STEELE COUNTY Times

HUSKIES SERIOUS ABOUT BIG 9 B1

www.steeledodgenews.com | TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018 | Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

Local broadcasters acquire Fairmont radio stations

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Radio broadcasters with ties to Steele County have acquired a longtime AM-FM combo in Fairmont, known in southwestern Minnesota as the city of lakes.

City of Lakes Media is buying KSUM-1370 AM and KFMC-106.5 FM in a deal announced last week. According to documents filed with the Federal Communications Commission, Lakes Media paid $800,000 to the station's previous owner, Charles V. Woodward, who operated Woodward Broadcasting.

Ketelsen

The president of Lakes Media is Matt Ketelsen, who owns 25 percent of the company. Other owners include Matt's father, Lynn Ketelsen of Owatonna, David Legault of West Concord and the JRL Revocable Trust of 2015. The Ketelsens own KOWZ-FM and KRUE Country Radio in Owatonna. Lynn Ketelsen is also the farm director and known as the voice of Minnesota agriculture with the Linder Farm Network.

With the Owatonna stations, the Ketelsens and the Trust hold interests in 18 radio stations

SEE **RADIO, A3**

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Craig and Dick Kruckeberg, both widely known for their creation and growth of Minimizer and Kruckeberg Industries, will be honored Thursday night as the 2017 Blooming Prairie Area Citizens of the Year. The event is planned for the BP Servicemen's Club with social at 6 p.m. and dinner and program to follow at 7 p.m.

CITIZENS OF THE YEAR

Kruckebergs love their neighborhood

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

"Won't You Be My Neighbor?"

Mister Rogers (Fred) is most famous for using that greeting when inviting television viewers into his neighborhood for many years.

Being a good neighbor is an imperative part of being successful in the business and industry world, claim the father and son duo of Dick and Craig Kruckeberg.

> "Our processes are good and with new products constantly introduced, it's like watching corn grow."
>
> **Craig Kruckeberg**
> BP Citizen of the Year

The Kruckebergs whose name is synonymous with Minimizer and Kruckeberg Industries will be honored Thursday night as Blooming Prairie Citizens of the Year for 2017.

The event at the BP Servicemen's Club begins with a social hour at 6 p.m. and dinner following at 7 p.m. It is sponsored by the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce.

Craig and his wife Robyn will be in attendance to accept the award. It is unlikely Dick and Lorraine will attend since they are wintering in Arizona. "The doctor shook his head 'no' when we talked about returning to Blooming Prairie for the chamber event," Dick said.

Minimizer was founded by Dick Kruckeberg in 1984. A former truck driver, Dick started Minimizer with the invention of a poly fender. Craig purchased the company from his father in 2008. He is currently the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Visionary of Minimizer.

The company currently manufactures more than 300 styles of fenders and also markets many other truck accessories.

Neighborhoods are what makes communities grow and that's what Blooming Prairie is, says Craig, "one great neighborhood."

The Kruckebergs credit one another with making Minimizer and Kruckeberg Industries a vital part of the Blooming Prairie neighborhood.

"Dick was a serial entrepreneur," Craig says with honesty. He traces his father's involvement with a service station in Rochester, his dedication to a snowmobile/camper dealership, his years as a truck driver and his time managing a restaurant with wife Lorraine.

"Minimizer is Dick's; I'm just a place holder. Minimizer is his baby and we just dressed it better."

Both Kruckebergs are proud of their family businesses. Craig says all his kids are entrepreneurs.

Even though they both pass credit to one another, both are also in agreement that Minimizer and Kruckeberg Industries employees are the "real" reason both entities continue to grow.

"We had a good product from day one and have been totally customer orientated," Dick believes. "There are times when there might have been something wrong with our products but we always made changes to make our end result better," he added.

Dick and Lorraine both grew up in the Blooming Prairie area. They tip their hats to the people of their neighborhood who continue to support one another and make the neighborhood grow.

Dick points to the 4th of July celebration as being a hallmark of the community. He also said the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group, the BP Education Foundation and the BP Youth Club have been successful because of people coming together.

"There are lots of people who have helped us and I would like to mention and thank them," Dick points out, "but I don't want to miss anyone."

Dick emphasizes, "It's all about how you treat people and I think you should treat people like you want to be treated. The town itself is great and we need to keep it going. If it falters for a short time, someone steps up and here we go again."

Both Kruckebergs exude humility when speaking of the chamber recognition.

"There are a lot more deserving people in this community," Craig said. "I just go to work every day," he acknowledges.

BP CITIZENS OF THE YEAR

DICK AND CRAIG KRUCKEBERG

Father-Son duo of Minimizer and Kruckeberg Industries

To be honored Thursday at annual chamber banquet in Blooming Prairie

Both said that their companies would not be where they are today if it were not for their customers and employees.

The ability to work together and get along results in getting along and working together, Dick reasons.

> "We had a good product from day one and have been totally customer orientated."
>
> **Dick Kruckeberg**
> BP Citizen of the Year

THEIR CAREER PATHS

Taking a few steps into history, let's review the careers of Dick Kruckeberg and Craig Kruckeberg.

"It's my hometown," Dick affectionately labels Blooming Prairie. In his younger days, he said few attended college. Dick recalls delivering milk for a dairy for a few years and then working for the Owatonna Public Schools and for Dan Gainey, owner of Jostens.

Dick's work with Jostens was split between Arizona and Owatonna. He then went to Rochester and started a service station, which he ran for about 15 years.

Truck driving came next for Dick and that's what led to creation of Minimizer. The story is well known to many how Dick came up with the poly fender idea. It happened when Dick carefully analyzed how a poly trash can his wife backed over

SEE **KEYWORD, XX**

Changes being made at BP Youth Club

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

A change in administration has been reported at the Blooming Prairie Youth Club.

Marcy Sundine is no longer the executive director. Kelli Naatz is supervising the club at this time, announced Ashley Marquardt, an Early Childhood Special Education teacher.

Sundine submitted her resignation to spend more time with her family.

The Youth Club board says there are no plans for additional changes ahead. Families and the community will be updated and informed, Marquardt said.

A committee called Blossoming Youth Facilities Foundation is active in researching a new facility for the Youth Club. This new facility would house the Youth Club. Other amenities would also be added.

Steele County Sheriff Lon Thiele is chairman of this committee.

Coming wave of technology

Former governor pushes chamber members to embrace it

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

For many Owatonna business leaders, the future looks bright.

On Friday, the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism held its annual dinner at the Owatonna Country Club. The event brought together 250 local business leaders with an eye towards continuing the region's economic prosperity.

This year the theme circled around the city's future, and keynote speaker Tim Pawlenty was there to discuss the importance of the state and city's effort at embracing the coming wave of technology.

Artificial intelligence and automation have become prescient economic issues, and these advanced technologies are predicted to bring about drastic and lasting economic and societal changes.

Pawlenty, a former two-term Governor of Minnesota, had much to say concerning the advent of these new technologies, and how this may affect state and local economies.

Pawlenty began his speech talking about Henry Ford and his own perspicacious adoption of what was, at that time, a new technology: the assembly line. Pawlenty thanked Meier, and the Chamber, saying "Brad does a fantastic job, and so does the board and everyone involved." He also admitted a certain fondness and favoritism towards the Steele County Free Fair.

The former Governor went on to explain that these coming technologies, the most recent wave of which he and Meier both refer to as the "fourth industrial revolution," threaten to "change manufacturing and so much more."

But it wasn't all doom and gloom. In fact, Pawlenty, although warning of the possibility that automation will make certain jobs obsolete, sees positives in these potential future technologies.

These technologies include the advent of greater medical advances which are able to bring medicine and expertise to far-flung regions of the earth. When talking about the possibility of a so-called "smart toilet" able to diagnose health problems, Pawlenty joked "it sounds like Star Trek, but I'm telling you it's coming."

Pawlenty continued by reviewing the different industrial revolutions the country's civilization has seen. These include the steam revolution and its close relative the internal combustion engine, as well as the more modern "third industrial revolution" of the internet.

In identifying the coming technologies as part of a "forth industrial revolution," Pawlenty is promising a host of sweeping technological advances, which could change society drastically.

These technologies include biotech, nanotechnologies, quantum computing, and advanced artificial intelligence systems. Of which Pawlenty says, "There's nothing artificial about it," referring, of course, to the measure of these machines' intelligence.

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Serving Blooming Prairie and Steele County since 1893

OUR VIEW

Resolve to give the gift of life

The new year always provides people with the opportunity to make resolutions for making changes in their lives. One resolution that should be considered this year is giving the gift of life.

Specifically, people should consider donating their blood to help others in need.

The Red Cross has issued an urgent call for blood donations during National Blood Donor Month, which is January. There is a shortage of all blood types.

Severe winter weather has had a tremendous impact on blood donations already this year. More than 150 blood drives have been forced to cancel causing more than 5,500 blood and platelet donations to go uncollected.

In addition to bad weather, seasonal illnesses, such as the flu, and hectic holiday schedules collectively contributed to more than 28,000 fewer donations than what was needed in November and December.

If you've missed an opportunity to donate recently, you'll want to get to a bloodmobile soon. If you've never donated, it's time to take part in such a life-saving venture.

It's estimated that 38 percent of the U.S. population is eligible to donate blood at any given time. However, less than 10 percent of that population actually follows through with donating.

Blood cannot be manufactured. It can only come from generous donors. Right now the greatest need is for Type O negative, Type B negative and Type AB. Type) is the blood type that doctors reach for in trauma situations.

Blood saves lives in emergency situations. Just a single car accident victim can require as many as 100 pints of blood.

According to the Red Cross, every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood. Approximately 36,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day in the U.S. Nearly 7,000 units of platelets and 10,000 units of plasma are needed daily.

While you consider shedding a few pounds, giving up smoking, spending more time with family, saving more money and paying off debts as some of your new year's resolutions, let's make donating blood the top priority.

Nothing can top the feeling of giving the gift of life to a complete stranger.

YOUR VIEW

County boards promote large factory farms

To-the-Editor:

Across rural Minnesota, local planning commissions and county boards have promoted large corporate interests and permitted large factory farms. Now that the environment is polluted with high nitrates, phosphorus, antibiotics and other contaminants, local governing bodies are running from the problems they created.

Our family farm is located in Dodge County. Although the neighborhood vigorously protested the permitting of a large swine factory farm situated on karst topography near our farm several years ago, Dodge County approved the factory farm anyway. Afterward, there were increasing levels of nitrates in our well testing. We have avoided drinking water from our farm well for years due to high nitrates. This fall, the water test revealed a nitrate level of 16 milligrams per liter, far in excess of the state maximum of 10 mg/L.

Our grass-roots organization, Dodge County Concerned Citizens, has been working hard to raise awareness regarding the public health and environmental concerns relating to factory farms. We recently objected to proposed changes to the local ordinance that would have allowed Planning Commission members to serve essentially life terms through reappointment. We urged Dodge County to turn over these positions to new members. For years, the County Board, which appoints Planning Commission members, has populated and repopulated our Planning Commission with feedlot operators and their friends. The county largely ignored our recent request and reappointed two members to another term! I suspect that control of these local boards by feedlot operators occurs in many other rural Minnesota counties, too.

These local governing boards put large corporate interests above the public health of their own local citizens — the same folks they were elected to represent. It's time to change the leadership across rural Minnesota at the township and county levels and put the citizens first.

Douglas Eayrs
West Concord

A true public safety warrior serves Steele County

Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

From a small plane smashing into a house followed by a tree and killing four people instantly to a man who ambushed his friend and plotted to kill law enforcement officers, Sgt. Gary Okins of the Steele County Sheriff's Office has seen his share of gruesome scenes over the past three decades.

Last week Okins celebrated his 30th anniversary with the sheriff's office. While he has no plans to leave just yet, Okins hinted that a glimmer of retirement may be on the horizon later this year.

For those who know Okins, he is a gifted story teller who loves to go into great detail about whatever topic is at hand. I sat down with him for several hours the other day reliving some of the crime scenes and other cases he's investigated during his career at the sheriff's office.

Okins laughed about one criminal case in which his story telling proved to be an instant turn-off for the suspect. While Okins was trying to get a statement for the case, and mixing a few stories throughout their conversation, the suspect turned to Okins and said, "I'm so tired of listening to your stories. Just shut up. I'll give you a confession."

The veteran investigator didn't take any offense and eventually got what he needed for the case. "I like to tell stories," Okins said.

Much has changed since Okins got into law enforcement in his home county of Redwood back in the mid 1980s. He initially started as a dog catcher for Redwood Falls before being approached to become an officer. At the time he had been laid off from a factory job in town. He worked for various small towns around Redwood County.

Okins now laughs about his equipment attire back in those earlier years. He had the same uniform with an universal police patch. "All I had to do is change badges when I worked in the other towns while I wore the same uniform," he said.

He left Minnesota for a short time to work as a city officer in a suburb of Kansas City. Okins said the big city experience was good, but admits it wasn't for him. "It did not appeal to me at all," he said.

Okins jumped at the chance to come back to Minnesota when Blooming Prairie offered him a part-time police job in 1986. A month later he was brought on full time, and he stuck with it for about 18 months when something more appealing came along.

It was a deputy position with Steele County. Okins recalls back then how it wasn't very easy to get into Steele County, especially for an outsider like him. "Steele County always liked hiring local people," Okins said. "I was the first one (on the sheriff's office) that wasn't born and raised here." He added then Sheriff Bill Hildebrandt saw his work in Blooming Prairie and liked what he offered.

When Okins moved into a detective position in 2000, the county averaged one homicide every 10 years. Today, unfortunately, it is changed to one every five years. He said for as small as Steele is, the county experiences its fair share of serious crime.

Modern technology has changed Okins' job drastically over the past 30 years. He lamented how all criminals, and others, now have cell phones and access to social media. During the last homicide case involving Richard Jurgensen of Medford, social media played a key role throughout the case.

"Social media was great to us because they posted all kinds of things that was helpful," Okins said.

Besides serving as the county's lead detective, Okins also serves as the chairman of the Steele County Crisis Resource Center in Owatonna.

Over the years Okins has been cursed at and accused of being racist, among other things, more than he can count. "I just tell people I'm here to help you. I don't care what color your skin is," he said. He added he finds it interesting that when these same people end up in trouble and need help right away, it's the police that they call immediately.

Okins said he's always treated people that he has come into contact with the way he would want to be treated.

As he winds down his law enforcement career and looks back at 30 plus years of crime fighting, he's reminded of what excites him the most. "Solving the serious crimes is most rewarding," Okins said.

The county's citizens are safer because of public safety warriors like Okins who go in hot pursuit of bringing crooks to justice.

Viking fans have got it

Reflections ... and how
HOWARD LESTRUD

These Viking fans have got it.

They know what it takes to support a professional sports team.

Yes, Stefon Diggs, #14, caught the amazing 61-yard touchdown that pushed the Minnesota Vikings into the National Conference championship game, but much credit is due the Vikings fandom.

Coach Mike Zimmer, his assistants and the player also got it. They credited the noisy sellout crowd with helping the Vikings put together an unbelievable comeback.

It's too often that some sports professional take more pride in their individual accomplishments and take the credit for helping a team. It's that 12th player on a football team, the FAN who really counts.

Zimmer said last Sunday's game featured the loudest crowd he has ever been a part of during his football days.

The Viking fan display could be compared to the following the 1987 Minnesota Twins got from the fans waving Homer Hankies during the World Series.

I have followed the Vikings since they came to Minnesota in 1961 and honestly can say that this finish to a game was the most astounding and unbelievable moment I have witnessed in pro football.

Usually, the kicker holds the key to last second wins. This time, it was quarterback Case Keenum passing to wide receiver Stefon Diggs.

The Vikings have had some exciting moments during their history including four appearances in the Super Bowl. Now, the Vikings are on the verge of being the first team ever to play in the Super Bowl on their home field.

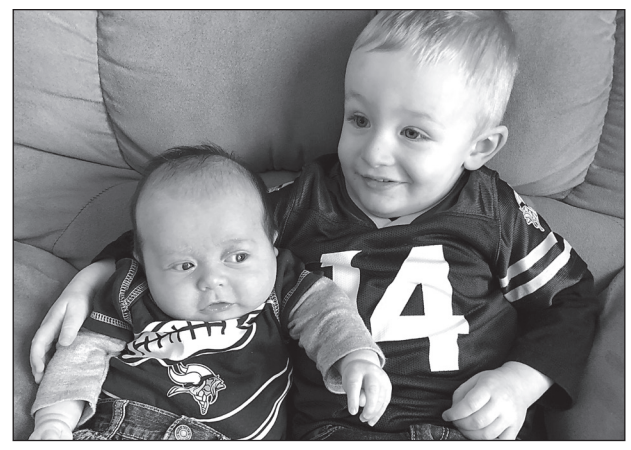

PHOTO BY CALEB OSTRANDER

Minnesota Viking fans come in all sizes. Brothers Khyson Ostrander, left, and Liam Ostrander show off their colors. Liam even wore Viking star Stefon Diggs' #14. The boys are children of Amy and Caleb Ostrander of Blooming Prairie.

Minnesota pride again is at a high level because of the Vikings accomplishments and it's because the success is not just because of the owners, managers, coaches and players. It's because of the many loyal fans.

People everywhere in Minnesota were wearing purple on this particular Sunday, day of the Vikings-New Orleans Saints game.

Many church goers at First Lutheran in Blooming Prairie came decked out in Vikings gear. Burnett Blume wore a colorful Vikings tie. Many others wore jerseys of their favorite Viking players. Brothers Khyson, 7 weeks, and Liam Ostrander, 22 months, wore their Viking colors in church.

Many others from the area attended the game including Roger and Joanne Sorenson; Benji, Nicki, Riauna and Carter Bishop; Scott Krejci and Matt Hansen.

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Spelling is the buzz at annual bee

2 BP students advance to regional contest

STAFF PHOTO: HOWARD LESTRUD

Three medals were given to the winners of the 27th Annual Blooming Prairie District Spelling Bee on Wednesday, Jan. 10 in the Blooming Prairie Elementary School gymnasium.

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Twenty-four Blooming Prairie students in grades 5-8 participated in the 27th Annual Blooming Prairie District Spelling Bee on Jan. 10 in the BP Elementary School gymnasium.

The Southeast Minnesota Service Cooperative of Rochester is sponsor of the Blooming Prairie spelling bee.

Spelling bees have been popular world-wide, and Blooming Prairie has really embraced the contest with lots of participants, said local spelling bee coordinator Jeanette Hauschildt.

Students are all placed in one group with six participants from each grade, 5-8. Fourth graders sat in the audience since they will be eligible to participate next year.

Sisters Maggie and Bobbie Bruns were two of the three winners last year. Maggie advanced to regional competition.

The top three winners receive gold, silver and bronze medals.

Two regional spelling bees are scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 13 and Tuesday, Feb. 27. First and second place winners from Feb. 13 advance to the Southeast Minnesota Spelling Bee Finals on Tuesday, Feb. 27 in Rochester.

Winner from the Southeast Minnesota Spelling Bee advances to the nationals in Washington, D.C. in May.

Superintendent Barry Olson and BP Elementary principal Chris Staloch gave a welcome to participants, students, parents and grandparents.

Beth Krebs was pronouncer of the words of competition.

Judges were Diane Anderson, Jeanette Hauschildt and Roger Sorenson. Judy Bishop was recorder.

Eighth graders in the contest included: Melanie Winzenburg, Judy Larisa, Bradley Simon, Bobbie Bruns, Asha Lighthizer and Alexis Ripka.

Representing the seventh grade were Hailey Hensrud, Leah Thorson, Sam Pirkl, Micah Donnelly, Grace Krejci and Abby Smith.

Competitors from the sixth grade were Kaiden Chicos, Rachel Winzenberg, Layla Lembke, Hannah Freese, Addison Doocy and Tyler Forystek.

Spelling bee contestants from the fifth grade were Jaydon King, Malread Holmes, Ava Blachelder, Gage Mullenbach, Caitlyn Stangl and Catelyn Bartlett.

Alternates were fifth graders Ella Smith, Elijah Skillestad and Brady Kittelson; sixth graders Jaylee Schleicher, Lily Schammel and Annaka Forsberg; seventh grader Abby Hefling and eighth grader Samuel Skillestad.

RADIO: *Sold to City Lakes Media*

FROM PAGE A1

throughout southern Minnesota, including one in Rochester and five in the Mankato market.

KSUM focuses on a Farm/Country format while KFMC carries Classic Rock. The FM station is 100,000 watts, the largest signal strength available to radio stations, according to Matt Ketelsen. The Fairmont stations have been in the Woodward family for 30 years. Charles Woodward plans to retire, though he will be staying on as a consultant for two years.

Matt Ketelsen said he is thrilled to be adding a couple more stations to his network of radio stations.

"I love climbing mountains and challenges," Ketelsen said. "I look forward to the opportunity."

He doesn't foresee many changes to the Fairmont combo as he considers it "a well run station" by Woodward. "We don't need some magic potion," Ketelsen said.

KSUM, Ketelsen said, carries a ton of local agriculture news. "Martin County is the largest hog producing county in the state," he said. "We will super service all the counties around it," he added.

After working as a regional director for former Minnesota senator Norm Coleman for several years, Ketelsen joined his father in the radio business 10 years ago. He started as sales manager and within six months was named general manager of the Owatonna stations.

Media and agriculture has been in Ketelsen's blood since childhood. His father has been a farm broadcaster for more than 40 years. He recalls waking up every day to his mother cooking bacon and eggs and listening to his father doing the farm reports on the radio.

"Radio has always been a part of my life," Ketelsen said.

As for the newest acquisition, Ketelsen said it fits perfectly into what he envisions doing the rest of his career. "I've always pictured myself as a businessman," he said.

He received a business degree from Iowa State University.

Ketelsen just finished a four-year stint on the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce. He lives in Lakeville with his twin sons.

The deal, which is pending approval of the FCC, should close by April 1.

TECHNOLOGY: *Former governer urges to use*

FROM PAGE A1

He went on to explain that these artificial intelligence systems will become relatively self-functioning, elaborating that "over time the machine can program itself to learn from its mistakes." Pawlenty even admitted, "this can be scary stuff," yet understands the importance of embracing these new technologies.

Next he discussed 3D printing and flying cars, both of which promise to bring changes to sectors of the economy. In identifying aspects of the economy that will be affected, Pawlenty included the realms of manufacturing, construction, medicine, business, transportation, and even the work of attorneys, who are under threat of being replaced by an online robotic equivalent.

Pawlenty used examples where these new technologies present humanitarian benefits, including a company called Zipline, which delivers much needed medical supplies to remote places in Rwanda. Examples like this one, despite Pawlenty's earnestness, could almost be interpreted as a handpicked result.

The former Governor see lots of upside to these promising new technologies, but also a downside. As he explains, there will be "a tsunami of automation coming."

Pawlenty went on to emphasize the importance of trade skills, as well as the value of promoting these trades in school. According to Pawlenty, "robots have to be invented and built, manufactured and maintained, and then, eventually, disposed of."

He feels that we will still require human labor for many of these jobs, and also comfortingly reminded the audience that we will likely always need human doctors, poets, sociologists, and artists. Pawlenty further explained that, regardless of these new technologies, in the future, non-automated careers will still be very important.

Pawlenty ended again on Henry Ford, and his vision of the future, something many people of the time could not understand. After this Pawlenty said, "We have a great state that values education, and innovation, and we can be on the cutting edge of this new industrial revolution, but it will take understanding, and not fear."

When his speech was finished, Pawlenty fielded questions from the audience on a myriad of issues pertaining mostly to the theme of the speech. As if almost obligatory, he lightly brushed off the inevitable Al Franken senate seat question before deftly pivoting back to the issues at hand.

The Owatonna Chamber of Commerce ensures that the community, and its surrounding populace, remains competitive on both a state and national scale. The work they do is paramount to the city's future. It is a future of uncertainty, but if Pawlenty can be believed, whoever is willing to embrace and utilize this coming wave of technology will find their own future a little less indefinite.

Prior to Pawlenty's speech, the Chamber of Commerce presented its outgoing Board of Directors and its Chair, Julie Rethemeier, with various awards and recognition. Rethemeier, director of public affairs at Federated Insurance, was more than happy to "pass the torch" onto the incoming board and its new Chair for the 2018 year, Pat McDermott.

McDermott, who is the Chief Operating Officer at J-C Press, congratulated Rethemeier for all her hard work and dedication, and explained that 2017 "has been a year of positive change" for the town and its economy.

The Chamber identified four key initiatives for the coming year. These include developing talent which can help to add to the town's economy, restoring the core of the city's main street and downtown areas, strengthening the general economy, and acquiring tourism. McDermott feels that "a vibrant downtown is important to our city's economy."

S-h-r-a-p-n-e-l

Asha Lighthizer wins local spelling bee

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

After 18 rounds of spelling bee competition, eighth grade Blooming Prairie High School student Asha Lighthizer earned first-place honors in the 27th Annual Blooming Prairie District Spelling Bee.

Lighthizer correctly spelled the word SHRAPNEL to win the competition. She is the daughter of Jake and Heather Lighthizer.

