

THE AREA'S PREMIER AUTO REPAIR SHOP!

Check inside for our insert showcasing valuable savings.

HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS!

HONEST-1
AUTO CARE

1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna • 507-431-4576 • www.Honest1Owatonna.com



Wednesday, March 8, 2023

STEELE COUNTY Times

YOU COMPLAINED... WE LISTENED!

*Attention Austin,
Ellendale, Geneva,
Hollandale, Lansing
and New Richland
readers!*



For the past several years we have experienced extensive problems with the U.S. Postal Service which led to unusually long delays in getting our weekly newspaper into your mailbox.

WE HAVE FOUND A SOLUTION where you now should receive our newspaper on Thursdays, the day after it's printed (unless holidays are involved). This should alleviate the frustration you have experienced in getting your newspaper in a timely manner.

In consideration of your past frustration, we are offering a one-time subscription special just for you.

Get a
one-year
subscription for
only \$29,

That's \$30 off the regular rate.

It doesn't get any better than this. Don't miss out and subscribe today!

4 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

BY PHONE 507-583-4431

IN PERSON 109 W. Rose St. • Owatonna
411 E. Main St. • Blooming Prairie

BY MAIL Steele County Times
P.O. Box 247
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

ONLINE www.SteeleCountyTimes.com

Yes, I'd like to subscribe for:

☐ 12 Months for \$29
SAVE \$30

☐ Add E-Edition access to above print subscription for \$10

NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
EMAIL _____

☐ PAY BY CHECK (payable to Steele County Times)

☐ Use my credit card

CARD# _____

EXPIRATION _____ CARD CVV# _____ ZIP _____

NAME ON CARD _____



THE AREA'S PREMIER AUTO REPAIR SHOP!

Check inside for our insert showcasing valuable savings.

HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS!

HONEST-1[®]
AUTO CARE

1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna • 507-431-4576 • www.Honest1Owatonna.com



Wednesday, March 8, 2023

STEELE COUNTY Times

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?

Last year Steele County residents made the Steele County Times the No. 1 choice for local news. Our circulation has become the highest of any publication in Steele County, including the "daily" newspaper in Owatonna.

With 3,000 households receiving the Steele County Times each week, our circulation has grown by nearly 50% over the past two years.

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 won general excellence awards

on both the state and national levels.

We also our locally family owned and don't have to satisfy the bottom line that corporations often demand. We are 100% local news, and 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 news coverage.

The Steele County Times is definitely **MOMENTUM WORTH READING**. We couldn't do it without our readers, and we hope you will consider becoming a regular subscriber now.

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

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

We offer a reasonably priced subscription that will not only provide you with accurate news and features, but also contribute to the revival of American journalism and help safeguard our freedoms for future generations.

15-Month E-Edition for \$45
15-Month Print Edition for \$59
30-Month Print Edition for \$99

Read this sample copy and decide for yourself

"Every article is full of **interesting newsworthy information**. Not just filler type stuff that many newspapers put in their paper. You have a great group of dedicated writers that know how to write articles that are interesting to read from beginning to end."

• CARL AND DENISE WIEMAN
SUBSCRIBERS



4 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

BY PHONE 507-583-4431

IN PERSON 109 W. Rose St. • Owatonna
411 E. Main St. • Blooming Prairie

BY MAIL Steele County Times
P.O. Box 247
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

ONLINE www.SteeleCountyTimes.com

Yes, I'd like to subscribe for: ☐ 15 Months for \$59 (1 year + 3 months) ☐ 30 Months for \$99 (2 years + 6 months)
Save \$14 Save \$48
☐ Add E-Edition access to above print subscription for \$10 ☐ 15 Months E-Edition only for \$45
Save \$14

NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
EMAIL _____

☐ PAY BY CHECK (payable to Steele County Times) ☐ Use my credit card
CARD# _____
EXPIRATION _____ CARD CVV# _____ ZIP _____
NAME ON CARD _____



Grow with GoPlus Checking!

The Plus in MBT's GoPlus Checking account means you get a higher interest rate and other great benefits to grow your balance!

2.75%^{*APY}

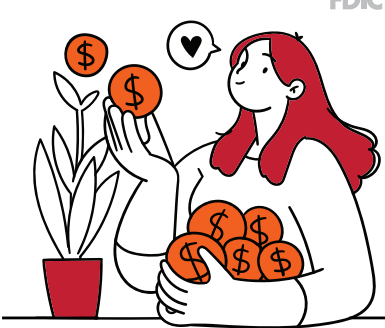
when qualifications are met

0.10% ^{*APY} on balances over \$15,000.
0.01% ^{*APY} if qualifications are not met.

Monthly qualifications to earn higher interest rate:

- 10 debit card transactions posted to account monthly
- 1 ACH deposit or ACH auto-debit per month

MEMBER FDIC



mbtbank.bank/personal/personal-checking

MBTBank

*2.75% Annual Percentage Yield (APY) paid on balances between \$.01 and \$15,000 and 0.10% APY paid on all amounts above \$15,000 each cycle when the minimum qualifications are met. If you do not meet the qualifications per cycle, your account will earn 0.01% APY. When account balance is greater than \$15,000 the yield printed on the statement will be a blended yield of the 0.10% and the 2.75% reflecting the combination of the two yields earned on all qualifying balances. Rates effective 11/30/2022. We reserve the right to change the interest rate and APY at any time after the account is opened. Available to individuals only. Fees may reduce earnings. Contact an employee about fees and terms of the account.







2019-2023 PRESIDENTS AWARD



There's never been a better time to upgrade to Carrier comfort. Save up to \$1,550 in Cool Cash rebates on a qualifying Carrier comfort system

*Limited Time Offer

408 N Cedar Ave
Owatonna, MN
507-451-2051

OWATONNA HEATING & COOLING

Carrier

Turn to the experts

OPEN HOUSE

OVER 100 MEMORIALS ON DISPLAY!

OWATONNA GRANITE & MONUMENT

EDWARDS

DONALD J.
JULY 23, 1934
OCT. 13, 2012

MAY R.
OCT. 13, 2012

JAMES

JOSHUA M.
JUNE 3, 1950
AUG. 3, 2012

SMITH

JOHN L.
JAN. 1, 1935
JAN. 1, 2013

MARY

AUG. 21, 1938
AUG. 21, 2012

REGISTER AT
OWATONNA GRANITE & MONUMENT
FOR A \$100 VISA GIFT CARD

COUPON

Good For 10% OFF

OWATONNA GRANITE & MONUMENT

OFFER GOOD DURING
OPEN HOUSE
SALE ONLY
FROM
March 11-18, 2023



JOIN US FOR OUR OPEN HOUSE MARCH 11-18, 2023

Special Expanded Hours

Open Monday-Friday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Saturday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

OWATONNA GRANITE & MONUMENT

1180 East Frontage Road, Owatonna, MN 55060-6284



507 - 455 - 9551

owatonnagranite@gmail.com



John and Barb Heerema



IMMEDIATE OPENINGS

Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Therapy

Intake 507-451-2630

SOUTH CENTRAL HUMAN RELATIONS CENTER

Providing Direction for Life's Problems Since 1964

507-451-2630

WWW.SCHRC.COM

610 FLORENCE AVE., OWATONNA, MN

Outside Owatonna: 800-722-0590

After-Hour Emergencies: 507-455-8100

Offices in Waseca and Kasson

MARCH MANIA

Subscription Special

Renew for \$49

Add E-Edition for only \$2

Any current subscriber can take advantage of this special

MARCH MANIA RENEWAL SPECIAL

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email for E-Edition or News Alerts: _____

Credit Card: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Card CVV# _____

Offer valid until April 15, 2023

Stop in at our Blooming Prairie or Owatonna Offices, call 507-583-4431 or mail to Steele County Times, P.O. Box 247, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

STEELE COUNTY Times

ALWAYS LOCAL. ALL THE TIME.



Blooming Prairie Elementary Principal Jacob Schwarz plants a kiss on the snout of Betty, a month-old crossbred pig. She's being held by BPHS senior Lexi Steckelberg. Students at the elementary school voted on which animal the principal would kiss as a reward for meeting their reading goals. For additional photos and story, turn to 15A.

Medford teacher earns national honor

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

Medford High teacher, advisor, and coach Jerome Johannes does not have to go far to see the success of his former students—four of them are Medford Elementary teachers.

In his 20th year at the school, he is head football coach, coaches track, and advises both the National Honor Society and Student

Council. His 18 years of work with the latter group recently earned Johannes special recognition.

During the National Association for Student Activities advisors conference in Boston, he was recognized as the Central Region Earl Reum Award winner, one of eight U.S. honorees. The award recognizes “outstanding contributions in the training and mentor-

ing of student activity advisors.”

Johannes has worked with the Minnesota Association of Student Councils and Honor Societies for over 10 years and works as a State Advisor with teachers who are new to the advising role.

He said his involvement at the division, state, and national levels came about when he realized that Student Council was much larg-

er than the local group.

“I attended Division meetings, got into the state organization, and started bringing kids to the national conference,” he said. “I met advisors from all across the state and the nation... Just being able to share with other leadership organizations spoke to me as a teacher.”

Leadership is at the core of what Johannes See **TEACHER** on A9 ▶



Jerome Johannes, pictured behind the podium in his Medford High classroom, recently received an award recognizing his work as a Student Council advisor.

State Champion



The thrill of winning seems to be slowly setting in for NRHEG's Annabelle Petsinger as her coaches, Dillon Kubiawicz and Shawn Larson, are elated and offering their congratulations. Petsinger snagged the state championship in the 120-pound girls division last week in St. Paul. She is the first NRHEG girl to win a state wrestling title and the only champion this year with ties to Steele County. See sports section for more state wrestling coverage.

Big goal for growing need

Pathways seeks donations during FoodShare month

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the inflation that followed, hunger looks different in Steele County.

Maggie Teele sees the face of it at least twice a week, when she works the front desk at Community Pathways. An Owatonna resident for four years, she started volunteering to meet people and get involved in her new community.

See **BIG GOAL** on A15 ▶



Community Pathways executive director Dom Korbel stands near food pantry shelves that aren't quite as full as they used to be. As food prices rise, he said, the organization has had to make tough decisions about what it can provide for shoppers.

SCHOOL DAYS TO CHANGE

Owatonna adjusts start, end times for busing

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

Building a school on the edge of town brings benefits like room for potential growth and ease of access but building it outside of major residential neighborhoods also brings transportation issues.

Case in point: When the new Owatonna High School opens this fall, Owatonna Bus Company will have 700 new riders needing to get there.

“We have a two-tiered bus system,” Owatonna Public Schools Superintendent Jeff Elstad said at the most recent school board meeting.

With the current system, “we’re able to bring kids in (to schools), drop them off, then pick up other kids and bring them back – which helps with the efficiency of our busing system.”

With hundreds of new riders, something had to change. In this case, it’s the start and end times of the school day.

“The alternative to any change like this would result, quite frankly, with the bus company having costs that are onerous,” Elstad said. “In turn, those costs come to our taxpayers and to our school district.”

See **SCHOOL** on A15 ▶

Spring ahead... turn clocks forward Sunday morning.



EMILY FIGHTS ON



Emily Otto and daughter Bethany Boswell enjoy their times together.



Pam Poston, left, is part of the Emily Otto care team. She and Emily are sisters and soulmates.

Care team helps Ellendale woman carry on despite ALS diagnosis

STORY AND PHOTOS BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Ellendale, like many other small southern Minnesota communities, comes together when its people are hurting. This tiny Steele County city lost one of its most active volunteers when Larry Otto, always a smiling

gentleman, died unexpectedly on Dec. 31, 2022, of a massive heart attack. Otto, 73, leaves behind his loving wife Emily and a caring family. Not only does Emily, 72, need to grapple with the loss of a husband, she also

See **EMILY** on A3 ►



Emily Otto's care team members are, in the front: Pam Poston, Emily Otto and Bethany Boswell; second row: Nancy Kepka, Terri Engel, Kristin Otto and Karol Foster. Emily is also holding RIP, Josh and Kristin Otto's family dog.

"Larry took my flight to heaven (shedding tears)... I hope to join him soon, and we will do a 'Happy Dance' together."

Emily Otto
Battling ALS



Emily Otto



The late Larry Otto, Minnesota's state American Legion chaplain, snaps a salute during a Memorial Day ceremony at a Steele County cemetery.

EMILY FIGHTS ON

◀ **EMILY** from A2 continues her battle against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). The string of unfortunate circumstances has created a strong need to take care of Emily.

ALS is a progressive nervous system disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, causing loss of muscle control. It is often associated with, and named for, all-star baseball player Lou Gehrig of the New York Yankees, who suffered from the disease.

Because Larry Otto was his wife's caregiver, it soon became evident someone would need to step in; Emily is confined to a wheelchair, recliner, or bed.

Thankfully, a team of caregivers has formed to be with her 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Larry was Emily's caregiver from the time she was diagnosed in January of 2020. Her condition has rapidly deteriorated in recent months, but Emily maintains a wide smile, and she shows a strong will to follow God.

While Emily's voice and body have weakened, her spirit and faith remain extremely strong.

Care at home

After Larry's death, a common question was where

her care would be centered. Close friend and retired registered nurse Karol Foster said, "She's going nowhere; she will remain in her Ellendale home. She belongs there."

Foster has more than 12 years of experience in hospice care. In the challenging days following Larry's death, the Otto family and friends had to formulate a plan to care for Emily in her home, 24/7.

They did just that, with Foster leading the way.

Members of Emily's care team sprang into action and created a working schedule of caregivers to be at her side at all times. They met Jan. 6, less than a week after Larry's death.

"Larry took my flight to heaven," Emily says, while shedding some tears at the same time. "I hope to join him soon, and we will do a 'Happy Dance' together."

Emily and her care team are willing to talk about how a community can fight adversity, allowing the Times to meet with most of the team to answer questions about the love shown for her, especially after her unexpected loss.

Asked how she was doing, Emily responded, "As well as I can; pretty good."

"One day at a time and one moment at a time. You take a deep breath with lots of prayers," said her sister, Pam Poston. "All of this is said, mixed with tears."

Real heroes

Larry Otto's death shocked the community of Ellendale. Some thought he was in good health, but they were aware he had fought heart disease.

It was Emily who found Larry collapsed on the bathroom floor. She phoned their daughter, Bethany Boswell, who called 911.

Emily also called their son Josh and his wife Kristin, who were the first to get to the house.

Boswell and her husband Curt, both EMTs, then arrived. Josh administered CPR to his father, but multiple attempts to save Larry failed.

The Ellendale ambulance responded to the 911 call, as did Mayo Ambulance and Steele County Sheriff's Deputy Sean Robbins.

"These people are the real heroes," Emily sobbed.

While she lost her beloved caregiver that evening, Emily

gained many more, with many people coming forward to offer their sincere help and assistance.

"We are Emily's love team," said care team member Jeanne Simonson.

Foster said she and the team members had many conversations before they were fully assembled.

The four key people involved in the formation were Poston, Foster, and friends Nancy Kepka and Patty Hocking.

Poston said a work calendar created for the team is working "flawlessly."

Terri Engel, who began cleaning for the Ottos more than a year ago, joined the care team "because I wanted to be there," she said. "Emily requested to stay at home and we're sticking to it."

Poston said her sister wanted to stay in her own home, and "we told her we would make it happen."

Son Josh said he will take care of Emily first in the morning.

"He said he would make sure he had her ready first," Kristin Otto said. "That's the way Larry did it."

Since it was Emily's desire to stay at home, she will welcome visitors,

but only after they have been cleared (according to Emily's availability) by care team members.

When visiting with friends at Larry's visitation, which was attended by more than 400 people, Emily told husbands everywhere to tell their wives, "I love you," at least twice a day. She also said a kiss was planted in there somewhere, "so you will have no regrets."

Emily hopes her caregivers can have some free time for themselves.

"Everyone has to take care of their own family," she said.

With a wink and a loving smirk, Emily tells her caregivers she could be alone a few hours a day.

The response was a lot of head shaking.

Sharing laughter

Emily and her caregivers laugh together – a lot.

Emily tells one story about her left arm. It doesn't work, so she calls it "Floppy."

"We all shed tears, but Emily keeps us going," Kristin Otto said.

Emily says her legs are spring-loaded. She recalls one time when her son was transferring her, he had her so far off the ground that her legs were dangling freely, she chuckles.

Why, in a small town, are people so willing to help families in need?

"It's because we love Emily," Kristin

Otto said. "It's our way of paying others back."

A food train has also been started to help the Otto family and to allow the community to meet the family needs.

Emily and Larry shared a strong faith as members of United Methodist Church of Ellendale. The core of the care team comes from that church family.

Fellow church member, the late Cindy Green, also suffered from ALS. Emily now has Green's scooter, as well as a necklace Green gave her.

"I sometimes have a pity party for myself and can't understand how I can handle this, but I know God is with me every day," Emily said. "He was with me the day Larry died."

Emily confesses that she did not know she was such a control freak until others took control. She said she is grateful for all her friends and family who have made sacrifices for her.

"It's like a relay race," Emily said. "Bethany and Curt hand it off to Kristin and Josh, and they hand it off to two more volunteers."

The toughest part of living with ALS, she said, is the inability to move and to talk clearly. But she can still use her computer.

"Writing has been one of my greatest loves," she said.

"We all shed tears, but Emily keeps us going."

Kristin Otto
Emily's Care Team

EMILY OTTO'S CARE TEAM

- "They're my care team, and they keep me going." – Emily Otto
- Team Captain: Karol Foster
 - Couples: Bethany and Curt Boswell, Josh and Kristin Otto and Pam and John Poston
 - Individuals: Nancy Kepka, Patty Hocking, Terri Engel, Julie Anderson, Deb Dwyer, Terry Jensen, Jeanne Simonson and Diana Foster

EMILY'S FOOD TRAIN

- Coordinated by Karol Foster, retired nurse and family friend
- Food accepted on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays by 5:30 p.m.
- Bring food to Otto residence just west of Ellendale
- Call Foster at 507-339-6508 to make arrangements

OUR VIEW

E-tab battle affects charities, communities

To understand the scope and impact of charitable gambling in Minnesota, consider the small town of Claremont, population 584, as an example.

Claremont Chamber of Commerce shares its gambling profits with groups in Dodge and Steele counties. Last year, that amounted to \$186,097.

It's no wonder chamber president Dean Schuette is concerned about efforts to curtail certain types of e-pulltabs, which are part of the gambling mix.

"That will have a big impact on local charities that we help support," he said.

On Monday, the Minnesota American Legion and Allied Charities of Minnesota held a press conference at the State Capitol to tell lawmakers that e-tabs are "crucial" to small, charitable gambling operations. The event is in response to a court challenge over the "open all" function on e-pulltab games.

The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community first challenged the feature in 2019, saying it operated too much like a slot machine. Tribes state-wide have exclusive rights to slot machines.

There's a great deal at stake here for both sides. While e-tabs got a slow start, they now rival paper pull-tabs in wagers; \$1.9 billion and \$2.1 billion, respectively. Originally legalized to help off-set the cost of U.S. Bank stadium, home to the Minnesota Vikings, e-tabs have become so popular, the state may be able to pay off that debt 20 years ahead of time.

Only a portion of e-tab profits go to the state; the rest stay in the communities where they're generated. That's why we feel it's important for local groups that run and benefit from charitable gambling to weigh in on this issue with their state lawmakers.

The tribes say e-tabs represent a threat to their gaming rights and break the promise of a 2012 gaming rights agreement that allowed them. Because the gaming commission has allowed the open-all option for almost eight years, though, making a change now will cost local vendors and charities millions.

A 2021 effort to legally remove the open-all option failed; there's no word on whether it will be introduced again. So this is the time for those with a vested interest to start talking with their lawmakers and find a way to preserve those critical dollars that help care for our veterans, support scholarships, and provide educational opportunities and sports activities for young people.

When it comes to charitable gaming, our money is always on the community.



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

If there's one thing that has become apparent over the past year, it's the fact that the Steele County Times is proving to be momentum worth reading.

Last fall I shared with you how this newspaper became Steele County's top choice for local news by having more subscribers than the "daily" newspaper that has been around for decades in Owatonna. We've added at least another hundred subscribers since October, bringing us very close to crushing the 3,000 mark of paid readers. I'm hopeful we'll accomplish that by the end of this year.

There isn't a week that goes by without somebody new calling or coming into one of our offices either in Blooming Prairie or

Momentum worth reading

Owatonna seeking to subscribe for the first time. It's gratifying to see such high interest in local news and humbling that people are trusting us to be their local news source.

And, contrary to what you may hear from time to time, local news is still important in people's lives.

Many years ago, before we started growing so much, I developed the slogan "Always Local. All the Time." It's something that obviously resonates with our readers, and it holds us true to what we're all about: providing quality local news for Steele County. Readers love to know they are going to receive a newspaper that's 100% local news. We're told it's something that they can't find anywhere else.

This week we're providing nearly every household in Steele County a gift by sending out what's known as a sample copy. It's an excellent way for those who don't subscribe to get to know us and what we offer. I'm confident that you will find we have the best interests of Owatonna, Blooming Prairie, Ellendale, Medford and smaller fringe communities in mind with our coverage every week. We have talented and experienced journalists covering all these communities.

Plus, just six weeks ago, we received 14 state journalism awards, including General Excellence, one of the top honors given out.

I'm confident that once you sample our paper, you're going to wonder why you're not receiving it every week. We can help with that by offering some great subscription specials, both for the print edition as well as the E-Edition, which can be accessed online.

The importance of focusing on local has also come to light through our social media and website offerings. Karen Hale has done a superb job for us over the past two years building an impressive following on Facebook, website and other social media platforms. Our website at www.steelecountytimes.com attracts more than 48,000 unique visitors and 4.5 million hits in one month, according to the most recent statistics from our web company. Hale always reminds me what makes the unique visitors number most impressive is that it's far greater than the population of Steele County.

We currently offer E-Blast, which features breaking news alerts as well as a weekly newsletter summarizing what's going to be in the print edition. There are about 3,000 people alone that receive the E-Blast. The open rate of the E-Blast is unusually high.

I hope all of this shows one thing. Newspapers can thrive in this challenging environment. Being hyper-local is my best defense to succeeding against the naysayers that have tried to put newspapers into the history books.

Come along for the ride and go in hot pursuit of discovering momentum worth reading.



GUEST COLUMN

Grants support early literacy, community beautification

BY TIM PENNY

This year at Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), we will reach a milestone of investing more than \$50 million in our communities through grantmaking since our start in 1986. While these grants support a wide range of projects – from providing books to young children to supporting small town growth – they each have had transformative and long-term impact on the future of southern Minnesota.

I'm excited to share about two opportunities that are open this Spring, as well as highlight some impacts of recent projects that SMIF has funded.

We are currently accepting applications for our Early Literacy Grant program. Nearly 100,000 children have been impacted by this grant which aims to enhance school readiness for children from birth to age eight by providing books to families. Schools, libraries and other early childhood-focused organizations have received this grant in the past which has been essential for

building children's confidence as readers throughout the region.

The program receives books through partnerships with publishing companies, Capstone and ABDO, which helps ensure a diverse selection of books are available for families to read to their children. Applications are due March 15. Contact Heidi Coulter at heidic@smifoundation.org with questions.

I always look forward to the Paint the Town Grant cycle which will open in early March. As I drive around the region I can see firsthand the impact that this grant has had on our communities. Last summer I was fortunate to attend the unveiling of a new mural in Spring Valley that depicts the trail system and trout fishing – both of which bring tourism to the area. Giants of the Earth Heritage Center in Spring Grove was able to use the grant to update the interior of their building, making it fresh and more welcoming for visitors.

By making this grant specific to towns under 10,000, SMIF can help small communities access resources that are sometimes limited. This program, which partners with Ace Hardware stores and Arrow Hardware & Paint stores, will open in early March with an application deadline of April 17. Contact Jennifer Heienjenniferh@smifoundation.org with questions.

SMIF recently concluded its Inclusive and Equitable Communities Grant cycle which is focused on creating more welcoming communities. I look forward to seeing how these projects unfold – from an initiative to encourage more Somali youth in Faribault to experience the outdoors, to a project in Blue Earth that will foster a sense of belonging in the schools. These grants are an exciting way to support organizations as they work toward more equitable communities.

Finally, we also recently awarded the Early Care and Education Grant recipients which supports services for children birth to age five. The Chatfield Public Schools will use the funding to strengthen and support social emotional learning in early childhood classrooms, child care settings and homes in the area. In the New Ulm Schools they will use their award to focus on kindergarten readiness for children and their families. We have heard from many Early Childhood professionals that these grants make a huge difference in the services they are able to provide to children and families in the region.

Over the past 37 years, SMIF grants have been able to move the needle on school readiness, economic development and community vitality. To see the full range of grants that SMIF offers throughout the year, visit smifoundation.org/grants.

As always, I welcome your comments and questions. You can reach me at timp@smifoundation.org or 507-455-3215.

Tim Penny is the president and CEO of Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation in Owatonna. He represented Minnesota's First Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1982-1994.

STEELE COUNTY Times

www.SteeleCountyTimes.com

Offices:

- Blooming Prairie: 411 E. Main St.
- Owatonna: 109 W. Rose St.

Customer Service:

news@steelecountytimes.com
507-583-4431

Deadlines:

News- 12 p.m. Friday
Advertising- 5 p.m. Thursday

Times Staff:

- Rick Bussler, Publisher and Owner
952-224-6331, rbussler@steelecountytimes.com
- Joni Hubred, News Editor
507-583-4431, jhubred@steelecountytimes.com
- Jenine Kubista, Production Coordinator
507-583-4431, jkubista@steelecountytimes.com
- Sherie Pechan, Office Manager
507-583-4431, news@steelecountytimes.com
- Johnnie Phillips, Sports Editor
507-583-4431, jphillips@steelecountytimes.com

- Kay Fate, Staff Writer
507-583-4431, kfate@steelecountytimes.com
- Wyonne Priebe, Sales Specialist
507-456-4299, wpriebe@steelecountytimes.com
- Gail Buckingham, Sales Specialist
507-456-4456, gbuckingham@steelecountytimes.com
- Roy Koenig, Sports Analyst
507-583-4431, voicedr@yahoo.com
- Katie Nelson, Owatonna Office
507-583-4431, knelson@steelecountytimes.com

Postmaster:

Send address changes to:
Steele County Times
P.O. Box 247
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917
Published weekly by
Bussler Publishing, Inc., P.O.

Box 247, Blooming Prairie,
MN 55917
USPS 058-340
Periodicals postage paid at
Blooming Prairie, MN

A state and national award winning weekly

MINNESOTA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

Awarded both state and national first place General Excellence

2023 —14 state awards	2017 —2 state and 3 national awards	2013 —7 state and 2 national awards
2022 —12 state and 5 national awards	2016 —8 state and 6 national awards	2012 —2 state awards
2021 —16 state awards	2015 —7 state and 4 national awards	2011 —4 national awards
2020 —9 state awards	2014 —3 state and 4 national awards	
2019 —7 state awards		
2018 —6 state and 4 national awards		

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

Protecting from scam calls

Dear Savvy Senior,
What tools can you recommend to help protect trusting seniors from scam calls? My 74-year-old mother gets tons of unwanted telemarketing and robocalls on her cell and home phone and has been duped out of hundreds of dollars.
Frustrated Daughter

Dear Frustrated,
It's a great question! Scammers are always looking for new ways to dupe people out of money, and in the U.S., phone calls remain the primary way swindlers hook older victims. The Federal Trade Commission recently found that 24 percent of adults over age 60 who reported losing money to a scam in 2021 said it started with a phone call – the largest percentage of any method, including email, text, and mail.

To help protect your mom from the onslaught of robocall scams, telemarketing, and spam calls, here are some tips and tools you can help her employ.

Register Her Numbers

If your mom hasn't already done so, a good first step in limiting at least some unwanted calls is to make sure her home and cell phone numbers are registered with the National Do Not Call Registry. While this won't stop fraudulent scam calls, it will stop unwanted calls from legitimate businesses who are trying to sell her something. To sign up, call 888-382-1222 from the phone



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

number you want to register, or you can do it online at donotcall.gov.

Cell Phone Protection

Most wireless providers today offer good tools for stopping scam calls and texts. For example, AT&T has the ActiveArmor Mobile Security app, Verizon provides the Call Filter app, and T-Mobile offers the Scam Shield app.

To activate these tools, download the spam-blocking app from your mom's carrier on her phone, which you can do at the Apple and Google App store. These apps are free to use, but most carriers will also offer upgraded services that you can get for a small monthly fee.

If, however, your mom uses a regional or small wireless carrier that doesn't offer scam/robocall protection you can use a free third-party app. Truecaller (truecaller.com), Call Control (callcontrol.com), Hiya (hiya.com) and YouMail (youmail.com) are all good options to consider.

Built-In Call Blockers

Many smartphones today also offer built-in tools that can block spam calls. If your mom uses a newer iPhone (iOS 13 or later), she can

completely silence all unknown callers who aren't in her contacts list in the phone "Settings."

Silencing all unknown callers is an extreme solution that will definitely stop all unwanted calls, but your mom will also miss some legitimate calls. However, unknown callers do have the option to leave a voice message, and their calls will appear in her recent calls list. And she can add any number to her contact list to let them through in the future.

If your mom owns a new Android phone, she can also block spam calls in the phone "Settings." Or, if she owns a Samsung Galaxy phone, she can use "Smart Call," which flags suspected spam calls and allows her to block and report them.

She can also block specific reoccurring spam call numbers on iPhones and Android manually.

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.

History from the News Archives

Owatonna girls head off to state



FILE PHOTO

Owatonna captured the 1992 Section 1AA High School girls basketball champions after defeating the Austin Packers in the section finals. The team advanced to the state tournament. Team members included: front row, from left: Stacy Armstrong, Jenni Granquist, Melissa Oberle and Joy Knutson; middle row: Manager Jenny Ehler, Kelly Paulson, Tricia Hoffman, Belinda Schmidt, Jenny Trenda, Jenny Een and Manager Star Torrez; back row: Manager Gabrielle Hokanson, Coach John Kuehn, Lynn Carothers, Dawn Braatz, Sara Peik, Angie Iverson, Erin Kolbe, Nathalie Kath, Coach Barry Olson and Manager Monica Kruschke.

10 Years Ago

Feb. 26, 2013

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

Even with as much as six to eight inches of snow falling around Blooming Prairie and in Steele County, deputy sheriff Chad Forystek said everything was surprisingly quiet during the two-day event on Thursday and Friday. "The main roads are melted off and the township roads are snow covered, but passable," Forystek said on Friday afternoon. "The schools were cancelled so that helped by keeping some people home." Blooming Prairie and Medford both called off school on Friday. Owatonna was running two hours late. Forystek went to work at 6 a.m. and said the roads were passable. "I think people heeded the warning and they were prepared for it," he said. "It was kind of a non-event."

The search is on to find a new school superintendent for the Medford School District. The Medford School Board met in the Medford School community room of Feb. 19, to discuss which direction they will take in finding a replacement for superintendent John Currie, who will be retiring after three years in the Medford School System. Bill Cronin spoke about contacting the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA), and that Medford School Board has used them before and they have a reasonable fees. The MSBA feels that either a full-time or a part-time superintendent is viable and it will depend on what type of candidate the board decides on.

20 Years Ago

Feb. 25, 2003

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

Blooming Prairie City Council decided to

change its policy and administer random drug testing to all city employees. The council met Tuesday, February 18, due to the President's Day holiday, and also clarified city employee use of any vehicles or facilities owned by the municipality. City Administrator Mike Jones said the topic of drug and alcoholic awareness came up in the most recent MMEA safety meeting. The city's current policy limited random tests to just those who are required to have a commercial driver's licenses, or those who drove heavy equipment. Jones felt there were others – including himself – that operate other city vehicles that should be included.

Steele County Sheriff Gary Ringhofer was congratulated by Minnesota Sheriffs' Association President, Pat Medure of Itasca County. Sheriff Ringhofer was in attendance at the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association "New Sheriff's Orientation Conference" held at the Northland Inn in Brooklynn Park. This intense conference is designed to make the Sheriffs aware of all the resources available to them to assist in carrying out their duties and responsibilities in a professional, knowledgeable, and confident manner. The successful conference ended with certificates being awarded on Friday, February 7, 2003.

50 Years Ago

Feb. 27, 1973

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

The third annual Mardi Gras Costume Ball, sponsored by the V. F. W. and American Legion, will be held on Saturday of this week, March 3 at the Servicemen's Club rooms. Theme of the event will be "Days of Wine and Roses." A social hour is planned for 6:00 p.m., with dinner to be served at 7:00 p.m. A dance will follow the dinner and will be open to the public at 9:00 p.m. Admission will be \$1.00 All attending the dinner and dance must be in costume. Music will be furnished by the Arman Rezac. A delightful Valentine's party was held at Prairie Manor Nursing Home in Blooming Prairie on Wednesday, February 14. Possibly the most important event that happened that Valentine's Day was the coronation of the Prairie Manor Valentine's Day King and Queen. The careful selection of Royalty representatives were voted on by each resident, who were given the suggested guidelines for determining their choices: respect and appreciation. The coronation was held at 2 p.m. amidst a burst of applause, Ora Olson was crowned Queen, and Eddie Motl was crowned King. Darla Trom, a

weekly visitor at the sing-a-longs, was given a life-sized Valentine Puppy by resident Hans Peterson unanimously chosen as mascot. Special Valentine cookies were baked in the Prairie Manor kitchen, Mrs. Adolph Severson sent rosettes and Marie Morrison furnished Valentine candies for the coffee party. Long after the Queen had retired, King Edward was seen walking the halls, crown intact, reluctant to relinquish his reign for the day.

75 Years Ago

February 1948

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

After nearly two years "on order" all the necessary equipment for Blooming Prairie Furniture Co.'s electric elevator has been installed and the "lift" is now in operation carrying merchandise and patrons to the large second story display room. Dell and "Stub" invite public inspection of the town's only electrically operated elevator. The boys will even give you a free ride in it.

The Times has received notice from the Internal Revenue office, St. Paul, that a deputy collector will be at the community building in Blooming Prairie on Monday and Tuesday, March 2 and 3. Hours, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The deputy collector offers his advice or assistance needed without charge. Any person whose total income was \$500, or more, in 1947 must file. The Times publishes this information for the government without charge.

Owatonna Photo News

31 Years Ago

Feb. 27, 1992

TOM SHEA, PUBLISHER

Students in Julie Nessa's first grade classroom at Wilson School collected lots of pennies for their special program called Pennies for Patients which is a benefit for the Minnesota Chapter of the Leukemia Society's programs of research and patient aid. With her bucket full of 1,551 pennies, Lizzie Meyer is the proud top collector in her class. The total number of pennies collected by Wilson students will be announced on WCCO radio during "33 Hours for Life: A WCCO AM Radiothon to Benefit the Leukemia Society" being held Feb. 28 and 29.

Wynne Sorum, Owatonna, and Ronald Priebe, Owatonna, were united in marriage at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Otisco on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, 1992. The Rev. Philip Lewison officiated the early afternoon, double-ring ceremony. A reception and dance was held at the Owatonna Elks Club on Feb. 15.

You don't have to be starving to need help



Heart Of Steele

JONI HUBRED

One of the most enduring memories from my teenage years is the image of an emaciated child starving in Biafra.

