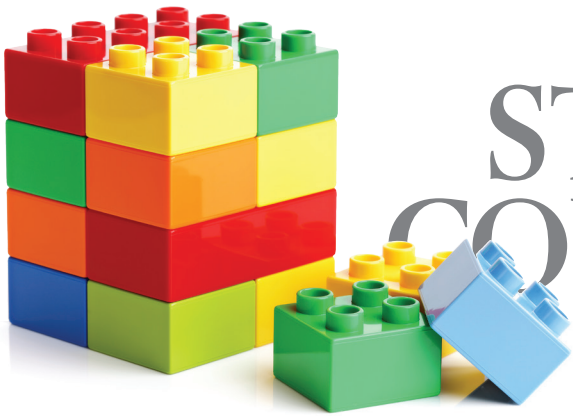




STEELE COUNTY Times

EXTRA: LEGOS D1

www.steeledodgenews.com

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2018

Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

More wind energy could breeze into area

By RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

In what would be one of the largest wind projects in the area, a Florida company is proposing to bring 71 turbines to Steele and Dodge counties next year.

NextEra Energy Resources revealed its plans to the Steele County Board last week to construct a large wind farm in Aurora and Havana townships on the east side of the county. Most of the project, however, would be built in Dodge County's Ripley Township.

The project is called Dodge Wind Energy Center. It would feature 71 wind turbines that would produce 170 megawatts of energy. About a dozen of the turbines would be constructed in Steele County with the rest in Dodge County.

In comparison, Oak Glen Wind Farm located north of Blooming Prairie produces 44 megawatts with 24 turbines. In 2011, Oak Glen became the first and remains the only wind farm in Steele County.

NextEra has begun a 12-month long permitting process through the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. Wind farms are regulated by the state, and not local counties, according to Dale Oolman, planning and zoning director for Steele County. "There will be public input for anyone that wants to comment on the project," Oolman said.

Melissa DeVetter, planning and zoning director for Dodge County, said the process to get approval for

SEE WIND FARM, A6

Drugs and loaded firearm seized in BP raid

By RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Police seized a large amount of drugs and weapons, including a loaded firearm, during a drug bust in Blooming Prairie.

Chief Greg Skillestad said his officers executed a search warrant at a residence in the 500 block of Center Avenue on May 3. The SWAT team and Steele County Sheriff's Office assisted Blooming Prairie with the raid.

Officers had been watching the home for quite some time after receiving numerous complaints about suspicious activity going on there, Skillestad said. But, he added, it was never enough to rise to the level of obtaining a search warrant.

However, that all changed on April 29 when the resident of the house, James Ogden, 36, was arrested after a traffic stop in Mitchell County, Iowa. During the stop, officers found 375 grams of marijuana as well as prescription pills and cash. Ogden has been charged with possession with the intent to deliver marijuana.

Mitchell County authorities contacted local police after their encounter with Ogden. "What really gave us the information we needed was when he was stopped in Iowa and arrested," Skillestad said. "I want to commend the officer for making the stop in Iowa. He did us a service in the City of Blooming Prairie to move forward."

The bust took place on the same day Ogden posted bail in Iowa. He was not at his Blooming Prairie home at the time of the search warrant, Skillestad said.

During the search at Ogden's Blooming Prairie house, officers seized a "substantially large amount of drugs and weapons," police said.

One of the items found was a loaded handgun, which Ogden is prohibited from having because of his prior criminal history of domestic violence, according to Skillestad.

Based on the amount of drugs found,

'We typically see drugs, guns and violence. It's a mixture for disaster.'

Chief Greg Skillestad
Blooming Prairie Police



COURTESY BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

Blooming Prairie Police seized a large amount of marijuana, knives and a loaded handgun during a raid of a house on Center Avenue May 3. Although no charges have yet been filed, Chief Greg Skillestad expects charges will come down once all the reports get to the county attorney's office.

Skillestad classifies Ogden as a "dealer" of at least marijuana. "It was definitely a source of income for him," the chief said, adding he has no idea how long Ogden is suspected of dealing drugs.

Ogden has not been charged in connection with the Blooming Prairie raid. Skillestad said he anticipates charges from the county attorney's office once all the reports are completed.

Local police have not had any prior contact with Ogden.

After the bust, police posted photographs and information on the department's Facebook page. Some people responded by blasting police for the raid. "You cops are a joke," one man said. "Pot isn't a big deal."

But Chief Skillestad criticized those people as "missing the whole picture" of the impact marijuana has in society. He said drug use generally starts with marijuana and leads to more serious drugs.

Even though marijuana has become legal in some states, Skillestad said those areas are now experiencing increased problems with pot use. "People are overdosing on marijuana and ending up in the emergency room," he noted.

"Marijuana is not a safe drug," Skillestad said. "There's way too many people that think it's safe and then get behind the wheel and crash," he said, adding drivers can be charged with driving under the influence of marijuana.

Said Skillestad of the drug problem facing society: "We typically see drugs, guns and violence. It's a mixture for disaster."

Skillestad encourages residents to continue calling police about anything suspicious. "If something just doesn't seem right, let us know," he said.

DAVID RIESS MURDER INVESTIGATION

Alleged grandma killer pleads not guilty

By RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

The suspected grandma killer from Blooming Prairie has pleaded not guilty in connection with at least one of the murders she is accused of committing.

Lois Riess, 56, waived her arraignment hearing and entered a plea by filing court documents in Lee County Florida last Thursday. She did not make an appearance in court.

Riess has been charged with killing Pamela Hutchinson, 59, on April 5 in a Fort Myers Beach hotel room. Authorities have said Riess befriended Hutchinson just days before killing her in an effort to steal her identity.

After the alleged killing, Riess is accused of taking off from Florida with Hutchinson's vehicle. Riess eventually ended up in South Padre Island, Texas after a nationwide manhunt. U.S. Marshals took Riess into custody on April 19 at a restaurant in South Padre Island.

The arraignment hearing for Riess was previously scheduled for May 29. However, with last week's plea, the arraignment has been canceled. No new court date has been set.

Dodge County Sheriff Scott Rose said Thursday his office is still awaiting lab results from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension in St. Paul before

SEE RIESS, A3

Goldy finds Gopher fans

Goldy, the Gopher mascot for the University of Minnesota, found himself in good company last week when he spotted Gophers fans in Owatonna during the U of M Gopher Road Trip. Goldy takes a breather by resting on the head of Roger Sorenson of Blooming Prairie. Sorenson was one of more than 300 people who attended the road trip tour featuring Gopher coaches and the athletic director. See sports for more details on the tour.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

BP instructor achieves state FFA honor

By HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Farming and agriculture have always been part of Bill Rinkenberger's identity.

Rinkenberger, vocational agriculture instructor and Future Farmers of America chapter advisor at Blooming Prairie High School, was recently honored with an Honorary FFA Degree.

He received the recognition and plaque at the state FFA convention held April 23 at Mariucci Arena in Minneapolis. The convention ran from April 22-24. Thirteen BP FFA members attended.

One of 20 outstanding teachers and business professionals in Minnesota to receive the degree, Rinkenberger said he was "very humbled" by his selection to receive the FFA Degree.

These recipients demonstrate success and support of FFA and agricultural education. Each year, the Minnesota FFA Association recognizes the contributions of those who have made a significant impact toward the success of the membership and the organization.

Many of these individuals have served in numerous leadership roles through Career Development Events, the State Officer team, the FFA Foundation or Alumni events.

Others receiving the chapter Degree award were: Randy Barka, Ag Mechanics CDE superintendent; Patti Bjorklund, Career Development Events; Veronica Bruckhoff, Profinium Financial Lance Brune, Willmar Senior High School; Jim Burns, Minnesota MMA Alumni; Jeremy Daberkow, Martin County West High School; Pat Dingels, Minnesota FFA Foundation; Craig Flor, Norther Crops Institute; Mark Jirik, Northern Crops Institute; Charles Larson, Kenyon Wanamingo High School; Richard Olson, Ulen

SEE FFA, A3

\$1.00 | Volume 126, No. 42



507-583-4431 | bptimes@frontiernet.net

INSIDE

Opinions..... A2
Obituaries..... A4
Worship & Faith..... A5
Hometown Sports B1
Public Safety..... B4
Golf Guide..... B6
Hometown Living..... C1
NRHEG Honor Roll..... C4
Community Calendar . C5
Business Section. D2-D3
Public Notices..... D4
Extra: Legos..... D6

AREA DEATHS

Sue E. Mataczynski, 68,
Blooming Prairie
Scott H. Easton, 55, Blooming Prairie
Gerald F. Oxley, 87, Blooming Prairie

*Serving
Blooming Prairie
and Steele County
since 1893*

EDITORIAL

Honor our public safety warriors

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. ~ Matthew 5:9

Being a law enforcement officer can be a thankless job. Officers are out on the front lines of the war against crime. They stick their necks out when the rest of us run for cover and hide. They jump into the middle of mayhem when everyone else helplessly stands by and watches. And sometimes even criticize.

This week is National Police Week, which was created about 27 years ago as a way to honor those officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others. Officers have died in the line of duty once in Blooming Prairie and four times in Dodge County. These heroes have given the ultimate sacrifice: Neil Johnson, chief of BP; Ole Havey, village marshal of Hayfield; Gregory Lange, chief of Claremont; Loring Guenther, captain of Dodge County and Douglas Claassen, chief of Hayfield.

When a police officer dies in the line of duty, it's not just the police officer that suffers, but rather the entire community. We need to remember fallen officers so that their sacrifices in keeping our communities safe are never forgotten.

The same goes for living officers who make sacrifices to keep the lawless under control for the betterment of society. We need to honor all police officers. Let them know how much they are appreciated. Without them, our lives would be in total despair and mayhem surrounding us.

It's easy for us to forget about the sacrifices made by law enforcement in order for us to live in the comforts of our homes and go about our daily living. Police officers, for example, work all hours, holiday and weekends while spending time away from their families.

But let's not forget about the other public safety heroes in our midst. There are firefighters, paramedics, EMTs and dispatchers who also deserve recognition for their efforts in keeping our communities safe. Many of them hardly get paid as they are called to serve their communities as volunteers.

All public safety warriors are underpaid and underappreciated for what they do. The one commonality in nearly every one of them is that they risk their lives in order to maintain peace and keep us safe. They are unsung heroes who are selfless and heroic every time they answer a 911 call for help.

The least we can do is provide support and trust to public safety personnel who live right alongside of us. They are truly our hometown heroes.



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

journalism, perhaps reading what Mr. Warner wrote will help clarify. He was truly a giant in the newspaper industry across Minnesota for many years. I was fortunate to work alongside of him for about five years when I broke into the business as an eighth grader.

This is what Warner shared about me in 2013:

Hardworking, inquisitive, fearless, visionary, bulldog.

Yes, these identify Rick Bussler.

Rick was an eighth grader when he learned the Brownton Bulletin's photographer would be leaving for college. Never lacking in confidence, he popped into the office and offered his services.

Cliff and June, his parents, were well known throughout the community as hardworking, straight-shooting, dedicated people. Their Bussler Durocs not only annually walked off with grand champion honors at the McLeod County Fair, they constantly earned top honors with their hogs at the Minnesota State Fair—and sold many animals on the international market. They were pillars in the 4-H and held leadership positions in the state Duroc association and the county fair organization. June is a long-time employee of the award-winning McLeod County Chronicle in Glencoe.

One might say, Rick has good genes.

The Bulletin had a string of hard-working, award-winning, fun-loving photographers. Rick stepped right in, not only following their footsteps, but he took the department to another level. Imitation is the highest forum of flattery and picking up where those ahead have moved and improving on what's left you, is a single achievement.

The real story about Rick Bussler

Rick excelled with the camera. The first few weeks he'd receive his assignment and get the job done. Soon he was coming up with his own ideas, first with sports photography but soon with general news shots as well. One of the Bulletin's trademarks was a quarter-page picture on the front page. Didn't take long and Rick would come up with outstanding ideas for this shot.

Back in those days, in our small shop, the photographer not only took the shots. He also developed the film, made the determination as to the size of the pictures and then printed them.

Soon the young shutterbug branched out into writing. His sports stories featured coaches' quotes, solid statistics, and interesting narrative. Once in a while he got pretty long-winded, but once he was shown what was unnecessary he quickly put on the brakes.

All too many reporters and photo people tend to be timid about getting close to the action. Rick wasn't. Many of his sports pictures seemed to put the reader right in the middle of action.

Rick had the vision to mentally layout what the reader would like and then the tenacity to finish the job. He saw the potential in a story and he'd stick with it until it was successfully completed. He was a real bulldog. A true hard worker.

Each year the Minnesota Newspaper Association conducts its Better Newspaper Contest. There were over 300 weekly newspapers in the state. With Rick playing a solid role the Brownton Bulletin, in 1984, became the first weekly from a small town—less than 800 population and less than 1,200 circulation—to win the Mills Award and be named the top weekly paper in Minnesota.

I'm proud to say Rick Bussler got his start in newspapering at my shop. It's great to see him continue in the trade.

Chuck Warner, Former publisher of Brownton Bulletin

And I'm proud to say that I worked for Chuck Warner, one of the greatest small town newspaper publishers Minnesota has ever experienced. He truly has left behind a great legacy.

It's now time for me to go in hot pursuit of living up to Chuck's expectations of putting out a first class, quality newspaper.

GUEST COLUMNS

Supporting a free and open Internet

By AMY KLOBUCHAR

Minnesotans in rural communities across our state are at risk of losing their access to a free and open internet. People like Lane from Avon, who at 21 years old is worried about getting his graphic design business off the ground. The internet has helped him get the word out about his designs and he plans to use that momentum to set up his own company, but he's worried that recent changes to net neutrality rules could make it harder for his small business to succeed. Minnesotans and Americans across the country share this young entrepreneur's concerns.

For years, the internet has allowed businesses to compete on a level playing field. It has given Americans access to television shows and day-to-day information on everything from driving directions to restaurant reviews. This openness online has been possible because our net neutrality rules prevented internet service providers from discriminating against certain people, content, platforms, and websites by charging more for equal access. The law made sure all data was treated equally. These rules formed the bedrock underneath the open internet by preventing big internet service providers from blocking, slowing, and prioritizing web traffic.

But the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) vote to end those protections threatens to change the way we communicate with each other, how companies do business, how consumers buy goods, and even how we educate our kids. It means that big internet service providers will be able to discriminate against businesses, content and users, charge more for their competitor's content, or slow down internet service arbitrarily. A two-tiered system that creates a fast lane only for those who can afford it and a slow lane for everyone else is just wrong.

And many Americans agree. When the FCC announced its proposal to eliminate net neutrality protections earlier this year, people pushed back and filed millions of comments supporting a free and open internet.

Repealing net neutrality rules could hit rural Minnesota especially hard. For many

rural consumers with only one choice for internet service, there is no real opportunity to comparison shop or find a new provider if they are unhappy with their service. This hurts all consumers, but especially those who run and operate their own businesses.

People like the owners of Aimclear in Duluth. Small businesses rely on the internet to advertise, sell their products directly to consumers and interact with clients. Aimclear has grown from just one man to a large, successful digital marketing firm and that may not have been possible if they had been forced to pay extra just to compete online.

We can't allow internet service providers, instead of consumers, to be in charge of determining the future of the internet. That's why I joined 49 of my colleagues in the Senate on a bill to overturn Chairman Pai's plan and protect net neutrality rules.

We are very close to getting the support we need—we have the 30 co-sponsors necessary to start debate on the legislation and we are only one vote short of the 51 votes needed for it to pass the Senate. This week, I signed a petition that would force a vote on this bill—passing this bill in the Senate is an important step in the right direction.

I've long been a supporter of a free and open internet, and in the Senate, I've fought to increase broadband access for our rural communities. We've come a long way over the last few years to connect people to educational and economic opportunities. But the FCC's decision will undo so much of that progress by limiting competition, hindering innovation, and hurting small business entrepreneurship.

We shouldn't make it harder for small businesses to start, grow and thrive. We shouldn't be making it more difficult for them to advertise on the internet, or for individuals to access it.

I'll keep the pressure on for a fair, free, and open internet that keeps rural communities and small businesses like Lane's and Aimclear on track to compete and innovate in an increasingly global economy. It's good policy and it's good business.

Amy Klobuchar is a U.S. senator for Minnesota.

Supplemental finance bill discussions now underway

By JOHN PETERSBURG

Call it the calm before the storm.

With all of our supplemental budget bills approved in the Minnesota House and Senate, negotiations on compromise proposals have begun in earnest. Conference committees – made up of an equal number of representatives and senators – are tasked with ironing out the differences in the bills passed by both bodies and finding a solution that can be approved in both the House and Senate.

While the conferees work, those of us who are not on those conference committees have been approving a number of other policy bills on the House floor over the past several days. Some of them include proposals relating to transportation, health, and veterans priorities.

But once the conference committees finish up, things will move at very rapid pace as we attempt to pass the compromises and send them to Governor Dayton's desk.

One significant bill that has not been debated is our capital investment proposal. The House and Senate recently unveiled their separate versions, and both are making their way through the process. I'll have more details on the House bonding bill as the initiative moves forward.

Lawmakers also received some positive economic news this week. The Minnesota Office of Management and Budget announced that a forecast for the month of April showed incoming revenues greatly exceeded expectations by \$252 million. Increased income tax collections led to the majority of the improved forecast.