"It was interesting and a new, fun thing to do," remarked Ashley after accepting congratulations from some of her friends. "It also will help me with my public speaking," she added.

Her closest rival was seventh grader Micah Donnelly who tripped up in Round 17 on the word ABDICATE. He is the son of Daniel and Mary Simon.

Two regional spelling bees are scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 13 and Tuesday, Feb. 27. First and second place winners from Feb. 13 advance to the Southeast Minnesota Spelling Bee Finals on Tuesday, Feb. 27 in Rochester.

Lighthizer and Donnelly now advance to the Southeast Minnesota Spelling Bee regionals on Tuesday, Feb. 13 in Rochester. Winners of the Feb. 13 regional move on to the Feb. 27 finals in Rochester.

Winner of the regional finals goes to Washington, D.C. for the finals in May of 2018.

Eighth grader Bradley Simon placed third in the competition and will be an alternate to the regional competition in Rochester. Bradley is the son of Jeremy and Amy Simon.

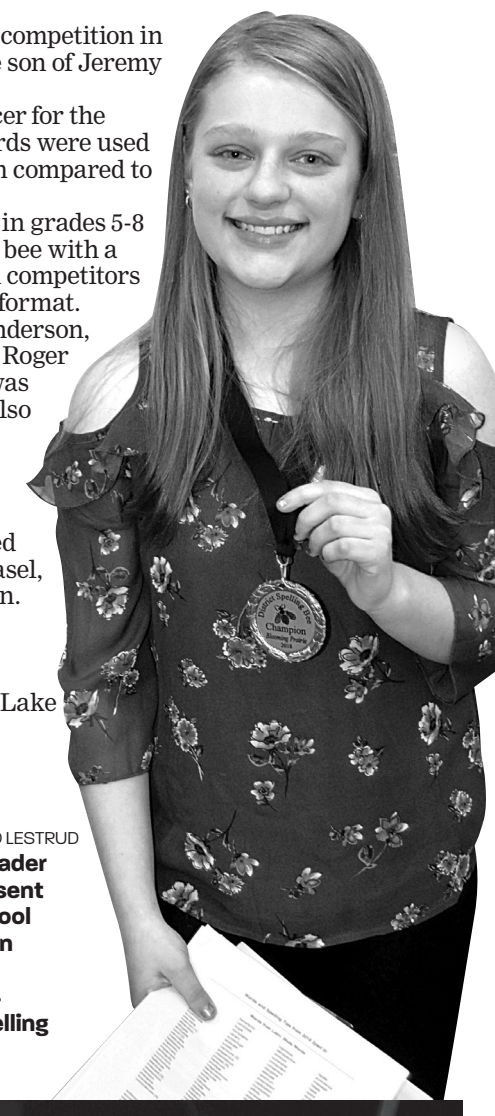
Beth Krebs, pronouncer for the competition, said 180 words were used in this year's competition compared to 161 last year.

Twenty-four students in grades 5-8 competed in the spelling bee with a practice round giving all competitors a chance to adjust to the format.

Judges were Diane Anderson, Jeanette Hauschildt and Roger Sorenson. Judy Bishop was recorder. Hauschildt is also the coordinator for the contest.

Only five competitors were knocked out in the first round. They misfired on these words: ballot, easel, icicle, thermal and tycoon.

The regional spelling bee competition will be at the Southeast Service Cooperative at 210 Wood Lake Drive SE in Rochester.



STAFF PHOTO: HOWARD LESTRUD

Blooming Prairie eighth grader Asha Lighthizer will represent Blooming Prairie High School in a regional spelling bee in Rochester on Feb. 13. She was the winner among 24 competitors in the BP Spelling Bee last week.

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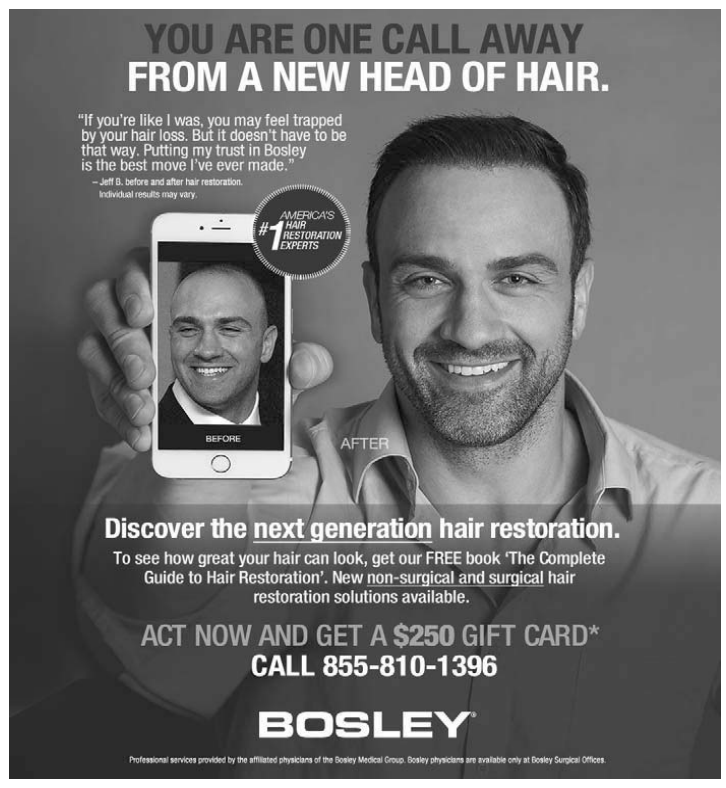

OBITUARIES

Lawrence Allen Ingvaldson, Ellendale

Lawrence Allen Ingvaldson, 86, Ellendale, passed away peacefully Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2018 at Koda Living Community in Owatonna.

Lawrence was born on March 2, 1931 to Melvin and Alma (Hendrickson) Ingvaldson in Newry Township near Blooming Prairie. He attended Newry Township country school. Lawrence was united in marriage to Marian Jean Hensrud on Feb. 24, 1952 and raised their family and farmed in Steele County.

Lawrence was a dairy farmer and raised corn and soybeans, and loved the farm life. He enjoyed playing cards, deer hunting and fishing, and bird feeding.

Lawrence is survived by two sons, Douglas (Darise) Ingvaldson of Owatonna, Darrell (Diane) Ingvaldson of Austin; grandchildren, Christina Ingvaldson of Owatonna, Patrick (Jenny Hoffman) Ingvaldson of Owatonna, Nancy (Travis) Hamilton of Elkton, Anne Ingvaldson of Duluth; six great-grandchildren; brothers Ernie (Jean) Ingvaldson of Albert Lea, Jerry (Karen) Ingvaldson of Dodge Center, LeRoy (Linda) Ingvaldson of Owatonna; several nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Lawrence was preceded in death by his parents; his wife Marian; parents Melvin and Alma Ingvaldson; sisters Marion Hensrud, and Betty at infancy.

Funeral services were held Sunday, Jan. 14, 2018, at First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie with Pastor Heidi Heimgartner officiating. Interment followed the service at First Lutheran Cemetery in rural Blooming Prairie.

Memorials can be directed to Koda Living Community of Owatonna, Heartland Hospice, or donor's choice. Services are prearranged and performed by Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com.

James "Jim" R. Schumacher, 35, Hollandale

James "Jim" Robert Schumacher, 35, of Hollandale, died Sunday, Jan. 7, 2018 at his residence.

He was born April 1, 1982 in Albert Lea, the son of Kenn and Brenda (Stucky) Schumacher. He grew up on a farm in the Hollandale and Ellendale area and attended school at NRHEG. Jim worked as a cook at the truck stop in Ellendale for many years. He enjoyed stock car races with his brother, hunting, fishing, fourwheeling, snowmobiling and any outdoor activity. He enjoyed spending time with family and especially enjoyed his nieces and nephews. Jim's family and friends remember him as being "always right" even when he wasn't.

He is survived by father, Kenn (Jenne) Schumacher of Hollandale; mother, Brenda (David) Strenge of Albert Lea; brother, Nathan (Amanda) Schumacher of Blooming Prairie; sister, Carol (Joe) Schumacher of Hollandale; grandmothers, Peg Shelton of Albert Lea and Nadine Strenge of Geneva; nieces and nephews, Hailey, Kaydance, Natalie, Justin, Lexi and Ryan Schumacher and numerous uncles, aunts and cousins.

He was preceded in death by brother, Justin " JT " Schumacher; sister, Annie Hartman; grandfathers, Albert Schumacher, Neal Stucky and Dale Strenge and grandmother, Laura Rayman.

Visitation will be at Michaelson Funeral Home in Owatonna on Friday, Jan. 19 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday at Michaelson Funeral Home with Rev. Sandy Miller officiating. Interment will be in the Stateline Cemetery in Northwood, Iowa followed by a lunch reception at Senior Court, 915 Maplehill Dr. in Albert Lea. (Please park on the street and go to the downstairs community room.)

Birthdays & Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

Jan. 16
Martin Morem
Lauren Hines
Jimmy Mans

Jan. 17
Kim Lea
Hailey Naatz
Sailor Lea

Jan. 18
Chelsie Hansen
Paul Master
Grady Strand

Jan. 19
Carol Holman
Bob Farr

Jan. 20
Cameron Brown
Joe Prizler

Jan. 21
Kennedy Bishop
Dale Borchert
Laura Thomas

Jan. 22
Jon Esplan
Joann Nielsen
Andrew Schwarz
Joseph Schwarz
Elaine Schwarz
Carol Braaten

ANNIVERSARIES

Jan. 21
Mike & Katie Ingvalson

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Wednesday - Turkey
Thursday - Your Choice
Friday - Beef
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SEMCAC Senior Menu

All meals subject to change

Wednesday, Jan. 17
Chopped Sirloin Steak
With Mushroom Sce, Baked Potato/Sr Cream, Buttered Beets, Peaches/Grapes/Pears

Thursday, Jan. 18
Hot Pork on Bread, Mashed Potatoes, Fresh Squash, Lemon Bar

Friday, Jan. 19
Meatloaf, Buttered Seasoned Mashed Potatoes, Seasoned Carrots, Cherry Crisp

Monday, Jan. 22
Hawaiian or Baked Chicken, Confetti Rice, Peas, Waldorf Salad, Vanilla Ice Cream

Tuesday, Jan. 23
Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Spinach with Vinegar or Lemon Juice, Fresh Fruit

MnDOT urges caution when driving near snowplows

There have been at least 22 crashes so far this season involving vehicles and snowplows. With a big chunk of winter still ahead, the Minnesota Department of Transportation is urging motorists to use extra caution during plowing and snow removal operations.

"Inattentive drivers, motorists driving too close to the plow and motorists driving too fast for conditions are the main causes of these crashes," said Steve Lund, state maintenance engineer. "Our snowplow drivers are well trained to drive their plows, but motorists should be patient and stay back from the plow.

Lund said that operators' ability to see behind them is restricted behind the truck so they must rely on mirrors to see to the rear and side of the truck.

"Their vision is also hampered by the snow clouds created while they plow. So, the safest place you can be is well behind the snowplow and away from the snow cloud it creates," he said.

Last year in Minnesota, there were 58 crashes involving vehicles and snowplows.

Minnesota law requires motorists to turn on their headlights when it's snowing or at any other time when weather conditions impair visibility.

Here are some other recommendations for safe driving around snowplows:

- Stay alert for snowplows, which turn or exit frequently and often with little warning. They also may travel over centerlines or partially in traffic to further improve road conditions.
- Stay back at least 10 car lengths behind the plow. Don't drive into a snow cloud.
- Slow down to a safe speed for current conditions.
- Turn on your headlights and wear your seat belt.
- Turn off the cruise control.
- Be patient and remember snowplows are working to improve road conditions for your trip.
- Don't drive distracted.

Motorists should check road conditions at 511mn.org.

LIBRARY BOOK NOOK

New movie releases to be offered at library

NANCY VAILLANCOURT

Are these long winter days getting you down? Then come and join us at the Blooming Prairie Branch Library for Movies in the Afternoon.

We will be showing four newly released movies on Thursday afternoons at 1 p.m. Our movie licensing agreement does not allow us to state the names of the movies, but here are the dates and some hints about each of the shows:

Jan. 25 - A well-known evacuation during World War II told from three perspectives: land, sea, and air.

Feb. 1 - Based on a best selling memoir, four siblings must learn to take care of themselves while dealing with an alcoholic father and a emotionally absent mother.

Feb. 15 - This film follows the story of a man who loses both of his legs when two bombs explode during the Boston Marathon.

Feb. 22 - During Queen Victoria's golden jubilee, a young Indian clerk arrives and finds favor with the queen herself.

Come join us on any of those days to see the movies on the big screen in the City Council room. Snacks will be provided, thanks to the Friends of the Library. See you there.

STEELE COUNTY Times
Always local, all the time.

GRIEF RELIEF

What is grief like? Grief is like a series of waves that come and go, feelings that vary in intensity over a long period of time as we are constantly reminded of changes that result from the death of our loved one. We need to take time to face our emotions and feelings. Then make careful plans for our new lives without the deceased. Our feelings and grief may seem unpredictable and confused at times, but that is perfectly normal.

Direction with dignity from Michaelson Funeral Home in Owatonna.

Cory Michaelson

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A friendly reminder on these chilly days

PASTOR LINDSAY STOLEN
RED OAK LUTHERAN CHURCH
AUSTIN

Have you been staying warm? It's been frigid outside these last weeks, but, well, what should we expect? It is January in Minnesota! I hope, physically, you've stayed toasty and your home is warm, but I wonder about spiritually.

Have you been staying spiritually warm? Warm in faith? Sometimes the habit is to slowly fade away a bit after the beauty of Christmas. We're tired from the rush, the busy of the holidays. Maybe some of us get a little spiritually cold. Lukewarm. For each of us, warming up might look different. It might be getting back into the rhythm of Sunday worship. It might be beginning a new prayer practice, or starting a gratitude journal with daily lists of blessings. It could be helping someone else stay warm.

In these cold days, I think often of our call to love and serve our neighbors. When it gets so frightfully cold, check in on your neighbors. Maybe you know people who don't leave the house in such cold. Give them a call; see if they need anything from the store since you're going already. As you make supper, make double and take a portion to them; better yet, invite them to sit at your table and share a meal.

Loving our neighbors, as Jesus calls us to do, can warm the spirits of not just the neighbor, but ourselves. You know this. This isn't new to you. But call it a friendly reminder in these chilly months. Love each other and the hearts of all involved will warm.

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

LUTHERAN

AURORA LUTHERAN
6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna
Pastor Stephanie Wood
507-676-5696
Worship: 9:00 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA
106 Third St. SE., Geneva
Pastor Kristen Venne
507-256-4288
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.

FIRST LUTHERAN – AFLC
503 Radel Ct., Ellendale
Pastor Richard Sliper
507-684-2451
Saturday: 8 a.m. Men's Bible Study
Sunday: 9 a.m. Worship; 10:15 a.m. Sunday School/ Confirmation
Tues.: 7 p.m. Call to Prayer, open to all churches
Wed.: 9:30 a.m. BibleStudy; 3:30 – 5 p.m. Jesus and Me; 6 p.m. Call to Prayer; 6:30 p.m. Youth Group
Christmas Eve Service: 5 p.m. Dec. 24

FIRST LUTHERAN – ELCA
434 First St. SW., Blooming Prairie
Rev. Heidi Heimgartner, 507-583-6621
firstlutheranbp.com
Worship: 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sundays
Education Hour: 9:30 a.m. Sun.

FIRST LUTHERAN – LCMC
8953 SW 37th Ave., Hope
Pastor Sandy Miller
507-451-3854
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School, Adult Ed: 10:15 a.m. Sun.

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN – LCMS
2500 7th Ave. NE., Owatonna
Rev. Mark Rosenau, Senior Pastor
Rev. Greg Schlicker, Associate Pastor
507-451-4125
www.goodshepherd owatonna.com
Worship: 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

MOLAND LUTHERAN – ELCA
7618 NE 84th Ave., Kenyon
Pastor Nancy Edwardson
507-789-6661
Worship: 10:45 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN – ELCA
9651 SW 75th St., Ellendale
Pastor Mike Walerius
507-465-8366
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9 a.m. Sun.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN – LCMS
1054 Truman Ave., Owatonna
Pastor Kirk Griebel
507-451-2720
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Education Hour: 10:15 a.m. Sun.

RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN – ELCA
30456 Mower-Freeborn Road, Austin
Pastor Lindsay Stolen
507-583-2038 or 507-437-3000
www.roglutheran.org
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School (Sept. – May): 10:15 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN – LCMS
4532 SE 84th Ave., Claremont
Pastor Alan Broadwell
507-528-2404
Worship: 6 p.m. Saturday; 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN – LCMS
28959 630th Ave., Sargeant
Pastor Collin Duling
507-251-5568
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9 a.m.

ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA
30450 570th Ave., Waltham
Pastor Dwight DoBell
507-567-2474
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – LCMS
202 E. Park Ave., Hollandale
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
507-567-2272
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA
2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden
Pastor Cheryl D. Indehar
507-451-2165
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.

TRINITY LUTHERAN
5881 SE 118th St., Blooming Prairie
Pastor Stephanie Wood
507-676-5696
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.
(First Sunday of the month)

TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA
609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
Rev. Todd Buegler, Senior Pastor
Rev. Dean Smith, Associate Pastor
Rev. Amanda Weinkauf, Associate Pastor
507-451-4520
www.tlcowatonna.org
Worship: Saturday: 5 p.m.; Sun.: 8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday: 6 p.m.
Sunday School: 8:15 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA
104 First St. SE., Hayfield
Pastor Paul Hauschild
507-477-2248
www.trinityhayfield.org
Worship: 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS
108 Third Ave. SW., Medford
Pastor Mark Biebighauser
507-451-0447
Worship: 8 a.m. & 10:30 Sun.
Education Hour: 9:15-10:15 a.m. Sun.

TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS
57043 300th St., Waltham
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
507-567-2272
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

ZION LUTHERAN – ELCA
7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale
Pastor Cheryl D. Indehar
507-451-2165
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.

CATHOLIC

CHRIST THE KING
203 Second Ave. NW., Medford
507-451-6353
Father Kevin Connolly
Deacon Patrick Fagan
Sunday Mass: 8:30 a.m.
Monday Mass: 9 a.m.

CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS
307 SW First St., New Richland
Father Raul Silva
Fr. Adam McMillan, Parochial Vicar
507-465-8217
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL
9946 SE 24th Ave., Owatonna
Father John Sauer
Fr. Jose Morales, Weekend Presider
507-451-1588
www.litomysl.webs.com
Reconciliation: 8:45 a.m. 1st & 3rd Sundays
Sunday Mass: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Children's Church for Preschool – 1st Grade began Sept. 24
Faith Formation for Kindergarten – Confirmation: 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays
Adult Study: 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC
150 NE Second St., Hayfield
Father Thomas Niehaus
507-477-2256
Mass: 8 a.m. Sun.
& 8:30 a.m. Thursday
Reconciliation: 7:30 a.m. Sun.

SACRED HEART PARISH
810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna
Father John Sauer
Fr. Jose Morales, Parochial Vicar
507-451-1588
www.sacredheartowatonna.org
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday; 8:30 a.m. &10 a.m. Sun.
Spanish Mass: 11:45 a.m. Sun.
Daily Mass: 7:15 a.m.
Reconciliation: 4 p.m. Sat.
Adoration: 8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Thurs.

ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC
114 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie
Father Thomas Niehaus
507-583-2784
www.stcolumbanuschurch.com
Mass: 10 a.m. Sun. & 8:30 a.m. Friday
Reconciliation: 9 a.m. First Friday & Saturday

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH
512 S. Elm Ave., Owatonna
Father Kevin Connolly
Deacon Patrick Fagan
507-451-4845
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m.
Reconciliation: 3-3:30 p.m. Sat.
Daily Mass: 8 a.m. Tues., Wed. & Fri. (Communion Service 8 a.m. Thursday)
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CHRISTIAN

CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT
540 SE 18th St., Owatonna
Dr. V. Brent Carlson, Pastor
507-451-1032
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Sunday Connections: 10:15 a.m.

PENTECOSTAL

FIRST UNITED PENTECOASTAL
230 Locust Ave., Owatonna
Pastor Eliazar Talamantes
507-363-2240
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.; 6:30 p.m. Wednesday

METHODIST

BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST
43089 180th St., Medford
(Seven miles west of Medford on CR 23)
Pastors JJ & Stefanie Morgan
507-835-8726
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST
200 Sixth St. NW., Ellendale
Pastor Randy Cirksena
507-684-2731
www.ellendaleumc.org
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST
815 E. University, Owatonna
Loren Olson, Pastor
Linda Boorman, Associate Pastor
Joyce Parker, Associate Pastor
507-451-4734
www.owatonnaumc.org
Traditional Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Contemporary Worship: 10:45 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School/Adult Classes: 10 a.m.
Wednesday night service at 6:30 p.m.

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

BRIDGES OF HOPE COMMUNITY
130 W. Bridge St., Owatonna
Pastor Keith Haskell
507-215-2249
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.
Biblestudy: 9 a.m. Sun.
Reformers Unanimous Meetings:
7 p.m. Friday

CEDAR CREEK
30 E. Main St., Hayfield
Pastor Aaron de Neui
507-477-2255
www.cedarcreekchurch.org
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.

DESTINY CHRISTIAN
Owatonna Campus
422 North St., Owatonna
Pastors Tyler & Jessica Braucht
507-254-8514
www.destinycc.org
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.

ELEVATION NORTH
2002 Austin Road, Owatonna
Pastor Doug Jones
507-363-3099
www.elevationnorth.blogspot.com
Worship (English): 10 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.
Worship (Spanish): 2 p.m. Sun.
Bible Study: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday
Spanish Evangelism & Prayer: 7 p.m. Friday

NEW BEGINNINGS
332 14th St. NE., Owatonna
Pastors Scott & Joan Peterson
507-721-1366
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.
Gateway Connection: 6 p.m. Sun.

SIMPLE CHURCH
4515 NW 22nd Ave., Owatonna
(Country Goods building across the freeway from Cabela's)
Pastor Todd Lundgren
507-451-5661
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.
Bible Study: 7 p.m. Wednesday

MENNONITE

PRAIRIE MENNONITE
13638 750th St., Blooming Prairie
Bishop Dennis Martin
507-583-7532
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Prayer Meeting: 7:30 p.m. Wed.

MORMON

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
404 31st St. NW, Austin
Bishop Rick Bremner
507-433-9042
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.

PRESBYTERIAN

ASSOCIATED CHURCH
Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ
800 Havana Road, Owatonna
507-451-1546
www.associatedchurch.org
office@associatedchurch.org
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m. (Fellowship, Church School, and Adult Discussions follow)
Wednesday Activities: Sept – May (see website for schedule)

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
109 E. Main St., Hayfield
Pastor Kirk Johnston
507-477-2631
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
2373 Seventh Ave. NE, Owatonna
Pastor Bob Brauer
507-340-7143
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sat.
Bible Study: 11 a.m. Sat.

UCC

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
211 S. Main St., Medford
Pastor Louise Bender
507-451-4596
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9 a.m.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

VIBRANT LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD
702 Third St. S., Ellendale
Pastor Patrick Stitt
507-684-3421
www.vibrantlifeag.com
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Kids Church: 10:30 a.m. Sun.

BAPTIST

FIRST BAPTIST
104 First Ave. NE, Blooming Prairie
Pastor Matt Fennell
507-583-2673
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. & 6:30 p.m. Wednesday
Sunday School: 9 a.m.
Bible Study: 11:30 a.m. Sun.

WANT TO SUBMIT SOMETHING TO THE WORSHIP SCHEDULE?

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Saluting BP Citizens of the Year

Congratulations Dick and Craig Kruckeberg on being named Blooming Prairie's 2017 Citizens of the Year.

The father and son duo will be honored at the Chamber Banquet Thursday night.

Dick and Craig have started a wonderful business for which we are all very grateful.

Becky Noble
BP Chamber Director

Craig Kruckeberg

Dick Kruckeberg

- Dick founded Minimizer in 1984
- Family owned and operated for three generations
- Craig took over company in 2006
- Minimizer is national leader in poly semi truck fenders

We want to thank the Kruckebergs for what they have accomplished in keeping Blooming Prairie a vibrant community to live in!

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KRUCKEBERGS: *Citizens of the year*

FROM PAGE A1

returned to form. The idea of making a poly truck fender thus evolved.

A very unassuming person, Dick said he "had a dream" of building a functional product but never thought it would be "that good."

Pointing to his son Craig's strong marketing of the Minimizer firm and other family ventures, Dick says, "Craig has done a fantastic job."

Craig was born in Rochester and moved to Blooming Prairie with his parents in 1977. He is a 1983 graduate of Blooming Prairie High School.

Not mincing any words, the younger Kruckeberg says he has yet to achieve the level of success he desires for Minimizer and Kruckeberg Industries.

His early working days circled around three jobs at one time to make ends meet, Craig relates. "I'm working harder now than when I was younger holding three jobs," he confesses.

Following high school graduation, Craig attended a nine-month cooking school in Rochester. Cooking was his main forte for some time, working in Rochester at various restaurants, including working for the Marriott, which provided food service for the Mayo Clinic.

