



**FIGHTING FOR
CANCER** A3

STEELE COUNTY Times



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TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2019

Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

Riess a no show in court

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Accused killer Lois Riess of Blooming Prairie was a no show once again at her court appearance in a Florida courtroom on Jan. 9.



LOIS RIESS

An attorney for Riess told the court that Riess waived her court hearing. Riess stayed in her jail cell during the court appearance. Judge Joseph C. Fuller told Riess' attorney that she needs to be in court for her next appearance.

"I think she needs to be here at some point... we've waived it ever since," Fuller said in court.

This was at least the second time that Riess, 56, has skipped out of her court hearings.

A new court date has been set for April 17 in Fort Myers.

Riess is charged with first-degree murder for allegedly killing a look-alike woman. In April, Riess befriended Pamela Hutchinson, who was vacationing in Fort Myers, and killed her in a hotel room, authorities say.

Hutchinson's murder came just weeks after Riess is suspected of killing her husband, David Riess, inside their rural Blooming Prairie home in March. After her husband's murder, Riess is accused of cleaning out his bank account and fleeing to Florida where she eventually connected with Hutchinson.

Riess has not yet been charged with her husband's murder. The case has been turned over to the Dodge County Attorney's Office for review. A spokesperson for the county attorney's office said last week no charges had been filed and provided no time line of when charges may be forthcoming.

Authorities have previously said Riess will face charges in Florida before Minnesota does anything with her.

Riess is being held in the Lee County Jail without bond. The Florida State Attorney's Office has filed to seek the death penalty against Riess.

Transplants hailed in BP

Mike and Sandy Jones picked as Citizens of the Year

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

They are not natives of the small, progressive southeastern Minnesota community of Blooming Prairie, but they say it feels like it.

Mike and Sandy Jones, two transplants from Leroy and Adams, will be recognized as the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce's Citizens of the Year for 2019.



A special evening for this married couple of 42 years is planned for Thursday, Jan. 17 at the Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. and dinner will be served at 7 p.m. RSVP at 507-583-4472.

Mike and Sandy moved to Blooming Prairie in 1986 where they raised four children as Awesome Blossoms.

Son Josh (Ellie) and grandson Owen live in Austin. Daughter Angie Carlson and step children Brody

and Lila live in Blooming Prairie. Daughter Hilary, granddaughter MiKenna Boehnke, live in Blooming Prairie. Son Patrick and fiancé Hilary Bottema reside in Rochester.

Mike and Sandy have both been heavily active in their community over the years.

He is retiring as Blooming Prairie's city administrator after serving in that capacity for 18 years. He will be succeeded by Andrew Langholz, currently the city clerk at Starbuck, a tourism community 20 miles from Alexandria.

"We've had a blast living in this small town," admits Mike, 66. Mike was drawn to Blooming Prairie as an accountant.

Sandy has cultivated her creativity in art by being involved in the community and artist in residence programs in Blooming Prairie and other communities.

Both Mike and Sandy have been very active in the Blooming Prairie Chamber and in many other civic and church involvements.

"It's an honor to represent our community as citizens of the year," Sandy re-

SEE CITIZENS, A8

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD
Mike and Sandy Jones are not natives of Blooming Prairie but they are products of small communities just a tad to the south near the border with Iowa.

Krueger named county board chair

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

In their first meeting of the new year, the Steele County Board of Commissioners reorganized by choosing new leadership.

Greg Krueger of District 5 was named chairman of the board while Jim Abbe of District 4 was chosen vice chair. Krueger replaces John Glynn, who had served as chair for the past year. The board also adopted new appointments for various committees.

The board continued with some basic housekeeping items throughout the rest of the meeting. The annual items included legal publications such as awarding the publication bid for the printing of the 2018 financial statement and the delinquent tax list for 2018. Bids were awarded to both the Steele County Times and the Owatonna People's Press.

Another routine item of note

during Tuesday's meeting was the approval of the 2019 board meeting schedule, which stands to follow the rhythm of past years' rotation of every second and fourth Tuesday of the month.

During the meeting, the board also accepted a proposal from Keith Johnson Construction in Blooming Prairie to remove metal buildings from the old highway shop property. "As you know, for several years we've been trying to clean up that property," County Administrator Scott Goldberg said to the board.

"Those would be the two buildings on the south side of the property," he clarified before the board's approval. The action also included dismissing a previous proposal to remove the buildings by Denny's Small Engines, which was not yet approved by Owatonna's Land and Zoning Board. The county is still responsible for any concrete or asphalt and any remaining buildings



GREG KRUEGER

located on the property.

The board also approved a Department of Corrections ICWC Crew Contract, which would see minimum status inmates contracted to be housed in Steele County where they are assigned in an ICWC work crew. The crew is to be supervised by a state employee, who is responsible for transporting them to and from the facility.

Although it was a routine meeting, there was some disagreement among the board when it came time to approve refilling a building inspector position. Commissioners Jim Abbe and James Brady opted to vote to table the refill for the time being and look at additional options, such as outsourcing. But with a vote of 3-2, the board passed the refill. The position is currently vacant due to the retirement of Tom Biesterfeld.

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 22.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Owen David Kormann is the First Baby of 2019 in Blooming Prairie. He is shown with his parents, Melissa and Justin Kormann and his sister Emma Lee.

First baby in BP

Owen David Kormann ushers in new year

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Owen David Kormann hit the scales at 9 pounds and 3 ounces.

This youngster became the First Baby of Blooming Prairie in 2019. He is the son of Melissa (Missy) and Justin Kormann and brother of Emma Lee, 5 1/2.

The Kormanns reside in Blooming Prairie at 140 NW 8th St.

Owen David measured 22 inches in length and was born at 10:29 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019. He was born at the Mayo Clinic Hospital in Austin.

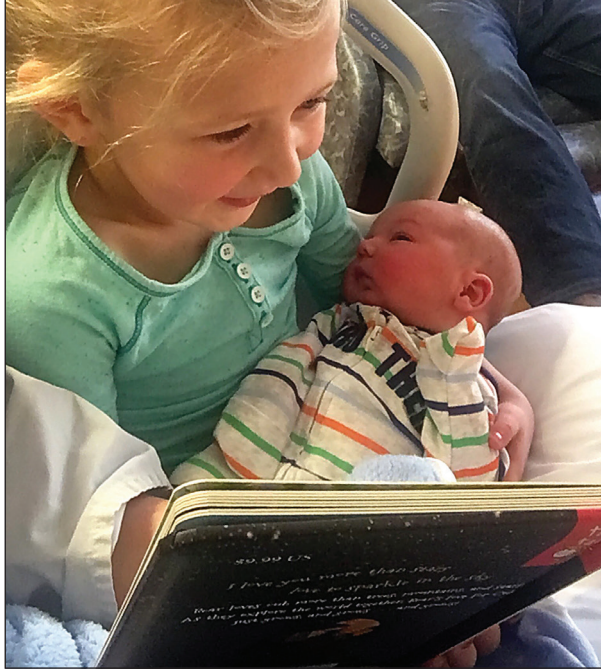
The Kormann family brought

home Owen David on Friday. Emma Lee missed the school on that day and had said that the day would be the longest of her life if she had to go to school on the day her baby brother came home.

Maternal grandparents are Tammy and Kevin Johnson of Blooming Prairie. Paternal grandparents are Lonnie and Teri Kormann of New Richland.

Emma and her baby brother Owen share some meaningful middle names. Emma Lee takes her middle name from her mother's brother Derek Johnson, who was killed in a construction accident in 2011.