This is yet another indicator that Minnesota's economy is not only strong but heading in the right direction, and in my opinion, further proof that tax relief enacted at both the state and federal levels is making a difference.

As always, please contact me if you have questions, comments, or concerns. Reach me by email at rep.john.petersburg@house.mn or call my office at 651-296-5368.

Rep. John Petersburg is a state representative for District 24A, which covers Steele and Waseca counties. He resides in Waseca.

CONTACT YOUR FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE

CONGRESSMAN
Tim Walz

WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE

1034 Longworth House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

202-225-2472

MANKATO DISTRICT OFFICE

527-1/2 South Front Street
Mankato, MN 56001

507-388-2149

TOLL FREE NUMBER:

877-846-9259

SENATOR

Tina Smith

WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE

309 Hart Senate
Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

202-224-5641

ROCHESTER OFFICE

1202-1/2 7th Street NW
Suite 213
Rochester, MN 55901

507-288-2003

SENATOR

Amy Klobuchar

WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE

302 Hart Senate
Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

202-224-3244

Fax: 202-228-2186

SOUTHERN OFFICE

1130 1/2 7th Street, NW,
Room 212
Rochester, MN 55901

507-288-5321

Fax: 507-288-2922

TOLL FREE NUMBER:

1-888-224-9043

CONTACT YOUR AREA MAYORS

BLOOMING PRAIRIE MAYOR

H. Peterson
507-583-7573

ELLENDALE MAYOR

Russ Goette
507-684-2681

HAYFIELD MAYOR

Rich Fjerstad
507-477-3535

MEDFORD MAYOR

Lois M Nelson
507-390-4553
dlnelson1167@q.com

OWATONNA MAYOR

Thomas Kuntz
507-774-7342
Fax: 507-444-4394
mayor@ci.owatonna.mn.us

A state and national award winning weekly



MINNESOTA
NEWSPAPER
ASSOCIATION

2017 - 2 State Awards
2016 - 6 National Awards,
8 State Awards
2015 - 4 National Awards,
7 State Awards
2014 - 3 National Awards,
3 State Awards
2013 - 2 National Awards,
7 State Awards
2012 - 2 State Awards
2011 - 4 National Award

(Awards presented by Minnesota Newspaper Association and National Newspaper Association)

STEELE COUNTY Times

Founded in 1893
Bussler Publishing, Inc.
www.steeledodgenews.com
Email: bptimes@frontiernet.net

USPS 058-340
Published Weekly on
Tuesdays
Postmaster: Send address
changes to:
Steele County Times
P.O. Box 247
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917
Phone: 507-583-4431
Fax: 507-583-4445

PublisherRick Bussler
Sports Editor.....Dennis Marshall
Advertising Director.....Annie Anderson
Staff WriterHoward Lestrud
Staff WriterLeMar Nelson
Graphic DesignerMolly Urban
SalesTracie Anderson
Bookkeeper/SalesJaye Adams
Office AssistantNancy Prizler

ETHICS

The Steele County Times editorial staff strives to present the news in a fair and accurate manner. Please bring any grievances against the Steele County Times to the attention of the Managing Editor.

DEADLINES

News: Noon Fridays.
Web: 11 p.m. (Daily)
Advertising: 4 p.m. Thursdays.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Steele, Dodge, Freeborn
& Mower\$42
Elsewhere in Minnesota\$44
Out of state\$46

TOP STUDENTS

BP seniors earn \$170K in scholarships

By **HOWARD LESTRUD**
STAFF WRITER

It was definitely a WOW! night for selected Blooming Prairie High School seniors on May 9. Blooming Prairie seniors were given more than \$50,000 in scholarships announced during a special awards recognition banquet at the high school. Totaling Wednesday’s monies plus scholarships given directly to Blooming Prairie seniors, the grand total in scholarships was \$170,199, said BPHS counselor Mary Worke who acted as emcee. “Here we are; it will be sad to see you go but you are ready,” Worke told Blooming Prairie seniors. The Class of 2018 includes 37 seniors. “This is a very



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD
American Legion Post 52 and Auxiliary presented two scholarships to seniors Samantha Wurst and Mitch Oswald. Making the presentations were Karl Luiken, Legion commander and Legion Auxiliary president Jaclyn Schlichter.

diverse group who worked very hard on making scholarship applications,” said Worke. Worke was joined at the awards table by John Worke, high school principal; Ali Mach, associate principal; Bill Rinkenberger, vocational agriculture teacher and Barry Olson, superintendent. Mrs. Worke said 48 percent of the Blooming Prairie graduates plan to attend a four-year college. Thirty percent will enter the work force, 19 percent will attend a technical school and 3 percent will join the military, she said. American Legion Post 52 Commander Karl Luiken and Auxiliary president Jackie Schlichter presented the Legion’s Citizenship Awards to Samantha Wurst and to Mitch Oswald. Ethan Arett was given a \$4,000 scholarship from Arkema. Ricky Soto made the presentation. Overall, Mitchell Oswald received 17 scholarship awards at last week’s senior awards night. Ethan Arett followed with 10 awards. McKenna Hein claimed eight awards Wednesday night and Samantha Wurst received six awards. Outstanding senior athletes were: Samantha Wurst and Mitchell Oswald.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD
Chosen top senior athletes at Blooming Prairie High School in 2018 were Samantha Wurst, left and Mitchell Oswald. They are shown with activities director Ali Mach. Both received the recognition at the senior awards night on May 9.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD
Four \$1000 scholarships in memory of Jordan Ressler (would have graduated in 2012) were presented by Melissa Meixner and Michael Ressler. They are shown with recipients McKenna Hein, Linnea Sunde, Mitchell Oswald and Ethan Arett.

BLOOMING PRAIRIE SENIOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

American Legion Citizenship Award Samantha Wurst and Mitchell Oswald Medallions to military students Zachary Wiese Arkema Scholarship Ethan Arett Federated Insurance Maxwell Romeo Northern County Co-op Mitchell Oswald Mayo Clinic Health System Scholarship Linnea Byers-Sunde Robert Kladek Scholarship Ethan Arett Mower County Farm Bureau Scholarship Mitchell Oswald Dale Hansen Memorial Scholarship Ayren Ingvalson and Mitchell Oswald Matmen John Carlson Scholarship Ethan Arett and Mitchell Oswald Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Ethan Arett Darrell Trom Scholarship Mitchell Oswald JMAC Scholarship Ethan Arett, Mitchell Oswald, McKenna Hein and Linnea Byers-Sunde Open Arms Suicide Awareness Scholarship McKenna Hein	Eric Kaplan Memorial Mitchell Oswald Rodney Nelson Memorial Scholarship Linnea Byers-Sunde Education Foundation Emma Christianson JayCee/BPEF Mitchell Oswald, Ethan Arett and McKenna Hein Farmer's Co-Op Elevator Ethan Arett and Mitchell Oswald Magnuson Presidential Scholarship Linnea Sunde Magnuson Scholarships Mitchell Oswald, Ethan Arett, Ayren Ingvalson, McKenna Hein, Alec Ille and Jerrin Jax First Lutheran Church Nick Thompson with matching funds from Wartburg Bud Rinkenberger Memorial Scholarship Ethan Arett Ingvalson/Ford Scholarship Ethan Arett National FFA Organization Mitchell Oswald AAUW Jerrin Jax and Mitchell Oswald BP Fire Department Mitchell Oswald and Samantha Wurst	BP Ambulance Mitchell Oswald BPTA Ethan Arett and Mitchell Oswald Lions Mitchell Oswald, Jerrin Jax, Ethan Arett, Samantha Wurst and Linnea Byers-Sunde Women of Today McKenna Hein and Asia Thostenson Jo McLaughlin Memorial Scholarship McKenna Hein Mac McFarlin Harriet Srsen-Ressler Blossom Scholarship Ethan Arett , Samantha Wurst, McKenna Hein, Mitchell Oswald and Maxwell Romeo Veteran's Scholars Scholarship Alec Ille Munich Presidential Scholarship Asia Thostenson Katie Nelson Kindness Scholarship Jerrin Jax American Red Cross Scholarship McKenna Hein and Samantha Wurst Connie Njos-Gilbertson Award McKenna Hein Triple A Recognition Samantha Wurst and Ethan Arett Blooming Prairie Letter Club Outstanding Senior Athlete Samantha Wurst and Mitchell Oswald
---	---	--

RIESS: pleads not guilty

FROM A1
charges will be filed in David Riess’ death. Once the results come back, the case will be sent to the Dodge County Attorney’s Office for review. Riess will remain in custody in Florida until the murder case involving Hutchinson is resolved. Riess remains held without bond.

THE LATEST: Riess Murder Investigation

- Lois Riess pleads not guilty in Florida murder
- Riess waives arraignment hearing
- Arraignment for May 29
- canceled; no new court date set
- Dodge County Sheriff still awaiting BCA lab tests in David Riess' murder

FFA: state honor

FROM A1
Hitterdal Public Schools; Leann Pietrzak, Milaca Public Schools; LuAnn Schloesser, Minnesota FFA Alumni and Foundation; Kari Schwab, Minnesota Agriculture Education Leadership Council; Megan Seifert, Melrose Area Public Schools; Dr. Amy Smith, University of Minnesota; Cara Soukop, Minnesota Corn Growers; Val Velde, Land O’Lakes and Minnesota State Sen. Bill Weber. Rinkenberger is known by “Rink” to those who know him well, including his students. Three of Rinkenberger’s students also received State Degrees. They are: Ethan Arett, Jeremy Hocking and Haley Ryks. Local chapter members must meet certain criteria to earn an FFA Degree. A chapter member must participate in 10 activities outside of the Blooming Prairie chapter and must complete 25 hours of community service. Chapter farmer candidates



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Bill Rinkenberger, Blooming Prairie High School vocational agriculture instructor and Future Farmers of American advisor, was recently honored with an Honorary State Chapter Degree. The award was given him at the state FFA convention on April 23.

watching these kids grow up and become young adults. He grew up in the Fosston area on a small dairy farm. Fosston is located between Bemidji and Grand Forks, N.D., He was one of five siblings on his parents’ dairy farm. Prior to entering the education world, Rinkenberger worked seven years in the dairy science industry as a dairy herd manager in North Dakota and South Dakota. He is currently in his 14th year of teaching, all at Blooming Prairie High School. He said he seen lots of kids go through his vocational agriculture program. Now, he is teaching Payton Fristedt whose mother is Allie Strand and his grandfather is Greg Fristedt, owner of The Bakery in Blooming Prairie. Rinkenberger teaches students in grades 8-12. He said this year’s junior and senior classes are small, but the eighth grade and seventh grade classes are in the 80s

and 70s, respectively. He says many of his students and FFA members truly understand agriculture and are very active in their family farm operations. He also added that some kids don’t understand agriculture and still think bread comes from a store. This year’s Blooming Prairie FFA officers are: Ethan Arett, president; Tim Wolf, vice president; Colton Ivers, secretary; Kaiden Hocking, reporter; Cole Christianson, sentinel; Haley Ryks, historian and Lexi Ripka, officer at large. When he’s not teaching kids and working with the Blooming Prairie FFA chapter, Rinkenberger works part time at a small dairy farm owned by Mike and Julie Mussman of Claremont. Rinkenberger does cattle chores, milks cows, mixes feed and helps with the planting.



Plus, 4 more Burgers & 4 more Kielbasa
FREE

The Family Gourmet Buffet
2 (5 oz.) Filet Mignons
2 (5 oz.) Top Sirloins
4 Boneless Chicken Breasts (1 lb. pkg.)
2 (4 oz.) Boneless Pork Chops
4 (3 oz.) Kielbasa Sausages
4 (4 oz.) Omaha Steaks Burgers
4 (3 oz.) Potatoes au Gratin
4 (4 oz.) Caramel Apple Tarts
OS Seasoning Packet (33 oz.)
51689DFZ | \$199.90* separately
Combo Price \$49.99
*Savings shown over aggregated single item base price.

Call 1-855-758-5762 ask for 51689DFZ
www.OmahaSteaks.com/like17
Limit 2 pkgs. Free gifts must ship with #51689. Standard S&H will be added. Expires 7/31/18. ©2018 OCG | 18M0094 | Omaha Steaks, Inc.

OPEN HOUSES

Sunday, May 20th

11:30 AM-1:00 PM
10158 Hwy. 30, New Richland
\$379,900



Beautiful acreage between Beaver & St Olaf Lake. Within 2 miles from a horse ranch rodeo. Absolutely turn key w/new hardwood floors, kitchen/bathroom cabinetry. Interior/exterior doors, newer windows & much more. Previously set up for horses with a 90'x45' horse barn, a 42'x42' shop building and extra detach garage which is 26'16' This property is a must to see!

1:30-3:00 PM
19412 724th Ave., Albert Lea
\$349,900



Beautiful natural setting with appx. 1000 ft. lakeshore. Potential for CRP income. Direct lakeshore access, beautiful lake view. Well maintained home & property. Includes 28' x 40' post frame building. Wildlife galore in your own personal woods for hunting or whatever you wish. Roof replaced in 2016 also has new furnace. Home also has workshop in lower level of home.

3:30-5:00 PM
18948 Sharon Ave.,
Albert Lea, \$269,900



Beautiful site with view of Pickeral Lake and channel many upgrades to this home including new roof, windows, new septic system, and storage shed. This home has been well taken care of.

 **Hosted Craig Hoium 507-473-3048**

RON HOLTAN
REALTY
REAL ESTATE

201 S. Washington
Albert Lea, MN
ronholtanrealty.com



OBITUARIES

Gerald F. Oxley, 87, Blooming Prairie

Gerald F. Oxley, 87, of Blooming Prairie, died Monday, May 7, 2018 at Prairie Manor Care Center.

He was born Sept. 13, 1930 in Corwith, Iowa to Glen J. and Ruth (Gordon) Oxley. Gerald attended country school and graduated with the Corwith High School Class of 1948. In 1949, he began his service in the United States Army Air Force, serving until 1950.

On Nov. 8, 1950, Gerald and Marjorie Ann Arndorfer were united in marriage at St. Benedict Catholic Church in St. Benedict, Kossuth County, Iowa. The couple raised two daughters. They purchased a farm and moved to Blooming Prairie in 1972. Jerry loved making his living as a farmer. He retired in 2004. He and Marjorie belonged to St. Columbanus Catholic Church in Blooming Prairie, where Jerry served as a council member for 34 years and

trustee for 28 years.

He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Hayfield American Legion. Jerry's other interests included baseball, fishing, bowling and dancing. He was a loyal husband, father, veteran, and Catholic. His family and friends will miss him dearly.

Jerry is survived by his wife Marjorie Oxley of Blooming Prairie; his grandson Joshua R. Skalisky of Rochester; 2 sons-in-law Dan Ditlevson of Prior Lake and Jim Schunke of Rochester; sisters, Mary Jane Oxley of Corwith, Iowa, Glennis Green of California; sisters-in-law Phyllis Oxley of Kanawath, Iowa, Marvel Oxley of Taopi; brother-in-law Patrick Garry of Chicago, Ill.; other relatives and many friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; daughters



Rebecca and Kathleen; sons-in-law Tom West and Robbin Skalisky; brothers Robert and Richard, and sisters Margaret and Theresa; brother-in-law Robert Green.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 12, 2018 at St. Columbanus Catholic Church in Blooming Prairie with Father Thomas Niehaus officiating. Interment was at the St. Columbanus Catholic Cemetery.

Memorials can be directed to the American Cancer Society, the Lupus Foundation of America, or recipient of donor's choice. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com. Worlein Funeral Home Blooming Prairie handled the arrangements.

LIBRARY BOOK NOOK

Celebrating Syttende Mai at the library



NANCY VAILLANCOURT

Can you guess which state in the U.S. has the most Norwegian-Americans?

Yep, it is Minnesota where 16.5 percent of the residents identify their heritage as Norwegian.

Wisconsin comes in second at 8.2 percent.

One of my college professors in Utah automatically assumed I was Norwegian since I was from Minnesota. I proudly pointed out my German, Luxembourg, and English roots, but now after recent DNA tests, I have found that I do have Scandinavian roots also!

Maybe that's why this year the Blooming Prairie Branch Library will be celebrating Syttende Mai, the 17th of May, which is the Norwegian Independence Day. We have a special guest, Arna Rennan, who

will inform us about Norwegian traditions and entertain us with music on her langeleik. Arna is performing thanks to a Library Legacy grant administered through SELCO.

We will have demonstrations and displays of rosemaling, hardanger, and wood carving. There will be coffee and treats provided by the Friends of the Library. The program begins at 2 p.m. Thursday, May 17 in the City Council Chambers. And even if you are Swedish, Danish, or any other background, please join us to celebrate Syttende Mai!

Sue E. Mataczynski, 68, Blooming Prairie

Sue Mataczynski, 68, passed away on April 26, 2018 at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester after a brief illness, surrounded by her family and pets.

Sue was born on Sept. 30, 1949 in Ladysmith, Wis., to Frank and Katherine (Hendricks) Mataczynski. Sue's family lived in Chicago until 1963 when they moved back to Wisconsin and settled in the Holcombe area. Sue graduated from Holcombe High School in 1967 and married her high school sweetheart, Dan Forbush in 1971. Together they built a home and raised a family.

Sue was passionate about her family and spent many

hours preserving the pictures and memories in multiple scrapbooks. She had a love for all animals and often joked about "taking in stray kids, puppies and kitties!" She enjoyed crafting, ceramics and sewing.