Craig's employment history continued with a management job in Faribault. With his oldest daughter Jessie soon to start school, Kruckeberg and his family decided to move back to Blooming Prairie.

The other Kruckeberg children are: LeAnna and twins Tyler and Trevor. The twins are both part of the Kruckeberg family businesses. Four grandchildren are in the fold.

Living in Blooming Prairie again, Craig commuted to his job in Faribault and also worked with Kevin Hart at the BP Dairy Queen in Blooming Prairie. He also helped his father at Minimizer, working at the plant, a converted hog barn, grinding up scrap and boxes and working in shipping.

Craig officially joined Minimizer on March 9, 1990. He admits he was late the first day of his new job. "It's even in my will that I will be late for my own funeral," Craig laughs.

The manufacturing business continued to grow at Minimizer and Craig became president in 2002.

Minimizer is the aftermarket solution for the heavy truck industry, whether a driver, owner/operator, fleet manager or technician. Over the last three decades, Minimizer released custom molded floor mats, slick plates, work benches, tool caddies, the Long Haul Series of heavy duty truck seats and truck mattresses. Steering wheels will soon be added to Minimizer's product lines.

"Keep harvesting and grow those small companies."

Craig Kruckeberg
BP Citizen of the Year

Tested and Tortured has become the brand and standard operating procedure at Minimizer. A lifetime guarantee on Minimizer products is offered.

Minimizer has over 1,000 items on the sku. "You don't have enough paper to mention them all," he jokes.

Often on the road traveling, Craig says he stays linked to his neighborhood through his employees. "Blooming Prairie is ever changing but always the same," Craig says, further explaining that the small town's friendly nature continues.

The future of Minimizer, home for over 100 employees, is endless, Craig believes because of the fact that 3.5 million trucks are currently on the road and in the last three months, 330,000 Class 8 trucks have been manufactured.

Craig said he wears his politics on his sleeve and openly supports President Donald Trump.

"God Bless President Trump: Crack that oil; cut them trees; lay those pipes; build them tanks; haul that coal; fix them bridges and build them roads."

Craig said he lost half of his friends because of his politics. "People read what they want to believe," he said.

Dick and Craig Kruckeberg have been increasingly involved in supporting Blooming Prairie causes. Craig, a Blooming Prairie Youth Club board member with his wife, says the Youth Club is an organization that holds their priority.

In addition to running two huge enterprises, Craig has time to focus on other interests. He is a licensed and bonded auctioneer and says he loves to shop the clearance section at Target Stores. He is also quick to point out that he widely supports other Blooming Prairie based businesses.

LIFE AND BUSINESS

Craig Kruckeberg is not remiss in being analytical and philosophical about life and business.

"If success comes overnight for someone, they may be going to jail; you have to grind it out.

"Our processes are good and with new products constantly introduced, it's like watching corn grow," Craig said.

Minimizer may outgrow Blooming Prairie but Kruckeberg Industries will stay because of its family of workers, Craig says.

Craig says the community "needs to understand" that no one will come in and immediately start a company employing 50 or more employees. "Keep harvesting and grow those small companies," he said.

"It's people coming together."

Dick Kruckeberg
BP Citizen of the Year

Craig saluted the success of Metal Services, NAPA and Darrick's Auto to name a few.

Kruckeberg Industries, another entity, has over 60 employees. Its driving parts include KIK Grahics, Steiner, Bandit Big Truck Series, Kruckeberg Motor Sports and Lee's Liquor in Minneapolis.

The bar is located in the warehouse district near Target Field. Kruckeberg said he has rented the bar to a private party for the three days of Super Bowl weekend, Feb. 2-4.

"What we have become is a marketing company, manufacturing being a necessity," Craig says. Minimizer is the No. 1 brand in heavy duty after market accessories for trucks, he reveals. "That's all here in Blooming Prairie," he says proudly.

Minimizer product distribution goes world wide including points as far away as Israel and South America. Canada claims 13 percent of Minimizer's business.

The future for Minimizer and Kruckeberg Industries may be unknown but growth is certain to be a goal for the future. He said Minimizer has been asked to carry fuel additives.

SUPPORTING THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Both Craig and Dick strongly believe in paying it forward by supporting their neighborhood/community. They praise the many volunteers who strive to make their community better.

"Find those loyal volunteers and put them to work," Craig challenges. "The most valuable thing is the time of volunteers. You won't get time back. Volunteers are worth a lot more than just writing out a check."

For example, Craig applauds the volunteer work of Cheri Krejci of the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group. "Time is her passion," he says.

As his father says, people must come together. Craig concurs. "We've seen many people come back to Blooming Prairie after swearing they would never come back," he commented.

"I need the world to stop so I can catch up. . ."

Trying to catch up, Craig Kruckeberg is writing a book. What's the theme? It's marketing, of course.

He also started racing trucks last year. "It's wonderful, a time to shut off my brain," he said. The 2018 season begins March 10 in Mobile, Ala.

Nothing is the same in the Kruckebergs' neighborhood. Dick and Craig communicate often but don't always see eye to eye, says Craig. "I've quit 100 times and he fired me 200 times," Craig grins.

A strong legacy has been created and is still being carved by the Kruckeberg family.

Dick spends considerable time at his shop north of town when he is back in BP. Some day, he hopes a museum might be created. Craig agrees and said with the racing history, the bootlegging history and the agricultural background of the Blooming Prairie area, a museum is appropriate.

Hometown Sports

STEELE COUNTY TIMES TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018 B1

BASKETBALL

STAFF PHOTOS: DENNIS MARSHALL

NRHEG's Benji Lundberg dribbles around a Blooming Prairie defender on Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Late-game execution lifts Panthers past Blossoms and Rebels

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva boys basketball team made the necessary plays down the stretch on Tuesday, Jan. 9 to come away with a 57-50 victory over Blooming Prairie in a battle between two of the top teams in the Gopher Conference.

The Awesome Blossoms (6-6, 3-2) led for most of the first half, but the Panthers (12-1, 5-0) took a 25-23 lead into the break after Benji Lundberg threw a home run pass to Jacov Shuller, who made a buzzer-beating layup.

Blooming Prairie control the game for most of the second half, but with six minutes to go NRHEG started to claw their way back.

NRHEG's Peyton Castle made a clutch 3-pointer and the Panthers made consecutive stops and buckets to retake the lead.

"I felt the final six minutes we were able to get stops and secure the rebound," NRHEG coach Pat Churchill said. "We made our free throws down the stretch and were able to extend the lead."

Churchill said the Panthers were lucky to escape with the win.

"Credit Blooming Prairie, they outplayed us for most of the night tonight," he said. "But our kids hung in there and played well down the stretch to win the game."

The Blossoms' poor shooting from the free throw line (12-of-25) was a big reason for their ultimate defeat.

'We lost a game we really should have won," Blooming Prairie coach Nate Piller said. "We played very well for the most part, but we missed too many one-and-one free throw chances. The loss hurts in the conference action, but the mistakes are correctible and we need to learn to finish close games."

Lundberg led all scorers in the game with 17 points for the visitors. Brady Agrimson had 12 points and

SEE **PANTHERS, B4**

NRHEG's Brady Agrimson drives past a defender in the Panthers' 57-50 victory over Blooming Prairie.

HOCKEY

Huskies best Spartans in battle for Big 9 supremacy

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna girls hockey team made their claim as a serious contender for the Big 9 Conference when they won, 4-2, over Rochester Mayo (15-4, 11-4) on Friday at the Four Season Center.

"We had a good start and that kind of set the tone for all three periods," Owatonna coach Dan Paur said. "We kept after them. Our forecheck was real good and didn't let them play a lot in their offensive zone."

The Huskies (12-4, 8-3) recorded the first goal of the game when Kiley Friedrichs was assisted by Jamie Davison five minutes and 23 seconds into the game.

Mayo tied the game 1-1 midway through the first period, but Owatonna's Sydney Hunst scored a goal on a power play near the end of the period to retake the lead for the Huskies. She was assisted by Rilee Schmidt.

The Huskies' Maylynn Prokopec added a goal in the second period to extend Owatonna's lead to 3-1.

Margo Achterkirch and Schmidt assisted Prokopec.

Prokopec and Schmidt assisted Anna Herzog on the final goal for the Huskies 5:24 into the third period.

The Spartans tacked on a meaningless goal near the end of the game.

Paur said the Husky goalie, Laura Ebeling, was on fire against Mayo.

"She was outstanding," he said. "She didn't have any soft goals. I think she might have been screened a little bit on the second goal, but she was outstanding tonight.

"She really had to stand on her head and make some big saves," Paur continued. "But that's what you need in big games."

Ebeling recorded 25 saves on 27 shots.

Paur said Huskies' defensemen

SEE **HUSKIES, B4**

STAFF PHOTO: DENNIS MARSHALL

Owatonna's Jamie Davison lines up to take a shot against Rochester Mayo on Friday at the Four Season Centre.

WRESTLING

Tigers and Razorbacks round out podium at conference meet

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The Medford Tigers (4-0) and the Westfield Razorbacks (1-2) finished second and third, respectively, at the Gopher-Valley Conference Tournament on Saturday at Lake Crystal Wellcome Home High School.

Maple River (5-1) won the meet with 179 points. Medford scored 139.5 and Westfield finished with 134.5.

The Tigers and Razorbacks each had three wrestlers go undefeated and win their respective weight class.

Medford's Charley Elwood (9-2) defeated Westfield's Ethan Arett (11-5) by decision 7-0 to win the championship match at the 106-pound weight class; Medford's Willie Von Ruden (13-2) pinned NRHEG's Agro Gushwa (5-8) one minute and 10 seconds into the championship match at 138 and Medford's Nate Meixner (11-3) pinned WEM-JWP's Jaden Taylor to place first at 182.

Westfield's Colton Krell (18-2) defeated NRHEG's Tyler Jacobson (15-7) by technical fall, 21-6, in the championship match at 170; Westfield's Dylan Nirk (15-3) pinned Maple River's Bill Karels (11-5) to earned first at 220 and Westfield's Mitchell Oswald (15-2) pinned Maple River's Connor Thorn (10-7) just 38 seconds in the championship match at 285.

New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (0-2) finished fifth with 96.

Medford's Jonny Meyer (8-4) placed second and NRHEG's Andrew Reich (3-9) finished third at 113.

NRHEG's Teddy Gushwa (2-1) earned second and Medford's Tate Hermes (2-1) finished third at 132.

Westfield's Payton Simon (5-11) placed fourth and NRHEG's Brendon Strand (4-8) finished fifth at 145. Medford's Bo Noble (9-4) defeated Westfield's Seth Peterson (7-8) by a 6-0 decision in the third place match at 152.

NRHEG's Cole Staloch (14-9) and Medford's Zach Wetmore (4-6) finished fourth and sixth, respectively, at 160.

Medford's Greg Larson (6-5) earned a fourth place finish at 170 and Nate McCarty (6-7) placed fifth at 220. NRHEG's Chad Erikson (2-8) placed sixth at 182 and Westfield's Morgen Moreno (14-4) placed second at 195.

WESTFIELD GOES 2-1 AT QUAD

There were four Westfield wrestlers who went undefeated at the GMLOS quadrangular invitational on Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Arett, Krell, Moren and Oswald won all three of their bouts. The meet at Grand Meadow found Westfield winning two matches and losing one.

The Razorbacks lost a close one, 40-36, to Grand Meadow.

Against GMLOS, the Super Larks jumped out to a 30-3 lead after six bouts, as Arett earned the only points for the Razorbacks with a 5-4 decision over Chris Romero at 113. The locals started a comeback with Joey Meyer pinning Gavin Sweeney at 1:45 of the first period at 145. After another pin for the hosts, Seth Peterson took an 8-4 verdict over Jon Sayles at 152, and Krell pinned Jordan Oxley in just 50 seconds at 170.

Another pin for GMLOS upped the score to 42-18, but the Razorbacks took the final three bouts to make the score a close one. Nirk won by forfeit, Moreno recorded a fall over Hunter Tangen in just 46 seconds of the first period at 220 and Oswald pinned Cade Luthe at 2:46 in the heavyweight bout.

BP edged United South Central 39-36 in the second match of the night.

BP trailed 36-27 going into the final three bouts, but Nirk, Moreno and Oswald won to overtake the Rebels. Nirk won by a fall, Moreno took a forfeit and Oswald used just 25 seconds to pin Jacob Billings.

The Razorbacks pulled away from St. Ansgar for the 54-27 victory in the final match. Arett, Cody Nirk and Tyler Archer all won their bouts after St. Ansger took an early 6-0 edge. The lead mounted to 30-15, when Payton Simon pinned Sage Hulshizer in 3:25 at 152. Seth Peterson and Krell followed with first period pins. Nirk, Moreno and Oswald closed out the match, with a Nirk pin over Elijah Soltero in the first period and forfeit wins for Moreno and Oswald.

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SKOL VIKINGS

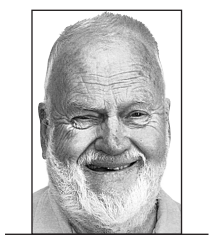
I will have more to say about it next week, after it soaks in a little, but the Minnesota Vikings victory over New Orleans Saints as the clock ran out will certainly go down in the team history, and probably the league history, as the greatest miracle in league football.

Congrats to the Vikings and onward to Philadelphia this Sunday.

THE WEEK IN SPORTS

The BP basketball girls continue to surprise as the season marches on. The win over archrival NRHEG just proved once again that the team continues to play well. The intensity and never-give-up attitude, balance they display on both offense and defense makes watching their performances a real treat.

The team is getting fine leadership from the seniors. However, most of the squad is made up of underclassmen, who need the guidance that veterans can afford them. Whatever happens the rest of the season, the girls can be justly proud of their achievements to this point. An 8-2 record is a great accomplishment



Outside the Lines
LEMAR NELSON

Westfield's wrestling team record is also a good one but even more outstanding are the individual records of four local matmen. Colton Krell at 170-pound weight class and Mitchell Oswald at heavyweight have each only lost two matches.

Krell is 15-2 and Oswald is 13-2. Morgan Moreno is 13-3 at 220 and Ethan Arett rounds out the four individuals with a 9-4 mark at 113.

Last week, the team won two matches and lost one at the GMLOS. They have fared well in several of the invitationals on the schedule so far. It truly has been a winning season for the shared team so far and it should continue as the season progresses.

The team wrestled the conference tournament this past Saturday and has a couple of dual meets left, but we are not too far away now from the state tournament. The team has high aspirations for success. Let's hope the high hopes come to fruition.

The basketball boys continue to play inconsistently. This past week provided one win and two losses and the team dropped back to 6-6 for the season. One of the factors leading to the losses is the very poor free throw shooting. That weakness has probably accounted for at least a couple of the recent losses.

Hopefully, that will improve over the last third of the season. The Blossoms are a pretty good team when they play up to their capability, but they need to acquire more consistency in their performance. One of the strengths of the team is the balanced scoring and that could warrant success with better free throw shooting and steadier floor play.

COMING UP

Besides many high school sports contests for the Blossoms, three upcoming events dot the schedule. Thursday, the Chamber of Commerce hosts its annual banquet and the public is urged and invited to attend. This is usually a great evening for socializing and honoring special individuals in the community and this year should be no exception.

Dick and his son Craig Kruckeberg will be the Citizens of the Year to be recognized, and the two certainly deserve the plaudits. Dick began a small company using recycled plastic milk cartons, and he and Craig have expanded that small enterprise into be of the most influential organizations in the community and to further reaches of the entire country.

Minimizer now makes products used around the world and its employees are always coming up with new and useful products, especially for trucks. A tip of the hat is due to the two honored citizens and I wish them and the company continued success for years to come.

Another event that now has tickets available is the second annual Speakeasy night now on the schedule. For $25 individuals can walk back in history and experience to a small extent what nightlife was like back in prohibition days. This should be a fun evening and residents are encouraged to take part in the activities.

Having been personally involved in its activities for many years, the third event is one that is especially important to me. The annual Benefit Bash for the Blooming Prairie Youth Club is fast approaching on Saturday, Feb.3, and the public is cordially invited to attend and participate in this major fundraising project for the club.

In the past four months, the local club has separated from its Rochester affiliation and is now operating on its own entity. The local support for the club has been overwhelming, and the organization and its community involvement is confident the club will be here for a long time to come. The annual benefit provides much of the funding for the programs organized and carried out through the year.

The club serves such an important role in the community to provide a safe and caring place for young kids in the community and its existence is essential to the area. I encourage all residents to mark Feb. 3 on the calendar and make plans to attend. Silent auction begins at 5:30 p.m. and is followed by the big live auction at 7 p.m. Food specials will be available. Raffle tickets for various prizes will also be available throughout the evening.

Donations and items for the auctions can be brought to the Youth Club and cash donations would also be appreciated. The usual full house is expected and it should be a great evening of fun and fundraising for a great cause.

BASKETBALL

STAFF PHOTOS: DENNIS MARSHALL

Medford's Izzy Reuvers goes up for a layup in transition against Bethlehem Academy on Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Tigers' hard working paying off despite their youth

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Medford Tigers girls basketball continue to turn the tide of their season and have now won five straight games after starting the season 2-4.

This past week, the Tigers beat both of their opponent by at least 20 points.

"We are probably playing a little better than I thought we would be," said Medford coach Mark Kubat. "But the kids did work awfully hard this summer."

Medford (7-4, 3-3) won 61-35 against Bethlehem Academy (1-12, 1-5) on Tuesday, Jan. 9 and defeated Waterville-Elysian-Morristown (4-10, 2-4) on Friday, 62-42.

The Tigers haven't lost in over a month. Their last defeat came on Dec. 12 when the lost 67-57 at NRHEG (9-4, 4-2).

Medford standout Emma Kniefel said just because the Tigers are experiencing some success doesn't mean they aren't still a work in progress.

"I feel good about where we are at," Kniefel said. "But we do need to keep picking it up because we are going to be facing some better competition in the long run. We want to get better at rebounding, keep improving on defense and continue to have good practices everyday."

Kniefel has continued to be stalwart for the Tigers this season. This is the sophomore's third consecutive season leading the team in scoring.

She finished with 22 points, 11 steals, four rebounds and three assists against the Cardinals.

Kniefel said her teammates help set her up for good opportunities on defense.

"[Kniefel] works both ends of the floor," Kubat said. "She is working very hard to be an all-around player."

Medford's Izzy Reuvers said the team can always depend on Kniefel to make the necessary play.

"She's fast and can really get up and down the court," Reuvers said. "She's also really good at pressuring opponents on defense."

Kubat said he was pleased with how the Tigers forced turnovers on the Cardinals' first 10 possessions of the second half.

"We just couldn't cash in," he said. "I think we scored one basket on the those 10 turnovers."

"We did a pretty good job of creating some havoc," Kubat continued. " We just didn't do a good job of finishing and our rebounding was not good tonight."

Medford's Emma Kniefel brings the ball up the court in the Tigers' 61-35 victory over Bethlehem Academy.

Kubat said he was glad the Tigers were able to win by such a comfortable amount because it allowed everyone a chance to get into the game on their home court.

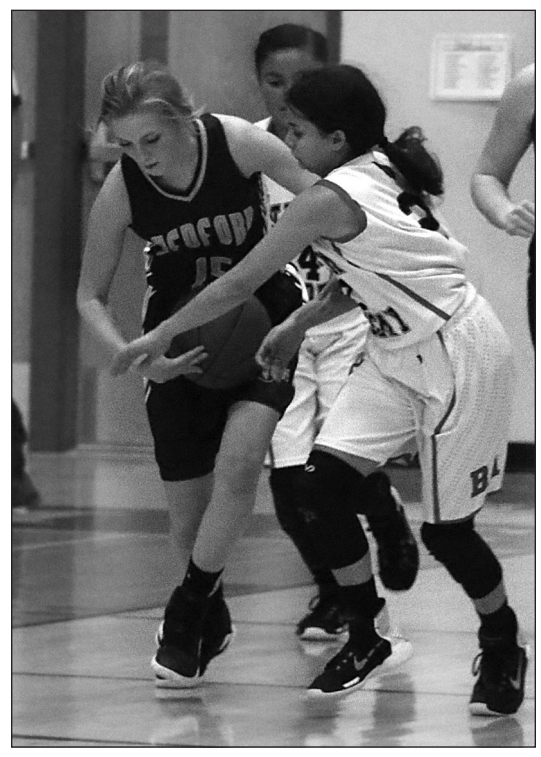
Kniefel said she loved getting to see some her teammates play, who don't normally receive a lot of playing time.

"We love that," Kniefel said. "We encourage everyone and we are so happy when they get to do something good in the game."

Jenna Berg scored eight and had three rebounds; Isabel Reuvers finished with seven points, four steals and three assists; Kiley Nihart contributed six points, four steals and four assists; Brooke Purrier scored five, Bella Steffen and Haley Von Ruden had two and Kristina Niner finished with one and Kinsey Cronin and Bailey Purrier scored four points each. Cronin also grabbed a team-high five rebounds and Purrier blocked three shots.

The Tigers' winning streak will be put to the test when they take on conference-leading Maple River (11-2, 6-0) at home on Friday.

"Every practice has been a war and that's what we have to continue to do all the way through the season, Kubat said. "Just keep our foot on the gas and keep getting better. We have a lot young kids that can play."



Emma Kniefel grabs a steal against Bethlehem Academy at Medford on Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Blossoms surge pass Panthers

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The Blooming Prairie girls basketball wrestled the lead from New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva with three late scores and held up with two clutch free throws to earn a hard-fought Gopher Conference victory at NRHEG, 56-54.

The Panthers (9-4, 4-2) had fought back from an early 29-12 first half deficit to take the lead and held the upper hand for most of the second half.

However, the Blossoms (8-2, 5-1) tied the game at 50, with a driving layup from Sam Wurst and a short jumper from McKenna Hein. NRHEG retook the lead with a free throw, but eighth-grader Bobbie Bruns swished a 3-pointer to give BP a 2-point advantage and two free throws from Hein sealed the win.

"This was a crazy game tonight," Blooming Prairie coach John Bruns said. "We were able to jumped out early and grab a big lead, but the Panthers closed out the first half on a 13-2 run and then took the lead early in the second half. We made that closing run down by four points with three minutes to play."

NRHEG 6-foot-5-inch center, Betsy Schoenrock, led all scorers in the game with 27 points, just under half of the home team's total. Sophie Stork had nine points and four assists and Olivia Christopherson added seven points and three assists. Kelly Harden helped Schoenrock on the boards by pulling down 14 rebounds. She also had four steals.

"We fought back from an early 17 point deficit," NRHEG coach Onika Peterson said. "We led most of the second half but we couldn't hold the lead in the close game. The last two conference games have both come down to the last minute and it will be fun and competitive to see them for the second time."

Hein led the Blossoms with a season-high 18. Wurst had 12, Megan Oswald finished with 11 and Bruns scored nine.

Rebounds were almost even and the Blossoms shot 38 percent from the field.

NRHEG's JV team jumped to a big early lead to take a 19-5 margin into the halftime break and defeated BP 35-22. According to coach Cory Hendrickson, the team played well enough, but just couldn't get any shots to fall. Maggie Bruns had nine points and Maren Forystek and Marti Snider each added four.

BASKETBALL

STAFF PHOTOS: DENNIS MARSHALL

Blooming Prairie's Jake Ressler and NRHEG's Nathaniel Techau watch as Ressler shot sails toward the basket on Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Blossoms back to .500 after tough week

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The final two minutes belonged to LeRoy Ostrander (11-2) and it resulted in a 60-53 non-conference victory for the Cardinals at Blooming Prairie on Friday, Jan. 12.

It marked the second straight loss for the Blossoms, as they finished the three-game week with one win and two losses. The team dropped back to .500 at 6-6.

The Awesome Blossoms led by as many as five points late in the game. They were up 53-52, when LeRoy Ostrander's Trey Hungerholt drove the baseline for a layup, was fouled and completed a three-point play with a free throw.. That put the Cardinals up 55-53. Free throws and two Blooming Prairie turnovers preserved LeRoy Ostrander's victory.

Hungerholt finished his night with 20 points, four assists, five rebounds and three steals. Cardinal teammate Seth Roysten counted 25 points, including four 3-pointers.

A poor night at the charity stripe cost the Blossoms, a problem with which the locals have struggled all season. They made just 8-of-18 free throw attempts.

"It was a tough night against a good shooting team," Blooming Prairie coach Nate Piller said. "The Cardinals shot the ball well, especially in the second half and late in the game. We need to clean up small things that add up to big things in the game. Poor free throw shooting continues to haunt us, and poor shooting in general hurts us."

The Cardinals had only three players besides Hungerholt and Roysten score. Jake Ressler led a balanced attack for the Blossoms with 11 points, including 3-of-5 from the line. He also blocked five shots in the contest.

Max Romeo and Gabe Hagen both scored 10 points, Kaden Thomas had nine and Karson Vigeland added seven. The locals had an edge in rebounding 34-26, and the team turned the ball over only nine times in the game, but the missed free throws and poor shooting from the field doomed the Blossoms.