Owen David takes his middle name from his father's brother Bryan Kormann, who was killed in a car crash near Medford. The Kormanns are the lucky recipients of some special gifts given by local business establishments.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Big sister Emma Lee Kormann reads to her new baby brother during his recent hospital stay in Austin. Owen David became the First Baby of the Blooming Prairie School District on Jan. 9.

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AREA DEATHS

Joyce A. (Ditlevson) Haflinger, formerly of BP

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OUR VIEW

When kids believe

In church pulpits throughout the Midwest last Sunday, the message was one of HOPE.

This message was tied to the recent escape from captivity of a young Barron, Wis. girl, Jayme Closs. This 13-year-old girl disappeared last October the same day her parents were murdered.

The sermon message kind of took care of itself, said the Rev. Heidi Heimgartner of First Lutheran Church of Blooming Prairie who spoke about HOPE and about young people believing.

She quoted Barron County Sheriff Chris Fitzgerald saying that “when kids believe, it makes it easy for us to believe.”

Sheriff Fitzgerald said Jayme was the hero of this case. She showed courage and fearlessness in breaking away from her captor last week and being found by some alert citizens near Gordon, Wis.

Jayme’s faith foundation definitely helped her survive what had to be three harrowing months, 88 days.

Pastor Heimgartner opened her sermon last Sunday with reference to Jayme Closs being reunited after making her escape. “We are given our own identity,” she said in also bringing a message about baptism.

Jayme’s story will be told over and over, and it is hoped that we will see more of the puzzle pieces come together from this case, which captivated the interest of thousands world wide.

Jayme had hope that she would soon return to her family and that hope came true.

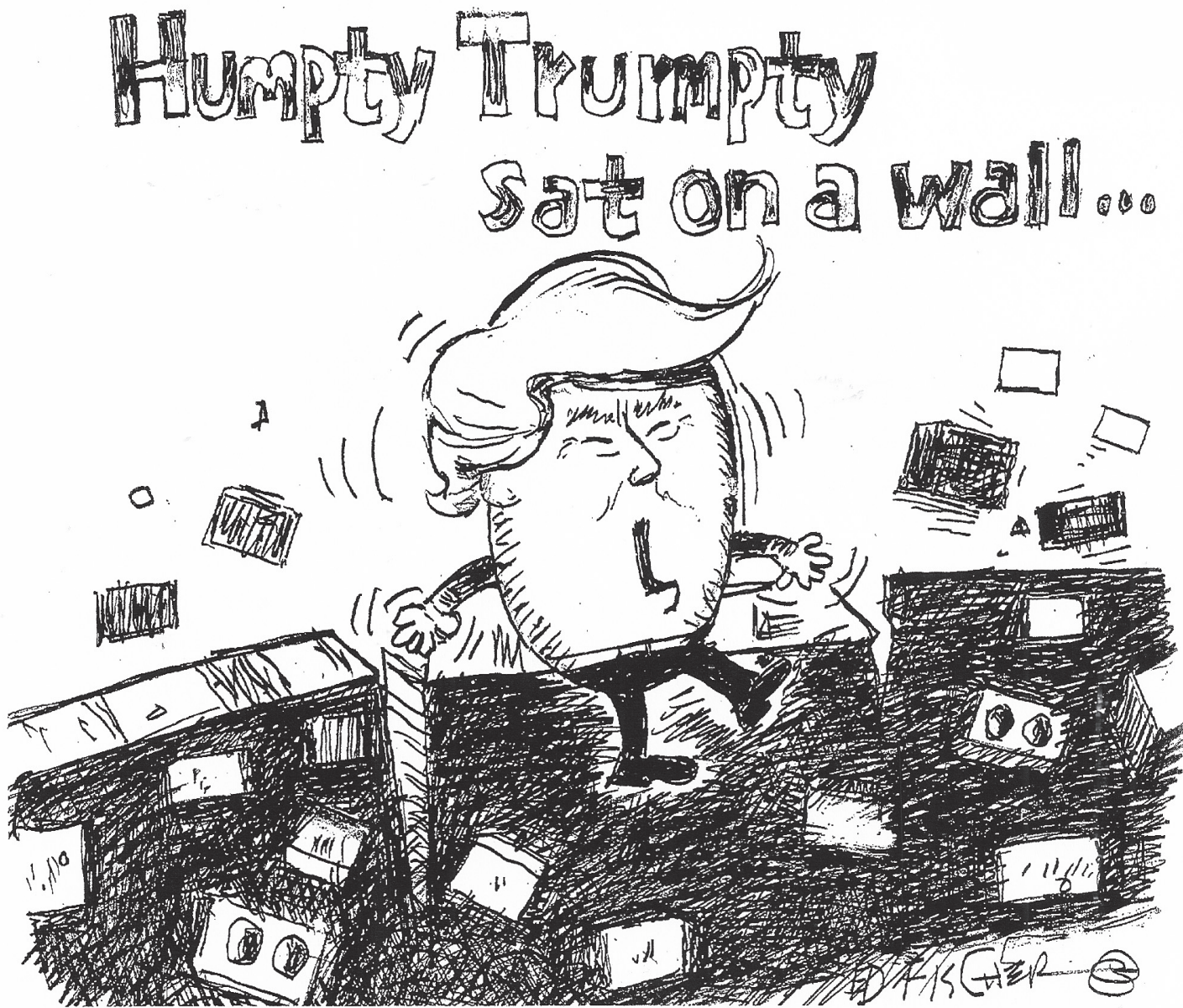
The healing process has now just begun, and it will take many steps toward rebuilding a new life. As Elizabeth Smart, a victim of kidnapping herself in 2002 as a 14-year-old, said, Jayme will need to build a new normal.

Jayme will never be the same person she once was, Smart says.

Many people are required to building “new normals” after tragedy strikes their family. A death or a serious accident can change lives forever.

Jayme believed she would some day reach freedom safely. That did happen.

A strong foundation put together as a youngster can lead us in our adult lives in some instances toward building a new normal in our lives. Believe. Hope will then be right around the corner.



Where’s Griswold when you need him?

What a difference a year can make.

I found that out this year as it became time to take down my outdoor Christmas decorations. As he has for years, Clark Griswold invaded my space in mid-November to decorate my yard with lots of lights and other decorations to light up the season. I’ve been known to do a little Griswold decorating over the years. It’s so much fun to light up the night sky with holiday lights proclaiming the wonder of the season.

The only problem I’ve come across is that Clark Griswold never returns to take down those decorations. He leaves them in my hands.

It has become anybody’s guess as to when those lights finally come down. It has ranged anywhere from early January to early May. Mother Nature seems to play a key role in determining when my lights actually come down.



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

Last year was one of those years that the lights ended up staying up until early May. It kind of gives me an eerie feeling when I’m out poking around the yard taking down holiday decorations in early spring, but many times I have no choice unless I want to freeze to death.

But this year has been an entirely different story. Thanks to a nice

early January warm-up and lack of snow, I immediately marched outside to take down the decorations and stash them away for yet another year. I actually managed to beat some of my neighbors in taking them down, which I consider a major accomplishment.

It’s always a relief for me to get the holiday decorations down at a reasonable time—like right after the holidays. It seems like if they stay up any longer than mid-January, you’re constantly getting strange looks from the neighbors as they drive by. No unusual vibes or strange looks should be coming my way this year!