I can't remember how to solve for x to save my life, but since the mid-1970s that image has made a permanent home in my brain. Back then, hunger seemed far away—somewhere in the mountains of Appalachia, in the deserts of Africa and war-torn Vietnam, children were starving.

Over the years, I've learned hunger, especially in America, wears many different faces. In

our community, there are some for whom food insecurity is a constant battle. They rely regularly on the local food shelf at Community Pathways of Steele County to put food on the table.

These days, the folks who are driving the massive increase in families served by Community Pathways aren't perpetually worrying about where to find their next meal.

According to director Dom Korbel, the one-two punch of the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation that followed hit some families harder than others. Many who had been living paycheck to paycheck, making it on the day-to-day, found themselves knocked out of that precarious position.

Now, an unexpected car repair may force them to cut way back on food. I'll never forget the story Korbel told about the couple saving up to cover their share

of the cost for a needed surgery. They're supplementing with the food shelf to afford proper medical care.

You won't see those folks on a poster or in a television commercial. I suspect they would turn down the opportunity—an absolutely unwarranted sense of shame often comes with asking for this kind of help.

I think we've come to believe that there are different levels of need and hunger, that some uses of a food shelf are "moral" or justifiable and others are not.

Of course, if you're planning to take the food and re-sell it for profit... you may want to check your moral compass.

But if you've been hit with an unexpected bill or you're in between jobs or you just need a little temporary help to ease your worries, from the bottom of my heart, I urge you to reach out. Your community is ready and waiting to help.



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL
SHINING KNIGHT
.....
EMILY
6th Grade
PARENTS: Richard & Karen Reseland

“Dependable, generous, helpful. These are all characteristics that Emily has displayed throughout the school year in the 6th grade. Emily consistently works hard and shows responsibility as a student. As a classmate, Emily is kind and helpful to those around her. And through our service projects, Emily has shown both a generous spirit and willingness to jump in when and where she is needed. Thank you Emily for your effort this year - it is appreciated.”



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL
SHINING KNIGHT
.....
WESTIN
1st Grade
PARENTS: Ben & Libby Trom

“Westin is a wonderful example of what it means to be a Shining Knight. Westin enters our classroom each day with a cheerful smile. He is helpful, kind and friendly. Westin's quiet demeanor and positive attitude help him to lead by example throughout the day. Westin always seems to know when someone needs a kind word a smile, or a hug to brighten their day. Westin is our shining Knight because he shows us all how to let the light of Christ shine through us. Congratulations Westin on being our Shining Knight!”



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

THIS FEATURE WAS NOMINATED BY MRS. SEYKORA
SPONSORED BY A PROUD ST. MARY'S ALUMNUS

730 South Cedar Ave., Owatonna
507-446-2300
stmarys-owatonna.org

◆

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

Prostitution: Owatonna Police responded to a prostitution incident in the 500 block of 15th St. NE at 11:18 a.m. on March 1.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This screenshot shows a possible burglary suspect wearing a distinctive multi-colored Looney Tunes coat. Residents are encouraged to call 911 to report any suspicious activity.

Police: Burglars hit west side of Owatonna

Owatonna Police are warning residents about the dangers of leaving doors unlocked as a rash of burglaries has been reported on the west side of town.

According to a news release, the suspect or suspects are entering houses – some at night – while the homeowners are present.

Officers responded to four addresses in 10 hours on Thursday, ranging from 2:20 a.m. to about 1 p.m.

Police records indicate the homes hit were on Lynwood Street Southwest, Brady Boulevard Northwest and two on Allan Avenue Southwest.

To prevent being a victim, authorities remind people to make sure their doors are locked; outside lights are on, if not motion-activated; and alarm and camera systems are on as well.

Residents are urged to report any suspicious activity they see by calling 911.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Another screenshot seems to show the same suspect, this time without the distinctive Looney Tunes coat. The shoes he is wearing appear to be the same, however. The west side of Owatonna has seen a rash of burglaries and attempted burglaries. Residents are reminded to keep their doors and windows locked.

COURT NEWS Steele County

The following case was heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 20 with Judge Joseph A. Bueltel presiding:

Rodrigo R. Deluna, 42, Faribault, previously appeared and was convicted of felony criminal sexual conduct and gross misdemeanor violation of no contact order. Deluna was sentenced to 78 months in St. Cloud State Prison, 110 days in county jail, predatory offender registration and no possession of firearms.

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 20 with Judge Karen R. Duncan presiding:

Joshua A. Haberman, 38, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of firearm after conviction for crime of violence and gross misdemeanor domestic assault. He was sentenced to \$175, 2 days in county jail, no contact with victim, domestic abuse evaluation, no possession of firearms, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 5 years of supervised probation.

Ashley M. Padilla, 31, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony burglary. Padilla was sentenced to 90 days in county jail/electronic home monitor, psychological evaluation, no possession of firearms, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 3 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 20 – 26:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Hunter J. Jirele, 26, Rochester, revoked license, stay of adjudication, \$100 and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Abdirashed A. Mohamed, 28, Burnsville, speeding, \$115; Bobbie J. Sandte, 37, Blooming Prairie, public nuisance, \$175; Ivan E. Schultz, 19, Winona, stop sign, \$125; Mallory M. Veldman, 30, Hollandale, hands free violation, \$125.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Joshua R. Bauer, 20, White Bear Lake, speeding, \$135; Douglas M. Bellrichard, 51, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Delores A. Boerigter, 76, Pella, IA, speeding, \$125; Sara L. Brazil, 25, Albert Lea, speeding, \$275; Ann M. Canchari, 53, Shakopee, speeding, \$40; Furqan R. Dagane, 20, Faribault, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Eric L. Davis, 26, Minneapolis, speeding, \$215; Carlos J. Diaz, 24, Owatonna, open bottle, \$175; Joseph F. Dotray, 62, Montgomery, speeding, \$125; Owen T. Dotseth, 19, Prior Lake, speeding, \$115; Darren D. Fuentes-Vinces, 21, Bloomington, speeding, \$115; Johnny Galloway, 39, Woodbury, speeding, \$115; Eliana J. Kinzer, 20, Columbia, MO, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$125 and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Beau R. Koy, 22, Shakopee, speeding, \$125; Brady M. Larson, 19, Owatonna, speeding, \$125; Timothy J. Lever, 56, New Richland, speeding, \$125; Cameron M. McCall, 24, St. Louis Park, speeding, \$135; Walid M. Mosalla, 39, Wesley Chapel, FL, speeding, \$115; Enrique D. Ortega Urdaneta, 21, Miami, FL, speeding and no license, \$375; Daniel T. Plocker, 30, Crystal, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$115 and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Howard E. Renn, 60, Gresham, OR, speeding, \$115; Angela M. Rodriguez, 34, St. Paul Park, seat belt, \$100; Luis M. Romero Montoya, 24, West St. Paul, speeding and no license, \$375; Jerry L. Schnelle, 61, Golden City, MO, speeding, \$135; Maxwell J. Schumacher, 27, Northfield, speeding, \$135; Tara L. Swalve, 45, Eagle Lake, speeding, \$115; Lay W. Taw, 20, St. Paul, speeding, \$115; Rajaderious O. Thigpen, 28, Selma, AL, speeding, \$115; Ramon H. Vasquez, 44, Inver Grove Heights, speeding and revoked license, \$335; Jay A. Vidallon, 50, Phoenix, AZ, speeding, \$215; Cody L. Walker, 25, Andover, speeding and no insurance, \$415; Amos W. Zor, 50, Crystal, speeding, \$215.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jacob C. Boyd, 35, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$105; Jeffrey D. Burkett, 46, Owatonna, motor vehicle theft, stay of adjudication, diversion program and 2 years of supervised probation; Sean E. Crawford, 34, Appleton, WI, DWI, \$400, 4 days in county jail and 1 year of supervised probation; Ikran A. Dahir, 20, Owatonna, permit violation, stay of adjudication, \$100 and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Andrew L. Davis, 39, Blooming Prairie, suspended license, \$275; Andrew W. Groeneweg, 29, International Falls, criminal sexual conduct, stay of adjudication, \$125, 1 day in county jail, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical assessment, no possession of firearms, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of pornography, submit to polygraph exams as directed, no access to internet without approval, 80 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; James E. Harmon, 36, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Hassan M. Hussein, 31, Owatonna, stop sign, stay of adjudication, \$125 and 1 year of supervised probation; Madison D. Kersey, 24, Minneapolis, DWI, 4 days in county jail; Erica S. Koepp, 36, Waseca, failure to obey traffic control device, \$125; Clarissa L. Kryzer, 41, Owatonna, revoked license, \$175; Michael A. Kullmann, 39, Owatonna, suspended license, registration violation and no insurance, \$575; Spencer H. Lebouef, 30, League City, TX, DWI and carrying pistol under influence of alcohol, \$225, 30 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, 232 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Juan C. Limon, 30, Faribault, possession of marijuana, \$125; Daeshawn O. McBeth, 18, Faribault, invalid license, \$175; Guled A. Mohamed, 21, Owatonna, speeding, \$225; Omar S. Muktar, 19, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Irene M. Rodriguez, 20, Claremont, permit violation, \$125; Arianna

J. Salinas, 22, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Xavian L. Sheka, 21, New Richland, no insurance, \$275; Kyle A. Skov, 49, Owatonna, domestic assault, stay of adjudication, \$300, 4 days in county jail, no possession of firearms and 1 year of supervised probation; Jose E. Sosa-Venegas, 23, Owatonna, violation of order for protection, 90 days in county jail; Wayne M. Stokes, 56, Albert Lea, suspended license, \$275; Jonas E. Trujillo, 41, Brooklyn Park, DWI, \$375, 30 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, Ignition Interlock program, chemical dependency evaluation, 232 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Abel I. Velasquez, 19, Owatonna, invalid license and no insurance, \$375; Lucas G. Vieths, 20, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$105; Devon M. Welke, 33, Owatonna, stop sign, \$5; Tristan J. Williams, 38, Albert Lea, suspended license, \$275; Jennifer A. Working, 33, Owatonna, possession of marijuana and paraphernalia, \$275; William J. Yanchulis, 41, Owatonna, domestic assault, \$125, 20 days in county jail, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, no possession of firearms, obtain permission to leave the state, domestic abuse evaluation, cognitive skill training and 1 year of supervised probation.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sherri A. Bauer, 52, Faribault, assault, stay of adjudication, 3 days in county jail, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, obtain permission to leave the state, psychological evaluation, 30 hours of community service and 1 year of supervised probation; Michael T. Carr Jr., 19, Medford, speeding, \$115; Harley O. Hanna, 64, Urbana, IA, speeding, \$125; Jennifer R. Henslin, 37, Dodge Center, cancelled license, stay of adjudication, \$200 and 1 year of supervised probation; Demetria L. Jones, 49, Albert Lea, speeding, revoked license and no insurance, \$515; Christopher L. Kluge, 49, Owatonna, DWI, \$405, 3 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use and 2 years of supervised probation; Melissa A. McShane, 45, Waseca, speeding, \$115; Brent A. Pelkey, 33, speeding, \$115; Ofelia V. Perez, 26, Faribault, suspended license, \$275; Sasha L. Puga, 33, McAllen, TX, speeding, \$115; Gatluak T. Puoch, 44, Grand Island, NE, speeding, \$115; Jequan O. Sherden, 26, Rochester, no insurance, \$275; Brodie I. Snow, 20, Waseca, neglect of a child, \$75, no alcohol or controlled substance use, obtain and maintain employment and 2 years of supervised probation; Shelley M. Thom, 55, Owatonna, parking violation, \$37.

POLICE BLOTTER Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

Feb. 25
DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest at 1st St. SE and Highway Ave. S. at 4:07 p.m.
March 2
Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at 89th Ave. SE and Highway 218 at 4:41 p.m.

See **BLOTTER** on **A11** ▶

Woman goes to jail for third probation violation

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

A former Blooming Prairie resident has been sentenced to four months in jail after violating probation on a felony assault conviction.

It was the third violation by Janiffer Lynne Miller, 39, since her original sentencing in January 2022.

According to court documents, the most recent offense was “by failure to abstain from use of mood-altering chemicals, failure to contact probation, failure to tell probation within 72 hours of a change of address, and failure to complete updated chemical dependency assessment and abide by all recommendations.”

Several other conditions of the terms of her probation include completion of a psychological diagnostic evaluation, completion of a domestic abuse diagnostic assessment and now, an order to successfully complete an inpatient treatment program.

The case began in May 2021, when law enforcement responded to a home in rural Blooming Prairie for a report of an assault.

Miller was gone by the time officers arrived, but the criminal complaint outlined what happened:

Miller arrived at the residence, drank several beers, then became belligerent and confrontational. When asked to leave, she “got in the face” of a child, swore at him, then grabbed him by the shirt collar and punched him in the face.

A man at the scene told the deputies where Miller had likely gone; when they went to that house, the owners consented to a search of the property.

Miller was found hiding in a hole in the wall of the basement, the report says, and was arrested without further incident.

She was charged with two counts of felony domestic assault and one gross misdemeanor count of driving after cancellation, inimical to public safety.

She pleaded guilty to one of the assault charges. The other two were dismissed at her Jan. 2022 sentencing, where she was given a 21-month prison term, stayed for five years.

Miller subsequently violated the terms of her probation in October and November of 2022, as well as in February 2023.



Janiffer Miller

Man accused of threatening to kill family in Owatonna

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

A man accused of threatening to kill a woman and her children has been charged with a felony in Steele County District Court.

Jose Terenci Velasquez Carias, 49, was arraigned last week on one count of threats of violence. He was conditionally released without bail and is due back in court April 3.

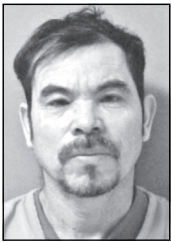
The investigation began March 1, when Owatonna police were called to a disturbance on Adams Avenue Northwest.

A woman who answered the door told officers Velasquez Carias was drunk; they found him crouched behind the kitchen counter.

The woman and four children in a bedroom were described as “distressed,” crying and shaking.

According to the criminal complaint, Velasquez Carias was angry at the woman. When she told him he needed to leave, he told her he was going to kill her and her family.

Velasquez Carias called his son and put him on speaker. The son allegedly said he was going to come to town to kill the woman and her family. Velasquez Carias said multiple times that he would have his son kill the



Jose Terenci Velasquez Carias

See **MAN** on **A11** ▶



ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST

Dr. Deborah Lien

DDS, MBS

drdeborahlienorthodontics.com

507-583-6613

FREE CONSULTATION

132 2nd Ave NE | Blooming Prairie

GLEN MIKE BRETT

TRUST US TO HANDLE WITH CARE

BRICK-MEGER FUNERAL HOME

MEDFORD FUNERAL HOME

Proudly Serving Steele County

megercares.com | 507.451.1457

Owatonna group honors ‘Woman of Achievement’

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

There’s a big announcement coming at this year’s Woman of Achievement celebration, hosted by Owatonna Business Women—and it’s not just the award winner.

In its 51st year, the event honors a woman who has a successful career, is involved as a leader in the community, and who helps others—particularly younger women—in their careers. This year, five women have been nominated, with applications vetted by an independent panel of judges.

The winner will be named during the March 18, 6 p.m., celebration at Spare Time Entertainment in



Jackie Berg



Rebecca Moore



Erin Vieths



Nicole Wacek



Mary Worke

Owatonna.

OBW public relations chair Madeleine Haberman said this year’s program includes 2022 Woman of Achievement Rhonda Guthier, speaking about what the award has meant to her, as well as information about what OBW does in the community. Also, the organization will continue its tradition of awarding scholarships, upping the number from 10 to 15 this year thanks to an “outstand-

ing” applicant pool.

“There will also be an announcement about a new program starting in the next year,” she added, without even a hint of what it might be.

During the evening, OBW will present Mary

Larson with a Lifetime Achievement Award and Muna Mohamed with the Young Careerist Award.

Haberman said this year’s community response, from ticket sales to sponsorships

and support for scholarships, has been “just outstanding... We’re really looking forward to it.”

Tickets are going fast and will be available at owatonnabusinesswomen.org through March 10—or until the event sells out.

Here’s more information about the five nominees:

Jackie Berg is the national sales manager at Wenger Corporation, where she is responsible

for leading a team of 20 sales professionals. She started at Wenger in 1996 as a sales rep and continued in multiple sales leadership positions. She chairs the Medford School Board, on which she has served for 10 years, and has been active as a coach for volleyball, a Finance Board member at her church, and was the chair for the Medford All School Reunion.

Rebecca Moore has been a senior legal counsel at Federated Insurance for the past eight years, handling Federated’s commercial real estate transactions, creditor rights issues and advising on risk management. She was formerly an attorney in the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office and See **OWATONNA** on A8 ►

IF YOU GO...

Who: Owatonna Business Women
What: 51st annual Woman of Achievement
When: March 18, 6 p.m. social hour, 7:30 p.m. program
Where: Spare Time Entertainment, 333 18th St., Owatonna
Tickets: \$35, at owatonnabusinesswomen.org

CASHIN’ IN AT BP



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Cash Kruckeberg poses for a co-principal photo with Blooming Prairie Elementary School’s other leader, Jacob Schwarz. Cash was able to have lunch in his office with a special advisory committee, make phone calls, and oversee some prize drawings.

‘The main guy of the school...’ for a day

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

If you were the kind of student who was ... familiar, shall we say?... with the inside of the principal’s office, you definitely would’ve wanted Cash Kruckeberg to be sitting behind the desk.

Unfortunately, he’s just a fourth-grader, but for a day, he was the acting principal at Blooming Prairie Elementary School.

The honor is an annual favorite at the BP Education Foundation auction. Parents – and last year, grandparents – pay top dollar for the student of their choice to be in charge.

Cash said he’d asked his grandparents, Karen and John Fourage, to try for the popular item.

“I asked for it, but after the auction, I forgot about it for, like, a week,” Cash said. “Then I asked if they got it, and they did.”

Why did he want it?

“Well, I’ve never done it before, and it seemed pretty cool to be the principal,” he said. “If it was a teacher for the day, it’d still be pretty cool, but being the main guy of the school ...”

The first thing he did as

Principal for the Day was check with the heartbeat of the school: “I went to the office and talked with (elementary secretary) Ms. (Lonna) Hefling to see the plans for the day,” Cash said.

“I got a cool lanyard to keep, and I also got a little radio so when I went up to class, they could call me on it,” he said.

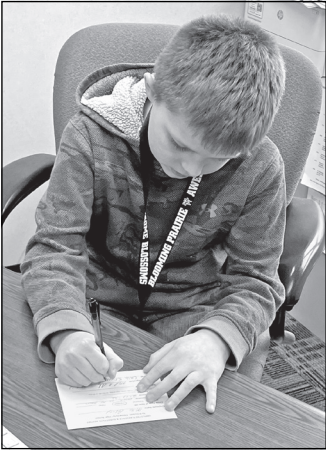
Lunch was spent with a group of his friends, eating pizza and Dilly Bars.

Though Cash called them his friends, the other principal, Jacob Schwarz, called it “a special committee lunch. They wrote some good things on my white board for improvements” at BPES.

Among them were to have more inspirational messages/jokes posted around the school; more recess and gym – “obviously, this is a popular one,” Schwarz smiled – and several suggestions about incorporating more art into students’ days.

In addition, Schwarz said, Cash “helped out with some (prize) drawings, made some phone calls and signed a few timecards. He did a great job.”

One thing he didn’t do: discipline. If he had, “I’d talk about what they did,” and let



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Cash Kruckeberg, a fourth-grader at Blooming Prairie Elementary School, signs a time card while acting as Principal for the Day. His grandparents were the high bidders on the popular item at last year’s BP Education Foundation auction.

them explain their side.

“If a kid gets sent to you, you should use the best words you can, and try to do your best to figure out what happened,” he said.

The son of Katie and Trevor Kruckeberg, Cash said he’d like to be a teacher of “either math or reading.”

His day as principal was fun, and he wouldn’t mind doing it again – but he’d have a much bigger job.

In the fall, the fifth- and sixth-grade classrooms will move into the high school.

“A whole different school and a whole new batch of kids,” Cash said.

Medford hires new liquor store manager

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

You don’t often see high-fives at local government meetings, but there was a solid one at last week’s Medford City Council meeting.

It was between Nick Goodnature, a volunteer firefighter, and Rachel Heinrichs, who had just been named the new manager at the Medford Municipal Liquor Store, known to locals as “the muni.”

Earlier in the meeting, Goodnature – who oversees the Fire Relief Association’s charitable gambling – had voiced his support for the move.

“I just want to tell you guys how appreciative I am of the new bartender at the Medford Muni,” he said during the public forum. “She’s doing a great job. It’s been fun working with her for the last five months – and there are



Rachel Heinrichs

a lot of good things going. She’s full of ideas.”

Goodnature also read a note from two long-time employees at the bar, who said they’d “seen great improvements and we’d like her to be our manager.”

City Administrator Jed Petersen made the recommendation to promote Heinrichs.

“We hired her in October as part-time lead bartender,” he told council members, “but the position really requires a manager. She’s done a phenome- See **MEDFORD** on A12 ►

Out of retirement and back in 4-H again

First stepped foot into the Steele County Extension Office many moons ago. Extension and 4-H icon, Larry Tande, invited me to be the 4-H summer assistant. “Yes” was the easy answer that day since Steele County was the 4-H program above all other 4-H programs in Minnesota. I joined the Steele County 4-H Team again 16 years later. The 4-H program had transitioned to another legend, Jane Nelson. Jane and I worked together for nearly three years until I moved to the State 4-H Office.

A few weeks ago, I had a call from the present day 4-H guru, Tracy Ignaszewski. She asked if I would come



Steele Talkin'
BRAD RUGG

out of retirement and help out for a couple of months as an interim 4-H educator while colleague Krystal Viktora was student teaching. The “yes” this third time was just as easy as it was the first time.

You see, Tracy, Jane and Larry all shared a similar vision for the 4-H program in Steele Coun- See **4-H** on A8 ►

Claremont Chamber hauls in \$186K in charitable gambling

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Organizations in both Steele and Dodge counties are benefiting from nearly \$186,000 of charitable gambling operated by the Claremont Chamber of Commerce.

Charitable gambling totaled \$186,097 at four locations in 2022, down about \$40,000 from the

previous year, according to reports released by Dean Schuette, president of Claremont Area Chamber. In 2021, the Chamber’s gambling hit about \$229,000.

Gambling takes place at J&H Liquor in Blooming Prairie and three locations in Dodge County—Claremont Pub, Dodge Center Country Club and

Dodge Center Legion.

Of the four charitable gambling venues, the Claremont Pub led the way with \$70,477 followed by Dodge Center Country Club at \$49,600, Dodge Center Legion at \$37,941 and J&H Liquor at \$27,079. The charitable gambling comes from bar bingo, pull tabs, e-tabs and sponsor raffles, Schuette said,

adding e-tabs currently make up two-thirds of the Chamber’s gambling profits.

Schuette said each gambling venue is allowed to determine which organizations they want the profits to benefit. “We give them the ability to help fund projects that are near and dear to their hearts,” he said.

He has found that there is great need throughout the area for the charitable gambling donations. “People are more willing to indulge because they know the good it is doing,” Schuette said.

No less than 61 organizations in both Steele and Dodge counties received funds from Claremont Chamber

in 2022. There were 28 organizations ranging from nonprofits to personal benefits and food shelves that split the proceeds earned at the Claremont Pub last year.

“We fund things that can’t be paid for with taxes,” Schuette said. “We are filling the gaps.” See **CLAREMONT** on A8 ►

Fresh start brings big changes to Medford Muni

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

By all accounts, Rachel Heinrichs is doing big things for the city of Medford, but she isn't quite sure how.

Check that: "I can honestly say I have six of the best people working together, and that makes this so much easier."

She's talking about her employees at the Medford Municipal Liquor Store, known as "the muni."

Since Heinrichs started last Halloween, sales at the muni and revenue for the charitable gambling featured there have skyrocketed. Profits from January 2022 were about \$8,900; profits from January 2023 were more than \$15,000 – despite several expensive upgrades and improvements.

It was enough to influence members of the city council to move Heinrichs from part-time lead bartender to full-time liquor store manager.

Medford Mayor Danny Thomas said he was in Owatonna recently, "and I had people come

up to me to tell me that on Tuesdays and Thursdays, they go to the Medford Muni. I could not believe it."

City Clerk Beth Jackson told council members "it's nothing but positive feedback from everybody who comes in" to city hall.

So, what gives?

"It was just starting fresh, I think," Heinrichs said. "I had an open slate to do whatever it was that success looks like. It was bringing in new bartenders, new faces, great customer service. Really, it just comes down to the staff I have – they're fantastic."

Her ideas are, too, including sprucing up the place and adding a large event board.

"That's been huge," she said. "We have a lot of customers who don't go on Facebook, so they can't necessarily see what's going on, so they love it. It's been a huge success – now just to fill it up with events..."

That's coming along, too. Heinrichs plans to hold a cornhole league on Tuesdays, beginning in May. Along with that would be food specials



Rachel Heinrichs is the new manager at the Medford Municipal Liquor Store. Sales and gambling revenue are way up, despite several recent big-ticket purchases and improvements.

– and possibly, food trucks for the league and on the weekend.

The store will close over the Easter weekend, when Heinrichs plans to refinish the floors and paint the inside. She would like to see more seating in the back room and has four new high-top tables in her sights for the main room.

She'd like to get another dartboard, and get the muni involved in a dart league.

The store's charitable gambling, run through the Medford Fire Relief Association, has six i-Pads, which have bingo installed.

There are four pull-tab boxes, and a 15-round meat raffle is held every

Friday at 5 p.m., with the items coming from Grampa's Old-Home Meats, the butcher shop down the block.

Heinrichs is also looking at specials for "local bikers, snowmobiles – we're on a nice trail – anything to get our name out there. We're loving being the new faces; people say, 'hey, I've heard great things, the muni has changed. The atmosphere is more upbeat, and it's nice to be greeted when I walk in the door.' They like coming here now; my staff is always welcoming – and it's just fun."

A 2009 graduate of Owatonna High School, she and her husband, Mathias, are both from Medford. He works for the city's public works department and is also a volunteer firefighter. The couple has three boys, ages 8, 3 and 1?.

Rachel Heinrichs worked at Federated when she saw the city's ad for the part-time job.

"I saw they were hiring, so I thought, 'why not?' I just live a few blocks away," she said, and tending bar has "always been my back-

up job, for the last 10-12 years. It got me through college," and was a part-time job even when she worked at Federated.

She gets to the store about 7:30 a.m., then does her bookwork, makes sure the gambling receipts are accurate, orders liquor, does the banking and scheduling for the five part-time employees.

Heinrichs has never owned a business, nor has she ever been the "boss."

"It's obviously a little different, since it's a city-owned business," she said, "but they've been in my corner since day one and are willing to listen to me."

Her new role "has been a positive change for my entire family," Heinrichs told the city council members. "I thoroughly love what I do."

The fresh start worked, she admitted.

"Spreading the word and getting more options – I knew it would change things," she said. "I just didn't expect such a positive change, so fast. It's overwhelming, but in a good way. It makes me feel really good."

Out of retirement and back in 4-H again

◀ 4-H from A7

ty. The recipe is really quite simple. It goes something like this: Surround yourself with strong and dedicated volunteers and listen to the 4-H'ers – give them what they want.

The demographics of the 4-H program in Steele County has changed over the years. The healthy numbers of livestock on nearly every family farm don't exist like they used to. Agriculture, in general, is much more specialized. The number of livestock producers is but a fraction of what they were, and the size of a viable family farm has grown considerably.

So, too, has the demographics of the 4-H pro-

gram changed. It had to if it was to compete with the countless options afforded our youth these days. Besides the strong community club program, Steele County 4-H has a robust outreach program, extending far beyond its' traditional roots.

Today's 4-H program finds us in local schools offering exciting STEM programming to elementary kids and in the summer, you'll see 4-H on Wheels out and about offering fun and creative summer activities to new audiences.

The club program in Steele County is rock solid. That old recipe of dedicated volunteers and delivering programs that kids want

remains the theme for how we do our work. In these first few weeks while I have been back, I have worked with our 4-H Softball Committee, our Shooting Sports and Wildlife Team and our Horse Project Developmental Committee. All are rolling out engaging summer programs that will help kids gain life skills they will forever utilize.

On Feb. 26, I worked with and admired a dedicated Pasta Dinner Committee that served nearly 900 dinners, pieced together a silent auction featuring some 200 baskets – the profits of which will fund, in part, our busy summer programming schedule. I have also

partnered with neighboring 4-H programs to share resources and increase numbers when multi-county efforts make sense.

It is not too late to sign up for 4-H. Parents and grandparents, you can expect to find a near-by club led by dedicated volunteers and a long list of project areas to choose from. The generations long recipe still works today. If you have questions on how to get involved, please contact our office at 507-444-7685.

Brad Rugg is the interim 4-H educator for Steele County. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.



Staff at South Central Human Relations Center are kicking off a month-long food drive that will benefit the Community Pathways food shelf. Pictured from left are treatment director Renee Lips-Bush, executive director Michele Merxbauer, director of nursing Vikki Ebenhoh, and human resources director Sharon Bishop.

Agency takes a team approach to food drive

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

A conversation between South Central Human Relations Center (SCHRC) director Michele Merxbauer and Community Pathways of Steele County executive director Dom Korbel has the Center's staff working to outdo each other in food donations.

March is Minnesota FoodShare Month, a time when local food shelves go all-out to collect funds and food donations to help see them through the year. Korbel has said this year's drive is especially important because the community's need for help has grown exponentially over the past few years.

After chatting with him, Merxbauer sent an idea to the SCHRC director of nursing Vikki Ebenhoh, who is also on the Owatonna-based agency's engagement team, "and they ran with it."

"We decided to do a four-week challenge, and each week has a different theme," Merxbauer said.

The team broke down the 140-person agency into eight teams of 17-18 people, across all three counties SCHRC serves–Steele, Dodge, and Waseca. Ebenhoh said the groups connect

using Microsoft Teams and other tech.

"We tried to include at least one group from Owatonna," human resources director Sharon Bishop said, so they could drop off donations at Community Pathways headquarters on Oakdale Street.

Each week, teams are collecting a different food item–starting with peanut butter. Every team is taking a different approach, and they're just getting started this week, Merxbauer said.

Korbel said FoodShare Month donations are counted between Feb. 27 and April 9–so there's still plenty of time for people to get involved. He's hoping Steele County will crush the goals he set–\$170,000 and 70,000 pounds of food–to help bolster the agency's \$250,000 food budget.

Efforts like the SCHRC drive will help make it happen.

"I just believe if we tell our story well enough and we are good stewards, people will step up and at the very least, take the worry of food off the plate for our shoppers," he said. "This community always steps up, and I think we're going to have the best FoodShare Month ever, but it can only happen with partners."

Claremont Chamber hauls in \$186K in charitable gambling

◀ CLAREMONT from A7

Schuette said the impact that Claremont Chamber has had on the area since it began charitable gambling in 1998 is "not a well-publicized story." Over the past 25 years, Schuette said "all but the last 10 years were modest amounts."

The worst year in recent memory was 2020 when COVID hit.

The Chamber only brought in \$58,000 in 2020, Schuette said.

Schuette, who serves as a board member for Allied Charities of Minnesota (ACM), is concerned about current talk at the legislature about curtailing e-tabs, which he says will definitely cut into the profits of gambling in rural Minnesota.

"That will have a

big impact on local charities that we help support," he said.

Currently, Minnesota collects about \$189 million in taxes from charitable gambling, according to Schuette. That leaves, he said, about \$89 million for charitable giving across the state.

"Every \$1 wagered, we get 1 cent for charity giving," Schuette

said, adding "taxes are unbelievable," and charitable gambling organizations are seeking tax relief.

His experience on the ACM board has "opened my eyes to what charitable gambling does all across the state."

For Schuette, charitable gambling is "all about giving back to the community."

2022 CLAREMONT CHAMBER DONATIONS

Total charitable gambling: \$186,097

Claremont Pub- \$70,477

- Benefits: Brian Bohlman, Tyler Maas, Kirk Aronson
- Churches: Rice Lake, Presbyterian, Faith Lutheran
- Let's Smile
- Beds for Kids
- Homeless Teens of Steele County
- Junior Achievement
- Grandparents for Education
- City of Claremont (fire and first responders)
- Rachel's Light
- Hospitality House of Owatonna
- Center for Family Unity

- Out of the Dark- Suicide Prevention
- Transitional Housing of Steele County
- Steele County Mounted Posse
- Homestead Hospice House
- Steele County Humane Society
- Steele County and Dodge County Food Shelves
- Owatonna VFW Baseball
- Various others

Dodge County Country Club- \$49,600

Dodge Center American Legion- \$37,941

Most organizations benefiting are in Dodge County.

J&H Liquor- Blooming Prairie: \$27,079

- City of Blooming Prairie (fire and ambulance)
- Toys for Tots
- BP Youth Club
- BP Backpack Program
- BP Ministerial Association
- BP After Prom
- Blossoms Forever Group
- Friends of BP Library
- BP Quarterback Club
- Razorback Wrestling
- Pack 348
- Jackie Friesner Benefit
- BP Cancer Research
- BP Ed Foundation
- Westfield Razorback Boosters

Owatonna group honors 'Woman of Achievement'

◀ OWATONNA from A7

other firms in the Twin Cities and Owatonna. She is on the leadership team for Federated's Professional Development Conferences for Women and has chaired community initiatives including Better Together, the Alliance for Greater Equity, and the Young Life Committee. She is a Big Sister for Big Brothers Big Sisters and a teaching volunteer for

Junior Achievement.

Nicole Wacek is in the Finance Department at Steele Waseca Co-operative Electric. She started there this past summer after more than 20 years in the banking industry, starting as a teller and eventually becoming the bank manager/vice president. She also worked as an office manager at an assisted living/memory care facility. Currently

president of the Moonlighters Exchange Club in Owatonna, she also serves as treasurer on the Lakes and Prairies District Board for Exchange and as a Steele County Humane Society board member. She is a past 4-H club leader, head judge for elections and a Sunday school teacher at her church.

Mary Worke is a school counselor at Blooming Prairie

High School. She helps students with academic achievement strategies to plan for life after high school. She's also liaison for PSEO and concurrent enrollment courses. In her 32 years at BPHS, she has taught physical education, been the school counselor, planned Honor Society and graduation ceremonies, coached volleyball, and refereed volleyball games. She is active at First Lutheran Church on the church

council and in the mentoring program, has volunteered for the Blooming Prairie High School After Prom Committee and the American Red Cross Blood Drive.

Erin Vieths is the court operations manager of the Third Judicial District – District Wide Case Processing Teams managing five district-wide teams that process work for all 11 counties in the Third District. She has

been promoted multiple times in the past 11 years working for the Steele County Court Administration. She is member of the MN Paralegal Association and a Steele County Court Administration Union Steward, has been on the Criminal Justice and Children's Justice Committees in many counties, volunteers at the Steele County Free Fair, and plays pool in a local pool league.

Early female settler worried about ‘scalping’

BY JONI HUBRED
NEWS EDITOR

While women have always played a role in history, it’s sometimes difficult to find their stories.