BP OVERTHROWS LOYOLA

The Awesome Blossom has eleven players score in an easy 79-52 victory over Mankato Loyola (3-11, 2-3) at Mankato on Monday, Jan. 8.

"We played very well tonight and also shot the ball well," Piller said. "Our size gave us a definite advantage and we used that to roll up the score. If we play and maintain that effort and execution, we have a chance to be a pretty good team."

BP scored a whopping 52 points in the first half.

Sophomore Hagen, in just his third game back from injury, led the well-balanced attack with 19 points, but Vigeland and Kubista had 12 and 11. Thomas and Jake Ressler contributed nine and eight points to the total. BP had a decided edge in rebounding, as it used the size differential to its advantage.

"A bonus in this game centered on the fact that starters rested for the final 12 minutes of the game," Piller said. "The reserves played pretty good against the Crusader starters. It was a great team effort tonight."

Blooming Prairie's Max Romeo makes a move against NRHEG in the Blossoms 57-50 loss.

Blooming Prairie's Gabe Hagan pump fakes against NRHEG on Tuesday, Jan. 8.

SCOREBOOK

BIG 9 CONFERENCE STANDINGS

Boys' Basketball	Conf.	Overall
Austin	9-0	12-0
Mankato East	8-1	12-1
Northfield	7-2	9-3
Rochester John Marshall	7-2	11-2
Owatonna	6-2	7-4
Mankato West	5-4	8-5
Red Wing	3-5	4-8
Rochester Mayo	2-5	4-7
Rochester Century	2-7	2-11
Faribault	2-7	4-7
Winona	1-7	4-8
Albert Lea	0-10	0-11

Tuesday, Jan. 9
Owatonna 76, Red Wing 49
Friday, Jan. 12
Owatonna 66, Faribault 26
Tuesday, Jan. 16
Owatonna at Austin, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 19
Owatonna at Mankato East, 7:30 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 22
Mankato West at Owatonna, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 26
Albert Lea at Owatonna, 7:30 p.m.

Girls' Basketball	Conf.	Overall
Northfield	10-0	11-2
Red Wing	8-1	11-1
Owatonna	8-2	9-6
Austin	6-3	7-4
Mankato West	6-4	9-5
Rochester John Marshall	5-5	6-8
Rochester Mayo	4-5	6-7
Faribault	4-6	5-8
Mankato East	3-6	3-8
Albert Lea	1-8	2-11
Winona	1-8	1-10
Rochester Century	1-9	3-11

Tuesday, Jan. 9
Red Wing 66, Owatonna 54
Friday, Jan. 12
Owatonna 56, Faribault 55
Tuesday, Jan. 16
Austin at Owatonna, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 19
Mankato East at Owatonna, 7:30 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 22
Owatonna at Mankato West, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 26
Owatonna at Albert Lea, 7:30 p.m.

Boys' Hockey	Conf.	Overall	Pts.
Northfield	6-3-0	9-5-0	12
Owatonna	5-1-1	7-6-1	11
Mankato East	5-1-1	7-8-2	11
Rochester Century	5-0-0	11-3-0	10
Albert Lea	5-3-0	8-4-0	10
Rochester John Marshall	3-2-0	5-7-1	6
Rochester Mayo	3-4-0	6-9-0	6
Mankato West	3-5-0	7-9-0	6
Faribault	2-6-1	6-8-1	5
Red Wing	2-4-0	2-11-0	4
Austin	1-4-1	5-8-1	3
Winona	0-7-0	1-9-0	0

Tuesday, Jan. 9
Owatonna 3, East Ridge 1
Saturday, Jan. 13
Owatonna 1, Mankato East 1
Tuesday, Jan. 16
Owatonna at Faribault, 7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 18
Rochester Century at Owatonna, 7:15 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 20
Owatonna at Red Wing, 3 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 23
South Saint Paul at Owatonna, 7 p.m.

Girls' Hockey	Conf.	Overall	Pts.
Rochester Mayo	11-4-0	15-40	22
Owatonna	8-3-0	12-4-0	16
Faribault	8-4-0	12-7-0	16
Northfield	7-2-0	11-7-2	14
Red Wing	6-1-0	14-4-0	12
Mankato East	6-5-0	8-10-0	12
Mankato West	5-6-0	11-9-1	10
Austin	4-8-0	6-10-0	8
Rochester John Marshall	4-9-0	6-13-0	8
Albert Lea	1-9-0	4-13-0	2
Rochester Century	1-10-0	3-15-0	2

Tuesday, Jan. 9
Owatonna 5, Mankato East 4
Friday, Jan. 12
Owatonna 4, Rochester Mayo 2
Tuesday, Jan. 16
Faribault at Owatonna, 7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 18
Owatonna at Rochester Century, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 20
Red Wing at Owatonna, 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 25
Northfield at Owatonna, 5:30 p.m.

Wrestling	Conf.	Overall
Albert Lea	4-0	11-0
Owatonna	4-0	6-3
Faribault	5-1	9-3
Northfield	3-1	3-1
Rochester Mayo	4-2	7-8
Mankato West	1-2	1-3
Winona	1-3	1-7
Rochester Century	1-4	2-6
Austin	1-4	1-4
Mankato East	0-3	7-4
Rochester John Marshall	0-4	0-4

Thursday, Jan. 4
Owatonna 66, Winona 13
Thursday, Jan. 11
Albert Lea at Owatonna, postponed
Thursday, Jan. 18
Owatonna at Rochester John Marshall, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 20
Owatonna at Zummbrota-Mazeppa, 9 a.m.
Thursday, Jan. 25
Austin and Mankato East at Owatonna, 5 p.m.

SCOREBOOK

GOPHER CONFERENCE STANDINGS

Boys' Basketball	Conf.	Overall
New Richland-H-E-G	5-0	12-1
Bethlehem Academy	4-1	8-4
Blooming Prairie	3-2	6-6
Maple River	2-3	7-6
United South Central	2-4	4-7
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	1-3	3-8
Medford	0-4	1-8

Monday, Jan. 8
Blooming Prairie at Mankato Loyola, 7:15 p.m.
Schaeffer 74, Medford 49
Tuesday, Jan. 9
NRHEG 57, Blooming Prairie 50
Bethlehem Academy 76, Medford 32
Friday, Jan. 12
NRHEG 63, USC 56
WEM 69, Medford 48
LeRoy-Ostrander 60, Blooming Prairie 53
Tuesday, Jan. 16
Tri-City United at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 19
NRHEG at Bethlehem Academy, 7:15 p.m.
Medford at Maple River, 7:15 p.m.
Blooming Prairie at WEM, 7:15 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 23
Maple River at NRHEG, 7:15 p.m.
Blooming Prairie at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 26
Medford at NRHEG, 7:15 p.m.
Blooming Prairie at USC, 7:15 p.m.

Girls' Basketball	Conf.	Overall
Maple River	6-0	11-2
Blooming Prairie	5-1	8-2
New Richland-H-E-G	4-2	9-4
Medford	3-3	7-4
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	2-4	4-10
Bethlehem Academy	1-5	1-12
United South Central	0-6	0-11

Tuesday, Jan. 9
Blooming Prairie 56, NRHEG 54
Medford 61, Bethlehem Academy 35
Friday, Jan. 12
NRHEG 60, USC 29
Medford 62, WEM 42
Monday, Jan. 15
Le Sueur-Henderson at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 16
Cleveland at Blooming Prairie, 7:15 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 19
Bethlehem Academy at NRHEG, 7:15 p.m.
Maple River at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Blooming Prairie at WEM, 7:15 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 20
Tri-City United at Blooming Prairie, 5 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 22
Schaeffer Academy at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 23
NRHEG at Maple River, 7:15 p.m.
Medford at Blooming Prairie, 7:15 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 26
NRHEG at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
United South Central at Blooming Prairie, 7:15 p.m.

Wrestling	Conf.	Overall
Maple River	5-1	5-1
United South Central	3-3	4-3
Medford	1-0	4-0
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	0-0	2-5
Westfield	0-0	1-2
W-E-M/J-W-P	0-1	0-1
NRHEG	0-2	0-2

Thursday, Jan. 18
Westfield at NRHEG, 5 p.m.
Maple River at Medford, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 20
Medford at Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial Area, 10 a.m.
Austin, Cannon Falls, Rochester John Marshall, Rochester Mayo, Saint Charles, Triton and Byron at Westfield, 10 a.m.
Thursday, Jan. 25
NRHEG at LeSueur-Henderson, 5 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 27
Medford and Blooming Prairie at Lake City, 10 a.m.

BOWLING

LADIES BOWLING LEAGUE

FIRST WEEK OF SEASON SECOND HALF
RESULTS WEEK FOURTEEN JAN. 10, 2018
TEAM STANDINGS

	WON	LOST
1. EPIC CONTRACTING	3	1
2. B TO Z HARDWARE	3	1
3. BUNKIES' LANES & GRILL	3	1
4. F & M BANK	1	3
5. KOSTERS' KAR CORNER	1	3
6. J & H/DAIRY QUEEN	1	3

HIGH TEAM GAME –SCRATCH	
F & M BANK	530
HIGH TEAM GAME- HANDICAP	
BUNKIES LANES & GRILL	551
HIGH TEAM SERIES- SCRATCH	
F & M BANK	1518
HIGH TEAM SERIES- HANDICAP	
BUNKIES LANES & GRILL	1575
HIGH GAME INDIVIDUAL	
1. MAREN WILLEY	178
2. JENNY HENDRICKSON	168
HIGH SERIES INDIVIDUAL	
1. JENNY HENDRICKSON	458
2. MAREN WILLEY	436

HUSKIES: *Battle for Big 9*

FROM PAGE B1

Jamie Davison, Rilee Schmidt, Grace Wolfe and KIley Friedrichs were all exceptional against Mayo.

"[Mayo] has some good forwards that will score on you if you stick chase or if you put their head down," Paur said. "That's a big responsibility for our four defensemen and they played really well."

Mayo had defeated Owatonna, 4-3, in the second round of the Schwan's Cup on Friday, Dec. 29.

"We wanted a little bit of redemption tonight," Paur said. "We felt like we played hard enough to win that game but they got a bounce in overtime.

"I don't know if we are tied or if we sit atop [the Big 9 Conference standings] after tonight," he continued. "The big thing is we got the win tonight."

Paur said he is pleased with the progression the Huskies have made so far this season.

"We had some slip ups earlier this season," he said. "But we have been competitive in every game. Odds are you're not going to go undefeated. I like where we are at right now. We are winning games and getting Big 9 points."

Davison said the team is feeling good about its recent success, but there are still a lot of things they need to work on.

"We need to make sure that we keep the effort and intensity up practice," she said. "We have some big games coming up where we will definitely have to perform well."

Ebeling said the Huskies have really stepped up in all facets of their game recently.

"We've been going hard and we've really pulled through against some of our toughest opponents," she said. "We are all really excited about this win against Mayo. It feels really good."

Achterkirch scores game-winner in final minute

Owatonna also defeated Mankato East (8-10, 6-5) on Tuesday by the score 5-4. The Huskies made a sensational comeback after trailing 3-0 just six minutes into the game.

"We needed to settle down a little bit," Paur said. "We regroup and had to remember what was important to us. The girls figured that out and went out there and attacked, the forecheck started to work and pucks started going in the net."

Achterkirch scored the game-deciding goal with 49 seconds remaining. She was assisted by Davison.

"We had to work real hard to comeback," Paur said. "It came down to the last minute."

Atcherkirch and Hunst each had two goals and Wolfe scored the other. Wolfe (2), Davison and Chloe and Riley Schmidt (2) added assists. Ebeling made 20 saves on 24 shots.

DAVISON COMMITS TO UW-SUPERIOR

Davison announced she had committed to continue her education and hockey career at the University of Wisconsin-Superior on Sunday, Jan. 7.

"I really excited for her," Ebeling said. "She was actually debating if she should [play college hockey] and we all encouraged her that she would really like it. I'm really glad that she is going through with it."

Davison said she and the Yellowjackets' coach have been in contact since the Schwan's Cup in December.

"I went up and visited a couple of times," she said. "I really liked the campus. It's a smaller campus and it's right across from Duluth, which is nice."

Davison said the her future teammates were a pivotal factor in her decision to commit.

"I met all the girls after one of their games and they were all super nice," she said. "They were all really fun and they all came up and introduced themselves and talked to me.

"They wanted me there," she continued. "It made me feel really included and like part of the team already. That's what made me decide I wanted to be there."

UW-Superior is a Division III school that competes in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference in men's and women's hockey.

Paur said the WIAC is a very competitive conference with good hockey.

"It's really quality hockey over there and they are lucky to have her," he said.

PANTHERS: *Late-game execution*

FROM PAGE B1

Schuller added 11. Gabe Hagen led the Blossoms' attack with 14 points. Kaden Thomas, Cameron Kubista and Jake Ressler each added seven.

Lundberg led all scorers in the game with 17 points for the visitors. Brady Agrimson had 12 points and Schuller added 11. Gabe Hagen led the Blossoms' attack with 14 points. Kaden Thomas, Cameron Kubista and Jake Ressler each added seven.

PANTHERS DO IT AGAIN

United South Central (4-7, 2-4) controlled most of the game on Friday, Jan. 12 at NRHEG, but once again the Panthers made a late-game push to defeat the Rebels, 63-56.

"They were getting whatever they wanted," Churchill said. "We were not tough enough on the defensive side of the ball in the first half."

The Rebels shot 60 percent from the floor including 5-of-7 from 3-point range and led 34-28 at halftime. The Panthers had been giving up an average of 45 per game.

"We started to chip away at the lead in the second half by getting some much needed stops on the defensive end," Churchill said. "We made their shots tougher in the second half."

USC shot just 38 percent in the second half.

NRHEG was able to take the lead with about four minutes to go. The Panthers made several free throws to push the lead out to 10 before the Rebels hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer.

Lundberg led the Panthers with 18 followed by 15 from Jerret Utpadel. Schuller and Nathaniel Techau finished with nine and eight, respectively.

NRHEG next plays at Bethlehem Academy Friday night at 7:15 p.m.

Junior High Roundup

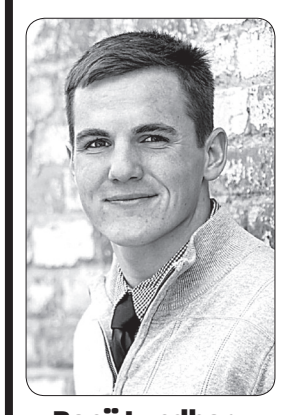
BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

Blooming Prairie coach Emily Henslin's junior high girls grabbed a doubleheader win over Southland on its home court Friday, Jan. 5. Both the seventh and eight grade teams played well in getting the victories.

The seventh grade started fast in its contest and stayed aggressive to the rim all game in a 25-6 win. A great defense allowed the Rebels just two points in the first half. Anna Pauly and Sierra Larson each had eight points to lead the Blossoms in scoring.

The eight grade girls, on the other hand, fell behind 9-2, before mounting a comeback to take a two-point margin at the break. According to Henslin, the team played the best second half in the entire season and dominated the scoring for a 37-26 victory. Lauren Schammel counted 25 points. Many of Schammel's points came from neat assists by Emily Miller. Miller added 10 points of her own.

★ STARS OF STEELE ★



Benji Lundberg

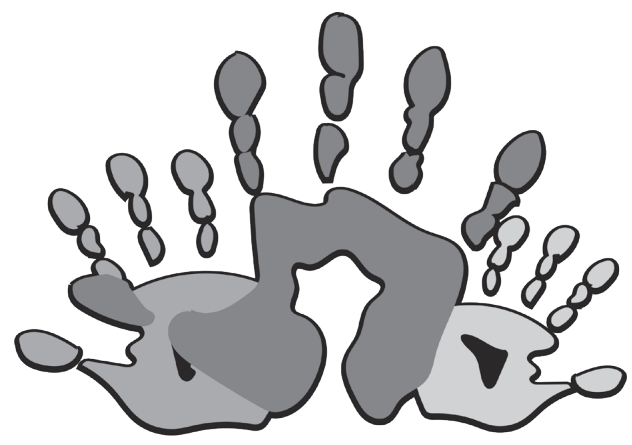
BOYS

NRHEG's boys basketball player Benji Lundberg has helped led the Panthers to a 12-1 record this season. Lundberg has led the Panthers in scoring this seaosn. He scored a game-high 17 points in NRHEG's 57-50 victory over Blooming Prairie on Friday.

Margo Achterkirch

GIRLS

Owatonna girls hockey player Margo Achterkirch lead the Huskies in goals (22) and assists (17) this season. She scored the game-winning goal against Mankato East on Tuesday, Jan. 9 with just 49 seconds remaining in the game.



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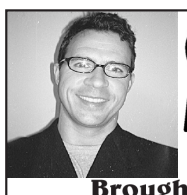
Financial Tips for Retiring Abroad


THE SAVVY SENIOR
Brought to you by: Prairie Manor Care Center
Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus
220 3rd St. NW, Blooming Prairie
583-4434

Dear Savvy Senior,
What are some financial factors to consider when retiring abroad? My husband and I will be retiring in a few years and are interested in living in a foreign country that's cheaper than the U.S.
Frugal Couple

Dear Frugal,
Retiring abroad has become a growing trend for millions of U.S. retirees who are looking to stretch their retirement savings. Here are some tips and resources to consider that can help you prepare.

Researching Tools

For starters, you can find lots of information and articles on the countries and cities you're interested in retiring to at websites like InternationalLiving.com and EscapeArtist.com.

Another good tip is to talk or network with some expatriates who have already made the move you're thinking about making. They can give you tips and suggestions on many issues, as well as the advantages and disadvantages and day-to-day reality of living in a particular country. Some popular sites for finding expat resources are ExpatExchange.com and ExpatForum.com.

But before committing to location, most experts recommend that you visit multiple times during different seasons to see whether you can envision yourself living there and not just exploring the place as a tourist. Also, consider these financial factors:

Cost of living: Retiring abroad used to be seen as a surefire way to live beyond your means, and for some countries it still is. But the U.S. dollar isn't what it used to be, so your money may not stretch as far as you think. See Numbeo.com for a country-by-country cost of living comparison.

Taxes: No matter what foreign country you decide to retire in, as long as you're a U.S. citizen you must file an annual tax return reporting all income above certain minimums, not matter where it's earned. For details see the IRS publication 54, "Tax Guide for U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad" at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p54.pdf.

Health care: Most U.S. health insurance companies do not provide coverage outside the U.S., nor does Medicare. Check with the embassy (see USembassy.state.gov) of your destination country to see how you can be covered as a foreign resident. Many countries provide government-sponsored health care that's inexpensive, accessible and just as good as what you get in the states, or you may want to buy a policy through Medibroker (Medibroker.com) or Bupa Global (BupaGlobal.com).

Also know that most people who retire abroad eventually return to the U.S., so you should consider paying your Medicare Part B premiums. If you drop and resume Part B, or delay initial enrollment, you'll pay a 10 percent premium penalty for every 12-month period in which you could have been enrolled.

Banking: Opening or maintaining a bank account abroad has become more difficult because of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, a U.S. law designed to prevent Americans from hiding assets abroad. So, you may have to establish a savings and checking account with an institution that has international reach like Citibank. And/or consider maintaining your U.S. bank account that you can access online, and get U.S. credit and debit cards that don't charge foreign transaction fees.

Rent versus buy: Buying a home in a foreign country can be complicated, so it's usually cheaper and simpler to rent, unless you know you're going to live there for a long time.

Social Security: You can receive your monthly Social Security benefits almost anywhere you live around the world (see SSA.gov/international/payments.html). Your benefits can be deposited into your bank account either in the U.S. or in your new home country, but there are some exceptions.

The U.S. State Department offers a handy checklist that can help you think through all the issues on retiring abroad. To access it visit Travel.state.gov and search for "retirement abroad."

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

BP Backpack Program receives 2 sizable donations

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Two sizable donations were accepted recently by Karen Peterson, coordinator of the Blooming Prairie Backpack Program and by Pastor Heidi Heimgartner, representing First Lutheran Church.

Steve Lonning, energy sales for Central Farm Services (CFS), presented two $1,100 checks to Peterson and to Pastor Heimgartner.

The first check came from CFS and the other $1,100 was a match made by Land O'Lakes Foods.

"We are just happy to give back to the community that shows a caring concern for its youngsters," commented Lonning.

The Backpack Program sends home meals for kids who need some healthy nutrition on the weekend.

The elementary school is the distribution point for the program.

Peterson reports that the program started in February 2017 with 37 students and now has grown to a high of 63 kids.

Faith and Formation students from St. Columbanus Catholic Church pack the backpacks on Wednesday nights when they have class. The amount of students involved varies from week to week. When the kids don't have class, Peterson has volunteers from the community to come in and help.

Overall, Peterson says she has about 25 community volunteers between drivers, packers and other support.

The program is driven by First Lutheran Church and the BP schools. First Lutheran acts as the fiscal agent.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Steve Lonning, energy sales for Central Farm Services, presents two checks for the Blooming Prairie School District Backpack Program. One is for $1,100 from CFS and the other is a matching donation from Land O Lakes Foods. Receiving the monies are Karen Peterson (center), coordinator for the Backpack Program and Pastor Heidi Heimgartner (left) of First Lutheran Church, the fiscal agent for the program.

History from the News Archives

10 Years Ago
Jan. 15, 2008

Dan Evans, Publisher

Constituent is not a word that is associated with a 16-year-old high school student very often. Especially, one who has been working on a bill since he was 15. "I was just trying to get As to keep from getting grounded, then all of a sudden my parents were having to drive me to the Capitol Building because I was not old enough to drive myself," commented Joe Gibson, a BPHS student who is aspiring to be a lawyer. After losing his grandfather to leukemia, Gibson wanted to do something more, which inspired him to work on a bill to changing the age to 15 in order to be able to donate blood to the Red Cross.

Kyle Severtson and Emily Allison were named BP Snow King and Queen during the 2008 Snow Week Coronation.

Joshua Ulland of rural Blooming Prairie is one of a few amateur bowlers who can say that they have bowled a perfect game. Around 9 p.m. on Dec. 19 at the Holiday Lanes in Albert Lea, Ulland was doing what he usually does on a Monday – bowling with some other guys on a five man handicap league. He had just bowled two games and was on his third of the night when it "became apparent," Ulland said, that he was "on a roll and that things were looking good for a high-scoring game."

20 Years Ago
Jan. 13, 1998

Elsie Slinger, Publisher

The BP Jaycees have announced the winners of its 1998 distinguished service awards. This is the 28th year that the Jaycees have presented area citizens with this recognition of their outstanding accomplishments. The winners are" Distinguished Service Award for Lifetime Achievement, Marvin "Mike" Lea; Outstanding Young Minnesotan, Rick Hansen; Outstanding Young Farmer, Keith Sayles; and Outstanding Young Educator, Steve Swenson.

Despite the county printing bid discussion, Steele County Commissioners enjoyed a slower-paced meeting for the first of the year on Jan. 6. The county board also elected L. Dean Christianson of Blooming Prairie as chairman for 1998.

50 Years Ago
Jan. 18, 1968

Victor, Vernon & Vryle Krejci, Publishers

Plans are underway for organizing a Jaycees chapter in Blooming Prairie, it was announced to the Times Tuesday of this week. At a special meeting attended by over 30 men Jan. 11 in the Community Building, it was decided to complete organizational plans for the new group immediately and start arrangements for affiliation with the state and the United States Jaycees.

The annual meeting of the stockholders' and directors' of the First National Bank, Blooming Prairie, was held Tuesday afternoon at 3 p.m. in the bank's meeting room. Allan C. Peterson, president and chairman of the board, presided at the session and informed the Times that E.T. Thompson was elected a member of the board of directors and that Marvin R. Ingvalson was elected assistant cashier.

Doug Kruckeberg, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Kruckeberg, Blooming Prairie, was recently appointed to practice teach in Mexico City, Mexico for a 11 week period.

75 Years Ago
Jan. 14, 1943

Frank Krejci, Publisher

Pfc. George J. Wilson, West Concord solider boy, stationed on a desert 85 miles from Los Angeles, Calif., discovered that incidents can happen in arm life, too. Pfc. Wilson, a cook in the Armored Division, opened a case of eggs and was greatly surprised when he read the egg handling certificate enclosed three weeks previous at the M. Nelson & Co. store, Blooming Prairie. A letter with the egg certificate included was received by George's brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Haven Wilson who reside near West Concord and former residents of Blooming Prairie.

Blooming Prairie's 67 year old banking institution, The First National Bank, since May of last year, has been classed as a "million dollar bank." 1942 made record-breaking history for this town's oldest financial institution when its total resources on Dec. 31, 1942 reached the peak of $1,365,017.69. Dec. 31, 1941 footings totaled $934,975.88. The phenomenal growth represents an increase of 46 percent.

Steele County Times Professional Directory

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319 East Main Street, Blooming Prairie | 888-933-6828 | Fax: 507-583-2389

Automotive
Koster's CAR KORNER
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- **Awards presented to community members for their dedication to BP Youth Club throughout 2017**

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STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Sgt. Gary Okins celebrated his 30th anniversary with the Steele County Sheriff's Office last week. He has been the lead investigator on nearly all of the most serious cases in the county, including multiple murders, over the past 18 years.

