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STEELE COUNTY Times

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

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*Circulation numbers provided on
Statement of Ownership (USPS Form 3526) filed
on behalf of both publications with the
United States Postal Service as required by postal
regulations in September/October 2022.*

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STEELE COUNTY Times

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STEELE COUNTY TIMES
Blooming Prairie, Owatonna MN
Volume 131, No. 13



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Gift to our Steele County Friends

Who cherish local news



Dear Reader,

We hope you enjoy this sample copy of the Steele County Times. Inside, you'll find traditional, honest journalism without any spin, false narratives or hidden agendas. It's real community news that can be delivered to your home every week!

Why the Steele County Times?

Media shapes our perception of the world around us. If we don't have an accurate source of information, we won't have an accurate understanding of the world.

The mission of the Steele County Times is to provide quality community news grounded in truth, facts and to prevent people from being misled. We are not controlled by any special interests.

We have the best interests of Owatonna, Blooming Prairie, Ellendale and Medford as well

as the greater community of Steele County in mind with our coverage each week. We have talented and experienced writers covering all of these communities. Plus, the Steele County Times has just been named one of the best newspapers in the nation by earning first place General Experience in the National Newspaper Association's annual newspaper contest. We are committed to producing the best possible newspaper.

We pride ourselves on being **ALWAYS LOCAL. ALL THE TIME.**

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Dan Peach of B to Z Hardware in Blooming Prairie has once again transformed the empty lot on Main Street with "Pumpkins on the Prairie," a fun spot for children as well as adults to visit for Halloween. There are pumpkins for sale, games for kids to play and photo opportunities throughout the spread. This will be the third year that Peach has spruced up the lot that once was the home to the Bakery before burning down.

Suit: EPA’s delay is unreasonable

Dodge group joins 32 others in battling water rules with factory farms

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A broad coalition of public interest and environmental justice organizations have filed a lawsuit against the Environmental Protection Agency alleging the EPA has failed to respond to

a legal petition urging the agency to strengthen clean water rules governing factory farms. Six national public interest advocacy organizations and 27 state and community-based organizations representing 15 states have joined in the lawsuit filed with

the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Oct. 7. Among the organizations is Dodge County Concerned Citizens (DCCC). The suit aims to force the EPA to finally issue a formal response to a rulemaking petition that had been filed more than five years ago

by the organizations. The agency’s complete failure to respond, the groups allege, violates the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), which requires agencies like the EPA to respond to petitions “within a reasonable time.” In the suit, the

groups argue the current delay is unreasonable on its face, and that the EPA’s inaction is unlawfully prolonging dangerous pollution and public health threats from factory farms. Most livestock in the U.S. is raised in concentrated animal



Sonja Trom Eayrs

feeding operations (CAFOs), which can confine thousands or even millions of animals and their waste.

See **EPA**’ on A2 ►

County to expand landfill

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

Steele County commissioners voted last week to move forward a landfill expansion plan that will close an unlined pit filled with demolition debris. Consultant Melanie Niday, with Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SHE), said the current area used for municipal solid waste (MSW), located off State Highway 218 north of Bixby, is estimated to reach capacity in 5.7 years. The permitted demo area will reach capacity in about 8.3 years. The last landfill expansion happened in the early-to-mid 1990s—and Niday worked on that project as well. While officials last year looked at expanding on the western side of the property, that would require purchasing land from a neighboring property owner, county administrator Scott Golberg said. “Since then, we started to turn inward to see what option might work on our own property,” he said. Niday presented an addendum to the 2021 feasibility study that focuses on eliminating and relocating the demo area and combining MSW and demolition waste into the existing area and future expansion. She said the state is already considering new rules for demo waste, which now can be stored in an unlined pit. While expanding to the west would push the landfill’s life expectancy to 2052-53, using the eastern property moves the needle even further out, to 2057. There will be costs to moving the existing demo material, and the county would lose the “borrow material”—soil used to provide

See **COUNTY** on A9 ►

Honor Flight

Group flies BP veteran Trom to D.C.

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

“It sn’t that something!” Former Blooming Prairie banker Kenneth Trom would be deep in discussion with friends at a coffee break and acknowledge a friend’s story with that phrase. Trom, a U.S. Army veteran, used it often during his Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. on Monday, Oct. 10. The purpose of the flight is to reward long-time veterans for their military service. Trom became the second BP veteran to make an Honor Flight. The late Merle McNutt, a Navy veteran, was the first given this special honor reserved for World War II, Korea War and Vietnam War veterans. **Early flight** It was early to rise for Trom, 87, and his daughter, Kerri, as they were to be at the Hubert H. Humphrey Terminal in Minneapolis two hours before their 6 a.m. departure. Trom always hoped that he could add the Honor



Veteran Kenneth Trom recently took an Honor Flight to Washington, D.C., as a reward for his military service.

“It’s an opportunity of a lifetime.”

Kenneth Trom
Honor Flight Veteran

Flight to his “bucket list.” “I knew about the Honor Flight some 20 years ago,” Trom said. A friend of Trom’s, Gene Lysne, went on the Honor Flight a few years ago and encouraged Trom to check into it, and that he did. Trom picked up an application form from the Mower County Veterans Service

officer and sent it in. Trom urges all veterans to contact their Honor Flight Hub. Participation in an Honor Flight gives veterans the chance to share this momentous trip with other veterans, to remember friends and comrades lost, and to share their stories

See **FLIGHT** on A12 ►



Members of Ken Trom’s Honor Flight group posed for a photo at the World War II Memorial. Trom and his daughter Kerri made the Honor Flight trip on Oct. 10.

Jury to decide dog-bite case

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

A jury trial has been scheduled in the case of an Owatonna woman who is suing the Minnesota State Patrol (MSP) for injuries she sustained when a police dog bit her. Cristina Berrier filed the suit nearly three years ago; MSP is represented by an attorney from the office of Attorney General Keith Ellison. At the time of the incident, Berrier was a service advisor at House Chevrolet in Owatonna. On March 15, 2019, MSP Canine Officer Doug Rauenhorst brought his squad vehicle in for service, with his dog, Diesel, in the backseat. According to case documents, Berrier knew Diesel; the officer allowed him to get out of the squad, then asked Berrier to put the dog back into the vehicle. Berrier said she opened the car door and said “Diesel, up,” the dog jumped into the car and turned around. She reportedly said she “kissed him on the face, and then with her right hand, went to close the car door and had turned away.” That’s when the dog bit her on the right thumb and forearm. Berrier was taken to the hospital in Owatonna, where the wound was cleaned and sutured. Six days later, she went to the Emergency Department at Owatonna Hospital with increased pain and two red streaks running up her arm, the document says. Berrier was immediately referred to Mayo Clinic Hospital-Saint Marys Campus in Rochester, where she had surgery. She

See **JURY** on A2 ►



U.S. Rep. Brad Finstad, left, and former Hormel CEO Jeff Ettinger greet each other prior to the start of a candidate forum Monday at the Owatonna Country Club. The men are in a rematch of the August special election – which Finstad won – to fill the term of the late Rep. Jim Hagedorn.

Candidates meet in forum before CD 1 rematch

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

“For those of you that came here looking for a political fight, you’re not going to get one here.”

Ironically, that sentiment came during a forum featuring the two candidates for U.S. Congressional District 1 – and perhaps most surprising, it came from one of the candidates.

U.S. Rep. Brad Finstad, who won the first of two elections pitting him against former Hormel CEO Jeff Ettinger, made the comment during Monday’s forum.

The pair are running in a rematch of the special election in August, held to fill the remainder of the term of the late Rep. Jim Hagedorn, who died in February from kidney cancer.

Finstad won that election by a margin of 3.9%, sending him to the U.S. House of Representatives for the final four months of the term.

He and Ettinger will face off again on Nov. 8, this time for a complete two-year term in Washington, D.C.

But back to that comment about politics.

It was in response to a question about the best solution to the student debt crisis.

“I don’t believe it’s the solution that President Biden has put forward under executive order,” said Ettinger, who describes himself as a moderate Democrat.

Biden’s program provides eligible borrowers with full or partial forgiveness of loans up to \$20,000 for federal Pell Grant recipients, and up to \$10,000 forgiveness to students who didn’t receive Pell Grants.

Instead, Ettinger said, “we should be doing more up-front ... with less debt for the students as we design college.”

The federal program, he said, “sends the wrong message to people. Why just student loans? Why not mortgages, why not health care debt, and so forth.”

Finstad agreed, not for the first time during the forum, with at least part of Ettinger’s answer.

“President Biden’s policy was horrible,” Finstad said. “Far too often in politics and government, we lose track of the cost of things. When

have we ever really sat down and asked why college is costing so much these days? We should be able to have a cordial, common sense conversation about that.”

A question from the audience about the “broken” political system asked what it would take “to return us to decision being made for ‘we the people,’ instead of all the political in-fighting.”

Ettinger said years ago, members of Congress “typically voted with their party 70-75% of the time. Now it’s 95%-plus. We need an openness to dialogue and working with each other ... not a rush to jam things through.”

Finstad, a Republican, said Washington, D.C. “needs to look a lot more like Owatonna. We need real people doing real things, solving real problems in a way that southern Minnesota is just known to get it done.

“We need people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and get things done,” he said. “If it’s a Republican or a Democrat – whoever it may be – if it’s a good idea and it advances southern Minnesota and makes this country better, we should have the conversation around it.”

The candidates also found common ground in the issues of backfilling the national workforce shortage with more – and better – options for technical and vocational careers, as well as the need for more affordable housing, but less gerrymandering.

Both hesitated about suggesting the role federal government should play when it comes to shoring up options for day care.

Many of the questions came from audience members, including one who asked the candidates if they would support a term limits amendment for Congress.

Both stopped short of saying they’d support the move, saying it’s ultimately up to the voters to decide whether a candidate should remain in office.

“What I have called for is change in leadership,” Ettinger said. “I think our current leadership – Nancy Pelosi, Kevin McCarthy, Chuck Schumer and Mitch McConnell have failed us, in the sense that they are part

of the polarization problem. I wouldn’t vote for Speaker Pelosi if I’m elected, and she chooses to run again. I think limits on that kind of leadership would be fine.”

Finstad said the issue provides “an opportunity for creative thinking here ... I’m open to a conversation on it; I just don’t think there’s a magic piece of legislation that will solve it.”

There were definite points of divergence, however, when it came to the support of new drilling and pipeline projects designed to bolster domestic energy product, as well as the candidates’ impressions of the Jan. 6 committee findings.

Finstad said that in his stops across the district – which encompasses the southern third of Minnesota – “not once has someone raised Jan. 6.”

Instead, he hears about “family pocketbook issues; the price of gas, the price of food, the supply chain disruptions, the workforce shortages, inflations, 401ks plummeting.”

Finstad referred to it as “another partisan committee” and “political theater.”

“You must talk to a very narrow set of people if that’s never come up,” Ettinger responded, “because I’ve had it come up over and over and over again. I’m not saying it’s the number one issue for people, but it’s something that people are concerned about.”

One of the key points surrounding the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol was the belief that the results of the 2020 presidential election were false.

“We have candidates in this state that are ... saying they don’t believe the election results and we can’t have any confidence in the next set of election results – I think that’s awful,” Ettinger said.

“We’ve already had one race – the special election – and Brad won that race. It never crossed my mind to challenge our local neighbors who are election officials, who go and volunteer, that they somehow manipulated the system and that’s how I got cheated out of a vote,” he said.

“To me, President Trump’s comments and his conduct speak for themselves.”



Jeff Ettinger, a self-described moderate Democrat, responds to a question from the audience during Monday’s candidate forum.



Incumbent Rep. Brad Finstad answers a question during the U.S. First Congressional District candidate forum Monday in Owatonna.

Owatonna firefighter’s speech shows uncommon bravery

Heroism comes in many forms.

In a community, we often think of our local heroes as firefighters, police officers, EMTs. They’re the people who run toward the things most of us would run from, the things we would rather not see.



Heart Of Steele
JONI HUBRED

For many, the work takes not only a physical toll but an emotional one. Dealing with that takes a special kind of courage, and one Owatonna firefighter showed it at last week’s appreciation event, hosted by the Exchange Club of Owatonna.

Jason Karsten has been a paid, on-call firefighter in Owatonna for 20 years. He works with the MNDOT fire team, traveling to the western U.S. and into Canada.

He’s a full-time MNDOT equipment mechanic. A husband. A father.

And the things he saw while working as a firefighter – “I’ve been on a lot of tough ones,” he said – affected every aspect of his life.

Karsten talked on Tuesday about not wanting to talk to anyone, always feeling on edge, severe mood swings. He knew he needed help, and he reached out to a therapist. Taking that step is difficult for most people, but even more so for firefighters and other first responders. It’s hard to ask for help when you’re the person people rely on to help them on the worst days of their lives.

But Karsten not only got help for his own issues, he also shared his story in a room full of other firefighters, opening the door for others who are struggling.

In a profession where you’re expected to be a superhero day in and day out, showing that kind of vulnerability takes uncommon courage.

The way Jason Karsten shared from his heart after receiving his Firefighter of the Year award is one of the bravest things I’ve seen someone do. I hope his message hits home with those who need it most.

Jury to decide dog-bite case

◀ **JURY** from A1

was hospitalized for three days and given antibiotics.

According to the court file, the wound was cleaned, then left open to heal “from the inside out.” X-rays prior to the surgery determined her thumb was broken. Berrier had multiple follow-up treatments to facilitate healing, as well as to regain mobility.

About a month after the injury, she was still experiencing swelling. A cast was applied to her thumb, hand, and arm.

Three months later, both the wound and the fracture were “healing nicely,” Berrier’s surgeon said in a deposition, and she could return to work. He testified there was a notable difference in the range of motion and grip strength between her two hands, but said she had “close to functional” range of motion on the hand that was injured.

In November 2019, Berrier returned to her surgeon for increased pain. X-rays taken then indicated “mild degenerative arthritis of the right thumb base” and its two joints.

By August 2020, court documents say Berrier was working full-time as an ATF administrator. Her job involved

monitoring and documenting firearms that go in and out of her place of business. She normally would be required, at times, to take apart and put firearms back together, but told an orthopedic surgeon retained by the defendant that she unable to do so because of weakness and pain.

Court documents show House Chevrolet’s insurance provider has paid more than \$33,000 for workers’ comp and medical bills.

Berrier’s lawsuit asks for no less than \$50,000 for pain and suffering; past, present, and future medical expenses; disability and emotional distress.

In its response, the State Patrol denied that Diesel attacked Berrier “without provocation.”

MSP cited common law “official immunity” as a defense and claimed Berrier knew and assumed the “open and obvious risks.”

In addition, the document says, Berrier “was not acting peaceably and did not obtain lawful access to the location of the Minnesota State Patrol vehicle, and therefore, was not in place where she could lawfully be.”

The opening day of the trial is set for Oct. 31.

Suit: EPA’s delay is unreasonable

◀ **EPA**’ from A1

“The vast quantities of manure generated from CAFOs are typically disposed of, untreated, on cropland where it can seep or run off to pollute waterways and drinking water sources,” the suit claims.

The Clean Water Act defines CAFOs as “point sources” of pollution, which should require polluting CAFOs to follow discharge permits that restrict their pollution discharges into rivers and streams. But due to the EPA’s weak regulations, only a small fraction of CAFOs have the required permits, the groups claim, adding the permits that do exist are weak and inadequately protective of water quality.

According to the lawsuit, the EPA’s failed approach has led to widespread factory farm pollution in waterways and communities across the country. The petition, which was filed in May 2017, provided a roadmap for the EPA to close loopholes that have enabled CAFOs to avoid regulation, and to make permits stronger and more effective.

“The EPA’s refusal to even answer simply confirms that it will not hold this industry accountable without legal and public pressure,” said Tarah Heinzen, legal director for Food & Water Watch. “We will not let the EPA continue to delay while factory farms pollute with impunity, endangering public health and fouling our rivers and streams across the country.”

Sonja Trom Eayrs of DCCC said her family’s farm located northeast of Blooming Prairie is situated at the headwaters of the Cedar River, which flows south into Iowa and eventually the Mississippi River. She said although the Trom farm is surrounded by 12 hog operations confining an estimated 30,000 hogs in a 3-mile radius, the family has never applied manure from area CAFOs on the land.

“This influx of CAFOs and their waste has severely harmed the environment and quality of life in the local community,” Trom Eayrs said. “CAFOs dispose of this waste on cropland in the immediate area, leading to degradation of local waterways.

Segments of the Cedar River are now on the Impaired Waters list, including the segment downstream from the Trom farm.

In addition to the local group organized by Trom Eayrs, other petitioners in the lawsuit include: Food & Water Watch, Center for Food Safety, Dakota Rural Action, the Environmental Integrity Project, Helping Others Maintain Environmental Standards, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Kewaunee CARES, Midwest Environmental Advocates, and North Carolina Environmental Justice Network.

The groups claim to represent millions of supporters across the country.

OUR VIEW

Kids lead the way to safe, healthy community

Next week, students in Steele County and across the country will take a pledge to stay drug and alcohol free as part of Red Ribbon Week activities.

Celebrated nationally since 1988, the Red Ribbon campaign was created in the wake of DEA Agent Enrique Camarena's murder at the hands of drug traffickers. The outrage over his torture and death led parents to form anti-drug coalitions, taking their cue from Camarena's family and friends who wore red badges of satin in his honor.

Over the years, the Red Ribbon campaign has included not only drugs, but also alcohol, tobacco, and more recently, vaping—anything that will get in the way of kids growing up healthy and happy. During the week, student groups will put up posters and run activities that encourage signing the Red Ribbon Pledge:

- I pledge to stay in school and learn the things that I need to know.
- I pledge to make the world a better place for kids like me to grow.
- I pledge to keep my dreams alive and be all that I can be.
- I pledge to help others and to keep myself drug free.

Parents can sign a pledge as well, to talk to their children about the dangers of drug abuse, to set a good example by not using illegal drugs, to monitor their children's behavior and set guidelines that help their children grow up healthy and drug-free.

We encourage our readers to take that pledge one step further and consider making a commitment to a drug-free community. There are many ways to accomplish this. You could make a call to police or the sheriff's department when you see evidence of illegal drug activity. Reach out to a friend or loved one who needs help with their mental health or overcoming addiction. Have a conversation with neighbors about the use of alcohol and tobacco.

This week, dozens of high school students will talk with younger kids about avoiding drugs. They'll be advocating for a better, healthier community.

We challenge every adult in Steele County to consider following their lead.

YOUR VIEW

Thiele does a great job for Steele County

To-the-Editor:
Sheriff Lon Thiele is very dedicated, hard-working, and committed to the residents of Steele County.

The Steele County Sheriff's Office has large group of employees many aren't aware of. He has the Sheriff's Office Deputies, Records Department, Civil Office, Special Deputies, Posse, and Detention Center staff. He knows he can't please everyone, but a few sour apples out of over 100 employees is a great percentage to have. Don't be fooled by misleading information or partial stories.

An item the opponent is complaining about facing the Steele County Sheriff's Office is the retention of employees at the Detention Center. If you have any conversations with any business owners in the community or follow the news, retention of employees and hiring employees is one of the biggest concerns they are faced with.

Finding good

quality employees with experience and a good work ethic is a real problem for all employers in whatever business.

A lot of the staff at the Detention Center were caught in a dilemma when members of the County Board couldn't decide if the Detention Center would remain open or not. Not knowing if it was going to remain open is why some employees left. Jails are not made to make money. It's an obligation to the residents of Steele County.

Since COVID there is a new norm that every employer must deal with.

With all the obstacles thrown out there, Sheriff Thiele has done a great job for Steele County in every aspect. He cares about Steele County and all the Citizens of Steele County.

Re-elect Sheriff Lon Thiele on Nov. 8. He will always be there for all of us.

Ron Priebe
Owatonna

CLARIFICATION

The Times would like to clarify a story on the Hope Creamery (Oct. 12 edition).

In the story, the Times incorrectly identified the process used by the creamery. The story should have noted the creamery uses the batch churn low temperature, long time process.

The Times apologizes for the error.



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

One of those life lessons that I've been frequently reminded about over the years is that hard work will eventually pay off in big ways.

And that certainly has been the case at the Steele County Times recently.

Last week I shared with you about how our newspaper earned the distinction of being one of the best newspapers in the country by capturing general excellence in the National Newspaper Association's annual contest.

Perhaps the announcement I have for you this week excites me even more than any award ever will.

For the first time ever, this newspaper has

Thank you, readers

become Steele County's top choice for local news. There are some hard facts to back up this claim.

Each fall newspapers are required by the U.S. Postal Service to file a Statement of Ownership. Along with general information about the newspaper, owners also have to report their circulation numbers for a 12-month average and the exact number closest to the filing date, which in this case is Oct. 1.

I'm thrilled to report that our circulation has topped what once had been a powerhouse in Steele County, the Owatonna Peoples Press. Total paid distribution for Steele County Times is 2,927 compared to 2,411 for OPP.

Over the past two years alone, our circulation has grown by nearly 50%.

What has transpired is almost like a David vs. Goliath moment. Judging from the circulation numbers, what once

had been a little weekly newspaper has now surpassed the big daily, though it's not really a daily any longer.

I'm really not aware of a newspaper anywhere that has experienced the growth we've been fortunate to achieve.

I've been tracking circulation numbers for years. Back in 2011, OPP reported 7,272 circulation. That number has nosedived steadily with the steepest declines coming over the past three years.

Meanwhile, our circulation has gone from about 800 in 2011 to 2,927 this year.

As you may or may not know, providing the area's best local news coverage isn't a task we take lightly. We have a news and production staff with combined experience of more than 210 years. I'm proud to have the most experienced news staff of true journalists in the area.

While hard work and dedication by our staff

have been big reasons for this accomplishment, we also recognize that it couldn't be done without our loyal readers who have been with us for years and those who have recently started reading our newspaper.

From the bottom of my heart, I am grateful to our readers who have entrusted us to become their primary source for local news. We couldn't do it without your support and only do it because we know how important local news is to our communities.

Thank you, readers. You have made this a fun and exciting venture for all of us. I hope you share in the excitement because this is your community newspaper.

If there is anything to take away from this, it's simply that the Steele County Times is momentum worth reading.

And who wouldn't want to go in hot pursuit of something as exciting as that?

YOUR VIEWS

Lawhead would serve well in Minnesota Senate

To-the-Editor:
I am writing this letter in support of Brandon Lawhead as a candidate for the Minnesota Senate.

I have known Brandon since he was a kid at Austin Packer football games, asking me questions about my NFL career. Brandon worked hard in school and became a lawyer. As

an attorney with over 25 years of experience, who has created law in the appellate courts, I believe Brandon has a unique perspective of the justice system, and it will serve our district well in the Minnesota Senate.

For example, Brandon understands that community safety starts with offering opportunities

for kids to be involved in health activities. In fact, Brandon invited me to participate in the football camp. I was delighted to see how Brandon used the football camp to reinforce trust between law enforcement officers and children by having the uniformed police officers give out NFL players autographs.

Brandon's law firm represented many police officers in worker's compensation matters, when the police officers were injured in the line of duty.

I strongly support Brandon Lawhead's candidacy for Minnesota Senate.

David Simonson
Austin

Vote Brandon Lawhead for Minnesota Senate

To-the-Editor:
As retired superintendent of the Austin School District, I have had the opportunity to work closely with Brandon Lawhead as a parent of three children in the District, an Austin High Alum and active fund raiser for multiple District projects. As a resident of the Austin School District, Brandon is an active advocate for public education.

Focused and consensus builder are descriptors that come to mind when I reflect on my work with Brandon.

During the 12 years I was superintendent, Brandon supported the expansion of the MacPhail School of Music to Austin, he started the Blair Lawhead Summer Music Concert to support the music programs in the Austin Public Schools and started and continues to coordinate a Football Camp featuring past Minnesota Viking players who work with area youngsters to

develop their football, scholastic and leadership skills.

During the COVID restrictions, Brandon leveraged his connections with the wider music community to connect local students and instructors with renowned musicians, Everett Bradley, band member of Bon Jovi, Bruce Springsteen and the E-Street Band. And Bon Jovi, himself.

Perhaps the quality that most impresses me about Brandon Lawhead is his focus on providing others with connections they would not have had the opportunity to engage without his unselfish willingness to share. Brandon's leadership in all he does is always qualified with what is best for all not just a few.