During Women’s History Month, Blooming Prairie librarian Nancy Vaillancourt, also a local historian, will help us bring some of those local stories to light. And we’ll start with a woman who moved to this area with some preconceived notions.

It is hard to blame Melissa Brainerd for her worries about settling in Minnesota.

She was around 21 years old and in her first year of marriage to Blooming Prairie pioneer John C. Brainerd when she arrived in 1871. News had traveled

to her home in Wisconsin about an attack on New Ulm, Minnesota during the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862.

According to a story in *Blooming Prairie Update*, a book by Harold Severson, Brainerd came into town “fully prepared to be scalped by Indians”. As it turned out, she never—at least to her knowledge—encountered a Native American.

Instead, she and her husband seemed to thrive in their adopted community. The book notes John was Blooming Prairie’s first recorder and treasurer, served on the school board and in the Minnesota State Legislature as part of the Steele County delegation. He built his fortune and reputation in lumber

and banking.

Melissa Brainerd, who had earned her teaching certificate at age 14, made her indelible mark on Steele County history as the first woman to serve on the Blooming Prairie school board and the first matron for the Oak Glen Chapter of the Eastern Star.

Her arrival in the community, however, was not without a few bumps.

According to the *Update*, John Brainerd had accepted a position as telegraph operator and arrived a few months ahead of his bride, staying in a hotel. When she arrived, traveling with a cousin, the hotel manager refused to let them into the building.

Perhaps more hastily than he expected, John

found them a home. Melissa Brainerd recalled the village had just two stores at that time and one doctor.

She also vividly recalled the winter of 1872, when a huge snow drift stopped a train just outside of town. Passengers were stranded with only cranberries and flour to eat before one of them walked into Blooming Prairie to ask for food.

An obituary published on Jan. 25, 1940, noted the Brainerds both played a role in Blooming Prairie’s growth:

“Theirs was a hospitable home where were entertained visiting ministers of all denominations, speakers, lecturers, educators and all who came here to further the cultural development of the town.”

Medford teacher earns national honor

◀ **TEACHER** from A1 brings to MHS, where he has worked since his graduation from Minnesota State University Moorhead.

“I really enjoy it here,” he said. “I really enjoy the leadership aspect. The school has allowed me to expand Student Council and teach leadership as a class. They’ve taken care of me and allowed me to grow as a coach, a teacher, and an advisor.”

Johannes believes every student has leadership skills and works to reveal those strengths in each student. The ultimate reward for him is watching them succeed, “whether it’s putting together a successful pep fest or seeing them on a state or national board.”

“As students get involved, they are setting themselves up for success later in life,”

he said. “I help them see the qualities they already have, the skills they have.”

Getting them involved at higher levels also provides big benefits for students, Johannes believes. As they collaborate and have conversations with students from other communities, they gain a more global mindset—and the notion that they can solve problems not only in their own schools, but in the community and, ultimately, in their careers.

“It’s all about student collaboration... and having conversations with other individuals who are experiencing things differently,” he said.

Schools typically share common problems, like generating school spirit and encouraging community service. Many of Med-

ford’s Spirit Week and pep fest ideas, games, and fundraising activities come from those conversations.

Students recently knocked it out of the park with an idea that came from the state level: a Giving Week, set during the school’s Snow Week. Using the state service project “Go Green” theme, kids raised \$1,500 in one week for a group that cleans up local waterways.

“They learn how to run an organization, they see what other schools do,” Johannes said. “Not everything fits, but at least we try it.”

What kids gain most from involvement up the line, though, is the personal connections they make.

“I think the coolest thing is some of the friends they meet... they’re still friends in college and down the

road,” Johannes said.

In nominating Johannes for the Earl Reum regional award, State Executive Director Doug Erickson said, “Minnesota is fortunate to have an individual who brings consistent leadership training to student leaders and advisors across the state. Our organizations benefit from Jerome’s expertise in leadership development.”

For Johannes, the award means more than just a personal recognition, although it’s “a nice nod to the years of service to Student Council and to be recognized amongst peers for the work we have done in Medford.”

However, he added, “I’m nothing without the students, administration, and staff that’s here, and the work we put into things, the opportunity to make impacts... that’s what the award speaks for more than anything.”

St. Paul's Episcopal Church presents

Walking Each Other Home

There are few things more necessary than good company, and good companions. One of the most important facets of being alive is to help our friends and neighbors live into their best lives, and to seek companions who will do the same for us.

Talks begin at 12:10. All talks are free and open to the public.

In this series of three talks before Easter, we will speak about good company and good companions, and what it means to walk each other home.

We are all just walking each other home.

Richard Rupert/Rev. Bess 1931-2019

March 15
Rev. Loren Olson, former pastor of United Methodist Church, Owatonna and current hospice chaplain at Mayo

March 22
Keith Davis, lay minister at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church in St. Paul, and St. Mark's Cathedral in Minneapolis

March 29
Rev. Michael Tippet, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Owatonna



Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

johndoercpa.com

We understand small business because we are a small business

◆ 314 E. Main St. | Blooming Prairie 507-583-7528

◆ 685 W. Bridge St., Suite 6 | Owatonna 507-451-9136

◆ 133 N. Broadway | New Richland 507-465-8100



BLOOMING PRAIRIE COMMUNITY EDUCATION

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Four Hour Refresher Class

Tuesday, March 21 - 5:30pm-9:30pm
Blooming Prairie High School, Room 201
\$24 Fee

Email: msouthworth@blossoms.k12.mn.us
or call 507-583-4426 to register

Michelle Southworth -
Community Education Coordinator



FEBRUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

The Exchange Club of Owatonna congratulates Kiara Gentz and Nils Gantert for their achievements!

The Exchange Club’s Youth of the Month is one of the most popular youth projects. The Youth of the Month/Year recognizes hard-working high school students who attain high levels of scholastic achievement, community involvement and leadership.

Kiara Gentz:

She is the daughter of Kelly and Kevin Gentz. Kiara is involved in many school activities including orchestra, student council, DECA (serving as treasurer), National Honor Society and Link Crew. She participates in various sports – basketball, cross country and track and field and is captain for all of them. Kiara also volunteers her time with leading Sunday school and Vacation Bible School. She has been involved in 4-H and has worked as a youth basketball supervisor and youth soccer supervisor. She will be attending a Wisconsin college to major in Exercise Science and run cross country and track and field.



Kiara Gentz and Nils Gantert are being recognized as the Exchange Club of Owatonna’s Student of the Month for February.

Nils Gantert:

He is the son of Stefan and Sarah Gantert. Nils participates in many sports including soccer, tennis, and basketball. He has been soccer captain for his junior and senior year. He also participates in band, choir, carolers, DECA, SHOC, student council, and National Honors Society. He is a national merit semi-finalist. He has volunteered for highway clean up, Meals for Hope and has been a Sunday School teacher. He currently works at the Owatonna Country Club as a chef and has been a soccer ref for the past 4 years. He intends to go to the University of Minnesota and plans to study pre-med.

Congratulations Kiara and Nils!

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY

HomeServices

“I’ll Find Your Heart a Home!”



Sandra McConn Halla
Broker Associate / Realtor®
Licensed in the State of Minnesota

Advantage Real Estate
660 W. Bridge St, Suite 300
Owatonna, MN 55060
Cell 507-213-6080
Office 507-451-7355
sandra@owatonnarealestate.com
www.owatonnarealestate.com

 A member of the franchise system of BHH Affiliates, LLC



Steve Carroll Ins Agcy Inc
Steve Carroll, Agent
215 22nd Street SE, Owatonna, MN 55060
Bus: 507-455-1660

State Farm, Bloomington, IL
2001738

DON'T LIVE WITH PAIN

YOU CAN FEEL BETTER!



Prairie Family & Sports Chiropractic
Chad M. Eischens, D.C.
Downtown Blooming Prairie
583.2271
www.drchad.org

STEELE COUNTY

Times

Always local,
all the time.

BLOOMING PRAIRIE

MARCH 14

10 a.m. – Storytime, BP Library

MARCH 16

1:30 p.m. – Local Author History Program, BP Library

ELLENDALE/HOPE/GENEVA

MARCH 13

7 p.m. – Berlin Township Meeting, Community Building

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

MARCH 12

8 a.m. – Owatonna Music Boosters Pancake Breakfast, VFW

7 p.m. – Family Feud Fundraiser, Trinity Lutheran

MARCH 13

4:30 p.m. – Owatonna Park Board Meeting, City Hall

5:30 p.m. – Moonlighters Exchange Club, VFW

MARCH 14

9:30 a.m. & 10 a.m. – Storytime, Owatonna Library

10 a.m. – Memory Café, History Center

4 p.m. – Steele County Board Meeting, County Admin Building

5:30 p.m. – Owatonna Human Rights Commission Meeting, City Hall

5:30 p.m. – Owatonna Planning Commission Meeting, City Hall

MARCH 15

4 p.m. – Owatonna EDA Meeting, City Hall

6 p.m. – Trivia Night, Mineral Springs

MARCH 16

9 a.m. – Farm & Power Show, Four Seasons

10 a.m. – Genealogy Club, History Center

March 17

9 a.m. – Farm & Power Show, Four Seasons



Members of the Ellendale Fire Department are ready to serve fish at a couple upcoming fish fries on Friday and again Friday, March 31 at the Ellendale Community Building.

Fish fries set to help Ellendale Fire

When you think of fish fries, what you do you think of? The Ellendale Fire Department reported-ly has one of the best fish fries around. The men and women of the fire department go above and beyond every day to help the people in their community. So since it is that time of the year and if you are thinking about fish, come on out to Ellendale Community Building on March 10 with serving starting at 5 p.m. and going until the fish is gone. A second fish fry will take place on Fri-

day, March 31 at 5 p.m. Consider helping out the local fire department. Firefighters hope to see everyone there so they can greet you and thank you for coming out.

Apply by April 17 for Paint the Town grants

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), in partnership with regional hardware stores, will be accepting applications for free paint and coating products for community mural, community welcome sign or historic structure projects through its Paint the Town Grant program. This grant opportunity is available to communities with a population under 10,000 throughout SMIF's 20-county region. A program goal is to encourage local volunteer involvement in the painting process. Projects will be awarded paint products based on visual impact, public benefit, volunteer participation and community support. Since 1997, SMIF has helped distributed more than 10,500 gallons of paint to 303 projects in the region through various programs. The Paint the Town Grant program was officially launched in 2015 with regional Ace Hardware and Arrow Hardware and Paint stores. The participating stores are Arrow Hardware & Paint (store locations: Northfield, Owatonna, Rochester Crossroads, Rochester North, St. Peter, Shakopee, St. Cloud), Faribault Ace Hardware, Pellicci Ace Hardware (store locations: Eagan, Farmington, Rosemount, Zumbrota) and St. Charles Ace Hardware. While some participating stores are located outside of SMIF's region, only communities with populations under 10,000 within SMIF's 20-county region are eligible to apply. "At SMIF, we have seen how the simple application of vibrant paint on new projects or historic structures can result in community pride in small towns across our region," said Tim Penny, SMIF president and CEO. "We are proud to once again work alongside Ace Hardware and Arrow Hardware & Paint partners to distribute paint for these projects." Applications are due by April 17. For more information or to apply visit smifoundation.org or contact Jennifer Heien at 507-214-7040 or jenniferh@smifoundation.org.

J & H LIQUOR'S

340 E MAIN, BLOOMING PRAIRIE

507-583-7557

YOUR HOMETOWN BAR / OFF-SALE

-BAR BINGO: MONDAY @ 6:30 PM (MUST BE 21 TO PLAY)

-WINE & WOMEN WED.: 6:30-10 PM

-BLOOMIN' GRAPEVINE WINE CLUB: (SEPT - MAY)

-"COLD BEER", DRINKS & FIREHOUSE PIZZA

-PULL-TABS, E-TABS, MN LOTTERY

-GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

-OFF-SALE: GREAT SELECTION BEER, WINE & LIQUOR

-"36" YEARS OF BUSINESS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

April 8: "Custmer Appreciation"

"37" years in business

July 1: Street Dance - "Smokescreen"

July 3: Party on the Lot...DJ Music: Karaoke

July 4: Open: 9 am - ??

July 22: B.O.B. Ride "Toys for Tots"

Senior Alliance presents public health panel

Senior Alliance for Steele County will offer a free presentation sharing what support services Public Health can provide seniors and their caregivers to stay safe in their homes or senior living communities on Tuesday, March 21 at 6 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna. Amber Aaseth, director of Steele County Public Health, along with Robert Benson, Home Care supervisor; and Alexa Wencil, Long-Term Care supervisor will conduct this presentation. During this presentation, the process for Medical Assistance and Elderly Waiver will be discussed as well. Time will be allowed for audience questions. This free event is open to families, individuals, and professionals. Please RSVP by March 20 to Melissa at 507-270-1450.

STEELE COUNTY Times

411 E. Main St • Blooming Prairie • 507-583-4431

STEELECOUNTYTIMES.COM

Sudoku Corner

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

Sponsored by:

Valley Terrace

Assisted Living

1212 W Frontage Rd, Owatonna, MN

507-451-0722 • valleviewofowatonna.com

Newly Remodeled

County Assistance Accepted

Pet Friendly

Answers

8	£	9	2	6	7	9	7	1
9	7	2	£	1	7	8	9	6
7	1	6	8	9	9	7	2	£
9	6	8	9	2	1	£	7	7
7	9	£	7	8	9	6	1	2
2	7	1	6	7	£	9	9	8
£	2	9	9	7	6	1	8	7
1	9	7	7	£	8	2	6	9
6	8	7	1	9	2	7	£	9

Music Boosters to host pancake breakfast

The Music Boosters of Owatonna is having a Pancake Breakfast at the VFW Hall in Owatonna Sunday, March 12 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. It includes pancakes, French toast, scrambled or fried eggs, sausage links, juice, coffee, milk. Tickets are \$8 in advance, \$9 at the door, under 5 are free. Advanced tickets can be purchased from any OMS or OHS music student or from Jerry Besser at Tone Music in Owatonna.

Loken Excavation & Drainage

YOUR DRAINAGE PROJECT PARTNER

WE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

Aggregate Products • Waterway Cleaning

All Excavation Projects • Hauling & Septic

Call DALLAS for your DRAINAGE needs!

507-451-2873

LOKEN

Excavation & Drainage Inc.

3695 Hoffman Drive NW • Owatonna

loken@qwestoffice.net | Toll-free 855-298-2568

Prairie Sportsman

Thurs. Evenings, 7:30

KSMQ

PUBLIC TV

Spectrum - 3, 8, 13, 189, 199, 779

Dish Network - 15

DIRECTV - 15

HBC Luminet - 15

MetroNet - 13, 105, 106, 107

Mediacom - 2, 7, 11, 13, 118, 119, 120, 802, 813

OmniTel - 5, 19, 20, 21, 297, 315

Fish fry on Friday at KC Hall

The Knights of Columbus Lenten benefit fish dinner will be held from 5-7 p.m. on Friday, March 10 at the KC Hall, 820 S. Elm Ave., Owatonna. The "all you care to eat" dinner will be served in the KC Hall and Lounge. It features baked and fried fish, whipped potatoes with country gravy, vegetable, roll, coleslaw, coffee and milk. Cost is \$15 in advance and \$16 at the door with children under 6 free. Advance tickets can be purchased from Knights of Columbus Council 945 or Grady Strand at 507-456-1788 or at the KC Hall.

NOW PLAYING THE PROM

the PROM

Chanhassen DINNER THEATRES

800.362.3515

952.934.1525

ChanhassenDT.com

PUBLIC SAFETY

◀ BLOTTER from A6
OWATONNA POLICE

Feb. 24 Arrest: Police assisted another agency with arresting a subject in the 600 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 3:54 p.m.

Feb. 25 Disturbance: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Rose St. E. at 12:04 a.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 200 block of Pearl St. E. at 12:59 a.m.

Hit and Run: At 1:10 p.m., a hit and run accident occurred in the 2400 block of Hoffman Dr. NW.

DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest at Rose St. E. and Pine Ave. NE at 8:50 p.m.

Feb. 26 DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest in the 2200 block of 26th St. NW at 1:28 a.m.

Restraining Order: Police arrested a subject following a restraining order violation in the 100 block of Hobart St. SE at 8:43 a.m.

Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at Elm Ave. N. and Winona St. NE at 4:25 p.m.

Domestic: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1100 block of School St. E. at 8:46 p.m. They took a subject into custody.

Feb. 27 Hit and Run: At 12:27 p.m., a hit and run accident occurred in the 1900 block of Austin Road SE.

Theft: At 3:21 p.m., identity theft was reported in the 200 block of Main St. E.

Restraining Order: Police arrested a subject following a restraining order violation in the 600 block of Lynwood St. SW at 3:52 p.m.

Restraining Order: At 3:58 p.m., a restraining order violation occurred in the 400 block of Allan Ave. SW.

Feb. 28 Crash: Officers and paramedics responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries at 26th St. NE and St. Paul Road NE at 8:07 a.m.

Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1100 block of School St. E. at 10:35 a.m. They took a subject into custody.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 3000 block of Hoffman Dr. NW at 11:55 a.m.

DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest at Bridge St. W. and Selby Ave. SW at 5:17 p.m.

March 1 Vandalism: Property damage was reported at Rose St. E. and Grove Ave. N. at 1:39 a.m.

Arrest: Police assisted another agency with arresting a subject in the 600 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 9:02 a.m.

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 700 block of State Ave. NW at 2:13 p.m.

Fraud: Officer took a fraud report in the 2200 block of 1st Ave. NE at 2:54 p.m.

ARRESTS
Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

Jacob James Kresel, 35, arrested at 2 a.m. Feb. 26, DWI, held for court.

Brandon Dean Gerhartz, 39, arrested at 11:30 a.m. Feb. 26, restraining order violation, held for court.

Darwin Antonio Varela Benitez, 38, arrested at 11 p.m. Feb. 26, felony domestic assault by strangulation, assault and drug possession, held for court.

Andrew Avery Buzzard, 28, arrested at 5:19 p.m. Feb. 27, restraining order violation, held for court.

Nathaniel Evan Rendon, 25, arrested at 10:51 a.m. Feb. 28, domestic assault/assault, held for court.

Jose Terenico Velasquez Carias, 49, arrested March 1, domestic assault and threats of violence, held for court.

Dean Michael Fisher, 32, arrested at 6:35 p.m. March 1, extradition hearing for Texas warrant, held for court.

Nathan Adam Curiel Chavez, 20, arrested at 10 p.m. March 2, probation violation warrant arrest, held for court.

STEELE COUNTY
SHERIFF

Janiffer Lynne Miller, 39, arrested at 4:22 p.m. Feb. 24, probation violation warrant arrest, held for court.

Matthew Clark Rankin, 34, arrested at 11:43 p.m. Feb. 25, DWI and child safety restraint violation, held for court.

Sharmae Lanora Martin, 23, arrested Feb. 28, warrant arrest, \$1,000 bail.

Michael Bryan Hoepfer, 32, arrested at 6:25 p.m. March 2, felony drug sales, held for court.

COURT NEWS
Dodge County

The following case was heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Feb. 12 with Judge Judi L. Williamson presiding:

Moeun Mok, 29, Rochester, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of marijuana. Mok was sentenced to 18 months in St. Cloud State Prison.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Feb. 12 – 19:

DODGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Hanna J. Bongers, 32, Rochester, damage to property, \$675.98, 90 days in county jail; Anthonee A. Busch, 22, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Peter A. Bushman, 60, Rochester, speeding, \$120; Alexandria A. Donath, 31, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Miyah L. Gordon, 21, Kasson, speeding, \$280; Beatriz I. Granado, 43, Claremont, parking violation, \$32; Daniel J. Lewison, 52, Lino Lakes, assault of peace

officer, 1 year in county jail; Joshua J. Mitchell, 34, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Jeremy J. Reinert, 38, Hayfield, parking violation, \$32; Helena A. Shaw, 36, Owatonna, suspended license, \$280; Luke J. Swanson, 16, West Concord, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$100 and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without conviction.

KASSON POLICE
DEPARTMENT

Miyah L. Gordon, 21, Kasson, no insurance, \$280; Chad J. Kneeland, 42, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Brian E. Preston, 40, Kasson, parking violation, \$37.

MN STATE PATROL
ROCHESTER

Tommy A. Carmody, 22, Tower, revoked license, \$280; Jesse C. Cook, 36, New Ulm, speeding, \$140; Darilyn D. Franko, 62, Dodge Center, stop sign, \$130; Joshua M. Jacobson, 41, Chatfield, speeding, \$130; Robb D. Lubenow, 40, Minneapolis, speeding, \$140; Mark W. Ott, 41, West Concord, seat belt, \$105; Wyatt W. Page, 23, Rochester, speeding, \$130; Kameron M. Smith, 16, Owatonna, window tint violation, \$130; Sufi A. Sufi, 23, Rochester, revoked license, \$280.

Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree



Fish Dinner

Friday, March 10
5 to 7 PM



\$15 in Advance

For advance tickets contact
Grady Strand at 507-456-1788
or the KC Hall

\$16 at the Door

Kids under 6 eat FREE
ALL YOU CARE TO EAT

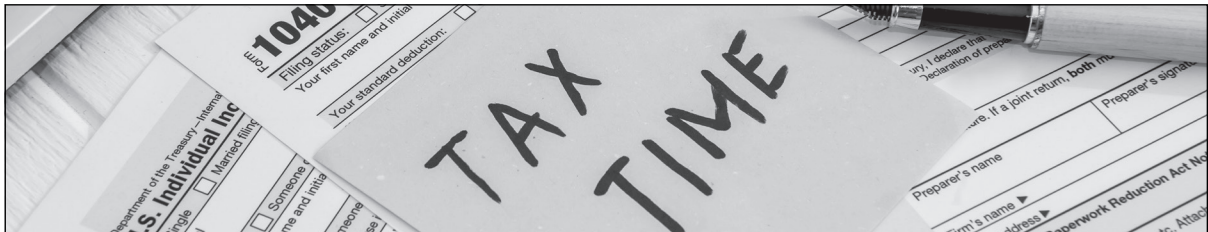
MENU

Fried or Baked Fish Plate
Mashed Potatoes with
Country Gravy
Vegetable
Coleslaw, Roll, Milk, Coffee



Please join us for dinner and support the
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
COUNCIL 945

The Columbian Center • 820 South Elm • Owatonna



Tax breaks aging taxpayers may be eligible for

Growing older comes with many perks for those who are open to exploring the benefits. In addition to senior discounts on movies, meals and more, moving into one's golden years could offer some breaks when it comes to taxes and finances.

It is always best to go over tax- and finance-related plans with an accountant or certified financial planner to figure out what is in your best interest. However, generally speaking, here are some potential age-related tax perks.

Increase retire-
ment savings

Older individuals can contribute

more to employer-sponsored retirement accounts and Roth or traditional individual retirement accounts (IRAs), according to AARP. For 2023, the contribution limit for employees who participate in 401(k) and 403(b) programs, most 457 retirement savings plans and Thrift Savings Plan through the U.S. Federal Government can increase their contributions to \$22,500 - a jump of \$2,000 from last year. Those over age 50 can maximize contributions even more, up to a total of \$30,000.

Larger standard
deduction

The Balance

Money says for tax year 2022, people age 65 or older can add an extra \$1,750 to the standard deduction they're eligible for if they are unmarried and not a surviving spouse. Those who are married and file joint returns can add \$1,400. For tax year 2023, those amounts go up to \$1,850 and \$1,500. In addition, the standard eligible deductions increased. Most older taxpayers feel the bigger standard deduction plus the extra standard deduction is more than any itemized deductions they can claim and choose this option when filing their returns.

Reduce taxable
income

The ability to contribute more to tax-deferred retirement accounts enables older adults to reduce their taxable incomes. This, in turn, reduces the amount that needs to be spent on income taxes.

Changes in filing
threshold

According to The Arbor Company, which oversees senior living communities, the filing threshold is the income that must be made before being required to file a tax return. Typical taxpayers who are either employees or retired and drawing pensions or Social Security

find the threshold increases over age 65. Single filers over age 65 do not need to file returns if their incomes are \$14,050 or under. Married filers over age 65 have a threshold of \$27,400. If primary or sole income comes from Social Security or a pension, those over age 65 may not have to file returns at all.

Elderly or dis-
abled tax credit

Differing from deductions, a credit for taxpayers is available to people age 65 or older or retired persons on permanent and total disability who receive taxable disability income for the tax year,

according to the Internal Revenue Service. In addition, this credit is for those who have an adjusted gross income or the total of nontaxable Social Security, pensions, annuities, or disability income under specific limits. The eligibility levels change from year to year. Credits range from \$3,750 to \$7,500.

These are some of the tax breaks American seniors can expect when filing their income tax returns. Speak with an accountant and financial planner about other perks that come with aging. Individuals also can visit www.irs.gov for further information. TF234855

Man accused of threatening to kill family in Owatonna

◀ MAN from A6 entire family, the report says, and could have his son in Owatonna in one day.

The victim told officers the son has access to firearms and is possibly involved in a gang, the complaint says, and she believed the threat that Velasquez Carias would kill her or have her killed.

One of the children

in the home reportedly told law enforcement that he heard Velasquez Carias tell his mother that he was going to have his son kill her – and claimed Velasquez Carias told the victim he would have his son kill them all in one day.

If convicted, the charge carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, or both.

Thank You

“On behalf of the Servicemens Club Manager, Staff, and Board Members we want to thank these individuals for the donations towards new barstools in the Foxhole area.”

Roger Stoen
Jon-Erik Meier
Mike White
Neil

David and Sue Wayne
Keith and Carol Holman
Tom and Anna Marie Brick
Chad and Julie Eischens
Mark and Karen Thoen
Sue and Jeff Zwiener
Steve Wencl

Wade and Judy Bishop
Dave and Rita Goodnature
Arden and Karla Anderson
Reene and Mike Woods
Kenny and Judy Esplan
Deb Bjornson
Doug and Kristi Miners

Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

We understand small business because we are a small business.

314 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie
507-583-7258

685 W. Bridge St., Suite 6, Owatonna
507-451-9136

133 N. Broadway, New Richland
507-465-8100

johndoerpcpa.com

SINCE 1954

STOCKWELL ACCOUNTING INC

OWATONNA, MN

802 N Elm Avenue, Suite 1
(507) 451 – 1873

planWELL.
prepareWELL.
STOCKWELL.

Ackerman Accounting & Tax Services

Lisa Ackerman

Tax Preparer/Accounting Services

www.ackermanaccounting.com
lisa@ackermanaccounting.com
507-451-3399

221 Mineral Springs Rd Ste A | Owatonna

9 10 11
Pay bills!
16 17 18
23 24 25

What will you do with your refund?

- 100% Free In-Person Tax Prep Assistance
- Household income of \$73,000 or less
- Avg Savings of \$200 in Fees

REGISTER NOW

United Way
United Way of Steele County

1850 Austin Rd Ste 103
Owatonna, MN 55060
507-455-1180

Expert tax prep.

Online and in person.

Make an appointment.

Cherronda
Cherronda R.
Tax Pro

H&R BLOCK

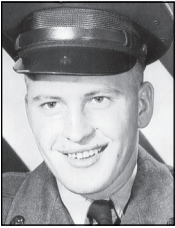
1015 W FRONTAGE RD
OWATONNA
507-451-1491

Help is here.

OBITUARIES

Obituaries Sponsor:
LEGACY MONUMENT SALES
Leon & Lori Bohlman 507-456-7864 or 507-456-3735
landlbo@gmail.com

Leo Haubenschild, 90, Rochester



Leo Haubenschild

Leo L. Haubenschild, 90, of Rochester, passed away on Wednesday, March 1, 2023.

Leo was born on Aug. 22, 1932, to John and Hermine (Peterka) Haubenschild in Ellendale. He attended school in Ellendale. He started his working career in Ellendale in 1950 at Nelsons Grocery Store, L & G Chevrolet and then Albert Lea Foundry.

He then entered the service on Feb. 7, 1951, after Basic Training at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland. He served in Korea from September 1951 until January 1952 when the entire 1st Calvary Division was rotated out of the combat area and relocated to Camp Chitose on the Island of Hokkaido, Japan until his discharge in January 1954.

After returning home, he worked for Srsen Auto, and Associated Grocers in Blooming Prairie, and the International Harvester Store in Austin, before starting his 30-year career at IBM on June 24, 1957, retiring in 1987.

After retirement he did special assignments back at IBM. He worked at Northern Hills Golf Course in the Clubhouse for 21 seasons.

On May 2, 2015, he was selected for the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. to visit all the war memorials.

He enjoyed playing baseball, fast pitch softball, fishing, golf, and spending time with his family.

Leo married Carol S. Lysne on June 1, 1957, and together they had three children: Julie, Brian, and Laurie. He is survived by daughters, Julie Haubenschild of Rochester and Laurie (Guy Gosselin) of Cedarburg, Wis.; 11 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren; and a sister, Harriet Fread of La Crescent.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Carol and son, Brian.

The Memorial Service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 11, 2023, in the River Park Chapel at Macken Funeral Home. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service in the River Park Chapel. Interment will be at Oakwood Cemetery in Rochester.

Online condolences are welcome at www.mackenfuneralhome.com.

Dean Fretheim, 89, Owatonna



Dean Fretheim

Dean Fretheim, 89, of Owatonna, passed away Thursday, March 2, 2023, at Benedictine Living Community.

Dean was born Aug. 23, 1933, in Decorah, Iowa, to Herman and Esther Fretheim. He graduated from Decorah High School and was an alumnus of Luther College, class of 1955.

Dean and Shirley Kittelson met, fell in love and they were married Sept. 11, 1955. Immediately after the wedding, Dean began a two-year stint in the U.S. Army, serving proudly at Ft. Bragg, Fayetteville, N.C. until his honorable discharge in September 1957.

Post discharge, at the urging of Kenny Bye his former football coach, Dean interviewed and accepted a position with Federated Insurance. He and his young family moved to Owatonna where he began a fulfilling 37-year career at Federated Insurance, retiring in November 1994.

In retirement, Dean and Shirley enjoyed traveling with close friends and spending time with their daughters and their grandchildren.

Dean was a man devoted to his family, friends and community, and his faith was a call to serve others. Throughout his life, Dean volunteered his time and talents to organizations that mirrored his beliefs. He served on the board of the Salvation Army, was President of the Lions Clubs, and headed the United Way campaign at Federated. Dean was a past Exalted Ruler of the Elks and was awarded the title of Honorary Life Member for his service to the organization. He volunteered with the

American Legion Color Guard and the Boy Scouts, and he coached Park and Rec basketball in Owatonna.

Dean was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church for more than 60 years and he served as a board member, Sunday school teacher and usher.

Dean loved a good western novel, TV show or movie and was a huge country music fan. He sang and played guitar, accordion, and piano. Dean loved to watch and play sports. His athletic talents included football, volleyball, tennis and golf, the game he played the longest, but frustrated him the most. He rarely missed a Vikings game and was devoted to all things Iowa Hawkeye.

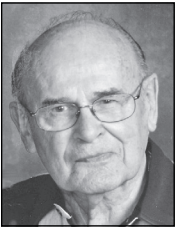
Dean was preceded in death by his parents Herman and Esther Fretheim, his older brother Harlan and his daughter, Lisa. Dean will be missed by his wife of 67 years, Shirley, his daughters, Debby Tresidder and Cheri Fretheim, two grandchildren, Kristin and Kevin Tresidder, his sister June DeBuhr, and many other family members and friends.

Visitation was held at Brick-Meger Funeral Home on Sunday, March 5, 2023. Funeral services were at Trinity Lutheran Church, Owatonna, on Monday, March 6, with visitation one hour prior to the service at the church. Interment will be at Madison Lutheran Church Cemetery in Decorah, Iowa, at a later date.

Memorials preferred to Trinity Lutheran Church or M Health Fairview Masonic Children's Hospital of Minneapolis.

BRICK-MEGER & MEDFORD
FUNERAL HOME

James Wierzbinski, 95, Owatonna



Jim Wierzbinski

James “Jim” Wierzbinski, 95 of Owatonna, died Monday, Feb. 27, 2023 at Owatonna hospital.

Friends greeted the family on Monday, March 6, at Brick- Meger Funeral Home and one hour prior to the funeral at church. Mass of Christian Burial was held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Owatonna. Burial followed at Sacred Heart Cemetery with military honors provided by the Steele County Funeral Unit. There was a Knights of Columbus Rosary recited on Monday at the funeral home prior to the visitation.

Jim was born Jan. 5, 1928, in Owatonna to Albert and Albina (Reger) Wierzbinski. He graduated from Owatonna High School in 1945. After graduation, Jim enlisted in the Navy on Aug. 10, 1945, and served until Dec. 24, 1948. During his time in the Navy, he served on USS Renville, Saint Croix, George Clymer, Diachenko. He was on board with the Navy when these various ships were participating in Operation Crossroads ordered by the Joint Chief of Staff to test the effects of the Atomic Bomb on naval vessels and conducted at Bikini Atolls, Marshall Islands in the Pacific. Jim received a World War II Victory Med-

al, American Area Campaign Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal and Good Conduct Medal.

After his service, Jim worked as a bank auditor and many other local jobs as well as working for Sears as an assistant manager for 33 years.

Jim married Shirley Sauter on May 24, 1975, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

Jim enjoyed golfing, bowling, and wood working. He was a member of the American Legion, V.F.W., Knights of Columbus and Sacred Heart Catholic Church. He was the second longest member of the Elks for 61 years during which he served as Chaplin for 25 years.

Jim is survived by wife Shirley, stepchildren Gail Sauter and June (John) Meitzner, sister Marilyn Dille-muth, sister-in-law Irene Wierzbinski, step-grandchildren, Georgia Jimenez and Christopher Meitzner, and numerous nephews and nieces.

He was preceded in death by parents, and brothers Frank, Bob and John Wierzbinski. In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to Sacred Heart Catholic Church or St. Mary’s Catholic School.

For more information or to leave an online condolence message go to www.megercares.com.

BRICK-MEGER & MEDFORD
FUNERAL HOME

Dewey Long, 94, Owatonna



Dewey Long

Dewey Lyle Long, 94, of Owatonna, died Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023 at the Woodlands in Albert Lea.

He was born Nov. 18, 1928 in Clinton Falls, to Owen K. and Carrie L. Long. He was the youngest of three sons.

On Nov. 23, 1949, he married Gladys Albertina Piepho. They had one daughter Michele (Mitzi) Rysavy.

In February of 1951, he left for Camp Rucker in Alabama to join Company F 135th Infantry, where he became a Sergeant. In 1951, he was chosen to take part in an Atomic Bomb Test called “Buster Jangle” which took place in Yucca Flats, Nevada. They were subjected to a blast that went off 1,118 feet above them. The cloud and ice cap was 7 miles high by 2 miles across.

Dewey worked part time for Cashman Nursery selling trees and shrubbery, and then joined Jostens straight out of high school as a stone setter, working his way up to the head of Quality Control until he retired in 2010.

Dewey was always interested in

aviation and got his pilot's license in 1959. He was a member of the Owatonna Scuba Diving club and was active in working with Buzz and Ken Kaplan and others to develop the Brooktree Golf Course. He was a member of the Toastmasters club. Dewey and Gladys enjoyed fishing, snowmobiling, and traveling the United States in their 5th wheel.