National Lampoon’s Vacation

has become one of our family’s favorite holiday films. The film portrays the misadventures of the Griswold family, whose attempts to enjoy vacations and holidays are plagued with continual disasters and strangely embarrassing predicaments.

Fortunately, our family survived the holidays without any disasters or predicaments to speak of. The closest we came to trouble was the leaning Christmas tree, which I wrote about back in December. We quickly corrected that issue and went on to enjoy the peace and joy of the season together as a family without any crazy distractions. Our tree, by the way, turned out to be one of the nicest we’ve ever had. It was sad to rip it down and toss it to the curbside.

I also managed to get all the indoor decorations put away for next year. It seems like I’m finally on top of things, for once.

Even though my decorations are shoved away for another year, I continue to be in hot pursuit of tracking down Clark Griswold to help with the yearly venture.

No, it wasn't Mickey Mouse

A newspaper column by Kathy Paulsen in a recent issue of the Star Eagle (New Richland-Ellendale) about a mouse in the house re-kindled some experiences Judy and I had last year with a mouse in the house.

Kathy started her column by talking about the 90th birthday of Mickey Mouse. We all like Mickey, right?

Mickey is a squeaky little guy created by Walt Disney and loved by all of us, right? Our family has become attached to Mickey because Walt Disney World has become one of our favorite destinations.

Disney’s Mickey is far different than the little varmint that invaded Kathy’s house and from the one that tormented my wife Judy and me about a year ago.

Since we live in a heavily agricultural area, it is not unexpected that a mouse might seek warmer temperatures and thus invade our homes.

Judy hates mice and is very clear when threatening to move if we find a mouse in our house. We have had very few of the varmints in our various houses but the one who visited us a year ago was one active little devil.

I was coming out of the bathroom one day and sauntered into my office/bedroom. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw movement that tiptoed over our carpeting and ran underneath a bed in our second bedroom, which doubled as an office.

Knowing how much Judy detests mice, I deliberated privately whether I should tell her or not. I told her.

The fun then began with Judy having a sighting of her own. She let out a scream and then we both began the hunt for the little bugger.

We found him and he began to play games with us. “There he goes,” Judy screamed as she said the dark grayish mouse headed for the kitchen. Guess what? We found him beneath the stove and I played “cat and mouse” with him, hoping to bash him when he decided to exit the stove.

He exited the stove and went underneath our refrigerator.

That wasn’t the end of him. I decided to go to bed one night and forget



Reflections
HOWARD LESTRUD

about the mouse. Judy would not go to bed. She set up an outlook point by the bathroom.

Almost losing consciousness as she slept on a chair near the bathroom door, Judy awakened to see the little critter heading into the bathroom. I awakened and then volunteered to watch for Mickey to reappear.

As I sat in the bathroom with a broom in my hand, little Mickey peered out from an opening near our bathtub. He again played “cat and mouse” with me and finally made a run for it. I smacked the floor twice with the broom but missed him.

Judy kept watch in the hallway and saw him come out from an area you would not believe he could navigate. I moved my perimeter to the living room and again heard Judy shriek, “There he goes.” He went across the hallway and headed to the living room where I grabbed my broom and feebly tried to strike him dead. I failed.

No, the FOR SALE sign did not go up on our house but we found asylum in Judy’s sister Cindi’s (Darrell) house during the night for a week.

“I’m not going to bed, knowing there is a mouse among us,” Judy said.

After a few days we decided to come back home at night. The watch began once again.

Judy took guard duty in the kitchen, with a broom in hand. I decided to go to bed. My sleep didn’t last long as Judy screamed, “Howard get out here.”

I reached the kitchen in my shorts, only to see Judy swinging her broom at a mouse caught in one of our 15 traps set in the house. He was just caught by the tail, however. I assisted by bashing him a couple of times and ending his masquerade as Mickey Mouse.

I know other people have had visits by these little creatures but that doesn’t make it any easier to accept.

Mickey, we like you, but not in our house. Stay put in Disney World and in Disney Land. That’s where you belong.

GUEST COLUMN

Better protecting children’s identities

By JOHN PETERSBURG

Hello from St. Paul.

Happy New Year! The start of 2019 means some new laws have taken effect, including a statute I sponsored that will better protect children’s identities.

The idea came from a constituent who was concerned about identity theft and protecting his kids from cyber thieves, which is why I sponsored legislation giving parents the right to obtain a secu-

rity freeze for their children.

The new law gives parents the opportunity to freeze credit history reports given out by consumer reporting agencies for their minor child, giving them more control over who is able to access a credit check on their kids. Allowing them to do so lowers the odds that children’s personal information—such as Social Security numbers—will be unknowingly stolen.

Parents now are able to make this proactive decision, and I’m

pleased to have helped create this new law. Recently KMSP-TV and KSTP-TV interviewed me about this new law.

The 2019 Session began last Tuesday, so if you have any legislative comments or concerns, please contact me at rep.john.petersburg@house.mn.

John Petersburg is the state representative for District 24A, which covers Steele and Waseca counties. He lives in Waseca.



Win a Florida vacation at BP Youth Bash

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Want to get away to Florida for a week-long vacation?

If interested, attend the Blooming Prairie Youth Club's annual Benefit Bash on Saturday, Feb. 2 at the Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club. Silent auction tables open at 5:30 p.m. Food options will be offered.

Tables close at 6:30 by color code. Awards will be presented at 7 p.m. They include Super Supporter (Kay Toquam last year), Generous Giver (KIK Graphics, Tyler Kruckeberg and Keeley Krebsbach last year) and the Amazing Advocate (Angie Carlson last year).

LeMar Nelson, longtime educator and journalist, received the Outstanding service Award last year. Live auctions begin at 7:30 p.m. The Youth Club made \$20,000 on

the benefit a year ago. This year's organizers have set \$25,000 as a goal.

The vacation has been donated by Tess and Rod Koster of Koster's Car Korner of Blooming Prairie. The vacation destination is the Kosters' property, which includes a pool and a tiki bar. It's said to be steps away from the beach.

Many other items will be offered in silent and live auctions, says Kelli Naatz, executive director of the Blooming Prairie Youth Club.

Donations are needed for the fundraiser. They may be brought to the Youth Club or "we will pick them up," said Naatz.

Raffle tickets will also be sold with the top prize being a processed half a hog donated by former Youth Club board member LeMar Nelson.

A heads or tails game (50-50) will be played for a cash prize. A treasure chest will also be part of the fun with keys sold and buyers then

having the chance to see if their key will open the treasure chest. If the key opens the treasure chest, the lucky person can choose the prize inside, or take the cash.

Last year, the prize was a cabin rental at the Brookside Campgrounds.

Other prizes that have been donated include: a Pheasants Forever print, an Amazon Fire tablet, two grandstand tickets for the Steele County Fair. Cheri Krejci has donated a special quilt featuring a farm scene design.

Many special baskets emphasizing holidays, baking, games and gardening will be featured. Gift certificates will also be on the table.

Quilters from First Lutheran Church, Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church and St. Columbanus Catholic Church have donated quilts.

Proceeds from this fundraiser go to the general fund. "Kids are the beneficiaries," says Naatz.

Whitey Hagen steals show again in fight for cancer

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Even though he says it's not about him, but because of the valiant efforts of many fighting for a cancer cure, Whitey Hagen again took center stage.

At 86 years of age, Hagen is not about to turn down the chance to balance a bar tray on his head and collect \$487.25 with the help of his granddaughter Brenna Hagen.