I strongly support Brandon Lawhead's candidacy for the Minnesota State Senate.

David Krenz
LaCrescent, Minn.

Congrats on national award

To-the-Editor:
I wanted to let you know how impressed I was after reading the article in the paper (Oct. 12 edition) about the awards given to the Steele County Times and especially impressive

was the first place General Excellence Award. Great job and great paper. Thanks to you and all the people working for the Steele County Times.

Nancy Ilk
Blooming Prairie

School board should listen to parents

To-the-editor:
If you vote for the future of children do your diligence and research! Are you happy with the school board and the current path it has taken with math being at 48% in 2021, reading at 53% and science 35% and history and spelling?

I think a lot of students can achieve better life skills. Maybe they're being distracted by gender ideology and critical race theory that's creeping into the schools, grade schools, vo-tech and colleges.

The parents should be heard by the board on what their children should learn. After all, they live with them and feed them.

Let concentrate on what courses that offer trade skills, life skills, and apprentice programs. Needs of the future jobs.

Plumbing, building, and electric. Not everyone needs to go to college.

I also think with the budget and state and federal programs that the budget should be looked at quarterly and yearly. If something is eliminated something else can take its place. Parents and board will make the choice with students.

Vote for Jan Guse, Mike Herman, Colin Whalen and Elizabeth Hedlund.

After all, they will be the leaders in the future. It seems to me that this process of the destruction of the schools is in liberalism, has been eroding the civilization of the west for a century and more, and is now about to reach its apogee.

Vicki Wimer
Owatonna

Times is one of the best in nation

To-the-Editor:
The recent national award that the Times captured is proof of what we have thought for many years. The Steele County Times is one of the best in the nation.

We are very fortunate to have the Times in Steele County so that everyone can read about all the fantastic local news. And, the

way it is all put together to make it informative and interesting reading, not just words to fill the page. It takes a lot of great staff members to put together a great newspaper each week, and then to start over for the following week and go in Hot Pursuit all year long.

Carl Wieman
Owatonna

Times Staff:

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2022—12 state awards (1st place- General Excellence)	2017—2 state and 3 national awards	2013—7 state and 2 national awards
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2019—7 state awards	2014—3 state and 3 national awards	
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(Awards presented by the Minnesota Newspaper Association and the National Newspaper Associations)

Snapshots Of HOPE

Breast cancer survivors and families share their stories

Positive attitude is the best medicine

BY ROYETTA SPURGEON

This isn't a story about a woman struggling with cancer or even a story about her as a "survivor." This is a story about her life, her strength and how she has inspired everyone around her. #YOURESTRONG, #YOURESMArt, #YOUREBEAUTIFUL (Kris Millerbernd)

I was diagnosed with Invasive Ductal Carcinoma (breast cancer) in December 2015. After intense testing and consultation with her team of medical professionals from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, I immediately began an aggressive 20-week chemotherapy progression. I underwent a double mastectomy in June 2016, and a complete reconstruction after that.

I'm a super positive, busy, outgoing person. I don't have time to sit around and dwell on it. It's just go, go, go constantly. I continue to do everything today – and more – than before the diagnosis. I haven't skipped a beat, and don't plan to. But things have certainly been different since Thanksgiving 2015. That is when I noticed an unusual discharge on my bra. I didn't honestly think much about it. I literally threw it in the laundry and went on about my business. Until the next day, that is. That night when I took it off, it was there again. That's when I thought, I'm a clean



Royetta Spurgeon is a breast cancer survivor. She is shown with her sons, Mark and Hunter, along with her husband, Mark. They live in Hope.

"I am beyond blessed and do not take one day for granted."

Royetta Spurgeon
Breast Cancer Survivor

person. I shower daily. That's not normal. So, I told my husband, Mark, and showed him the bra, and after acknowledging it as unusual, unbeknownst to me, he sent a text to the family's doctor, Diane Wallner, in Owatonna. She wanted to see me first thing Monday morning. It was then that a sample of the discharge was taken and tested. The results came back noncancerous, but to determine where the discharge was coming from, blood work, and ultrasound and

biopsies were done on both breasts. We didn't have the actual results back, but (Wallner) called me, and I could just tell in her voice that it was probably not good. She said it's probably 99% breast cancer. It wasn't 100%, but she just wanted to prepare me.

With that a phone call from Dr. Josh Froman, who performed the biopsy, and confirmed it. The left one came back benign, and the right one came back positive. Their technical term was invasive

ductile carcinoma, which is a fancy term for breast cancer. My husband and I decided to tell our boys, Mark and Hunter, (at the time 9 and 8 years

old) they took it hard (they were young and many unknowns). We did not know what to expect because it was in the very, very beginning, so it was

very hard. We all gained a better understanding of what the journey would entail in January 2016. See **POSITIVE** on A7 ►



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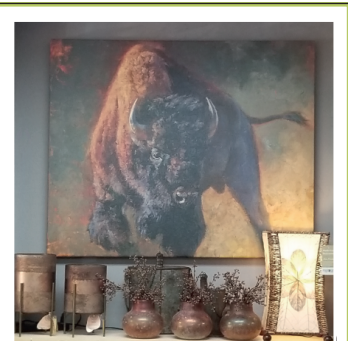
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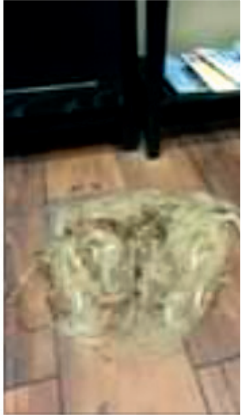
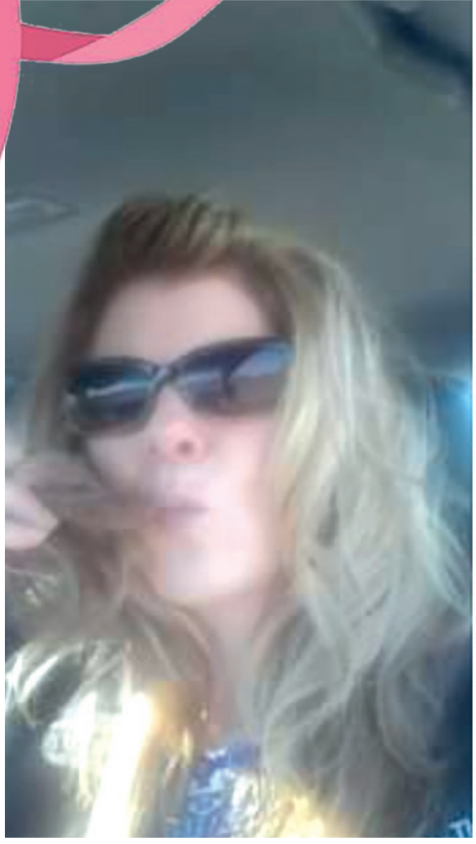
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Praying that cancer was a one and done

BY JULIE ERICKSON-GREEN

These pictures were me on May 17, 2016, kissing my hair goodbye. That was how I announced that I had CANCER to most of my friends and family, through a social media post on Facebook.

My story started a few months earlier. In early 2016, I noticed that I was having tenderness and gentle throbbing in my armpit that came on with no particular cause of onset. This had probably been going on for a few months already when I realized that it was a continuous thing.

I decided to call the nurse line to see if I should go in for an exam and yes was the answer. The thought/diagnosis was maybe infection in the armpit from shaving, which I was given antibiotics for[DG1]. After two rounds of antibiotics and no resolve, I was told that I should just wait a few months and come back.

My gut said NO!

I requested an ultrasound, which indicated an enlarged lymph node. Still, I was told to do nothing, wait five months for my 40th birthday, when insurance would cover a mammogram.

Again, my gut said NO!

I went home and made an appointment for myself in Rochester. There, I had an exam in which a lump was felt in my breast tissue. I was also given more ultrasounds, MRIs and biopsies. The result, invasive ductal carcinoma, triple positive: HER2, estrogen and progesterone, breast cancer.

At 39 years old, that was so unexpected! I was quite healthy, I exercised all the time and was at the best shape of my life, then everything changed. My treatment was chemotherapy, double mastectomy (by my

choice) and reconstruction. 2016 was a hard year! I went through so much medically, physically and emotionally that year!

Looking back, I realize just how strong I was. I am coming up on six years cancer free, officially, on Oct. 6. I still deal with medically induced menopause that started with my chemotherapy in May of 2016.

Every day, I wish I could go back to the body I had before cancer, but I am very thankful to have survived and that I am healthy now! I pray that my cancer was a one and done! I am so grateful for the support of friends and family during that time and to the present. My best advise is to trust yourself!

Julie Erickson-Green lives in Owatonna.

"My best advice is to trust yourself."

Julie Erickson-Green
Breast Cancer Survivor

THINK PINK

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Breast cancer is the most commonly occurring cancer in women. It's important to do self exams and schedule regular mammograms.

Potential warning signs for Breast Cancer:

- A new lump or mass
- Swelling
- Dimpling
- Pain
- Retraction
- Skin abnormalities
- Swollen lymph nodes

Reduce your risk

These strategies can help lower breast cancer risk:

- Limit alcohol consumption
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat plenty of fruits and veggies
- Don't smoke
- Engage in regular exercise
- Schedule regular mammograms
- Consult with doctor about family history of breast cancer



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Early Detection
For Your Protection

Living with a mother who died young

BY WENDY BOGEN

It's 1997. I am 25 years old, a newlywed, pregnant with my second child, living at the in-laws, on strike at my job, and find out my mother is diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer.

Immediately after her diagnosis, my mother, Jean (Swearingen) Thostenson, had a mastectomy, and they removed many lymph nodes. She started her chemo and radiation therapy and was sick from day one. She hated the fact that she lost her hair, her wigs were scratchy, and her fake boob was awkward.

A year and a half go by, the chemo and alternative treatments are not working, and the cancer is spreading to other parts of her body. But she continues to fight as she has a 13-year-

"I have often wondered why my mom?"

Wendy Bogen

Mother Died of Breast Cancer

old son at home. But now the cancer was in her brain. Things progressed fast from there and my sweet mama took her last breath with me at her side on Nov. 28, 1998.

Now I am 51 years old, and I realize how young she was at 47 to die. I have missed her so much. What I would give to be able to have my mom there for me when I have needed her the most. More than anything, I would have loved her to be able to watch my children grow, to cheer us on with our accomplishments, or just be a shoulder just to cry on.

I have often wondered why my mom?

I am not afraid to die, but I do hate to know that one day my kids will have this same emptiness in their hearts as I have had in mine.

I can tell you that she is proudly looking down at all three of her kids, and her nine beautiful grandchildren – most of whom she never got to meet. I am forever grateful for the time I did get with her, and for the foundation she gave me to make me the person that I am today. Thank you for being my rock mom, love you forever.

Wendy Bogen operates the Rustic Door and lives in Owatonna.



Wendy Bogen is shown with her mother, Jean Thostenson, who died of breast cancer in 1998.

Positive attitude is the best medicine

◀ POSITIVE from A5

After the diagnosis, I moved all of my appointments and treatments to Mayo Clinic in Rochester. My first appointment was on Jan. 6 – one Wallner had set up prior to my breast cancer diagnosis. They were under the impression that they were starting from step one and going forward. They didn't realize I had already been diagnosed with it. I had to redo everything.

Over the next couple of weeks, I underwent tests and met with a team of doctors to determine my diagnosis and my treatment plan. They threw everything out there from A to Z, and then they eliminated

as time went on and after different tests, their results confirmed the diagnosis in Owatonna. They did tell me it's curable and it's treatable! It wasn't in my chest cavity, and it wasn't in my lymph nodes so that was fantastic, that gave me a positive outlook on it. In mid-January, I began the first of 16 chemotherapy treatments. For 12 weeks, I chose chemo once a week, and the remaining eight weeks, it was every other week. I also had targeted treatments every three weeks to block the chemical the cancer produces.

Surgery was inevitable; there was no question I would do a double mastectomy. If

I wanted, I could have done a lumpectomy to remove the spot, the tumor, or I could have removed the one (breast), but from the very get-go, there has been absolutely no question in my mind at all just take them both. It wasn't even up for discussion!! I prayed and hoped they took it all and it would be all gone. Although my surgery hadn't been scheduled, I anticipated it would be sometime in July with six to eight weeks of recovery. In the meantime, I felt good. Other than doctor's appointments and chemo days, I went to work every day. I didn't have any reason to miss work.

Without knowing I had cancer, many

wouldn't be able to tell. Hopefully I still looked normal. I continued to run around, and I still had hair! Noting the chemo, I had 100% hair loss. I was blessed to be a part of the Mayo Clinic study for cold caps. It's a cooler, filled with ice and water, connected to some tubing that turns into a black cap that goes on your head. It looks like a beehive. The device is used an hour before, during and five hours after chemo treatments to keep my scalp at 57 degrees. It closes the hair follicles, so it doesn't suck up the chemo. The process is popular in Europe, where it's been around for 20+ years, but it's only a few

years old in the U.S. and had only been used for six months at Mayo.

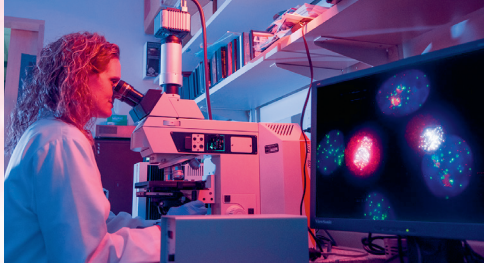
I was the last one to get in on the study, and was 100% successful. I'm so thankful. It was not a guarantee that the process would work. I prayed and prayed and followed the direction to a "T", literally!

We are so thankful for all the emotional, physical and financial support we have received over the years from our family, friends, employer, the community and people we didn't even know. All continue to show their support and love by checking in on me, quite often. I am beyond blessed and do not take

one day for granted. Honestly, I think my positive attitude and my busyness was my best medicine; it kept me going and still does!

Fast forward to today, I am six years cancer free. I pray and am thankful every day I get on this earth. Mark and I will celebrate 17 years of marriage in January and our boys, are 16 (Mark Jr.), and 15 (Hunter). I continue to stay very busy keeping up with our boys and their many activities, including hockey, lacrosse, and fishing. God bless!

Royetta Surgeon lives in Hope and works at Federated Insurance in Owatonna.



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Candidates share views about voting and ID

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

In an effort to keep you, our readers, well-informed and abreast of relevant issues, today is the 17th in a series of questions we are asking all of Steele County's candidates for state office. We want voters to know where each candidate

stands on the issues to make their best decision at the ballot box. Each week, we'll ask the candidates a new question. They will all receive the same question, be given a word limit and a deadline of four days to answer. We'll publish their answers the following Wednesday; responses may be edited

for length. The series will continue through Oct. 26, then we'll give the candidates a little break before the Nov. 8 general election. If a candidate doesn't respond, we'll note that. This week, we're asking about Voter IDs: Current Minnesota law does not require photo

identification at the polls for registered voters. Minnesota voters can also register at the polls on the day of an election by providing one of several approved forms of proof of address, or by having a registered voter vouch for them. A proposed bill from the State Senate in 2021 required – among other things – that

all voters present a photo ID at the polls. It narrowly passed the Senate but had no support in the House of Representatives. ***Do you support laws that require all voters to produce an official photo ID in order to vote? Why or why not? If yes, what types of IDs do you think should qualify?***

Question of the Week:

Do you support laws that require all voters to produce an official photo ID in order to vote? Why or why not? If yes, what types of IDs do you think should qualify?

Minnesota House District 19B

John Petersburg – R (i-24A), of Waseca: If you think about it, no one seems to be concerned about showing an ID when buying alcohol or cigarettes or entering a casino to gamble or to get on an airplane, but if requested to show an ID to vote it raises claims of abuse and oppression. The right to vote is one of our most important and protected rights granted by the constitution. It doesn't matter if you think there has been past voter fraud or not, we must



do everything we can to increase voter confidence and their trust in the voting system. Yes, I do support requiring a photo ID to vote. It will eliminate one of the concerns that some voters have. That is verifying the identity and therefore the afforded right to vote. I would think any ID that would qualify for verifying identity would suffice and, in addition, we need to make sure we reduce any obstacles to acquiring that ID.

Abdulahi Ali Osman – DFL, of Owatonna: No response.



Minnesota House District 23A

Peggy Bennett – R (i-27A), of Albert Lea: Right or wrong, if the perception is there that a vote doesn't count it will create anger and erode the trust between people. Everyone, no matter what political party, should come away from an election feeling like it's a fair election. Photo IDs are required for many things, including buying cigarettes, cashing a check, boarding an airplane, receiving food stamps, and purchasing a fishing license. Even the Minnesota DFL party required an approved photo ID to get into their state convention last spring. For many other countries, including most of Europe, photo IDs for voting are required and non-contentious. I support photo IDs as one important measure to ensure election integrity. Why shouldn't people have to prove who they say they are for something as important as voting? To say that requiring an ID is voter suppression because people of color or poverty just don't have the wherewithal to get an ID is offensive. Are those claiming this questioning the intelligence or ingenuity of these people? The real issue is accessibility. We need to make sure that any eligible voter who doesn't have an appropriate ID is able to get one. Voter ID legislation should contain robust provisions to issue free photo ID cards for eligible voters who do not have any of the required IDs. It should also establish a provisional balloting process for voters who don't have an approved ID at the time of voting, allowing the voter up to seven days after the election to prove their identity. Finally, there are any number of photo IDs that could be appropriate, such as a driver's license, state issued ID, military ID, or passport. No voter should walk away from an election feeling that his/her vote doesn't count. Election integrity matters. Let's get voter ID passed!



Mary Hinnenkamp – DFL, of Albert Lea: Minnesota has one of the best-run election systems in the country. Our votes are accurate and safe and we routinely rank at the top for voter participation. We should celebrate and be proud of that! Some politicians try to gin up the idea that fraud is happening, or claim in advance that elections are rigged if they don't win, but they never produce substantive proof. Groundless attacks on our voting system are attacks on our democracy, and they lead to events such as the riot to overturn an election on January 6th. I am grateful that in January of 2021, my opponent Rep. Bennett voted with the majority on Minnesota House Resolution One to reject the violence of January 6th, and to support the result of the November 2020 election. However, I am dismayed that she deliberately casts unfounded doubts on our state's voting system and wants to restrict voting access. I oppose the photo ID requirement for voting. Back in 2012, voters in Minnesota rejected a photo ID requirement by a clear majority. My mother never learned to drive a car. She had no photo ID and if one had been required, it would be a substantial burden for her involving several trips to another town to obtain one. She voted in every election all her life because she felt it was her responsibility and because it was simple and accessible. Documented cases of voter fraud are exceedingly rare. Voter restrictions are unwarranted and just end up disenfranchising people like my mother. No eligible voter should be excluded from participating in the most basic act of democracy, voting!



Minnesota House District 23B

Patricia Mueller – R (i-27B), of Austin: As a citizen of this country, we have the privilege to vote for our leaders. No matter your gender, your skin color, or your income, we each get one vote. That is a sacred right given to citizens of this country and should be protected. Not every country gives its citizens this privilege. Leaders in some countries are chosen because they have the right bloodline or are wealthy. But because our government is a democratic republic, leaders are chosen by the people from among their peers. Leaders from both sides of the aisle should want safe and secure elections. We should both want our elections conducted with integrity. Citizens have the opportunity to be election judges and challengers to ensure fidelity. The person the citizens choose must be installed into office because that honors the voice of the people.



This is why I support voter ID. One needs identification for a myriad of activities including flying, buying alcohol, getting insurance, opening a bank account, applying for welfare benefits, and even having procedures done at the hospital. It seems reasonable to expect those individuals that want to have a voice in electing the next leaders should be able to prove they are citizens of our country. In addition to voter ID, I think we should shorten the early voting time and enact more safeguards on those who vote by mail. There is no reason early voting needs to start 45 days ahead of the election. To those who vote by mail, you should have a witness and a secure envelope with verification. There are few civil actions that I take more seriously than voting. This is why we need voter ID, shorten the early voting time, and ensure mail-in ballots are verified.

Tom Stiehm – DFL, of Austin: I think that Minnesota has adequate voter protection laws. You need an ID to register to vote. You do not need an ID to vote if you have already



registered. Statistically we do not have any more voter fraud than we have had in previous elections.

Minnesota Senate District 19

Kate Falvey – DFL, of Faribault: I do not support a requirement to present a photo ID when voting. The registration process and sign-in are enough verification to vote on the day of voting. I am not really sure what to add to this. Requiring photo ID is a privileged policy position to take, that I do not support. I am not naive to election concerns, but the system we have works



with VERY few irregularities. The people who work on Election Day in this country are patriotic volunteers and should be respected as such. They are from both parties and they are well-trained, observant, detail-oriented, and friendly folks that I think do a great job every time we have an election, whether it is a one-issue levy vote or a Presidential year. I am grateful for the volunteers in our precincts.

John Jasinski – R (i-24), of Faribault: I strongly support the requirement to have a photo ID to vote! During my first term in the Senate, I was the co-author of the bill and in my second term I authored a bill for Voter ID. I believe election integrity is very important and it is something I hear about quite frequently in my district. I do not know the exact percentage, but I believe that approximately 95% of voters in Minnesota have a driver's license or photo ID and I believe should be required to show it to vote. In our bill that we proposed, the other



5% would have been provided a photo ID at NO charge. In today's society there are so many requirements to show your driver's license or ID, that voting should be one of them. I am a 56-year-old male, and definitely show the signs of age, and I still am required to provide my photo ID to buy a case of beer at Hy-Vee liquor. I believe that at this past year's Democrat convention, their members were required to show a photo ID to enter the event, yet I have never witnessed a Democrat take a positive vote for photo ID in Minnesota. I think that is wrong!

Minnesota Senate District 23

Gene Dornink – R (i-27), of Brownsdale: I have spoken with many constituents on this issue, including election judges, and other poll volunteers. To them, requiring a valid ID to vote is a common-sense measure and it has my full support. Every Minnesotan should have confidence in their vote and ensuring confidence should be a top priority to maintain democracy. Minnesota is only 1 in 15 states that does not have any laws requesting or requiring voters to show some form of identification at the polls. However, Minnesota does require a valid ID to purchase alcohol, rent an apartment, buy a home, get on a plane, drive a car, and attend the DFL State Convention. The notion that eligible voters would be disadvantaged by having a voter ID requirement is unfounded and simply untrue. Currently, we even require a



valid ID number to request a mail-in ballot. Why should it be different on Election Day? I support allowing a multitude of government identifications to be accepted. We should allow driver's licenses, passports, military ID cards, and government issued personal ID cards (which are distributed in place of driver's licenses for those not able to drive). These forms of ID are readily available and nearly every eligible voter will already have at least one of them. As your Senator, I will always fight for your rights and freedoms and that starts by ensuring every ballot is cast freely and fairly without influence. Requiring an ID to vote is one step to instill confidence that every vote is cast with confidence. More importantly, I want to hear from you! Send me an email with your thoughts at sen.gene.dornink@senate.mn.

Brandon Lawhead – DFL, of Austin: No response.



Next week's question

The two guarantees in life – death and taxes – carry a bit more weight in Minnesota. The state's income tax rates start at 5.35%, and seniors run the risk of having the state tax a part of their Social Security benefits and pensions. The 1.08% property tax rate is

slightly above the national average, though Steele County is even higher, at 1.23%. Sales tax rates in the state are higher than the national average, too, and Minnesota also imposes an estate tax. ***All of that to say, residents pay a lot of taxes. Do you have ideas or plans for any sort of tax relief?*** There will be a limit of 300 words.

Home sharing is growing

Dear Savvy Senior, I saw a news segment on television a few months ago about home sharing programs for seniors and would like to learn more. I'm 68, divorced, and am interested in renting out a room in my house to help make ends meet. What can you tell me?
Interested Boomer

Dear Boomer, Because of inflation and rising housing costs a growing number of baby boomers are opting to rent out a spare room in their house as a way to generate some extra income, and for some, increase companionship.

To find a good fit, older homeowners often turn to “home sharing programs” that will match an empty nester with someone needing affordable housing.

But be aware that home sharing isn't for everyone. You need to carefully consider the pros and cons of renting out a spare room in your house and make a list of what you want and don't want in a housemate/renter.