He is preceded in death by his wife Gladys, and two brothers Kenny and Cyrus Long.

He is survived by one daughter Michele (Mitzi) Rysavy and her husband Jim Rysavy of Owatonna.

Memorial Service for Dewey and Gladys (who passed away in May of 2022) will be 11 a.m. Friday, March 10, 2022 at Associated Church with Pat Postlewaite presiding. Visitation will be from 9:30 to 11 a.m. before the memorial at church. Burial will follow at Forest Hill Cemetery with military honors by the Steele County Funeral Unit. For more information or to leave an online condolence message visit www.megercares.com.

BRICK-MEGER & MEDFORD
FUNERAL HOME

David Kraay, 77, Owatonna



David Kraay

David Kraay, 77, of Owatonna, died on Saturday, March 4, 2023, at the Owatonna Hospital.

David was born on Nov. 27, 1945, in Albert Lea to Jochem and Doris (Larson) Kraay.

He married Leigh Ann Wilker in Owatonna on Oct. 20, 1972.

David grew up in Owatonna and attended school there. Following school, he received training in HVAC repair. David worked for Anderson Heating and Roofing before creating Tonna Heating & Cooling. He also worked at OTC on the HVAC systems before he retired in 2007.

David enjoyed hunting, and fishing up north at his cabin, as well as

spending time with his family.

He is survived by his wife Leigh Ann Kraay of Owatonna; children, Allan (Michelle) Kraay of Owatonna, Michelle (Steve) Benish of Windermere, Fla., and Kelly (Jason Guevara) Kraay of Faribault; four grandchildren: Cody, Dalton, Kinsley and Nolan; great granddaughter Mia. He is also survived by his sister Deb (Kevin) Grose of Owatonna.

He was preceded in death by his parents, JC and Doris Kraay; three brothers, Ron Kraay, Mike Kraay, and Tim Kraay; two sisters, Barabara Kraay and Joan Marie Kraay; and a grandson, Aaron Kraay.

Visitation will be held Saturday, March 18, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Michaelson Funeral Home, Owatonna. Interment will follow in Owatonna Memorial Garden Cemetery.

Medford hires new liquor store manager

◀ **MEDFORD** from A7 nal job, and the changes she’s made have greatly increased business.”

Records show profits for January 2022 at just short of \$9,000. A year later, that number was more than \$15,000 – despite what Petersen called several “large ticket purchases.”

Those include a new point of sale system, new pop guns, new tap lines, and payout of the previous manager’s paid time off.

The Fire Relief Association has also seen a boost.

Though he didn’t have the total yet, Goodnature said he was “pretty sure February will be one of the top five months – again” for gambling revenue. “Three months in a row, we’ve knocked it out of the park.”

While shares of those proceeds go to the state and the city, the remaining profits go to provide retirement benefits and other assistance for firefighters. The liquor store has six i-Pads and four pull-tab boxes.

According to Beth Jackson, city clerk, gambling sales have hit more than \$30,000 the last three months.

“Before you vote about making Rachel full time,” she said, “keep in mind that with her bringing in those kind of sales, my checks from

(charitable gambling) for the city now are \$2,500 instead of \$1,200. Even though we didn’t budget for a full-time muni manager, you already have that revenue there. She’s already bringing it in the door, between muni sales and gambling revenue.”

Except for 2020 – when most businesses were closed because of COVID-19 – the Medford Municipal Liquor Store has typically turned a profit.

Still, sales had slipped – so much so that Mayor Danny Thomas had talked about closing the muni on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Last week, over those two days, Heinrichs said, “we made five grand ...”

“... and that’s not including the gambling,” Goodnature finished. “It’s nuts. There’s people in that bar that I don’t even know who they are – and I’ve been here 20 years.”

It’s momentum Heinrichs plans to continue.

“I had my highest sales on Saturday,” she told the council. “It was just tipping four grand, in one day.”

Heinrichs’ promotion was an easy vote, especially for Manda Mueller, the liquor store commissioner for the city.

“She’s been amazing,” Mueller said. “My fear is that if we don’t make some changes as far as

(making the position full time), down the road, we’ll lose her to someone who does offer full time. I’d hate to take three steps back when we’ve taken so many steps forward.”

Other business

· Members of the council approved a resolution calling for a public hearing on the planned assessments for the 2023 street improvement project. Affected property owners will receive a notice by mail; the hearing is set for 6 p.m. March 27. The total amount proposed to be assessed is just over \$221,000, payable in annual installments over 15 years.

· Owatonna city officials were “very receptive” about a joint venture to build a new wastewater treatment facility to share with Medford. Crucial to the project is funding from the state legislature: \$22 million for Owatonna and \$4.5 million Medford, to help offset costs.

The bond is necessary, Petersen said, “to keep the rates within reason. We’re still talking about \$100 a month average sewer rate, but we’d be looking at high increases if we have to build our own plant.”

Rep. John Petersburg (R-Waseca) presented his bonding bill request for the project last week on the House floor. No action was taken.

DEATH NOTICE

Faye Kottke, 90, Owatonna

Faye (Allyn) Kottke, 90, of Owatonna died Thursday, March 2, 2023 at Benedictine Living Community in Owatonna.

Visitation will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 8, 2023, at Michaelson Funeral Home in Owatonna. A memorial service will follow at 3 p.m.

A full obituary will appear at a later time.

TRUST US TO Handle With Care

GLEN

MIKE

BRETT

Proudly Serving Steele County

BRICK-MEGER FUNERAL HOME

MEDFORD FUNERAL HOME

507.451.1457 • megercares.com

BOOK NOOK



Even though we are a small-town library, the Blooming Prairie Branch Library is fortunate to be able to host author visits each year. South East Libraries Cooperating (SELCO) coordinates author tours each year. This year I am pleased to announce that Lorna Landvik will be visiting our library. The exact date and time have yet to be established. If you would like to start reading some of Lorna's books, such as *Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons* or *Once in*

Two Minnesota authors plan library visits

a Blue Moon Lodge, stop by the library to find a display of her books. Watch this space for all the details to come! During the month of March, we also have author Dean Ulland, who will be speaking on his book *We Must All Be Ready to Sacrifice*. Dean is a retired history professor from Riverland College who has extensively studied the World War I time period. His book specifically addresses "the Great War and its effects on the people of Freeborn, Mower, and Steele Counties in Minnesota." Find out how your ancestors dealt with the heartaches of sending their family members to the front. What challenges happened in their daily lives? One chapter in the book deals with Dissent, Disloyalty, and Politics. Local residents with German backgrounds were often suspected of treasonous intentions. Neighbors turned in neighbors if German was spoken or "suspicious" behavior was noted. (My own grandfather told stories about how he stopped speaking German in public during World War I.) Another chapter focuses on "Boozy Prairie" and the so-called Saloon Owner's Rebellion. As a Blooming Prairie alumnus, Dean knows both facts and stories about this time period. Please join us on Thursday, March 16 at 1:30 p.m. for an interesting presentation. See you at the library!

KCs share \$24K with local organizations



The Knights of Columbus in Owatonna recently presented donations totaling \$24,500 to 15 local organizations. Funds were distributed from the group's charitable gambling operations. Those pictured represent St. Mary's School, St. Joseph Parish, Sacred Heart Parish, Hospitality House, Rachel's Light, Healthy Seniors of Steele County, Grandparents for Education, Habitat for Humanity, Exchange Club Center for Family Unity, Community Pathways, Homestead Hospice House, Catholic Charities of S. MN-Adoption Services, and Open Arms Suicide Prevention.

COLLEGE NEWS

Local students earn college, university degrees

St. Scholastica
Allison Brayden of Owatonna recently graduated from The College of St. Scholastica with a BS in Nursing.
St. Cloud State
Luis Sandoval of Owatonna was among more than 500 students who graduated from St. Cloud State University during fall semester 2022. Sandoval earned an Associate of Arts, Liberal Arts and Sciences degree.
UW-Eau Claire
The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire awarded 613 degrees in December 2022. Local students who received degrees and their fields of study are Lawren Deml, Arts and Sciences, Bachelor of Arts, integrated strategic communication, and Mackayla Knutson, Arts and Sciences, Bachelor of Science, biology. Both are Ellendale residents.

Schools award academic honors to local students

St. Olaf
The following local students have been named to the St. Olaf College dean's list for the fall 2022 semester: Cora Harpel, Jack Harpel, and Kari Harpel, all of Ellendale; and Carter Kuehn, Brian Kuehn, and Shelly Rockman, all of Owatonna. The dean's list recognizes students with a semester grade point average of 3.75 or higher on a 4-point scale.
UW-Stevens Point
Payton Jorgenson of Owatonna was among more than 2,350 undergraduate students honored by University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point for attaining high

grade point averages during the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. Jorgenson received Highest Honors, reflecting a grade-point average of 3.90 to 4.0 (4.0 equals straight A).
UW-LaCrosse
Owatonna students have been named to the Dean's List at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse for the fall semester of the 2022-23 academic year, ending December 2022. Qualification for the Dean's List is limited to students who have attained outstanding academic achievement. To be eligible, students must have earned not less than a 3.5 semester grade point average and carried a minimum of 12 credits. Local honorees include: Cora Barrett, Management Major; Jenna Bauman, Clinical Laboratory Science Major; Holly Buytaert, Mathematics Major; Kaia Elstad, Exercise and Sport Science Major; Exercise Science – Pre-professional Track; Hillary Haarstad, Marketing Major; Molly Hawkins, Spanish Education Major (Early Childhood – Adolescence); Alexis Highfield, Psychology Major; Benjamin Johnson, Exercise and Sport Science Major; Exercise Science – Pre-professional Track; Lexi Ringhofer, Biology Major; Biomedical Science Concentration; Anna Sobrak, Radiologic Science Major; Radiation Therapy Emphasis; Nicole Weber, Biology Major; Biomedical Science Concentration; Elizabeth Wunderlich, Biology Major; Biomedical Science Concentration

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Mar. 8 Clint Becker Brook Krejci Cody Poshusta Noah Jonathan Nelson	Mar. 11 Marion Mast Harlan Hansen Neila Nelson Archer Lurken	Mar. 13 Kelly Peterson Evie Emanuel Kelli Williamson Lonnie Lembke
Mar. 9 Jeremy Wangen Nicki Bishop Kylie Forystek Kim Eaker Lang Adrian Noble	Mar. 12 Charlotte Trom Riauna Bishop Denise Thompson Dennis Wendl	Mar. 14 John Abbe Elliot Swenson Brielle Johnson
Mar. 10 Elizabeth Salinas Brenda Yentsch Ryan Glynn Jean Farr Aspen Clayton Olivia Anderson Aubree Johnson	Mar. 10 Josh & April Nease	

HONEST-1 AUTO CARE
honest1owatonna.com

NEW RICHLAND • HARTLAND • ELLENDALE • GENEVA

PANTHER of The Week

NRHEG Elementary School- Ellendale
This week's Panther of the Week is—Ruxin Anderson. He is the son of Chandler Anderson and they reside in Clarks Grove. Ruxin is in Mrs. Johns' third grade class.

Ruxin shows Panther Pride by always including others, works hard every day, and respects all his teachers. He loves to help his peers!

Keep up the great work Ruxin!

Whispering Oak Place
903 Calvary Court • Ellendale, MN 56026
507-684-3026
Cornerstone Management Services
Congratulations Panthers!

RJ'S 5TH AVE
GO PANTHERS!!
507-684-9422
Ellendale

4.25% APY*

15 Month Certificate of Deposit

Community Bank Owatonna
Celebrating 20 Years as Owatonna's Only "Community Owned Bank"
2003 – 2023

640 Bridge Street – Owatonna
507-455-BANK (2265)
www.cbowatonna.com

Member FDIC

*The minimum balance to open an account and earn the Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is \$5,000. The APY is effective March 1, 2023. Interest is compounded quarterly. A substantial penalty may be imposed for early withdrawal. Commercial, Institutional, or Brokered Funds not eligible.

BLOSSOMS OF THE WEEK

Coltyn Wacek – KD – Mrs. Burkhart's Class – Parents: Brandon & Kristin Wacek –
Coltyn is an Awesome Blossom! He is kind, friendly, creative and a hard worker! Coltyn comes to school every day with a big smile and a great attitude. Coltyn is a good friend to all his classmates. We are so lucky to have Coltyn in our Bridges class. Congratulations, Coltyn!!

Leah Krell – 1D – Mrs. Busho's Class – Parents: Justin & Kristin Krell –
Leah is the perfect example of an Awesome Blossom. She comes to school each day excited and ready to learn. Leah is a wonderful student who is a hard worker and will help anyone in need. She is a fantastic role model to all of her peers! We are so proud of you, Leah! Keep being amazing!

Ethan Hullopeter – 2C – Mrs. Anderson's Class - Parents: Brady & Heather Hullopeter –
Ethan comes to school each day with a positive attitude and a smile on his face! He works hard and shows Prairie Pride every day. He is always willing to help his classmates and his teacher, and he often does so without being asked. He is friendly and kind to everyone and others enjoy being around him. We are so lucky to have Ethan in 2C!

The Blossoms of the Week are Sponsored by these Community Boosters

Cargill
Helping the world thrive
157 Hwy Ave N
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917
507-583-6641
www.cargill.com

Prairie Manor Heather Haus
Outpatient Therapy, Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing
220 3rd St NW Blooming Prairie, MN
507-583-4434

STEELE COUNTY Times

411 E. Main St • Blooming Prairie • 507-583-4431

STEELECOUNTYTIMES.COM



**Pastor
Matt Fennell**

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
BLOOMING PRAIRIE

I have been thinking a lot lately about the Biblical account of the life of a lady much neglected by most. Her life was by any measure a difficult one, and yet one that if we take the time to understand can be a source of great comfort and encouragement.

Her name is Leah, and from the moment we meet her, we find that she is little respected by those who should have cherished her.

The girl nobody wanted

Her father is a scoundrel and scheming con-man who does not seem to comprehend her value or great quality as character. He rather seems to see her as an obstacle to be done away with as quickly as is conveniently possible. She becomes a pawn in his dishonest plot and in the original bait and switch scam she is foisted upon a young man who is enamored with her more beautiful sister.

Rachel the pretty one appears to have been the favored one of all. Many readers applaud Rachel due to the romance of the story, and yet a careful reader of Scripture will struggle to find much commendation of her apart from noting her attractive appearance. Quite honestly, her father accidentally did Jacob a

big favor by giving him this under valued gem.

Sadly, her new husband was little more discerning than her father. Enamored by her younger sister, he fails to give her the respect and affection she deserved. He made no attempt to hide his favoritism. It is obvious to everyone that Rachel is the sole object of his de-luded affection. Yet for all this favored position, we never see Rachel act with any grace towards her mal-igned sister with whom she shares a husband.

The little information we have is he finds her to be a liar, deceiver, thief and idolater. If this were not enough, the two conversations recorded in Scripture seem to indicate an individual who treated her husband disrespect-fully. She verbally badgers

him and seems merely to value him as a prize by which she could best Leah.

I think we would all agree this is a dysfunctional home and a dismal experience. The treatment is most heinously illustrated when Jacob faces the most dangerous situation. He is informed that his older brother is coming with a small army. This is very disconcerting, for on the last occasion of their meeting Esau had vowed to kill him for stealing the blessing from him. Only his mother's quick inter-vention had enabled him to escape by fleeing out of the country.

Now he was coming home and it appeared the piper must be paid! So, what does he do? He at-tempts to butter-up brother Esau, but also takes precautions. He divides his

family up in four groups. If one gets slain, he in the rear most position will have time to escape. Quite the courageous hero. Who does he keep in back with himself? Rachel and her son. Where is Leah and her family but in the very teeth of danger. We could understand a person in her position becoming bitter and resentful yet there is no record of this. We see her as a faithful and kind wife to Jacob all of her life.

It's interesting how things worked out, though. For although her father may not have wanted her, and her husband underestimat-ed her exceedingly, the One who keeps the books made sure that she received her due in the end! She outlived Rachel. She was blessed with six children—five boys and one girl. At the end of his life Jacob comes back to her and is buried with her and not Rachel.

It is interesting that when God gives the orders

for the manner in which the nation of Israel is to move out from their encampment that the most favorable positions are accorded to the descen-dants of her sons. It would seem God disagreed with Jacob's ranking.

It does not stop there. It is from her that both the priestly line as well as the Royal Line would descend. Such men as Moses, Aaron, Kings David and Solomon as well as all their lineage up to and including Jesus himself all have their de-scent through Leah. Mary the mother of Jesus was one of her descendants as well as John the Baptist.

Are you undervalued or overlooked? Does it seem that you are unloved or unwanted?

I assure you our Heavenly Father does not view you as so. Bear your struggles with grace for He not only loves you but will also see to it that the record is put straight.

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

NORTHBRIDGE 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@stjosephowtonna.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 10:15 a.m.
www.litomysl.webs.com

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC
150 NE Second St. Hayfield
507-477-2256
Rev. Bill Becker
Saturday Mass 4:30 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 8:30 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.
Daily Mass: Tuesday, Wednesday and 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

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

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
Sundy 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.
flchopemn@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.
Sunday School 9 a.m.
pontoppidanlemond@outlook.com

REDEEMER LUTHERAN — LCMS
1054 Truman Ave., Owatonna
507-451-2720
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Sunday Education Hour 10:15 a.m.
redeemerowatonna@outlook.com

RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN- ELCA
30456 Mower-Freeborn Rd., Austin
507-320-8287
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
www.roglutheran.org

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN — LCMS
4532 SE 84th Ave., Claremont
507-528-2404
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. (2nd & 4th Sunday Holy Communion)
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Wednesday: Advent 7 p.m. (with Holy Communion)
sjlcoffice@frontiernet.net

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN — LCMS
28959 630th Ave., Sergeant
320-674-0351
Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m.
Sunday School 9 a.m.
www.saintjohnssergeant.jimdo.com

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN — ELCA

1301 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
507-451-7293
Sunday & Summer Worship 8 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.
Thursday & Saturday worship at 5 p.m.
Sunday worship at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
info@stjohnowatonna.com

ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN- ELCA
30450 570th Ave., Waltham
507-567-2474
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Pastor Barbara Finley-Shea
FB - St. Michael's Youth Activities Waltham, MN

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN — LCMS
202 E Park Ave., Hollandale
507-567-2272
Sunday Worship 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
www.motorcitychurch.org

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN — ELCA
2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden
507-451-2165
Sunday Worship 10 a.m.
deaconbilliejo@gmail.com

TRINITY LUTHERAN- ELCA
609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
507-451-4520
Sunday Worshop -Sanctuary 8:15 a.m. & 9:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall 10:45 a.m., Live Stream 9:30 a.m. at facebook.com/tlcowatonna and tlcowatonna.org/worshiplive
Video on Spectrum (CH181) Metronet TV (Ch 900) and owatonnalive.com
Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday at 6 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m.
www.tlcowatonna.org/

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

TRINITY LUTHERAN — LCMS
108 Third Ave. SW, Medford
507-451-0447
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Wednesday 6:30 p.m.
tlcmedfordoffice@gmail.com

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

ZION LUTHERAN — ELCA
7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale
Sunday Worship 8:30 a.m.
deaconbilliejo@gmail.com

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN — ELCA
1909 St. Paul Rd., Owatonna
507-451-4853
Sunday Worship 9:15 a.m.- In-person service and livestreamed
www.oursaviorsowatonna.com

EMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
750 Jeffery St., Owatonna
507-455-2729
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.
www.emmanuel-wels-owatonna.com

MENNONITE

PRAIRIE MENNONITE
13638 750th St. — Blooming Prairie
507-583-7532
Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday Pray Meeting: 7:30 p.m.
www.prairiemennonite.org

METHODIST

BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST
43089 180th St., Medford (Seven miles west of Medford on CR. 23)
507-835-8726
Sunday Worship — 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School — 9:45 a.m.
www.bloominggroveumc.org

ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST
200 Sixth St. NW, Ellendale
507-382-2483
Sunday School at 9:15 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.
www.ellendaleumc.org

OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST
815 E University St. — Owatonna
507-451-4734
Sunday Traditional Worship (Pathways) 9 a.m.
www.owatonnaumc.org

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

CEDAR CREEK
30 E Main St., Hayfield
507-477-2255
Sunday Worship 10 a.m.
www.cedarcreekchurch.org

DESTINY CHRISTIAN
2515 Harvest Lane NW- Owatonna
507-456-4775
Sunday Worship:9 a.m.
Wednesday Worship: 6:30-7:30 p.m. 1st & 3rd every month
www.destinycc.org

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

NEW BEGINNINGS
332 14th St. NE, Owatonna
507-413-0209
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
Wednesday Service: 7 p.m.
www.nbclife.org

REDEMPTION CHURCH
123 E. Main St., Owatonna
507-413-7850

MOST
BLOOMING PRAIRIE STUDENTS
DON'T
DRINK ALCOHOL IN A TYPICAL MONTH
2022 MN Student Survey, n= 149 BPHS Students. Funded by MN DHS BHD

United Way
United Way of Steele County
GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
LIVE UNITED.
1850 Austin Rd Ste 103
Owatonna, MN 55060
507-455-1180
www.unitedwaysteelcounty.org
Text UWSC2021 to 202-858-1233

Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.
www.redemptionowatonna.org

SIMPLY CHURCH
105 2nd St., Geneva
507-438-5418
Sunday Bible Study: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Tuesday Worship: 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday Worship: 5:30 p.m.

MORMON

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAT SAINTS
404 31st St. NW, Austin
507-433-9042
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.
www.churchofjesuschrist.org

PENTECOSTAL

FIRST UNITED PENTECOSTAL
230 Locust Ave., Owatonna
507-363-3046
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
Wednesday Service: 7 p.m.

PRESBYTERIAN

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
109 E Main St., Hayfield
507-477-2631
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
www.firstpresbyterianhayfield.com

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
P.O. Box 66
121 East St. N., Claremont
507-528-2320
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
www.faithstreet.com

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST
2373 Seventh Ave NE, Owatonna
651-955-4032
Saturday Worship: 11 a.m.
Saturday Bible Study: 9:30 a.m.
www.owatonnasdachurch.org

UCC

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
211 Main St. S., Medford
507-451-4596
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
www.ucc.org

Monuments
LEGACY MONUMENT SALES
Leon's Cell 507-456-7864
Lori's Cell 507-456-3735
landlbo@gmail.com
Call for a catalog to view in the comfort of your home. We are here to help you create your monument by email or phone.

LEON & LORI BOHLMAN

LERBERG'S FITNESS CENTER & CAR WASH
118 5th Ave. Ellendale
507-684-2471

Dr. Deborah Lien
DDS, MBA
Building Healthy Smiles!
32 2nd Ave NE
Blooming Prairie
507.583.6613
FREE CONSULTATION

United Way
United Way of Steele County
GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
LIVE UNITED.
1850 Austin Rd Ste 103
Owatonna, MN 55060
507-455-1180
www.unitedwaysteelcounty.org
Text UWSC2021 to 202-858-1233

Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
314 E. Main St.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-7528
685 W. Bridge St.
Owatonna
507-451-9136
133 N. Broadway
New Richland
507-465-3810

Vandal's FAMILY MARKET
Locally Owned & Operated
237 Hwy. Ave. S.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-6671

Owatonna GRANITE & MONUMENT
"Creating Your Story in Stone"
1180 Frontage Rd E • Owatonna
507-455-9551
www.owatonnagranite.com

FLOOR TECH
322 East Main St.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-2276

FARMERS INSURANCE
Mike Bishman
121 W. Broadway St.
Owatonna
507-451-0193

REALIFE COOPERATIVE
Vibrant Living For Individuals 55 & Older at a Reasonable Price
Call Jon Arnett @
455-3735 for a tour
236 22nd St. SE • Owatonna

Valley Terrace
Assisted Living
1212 W Frontage Rd, Owatonna, MN
507-451-0722
valleyviewofowatonna.com

Read between the swines?

BP wraps up I Love to Read month

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

I Love to Read month wrapped up last week at Blooming Prairie Elementary School (BPES) with a lot of music, a lot of dancing – and a little smooch.

Angie Huck, a Title 1 teacher at the school, asked the students a series of questions, each drawing more screams and laughter than the one before.

“Are you ready to see Mr. Schwarz kiss a pig? Do you hope the pig is muddy? Do you hope the pig is dirty? Do you think he should kiss the pig right on the lips?”

Then came the man of the hour: BPES Principal Jacob Schwarz, who entered the gym in overalls, cowboy hat, and boots – chasing a giant chicken.

It was in keeping with the theme this year: “Yeehaw! It’s I Love to Read month!”

The Wednesday dress-up days were centered around farming and animals. When the rooster crowed over the



Kindergartners from Emily Voss's class participate in the chicken dance during their celebration of I Love to Read month at Blooming Prairie Elementary School. Dressed in the farm theme are, from left, Hattie Young, Weston Lang, Ansley Tollefson, Lanie Kraudy, Violet Hagen, and Kipton Gross.

intercom, everyone in the school was asked to drop what they were doing and read.

After catching his breath, Schwarz congratulated the 470-plus students – announcing that some classes had read more than a million words during February.

“The reason we celebrate is because that’s the reason we’re in school, right? We’re here to learn to read, then read to learn,” he

said, before turning the microphone over to Huck.

“It’s the time you’ve all been waiting for,” she said. “Mr. Schwarz is going to kiss a puppy.”

After a couple more false starts – kissing both a stuffed pig and a tiny Peppa pig figure drew boos and jeers from everyone – Blooming Prairie High School senior Lexi Steckelberg wound her way through the crowded gym.

In her arms,

wrapped in a blanket, was Betty, a month-old crossbred pig from the Steckelberg farm.

It was an appropriate choice made by the students, who after meeting their reading goals, had the opportunity to drop a token in the bucket of the animal they wanted to see their principal kiss.

It could have been a cow or goat or sheep – but Betty got the honors on, of all days, National Pig Day.



Dawson Salisbury, a kindergartner student in KB, reacts to the idea of his principal kissing a muddy pig “right on the lips” during the I Love to Read month celebration at Blooming Prairie Elementary School.



Betty, a month-old pig from the Steckelberg farm outside of Blooming Prairie, seems uninterested in the chaos around her as students at the Blooming Prairie Elementary School waited for their principal to give her a kiss.

SCHOOL DAYS TO CHANGE

◀ **SCHOOL** from A1
Those costs would likely come in the form of new buses for the district. The base price for a new full-size bus starts at more than \$100,000.
“It’s really just looking at how we can

efficiently and effectively safely transport our students to school, in conjunction with the bus company,” Elstad said. “They have a master router who spends hours figuring out the best way for us to do this.”

When Owatonna Bus Company approached the district with the proposal to shift start and end times, members of the school board recognized potential problems.

“At our work session, there was a concern about the later (start) time of our K-5 learners,” Elstad said. “Many folks in the community might have an 8:00 work start time.”

The district has always provided early morning supervision for elementary age

“It’s going to mean change and adjustment but given the price tag of buses that would be required to do it otherwise, we still think it’s the right choice.”

Lori Weisenburger
Owatonna School Board Member

students, he said, “and we would continue to do that, and offer that opportunity so that parents who do need to drop children off would still be able to get to work on time.”

It wasn’t a “quick decision,” board member Lori Weisenburger said.

“I just want to make sure the public knows

and understands that we vetted this issue, and we know it does have some impact on folks,” she said. “It’s going to mean change and adjustment but given the price tag of buses that would be required to do it otherwise, we still think it’s the right choice.”

The district’s current transportation

policy provides free busing to students who live two miles or more from the school they attend. Families within a two-mile radius may pay a fee for bus transportation.

NEW SCHOOL DAYS
Starting fall of 2023

- Elementary- Kindergarten-Grade 5: 8:10 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.
- Middle School- Grades 6-8: 7:50 a.m. to 2:20 p.m.
- High School- Grades 9-12: 8:20 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.

Big goal for growing need

◀ **BIG GOAL** from A1
“I check people in, greet them, let them know they’re welcome, and we appreciate them coming in,” she said. “They tell you their stories.”

Those stories have changed dramatically over the past three years, Teele said. So many more county residents need help.

“People come in who never had to come before,” she said.

Community Pathways is still seeing the people for whom hunger is a much bigger and more constant battle. But a new group is pushing the organization’s food budget to the limit.

According to executive director Dom Korbel, the average number of weekly shoppers has grown from 254 in 2021 to 567 in the rolling six-week average he’s tracking this year.

“I think a large portion is due to how many people were riding the edge of needing help and were pushed over in the last 18 months,” he said. “We are seeing so many more people that need us because of one thing.”

That could be an unexpected car repair blowing up someone’s monthly budget. Around the time school starts, families come in because school supplies take a big bite out of their budgets.

One couple, in their early 60s, came in after learning the wife needed a critical surgery and what their share of the cost would be.

“The husband said, ‘I’ve got a plan, I’m taking extra shifts at work.

If we can lower our food costs, she can have that surgery,’” Korbel said.

The increased need coupled with rising food costs has him looking at a big goal for this year’s Minnesota FoodShare Month. The campaign was founded more than 40 years ago, when advocates for food shelves realized that donations were dropping off significantly after the holidays. They designated March as FoodShare Month.

Organizations across the state participate; local food shelves use the Minnesota FoodShare marketing arm to boost their efforts.

“It gave us this rallying point to raise funds,” Korbel said. “The goal locally is a huge push for donations and food.”

“Huge” this year amounts to \$170,000 and 70,000 pounds of food, up from \$142,000 and 62,000 last year. Along with individual donations, this month is when the Hometown Sampler happens every year, raising funds and collecting food during weekend concerts featuring five local bands.

Held last weekend, the event was a key part of the March effort with a target that amounts to about 20% of the overall March goal. Korbel is also out speaking to any group that will have him, and local businesses, organizations, churches, and even schools are getting into the game with collection events.

“I’ve got food drives going on across the community I don’t even know about,” Korbel

said with a broad smile. “There’s so many things going on. People just step up for us.”

Along with actually feeding local residents, the amounts raised in March serve a dual purpose. Korbel said Minnesota FoodShare raises money throughout the year, and those dollars are distributed to communities based on the success of their local efforts.

While it’s not dollar-for-dollar, “there’s a one hundred percent correlation between the dollars we raise and the

share we get,” he said.

Korbel said this year’s drive is more important than ever, as Community Pathways is having to make some tough decisions about its food supplies. There’s food on the shelves, but “we’ve having to manage the variety and cost.”

Eggs, an item shoppers value, now take up about 30% of the nonprofit’s \$250,000 food budget. A decision to make sure they’re on the shelves means stocking almost no canned fruit.

BEV'S FRIENDS & FAMILY TOURS PRESENTS:
ALASKA CRUISE AND LAND TOUR

AUGUST 9-21, 2023
Enjoy more with the best deal at sea on the Sapphire Princess!
Cruise departs from Vancouver, BC (passport required) and includes stops in Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway plus Glacier Bay and College Ford scenic cruising. The land tour includes both rail and motor coach tours to Talkeetna, Mt. McKinley, Denali, Fairbanks and more.
Cost includes transportation to airport, non-stop airfare, cruise, port fees, 5-day land package, hotel stays and perks such as pre-paid gratuities and special cabin night dinner and show in Denali. As well, veterans receive an additional \$100 credit.
Deluxe balcony double room \$5399 per person if paid by check. \$900 deposit per person at the time of booking with balance due on May 1st. Optional travel insurance is available and recommended. Call for date/location of travel show presentations. Reserve early to secure your spot!

Contact Bev's Friends & Family Tours at:
507-451-8695 / jbllysne@charter.net
Mail check to 318 SW 13th St., Owatonna, MN 55060.

Owatonna Music Boosters

- Pancake Breakfast -

Pancakes, French Toast, Scrambled or Fried Eggs, Sausage Links, Juice, Coffee, Milk

8:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M.

Sunday, March 12, 2023

VFW Hall, Owatonna, MN

\$8.00 advance - \$9.00 at door - Under 5 free

Ham & Hope Butter Family Bingo

All Proceeds Benefit
Feed my Starving Children Mobile Pack

Sunday, March 26 2:00 P.M.
First Lutheran Church Blooming Prairie

Open to the Public
20 Games
\$1 Donation per game
Snacks and Beverages Available

Sponsored by Hormel Foods and Hope Creamery

More information : Cheri Krejci 507-438-6895

62nd Annual WELLS RIFLE & PISTOL ASSOC GUN SHOW

Modern & Antique Guns, Knives, Coins & Collectibles

Sat., March 11 • 8:30am-4:00pm
Sun., March 12 • 8:30am-3:00pm
— Over 300 Tables —
\$5 Admission • Public Invited
Delicious breakfast & lunch available:
Pie, egg-brewed coffee, & more!
U.S.C. Public High School • Wells, MN

Under 14 FREE • Must be accompanied by an adult.
Frying in the Show? Wells Airport • 8687. Call 507-985-1153 upon arrival for free shuttle to and from the Show.

BP students become Math Masters

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

Jackson Olson is a boy of few words, but he knows math.

The Blooming Prairie Elementary School sixth-grader “learned multiplication and division in kindergarten. My stepmom taught me.”

It made sense, then, for him to be a part of the school’s first-ever Math Masters team – though with 11 students and only five allowed per team, Jackson was chosen to compete in the individual division.

So what is Math Masters?

“It’s just how it sounds,” he said.

A little more information: It’s a mathematics competition program for fourth-through sixth-graders in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The students use critical thinking and problem-solving skills that cover a wide range of areas.

Denise Hadrath, a fifth-grade teacher at BPES and the school’s gifted and talented coordinator, is the team’s coach.



One of two BPES teams works on its series of problems during a Math Masters competition last week in Austin. Pictured clockwise from bottom left are Briella Musel, Carson Sayles, Elliot Schiller, Leah Watson, and Mason Peterson. The students are sixth-graders.

“We also have Mrs. (Sara) Reinke, who helps me,” she said. Reinke is a math teacher at Blooming Prairie High School.

“The questions are definitely challenging,” Hadrath said last week, the day before the team had its only competition of the season.

The questions are “at a higher level” than typical sixth-grade math problems, she said, “so it’s nice to have (Reinke) in there.”

To form the team, Hadrath spoke with sixth-grade teacher Matt Kittelson to



The Blooming Prairie sixth-grade Math Masters pose for a team photo after their competition last week in Austin. In the front, from left, are Briella Musel, Lizzy Johnson, Jackson Olson, and Justin Olsen. In the back are Addison Hjelm, Leah Watson, Carson Sayles, Elliot Schiller, Owen Gimbel, Joey Schwarz, and Mason Peterson.

identify students “he thought were strong at math and would be able to handle something like this. We looked at what he saw in class and what we saw on test scores.”

After talking with the students, “there were definitely some that said, ‘I may be good at math, but I don’t want to do that,’” Hadrath said.

something if I’m stuck,” she said, “and I can help them figure out something if they’re stuck.”

Her team’s strength is PEMDAS, the order of operations: parentheses, exponents, multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction, she said.

Briella knew “most of them are really good at math, because they get their work done right away. I didn’t really like math when I was younger; the older I got, the better I got at it and the easier it was for me. You pay more attention when you’re older, instead of messing around.”

Personally, “there’s some things I’m good at, and some things I’m learning.”