Brenna and her grandfather teamed together to walk through a crowd of 120 patrons at the Geneva Bar & Grill, asking them to place some greenery in their bar trays.

Hagen was one of the originators of the cancer auction in 1984. "I am just thrilled to be part of this," Hagen said with emotion.

Hagen, his wife LeJune and former Geneva Bar & Grill owner Hank Thompson and his wife Judy (since passed from cancer) sat down one afternoon in 1984 and decided something should be done to fight cancer.

Whitey's brother, Richard, died from cancer at age 47 in 1983. "Hank told me, why don't you have an auction in memory of your brother," Whitey recalls. Hagen had previously worked with a fundraising auction in Albert Lea at Eddy's Bar, thus he knew some of the tricks to make such an event successful.

Hagen has been part of 35 annual cancer auctions, the 2019 auction split into two weekends, last Friday and Saturday and this Friday and Saturday, Jan. 18 and 19.

"We are fighting to keep people



Brenna Hagen and her grandfather Whitey Hagen each placed a bar tray on their heads and paraded through a crowded Geneva Bar & Grill to collect \$487.25 to help in the fight for a cure for cancer.

many of the auction guests said.

Teresa Chapman, executive director of the District Five Eagles Telethon in Rochester, was introduced by Hagen and saluted Hagen on a triple achievement: 62 years of married life, 86 birthdays and 35 years in working with the Geneva Cancer Auction.

Hagen said the auction is now run by his three sons, Keith, Greg and James.

The auction definitely energizes Hagen and anyone who associates with him. Chapman said the Eagles

cure for cancer, he pays tribute to a Korean War buddy, Paul Mehle. Hagen wears a VFW medal in his honor. He was killed on July 15 and the war ended 10 days later.

"All the people here today are important," Hagen told the crowd. They responded with loud applause. Hagen jokingly responded, "Is the applause because I'm not going to be around much longer?"

The funds now go to the Eagles Cancer Telethon in Rochester, to the University of Minnesota and to the Hormel Institute.

Open house reveals plans for major road project in Owatonna

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

With the current pavement condition of Rose Street, Owatonna and Steele County have been mulling over how to approach a rehabilitation of the pavement for a few years now.

On Thursday, Jan. 10, an open house was held at the Steele County Community Center in Owatonna to educate the public on plans to do pavement rehabilitation work on Rose Street and Oak Avenue, as well as convert Oak Avenue from a 4-lane road to a 3-lane road and add a mini-roundabout at Grove Avenue and Rose Street. Also in the works are plans for traffic signal modifications and pedestrian crossing enhancements at CSAH 45 (Oak Avenue) and School Street.

Preliminary drawings were available and community members had the opportunity to give public comment on the proposed improvements. "The purpose of tonight's meeting is for businesses and residents to give input and learn about the projects," County Engineer Greg Ilkka said.

"Rose Street is in tough shape," he explained, adding that, "the concrete rehab is the biggest part of the work and most of that will happen on Rose Street." Ilkka and others in attendance were adamant that the project would increase the lifespan of those roads. "We want to get another 20 years out of Rose and another 10 years out of Oak," he said.

City Administrator Kris Busse

explained that the city and county formed a committee that deals with traffic issues, and that these projects were born out of that entity. "It has been good working with the county. We appreciate their willingness and their communication," Busse said.

City Council President Greg Schultz reiterated Busse's thoughts on the cooperation between the city and county. "There's been good communication back and forth between the county and the city," he said. He also added that the condition of Rose was a motivating factor in these projects saying, "Rose has been here a long time."

While the rehabilitation is a large part of the proposal, City Engineer Kyle Skov explained that Oak Avenue will see a more minimal rehab effort. "Oak was addressed partially last year when the county did a slab jacking project to level out offsets," he said.

"Half of the road will be closed at a time," Skov explained of the planned construction. "We're aiming for summer of 2019, but we want to try and be flexible in our target for better pricing," he said. "We want to condense it to a reasonable amount of time but also need to give the construction enough time to get it done."

Skov was in agreement with SRF consultants who were on hand during the open house on the viability of a 3-lane road as opposed to a 4-lane. "It was thought that it might be safer and would move traffic better," he said. Skov explained that having a designated turn lane would allow traffic to continue to flow in each of the regular lanes.

Matt Hansen, a design engineer with SRF, said that converting from a 4-lane to a 3-lane has lots of safety benefits, particularly for pedestrians. He also explained the consulting process. "We did a thorough study and assessment in 2018 and presented the county with recommendations."

Agreeing with Hansen's assessment of improved pedestrian safety, SRF Senior Engineer Tom Sachi said that, "a 3-lane section reduces the multiple threat issue of one driver stopping and another continuing in the other lane."

Assistant County Engineer Paul Sponholz described the duration of the projects and some of the finer details involved. "Most likely between the two projects, it will last all summer," Sponholz said. "Oak will be easier and we will maintain one lane in each direction."

The notion of adding a roundabout at Rose Street and Grove Avenue was seen as carrying many benefits. "A roundabout was evaluated and considered to be safer, cheaper, and more efficient traffic wise," Sponholz explained. "What we call a modern roundabout has a lot of better design functions than an older traffic circle."

Sponholz estimated the construction cost would be around \$2.3 million for Rose Street and \$300,000 for Oak Avenue. Twenty-five percent of those costs will be paid by the city, with the remainder paid through sales tax. "We're still working on a second open house to put out the final plans and the construction strategy," Sponholz added.

LIBRARY BOOK NOOK

Family fun nights coming to library

As we changed calendars for the New Year, Blooming Prairie Branch Library wants to invite you to some special family events coming up in the next five months.

Mark them on your calendar and make a date with your children or grandchildren for our Family Fun Nights!

In cooperation with the Blooming Prairie Early Childhood Family Education preschool teachers, one Thursday evening each month at 6:30 p.m. we invite you to join us in the City Council Chambers for stories, songs, crafts, and fun.



NANCY
VAILLANCOURT

Here are the dates and the topics for each month:

Jan. 17 - Tropical Paradise - wear your Hawaiian shirts, bring your beach towels, and join us on an imaginary trip to warmer locations.

Feb. 28 - Harry Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

March 21 - Go, Go Guineas!

April 25 - Hoppy Hour (with my favorite animals)

May 16 - Kid Friendly

One last thought for the New Year from Charlie "Tremendous" Jones:

You will be the same person in five years as you are today except for the people you meet and the books you read.

Country music coming to Steele Fair

A flavor of country music will be coming to the Steele County Free Fair this year, fair officials announced last week.

Country music entertainer and recording artist Chris Hawkey will be performing at the grandstand on Thursday, Aug. 15.

Hawkey began recording music in Nashville in 2010 and has had many songs on the Billboard National Country charts.

"Chris Hawkey Band has been playing to record crowds all over

the U.S. as both a headliner and direct support for Country Music stars," said Wayne Steele, the fair's entertainment director.

In addition to performing country music, Hawkey is also the co-host and producer of Powertrip Morning Show on sports giant KFAN Radio. He also produces the radio broadcasts of the Minnesota Vikings football games for the Vikings Radio Network.

Steele said tickets will be available at a later date.

Keeping your home safe from radon

Did you know that two out of five Minnesota homes have high Radon levels?

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

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

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

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

What is a safe level of radon?



Steele Talkin'
ANDREA MARSHALL

Any radon level poses some health risk. While it is not possible to reduce radon to zero, the best approach is to lower the radon level as much as possible. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set the action level at 4 pCi/L (picocuries of radon per liter of air). It is highly recommended at 4 pCi/L or higher a radon mitigation system is installed to reduce the radon level.