Investigating the worst

Sergeant celebrates 30 years with sheriff's office

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Just months after becoming a rookie detective with the Steele County Sheriff's Office, Gary Okins had his first homicide to investigate. And if it weren't for his knowledge of the suspect, the case would have likely turned out even more tragic with the deaths of possibly several law enforcement officers.

When the call came in about a shooting on Dec. 29, 2000, Okins overheard the radio traffic and knew something wasn't right about what had been described to a dispatcher during the 911 call. The caller, Roger Schleicher, indicated his friend had accidentally been shot on his elk farm near the Steele-Waseca county line.

Okins recalled that Schleicher had previously talked about wanting to kill somebody. Aware of Schleicher's history of imbalance, Okins intervened and made sure responding officers did not immediately drive up to his residence.

> "Keeping up closing the serious cases we have and getting the convictions is the most rewarding for me."
>
> **Sgt. Gary Okins**
> Steele County Sheriff's Office

About a dozen law enforcement officers, including then Sheriff Bill Hildebrandt, set up at the end of Schleicher's driveway to make their plan of entry. Hildebrandt was ready to go up to the farm by himself, but Okins warned him not to proceed. Instead they approached the farm with rifles ready using a road grader as a battering ram.

"We later learned that he was going to shoot everyone who came up the driveway," Okins said. "He had rifles all lined up in the garage (to follow through)."

Deputies took Schleicher into custody after finding he had executed his friend, Jack Johansen, by shooting him six times, including five times in the torso and a sixth time "to put him out of his misery."

In a statement to police later, Schleicher told investigators the only reason he didn't stick to his plan to kill the officers was because he counted the number of legs behind the road grader, and figured out "there were more

SEE **SERGEANT, C6**

Boosters warm the hearts of music lovers

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

There's nothing like a good concert to warm you up on a cold Minnesota night.

On Saturday, the Music Boosters group of Owatonna held its eighth annual benefit concert at the Owatonna High School. The event, which raises money for the Music Boosters program, featured both a live concert and a concurrent silent auction. The acts included group ensembles of both adults and children, as well as solo acts performed for the audience.

> "We teach music because it's beautiful, and we want others to experience this beauty."
>
> **Sue Bowcock**
> Music Teacher

The price of admission was $10, which, along with the money raised by the silent auction, goes to benefit Owatonna music programs for grades K-12. Jeff Elstad, superintendent for Owatonna's school district, lauds the work that the Music Boosters do.

The Bad Tangerines perform acapella variations on modern hits along with Chris Harris, Choir Director at the Owatonna High School, for the annual Music Boosters of Owatonna silent auction and concert.

Elstad believes that music programs, and extra-curricular programs of any nature, go a far way in benefiting our city's young people and their continued education, noting that "extra-curricular activities in general lend themselves to students doing better in school and becoming more successful in life."

He explained that Owatonna has "a

SEE **BOOSTERS, C2**

Rae Ann Konz is first baby in Steele County

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Amber and James Konz are the proud parents of Rae Ann Konz, the first baby to be born in Steele County in 2018.

Rae Ann came into the world at 10:59 a.m. and weighed 7 pounds, 7 oz. She was welcomed by siblings Logan, 7 and April, 11.

Rae Ann was born at the Owatonna Hospital.

The Konz family recently resided in the Blooming School District and now reside in Claremont.

Editor's Note: The Steele County Times, along with other area businesses, has sponsored a First Baby Contest for parents living within the Blooming Prairie School District. As of Monday, we have not been made aware of anyone having a baby. Please contact our office right away if you happen to be fortunate to have what you think would be the first baby of 2018. There are many prizes to collect.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Rae Ann Konz is the first baby of 2018 in Steele County. She is shown with parents Amber and James Konz and siblings Logan, 7 and April, 11.

Radon is a serious health issue

Radon is a colorless, odorless radioactive gas that naturally comes from the soil. Radon can enter any building—homes, offices, and schools—and result in a high indoor radon level. Radon gives off radioactive particles that, when breathed in, can damage the lining of the lungs.

Radon can enter a house through cracks in concrete slabs, spaces behind brick veneer walls that rest on uncapped hollow-block foundations, pores and cracks in concrete blocks, floor-wall joints, exposed soil, as in a sump or crawl space, weeping (drain) tile, if drained to an open sump, mortar joints, loose fitting pipe penetrations, open tops of block walls, building materials such as brick, concrete, or rock.

Steele Talkin'
JANE NYQUIST

Radon is a serious public health issue in Minnesota, where 2 in 5 homes tested have radon levels that are a major health risk. Minnesota has high radon levels due to its unique geology and cold climate. During the winter, home heating systems tend to draw in radon gas from the soil, increasing radon levels inside the home. Many Minnesotans also use basements as living spaces, which can increase radon exposure.

The U.S. Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States today. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. If your home has high radon levels and you smoke, your risk of lung cancer is even higher. Radon accounts for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year. You don't have to be a smoker to get lung cancer; 2,900 lung cancer deaths were nonsmokers.

Radon is present everywhere, but the greatest exposure is inside buildings. Radon exposure is most likely to happen at home, where people spend most of their time. Your home can have high radon levels whether it is old or new, well-sealed or drafty, and with or without a basement. All houses have some radon, but even houses next to each other can have very different radon levels. The only way to measure your radon risk is to test your home. If you do have high radon levels in your home, there are ways to reduce it.

Three ways to protect you and your family:

• Test your home. Testing is easy, free, and only takes three to five days. Test kits are available for pick up at Steele County Public Health, 635 Florence Avenue, Owatonna, 507-444-7650. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

• Reduce your exposure - reduce radon gas by taking action to reduce radon entry into your home.

• Protect your loved ones - tell your family and friends to test so they are not exposed to a deadly gas in their homes.

It is recommended that homeowners retest for radon every 2-5 years or if there have been any structural changes such as an addition or if finishing a basement. Tests should be performed in the lowest level of the home that is frequently occupied. Perform a radon test after installing a new heating system or central air conditioning.

Jane Nyquist is a health educator at Steele County Public Health. Steele Talkin' is a regular column written by various authors representing groups and organizations throughout Steele County.

BP Council raises impound fee, eliminates dog fee

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Blooming Prairie City Council increased one of the city's fees and eliminated another at its monthly meeting on Monday, Jan. 8.

The council authorized the increase of the city's vehicle impound fee from $15 to $20 a day and the reduction of the dog licenses fee from $10 to $0.

City Administrator Michael Jones said the impound fee was "underpriced" compared to other cities, and there was even discussion of increasing the fee to $30.

"I had to express my concern that as a city, we have to document our need to cover that cost," he said. "I didn't want to move it up that high and double what we were charging. So it was determined by the Police Commission to only raise it by $5 a day."

Jones said the dog license fee was reduced because they weren't getting enough participation from citizens and he wants to see if this helps fix the problem.

The city only issued 64 dog licenses in 2017.

"I just want to try to eliminate the fee,

SEE **COUNCIL, C6**

Cancer organizer: 'We can beat this disease'

Staff photo by Howard Lestrud

Whitey Hagen and his granddaughter Brenna Hagen put serving trays on their heads and raised lots of money to fight cancer during a Geneva Cancer Fundraiser at the Geneva Bar & Grill last weekend. The elder Hagen has organized the cancer auction for the entire 34 years it has been in existence.

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

"We can beat this dreadful disease," promised Geneva Cancer Auction organizer Whitey Hagen as he addressed some devoted supporters at the Geneva Bar & Grill last weekend.

The first of two consecutive fundraising cancer weekends to find a cure for cancer is now history.

Hundreds of supporters came to this small Freeborn County city last Friday and Saturday to express their support for fighting cancer.

With the first weekend auctions and counting funds from other fundraisers including a wild game feed ($22,000), the Geneva cancer group has put together over $60,000 to be designated to help cure cancer.

Bids in some cases were astronomical as one person bought an aged business yard stick for $40, donated it back to the auction committee and saw it sold again for $200.

The antique yard sticks carried the business names of Geneva OK Hardware, Geneva Market Farm Store and the Blooming Prairie Furniture Store.

A container of Apple Pie Schnapps went for $550 with the bidding waged between Troy Hagen and Rodney Wayne. Hagen won the bid.

The 34th annual auction started Friday night, resumed Saturday afternoon and went late into the evening. A second weekend of the Geneva Cancer Auctions will be held Friday, Jan. 19 and Saturday, Jan. 20 again at the Geneva Bar and Grill.

Whitey Hagen, 85, has been the star of the show all those 34 years. He helped originate the cancer auction with former bar and grill owner Hank Thompson.

Hagen grabbed the microphone on many occasions to make special announcements and also to do some auctioneering himself. "It's not hard to be an auctioneer but it's tough to jump rope," said Hagen as he fought with a long microphone cord.

He even introduced his granddaughter, Brenna Hagen, who became the first female auctioneer to work a Geneva cancer auction.

Tracy Holland and Whalen Busho also did some auctioneering on the opening weekend. Many assistants helped by displaying merchandise to be auctioned.

Hagen also convinced granddaughter Brenna to take a beverage tray and put one on top of her head like he did. The duo then traipsed through the bar getting visitors to put cash in the tray to benefit the fight against cancer. The Hagens raised $181.

"It's just gotten to be a habit for me," said Dave Hruka of Cresco, Iowa, as he sat in front of a large row of merchandise he had won on the auction.

Hruka and wife Sally have been coming to the auctions for many years. "It's their fault," Sally said pointing at friends Jim Tollefson and Bobbie Potter who convinced them to be regular auction goers.

Some of the items included Hope butter donated by Victor Mrotz of the Hope Creamery.

Many of the items were donated by local residents and featured food like pickled eggs, deviled eggs, meat, etc

Group strives to control erosion of area waterways

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Minnesota is home to a variety of geographical features, but chief among them are its bevy of waterways, lakes, and rivers.

These cut across a landscape peppered with agricultural plots of differing size and shape. Proper maintenance, monitoring, and understanding of their features is key to both upholding and sustaining their natural shape and flow. This is where Steele County Soil and Water come in.

SCSW, which is a local unit of government, sees proper natural resource management as their manifesto. SCSW Conservation District has been serving the county since 1946.

As an organization, they strive to coordinate measures which help to prevent and control both erosion and flooding as well as put forth efforts aimed at enhancing the local wildlife. They also help to further develop the local economic base and provide for recreational regions within the landscape. In essence, they manage the soil under our feet and the water which flows across the county.

Eric Gulbransen, district manager for SCSW, explains that roughly 99 percent of creeks in the area are increasing their bank erosion in the events that they've encountered as of late. He said this sort of erosion "takes a heavy toll on all our waterways."

One solution is to keep the water on the surface through wetland restoration and storage. This entails part of a larger project aimed at renovating and utilizing Steele County's wetlands.

Staff photo by Chris Baldwin

Steele County Soil and Water, located in Owatonna, helps to ensure that our county's waterways and agricultural land are properly maintained.

Gulbransen says that, although marshlands are able to hold a lot of water, once these hit their capacity, the water will begin to overflow and cause problems with adjacent waterways, including the all too familiar plight of bank erosion.

These problems are often compounded in the spring, during periods of protracted rainfall. Adam Arndt, district technician forSCSW, says that because of large volumes of rainfall, the ground is sometimes unable to soak it all in fast enough, which causes flooding, runoff, and overflow. If the ground has ample enough time, the soil can soak it up like a sponge.

Without such time, runoff becomes a problem. Arndt said, "Runoff is worse than just rain, you can store the rain in the ground or in wetlands, but as soon as it starts to run, you can't store it anymore, and that's when you know you have a problem." Arndt believes that everyone can do their part to monitor and keep their nearby waterways stable.

One tip he has for homeowners both rural and urban who live near a river or stream, is to avoid throwing leaves and brush over the edge into the water. Trees near a waterway can also be a detriment, as shade produces bare ground which opens the land up to erosion.

Planting and maintaining grass cover near banks is very good, and very simple solution. But Gulbransen advises homeowners to pick a deep rooted grass for areas near water, explaining that this is able to withstand more pressure from erosion, rainfall, and overflow. He jokes that homeowners should "avoid common grasses like Kentucky Blue" as its roots only run three inches.

When faced with large scaled jobs, such as the one they worked on in Medford along the Straight River this past fall, SCSW has its own technique. This involves placing and securing "rip-rap," basically large rocks used at the edge of the bank as well as placing some fill between.

On the large project in Medford, Gulbransen and his team used 4,250 yards of "rip-rap" and 716 yards of fill. A normal sized dump truck is only capable of carrying 10 yards of fill at a time, which give one an impression of the scale entailed in jobs like this one.

Gulbransen and his team spent a long time engineering the specifics of jobs like that one, which often require additional assistance from engineers with a higher class grade. SCSW is only able to independently engineer and work on a project if it is determined to be below grade 5. Those such as the one in Medford, which are squarely positioned at grade 5, require engineers such as Pete Fryer.

Fryer is employed by Southeastern Technical Service Area 7 JPB. Gulbransen explains that JPB, the Joint Powers Board, operates between all 11 Southeastern Minnesota counties, including Steele. He says that "Pete goes to all the counties doing these large projects." On these large-scale jobs, Fryer is accompanied by an additional engineer and two civil engineering technicians.

Having worked at SCSW for 23 years, Gulbransen reports that he's only had five of these large scale bank erosion projects, with four of those occurring in this year alone, including the project along the Straight River in Medford. They receive funding from both the state and county, as well as from special grants.

Jobs like this require contractors, something SCSW doesn't involve themselves in. Gulbransen explained that "we leave all of the contracting up to the land owners." He added that "it's sort of a conflict of interest, and so we stay out of it."

SCSW doesn't just work on waterways and rivers, it also helps to build windbreaks and provide resources for wildlife plantings. They sell a wide variety of native stock trees and flora, including flowers. These are often used in windbreaks, a familiar feature of Minnesota's rural areas.

When helping to build windbreaks, SCSW will make planting visits and provide tips for land owners, however they do not participate in the actual planting. Much like the contracting

SEE **WATERWAYS, C6**

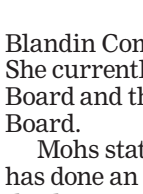
Owatonna Foundation announces new members

At a recent meeting of the Owatonna Foundation Board of Trustees, two new trustees were elected to serve on the Foundation's Board of Directors.They are Jolayne Mohs and Dr. Bob Wottreng.

Mohs

Mohs is the director of community engagement at Mohs Contracting. She and her husband, Scott, have three boys, and own and operate Mohs Contracting. She has served on the Trinity Nursery School Board and Owatonna Public Library Board and is a graduate of Leadership Owatonna and the Blandin Community Leadership Program. She currently serves on the Owatonna School Board and the Owatonna Hospital Foundation Board.

Mohs stated, "I believe the Foundation has done an amazing job of contributing to the dreams of people and organizations by financially supporting projects and amenities that promote a strong quality of life. I believe the Foundation plays an important role in moving the Owatonna community forward and making it a place where individuals and families want to work, live and stay."



Wottreng

Dr. Wottreng and his wife, Karen, have three boys and together they own and operate Wottreng Family Dental. He has served as a volunteer for the American Red Cross, was an Owatonna Public Schools facility task force member, served on the Owatonna School Board and is currently an adult leader for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church's Youth Ministry and is a volunteer instructor for Junior Achievement.

Wottreng noted, "The Foundation has its greatest impact when it educates and empowers individuals, businesses, and other organizations to support Foundation strategic initiatives that focus on improving the long term quality of life for our community members."

Mohs and Wottreng join 33 other Trustees that comprise the Foundation Board.

"We're pleased to welcome these new Trustees to the Foundation Board. The Owatonna Foundation is our community's foundation," said Betsy Lindgren, president of the Foundation. "These two new members, like the other trustees, will commit their time and talents to continue the Foundation's mission of improving the quality of life for present and future generations by supporting Owatonna projects that focus on community, arts, recreation and education. We know that their passion for Owatonna will serve the Foundation Board well."

The following Trustees serve as the Foundation's officers: President: Betsy Lindgren, Vice President: Dennis Meillier, and Secretary/Treasurer: Ray Stawarz.

Other members of the Board of Trustees include: William Beer, Dr. Brian Bunkers, Gerald Deetz, Gregg Draeger, Tom Dufresne, David Einhaus, Dale Gandrud, Todd Hale, Bob Heers, Charles Herrmann, Michael Jensen, Jay Johnson, Robert Jungbluth, Kent Kienholz, Matt Kottke, Chadwick Lange, Tim McManimon, Corey Mensink, Gene Michaelson, Andy Michaletz, Monte Mitchell, Carol Nelson, Sabra Otteson, Julie Rethemeier, Dave Seykora, Stephen Smith, Sharon West, Kenneth Wilcox, Dennis Von Ruden, and Dr. Carol Winter.

Incorporated in 1957, the Foundation has served the Owatonna community for 60 years, providing over $11.8 million dollars in financial support to meet the ever-changing needs of the community.

The Foundation makes grants for capital purchases and improvements in the following categories: Community – with projects that have an impact on the quality of life of the people of Owatonna, and the parks and places they use and enjoy. Arts – with projects that support fine arts, both visual and musical, and encouraging a diverse cultural environment. Recreation – with projects that help improve the recreational diversity of Owatonna, offering all ages a recreational outlet throughout the year. Education – with scholarships and improvements promoting literary and scientific ventures and preserving the history of Owatonna.The Foundation also provides $30,000 annually in both traditional and non-traditional scholarships for youth and adults that are residents of Owatonna.

The Foundation office is located at 108 West Park Square in Owatonna. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information please go to the Foundation's website at www.owatonnafoundation.org, or call 507-451-2995.

BOOSTERS: *Warming hearts*

FROM PAGE C1

longstanding tradition of supporting the arts." Something he feels quite proud of, seeing as Elstad views the arts as "very valuable to the education of our kids."

According to Elstad, this tradition of appreciating the arts is what originally drew him to both the community and the superintendent position. He further explained that all the proceeds collected from the event will go to benefit the entire district, and can provide uniforms, instruments, and sponsor students involved in music across all grades.

As superintendent, Elstad takes pride in the event and the community's warm reception to it. He expressed that he "loves to watch the students perform." He added with a smile, "we have some talented adults as well."

The event can be fun and entertaining for both the audience and its performers. Elstad said, "It warms my heart to see all our young people perform and it makes me proud to see our music staff show what they can do as well."

This year Elstad was amongst the performers, which has become a bit of a modern tradition. He performed two songs, Frank Sinatra's classic "Come Fly with Me" and a song by Michael Bublé, called "Save the Last Dance for Me."

Pete Guenther, director of bands at Owatonna High School, agreed with Elstad's assessment, saying he too enjoys seeing both the students and the staff perform. When asked what some of his favorite acts are, he singled out Elstad's past performance of a "Phantom of the Opera" song. He also said that the Jazz Band, which tries to mix it up each year, does a great job as well. "They always try to do something different," he added.

Despite the night's focus on fundraising, Guenther also appreciates the additional support the Music Boosters of Owatonna provide. He explained that there is a difference between advocacy and raising money. "Advocacy is stepping forth to recognize the importance of something like music," he said.

According to Guenther, the Music Boosters of Owatonna is very invested in its support of music for all students. Because of its heavy involvement in this avenue, Owatonna's musical education is excelling, he said.

"Everyone wants to be here," Guenther said, noting that he, too, is excited to be entertained by the acts. With a smile he said, "It's starting to get quite a following, I think people want to see this."

At the event, Guenther was directing both the Percussion and Jazz Band. A few interesting acts he pointed out included his wife conducting a group of young clarinet players, and the Percussion Band's contest level piece. He also added that "Jeff's pieces are going to be a highlight." Of the performers, Guenther said, "They are excited to be out there and make some great music!"

In the years before they decided to put on this annual concert, the Music Boosters had previously raised money and remained involved in other ways. Guenther recalls that around eight years ago a group from the Music Boosters got together and told him about its idea for the concert, and he loved it from the start.

Guenther can remember that students were very adamant about attending from the get go. "The students have also loved it, I think because they get to see their teachers perform and have fun," he said.

When asked about Elstad's support for the concert, Guenther explained, "When you have a superintendent who supports the arts like he does, I couldn't be prouder to be here."

One of this year's participants was Sue Bowcock. She has taught in the district since 1986, and had previously taught four years elsewhere. She is retiring this year from her post as elementary music and choral chair. According to Bowcock, she loves making music with her friends, and events like this give them a great excuse to do so.

"Music is for everyone," she said. "Children are already musicians, we music teachers just help them unwrap this gift." This year she chose a southern gospel song to perform with her group of friends.

When speaking on the Music Booster program's importance, Bowcock recalls that back in 1981 there were massive cuts and the Music Boosters of Owatonna helped to ensure that the music program would be safe from budget slashing. She says that little by little they brought the music department back. "It's thriving," she said.

Bowcock believes that "music serves a different purpose for every person." She explained that "we know it's good for brains and reading and emotional balance, but we don't necessarily teach music because of this." Bowcock added, "We teach music because it's beautiful and we want others to experience this beauty."

Young kids love to bowl in BP

Staff photo by Howard Lestrud

Viridiana Villarreal and D.J. Stender learn the basics of scoring bowling games while part of a Blooming Prairie High School physical education class at Ressler Grille and Lanes.

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Aaron Ressler of Bunkie's Grille and Lanes of Blooming Prairie smiles widely as he greets Blooming Prairie High School students at the entrance to his four-lane bowling alley.

"It's a lifetime sport and the kids love it," says Kevin Driessen, physical education instructor at BPHS.

"I am very biased about kids learning how to bowl and how to golf because it's my life," commented Ressler.

This year marks the third consecutive year that Blooming Prairie High School has been busing students to the bowling alley as part of physical education curriculum.

Driessen brought 27 ninth graders and 20 sophomores to Ressler Lanes last week.

Driessen said the sport of bowling suits most everyone because it is not as physically demanding as other sports. "Athletes and non-athletes enjoy it on the same level," he said.

Praising the partnership with Ressler, Driessen said Ressler goes out of way to accommodate the young bowlers. "He is easy to work with and gets along well with kids," Driessen added.

As part of the classroom on the bowling lanes, students are required to bowl at least three games during the week and they are also asked to learn how to score the game. Most newer bowling alleys have automatic scoring systems.

"It's a struggle at first for the kids to learn how to score but they usually pick it up quickly," Ressler said.

Ressler said he would like to get the school to put bowling in the curriculum beginning at the fifth grade. "This is a good age for the kids to learn the sport and I'll keep bugging the school district to add bowling to the curriculum at a younger age," Ressler remarked.

"It is sure fun to see the alleys busy," Ressler smiled widely once again.

CHAMBER SPOTLIGHT

Annual Chamber Banquet

THURSDAY

Servicemen's Club - Blooming Prairie

Social hour- 6 p.m.
Supper- 7 p.m.

Program honoring Citizens of the Year
This is an evening of food, fun, fellowship and is open to the public.

Call Chamber Office at 507-583-4472 if you plan to attend.

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Precinct Caucus coming to Owatonna

The Steele County Republican Party will meet for the Minnesota Precinct Caucus on Tuesday, Feb. 6, at 6:30 p.m. at the Owatonna High School.

The group will initially meet in the auditorium and then disperse to classrooms by township and precinct.

The precinct caucus is the grassroots beginning of the political candidate process that leads up to local and state party conventions and endorsements, and it all begins on Feb. 6. Going to a caucus gives folks the opportunity to meet with their neighbors to talk about important issues, show support to candidates, and influence who the party will endorse for office.

Per state statute, to participate in Steele County caucus, residents must be eligible to vote in the November 2018 general election, live in Steele County, and generally agree with the principles of the Steele County Republican Party who is hosting the caucus.

Republican party members will be having a Governor Straw Poll at the caucus to see which one of our gubernatorial candidates is favored in Steele County.

What happens at the caucus? Prior to the breakout session, current legislators will outline what to expect in the 2018 legislative session.

Generally, there are four main activities at a caucus:

Voters meet in separate rooms according to neighborhood or rural township.

Voters choose delegates who will endorse candidates at future conventions, which will include state representatives, Governor and other constitutional officers. (The recently elected Minnesota State Senators are not up for election in 2018).

There is an opportunity to discuss issues and suggest additions or changes to the Party Platform.

The group will have a Governor preference ballot called a Straw Poll where all eligible participants can vote.

There is an opportunity to volunteer for upcoming campaign committees. "Even if you have never participated in the past, we encourage you to attend on Tuesday, Feb. 6," said Pam Seaser of the Steele County Republicans.

The caucus will end by 8:15 p.m.

Questions should be directed to Seaser at 507-455-1709 or check out the group's website at steelecountyrepublicans.com.

NRHEG Panther of the Week

Sponsored by: Steve's Smokey Acres — Award Winning Home-Cured Meat Products — Established 1973

ALAMAE

NRHEG Elementary- Ellendale

This week's Panther of the Week is Alamae Gutierrez. Alamae resides in New Richland with her parents Jesus Gutierrez and Ashley Chelsey.