That’s just the point, Hadrath said.

“They have fun doing it; they get excited when they get it figured out, working together,” she said. “It’s a wide range of kids in that group that all still think it’s fun to do that kind of academic work.”

It’s the school’s first year competing in Math Masters; Hadrath will also coach the fifth-grade team, which has a competition on April 20.

The sixth-grade overall team had two students place among the top six in the number facts round at its March 2 competition. Justin Olsen placed second and Joey Schwarz was fifth.

The two teams of five students placed fourth and seventh out of nine.

Jackson was the only individual competitor.

It’s your health, be a medical advocate for yourself

One thing I have learned from my sister Janice and from my daughter Tammi is that you must be a medical health advocate for yourself to stay healthy.

My sister contracted diabetes when she was 18, and Tammi was diagnosed with a chronic liver disease when she was 14.

Both asked questions after questions of their medical health teams. Neither would accept a pill until it was fully explained why she was taking that certain medicine. Both always read every word in those medication explanation sheets.

Being an advocate for yourself means that you are truly concerned about your health and how it should be managed. One of Tammi’s nurses looked her straight in the eye and said, “Tammi, it’s your health, take care of yourself by being advocate for yourself.”

I’m sure many of you readers likewise take care of your health by asking questions as to why you are being treated a certain way. My parents never asked pointed questions of their doctors and nurses. That’s because they did not go to the doctor very often and because they believed everything the doctor was telling them.

When my parents went to the doctor, either for us kids or for themselves, it had to be because we were very sick.

Now, health care is so specialized that you

can best be reassured that you are getting the best medical care available.

If it is difficult for you to directly communicate with your doctor, ask a family member or friend to be your health advocate.

Also, don’t be afraid to ask for another medical opinion on a particular health issue. Your doctors and nurses may have your best interests at heart, but they do approach medical care in different ways.

We in Minnesota are extremely fortunate to have fine medical care facilities at our fingertips (teleconference and video conference) and in person. These facilities are staffed by some of the finest medical personnel in the world. We have two of the world’s best teaching institutions, the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

So, with all these advantages on your side, you can be an advocate for your own health care by helping your medical team actually assess your needs.

When Tammi was fighting her liver disease, Judy and I accompanied her to every doctor’s visit. Six ears are better than two ears.

Judy and I continue that practice today by going into see the doctor or nurse together. If you don’t follow that practice, you oftentimes miss what a medical professional is explaining.

With medical



Reflections

HOWARD LESTRUD

portals, patients can now more clearly understand their health issues. Doctors can send a report to the patient soon after they have seen that patient. Patients, in turn, can ask questions of their doctors or nurses directly through the computer.

Health agencies also recommend encouraging patients to complete questionnaires before or after seeing a medical professional.

Yes, one might say: “Don’t ever get sick.”

Our nephew is currently attending medical school in Chicago, and it is such a learning experience to sit down with him and to reflect on his medical experiences thus far on his road to becoming a doctor. Take care of your body. It’s the only one you have.

By being a health advocate for yourself, you are increasing your chances of staying healthy. Your doctor can only tell you so much by taking blood tests and by doing other routine examinations. The rest comes from you sharing with the medical professional how you really feel.

It is often said, “If you have good health, you have everything.” That is so true.

MATH MASTERS AT GLANCE

Competition test materials are prepared by math department faculty members at St. Cloud State University and the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John’s University. The problems cover the areas of:

- Number facts/order of operations
- Numeracy/properties of numbers
- Geometry/time/money
- Statistics/probability/counting
- Decimals/fractions/percents

BEV’S FRIENDS & FAMILY TOURS PRESENTS: GALLERIA SPRING FLOWER SHOW & BACHMAN’S



FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2023
WELCOME SPRING!

Welcome in spring with a trip to the Galleria and Bachman’s! We’ll have plenty of time to view the beautiful floral displays at the Galleria and do some shopping. Then we’ll enjoy a delicious lunch at Tavern on France and finally, we’ll be able to tour Bachman’s Inspiration House and its retail store.

\$125 includes motor coach transportation, a delicious lunch and entrance to Bachman’s “Inspiration House.” Don’t wait to reserve your spot - this tour is always very popular.

Departure times:

Albert Lea Walmart	8:30 am
Owatonna Perkins	9:00 am
State Bank of Faribault	9:30 am (mall location)

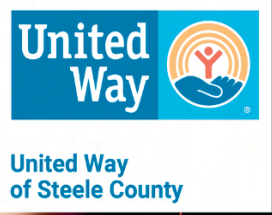
Reserve your seat early as this one will fill quickly!
Contact Bev’s Friends & Family Tours at:
507-451-8695 / jbllysne@charter.net.
Mail check to 318 SW 13th St., Owatonna, MN 55060. Or contact Kim at the State Bank of Faribault.

Increase your social media skills



DO IT YOURSELF
SOCIAL MEDIA

DoItYourselfSocialMedia.com



JOIN US FOR A
CELEBRATION LUNCHEON

2023

HONORING LIVE UNITED AWARDEES:
BRENDA HAGER
RE/MAX VENTURE - DEB & MATT GILLARD
BLOOMING PRAIRIE YOUTH CLUB - JOSI CHRISTY

MARCH 21, 2023

RSVP:
3-16-2023

\$30



AT 11:30AM-1PM
OWATONNA
COUNTRY
CLUB



NRHEG's Annabelle Petsinger works to pin Sauk Centre-Melrose's Lanna Walter in the semifinal match of the girls' 120-pound bracket. Petsinger pinned Walter in the third period to advance to the state title match - which she went on to win.

Petsinger tops the podium

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

NRHEG's Annabelle Petsinger made school history this weekend by becoming the Panthers' first-ever girls' wrestling state champion.

Petsinger was dominant from start to finish across her two days at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul, and capped her tournament win over Stillwater Area's Audrey Rogotzke in a 120-pound title match that involved some third-period heroics.

After trailing, 4-2 in the third, Petsinger managed to score a takedown to tie the match before earning two, three-point near falls to close out the match at 10-4.

"I felt the pressure going and I just tried to roll with it. Then, I just tried to get her on her back as soon as possible

and try to finish the match because if you pin her, you win," said Petsinger with a laugh.

While Petsinger did not secure the pin in the finals, she did manage to pin both her quarterfinal and semifinal opponents.

When all was said and done, and the bright lights of the state tournament shone down on her as the 120-pound champ, Petsinger took time to reflect on her storybook day.

"I've wanted to win state since I was little. I didn't think it was going to happen when I was a little three-year-old watching the tournament, but here we are," she said with a smile.

Petsinger's win was not only a special one for the NRHEG junior, but also for her head coach, Shawn Larson.

With the win, she be-



NRHEG's Annabelle Petsinger, standing on No. 1, looks on from atop the podium after winning the state title at 120 pounds. Petsinger became NRHEG's first-ever girls' state champion with the feat.

came Larson's first-ever state title winner across both boys and girls wrestling.

"I just wanted it so badly for her. It was a fantastic win and I just hope her accomplishments inspire more girls to come in and give the sport a try," said Larson.

Tigers win consolation bracket

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Medford wrestlers were ousted from the state team tournament



Medford 113-pounder Luis Lopez takes down his opponent from Belgrade-Broten-Elrosa in the first round of the MSHSL state team tournament last week. Lopez won the match via fall to tie the dual at 6-6.

the Tigers came back to win the consolation championship.

Medford's opening draw against the Jag-See **TIGERS** on B5 ►

Hermes snags third for Tigers

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The Medford Tigers qualified seven wrestlers for the state tournament last weekend and were led by senior Tate Hermes, who finished in third place at 170 pounds.

Seven Medford athletes took to the mats: Hermes, Luis Lopez, Tommy Elwood, Evan Schweisthal, Charley Elwood, Garron Hoffman, and Dylan Heiderscheidt.

The Tigers looked primed for another big day at state after winning in the consolation bracket during the team event the day prior; however, adversity struck early and often.

Out of the seven wrestlers who qualified, three athletes lost

See **HERMES** on B5 ►



Medford 170-pounder Tate Hermes lifts his opponent into the air during a consolation match at the MSHSL state individual tournament last week. Hermes made his way through the back of the bracket with two straight wins to take third place.





Johnson, Doerhoefer
& Miner P.A.

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

johndoercpa.com

We understand small business
because we are a small business

◆ 314 E. Main St. | Blooming Prairie
507-583-7528

◆ 685 W. Bridge St., Suite 6 | Owatonna
507-451-9136

◆ 133 N. Broadway | New Richland
507-465-8100

2023

MANTORVILLE THEATRE COMPANY

Year Round Community Theatre at the Historic Opera House

COME! CELEBRATE OUR 50TH WITH US!

50th Anniversary

Ken Ludwig's

BASKERVILLE

A Sherlock Holmes Mystery

Get your deerstalker cap on--the play's afoot! Comedic genius Ken Ludwig transforms the classic "Hound of the Baskervilles" into a murderously funny adventure. The male heirs of the Baskerville line are being dispatched one by one. To find their ingenious killer, Holmes and Watson must brave the desolate moors before a family curse dooms its newest heir.

\$20 Reg
\$18
Sr/Mem/Stu

March 17 - April 2

Fri & Sat 7:30PM, Sun 2PM

507-635-5420

5-5th St, Mantorville

mantorvilletheatrecompany.com

COMMERCE BANK

4.25% APY*
24 Months

4.00% APY*
12 Months

3.90% APY*
36 Months

Home Run CD:

> \$25,000 Minimum Deposit
> New Money to Commerce Bank
> Option to Extend Your Term 12 Months**

Geneva
507.256.7235

www.cbmn.bank

Edina
952.841.9750

* Annual Percentage Yield (APY) effective as of 02/20/2023 and subject to change without notice. Fees may reduce earnings. Early withdrawal penalties may apply. New Money defined as "funds that were not at Commerce Bank, in any type of account as of the date of account opening."
** At any time during the initial term, you may request a 1-time extension of 12 months, added to the end of the original term.

Member FDIC

Get to a Healthier Place at

ANYTIME FITNESS®

Join for \$1

Offer Expires: 3/20/23

Amenities Include:

24-hour access

Membership good at 5200 Anytime Fitness clubs worldwide

2 free weight rooms

24-hour aerobics, new Life Fitness circuit training machines

Showers, lockers, towel service

Cardio machines, functional training and tanning

Celebrating Longest Standing Franchisee - 20 Years!

1010 Hoffman Dr.

(Located in the old WalMart)

507-456-8587

\$1

SPECIAL OFFER

Get our E-edition for 6 months for the low price of \$1

STEELE COUNTY Times

ALWAYS LOCAL, ALL THE TIME.

Speller picks school tradition over competition

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

Parents like to tell their children to make good choices.

For Johanna Spielman, daughter of Karen and Josh Spielman of Owatonna, there wasn't a bad choice in sight.

An eighth-grader at St. Mary's School, Johanna worked her way through a classroom spelling bee, then defeated seven other top spellers at the school to qualify for the first round of the regional spelling bee.

She traveled to Rochester on Feb. 7, where she was one of 59 students from 29 school districts.

As she had last year, Johanna mowed through her competition and advanced to the final round of the regional bee, where she was in a field of 12.

The winner of that contest wins not only the region title, but also a trip to the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.



Johanna Spielman, an eighth-grader at St. Mary's School in Owatonna, smiles as she awaits her word in the first round of the Southeast Minnesota Regional Spelling Bee on Feb. 7. Johanna advanced to the regional competition's final round but opted to help organize and attend a school event held on the same day.

Last year, Johanna placed third at the regional final, just missing a trip to the nation's capital.

This year?

"This year, she advanced again," said Karen Spielman, "but she actually chose not to compete in it, because St. Mary's has a really neat tradition of having a Mardi Gras event on Fat Tuesday."

That fell on Feb. 21, the

same day as the region final. The same thing happened last year, too.

"Last year, she chose to attend the spelling bee, so she had the opportunity," Spielman said. "This year, she had to weigh attending the (region final), or, since she chose the spelling bee over the Mardi Gras last year, should she take advantage of the opportunity to experience this final St. Mary's event as an eighth-grader?"

"She opted for the Mardi Gras this year."

As eighth-graders, Johanna and her classmates help coordinate and lead the annual event, which the entire school attends.

"It's kind of a great leadership opportunity and school-wide connection," Spielman said, "and it's something that's St. Mary's-specific that she won't be able to experience again."

Johanna took the decision seriously, she said, including how close she came to heading to the national bee.

Had she made it to Washington, D.C., last year, might she have wanted to try again this year?

In a word, no.

In fact, it might have made this year's choice even easier, Johanna said.

"I probably would've not wanted to go even more this year if I'd done well last year," she said.

"We as parents supported Johanna's choice in whatever she wanted to do," Spielman said, "because both events — it was a win-win in our minds. Based on our conversations with her, Johanna really values her school and her classmates and her friends, and the opportunity to participate in such a neat event at St. Mary's in her final year was really important to her."

Johanna will head to Owatonna High School next year. She's on the OHS gymnastics team, and runs track, plays tennis, and the piano.

Reading is something she and her younger sister Josie, a fifth-grader at SMS, have always loved.

"I can read anything, but really love reading fiction and fantasy books," Johanna said. "I like to write, too."

She credits the staff at St. Mary's for her academic success and specifically, English teacher Anne Nylund, who organizes the school spelling bee each year.

"She's awesome," Johanna said.

Her sister Josie and brother Jackson, a fourth-grader, are also good spellers, she said.

Is there a Spielman spelling dynasty at hand?

Their mother laughed.

"We just encourage our kids to do the best they can at whatever they choose to do, and we're proud of them regardless."

Especially, it would seem, of their choices.

Edward Jones®

MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

401(k) door opens for small-business owners

Are you a business owner who has wanted to offer a retirement plan to your employees, but you've been stymied by the costs involved? If so, you may be interested to learn about new legislation that can help open the door to the same type of plan enjoyed by employees of large companies.

At the end of 2022, President Biden signed into law the SECURE 2.0 Act, which, among many other provisions, provides tax credits for business owners who want to open a 401(k) plan.

The tax credit was introduced in the original SECURE Act in 2019, but it's been significantly increased in the updated laws. If you have 50 or fewer employees, you can now claim a startup credit covering 100% of the costs associated with opening and administering a 401(k) plan, up to \$5,000 for each of the first three years of your plan. To qualify for this credit, your business must have least one employee — besides yourself, if you're the owner — who earns less than \$150,000 a year. And you're eligible for the credit even if you join a multiple employer plan (MEP), which, as you may know, is designed to encourage smaller businesses to share the administrative duties involved in offering tax-advantaged retirement plans.

SECURE 2.0 also introduces an employer contribution credit, which may entitle your business to a tax credit based on employee matching or profit-sharing contributions. This credit is capped at \$1,000 per employee and phases out gradually over five years. It's also subject to further reductions for businesses with 51 to 100 employees.

Another SECURE 2.0 provision deals with Roth matching and non-elective contributions. Effective this year, employees with 401(k) plans, along with those covered by 403(b) plans for nonprofit groups and 457(b) plans for government employees, can choose to have matching or non-elective contributions made as Roth (after-tax) contributions. Before this change, employers had to make these matching and non-elective contributions on a pre-tax basis. Of course, you'll need to communicate to your employees that Roth matching or non-elective contributions count as taxable income. The advantage is that your employees can ultimately withdraw the Roth contributions and earnings tax free, provided they meet certain conditions.

In looking ahead, SECURE 2.0 contains other options to make it easier for business owners to offer retirement plans. Starting in 2024, if you don't already provide a retirement plan, you can offer a "starter" 401(k) or "safe harbor" 403(b) plan to employees who meet age and service requirements. These plans have lower contribution limits than a typical 401(k) or 403(b) and you can't make matching or nonelective contributions. Consequently, a starter plan may be quite attractive to businesses with few employees.

And beginning in 2025, 401(k) and 403(b) plans will be required to automatically enroll eligible participants, although employees can choose to opt out. Also, exceptions will be made for businesses with 10 or fewer employees and for businesses less than three years old.

The ability to offer a retirement plan is a great asset for business owners who want to attract and keep good employees. And the SECURE 2.0 Act may make it easier for you to achieve this goal.

To learn more, call today.



Jeffrey M. Hall

Financial Advisor

143 W. Bridge St.
Owatonna, MN 55060
507-446-0150
jeffrey.hall@edwardjones.com

edwardjones.com

Member SPIC

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Cougars top Huskies for Big Nine title

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna Huskies boys basketball team suffered a 65-63 loss to the Mankato East Cougars at home last week in a clash between two Big Nine Conference title contenders.

Unfortunately for the Huskies, the two-point loss knocked the team out of the title hunt as the Cougars secured a two-game lead with just one conference game left to play.

“If you would have told me before the year began that at this point in the season, we would be playing for what we were tonight,

I would have told you, ‘I expected it,’” said Owatonna head coach Josh Williams.

After keeping the score tight through the first half, Owatonna found itself in a 19-point hole halfway through the second before a game-altering run evaporated the Cougars’ lead to one point with just over a minute to play.

Owatonna had two opportunities to take the lead with possessions inside of a minute; however, turnovers and a pair of fouls ended up giving Mankato East a four-point lead with eight seconds remaining.

The Huskies scored



Owatonna's Jason Klecker goes up for a shot against Mankato East last week. Klecker and the Huskies nearly beat the Cougars, but fell just short at 65-63 to fall out of the running for a Big Nine Conference title.

a basket with 0.2 seconds remaining to go down by two, but the Cougars successfully inbounded the ball to end the game.

Blake Burmeister and Jason Klecker tied for the team lead with 16 points against Mankato East.

Later in the week, Owatonna finished off its regular-season schedule with a 97-65 win over Red Wing.

The Huskies took control of the game from the start and jumped out to a 43-25 lead at halftime.

Red Wing began to find its scoring rhythm in the second half, however, Owa-

tonna caught fire en route to outscoring the Wingers 54-40.

Burmeister once again led the team in scoring; his 44-point performance set a school record for most single-game points scored and the most three-pointers made in a single game with 11.

Owatonna played Rochester Century in the opening round of the Section 1AAAA tournament on Tues-

day, March 7, however, stats and results were not available at the time of press.

Player Stats vs. Red Wing			
	P	R	A
Burmeister	44	2	4
Klecker	12	1	1
Walter	11	3	7
Vick	10	14	7
Williams	8	3	0
C.J. Theis	3	1	1
N. Theis	3	0	0
Ginskey	2	1	2
Kleeberger	2	1	1
Team	2	1	0

SCOREBOARD			
TEAM	1st	2nd	Final
Owatonna	43	54	97
Red Wing	25	40	65



Owatonna's Ayden Walter leaps toward the rim during a layup attempt against Mankato East. The Huskies battled back from a 19-point deficit in the second half, but fell just short in a 65-63 loss.

Burmeister breaks pair of OHS records

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Owatonna boys basketball athlete Blake Burmeister set new school records for points and three-pointers made in a single game in a 44-point performance against Red Wing last week.

The senior broke the previous scoring record of 42 points by knocking down two free throws late in the game to set the new bar at 44, while also breaking the previous record of 10 three-pointers in a game by scoring 11 against the Wingers.

“Last time we faced them I had a pretty good game, so going into this one I felt like I had a good chance to have another good game. I typically do well against zone defenses because there’s more space to shoot, and I took advantage of that space again this time around,” said Burmeister.

According to Burmeister, he was not aware of how close he was to the record during the game, but had a feeling that he was in the hunt for a special night when his three-point attempts just kept falling.

In the end, Burmeister lit up the scoreboard with 11 of 17 shooting from downtown to account for 33 of his 44 points.

Outside of his 11 three-pointers, Burmeister also finished two of four from two-point range to end his night shooting 13-for-21 from the field — good for a shooting percentage of 61.9%.

When asked about what the records meant to him and the fact that they came in his last regular-season home game, Burmeister’s answer was simple: “It means everything. I love this team... the players, coaches, staff and everyone here with us.”



Owatonna's Blake Burmeister, right, speaks with head coach Josh Williams in the team's game against Mankato East last week. Burmeister had a career night later on in the week, scoring a school-record 44 points and 11 three-pointers in a 97-65 win over the Red Wing Wingers.

While Burmeister does not plan to play sports in college and instead is looking to pursue an education and career in dentistry, the senior does hope that his time in the Huskies’ royal blue and silver does have a positive influence on the next generation of Owatonna athletes.

“I hope I’m remembered

as a shooter and someone who could be relied on at both ends of the court. But what I really want is to be an example for future kids to work hard to achieve their goals. Even if you fail the first time — like I have done many times — don’t give up. Work harder. You will achieve your goals in time.”



Owatonna's Blake Burmeister drives to the basket against Northfield earlier this season. Burmeister said that he hopes he will be remembered as a shooter, but that he also wants to be an inspiration for the next generation of Owatonna Huskies to work hard to accomplish their goals.

So long, Luis



Steele Sports
JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

I think that I speak for all Minnesota Twins fans when I say that I was sad to see the departure of star utility player and 2022 American League batting champ Luis Arraez.

Arraez had not only become a fan favorite for his consistent hitting and ability to play nearly all positions in the field, but for the fact that he was consistently just happy to be playing the game he loves.

That being said, I can’t fault the Twins’ front office for thinking that now was the best possible time to trade away one of our star players at his highest value.

After four seasons in the MLB, Arraez has a career batting average of .314 — an elite number to say the least.

However, his numbers are somewhat inflated by his first two seasons in the league where he batted .334 and .321 during a much smaller sample size of at-bats.

Arraez earned an average of .328 across that span — which surely turned heads league-wide — but, he did so across 438 at-bats.

Arraez has earned a larger role with the team in the past two seasons and has seen the plate 975 times as a result, but his numbers have dipped from that starting average of .328 to .305.

While it may be picky to look at his stats this way and begin to make judgments on differences of 0.023, it actually proves that there was solid reasoning behind the Twins’ decision to deal him.

While his play in the field may not regress, Arraez’s averages at the plate are what make him a true commodity.

To see consistent declines in his most valuable asset would mean that his value in trade conversations would likely decrease the longer that the Twins held onto him.

Adding onto this theory of now being the proper time to trade Arraez is the fact that he set a new career-high in 2022 with eight home runs.

With the Twins becoming known as a team that supplies much of its offense through the long ball, Arraez’s power does not seem to fit the direction that upper management is trying to go.

However, the return that the Twins managed to receive for Arraez — starting pitcher Pablo Lopez — is perfectly on point for what the team needs.

Lopez has come into his role as a starter in the past two seasons for Miami and has seen consistent improvements in all major pitching statistics — even doing so in a much greater sample size of work.

Similar to Arraez’s sample sizes, Lopez’s first three seasons saw him pitch just 226.4 innings compared to his 282.2 innings pitched since 2021.

After allowing opponents to bat .247 on average through his first three seasons, Lopez has reduced said number to just .233 since 2021, all while improving his strikeout percentage from 21.2% to 25.6%.

Also adding to the allure of Lopez is the fact that his wins above replacement statistic (WAR) has improved from 2.8 to 5.8 in the same span.

While I may be sad to see Arraez go, I think that this was the exact right time for the Twins to strike and improve their rotation in a major way.

NRHEG reaches subsection finals

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The NRHEG girls basketball team last week played its way into the Subsection 2AA championship game against Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial (LCWM) by beating both Maple River and Waseca in

its first two games. The Panthers kicked off their tournament with a 75-47 win over Maple River before stopping Waseca 45-38 in the semifinal round. “It was a great team win. For the last week, everyone put in the work preparing for Maple River and Waseca. I could not

be more proud of this group of girls. When things get hard, they keep fighting,” said NRHEG head coach Onika Peterson. NRHEG ended its week by traveling to Mankato East High School to face the Blue Jays in a game that came down to the wire. See NRHEG on B5 ►



NRHEG’s Sidney Schultz shoots a free throw against Maple River in tonight’s Section 2AA quarterfinal game. No. 3 NRHEG beat No. 6 Maple River 75-47 to advance to the semifinal game against No. 2 Waseca.



Steele County’s Brady Rossbach is stuffed by Minnesota Moose goaltender Bridger Fixmer on a breakaway attempt to keep the Blades from taking a 3-2 lead in game one. Fixmer’s save proved crucial, as the game went to double overtime where the Moose went on to win 3-2.

Blades look sharp, but still fall

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The Steele County Blades’ season officially came to an end last week after the team was swept 2-0 in a three-game series by the Minnesota Moose in United State Premier Hockey League (USPHL) playoffs. Traveling to Fogerty Ice Arena in Blaine, the Blades came out sharp for their first game, but could not come out with the win despite forcing two overtime periods. After falling behind 2-0 during a two-goal second period for the Moose, the Blades managed to tie the game

with two, late third-period goals from Noah LaFleur and Brody Ward. Neither side managed to score during the first overtime period, but it was the Moose who finally broke through 4:29 into the second overtime period with a breakaway goal. Despite the 3-2 loss, Steele County goaltender Levi Preugschas was stellar in net for the Blades and stopped 74 of the 77 shots he faced. Two days later, Steele County’s final game of the season came in a 4-2 regulation loss to the Moose. Steele County

jumped out to a 1-0 lead 12:51 into the first period behind a goal by Steven Pribula, but the game would change quickly after the beginning of the second period. The Moose hit the ice with a fury, and scored three quick goals in under 10 minutes to take a 3-1 lead. Steele County managed to cut the Moose’s lead to 3-2 with a goal by Matej Cech, but the Moose answered with one more goal at the 17:31 mark to bring the score to its final tally at 4-2. Preugschas once again took the net for the Blades and stopped 39 of 44 shots against.



Owatonna Live
SPORTS WRAP
ROY KOENIG

Home sweet home

You don’t need a history book to appreciate some of the top events to happen in the Owatonna High School gym. Just look back to Friday night. Senior Blake Burmeister set the program record for points and three-pointers made in a game. He said, “I can’t really explain it. I didn’t really know what was going to happen when I went into the game, but I started to feel it early making my first few shots. My teammates just fed me with confidence the whole game and kept feeding me the ball. They were really the true MVPs of that game.”

Burmeisters’ 11 three-pointers broke Andrew Olson’s record from 2003. His 44 points eclipsed Mark Randall’s mark of 42. “It means everything. It truly does. I feel like I’ve been working really hard. The team’s been working really hard.” It was the final regular season varsity basketball game in the current high school gym. Randall stated in a text, “I’m happy for him... it’s always exciting to break records. I am actually surprised it lasted this long given the way the game is played now and the length of the game is longer. I didn’t even know I broke the record when it happened back in 1991.” He hit the total in a playoff game against Northfield and in the state tournament versus Cretin-Derham Hall who went on to win

the title. “We actually should have beat them and would much rather have won than broken the record.” Titles and memories Indians or Huskies, state tournament volleyball, wrestling, and basketball teams have called the OHS gym home. State championship banners for 16 Owatonna teams hang on the wall. Many conference titles have been clinched there. Countless pep fests, coronations and concerts have featured the talents of OHS students. Recently, the gymnastics team captured a section championship there and will become its new varsity resident. Boys’ basketball coach Josh Williams reminisced saying, “Twenty years of being blessed to coach in this community, on this court and in this school. Starting with my first



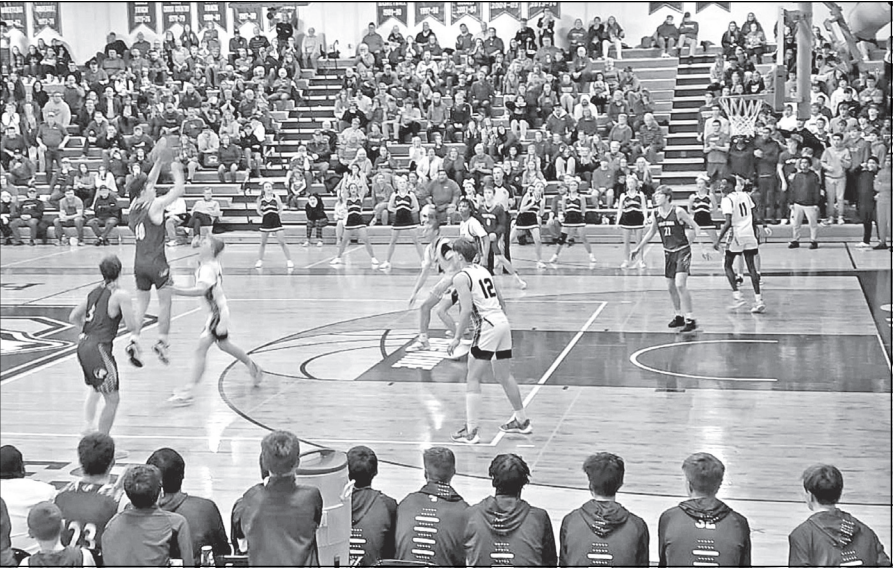
Left to right: Owatonna girls basketball seniors Natalie Krumholz, Anni Moran and Kiara Gentz.

game, stepping on that court for the first time at home. I think it was my third year as a head coach we won our first conference title. I remember taking pictures underneath the same basket as last year.” “I look at last year’s Lakeville North game. That game in itself, when you’re talking about how good they are. Coaching my son Brayden, and my son Leyton now. Just being able to share that opportunity with both my boys.”

Final girls’ game OHS girls’ basketball head coach Lindsey Hugstad-Vaa, in her seventh season, has developed a nice feel for the gym: “It’s so crazy to think that this is going to be the last varsity girls’ game in this gym. There’s so much history here and I love this gym. I’m excited about the new high school but there’s something to be said for an older gym that has so much history.”

Girls face OHS grad The girls lost at Lakeville South in the section tournament last week to end their season. OHS grad Angie Iverson-Ohnstad coaches the Cougars as they seek their first-ever trip to state when they challenge Lakeville North on Friday, March 10 in Rochester. Seniors leave a legacy The Huskies’ seniors are Kiara Gentz, Anni Moran, and Natalie Krumholz. Hugstad-Vaa says they are “great students in the community, great athletes on the court and field. Just great people... You can’t say enough good things about our three captains. How hard they work every day in practice and games.” “They have been great mentors to the younger girls. Very supportive of their teammates no matter who’s in the game. It just speaks volumes to their character.” Gentz will run cross-country

and track at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Moran will play lacrosse at Quincy University. Filling up the bleachers Former coach John Kuehn joined the girls’ staff in the late 80s. “Barry Olson and I came in at the same time. We had about a.500 season. They wouldn’t even take down the stands on one side of the gym. Barry made a point, when we’re done, those stands will be down. We always talked about lucky we were to be in Owatonna because we had so many quality athletes.” Owatonna went to state five times during their coaching tenure and duedeled Rochester Mayo for Big Nine and section supremacy. One season, the Spartans whipped OHS twice during the regular season, but Kuehn told Owatonna Live’s Jason Iacovino, “We got in the section finals. They’re ranked second in the state. We slowed it down to a snail’s pace and won by five. We always had good games with Mayo. That was a tough rivalry.” The OHS gym offers some challenges. “Our two side courts, you couldn’t even play games on them because the three-point line went out of bounds. Kids are going in for layups and running into a wall.” Kuehn added, “Owatonna is lucky to have this situation. Because now it’s going See SPORTS WRAP on B12 ►



Huskies fans packed the Owatonna High School gym for the team’s game against Mankato East last week. Owatonna fought hard, but eventually lost 65-63 to the Cougars.



FREE CONSULTATIONS

Dr. Deborah I. Lien
ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST
DDS, MBS

583.6613
132 2nd Ave NE
Bloomington
www.drdeborahlienorthodontics.com



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
The Medford Tigers celebrate their consolation bracket win at the MSHSL state team tournament last week. Medford defeated WCAABE 37-33 to win their final match.

Tigers win consolation bracket

◀ **TIGERS** from **B1** uars ended in a 42-22 loss despite the Tigers leading 22-12 through 152 pounds. The team rebounded nicely to secure two straight wins over United North Central (UNC) and West Central Area/Ashby/Brandon-Evansville (WCAABE) with scores of 38-20 and 37-33.

A tough stretch of six losses cost Medford a trip to the semifinal match. From 160 to 285 pounds, BBE scored pins in all but two of the matches.

Winning for Medford early on were Luis Lopez, Kaden Harfmann, Jack Meyer, Charley Elwood, and Garron Hoffman, to put Medford's total at 22 points.

Scoring bonus points were Lopez and Meyer with falls, while

Harfmann recorded an 11-0 major decision. After falling to BBE, Medford moved on to face UNC in the opening round of the consolation bracket.

The Tigers led the whole way against UNC and jumped out to a quick 13-0 lead behind a decision from Liam Ahrens, a pin by Lopez, and another major decision from Harfmann.

UNC went on to record five wins over the course of the dual, but consistent bonus-point pressure from the Tigers eventually put the meet out of reach after 182 pounds, when a major decision from Dylan Heiderscheidt moved the score to 38-10.

Scoring bonus points down the stretch were Tommy Elwood and Heiderscheidt with major decisions, Tate Hermes with a techni-

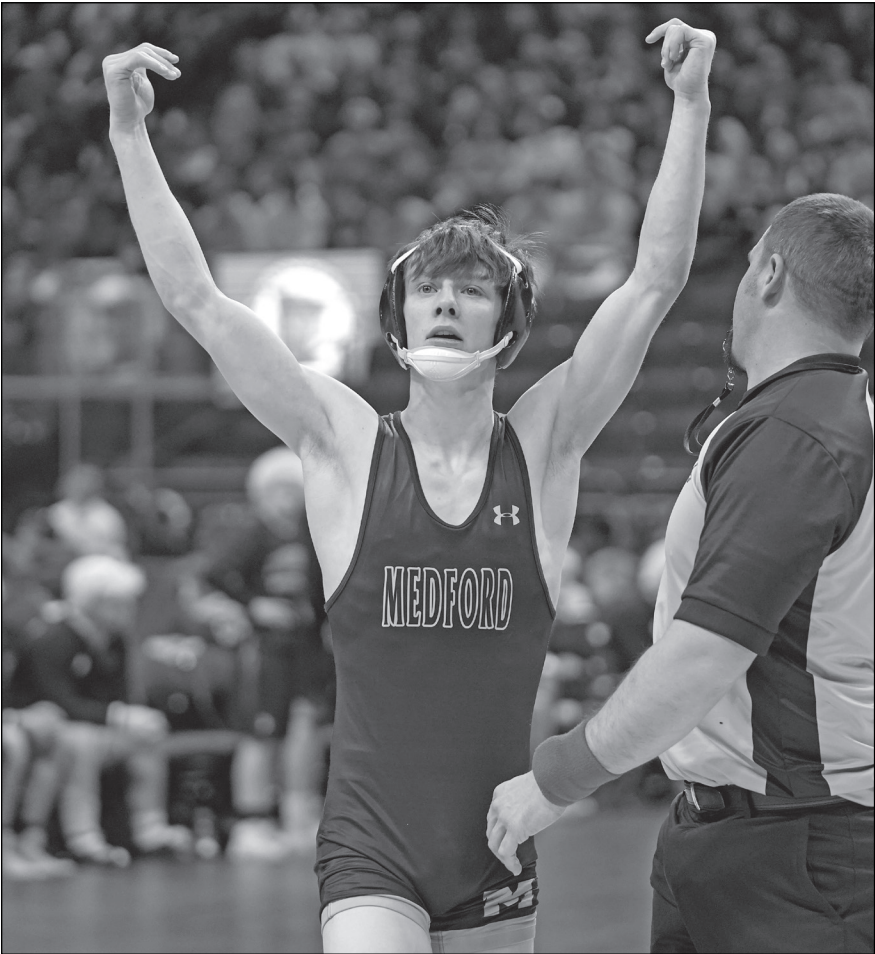
cal fall, and Charley Elwood with a pin. After beating UNC, Medford squared off with WCAABE in the consolation championship.