To help you figure all this out, a good resource is sharinghousing.com, a website dedicated to understanding the home sharing concept. They offer various articles, online lessons and resource books that can help you determine if this is a good option for you, and if so, how to find and choose a good housemate.

Home Sharing Tools

If you decide to proceed in finding a housemate/renter, a good first step is to seek out a home sharing program in your area.



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Home sharing programs, usually nonprofits, screen both homeowners and renters. They check references, handle background checks, and consider lifestyle criteria when making matches. They can also help you with the leasing agreement that the renter would sign that covers detailed issues like smoking, pets, chores, overnight guests, use of common rooms, quiet hours, etc.

Most home sharing programs are free to use or request a small donation. Others, however, may charge the homeowner and potential renter a fee for this service. To look for a home sharing program in your area visit the National Shared Housing Resource Center website at nationalsharedhousing.org.

If you don't find a program that serves your area, you can also search for housemates through an online home sharing service like silvernest.com. Or, if you'd rather have a younger housemate that can help out with some household chores, consider nesterly.com. This is an online home sharing agency, available in a few select communities, that matches young renters with older adults looking to supplement their incomes and share their space.

If you don't have any luck with any of these home sharing sites, put a call in to your Area Aging Agency (call 800-677-1116 for contact information) who may be able to offer assistance or refer you to local agencies or nonprofit organizations that offer shared housing help.

You can also check with your local senior or community center, or local church you attend to see if you can post an ad on their bulletin board or in their newsletter. Or you can advertise in your local newspaper or online at sites like craigslist.org or roommates.com.

If you find someone on your own that you're interested in renting to, ask the prospective renter to fill out a rental application (see rentalleaseagreement.org to download and print one for free) and run a tenant screening and background check, and then call their references. Tenant screening/background checks can be done at sites like e-renter.com or mysmartmove.com.

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.

County to expand landfill

◀ **COUNTY** from A1 cover for the landfill and for road projects—now taken from the eastern property, Niday said.

“We're getting on the side of being dirt poor,” she said, adding the county could purchase that material.

Advantages of the eastern expansion include the use of existing facilities and roads. Previous work on the

site will minimize the need for soil boring and geotechnical tests, and the county will likely be able to use existing monitoring wells.

Also, eliminating the demo site, Niday said, eliminates the risks that come with having an unlined disposal area. She said Minnesota Pollution Control is looking more closely at unlined demo disposal, because con-

struction materials now have more chemicals and contaminants in them.

Commissioners authorized Golberg to sign off on a contract with SEH to move forward with the eastern expansion. Niday said some technical drilling could be done as early as this fall, with design taking place over the winter and permits submitted to the state in March.

History from the News Archives

Berlin was once thriving



COURTESY ELLENDALE HERITAGE SOCIETY

Two miles north of Beaver Lake on County Road 28 is where the settlement of Berlin was located. The brick building that is still standing was the Berlin Creamery, but in addition to that, there was at one time a school, a butter maker's house, Berlin Store with living quarters in the back and even a feed mill and blacksmith shop. When this settlement was thriving, the Clarence Thompson family (Mardelyn Thompson's parents) lived on the farm across the road. This photo shows Clarence, “Spike” as he was known, posing in front of the Berlin store with his horse.

10 Years Ago Oct. 16, 2012

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

The Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossoms football squad celebrated a 12-7 road victory at Faribault Bethlehem Academy on Saturday, Oct. 6. The Blossoms surprised the previously unbeaten Cardinals with a tough defense and some big plays to earn their 8th-straight Gopher Valley Conference title. A last minute interception in the Blossoms end zone helped seal the victory and provided a nail-biter finish to an exciting game.

It didn't take science teacher Ali Mach long to get into the BP school district new greenhouse once it was completed. Since the beginning of the school year her junior and senior science students have been busy with projects of a hands on nature. “The prospects of projects and experiments are almost limitless,” commented Mach. As of now, the science class is the only class in school that uses the facility regularly, but many other classes in the high school and eventually the elementary school will have opportunities to enjoy the thrill of learning by actually doing science projects.

20 Years Ago Oct. 15, 2002

ELSIE SLINGER, EDITOR

During Fire Prevention Month, kindergarteners got the chance to step into the fire truck and ask questions of firefighter Nick Schiefert at the Blooming Prairie Fire Department's tour. The winners of the Annual Fire Prevention Poster contest were announced. They winners are: Melissa Nachin, first grade; Rachel Anderson, sixth grade; and Bryce Halla, fourth grade.

Blooming Prairie council approved the request for the police department to invest in a drug dog at their monthly meeting. The cost will be \$2,000. The 1-year-old purebred Golden Retriever would be donated to the department and training taken through Ramsey County over a two-week period at a reduced rate. Other costs will be covered by the city, but the costs could be recouped through seized property once a hit is made.

50 Years Ago Oct. 18, 1972

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

No filings were received for the lone council position to be filled at this year's village election announced clerk, Robert Becker. Councilman Reuben Carlson announced he would not be seeking re-election before the deadline, which was October 10th. This is the first time village officials can remember that a council position went “begging” for lack of a candidate on the ballot in Blooming Prairie. No explanation is known for the little interest shown by residents in this year's town election.

The Blooming Prairie football team dropped their conference record to 2 wins and 3 losses when they were defeated by Ellendale 24-0 last Friday. The Raiders dominated the game from start to finish. Ellendale played an aggressive game gaining 147 yards in passing and 219 yards on the ground for a total of 366 total yards. The Blossoms will attempt to climb to an even record in the conference this week as they travel to New Richland.

75 Years Ago Oct. 16, 1947

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

From the Red & Black On Tuesday and Wednesday mornings the seniors started out by car to Austin to have their graduation pictures taken. In the cars in which the girls were riding the windows had to be kept up so nobody would get mugged. Clothes were hung on hangers on every window. The policy of “first come – first serve” was used so the ones who got there early were in luck. Everyone thought it would be nice to get a day out of school, but after sitting on front of the bright lights and turning one way and then another for a half a day, they were beginning to wonder.

Confirmation services were held Sunday at Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church with the pastor, Rev. H. J. Rasmussen officiating. Confirmed were: James Linquist, Ordean Grant, Raeburn Hanson, Harry Hightshoe, Virgil Christianson, Gaylen Severson, Bernice Duken, Lorraine Helleck, Francis Tollefson, Madelene Basness and Janice Lestrud. An offering of over \$500 was contributed by the congregation to the Lutheran World Action.

Owatonna Photo News 31 Years Ago Oct. 17, 1991

TOM SHEA, PUBLISHER

Owatonna Junior High School Math Club participated in their second Minnesota Junior High Math Competition at Mankato. Owatonna's B team composed of Ann Schaffner, Sara Johnson, Aaron Johnson, John Kavitz, Mike Arnold and Chrystie Hanson took first place with 150 points. The Owatonna A team composed of Ben Neigebauer, John Eggers, Jim Arthur, Natalie Wilder, Erica Ross and Charissa Pettyjohn scored 144 points to tie for third place.

OFF TO STATE – The Owatonna Indian girls tennis team captured the Region 1AA Tennis Championship with a thrilling win over Apple Valley. Also earning entry in the individual portion of the State Tournament was the doubles team of Jenni Granquist/Krista Friedrich. Team members are Mary Kenow, Jenny Anderson, Captains Heather Anderson and Melissa Oberlie, Krista Frierich, Jenny Granquist, Gretchen Hinchley, Mary Richards, Liz Stroick, Lisa Voss, Angie Johnson and Jennifer Conlin. The girls are coached by, Head Coach, Ron Phillips and Assistant Coach Norma Jansen.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

Oct. 8
DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest in the 33800 block of Highway 218 in Udolpho Township at 11:59 p.m.
Oct. 11
Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at Highway Ave. N. and 2nd St. NE at 4:28 a.m.
Crash: At 8:03 a.m., a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 300 block of Highway Ave. S.

OWATONNA POLICE

Oct. 7
Assault: Police responded to an assault in the 300 block of Pine Ave. NE at 1:20 p.m. They issued a citation at the scene.
Assault: At 6:33 p.m., an assault occurred in the 600 block of Cedar Ave. S.
Shoplifting: At 8:10 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.
Oct. 8
DWI: Police made DWI arrests at Oak Ave. S. and Mill St. W. at 12:55 a.m. and at Elm Ave. N. and Broadway St. E. at 11:06 p.m.
Shoplifting: At 3:52 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 300 block of Park Dr. NW.
Hit and Run: At 5:08 p.m., a hit and run accident occurred in the 3900 block of Cabela Dr. NW.
Oct. 9
Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop

in the 100 block of Pearl St. W. at 1:56 a.m.
Domestic: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 700 block of State Ave. NW at 3:13 a.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.
Trespassing: Police responded to a subject trespassing in the 300 block of 20th St. NE at 4:36 p.m.
Theft: Police arrested a subject following a theft incident in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 8:31 p.m.
Oct. 10
Burglary: Police began a burglary investigation in the 1200 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 4:07 a.m.
Crash: Officers responded to a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage in the 200 block of Mineral Springs Road NE at 1:30 p.m. They issued a citation to one of the drivers.
Warrant: Police made warrant arrests in the 700 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 1:32 p.m. and the 500 block of State Ave. NW at 9:52 p.m.
Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 2200 block of Hartle Ave. SE at 3:54 p.m.
DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest at North St. E. and Elm Ave. N. at 11:51 p.m.
Oct. 11
Threats: Police responded to a subject making threats in the 500 block of 15th St. NE at 11:14 a.m.
Fraud: Officer took a fraud report in the 500 block of Ridge Road NE at 2:17 p.m.
Oct. 12
Disturbance: Police responded to a disturbance in the 400 block of Bridge St. W. at 11:08 a.m.
Vandalism: Property dam-

age was reported in the 400 block of Darrt Ave. NE at 2:31 p.m.
Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 400 block of North St. W. at 5 p.m.
Shoplifting: At 5:31 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.
Theft: At 7:24 p.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 700 block of Academy St. E.

ARRESTS

Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

Andrew Graham Scott, 31, arrested at 12:27 a.m. Oct. 8, felony domestic assault and interfering with 911 call, held for court.
William Joseph Yanchulis Jr., 41, arrested at 4:45 a.m. Oct. 9, felony domestic assault by strangulation, held for court.
Jordan David Lindeman, 25, arrested at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 9, warrant arrest, held for court.
Tamara Jane Olson, 39, arrested at 9:58 p.m. Oct. 10, warrant arrest, \$7,500 bail.
Joshua Jared Rocha, 28, arrested at 1:02 a.m. Oct. 12, DWI-test refusal, held for court.
Daniel Joseph Green, 34, arrested at 8:30 p.m. Oct. 11, warrant arrest, \$3,000 bail.
Codie James Tesch, 24, arrested at 1:14 a.m. Oct. 13, felony motor vehicle theft, aggravated robbery and fleeing in motor vehicle, held for court.
Brandon Dean Berg, 32, arrested at 10:45 p.m. Oct. 13, felony threats of violence, assault of peace officer and obstruction with force, held for court.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

Larry Edward Carlson, 62, arrested at 11:19 p.m. Oct. 7, warrant arrest, held for court.
Joseph Michael Wencil, 22, arrested at 2:35 a.m. Oct. 9, probation violation warrant arrest, held for court.
Jesse Ora Halley, 36, arrested at 8:21 a.m. Oct. 10, warrant arrest, body only.
Zachary Martin Ahrens, 20, arrested at 10:06 a.m. Oct. 12, probation violation apprehension and detention, held for court.



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911 Center may relocate

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

While Steele and Rice County officials will likely continue a joint powers agreement (JPA) for emergency dispatch, both boards are looking at where to locate the 911 call center.

Last week, Steele County board members reviewed a 911 feasibility study authorized by Rice County commissioners and drafted by Wold Architects. The draft report was designed to gather data about future 911 operations and space needs.

The core planning group included Rice commissioners and staff, as well as Jill Bondhus, 911 dispatch administrator, and consultants.

Steele commissioners Jim Abbe and James Brady, county administrator Scott Golberg, and facilities and fleet director Jake Rysavy also participated.

The study presented three options—renovating the existing Law Enforcement Center (LEC) space in Owatonna, renovating parts of the Rice County LEC that will be vacated in 2024, when their new public safety center opens, and terminating the JPA and setting up a Rice County center in the vacant LEC space.

However, said Jacob Wollensak, who presented the study for Wold, “As a group, we’ve eliminated the third option. That’s not anything anyone feels is good to pursue.”

The current space in Owatonna measures 3,000 square feet. The study anticipates a need for 14 consoles—seven are operating today—and nearly twice that amount of space within 10 years.

County officials during their Tuesday meeting also voted to move forward with a plan to renovate part of the under-used Detention Center and add space for the sheriff’s department. That could free up space on the LEC building’s first floor to accommodate a kitchenette, conference room, locker room, and office, Wollensak said, which would be eliminated to make space for the consoles.

“The proposal that we came up with was geared toward getting an open call floor, so they can have more clear communication with their staff, and all the call takers can be within sightline of each other for support,” he added.

The Rice LEC option, Wollensak said, offers open space with enough room not only for the future Rice-Steele needs but also flexibility to add another county into the mix. There would be a need to upgrade fire suppression and other “best practices” items to bring the area up to dispatch standards.

The bulk of the costs for any option, Wollensak said, will be the technology, especially with moving into Rice County—although con-

See 911 on A13 ►

“Anything would set me off. I knew I needed help at that time.”

Jason Karsten
Firefighter of the Year



STAFF PHOTO BY JONI HUBRED

Exchange Club member Gail Buckingham presents a plank to Firefighter of the Year Jason Karsten. It will be installed at the Steele County Historical Society Village of Yesteryear boardwalk.

‘I knew I needed help’

Firefighter of Year reveals trauma of job

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

Some things Owatonna firefighter Jason Karsten has seen have settled deep inside his heart.

During last week’s 2022 Firefighter of the Year celebration, held at the Owatonna Eagles Club, Karsten talked about his most memorable call, the rescue of three women whose vehicle had landed in water. Wearing a wet suit in the freezing cold, he got into the water to free the last victim from behind the steering wheel.

The doors were closed, the car was submerged. Later, he learned the woman was the mother of a family friend.

As another firefighter cut the woman’s seat belt, she popped into Karsten’s arms and he got her to shore.

“I thought she was gone,” he said, but later learned she was brought back to life. “That was one of my most memorable calls, because we saved this lady’s life.”

Other memories are not as positive. Karsten said he has responded to serious plane crashes and serious car accidents, many of them fatal.

“Those calls weighed a lot on me, and it affected me mentally,” he told the audience, which included members from the host Exchange Club of Owatonna, city officials, and firefighters and their families. “I got to the state of mind where I really didn’t want to talk to anybody. I was on edge. I would have pretty severe mood swings.”

‘I knew I needed help’
His mental health struggles also took a toll on his wife and children, his parents, and his Owatonna Fire Department family.

“Anything would set me off. I knew I needed help at that time,” Karsten said. “Every part of my life was affected.”



STAFF PHOTO BY JONI HUBRED

Owatonna Fire Chief Ed Hoffman, left, introduces Firefighter of the Year Jason Karsten during a celebration held Thursday at the Owatonna Eagles Club. The event has been hosted for 20 years by the Exchange Club of Owatonna.

Several years ago, he reached out and talked to a therapist who showed him how to deal with he had seen. It helped him, and he encouraged his fellow firefighters to “please talk to someone.”

“Don’t let it build up inside, because it hits home,” he said.

Karsten also thanked his wife and children, “they have been through a lot”, as well as past and present firefighters and the Exchange Club.

Asked why he chose to share his personal story, Karsten said he had done a lot of research and knows he’s not the only one in the fire service who struggles.

“Firefighters, police officers, EMS, we see there’s a lot of suicide with that,” he said. “I had to reach out and do something.”

After celebrating his 20th anniversary as an on-call firefighter, Karsten thought about retiring, but said Owatonna has a young department and “I do have knowledge to help teach and help the new up and comers.”

“I’m thankful for the past 20 years,” he said. “I might have a few more in me, we’ll see.”

Along with a plaque, Karsten was honored with a plank bearing his name; it will be installed at the boardwalk in the Steele County Historical Society’s Village of Yesteryear on Austin Road in Owatonna.

A mentor and leader
Fire Chief Ed Hoffman, who selects the Firefighter of the Year, said he sent out an invitation asking for nominations. The result didn’t come as a surprise.

“We got one name coming up over and over,” Hoffman said.

Karsten is a great mentor and leader, he added, and shares knowledge from the work he does with the Minnesota Department of Transportation fire team. “He brings a lot to the department. The firefighters really support you.”

Hoffman also thanked the Exchange Club for honoring firefighters for the past 20 years, as well as all the retired firefighters “for everything they’ve done to get us to where we are” and current firefighters for their service.

“One group we don’t always acknowledge a lot is our spouses, our families, our significant others,” he said. “The calls come in whenever. We’re leaving family events, dinners, dates... We can’t do what we do without your support.”

The evening included a presentation from 2003 Firefighter of the Year Leon Ellis, who shared stories about many of Owatonna’s major fires during his time with the department. Along with talking about each incident, he shared newspaper articles that showed photos of the department at work fighting business, house, and church fires.

Help available for assistance in the home



Steele Talkin’
ROBERT BENSON

It may be time to think about assistance in the home for a family member. Through the Department of Human Services in Minnesota, there are a variety of resources available that are applicable.

One of the programs available is MnChoices which helps make decisions about long-term care and support services. MnChoices provides assessments to determine eligibility for publicly funded programs and services. People who will benefit from MnChoices need long-term care services and support. Lead agencies will have support planning to understand the needs of the person and what support options such as a nursing home or other institution can help. If qualified, publicly funded programs can grant access to Medical Assistance homes and community-based waiver services. Other benefits of the MnChoices assessment are to promote equal accessibility across all populations and support services for the individual’s needs and preferences.

MN Choices is a Comprehensive Assessment to determine what programs clients are eligible for pending their assessed needs. The Assessment can be for anyone of any age and should be on MA or Qualify for MA which has financial limitations for certain programs. The Assessment determines eligibility for programs like Elderly Waiver (EW), Alternative Care (AC), Essential Community Supports (ECS), Personal Care Assistance (PCA), Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) Waiver, and many other programs.

Additionally, the Elderly Waiver program provides services for people over the age of 65 who are eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) and are in need of care that is generally provided in a nursing home but choose to stay and live within their own community. To qualify, an assessment is completed through the Long-Term Care Consultation that must meet criteria such as requiring the level of care provided in a nursing home, cost no greater than the estimated cost of the nursing home,

See **HELP** on A14 ►

Ribbon cutting celebrates Owatonna streetscape

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

Cold weather and even a few snowflakes didn’t stop the fun Thursday, as Owatonna officials and business owners celebrated the official completion of the North Cedar Avenue streetscape project.

The \$4.5 million project updated sewers and roadways; widened sidewalks; added planters, benches, and other fixtures; turned alleys into pedestrian walkways;



STAFF PHOTO BY JONI HUBRED

Owatonna mayor Tom Kuntz, center, held the scissors as officials formally cut the ribbon on the North Cedar Avenue streetscape project. The 100-300 blocks have been under construction since June of 2021.

created bump-outs and reoriented parking; and added trees, grasses, and flowering plants.

Construction on North Cedar’s 100, 200, and 300 blocks started with a June 2021 groundbreaking—and warmer weather than the October 13 ribbon cutting. But Main Street director Lisa Cochran said all things considered, she was “very pleased with the turnout.”

“It was great to see the businesspeople, the

See **RIBBON** on A14 ►

Honor Flight

◀ **FLIGHT** from A1 and experiences with each other.

There is a pecking order when a veteran applies. World War II vets go first, Korean War vets are next, and then Vietnam veterans can have the chance to make the flight.

"I'm glad I went," said Trom. "It's an opportunity of a lifetime."

Mail call

Just after the 85 veterans and their 85 guardians boarded the plane, they were treated to a water cannon salute.

A highlight of the trip for Trom came early in the flight when he heard "Mail Call" over the loudspeaker. Military types are familiar with that familiar phrase after serving their country.

Guardians, including Kerri, were encouraged to write a letter and send to Honor Flight organizers who addressed the piece to the veteran.

"I got about 20 pieces of mail, which really was a nice gesture," Trom said.

Trom sat across the aisle from a Brainerd Korean War vet.

"We knew some of the same people," he said. "Isn't that something!"

Salute at Dulles

The flight was 1 hour and 58 minutes, and another water cannon salute came upon the arrival at the Dulles International Airport.

The group's first stop was the Air Force Memorial, which is quite new with 30 spires surrounding the memorial. The shortest spire was 201 feet tall, and the tallest spire was 270 feet. Trom said it reminded him of the three airplanes mounted near I-35 north of Owatonna.

The spires are to represent a vapor trail left by a jet airplane, he said. The memorial overlooks D.C. and gave veterans and their guardians a "nice view" of the Pentagon, the Washington Memorial and other popular memorials.

The group then took a lunch break at the Air Force Museum.

Next stop was the World War II memorial, with the European Theatre on top and the Pacific Theatre below.

"It was very impressive," Trom said.

The Korean War Memorial featured bigger than life-size soldiers marching through the rice paddies, wearing Army ponchos. The soldiers were on a battle march.

Trom said that was a favorite because he served a long time in Korea and got to know the terrain well. He said three soldiers from southeastern Minnesota were killed in the Korean War.

Unknown soldier

Another highlight came as veterans and their guardians visited the Arlington Cemetery. The Minnesota group was fortunate to see the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

"My daughter really liked this," Trom said.

While his group "got behind" early and thus missed seeing some sights, they saw most when the Honor Flight vets took a bus tour around the mall area.

That tour enabled the military veterans a chance to see the Capitol, the White House, and

many other notable shrines.

"We called this tour a drive-by," said Trom, adding he was disappointed that his group did not have time to visit the Vietnam Wall.

On the bus ride, Trom said he made friends with a Vietnam vet from Anoka.

"I tried to encourage him to have a special Vietnam Tribute, similar to what Blooming Prairie did several years ago," Trom said.

The Honor Flight ended with the plane landing at 10:30 p.m.

"It was a long day but an unforgettable one," Trom said. "We had just witnessed seeing the nerve center of the world in action."

NEW RICHLAND • HARTLAND • ELLENDALE • GENEVA

PANTHER of The Week



NRHEG Elementary School- Ellendale



This week's Panther of the Week is Joshua Mejia-Estrada. Joshua is the son of Flor and Oscar and they reside in Ellendale. He's in Mrs. Klukow's fourth grade class.

Josh emanates what Panther Pride looks like. He is a leader and expects fellow classmates also to show Panther Pride. Josh has many friends because he is kind to everyone.

Josh loves to play football and be with his friends. Keep up the great work Joshua!



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✓ Everyone, no matter your political party, should come away from an election feeling like it's fair and Secure. I authored two election reform bills and am committed to work on this issue until it is fixed!

✓ Education needs to go back to basics. Teachers are overloaded with paperwork and mandates. We need to get back to the basics of math, literacy, basic science, and history!

✓ People deserve to feel safe. I support our police officers and well funded law enforcement to keep our communities safe!



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Frank Panos, 64, Owatonna



Frank Panos

Frank “Poncho” Panos died Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2022, at Homestead Hospice House in Owatonna. Francis Stanley Panos was born Dec. 30, 1957 to Stanley and Elsie (Zak) Panos in Owatonna. He attended Medford High School. He married Deanne Dillon in Owatonna in 2000. Together, they raised their triplets Dominic, Dakota, and Jasmine. The couple later divorced, but remained good friends. Frank was the owner/operator of Medford Cabinet Shop for all of his life. He assumed ownership of the shop from his father, Stanley. His life interests included motorcycling, snowmobiling, fishing, and trips to the casino. He enjoyed being the life of the party. His greatest love was the

time spent working in his shop. Left to carry on “Poncho’s” memory are children: Dominic and Dakota of Owatonna, and Jasmine of Medford; the triplets mother, Deanne; sisters Jan (Mike) Guse, Owatonna, and Judy (Floyd) Davidson, Tower, Minn. He was preceded in death by his parents. Funeral service will be Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022 at 3 p.m. at Medford Funeral Home, with burial to follow at Resurrection Cemetery. Friends may greet the family Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022 from 1– 3 p.m. at the funeral home. For more information or to leave a condolence message go to www.megercares.com.