Sue is survived by her 3 children: Laura Forbush of Austin, Danny Forbush, Prescott, Wis., and Rebecca Pollard (Frank), Montgomery, Ala; grandchildren:

Jennifer Pape, Joshua Pape, Michael Pape, Shawn Payne, DeAndre Forbush, Anthony Scott, and Shemiah Scott;



brother, James (Rhonda) Mataczynski; sister, Rita Ludvigsen (Gary Dixon) and several nieces and nephews.

Sue had a special love for pets, and especially enjoyed caring for rescue pets. She had a service dog, Samantha and cats, Squeaker and Tipplers.

Sue was preceded in death by her parents, Frank and Katherine Mataczynski, and her husband, Daniel Forbush.

Memorial Services will be held at a later date in Sue's hometown of Holcombe, Wis.

Scott H. Easton, 55, Blooming Prairie

Scott H. Easton, 55, of Blooming Prairie, passed away Monday, May 7, 2018 at Prairie Manor Care Center in Blooming Prairie.

Scott Harlan Easton was born May 18, 1962 in Owatonna to Harlan and Marjorie (Loew) Easton. He graduated from Blooming Prairie High School in 1981. Scott then attended college at the Vocational Technical School in Faribault.

On June 13, 1998, he married Julie Adams at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Brownsdale. The couple made their home in Blooming Prairie and together had two sons.

Scott worked for Viracon in Owatonna for 20 years and also owned and operated S & J Lawn Care. He was a member of the First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie. Scott was a great Minnesota Vikings fan and loved bald eagles, camping and grilling, he would cook out

year round. He also enjoyed doing lawn work and building his business, but most of all Scott enjoyed time spent with his family. Scott will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Survivors include his wife Julie Easton of Blooming Prairie; sons Travis Easton of Blooming Prairie, Jeffrey Easton of Blooming Prairie; brothers, Robert (Jane) Easton of Albert Lea, Rod (Tess) Koster of Elysian; sisters, Connie Trihus of Blooming Prairie, Rita (David) Braaten of Owatonna; mother-in-law and father-in-law, John and Doreen Adams of Austin; sisters-in-law, Tammy (Steve) Pfeifer of Austin, Laurie (Kerry) Dinges of Ness City, Kan.; nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Harlan and



Marjorie Easton, brothers, Richard and Ronnie Koster, and sister, Carole Stish.

A funeral service was held Saturday, May 12, 2018 at the First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie, with Pastor Heidi Heimgartner officiating. Interment was at Red Oak Grove Cemetery, rural Austin.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the family. Services are prearranged and performed by Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com.



Jensen

Heating, A/C,
& Plumbing

Registered
Showroom

256•4712
Geneva, MN

24 hour service for all your
plumbing & heating needs

We'll treat your home as
if it were our own.

THE BOLD LOOK
OF **KOHLER**



237 Hwy Ave. S. | Locally Owned & Operated | 507-583-6671

Check out **OUR DOLLAR** Selection!



Head & Shoulders Shampoo
13.5 oz
\$1 off with 20 pts



Any Diapers Any Brand
\$1 off with 20 pts



Gary's Quick Steak
12 oz
\$1 off with 20 pts



Pepsi Products
20pk 12 oz
\$5.99

Prices Good 5/15 - 5/21

Birthdays & Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

MAY 13
GREG JOHNSON
CODY SCHMELING
RANDY LEA

MAY 14
RON SCHMELING
ALEX LEA
TAMMY WURST

MAY 15
ANGIE CARLSON
TAMZEN JOHNSON

MAY 16
LINDA HANSEN
HOLLY ILLE
GAVIN ESPLAN
MITCHELL FIEBIGER

MAY 17
CHRIS BARTLETT
ASHLEY SCHMELING
NICHOLAS HANSON
THOMAS SHAWBACK
MICHELLE VIGELAND

MAY 18
CODY CHRISTIANSON
BRYAN FRISTEDT
CADE CHRISTIANSON

DAVID FARR
CHRIS STALOCH

MAY 19
ASHLEY ALLISON
DEAN ZILM
SKYLAR VALEK
NANCY CLARK

ANNIVERSARIES

MAY 15
JIM & NICOLE RICHARDS
MARY & PAUL MASTER

MAY 17
JASON & KAYLENE JENSEN

MAY 18
BRIAN & SUE BOWMAN

MAY 19
DARRELL & CINDI HANSEN
MISSY & JUSTIN KORMAN
KEN & JUDY ESPLAN
TOM & HANNAH STONEBURNER

MAY 20
RICH & JEAN SCHWARTZ
PAT & JESSICA SKINNER

Sponsored by:

Best kept secret!

Deli Sandwiches Daily Specials
ALL COME WITH A COOKIE & CHIPS

Tuesday - Ham	Thursday - Your Choice
Wednesday - Turkey	Friday - Beef

The Bakery
Main Street • Blooming Prairie • 583-4433

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



Michaelson
FUNERAL HOME
Direction With Dignity

www.michaelsonfuneral.com
507-451-7943

PASTOR'S CORNER



Pastor Bob Brauer
SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH
OWATONNA

God fills our hearts with love

When God wants to show His love to one of His children His favorite method is to fill someone else's heart with love and help them to see the need of His child. Then if they act out that love in blessing to the one in need the Father's heart can be expressed through one child to the other. In the process both are blessed. The one because He receives the unmerited love of God from another. The other because expressing God's love helps Him to be more loving and to rejoice in God's goodness.

This was how Jesus lived out His love. He said in John 5:19, 20 "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel." Our problem is that we are do not spend enough time in God's

presence to be filled with His love so that we can recognize the Spirit's prompting. What if every day you could end the day knowing that God had used you to show His love to one or more persons? How would that make you feel? Would you be excited each morning to see what God was going to do through you? Would you pay more attention to what stirred up your heart with love and compassion? Would the world be a better place if many of us watched to see what God was doing and then

cooperated with Him in bringing His love to a weary, selfish, hurting world? I think so. Here is Jesus' promise: John 14:12, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father." Father. Open our eyes that we can see where you are working and can rejoice to work with you bringing your love to the weary world around us.

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

LUTHERAN	1054 Truman Ave., Owatonna Pastor Kirk Griebel 507-451-2720 Worship: 9 a.m. Sun. Education Hour: 10:15 a.m. Sun.	Pastor Paul Hauschild 507-477-2248 www.trinityhayfield.org Worship: 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.	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.	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.	Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. Prayer Meeting: 7:30 p.m. Wed.
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.	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.	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.	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	NON-DENOMINATIONAL	MORMON
COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 106 Third St. SE., Geneva Pastor Kristen Venne 507-256-4288 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.	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.	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.	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) Adoration Chapel available Mon. – Fri. 7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Key fob required after hours or weekends	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	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.
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	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.	ZION LUTHERAN – ELCA 7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale Pastor Cheryl D. Indehar 507-451-2165 Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.		CEGAR CREEK 30 E. Main St., Hayfield Pastor Aaron de Neui 507-477-2255 www.cedarcreekchurch.org Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.	PRESBYTERIAN
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.	ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA 30450 570th Ave., Waltham Pastor Dwight DoBell 507-567-2474 Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.	CATHOLIC		DESTINY CHRISTIAN Owatonna Campus 422 North St., Owatonna Pastors Tyler & Jessica Braucht 507-254-8514 www.destinyc.org Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.	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 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.	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.	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.	CHRISTIAN	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	FIRST PRESBYTERIAN 109 E. Main St., Hayfield Pastor Kirk Johnston 507-477-2631 Worship: 9:30 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.	ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA 2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden Pastor Cheryl D. Indehar 507-451-2165 Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.	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	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.	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.	SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
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.	TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 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)	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	PENTECOSTAL	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	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.
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.	TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna Rev. Todd Bugler, Senior Pastor Rev. Dean Smith, Associate Pastor Rev. Amanda Weinkauff, 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.	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.	METHODIST	MENNONITE	BAPTIST
REDEEMER LUTHERAN – LCMS	TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 104 First St. SE., Hayfield	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;	OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST		

www.minimizer.com

800-248-3855

Blooming Prairie

“Creating Your Story in Stone”

1180 Frontage Rd E • Owatonna

507-455-9551

www.owatonnagranite.com

LERBERG'S FITNESS CENTER & CAR WASH

118 5th Ave.

Ellendale

507-684-2471

Building Healthy Smiles!

132 2nd Ave NE

Blooming Prairie

507-583.6613

FREE CONSULTATION

Service Center:

507-528-2233

After Hours Towing:

507-456-4158

111 Front Street

P.O. Box 282

Claremont, MN

Certified Public Accountant

Tamzen R. Johnson

319 East Main Street, Blooming Prairie; 888-933-6838 / Fax: 507-583-2389

Locally Owned & Operated

237 Hwy. Ave. S.

Blooming Prairie

507-583-6671

FOR THAT HOMETOWN PERSONAL TOUCH

Hwy. 218

Blooming Prairie

507-583-2018

322 East Main St.

Blooming Prairie

507-583-2276

Mike Bishman

121 W. Broadway St.

Owatonna

507-451-0193

Vibrant Living For

Individuals 55 & Older

at a Reasonable Price

Call Jon Arnett @

455-3735 for a tour

236 22nd St. SE • Owatonna

WANT TO SUBMIT SOMETHING TO THE WORSHIP SCHEDULE?

Contact us by email,

phone, or mail:

bptimes@frontiernet.net

507-634-7503

P.O. Box 247,

Blooming Prairie, MN

55917

WIND: 71 turbines

FROM A1

wind farms is “very lengthy and very involved.” She said NextEra is in the waiting period as it seeks approval from the state.

One of the greatest concerns Steele County has is the potential impact to roadways during the construction phase, Oolman said. He noted both Steele and Dodge counties are working together to have a single agreement with the developer on roadway issues. Under the agreement, NextEra would be responsible for returning the roadways to their original condition.

In regards to the Oak Glen Wind Farm, Oolman said he is not aware of any issues that have been reported.

NextEra operates 120 wind projects in 32 states and Canada, according to Bryan Garner, spokesperson for the company. “Our company is the most experienced in renewable energy projects in the world,” he said.

Garner said NextEra has been a part of Minnesota’s landscape with wind farms since 2000. NextEra operates a 100-megawatt wind farm in Mower County near Sargeant.

There are four factors NextEra looks at before deciding on an area to construct a wind farm, Garner said. They are wind resource, inner connection to power grids, availability of land and potential customers for the energy.

“We study where the wind blows the strongest and with the most consistency,” Garner said.

A typical wind turbine, Garner said, occupies about one acre of land. “We lease the land,” he said. “This is an opportunity for land owners to partner with us. It’s another way for them to earn money,” he added.

The largest impact to the community would be during the construction phase, which is slated to begin in spring 2019. Construction would create about 200 jobs. It will take up to nine months to complete the project.

After the wind farm is operational, there would be about 12 full-time jobs available for wind technicians and office support.

The area would also benefit from tax revenue generated from the wind farm. Garner said about \$15 million would be collected in property taxes over the life of the project.

“It’s a big uplift for the community,” Garner said.

The project would produce enough energy to serve 50,000 homes at one time, Garner said.

A citywide venture



Vandal's Family Market participated in the garage sale activity in Blooming Prairie last Saturday by serving hot dogs and bratwurst. Helping serve and collecting donations for the BP Youth Club are from left: Tracy Duenes, Brady Holmberg, Juan Villarreal Ramon, Brandy Vandal Holmberg and Teresa Haberman.



Gannon Rafdal, 5 and Wyatt Rafdal, 9 of Blooming Prairie chomped on some delicious hot dogs at Vandal's Family Market last Saturday. Vandal's was a stop on the city-wide garage sale for many people.



Blooming Prairie's city-wide garage sale on Saturday, March 12 drew customers of all ages at the Darrell and Cindi Hansen residence. These garage sale fans were members of the Blooming Prairie High School track teams who were challenged to find something for \$1 that would help them when stranded on a deserted island. From left are: Asha Lighthizer, Jerrin Jax, Carson Brennecke and Adam Larson.

WINDOW SALE!!!

STARTING AT
\$279
ANY SIZE INSTALLED*

- Free Installation
- Lifetime Warranty
- Financing Available:
12 MONTHS SAME AS CASH

*White vinyl, double hung, double pane windows; four windows minimum; up to 101 sq. ft. Standard installation includes removal of wood windows without capping or Low E.

Family Owned and Operated
CUSTOM WINDOWS PLUS • 712-720-0759

18th Annual

CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAYS

MAY 17TH-20TH

Creations for Outdoor Living

25% ALL ANNUALS

MAY 17

25% OFF

All Water Plants

MAY 18

Shade Tree Sale

(POTTED TREES ONLY)
Buy 1 at Reg. Price, Get 2nd Tree Free of equal or lesser value! One year guarantee does not apply to sale items

MAY 19

Free Delivery In Austin

On Landscape Supplies: All Bulk Rock & Mulch and Retaining Wall & Paver Stones

MAY 20

25% OFF

One Day Only

On all potted trees, shrubs & perennials. Cash & Carry. One year guarantee does not apply to sale items.

A NEW SPECIAL EVERY DAY!

3108 4th St. NW, Austin • 507-433-3239
DolansLandscapeCenter.com

Recipe Corner

Finger-Lickin' Shrimp

Yields 12 bites

34 cup best-available olive oil
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons minced fresh Italian parsley
2 teaspoons minced fresh oregano or thyme or 1 teaspoon dried
12 colossal shrimp, shells on
1/2 cup kosher salt or coarse sea salt

Preheat grill to medium-high heat. In a small bowl, prepare dipping sauce by whipping together 1/2 cup of the olive oil, the lemon juice, garlic, parsley, and oregano. Save. Using a paring knife, make a 1/4-inch incision down the backs of the shrimp. Devein them, but do not remove the shells. In a medium bowl, add remaining 1/4 cup olive oil and the shrimp. Toss the shrimp in the oil, then sprinkle salt overtop, and toss thoroughly so that the shrimp are coated in salt. Grill shrimp directly over the heat or pan cook for approximately 3 minutes per side, or until shrimp are opaque throughout. Serve with dipping sauce.

Sponsored by
Krejci Ford
15th Presidents Award Winner
Blooming Prairie, 583-2046

STEELE COUNTY **Times**

Automobile

Best shop rates in town!

1150 Hoffman Drive, Owatonna, MN
Sales 507-446-9218 • Service 507-774-9533
www.cartimeofowatonna.com

Cleaning

Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning
Commercial Janitorial Cleaning

Mark Reed
22 E. Main St.
Dodge Center, MN 55927

507-374-6806
1-800-669-1331
www.coreysmn.com

Collision

THE ONLY AREA SHOP certified to work on the 2015 Ford Aluminum F150

ASSURED PERFORMANCE™ COLLISION CARE

CSI: Collision Specialists Inc
507.437.2837

Excavating

Design • Installation
Compliance Inspections

Aggregates • Hauling
Washed Sand & Rock
Black Dirt • Fill • Gravel

507-583-2999

Since 1998
Bonded & Insured

EXCAVATING, INC.
• EXCAVATION • BASEMENTS
• DEMOLITION • DOZER WORK
Commercial & Residential Sitework

Pets

“Professional Cremation and Burial Services for your loving pet”

Larry & Donna Bennett
4151 N. County Rd. 45
Owatonna, MN 55060
(507) 451-2203

Shorty & Sue Schrodt
857 Mosher Ave.
Owatonna, MN 55060
(507) 455-3204

Cell: 507-456-7977

Furniture

HAVE A SEAT!

Over 250 Bar Stools/Counter Stools In Stock!

Family FUN CENTER
507.282.7682
familyfuncenter.com
2207 7th St. NW Rochester, MN

Truck Accessories

The lightest, most durable, longest lasting truck fenders, bracket kits, and truck accessories in the trucking industry.

Minimizer.com • 800-248-3855 • Blooming Prairie

Tires

870 32 Ave. NW
Owatonna, MN 55060

Complete Truck Parts and Service

507-455-0388
Fax: 507-455-0486
After Hours: 507-455-0483
Tire Service
AG & Heavy Truck

Mike Hartle
Owner

Advertise Here

Call Tracie at 507-583-4431

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

Blotter Spotlight: Domestic: Officers responded on May 6 to a domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Allan Ave. SW at 9:14 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

BP man charged in police chase

By RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER



With an alcohol level of nearly four times the legal limit, a Blooming Prairie man is accused of leading police on a chase Thursday night.

Wayne Benson, 49, has been charged in Mower County District Court with felony fleeing police and gross misdemeanor second-degree DWI in connection with the case that originated with a driving complaint in Dodge County.

Authorities said Benson was driving erratically as he crossed into Mower County from Dodge County on Highway 20 near the Sargeant area. A Mower County deputy spotted the vehicle on County Road 1 and saw it driving erratically and crossing the fog line onto the gravel shoulder, according to court records.

The deputy began pursuing the vehicle as it continued driving west on County Road 1. Speeds ranged between 40 to 50 miles per hour, but Benson allegedly continued to drive erratically. The vehicle almost twice hit vehicles in the eastbound lane, police said.

Mower County requested assistance from Blooming Prairie Police, who set up spike strips on County Road 1 near Brookside Campground south of Blooming Prairie. The strips deflated three of the vehicle's tires, but the chase was still on. The deputy utilized the PIT maneuver to cause Benson's vehicle to spin out as it approached U.S. Highway 218.