What can I do? The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) recommends all Minnesotans test their home for radon. A radon test is the only way to find out how much radon is in your home. You can test your home yourself or hire a professional. The result from a properly performed test will help you decide if you need to reduce your home's radon levels.

Where can I get a radon test kit? Steele County Public Health offers FREE short-term radon test kits. All you need to do is stop at the office located at 635 Florence Ave. in Owatonna and request a free test. There are health specialists available to answer any questions you may have and can explain how to properly perform the test.

What if my test level is determined to be high? If the level is high you should hire a licensed radon professional to install a radon mitigation system. Radon mitigation is any process or system used to reduce radon concentrations in buildings. Radon mitigation systems usually use a fan to continuously pull air from the soil and exhaust it outdoors through a pipe.

If you have questions about radon, please feel free to call Steele County Public Health at 507-444-7661 or go to the MN Department of Health website for further information.

Have a happy and healthy 2019!

Andrea Marshall is a health educator with Steele County Public Health in Owatonna. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations around Steele County.

Triple A nominees named for Owatonna

Owatonna High School seniors, Emily Rahrick and Zach Barrett, have been nominated for the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) Academics, Arts and Athletics Award (Triple A).

Established in 1988, the Triple A Award acknowledges a male and female high school senior with a 3.0 or higher GPA who participates in League-sponsored athletic programs and fine arts activities such as theater, speech and music. The Triple “A” Award recipients are selected through a multi-level process involving member schools of the league (Owatonna High School), the League’s administrative regions (Region 1AA), and a special committee of educators, business leaders, and members from the fine arts and athletic communities (State Level).

Both Rahrick and Barrett are participants in a variety of



ZACH BARRETT



EMILY RAHRICK

programs at Owatonna High School and involved in our communities.

Rahrick’s awards and activities at Owatonna include: National Honor Society; Band (4 years) Solo/Ensemble contest superior rating (2 years), Choir (2 years), Orchestra (3 years); Girls Varsity Tennis Team (6 years) Tennis Captain (2 years) Tennis All-Conference (4 years)

State Tennis participant (1 year); Varsity Track and Field (3 years) Track and Field Captain (1 year).

Barrett’s awards and activities at Owatonna include: Band (4 years) Solo/Ensemble contest superior rating (3 years); Choir (4 years) Solo/Ensemble contest superior rating (1 year); Orchestra (2 years); Boys Soccer (4 years) All-Conference (1 year) State Soccer participant (1 year); Basketball (2 years); Track and Field (3 years) Track and Field Captain (1 year) Track and Field All-Conference (1 year).

The MSHSL’s Administrative Regions will review the Triple A nominees from its member schools. Owatonna is in Region 1AA. The top male and female students in the state, as determined by a points system, will be announced by MSHSL officials this spring.

History from the News Archives

10 Years Ago

Jan. 13, 2009

DAN EVANS, PUBLISHER

The candidates for Snow Week at Blooming Prairie High School have been announced. King candidates are Israel Clark, Josh Johnson, Derek Resler, Ryan Noble and Grady Pyburn. Queen candidates are Mackenzie Ohm, Lindsey Raker, Samone Read, Courtney Severtson and Krista Young.

Mike and Crystal Studer are the happy parents of the first Blooming Prairie baby of 2009, Jaxson Míachel Studer. At 7:57 p.m. on Jan. 3, exactly one week before her due date, Crystal delivered a baby boy. Jaxon and his parents win a basket full of merchandise and gift certificates donated by local businesses.

During its Christmas party on Jan. 3, the Blooming Prairie Fire Department honored six recently retired firefighters for their service to the community. Chuck Wagner, David Kahnke, James Trotman, Larry Christianson, Brad Clark and Kevin Christianson retired from the department between 2007 and 2008. They served a combined 103 years, including Wagner who had the most at 30 years.

50 Years Ago

Jan. 8, 1969

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

Steven Frank Krejci, 16-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Krejci, met an untimely death when the car he was driving went out of control and into a ditch at 1 a.m. Jan. 1. The one-car mishap occurred on Dodge County Road 2, three miles east of Blooming Prairie. Steven was thrown from the vehicle when it overturned in the ditch, and he lived only a short time after the accident.

Police Chief Jens K. Jorgensen released this week information contained in his report of 1968 activities by the Blooming Prairie Police Department. The report revealed that local police officers made a total of 93 arrests during 1968 for a variety of violations. Total fines assessed by the justice-of-the-peace amounted to \$1,835. There were 28 auto accidents investigated during the year, amounting to \$8,720 in property damage. There were no traffic deaths in BP in 1968.

Erwin Muri, First District commissioner from Ellendale, was elected Monday of this week to the chairmanship of the Steele County Board of Commissioners for 1969. Albert Yentsch of Blooming Prairie was elected vice chairman. Robert Jurgenson of Owatonna served as chairman of the board during the past year.

20 Years Ago

Jan. 12, 1999

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

Ron Anderson took the oath of office for mayor of Blooming Prairie last week from city administrator Mike Rietz. Anderson started his two-year term Monday night at the monthly council meeting.

Train activity through Blooming Prairie will increase now that the I&M Rail Link has started using the former Soo Line railroad, which passes through here on its way to St. Paul to the north and Mason City, Iowa to the south. The train traffic will increase up to six per day.

Nick Schiefert and his wife Amanda are the new owners of the local Dairy Queen. Nick is being honored by the Blooming Prairie Jaycees.

It has been four years since the U.S. Postal Service changed its rates. The new 33-cent First Class letter rate became effective Jan. 10.

75 Years Ago

Jan. 13, 1944

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

At the annual meeting of officers and directors of the Farmers & Merchants State Bank, it was voted to increase the surplus fund by \$9,000, making the total surplus of this banking institution total \$44,000. All the former officers and directors were re-elected. E.O. Habberstad is president and E.J. Faltejek is vice president.

The annual directors’ meeting of the First National Bank was held in the banking house Tuesday. Election resulted in the same men heading the institution for another year. C.T. Farr is president and chairman of the board while A.L. Fosteson is executive vice president.

Can You Deduct Medicare Costs on Your Income Taxes?

Dear Savvy Senior,

Can I deduct my Medicare premiums, deductibles and copayments on my income taxes? I had a knee replacement surgery last year and spent quite a bit on medical care out-of-pocket and would like to know what all I can write off.

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need to file an itemized Schedule A (1040) tax return. You cannot claim medical expenses on Form 1040A or Form 1040EZ.

ALLOWABLE MEDICAL EXPENSES

The list of allowable medical expenses, as defined by the IRS, is long and fairly flexible. As a Medicare beneficiary, you can deduct your monthly premiums for Part B, Part C (Medicare Advantage plans), Part D drug plans, and any supplemental (Medigap) insurance you have. If you have to pay a premium for Part A, that’s allowed too. You can also deduct the cost of all your deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments under Medicare.

In addition, you’re also allowed to deduct the cost of medical services not covered by Medicare, including dental treatment, vision care, prescription eyeglasses, hearing aids, and even long-term care. They also allow transportation to and from medical treatment to count as an eligible medical expense. And if necessary, you may even be able to deduct home alterations

and equipment, like entrance ramps, grab bars, stair lifts etc., that can help you age in place.