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FUNERAL HOME

Theresa Hardcopf, 90, Owatonna



Theresa Hardcopf

On Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2022, Theresa Ann Hardcopf (Arndorfer), a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother passed away peacefully at the age of 90. ‘Ann’ was born to Emil Frank and Dorothy Marie Arndorfer in St. Benedict, Iowa on May 10, 1932. After graduating from Lavern, Iowa High School in 1950, she moved to the big city (Washington, D.C.) and worked as a typist for the FBI. Unfortunately, the passing of her father required Ann to return home in November 1950 to help her mother raise two younger siblings. It was this sense of unselfishness and duty to family that defined Ann and shaped her life. Ann subsequently started a job at the Iowa State Bank in Algona, Iowa. Life proceeded smoothly until she met a dashing Air Force man at a summer dance in Algona in 1953. The young couple married on April 14, 1955, at St. Benedict Catholic Church, a stone’s throw from her home. Between 1954 and 1966, the young family moved 11 times, changing states, towns, jobs, apartments, and houses, finally settling in Owatonna in 1966. Ann stayed home while the kids were young, making their clothes and serving ample amounts of love. Once the youngest was settled in school, Ann returned to the workforce in 1970 as a supervisor for the United States Department of Agricul-

ture (USDA). After many recognitions for outstanding work, she successfully retired from the USDA 30 years later in 2000. While family was Ann’s greatest passion, she was generous in sharing her time and talents with others. She spent many years in service to Sacred Heart Catholic Church (choir, eucharistic minister) and the Owatonna Women’s Club. She was also an election judge and unabashed Republican. Ann also founded a local cooking club, Pantry Secrets. In fact, cooking was her secret passion, to the delight of her family. Her cooking was so good that family members frequently recommended she start a restaurant. As the years passed, Ann ultimately chose sunshine in Arizona over snow in Minnesota. She kept busy there cheering and keeping score at Bob’s softball games, cooking, and socializing with neighbors, and hosting family. Ann is survived by her husband (Robert William Hardcopf Jr.), four children (Jan Gail Bickley, Robert William Hardcopf III, Robin Ann Schmidt, and Rick Alan Hardcopf), six grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. Funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 20, 2022, at Sacred Heart Church, Owatonna. Friends may greet the family one hour prior to the service at 10 a.m. at the church.

BRICK-MEGER & MEDFORD
FUNERAL HOME

Mary Kaehler, 73, St. Charles



Mary Kaehler

Mary Kaehler, 73, of St. Charles, passed away Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2022 at Season’s Hospice House in Rochester surrounded by family, ending her battle with cancer. Mary was born June 16, 1949 in Blooming Prairie to Thomas and Mary (Renchin) Burke. She was raised on the Burke Blacktop Angus Farm and was involved with showing livestock. She dreamed of adventures beyond Blooming Prairie, so she completed nursing school at Mayo Clinic, then became an international airline stewardess. Mary and Frank Kaehler were married Nov. 4, 1972. After marriage, Mary continued flying then decided to raise her family and support the operations at Homedale Farms. Later she worked for Herff Jones, and then at Mayo Clinic as a radiology tech. Mary and Frank were married nearly 50 years and lived on their family farm, just northwest of St. Charles. Mary’s greatest accomplishment in life was raising their six children, but she loved her grandchildren even more. She also devoted time to managing the farm, keeping tabs on Frank, making her famous chocolate candy treats, baking, decorating

cakes, canning, and gardening. She was a great cook and baker, serving many guests at their table filled with delicious meals and desserts. She welcomed everyone. Survivors include her husband Frank, daughters, Nicole (Lowell) Jabs, Rachel Leaver, Leah (Andy) Mindemann, Angela (Kyle) Hotz, Lyndsie (Kyle) Balstad; grandchildren, Elizabeth, Lane, Samantha, Weston, Clara, Maggie, Gabe, Paige, Jason, Abby, Charlee, and Thomas; siblings, Thomas Burke and Patty Misgen. Mary was preceded in death by a son, Scott Donald, her parents, and two brothers, Tony and Patrick. A Funeral Mass for Mary was held Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2022 at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in St. Charles with the Rev. Tim Biren officiating. Visitations were held at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church on Monday, Oct. 10, and on Tuesday prior to the mass. Burial was in Calvary Cemetery. Mary’s Funeral Mass is available to view via the church live stream at www.redeemersaints.org. Hoff Funeral Service of St. Charles is assisting the family with arrangements. www.hofffuneral.com. Memorials will be directed to the St. Charles High School Students in Need Fund.

Trevor Harber, 40, Wells



Trevor Harber

Trevor Roland Harber, age 40, of Wells, and formerly of Blooming Prairie, passed away on Friday, Sept. 30, 2022, at his home in Wells. Trevor was born on June 15, 1982, in Robbinsdale. On Dec. 20, 1983, he was adopted by Michael and Deloris (Nelson) Harber. He graduated from Blooming Prairie High School in 2001. Trevor was an avid Star Trek fan, loved cooking- especially meat, and was a lover of all animals. Trevor is survived by his mother, Deloris Harber; siblings, Tammy (Dan) Arens, Heidi (John) Ferguson, Sara (Garry) Janssen, Jason (Erin) Harber; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father, Michael Harber; grandparents; and aunts. A memorial service for Trevor was held on Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2022, at Worlein Funeral Home Chapel in Austin. Visitation will take place one hour prior to the service. Memorials are preferred to Tracy’s Paws Rescue in Hondo, Texas. Worlein Funeral Home of Austin is assisting the family with arrangements. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com.



Delna Velzke, 88, Owatonna

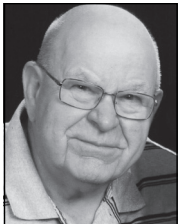


Delna Velzke

Delna Velzke, age 88, of Owatonna, passed away peacefully on Oct. 1, 2022, at the Owatonna Hospital. Funeral services were held on Saturday, Oct. 15, 2022, at 10:30 a.m. at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Morristown with the Rev. Dr. Eugene C. Chase, Jr. officiating. Interment will be at Riverside Cemetery, Morristown. Visitation was held on Friday, Oct. 14, 2022, at Boldt Funeral Home, Faribault and one hour prior to service on Saturday at church. Delna was born in Morristown to Herman and Erna (Meschke) Vollbrecht on April 26, 1934. She was baptized and confirmed in Morristown. On March 10, 1956, she married Delbert Velzke and together they farmed and raised six children south of Morristown. Delna’s most important roles in life were being a wife, mom, grandma, and great grandma. She also worked at the State School of the Blind, Birds Eye and many other places. Delna lived by example to those around her and always put her faith and family first. She adored her husband, 6 children, 17 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren. Her hobbies included being a member of AAL/Ladies Aid, gardening,

traveling, sewing, square dancing, setting puzzles, baking new recipes and was always up for a game of cards. She is survived by her children, Duane (Mary) Velzke of Rochester, Anita (Gordy) Nelson of Waseca, Audrey Pederson of Owatonna, Eileen Johnson of Medford, Keith (Nancy) Velzke of Morristown and Clark (Patty) Velzke of Medford; grandchildren, Chad (Andrea) Pederson, April (Jeff) Glynn, Ashley (Clint) Semmann, Dan (Tyler) Nelson, Julie (Steve) Nelson, Jill (Mike) Pitts, Jolene (Alex) Clark, Leah (Justin) Foss, Lindsay (Levi) Vivier, Lauren (Matt) Velzke, Luke Velzke, Aaron (Sarah) Robinson, Wyatt (Ashley) Robinson, Bruce (Kristen) Velzke, Tyler (Andrea) Velzke, Natalie (Drew) Roemhildt, and Spencer (Jess) Velzke; 28 great grandchildren; brothers-in-law, Jack Schwichtenberg, David (Dianne) Velzke and Marvin (LaDonna) Velzke and sister-in-law, Geraldine Kelm. Delna was preceded in death by her parents, Herman and Erna Vollbrecht; husband, Delbert Velzke; sister, Majorie Schwichtenberg; brothers, Raymond Vollbrecht and Donald Vollbrecht; sisters-in-law, Janette Vollbrecht, Mildred (Marvin) Melchert; brother-in-law, Curtis Kelm and great grandchild, Brady Velzke. In lieu of flowers, memorials preferred to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Morristown, or Camp Omega.

Myron Wolters, 84, Owatonna



Myron Wolters

Myron Edwin Wolters, 84, of Owatonna, died Friday, Oct. 14, 2022 at Birchwood Cottages in Owatonna. He was born March 11, 1938 in Steele County, the son of Irving and Harrieth (Gasner) Wolters. He grew up on a farm in the Crane Creek area, attended country school at District #10 in Crane Creek and then went to Owatonna High School through the 11th grade. Following his school, he served in the National Guard and began a milk can route in Steele County along with some of Dodge and Waseca Counties, delivering to the Claremont Creamery. On July 31, 1957, he married Beverly Balzer at the old St. John Lutheran Church in Owatonna. The couple rented a home on a farm in Crane Creek before moving to the family farm and eventually moving to their home in Owatonna on Beech Avenue. Myron worked for a short time for Borden’s in Owatonna and then began his career with the Owatonna Fire Department in 1970, retiring as an Engineer and Firefighter in 1992. Always being one to keep busy, he worked part-time jobs on his days off from the fire department, including driving school bus and delivering the Minneapolis Star Tribune. In retirement, Myron was very ac-

tive at the Eagle’s Club serving meals along with his wife at events held there, yard work and cleaning. Myron and Bev were Mr. and Mrs. Eagle of the year in 2002-2003 and he was Mr. Eagle of the year in 2006. Trips up north to the cabin near Longville to fish, outings to the casino, playing cards and visiting with everyone brought Myron great satisfaction and joy. He was a member of St. John Lutheran Church in Owatonna and the Eagle’s Club. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Beverly Wolters of Owatonna; sons, DeWayne Wolters (Lynda Virgin) of Longville and Daniel (Jody) Wolters of Owatonna; sister, Lorraine Carpenter of Mankato; sister-in-law, LaVonne Wolters of Owatonna and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Irving and Harrieth; brothers, Glenn (Mary Lu) Wolters and LeRoy Wolters and brother-in-law, Lowell Carpenter. Visitation was at Michaelson Funeral Home on Monday, Oct. 17 and at St. John Lutheran Church in Owatonna on Tuesday. Funeral services were held Tuesday, Oct. 18, 2022 at St. John Lutheran Church with Pastor Dave Klawiter officiating. Interment was in the St. John Cemetery in Owatonna. Memorials are preferred to St. John Lutheran Church, Allina Hospice or donor’s choice.

911 Center may relocate

◀ 911 from A11 struction in that space would be minimal. The base project cost for renovating in Steele County is estimated at \$2,192,843; in Rice County, it’s \$2,940,666. Potential timelines for both projects would have the Steele option done in March 2024 and the Rice option, in May 2025. Also, with the Rice County option, the current dispatch back-up location in Faribault would have to be moved, likely to the Steele County LEC. Commissioner Greg Krueger said there’s a trend now to do regionalization for 911. He asked whether that option has been explored. The southeast region conducted a study in 2014, Bondhus said, and there are some shared projects going on, but not consolidation. “I know these positions are not easy to fill, and I just think that’s an option that should be on the table when you’re talking about this type of change,” Krueger said. Abbe said this might

be a “golden opportunity” to open talks with one of the southern metro counties with facilities that might have room for future expansion. “I understand the desire to possibly relocate to Rice County but that comes at a considerable cost,” he said, adding that the county in no way is unhappy with the current JPA. “I just think it needs to be looked at.” After presenting to the Rice, Joint Powers, and Steele boards, Bondhus said, the next step will be taking feedback from both counties to the Joint Powers board.



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NOTICE

City Hydrant Flushing
OCTOBER 24-28

All city fire hydrants in Blooming Prairie will be flushed on Monday–Friday, October 24–28, beginning at 7:30 a.m. and continuing until 4 p.m., weather permitting. Flushing of hydrants can cause some rust to come out of pipes in areas; particularly where the water system is not looped.

Thank you for your cooperation

Blooming Prairie Public Utilities

Recipe Corner

Ten-Minute Chicken Fajita Grill Bake

Need dinner in a flash? This spicy Mexican-inspired tray bake will be ready in under 10 minutes, just chuck it all on the pan and you're ready to roll.

Ingredients:

1 1/2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 packet spice mix for fajitas

2 green shallots

10 oz. jar Chargrilled Peppers, drained, coarsely chopped

7 oz. tub avocado dip

Fresh coriander sprigs, to serve

1 1/2 lbs. chicken breast stir-fry

12 small white corn tortillas

Crème fraîche, to serve

Directions:

Step 1: Preheat grill on high. Drizzle half of the 1 tbs oil over a baking tray. Place the tray under the grill to heat.

Step 2: While the oil on the tray is heating, place the chicken in a large bowl. Add the spice mix. Use your hands to toss until chicken is coated.

Step 3: Once the oil is hot, arrange the chicken mixture in a single layer on the tray. Drizzle over the remaining 1/2 tbs oil. Return the tray to the grill and cook for 3 minutes.

Step 4: Meanwhile, wrap the tortillas in foil and place under the grill with the chicken. Chop the shallots.

Step 5: Add the peppers to the tray with the chicken and toss to combine. Return to the grill for 2 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through.

Step 6: Serve the chicken grill bake with the warmed tortillas, avocado dip and crème fraîche, sprinkled with the shallot and coriander.

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United Way of Steele County

507-455-1180

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STEELE COUNTY Times

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BLOSSOMS OF THE WEEK



Carter Watson – KD – Mrs. Burkhardt's Class – Parents: David & Ashley Watson – Carter Watson – KD – Mrs. Burkhardt's Class – Parents: David & Ashley Watson – Carter is an Awesome Blossom! His friendly smile brightens our classroom every day. Carter is the first one to help a friend or his teacher. He tries his best in all he does. We are so lucky to have Carter in our Bridges class. Congratulations, Carter! We are so proud of you.



Aurora Musel – 4A – Ms. Volgarino's Class – Parents: Cathy Janning & Scott Musel – Aurora is a great example of prairie pride in our school and classroom! Aurora is an incredibly caring classmate and shows kindness to all. She does her best and works hard each day. Aurora is respectful to all students and teachers and is a joy to have in our room. Way to go, Aurora! 4A is so proud of you!



Abigail Kennedy – 5B – Mr. Kiehne's Class - Parents: Joel & Rachel Kennedy – Abigail Kennedy – 5B – Mr. Kiehne's Class - Parents: Joel & Rachel Kennedy – Abby is a fantastic example of a student who uses Prairie Pride each and every day! She strives to do her best in all of her outstanding work here at school. Abby is also a wonderful classmate and friend to her peers. She is always more than willing to share ideas with her classmates or lend a helping hand to a friend in need. We are so lucky to have you in our classroom and are so proud of you. Keep up the amazing work, Abby!

The Blossoms of the Week are Sponsored by these Community Boosters



157 Hwy Ave N
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917
507-583-6641
www.cargill.com



220 3rd St NW Blooming Prairie, MN
507-583-4434

BP class marks 64 years



Submitted Photo

The Blooming Prairie Class of 1958 celebrated its 64th class reunion on Sept. 17 at the Pizza Cellar in Blooming Prairie. This was the first class to graduate from the new high school. "Everyone had a great time. It's hard to believe we've been out of school for 64 years," said Judy Wencil. Those attending included: seated, from left: Luella Anderson Jensen, Jane Morton Hoshal, Betty tollefson Ronningen and Doris Engler Rasmussen; standing: John Hansen, Carol Erickson Benson, Chris Thissen, Margo Anderson Brudwick and Judy Dixon Wencil.

BOOK NOOK

Reading aloud boosts academic success

Parent-teacher conferences are being held this week in the Blooming Prairie Schools. Hopefully all the reports were stellar, and all your children are at the top of their classes.

However, we can always do better, right? Or maybe there are some students who are struggling with catching up to the rest of the class. Either way, one of the best ways to strengthen academic success is by reading aloud!

Two years ago, I was teaching a youth religion class online. When I asked the high school students to read out loud, there were

very few who could do so without struggling. While it can help at any age, reading out loud is a skill that students can develop and use throughout their lives.

Reading aloud can help increase reading speed and accuracy. Many times when reading silently, readers tend to skip over words. Usually this is not a problem if you are skipping over background words like the, is, etc. But reading aloud makes you pay attention to all the words, not just the ones you think are important.

We know that there are different styles of learning usually listed as visual, auditory,

reading/writing, and kinesthetic or tactile. Reading out loud brings several of those learning styles into action together.

Reading out loud also helps expand your vocabulary. You might skip over unknown words when silent reading, but when you come face to face with it and have to read an unfamiliar word, you first have to figure out how to pronounce it and then hopefully find out its meaning. This helps to improve your comprehension of what you are reading.

So encourage your children and grandchildren to read out loud to you often. Beginning



NANCY VAILLANCOURT

readers love to show off their new skill. Older children may not be as eager to do so. One suggestion is to read a book together and take turns reading chapters.

If you need help finding books to read together, come and see us at the Blooming Prairie Branch Library.

Help available for assistance in the home

HELP from A11 and if the individual chooses to stay within the community. Similarly, the Alternative Care Program provides services to people over the age of 65 who require the level of care provided in nursing homes but in their own community. This population is not eligible for MA and pays a fee

based on their income. Services and supports are approved pending no other payer source for the needed services and supports. EW and AC covered the majority of similar services like Homemaking, Personal Care assistance, personal Emergency response system, Home delivered meals, Nursing, Transportations, and many others. The difference between AC and EW, is that EW covers Customized living services for those in Assisted livings/ group homes and AC you are not Eligible for MA.

The Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) is another funding program that provides home and community-based services for people under the age of 65. To qualify for waiver services, the individual must be eligible

for MA, be certified disabled by the State Medical Review Team or the Social Security Administration, be under the age of 65, be assessed for needs of support, and choose to live within their own community. Additionally, if the client was on CADI before they were 65 years old they can choose to stay on CADI Waiver. If not on CADI before 65 years old they would have to qualify for AC, ECS, or EW.

Lastly, the Essential Community Supports – a program for people aged 65 and older who do not meet nursing facility level of care, who are not eligible for MA, Qualify for Alternative Care but who do have an assessed need that ECS services can address. Some services you could be eligible for are homemaking, personal Emergen-

cy response system, meals, and others. You get a monthly budget to pay for your services.

The Department of Human Services in Minnesota therefore offers several resources such as MnChoices, the Elderly Waiver, CADI, as well as the Alternative Care program(s). To get started, contact Julie Hanson, Case Manager and MN Choice Assessor, Public Health Office at 507-444-7650 or reach out via email at scphn@co.steele.mn.us.

Robert Benson is the adult health lead for Steele County Public Health in Owatonna. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.

BIRTHDAYS

Oct. 19
Leah Thorson
Kathy Anderson
Paul Iverson

Oct. 20
Allison Hensrud
Joan Hagen
Tom Johnson

Oct. 21
Ryan Hansen
Lisa Meshke
Herman Lembke
Rena Anderson

Oct. 22
Michael Iversen
Max Sorensen

Jaydon Brown
Jacob Oldenkamp

Oct. 23
Lisa Hocking
Vern Dahl
Edward Erickson
Rick Kittelson
Levi Ryks

Oct. 24
Rae Jean Hansen
Lindsey Schiefert
Becky Johnson

Oct. 25
Rebecca Johnson
LuAnn Becker
Jennifer Peterson

Timothy Wolf
Sue Schmeling
Bob Braaten

ANNIVERSARIES

Oct. 19
Eric & Jackie Wagner
Amanda & Allan Wacek

Oct. 20
Jeremy & Amy Simon
Bergen Klemmensen
Bob & Judy Remker

Oct. 22
Kevin & Amanda Tocko

Oct. 23
Greg & Kathy Johnson



honest1owatonna.com

Ribbon cutting celebrates Owatonna streetscape

RIBBON from A11 Chamber ambassadors, all the city people, and there were other people who came from the community," she said. "I loved seeing that."

The ribbon cutting celebration was designed as a bonus Downtown Thursday, with music by the Jeremy Polland Band, games, and face painting. Cochran said the crowd broke up early, because of the weather.

Downtown Owatonna's next big event is trick-or-treating on Saturday, October 29, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. It's free and hosted by the Owatonna Business Partnership. You can learn more at owatonnabusiness.org.

The warmth of Christ is found in the living church



Rev. Leandra Anderson

RED OAK GROVE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
AUSTIN

If you are anything like me, I love this time of year. I love the air getting cooler, the crunchy leaves, the cozy sweaters, and perfect hiking weather. It is also the

season where we find ourselves cozied up to a fire in the cooler nights enjoying that autumn air. When watching fires burn down I am always fascinated by the embers that seem to change color and dance as the light and heat shifts through them. Those carefully tended to flames that slowly change into a well kindled fire that sends out warmth. The warmth of crackling of a fire in a fire pit is something

of comfort, as so many good memories are formed around s'mores and a warm flame. But, we know that fire, too, has an intensity and intention to it. Sometimes we say that someone had a fire lit within them. Even Jesus talks about a wish that he had already brought a kindled fire within the people. Today we can think about the salvation, promise, and guide that Jesus brought us as a kindled fire that

has been lit inside of all members of the body of Christ. We also can ask what does it mean for us when we know about that kindled fire that Christ brought to life inside us? The Gospel of Luke repeatedly points to this being something we show by being in community with others. Church is a place where that kindled fire is tended to and where our point of community begins. The church is the people that is found

within it. You being church means that the fire of Christ is carried with you and is shown to the world from there. Like the embers that are alive, Christ is alive in you. That the people around you, who we call church, the church you are a part of, are kindled too. The living church is a place where we find the fires and warmth of Christ visible through each other. This is a circle that is so much bigger than only our individual

worship spaces, it extends to that community in which we share so closely with one another. I hope for you that you feel the warmth and glow that comes from the kindled fire within you and that you can recognize that in one another. I hope as the days get colder that you are reminded of the bonfires and the fiery colors of the leaves of fall, as they remind us of that special kindled fire that lives within you.

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

CORNERSTONE EVANGELICAL FREE
1500 18th St. SE, Owatonna
507-446-5850
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.
www.cornerstoneowatonna.com

NORTHIDGE ASSEMBLY OF GOD
1650 7th Ave. NE, Owatonna
507-451-5467
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.

BRIDGE OF HOPE
500 Dunnell Dr., Owatonna
507-215-2249
Sunday Bible Study: 9 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
Friday RU Recover pfm: 7 p.m.