Once officers approached the vehicle, Benson allegedly began fighting with them. A preliminary breath test indicated Benson's alcohol level was almost four times the legal limit, police said.

No one was injured during the chase. Benson's driving record shows he has prior convictions for DWI. He will appear in court on May 24.

MnDOT asks motorists, farm equipment operators to safely share the road during planting season

Motorists traveling on Minnesota highways this spring need to be aware of large farm equipment moving from farm to farm, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

“Planting season is in full swing and farmers in every corner of the state are out on the highways,” said Ray Starr, acting state traffic engineer. “Motorists need to be prepared to encounter slow-moving farm vehicles, especially on rural, two-lane roads.”

Farm equipment is large and heavy, making it hard for operators to accelerate, slow down and stop. The equipment also makes wide turns and sometimes cross over the center line. In addition, farm vehicles can create large blind spots, making it difficult for operators to see approaching vehicles. All of these factors can cause serious crashes.

Over the past five years, there were 688 crashes involving farm vehicles that resulted in 23 fatalities and 348 injuries.

Nearly half of the fatalities were an occupant of the farm vehicle.

Twenty-two percent of all farm equipment crashes and 29 percent of the fatalities were distraction-related. Other factors were speed-related and alcohol-related.

- MOTORISTS SHOULD:**
- When approaching farm equipment, slow down and use caution.
 - Watch for debris dropped by trucks. It is safer to brake or drive through debris than to veer into oncoming cars or off the road.
 - Wait for a safe place to pass.
 - Wear seatbelts.
 - Drive with headlights on at all times.

- FARM EQUIPMENT OPERATORS SHOULD:**
- Use lights and flashers to make equipment more visible.
 - Use slow-moving vehicle emblems on equipment traveling less than 30 mph.
 - Consider using a follow vehicle when moving equipment, especially at night.

COURT NEWS

Steele County

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of April 30 with Judge Joseph A. Buettel presiding:

Jenny Guadalupe Gutierrez, 23, Mitchellville, IA, previously appeared and was convicted of felony issuance of dishonored check. She was sentenced to \$3,086.48, 271 days in county jail and 3 years of supervised probation.

Mario A. Lindsey, 21, Northfield, previously appeared and was convicted of felony violation of predatory offender registration requirement. Lindsey was sentenced to \$131 and 14 months in St. Cloud State Prison.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of April 30 – May 4:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT
Johnathan Olvera, 24, Austin, revoked license, §281.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER
Danae S. Andrews, 22, Blooming Prairie, invalid license, §131; Shane A. Cook, 42, Tyler, TX, DWI, §406, 2 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Isabell G. Hernandez, 65, Blooming Prairie, revoked license, §281; Celso Huerta,

63, Owatonna, speeding, §141; Luis N. Juarez, 41, Minneapolis, revoked license, §281; Michael A. Keller, 18, New Berlin, WI, speeding, §121; Preslie M. Kubat, 22, Kasson, texting while driving, §131; Brock L. Lanham, 27, Shakopee, speeding, stay of adjudication, §200 and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Bradley M. Rozanski, 22, Florissant, MO, speeding, §121; Tu-An A. Tran, 16, Richfield, speeding, §141; Daniel J. Wacek, 65, Owatonna, speeding, §121; Veronica A. Weston, 36, Minneapolis, speeding, §221; Craig J. Wodnick, 59, Minneapolis, speeding, §141.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT
Cody L. Blaha, 20, Owatonna, possession of marijuana and paraphernalia, §281; Rosalio J. Chavez, 31, Owatonna, stop sign, §131; Tawnee J. Cunningham, 25, St. Paul, theft, §381, 1 day in county jail and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Jasmine B. Cyrus, 21, Stillwater, controlled substance crime, stay of adjudication, §75, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 2 years of supervised probation; Derek P. Denelsbeck, 36, Owatonna, invalid license and possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, §381 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; James M. Fredericksen, 62, West Des Moines, IA, improper turn, §131; Jade M. Huseby, 18, Owatonna, failure to yield, §131; Levi R. Jensen, 20, Albert Lea, window tint violation, §131; Caleb R.

Kubat, 18, Owatonna, seat belt, §106; Matthew R. Laue, 46, Kenyon, open bottle and revoked license, §381; Kyra C. Mahoney, 20, Owatonna, expired tabs, §111; Monica J. Prusha, 26, Owatonna, no license, §181; Sekeriye M. Saleban, 18, Owatonna, disorderly conduct, §81 and 20 hours of community service; Chelsea R. Scherr, 25, Owatonna, give peace officer false information and theft, §131 and 42 days in county jail; Riki J. Whelan, 30, Albert Lea, open bottle, §181; Rayce M. Witt, 19, Hollandale, no insurance, §281.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Howard P. Baxter, 87, Owatonna, speeding, §131; Skyler R. Brown, 18, Blooming Prairie, speeding, §121; Hayley R. Darrington, 28, New Richland, revoked license, §281; John C. Eppel, 50, Owatonna, revoked license and improper information on license, §301; Taneasha A. Frazier, 28, Lauderdale, suspended license, §281; Joshua L. Hansen, 19, Owatonna, possession of marijuana and speeding, §271; Johnny C. Johnson, 57, Waseca, speeding, suspended license and no insurance, §521; Jeremy L. Jones, 38, Cottage Grove, speeding, §221; Brian J. Maestre-Reavis, 30, Owatonna, no insurance, §281; Jennifer L. Mitchell, 42, Rochester, speeding and expired tabs, §171; Charles B. Olseth, 72, North Mankato, speeding, §121; Ruben C. Perez, 42, Waseca, speeding, §121; Wendy J. Peterson, 36, Waseca, speeding, §141; Oscar L. Rodriguez, 20, St.

Sex offender to be released into Owatonna

By RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER



A Level 3 predatory offender will be getting out of prison and released back into Owatonna.

Justin Wayne Fischer, 36, will be moving into the vicinity of East Rose Street and North Elm Avenue, according to police. He will be released on May 24.

Police detective Christian Berg said a public notification meeting will take place at the Law Enforcement Center in Owatonna on May 22 at 6 p.m.

Fischer has a history of sexual conduct with minor girls between the ages of 8 and 16. His conduct has included sexually explicit conversation. The contact has included sexual touching with the youngest victims and penetration with the 16-year-old victim.

According to state officials, Fischer has served the sentence imposed on him by the court. He has been incarcerated since November 2016. At the time he was arrested in September 2016 for probation violation. He has been most recently serving his time at the

Paul, stop sign and improper information on license, §151; Keith T. Snorek, 50, Owatonna, no license in possession, §101; Rosa I. Solorio, 41, Waseca, speeding, §141; Andres J. Vargas, 32, Owatonna, revoked license, no insurance and speeding, §681.

POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

May 8
Threats: Police responded to a subject making threats in the 300 block of Center Ave. N. at 9:59 p.m.

OWATONNA POLICE

May 4
Assault: Officers responded to an assault at Main St. E. and Lincoln Ave. S. at 9:03 a.m.
Shoplifting: At 10:40 a.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 400 block of North St. W.
Thefts: Police took theft reports in the 600 block of Birchwood Lane SE at 1:28 p.m. and the 200 block of Holly St. SW at 5:18 p.m.
Arrest: Officers assisted another agency with arresting a subject in the 2200 block of 3rd Ave. NW at 1:42 p.m.
Theft: A citizen reported his or her identity had been stolen in the 200 block of Northview St. SW at 2:56 p.m.

May 5
Shoplifting: At 9:50 a.m., police arrested a subject for shoplifting in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W.

May 6
Thefts: Police took theft reports in the 2400 block of 25th Ave. NW at 8:28 a.m. and the 100 block of 12th Place NW at 9:40 a.m.
Hit and Run: At 12:41 p.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 500 block of State Ave. NW.
Burglary: Police began a burglary investigation in the 700 block of Grove Ave. S. at 12:47 p.m.
Domestic: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Allan Ave. SW at 9:14 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

May 7
Arrest: Police assisted another agency with arresting a subject in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 1:02 p.m.
Restraining Order: Officers responded to a restraining order violation in the 300 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 1:08 p.m.
Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 2000 block of Greenwood Dr. NE at 4:36 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.
Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 500 block of Young Dr. SW at 6:56 p.m.

May 8
Fraud: Officers received a report of a fraud incident in the 1000 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 4:05 a.m.
Thefts: Police took theft reports in the 1000 block of St. Paul Rd. NE at 10:04 a.m., the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 7:35 p.m. and the 400 block of Clearview Place NW at 8:45 p.m.
Hit and Run: At 11:36 a.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred at University St. E. and Harriet Ave. SE.

May 9
Fight: Officers responded to a fight in the 300 block of School St. E. at 9:26 a.m.
Threats: At 12:12 p.m., a subject was making threats in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.

May 10
Theft: Officer took a theft report at Cedar Ave. N. and Rose St. W. at 8:51 a.m.
Burglary: At 9:32 a.m., a burglary occurred in the 600 block of Morning Dr. SE.
Assault: Officers responded to an assault in the 400 block of Bridge St. W. at 11:41 a.m.
Crash: Paramedics and officers responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries at School St. W. and Oak Ave. S. at 12:35 p.m.
Restraining Order: Officers responded to a restraining order violation in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 11:41 a.m.
Disturbance: Police responded to disorderly conduct in the 400 block of 16th St. SW at 4:40 p.m.
Hit and Run: At 7:30 p.m., a hit and run accident resulted in property damage in the 300 block of School St. E.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

May 4
Arrest: Deputies arrested a subject in the 100 block of Riverview Court in Medford at 2:23 p.m.

May 5
Suspicion: At 6:12 p.m., deputies responded to suspicious activity at County Road 45 S. and 85th St. SE in Somerset Township.

May 6
Restraining Order: Deputies responded to a restraining order violation in the 87000 block of 37th Ave. SW in Somerset Township at 3:37 p.m.
DWI: Deputy made a DWI arrest on Interstate 35 southbound in Summit Township at 7:21 p.m.

May 7
Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest at the detention center at 12:19 a.m.
Animal: At 8:15 a.m., an animal bite occurred in the 81000 block of 47th Ave. NW

correction facility in Moose Lake.

The current notification is not intended to increase fear but rather raise awareness. Law enforcement believes that an informed community is a safer public.

Convicted sexual offenders have always been released to live back in communities. It was not until the passage of the Registration Acts that police had an ability to track movement of the offenders after their initial release. Law enforcement is now able to share information about many of these offenders with the public because of the Community Notification Act.

Abuse of this information to threaten, harass or intimidate a registered offender is unacceptable and such acts could be charged as a crime. Officials say such abuses could potentially end the ability of law enforcement to provide these notifications.

Fischer will become the fifth Level 3 offender to be living in Owatonna. Others include Phillip Louis Davis, William Marcus Daniel Edwards, Curtis Lavern Enzenhauer and Benny Ledesma.

There are two high-risk offenders living in Blooming Prairie. They are James Peter Zylstra and Robert Martinez.

Level 3 offenders are considered the most likely to reoffend.

in Deerfield Township.

Child Protection: Deputies received child protection reports from the 7000 block of 85th Ave. NW in Deerfield Township at 10:27 a.m. and the 400 block of 6th Ave. W. in Ellendale at 10:28 a.m.

Theft: Deputies took theft reports in the 900 block of Calverly Court in Ellendale at 1:45 p.m. and the 200 block of 1st St. NW in Medford at 8:51 p.m.

Fire: At 6:21 p.m., deputies responded to a fire call in the 62000 block of Kenyon Road in Merton Township. They issued a citation.

Fight: Deputies issued a citation following a fight in the 1800 block of 44th Ave. SE in Havana Township at 7:14 p.m.

May 8
Domestic: Deputies responded to a domestic disturbance in the 51000 block of County Road 45 N. in Clinton Falls Township at 4:14 a.m.

Theft: Deputy took a theft report in the 100 block of Central Ave. W. in Medford at 6:34 a.m.

Arrest: Deputies arrested a motorist during a traffic stop on U.S. Hwy. 14 in Havana Township at 9:37 p.m.

May 9
Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest at the detention center at 3:13 p.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 78000 block of 66th St. NW in Deerfield Township at 3:19 p.m.

ARRESTS

Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

Jacob Clinton Carlson, 25, arrested at 2:30 p.m. May 4, probation violation, held for court.

Lamoine Allen Busse, 55, arrested at 10:30 a.m. May 5, felony theft, held for court.

Jilliena Mae Jackson, 24, arrested at 9:30 p.m. May 6, domestic assault/assault, held for court.

Mary Peter Nyang, 34, arrested May 7, warrant arrest, \$500,000 bail.

Misty Donell Herrley, 35, arrested at 2:40 p.m. May 8, warrant arrest, held for court.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

Richard Martin King, 34, arrested at 2:45 p.m. May 4, warrant arrest, held for court.

Leonard Bernard Lee, 61, arrested at 7:49 p.m. May 6, DWI-test refusal, held for court.

Cassandra Sue Britt, 25, arrested at 12:21 a.m. May 7, probation violation warrant arrest, body only.

Jesse Willard Baldus, 39, arrested May 7, domestic assault, held for court.

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

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Todd Senholtz – order for protection violation - \$6,000 bail | 8. Oscar Sias – terroristic threats - \$25,000 bail | 14. Alan Sobey – disorderly conduct - \$500 bail |
| 2. Yennifer Serban – drugs – no bail | 9. Pedro Sifuentes – DWI – no bail | 15. Gumecindo Solis – child endangerment - \$3,000 bail |
| 3. Benjamin Shannon – theft - \$3,000 bail | 10. Angela Silvas – assault - \$1,000 bail | 16. Jorge Solis – agg violation - \$3,000 bail |
| 4. Aman Sheikh-Yusuf – theft by check – no bail | 11. Michael Sinn – revoked license, no insurance - \$1,000 bail | 17. Josefina Solis – child neglect - \$3,000 bail |
| 5. George Shelton – possession of pistol – no bail | 12. David Kenneth Smith – theft - \$20,000 bail | 18. Michael Sommerfield – theft - \$500 bail |
| 6. Ricky Shelton – assault – no bail | 13. Paul Randall Smock – possession of stolen property - \$20,000 bail | 19. Jose Sosa – DWI – no bail |
| 7. Thomas Siagiannis – seat belt - \$1,000 bail | | 20. Shane Spencer – traffic - \$1,000 bail |

Disclosing active warrants promotes public safety and aids in the identification and apprehension of wanted individuals

Alexander Jay Brown, arrested at 3:27 p.m. May 7, apprehension and detention arrest, held for court.
Dorian James Cornelius, 57, arrested at 5:21 a.m. May 8, felony domestic assault/assault, held for court.
Jesse Sterling Bentley, 27, arrested at 10:17 p.m. May 8, DWI-test refusal, held for court.
Branden Anthony Hendrickson, 19, arrested at 8:30 a.m. May 8, warrant arrest, body only.
Miranda Leigh Bixby, 30, arrested at 2:30 p.m. May 9, warrant arrest, body only.
Benjamin Robert Drabek, 23, arrested at 2:15 p.m. May 10, felony probation violation, held for court.
Christina Kay Wittrock, 35, arrested at 4 p.m. May 10, warrant arrest, body only.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT
Raquel S. Buchanan, 17, Byron, speeding, \$120; Andrew M. Dohrmann, 17, Kasson, seat belt, \$105; Michael A. Dunn, 47, Kasson, speeding, \$130; William A. Holzer, 65, Rochester, texting while driving, \$130; Ryan C. Pettey, 25, Rochester, parking violation, \$32; Pumps Tire Service, parking violation, \$32; Keenan L. Wenzel, 19, West Concord, parking violation, \$32; Stephanie M. Wilson, 26, Rochester, speeding, \$180.

MN STATE PATROL
Jacob Skyler Farless, 26, arrested at 11:45 p.m. May 5, felony motor vehicle theft, held for court.
Steven Cha Lee, 53, arrested at 1:18 p.m. May 9, felony controlled substance crime, held for court.
Chao Kenneth Lee Panou, 35, arrested at 1:18 p.m. May 9, felony controlled substance crime, held for court.

MN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Lyle L. Wilson Jr., 64, West Concord, burning prohibited materials, \$280.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER
Tylor A. Bruggeman, 24, Mazeppa, speeding, \$120; Tonnettea Fountain, 48, Hayfield, no license, \$180; Michael J. Larsen, 45, Rochester, speeding, \$140; Amarpal S. Mand, 21, North Mankato, speeding, \$130; Chad M. Osgood, 39, Hayfield, revoked license, \$280; Myron C. Pool, 58, Dodge Center, seat belt, \$105; Matthew B. Potter, 47, Waseca, speeding, \$130; Sherie R. Roland, 53, Hayfield, seat belt, \$105.