WCAABE came out swinging with a pin at 106 pounds to lead 6-0, but the Tigers shifted the momentum soon after by winning the next seven straight to lead 32-6.

Even though Medford's lone win afterward came at 170 pounds, when Hermes beat his opponent via technical fall, the damage was already done as Medford scooped the 37-33 win.

With the win, Medford took fifth place in the tournament.

The end of the state team and individual meet marked the end of Medford's 2022-23 season.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
Medford 120-pounder Jack Meyer pumps up the Medford crowd after winning by fall against Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa. Meyer stuck his man inside the first minute to improve Medford's lead to 16-6.

NRHEG reaches subsection finals

◀ **NRHEG** from **B4** Peterson's squad came in as underdogs, the No. 3-ranked seed behind No. 2 Waseca, but the seedings proved irrelevant 18 minutes into the game.

At the half, NRHEG had played to a 21-21 tie with both teams fighting for offensive opportunities and playing behind strong defense.

In the second half, NRHEG's defense

proved to be the deciding factor in the game as the Panthers held the Blue Jays to just 17 points.

The Panthers were able to outscore Waseca 24-17 in the second half to find their biggest win of the season at 45-38.

Senior Sidney Schultz was the Panthers' leading offensive player with 23 points, three rebounds and one assist.

Prior to beating

Waseca, NRHEG cruised through its opening-round match-up against No. 6 Maple River by beating the Eagles 75-47.

NRHEG took control of the game early and did not miss a beat the entire 36 minutes, even after enduring its first losing streak of the season heading into the game.

"The fact that our kids held their compo-



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
Medford 152-pounder Garron Hoffman works for a near fall in the opening round of the MSHSL state individual tournament. Hoffman won his opening match by a 15-0 technical fall, but was defeated by a narrow 6-5 in the quarterfinal round.

Hermes snags third for Tigers

◀ **HERMES** from **B1** in their opening matches, while two more won their first match but lost in their second.

Hermes was the lone Tiger to reach the semifinal round. He came close to making a repeat trip to the state finals match, but a 5-3 sudden victory decision went the way of eventual champion Maximus Hanson of Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa to keep him from his first state title.

Also placing for Medford was Tommy Elwood, who took fifth at 126 pounds.

Elwood won his opening match but fell in the quarterfinal round to Chatfield's Gage Bartels before catching fire in the backside of the bracket

to win three of his last four matches.

Elwood's fifth-place finish marks the second time in as many years that the Tigers sophomore has placed fifth at the state tournament.

Elwood's brother and three-time state champion, Charley Elwood, also faced adversity at the state meet and had difficulties overcoming injury-related issues.

Elwood — who has battled injuries over the course of his storied career — won his opening bout by a close 3-2 decision before falling by an 8-6 decision to Canby's Lincoln Fink in the quarterfinal round.

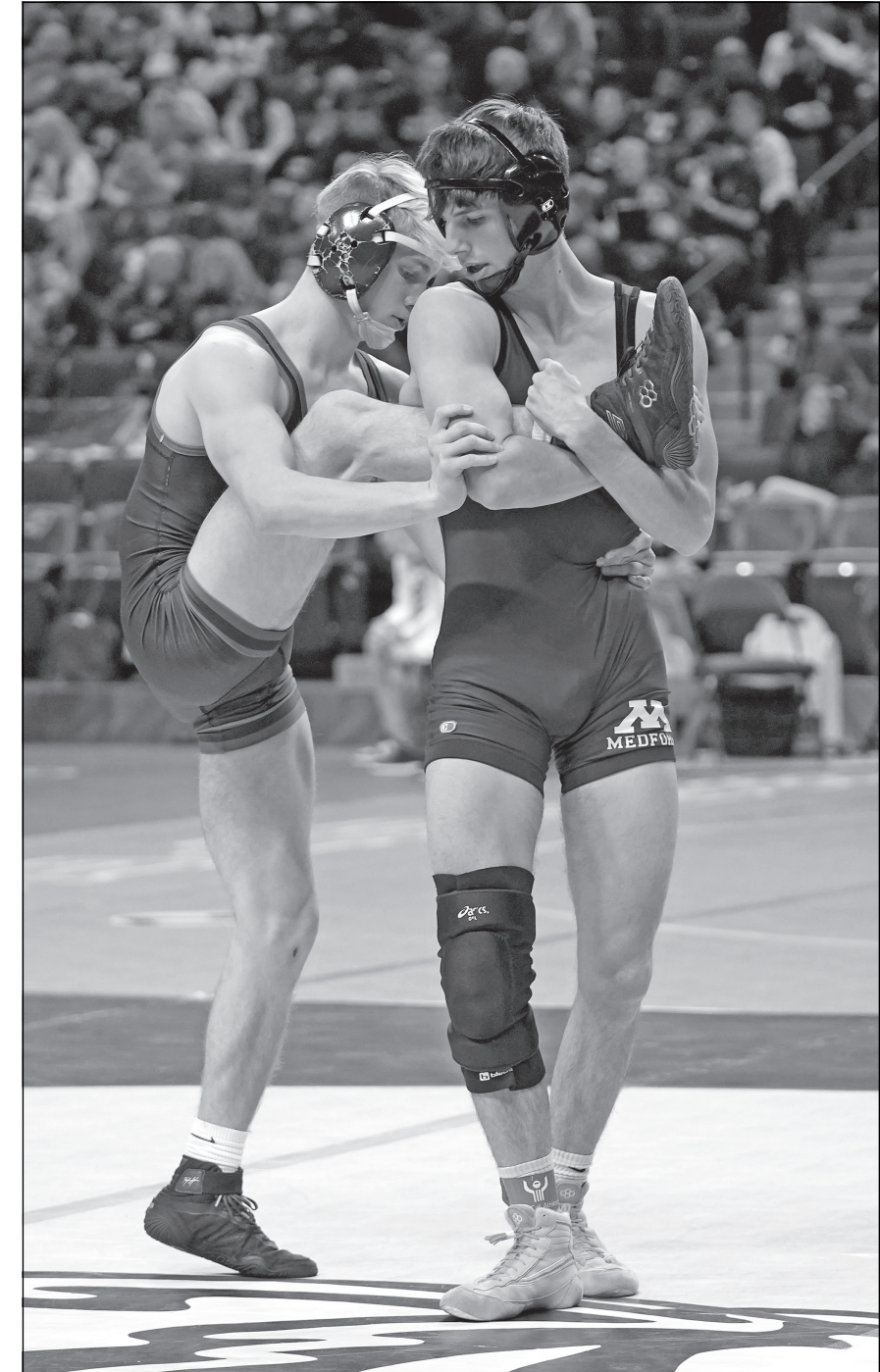
Elwood battled to win by a 15-0 tech-

nical fall in his first consolation match, but medically forfeited in the second round to Crookston's Ethan Bowman.

Hoffman was the only other Tiger to win his opening round match, with a technical fall over Minneapolis North Community's Stephon Rendo.

The senior fought valiantly to keep his tournament hopes alive, but a 6-5 decision victory for Bird Island-Olivia-Lake Lillian District's Austin Kiecker in the quarterfinal round cut his chances.

Medford's appearances at the state team and individual meets marked the team's last competition of the 2022-23 season.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
Three-time state champion Charley Elwood lifts his opponent's leg as he prepares for a takedown attempt. Elwood won his opening round match via a 3-2 decision, but was defeated by an 8-6 decision in the second round before medially forfeiting later on in the consolation rounds.

sure and came in ready to play tonight was huge. Even though it's easy to get in your head after two losses, I was really excited with how strong we came out tonight," said Peterson.

After taking a 35-16 lead into halftime, the Panthers shut the door for a comeback by exploding for 40 points in the second half.

Senior Erin Jacobson led the team with 22 points in the game and provided a spark down the stretch by

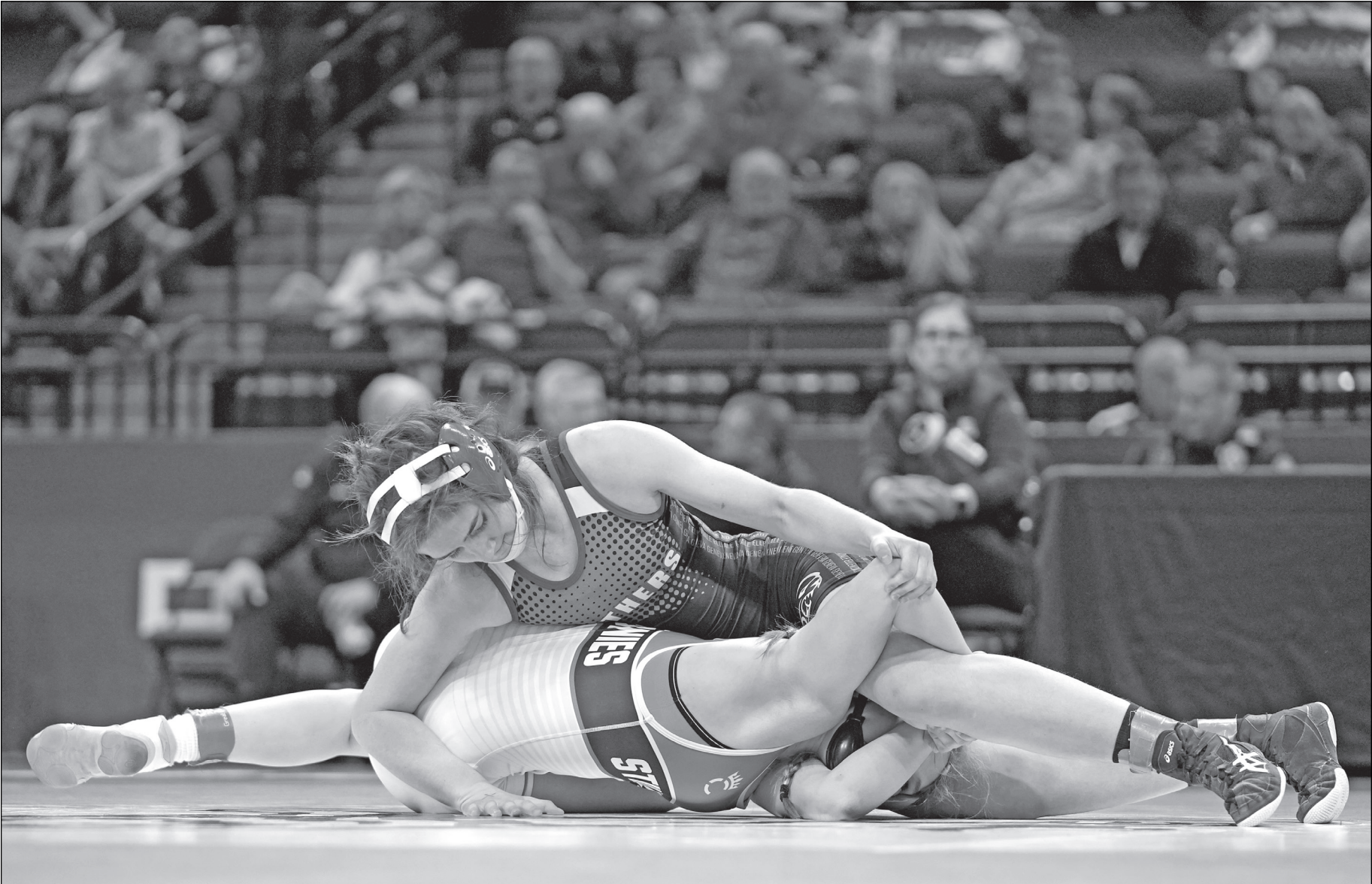
scoring 20 of her 22 points in the second half.

NRHEG faced LCWM in the Subsection 2AA championship game at Taylor Center in Mankato on Monday, March 6.

Stats and results from the game were not

available at the time of press.			
Player Stats vs. Waseca			
	P	R	A
S. Schultz	23	3	1
Jacobson	6	7	0
F. Nielsen	6	3	0
C. VanMaldeghem	5	3	1
O. VanMaldeghem	3	5	1
H. Schultz	2	4	1

SCOREBOARD			
TEAM	1st	2nd	Final
NRHEG	21	24	45
Waseca	21	17	38



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

NRHEG'S Annabelle Petsinger works to gain top control against Stillwater Area's Audrey Rogotzke in the state finals match as 120 pounds. Rogotzke led Petsinger 4-2 going into the third round, but Petsinger managed to get a takedown and two, three-point near falls to win 10-4.

THREE WRESTLERS PLACE FOR NRHEG, WESTFIELD

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The Westfield Razorbacks and NRHEG Panthers sent a total of five wrestlers to the state tournament last week with three returning home as state placers.

Leading the charge for the two teams was NRHEG's Annabelle Petsinger, the lone state champion out of all Steele County wrestlers this season.

Petsinger won her 120-pound bracket by dethroning reigning champ Audrey Rogotzke of Stillwater Area via a 10-4 decision to take home NRHEG's first-ever girls state title.

The Panthers also had the next highest placement on the podium as senior heavyweight Makota Misgen took third place by beating Adrian Area's Cameron Wieneke by a 5-1 decision in the third-place match.

Misgen came close to making it back to the state title match after competing for the title a season ago but was ultimately stopped by WEM/JWP's Keegan Kuball in the semifinal round with a 2-1

tiebreaker decision.

Kuball went on to win the state title by beating Jackson County Central's Cameron Scholten via a 9-4 decision.

Reese Routh was NRHEG's last qualified wrestler and did not place at the tournament after being eliminated by Jackson County Central's Isaiah Rodriguez in a 20-9 major decision.

Placing for Westfield at the 2022-23 state tournament was Bo Zwiener in sixth place at 132 pounds.

Zwiener collected a pin and a close 4-3 sudden victory decision on day one to advance to the semifinal round, but the sophomore was stopped by a second-period fall against Royalton-Upsala's Alex Diedrich.

Westfield's only other competitor was 145-pounder Cade Christianson, whose tournament was abbreviated by an opening-round pin loss to Holdingford's William Pilarski.

The conclusion of the 2022-23 state tournament marked the end of both NRHEG and Westfield's seasons.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Westfield 132-pounder Bo Zwiener is locked in before his semifinal matchup on day two of the MSHSL state individual tournament. Zwiener went on to lose the match and ended up placing sixth at the tournament.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Westfield 145-pounder Cade Christianson battles to escape from the bottom position. Christianson lost his opening match by fall in the second period and did not wrestle again.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

NRHEG's Makota Misgen takes down Frazee's Xander Kohler in the first period of his opening-round match. Misgen went on to pin Kohler to advance to the quarterfinal round.



Owatonna 138-pound wrestler Aliah Fischer works to secure near-fall points against her Bloomington Kennedy opponent. Fischer went on to pin her opponent and secure her spot in the fifth-place match.

Robb wrestles his way to second

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna Huskies sent 10 individual wrestlers to the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) state meet last weekend and were led by 152-pounder Cael Robb's second-place finish.

Robb found himself in a dogfight in the championship match with undefeated Lakeville North wrestler Zach Hanson but ended up on the wrong side of a 13-3 major decision to end his senior season.

"It was a fun experience. I just tried to take it all in. I wish I could do it again, but it was a great time, and I couldn't be more excited for next year," he said.

Robb began his tournament with an opening-round technical fall and a 12-2 major decision in the quarterfinals before propelling himself to the championship match with an 8-6 decision over St. Michael-Albertville's Jarret Wadsen.

By placing second, Robb secured his fourth state placement, having placed third, fourth, and sixth the prior three years.

The senior is slated to continue his wrestling career at the University of Nebraska-Kearney next year.

Also placing for Owatonna was sev-

enth-grader Aliah Fischer.

The Owatonna Middle School student turned heads in her first-ever MSHSL state tournament by making a run in the back of the bracket after losing an 8-4 decision in her opening-round bout.

En route to placing fifth, Fischer earned a third-period pin over Bloomington Kennedy's Kelsey Cruz Rojas and a 6-1 decision win over Rochester Century's Nora Apkan.

"It's really big for me just having that drive like, 'Hey you've made it here now. You can make it again. It's especially cool being here as a seventh-grader. It's definitely a confidence boost, and I know I have a lot of years left to keep competing,'" said Fischer.

Also competing for Owatonna at the state meet were 106-pounder Kaden Lindquist, 107-pounder Isabelle Townley, 113-pounder Donovan Sorenson, 120-pounder Lane Karsten, 132-pounder Trey Hiatt, 138-pounder Michael Reinardy, 160-pounder R.J. Reinardy and 195-pounder Blake Fitcher.

Though eight remaining athletes did not place at the tournament, their efforts did not go unnoticed.

"We had some cool moments like Trey Hiatt coming back

from an MCL injury and starting out with a pin, and Lane Karsten taking the mat and establishing himself with a 12-0 win. We have a lot of hard-working, talented wrestlers in our room. I think it was a great experience getting those first few matches under the bright lights out of the way so next time we come here we're sending more of our wrestlers onto the podium," said Owatonna head coach Derek Johnson.

The end of the MSHSL state tournament brought the 2022-23 Owatonna wrestling season to a close.



Owatonna's Cael Robb, white singlet, and head coach Derek Johnson, white shirt and tie, both celebrate after Robb's semifinal win to advance to the state title match. Robb lost in the title match, but earned his place on the state podium for the fourth consecutive year.



Owatonna's Cael Robb wrangles his opponent to the mat in his semifinal match. Robb went on to win the match via a 12-2 major decision to advance to the state finals match.



Owatonna's Trey Hiatt stares down his Faribault opponent in the opening round of the MSHSL state individual tournament. Hiatt missed the majority of the season due to an MCL injury but qualified for the state tournament in sections and managed to win his opening match at state.



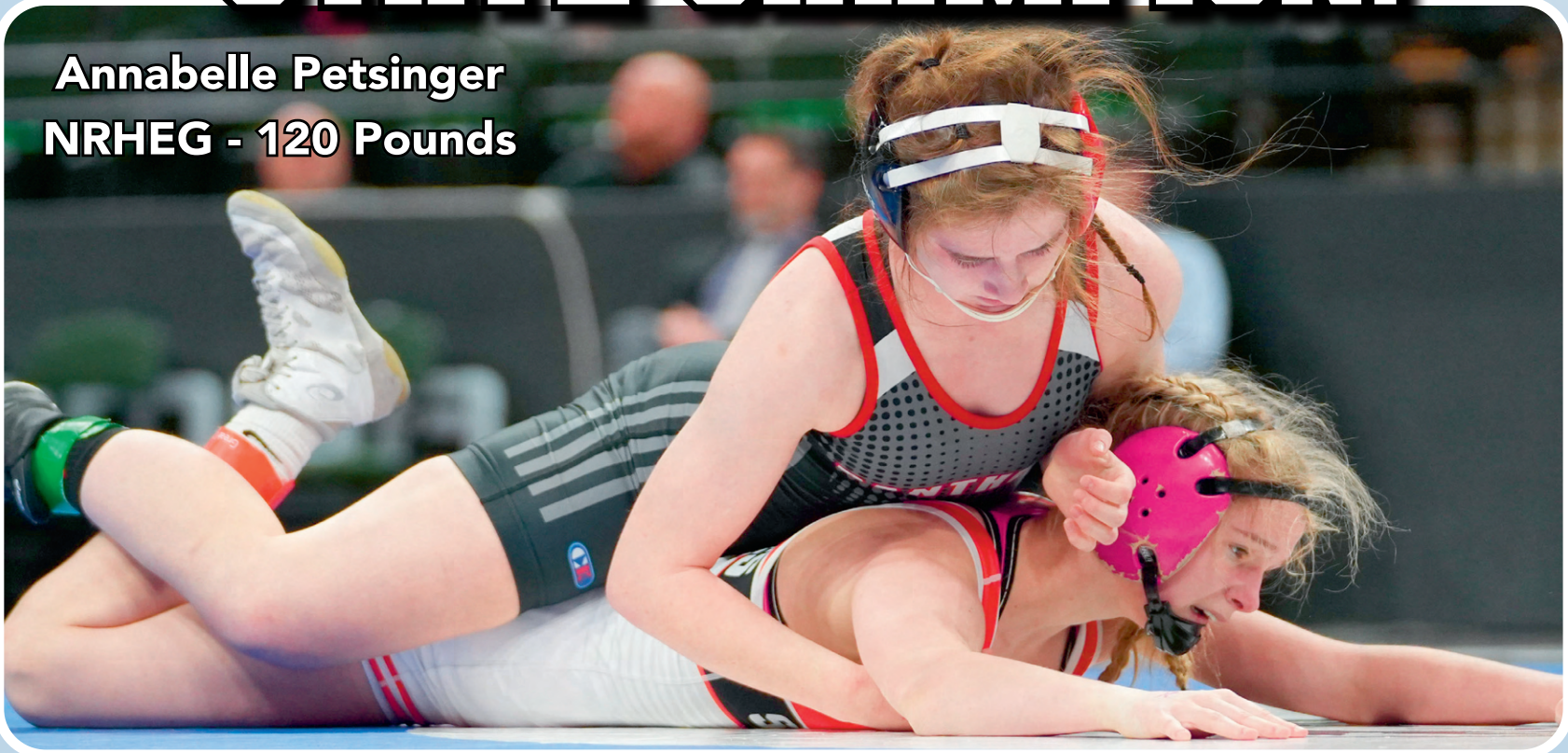
Great Job Huskies!

Moving Kids Forward | Owatonna Bus Company



MINNESOTA

Congratulations area wrestlers on your STATE CHAMPION!



Annabelle Petsinger
NRHEG - 120 Pounds

Annabelle Petsinger captured the first ever girls state wrestling title for NRHEG.

FIFTH PLACE



Aliah Fischer of Owatonna earned fifth place at state.

Aliah Fischer
OWATONNA
138 Pounds

Bo Zwiener
WESTFIELD
132 Pounds

Bo Zwiener of Westfield powered his way into sixth place at state.

RUN



Cael Roberson
OWATONNA
152 Pounds

Cael Roberson powered his way to sixth place at state.

SIXTH PLACE



Lerbergs Fitness Center & Car Wash

PANTHER'S ROCK!



118 5th Ave
Ellendale, mn
507-684-2471



HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS!



Mon-Fri 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna
507-431-4576 • www.Honest1Owatonna.com

LERBERG'S FOODS

Steele County's Oldest Grocery Store!

Since 1901



Mon-Sat
8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sunday
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Great Job
Wrestlers!

120 5th Ave, Ellendale 507-684-2472
Like us on Facebook
Visit our website: lerbergsfoods.com

Good Job Bo Zwiener!



SUE ZWIENER and RACHEL BLAEDORN
Financial Service Professionals

507-583-2200 • Blooming Prairie, MN 55917



WAY TO GO
PANTHERS!

Full-service & self-service automotive recycler
Late model cars & trucks

12880 SW 72nd Ave. | Ellendale, MN | 800-358-4902 | 507-684-2100 | www.misgen.com



CONGRATULATIONS
ON A GREAT SEASON!

Blooming Prairie Schools
Blossoming Into Learners and Leaders
blossoms.k12.mn.us

What will you do with your refund?

- 100% Free In-Person Tax Prep Assistance
- Household income of \$73,000 or less
- Avg Savings of \$200 in Fees



United Way
of Steele County

REGISTER NOW >





1850 Austin Rd Ste 103 | Owatonna, MN 55060 507-455-1180



NICE JOB RAZORBACKS!

From the Blooming Prairie
Bus Company

Moving kids forward



BP
PUBLIC
UTILITIES

Congratulations on
a Great Season!



333 2nd Ave NE • Blooming Prairie • 507-583-6683

A'S BEST!



our superb performances at state!

STATE NNER-UP!

THIRD PLACE



Robb
ONNA
ounds

ob of Owatonna muscled
o a state runner-up title.

H PLACE



Tate Hermes
MEDFORD
170 Pounds

Tate Hermes of Medford picked
up third place at state.



Makota Misgen
NRHEG
285 Pounds

Makota Misgen of NRHEG came
away with third place in the
285-pound division.

CONGRATS TO THE MEDFORD TIGERS ON CAPTURING FIFTH PLACE AT STATE!



Members of the Medford Tigers accept their fifth-place trophy at the Xcel
Energy Center in St. Paul Thursday night.

Congrats to all these wrestlers for their amazing achievements this season!

TOREY'S

RESTAURANT & BAR

DOWNTOWN OWATONNA, 208 N. CEDAR AVE
507-455-9260 • WWW.TOREYS.NET

OPEN FOR DINING

CONGRATULATIONS
WRESTLERS!

Congratulations to
All Area Wrestlers!

JK Routh Contracting, LLC
Owatonna, MN

Wick
Buildings

Jesse Routh
507-383-7892

Whispering Oak
Place
ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE

Exceptional Care.
Extraordinary Living.

903 Calverly Court • Ellendale, MN 56026
507-684-3026 • Cornerstone Management Services

Congratulations
on an
Awesome
Season!

WAY TO GO TIGERS!

Medford Wrestling Boosters Club

WAY TO GO TIGERS!

The Medford School is Proud of You!

CONGRATULATIONS ON
WINNING 5TH PLACE AT STATE!

Moving Kids
Forward

MEDFORD BUS COMPANY

Congratulations

To the Valentine royalty at Prairie Manor Care Center

The lingering effects of COVID are still holding on as Prairie Manor Care Center in Blooming Prairie was quarantined over Valentine's. However, they were able to hold their annual Valentine coronation on February 28. Maintaining a tradition since 1973, the center crowned a king and queen for Valentine's. The 2023 Prairie Manor royalty was chosen by the votes of staff and residents.



Congratulations
Queen Janice
Haberman
and King Ken
O'Leary



Here's a list of the royalty from Prairie Manor dating back to 1973:

1973 Ora Olson & Ed Mott
1974 Juanita Shaw & David Morgan
1975 Crodula Mullenback & Pete Hansen
1976 Katherine Ranum & Amos Eaker
1977 Alma Murphy & Frank Snider
1978 Libby Sanders & Vern Paulson
1979 Dorothy Lipold & Hartwig Hanson
1980 Martha Herdina & Art Anderson
1981 Isabel Taylor & Joe Matejeck
1982 Mary Cochlin & Clarence Anderson
1983 Elsie Wend & Mike Lester
1984 Agnes Wolf & Walter Noble
1985 Alice Starch & George Peterson
1986 Anna Johnson & Frank Kubat
1987 Libby Ruzek & Victor Jensen
1988 Myrtle Jensen & Lawrence Pfeiffer
1989 Mable Madsen & Ray Bray

1990 Hilda Wojohn & George Kubista
1991 Jessie Collins & Ray Young
1992 Mary Skalicky & Ed Skalicky
1993 Gladys Peterson & Harvie Goldberg
1994 Marie Branderhorst & Andie Anderson
1995 Emma Kruckeberg & Jack Worke
1996 Mable Eaker & Sy Kruckeberg
1997 Mayme Summer & Bernard Nelson
1998 Anita Tapp & Joe Wright
1999 Christy Jelinek & Otto Anderson
2000 Grace Sauke & Leon Thompson
2001 Harriet Ward & Al Burns
2002 Clara Bocker & Lester Janke
2003 Marjorie Smith & Hugo Harpel
2004 Gertrude Nelson & Merlin Nelson
2005 Evelyn Lewison & Franklin Pierce
2006 Eveline Lysne & Stan Bratten

2007 Irene Filley & Don Williamson
2008 Ysable Cervantes & Leon Thompson
2009 Georgia Block & Dale Budreau
2010 Pearl Mason & Herbert Graff
2011 Doris Halstenson & Hank Halstenson
2012 Marion Becker & Robert Becker
2013 Alice Fuhr & Eugene Motl
2014 Evelyn Trom & Robert Swearingen
2015 Sylvia Plunkett & Charles Mollenhaur
2016 Helen Pagakis & Vernon Jackle
2017 Marilyn Thorson & Eugene Kaplan
2018 Donald Bakke & Donna Dittlevson
2019 Clara Sibenaller & Gary Boettcher
2020 Helen Krystosek & Bill Gebhardt
2021 Doug & Elsie Kiser
2022 Naomi Erickson & John Whiting
2023 Janice Haberman & Ken O'Leary

Sponsored by these local businesses

MOST
BLOOMING PRAIRIE
STUDENTS
DON'T
DRINK ALCOHOL
IN A TYPICAL MONTH

2022 MN Student Survey, n=149 BPHS Students.
Funded by MN DHS BHD

misgen
auto parts

507-684-2100

12880 SW 72nd Ave, Ellendale

Tandem Products, Inc.

520 Industrial Drive
Blooming Prairie, MN

507.583.7222
HRBP@TandemProducts.com

www.unitedwaysteelecounty.org

Change doesn't just happen.
It's created together.

1850 Austin Rd Ste 103
Owatonna, MN 55060

THANK YOU
FOR GETTING INVOLVED.
CHANGING LIVES.
LIVING UNITED.

Dr. Deborah Lien
ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST DDS, MBS

Building Healthy Smiles!

132 2nd Ave NE • Blooming Prairie
507.583.6613 * FREE CONSULTATION

Sorenson's
APPLIANCE & TV

Whirlpool, Maytag,
KitchenAid,
Jenn-Air, Frigidaire,
Danby, Broan,
TV's Samsung and LG

Geneva, MN
507-256-7258

Mike's
REPAIR

Ag & Truck Tire

870 32 Ave. NW, Owatonna
Emergency or on the farm repair
507-455-0388
(After hours 507-455-0483)

Hope
CREAMERY

TRY HOPE
BUTTER FOR
YOUR BAKING!

507-684-2019

LOCALLY PRODUCED

Johnson, Doerhoefer
& Miner P.A.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

314 E. Main St.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-7258

685 W. Bridge St.
Owatonna
507-451-9136

133 N. Broadway,
New Richland
507-465-8100

SALINAS AUTO REPAIR INC.

656 3rd St. NE • Blooming Prairie, MN

Robert Salinas
Family-Owned
507-583-6620

**FLOOR
TECH**

322 East Main St.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-2276

HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS!

1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna
507-431-4576
www.Honest1Owatonna.com

Vandal's
FAMILY MARKET

327 HWY AVE S • BLOOMING PRAIRIE 583-6671

LARGE SELECTIONS
LOW PRICES

495 West N St.
Owatonna
507-451-7220

Like us on Facebook

SCOREBOOK		
GOPHER CONFERENCE		
STANDINGS		
GIRLS BASKETBALL		
GOPHER EAST		
	Conf.	Overall
Hayfield	10-0-0	27-3-0
Blooming Prairie	6-4-0	11-13-0
Triton	5-5-0	10-17-0
Randolph	4-6-0	19-10-0
Kenyon-Wanamingo	3-7-0	11-13-0
Bethlehem Academy	2-8-0	10-14-0
GOPHER WEST		
	Conf.	Overall
NRHEG	8-1-0	21-5-0
WEM	7-2-0	17-9-0
Maple River	4-4-0	14-12-0
JWP	2-6-0	13-15-0
Medford	1-7-0	2-24-0
United South Central	0-2-0	3-13-0
BOYS BASKETBALL		
GOPHER EAST		
	Conf.	Overall
Hayfield	9-1-0	22-6-0
Kenyon-Wanamingo	7-3-0	19-8-0
Randolph	6-4-0	16-10-0
Bethlehem Academy	4-6-0	14-11-0
Blooming Prairie	2-8-0	9-16-0
Triton	2-8-0	9-18-0
GOPHER WEST		
	Conf.	Overall
Maple River	10-0-0	25-2-0
United South Central	8-2-0	19-7-0
JWP	6-4-0	14-13-0
WEM	3-7-0	4-21-0
NRHEG	2-8-0	3-23-0
Medford	1-9-0	2-24-0
BIG NINE CONFERENCE		
STANDINGS		
GIRLS BASKETBALL		
BIG NINE CONFERENCE		
	Conf.	Overall
Rochester Mayo	19-3-0	23-5-0
Mankato East	18-4-0	20-7-0
Austin	17-5-0	20-8-0
Red Wing	16-6-0	19-8-0
Rochester Century	15-7-0	17-10-0
Winona	11-11-0	13-14-0
Mankato West	11-11-0	11-16-0
Owatonna	10-12-0	10-17-0
Rochester John Marshall	5-17-0	5-22-0
Northfield	4-18-0	4-23-0
Faribault	3-19-0	4-23-0
Albert Lea	3-19-0	3-22-0
BOYS BASKETBALL		
BIG NINE CONFERENCE		
	Conf.	Overall
Mankato East	18-4-0	21-5-0
Owatonna	16-6-0	19-7-0
Rochester Century	15-7-0	16-10-0
Rochester Mayo	15-7-0	19-7-0
Austin	14-8-0	16-10-0
Northfield	13-9-0	15-11-0
Mankato West	11-11-0	14-12-0
Rochester John Marshall	11-11-0	12-14-0
Winona	11-11-0	11-13-0
Albert Lea	6-16-0	7-19-0
Faribault	1-21-0	1-25-0
Red Wing	1-21-0	3-23-0
GIRLS HOCKEY		
	Conf.	Overall
Owatonna	12-1-0	18-6-0
Northfield	9-2-0	18-8-0
Mankato East	8-3-0	16-5-0
Albert Lea	10-3-0	16-6-1
Winona	8-7-0	9-13-0
Rochester Century/JM	6-7-0	6-16-1
Red Wing	7-8-0	7-17-0
Rochester Mayo	5-11-0	6-16-0
Mankato West	1-12-0	2-19-2
Austin	1-13-0	2-19-0
BOYS HOCKEY		
	Conf.	Overall
Northfield	14-3-0	20-5-0
Rochester Century	12-4-0	15-10-0
Rochester Mayo	10-3-1	17-5-2
Owatonna	8-5-2	11-12-2
Albert Lea	11-4-1	18-6-1
Mankato East	7-8-0	10-15-0
Rochester John Marshall	8-6-1	14-10-1
Mankato West	5-9-3	7-15-3
Faribault	7-9-0	11-13-0
Winona	4-9-2	9-13-2
Austin	1-15-1	4-19-1
Red Wing	0-12-3	1-20-4



TIGERS

Of THE MONTH

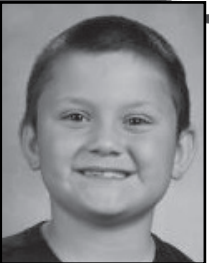
MEDFORD ELEMENTARY FEBRUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



KINDERGARTEN
Liam Hansen



1ST GRADE
Molly Miller



2ND GRADE
Ryder Randall



3RD GRADE
Ava Dircks



4TH GRADE
Alana Oulman



5TH GRADE
Brooklynn Wavrin



6TH GRADE
Grace Mullenmeister



7TH GRADE
Claire Nagel



8TH GRADE
Derek Klein

MEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL - JANUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



9TH GRADE
John Hora



10TH GRADE
Alyson Tuttle



11TH GRADE
Grant Cuevas



12TH GRADE
Tate Hermes

PROUD SUPPORTERS OF THE MEDFORD TIGERS



Nice Job
Medford Students!