Some things, however, you cannot deduct like vitamins and supplements unless recommended by a physician to treat a specific medical condition. And Medicare late penalties added to Part B or Part D premiums. Medicare beneficiaries who fail to sign up during their initial enrollment period are typically hit with a penalty that gets added to their monthly premiums, but these additional costs won’t count for tax purposes.

For more information, including a detailed rundown of allowable and unallowable medical expenses, see IRS Publication 502 “Medical and Dental Expenses” at IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p502.pdf or call the IRS at 800-829-3676 and ask them to mail you a copy.

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.

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BLOOMING PRAIRIE
JAN. 15
10:30 a.m. – Storytime, BP Library
2 p.m. – Intro to Computers, BP Library
2:30 p.m. – BP Public Utilities Meeting
4:30 p.m. – Fire Commission Meeting
5:30 p.m. – Ambulance Commission Meeting
7 p.m. – Planning and Zoning Meeting

JAN. 16
10:30 a.m. – Storytime, BP Library
JAN. 17
6 p.m. – Annual Chamber Banquet, Servicemen's Club



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ELLENDALE/HOPE/GENEVA
JAN. 15
6:15 p.m. – Tae Kwon Do, Ellendale Gym
JAN. 16
10 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building
5:30 p.m. – Community Ed-Rosemaling for Beginners, NR HS Art Room

OWATONNA/MEDFORD
JAN. 15
9:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. – Tale Time, Owatonna Library



Part-time Assistant Cook for noon meal program in Owatonna Senior Place. Monday thru Fridays. Approx 29 hours per week. Paid Holidays/Vacation/Sick Leave/401k.

For more information and application, visit www.semcac.org or contact **Semcac Senior Nutrition**, PO Box 549 Rushford MN 55971 (507)864-8231.

Applications must be postmarked by January 23, 2019. EOE



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Part-time Food Delivery position for noon meal program in Owatonna. Monday through Friday. 2.5 hours/day. Vehicle and valid driver's license required. Mileage is reimbursed. Paid Holidays.

For more information and application, visit www.semcac.org or contact **Semcac Senior Nutrition**, PO Box 549 Rushford MN 55971 (507) 864-8231.

Applications must be postmarked by January 18, 2019. EOE

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Help name the Steele fair's theme for 2020

It may only be the start of 2019, but the Steele County Free Fair is already looking ahead to the 2020 fair. Publicity director Wayne Steele is requesting folks to submit their suggestions for a theme for the 2020 fair by March 1, 2019. The fair traditionally has reached out to the greater community for help in coming up with a theme. The theme for the 2019 fair is “Summer Days Carnival Lights.” Steele also announced that applications are being accepted for 2019 Century Farms in Steele County. The forms are available at the fair office. Century Farms will be recognized on the opening day of the fair, Aug. 13. Farms that qualify for the Century Farm recognition are those that are at least 100 years old in 2019 according to abstract of title, land patent, original deed, county land records, court file in registration proceedings or other authentic land records. The family must have owned the farm for 100 years or more. Ownership must be continuous. Application forms may be obtained online at MNstatefair.org. The deadline is March 1.



Classes offered at Owatonna Arts Center

Learning how to transfer images using the Grid Method will be the focus of a one-day workshop at the Owatonna Art Center on Saturday, Feb. 2 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Ann Magnusson will host the workshop for people to learn to use the Grid Method to transfer and/or enlarge an image of your choice onto a drawing surface. The Grid can be used to create photo-realistic drawings or paintings when accuracy is important. It is a simple method, used for centuries by artists and is an easily understood aid for artists of all abilities. Magnusson will discuss the Grid, its applications and then using a photo of your choice, you'll be guided through the grid method process, step by step. Once comfortable with the process, you'll be encouraged to continue with the transfer and perfect the drawing at your own pace and according to your experience. Participants are asked to bring a bag lunch and beverage. Magnusson said she will also take time to view her exhibition in the Galleries, Interior and Portraits, and relate my work to the workshop topic. Basic drawing materials will be provided. Individuals may want to bring additional supplies such as pastels, charcoal, water-based paints and brushes plus any specific paper or canvas needed for these additional materials. “It will be a focused workshop, you'll be surprised by the results you can achieve using this method,” said Magnusson. To register, call the Arts Center at 507-451-0533. Deadline is Jan. 25. For further information or questions, please feel free to contact Magnusson at aemagnus1@gmail.com. On Feb. 3 from 1-3 p.m., there will be a Figurative Clay Relief Tile Workshop with Kathy Mommsen at the Arts Center. The class is free, but pre-registration is required (maximum 8 students). You must be 16 years or older. No experience is necessary. Participants will glaze a tile while observing a dancer posing. Tiles will be able to be picked up on Sunday, Feb. 10 from 1-4 p.m.

In this free workshop, artist Kathy Mommsen will show you how to draw and glaze dancers on ceramic tiles. You will start with a fired relief tile and you will learn Kathy's black maiolica glazing process while observing local dancer, Julie Deetz, posing in the studio. You will first do a wax drawing and then you will paint with overglazes on a tile while observing a model to understand that drawing directly on clay gives emotion to the art. You will be able to keep the tiles you create. The tiles will be fired after the workshop and be ready to pick up during the opening of Kathy's Emotional Expression Clay Relief Sculptures Show at the Owatonna Arts Center, Sunday, Feb. 10 from 1-4 p.m. Kathy Mommsen is a fiscal year 2018 recipient of an Artist Initiative grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature; and by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

INDIVISIBLE set to present to Owatonna council

Owatonna will soon be designated as a “Pollinator Friendly City.” On Tuesday, Jan. 22, Steele County INDIVISIBLE will meet at 6 p.m. at the Owatonna City Council Chambers in West Hills to hear a presentation about the importance of supporting pollinators before presenting a resolution to the Owatonna City Council about becoming a pollinator friendly city. Steele County INDIVISIBLE is a grassroots organization committed to the progressive movement begun by the 2017 Women's March encouraging grassroots activism at the local, regional, and national levels. Everyone is Welcome. We speak with many voices following the principals of the Women's March Minnesota in the pursuit of truth, equity, and justice. Twice monthly meetings of Steele County INDIVISIBLE are regularly held at noon on second Tuesday each month and at 6 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday each month at the Owatonna Public Library, third floor Gaaney Room. Meetings are free and open to the public. All are welcome.

Area diving club offers scuba classes

For those wishing to learn more about scuba diving, the Owatonna Diving Club has the opportunity for you. The club will sponsor a free Discover Scuba class on Feb. 6. Sign-up is being handled through the Owatonna Community Education at Owatonnacommunityed.org or by calling 507-444-7900. The club also encourages people to check out SCUBA classes through community education. Regular classes will be offered on Feb. 13.



STEELE COUNTY Times

Sons of Norway to feature Scandinavian tour

The Nortonna Lodge 1-638 of the Sons of Norway will meet on Monday, Jan. 21. Supper will be served at 6 p.m. for a cost of \$8 at the Owatonna Elks Lodge, 126 East Vine St. This month's program will be “Scandinavian Tour 2018” with Paul and Cindy Hokanson. Enjoy photos and stories from their trip to Norway, Denmark, and Iceland. If you would like more information on the Nortonna Lodge of the Sons of Norway, contact Cindy or Paul Hokanson at 507-451-9301.

Vet's officer sets outreach hours

Outreach hours for Steele County's Veterans Service officer are back for 2019. For January, Rene Gilormini has set his outreach hours for this Thursday, Jan. 17 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. at the Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club and 11-11:30 a.m. at the Ellendale Community Building. In his role as veteran's service officer, Gilormini holds monthly outreach hours throughout the year.