COURT NEWS
Dodge County

The following case was heard in Dodge County District Court the week of April 30 with Judge Jodi L. Williamson presiding:

Adam D. Wacek, 33, Hollandale, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of marijuana and misdemeanor reckless driving. He was sentenced to \$130, 90 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, cognitive skill training, chemical dependency evaluation and 5 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of April 30 – May 7:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Jackson R. Churchill, 20, Blooming Prairie, parking violation, \$32; Julia K. Cupples, 67, Rochester, parking violation, \$32; Natasha L. Evans, 26, Kenyon, parking violation, \$32; Brock A. Gullickson, 18, West Concord, possession of paraphernalia, \$130; Courtney R. Kispert, 22, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Darwin G. Knott, 60, Kenyon, burning permit violation, \$105; Hector R. Montes, 30, Kasson, theft, \$380, 30 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised

History from the News Archives
10 Years Ago
May 13, 2008
DAN EVANS, PUBLISHER

Diana Magnuson will be honored for her years of dedicated services to the Blooming Prairie Ambulance during National EMS Week at an open house May 20. Owners could be in the dog house. They are called “Man’s Best Friend,” but starting this May in Blooming Prairie, your “best friend” may cause you a hefty fine or a firm date with a Steele County judge. The city will be fining dog owners for not licensing their dogs. Zachary Piller and Anna Erickson were recognized at the South Central Regional Science Fair at Mankato May 3. Piller is a third grader while Erickson is a sixth grader at Blooming Prairie Elementary School.

20 Years Ago
May 12, 1998
ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

The Exchange Club of Steele County is pleased to announce its May Student of the Month is Andrea Wonderlich, a senior at Blooming Prairie. She is involved in many school activities as well as 4-H, church and other community organizations. Former Austin resident Beatrice Gellerman celebrated her 100th birthday May 7 at Prairie Manor in Blooming Prairie. Feedlot issues in the county remain controversial, according to Mary Overlee Olson of Steele County. Earlier this year the county commissioners approved a feedlot ordinance that had been discussed for 18 months. Steele County is seeing an increase in feedlots with sizes ranging from 800 to 1,600 animal units.

50 Years Ago
May 9, 1968
VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

Rev. Hilary L. McNallan assumed the duties of priest at St. Columbanus Catholic Church in Blooming Prairie May 1. The parish has been served by Rev. John Cody since the resignation recently of Rev. Patrick Russell. Rev. McNallan was ordained into the priesthood on June 3, 1934. A transaction which took place over a month ago and which is generally known among area residents was released for publication this week. It involves the purchase of Tastee-Freez in Blooming Prairie by Claude Grandprey and also his retirement as general manager of the Central Co-op Oil Association on May 1. Jim Pompa, proprietor of Shaw Drug Store in Blooming Prairie announced this week that he has sold his pharmacy business to Ray Reichert, operator of Reichert’s Rexall Drug Store in Blooming Prairie. Pompa plans to retire. The Blooming Prairie Firemen’s benefit dance held last Friday night at the Terp Ballroom in Austin was the most successful ever staged. A record crowd was in attendance at the dance and everyone present reported a most enjoyable evening.

75 Years Ago
MAY 20, 1943
FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

Rev. J.A. Brygger of Ulen, Minn., has accepted the call extended him by the local Baptist church congregation to become its pastor. He will assume the pulpit in Blooming Prairie on Sunday, May 23. Rev. and Mrs. Brygger will occupy the church manse when their household effects arrive. E.O. Habberstad, president of Farmers & Merchants State Bank, was chosen clerk of the board of education. He will fill the vacancy created when Dr. B.D. Betlach left Tuesday for Dallas, Texas to join the armed forces. Mr. Habberstad is a member of the school board and well-qualified to transcribe all school board proceedings into permanent records. Blooming Prairie was black as the proverbial “Ace of Spades” Friday night in the semi-surprise state blackout. The state was testing the way war-time air protection functions. BP lights went out at the first warning as though the city’s municipal power plant had been hit by axis bombs.

‘Extra Help’ Program Helps Seniors With Their Medication Costs



THE SAVVY SENIOR

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

Dear Savvy Senior, Are there any special Medicare programs that help seniors with their medication costs? My 74-year-old mother, who lives primarily on her Social Security, takes several high-priced drugs that sap her income even with her Medicare drug plan. Looking for Assistance

Dear Looking, Yes, there’s a low-income subsidy program called Extra Help that can assist seniors on a tight budget with paying for their premiums, deductible and co-payments in their Medicare (Part D) prescription drug plan. Currently around 10 million people are receiving this subsidy, but another two million may qualify for it and don’t even realize it. They’re missing out on hundreds, maybe thousands, of dollars in savings each year. Changes in the law make it easier than ever to qualify for the Extra Help program. Even if your mom applied and didn’t qualify before, she may be eligible now. The amount of additional assistance she would receive depends on her income and assets. If she qualifies for help, she’ll pay no more than \$3.35 for a generic drug and \$8.35 for a brand-name drug in 2018.

To get the subsidy, your mom’s assets can’t be more than \$14,100 (or \$28,150 for married couples living together). Bank accounts, stocks and bonds count as assets, but her home, vehicle, personal belongings, life insurance and burial plots do not. Also, your mom’s monthly income can’t be more than \$1,538 (or \$2,078 for married couples). If your mom supports a family member who lives with her, or lives in Alaska or Hawaii, her income can be higher. In addition, the government won’t count any money if your mom receives help for household expenses like food, rent, mortgage payments, utilities and property taxes.

HOW TO APPLY
There are three ways to apply for Extra Help: online at SSA.gov/prescriptionhelp; by calling Social Security at 800-772-1213; or by visiting her local Social Security office.

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.

Crossword solution

T	S	A	R		P	E	B	B	L	Y	
A	C	C	E	L	E	R	A	T	I	O	N
P	A	N	D	O	R	A		U	N	K	I
	M	E	S	A	S			D	E	C	A
					M	E	D			A	M
						C	O	M	I	C	
					E	U		H	A	A	S
						C	T	N		N	B
H	A	N			M	E	A	D		A	H
E	X	A	M			S	E	R	A	L	
L	I	S	U						B	I	G
M	O	U	S	E	R				S	H	A
	M	A	C	R	O	N			A	T	E
								I	N	T	E
								S	C	E	N

Accountants
**Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.**
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
Certified Public Accountant **Tamzen R. Johnson**
319 East Main Street, Blooming Prairie | 888-933-6828 | Fax: 507-583-2389

Automotive
**Koster's CAR KORNER**
ROD & TESS KOSTER, Owners
Bus: 507-583-2018 • Fax: 507-583-2317
Hwy. 218 • Blooming Prairie
www.kostercarkorner.com
FOR THAT HOMETOWN PERSONAL TOUCH

Construction
**Johnson Construction & Tree Service**
Tree & Stump Removal • Trimming & Topping • Tree Moving
Lot Clearing • Backhoe/Skidloader • Hauling General Construction
24 Hr. Emergency Services • Year Round Work • Licensed & Insured
KYLE JOHNSON • 507-583-7592
AUSTIN & BLOOMING PRAIRIE

Garbage
SKJEVELAND ENTERPRISES
YOU CAN COUNT ON US!
Sanitation & Recycling Services
Pride in service since 2007
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL
• Sanitation & Recycling Services
• Roll-Offs & Dumpsters
• Rubbish & Garbage Removal
Contact Skjeveland Enterprises today!
507-528-9900

Construction
J.A. Gwilt Siders, Inc.
Siding, Windows, Gutters, Roofing & Decks
Call 507-456-1504 for your FREE estimates!
Serving Steele County for 20 years.
Known for our exceptional quality of material and labor.

Funeral Planning
A Simple, Thoughtful Act of Caring
PREARRANGEMENT & PREFUNDING
**507-583-7561**
www.worlein.com
Mary Kittelson
NFDA Certified Preplanning Consultant • Licensed Agent • Purple Cross Plans
Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home
418 Highway Ave S. • Blooming Prairie, MN

Recreation
**MINERS Outdoor & Rec**
Outdoor Power Equipment, Golf Carts, ATV, Sales Service, Parts & Accessories
Hwy 218 S.
Blooming Prairie
www.minersoutdoor.com • 507-583-2712

Bridal
**Holiday Inn**
507.446.8900
2365 43rd St. NW • Owatonna

Orthodontic Specialist
Dr. Deborah J. Lien, DDS, MBS
132 2ND AVE. NE
BLOOMING PRAIRIE
ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST
FREE CONSULTATIONS
**Building Healthy Smiles!**
drdeborahlienorthodontics.com
507.583.6613

BASEBALL



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD
Blooming Prairie's Payton Simon (8) rounds third base to score a run for the Awesome Blossoms in a recent baseball game on BP's field. The Blossoms are coached by Matt Kittelson.

BP Evenges early loss

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

After the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva boys' baseball counted a run in the first inning, Blooming Prairie answered with three of their own and went on to a 7-4 victory on Thursday, May 10, over the Panthers on their home diamond. The win raised the BP record to 7-2 overall and 6-2 in the Gopher Conference.

Payton Simon ignited the Blossom outburst in the first inning with a double, and he added another single later in the game. The team counted four more runs in the fourth inning to put distance between BP and the visitors. Brad Staska stroked a double and drove in two runs, and Trent Swenson and Seth Peterson each had a hit and drove in a run.

"We talked about being more patient against Panther pitcher [Jake] Tasker," BP coach Matt Kittelson said. "It seemed to give the guys more focus. It was a nice victory to avenge the earlier loss to that team."

NRHEG tied the game 3-3 in the third inning, but the Blossoms scored four runs on two hits.

"Overall, I thought we played a pretty decent game," NRHEG coach Drew Paukert said. "Our pitchers threw strikes for the most part tonight when they needed to, BP got some timely hits when they needed too."

Jack Abbe pitched the distance and gave up just three earned runs on only three hits, with five walks and four strikeouts. BP had seven runs, six hits and two errors; NRHEG had four runs, three hits and a error.

Tasker finished the game 2-for-3 with a RBI. Cole Staloch was 1-for-2 and scored two runs and Kordell Schlaak was 1-for-2 and scored a run.

"BP came out ready to play and we weren't quite as sharp to start," Paukert said. "Defensively we only had one error and made some very nice plays. We did have a few miscues on the base paths, which hurt us. I like the direction we are heading as playoffs near."

BP EARNS SPLIT AT WEM

The Awesome Blossom baseball team salvaged a split in two five-inning games at Waterville on Monday, May 7. After being blanked 10-0 in the first game by the Buccaneers, BP used the pitching of Ian Wayne and some timely hitting by the Blossoms to win the nightcap 4-2.

The Blossoms struck for three runs in the second inning of the second game after counting a single run in the first, and Wayne held the Bucs to just single runs in the first and fifth innings. He walked just one batter and scattered the seven hits by WEM to record the win.

Peterson and Arett both had two hits for the winners. Payton Simon, Arett, Staska and Peterson each had a RBI.

"I was proud of the boys how they bounced back from a tough first game loss," Kittelson said. "Wayne is very calm on the mound and did a nice job of keeping the ball down in the strike zone. The defense, unlike game one, made a lot of good plays behind him as well. The loss in the first game came with five errors, after BP trailed just 2-0 after four innings."

WEM's Will Storch ignited the Bucs with a home run in the fifth, and the losers fell apart after that, committing four of their five errors of the game in that fateful fifth. Storch had two hits, scored two runs and drove in four runs. Bladyn Bartelt pitched the shutout for the Bucs. WEM had 10 runs, six hits and two errors in game one; BP had zero runs, two hits and five errors. In the second game BP had four runs, eight hits and no errors; WEM had two runs, seven hits and two errors.

SPEEDWAY



PHOTO COURTESY OF RONNIE SOX
A-main feature race winnner Ricky 'Rude' Proffitt (second from right) poses with his \$10,000 check at the Bandit Big Rig Series event at Concord Speedway Saturday, May 5th.

Ricky Rude holds off rest of Bandit posse at Concord Speedway

Concord, N.C. – Defending Bandit Series champion Ricky Rude is doing everything he can to ensure back-to-back titles. Rude took the lead on lap six of the a-main feature race at Concord Speedway Saturday night and never looked back, securing his first feature win of the 2018 season.

"I'm just tickled to death to get back in this spot," Rude said. "I kept telling my spotter, 'Tell me how many laps are left. I gotta get this done!'"

Multiple yellow flags didn't help Rude's cause, but he wasn't too worried.

"I knew the yellow flags would come out. It never fails, but I'm used to it," Rude said.

Two other Bandits that had themselves a night – Mark Noble and Justin Ball. Noble won the third heat race and first challenge race, narrowly holding off Rude each time. Ball won the second challenge race as well as the Bandit Shoot Out. Ball's Shoot Out win netted a local youngster, James, a crisp \$100 bill, which he said he would use to "probably take my mom out for Mother's Day." Kruckeberg Motorsports had one of their best nights ever. Not only did Noble pick up two wins, but Tyler and Craig Kruckeberg finished second and third in the a-main feature race.

"I was just following (my son) Tyler. He got loose a couple times so I had to get loose a couple times," Craig said.

"It was a struggle at the end," Tyler said. "Ricky just had a little more power than me, so he was pulling away on the straightaways and I was trying to make it up in the corners. I just couldn't get to him fast enough. Hopefully, next race I'll have a little bit more power."

The next Minimizer Bandit Big Rig Series event has a midwestern flair. Hawkeye Downs Speedway in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is one of only a couple return tracks on the 2018 schedule.

"Last year's event was fantastic," Bandit Technical Director Brian Madsen said. "Fans loved it and we expect a similar response next month."

The Bandits race at Hawkeye Downs on Saturday, June 9th. Fans can get tickets to any Bandit event in 2018 by going to the official Bandit website.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RONNIE SOX
A-main feature race winnner Ricky 'Rude' Proffitt (second from right) poses with his \$10,000 check at the Bandit Big Rig Series event at Concord Speedway Saturday, May 5th.

About Bandit Big Rig Series

The Bandit Big Rig Series returns big rig tractor truck racing to the short track in the United States. The series was designed to be affordable and accessible for anyone wishing to put together a race team. For additional information, please contact Jason Johnson at (507) 676-1987, or email jason@banditseries.com.

The Oaks

Golf Club in Hayfield

Wednesdays & Thursdays

Steak-n-Play \$28

Buy one 18 hole greens fee

Get one FREE

with paid full cart!

One coupon per customer. Valid anytime. Must present coupon. Expires 10/31/2018.

73671 170th Avenue, Hayfield
2 Miles west and 1/2 mile south of Hayfield
TheOaksInHayfield.com • 507-477-3233

WE ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

45986 HIGHWAY 56 • KENYON, MN
507-789-6307 • WWW.KENYONCOUNTRYCLUB.COM

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP - \$595	JUNIORS (6-15) - \$80
SINGLE MEMBERSHIP - \$375	SOCIAL - \$45
COLLEGE POST SECONDARY - \$215	FIVE 9 HOLE PASSES - \$60
JUNIORS (15-18) - \$160	FIND US ON FACEBOOK!

Spring has Sprung

take advantage of one of the biggest sales of the year

Call Now!

15% OFF

on Renewal by Andersen Windows

NO money down, **NO** payments,
NO interest for **12** months!

*special promotion not valid with any other offers or pre-approved projects.
valid through May 31st, 2018

Plus
*up to an additional **10% off**
for *your* one day sale

Stop by our interactive showroom for more details
603 S 1st Ave, Albert Lea MN

Home Solutions MIDWEST
Making Homes New Again

507-373-3435
moreinfo@HomeSolutionsMidwest.com
www.HomeSolutionsMidwest.com

Find us on Facebook

Lic: BC001552

Senator brings new life for Highway 14 funding

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

After being snubbed by state transportation officials, a state senator is breathing new life into potential funding for completing the U.S. Highway 14 project between Dodge Center and Owatonna.

Last week Sen. Dave Senjem of Rochester introduced a measure that would provide \$174 million for the Highway 14 project as part of a \$1.2 billion bonding bill. The bill survived the latest threat when a Senate Capital Investment committee passed it Thursday. Senjem is chairman of the committee. The bill could reach the full Senate floor this Wednesday.

Senjem's bill would fund the Highway 14 project through the state's gas tax.

"We are thrilled to see funding for Highway 14 expansion from Owatonna to Dodge Center included in the Minnesota Senate's bonding proposal," said Karen Foreman, president of the U.S. Highway 14 Partnership. "Especially in light

of the disappointing announcement that Highway 14 would not receive any funding from the Corridors of Commerce program this year, the Highway 14 Partnership is grateful the legislature is taking steps to address this important and dangerous stretch of road."

The Highway 14 Partnerships calls on the legislature and governor to address the regional imbalance of 2018's Corridors of Commerce funding by mandating that any additional funding for the program this year goes straight to Greater Minnesota projects like Highway 14.

State lawmakers have tried to fund Highway 14 in the past, but typically run into resistance from the governor's office. Last year Highway 14 was initially part of the Senate Transportation bill. The senate was forced to remove Highway 14 last year under strong threats from the governor that he would veto such a measure.



SEN. DAVE SENJEM

"(The governor's) beef has always been that the legislature shouldn't select which highways will be funded," said Senjem. Instead the governor relies on transportation officials to decide the most critical needs for highway funding.

But Senjem isn't happy with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, especially over the Highway 14 project. On May 1, MnDOT selected other highways, primarily in or close to the metro area, for future funding through the Corridors of Commerce projects.

"We have lost trust with MnDOT," Senjem said. "We have found there are critical places around Minnesota that have long been ignored by MnDOT. When you lose trust with an agency, it makes the relationship a lot harder," he said.

With the governor's opposition in mind, Senjem got a little more creative this year by proposing to

"We're going to stay strong and get it to the governor's office and let him decide."

Sen. Dave Senjem
Highway 14 Proponent

put the funding for Highway 14 into the bonding bill.