Prepared and paid for by Petersburg Campaign Committee,
70019th Ave. NE, Waseca, MN 56093



John Petersburg

Congratulations Students!

PROUDLY SERVING STEELE COUNTY

Brick-Meger Funeral Home & Medford Funeral Home

megercares.com
507.451.1457

We Love Our Students!



Medford Teacher's Union



Great Job - you make our school proud!

GREAT JOB STUDENTS!

MEDFORD BUS COMPANY

MOVING KIDS FORWARD

Moving Kids Forward



Residential • Farm • Industrial • Commercial



COLE'S ELECTRIC, INC.

Whether you own a home or a business, expert wiring is crucial to your safety and comfort. When you need the best in wiring, call on the qualified, licensed electricians at Cole's Electric, Inc.

507-451-1387
7596 NW 40th St. Owatonna | www.ColesElectric.com



AREA SPORTS BOOSTERS

These businesses and organizations are proud supporters of the Steele County Times' expanded county wide sports coverage. We wish all local teams the best success throughout the season.

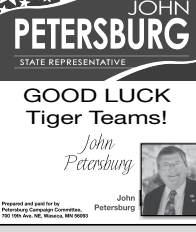
Go Blossoms, Go Tigers, Go Huskies and Go Panthers!



Good Luck
This Season Teams!
From the
Blooming Prairie
Bus Company
Moving kids forward



FOR SALE
Jennifer Walsh
REAL ESTATE
Jennifer Walsh
507-438-6676
jenwalsh@kw.com
jenwalsh.kw.com
Powered by 



JOHN PETERSBURG
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
GOOD LUCK Tiger Teams!
John Petersburg
Petersburg



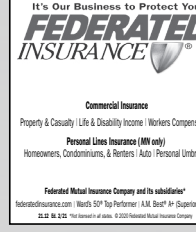
MEDFORD TIGERS
Good Luck on your Sports Seasons!
Medford Teacher's Union



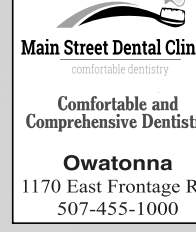
RJ'S 5TH AVE
GO PANTHERS
507-684-9422
Ellendale



Steve's Meat Market
210 5th Ave. W.
Ellendale, MN
507-684-2331



FEDERATED INSURANCE
Commercial Insurance
Property & Casualty / Life & Disability Income / Workers Compensation
Personal Lines Insurance (MN only)
Homeowners, Condominiums, & Renters / Auto / Personal Umbrella
Federated Mutual Insurance Company and its subsidiaries
federatedinsurance.com • 800-527-7619 / 507-431-4576
AFLAC is a service mark of AFLAC Company.



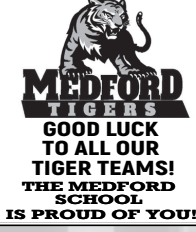
Main Street Dental Clinics
Comfortable and Comprehensive Dentistry
Owatonna
1170 East Frontage Rd.
507-455-1000



MINERS Outdoor & Rec
507-583-2712
Hwy 218 South,
Blooming Prairie, MN
Outdoor Power Equipment,
Golf Cart Sales, Service,
Parts & Accessories
www.minersoutdoor.com



Koster's CAR KORNER
Rod, Tess,
Breanna and Reeves
On the point • HWY 218
Blooming Prairie
507-583-2018
www.kosterscarkorner.com



MEDFORD TIGERS
GOOD LUCK TO ALL OUR TIGER TEAMS!
THE MEDFORD SCHOOL IS PROUD OF YOU!



COLE'S ELECTRIC, INC.
Residential • Farm
Industrial • Commercial
507-451-1387
7596 NW 40th St. Owatonna
www.ColesElectric.com



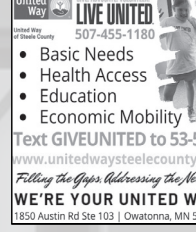
JENSEN HEATING, A.C. & PLUMBING
If you've ever called Jensen Heating, AC & Plumbing for any work, you already know they're the best around and why
104 Central Ave N,
Geneva, MN
507-236-4712



HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS!
HONEST-1 AUTO CARE
Mon-Fri 7 a.m.-6 p.m.
1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna
507-431-4576
www.Honest1Owatonna.com



KIBBLE EQUIPMENT
Your Farm. Your Future. Our Focus.
JOHN DEERE
Owatonna 507-451-4054
www.KibbleEq.com



LIVE UNITED
507-455-1180
• Basic Needs
• Health Access
• Education
• Economic Mobility
Text GIVEUNITED to 53-555
www.unitedwaysteelecounty.org
Following the spirit of addressing the needs
WE'RE YOUR UNITED WAY
1850 Austin Rd Ste 103 | Owatonna, MN 55060



DARRICK'S PREFERRED AUTO
ASE Certified
3 year/36,000 miles Warranty
540 Highway 218 South
Blooming Prairie



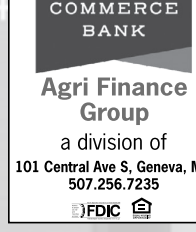
MBT Bank
Serving Southern Minnesota & Northern Iowa
www.mbtbank.bank
Member FDIC



PROUDLY SERVING STEELE COUNTY
Brick-Meger Funeral Home
&
Medford Funeral Home
megercares.com
507.451.1457



Main Street Dental Clinics
comfortable dentistry
Comfortable and Comprehensive Dentistry
New Richland
132 Broadway Ave. N.
507-463-0502



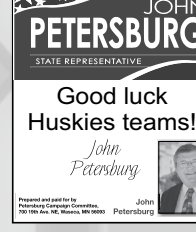
COMMERCE BANK
Agri Finance Group
a division of
101 Central Ave S, Geneva, MN
507-256-7235
FDIC



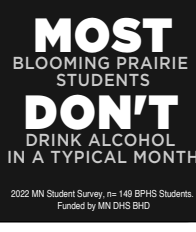
TOREY'S RESTAURANT & BAR
DOWNTOWN OWATONNA
208 N. CEDAR AVE
507-455-9260
WWW.TOREYS.NET



Good Luck Teams! Owatonna Bus Company
Moving kids forward



JOHN PETERSBURG
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Good luck Huskies teams!
John Petersburg
Petersburg



MOST BLOOMING PRAIRIE STUDENTS DON'T DRINK ALCOHOL IN A TYPICAL MONTH
2022 MN Student Survey: n=140 BPHS Students.
Funded by MN DHS BHD



Dr. Deborah Lien
DDS, MBS
drdeborahlienortheastdental.com
507-583-6613
FREE CONSULTATION
132 2nd Ave NE | Blooming Prairie
Building Healthy Smiles
ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST



Blossom Logo Wear One Stop Shop
623 6th Street SE
Blooming Prairie
507-683-7001
www.sportstitch.net




GOOD LUCK TIGERS! Moving Kids Forward
MEDFORD BUS COMPANY
MOVING KIDS FORWARD



Lerbergs Fitness Center & Car Wash
CAR WASH
118 5th Ave
Ellendale, MN
507-684-2471



LERBERG'S FOODS
Steele County's Oldest Grocery Store!
Since 1991
120 5th Ave, Ellendale 507-684-2472
Like us on Facebook
Visit our website: lerbergsfoods.com



usbank
Owatonna Branch
USBANK.COM



MICHAEL BISHMAN
121 West Broadway Street,
Owatonna
Phone: 507-451-0193
1-800-956-9864
Monday - Friday 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
Saturday & Sunday Closed
Available after hours by appointment
Like us on Facebook


Home sweet home

◀ **SPORTS WRAP** from B4 to be nice for everybody in the community. It needed to be done. I'm happy for Owatonna."

Wrestling with a crowd

The gym was filled beyond capacity at wrestling duals between Owatonna and Albert Lea during their heydays. Then-coach Scot Davis recalls, "Win or lose, those meets were before a packed house with standing-room-only space left to view from. People actually had to sit on the floor and were also lined up along the walls."

Davis used that setting to celebrate his 25th wedding anniversary with Mary. "I announced this over the microphone as I had her come down to the gym floor where I read her a note I had written. I kissed her afterward. That received a rousing standing ovation." Davis also did a skit with his daughter Ashley the year she was crowned Snow Queen.

Waiting for third

Fans knew. The coaches knew. But the Owatonna High School gymnasts didn't know for sure that they had made the podium with a third-place finish at the recent state meet.

Junior Emma Johnson said there was some drama. "Going into

awards we never really know where we're at. It's always kind of a surprise. But I think we all knew we had a good meet, and we had a good chance of being on the podium. And everyone was just really excited."

She told Owatonna Live she was pleased. "I'm very excited for and very proud of everyone on the team. By the time we're at state, we've already gone through all the hard stuff. So, it's just a meet to enjoy and have at it."

Coach Evan Moe added, "We've been making the joke the last couple of weeks that we've really got a stranglehold on that third place. I believe this is our fourth time in the last six years." He pointed out Northfield

took third the one time the Huskies didn't go to state. "It feels great though, of course. Any time you can represent your town at the big meets, it feels great."

Among the Huskies at state was sophomore Jozie Johnson. "I was the first person to go for the whole meet which was a little scary." She'll be ready when next season rolls around too. "I'm super excited. I'm already starting to set new goals for myself and get some new skills and reach good achievements."

More memories to come

The gymnasts hosted the section meet at OHS. "It was real exciting, especially since it was

home. We were all really pumped and excited," said sophomore Averie Roush. A move to the current OHS as their new home suits her just fine. "I'm excited for next season and having a new gym because we'll have a lot more room for people to come and watch us. Practices also won't be as congested as they are right now."

"It will be a great atmosphere. Just like we saw at sections having all those fans in there. Having a space dedicated to gymnastics will be amazing for the program," added Moe.

Blades battle the Moose

Steele County Blades junior hockey rallied to tie their playoff opener against the Minnesota

Moose and scored first in the second game. However, the Moose swept the series 2-0 by winning 3-2 in two overtimes in the first game, and 4-2 in the second. Coach Nick Adamek was proud of his team's effort. "The Moose are a good team. We battled hard to take them to double overtime in game one. Frankly, I thought we outplayed them in game two."

After a slow start to the season, Adamek feels the club came together well. "Our guys just kept going. That's one thing I can say about this group. They're pretty resilient. They were super close with each other. This was the most fun team I ever had the opportunity to coach."

HATS OFF TO NRHEG SCHOLARS!

Congratulations to these students at NRHEG High School for achieving academic excellence by making the honor rolls for first semester!

A HONOR ROLL

GRADE 6

Aubrey Basemen
Addison Bauleke
August Bethke
Lydia Burgess
Ellie Clark
Mack Gilliland
Alayna Groskreutz
Eli Hendrickson
Wyatt Hendrickson
Brock Holland
Kasey Jewison
Kendel Klocek
Crissa Koopal
Klare Liverseed
Gracie Luna
Emma Mortenson
Brynlee Neitzel
Tyler Piepho
Joey Rossing
Memphis Schlaak
Emilia Stadheim
Hailey Staska
Lauren Wakefield
Kylie Warke
Quinn Wayne
Matthew Williams
Julieann Wobbrock

GRADE 7

Ezra Boerner
Scarlett Chance
Kenley Gehrke
Chase Hanson
Savannah Johnson
Blake Klimmek
Jovey Knudson
Aaron Merritt
Calvin Nissen
Alexis Olson
Makenna Reeder
Reid Sandry
Brooklyn Sommer
Noah Weller
Levi Whiteside

GRADE 8

Jack Bartlett
Finnegan Baumann
Izley Boerner
Jada Braund
Clara Buendorf
Brooks Gilliland
Caralee Koopal
John Lynne
Dominic Olson
Kylie Olson
Brendan Schmidt
Ciara Stenzel
Sophia Williams

FRESHMEN

Holly Bartness
Melina Bell
Meela Budach
Kyera Eustice
Olivia Johnson
Jozie Klimmek
Wyatt Larson
Devon Nelton
Chloe Riewer
Payge Rosacker
Joseph Rosenquist
Adalyn Stadheim
Chloe Stork
Owen Wayne

SOPHOMORES

Hannah Brunsen
Aiden Dobberstein
Katelyn Grinnen
Sierra Misgen
Tayla Sandry
Aidan Schlaak
Reilly Weitzel
Olivia Wencil
Georgia Zimprich

JUNIORS

Ned Bell
Gavin Briggs
Kia Buendorf
Parker Bunn
Payton Bunn

Kyra Cain
Julia Churchill
Lauren Cowell
Levin Kitzer
Addison Loken
Kylah Mikesell
McKenzie Mueller
Madison Murray
Preslie Nielsen
Evelyn Nydegger
Erin Peterson
Annabelle Petsinger
George Roesler
Tayler Schmidt
Elsie Schultz
Haillie Schultz
Brenna Sommer
Isabel Stadheim

SENIORS

Aden Berg
Faith Borchert
Avyana Boyd
Haley Breitbarth
Anton Domeier
Kara Doyle
Bree Ihrke
Erin Jacobson
Shelby Johnston
Makota Misgen
Malu Monrreal
Sidney Schultz
Trinity Vulcan Smith
Mayla Soulisak
Josie Strom
Ethan Thompson
Will Utpadel
Eva Wayne
Grace Wilkenon
Ashley Wobschall

Brayton Kruger
Aiden Merritt
Andy Nelson
Lila Peterson
Aiden Routh
Owen Schlaak
Alexia Schmidt
Jaren Surat
Bryce Thibodeau
Melody Torley
Bentley Whitmore
Alec Wyrum

GRADE 7

Gianelle Cazares
David Deen
Lilly Diel
Alexandria Mejia Estrada
Adrianna Goette
Mallory Groskreutz
Alamae Gutierrez
Connor Louks
Gabrielle Nelson
Braydon Rollag
Nicole Rodriguez Santoya
Dylan Schroht
Corey Seedorf
Tru Thao

GRADE 8

Ariel Anhalt
Autumn Baseman
Jade Bauldry
Hazel Botten
Addison Buenger
Abigail Cosgrove
Amelia Duryee
Shan Hansen
Keira Hutchens
Anika Ladlie
Khaiden Madson
Faith Phillips
Hailey Raab
Ryan Schlaak

FRESHMEN

Kaitlyn Bauleke
Justin Beauvais

Evan Berg
Jordan Brouwers
Hudson Chrz
Bailey Dalbec
Brenna Dalbec
Shya Diel
Kaitlyn Dobberstein
Caylee Donovan
Jannelle Garrido
Kaleb Hughes
Molly Johnson
DeShawn Jones
Boden Kitzer
Gavin Lewison
Alexis Loken
Deven Parpart
Winter Pederson
Gabrielle Schlaak
Trevor Selover
Tatum Thibodeau
Cheyann Torres
Wyatt Tuttle
Abigail Viktora
Kayden Warke

SOPHOMORES

Owen Bartlett
Giselle Cazares
Harbor Cromwell
Eden Eads
Wendy Gutierrez Garcia
Aryanna Howe
Cole Hutchens
Brady Koopal
Lainee Krohn
Lukas Loverink
Megan Miller
Noah Miranda
Melina Monrreal
Jay Mullenburg
Cohen Riewer
Logan Schiell
Mallory Schlinger
Grace Starman
Aspyn Stenzel
Gabriella Willaert

JUNIORS

Peyton Curtis
Danny Deniz-Clark
Hailee Klemmensen
Jordis Kruger-Diaz
Keira Lenort
Sydney Lewer
Dacoda Malakowsky
Faith Nielsen
Samuel Olson
Jaylin Raab
Clay Routh
Reese Routh
Cayden Thorson
Malonna Wilson

SENIORS

Sean Beauvais
Evan Beckmann
Maverik Bueltel
Jared Cain
Alexus Chambers
Samuel Chrstensen
Jaylee Christopher
Aidan Deyle
Blake Eustice
Sarah George
Wyatt Groskreutz
Bailey Ihrke
Treyvin Johannsen
Jackson Iageson
Bryce Mudgett
Charlie Misgen
Andrew Phillips
Clair Pittman
Sawyer Prigge
Cody Reistad
Kaleb Schmidt
Tatum Vulcan Smith
Brooklyn Stand
Corrie Warner
Neela Wencil
Gavin Wilkenon
Bradley Wobschall
Katelynn Zimmerman

Sponsored by these local businesses

JENSEN HEATING, AC & PLUMBING

Heating & Air Conditioning

Amana

LASTS AND LASTS AND LASTS.

If you've ever called Jensen Heating, AC & Plumbing for any work, you already know they're the best around and why Amana recommends them.

104 Central Ave. N, Geneva, MN • 507-256-4712

LERBERG'S FOODS

Since 1901

Steele County's Oldest Grocery Store!

Mon-Sat 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sunday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

120 5th Ave, Ellendale 507-684-2472
Like us on Facebook
Visit our website: lerbergsfoods.com

Main Street Dental Clinics

comfortable dentistry
mainstreetdentalclinics.com

Comfortable and Comprehensive Dentistry

Blooming Prairie 405 E. Main St. 507-583-2141
Owatonna 1170 East Frontage Rd. 507-455-1000
New Richland 132 North Broadway 507-463-0502

GO PANTHERS!

507-684-9422 - Ellendale

Agri Finance Group

a division of

101 Central Ave S, Geneva, MN 507.256.7235

FDIC

Lerbergs Fitness Center & Car Wash

118 5th Ave Ellendale, mn 507-684-2471

Congratulations Panthers!

STEELE COUNTY Times

All Local. All The Time | steelecountytimes.com

Steve's Smoked Meats

Steve's Meat Market

Award Winning Smoked & Cured Sausage Products

Hours M-F 8 am - 5 pm • Sat 8 am - 1 pm

Go Panthers!

210 5th Ave W • Ellendale • 507.684.2331

HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS!

HONEST-1 AUTO CARE

1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna 507-431-4576

www.Honest1Owatonna.com



Volunteer DRIVERS NEEDED!

Semcac's Volunteer Driver Program is looking for drivers to provide transportation for those in need, in your own community. Drive as little or as much as you would like. Mileage (IRS Business Rate), meals & parking reimbursed.



We are looking for drivers in *Waseca, Steele, Dodge, Fillmore, Houston & Winona Counties.*
Please call **507-634-4490** or **1-800-528-7622 option 2** for more information. Semcac.org/volunteer/

PROPERTY SUPERVISOR

Life Style Inc Property Management in Owatonna is accepting applications for a highly motivated & organized team player to join our team.

Position ensures properties meet daily expectations, compliance, safety standards & financial goals. Must exhibit great customer service, leadership and communication skills. Must also be detailed orientated and have knowledge of financial performances & goals as it relates to the success of our rental properties.

Clean driving record required. Employment application and detailed job description found on www.lifestyleinc.net or by calling **507-451-8524**, tdd **507-451-0704**

EOE

ENJOY NEWS 24/7 ON OUR NEW APP!

The Steele County Times has launched a new app available through Apple.

3 Easy Steps to Install:

1. Go to "Apple Store" on iPhone
2. Search "Steele County Times"
3. Click on "Get"



You'll be able to Enjoy:

- Breaking News
- Top News and Sports Stories
- Favorite Columns

STEELE COUNTY **Times**
ALWAYS LOCAL, ALL THE TIME.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT Finance Director

The City of Kenyon & Kenyon Municipal Utilities, MN, is seeking a Finance Director. Kenyon is located 40 miles south of the Twin Cities and 40 miles north of Rochester, MN. Conducts financial and accounting functions. Pay rate up to \$37.41+ per hour (non-exempt) but negotiable depending on experience plus excellent benefits.

Qualifications: A.A Degree in accounting, finance, business, or related field and at least three years of experience in a position with similar responsibilities. Desired: B.S. degree in accounting, finance, public administration, business or related field.

Application materials are available at Kenyon City Hall, and at <http://www.cityofkenyon.com> or by calling 507-789-6415. Review of applications will begin on March 3, 2023, Application materials will be accepted until the position is filled. Submit application materials to info@cityofkenyon.com, by mail, or at City Hall 709 2nd St. Kenyon, MN 55946.

EOE



EXCHANGE CLUB
CENTER for
FAMILY UNITY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Exchange Club Center for Family Unity in Owatonna is looking for a Full-time Executive Director. The Director reports directly to the Center's Board of Directors. Responsibilities include:

- Supervision of paid staff and the Center's volunteers.
- Organizing community education and awareness activities (e.g. fundraisers, education activities, connection with local groups that support the Center)
- Developing policies related to the administration of the Center (e.g. accreditation documents, personnel policies, operations and strategic plans)
- Work with the Center's treasurer to ensure that the organization is properly utilizing financial resources. Develop grant requests, or coordinate with our contracted grant writer on these tasks.
- Report to the Board of Directors monthly with organizational statistics and the status of progress toward established goals.

Experience preferred:

- Bachelor's degree in Human Services or a related field
- Minimum of two years experience working with a related organization
- Possess knowledge of strategies to deal with family violence, child abuse, and related family situations.
- Superior communication, public relations and motivation skills.

Salary and benefits will be commensurate with the candidates experience and skill sets.

The Exchange Club Center for Family Unity is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization whose mission is "To educate and support families and communities in the prevention of child abuse". We offer three major programs: Parent mentoring, supervised visitation, and a parent circles group. We serve families in the counties of Steele, Rice, Waseca, Dodge and Freeborn.

For more information regarding this Executive Director position, please contact Brad Haugen, Treasurer at 507-210-6453 or bradpapahaugen@gmail.com

NOW HIRING

Are you a hardworking, motivated individual searching for the opportunity to expand your skills and grow? We are an upscale cabinet shop and are looking for experienced cabinet makers/installers that share our goal of paying attention to details and making sure the project looks and feels right!

Experienced Cabinet Maker/Installer

- Multi-tasking
- Strong ability and desire to learn new skills
- Follow Instructions
- Take initiative and lead by example
- Cabinet making experience 2 years (4 years preferred)
- 1 year of carpentry



We offer full-time employees competitive pay, a desirable benefits package and an excellent work environment.

Please apply with a resume or detailed work experience in person or email to accounting@rcbmi.co



**98 Main Street
Nerstrand, MN 55053
507-645-0551**



HOSPITALITY HOUSE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hospitality House of Owatonna is looking for an Executive Director to provide overall management, planning, and leadership of the organization.

For more information visit our website www.hospitalityhouseofowatonna.org or send your resume to mcschlobohm1327@gmail.com or call **507-213-1396** with any questions.

NOTICE

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #756 BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA 55917 MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2023 HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER

PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGENDA

6:00 a.m. Thursday, March 16, 2023
*Regular School Board Work Session
7:00 p.m. Monday, March 20, 2023 *Open Public Forum - High School Media Center
7:15 p.m. Monday, March 20, 2023
*Regular School Board Meeting - High School Media Center

A regular school board work session of the School Board of Independent School District #756, Blooming Prairie, Minnesota was held in the High School Media Center on Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 6:00 a.m.

Any person may raise a question to the School Board. The Board will not act on any item presented to them, which is not on the agenda, until the following Board meeting. Also, the Board would like persons to limit themselves to five minutes, with a maximum of 15 minutes per topic. These limitations are needed for us to run a timely and orderly Board meeting. Persons are requested to identify themselves prior to speaking.

- I. CALL TO ORDER – CHAIRPERSON
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- III. ROLL CALL – CLERK
- IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- V. PRINCIPAL REPORTS

VI. ITEMS ON WHICH BOARD ACTION IS REQUESTED

- A. Consent Agenda
Minutes
Bills
Treasurer’s Report
Resignations/
Terminations
Donations
- B. Employment
C. Volunteer
Coaches
D. Additional Contract Approvals
E. Acceptance of Bids
F. Rejection of Bids
G. Equipment Purchases for Building Project

VII. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ONLY

- A. Project Oversight Committee Report

- B. Building Project Financial Report
C. Transition Meeting Report
D. Committee Reports
E. Enrollment Data
F. Dates to Note

VIII.SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

*Agenda may be subject to changes

NOTICE

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #756 BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA January 17, 2023

A regular school board meeting of the School Board of Independent School District #756, Blooming Prairie, Minnesota, was held in the High School Media Center on Tuesday January 17, 2023 at 5:15 p.m. (Open Forum at 5:00 p.m.)

OPEN FORUM – No comments.

I. CALL TO ORDER – CHAIRPERSON

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL - CLERK

Dean Meshke, Jenny Thurnau, Jon Sunde, Melissa Stoen, Rodney Krell, Kelly Braaten, Crystal Studer

ALSO PRESENT:
Superintendent of Schools, High School Principal, Associate Principal, Members of the BPTA, Members of the Press

MEMBERS ABSENT:
None

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Melissa Stoen seconded by Jon Sunde to approve the agenda as updated. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

V. PRINCIPAL

REPORTS

Reports given by Mr. Worke and Ms. Mach.

VI. ITEMS ON WHICH BOARD ACTION IS REQUESTED

A. Installation of New School Board Members
Installation of newly elected board members Kelly Braaten, Rodney Krell, Dean Meshke and Crystal Studer with the “Acceptance and Oath of Office” being recited.

B. Designation/ Rotation of School Board Officers
Motion by Crystal Studer and seconded by Dean Meshke to approve the officers as follows: Rodney Krell, Chair; Kelly Braaten, Vice Chair; Melissa Stoen, Clerk; and Jon Sunde, Treasurer. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

C. School Board Assignments
Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Melissa Stoen to approve school board assignment changes as presented. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

D. Minutes, Bills, Treasurer’s Report, Resignation, Donations
Motion by Melissa Stoen and seconded by Dean Meshke to approve minutes, bills, treasurer’s report, and resignations as presented. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

E. Employment
Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Melissa Stoen to approve the employment of Sara Reinke as an assistant golf coach. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Jon Sunde and seconded by Kelly Braaten to approve employment of Chase Callahan as a long-term substitute. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Dean Meshke to approve the employment of Mike DenHerder as part-time jr. high boys’ basketball coach. Motion carried.

(7 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Crystal Studer to approve the employment of Brian Nelson as part-time jr. high boys’ basketball coach. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

F. Volunteer Coaches
No additional volunteer coaches at this time.

G. Designation of Local Depositories, Staff, Newspaper and School Attorney
Motion by Melissa Stoen and seconded by Jenny Thurnau to approve the following financial institutions currently designated as depositories for school funds and investments: MBT Bank, Blooming Prairie; Minnesota Liquid Asset Fund, New York; US Bank, Blooming Prairie & St. Paul; and Wells Fargo, Minneapolis. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Jon Sunde and seconded by Kelly Braaten to approve the following persons authorized to make electronic or paper transactions from any institution for the district: Christopher Staloch, Nancy Clark, Kari Forystek, and Nicole Bartness. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Jenny Thurnau to approve the Steele County Times as the current official school newspaper. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Melissa Stoen to approve Hoversten, Johnson, Beckmann & Hovey, PLLP, Austin, MN, as the district’s designated school attorney. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

H. Promulgation of Seniority Lists for the Teaching Staff
Motion by Melissa Stoen and seconded by Jenny Thurnau to approve the seniority lists for teaching staff. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

I. Additional Contract Approvals
None at this time.

J. Acceptance of Bids
None at this time.

K. Rejection of Bids
None at this time.

L. MSHSL Form B
Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Crystal Studer to approve monies available through the MSHSL Foundation for training of coaches/students/school personnel along with health and safety education. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

M. Safe Learning Plan
No changes at this time.

N. School Meals Policy
Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Jon Sunde to approve amended “School Meals Policy” as presented. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

O. Food Service Equipment Purchases
Motion by Jon Sunde and seconded by Melissa Stoen to approve the purchase of food service equipment from Hubert Co. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

P. Equipment Purchases for Building Project
Motion by Melissa Stoen and seconded by Jenny Thurnau to approve the equipment purchases for the building project as presented. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

VII. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ONLY

A. Building Project Report
Update given.

B. Committee Reports
A committee report update was given for the following committees: Education Foundation, MSBA & MSHSL, and Staff Development.

C. Enrollment Data
Enrollment (per JMC) for the 2022-23 school year as of January 11, 2023 is 478 at the elementary school (grades K-6) and 377 at the high school (grades 7-12) (358 attending BPHS and approximately 19 PSEO).

D. Dates to Note
The board noted dates of importance.

E. School Calendar 22-23
Discussion held regarding the end of the school year and the construction process.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

-Thank you from Kari Forystek
-Thank you to MBT Bank, Main Street Dental, & Hanson Family Foundation for their donations
-Meeting with staff to talk about next year and the transitions
-Business office transition meeting is set up for Friday with SMS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Jon Sunde and seconded by Dean Meshke to adjourn the meeting at 5:58 p.m. Motion carried. (7 Aye/0 Nay)

Tentatively, the next
Continued on next page

Public Notice

Aurora Township will accept quotes for class 5 gravel. No class 5 gravel made with or including concrete or asphalt will be accepted. All taxes and fees to be included in the quote. Quotes need to be specified in price per ton for hauling and price per ton for material. Material to be delivered on any roads and driveways in the township. Dust control spots need to be hauled by June 1st, 2023 and the remaining material is to be delivered by August 31st, 2023. A current certificate of insurance must accompany all quotes. Quotes will be read April 3rd, 2023 at 7 PM at the Aurora Town Hall. The full board reserves the right to reject any and all quotes and to waive irregularities therein and reserves the right to award the contract in the best interest of the township.

Alicyn Prestegard – Clerk

Dennis Paulson – Chairman

3.1-8

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 756 BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MN NOTICE OF BID

Independent School District No. 756, Blooming Prairie, Minnesota, is presently soliciting competitive “Prime Contract Bids” for Blooming Prairie Public Schools District Wide Renovation Work. Sealed bids will be received electronically through Building Connected using the following link:<https://app.buildingconnected.com/public/5757529c-4425ca0a0029307b>, free of charge to Contractors. No other agent is authorized to receive bids. Bids will be received until 2:00PM, on March 16th, 2023. Bidders are also invited to review the results online at <https://www.krausanderson.com/subcontractors/bid-tabulations/>.

All bids shall be on a lump sum basis. No bid may be withdrawn for a period of 60 days after bid receipt without consent of the Owner. Each bidder shall accompany the Bid Form with a bid security as described in the Instructions to Bidders. The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any irregularities in bids. This portion of the project involves the rebid of electrical upgrades and reroofing. Direct communications regarding this Project to the office of the Construction Manager: Matt Steffen (matt.steffen@krausanderson.com) Kraus-Anderson Construction, 502 2 AVE SW, Rochester, MN 55902 Tel: 507-226-8600. Obtain Bidding Documents, including the online bidding instructions, as well as Drawings and Specifications, via free electronic download by visiting the online Kraus-Anderson plan room. Contact Katie Reinhart with any planroom downloading questions at 507-226-8600 or matt.steffen@krausanderson.com to receive an invite. Kraus-Anderson will not be responsible for notifying individual parties who obtained documents without utilizing the Building Connected process through KA, when Addenda are issued. Bidding Documents will be available for inspection at the office of the Construction Manager and the office of the Architect: as well as several Builder’s Exchanges: MHC Dodge Plans, MEDA, St. Cloud, Mid-Minnesota, Brainerd Lakes, Rochester, Duluth, and MBEX. A Pre-Bid conference will be held at the following location and time:
• Blooming Prairie Elementary: Wednesday March 8th at 2:00pm.

Independent School District No. 756
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

CITY OF BLOOMING PRAIRIE
ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Electronic Bids will be received by the City of Blooming Prairie, Minnesota, on the QuestCDN.com website via the VirtuBid electronic bidding application. Only electronic bids will be accepted for this project. Bids will be received on the QuestCDN.com website, until 10:00 A.M., CDT on Thursday, March 30, 2023, at which time they will be opened electronically and reviewed for the furnishing of all labor, materials, and all else necessary for the following:

2023 Street and Utility Improvements Project

In general and pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, chapter 429, the work consists of the construction of water main improvements and street rehabilitation and reconstruction with approximately the following quantities:

2225	LIN FT	8" DIP Water Main/ PVC Alternate
3575	LIN FT	6" DIP Water Main/ PVC Alternate
8	EACH	Hydrant
25	EACH	6"/ 8" Gate Valve and Box
2100	LIN FT	1" Type "K" Copper Water Service Pipe
56	EACH	1" Corporation Stop
55	EACH	1" Curb Stop and Box
6738	CU YD	Common Excavation
5880	CU YD	Class 5 Aggregate Base
19345	SQ YD	4.0" Bituminous Pavement Section
8615	SQ YD	5.0" Bituminous Pavement Section
7525	LIN FT	Concrete Curb and Gutter (B618 and Surmountable)

Along with miscellaneous items needed to reconstruct the utilities and roadways.

Complete digital Bidding Documents are available at www.questcdn.com by inputting **QuestCDN eBidDoc #8414046** on the website’s Project Search page.

Direct inquiries to Engineer’s Project Manager, Brett Grabau, at (507) 529-6030 and Brett.Grabau@Stantec.com.

Bid Security in the amount of 5 percent of the amount of the Bid must accompany each Bid in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders. For this project, the City will only accept online electronic bids through QuestCDN. To access the electronic bid, download the project documents and click on the online bidding button at the top of the advertisement. Prospective bidders must be on the plan holders list through QuestCDN for bids to be accepted.

The Owner reserves the right to retain the deposits of the 3 lowest Bidders for a period not to exceed 60 days after the date and time set for the Opening of Bids. No Bids may be withdrawn for a period of 60 days after the date and time set for the Opening of Bids.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, to waive irregularities and informalities therein, and further reserves the right to award the Contract to the best interests of the Owner.

The successful bidder must be a “responsible contractor.” The term “responsible contractor” means a contractor as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 16C.285, subdivision 3. Any prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that does not meet the minimum criteria or fails to comply with the verification requirements is not a responsible contractor and is not eligible to be awarded a construction contract for the project or to perform work on the project. A prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that makes a false statement under oath verifying compliance with the minimum criteria will be ineligible to be awarded a construction contract on the project, and the submission of a false statement may result in termination of a contract awarded to a prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that submits the false statement. A prime contractor shall include in its verification of compliance a list of all of its first-tier subcontractors that it intends to retain for work on the project. Before execution of a construction contract, a prime contractor shall submit a supplemental verification under oath confirming that all subcontractors and motor carriers that the prime contractor intends to use to perform project work have verified to the prime contractor, through a signed statement under oath by an owner or officer, that they meet the minimum criteria for a responsible contractor.

Terri Zwiener, Interim City Administrator
City of Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

3.8

Continued from previous page
Regular School Board Work Session will be held on Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 6:00 a.m. in the High School Media Center.

Tentatively, the next Regular School Board Meeting will be Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 5:15 p.m. in the High School Media Center (Open Forum begins at 5:00 p.m.).