ST. PAUL EPISCOPAL CHURCH
220 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna
507-451-5319
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study: 11 a.m.
Wednesday Evening: 7 p.m.
www.stpaulsowatonna.org

BAPTIST

FIRST BAPTIST
104 First Ave., Blooming Prairie
507-583-2673
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
Sunday School: 9 a.m.
Sunday Bible Study: 11:30 a.m.
Wednesday Service: 6:30 p.m.
www.fbcbloomingprairie.org

GRACE BAPTIST—OWATONNA
65 26th St., Owatonna
507-451-3494
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
Sunday School: 8:45 a.m.
Sunday Evening: 5 p.m.
Wednesday Adult Service 7 p.m.
Wednesday Youth Service 7 p.m.
gracebaptistministry.org
info@gracebaptistministry.org

BETHEL BAPTIST
1611 Hemlock Ave., Owatonna
507-451-8548
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

CATHOLIC

CHRIST THE KING
205 Second Ave. NW, Medford
507-451-4845
Mass: 5:30 p.m. Sat
Mass: 9 a.m. Mon & Fri
parishoffice@stjosephowatonna.org

CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS
307 SW First St., New Richland
507-234-6244
Saturday Mass: 5 p.m.
www.stannjan.com

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL
9946 SE 24th Ave., Owatonna
507-583-2784
Rev. Bill Becker

Sunday Mass: 8:15 a.m.
www.litomysl.webs.com

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC
150 NE Second St. Hayfield
507-477-2256
Rev. Bill Becker
Saturday Mass: 5 p.m.
www.stcolumbanuschurch.org

SACRED HEART PARISH
810 S Cedar Ave., Owatonna
Mass Times: Daily Tuesday-Friday at 7:15 a.m.
Saturday Mass: 5 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8 a.m., 10 a.m. 12 p.m. (Spanish)
Reconciliation 4 p.m.
Saturday Adoration Thursdays 8 a.m. and 7 p.m.
www.sacredheartowatonna.org

ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC
114 E Main St. Blooming Prairie
507-583-2784
Rev. Bill Becker
Sunday Mass: 10:00 a.m.
www.stcolumbanuschurch.org
columbanusbp@gmail.com

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH
512 S Elm Ave., Owatonna
507-451-4845
Daily Mass: 8 a.m. Tues., Wed. & Fri.
Communion Service 8 a.m. Thursday
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m.
Adoration Chapel available Mon-Fri. 7 a.m. -5:30 p.m. (Key fob required after hours or weekend)
www.stjosephowatonna.org

CHRISTIAN

CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT
540 SE 18th St., Owatonna
507-451-1032
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.
Sunday Connections: 10:15 a.m.
www.owatonnacovenantchurch.org

CHRISTIAN FAMILY CHURCH
2300 Heritage Pl. NW, Owatonna
507-455-3205
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
www.cfchurches.org

VICTORY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
1380 Rice Lake St. E., Owatonna
507-451-8111
Sunday Service: 10 a.m.
www.victorymn.org

LUTHERAN

AURORA LUTHERAN
6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna
507-451-2819
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.
Pastor Clark Baldwin
Sundly School: 10:15 a.m.
office@auroralutheranchurch.org

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN — ELCA
106 Third St. SE, Geneva
507-256-4288
Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.
Every 3rd Saturday at 5 p.m.
communitylutherangenevamn@gmail.com

FIRST LUTHERAN-AFLC
503 Radel Ct., Ellendale
507-684-2451
Sunday: Worship-9 a.m., Sunday School & Adult Bible Study-10:20-11:15 a.m.
Monday: Call to Prayer-7 p.m.
Wednesday: Bible Study-9:30 a.m., Confirmation- 6-7 p.m., Youth Group- 7-9 p.m.
Saturday: Men's Bible Study- 8 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:15-11 a.m.
firstlutheranchurchellendale@gmail.com
Website: https://www.firstlutheranellendale.org/

FIRST LUTHERAN — ELCA
434 First St. SW, Blooming Prairie
507-583-6621
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Sunday School 10 a.m.
firstluthoffice@yahoo.com

FIRST LUTHERAN — LCMC
8953 SW 37th Ave., Hope
507-451-3854
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Sunday School and Adult Ed 10:15 a.m.
fichopemn@gmail.com

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN — LCMS
2500 7th Ave NE, Owatonna
507-451-4125
Sunday Hymn Service 8:30 a.m.
Sunday Praise Service, Sunday School & Bible Class 10 a.m.
info@gsowatonna.com

PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN — ELCA
9651 SW 75th St., Ellendale
507-213-0281
Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m.
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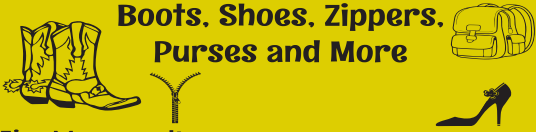
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STEELE COUNTY TIMES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2022

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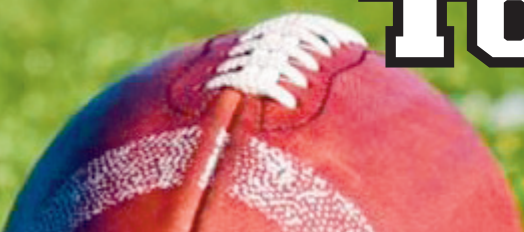
Hometown Sports



ON TO SECTION FINALS

STAFF PHOTO BY SEVY ENTER

Owatonna's Garrett Karsten races to beat a Northfield defender to a loose ball. Karsten and the Huskies beat both Northfield and Rochester John Marshall 1-0 to advance to the Section 1AAA championship game. For more coverage see Page 3B.



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Blooming Prairie.....53
NRHEG..... 12



New Prague 16
Owatonna 7



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STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Owatonna's cheerleaders share one of their many cheering acts during a recent halftime show of a Huskies football game. The cheerleaders are coached by Mara Oien.

Huskies cheerleaders to keep tradition going

BY ROY KOENIG
SPORTS ANALYST

A fear of heights shouldn't stop anyone from joining the Owatonna High School cheerleading team. But be ready to get a good workout, and you might just find yourself flying.

Junior captain Mariah Cuellar will help lead the transition to the new high school. "Oh. I'm really excited



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Cheering for the Huskies doesn't only happen on the field. Cheerleaders also take part in other events, including the recent Homecoming parade in downtown Owatonna.

to cheer on that new track," she said. "It's going to be all fresh and new. Hopefully, we can keep the old traditions."

Coach Mara Oien cheered at OHS and calls her coach Kelly Spinler a role model. "I have been lucky to be able to carry on that tradition at Owatonna," Oien said.

They might face at least one challenge during Homecoming Week. "We usually

See HUSKIES on B10 ►

Huskies captain recovers from knee injury



SPORTS WRAP
ROY KOENIG

Owatonna senior football captain Trevor Schirmer has taken on the reluctant role of volunteer coach, as a knee injury early this summer forced him to the sidelines.

He told the Owatonna Live Coaches Show, "My thought process was I'm gonna do whatever I can. Be here every day to make other players better and really just fill in the gap that I left."

He said his recovery is going well, and he's eyeing a return to track and field where he is a contender to advance to state in shot put and discus. Seeing him move on the sidelines tossing a football around during the pregame in jersey and sweatpants, you wouldn't know he is injured.

On Senior Night, football coach Jeff Williams said, "Schirmer is one of our guys. He's a kid we leaned on very heavily last year at the left tackle position and the defensive line. He was a big-time performer for us. It was really a gut-punch when we found out right at the end of the school year that we were not going to have him for the season. But he's done a good job. He's at every practice. He's there to help out. He's kind of a young coach. He's able to pass on tips to the kids and is excited to do it...He's handled it as a class act."

See SPORTS WRAP on B6 ►



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Prepared and paid for by April St. Martin Committee, 427 Larch Ave., Owatonna, MN 55060

Pickleball
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Steele Sports
JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Pickleball — America’s fastest-growing sport — seems to be spreading even faster than I had originally anticipated as even A-List celebrities are getting in on the action.

It was recently announced via sources such as Sports Illustrated, that Tom Brady, Drew Brees, LeBron James and Kevin Durant have all become partial owners in Major League Pickleball.

Yes, some of the most well-known stars in debatably the nation’s two biggest sports markets have all begun their journey with pickleball, and I’m beginning to feel like I’m missing something.

From last spring to this fall I have spent plenty of time at the local tennis and pickleball courts, but I have never picked up a paddle.

In my own defense, I never grew up playing tennis outside of my physical education classes in school which likely contributed to my lack of knowledge surrounding pickleball, but something tells me I’m really behind on getting into the sport.

I’ve watched highlights of competitive matches and seen some of the unorthodox techniques used by pickleball athletes to score points, and I’ve come to understand that the game is much more complex than I originally imagined.

Initially, I viewed pickleball as a slower version of tennis, solely played to take the action-packed nature of tennis and shrink it into a smaller court.

Now, after having done some research, I understand that the two games are quite well removed from one another in terms of strategy.

For instance, when it comes to shot selection, I know now that the pace of shots is equally as important as the placement.

From what I’ve seen, the slow, methodical shots that land near players’ feet on the edge of the court are some of the hardest to return as they require excellent timing and precision to read.

On the contrary, other shots in doubles matches may be returned at blistering speed, with both teams fighting to see who will slip up first when dealing with the constant offensive pressure.

It seems to me that the game that I thought I knew based on predetermined ideas is not at all what I anticipated.

Needless to say, the next step in my pickleball journey may be hitting the courts around town to see if someone can give me a proper education in the fundamentals of the game.

If anyone is looking for an easy game to pad their record or just needs a doubles partner for a quick match, feel free to reach out.

I’m not as spry as I once was, but this aging dog may still be capable of learning new tricks.



Blooming Prairie’s Cade Christianson (5) and Derek Kubicek (27) make a tackle against NRHEG running back Andrew Phillips (29). The Blossoms suffocated the Panthers’ ground game, holding NRHEG to just 13 rushing yards on 27 attempts.

BP ends losing skid,
rolls past Panthers 53-12

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Blooming Prairie football bounced back from a two-game losing skid with a 53-12 win on the road against NRHEG last week, improving its record to 4-3 overall while keeping the Panthers’ winless record intact at 0-6.

NRHEG was unable to contain the Awesome Blossoms’ offense when it mattered most, allowing multiple scores on fourth-down plays and leading to a loss that carried more weight than just a regular game.

“It’s really tough to have senior night end in a lopsided loss. BP came in and played great and had a great game plan. Tonight, like all season, we saw how hard we have been hit with injuries. It feels like as soon as one player comes back, two more get hurt. Injuries have been a huge disadvantage for us all season,” said NRHEG Head Coach Marc Kruger.

Blooming Prairie took control of the game in the first quarter and opened the scoring with a two-yard rushing

touchdown by utility player Alex Lea at the 5:29 mark.

Lea’s touchdown was followed by an unsuccessful point-after attempt and put the Awesome Blossoms up 6-0.

After the ensuing drive by the Panthers fizzled out near the end of the quarter, Blooming Prairie found itself knocking on the door of the Panthers’ red zone and capitalized for a 20-yard touchdown pass on fourth down from quarterback Brady Kittelson to wide receiver Derek Kubicek.

Blooming Prairie was able to secure the extra point to improve to 13-0 before another quick drive for the Awesome Blossoms ended with a 33-yard touchdown pass from Kittelson to Lea just over a minute later to increase the lead to 20-0.

The Awesome Blossoms found the endzone again just five minutes later with Kittelson and wide receiver Cade Christianson connecting on a nine-yard touchdown pass to put Blooming Prairie ahead 27-0 near halftime.

While the game ap-

peared to be slipping away from the Panthers, NRHEG was able to put points up before halftime when quarterback Alden Dobberstein found wide receiver Sawyer Prigge on a 57-yard touchdown pass with 4:33 remaining until halftime.

However, Blooming Prairie scored once more before the half on a freakish 20-yard run that saw Kittelson scramble out of the pocket, reverse fields, and break multiple tackles before slipping into the end zone — much to the delight and amazement of Blooming Prairie fans.

The score would put Blooming Prairie ahead 34-6 at halftime, nearing the mark necessary to implement the mercy-rule running clock.

Blooming Prairie found the endzone first again after the half on a seven-yard touchdown rush by Lea to go up 41-6. Then NRHEG’s Dobberstein found wide receiver Jaylin Raab on a 70-yard passing touchdown to cut the lead to 41-12 with 9:06 remaining in the third quarter.

The third quarter saw Blooming Prairie score once more near the tail end with Lea scoring on a five-yard rush to make the score 47-12.

In the fourth, Blooming Prairie scored its final points on a 35-yard passing touchdown from quarterback Cannon

SCOREBOARD

TEAM	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final
Blooming Prairie	6	28	13	6	53
NRHEG	0	6	6	0	12

Wacek to wide receiver Dylan Anderson with 34 seconds remaining in the game to settle the score at its final mark of 53-12.

Lea was Blooming Prairie’s leading offensive producer with 128 yards rushing and 33 yards receiving to go with four touchdowns.

The Blossoms faced Medford in the team’s next game on Wednesday, Oct. 19, while the NRHEG Panthers showed off against WEM on the road the same day.

Scores and results from the game were not made available at the time of press.

Player Stats

Blooming Prairie

Passing

#9 Brady Kittelson — 8-18 144 yards 3 TD; #21 Cannon Wacek — 3-3 52 yards 1 TD

Rushing

#12 Alex Lea — 22 att. 128 yards 3 TD; #5 Cade Christianson — 8 att. 100 yards; #9 Kittelson — 5 att. 61 yards 1 TD; #50 Micah Donnelly — 3 att. 8 yards; #15 Carter Ingvalson — 1 att. 5 yards; #21 Wacek — 2 att. 2 yards; #11 Sam Smith — 1 att. 2 yards; #6 Gage Mullenbach — 1 att. 2 yards; #72 Brady Johnson — 1 att. -5 yards

Receiving

#5 Christianson — 4 rec. 63 yards 1 TD; #1 Dylan Anderson — 3 rec. 60 yards 1 TD; #27 Derek Kubicek — 2 rec. 33 yards

1 TD; #12 Lea — 1 rec. 33 yards 1 TD; #8 Mullenbach — 1 rec. 7 yards

Defense

#12 Lea — 7.5 tackles 3 solo 9 assists; #5 Christianson 7.0 tackles 3 solo 8 assists; #74 Sam PirkI — 5.5 tackles 3 solo 5 assists; #1 Anderson — 3.0 tackles 2 solo 2 assists; #33 Kolby Vigeland — 3.0 tackles 2 solo 2 assists

NRHEG

Passing

#6 Alden Dobberstein — 9-20 203 yards 2 TD

Rushing

#10 Nash Howe — 2 att. 12 yards; #26 Deven Parpart — 5 att. 11 yards; #41 Carter Flatland — 1 att. 11 yards; #29 Andrew Phillips — 7 att. 3 yards; #24 Seth Staloch — 3 att. 1 yard; #5 Jaylin Raab — 3 att. -1 yard; #9 Sam Olson — 1 att. -8 yards; #6 Dobberstein — 5 att. -16 yards

Receiving

#5 Raab — 1 rec. 70 yards 1 TD; #8 Sawyer Prigge — 1 rec. 57 yards 1 TD; #9 Olson — 3 rec. 44 yards; #21 Lukas Loverink — 2 rec. 32 yards; #29 Phillips — 2 rec. 0 yards

Defense

#5 Raab — 7.0 tackles 7 solo; #21 Loverink — 6.0 tackles 6 solo; #8 Prigge — 5.5 tackles 5 solo 1 assist; #42 Ethan Thompson — 5.5 tackles 5 solo 1 assist; #33 Reese Routh — 3.5 tackles 3 solo 1 assist; #1 Aidan Schlaak — 2.5 tackles 2 solo 1 assist; #26 Parpart — 2.0 tackles 2 solo; #64 Makota Misgen — 2.0 tackels 2 solo



NRHEG quarterback Alden Dobberstein (6) launches a pass on the run while Blooming Prairie’s Dylan Anderson (1) follows close behind. Dobberstein threw for 203 yards and two touchdowns in the game, but it was not enough as Blooming Prairie went on to win 53-12.



Blooming Prairie’s Dylan Anderson (1) beats NRHEG’s Andrew Phillips to the edge to find space during a big reception for the Awesome Blossoms. Anderson scored on the play, taking one of his three receptions to the house for a 35-yard score.



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Huskies advance to section soccer final

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

After securing two gritty wins in the opening and semifinal rounds of the Section 1AAA tournament, Owatonna's boys soccer team progressed to the section championship game against Rochester Mayo.

Owatonna earned its trip to Rochester to face the Spartans after beating Northfield and Rochester John Marshall both by scores of 1-0.

In the semifinal game, Owatonna found itself in a dogfight with the Rockets as both teams battled for possession and benefitted from scarce offensive opportunities.

After taking a 0-0 tie to halftime, both teams

returned to the field and picked up right where they left off, carrying the 0-0 tie into the end of regulation.

As is standard for MSHSL tournament play, both teams played an overtime period to determine a winner, where Owatonna prevailed behind a goal from defenseman Blake Burmeister to break the tie at 1-0.

Burmeister's goal came off of a header to the top left corner of the net after a perfect set-piece pass from midfielder Ty Svenby found the defenseman lurking on the back post.

The goal was Burmeister's fourth of the season and first since a hat trick performance on Sept. 1.

Earlier in the week, Owatonna had to go

through Northfield in order to keep its season alive.

In similar fashion, the Huskies and Raiders kept a clean sheet through the first half, before Owatonna was able to find the winning goal in the second half behind a shot from midfielder Ashton Kraus.

Kraus was able to score from inside the Northfield penalty box with some nifty footwork to cross up a Raiders defender and the goaltender after receiving a through ball pass from midfielder Rolando Maya.

Owatonna faced Rochester Mayo on Tuesday to determine the Section 1AAA championship winner; however, results from the game were not made available at the



STAFF PHOTO BY SEVY ENTER

Ty Svenby of the Huskies takes a shot against Northfield last week. Svenby was credited with an assist after finding Blake Burmeister on a set piece to secure the 1-0 win over Rochester John Marshall late last week.

time of press.

A win by Owatonna would mean that the

Huskies advance to the state tournament for the first time since 2016

when the team lost 5-0 in the opening game to Wayzata.

Turnovers crush Huskies in 16-7 loss to New Prague

BY ROY KOENIG
SPORTS ANALYST

Owatonna lost 16-7 to New Prague in the final regular season home football game at the current high school.

After 99 years of playing football there, they move to the turf at the new campus next fall. The Huskies recognized 23 seniors to open the night.

The Trojans won the toss, took the ball, and marched 80 yards in 16 plays for a 7-0 lead, eating up more than nine minutes.

"They did get up underneath our pads. And their running back 34 [Nathan Burkhardtsmeier] ran hard. They were winning the line of scrimmage," said OHS coach Jeff Williams.

"But we had them behind the sticks, third-and-15 in their own end, and a great opportunity to get off the field. And they cracked a trap off for 16 yards and a first down."

Owatonna's first possession ended after four downs, coming up a yard short on fourth-and-two. The Trojans capitalized on the short field with a middle screen for a 31-yard touchdown pass, one of just three passes they completed.

The Huskies didn't pick up a first down until there was about two minutes left in the first half.

"You've got to tip your hat to New Prague. They came out with a very aggressive game plan and ran down hill," Williams said.

Burkhardtsmeier punished Owatonna with 41 carries for about 180 yards.

Williams said the defense settled in.

"The problem was we were giving them some short fields. We failed to convert on a fourth down and gave them a short field. And turnovers gave them a short field," he said. "We put our defense into a difficult position at times as well and asked them to bail the offense out. It's tough to do, especially when you're relying on a lot of those kids playing both ways."

The Trojans had just one two-way starter on the line, 6-foot-8, 260-plus pound University of North Dakota recruit Matthew Schoenecker, who factored into a couple sacks and blocked a pass.

Trailing 13-0 to start the third quarter, Owatonna had the ball third-and-nine deep in its own territory. Quarterback Noah Truelson,



STAFF PHOTO BY JOEY BUNTON

Owatonna's Justin Gleason (15), Drew Kretlow (33) and Torrin Smith (50) work together to make a tackle against a New Prague rusher. Owatonna's defense held the Trojans to just 16 points, but New Prague still walked away with the win 16-7.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOEY BUNTON

Owatonna quarterback Jacob Ginskey (13) rolls out and keeps his eyes downfield as he prepares to pass during a play against New Prague last week. Owatonna's passing game struggled against the Trojans, with Ginskey and backup Noah Truelson passing for a total of 99 yards throughout the game.

who stepped in after Jacob Ginskey left late in the second quarter with an injury, rolled left and found Justin Gleason downfield. Gleason trucked his tackler while picking up 28 yards. Drew Kretlow added a 37-yard run.

Conner Grems took the ball the final four yards for the score.

Williams said, "I thought we were starting to cook with some gas. We were finding the off-tackle hole. Grems was doing a good job of bouncing

outside. Some good things were happening on that drive and all of a sudden, we're back in the football game 13-7. We've got some positive momentum.

"And then the fumble on the next series kind of takes the wind out of your sails...Again, it's a game where we're asking a lot of kids to play on both sides of the ball. It's become a necessity. That translates over to the other side of the ball, those momentum changes."

Turnovers ended the final four drives for Owatonna and New Prague ran out the clock for its second straight victory over the Huskies.

OHS closes the regular season tonight (Wednesday) at Kasson-Mantorville. "The nice thing about coaching kids, is they turn the page faster than adults do...kids are resilient," Williams said, adding they bounce back rapidly.

The Komets are

similar to last year, according to Williams. "They're running option. Their quarterback is a threat. They got a nice running back. They'll test your discipline, your option responsibilities," he said.

Owatonna beat K-M 17-14 on a late field goal in adverse weather conditions at OHS last year. The Komets went on to finish as Prep Bowl runner-up in Class 4A.

Player Stats

- Passing**
- #13 Jacob Ginskey — 5-9 46 yards; #16 Noah Truelson — 4-9 53 yards 2 Int.
- Rushing**
- #2 Conner Grems — 12 att. 39 yards 1 TD; #33 Drew Kretlow — 5 att. 53 yards
- Receiving**
- #8 Caleb Hullopeter — 4 rec. 48 yards; #15 Justin Gleason — 2 rec. 39 yards; #2 Grems — 1 rec. -1 yard; #18 Collin Vick — 1 rec. 9 yards; #3 Ayden Walter — 1 rec. 13 yards



STAFF PHOTO BY JOEY BUNTON

Owatonna kicker/punter Drew Henson prepares to boot a punt downfield against New Prague. Both teams' punters were busy in the game, with both teams scoring a total of 23 points in Thursday's game.

SCOREBOARD

TEAM	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final
Owatonna	0	0	7	0	7
New Prague	7	6	0	3	16

Tigers claw back, beat Panthers 3-2

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Medford volleyball hosted NRHEG last week for Senior Night and had to fight its way back from a 2-1 deficit to win an important Gopher Conference game as well as an emotional game for the team's senior veteran players.

The Tigers kept the first three sets close, but won just one before the team kicked the game into high gear in the fourth and fifth sets to make the difference.

Medford Head Coach Missy Underdahl had mentioned all season so far that her team has had the ability to compete and succeed in any match-up; however, finishing sets while they are ahead had been a recurring issue.

Yet, this time around, Underdahl's squad made sure to shut down any hope of a comeback.

The first set belonged to NRHEG after a long battle between both sides ended in a 25-23 win for the Panthers, but Medford had an answer.

The Tigers found ample offense in the second set and finished out with a seven-point lead, winning 25-18 to tie the match at 1-1.

NRHEG was able to restore its lead after winning the third set 25-21, but the game took a turn quickly afterward.

With their backs against the wall, Medford exploded for a 25-17



Medford's Addison Vandereide (8) tries to beat NRHEG blocker Hallie Schultz for a kill. Vandereide and the Tigers got the best of the Panthers in five sets, winning 3-2.

set win in the fourth to one-up itself from its second set win and tie the match at 2-2.

Riding the momentum of tying the match again, Medford rode the energy of its home crowd and creative offensive play to dominate the Panthers 15-6 in the final set, leaving no doubt who the rightful winners were on the night.

Athletes, fans and family alike came together to cheer for the Tigers team as they completed the comeback and won a game that carried more weight than just a standard conference game.



Medford senior athletes Morgan Jones, left, and Adalia List, middle, are all smiles while sharing a moment during the team's Senior Night pre-game ceremony with teammate Addison Vandereide, right. Medford won its Senior Night game 3-2 over NRHEG after coming back from being down 2-1 through three sets.

Medford's win propelled the Tigers to a two-game winning streak and set the team up with more momentum to carry into its final regular season match against Randolph on Monday.

Meanwhile, NRHEG was handed its second loss in a row, and just its sixth of the entire season as the team headed into its final two games against Nicollet and Maple River on Monday and Tuesday.

Stats and results from the two teams' final regular-season games were not made available at the time of press.

Tigers win streak ends in shut out

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Medford football's two-game winning streak ended last week after undefeated St. Clair/Loyola came to town and shut out the Tigers 21-0.

Offense was at a premium for both teams throughout the game, but it was the Spartans who found the endzone on three separate occasions to eventually pull away.

Both defenses kept the scoreboard locked at 0-0 through the first quarter before St. Clair/Loyola broke the tie with a second-quarter touchdown to lead 7-0.

The Spartans took their lead into halftime and held Medford at a seven-point deficit until St. Clair/Loyola found the endzone again in the late stages of the fourth quarter to increase its lead to 14-0.

Medford found itself in an offensive predicament for most of the game, having to choose between punting and going for it on fourth-down plays. However, the Spartans' fourth-quarter touchdown increased the Tigers' urgency tenfold.