She is in Mrs. Ihrke's second grade class. Even though Alamae is quiet and soft spoken, she is very much a leader in our classroom. She is kind, smart, positive, and strives to do her best at school every single day. Alamae will help anyone at any time. We are so happy and fortunate that she moved to our school this year! Alamae loves to read and do math! Her favorite books to read are nonfiction.

She fosters cats with her grandma, and enjoys doing art projects with her mom.

Keep up the great work Alamae!

AAUW to offer several scholarships

The Owatonna branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) is offering four scholarships for female Steele County residents. The scholarships are available for the 2018-2019 academic year.

The AAUW Owatonna Scholarship is $1,000 and will be awarded to a student currently attending an accredited college or university. Application is open to all fields of study.

The Audrey Hammel Scholarship is $500 and will be awarded to a student currently attending an accredited college or university. Application is open to students pursuing a course of study in English or a foreign language. This scholarship was established in memory of Audrey Hammel, a charter member and past president of AAUW Owatonna.

The Rachel Carson Environmental Scholarship is $1,000 and will be awarded to a student currently attending an accredited college or university. Application is open to students pursuing a degree in a field such as engineering or science with a focus on environmental conservation. This scholarship was established through a gift from former AAUW Owatonna member, Ellyn Hansen.

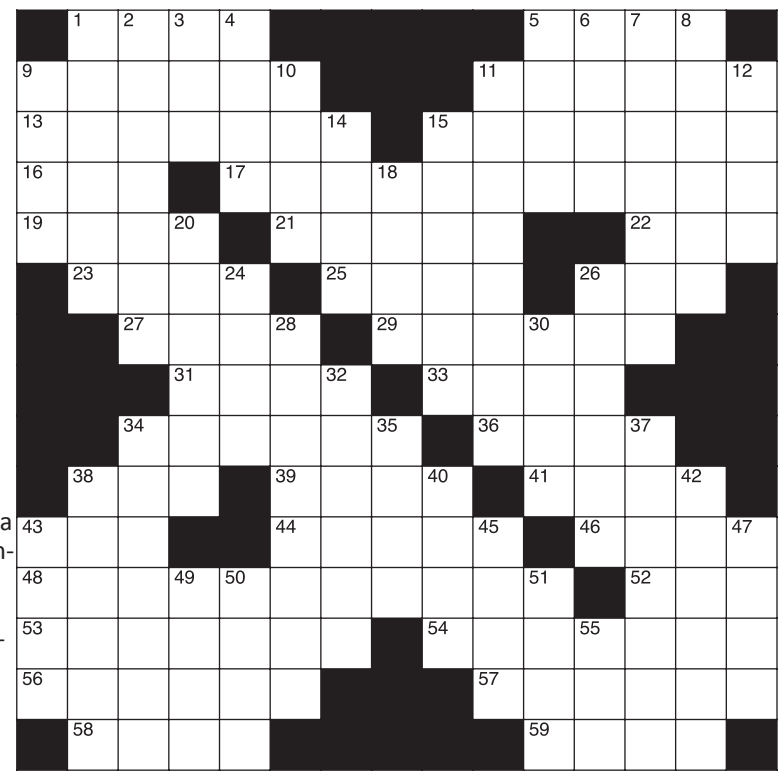
The June A./Melanie Nelson Scholarship is $1,000 and will be awarded to a student who has either been accepted at or is currently attending an accredited college or university. Application is open to all fields of study with special consideration given to students pursuing a course of study in a STEAM field(science, technology, engineering, the arts or math). This scholarship was established through a gift from AAUW Owatonna member, Melanie Nelson, in memory of her mother, June.

Application deadline for these scholarships is March 15, with the award winners to be announced by the end of May. Application forms are available on-line at http://owatonna-mn.aauw.net/ under the scholarship tab. Two letters of recommendation and an official transcript must accompany the application.

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Funds for these scholarships are raised each fall through the Taste of Steele County.

WEEKLY CROSSWORD

Solutions on D4



CLUES ACROSS

1. Methaqualone pill (slang)
5. Religious service
9. Woodland gods (Greek myth.)
11. "Where Is My Mind?" rockers
13. Deliberately contrary states of affairs
15. Inflection of the voice
16. "Great Expectations" character
17. Becomes a butterfly
19. Spoke
21. Tennis player Sharapova
22. Midway between north-east and east
23. Afrikaans
25. No instruction set computing
26. Pacific Standard Time
27. Relaxing places
29. Confiscates
31. Gladys Knight's fellow performers
33. Witnesses
34. Taking place in a series
36. Satisfy
38. Freshwater fish of N. America
39. Laments
41. "Girls" creator Dunham
43. Indian title of respect
44. Cocoa plum
46. Network of nerve cells
48. Link together in a chain
52. Cool 70s crew "The __ Squad"
53. Persons engaging in energetic pursuits
54. Accumulation of glacial debris
56. Fastened
57. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
58. Whiskey and bread are two
59. Scottish tax

CLUES DOWN

1. Rope used to lasso
2. Idyllic places
3. Field force unit
4. Guitar great Clapton
5. Slang for type of skirt
6. Figure skating jump
7. Innocent
8. Mathematical ratio
9. Slowly drinks
10. Line where edges meet
11. Offices of the pope
12. Dry or withered
14. "__ the Man" Musical
15. Difficult situations
18 Greek goddess of discord
20. Marked by smartness in dress and manners
24. Habitat
26. Annoy constantly
28. Full of life
30. Great energy
32. BBQ and soy are two
34. Virtuous
35. Not fatty
37. Foes
38. Merchandiser
40. Dishonest scheme
42. Repents
43. Protective crust
45. Native American people
47. Any place of bliss or delight
49. Bring up
50. Birds
51. Geological times
55. Consumed

Let's get you movin!

KELLERWILLIAMS PREMIER REALTY

Jennifer Walsh
507-438-6676
email: jenwalsh@kw.com
web: jenwalsh.kw.com

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

Restraining Order: On January 9, Officers responded to a restraining order violation in the 600 block of Hazel Lane NE at 2:47 p.m.

CRIME BRIEFS

CSI technicians in the making

A group of eighth grade criminologists from Owatonna is getting a first-hand lesson on investigating crime scenes.

Owatonna Police partnered with middle school teacher Nicole Rhodes' forensics class to create the practical crime scene scenarios that allowed students to investigate and process a crime scene.

The young CSI technicians investigated a burglary and homicide scene on the second floor of the old Cedarview Nursing Home.

Police detectives Matt Oeltjenbruns, Brady Vaith, Christian Berg and evidence technician Kim Dub provided insight and direction for the students as they worked their way through the mock crime scenes.

The practical exercise was the culmination of the student's hard work throughout the semester learning about forensics and how to process crime scenes. The local officers previously worked with the students to teach fingerprinting skills.

COURT NEWS
Steele County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Jan. 1 – 5:

MN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Nicholas J. Ziemke, 23, Waseca, suspended license and operate on public roads right of way, $331.

MN State Patrol Rochester

Sylvester L. Armstrong, 30, Mounds View, failure to use designated lane, $131; Logan J. Boos, 23, Lake Mills, IA, speeding, $141; John B. Carlson, 32, Des Moines, IA, speeding, $141; Levi D. Claybaugh, 19, Janesville, speeding, $221; Jaime R. De Leon, 32, Blooming Prairie, revoked license and seat belt, $306; Daniel Delacruz, 39, North St. Paul, speeding, $281; Arlo J. Drees, 55, Austin, speeding, $121; Willie J. Finch, 26, Chicago, IL, possession of marijuana, $131; Edwin I. Fuentesreyes, 36, South St. Paul, speeding, $221; Benigno Galvan Ortiz, 52, Albert Lea, speeding, $141; Justin R. Gehrke, 18, Morristown, driving on the shoulder, $131; Brennen L. Giesler, 17, Dover, speeding, $121; Sha L. Htoo, 20, St. Paul, speeding, $141; Ali R. Hussaini, 37, Overland Park, KS, no license and speeding, $231; Ashley A. Johnson, 17, Owatonna, speeding, $221; Ronald L. Kaltved, 77, Estherville, IA, speeding, $131; Alekhya Kokku, 25, Ames, IA, seat belt, $106; Ryan C. Lambott, 43, Springfield, MO, no license and possession of marijuana, $331; Moises Lopez, 20, Chicago, IL, speeding, $281; Kyle M. Melcher, 27, Owatonna, seat belt, $106; Samantha Murrieta, 18, Dodge Center, expired license, $181; Dulce K. Ojeda Cantu, 23, Faribault, no license and suspended license, $381; Hicham Ounasser, 41, Rochester, speeding, $121; Gary W. Prantner, 41, Byron, stop sign, $131; Destiny L. Quast, 19, Faribault, speeding, $381; Irma Rangel, 21, Brownsville, TX, seat belt, $106; Jeffrey M. Schmidtke, 52, Faribault, speeding, $131; Dillin R. Schultz, 25, Owatonna, seat belt, $106; Ravikumar Selvam, 28, Ames, IA, speeding, $221; Marie Sidonie, 55, St. Paul, move over law violation, $131; Stephanie J. Valek, 36, Burnsville, speeding, $221; Mary M. Whitelaw, 28, Culver City, CA, speeding, $131; Joseph R. Wigham, 29, Lyle, seat belt, $106; Kayla S. Winter, 29, Faribault, texting while driving, $131.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jared L. Aas, 43, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, $481; Abdulbari A. Ali, 22, Mankato, speeding, $141; Tiffany K. Feiler, 30, Owatonna, texting while driving, $131; Matthew R. Hager, 28, Meriden, revoked license, $281; Jasmyn D. Harris, 17, Owatonna, seat belt, $106; Kobie J. Kath, 16, Owatonna, irregular or erratic driving, $121; David J. Keck, 18, Owatonna, speeding, $121; Nancy K. Kennon, 65, Owatonna, failure to obey traffic control device, $131; Alexander J. Kovich, 18, Owatonna, careless driving and no license, $281; Sarah A. Meyer, 32, Owatonna, no insurance, $281; Elizabeth J. Pyburn, 30, Sioux City, IA, speeding, $141; Jesse F. Riley, 38, Owatonna, no insurance, $281; Dante L. Robertson, 17, Owatonna, speeding, $121; Sabrina R. Schmitz, 22, Owatonna, speeding, $121; Paul A. Treganza, 55, Owatonna, violation of order for protection, $281, 3 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, obtain permission to leave the state, maintain employment and 2 years of supervised probation; Adam M. Wencl, 23, St. Cloud, cancelled license, $131 and 106 days in county jail.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Joelle K. Butler, 32, Ellendale, speeding, $131; Michael D. Cosens, 41, Owatonna, speeding, $121; Imanol R. De La Rosa, 19, Owatonna, speeding, $281; Amanda C. Duval, 23, Waseca, speeding, $221; Christopher J. Hassing, 28, Blooming Prairie, speeding, $121; Benjamin M. Johnson, 22, Andover, speeding, $131; David M. Meyers, 38, Zumbrota, speeding, $121; Eric G. Murillo, 25, Kansas City, MO, speeding, $221; Castro Quirino, 18, Dowagiac, MI, no license and speeding, $231; Angelita Rodriguez, 29, Owatonna, revoked license, $281; Abby M. Sargent, 20, Waseca, speeding, $141; Jennifer L. Schroeder, 50, Owatonna, speeding, $121; Cole A. Scott, 29, Doniphan, MO, careless driving and texting while driving, $231; Earl C. Thibodeau, 51, Faribault, cancelled license, $81 and 2 years of unsupervised probation; James D. Wagoner, 52, Minneapolis, speeding, $121.

ARREST
Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

William Joseph Wieseler, 30, arrested at 6:40 a.m. Jan. 5, warrant arrest, $10,000 bail.

Branden Anthony Hendrickson, 18, arrested at 6:47 p.m. Jan. 5, warrant arrest, held for court.

Isaac Joseph Cronin, 20, arrested at 2:52 p.m. Jan. 5, warrant arrest, held for court.

Marcos Ernesto Reyes, 42, arrested at 6:52 p.m. Jan. 5, warrant arrest, held for court.

Levi Jeffrey Westling, 25, arrested at 1:28 p.m. Jan. 10, warrant arrest, $1,000 bail.

Lamoine Allen Busse, 55, arrested at 2:16 p.m. Jan. 10, warrant arrest, $1,000 bail.

Isaiah Hayden Coffey, 20, arrested at 6:23 p.m. Jan. 10, probation violation apprehension and detention arrest, held for court.

Brian Kenneth Warn, 53, arrested at 10:43 a.m. Jan. 11, warrant arrest, held for court.

Tony Terrence Fisher, 39, arrested at 12:14 a.m. Jan. 12, felony motor vehicle theft, held for court.

Steele County Sheriff

Ira Seth Shepherd, 21, arrested at 5 a.m. Jan. 6, DWI, held for court.

Jonelle Suezette Hill, 36, arrested at 9:21 a.m. Jan. 9, probation violation warrant arrest, body only.

Jamie Lee Carey, 31, arrested at 10:37 p.m. Jan. 9, warrant arrest, held for court.

Ryan Ervin Whelan, 35, arrested at 3:12 p.m. Jan. 11, warrant arrest, $300 bail.

POLICE BLOTTER
Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

Jan. 5

Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 200 block of Main St. E. at 4:17 p.m.

Trespassing: Police responded to a subject trespassing in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 5:10 p.m.

Shoplifting: At 11:45 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 400 block of North St. W.

Jan. 7

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 400 block of Morning Dr. SE at 6:29 a.m.

Theft: At 12:30 p.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 200 block of 12th St. NE.

Threats: Police responded to a subject making threats in the 500 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 1:42 p.m.

Arrest: Officers arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at Pearl St. E. and Elm Ave. N. at 1:58 p.m.

Jan. 8

Suspicion: Officers responded to suspicious activity in the 600 block of Walnut Ave. S. at 7:11 a.m.

Death: Police began a death investigation in the 300 block of Grove Ave. S. at 10:57 a.m.

Warrant: At 1:14 p.m., officer made a warrant arrest in the 300 block of Bridge St. W.

Fraud: Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 400 block of North St. W. at 1:18 p.m.

Crash: Police responded to a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage at Barney St. SW and Oak Ave. S. at 2:06 p.m. They issued a citation to one of the drivers.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 400 block of 13th St. NE at 9:27 p.m.

Jan. 9

Warrants: Police made warrant arrests in the 100 block of Rose St. W. at 10:41 a.m. and the 200 block of Mill St. E. at 11:32 p.m.

Restraining Order: Officers responded to a restraining order violation in the 600 block of Hazel Lane NE at 2:47 p.m.

Jan. 10

Fire: Police responded to a fire call in the 200 block of Linden Ave. NE at 1:12 a.m.

Arrest: Officers assisted other agencies with arresting subjects in the 400 block of State Ave. NW at 12:02 p.m. and the 200 block of School St. W. at 2:52 p.m.

Shoplifting: Police arrested a subject for shoplifting in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W. at 5:24 p.m.

Jan. 11

Warrant: Police arrested a juvenile for an outstanding warrant in the 300 block of Main St. E. at 8:21 a.m.

Death: Police began a death investigation in the 2200 block of Hartle Ave. SE at 11:23 a.m.

DWI: At 3:18 p.m., officers arrested a subject for driving while intoxicated in the 400 block of Oak Ave. N.

Shoplifting: A shoplifting incident occurred in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W. at 4:19 p.m.

Crash: Police arrested a subject following a motor vehicle accident that resulted in property damage at Elm Ave. S. and University St. E. at 6:07 p.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 1300 block of Bigelow Ave. NE at 7:38 p.m.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

Jan. 5

Death: Deputies began a death investigation on Interstate 35 at mile marker 34 northbound in Somerset Township at 12:34 p.m.

Arrest: Deputies arrested a motorist during a traffic stop in the 100 block of 1st Ave. SW in Medford at 9:21 p.m.

Jan. 8

Medical: Deputies responded to a medical emergency in the 41000 block of 66th St. NW in Medford Township at 8:29 p.m.

Jan. 9

Suspicion: At 9:56 a.m., deputies responded to suspicious activity in the 14000 block of 72nd Ave. SW in Berlin Township.

Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest at the detention center at 10:02 a.m.

Jan. 10

Trespassing: Deputies responded to a subject trespassing in the 500 block of Central Ave. W. in Medford at 8:32 p.m.

Jan. 11

Crash: Deputies assisted the State Patrol with a motor vehicle accident with injuries at 69th St. NE and Cedar Ave. in Medford Township at 8:09 a.m.

COURT NEWS
Dodge County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Jan. 1 – 8:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Cole E. Baldwin, 31, Hayfield, DWI and damage to property, $580, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical assessment and 1 year of supervised probation; Chad E. Donner, 46, Dodge Center, domestic assault, $205, 3 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, domestic abuse counseling and 1 year of supervised probation; Eugene Ford, 57, Hayfield, revoked license, $280; Eric S. Holland, 37, Blooming Prairie, domestic assault, $455, 2 days in county jail, mental health evaluation, domestic abuse counseling, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, 30 hours of community service and 1 year of supervised probation; Matthew L. Kachmarzinski, 24, Rochester, DWI, $1,005, 4 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation and 2 years of supervised probation; Wayne E. Kubat, 54, Dodge Center, speeding, $130; Tanya L. McKinley, 33, Lonsdale, speeding, $220; James R. Rongve, 33, West Concord, revoked license and no insurance, $480; Shane M. Sterling, 28, Rochester, speeding, $120.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

James A. Denker, 35, Rochester, suspended license, $280; Brady M. Finn, 19, Mantorville, seat belt, $105; Jericho J. Forney, 40, Rochester, parking violation, $32; Lucas J. McNiff, 21, Mantorville, DWI, $510, 8 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, 40 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Lacy M. Munson, 26, Kasson, parking violation, $32; Robert E. Pierick, 50, Kasson, parking violation, $32; James R. Rongve, 33, West Concord, revoked license, $280; John T. Thomforde, 38, Stewartville, cancelled license, $280; Jennifer W. Vrieze, 29, Kasson, parking violation, $32.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Leah M. Beyer, 33, Kasson, speeding, $120; Alexander J. Dugstad, 25, Rochester, speeding, $140; Maria D. Floriano, 37, Kasson, no license, $180; Gregory E. Idso, 32, New Richland, revoked license, $280; Herman J. Klarr, 34, Elgin, speeding, $130; Michael D. Marquardt, 49, Dodge Center, speeding, $130; Beau N. Nagel, 20, Spring Valley, speeding, $130; Alfredo O. Ramos, 34, Omaha, NE, speeding, $120; Ryan D. Stewart, 24, Rochester, speeding, $140; Sean E. Ulrikson, 22, Rochester, speeding, $130.

WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Joshua L. Billings, 26, Faribault, revoked license, $280; Alejandro Ortiz Sanchez, 31, Kenyon, cancelled license, $280; Ashley N. Smith, 23, Faribault, revoked license, $280; Joshua L. Swenson, 30, West Concord, speeding, $130; Christopher L. Tuma, 46, Mantorville, speeding, $120.

OWATONNA FIRE

Jan. 5

Carbon Monoxide: At 10:48 a.m., a carbon monoxide incident occurred in the 1700 block of Woodlawn Ave. NE.

Jan. 6

Smoke: Firefighters responded to an odor of smoke in the 500 block of Barney St. SW at 2:43 p.m.

Jan. 8

Extrication: Fire rescue extricated a victim from a vehicle in the 300 block of Grove Ave. S. at 10:57 a.m.

Smoke: At 11:15 a.m., fire personnel assisted with smoke removal in the 1500 block of St. Paul Rd.

Jan. 10

Rubbish Fire: Firefighters responded to an outside rubbish fire in the 200 block of Linden Ave. NE at 1:12 a.m.

Freeborn officials seek input on disaster mitigation plan

Freeborn County is seeking the public's input on the county's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The plan is required by the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, according to Sheriff Kurt Freitag. Local jurisdictions are required to update the plan every five years to remain eligible for pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation grant programs, he noted.

Freitag is seeking feedback from residents prior to the plan being submitted to state and federal authorities. "Community involvement and feedback are vital to the success of the plan," he said.

A copy of the draft and survey for public feedback in available online at scse.d.umn.edu/freeborn-county-mhmp. Comments will be taken until Jan. 26.

Freeborn County's multi-jurisdictional plan covers the entire county, including the cities of Geneva, Hollandale, Clarks Grove and Albert Lea. The plan also incorporates the concerns and needs of townships, school districts and other stakeholders taking part in the plan, Freitag said.

The county, Freitag said, is vulnerable to a variety of potential natural disasters, which threaten the loss of life and property in the county. The plan addresses how to mitigate against hazards such as tornadoes, flooding, wildfires, blizzards, straight-line winds, ice storms and droughts. Just last year a tornado hit Clarks Grove.

"Hazard mitigation planning ultimately helps us protect Freeborn County residents," Freitag said. "By working with local communities we can identify vulnerabilities and develop strategies to reduce or eliminate the effects of a potential disaster."

Questions about the plan can be directed to Rich Hall, the county's emergency management director at 507-377-5221 or email at rich.hall@co.freeborn.mn.us.

State Patrol deals with autism

Handling autistic people now part of training for troopers

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

With the growing number of autistic people in society, a top Minnesota law enforcement agency is striving to meet the needs of those suffering from the mental condition.

The Minnesota State Patrol is now training cadets and sworn officers in recognizing and responding to people with autism. All troopers across the state had autism training as part of their centralized in-service training this past fall.

Autism is a developmental disorder characterized by troubles with social interaction and communication.

Sgt. Troy Christianson of the Rochester district of the State Patrol said troopers will follow-up later this month with an online training for reinforcement of the lessons learned late last year.

The training, Christianson said, helps troopers learn how to recognize and respond to people with autism. In addition, it helps them understand what sorts of dispatches will bring them into contact with autistic people, de-escalation tips, and as a last resort arrest and incarceration tips.

Christianson said the training also offers troopers access to model programs and cross-educational opportunities with autistic children and adults and their families and supporters.

"The training was well done," Christianson said, "Every person with autism is different, but the training offered a variety of ideas, such as facing the person, giving them time to answer a question, slow down and don't rush, asking one question at a time and offering to help them."

The number of autistic people has drawn substantially in recent years. In the 1990s, about one in every 2,500 people was known to be autistic. Today that number is one in 68.

About half of autistic people are non-verbal, statistics show.

During the training, troopers learned that an autistic person may seem as if they're acting guilty by displaying such behaviors as lack of eye contact, responding slowly or not at all to questions, and changing the subject. But they also learn strategies for dealing with those behaviors such as speaking in short sentences without slang or metaphors, giving the person room and avoiding touching them, and using low, calming body language and voices.

"The State Patrol is striving to learn how to interact with everyone," Christianson said. "It's another step on the road to keeping Minnesotans safe."

There are 591 troopers across the state that provide assistance, education and enforcement to citizens.

WARRANTS: The following individuals have active warrants in Steele County. The Sheriff provides this information as a public service

- Lionel Baldwin – weapons - $3,000 bail
- Jacob Banks – warrant – no bail
- Ramon Barajas-Pulido – warrant – no bail
- Jesus Barrera – controlled substance crime - $100,000 bail
- Kristopher Barta – false name - $500 bail
- Cody Batroff – DWI – no bail
- Claudia Bautista – theft - $10,000 bail
- Richard Bazan – DWI - $1,000 bail
- Shawn Beaulieu – forgery – no bail
- Gary Bechtel – DWI - $12,000 bail
- Jeremy Becker – theft, shoplifting - $500 bail
- Judith Beneke – DWI - $1,400 bail
- Jose Bernal – domestic assault - $700 bail
- Kathleen Bernichon – theft by check - $2,500 bail
- Jose Blancaste – DWI - $1,000 bail
- Jose Blanco-Delgado – burglary, assault - $35,000 bail
- Henry Bloomfield Jr. – DWI - $12,000 bail
- Kenneth Bonow – warrant - $3,000 bail
- John Borchert – fleeing officer - $2,000 bail
- Jojo Boswell – theft - $20,000 bail

Just snow business

STAFF PHOTO: DENNIS MARSHALL

The Blooming Prairie Street Department works diligently to clear Main Street before the morning traffic picks up.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

RICE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY WILL HOST EVENT ABOUT US DAKOTA WAR OF 1862

Historian/Educator Tim Madigan, will offer his PowerPoint presentation about this tragic time in Minnesota history. He will lay out the time-frame and explain various reasons and events leading up to the conflict, which resulted in the deaths of several hundred settlers, Native Americans and soldiers in 1862.

The cost of this program is $3.00 for nonmembers and free for members and will be held in the Carlander Family Room at the Rice County Historical Society located at 1814 NW Second Ave., on Thursday, Jan. 18, 2018, at 7 pm.

For questions about the event, call the RCHS museum at 507-332-2121.

TRAINING ABOUT THE CAUCUS COMING TO THE AREA

Free trainings will take place across Minnesota during the month of January and February to provide information about the caucus on Tuesday, Feb. 6. One will be in the area in Rochester on Wednesday, Jan. 24.

For locations and to register for these important, informative trainings, visit www.americanmajority.org/training.