A complete copy of the official minutes may be found in their entirety in the official minute book located in the superintendent's office at the high school; however, they will not be available until approved by the School Board.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Stoen
Clerk of the School Board
Independent School District #756
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF GOODHUE

DISTRICT COURT
First Judicial District:
Court File No. 25-JV-23-23

AMENDED SUMMONS
Child In Need of Protection or Services
Petition

In the Matter of the Welfare of the Child(ren) of: Steven Alexander Fine
Please take notice that on January 26, 2023, a Petition was filed with the above named court alleging that the child(ren) of the above-named parent(s) or legal custodian(s) are in need of protection or services. A copy of the Petition is attached.
YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED AND REQUIRED TO APPEAR IN COURT VIA ZOOM at the following date and time where a hearing regarding the Petition and the best interests of the child(ren) will be held:

**April 18, 2023
9:00 AM
Admit/Deny Hearing
District Court Judge
Goodhue County
District Court
454 West Sixth Street
Red Wing MN 55066
651-267-4800**

YOU HAVE BEEN SERVED WITH THIS SUMMONS because, pursuant to statute or court rule:
• You are a parent to the child(ren) named in the petition; or
• You are a party to this proceeding pursuant to Juvenile Protection Rule 32.01 or an attorney for a party, or
• You have legal custody of the child who is the subject of the Petition; or
• You are a person whose presence the court believes is important to a determination concerning the best interests of the child(ren) who are the subject of the Petition.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR AT THE HEARING:
• The court may conduct the hearing without you; and
• The court may find that the factual allegations and statutory grounds set forth in the petition have been proved; and
• The court may enter an order granting the relief requested in the Petition, which may include:

o removing the child(ren) from the home of the parent or legal custodian and placing the child(ren) in foster care,
o permanently severing the parent's rights to the child(ren) pursuant to a termination of parental rights petition,
o permanently transferring the child(ren)'s legal and

physical custody to a relative, or
o an order for other permanent placement of the child(ren).

A STATEMENT OF YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IS ATTACHED, including the right to be represented by an attorney as authorized under the statutes and court rules.
It is your responsibility to immediately notify the Court Administrator if your address changes.

There is more information under the **Child in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS) Help Topic** on the MN Judicial Branch website at www.mncourts.gov/help-topics/CHIPS.
There you will find: a child protection video (www.mncourts.gov/ChildProtectionVideo), information on asking for a court appointed attorney, and other tools and resources.
To receive an eReminder for future court dates via e-mail or text, visit www.mncourts.gov/Hearing-eReminders.aspx or scan the QR code to enroll.
Dated: February 21, 2023

Vanessa Jeske
Court Administrator



NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF STEELE

DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Case Type: Civil
Court File No. 74-CV-23-195

Barrie King
Trebtor-Macconnell III, individually and
Tiffany Lynn Clark, individually and as joint tenants and Bell Bank, a Corporation under North Dakota Law Plaintiff

vs.
SUMMONS
Shirley Jensen; Kathleen J. Jensen-Roth and Steve Roth; Dianne M. Lee and Al Lee; DeWayne M. Jensen and Lauri Jensen; Nancy A. Williams; Barbara J. Wayne-Heyer and Kip Heyer; and also all heirs-at-law, legatees and devisees of any of the foregoing person, if deceased; also the husband or wife, if any, of each of the foregoing persons named as defendants; also the unknown heirs of each of the above-named defendants, if deceased; and also all other persons unknown claiming any right, title, estate, interest, or lien in the real estate described in the Complaint herein,

Defendants.

THIS SUMMONS IS DIRECTED TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS:
You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon plaintiffs attorneys an Answer to the Complaint which is on file in the office of the Court Administrator of the above-named Court, within twenty (20) days after service of this Summons upon you, exclusive of the day of service. If you fail to do so, judgement by default will be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.
This action involves, affects, or brings into question real property situated in the County of Steele, State of Minnesota described as follows:
Lot 4, in Block E, Creamery Addition to the Village of Ellendale (now City of Ellendale), according to plat thereof on and of record in the Office of the Register of

Deeds in and for Steele County, Minnesota
NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the object of this action is to determine adverse claims to the real estate and to have title to said real estate quieted in fee simple in the Plaintiff and to have it adjudged that the Plaintiff is the owner of said real estate as stated in the Complaint in fee simple absolutely, and that the Defendants, or any of them or any other persons or parties have no right, title, estate, lien, interest or easement therein, thereto or thereupon.
NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that no personal claim is made by plaintiff against any of the defendants.
Civil cases are subject to Alternative Dispute Resolution processes as provided in Rule 114 of the General Rules of Practice for the District Courts. Alternative Dispute Resolutions includes mediation, arbitration, and other processes set forth in the rules. You may contact the Court Administrator for information about these processes and about resources available in your area.
Dated this 7 day of February, 2023.

LEACH LAW PLLC
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF

/s/ Abby Leach Schumaker
MN# 0398442
1206 W. Front St. #5
Albert Lea, MN 56007
Telephone: 507-369-5953
e-mail:
abby@leachlawalbertlea.com

3.8-22

NOTICE

**REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION
BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA
January 12, 2023**

A regular school board work session of the School Board of Independent School District #756, Blooming Prairie, Minnesota was held in the High School Media Center on Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 6:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Jenny Thurnau, Jon Sunde, Melissa Stoen, Rodney Krell, Kelly Braaten, Crystal Studer

MEMBERS ABSENT:
Dean Meshke

ALSO PRESENT:
Superintendent of Schools

DISCUSSION ITEMS:
General review and discussion was held on agenda items for the January 17, 2023 regular school board meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Stoen
Clerk of the School Board
Independent School District #756
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

3.8

Public Notice

Blooming Prairie Township will hold its annual election and meeting on March 14th 2023. The polls will be open from 4PM until 8PM, with the meeting to follow. If you are unable to attend but would like the Annual, documents please request those documents from Missy Anderson any time after March 7th.

On the ballot are

Doug Krell – 3 year term Supervisor
Katie Zipze- 2 year term Treasurer

Thank you-
Blooming Prairie Township Board
Missy Anderson - Clerk

3.8

STEELE COUNTY

Times

Always local, all the time.

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWS!
ANYWHERE- ANYTIME

News • Sports • Obituaries
Features • More!

Hometown news that makes a difference!

WWW.STEELECOUNTYTIMES.COM

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1 Baseball blunder
6 Contributes
10 Dull color
14 Relinquish
15 Icy precipitation
16 "Field of Dreams" setting
17 It's taken in class
19 Guys-only party
20 More within reach
21 Devoured
22 Filly's mom
23 Pair of draft horses
25 Wearable wares
27 "L.A.'s Finest" actress
30 Very skillful
32 Mild-mannered
33 Back from boating
34 Drugstore chain
37 Long tresses
39 Whip severely
40 Crippling virus
42 Poetic tribute
43 Lacking iron
46 Bring down
47 Gloomy
49 Egyptian bird
50 "Cheers!"
52 Place to wait
54 Santa Anita event
55 "___ the season ..."
57 Kind of block
61 Start of a plan
62 Houses on the market
64 Snorkeling gear

DOWN

1 He played Obi-Wan
2 Fixed charge
3 Novelist ___ Mae Brown
4 Pull ahead of
5 "Judy" portrayer
6 "Bingo!"
7 CNN reporter Bash
8 Despotism
9 Certain sofa
10 Hardly cheery
11 "Service Above Self" group
12 In the know
13 Deli item
18 Many a TV series
24 Great painting
26 Get ready for the O.R.
27 BB's and bullets
28 Main movie part
29 Charitable
31 Embarrassment
35 Henry ___
36 Some heirs
38 Went under
41 Monopoly avenue
44 Not taking sides
45 Meteorological conditions, briefly
48 Discomfort
50 "Catch my ___?"
51 Dashboard item
53 Cozy retreats
56 Actress Gilbert
58 Fairy follower
59 Looking down from
60 Advanced
63 Played the first card

Solution to Crossword:

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

FOR SALE

Jennifer Walsh

REAL ESTATE

Jennifer Walsh

507-438-6676
jenwalsh@kw.com
jenwalsh.kw.com

Powered by KW

DEALS ON WHEELS

Sell your car, bike, RV, trailer, and anything on wheels today!!

Over 16,000 in households

CLASSIFIEDS

Serving Steele, Mower, Freeborn, Dodge, and Olmsted Counties

BARGAIN FINDER

Sell your items for \$50 or less. Run it for four weeks. ONLY \$5!

www.steeledodgenews.com

TO PLACE AN AD

Steele County Times
507-583-4431
bptimes@frontiernet.net
411 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

3-WEEK SPECIAL: \$32

BUY TWO WEEKS,
GET THE THIRD FREE
UP TO 20 WORDS; 10¢ FOR EACH WORD AFTER

TO PLACE AN AD

Dodge County Independent
Dodge County Advantage
507-634-7503 • dcl@kmtel.com
301 S. Mantorville Ave., Suite 200, Kasson, MN 55944

COINS

NEED CASH? I give free appraisals of your older coins from 1964 and older. I am also looking to buy older coins such as silver dollars, halves, quarters, dimes, and Indian Head cents. Please call Ron from Hayfield at 507-477-2427 or 507-259-6460. TFN

FOR RENT

DODGE COUNTY RENTALS
Smoke free 2 bd apts in Claremont & Kasson open **NOW!** Rent based on income. Month to month leases and free applications. 507-398-6027 or 507-451-8524
www.lifestyleinc.net
tdd 507-451-0704
Equal Housing Opportunity

OWATONNA RENTALS
Smoke free 1 bd apts & 2 bd. townhomes open **NOW**. Several great locations, flexible leases and affordable rates! 507-451-8524

www.lifestyleinc.net
tdd 507-451-0704
Equal Housing Opportunity

FOR SALE

Huge 25% Off Everything in the Store Sales!
Lots of new items including Video Games, LP Records, Toys, Clothing & more! Open Mon - Thur 1pm-4:30 & Sat 11am-3pm! Only at Dano's Consignment Store, 32 E Main ST, Dodge Center. (90% of ALL our items are priced under \$10!) 3.9

HELP WANTED

Full-time Caregiver for disabled female. Available shifts: Every other Saturday, every other Sunday, every other Friday overnight, every Friday overnight. Can take any or all. No heavy lifting, will train. Northwest Rochester. \$15.25/hour. 507-289-2756. 3.2-16 ccptd

SERVICES

CALEB'S PET SITTING
Cats & Dogs, please call me at 507-634-7907. TFN

High school student looking for babysitting work, light housecleaning, outdoor tasks, etc. TFN

Call Madeline at 507-634-6293. TFN

ODD JOBS

HEALTHY, STRONG 15-YEAR-OLD BOY hoping to be hired for odd jobs that work around a hockey schedule. 507-202-3702 TFN

GETTING THE WORD OUT FOR YOU!



Gail Buckingham

Contact us today and see what makes advertising in the **Steele County Times** a great fit for your advertising needs.

STEELE COUNTY **Times**

507-456-4456
gbuckingham@steelecountytimes.com



Steve Fields
Minnesota Attorney



INJURED AT WORK? DISABILITY DENIED?

Contact Us Today
For Free Advice

Workers' Compensation
Long-Term Disability
Social Security Disability

507-923-4169

www.GetFields.com

WINSTOCK 2023

JUNE 16 & 17 ★ WINSTED, MN



HURRY!
EARLY BIRD
PRICING ENDS
MARCH 15



JOIN CODY JOHNSON, MIRANDA LAMBERT & MORE
PURCHASE TICKETS & CAMPING PASSES
WINSTOCKFESTIVAL.COM • 320.485.4287



FULL-RIDE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

APPLY BY MARCH 31

SOUTHEAST Technical College

605-367-6040 | admissions@southeasttech.edu
SOUTHEASTTECH.EDU/SCHOLARSHIPS

Are you looking for child care?



Parent Aware offers free tools and resources to help families find the quality child care programs their children need to succeed in school and life.

ParentAware.org | 888.291.9811

STEELE COUNTY TIMES ADVERTISING SALES

ADVERTISING THAT WORKS HARD FOR YOU!



Wyonne Priebe

Contact us today and see what makes advertising in the **Steele County Times** a great fit for your advertising needs.

STEELE COUNTY **Times**

507-456-4299 • wpriebe@steelecountytimes.com

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Growing media company looking for a marketing specialist to focus on new digital billboard network as well as opportunities for print publications. Must be self-starter, able to work independently and demonstrate knowledge of all forms of marketing and advertising. This position will be part time with potential to grow into full time. It could be full time for the right person.

Send resume and letter of interest to

Publisher Rick Bussler at

rbussler@steelecountytimes.com

DODGE COUNTY **INDEPENDENT**



mcAn

Minnesota Classified Advertising Network



WANTED TO BUY

WANTED:

ALL 1970S MOTORCYCLES
Running or not. Titled or not. Cash in exchange. Sell now while prices are high! Call Dan at 612/720-2142

BUYING AND SELLING

silver bars, silver dollars, rare coins, gold coins, gold jewelry, any gold-silver items, collector coins. Kuehl's Coins, Fairmont, Minnesota 507/235-3886

Classified Advertising that is Easy!

THE MINNESOTA CLASSIFIED Ad NETWORK
Make an impact with your advertising dollar with classified advertising that reaches over 2.5 million readers!

Your newspaper representative can provide complete details.
The 244 Network is a program of the MMA, phone 800-278-2976

MISCELLANEOUS

FREE

HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

for those that qualify. Government program for recipients of select programs include Medicaid, SNAP, Housing Assistance, WIC, Veterans Pension, Survivor Benefits, Lifeline, Tribal. 15 GB internet service. Bonus offer: Android tablet FREE with one-time \$20 copay. Free shipping & handling. Call Maxisp Telecom today! 866/433-5324

CARING FOR

AN AGING LOVED ONE?

Wondering about options like senior-living communities and in-home care? Caring.com's Family Advisors are here to help take the guesswork out of senior care for you and your family. Call for your free, no-obligation consultation: 866/924-8422

MISCELLANEOUS

DONATE YOUR CAR

truck or boat to Heritage For The Blind. Free 3-day vacation, tax deductible, free towing, all paperwork taken care of 844/220-9501

DISH NETWORK:

Only from Dish, 3-year TV price guarantee! 99% signal reliability, backed by guarantee. Includes Multi-Sport with NFL Redzone. Switch and get a FREE \$100 gift card. Call today! 855/562-4309

THE GENERAC PWRCELL

a solar plus battery storage system. Save money, reduce your reliance on the grid, prepare for power outages and power your home. Full installation services available. \$0 Down financing option. Request a free, no obligation quote today. Call 888/913-5895



Dear Motor Medics,

I have a 2005 Ford F150 truck with the 5.4 engine and I've been watching my fuel mileage drop slowly but steadily over the past five years. It's been about 60k miles and I've lost about 5mpg over that time frame. The truck runs perfectly so I haven't taken it in to have anything checked. Where should I start if I wanted to try and get the mileage back up where it had been?

Dan in Sioux City Iowa

Dear Dan,

Fuel economy degrades for many reasons, some of which can be avoided with daily habits while others need to be addressed on a more professional level. Daily you can keep the air in your tires at the level recommended by your vehicles manufacturer and you can keep your engine oil maintained and your air filter clean. Driving at excessive speeds also is a prime waster of fuel and with many places raising the speed limits we have seen mileage fall accordingly. Some of the more in-depth end tune up items such as spark plugs and wearing oxygen sensors can degrade economy. These things can be checked by your mechanic. Finally, but not all is the fuel system and induction system. As the valves and injectors become carbon coated and sludge builds up on them, the engine efficiency will drop and as it does the fuel economy will as well. These are a few things you and your mechanic can talk about.

Take care, the Motor Medics

Dear Motor Medics,

I keep developing a shake in my cars brake system. It's a 2006 Chevy Impala and I made it the first 80k miles before it first happened and at that time they replaced all of my cars brake pads and rotors and it was good for about 6 months then the front rotors warped again and I replaced them a second time. Now it's been just three months and they are shaking again and I can only assume it's the front rotors. What could be causing them to fail so often when the first ones lasted so long? I'm using original equipment parts.

Peter in Sachse Texas

Dear Peter,

We suspect there may be more to the brake failure than just worn out brake pads and rotors. When brakes are replaced it is easy to replace just the parts you visually see worn and overlook underlying items such as calipers that are sticking and brake hardware and hoses that are causing the brakes to drag. An important part of any brake job is to thoroughly inspect these items or you can end up with repeat failure. If a brake is not releasing completely it may not feel like there's a problem but it can build up heat from dragging and that heat can lead to premature wear and also brake rotors that are warped again in a short amount of time. When you find out what is wrong inspect everything else thoroughly.

Take care, the Motor Medics

Kappy's COLLISION CENTER
OWATONNA'S COLLISION SPECIALIST

Now using PPG Waterborne Paint
STAY HAPPY
www.kappysauto.com
kappysauto@gmail.com

SEE KAPPY
Charlie & Al Kaplan
507-451-8989

Schaeffer's SPECIALIZED LUBRICANTS

Bruce Freerksen
(507)273-9110
brucewithschaefferoil@gmail.com
West Concord, MN

L&D Recycling, Inc.
Scrap Iron & Metals

WE BUY ALL METALS!
507-527-2408 • LDRecycling.com
55970 STATE HWY 56, West Concord, MN

HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS!

HONEST-1 AUTO CARE

Mon-Fri 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.

1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna
507-431-4576 • www.Honest1Owatonna.com

LET THESE SPONSORS KNOW YOU APPRECIATE THESE COLUMNS!

FOR ENTERTAINMENT ONLY.

ALWAYS CONSULT YOUR LOCAL SHOP AND FOLLOW ALL SAFETY PROCEDURES BEFORE REPAIRS.

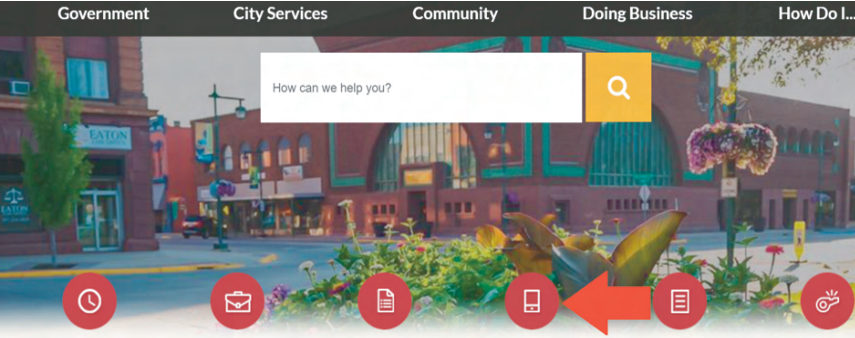
Come visit the Motor Medic® online at underthehoodshow.com

Focus On Owatonna



March 8, 2023

Sign up to receive notifications when the latest City Newsletters, News Releases or Videos are posted at Owatonna.gov. Click on "Notification Sign-up" on the home page and look for "Communications".



Reminder to Keep Fire Hydrants Clear

This is a reminder that the Owatonna Fire Department is hosting a contest for residents to help clear snow from around fire hydrants. The Owatonna Fire Department has launched a "Keep Fire Hydrants Clear" program to keep hydrants clear from snow so firefighters can access them quickly if needed. After each snowfall, send in photos for a chance to win an "Owatonna Fire Prize Pack" at the end of winter. Residents should clear a three-foot perimeter around the hydrant and a path from the street to the hydrant. The photos of hydrants being cleared should

be submitted via Facebook Messenger to Owatonna Fire Department or visit the Fire Department's page on owatonna.gov. "During a fire, every second counts, and after a snowfall, there are hydrants that can become hard to find," said Fire Chief Ed Hoffman. "Having an easily accessible fire hydrant affects how quickly we can successfully put out a fire in your neighborhood." Follow Owatonna Fire Department on Facebook for additional information.

Spring Park & Recreation Registrations

The Owatonna Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department's upcoming programs include something for everyone. Check out the Spring/Summer Activity Guide that was sent through US mail in February or online at Owatonna.gov.

Activity and registration dates are listed below:

- Spring soccer registration is February 21 through March 7
- Adult noon basketball registration is February 21 through December 1
- Adult softball registration is February 21 through March 21
- Adult bag toss registration is February 21 through April 18
- Spring swim lessons registration is March 16 through one week prior to the program

The guide also includes

new and redesigned options such as Backyard Adventure Camp, Outdoor Adventure Camp, Nature Investigators and more! Family archery and geocaching programs provide fun opportunities to get out and try something together as

a family! Programs are available for everyone to get out and enjoy the great spring weather. Register on the Owatonna Parks, Recreation and Facilities website at www.owatonna.gov/283/Parks-Recreation, by phone at 507-444-4321

or in person at 540 West Hills Circle. Scholarships are available. Volunteer coaches are always needed for youth sports programs.

Park Pavilion Rentals

Park pavilions are available to rent May 1 through October 15 and can be reserved up to one year in advance. They provide an excellent venue for family reunions, picnics, graduation parties or other special occasions. To find out about the amenities available at each park and pavilion, use the Park Finder app at Owatonna.gov. Reserving a pavilion allows the renter to sole use of it from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. An additional permit is required 30-days in advance for the following uses: bounce houses, inflatables, tents, amplified sound, moving park amenities such as picnic tables or requesting use outside of normal permitted hours. Payment is required at the time of reservation in addition to a refundable damage deposit. Pavilions are available at Brown Park, Dart's Park (large and small), Fairgrounds Park, Gainey Park, Jaycee Park, Kaplan's Woods, Manthey Park (large and small), Mineral Springs Park, Morehouse Park and the Warsinski Chalet. Please read the Outdoor Rental and Use Policies on the website prior to reserving.



Park Master Plans Approaching the Finish Line

After many months of planning and receiving input, the City of Owatonna Parks & Recreation is in the final stages of planning improvements in several parks. The last ten months have included hosting focus groups and open houses, conducting surveys, posting online maps and public displays to gather ideas from community members for four of Owatonna's park areas. WSB Engineering was selected by City staff and City Council to lead this effort to take a peek into the future uses for these areas. Following the first public engagement period, two concept plans were proposed for Cashman Property, Morehouse Park, Kaplan's Woods Parkway & Lake Kohlmier and Kaplan's Woods. The plans were presented several times in-person and online including at the Steele County Free Fair, to the Park Board and at a City Council Study Session. Continued public input helped develop the two designs into one concept for each area. Large, printed versions of the concepts are available to view in the Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department



conference room at City Hall. Next, an actual written master plan will be created for each of these areas. Beyond the concept maps, written master plans will also include probable cost estimates, potential alternatives, possible funding sources, phasing recommendations and other considerations necessary before any improvements would occur. These plans are dynamic documents that are reveal-uated and can change as the community grows and changes, yet they provide direction for development. Plans with robust public engagement such as these are integral in seeking funding from private, public, state and federal sources. Owatonna continues to be an innovative community in southern Minnesota, pro-viding new and unique experiences for its residents and visitors. The plans will be presented to the Park & Recreation Board March 13 and then to the City Council for final approval.

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 including meeting times for the following

City boards and commissions:

- AIRPORT COMMISSION
- CHARTER COMMISSION
- CITY COUNCIL
- FIRE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
- HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
- HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
- PARK & RECREATION BOARD
- PLANNING COMMISSION
- PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
- PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
- WEST HILLS COMMISSION

Brought
To You
By

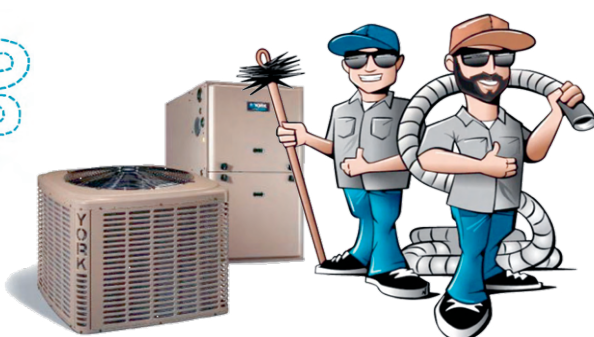


HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

1500 E. Main St Owatonna MN 55060

507-451-6388

Our family keeping yours comfortable since 1969



OWATONNA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INSPIRING EXCELLENCE • EVERY LEARNER • EVERY DAY

OWATONNA PROUD



OWATONNA SCHOOLS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023 | B18

Point of law, mock trial way



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Members of Owatonna High School's Mock Trial team captured the regional championship trophy recently. Team members include, from left: Josaphine Nguyen, Carter Hanson, Hailey Kjersten, Vanessa Gonzalez, Lileigh Nguyen, Kinzie Carlson, Aubrianna Werk, Rohit Poduval, Elizabeth Roesner, Abigail Beaver, Riddhi Bhakta, and Haley Abrahams.

Read Across America



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

March 2 was Read Across America Day. McKinley Elementary second grade teacher Kate Seifert invited the author of "Dr. Seuss (First Biographies)" to her class. That author is Ms. Seifert's mother, Cheryl Carlson. She shared with the class her experience writing books. It helped the students realize that authors are real people!



Students of the Week

Elementary School

High School



Olivia Vaske-Van Wyk
Third Grade
Parent: Victoria Vaske
Olivia Vaske-Van Wyk is an incredibly hard-working student who is always willing to help anyone who needs it. She is a positive leader in the classroom and is working incredibly hard to grow academically. She is an absolute pleasure to have in our classroom family!



Harper Johnson
Fifth Grade
Parents: Sara and Justin Johnson
Harper always makes it her priority to be helpful, respectful, generous and kind to everyone she interacts with. Harper continues to learn and grow as a leader and we are so honored to have her at Wilson Elementary and Owatonna Public Schools!



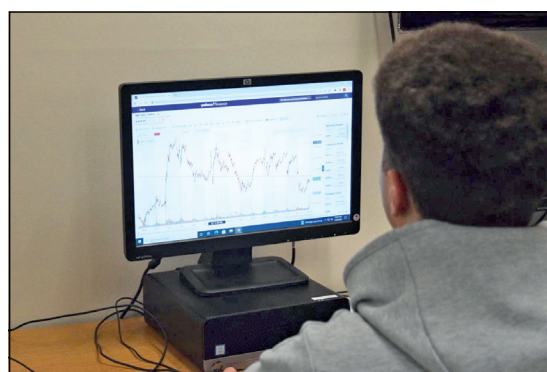
William Meyman
Freshman
Parents: James and Jennifer Meyman
William is a hard-working student. He puts forth extra effort in getting his work done and done well. He is an excellent student, kind and respectful. He excels in understanding and succeeding in class. We appreciate William's attitude and approach to his work!

OWATONNA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Online

Sign up for Owatonna Online

Owatonna Online is the accredited K-12 online public school offered free through Owatonna Public Schools for any Minnesota student. Registration is now open for the 2023-24 school year. Please visit owatonnaonline.isd761.org and click on "enrollment" to begin the process.



OHS MAGNET PHOTO BY TREVOR SCHIRMER

Senior Dezmond Nichols analyzes the S&P 500 for future trades.

Student investors at OHS

BY TREVOR SCHIRMER
OHS MAGNET WRITER

Investing is a great opportunity for people willing to look to slowly grow their wealth while being patient. It is a great way to set yourself up for retirement when you are older. Owatonna High School offers a personal finance class as an elective. This class can be extremely beneficial for people's future.

OHS teacher Mr. Tate Cummins said, "Personal finance as a young adult is absolutely critical. Especially the fundamentals of tracking income and expenses, setting financial goals, using the Rule of 72 to your advantage (compound interest), becoming a homeowner, understanding the pitfalls of credit card debt and investing in yourself (education and training) to earn an income that supports your lifestyle. As our parents have told us: 'Money doesn't grow on trees.' Young adults have to take ownership in preparing themselves after high school. I think this class can be very eye opening for our students."

Mr. Cummins has had a background in the market and has learned a lot about the stock market when he was younger.

Mr. Cummins said, "It turns out the events from 9/11 had a big impact on

the financial markets. At the time, I was a young Financial Advisor with American Express. I had been with the company for approximately 18 months and things were going well. I enjoyed it, but I always had a feeling that I wanted to help a younger generation understand the importance of business and more specifically - finance. With the turbulence in the world economy and the overall difficulty with gaining new clients during that time, I decided to go back to school to become a business teacher."

This shows his love for teaching and his experience with the market which is a perfect combination to teach the students of OHS.

Junior Maurice Dut is a business fanatic that loves to learn. He is currently enrolled in marketing and in personal finance. Personal finance is an easier class to access in the school due to the importance of the class.

Dut said, "Personal Finance - it's an important class that everybody needs to take to learn how to manage their money and learn about the stock market."

View all articles by the Owatonna High School Magnet staff at ohsmagnet.com.

United Way
1850 Austin Rd Ste 103
Owatonna, MN 55060
507-455-1180

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
LIVE UNITED.

Change doesn't just happen.
It's created together.

THANK YOU
FOR GETTING INVOLVED
CHANGING LIVES.
LIVING UNITED.

Join us for a better tomorrow
www.unitedwaystelecounty.org



HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS!

HONEST-1
AUTO CARE

Mon-Fri 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna
507-431-4576 • www.Honest1Owatonna.com



HealthFinders presents
Spring Festival Gala 2023

LIGHTS CAMERA & ACTION!

Saturday, April 22, 2023 - Buy Tickets Now!
Armory Square, Northfield

**Film
Shorts**

**Live & Silent
Auctions**

**Fun &
Games**

Our spring gala is a movie in the making, starring HealthFinders' supporters, donors and communities. Guests walk the red carpet and experience the exciting atmosphere of a film festival. Beautiful food, fun and games, film shorts, a Walk of Fame and live + silent auctions all make it a night to remember.

PLEASE JOIN US!



ABOUT HEALTHFINDERS
HealthFinders Collaborative is a community health center that provides health and wellness services to Rice and Steele counties. In addition to primary medical and dental care, HealthFinders has a range of chronic disease management and wellness programs, medication assistance, mental health support, and substance use services.

Every \$1 donated to HealthFinders generates \$16.50 in impact.

HealthFindersMN.org



STEELE COUNTY COALITION
FOR HEALTHY YOUTH

Mardi Gras

**Support Healthy Youth
by joining us:**

March 10, 2023
6pm-9pm
Trinity Lutheran Church
609 Lincoln Ave - Owatonna

**Food, Games, Silent
and Live Auction!!**

**Help us help our future
leaders. Join us for the
cause, stay for the fun!!**

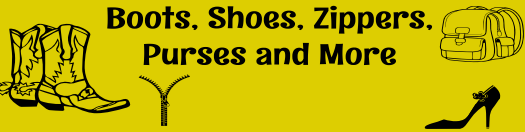
**This is a sober event
all are welcome!!**

Help us raise:
\$5,000
to support Youth Mental Health and
Substance Use Prevention.

**Tickets
\$20**




HERE'S MY CARD

ACCOUNTING Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A. CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS ACCOUNTING AND TAX SERVICES FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND INDIVIDUALS 314 East Main St., Blooming Prairie 507-583-7528 Fax: 507-583-2389	AUTOMOBILE HOME OF THE HONEST MECHANICS! HONEST-1[®] AUTO CARE Mon-Fri 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. 1125 S. Oak Ave. • Owatonna 507-431-4576 • www.Honest1Owatonna.com	AUTOMOBILE Mike's REPAIR 507-455-0388 Fax: 507-455-0486 870 32nd Ave. NW Owatonna, MN 55060 Mike Hartle Owner All tire sizes, sales and service for ag and truck! After Hours: 507-455-0483
AUTOMOBILE misgen auto parts Full-service & self-service automotive recycler Late model cars & trucks 12880 SW 72nd Ave. Ellendale, MN 56026 800-358-4902 507-684-2100 www.misgen.com since 1972 	AUTOMOBILE Russ Nelson Motor Shop MOTOR SHOP ELECTRIC MOTOR REPAIR & REPLACEMENT USED/RECONDITIONED BALDOR MOTORS SINGLE PHASE 1 - 10HP, 2-7 1/2HP - SHP • One Year Warranty 601 DUTTON DRIVE ELLENDALE, MN 507-473-0513 russnelson1941@gmail.com	COLLISION THE ONLY AREA SHOP certified to work on the 2015 Ford Aluminum F150     CSI: Collision Specialists Inc www.csiaustinmn.com 507.437.2837
CONSTRUCTION J.A. Gwilt Siders, Inc. Siding, Windows, Gutters, Roofing & Decks Call 507-456-1504 for your FREE estimates! Serving Steele County for 20 years.  Known for our exceptional quality of material and labor.	CONSTRUCTION & TREE SERVICE Johnson Construction & Tree Service Tree & Stump Removal • Trimming & Topping • Tree Moving Lot Clearing • Backhoe/Skidloader • Hauling General Construction 24 Hr. Emergency Services • Year Round Work • Licensed & Insured KYLE JOHNSON • 507-583-7592 AUSTIN & BLOOMING PRAIRIE	EXCAVATING SEPTIC SYSTEMS • Design • Installation • Compliance Inspections State License # 1844 Serving the Area Over 12 Years  BISHOP BE EXCAVATING, INC. • EXCAVATION • BASEMENTS • DEMOLITION • DOZER WORK Commercial & Residential Sitework 507 583-2999 Aggregates • Hauling • Washed Sand • Black Dirt • Fill • Gravel
GARBAGE SERVICE SKJEVELAND ENTERPRISES YOU CAN COUNT ON US! Sanitation & Recycling Services Pride in service since 2007 RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL • Sanitation & Recycling Services • Roll-Offs & Dumpsters • Rubbish & Garbage Removal Contact Skjeveland Enterprises today! 507-528-9900 	GRANITE & MONUMENTS Owatonna GRANITE & MONUMENT Sunburst MEMORIALS established 1987 <i>Creating Your Story in Stone</i> JOHN & BARB HEEREMA 1180 Frontage Rd E, Owatonna 507-455-9551 • owatonnagranite.com	HAIR SALON Gillespie Beauty Salon • Booth rental available • Hair Products • Offering cuts, color, perms, foils and highlights for all ages Pureology, Kendra, Olaplex, Nioxin, Paul Mitchell, Lis'n 109 W. Vine St. • Owatonna • 507-451-4552
ORTHODONTICS Dr. Deborah J. Lien, DDS, MBS ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST FREE CONSULTATIONS 132 2ND AVE. NE BLOOMING PRAIRIE Building Healthy Smiles! 507.583.6613 drdeborahlienorthodontics.com 	PETS Bennett's PET HAVEN CEMETERY, INC. "Professional Cremation and Burial Services for your loving pet" Larry & Donna Bennett 4151 N. City Rd. 45 Owatonna, MN 55060 (507) 451-2203 Shorty & Sue Schroht 857 Mosher Ave. Owatonna, MN 55060 (507) 455-3204	PREPLANNING A Simple, Thoughtful Act of Caring PREARRANGEMENT AND PREFUNDING  Mary Kittelson NPA Certified Preplanning Consultant Licensed Agent • People's Choice Plans 507.583.7561 www.worlein.com Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home 418 Highway Ave S • Blooming Prairie MN
ROOFING Contact us for all of your roofing needs PIEPHO ROOFING, INC Unparalleled Service James Piepho 507-451-1686 5098 SW 18th Street, Owatonna, MN 55060 www.piephoroofing.com Lic. #BC679096 	SHOE REPAIR Jim's Shoe Repair Boots. Shoes. Zippers. Purses and More  Jim Marquardt 628 E. Rose St Owatonna, MN 55060 Call for Service 507-451-2909	STEELE COUNTY TIMES ADVERTISING SALES ADVERTISING THAT WORKS HARD FOR YOU! Contact us today and see what makes advertising in the Steele County Times a great fit for your advertising needs.  Wynne Priebe STEELE COUNTY Times 507-456-4299 • wpriebe@steelecountytimes.com