With just three first downs on the night, Medford was forced to play more aggressively



Medford's Jesse Ortiz (8) scrambles to evade the oncoming St. Clair/Loyola pass rush. The Tigers' offense struggled against the Spartans and only accrued 45 yards of total offense.

to stay in the game, but the offensive production still eluded the team.

Ultimately, St. Clair/Loyola would regain possession from the Tigers and ice the game in the final minutes with one last touchdown to put the game out of reach for Medford at 21-0.

The Tigers suffered their worst offensive performance of the season against the Spartans in the loss and accrued just 45 yards of total offense.

Despite the three-touchdown difference in score, Medford's defense was able to take away some positives from the game.

The 21 points Medford allowed to the Spartans was the lowest scoring point total that St. Clair/Loyola has posted all season en route to its 7-0 record.

In its final regular season game, Medford traveled to Blooming Prairie to face the Awesome Blossoms on Wednesday, Oct. 19.

Stats and results from the game were not made available at the time of press.



Medford running back Garron Hoffman (28) gets tackled by a host of St. Clair/Loyola defenders. Hoffman was held in check by the Spartans and rushed for just seven yards on 11 carries.



Medford utility player Aaron Richer (34) leaps up to make a one-handed catch against St. Clair/Loyola last week. Richter was held without a catch in Medford's 21-0 loss to the Spartans.

Player Stats

Passing

#8 Jesse Ortiz — 2-11 16 yards 1 Int.

Rushing

#8 Ortiz — 11 att. 22 yards; #28 Garron Hoffman — 11 att. 7 yards

Receiving

#26 Evan Schweisthal — 1 rec. 9 yards; #10 Logan Maas-Hansen — 1 rec. 7 yards

Defense

#52 Tate Hermes — 12.0 tackles 7 solo 10 assists; #28 Hoffman — 5.0 tackles 2 solo 6 assists; #71 mason Degrood — 4.5 tackles 2 solo 5 assists; #50 Hunter Perdue — 4.0

tackles 2 solo 4 assists; #57 Dylan Heiderscheidt — 3.5 tackles 1 solo 5 assists 1 FR; #26 Schweisthal — 3.5 tackles 1 solo 5 assists; #8 Ortiz — 2.5 tackles 2 solo 1 assist 1 Int.

SCOREBOARD

TEAM	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Final
Medford	0	0	0	0	0
St. Clair/Loyola	0	7	0	14	21

BP volleyball loses to BA in shutout

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Blooming Prairie volleyball finished its second-to-last game of the regular season with a 0-3 loss to Bethlehem Academy in an up-and-down game for the Blossoms.

Bethlehem Academy came hot out of the gates winning the first set 25-16 thanks to a strong rally early in the set, yet the match took an interesting turn shortly afterward.

In the second set, Blooming Prairie came out from its set intermission with a whole new offensive flair and grew its lead up to 12-5 early.

Yet, the set would begin to slip from the Blossoms due to strong serves and outside hitting from the Car-

dinals.

Blooming Prairie's seven-point lead quickly shrank to four points before being completely erased when the Cardinals tied the game at 16-16.

The Blossoms called a timeout with the game tied, but it was not enough to slow the momentum created by Bethlehem Academy.

The Cardinals hit the court after the break and continued their rally all the way until the score reached 23-18.

With just two points to go in the set, Blooming Prairie fought back valiantly to bring the score to 23-22 but was unable to get the job done after two more quick points by the Cardinals.

The third set is where the match took



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Blooming Prairie middle hitters Abby Hefling (10) and Addison Doocy (1) reject a shot sent over by Bethlehem Academy's middle hitter. The Blossoms were able to rack up blocks, but could not stop the Cardinals defense entirely en route to a 3-0 loss.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Blooming Prairie's Abby Hefling makes a leaping play in the back row for the Blossoms to save a potential point for Bethlehem Academy. Hefling had four digs, six blocks and three kills against the Cardinals.

a turn for the worst for the Blossoms. After they drew close to tying the game at 1-1, the Cardinals ran away with the win behind a dominant 25-9 final set win.

Blooming Prairie did not have the answers for Bethlehem Academy's hitting, despite having stayed afloat earlier on in the match with its blocking game.

Leading the Blossoms was setter Macy Lembke with 13 set assists, 11 digs, two blocks and three kills.

Earlier in the week, Blooming Prairie flipped the script in a game against USC where the Blossoms were able to walk away with a 3-0 win.

Blooming Prairie controlled the game against the Rebels from start to finish and neutralized nearly all offense from its opponents, finishing the match quickly with set scores of 25-12, 25-10 and 25-7.

Middle hitter Sierra Larson led the team with 12 digs, seven blocks, seven kills, and one ace serve.

The Blossoms played their last regular season game of the year on the road against WEM on Tuesday, Oct. 18, however, stats and results were not available at the time of press.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Blooming Prairie's Haven Carlson (15) has her shot blocked by two Bethlehem Academy front-row blockers in the two teams' matchup last week. The Blossoms fell 3-0 to the visiting Cardinals in an up-and-down game for Blooming Prairie.

Larson leads Blossoms for senior campaign

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

After spending the majority of last volleyball season on the sidelines due to an injury to her thumb, Blooming Prairie

middle hitter and team captain Sierra Larson has been able to make up for lost time as a vital member of the Blossoms' starting rotation.

Larson's injury came early on in the season a year ago, and made it so fellow ath-

letes Haven Carlson and Abby Hefling had to fill in to support the role that Larson was forced to vacate.

"Last year, I had a few games at the beginning of the season and about three to four games at the end. It being my senior season now, it's been fun being able to have the whole season to lay it all out there. I'm really just trying to enjoy every single game," said Larson.

Larson's love for the game is obvious to those who witness her play.

As a middle hitter, Larson typically lines up in the front row for Blooming Prairie, but as one of the team's most trusted athletes she rotates through most every position on the court during the course of the game.

Whether it be blocking in the middle, hitting from the outside or digging balls in

the back row alongside libero and fellow team captain Madi Lea, Larson can be seen smiling and celebrating with her team after every point.

According to Larson, her biggest strength on the court is her mentality to win.

"I think it's my aggression and willingness to compete for every single point. Whether it's a swing to get a kill or diving to get that dig, really just my biggest focus is giving it everything I've got to get that next point."

Larson's leadership and competitiveness have earned her the support of not only her teammates, but the fans as well.

Most recently in Blooming Prairie's game against Bethlehem Academy, fans could be heard chanting "MVP" after Larson rejected a shot via a block and

followed the scoring play by earning a kill the very next rally.

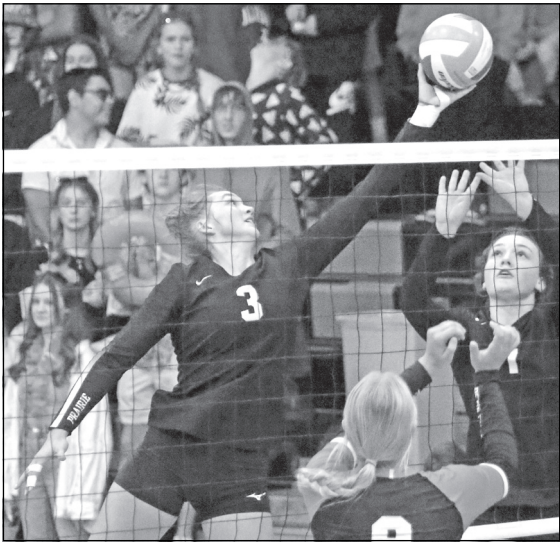
Having Larson back on the court has also helped Blooming Prairie improve its last season record from 5-14 overall and 1-5 in-conference to 2022's record of 11-10 overall and 5-5 in-conference.

"It is sad that it's my last year, but our coaches talked about leaving it all on the floor and having no

regrets. Having played since fourth grade, I've learned so many valuable skills that have not only helped shape me as an athlete, but as a person as well."

Fans will be able to catch Larson and the Blossoms next as the team prepares for the upcoming section playoffs beginning next week.

Blooming Prairie's seed and matchup were unavailable at the time of press.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Blooming Prairie's Sierra Larson (3) goes for a kill as teammate Addison Doocy (1) backs her up. Larson has been a leader for Blooming Prairie on its front row as the team's starting middle hitter.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Sierra Larson, forward-facing right, celebrates with her teammates after scoring a point. According to Larson, her attitude toward this season has been to "enjoy every single game."

Couple shares war memories with Cargill citizens group

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Cargill's Citizen Advisory Panel (CAP) meets monthly and represents the community. In sharing a desire to see the Blooming Prairie area grow, Cargill,

formerly Arkema, likes to continue a link with the community. Roger Sorenson, facilitator for the Cargill CAP, relies on Cargill officials to present plant reports every quarter. Sorenson always asks Cargill leaders

to suggest programs. Within the past year, he has found some intriguing speakers. Last Wednesday, Oct. 12, Sorenson asked U.S. Army veterans Bryce and Jaclyn Schlichter of Blooming Prairie to tell their stories about the

war in Iraq. The Schlichters, members of the Austin National Guard, were both deployed in Iraq for 11 months. The Army is what brought Jaclyn and Bryce together. There were some tense mo-

ments for the couple, who were later married. Jaclyn assumed many different roles, including radio control operator and truck driver. Bryce was also a truck driver and like Jaclyn picked up other duties, too.

The Schlichters were on only one mission together. The purpose of the U.S. troops being in Iraq was to train the Iraqis so they could run the country, Bryce said. Bryce admitted that he often wondered why the U.S. was in Iraq. Liberation is the key word when talking about the war in Iraq, he said. The Schlichters both still wonder where Iraq is headed. "You just can't change a country overnight," Bryce said. At the conclusion of their presentation, the Schlichters opened the forum to questions from the CAP members. Bryce was asked to comment on his injuries suffered while on patrol. While he was in the turret, Schlichter's vehicle was bombed and caused him to suffer severe shrapnel wounds. He was hospitalized and later returned home. Both Bryce and Jaclyn are willing to share their Army experiences during war time. Bryce talked to a Cub Scout troop the same day he visited the Cargill CAP. The Cargill CAP will meet next on Wednesday, Nov. 9. Jerry Mausbach, supervisor of Blooming Prairie Public Utilities, will be the featured speaker.

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STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD
Gourds work well as birthday favors or for Halloween art. These three boys sold \$65 in gourds to be used for a 90th birthday celebration. Shown from left are: Carter Sorensen, Max Sorensen and Isaac Stoen. Buying the gourds were Szanne Dotta, left, of Litomysl and Jennifer Walsh of Ellendale.

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Owatonna Girls 2nd, boys 4th in Mankato

COMPILED BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

The Owatonna girls cross-country team placed second at the Mankato East Invitational last week while the boys team earned a fourth-place finish.

It was a fast day for the girls team as Carsyn Brady and Leah Leckner finished in seventh and ninth respectively, with Kendra Melby and Clara Meier in close pursuit in 12th and 13th place.

Brady led the pack with a time of 19:40.92 for a pace of 6:19 per mile.

Ava Cox also cracked the top 20 for Owatonna, finishing in 19th place.

Owatonna finished comfortably in second place with 60 team points — 25 points behind first-place Marshall and 31 points ahead of third-place Waconia.

On the boys side, Owatonna's best finisher on the day was Trevor Hiatt, who came in seventh place in 16:36.80.

David Smith and Leyton Williams were the only other Huskies inside the top 20, with Smith finishing in 10th and Williams crossing the finish line in 13th.

The Huskies were narrowly beaten by Marshall for third place at a final score of 81-83.

Both squads ran at. The Big Nine Conference meet on Tuesday, but results were not made available at the time of press.

Barring results from the team and individual scores, Owatonna and its runners will be eligible for the Section 1AAA championships depending on placements.

Huskies cheerleaders to keep tradition going

◀ **HUSKIES** from B1 decorate the entire commons area... Next year at the new school, the commons area is three floors high. I don't know how we're going to get up to the ceiling," Oien said with a smile.

An off-site tradition is the pep rally at the Steele County Fair, which sends junior Kaitlyn Jore-Rami airborne. "I'm a flyer. So, I 'm flying all the stunts like flips in the air and lifts where you go up on one leg," Jore-Rami said. She added she got over any fear of flying early and has great faith in her teammates to catch her.

Senior Kat Bartz embraces her role as captain.

"I think it means to be able to deal with conflicts easily or be able to lead your team when they need help with things," Bartz said. "Because when it comes to decision making, I think it comes to at least two people."

She thinks the change will be good. "I think it's a well-needed retirement for the old school," Bartz said. "It feels cool to be the last class to be leaving this school. But I am looking forward to seeing what the younger classes are going to do with the new school."

Senior Katrina Butler came on board as a freshman

to try something new.

"I love cheering with the student section. They're very supportive. They come to every away game," said Butler. She says most cheers carry over year-to-year. "But our coaches usually introduce a couple new chants each season to try to keep it more interesting."

Oien says try-outs are held in the spring. "During the summer they usually come if for about two or three practices a week, where they are doing strengthening things. Some of them work with coach (Jerry) Eggermont in the weight room." To cheer at football, "They have to be able to run a nine-and-a-half minute mile. They have to be able to do a set of 25 continuous pushups...I think it surprises people from outside of Owatonna. I think the Owatonna community realizes that our cheer program is really made up of a bunch of athletes."

Jore-Rami said, "I definitely love cheering on my school. When we do new stunts, new skills, everyone is very supportive." She noted about half the squad is also on the competition team with events starting in November.

Oien added, "A lively group, lots of spirit lots of energy. They bring excitement every day."

2022 FOOTBALL MANIA PICKS

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FOOTBALL CONTEST RULES:

CONTEST PERIOD: Sept. 14-Nov. 30. Different games will be featured each week in the newspaper.

HOW TO WIN: Read the advertisements on this page and pick the team you think will win each game. Write the team's name in the blank with the corresponding number. Cut out and drop off at Steele County Times, 411 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie or 109 W. Rose St., Owatonna (mailboxes outside both buildings, if office is closed), mail to Steele County Times, P.O. Box 247, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917 or email to news@steelecountytimes.com. Must be returned by 5 p.m. on Tuesday prior to the games.

• PLEASE NOTE: The selected games are for the following week (not the current week) because of production and mailing schedule.

TIE-BREAKER: You must enter a score for the tie-breaker game or you will be disqualified.

PRIZES: We will award the winner a \$20 gift card to Torey's Restaurant in Owatonna. There will be a grand prize awarded to the person who picks the most correct games throughout the entire 12-week period. All decisions by judges are final.

ELIGIBILITY: Anyone can enter ages 12 or older, excluding staff members of this newspaper.

THIS WEEK'S WINNER IS...

Back in the winner's circle after winning the first week of the contest is Keith Stark of Blooming Prairie. He correctly matched 13 of 18 games this week. A couple of his misses included the Owatonna/New Prague game as well as the Minnesota Gophers vs Illinois game. To date after four weeks, Keith has won two weeks and Ed Draheim of Owatonna has won two weeks. Congratulations Keith!

FOOTBALL MANIA ENTRY FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

1. _____

TIE-BREAKER SCORE _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

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15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____



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1. Blooming Prairie vs. Medford

2. Owatonna vs. Kasson-Mantorville

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7. New York Giants vs. Jacksonville Jaguars

8. Kansas City Chiefs vs. San Francisco 49ers

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13. UCLA vs. Oregon

14. Iowa vs. Ohio State

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16. Syracuse vs. Clemson

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5. Tampa Bay Buccaneers vs. Carolina Panthers

6. Atlanta Falcons vs. Cincinnati Bengals





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12. Mississippi vs. LSU

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17. Kansas State vs. TCU

18. Cincinnati vs. SMU



OWATONNA PROUD

OWATONNA SCHOOLS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2022 | B11



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Fifty-four new members have been inducted into the National Honor Society at Owatonna High School. They attended their first meeting on Oct. 10.

OHS students inducted into National Honor Society

Congratulations to 54 juniors and seniors who were inducted into the National Honor Society (NHS) at Owatonna High School on Oct. 10.

They join 45 returning members in the national organization which recognizes individual student academic achievement.

New members who are seniors include Kate Havelka, Natalie Krumholz, Emily Schmidt, Andrew Skov, Macy Stanton, Carter Straw-

matt and Ty Sveby.

Junior new members are Ethan Armstrong, Tate Berkley, Kali Clauson, Amelia Cook, Anna Cox, Cole Dahl, Jackson DeGroot, Caleb Dibble, Trevor Duck, Madelyn Fisher, Morgan Fisher, Sadie Fox, Jacob Ginskey, Carter Hanson, Jena Hanson, Samantha Hartman, Ella Heyne, Kennedy Hodgman, Madison Homuth, Danika Kaytor, Mehssa Krause, Matthew Larson, Sophia Laughlin, Elijah Leon, Madison

McGinn, Laken Meier, Becca Nielsen, Jolee Olsen, Ava Otto, Anah Packard, Evan Padgett, Carsen Phelps, Elizabeth Radel, Danika Ringhofer, Ava Schauweker, Ashlynn Schwering, Calista Seiler, Taya Selbrade, Mitchell Seykora, Owen Smith, Paytyn Struss, Jack Thamert, Arielle Thurber, Madeline Walerius, Ruth Weckman, Will Wottreng and Aubrianna Werk.

Last year, NHS members completed

over 4,140 service hours at churches, nursing homes, school events, and more. They raked, shoveled, delivered meals, made cards, and raised money for organizations, among other service opportunities. NHS conducted two blood drives, which collected 109 units of blood from high school students and staff. Their annual talent show raised \$2,100 for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Minnesota.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The officers for the National Honor Society at Owatonna High School include: back row, from left: Maclean Pilcher, David Smith and Drew Kretlow; front row: Korah Rocha, Ava Eitrheim, Paiton Glynn and Hailey Kjersten.

A new take on 'You Only Live Once'

BY ANDRES CONTRERAS

OHS MAGNET WRITER

YOLO (Youth Oriented Leadership Organization) is a new up and coming student led organization whose sole purpose is to improve mental health and help students stop vaping. This student-led organization started in the 2021-22 school year and was founded by activist and Steele County Public Health worker Ms. Andrea Marshall.

Ms. Marshall decided to start the club because she saw a huge need in the Steele County community and recognized how big the vaping epidemic has become in today's society, specifically for kids in high school. Ms. Marshall said, "I decided to start YOLO because I saw a huge need and recognized that there are mental health problems and that the vaping numbers are way too high for my comfort level." YOLO has its own office in downtown Owatonna which helps organize and gives the students a place to work in an office-like environment.

Ms. Marshall got funding from MDH, Minnesota Department of Health, which helped immensely in the club lift off. Ms. Marshall said, "I really felt like I could take this club and go with it and having the funding from the grant would help me do awesome things." MDH set out information for a grant and ALA, the American Lung Association, partnered with Ms.



Marshall on writing and submitting an application. The grant includes \$150,000 per year which goes to salary for the leaders, event planning and buying merchandise without having to fundraise every time. The State of Minnesota was aware of how big the crisis of substance abuse and mental health was; they were more than happy to fund a student-led organization to help better kids.

YOLO has a unique way of setting up their group. Instead of working together as just a large group, the organization is split into six factions as well as one large group. One of the factions is the leadership team which involves all of the small group leaders including the group's secretary and executive leaders. Along with the leadership team there is marketing, design, planning and PSE 'policy system and environment'. Ms. Marshall said, "We've done a lot of work establishing ourselves and making sure we

have these teams in place." It is left to the hands of students to decide where the teams go, how they will reach students and educate on the topics they are focused on.

Kinzie Carlson is YOLO's secretary. She was not sure which sub group she wanted to be in or be a leader of but her role as secretary helped find her place by being able to attend all meetings. Carlson decided to be involved in YOLO because she wanted to help kids in Steele County better their mental health and fix their issues with substance abuse. Carlson said, "It's all about reducing substance abuse, specifically vaping in our community, not just in OHS but in Steele County as a whole." After being a leader for YOLO, Carlson learned that mental health is a very big factor to what causes substance abuse.

Hailey Kjersten is one of two YOLO leadership executives who has been very dedicated to the club since joining. Kjersten said, "YOLO is

a collective student initiative whose motto is 'reaching students through students.' Kjersten is a coordinator who got involved with YOLO in the spring of 2022, her role is to lead all of the small teams. Kjersten decided to get involved because she believed it would be a new and different opportunity for her.

YOLO has been involved in many events in the community such as 'safe and drug free' and 'have a safe season'. YOLO is planning on moving their ideas inside of OHS and into our fellow health classes, along with meeting with Principal Sullivan in OMS to teach about subjects in the health classes there. An upcoming event they are currently working on is a panel discussion with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Freshmen through seniors in Steele County are all eligible to join YOLO, but joining YOLO is a big time commitment. There is an application and interview process—they do this to make sure the organization is getting students who are genuinely interested in their motive and will be committed and have the time and energy for the group. YOLO is not turning anyone away but they are trying to get people who will be involved and commit.

YOLO wants to remind everyone to take positive risks instead of negative ones, and to live life in a safe and respectable way while still having fun.

Red Ribbon Week is coming up

Red Ribbon Week is an annual national drug prevention celebration.

Adults can support youth to make a pledge to live a drug-free life. A variety of activities will be hosted for youth by SHOC (Students Helping Others Choose – an OHS group), Noon Kiwanis, Public Health, and the Steele County Safe and Drug Free Coalition. The annual fourth grade drug prevention poster contest will be held, with posters displayed in local storefronts as well as in the schools. All families are in-

vited to the Red Ribbon Week kick-off event on Tuesday, Oct. 25, from 5-6:30 p.m. at Owatonna Middle School. Activities will include:

- Free food
- Fun activities
- Halloween treats and prizes
- Fourth grade "Celebrate Life, Live Drug Free!" poster contest winners

The Safe and Drug Free Coalition and Public Health will share literature for parents on how to keep kids healthy and drug/vape free.



Students of the Week



Elementary School

Cooper Case
First Grade
Parents: Jacob and Elizabeth Case

Cooper comes to class with a smile on his face and he is always ready to learn. He shows determination and pride in his work. He is responsible, respectful, and a great friend to everyone. Thank you, Cooper, for being a wonderful leader!



Middle School

Jack Mitchell
Sixth Grade
Parents: Ryan and Margaret Mitchell

Jack comes to music class with a positive, ready to learn attitude. He demonstrates his knowledge and is respectful. These skills make him a leader in the class and his kind, fun, and outgoing personality are added perks. Thanks for being awesome, Jack!

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Community invited to Red Ribbon kick-off

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

With red bracelets, games, and a family dinner, Owatonna Public Schools' Red Ribbon Week kicks off Oct. 25 with a simple message: "Celebrate Life, Live Drug Free!"

The National Family Partnership launched the drug use prevention campaign in 1988, after Drug Enforcement Administration Agent Enrique Camarena was tortured and murdered by drug traffickers. Locally, Owatonna High School's SHOC (Students Helping Others Choose) Club spearheads activities.

SHOC advisor Nancy Williams said students worked with local businesses on a card that will offer discounts to students wearing red bracelets during the week. OHS students can also enter a prize raffle, and there will be announcements with information

about chemicals and how they impact mental health and encouraging kids to reach out for help when they feel depressed or anxious.

Families are encouraged to attend Tuesday's kick off in the Owatonna Middle School cafeteria. Speakers during the brief program include Mayor Tom Kuntz, Police Chief Jeff Mundale, and Superintendent Jeff Elstad, and fourth grade poster contest winners will get a moment on stage.

"We would love to see anyone from the community be part of the Red Ribbon kickoff," Williams said. "A lot of the games and activities are geared toward elementary kids, but there are also booths with information from Public Health and the (Steele County) Safe and Drug Free Coalition."

The event is held in partnership with the Kiwanis Club; members serve a family dinner for the kick-off and help with

activities during the week. SHOC members—107 of them—do everything from judging the poster contest to hanging banners and running a booth during lunch periods at OHS. Williams said the Alternative Learning Center and the Middle School also host activities that encourage students to sign the Red Ribbon pledge:

- I pledge to stay in school and learn the things that I need to know.
- I pledge to make the world a better place for kids like me to grow.
- I pledge to keep my dreams alive and be all that I can be.
- I pledge to help others and to keep myself drug free.

Williams said SHOC is one of the high school's biggest clubs.

"It's pretty cool that lots of kids are making good choices for themselves and then want to take it a step further and be a role model," she said.