BLOOMING PRAIRIE LUNCH MENU


Jan 16 Italian Stromboli, Chicken Bacon Ranch Melt, Garden Salad

Jan 17 Beefy Nachos with Cheese, Turkey Deli Sandwich, Refried Beans

Jan 18 Roast Turkey & Gravy, Chicken Caesar Salad, Mashed Potatoes, Rip Stick Breadstick, Chocolate Chip Cookie

Jan 21 No School

Jan 22 Southern Food Day French Toast Sticks, Sausage Patty, Hot Ham & Cheese Flatbread, Black Eyed Pea Salad

Jan 23 BBQ Meatball Sub, Beef Stroganoff, Whole Grain Dinner Roll, Garlic & Herb Broccoli, Mini Rice Krispies Treat

SEMCAC SENIOR DINING MENU


Call 583-7369 Day before 10-1 to reserve
B. P. Sr. Center 11:30-12 M-F Ellendale M-W-F 11:30-12

Jan 16 Italian Chicken Breast, Rice Pilaf, Buttered Carrots, Green Salad/Dressing, Cranberry Sauce, Cream Puff

Jan 17 Pork Loin, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Fresh Squash, Beet Pickles, Flavored Ice Cream

Jan 18 Meat Loaf, Scalloped Potatoes, Brussel Sprouts Home Made Dinner Roll, Mandarin Orange Dessert

Jan 21 BBQ Rib Pattie, Parsley Butterd Potatoes, Pineapple Slice, Coleslaw, Pears with Caramel Sauce

Jan 22 Taco Casserole, Fruit Salad, Seafoam Dessert

Jan 23 Beef Roast, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Harvard Beets, Pea/Pickle/Cheese Salad, Home Made Dinner Roll, Banana

J&H LIQUOR

Bar Bingo Mondays 6:30 p.m.
Bloomin' Grapevine Wine Club Tuesdays 7-8:30 P.M. • Jan 29, Feb 26, March 19, April 16
Wine Tasting Gala May 7 Season Finale 7-9 P.M. Benefits BP Youth Club
Customer Appreciation Day 33 Years in Business • April 6
Cruise for Cancer Ride June 22
Street Dance “Red Dirt Road Band” July 3
B.O.B. Ride “Toys for Tots” July 20

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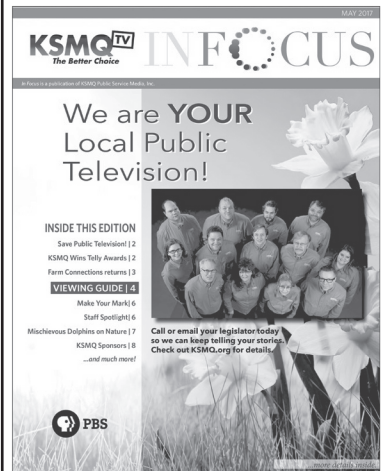


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OBITUARIES



Joyce A. (Ditlevson) Haflinger, formerly of BP

Joyce Haflinger entered into rest Friday, Jan. 4, 2019 in her home at Sunridge Retirement Community, Colorado Springs, Colo.

She was the daughter of Edward and Frances Ditlevson, born on Aug. 11, 1926 in Blooming Prairie. Joyce was the oldest of six children, four sisters and a brother. She graduated from Blooming Prairie High School in 1945. Her family attended First Baptist, and at age 10 Joyce became a Christian, receiving Jesus Christ as Lord of her life. The foundation of

her life and her daily strength were the principles found in God's word, the Bible.

After high school, she worked at the JW Thomas clothing store in Minneapolis, and then as a secretary at Hormel in Austin. Joyce felt called to work at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Ill. She moved there with her sister, Nola, in 1949, and began working in the service department. Later she became the office manager of the music department. Joyce met Carl Haflinger while working at Moody. They were engaged on Joyce's birthday, Aug. 11, 1950. One year later, to the day, they married in 1951.

Carl and Joyce could not have children of their own,

so they chose adoption. They were blessed to adopt Elizabeth in November 1960, and Jonathan in September 1964.

She was known for her love of children, serving in church with Sunday school, singing in choir, and serving special and delicious meals to her family. Joyce was a great listener. She taught herself accounting and applied this in keeping books for several companies.

Joyce and Carl lived in Chicago 50+ years and had the great joy of retiring to Blooming Prairie for eight years, once again seeing dear relatives and friends. They attended First Baptist Church from 2008-2016.

Joyce is survived by her forever and always husband, Carl,

of 67 years; her one remaining sister, Nola, from Ely, Minn.; her daughter - Beth (Tim) Gunsolley; son - Jon (Debby) Haflinger; grandchildren - Randi, Lauren and Taylor Floyd, Trenton Gunsolley and Ian Haflinger; two great grandchildren - Tristan and Rissa and baby Floyd is on the way!

She was preceded in death by her parents, her brother, Lynwood, and three of her sisters: Delnora, Marian and Connie.

A memorial service was held in Colorado Springs and interment will be in the future, at the Danish Baptist Cemetery in Blooming Prairie.

COLLEGE NEWS

Area students named to Dean's Lists

Several area students have been named to the Dean's Lists at their respective colleges for the Fall 2018 semester.

Natalie Greiner of Owatonna has been named to the Dean's List for high academic achievement at Bob Jones University in Greenville, S.C.

To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a 3.0-3.74 GPA.

Bob Jones is a Christian liberal arts college.

Greiner is a junior accounting major at Bob Jones.

At North Dakota State University in Fargo, Alec Holcomb, sport management, of Owatonna and Elias R. Lazaro, architecture, of Hollandale were named to the Dean's List.

A student must earn a 3.5 GPA or higher and be enrolled in at least 12 class credits to qualify for the Dean's List at NDSU.

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STEELE COUNTY Times





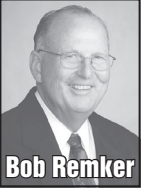
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Panther of the Week

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Quinn Wayne

This week's panther of the week is Quinn Wayne. Quinn lives outside of Ellendale with her parents Brandon and Jodi. She has one older sister Eva and one older brother Owen. Quinn is in Ms. Beenken's second grade class at NRHEG.

She is a wonderful leader in the classroom and is always willing to help out wherever needed! Quinn is outgoing and has a kind and giving heart. Her creativity and happiness makes her a wonderful friend that we can always count on! She is always showing her Panther Pride and is very respectful to her teachers. Quinn works hard each and every day in school and always tries her best. You can always find Quinn wearing a friendly smile, way to go Quinn!

Quinn's favorite food is spaghetti and her two favorite movies are "Sing" and "Trolls." Her favorite book series to read are "Magic Puppy" and "Puppy Place." Quinn has many exciting hobbies that include: gymnastics, singing, dancing and drawing. She also loves playing the card game pig with her brother and beating him at it!

Keep up the great work Quinn!



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Jimmy Mans
Lauren Hines

January 17
Kim Lea
Hailey Naatz
Sailor Lea

January 18
Paul Master
Grady Strand
Chelsie Hansen

January 19
Carol Holman
Bob Farr

January 20
Cameron Brown
Joe Prizler

January 21
Kennedy Bishop
Dale Borchert
Laura Thomas

January 22
Andrew Schwarz
Joseph Schwarz
Elaine Schwarz
Carol Braaten
Jon Esplan
Kyle Krueger

Anniversaries

January 21
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Cancer Corner

Blooming Prairie Cancer Group



A Blooming Prairie Cancer Group donation jar has caught the attention of many youngsters who have been saving their coins to donate to the fight against cancer. Collecting coins were: Eva Magnuson, Annastyn Peterson, Ayden Jones, Isaiah Jones, Cassidy Jones and Aubree Johnson. (Photo submitted)

BY HOWARD LESTRUD – STAFF WRITER

Come and celebrate the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group's latest donation to the Fifth District Eagles Telethon by having a breakfast at the Pizza Cellar on Sunday, Jan. 20.