Senjem said there is "no plausible reason" for the governor to continue opposing Highway 14. "We're frustrated," he said. "We're going to stay strong and get it to the governor's office and let him decide. It will be a test of will."

This year there is "a lot of energy over Highway 14" in the legislature, Senjem said. "I feel good about it. We're all going to work together and not allow hate to enter the conversation," he added.

Senjem credits his fellow senator, John Jasinski of Faribault, for providing heavy support for Highway 14. "He has been a strong and powerful voice on Highway 14,"

Senjem said. "Every third word in his vocabulary is Highway 14."

Highway 14, Senjem said, needs to finally get funded. "This has been on a list for a life time," he said. "I'm elbow deep in it. I wouldn't put it in my bill if I wasn't serious about it."

The Highway 14 Partnership is united in supporting the four-lane expansion of Highway 14 all the way from Rochester to New Ulm, which is considered the economic lifeblood of southern Minnesota.

"We are tired of picking up the paper to read the latest news about neighbors who have been killed or injured on this road," Foreman said. "Highway 14 remains the most highly populated stretch of road in greater Minnesota without a continuous four-lane connection. The time to fix that is now."

Monday is the deadline for lawmakers to wrap up their legislative session. Senjem is confident the legislature will work Highway 14 into the final bonding bill. However, the governor would still have the right to line item veto the measure, which he has threatened to do in the past.

Mai Fest to celebrate auctioneer's legacy of giving

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Anybody who's been to an auction in Steele County has probably heard his voice. For over 35 years Jeff Kath served as auctioneer for a variety of important causes, and now his family hopes to celebrate his charitable legacy by throwing an auction in his name.



JEFF KATH

The Jeff Kath Memorial Mai Fest will be held at the Retrofit Building on Saturday from 5 p.m. to midnight. There will be both a silent and live auction scheduled for 5 to 8 p.m., where Steele County residents can bid on items and remember the man who got them bidding in the first place.

There will be a live band and a DJ service, and to correspond with the event's German theme, brats and sauerkraut will be served along with additional side dishes. And there will be polka, Hammerschlagen, raffles, and more. The money raised will go to benefit the Elks Youth Camp in Northern Minnesota, local youth activities sponsored by the Elks, and a scholarship in Kath's name.

Kath was a mainstay at many similar events in and around town, making it as far as Waseca in some cases. As an auctioneer, he brought people out for a wide range of causes, and always made sure to keep them bidding high.

This past January Kath passed away at the age of 63 from an embolism, which is a lodging of embolus, a blockage-causing piece of material, inside a blood vessel. Being a Christmas baby, he had just celebrated his birthday, and was at home when the incident occurred.

Knowing all that Kath had done for the community, his family felt they needed to do something special in his honor. "After Jeff passed people had come to us and said that we should have some sort of benefit in his name because of all the people he's helped," said Rhonda Michaletz, Kath's sister.

After years of helping other organizations in town raise money for their own special causes, his family is proud that his name will be attached to one of his own. "It's an honor to have his name attached to something youth related," Kath's wife Jayne said.

Outside of auctioneering, Kath was heavily involved in the Elks Club, and spent time utilizing his talents at different youth oriented events, including the Elks Youth Camp in Northern Minnesota, as well as the soccer shoot and hoop shoot, local activities put on by the Elks Club.

Taking his work a step further, Kath also did fundraisers for the camp, helping to take care of all of the lighting and buildings installed there. The camp provides kids everything they need, and recruiters like Jayne Kath are willing to drive the kids up there if the parents are unable to.

He had a personality fit for the job.

SEE KATH BENEFIT, C2

EDUCATE AND THEN ENFORCE



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

The mangled wreck of a car driven by a 16-year-old girl provided a strong reminder for Owatonna students prior to prom weekend about the dangers of drinking and driving. Kaitlyn Hansen, a student at Fillmore Central, died instantly in the crash. Her family hopes the car will provide a powerful message of the deadly consequences of drinking too much alcohol.



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

Owatonna student Terrell Connor tosses a few beanbags while wearing a set of impairment goggles to get a sense of what's like to be under the influence of alcohol. Capt. Jeff Mundale of Owatonna Police looks on during the educational activity prior to prom.

Owatonna holds driving safety activities for prom weekend

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

For teens prom will be a fun event that they will remember for their whole life. But for many parents, it can be worrying to think that your son or daughter will be at risk for traffic crashes while out celebrating.

This is the tragedy that befell the Hansen family, who lost their daughter at the age of 16 to a drunk driver. Kaitlyn Hansen was a junior at Fillmore Central High School when her Ford Taurus was hit head-on. The incident occurred on Highway 52 near Chatfield.

The driver of the other vehicle was 56-year-old Cindy Mueske, who crossed the centerline traveling between 85 to 95 mph.

According to investigators, Mueske had a blood alcohol concentration between .08 and .151 at the time of the collision. The legal limit in the state of Minnesota is .08. Mueske pleaded guilty to criminal vehicular homicide.

Although struck by such a terrible tragedy, the Hansen family hopes that others can learn from Kaitlyn's story, and that those who hear it will think twice before getting behind the wheel after drinking or using drugs.

"This is a critical time to set a good example."

Capt. Jeff Mundale
Owatonna Police

On Thursday, OHS students got to hear Kaitlyn's story and participate in several activities aimed at educating them on the dangers of drinking and driving.

Capt. Jeff Mundale of Owatonna Police, TZD (Toward Zero Deaths) Coordinator Jason Petterson, State Patrol Sgt. Troy Christianson, SE MN TZD Coordinator Jessica Schleck, and OHS SHOC Advisor Nancy Williams all banded together to organize and participate in the event, which took place in the school's gym during lunch time.

Nancy Williams credits her SHOC students with helping to come up with the idea. "They're the ones who suggested we include the car," Williams said. "So we worked together and got it here."

SHOC stands for Students Helped Others Choose, and Williams says that those involved have made her proud of both their steadfast adherence to helping their peers and their strength of character. "They've given speeches at some of the other schools, and they work closely to help their peers," she said. There are currently 82 students involved in SHOC at OHS.

Mundale oversaw a beanbag toss in which students had to toss beanbags without a set of impairment goggles, and then try to perform the same activity with a set of impairment goggles on.

The goggles partially replicate the vision of being intoxicated, and Mundale and his fellow officers were equipped with an arsenal of differing sets that varied in strength.

"It's about educating them," Mundale said. "What's important to mention is about 30 teens age 13 to 19 are killed each year in Minnesota,

SEE PROM SAFETY, C2

School finally unloads land in Medford

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

A chunk of land that has been causing restlessness with Medford school officials for several years has finally been sold.

At last week's meeting, the Medford School Board accepted an offer from Timbercrest, LLC for 16 acres of land on 5th Avenue SE in Medford. Timbercrest is operated out of the south metro and primarily builds single family homes and townhomes.

The offer came after board members agreed in March to lower the price from \$200,000 to \$180,000. Proceeds from the sale will go into the school's general fund.

The school's inability to move the land had been creating anxiety with board members, who desperately wanted to unload the property. The board initially listed the property at \$235,000.

The board considered the offer in a closed discussion at last week's special session.

With the land being sold, school officials are now focusing on a rebranding initiative. The board is currently considering various options for an in-house renovation venture.

The renovation project, which will work to both update the media center and utilize extra space available for additional purposes, is still in the early stages of moving forward.

After the closed meeting, Superintendent Mark Ristau went through several concepts relating to the planned renovation project before leading the board members on a brief walkthrough of the proposed alterations.

The tour was a great way to catch thoughts and ideas from the school board while also showing them the layout and limits of the current designs.

SEE MEDFORD SCHOOL BOARD, C2



Steele Talkin'
AMY BARTZ AND JEN HINTZ

Safe Harbour – Restoring Wellness

Safe Harbour has been a part of the continuum of care provided by South Central Human Relations Center for over 30 years. The first part of Safe Harbour's history was in a three story Victorian Home in heart of Owatonna. A little over six years ago the program moved into a new facility. This move allowed for expansion of services.

Safe Harbour is now a 12-bed Intensive Residential Treatment (IRT) and Residential Crisis program for adults in need of behavioral health and support services. The focus of this program is to help people with a mental

SEE STEELE TALKIN', C2

STEELE TALKIN': Safe Harbour

FROM C1

and chemical illness to avoid hospitalizations, or promote continued stabilization following a hospital stay. Safe Harbour utilizes evidence-based practices — Illness Management and Recovery, Integrated Dual Disorder treatment, therapy, psychiatry, and counseling, to help residents create their treatment plan and chart a path for recovery. Residents may receive treatment in a residential program for up to 90 days, though the average stay is about 45 days.

As people transition into the program, a strong focus is placed on restoring wellness. One of the tools used is the SAMSHA 8 Dimensions of Wellness. This assists people to implement practical ways to start developing healthy habits; ultimately having positive impacts on mental, physical and chemical health.

The eight dimensions of wellness include:

- **Emotional-** coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships.
- **Environmental-** Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being.
- **Financial-** Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.
- **Intellectual-** Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills.
- **Occupational-** Personal satisfaction and enrichment from one's work.
- **Physical-** Recognizing the need for physical activity, healthy foods and sleep.
- **Social-** Developing a sense of connection, belonging and a well-developed support system.
- **Spiritual-** Expanding a sense of purpose and meaning in life.

As we know, good physical and mental health is linked together for overall wellness. So we start with the “basics,” which include environmental, physical and social dimensions. When a resident comes in our doors, we work hard to address the environmental component of wellness by providing a safe, calm and welcoming environment. There is much effort and focus on creating a place in which residents are able to recover. We support balanced eating, establishing a healthy sleep pattern, as well as activity and exercise in each resident's day. Residents complete a physical health assessment upon admission. This assists in identifying needs and linking them to specific services, such as establishing a primary care provider, dental care, eye care, as well as any other needed medical health services.

Social wellness is another component. This focuses on the connection to community, as well as establishing and developing social networks that become part of the resident's long term recovery. At Safe Harbour, we support this by educating residents on community groups such as AA, NA or mental health support groups. We also engage in community based activities to support their comfort and “getting connected” to the community in a healthy way.

It seems that when those “basics” are in place, residents are better able to start managing the emotional dimension of wellness. Residents are educated and practice healthy coping skills to manage daily stressors, symptoms, and develop healthy and satisfying relationships. This is a time to practice self care, foster resiliency, find methods to cope with stressors, and know when to ask for help. Improving intellectual wellness is supported by giving the resident time to explore new ideas, new points of view, as well as practicing problem solving skills. Spiritual wellness encourages the resident in getting a sense of connection with mind, body and soul, to have a sense of purpose and connection to their life. This is practiced by doing gratitude journals, daily reflections and creating their own spiritual plan.

Amy Bartz, MSW,LICSW is treatment director and Jen Hintz, B.S. is assistant treatment director at Safe Harbour; a program of South Central Human Relations Center. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.

THE PAINS OF STRESS

Prairie Family & Sports CHIROPRACTIC

Long Name... Great Results



How well do you adapt to stress?

Just as a chain tends to break at its weakest link, we seem to exhibit stress and strain in the weakest areas of our bodies. For some its an upset stomach. For others, reoccurring headaches, back pain, or muscle stiffness. Regardless of your response, your nervous system is involved. Our approach to stress is to help normalize the function of your nervous system by finding the “weakest links” in your spine and help restore better function. It may not be possible to remove the stress from your life, however, with our help you can respond better to the unique challenges you face.

TRY CHIROPRACTIC - CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT!
507-583-2271 or Toll Free 1-866-5-DRCHAD

507-583-2271 or 866-5-DRCHAD	Chad M. Eischens, D.C. 344 East Main Street Blooming Prairie, MN 55917	Website: www.drchad.org E-mail: drchad@drchad.org
------------------------------	--	--



Panther of the Week



Shelby

Sponsored by:



NRHEG Elementary- Ellendale

This week's Panther of the Week is Shelby Bissell
This week's Panther of the Week is Shelby Bissell. Shelby lives in Ellendale with her parents James and Katie Bissell. She has one older brother Hunter. Shelby is in Ms. Beenken's 2nd grade class at NRHEG. Shelby is a wonderful leader in the classroom. She is very responsible and loves to help out whenever she can. Shelby is a great friend and a very hard worker. She always has a smile on her face. Her kind heart makes her an awesome friend. Shelby's favorite book is Goosebumps and her favorite movie is Project MC2. She enjoys playing with slime and doing karate. Shelby enjoys spending time with her family and playing outside in the summer; she is very excited for summer to come. Shelby's favorite food is pancakes. Keep up the great work Shelby and have a fabulous summer!

Medford's Anderst state's new Student Council President

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

Medford High School junior Journey Anderst was selected as the State of Minnesota's Student Council President for the 2018-19 school year at the Minnesota Association of Student Council and Minnesota Association of

Honor Societies Ceremony on April 9 at the ACGC High School in Grove City, Minnesota.

Anderst term as president will official begin on May 23.

“Student council is my favorite thing,” Anderst said. “I’m kind of a nerd when it comes to it. It’s super exciting and leadership is a lot of fun and it makes you grow as

person.

“During my time I want to attend as many as division meetings as possible,” she continued. “The state of Minnesota is split up into divisions. We are in the southeast division and then there is the central division and so on. I want to attend as many of those as I can, so I can get the word out about our state and national

MAI FEST: Kath Benefit

FROM C1

Michaletz says that Kath was always equipped with a joke or a story. This enabled him to light up any room and gave him reason to pursue a career in auctioneering. “It was a way for him to entertain everyone, if you gave him a mic you wouldn’t get it back from him,” his sister joked.

His ability to get the best out of people was something that contributed to every auction he called. “One time he sold a blueberry pie for \$450,” Michaletz recalled. “Everyone wanted him at their fundraisers, because they knew he could get the whole place bidding.”

Kath’s introduction to auctioneering came when he was still a young man. According to his siblings, he had what they called “the gift of gab,” and with such an infectious personality, Kath needed an outlet for his talents.

After being told that he should look into a career in auctioneering, Kath met a man named John Nechanicky, who took him under his wing and the two of them would work as partners to call larger auctions together.

Steve Kath, Jeff’s brother, remembers Nechanicky as “a great guy, he helped Jeff find his calling.” After Nechanicky passed away, Kath continued to call auctions around the area, becoming the consummate pro the community remembers today.

“Jeff was not only a brother, but a great friend,” Steve explained. “A lot of people who knew him said he was a one of a kind



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jeff Kath is shown with his grandkids. Kath was a renowned auctioneer within the community for many years, and helped to raise money for any cause which came calling. Kath's family and friends will be holding a memorial benefit this Saturday in Owatonna.

guy,” he said. With a legacy of giving, his family and friends will remember Jeff as a man who helped raise money any way he could, and used his talents to spread the feeling of charity wherever he went.

JEFF KATH MEMORIAL MAI FEST

Saturday
5 p.m. to Midnight
Retrofit Building- Owatonna

EDUCATE: Prom Safety

FROM C1

and about a third of those are from drinking and driving.”

Mundale thinks that it's vital to teach young people safe habits at an early age to catch them before they're able to make mistakes. “This is a critical time to set a good example,” he said.

While Mundale supervised the beanbag toss and shared some eye-opening statistics, Sgt. Christianson had students try their hand at shooting hoops while wearing the goggles.

“It's important to carry over my experience to help them make smart choices,” Christianson said. He has spent years as a crash reconstructionist, and knows firsthand the dangers of impaired driving. “Basically we want to educate and then enforce,” he said.

Petterson, who was helping to administer field sobriety tests to students with the goggles on, explained that, “they're realizing that they can't keep their functions straight.” Along with the other volunteers, he hopes this might deter students from making unwise choices during prom weekend.

One of the students who walked the line for Petterson, Andrew Frank, described the feeling of trying to perform the test while wearing the impairment goggles as, “being dizzy times 10.”

Fellow student Terrell Connor, who took a few shots from the free throw line with the goggles on, feels it's a great way to instill positive choices for life. “My distance was all screwed up. It really

messed with my depth perception, which isn't good,” he said.

Christian Nogle also tried his hand at some of the activities, and was shocked to see the difference when he peeled his goggles off. “It felt normal at first, but then when I tried to move everything was different from where I was,” he said, adding the best part was when he took the goggles off and saw the dramatic change.

“We just hope that they carry some of the lessons they learn here through their entire life,” Williams said. Although this is the first year OHS has held a safety event like this one, Williams anticipates it will become an annual tradition.

While the car is a powerful message, Williams knows that students will get a lot out of the hands-on demonstrations. “I think kids learn more while having fun,” she said.

After taking part in the activities, students were also asked to make a pledge not to drink or drive. Williams thinks that this is an important part of making sure that they follow through on the lessons they learned.

By giving students a real-world example, and having them experience the feeling of impairment while trying to perform certain tasks, the volunteers at OHS' pre-prom safety event know that they will have positively impacted students' lives.

But at the end of the day Kaitlyn Hansen's story is an important reminder that when it comes to driver safety, it's not all just fun and games.

MEDFORD:

Land Sale

FROM C1

Currently the hope is to modernize the media center with an eye towards shoring up some extra space for a variety of functions. With tablets and smartphones becoming a ubiquitous presence in everyday life, including at school, the board will consider all options when it comes to upgrading the school's media center.

This means getting rid of some of the older, desktop models of computers, as well as figuring out which books or other media content can be sold or donated.

“We'll go through and see which ones haven't been checked out in five years or more,” Ristau suggested.