Exchange supports Center for Family Unity



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Exchange Club of Steele County presents the Exchange Club Center for Family Unity in Owatonna with a \$5,000 check for its capital campaign for a new office location. Center Executive Director Beth Hortop has announced a purchase agreement has been signed for the building at 1820 Hartle Ave. in Owatonna. The check presentation during the Club's regular meeting, Sept. 16, included Club President Mary Wencil (left), Hortop (center), and Club and Center Board Director Bruce Kubicek. The Center provides parent mentoring and supervised visitation services for Steele, Rice, Waseca, Dodge, and Freeborn counties.

"They're a pretty active group."

But it wasn't always that way. When Williams started as advisor eight or nine years ago, she said, the club had 35 members, all girls.

She said growing SHOC has depended on getting students to encourage and recruit

younger kids. "You've got to be able to empower students to recruit and talk about why they think others should join," she said.

Williams said there's also been an effort to make the group more diverse, in gender and culture.

"Owatonna's demo-

graphics have changed, and we have changed along with it," she said. "We want all of our little kids to see somebody who looks like them being role models and making good choices."

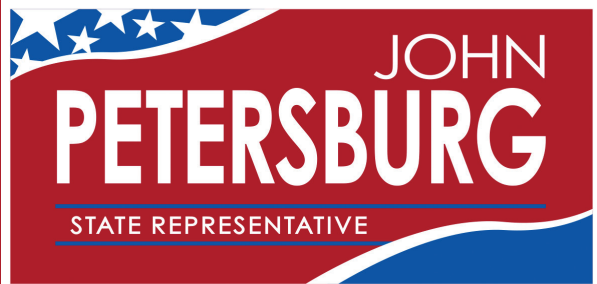
The Oct. 25 event is free to attend. Owatonna Middle School is located at 500 15th St. N.E.



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Mastering Gardening

LORRIE RUGG

Is it really Fall already?

on your radar before the snow flies. There is still time to plant spring bulbs. After a long winter, the sight of those tulips and daffodils coming out of the ground will be worth it. Remember that bulbs need to be planted in full sun. Mass plantings of bulbs give you the most bang for your buck!

Mow your lawn one more time – lower your mower to 2” to discourage snow mold from forming next spring.

Check your houseplants before bringing them inside. You don’t want to bring uninvited guests into your house. Treatment with insecticidal soap will help prevent that. Do they need to be transplanted into a bigger pot or just need some new soil?

Protect your plants outside. Do you have bunnies or deer that would like nothing better than to munch on them this winter? Tree guards

on a young tree will help that in addition to helping prevent sun-scald. Evergreens can be wrapped in burlap or create a barrier from those drying winter winds. Mulching tender perennials will help them survive the winter.

Clean up your tools and pots. Your pots should be washed with a mild bleach solution. Tools should be disinfected with a 70% rubbing alcohol solution. Metallic tools can be protected from rust forming on them with a light coating of WD-40. If you clean up and sharpen your tools this fall you will be thanking yourself in the spring. Don’t forget about those garden gloves and shoes. Wash those gloves and hang them up to dry. We can never be too careful with our shoes, especially since we are all learning about jumping worms. Keep those shoes clean to prevent the spread from garden to garden.

If you have not done a soil test before or in the last five years this is a good time to do so. The Soil Testing Lab at the University of Minnesota gets very busy in the spring so avoid the rush and do it now You can find soil test directions and pricing options at <https://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu>.

I tried something new this fall, I had beautiful coleus plants this summer, and wanted to see how easy it is to take cuttings from them and see if I can have some new plants to put outside next spring. So I read that I needed to have a 6-inch cutting from a stem that had not bloomed yet. Remove the leaves that would be in the water – I am using that method to see if they will form roots. When you have a good healthy crop of roots pot them in soil and let them grow. So time will tell how successful I will be. You are never too old to learn something new!

Lorrie Rugg is the coordinator of the Master Gardener program for Steele and Rice counties. She may be reached at 507-444-7687 or brow3298@umn.edu.

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Departure times:

Albert Lea Walmart	9:30 am
Owatonna Perkins	10:00 am
Faribault State Bank Mall Location	10:30 am

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OCT. 25
10 a.m. — Storytime, BP Library

ELLENDALE/HOPE/GENEVA

OCT. 27
7 a.m. — Ellendale EDA Meeting, Community Building

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

OCT. 22
Owatonna Fall Crawl, Downtown Owatonna
1 p.m. — Fairway Beerfest, Tavern Nine
1 p.m. — 3 Wheel & Ab Music, Foremost Brewing
5:30 p.m. — Adam Moe Music, Mineral Springs Brewery
7:30 p.m. — A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder, Little Theatre of Owatonna

OCT. 23
2 p.m. — A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder, Little Theatre of Owatonna
2 p.m. — Sound Field Presentation Music of Now, Arts Center

OCT. 24
4 p.m. — Owatonna HRA Meeting, City Hall

5:30 p.m. — Exchange Club Meeting, VFW
7 p.m. — Medford City Council Meeting, City Hall

OCT. 25
9:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. — Storytime, Owatonna Library
10 a.m. — Memory Café, History Center
4 p.m. — OPU Meeting, Public Utilities
5 p.m. — Sharrie Staats Benefit, Mineral Springs Brewery
5 p.m. — Steele County Board Meeting, County Admin Building
5:30 p.m. — Owatonna Planning Commission Meeting, City Hall

OCT. 28
5 p.m. — Magic of Rotary, Country Club

Go a-haunting at the Village of Yesteryear

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

An annual Halloween activity returns Oct. 29 to the Steele County Historical Society (SCHS) Village of Yesteryear, with family fun and—of course—plenty of candy.

Dubbed “A-Haunting We Will Go,” the event runs from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Volunteer MaryAnne Higgins said last year’s event drew thousands of kids who came from trick-or-treating in downtown Owatonna, which happens 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

“It’s really geared toward children,” she said of the SCHS event. “Halloween stories, craft projects,

a scarecrow scavenger hunt...everything is family-friendly.”

The crafts will involve painting small rocks and creating a mummy out of an empty toilet paper roll, Higgins said. Costumed volunteers will hand out candy.

None of the buildings on the property at 1448 Austin Road will open for the event, but popcorn will be available all afternoon at the Beaver Lake Concession Stand.

The event is sponsored by A Taste of the Big Apple, Lilly and Rose Boutique, and Verizon-Wireless World. To learn more, visit schsmn.org or find the Historical Society on Facebook.

Sudoku Corner

4	7		3		8		5	1
1	2				9	7	4	
			4			6	2	
3							9	4
2	9	4	1			5		6
5			9	6		2		7
6			8		2			
9				4	1		6	
7	8		5	3				9

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6	1	7	9	8	5	2	8	7
2	9	8	1	7	2	5	8	6
5	2	8	2	6	8	1	7	9
2	8	2	7	9	6	8	1	5
9	8	5	8	2	1	7	6	2
7	6	1	5	8	2	2	9	8
8	2	9	2	1	7	6	5	8
8	7	2	6	5	9	8	2	1
1	5	6	8	2	8	9	2	7

Steele County Toys for Tots applications open

This year's Steele County Toys for Tots applications are now available on the Toys for Tots website and at these Steele County locations:

- Minnesota Prairie County Alliance, 630 Florence Ave., Owatonna
- Community Pathways of Steele County, 155 Oakdale St., Owatonna
- Owatonna Public Library — Children's area, 105 N Elm Ave., Owatonna
- Salvation Army, 1810 Cedar Ave. S., Owatonna
- Steele County Public Health, 635 Florence Ave., Owatonna
- Blooming Prairie Public Library, 138 Hwy Ave S., Blooming Prairie
- Lerberg's Foods, 120 5th Ave., Ellendale
- Ellendale Food Shelf, 200 Sixth St., Ellendale
- Keen Bank — Hope, 9087 SW 37th Ave., Hope
- State Bank of Red Wing — Medford, 115 1st St. NE., Medford

Applicants must print the application, fill it out and mail back no later than Nov. 30. Completed applications may be returned to Minnesota Prairie County Alliance; or

Community Pathways of Steele County or mailed to: Steele County Toys for Tots/Family To Family, P.O. Box 199, Owatonna, MN 55060

Parents/guardians and children must live in Steele County. Children must be 15 and younger as of Dec. 31, and school-aged kids must be attending school or home-schooled.

In 2021, Steele County Toys for Tots served 489 families with over 1,100 children receiving Christmas gifts.

Toys for Tots of Steele County has been in existence for more than 40 years. It

operates within the national U.S. Marine Corp Reserve Toys for Tots program, which began in 1947.

Its objective is to collect and distribute new and unwrapped toys to Steele County needy children at Christmas. Cash and gift cards received are used to purchase toys as per directives from our national organization.

For more information, visit owatonna-mn.toysfortots.org or the Steele County Toys for Tots Facebook page.

COVID moves LTO 'Gentleman's Guide' performances

Due to positive COVID-19 cases within the cast and the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control, Little Theatre of Owatonna cancelled last week's first four shows of "A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder", with book and lyrics by Robert L. Freedman, music and lyrics by Steven Lutvak.

The theater has slated five shows this week, with cast and crew masking during the first three of the five performances. Masks for audience members remain optional but are encouraged.

Updated performance dates include Wednesday, Oct. 19; Thursday, Oct. 20; Friday, Oct. 21; Saturday, Oct. 22; and Sunday, Oct. 23

"I'm disappointed that we will not be able to perform 'A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder' this weekend," director Gordy Handeland said last Wednesday. "But we hope you'll join us next week for this very funny musical comedy."

Executive Director Victoria Bartkowiak added, "The health and safety of our cast, crew, and volunteers is something we take very seriously at LTO. Covid is still with us, and with live theatre, there is always the chance that it will pop up. We must do

what is best for everyone, and at this time, that is canceling productions."

Bartkowiak also apologized for any inconvenience and asked for everyone's understanding.

Ticket holders were contacted about the new performance dates. If you have not been contacted or have any questions, call the box office at 507-451-0764 or write to ltomn@outlook.com.

Correction: In the Oct. 5 story about this production, we published incorrect information about the cast list. We regret the error, and here is the corrected list:

- Austin Stole as Monty
- Brie Stole as Sibella
- Heather Burke as Phoebe
- Erik Eitrheim as Asquith D'Ysquith
- Rian Cloutier — ensemble
- Ron Hager — ensemble, featured as Tour Guide
- Bin Huang — ensemble
- Maggie Jones — ensemble, featured as Miss Barley
- Curt Jorgenson — ensemble, featured as Magistrate
- Holly Jorgensen — ensemble
- Margaret Schlicker — ensemble
- Gail Zollner — ensemble, featured as Lady Eugenia

Earth Day event at Rice Lake park

The Friends of Rice Lake State Park are holding two work events this month that are open to the public.

Families are encouraged to attend.

The first was held last Saturday featuring a general fall clean-up.

The second event is the rescheduled Earth Day event on Saturday, Oct. 29, beginning at 9 a.m., with sign in at the picnic pavilion. After cleanup along the trails, participants will be fed lunch at about noon. There are no special COVID requirements.

Work materials will be provided at each event, but you may want to bring your own gloves.

Call 507-414-6191 to register for both events and or for more information.

An Old Fashioned Shrimp Boil coming to BP

Revelers in the low country of South Carolina have long celebrated the end of summer by getting together for an old fashioned shrimp boil. However, one doesn't have to go all the way to South Carolina to experience the greatness of this celebration.

On Saturday, Oct. 29, the Sons of the American Legion, Squadron #52, are hosting a "shrimp boil to remember" at the Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club. The menu includes: shrimp, sausage, sweet corn, potatoes and onions and beverage.

Social hour starts at 5 p.m. with dinner following from 6 to 8 p.m. Because the boil is close to Halloween, it will be served "pirate style" on tables of eight. If you want to dress up in a Halloween costume, best costume will be recognized.

There will be multiple drawings for \$10 Gift Certificates to the Foxhole!

Seating is limited and only 144 tickets are available. The cost is \$20 per ticket. Tickets can be purchased from the Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club. No walk-ins.

The Servicemen's Club is located at 210 4th St. N.E. in Blooming Prairie.

Webinar to highlight Parkinson's meeting

The Parkinson's Support Group will be meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 25 from 2-3:30 p.m. in the Gainey Room at the Owatonna Public Library.

This month's program will be a webinar on "Pain and Fatigue in Parkinson's Disease."

The Parkinson's Support Group meets the fourth Tuesday of each month. It is open to all who have Parkinson's and their caregivers.

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Crafts and Cocktails set at the Hormel Historic Home

Enjoy a day of "not your Grandma's" Crafts and Cocktails at the Hormel Historic Home on Saturday, Oct. 29. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. with crafts starting at 9 a.m. The home is located at 208 4th Ave. N.W. in Austin.

The Hormel Historic Home has partnered with some amazing local Makers to host a day of inspiration and fun by creating crafts for attendees to keep or for gift giving for the upcoming Holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, or just because!

Craft choices range from canvas painting, candle making, porch pot designing, tea mixology, coasters, cake decorating, and charcuterie board making.

The Hormel Historic Home will organize your craft agenda based on the crafts attendees pre-register for. To pre-register on the Hormel Historic Home's

website, attendees will add an Entry Ticket to their shopping cart and then add up to four crafts (of attendee's choice) before checking out.

Tickets are available on the Hormel Historic Home's at www.hormelhistorichome.org or by calling the Hormel Historic Home's office at 507-433-4243. Tickets must be pre-purchased and include entry to the event, a Bloody Mary or Mimosa upon arrival, gourmet hors d'oeuvres, attendee's choice of gourmet sandwich for lunch, and signature desserts in the afternoon. Chic cocktail specials will be featured every hour and other beverages will be available to purchase.

Proceeds from this event support the core mission of the Hormel Historic Home, an independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Steele County Sheriff's Race 2022

Candidates address crime-related issues

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

In an effort to keep our readers as informed as possible about the upcoming election and the choices they are offered, we are asking the candidates of several races to weigh in on the issues.

That includes the race for Steele County Sheriff. Incumbent Sheriff Lon Thiele is facing challenger Darrin Helget, who is currently a deputy sheriff for the SCSO.

Every week through Nov. 2, we will publish the answer to a weekly question, designed just for the sheriff candidates. There will be a word limit; the only editing we'll do is if the answer is too long.

We sincerely hope this is beneficial to you, our reader, about the issues affecting Steele County, where the candidates stand and how they may address those concerns.

Here's this week's question:

According to CrimeGrade.org, Steele

County's crime rate is lower than 93% of the average U.S. counties, earning it a "grade" of A+. While the exact numbers may be open for discussion, most would agree we live in a pretty safe county.

That being said, what is the number one crime-related issue that you plan to address first, if elected?

Answers were limited to 300 words.

Steele County Deputy Darrin Helget: I have mentioned it before: I believe drugs are the number one crime-related issue facing us. I say this because drugs factor into so many other crimes. Drugs are too frequently present during domestic disputes (recently assisted Owatonna PD and a meth pipe was removed from suspect). Various thefts, vehicle break-ins, burglaries and other "crimes of opportunities" are committed by drug users looking for quick cash. More violent crime frequently has roots in the drug scene and is present in our communities. Unfortun-

nately, drugs are in our schools.

There are several ways in which I plan to address the drug issue; in 2020, the Steele County Sheriff's Office reimplemented a K9 unit after I addressed that as a primary need in 2018. Our dog is a single purpose dog trained in "scent," one of the scent odors K9 Willow is trained in is certain narcotics. Our K9 can be better utilized for combating the drug issues in our communities. One of my primary goals is to train members of our agency in drug interdiction. Interstate 35 and Highway 14 are prime routes for drugs being transported into our state and ultimately distributed back to our

communities.

I would also look to partner with area K9 units and schools to not only find drugs in our schools, but as educational tools in the hopes of slowing down the upward trend of use and presence in the schools.

The Steele County Sheriff's Office is a member of the South Central Drug Investigation Unit (SCDIU) but has not had an agent assigned to SCDIU since 2010. There has been interest from Deputies on becoming task force members, but the opportunity was never given, it is time to get an agent from our office on the task force.

Steele County Sheriff Lon Thiele: As your Sheriff, I promise to maintain focus on

meaningful community engagement. I'll continue to address the drug and mental health issues. I'll continue the implemented intelligence-based policing initiatives and crisis intervention training. I will also maintain the continued reduction in crime with increased patrols in the necessary areas.

The Minnesota Crime Reporting System is a yearly statistical report of offenses and clearances in Steele County. Every year, I analyze the report and address issues that could be a problem in our county.

The report consists of Part 1 and Part 2 crimes. Part 1 crimes are reported in terms of arrests. Part 2 crimes include, but are not limited to, some victimless crimes.

I am very proud to announce the Steele County crime rate has been reduced since I was first elected Sheriff in 2010. Although crime statistics have been reduced, property crimes remain at the top of the list.

I focus on two au-

diences. The potential victims and the offenders. As Sheriff, I position deputies in strategic locations where crime is occurring and target the nature of the problem.

There are ways of preventing numerous property crimes. If deputies are patrolling in a known concerned location and a homeowner leaves a garage door open the deputies will stop and notify the homeowner. The deputies will remind the resident about the importance of securing their belongings which could be beneficial.

I will stay tough on internet crimes against children, support the safety and security of our schools and continue to improve organizational transparency and accountability.

I will work tirelessly to ensure the safety of our children, neighbors, and Steele County communities. In addition, my commitment to you and involvement within our community will not waver. You can trust that I will put the needs of Steele County first.

Senior Alliance to offer Dementia Friends info session

Senior Alliance for Steele County will offer Dementia Friends Informational Session beginning at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 25, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna.

This informational session will of value to professionals in the field of senior living; caregivers; as well as friends, family, and neighbors of those living with dementia.

This in-person informational session will last about 60 minutes and cover the five key messages about dementia, how it affects people, and how we each can make a difference in the

lives of those living with dementia. People living with dementia need to be understood and supported in their communities.

Dementia Friends is a global movement developed by the Alz-

heimer's Association to help everyone in a community to understand dementia. At the conclusion of the session, each Dementia Friend will be able to turn their understand-

ing into a practical action that can help someone with dementia in their family or community.

Please RSVP by Oct. 24 to Melissa at 507-213-6573.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1 Gloom's partner

5 Deadly snake

10 Pal, in Perth

14 Surrounding glow

15 Variety

16 Fan favorite

17 Say it ___ so

18 Purple shade

19 Scruff of the neck

20 Oscar, for one

22 Sound reasoning

23 Subway in Paris

24 Call the shots?

25 Ship's pronoun

27 Not straight-forward

30 Easy to access

32 Food safety org.

36 Moving about

37 Philandering fellow

38 Cuts into cubes

39 Predicament

40 Nickel and lead, e.g.

42 Ill-tempered

44 Made tracks

45 Skillful

48 Type of drum

50 Talk big

51 Be realistic

55 Virus prefix

56 Repair bill line

57 Campus house

58 Bird feeder block

59 Legend maker

60 Shredded

61 Online crafters site

62 Tropical nut

63 Give and take

DOWN

1 Honoree's spot

2 Send packing

3 Tree trinkets

4 Kind of finish

5 Tom's "Knight and Day" co-star

6 Eloquent

7 Champagne designation

8 Carry on

9 Affirmative vote

10 Diamonds or clubs, in bridge

11 Words of wisdom

12 Subject for debate

13 Bumper sticker word

21 Complete

22 Lucy of "Kill Bill"

24 URL punctuator

25 Pull a fast one

26 Nozzle site

28 Poke fun at

29 Emphasize

31 5W-20, e.g.

33 Yellow brick road traveler

34 Boxer Oscar ___ Hoya

35 PGA part, briefly

38 Kind of coffee

40 Web crawler

41 Quartz, for one

43 Chart topper

45 Bring down

46 Breakfast treat

47 Hotel posting

49 Flat floaters

51 Deal with

52 Be up against

53 Scarlett's home

54 Ballroom move

56 Popular dog

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Solution to Crossword:

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

Answers to Last Week's Puzzle

Solution to Crossword:

R	A	I	D		F	R	O	Z	E		T	R	O	T
A	I	D	E		L	A	D	E	N		R	E	D	O
P	O	O	L		O	P	E	N	S	E	A	S	O	N
I	L	L	I		N	O	I	S		U	N	C	O	R
D	I	S	C		E	R	N		S	E	V	E	N	
					A	M	P	E	R	E	O	R	A	T
P	I	S	T		O	L		A	N	T	I	T	E	A
R	O	T	E		A	B	I	D	E		B	O	S	S
E	T	A			G	N	A	T		S	P	O	R	T
P	A	G	E		R		R	A	T	T	A	N		
					E	N	A	C	T		H	A	N	D
S	O	N	A		T	A		S	E	M	E	S	T	E
E	N	A	M		E	L	W	A	R	E		M	A	R
E	L	M	O		L	O	G	O	N		A	K	I	N
D	Y	E	R		A	N	E	N	T		N	E	E	D

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Information You Need to Know

This will allow you to have a greater understanding of the Owatonna School District’s direction.

Over the last year and a half we have heard so often that racial equity ideologies are not being implemented by District 761. So, why did they seek this partnership with MSU back in 2018? And then get the school board involved the 2019/2020 year? This would include all four incumbents running right now. We believe there is still very

little transparency from them when it comes to this topic. These are excerpts from the Spring 2020, Volume 11, Issue 1 edition of MSU Mankato Partnership’s 2020 Vision: Vision Builders To view the full document, go to: <https://ed.mnsu.edu/globalassets/college-of-education/center-for-education-partnerships/media/spring-2020-partnership-mag.pdf>

The information found here identifies School District 761 leaders as the engineers of the racial equity training launchpad for, not only teachers, but other school leaders, and school board members. Though citizens have been told CRT is not taught in this school district, these

pages bring awareness that the racial equity ideology has been actively implemented. United Patriots for Accountability, along with many other concerned citizens, believe that Martin Luther King Jr.’s values are the foundation of a truly equitable society. Let’s judge each other based on “the content of our character, not the color of

our skin.” We trust this information will give citizens a greater understanding of the district’s direction. Please vote for the school board races on Nov. 8.



MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO & OWATONNA PUBLIC SCHOOLS A RACIAL EQUITY PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership

The Center for Engaged Leadership, which runs parallel to the Department of Educational Leadership, partners with several P-12 school district leaders and teachers in the work of racial equity and social justice. It is because of this existing relationship that the district leadership from Owatonna Public Schools contacted Minnesota State University, Mankato’s Department of Educational Leadership in the spring of 2018 asking if we, Natalie Rasmussen, Assistant Professor, and Jinger Gustafson, Assistant Professor and Department Chair, might partner with them in order to provide professional development to their district around racial equity. Their request was very much aligned with our department’s mission and vision: The Department of Educational Leadership is dedicated to the study of the intersectionalities among race, cultural responsiveness, and social justice. We prepare racially and ethically conscious leaders who are resolute in serving ALL learners in a broad spectrum of educational settings. The department is committed to developing educators with strong skills in racial equity leadership, instructional leadership, and experiential learning. We seek to advance the capacity of leaders who will eliminate predictable racial disparities through project based learning and learner-centered programming in Master of Science, Specialist, and Doctorate graduate degree programs. At our initial meeting, Owatonna Superintendent, Jeff Elstad, shared his vision for what he wanted for the district in order to increase racial awareness, address issues of bias and racism, and to provide the best educational experience for all of his students. Superintendent Elstad and his leadership team of Michelle Krell, Director of Teaching and Learning, and Chris Picha, Director of Human Resources, sat down with us to envision what this partnership might look like. We explained that usually, the single-session professional development workshop where consultants “blow in, blow up, and blow out” were not nearly as effective as those that cultivated a relationship over time and catered to the particular learning needs of the community. They agreed and as a result, we devised a plan for the next school year to take Owatonna’s building and district leadership through a year-long partnership in which we created curriculum and

learning activities crafted uniquely for them.

The Work

We researched the change in the district’s racial demographics over the last several decades. The Owatonna Public Schools student population, which had been 98% White in the 1980s was now at about 72% White students. We saw that there had been an increase in its Latinx students which now made up about 15%, and

left unacknowledged, can express themselves in very negative ways in the daily operation and functioning of a typical school district. Our goals were to bring awareness and knowledge about race and racism to the district leadership and to equip leaders with the tools necessary to address these issues.