Special sale at Farmers Feed and Pet Supply to benefit Christmas Bird Count

Farmers Feed and Pet Supply will hold a Grand Opening of its newly remodeled birdseed and equipment area with a special sale of birdseed and accessories on Jan. 19-20 at 616 N. Cedar Ave.

With the cooperation of the Owatonna Izaak Walton League, there will be special offers as well as gift certificates, free carryout and delivery. The Ikes will use its profits to fund the annual Christmas Bird Count.

For more information, call 451-2363.

IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE SELLING SPECIAL CALENDARS IN JANUARY

The Owatonna Izaak Walton League will be selling special 1990 calendars throughout the month of January until they are gone.

The calendars feature historic buildings in Owatonna and daily quotations from famous people including a few from Izaak Walton. They were created by southern Minnesota artist Ron Hunt. All the dates from 1990 line-up with the dates for 2018.

There are over a dozen calendars available at $5.00 each. If interested, call 451-6676. The Ikes will deliver in Owatonna.

STEELE COUNTY PUBLIC RECORDS - JULY 2017

BIRTHS

Tristen Omere Coats, Parent: Skylar Washington, July 3.
Tenley Jo Blake, Parents: Heather and Travis, July 4.
Allie Belle Jore, Parents: Breanne and Shawn, July 4.
Anton Scott Ripka, Parents: Samantha and Travis, July 5.
Maliya Rae Drache, Parents: Veronique and Derek, July 6.
Aria Kaylee Garcia Rojas, Parents: Maria Martinez and Delfino Pina, July 6.
Jonah Mark Herron, Parents: Jessica and Mark, July 7.
Dominic William Ringhofer, Parents: Karly and Anthony, July 8.
Sophia Lynn Schoultz, Parents: Kimberly and Cody, July 9.
Lily Sue Dalluge, Parents: Jennifer and Joshua, July 9.
Elaina Mary Miner, Parents: Rebecca and Daniel, July 11.
Stella Sylvia Kvalsten, Parents: Andrea and Per, July 13.
Porter James Hoban, Parents: Laurel and Jared, July 14.
Braxtyn Raul Sylvester, Parents: Ashly and Raul, July 15.
Mario Alexander Ortiz, Parents: Maria and Antonio, July 16.
Tenley Rose Kiker, Parents: Emily and Dylan, July 17.
Regan Kay Martin, Parents: Annette and Eric, July 17.
Nuzayba Mohammed Abdullahi, Parents: Dahabo Abdulle and Mohammed Sharrif, July 18.
Evaleigh Marie Moldenhauer, Parents: Mandi and Eric, July 20.
Makenna Margaret Flatgard, Parents: Brittney and Nicholas, July 20.
Kenzley Lynn Hagen, Parents: Brittany and Dustin, July 21.
Lucas Chad Wiersma, Parents: Frances and Jordan, July 21.
Norah Rose Everhard, Parents: Lauren and David, July 22.
Oliver John Petsinger, Parents: Carrie and Daniel, July 23.
Melanie Hazel Waters, Parents: Angela and Jared, July 25.
Pari Mukeshkumar Patel, Parents: Mayaben and Mukeshkumar, July 27.
Abe Francis Slowinski, Parents: Stacy and Nicholas, July 31.

DEATHS

Darrell Russell Oleson, 86, Owatonna, July 3.
Clifford Jerome Sellner, 90, Owatonna, July 3.
Robert Charles Mensing, 84, Owatonna, July 4.
Ronald Esty Ramsey, 74, Owatonna, July 6.
Arlene L. Broe, 89, Faribault, July 7.
Ardythe Ellen Waldrop, 74, Owatonna, July 9.
Donald Dean Ackerman, 57, Geneva, July 14.
Francis Steven Talbert, 62, Owatonna, July 16.
John Raymond Olbrich, 84, Claremont, July 20.
Dorothy Mae Saufferer, 93, Owatonna, July 20.
Eric Royce Rettenmaier, 47, Kasson, July 22.
Emil Blazek, 84, Owatonna, July 24.
Cynthia Lu Karsten, 60, Faribault, July 25.
Teisha K. Chapman, 38, Albert Lea, July 26.
Lois Jane Price, 61, Owatonna, July 26.
Wava Isabelle Armstrong, 78, Owatonna, July 27.
Beverly Ann Culbertson, 89, Owatonna, July 28.
Karen Faye Grubisch, 75, Owatonna, July 30.
Philip Ronald Penman, 53, Owatonna, July 30.
Mary Jean Zak, 61, Owatonna, July 31.
Doris Mae Flanders, 87, Austin, July 31.

MARRIAGES

Jesse Michael Sletten and Courtney Ann Ringhofer, July 1.
Hussen Osman Ereg and Beelo Abdisalam, July 5.
Edward Tyler Chambers Jr. and Maria Denise Tonkin, July 7.
Dalton Robert Wanous and Stephanie Jean Underdahl, July 8.
Carly Laura Kinzler and Zachary Lee Keller, July 8.
David John Chabot and Megan Lee Beer, July 8.
Elliot Jerome Pachniak and Kendra Noel Schroeder, July 8.
Hanad Abdi Hayle and Leyla Habib Abdulle, July 9.
Zachary Edward McGaughy and Amber Lynn Wobbrock, July 14.
Cruz Corona and Melyssa Ellen Dominguez, July 15.
Sara Jo Lyndgaard and Jareb Adriel Morgan, July 15.
Bradley Alan Kubat and Holly Marie Larson, July 15.
Brandon John Snyder and Coleena Michelle Ray, July 15.
Scott Daniel Maas and Anna Rose Haugen, July 17.
Matthew Douglas Bauer and Sherri Ann Jordahl, July 17.
Shawn Michael Kennedy and Jessieanna Mireles, July 20.
Tyler Nicholas Trocinski and Aurora Josy Rodriguez Alvarez, July 22.
Christopher John Plasek and Melissa Laurie Weber, July 22.
Jose Luis Sanchez Jr. and Esmeralda Guzman Mandujano, July 28.
Jeffrey Real Doyon and Wendy Juyne Pikora, July 29.

DIVORCES

Monica Loppnow and Daniel F. Battenfeld.
Kassie Elizabeth DeNeui and David James DeNeui.
Kathryn Ann Stenzel and David Allen Stenzel.
Susan Marie Kiefer and James Michael Kiefer.

BLOOMING PRAIRIE

JAN. 17
10:30 a.m. – Storytime, BP Library

JAN. 18
6 p.m. – Annual Chamber Banquet, Servicemen's Club
6:30 p.m. – Family Fun Night, BP Library

JAN. 21
KC's Pancake Breakfast, St. Columbanus Church

JAN. 23
10:30 a.m. – Storytime, BP Library

JAN. 27
Coyotes "Fur" Cancer Fundraiser, Cue Company

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ELLENDALE/GENEVA/HOPE

JAN. 17
6 p.m. – NRHEG After Prom Meeting, NR Media Center

JAN. 18
3:30 p.m. – Com Ed (Lego Coat Rack) Class, NRHEG HS Art Room

JAN. 19
3 p.m. – Snow Tubing, Mt. Kato

JAN. 23
6:30 p.m. – Karate, Ellendale Elementary Gym Noth

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OWATONNA/MEDFORD

JAN. 17
4 p.m. – Owatonna EDA Meeting, City Admin Building

JAN. 18
8 a.m. – Owatonna Downtown Parking Committee Meeting, City Admin Building
Noon – 1 p.m. – Business Boot Camp, Owatonna Library
5:30 p.m. – Shade Tree Commission Meeting, City Admin Building
6:30 p.m. – Family Storytime, Owatonna Library
7 p.m. – SCHS Lecture – Being Muslim in MN, History Center
7 p.m. – AAUW-Owatonna January Meeting, McKinley Elementary

JAN. 21
10 a.m. – 3 p.m. – Bridal Fair, Holiday Inn

JAN. 22
4 p.m. – Owatonna HRA Meeting, City Admin Building

JAN. 23
9:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. – It's Tale Time, Owatonna Library
5:30 p.m. – Business After Hours, Michaelson Funeral Home
4 p.m. – Owatonna Public Utilities Meeting, Morehouse Meeting Room
5 p.m. – Steele County Commissioners Meeting, County Admin Building
7 p.m. – Owatonna City Council Meeting, City Admin Building

Recipe Corner

Molasses Oatmeal Loaf

Makes 1 medium loaf

- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1, 1/3 cups buttermilk
- 3/4 cup rolled oats
- 1, 2/3 cups whole-wheat flour
- 1, 3/4 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, chilled and cut into cubes
- 1 extra-large egg, beaten
- 1 8 x 4 x 2 1/2-inch loaf

Mix the molasses and the buttermilk in a large bowl. Stir in the oats and then let soak for 30 minutes.
Preheat oven to 400 F.
In another bowl, mix the flours, baking soda and salt. Add the pieces of butter and rub in, using the tips of your fingers, until the mixture looks fine like crumbs.
Add the beaten egg and the mixture of soaked oats and mix well with a wooden spoon to make a fairly heavy dough. Scrape the mixture into the greased loaf pan and, with floured fingers, press it into a neat loaf shape.
Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce the oven temperature to 350 F and bake for a further 35 minutes.
Turn out the loaf onto a wire rack and let cool to room temperature before slicing.
Keep tightly wrapped and eat within 3 days, or toast. The loaf can be frozen for up to 1 month.

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2018 EVENTS
● **APRIL 7:** Customer appriciation day "32" years of business
● **JUNE 23:** Cruise for Cancer ride
● **JULY 3:** Street dance (21 and over only)
● **JULY 4:** Open 9 a.m. to close
● **JULY 21:** B.O.B. ride: "Toys for Tots"

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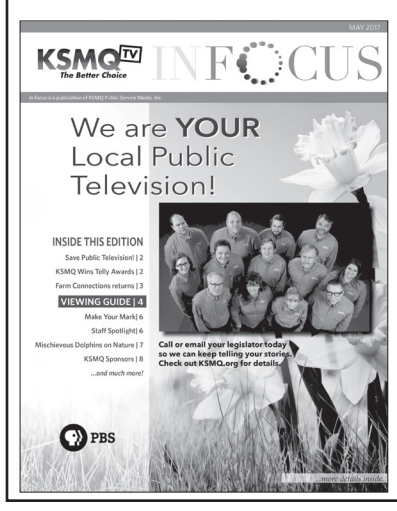
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WATERWAYS: *Erosion control*

FROM PAGE C2

farm or homestead. Arndt explains that these windbreaks are vital to lowering heating and cooling costs, and help to not just keep wind out, but also aid in preventing snow and water from reaching developed areas. Much like most other features of agricultural land, windbreaks will eventually require maintenance and renovation.

In a state of such agricultural prevalence where waterways and rivers, together with marshlands and lakes, spill between farms and cities alike, the work that organizations such as SCSW do can go a long way in preserving and protecting the natural and optimum shape of our land and the water that cuts between it.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Steele County Soil and Water worked on three large-scale projects this year, including this stretch of the Straight River near Medford.

COUNCIL: *Approvals and eliminations*

FROM PAGE C1

but leave everything else in place," Jones said. "You're still required to have a license. Just come to office and get one at no cost. Let's find out if it's the cost that is keeping people from coming to our office to get a license."

Some of the funds collected from the dog licenses was used to help with expenses from the Blooming Prairie Veterinary Clinic.

The council also discussed the increase of the water base rate by $2 to $15 a service made by the Public Utilities Commission.

Jones said the increases were made in anticipation of having to build a new or upgrading the current water tower.

"There will be a time in the near future where we will be looking at updating our water tower," Jones said, adding that it would take virtually the same amount to make the upgrades or construct a new tower.

THE COUNCIL ALSO APPROVED:

• The official appointments, official depositories and official city newspaper resolution that was presented by Mayor Harold Peterson. Council member Bill Newman was appointed acting mayor, Henefield lacovino Law Office LLC was appointed at the city attorney, the Steele County Times and the Leader were appointed the official city newspaper, Brett Grabau was appointed city engineer and Nick Nelson and Dr. Vern Krebs were appointed the city health officers. The Farmers and Merchant State Bank and the U.S. Bank of Blooming Prairie were named the city's official depository.

• The summary of a closed session held in December where some city employee evaluation took place and discussion was held about Jones' future retirement.

• Vacating a plotted street between 3rd Street Northwest and 4th Street Northwest. The Board of Directors of Prairie Manor, Inc. had asked the city to vacate the avenue to enable a possible future development of their facility.

• The resolution to prove coverage to the mayor, the council and the Public Utilities Commission through the city's worker's compensation insurance coverage.

• The Blooming Prairie Cancer Group's application to the State of Minnesota Gambling Control Board for a Exempt Gambling Permit to conduct a benefit on Jan. 27. The approval waived the 30-day waiting period for action on the application.

• A payment request of $13,786.60 from Ulland Brothers, Inc. for the 2017 Street Rehabilitation Improvements Project.

• A $1,500 donation from the Claremont Area Chamber of Commerce. The donation for be split evenly between the Blooming Prairie Fire Department and Blooming Prairie Ambulance.

SERGEANT: *Celebrating 30 years*

FROM PAGE C1

people than I could shoot."

Schleicher tried to use a mental insanity defense, but it failed. He is currently serving a life sentence in Stillwater State Prison for pre-meditated first-degree murder.

Okins recalled his first homicide last week as he celebrated his 30th anniversary with the sheriff's office. He joined the sheriff's office on Jan. 11, 1988 and spent the first 12 years working as a road deputy. Prior to joining the sheriff's office, he worked as a police officer in Blooming Prairie as well as a suburb of Kansas City for one year.

During his career with Steele County, Okins has investigated some of the worst scenes. There have been several homicides, the shooting of the Blooming Prairie police chief, aggravated assaults, some deadly plane crashes and an officer involved shooting.

Perhaps the most gruesome case for Okins came in June 2004 when four people were killed after the pilot of a small plane became disoriented in fog and crashed into a farm house east of Owatonna. "The plane hit the top of a house first, skipped off the house, and hit a big Cottonwood tree square on," Okins said.

In describing the scene, Okins said, "You couldn't tell who was who. There were body parts all over the place." He and other investigators, used at least 2,000 flags as evidence markers to identify as many body parts and other evidence as they could.

Another plane crash at the Owatonna's Degner Regional Airport claimed eight lives in July 2008 after a massive rain storm. A corporate jet carrying businessmen from the East Coast who were coming to Owatonna to visit Viracon skidded off the runaway and plowed into a corn field.

Throughout the years, Okins has found that the cliché "When it rains, it pours," to be true with big cases. In 2009, he assisted with an officer-involved shooting along Interstate 35 by the Hope exit. A trooper fired at a man during a traffic stop as the suspect tried to flee in a field near Hope. The man had initially shot at the trooper.

The next day Okins was called out to a gravel road west of Owatonna where authorities found Katie Anderson dead from 109 stab wounds. She was also run over with a vehicle twice. "Her body was filled with blood and holes from the stabbing," Okins said.

What made matters worse in investigating the Anderson homicide was that it began snowing on the crime scene. "The fire department came out to provide us with a canopy tent to keep the area clear of snow," Okins said.

Authorities tracked down Anderson's killer, Ryan Hurd, in Tulsa, Okla. Because of bad weather, Okins could not go down to Oklahoma as preferred to solidify the case and get a confession from Hurd. Instead he relied on a "pretty good" confession that Tulsa Police got for him. It was later found Hurd wrote a detailed confession on the wall of his cell. Hurd was convicted of first-degree murder.

Okins has also found a bit of irony associated with crime over the years.

In June 2016, a group of teenagers stabbed another teen in a corn field located "just feet" from where Anderson was murdered. In an even more bizarre twist, the victim was stabbed 109 times—the same as what Anderson had been stabbed and the suspects had the same type of vehicle that was used in the Anderson murder. The only difference was the victim in the corn field stabbing survived and is now living in Texas.

Okins said in the case he learned that the suspects had goggled how to kill someone by stabbing. A steak knife had been used in the stabbing.

"It was totally random. Just a fluke," Okins said of the two crime scenes seven years apart.

The most challenging case, Okins said, came in June 2016 when Richard Jurgensen was shot to death on a gravel road northeast of Owatonna. "This was most challenging due to the people involved and the circumstances of the victim being involved with bad people," Okins said.

What made the case especially tough for Okins was that there were so many potential witnesses and suspects. "They all had a bad record and didn't want to talk to police," he said. "In my previous homicides, it was always pretty much black and white who did what."

In the end, two people pleaded guilty last fall to second-degree murder in Jurgensen's death. "I think it worked out well," Okins said, adding that they would have liked to seen the suspects convicted of first-degree murder.

Another interesting case Okins has worked involved a Fentanyl death, which resulted in a third-degree murder conviction. It was the first case in Minnesota prosecuted for murder resulting from the sale of a prescription drug.

In the case, a man chewed and ate a Fentanyl patch and died as his friends tried to get him to the hospital. "That's direct poison," Okins said. "It's like putting a gun to your head and pulling the trigger."

Okins said the greatest reward he gets from his job is helping people. "I love the aspect of solving the case by looking for evidence and getting to the bad people and putting the case together so it can prosecuted," he said.

"Keeping up closing the serious cases we have and getting the convictions is the most rewarding for me," Okins said.

He takes pride in what he has accomplished for the county over the past three decades, especially the past 18 years as detective. "Not everybody can do the job that we do," Okins said. "It takes a special type of person."

Okins is contemplating retirement from law enforcement, but no official plans have been made yet.

In the meantime, Okins plans to continue cracking the most serious crimes in the county.

Cancer Corner

Blooming Prairie Cancer Group

by Howard Lestrud
Staff Writer

Local hunters plan fundraiser for BP Cancer Group

Local hunters Craig Anderson of Blooming Prairie and Elliott Herdina of Owatonna came up with a novel fundraising event to benefit the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group.

The First Annual Coyotes 'Fur' Cancer Fundraiser is set for Saturday, Jan. 27.

"The Cancer Group has done so much for so many people and that's one reason we want to give back," said Herdina, a Blooming Prairie High School graduate who would like to return to BP permanently some day.

On his way to a deer hunting destination in Wisconsin one Friday night in December of last year, Herdina dialed up fellow hunting partner Anderson and shared some ideas about a coyote hunt that would pay dividends to the BP Cancer Group.

Anderson's wife Gail has been treated for breast cancer. "We just wanted to find a way we could help and pay back what the Cancer Group has done for us," remarked Herdina.

The planning for this first annual Coyotes 'Fur' Cancer Fundraiser didn't stop with the phone call between Herdina and Anderson. They continued to share ideas that weekend, both texting one another while Herdina was hunting in the woods.

"I didn't get a deer on that trip but it was still fun getting out and working on this project," Herdina continued.

The special day will feature an actual coyote hunt and then at the end of the day at 6 p.m., hunters and others will gather at The Cue Company in Blooming Prairie for a night of fun.

Tickets cost $20 each. "You don't have to be a hunter to participate," Anderson said.

Purchase tickets at Cumberland's Northwest Trappers Supply, Inc. of Owatonna, The Cue Company of Blooming Prairie, Dean's Smoke Shack of Geneva and Coordes Guns in Lansing.

A long list of prizes includes a Savage Axis II .223 donated by Wiebke Fur. An electronic game call is donated by Cumberland's. Other prizes include a range pass from Coyote Creek Gun & Archery, a Husqvarna chainsaw donated by Jeff and Craig Anderson, a four-hour guided fishing trip given by Clear Lake Bait & Tackle and Muck boots donated by B to Z Hardware of Blooming Prairie.

Other prizes were donated by Dean's Smoke Shack, Mike Herdina with Ozark National Life Insurance, Darrick's Preferred Auto, Hartscrabble Hill Hide and Fur, Hormel's and Coordes Guns.

Hunters will gather in groups in early morning to begin the coyote hunt. When the hunt is over, hunters will bring their coyotes to the back parking lot of the Cue Company.

Herdina said hunting groups from Kenyon, Clarks Grove and Blooming Prairie are expected to participate.

No license is required to hunt coyotes since they are considered varmints. Furs will be sold anywhere from $7 to $45, Herdina says.

Hunters use a variety of rifles including bolt action .223 caliber and .22-250 caliber. Semi automatics are the new craze, Herdina said.

Obviously, most of the funds raised will come from the evening get-together at the Cue Company. Anderson will collect all the furs and patch them up for sale to a fur buyer.

After the hunt, a chili and soup feed is planned with Cue Company owner Collette Lea donating and preparing the food.

Success of the hunt will be weather dependent, Herdina emphasizes. Temperatures in the low 20s would be welcome as will be snow cover.

Herdina says coyote hunting runs in his family. "Since I was a kid in diapers, hunting has been part of my life," he said.

He hunted with his grandfather Chuck and with his father Mike Herdina. Other hunting partners have included Anderson, Arik Olson, Carl Thueur and Mark Lembke.

"Our town is so strong when it comes to fighting cancer," Herdina said. "We just thank everyone who has donated to this cause," he added.

More information can be obtained by contacting Craig Anderson or Elliott Herdina at 507-475-2105.

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Keys to healthy soil

As we ring in 2018, getting healthy is a common New Year's Resolution among millions of people. But for farmers, the New Year is also an opportunity to set goals to get your soil healthy – a practice of elevated importance to protect natural resources, and help you manage extreme weather, increase profitability and sequester carbon, field by field.

The Soil Health Partnership program by the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) has developed the Top 5 Resolutions for 2018, from your soil's point of view.

Be aware of nutrient intake

Using science-based nutrient management strategies on the farm can help curb unwanted loss and improve farm economics. Split nitrogen (N) fertilizer applications, or dividing total nitrogen application into two or more treatments per year, can help growers enhance nutrient efficiency, promote optimum yields and protect the environment.

Cover new ground

Growing cover crops in the winter, like grasses and legumes, helps hold the soil in place, reducing erosion, while improving use of water and many ag inputs. These crops make the soil more resilient to drought and resistant to flooding. They help reduce nutrient loss by taking up what's left on the field between growing seasons – and provide beneficial habitat for migratory birds and pollinators.

Adopt healthier habits

On the farm, that may mean less intensive tillage! Reducing or eliminating the practice of turning over the soil between growing seasons is one proven method of restoring soil health that can help the bottom line. Adopting strip-till can be like getting a new pair of walking shoes to set you on a new path.

Focus on what matters

In this case, organic matter! Adding cover crop roots and disturbing the soil less through tillage can help restore the lively ecosystem of organisms your crops and soil crave. Earthworms, microscopic bacteria and fungi, and a host of other organisms produce structure and nutrients for plants to grow.

Save for the future

Farmers are beginning to understand that improving soil health is like putting money in the bank. Data collected on the Soil Health Partnership's 111 farms is starting to show that taking care of the farm's foundation can pay big dividends over time, through optimal yields, more resilience to extreme weather, and more efficient use of inputs like fertilizer.

European Corn Borer life cycle and overwintering habits

ON THE FARM

Claire LaCanne

Most farmers know that European Corn Borer has historically been one of the major pests of corn in our region.

The European Corn Borer (ECB) is a species of moth whose larvae can do major damage to corn fields. The extensive use of Bt traited corn has controlled ECB populations, though insects are adaptive and some buggers still persevere.

It's wise to understand the life cycle and overwintering habits of our local pests so that when it comes time for pest management, we are prepared with the right background knowledge to make the best decisions.

During its lifetime, the ECB goes through four stages of development: egg, larva (borer), pupa, and adult (moth). These four stages equal one generation. The larva stage can be broken down into five instars, or larval stages, of development. Young larvae feed on tassels, whorl, leaf sheath tissue and they mine midribs. In some instances, they feed on silk, kernels, and cobs, or enter the stalk. Older larvae tend to burrow into the stalk and sometimes the base of the corn ear or into the kernels. Feeding by older larvae is usually the most damaging. One to two larvae within a corn stalk is tolerable, but heavily tunneled stalks of grain corn suffer from lodging, reducing the capacity for machine harvesting. Stalk damage can also allow several fungi to affect corn plants.

During the fifth (final) larval instar, all larvae either prepare to

pupate and become adults or enter diapause. Diapause, the insect version of hibernation, causes suspended development. It is controlled by day length, temperature, and the genetic makeup of the population. Diapause ensures survival through the fall and winter; the diapaused fifth instars remain in suspended development throughout the winter until spring, when diapause ends and the larvae resume development and pupate. Larvae spend the winter in cornstalks, corn cobs, or weed stems. ECBs that survive the winter in our area of the Corn Belt end diapause around May and then continue development to their adult stage.

Another particular trait of the ECB is that there are different types of the same species. The different biotypes (a subunit of a species) of ECB populations in North America are univoltine, or one generation, and multivoltine, or three or more generations. Minnesota has univoltine and multivoltine biotypes. Moth flights and egg-laying (oviposition) usually occur during June-July and August-September in areas with one to two generations per season. In locations with three generations, moth flights and oviposition typically occur in May, late June, and August.

Who knew insects could be so complex? They sure are, and that's why it's important to understand our pest critters. For more University resources to aid in decision making for ECB control, go to https://www.extension.umn.edu/agriculture/corn/pest-management/#insect-management.

Claire LaCanne is the agricultural extension agent for Steele and Rice counties. Her column appears in this newspaper regularly.