There are also planned alterations for the school's special education rooms, which Ristau hopes will benefit from more accommodating and refined classroom designs.

The current proposal is to build a separating wall and add a door to split one large classroom into two. This will allow for a better environment for the school's special education students, and make it easier for the teachers who will have less distractions crossing from one region of the room into another.

Other than these initial projected ideas, the board is still looking for more ways to optimize its available space. The need for more space is a good sign for the school, which expects enrollment levels to remain consistent or increase.

After the walkthrough, Ristau and the board members took time to review the school's projected capital items for the coming year. These figures will give board members a general notion of the potential costs for the 2018-2019 school year.

The total projected cost for the next school year stands at \$282,000. This includes exorbitant line items such as new Google Chromebooks estimated to cost \$190,000 and \$47,000 worth of new teacher laptops. There is also a \$15,000 cost for Google Admin licenses.

To remedy these costs, the school will be selling back some of its older devices and switching over to free software such as Google Classroom. In all, these actions will save around \$28,980 for the school. These will balance along with the projected total and a \$100,000 potential cost for the media center remodeling.

The board also touched briefly on the continued progress for the school's rebranding project. Many of the members were adamant that the school should continue to seek outside donations and sponsorship.

Viracon has recently offered to donate glass for the project; however, this might come with additional costs. “The glass from Viracon will be free, but the installation won't be, so we're still looking at that,” Ristau told the board. “I'll continue to work on trying to find some more sponsors and donors.”

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE ANNUAL

BLOOMING PRAIRIE AMBULANCE OPEN HOUSE

BOUNCE HOUSE!

FOOD! PRIZES!

DISTRACTED DRIVER CAR





TUESDAY, MAY 22ND • 4:00 PM TO 7:00 PM
AT THE BLOOMING PRAIRIE AMBULANCE GARAGE
SOUTH EDGE OF BLOOMING PRAIRIE ON HWY 218

Just a spoonful of sugar

Hospital Auxiliary's Festival of Tables set for May 22

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

“Just a spoonful sugar makes the medicine go down. . .” actress Julie Andrews chirps during the movie production of “Mary Poppins.”

This song provides the title for Joanne Sorenson’s unique table to be one of 23 featured at the Seventh Annual Owatonna Hospital Auxiliary’s Festival of Tables event on Tuesday, May 22.

The annual fundraising event will again be staged at the Owatonna Country Club, 1991 Lemond Road.

The past three years, monies from the fundraising event have been directed toward scholarships. More than \$6,000 was raised last year and over \$7,000 went to scholarships in 2016.

Winners of this year’s scholarships have been selected but not announced.

This year’s Festival of Tables is the seventh annual, and Sorenson will have her Mary Poppins table set up, making her the only table decorator who has displayed a theme every year.

A variety of Homer Laughlin creamers and sugar bowls make the statement, “just a spoonful of sugar” medicine anyone?”

“We are sold out with about 215 expected to attend this spectacle,” says Greene. She is part of a Festival of Tables Committee of eight volunteers.

Mary Greene is again the chair of this popular event and has held that distinction during every year the event has been held. Other committee members are: Dave Kenow, Deb Albrecht, Gloria Kenow, Joanne Peterson, Judy Weinke, Ronda Christenson and Shirley Nelson.

The Festival of Tables is a perfect reason to bring out collectible items and showcase them,” remarked Greene. During the seven years of the fundraiser, every table has been different. There are no repeat performances, she says.

“It’s for a good cause, too,” Kenow. “It’s a good time to get together,” added Greene.

Some of the more unique tables



MARY GREENE

in years past have been a John Deere display (with huge sprayer out front); Halloween theme; sports theme and a tornado with the Wizard of Oz.

The Owatonna Hospital Auxiliary has been in existence since 1957. Its purpose is to help purchase needed medical equipment for the hospital and also to help young people enter a health-related field.

Greene said Ginny Thompson urged her to get involved with the Festival of Tables project. “Mary you can do that,” Thompson said in convincing her to chair the project seven years ago. “It’s been running ever since,” she said.

The past couple of years Greene has said it would be her last as chair, but she keeps coming back. “Never say never,” she says.

The 2018 Festival of Tables will feature 23 tables of creativity.

Greene will even be the hostess for Table 4, called “Birds.” Stop by her table and admire the many hand-carved birds crafted by local artist Stephanie Kolbe.

Ships, sand and sand decorate a table called “By the sea. By the sea, By the beautiful sea.” Hostesses are Hospital Gift Shop day chairs.

Enjoy Snowbabies in May. These popular, tiny bisque figurines will be displayed at a table hosted by Paula Steinbronn.

Even the guys have a table. Their table will show a collection of Yosemite Sam figurines, signage and other items collected by Dave Kenow, former Auxiliary president.

Guests may begin viewing tables at 11 a.m.

The luncheon begins at 12 noon. Luncheon choices include a mixed berry salad with chicken, raspberries, blackberries, walnuts ad gouda cheese.

Shirley Schultz of the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce and a former Auxiliary member, will speak about what’s happening in downtown Owatonna.

Raffle tickets will be sold on decorative baskets containing many surprises. The event ends at 2 p.m.

If interested in having a table for next year, contact Greene at 507-363-1798.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Joanne Sorenson of Blooming Prairie has had a decorative table at the Owatonna Hospital Auxiliary's Festival of Tables every year for the past six years. Last year's table by Sorenson was called “Deutschland.”

Area judge awarded Legion of Merit from U.S. Navy

At his recent Navy retirement ceremony, Captain Ross Leuning received the Legion of Merit, a high ranking award given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding achievements in the military service consisting of actions having a quality of an unusual requirement or remarkable complexity carried out in an unexpected and obviously extraordinary way.

Leuning served 38 years in the military, starting as a Private in the Army National Guard while still a senior in high school. He served as a combat engineer and later as a combat medic while putting himself through the University of South Dakota and then the University of Oregon School of Law, finishing his National Guard career as a Specialist 5, (E-5). After getting his Juris Doctorate, Leuning chose a career in the Navy’s Judge Advocate General Corps (JAG). During his Navy career, he rose

from ensign, to lieutenant junior grade, lieutenant, lieutenant commander, commander, and finally to captain.

Leuning had many assignments during his long Navy JAG career, including criminal defense counsel; senior prosecutor; assistant professor at the U.S. Naval Academy; appellate counsel; force judge advocate for Naval Base Yokosuka, Japan; and served worldwide as a general courts-martial military judge for four years.

In 2010, after 30 years of combined military service Leuning was set to retire. He had served six years in the Army National Guard, five years active duty Navy, and 19 years in the Navy Reserves (during which time he also maintained a civilian legal career). At what he thought was his last



CAPT. ROSS LEUNING

Military Judges conference, Leuning heard about another JAG who had been involuntarily recalled to active duty for assignment in Iraq, a great hardship to that officer and his family. Instead of retiring, Leuning

volunteered to take the other officer’s place and a month later was deployed for a year in Iraq as command judge advocate for Base Command Group, Al Asad. While deployed, Leuning interviewed with Gov. Mark Dayton via Skype and was

appointed a Judge in Minnesota’s Third Judicial District upon his return from Iraq in August 2011.

It is for Leuning’s final assignment that he was awarded the Legion of Merit. In 2016, he reached 30 years of Naval service and statutory retirement.

At the request of the Navy, he served an additional 14 months beyond statutory retirement to help create the Navy’s Preliminary Hearing Officer Unit, a command created in April 2016 dedicated to performing preliminary hearings for active duty Navy in sexual assault cases and other high visibility cases.

The formation of the command was aimed at insuring that independent, experienced, high ranking JAG officers performed preliminary hearings in all Navy sexual assault cases.

Captain Leuning developed new hearing procedures, preliminary hearing officer training materials, and a new reporting format and procedures. Leuning presided over the first serious sexual assault preliminary hearings performed by this new command and over many high visibility cases including some of the first cases looking into the Fat

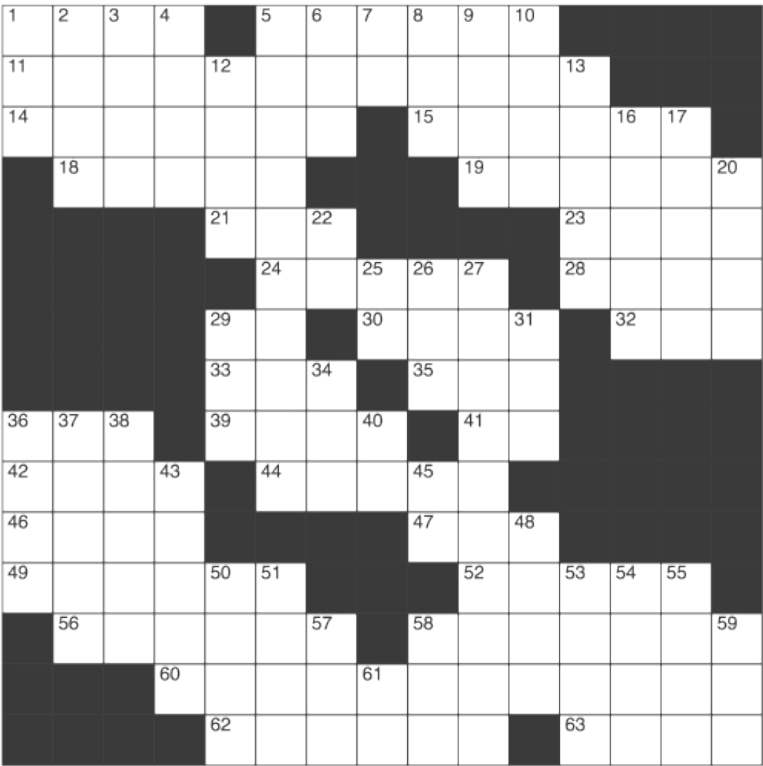
Leonard bribery scandal in Singapore. Leuning trained all the officers assigned to the new command and later trained all Navy Reserve JAG officers at a nationwide training symposium in May 2017. Prior to leaving, Leuning created an online repository of training materials to aid active duty and reserve JAG officers who are assigned to perform these

preliminary hearings. Leuning continues to serve as a Judge for the Third Judicial District in Minnesota, chambered in Albert Lea, but also frequently presides in Steele and Waseca counties. He has recently been appointed to spearhead the creation of and preside over a Veterans Court for the Third Judicial District.

WEEKLY CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- Emperor of Russia
- Abounding in rocks
- Increase in speed
- Music app
- Not nice
- Tables (Span.)
- Decomposes
- __ student: learns healing
- Nursemaid
- Joke-teller
- Male parent
- Group of countries (abbr.)
- “Rambling Rose” actor Lukas
- Midway between south and southwest
- Cartoon Network (abbr.)
- Peacock network
- Principal ethnic group of China
- Made of fermented honey and water
- Exclamation of surprise
- Evaluates skill or knowledge
- Stage in ecological succession
- Ethnic group of SE Asia
- Not small
- A cat is one
- Broken piece
- French president



- Artist’s workshop
- Ability to apply knowledge and skills
- Visually stunning
- Ancient region south of Dead Sea

CLUES DOWN

- Used to pour beer
- Con game
- Skin disorder
- Communists (slang)
- Subjects to hostility
- A major division of geological time
- Hitting statistic (abbr.)
- British thermal unit
- Influential envoy to

- Woodrow Wilson
- Fits on neck of animal
- Fertile soil
- Type of battery
- Khoikhoi peoples
- Consist of two parts
- Small group of trees
- Execute or perform
- Millihenry
- 007’s creator
- Associated with esoteric doctrine
- Electronic countermeasures
- Schenectady County Airport
- No (Scottish)
- Position of leadership
- Statement
- Raccoons belong to this genus
- One who diagnoses
- True mosses
- Blood type
- Albanian
- Emergency response notification system
- College reservists
- Away from wind
- Tough outer layer
- Art __, around 1920
- Born of
- The greatest of all time
- Georgia rockers
- Natural logarithm

Let’s get you movin!

KW KELLERWILLIAMS.
PREMIER REALTY

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



NOW PLAYING!

Nominated for
8 Tony Awards
including
“Best Musical!”

Disney
NEWSIES
THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

Presented by
StarTribune

50 YEARS
Chanhassen
DINNER THEATRES

952.934.1525
800.362.3515
ChanhassenDT.com

BLOOMING PRAIRIE

- MAY 16**
10:30 a.m. – Storytime,
BP Library
5 p.m. – Door to Door
Sales of July 4th Buttons,
Meet at Pizza Cellar
Beer 101 Craft Beer Club
Launch Party, 218 Liquor
- MAY 17**
6:30 p.m. – Family Fun
Night, BP Library
- MAY 19**
4:30 p.m. –
Groundbreaking of Veteran's
Memorial, Servicemen's
Club
5 p.m. – American
Legion Spring Fling Roast
Pork Sandwich Feed,
Servicemen's Club
- MAY 22**
10:30 a.m. – Storytime,
BP Library



Dr. Deborah J. Lien
ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST
DDS, MBA
GIVE THEM EVERY REASON TO SMILE
583.6613
132 2nd Ave NE | Blooming Prairie MN

ELLENDALE/GENEVA/HOPE

- MAY 16**
3:30 p.m. – Home Alone
Class, Ellendale Media
Center
- MAY 18**
7 p.m. – NRHEG High
School Play, NR Gym
- MAY 19**
3 p.m. & 7 p.m. – NRHEG
High School Play, NR Gym
- MAY 20**
7 p.m. – NRHEG
Baccalaureate, NR Gym
- MAY 22**
3:30 p.m. – Community
Ed (Spring Gym Games), NR
Wrestling Room
6:30 p.m. – Karate,
Ellendale Gym North



Blooming Prairie
800-248-3855
www.minimizer.com

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

- MAY 16**
4 p.m. – Owatonna EDA
Meeting, City Admin Building
- MAY 17**
Noon – Business Boot
Camp, Owatonna Library
7 p.m. – Mike Eckers
presents WWI-Battlefield
Medicine, History Center
7 p.m. Doug Wardlow Talk,
Owatonna Library
- MAY 18**
2 p.m. – 7 p.m. – Rip
Roar'n Rummage Sale,
Fairgrounds
3 p.m. – Mohs Homes
Open House, 1915 White
Oak Lane NE
- MAY 19**
7 a.m. – Farmers Market,
Central Park
9 a.m. – 2 p.m. – Rec on
the Go
9 a.m. – 1 p.m. – Rip
Roar'n Rummage Sale,
Fairgrounds
- 9:30 a.m. – DIY Youth
Event, Owatonna Area
Business Development
Center
10 a.m. – 6 p.m. –
Customer Appreciation Day,
Karl's of Medford
10 a.m. – Mohs Homes
Open House, 1915 White
Oak Lane NE
3 p.m. – 11 p.m. – Benefit
to fight Crohns & Colitis,
Fairgrounds
- MAY 21**
6 p.m. – Sons of Norway
Meeting, Elks Lodge
- MAY 22**
4 p.m. – Owatonna Public
Utilities Meeting, OPU
5 p.m. – Steele County
Board Meeting, County
Admin Building
5:30 p.m. – Owatonna
Planning Commission
Meeting, City Admin Building
5:30 p.m. – Business
After Hours, Community Bank

Little Theatre announces 2018-2019 season lineup

Little Theatre of Owatonna (LTO) is pleased to announce the lineup for the 2018-2019 season.

More details of these plays, as well as audition information, will be available on LittleTheatreOfOwatonna.org as it becomes available.

FALL:
“And Then There Were None” by Agatha Christie – Mystery
Directed by: Kristi Westergaard
Dates: Oct. 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, & 28
Presented with special arrangements from Samuel French

HOLIDAY:
“It’s a Wonderful Life: A live Radio Play” adapted by Joe Landry – Holiday Drama
Directed By: Victoria Bartkowiak
Dates: Nov. 29 & 30, Dec. 1 & 2
Presented with special arrangements through Playscripts

WINTER 2019:
“Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street” music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by Hugh Wheeler – Musical Thriller
Directed by: Jeffrey Jackson
Dates: Feb. 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, & 24
Presented with special arrangements through Music Theatre International (MTI)

PRING 2019:
“Farce of Habit” by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Home & Jamie Wooten – Comedy
Directed by: Sandee Hardy Hagen
Dates: April 26, 27 & 28 – May 3, 4, & 5
Presented with special arrangements through Dramatists Play Service

SUMMER 2019:
“Once on this Island” by Lynn Ahrens & Stephen Flaherty – Musical
Directed by: Heather Burke
Dates: June 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29 & 30
Presented with special arrangements through Music Theatre International (MTI)

BP Vets Memorial ground breaking May 19

HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

It’s going to be a real doubleheader on Saturday at the Blooming Prairie Servicemen’s Club.

The Blooming Prairie Sons of the American Legion Squadron 52 hosts its Fifth Annual Spring Fling and the event is kicked off with a special event, groundbreaking ceremonies for the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial.

Following the groundbreaking, guests may attend the Spring Fling Fundraiser and enjoy some delicious, slow-roasted pork loin sandwiches. Squadron treasurer Dean Zilm will prepare the pork using a “family secret” barbecue sauce, juices and herbs. He will be working with Jenny Cashman in the kitchen to serve the special dining treat.

A free will donation will be asked for the dinner.

Squadron 52 has been the driving force in making the veterans memorial in Blooming Prairie a reality.