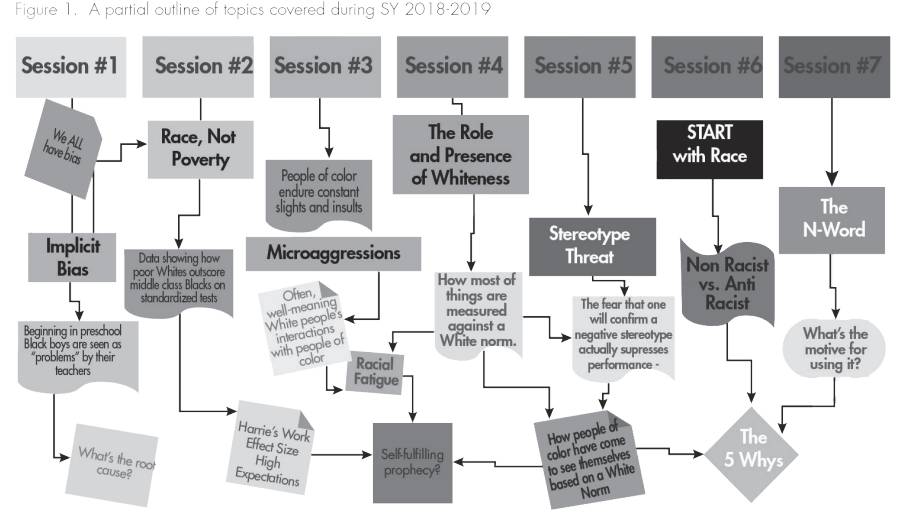
Courageous Conversations

We, along with building and district leaders, agreed to employ the tools outlined in Glenn Singleton’s (2014) Courageous Conversations About Race.

cannot be solely the school district’s responsibility. Last year’s incident highlighted the fact that even though a racially charged issue was made public because of the actions of a few students, the genesis of and response to this issue came from school, families, and community. Superintendent Elstad’s response was that all stakeholders of Owatonna needed to be made aware of the root cause and join in the heavy lifting of racial equity rather than place the work at the feet of the district and then perhaps have it discounted, or worse, counteracted by the greater community.

New Partnerships

As a result, we were invited once again to partner with the district during the 2019-2020 school year in order to include separate and ongoing sessions for Owatonna Courageous Educators where a wide range of classified and unclassified staff from the district came to a three-hour professional development session – a morning group and an afternoon group – four times per year, with the hope of eventually taking all the district’s staff through the racial equity training over the course of a few years. This training was geared to anyone having contact with students. Additionally, we were asked to work concurrently with several leaders of Owatonna and Steele County in a similar format called Owatonna Courageous Community – equity work that is focused more on issues of racial awareness as they pertain to social justice. Finally, this year we were invited to do a deep dive with the Owatonna School Board. The purpose of this four-hour session was to give them an overview of the work being done in their district and also give them an opportunity to start or continue their own racial equity journeys. The Board members were engaged and welcoming of the work and plan to schedule another session later this summer. Our vision is that through partnerships with the various stakeholders of the Owatonna community, that people will begin to have a shared vision, language, and perceived course of action for how best to confront issues of race and systemic racism. We are proud to be a part of the Owatonna School District and Community’s racial equity journey and look forward to continuing this urgent work.



Black students, comprised of East Africans as well as African Americans, constituted about 8%. Other students of color made up the remaining 5% of the total population of approximately 5000 K-12 students. Even though there has been a substantial influx of students of color to the district in recent years, Owatonna’s leadership and teaching staff remain overwhelmingly White. With this change in student demographics, the district began to see racial disparities in several areas. Thus began that first year. We started with a four-hour workshop in August and then approximately every month for the remainder of the school year, we engaged in a 90-minute professional development session in which building principals, assistant principals, and district directors and department heads were introduced to and grappled with topics such as those outlined in Figure 1: Topics included Implicit Bias; It’s Race, Not Poverty; Microaggressions; The Role and Presence of Whiteness; Stereotype Threat; Non-Racist vs. Anti-Racist; and The History and Use of the N-Word. These topics, as well as others, were presented as a web of underlying and interconnected forces that, if

In each of our sessions, we used The Protocol and The Compass in order to establish a structure for the deep and at times uncomfortable conversations necessary to engage in the important work of racial equity. We used several tools to present information and foster deep and authentic dialogue such as ice-breakers, surveys, instant and anonymous electronic polls, podcasts, readings, video clips, and other activities. Time was always built into every session to allow participants to engage in small group discussions to process new information or to brainstorm how to apply the knowledge to their work. The “Incident” In February of 2019, Owatonna High School experienced a racially motivated incident that made national news and was reported in the New York Times. Because of the actions of a few White students who posted racial slurs on social media, Black students responded, called them out, and wanted an explanation. This escalated to the point of locking down the high school and summoning police. This incident brought to light the fact that Owatonna Public Schools had a race problem. Superintendent Jeff Elstad realized that racial equity work

BRINGING RACIAL EQUITY TO TEACHER EDUCATION: EMERGING EFFORTS TO LAUNCH A NETWORKED IMPROVEMENT COMMUNITY

OUTCOMES

Uproot whiteness to establish systems and structures in teacher education that promote racial equity. For Example: Changes in mission, vision and core principles to incorporate explicit focus on racial equity. New positions and hiring decisions focused on racial equity and representation.

Increased capacity to do racial equity work at individual, department, college, and community levels.

EVIDENCE OF SYSTEMS CHANGE MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

Racial consciousness and social justice mentioned specifically in College of Education’s vision. New scholarships for 16 teacher education candidates of color New campus-wide general education course in critical race theory Explicit references to racial consciousness and social justice in job postings Led to increase in applicants of color (25 out of 70 in one search and 4 out of 10 in another) Three new faculty of color hired this academic year



Prepared and Paid for by United Patriots For Accountability • 133 W. Mill St. • Owatonna, MN 55060

PROBATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF STEELE

THIRD JUDICIAL
DISTRICT
DISTRICT COURT
INFORMAL PROBATE
Court File No.
74-PR-22-1473

Estate of
Richard H. Knutson,
Deceased

NOTICE OF INFORMAL
PROBATE OF WILL
AND APPOINTMENT
OF PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVE
AND NOTICE TO
CREDITORS

TO ALL INTERESTED
PERSONS AND
CREDITORS:

Notice is hereby given that an application for informal probate of the above-named Decedent's Last Will dated September 16, 2020 Codicil(s) dated Separate Writing dated has been filed with the Probate Registrar, and the application has been granted. Notice is also given that the Probate Registrar has informally appointed the following:
Name: Lisa Baloun
Address: 19238 Woods Edge Trl Brainerd MN 56401
As personal representative of the Estate of the Decedent. Any heir, devisee or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as personal representative or may object to the appointment of the personal representative. Unless objections are filed pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 524.3-607, and the court otherwise orders, the personal representative has full power to administer the Estate, including, after 30 days from the date of issuance of letters, the power to sell, encumber, lease or distribute real estate. Any objections to the probate of the Will, or to the appointment of the personal representative, must be filed with this court, and will be heard by the court after the filing of an appropriate petition and proper notice of hearing. Notice is also given that, subject to Minn. Stat. § 524.3-801, all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four (4) months after the date of this Notice, or the claims will be barred.

/s/: Deanna Verdick
Deanna Verdick, Deputy
Probate Registrar

Date:
October 4, 2022

Robin Hoesley
Court Administrator

Date: October 4, 2022

NOTICE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF STEELE

JUDICIAL
DISTRICT: Third
Court File No.
74-FA-22-1537
CASE TYPE: Domestic
Abuse

Notice of Issuance of
Emergency (Ex Parte)
Order for Protection
by Publication
(Minn. Stat § 518B.01,
subd. 8)

In the Matter of
Lee Marvin Albert
Petitioner
vs
Tami Kay Lockman
Respondent

To Respondent
named above:

YOU ARE NOTIFIED
that an Ex Parte Order
for Protection has been
issued in the above
matter. You may request
a hearing if you contact
the court administrator's

office within 12 days of the date of publication of this notice. You may obtain a copy of the Ex Parte Order for Protection and the form to request a hearing from the court administrator's office at the following address: 111 E. Main St, Owatonna, MN 55060
Failure to request a hearing or to obtain a copy of the Ex Parte Order will not be a defense to prosecution for violation of the Court's order.

October 12, 2022
Date
Robin Hoesley
Court Administrator/Deputy

NOTICE

Office of the Minnesota
Secretary of State
Amendment of
Assumed Name
Minnesota Statutes,
Chapter 333

The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.

ASSUMED NAME:
IronPlanet

PRINCIPAL PLACE OF
BUSINESS: 4000 Pine
Lake Road, Lincoln, NE,
68516

NAMEHOLDER(S):
Name:
Timothy J. Kirschbaum

Address: 4000 Pine
Lake Road, Lincoln, NE,
68516

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY:
Tim J. Kirschbaum
MAILING ADDRESS:
4000 Pine Lake Road,
Lincoln, NE. 68516
EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL
NOTICES:

kgraves@ritchiebros.com

STATE OF MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
FILED
10/06/2022
Steve Simon
Secretary of State

FORECLOSURE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE
FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO
VERIFICATION OF THE
DEBT AND IDENTITY
OF THE ORIGINAL
CREDITOR WITHIN THE
TIME PROVIDED BY
LAW IS NOT AFFECTED
BY THIS ACTION.

Notice is hereby given that default has occurred in conditions of the following described mortgage:
DATE OF MORTGAGE: October 5, 2017
MORTGAGOR: Michael A. Taylor, an unmarried man
MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.
DATE AND PLACE OF RECORDING: Recorded: October 27, 2017
Steele County Recorder
Document #: A000415539
ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Said mortgage was assigned to NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing on July 7, 2020, and said assignment was recorded on July 14, 2020, and given document number A000430200.
LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: THE EAST 66 FEET OF LOT 9, BLOCK 5, IN DARTT'S SECOND ADDITION TO THE CITY OF OWATONNA, MINNESOTA, STEELE COUNTY, MINNESOTA. AND BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 8, IN BLOCK 5, IN DARTT'S SECOND ADDITION TO THE CITY OF OWATONNA, MINNESOTA, THENCE WEST 66 FEET, THENCE NORTH 22 FEET, THENCE EAST 66 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 22 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING, STEELE COUNTY, MINNESOTA.
PARCEL ID #: 17-129-0512
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 404 Dartt Avenue, Owatonna, MN 55060
TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.
TRANSACTION AGENT ID NO.: 1006919-1000045205-4
CURRENT MORTGAGE SERVICER: NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage

Servicing
COUNTY IN WHICH
PROPERTY IS
LOCATED: Steele
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL
AMOUNT OF
MORTGAGE:
\$116,262.00
AMOUNT DUE AND
CLAIMED TO BE DUE AS
OF DATE OF NOTICE,
INCLUDING TAXES, IF
ANY PAID BY MORT-
GAGEE: \$126,426.01
That prior to the commencement of this mortgage foreclosure proceeding Mortgagee/ Assignee of Mortgagee complied with all notice requirements as required by statute; that no Mortgagors have been released from financial obligation on said Mortgage; that no action or proceeding has been instituted by law to recover that debt secured by said Mortgage, or any part thereof; that all conditions precedent to foreclose of the Mortgage and acceleration of the debt secures thereby have been fulfilled; PURSUANT to the power of sale therein contained, said Mortgage will be foreclosed and the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:
DATE AND TIME OF SALE: December 8, 2022, at 10:00 am
PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Law Enforcement Center 204 East Pearl Street, Owatonna, MN 55060
to pay the debt the debt then secured by the Mortgage, and taxes, if any, on said premises, and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys' fees allowed by law, subject to redemption within six (6) months from the date of sale by the mortgagor, their personal representatives or assigns.
DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: The date on or before which the mortgagor must vacate the property if the mortgage is not reinstated under Minnesota Statutes section 580.30 of the property redeemed under Minnesota Statutes sections 580.23 is June 8, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. If the foregoing date is Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday, then the date to vacate is the next business day at 11:59 p.m.
MORTGAGOR RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None
THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL

ORDER IS ENTERED
UNDER MINNESOTA
STATUTES, SECTION
582.032,
DETERMINING, AMONG
OTHER THINGS, THAT
THE MORTGAGED
PREMISES ARE IM-
PROVED WITH A RES-
IDENTIAL DWELLING
OF LESS THAN FIVE
UNITS, ARE NOT PROP-
ERTY USED IN
AGRICULTURAL
PRODUCTION, AND
ARE ABANDONED.
THIS COMMUNICATION
IS FROM A DEBT
COLLECTOR
ATTEMPTING TO
COLLECT A DEBT.
ANY INFORMATION
OBTAINED WILL BE

USED FOR THAT
PURPOSE.
Dated: October 13, 2022

NewRez LLC d/b/a
Shellpoint Mortgage
Servicing
Mortgagee

Kenneth J. Johnson
Minnesota State Bar No.
0246074
Johnson, Blumberg &
Associates, LLC
Attorney for Mortgagee
230 W. Monroe St.,
Ste. 1125
Chicago, IL 60606
Phone 312-541-9710
Fax 312-541-9711

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Should You Consolidate Retirement Accounts?

One of the rewards for working over several decades is the ability to contribute to tax-advantaged retirement accounts, which can help provide needed income for you when you do retire. As the years went by, you may well have accumulated several retirement accounts, such as IRAs and 401(k)s or similar employer-sponsored plans. But you might find it advantageous to consolidate these accounts with a single provider.

Consolidating them can provide you with several potential benefits, including these:

- Less confusion and clutter – If you have multiple accounts in different locations, it may be difficult to keep track of tax documents, statements, fees, disclosures and other important information. Consolidating accounts could help provide clear, simplified account maintenance.
- Less likelihood of "lost accounts" – It may be hard to believe, but many people abandon their retirement accounts, leaving thousands of dollars behind and unclaimed. In fact, at the end of 2021, there were nearly 25 million forgotten 401(k) accounts, worth about 20% of all 401(k) assets, according to an estimate by Capitalize, a financial services company that helps individuals roll over retirement plan assets into new accounts. It's possible that employers can even move small, old accounts out of their 401(k) plans and into an IRA on behalf of their former employees, thus increasing the chances that savers will lose track of their money. By consolidating your retirement plans with one provider, you can ensure you don't lose track of your hard-earned money.
- Ability to follow a unified strategy – With multiple retirement accounts, and different investment portfolios, you might find it difficult to maintain a unified financial strategy that's appropriate for your goals and risk tolerance. But once you've consolidated accounts with a single provider, you'll find it easier to manage your investment mix and to rebalance your portfolio as needed. The need to rebalance may become more important as you near retirement because you may want to shift some of your assets into investments that aren't as susceptible to swings in the financial markets.
- Possible improvement in investment options – Often, 401(k)s may have limited investment selection, so consolidating accounts with a full-service firm may allow for a wider array of products and strategies. This broader exposure can potentially help you improve your overall retirement income strategies.
- Greater ease in calculating RMDs – Once you turn 72, you will need to start taking withdrawals — called required minimum distributions, or RMDs — from your traditional IRA and your 401(k) or similar plan. If you don't take out at least the minimal amount, which is based on your age and account balance, you could face a penalty. If you have several accounts, with different providers, it could be cumbersome and difficult to calculate your RMDs — it will be much easier with all accounts under one roof.

So, if you do have multiple retirement accounts, give some thought to consolidating them. The consolidation process is not difficult, and the end result may save you time and hassles, while also helping you manage your retirement income more effectively.

To learn more, call today.



Jeffrey M. Hall
Financial Advisor

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Grade 11: range
\$30.54-\$37.00 per
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General Duties: Assists the Water-Wastewater Supervisor in overseeing and performing skilled and technical work and maintenance of the water and wastewater systems. Assists in providing a continuous supply of safe drinking water and maintaining a safe discharge effluent wastewater within local, State and Federal regulations.

Requirements: Must acquire a Class A license within six months of hire, must obtain and maintain Type IV bio-solids certificate, Must obtain and maintain a Class B Driver's license with tanker endorsement,

must be able to respond within 30 minutes for work outside normal working hours and respond to emergencies, Must be able to make timely decisions which affect the water and wastewater systems, Must have general knowledge of the methods and techniques used in the repair, maintenance, rehabilitation and construction of water and wastewater lines.

Apply: City Administrator, 401 5th St. SE, Kasson, MN 55944. Call 507-634-7071 or email cityhall@cityofkasson.com to request an application. First review of applications on August 15, 2022; position open until filled.

THE HAYFIELD AMERICAN LEGION is looking for an individual or individuals to fill the position of restaurant cook/manager and bar manager. If interested in one or both contact: Pat 507-421-4770. Stan 507-272-3102 or Craig 507-272-0891.

INSTALLATION AND SERVICE TECHNICIAN: KMTelecom, an Independent Telecommunications company located in Kasson, MN is seeking a full-time, Service Technician.

Primary position responsibilities include the installation and maintenance of Customer Broadband, Television, Phone and PBX services. Other responsibilities include locating, splicing and troubleshooting fiber and copper facilities. Experience preferred but also willing to train a hardworking and motivated individual. The individual must be a self-starter, have the ability to problem solve and possess strong technical and communication skills. We offer competitive wages and an excellent benefit program. Please submit your resume to KMTelecom, ATTN: Human Resources, 18 2nd Ave NW, Kasson, MN 55944 or email to hr@kmtel.com.

.Looking for a CRS to work in Insurance office in Kasson. Pay based on experience. Benefits available. Full-time. Contact Jeff at 634-4580.

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2023 Hyundai Tucson SEL AWD  STOCK# PH178789 LEASE FOR \$410 /MO. SALE PRICE \$31,175	2023 Hyundai Santa Fe SE AWD  STOCK# 3550180 LEASE FOR \$418 /MO. SALE PRICE \$31,105	2023 Hyundai Santa Cruz SEL AWD Activity Package  STOCK# PH045774 LEASE FOR \$519 /MO. SALE PRICE \$34,510

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Boards & Commission Meetings

We'll save you a seat!

The City of Owatonna encourages community members to attend public meetings and serve on any of its 12 boards and commissions. Notice of all public city meetings and agendas are available at Owatonna.gov. Boards and commissions, generally, meet at the following times.

AIRPORT COMMISSION:
Second Thursday of each month at 5 p.m. in the Airport Lounge.

CHARTER COMMISSION:
Annually the third Thursday of April and whenever necessary at 4 p.m. in Second Floor Conference Room at City Hall

CITY COUNCIL:
First and third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall with Study Sessions immediately prior to each meeting at 5:30 p.m.

FIRE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION:
Whenever necessary at the Fire Department.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:
Third Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:
Fourth Monday at 4 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room at City Hall.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:
Second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room at City Hall.

PARK & RECREATION BOARD:
First Monday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall or other location as announced prior to the meeting.

PLANNING COMMISSION:
Second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 5:30 p.m. in all months except November, December, January and February when meetings are held only on the second Tuesday of the month in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD:
Third Tuesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in the Gainey Room at the Library.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION:
Fourth Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Morehouse Meeting Room at the Owatonna Public Utilities Office at 208 West Walnut Avenue.

WEST HILLS COMMISSION:
Meet the third Thursday of April and October at Noon in the Owatonna Arts Center.

Finding Information About the City of Owatonna

Visit:
The City of Owatonna's website at owatonna.gov has answers to many questions about services provided, events, City Council meetings and other information

Email:
Submit a question or topic that is of interest at info@ci.owatonna.mn.us

Tune In:
Mayor Thomas Kuntz and City Administrator Kris Busse are featured guests for the "Talk of the Town" broadcast the third Wednesday of each month on KRFO (1390 AM or 94.7 FM) at 9:40 a.m. and KOWZ (100.9 FM) at 10:10 a.m.

Watch:
City information is shared on the Public Access Cable. Watch Channel 181 on Charter/Spectrum or Channel 900 on Jaguar/MetroNet where City Council Meetings are livestreamed and rebroadcast at the following times:

- Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.
- Thursdays at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
- Saturdays at 4 p.m.
- Sundays at 4 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

Log On:
Follow the City of Owatonna on Facebook for the latest updates

FIRE DEPARTMENT
Jason Karsten Selected as 2022 Firefighter of the Year



The Owatonna Fire Department is proud to announce Paid-On-Call Firefighter Jason Karsten as the 2022 Firefighter of the Year. Fire Chief Ed Hoffman selects an individual for this honor with input from staff annually. Karsten was recognized at the October 11 Exchange Club of Owatonna's 2022 Firefighter Recognition Banquet honoring all firefighters who serve Owatonna.

The criteria used to select the award recipient includes performance above and beyond the regular duties of a firefighter, being a genuinely good person, desire to be a good firefighter, being a good team member and using knowledge and skills in a positive way that improves the department overall.

Karsten began his career with the Fire Department as a Resident Firefighter in 2002 before becoming a Paid-On-Call firefighter. "Jason has been a great mentor to many firefighters over the years and is frequently called upon by the full-time firefighters to assist with department trainings and at fire incidents," said Ed Hoffman, Fire Chief. Karsten also works full-time as a heavy equipment mechanic with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and joined their fire team last year. He also spent eight years working as a Smoke-chaser for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Tavern Nine's Fairway Beerfest

Tavern Nine in the Clubhouse at Brooktree Golf Course is partnering with the Owatonna Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department to host its inaugural Fairway Beerfest October 22 from 1 until 4 p.m.

More than 20 breweries will serve samples of their favorite or new beers. Oktoberfest food, games and music will be available with a live band performing from 4 until 7 p.m.

Proceeds from this event will support Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department youth programs. This event is for ages 21 and older. It will be held outdoors, rain or shine.

Purchase tickets at Eventbrite.com. (Tavern Nine's Fairway Beerfest Tickets, Sat, Oct 22, 2022 at 1:00 PM | Eventbrite) Tickets will not be refunded unless the organizers cancel the event.

POLICE DEPARTMENT



COPTOBER for KIDS!

Join Owatonna police officers at the Owatonna Public Library for a family event with fun and educational hands-on demonstrations, book readings, squad car tours, K9 visits, fingerprinting, handouts and so much more! **The event will be October 20 from 9 a.m. until noon** and is designed for fifth grade students and younger.



Sergeant Tracy Duchene Selected as 2022 Police Officer of the Year

The Owatonna Police Department is proud to announce Sergeant Tracy Duchene as the 2022 Police Officer of the Year. Duchene was honored with this award from the Moonlighter's Exchange Club on September 22 during their Annual Police Officer Recognition Banquet. During the program, Chief Mundale highlighted Duchene's career and his positive influence on the department and community.

Duchene graduated from Medford High School and Rochester Community and Technical College. He began his law enforcement career at the Steele County Detention Center as a Correctional Officer and began working with the Owatonna Police Department as a part-time patrol officer until he became a full-time police officer. He was promoted to patrol sergeant and has served in specialized assignments as a Field Training Officer, SWAT officer and Field Training Officer Supervisor. Duchene has received many service awards including a Life Saving award and four Class D commendations for separate events that demonstrate outstanding performance under difficult circumstances.

Tavern Nine's Fairway Beerfest

Saturday, October 22nd, 2022 1pm - 4 pm

- 20+ Breweries
- Held on the Golf Course Fairway
- Food Specials
- Games
- Live Polka Music

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion Progressing

A significant expansion of Owatonna's Wastewater Treatment Plant began in July. The City's contractor for the project, Rice Lake Construction, has completed the excavation of the foundation for the new Membrane Bioreactor Building (MBR). The location was previously used as a landfill and required extensive excavation to remove debris and then backfill the area with materials suitable for construction.

The excavated materials were identified during the planning process for the facility and remediation of them was included in the project's scope and bid documents. The area has been filled to the first footing grade with sand. Underground plumbing has been installed and the base slabs are being poured. Next, excavation for the Fine Screen Building (FSB) will occur. This new filter technology requires a finer screening of the particulates in the wastewater prior to being treated. The existing course screen will also remain in place. The project is expected to be completed in late 2024.

An expansion of Owatonna's existing wastewater treatment plant was initiated in 2017. The plant has been operating at or above its capacity for the past several years. In 2021, plans got underway to expand the plant from its current capacity of five million gallons per day (MGD) to more than nine MGD, an 80 percent increase to continue meeting the needs of the growing community.



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