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Hollandale 1 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 24
Buffalo Wild Wings
Owatonna, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 29
National Guard Armory
Austin, 1 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 30
National Guard Armory
Austin, 12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 30
Riverland Community College
Owatonna, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 31
National Guard Armory
Austin, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 2
St. Theodore Catholic Church
Albert Lea, 2 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 3
Hy-Vee
Owatonna, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 22
Riverland Community College
Albert Lea, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

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Mike's Repair — Ag & Truck Tire — 870 32 Ave. NW, Owatonna — Emergency or on the farm repair — 507-455-0388 (After hours 507-455-0483)

Sorenson's Appliances & TV — GE, Frigidaire, Direct Tv, Danby, Crosley, Broan, Jenn-Air, KitchenAid, Maytag, Panasonic, RCA, Samsung, Toshiba, Whirlpool — Geneva, Mn — 507-256-7258

misgen auto parts — 507-684-2100 — 12880 SW 72nd Ave, Ellendale

FORECLOSURE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:
DATE OF MORTGAGE: September 8, 2014
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: $99,170.00
MORTGAGOR(S): Cindy K. Rogness, a married person
MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a Delaware corporation, as nominee for Wintrust Mortgage, a division of Barrington Bank and Trust Co., N.A.
DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on September 9, 2014 as Document Number A000398644 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota.
ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: None.
LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot Three (3), Block One (1), in Stormo Addition to City of Owatonna, Minnesota.
STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 1314 N CEDAR AVENUE, OWATONNA, MN 55060
COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele County, Minnesota.
THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: $96,964.55
TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.
NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Wintrust Mortgage, a division of Barrington Bank and Trust Co., N.A.
RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-157-0103
TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 100031200012152291
THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part.
PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:
DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 13, 2018 at 10:00 AM.
PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, Minnesota.
to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of sale.
TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on August 13, 2018.
THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None

Dated: December 19, 2017

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A. Mortgagee

THE ACADEMY LAW GROUP, P.A.

By: /s/

Rebecca F. Schiller, Esq.
N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq.
Samuel R. Coleman, Esq.
Corbin C. Smith, Esq.
Attorneys for Mortgagee
The Academy Professional Building
25 Dale Street North
St. Paul, MN 55102
(651) 209-9760
(17-1292-FC01)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

12/26, 1/2, 1/9, 1/16,1/26, 1/30

FORECLOSURE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that default has occurred in conditions of the following described mortgage:
DATE OF MORTGAGE: October 3, 2008
MORTGAGOR: Mary Jean Patterson, single woman.
MORTGAGEE:
Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Advisors Mortgage, LLC its successors and assigns.
DATE AND PLACE OF RECORDING: Filed October 9, 2008, Steele County Registrar of Titles, Document No. T000063549 on Certificate of Title No. 15636.
ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: U.S. Bank National Association. Dated September 19, 2017 Filed September 25, 2017 , as Document No. T000075332.
Said Mortgage being upon Registered Land.
TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.
TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER ON MORTGAGE: 100199600000155495
LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON MORTGAGE: Advisors Mortgage, LLC
RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE SERVICER: U.S. Bank National Association
MORTGAGED PROPERTY ADDRESS: 455 Kriesel Place Northeast, Owatonna, MN 55060
TAX PARCEL I.D. #: 173360112
LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:
Lot 12, Block 1, Heers Addition No. 4, Owatonna, Minnesota
COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: $144,281.00
AMOUNT DUE AND CLAIMED TO BE DUE AS OF DATE OF NOTICE, INCLUDING TAXES, IF ANY, PAID BY MORTGAGEE: $125,640.08
That prior to the commencement of this mortgage foreclosure proceeding Mortgagee/ Assignee of Mortgagee complied with all notice requirements as required by statute;
That no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said mortgage, or any part thereof;
PURSUANT to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:
DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 2, 2018 at 10:00 AM
PLACE OF SALE:
Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, MN
to pay the debt then secured by said Mortgage, and taxes, if any, on said premises, and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys' fees allowed by law subject to redemption within six (6) months from the date of said sale by the mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns unless reduced to Five (5) weeks under MN Stat. §580.07.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: If the real estate is an owner-occupied, single-family dwelling, unless otherwise provided by law, the date on or before which the mortgagor(s) must vacate the property if the mortgage is not reinstated under section 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under section 580.23 is 11:59 p.m. on August 2, 2018 unless that date falls on a weekend or legal holiday, in which case it is the next weekday, and unless the redemption period is reduced to 5 weeks under MN Stat. Secs. 580.07 or 582.032.

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE:None
"THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED."

Dated: November 28, 2017

U.S. Bank National Association
Mortgagee/Assignee of Mortgagee

USSET, WEINGARDEN AND LIEBO, P.L.L.P.
Attorneys for Mortgagee/ Assignee of Mortgagee
4500 Park Glen Road #300
Minneapolis, MN 55416
(952) 925-6888
19 - 17-007504 FC

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

12/12,12/19,12/26 1/2,1/9,1/16

FORECLOSURE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that default has occurred in conditions of the following described mortgage:
DATE OF MORTGAGE: October 23, 2013
MORTGAGOR: Francis L. Pete and Louise Pete who acquired title as Louise M. Barker, husband and wife, as joint tenants.
MORTGAGEE:
Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Citibank, N.A..
DATE AND PLACE OF RECORDING: Filed December 3, 2013, Steele County Registrar of Titles, Document No. T000071027 on Certificate of Title No. 17106.
ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: CitiMortgage, Inc.. Dated January 5, 2016 Filed January 19, 2016 , as Document No. T000073389. And thereafter assigned to: Nationstar Mortgage d/b/a Mr. Cooper. Dated November 17, 2017 Filed November 27, 2017 , as Document No. T000075625. Said Mortgage being upon Registered Land.
TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.
TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER ON MORTGAGE: 100011511237743902
LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON MORTGAGE: Citibank, N.A.
RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE SERVICER: Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper
MORTGAGED PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1419 North Cedar Avenue , Owatonna, MN 55060
TAX PARCEL I.D. #: 17-156-0209
LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:
Lot Nine (9); and Lot Ten (10), Except the South 70 feet of Lot 10, in Block Two (2) in Ochs' Addition to the City of Owatonna, Minnesota, County of Steele.
COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: $156,500.00
AMOUNT DUE AND CLAIMED TO BE DUE AS OF DATE OF NOTICE, INCLUDING TAXES, IF ANY, PAID BY MORTGAGEE: $161,662.64
That prior to the commencement of this mortgage foreclosure proceeding Mortgagee/ Assignee of Mortgagee complied with all notice requirements as required by statute;
That no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said mortgage, or any part thereof;
PURSUANT to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:
DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 16, 2018 at 10:00 AM
PLACE OF SALE:
Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, MN
to pay the debt then secured by said Mortgage, and taxes, if any, on said premises, and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys' fees allowed by law subject to redemption within six (6) months from the date of said sale by the mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns unless reduced to Five (5) weeks under MN Stat. §580.07.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: If the real estate is an owner-occupied, single-family dwelling, unless otherwise provided by law, the date on or before which the mortgagor(s) must vacate the property if the mortgage is not reinstated under section 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under section 580.23 is 11:59 p.m. on August 16, 2018, unless that date falls on a weekend or legal holiday, in which case it is the next weekday, and unless the redemption period is reduced to 5 weeks under MN Stat. Secs. 580.07 or 582.032.

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE:None
"THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED."

Dated: December 11, 2017

Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper
Mortgagee/Assignee of Mortgagee
USSET, WEINGARDEN AND LIEBO, P.L.L.P.
Attorneys for Mortgagee/ Assignee of Mortgagee
4500 Park Glen Road #300
Minneapolis, MN 55416
(952) 925-6888
21 - 17-005832 FC

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

12/19,12/26,1/2 1/9,1/16,1/23

FORECLOSURE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:
DATE OF MORTGAGE: September 30, 2004
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: $163,920.00
MORTGAGOR(S): John Devetter and Colleen Devetter, husband and wife
MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a Delaware corporation, as nominee for Timberland Mortgage Services, Inc., a Minnesota corporation
DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on October 1, 2004 as Document Number A000326156 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota.
ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. by assignment recorded on July 11, 2011 as Document Number A000378974 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota; thereafter assigned to GCAT Management Services 2015-13 LLC by assignment recorded on August 25, 2015 as Document Number A000403768 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota; thereafter assigned to MTGLQ Investors, L.P. by assignment recorded on October 18, 2017 as Document Number A000415351 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota.
LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Commencing at the Southwest corner of the Southeast Quarter of Section 35, Township 107 North, Range 21 West, thence running East 1545.7 feet which point is the true point of beginning, thence running North 340 feet, thence running East 384.3 feet, thence running South 340 feet; thence running west to the point of beginning, Steele County, Minnesota.
STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 5348 48TH STREET SOUTHWEST, OWATONNA, MN 55060
COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele County, Minnesota.
THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: $160,595.30
TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.
NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Timberland Mortgage Services, Inc., a Minnesota corporation
RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Rushmore Loan Management Services, LLC
TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 09-035-2204
TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 100321500021405989
THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part.
PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:
DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 13, 2018 at 10:00 AM.
PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, Minnesota.
to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of sale.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on August 13, 2018.

THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: Colleen Devetter a/k/a Colleen Ahern

Dated: December 15, 2017
MTGLQ INVESTORS, L.P. Mortgagee
THE ACADEMY LAW GROUP, P.A.

By: /s/

Rebecca F. Schiller, Esq.
N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq.
Samuel R. Coleman, Esq.
Corbin C. Smith, Esq.
Attorneys for Mortgagee
The Academy Professional Building
25 Dale Street North
St. Paul, MN 55102
(651) 209-9760
(16-0377-FC01)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

12/19,12/26,1/2 1/9,1/16,1/23

NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF STEELE

DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
PROBATE DIVISION

Court File Number: 74-PR-17-2379

NOTICE AND ORDER OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In Re: Estate of
Eleanor Jean Anderson,
Decedent

It is Ordered and Notice is given that on March 5, 2018, at 3:00 p.m., a hearing will be held in this Court at, 111 E. Main Street, Owatonna, Minnesota, for the formal probate of an instrument purporting to be the Will of the Decedent dated, August 7, 1990, ("Will"), and for the appointment of Jeri Linn Alwes, whose address is 527 1st St. NE, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917 and Juli Ann Anderson, whose address is 4429 Urbandale Court N., Plymouth, MN 55446 as Personal Representatives of the Estate of the Decedent in an UNSUPERVISED administration. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representatives will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

Joseph A. Bueltel
12.28.2017
Judge of District Court

Attorney for Petitioner
Eric J. Mattison
Einhaus, Mattison, Carver & Haberman, P.A.
202 N. Cedar Avenue
Owatonna, MN, 55060
Attorney License No: 151609
Telephone: (507) 451-3580
FAX: (507) 451-3532
Email: mattison@owatonnalawyers.com

1/9, 1/16

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS FOR 2018

The Annual Meeting and Election of Officers of the Steele Co. Chapter of Minnesota Pheasants for 2018 will be held at the KC Hall, 820 S. Elm, Owatonna on Tuesday Feb 6 with social hour at 6:30 and meeting at 7:00

Please Contact Kevin Johnson 455-0880

1/9 ,1/16 ,1/23

9 arrests made locally during holiday DWI sweep

Nine motorists in Steele County provided a sobering reminder of drinking and driving dangers over the holidays.

During the holiday DWI campaign that included extra enforcement from Nov. 22-Dec. 31, Owatonna Police arrested seven drunk drivers while the Steele County Sheriff's Office had two arrests.

In addition, troopers with the Minnesota State Patrol arrested 68 drivers throughout the 11-county southeastern region, which includes Steele, Dodge, Freeborn and Mower counties.

Statewide, police officers made 2,656 DWI arrests over the holiday campaign. More than 300 law enforcement agencies across the state participated in the campaign.

With the holidays behind, traffic safety experts are now focusing their attention on the upcoming Super Bowl. Public safety officials are asking, "What's your sober game plan?"

"Nobody plans on getting behind the wheel and taking a life, but that's exactly what you are risking if you decide to drive after drinking," said Mike Hanson, director of the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety. "If you plan on drinking, make a sober game plan. The message is simple: before watching the Big Game or heading out to enjoy an evening that may include alcohol, plan ahead and line up a sober ride."

Super Bowl weekend is typically a challenging time on Minnesota roads with some people choosing to get behind the wheel after drinking. During a five year period from 2011 to 2015, an average of 180 people were arrested for DWI during the Super Bowl weekend.

GUEST COLUMN

Time to focus on school choice in Steele and Dodge counties

BY ANDREW R. CAMPANELLA

Later this month, schools, homeschool groups, organizations, and individuals in Minnesota and across America will work together to raise awareness about the importance of opportunity in K-12 education.

National School Choice Week begins on Sunday and celebrates all types of schools and education environments for children.

Nationwide, 32,240 different events and activities – such as open houses, school fairs, and information sessions – are being planned, with an estimated attendance of 6.7 million people. In fact, 452 of those events and activities will be held in Minnesota, and one is in Steele County and two are in Dodge County.

National School Choice Week has been celebrated every year since 2011. And even with increased awareness, many families still have questions about school choice and how it can benefit them and their communities.

The first thing to know is that school choice isn't partisan or political. It isn't about a specific set of policy goals either. Rather, it's about parents making personal decisions for their children.

School choice means empowering individual parents with the opportunity to search for, and find, the best education environments for their individual children – regardless of where they live or how much money they make.

Finding the right school is important, because every child has unique talents, challenges, and needs. School choice isn't about finding fault with any of the schooling options available. Instead, it recognizes that while one student might thrive at a neighborhood school, another student might do better somewhere else.

Research shows that when parents actively choose schools and education environments for their children, students are more likely to succeed in school. They are also more likely to graduate from high school, get good jobs, and participate in their communities.

School choice isn't just theoretical. Right now, more parents in Minnesota and across America are actively choosing the education environments for their children than at any other time in history.

National School Choice Week provides parents with an opportunity to evaluate the education options available for their children. If parents are interested in switching their child to a different school, or considering homeschooling, it helps to start looking into these options in the winter.

Families in Minnesota can choose from traditional public schools, public charter schools, public magnet schools, private schools, online academies, and homeschooling.

Searching for a new school, or considering an alternative education environment, doesn't have to be daunting. Parents can start by talking to their children and other parents, researching schools online, and visiting schools in person. A good place to start is the National School Choice Week website: www.schoolchoiceweek.com, where we provide more information about specific school choice options in the North Star State as well as listings of the tens of thousands of local and regional events happening this year.

National School Choice Week is a time when the country comes together around the idea that every child can succeed when they find the right school fit. This January, parents have more options and opportunities than ever before to find that right fit. For individual communities and for our country, that is a good thing.

A nationally recognized advocate for children and families, Andrew R. Campanella serves as president of National School Choice Week, the world's largest-annual celebration of opportunity in education. He lives in Northwest Florida.

Crossword solution

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FORECLOSURE

11-073286

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:
DATE OF MORTGAGE: May 1, 2003
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: $89,000.00
MORTGAGOR(S): Paula L. Aldrich and Raymond P. Aldrich, wife and husband
MORTGAGEE: Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc.
LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON THE MORTGAGE: Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc.
SERVICER: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Filed May 6, 2003, Steele County Recorder, as Document Number A 310176
LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:
Commencing at a point 2 rods East and 12 rods and 2 links South of the NW corner of E1/4 of SE1/4 of SE1/4 of Section 3-107-20; running thence East 127.60 feet; thence South 66 feet; thence West 127.60 feet; thence North 66 feet to the point of beginning
AND
The E1/2 of the following described property: Commencing at a point 2 rods East and 12 rods and 2 links South of the NW corner of E1/4 of SE1/4 of SE1/4 of Section 3-107-20; thence East to a point 2 rods West of the East boundary of said SE1/4 of said SE1/4; thence South 66 feet; thence West to a point 2 rods East of the West boundary line of said E1/4 of SE1/4 of SE1/4; thence North 66 feet to point of beginning
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1315 Bigelow Ave, Owatonna, MN 55060
PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17.003.2207
COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele
THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: $77,766.35
THAT all pre-foreclosure requirements have been complied with; that no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said mortgage, or any part thereof;
PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:
DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 22, 2018, 10:00am
PLACE OF SALE: Sheriff's Main Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, MN 55060
to pay the debt secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any, on said premises and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys fees allowed by law, subject to redemption within 6 months from the date of said sale by the mortgagor(s) the personal representatives or assigns.
TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: If the real estate is an owner-occupied, single-family dwelling, unless otherwise provided by law, the date on or before which the mortgagor(s) must vacate the property, if the mortgage is not reinstated under section 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under section 580.23, is 11:59 p.m. on August 22, 2018, or the next business day if August 22, 2018 falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday

"THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES SECTION 582.032 DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN 5 UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

Dated: January 2, 2018

Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. Mortgagee

SHAPIRO & ZIELKE, LLP

BY _____
Lawrence P. Zielke - 152559
Diane F. Mach - 273788
Melissa L. B. Porter - 0337778
Randolph W. Dawdy - 2160X
Gary J. Evers - 0134764
Tracy J. Halliday - 034610X
Attorneys for Mortgagee
Shapiro & Zielke, LLP
12550 West Frontage Road, Suite 200
Burnsville, MN 55337
(952) 831-4060

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR

1/9,1/16,1/23
1/30, 2/6,2/13

NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF STEELE

DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
PROBATE DIVISION

Court File Number: 74-PR-17-2389

NOTICE OF INFORMAL PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In Re: Estate of
Beverly J. Moen,
a/k/a Beverly Moen
Decedent

Notice is given that an application for informal probate of the Decedent's will dated October 25, 2010 has been filed with the registrar. The application has been granted.

Notice is also given that the Registrar has informally appointed Marti Lillesve whose address is, 4500 Ranchview Lane North, Plymouth, MN 55446, as personal representative of the Estate of the Decedent. Any heir, devisee or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as personal representative or may object to the appointment of the personal representative. Unless objections are filed with the Court (pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-607) and the Court otherwise orders, the personal representative has full power to administer the Estate, including, after 30 days from the date of issuance of letters, the power to sell, encumber, lease, or distribute real estate.

Any objections to the probate of the Will or appointment of the Personal Representative must be filed with this Court and will be heard by the Court after the filling of an appropriate petition and proper notice of hearing.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

A charitable beneficiary may request notice of the probate proceedings be given to the Attorney General pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 501B.41, subdivision 5.

Kris Schmitz
12.29.2017
Registrar

Attorney for Estate
Name: Steven T. Rizzi Jr.
Firm: Adams, Rizzi Sween, P.A.
Street: 300 First Street NW
City, State, Zip: Austin, MN 55912
Attorney License No: 153126
Telephone: (507) 433-7394
FAX: (507) 433-8890
Email: srizzi@adamsrizzisween.com

1/9, 1/16

NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF STEELE

DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
PROBATE DIVISION

Court File Number: 74-PR-18-10

NOTICE AND ORDER OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S) AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In Re: Estate of
Carole Elizabeth Nordlie,
a/k/a Carole E. Nordlie,
a/k/a Carole Nordlie,
Decedent

It is Ordered and Notice is given that on March 5, 2018 at 3:00 a.m./p.m., a hearing will be held in this Court at the Steele County Courthouse, 111 E. Main Street, Owatonna, Minnesota, for the formal probate of an instrument purporting to be the Will of the Decedent, dated November 16, 1995, and codicil(s) to the Will dated, and separate writing(s) under Minn. Stat. 524.2-513 ("Will"), and for the appointment of LaRae Nordlie , whose address is 401 Pebble Beach Drive NE, Owatonna, MN 55060, as personal representative(s) of the Estate of the Decedent in an UNSUPERVISED administration. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the personal representative(s) will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, to sell real estate and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minn. Stat. 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative(s) or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be forever barred.

Joseph A. Bueltel
1/3/2018
Judge

Attorney for Personal Representative
Mark M. Walbran
WALBRAN & FURNESS
140 E. Main Street,
P. O. Box 273
Owatonna, MN 55060
Phone: (507) 451-1173
Fax: (507) 451-8916
Attorney License No.: 113712

1/16, 1/23

STEELE COUNTY

Steele County Commissioner's Synopsis for 11/28/17
Complete minutes can be viewed on the Steele County Website.

Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
1. Glynn/Gnemi to approve the agenda.
A. Approve the November 14, 2017 Special Board Minutes.
B. Approve the Bills.
C. Approve Personnel Report.
D. Approve the Contract between the City of Medford and the Steele County Sheriff to provide Law Enforcement Protection from 01/01/18 through 12/31/18.
E. Accept Public Works Policy Committee Minutes.
F. Accept Land Use & Records Committee Minutes
G. Approve 2018-2019 Landfill Waste Delivery Contracts.
H. Authorize the chair to sign the 2018-2019 Feedlot Delegation Agreement Work Plan.
I. Approve $1,101.46 from the Aquatic Invasive Species Grant funds for AIS ad space in the 2018 Steele County plat book.
2. Glynn/Krueger to approve the 2018-2019 Radiological Emergency Preparedness Grant Agreement in the amount of $12,000. Ayes all.
3. Executive Director Jane Hardwick and Finance Manager Kevin Venenga gave a 3rd quarter update for MnPrairie County Alliance. Charity Floen and Brandon Smith explained the Adult & Disabilities Services Program.
4. Glynn/Krueger offered a Resolution to adopt the Steele County 2018 Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan. Upon the vote being taken, five Commissioners voted in favor thereof, none absent and not voting. A copy of the Resolution in on file in the Auditor's office.
5. Glynn/Abbe offered a Resolution to approve and authorize the Chair to sign a "Conflict of Interest Disclosure" form as part of the Grant agreement for State funds available for the Steele County Public Works Building. Upon the vote being taken, five Commissioners voted in favor thereof, note absent and not voting. A copy of the Resolution in on file in the Auditor's office.
6. Glynn/Krueger offered a Resolution to approve and authorize the Chair to sign a Certification for a "Minnesota Management and Budget State of Minnesota General Obligation Bond Financed Property land" restriction form as part of the Grant agreement for State funds available for the Steele County Public Works Building. Upon the vote being taken, five Commissioners voted in favor thereof, none absent and not voting. A copy of the Resolution is on file in the Auditor's office.
7. Glynn/Krueger offered a Resolution relating to Financing of Certain Proposed Projects to be undertaken by the County; establishing Compliance with Reimbursement Bond Regulations under the Internal Revenue code. Upon the vote being taken, five Commissioners voted in favor thereof, none absent and not voting. A copy of the Resolution is on file in the Auditor's office.
8. Gnemi/Glynn to approve a supplemental Agreement to the Amcon Construction Management Contract for an additional $130,000 for the Public Works Building. Ayes all.
9. Gnemi/Glynn to approve the Steele County Attorney and Administrator to negotiate a lease agreement with Steele County Transitional Housing to lease County owned property at 119-121 E Mill St. Ayes all.
10. Krueger/Gnemi to approve the Asset transfer of a 1988 John Deere Row Crop Tractor, Unit #2064 from the Highway Department to the Landfill Department. Ayes all.
11. Abbe/Gnemi to approve the Asset transfer of a 1984 Ford F-350 Flatbed, Unit #8140 from the Highway Department to the Buildings and Grounds Department. Ayes all.

LISTING OF BILLS
11/28/2017

Amazon	4,868.30
Erickson Engineering Co LLC	5,695.41
Jones Haugh & Smith Inc	3,642.80
Microsoft	5,317.94
Mn Dept of Transp – Commiss of Transp	6,428.59
Newegg	4,023.44
Oertel Architects	11,239.50
RDO Equipment Co, Inc	4,098.51
Rocon Incorporated	57,132.65
SCR Southern-Rochester	3,391.26
Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc	12,295.67
Steele County Treasurer	12,271.10
Streamline Communications LLC	3,264.88
Summit Food Service Management	10,338.84
Sunbelt Rental	7,791.26
Wencl Drywall LLC	3,000.00
128 Warrants under $2,000	47,694.09
Total:	$ 202,494.24

Motion by Commissioner Gnemi, seconded by Commissioner Abbe to adjourn the Call of the Chair at 7:48 p.m. Ayes all.

1/16

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Caleb's Pet Sitting, Cats & Dogs, please call me at 507-634 -7907. 33tfc

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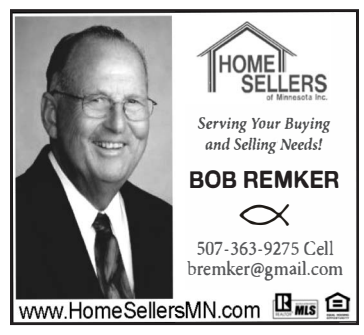

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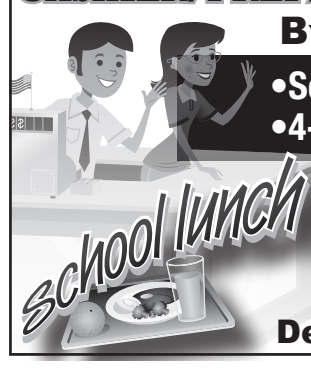

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PH# 507-374-2578
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