Just before the Spring Fling fundraiser, a formal groundbreaking is planned with the celebration starting at 4:30 p.m.

Commanders from the local American Legion Post 52, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 878, American Legion Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion Squadron 52 will participate.

Representatives from the BP Servicemen’s Club, the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial Committee and

Families and friends of veterans have already reserved 262 wall pavers for the memorial. Peterson



Submitted schematic

The Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial to be constructed just east of the BP Servicemen’s Club will soon be a reality. Here’s another look at the architect’s drawing for the memorial. Groundbreaking is planned for 4:30 p.m. Saturday at the BP Servicemen’s Club.

the BP Veterans Memorial Corporation will also be on hand to turn the first shovel.

Contractors working on the site preparation and the electrical project will also be in attendance.

The public is encouraged to attend this historic moment of recognizing area veterans.

Tom Peterson, SAL adjutant and chairman of the Veterans Memorial Committee, has provided an update on total contributions to date. “We are 64.8 percent to our goal with \$162,039.12 in contributions,” Peterson said.

also acknowledged the \$735 contribution to the memorial by the Joyce Johns family in loving memory to James Johns.

Peterson said it is a good time to reserve a wall paver for your veteran. He said time is of the essence to get the wall paver etched with the veteran’s name in time for the proposed dedication on Veterans Day on Nov. 11.

Anyone having questions about reserving a wall paver or about making a contribution should contact Peterson at 507-456-2017.

For those attending both events, sign up for door prizes and participate in

the silent auction. Cabela’s has donated several items for the silent auction, which will benefit the BP Veterans Memorial.

Raffle tickets at a cost of \$5 each will be available at the Spring Fling for a chance to win a patriotic quilt sewn by Marilyn Meshke and quilted by the Calico Hutch in Hayward.

The quilt is named “Stars and Bars.” Its dimensions are 86 x 102 inches. Drawing for the quilt will take place on Memorial Day, May 28 at the BP Servicemen’s Club. In addition to the quilt, two other prizes will be presented, second prize of \$100 in cash and third prize of \$50 in cash. Ticket buyers need not be present to win.

All proceeds from the quilt raffle will be donated to the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial. Raffle tickets can be purchased at the BP Servicemen’s Club Foxhole, and at A Touch of Charm, Sportstitch, BP Area Chamber of Commerce and from members of the BP Veterans Memorial Committee and from the BP Veterans Memorial Corp.

Contact the following individuals about tickets or BP Veterans Memorial questions: Marilyn Meshke, Sandy Jones, Doug Miner, Tom Peterson, Fred Vokoun, Tom Walters, Kenny Vermilyea, Keith Holman, Jackie Schlichter, or Kurt Blome.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SONS OF NORWAY ANNOUCE MEETING
The Nortonna Lodge 1-638 of the Sons of Norway will hold its annual Syttende Mai dinner on Monday, May 21, at 6 p.m. at the Elks Lodge, 126 East View Street.

Syttende Mai is Norway’s Constitution Day. The annual celebration dinner will feature torsk, meatballs, potatoes, vegetable, cucumber salad, lingonberries, lefse, and rice creme.

Reserve your spot for the Syttende Mai dinner by Monday, May 14 by contacting Trudy Haugen at 507-451-7865

If you would like more information on the Nortonna Lodge of the Sons of Norway, contact Cindy or Paul Hokanson at 507-451-9301.

CONSERVATIVE COALITION OF OWATONNA HOSTING DOUG WARDLOW
The Conservative Coalition of Owatonna will be hosting Doug Wardlow at the Owatonna Public Library on Thursday, May 17, at 7 p.m. He will be speaking on “Freedom and Justice for the People.”

Wardlow is an accomplished trial and appellate attorney, practicing law with Alliance Defending Freedom. He litigates constitutional cases in defense of free speech, religious liberty and rights of conscience in state and federal courts across the nation.

Wardlow is also running for Attorney General for the State of Minnesota. Wardlow said, “As Attorney General, I will wage an aggressive campaign to protect and extend our most cherished

fundamental freedoms. By standing up for the rights of the people and restraining the excesses of government, we can make sure that Minnesota is a place of opportunity and prosperity for generations to come.”

All are invited to attend. There is no charge. This event is being hosted by Conservative Coalition of Owatonna, a group of local community members who agree we need to be energized, educated and engaged in navigating cultural issues.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY TO HOST MAY DIY
Habitat for Humanity of Steele-Waseca Area is excited to host a May DIY (do-it-yourself) Youth Event on Saturday, May 19 from 9:30 to 11 a.m. at the Owatonna Area Business Development Center, 1065

SW 24th Ave, Owatonna.

Youth will be building a simple step stool from lumber graciously donated by Alexander Lumber. The event is free and family-friendly. Fastenal has also donated material for this wonderful event. Youth will need adult accompaniment throughout the event. Space is limited. Call Ellen Heydon at 507-446-0112, register online at www.habitatswa.org or email communityengagement@habitatswa.org to register.

Our sponsors for this event are Amesbury Truth, Guardian Energy LLC., United Prairie Bank, First United Bank, Bremer Bank and Hy-Vee. With the support of Alexander Lumber, Court Sports & More, Einhaus, Mattison, Carver & Haberman, P.A., Owatonna Area Business Development Center, Rush Creek Lumber, Tim’s Auto Service.

Memorial Day services planned in BP

HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

The Rev. Tom Neihaus of St. Columbanus Catholic Church of Blooming Prairie will be the main speaker during Memorial Day ceremonies in Blooming Prairie on Monday, May 28.

He will speak at 11 a.m. at the Blooming Prairie City Cemetery following a parade from the Prairie Plumbing and Heating parking lot to

the city cemetery.

The public is invited.

The parade will feature representatives from American Legion Post 52, Legion Auxiliary, VFW Post 878, VFW Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion. The Blooming Prairie High School band will also perform.

Coffee and doughnuts will be served at the BP Servicemen’s Club beginning at 9:30 a.m. on Memorial Day.

Parade participants then gather at Prairie Plumbing.

Following the Memorial Day ceremonies at the BP City Cemetery, everyone is invited to a lunch at the BP Servicemen’s Club. Pulled pork or pulled turkey sandwiches will be served with potato salad, pickles, watermelon and brownies.

The lunch will be a free will offering except the veterans who will receive a free meal.

After lunch, a presentation and recognition of the 2017-18 Voice of Democracy winners will be featured. Quilts of Valor will also be presented to veterans. Joyce Johns, VFW Auxiliary president, will preside.

The day’s ceremonies end with a drawing for a Veterans Memorial Quilt. Proceeds go to the BP Veterans Memorial.

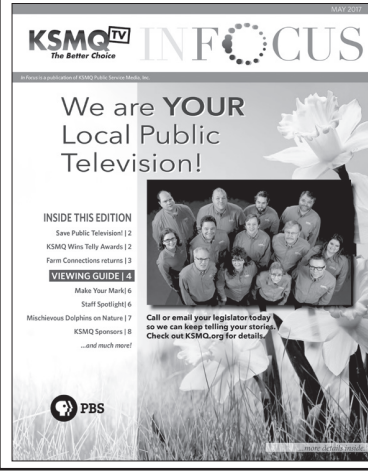
Don’t miss all the “Better Choices!”

Plan your viewing with the IN FOCUS Program Guide!
Delivered to you monthly • 1 Year Member Subscription \$35.
email: MBednar@KSMQ.Org or 507.481.2098



KSMQ TV
The Better Choice







Summer Bar Bingo: Mondays @ 6:30pm
May 7,14,21 June 4,18
July 2,16,30 Aug. 13, & 27

2018 EVENTS

- **May 8:** WineTasting Gala 7pm-9pm @ J&H (21 to attend)
Tickets \$12 advance / \$18 Door
Benefits the B.P. Youth Club
- **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”

WE CAN ACCOMMODATE YOUR BIRTHDAY, ANNIVERSARY, OR RETIREMENT PARTY

BUSINESS FOR SALE
Need a career change?
Be your own boss!
Great opportunity to own this hometown bar/off-sale.
Contact Harvey for details

340 E. Main st. • Blooming Prairie • 583-7557

ALL EVENT DETAILS AVAILABLE AT J&H LIQUOR

Spring planting underway



SOME dry and warm weather early last week enabled many area farmers the opportunity to do some corn planting. Here, a Blooming Prairie area farmer busily plants corn on a field just north of Highway 30 and Highway 218. The United States Department of Agriculture reported corn planting at just under 10 percent, about nine days behind normal planting time.

CFS Presents a \$3,000 Grant to the Blooming Prairie FFA Chapter



The CFS Foundation has awarded a \$3,000 grant to the Blooming Prairie FFA Chapter. CFS employees Steve Lonning, left, and Ashley Schmeling presented the checks to members of the local chapter: Ethan Arett, Jeremy Hocking, Mitchell Oswald and Tim Wolf.

The CFS Foundation recently approved \$31,500 in grant funds to be distributed to 21 FFA chapters within its service and trade area. The Blooming Prairie FFA Chapter is one of the recipients.

In addition, the CFS funds are being matched by the Land O'Lakes Foundation, bringing the total contribution to \$63,000. The purpose for the grant money is for each chapter to use the funds to focus on developing and applying leadership and classroom skills with activities, projects, or events that help improve our rural communities and/or service those who live there.

"Giving back to our Communities is one of our five cooperative principals," said Merlyn Kruger, interim general manager. "Contributions such as this are an investment in the future of our rural communities. The skills

that young people can gain from participating in FFA are invaluable and we want to help local chapters fund projects that will teach and inspire the students in FFA to be great leaders in our communities."

Each chapter advisor was asked to fill out an application describing an activity, project, or event that their chapter has planned for the coming months or has already accomplished this year and how it may have improved their community or helped service a group of individuals within their community. They were also asked how the funds provided by CFS would help with this activity now or in the future.

The funds provided will allow the chapter to create a blue jacket program

for the FFA members.

"FFA plays an important role in developing leadership skills, personal growth and career success," said Kruger. "We are very proud to be able to offer this grant to the Blooming Prairie FFA program and promote all aspects of agriculture."

CFS employees, Steve Lonning and Ashley Schmeling, were on-hand to present the Blooming Prairie FFA Chapter with a check for \$1,500 and matching funds from Land O'Lakes Foundation of \$1,500 for a total of \$3,000.

an Ag-focused Cooperative that turns **Progress** into **Powerful** solutions for our customers.

cfscoop.com

Agronomy • Energy • Grain • Feed • Financing

Let Us Put A Drainage Project Like This On Your Farm

We can also help you with:

- Aggregate Products
- Waterway Cleaning
- All Excavation Projects
- Hauling
- Septic

LOKEN

Call Dallas for all your Drainage Needs!

507-451-2873

Toll-Free 1-855-298-2568

Excavation & Drainage, Inc. 3695 Hoffman Drive NW • Owatonna • loken@qwestoffice.net

USE WHAT THE PROS USE.

Three decades of field work, research, design, innovation and testing into crafting the most advanced cutting machines in the world. You'll see, first hand, why the most respected landscape professionals trust Exmark 2-to-1 over the next best-selling brand.*

QUEST® STARTING AT \$3,299

Based QZ27086EM42200 • 42" fabricated deck • 708cc Exmark engine • Up to 7.0 mph
See your dealer for more details.

RADIUS® STARTING AT \$4,999

Based RA27086EM4300 • 48" UltraCut Series 3 deck • 708cc Exmark engine • Up to 8.0 mph
See your dealer for more details.

LAZER Z® E-SERIES STARTING AT \$9,399

Based LZ2551SKA4842 • 48" UltraCut Series 4 deck • FX651V Kawasaki engine • Up to 8.0 mph
See your dealer for more details.

0%-42 MONTHS* LIMITED TIME OFFER

Northland Farm Systems

507-451-3131 • (800) 385-3911 • 2250 Austin Rd. Owatonna

*Trusted 2-to-1 over the next best-selling brand of zero-turn mowers. Based on U.S. Data study by Wiser Research Associates Inc. Market Share and Additional Equipment Study (February 2018)

GARDENING TIP OF THE WEEK

Compliments of Steele County Master Gardeners

As you start your garden projects this year do you best to include some flowers that will provide for pollinators. Ideally clusters of plants that bloom from April to September are desirable. There are many shrubs, trees, and perennials that can be used, but some annuals will do the trick also. A few snapdragons or zinnias added to the vegetable garden aid in pollinating. Even the tomato blossom provides protein for the bees. Even though dandelions are the bane of some homeowners, consider viewing them differently. They are some of the first sources of food for the bees.

Did you know
Zinnias are also called the "Old Maid Flower"?

Steele Co. Master Gardeners Annual Plant sale will be Held
Friday: May 18, 4-7 p.m.
Saturday May, 19 7-11 a.m.
At the Steele Co. Community Building, 1380 Elm St. (at the Fairgrounds-new Location)

Featuring perennials, annuals, vegetables and some slightly "used" garden supplies.

If you have questions about gardening, lawncare, insects, soil, please contact us at 507-444-7687 and SC Master Gardeners will be happy to reply.

This gardening feature sponsored by:

FRANK & TOM'S GARDEN PLANTS

Highway 218 South, Blooming Prairie

DISCOVER
YOUR
FUTURE



It's been a wonderful experience for the kids to learn how to work together with others and to learn problem solving skills.

Rachel Harberts
BP Teacher

Students build, play and imagine
at Lego Engineering Day

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
Howard Lestrud

“Look how engaged the kids are,” said Blooming Prairie Elementary School second grade teacher Kim Lea as she observed second and third graders working on the Second Annual LEGO Engineering Day.

“There’s more than one way to get an answer,” Lea explained. “It comes from working together and coming up with new ideas,” she added.

All elementary students in grades K-6 became scientists and engineers for the day proclaimed as LEGO Engineering Day at the BP Elementary School.

Students worked in different groups to solve a problem. The problem posed for the students this year was to come up with a machine that can clean up the trash in the ocean.

Principal Chris Staloch said the students are learning about all of the trash that is accumulating in our oceans and the negative effects it is having on our environment.

First grade teacher Rachel Harberts organized the day with help from the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation and Arkema Inc., the financing partners purchasing the LEGOS.

Harberts said the problem was tied in with the learning unit on Earth Day. The challenge was to build a robot to help clean up the garbage on the ocean floor.

Students buddied up with another: Kindergarten and first grade, second and third grade, fourth and fifth grade and sixth grade (alone).

“It’s been a wonderful experience for the kids to learn how to work together with others and to learn problem solving skills,” said Harberts. Twenty-eight “we do2” kits were purchased.

“The way education is going, this learning project could help students identify a job in the future,” Harberts remarked.

Each working group was given an hour to build their machines for trash cleaning duty. Members of the Wrench Warmers robotics team from Blooming Prairie High School served as advisors for the young elementary students and gave them guidance in building their trash cleaning machine.

“It’s great to see those high school kids acting as mentors for the younger ones,” Harberts said.

Wrench Warmer team members helping the elementary students on their problem solving were D.J. Stender, Jack Matson, Viridiana Villarreal, Adam Larson, Riley Millam, Baylee Sorenson, Cole Graves and Jillian Wigham.

Teachers working on the LEGO projects included: Emily Henslin, Kindergarten; Rachel Harberts, first grade; Denise Hadrath, second grade; Becky Johnson, third grade; Kayleena Miller, fourth grade; Kendall Osborn, fifth grade and Diane Anderson, sixth grade.

Most of the elementary kids have had previous experience working with LEGOS. “My desk is full of LEGOS,” said second grader Ian White. He was working with his cousin, third grader Gracelyn Anderson.

Watching her students build the special trash cleaning machine, third grade teacher Angie Avery was confident the kids “would figure it (problem) out.”

Second grader Jonathan Schweischal and third trader Zachary Holtberg built a helicopter that lowered a drag into the water to clean up the trash. “We made some dramatic changes on our machine,” related Holtberg.

“That’s what scientists do, they make changes,” he said. Lea said she believed the kids now understand more about building something together and making the necessary applications needed to be successful.

As the hour wound down, many of the teams saw their machines in operation. Second graders Landon Olivo and Beckett Lea worked with third graders Aubrey Klocke and Gabe Staloch to successfully build a rig that could successfully collect trash on the ocean floor.

“It was fun working together,” said second grader David Penkeva.



Staff photo by Howard Lestrud

Gabe Staloch, a third grader at the Blooming Prairie Elementary School, practices with his trash cleaning machine created from LEGOS. Second graders Landon Olivo and Beckett Lea and fellow third grader Aubrey Klocke were on Staloch’s team.

We made some dramatic changes on our machine. That’s what scientists do, they make changes.

Zachary Holtberg
BP Third Grader



Staff photo by Howard Lestrud

Blooming Prairie Elementary School third grade teacher inspects the progress of the team of Claudia Miller, Ryder Smith and Wyatt Rafdal as they participate in the Second Annual LEGO Engineering Day May 9.



Staff photo by Howard Lestrud

Using a LEGO packaging cover for a pattern, Zachary Holtberg, a third grader, designs a helicopter to help accomplish the removal of trash from the ocean floor.



Staff photo by Howard Lestrud

Team building skills were learned from a recent science engineering day at the Blooming Prairie Elementary School. Shown from left to right are: Landon Olivo, second grade; Beckett Lea, second grade; Aubrey Klocke, third grade and Gabe Staloch, third grade.

My desk is full of LEGOS

Ian White