Board members of the BP Cancer Group will present a HUGE check to the Eagles Telethon at the Mayo Civic Center on Saturday, Jan. 19.

Cheri Krejci, treasurer, has control of the purse strings but was tight lipped as to what the amount will be. That total should be known at about 9:35 on Saturday night.

The Stix of Fury drum corps will perform on stage at 8:50 p.m. The check presentation and the Stix of Fury performance will be broadcast live on KTTC Channel 10.

The facsimile check will be on display at the breakfast, thus everyone will then find out the total for sure.

Menu for the breakfast will include pancakes, eggs, sausage, muffins, orange juice, milk and coffee.

Silent auction items will be part of the morning breakfast. Some of the items include a tied baseball blanket and a framed Target Field photo signed by former Minnesota Twins great Tony Oliva.

Kids can also bring in coins for the BP Cancer Group fish bowl. The fish bowl has been collecting coins since last year's breakfast.

Tickets will also be on sale for the BP Cancer Group's Purse Bingo scheduled for Saturday, April 6.

Sponsored by Krejci Ford

Recipe Corner

APPLE CINAMMON BATTER BREAD

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tsp active dry yeast
- 1-1/4 cups warm water
- 3 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1 apple - peeled, cored, and chopped into small bits
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 2-2/3 cups all-purpose flour

DIRECTIONS:

In a medium bowl, add the yeast and water. Stir mixture until the yeast is dissolved. Add sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, apple, oil, salt, and 2 cups of flour. Mix well. Mix in the remaining 2/3 cup of flour. Cover bowl with clean kitchen towel or with plastic wrap. Let the batter rise in a warm, draft free place for 30 minutes. Stir down the batter. Scrape batter into a greased bread pan, 9x5x3 inches. Cover the bread pan and let the batter rise in a warm, draft free place for another 30 minutes or until doubled in size. Bake the loaf at 375 degrees F for 45 minutes or until the bread sounds hollow when tapped on. Remove the loaf from pan and let cool on a bread rack.

Sponsored by

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

PASTOR’S COLUMN

Baptism is our identity



Pastor Paul Hauschild
TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, HAYFIELD

In many liturgical churches, this past Sunday was “The Baptism of Our Lord” Sunday. It’s a wonderful annual service that lifts up the meaning of Baptism in our lives. I believe that the Baptism of Jesus emphasizes this incredible gift: We are His Children, and we have a purpose.

The voice of God announced after Jesus’ baptism by John: “This is my Son, with whom I am well pleased.” It encouraged the human side of Jesus to begin his public ministry, and it also says to us how important we are in our baptism. Every time I baptize a child or adult, I sense the voice of God saying: “This, too, is my child, with whom I am well pleased!” It’s about Identity! It’s about

having a purpose! It’s about turning from sin and walking in a new life.

Mainline churches usually baptize babies. We call it a Sacrament: A special way to receive God’s Grace as a gift. And then we live it out! If Christian Identity is a gift through grace, then we want to give out this identity, and all the spiritual gifts that accompany it, to the young child. Through the faith of the parents, sponsors and congregation, the faith of the child grows and matures into discipleship. The child learns that they are “saved by grace through faith” as a gift of God. Every faith decision afterward is a response to this gift.

For most Non-denominational churches, along with Baptist and

Assembly of God churches, I believe baptism is more of an Ordinance. As one grows old enough in the faith to decide for themselves as to their spiritual direction and discipleship, baptism is a religious rite that relies on God’s grace and points to their personal decision of discipleship. It is an event that can be experienced more than once.

Which is the right view of baptism? Both are. Both have biblical roots and long standing tradition over the centuries. But one thing all churches have in common: Baptism is about growing into a new life and knowing one’s identity as a child of God, through the Holy Spirit. And if we are children of God, we are in his care and mercy every day. Thanks Be To God!



AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

LUTHERAN AURORA LUTHERAN 6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna Pastor Stephanie Wood 507-676-5696 Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. Worship: Sunday at 10:45 a.m. COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 106 Third St. SE., Geneva Pastor Kristen Venne 507-256-4288 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun. FIRST LUTHERAN – AFLC 503 Radel Ct., Ellendale Pastor Richard Sliper 507-684-2451 Saturday: 8 a.m. Men's Bible Study Sunday: 9 a.m. Worship; 10:15 a.m. Sunday School/ Confirmation Tues.: 7 p.m. Call to Prayer, open to all churches Wed.: 9:30 a.m. BibleStudy; 3:30 – 5 p.m. Jesus and Me; 6 p.m. Call to Prayer; 6:30 p.m. Youth Group FIRST LUTHERAN – ELCA 434 First St. SW., Blooming Prairie Senior Pastor: Rev. Heidi Heimgartner Associate Pastor: Rev. Mike Walerius 507-583-6621 firstlutheranbp.com Worship Service- 9 a.m. Sunday School- 10 a.m. FIRST LUTHERAN – LCMC 8953 SW 37th Ave., Hope Pastor Sandy Miller 507-451-3854 Worship: 9 a.m. Sun. Sunday School, Adult Ed: 10:15 a.m. Sun. GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN – LCMS 2500 7th Ave. NE., Owatonna Rev. Mark Rosenau, Senior Pastor Rev. Greg Schlicker, Associate Pastor 507-451-4125 www.goodshepherd owatonna.com Worship: 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m. MOLAND LUTHERAN – ELCA 7618 NE 84th Ave., Kenyon Pastor Nancy Edwardson 507-789-6661 Worship: 10:45 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN – ELCA 9651 SW 75th St., Ellendale Pastor Mike Walerius 507-465-8366 Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9 a.m. Sun. EDEEMER LUTHERAN – LCMS	1054 Truman Ave., Owatonna Pastor Kirk Griebel 507-451-2720 Worship: 9 a.m. Sun. Education Hour: 10:15 a.m. Sun. RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN – ELCA 30456 Mower-Freeborn Road, Austin Pastor Lindsay Brennan 507-583-2038 or 507-437-3000 www.roglutheran.org Worship: 9 a.m. Sun. Sunday School (Sept. – May): 10:15 a.m. ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN – LCMS 4532 SE 84th Ave., Claremont Pastor Alan Broadwell 507-528-2404 Worship: 6 p.m. Saturday; 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m. ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN – LCMS 28959 630th Ave., Sergeant Pastor Collin Duling 507-251-5568 Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9 a.m. ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA 30450 570th Ave., Waltham Pastor Dwight DoBell 507-567-2474 Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun. ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – LCMS 202 E. Park Ave., Hollandale Pastor Jesse Krusemark 507-567-2272 Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA 2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith 507-451-2165 Sunday School: 9:15 a.m. Worship: 10:30 a.m. TRINITY LUTHERAN 5881 SE 118th St., Blooming Prairie Pastor Stephanie Wood 507-676-5696 Worship: Sunday at 9 a.m. TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA Trinity Lutheran Church 609 Lincoln Avenue Owatonna MN 55060 507.451.4520 tlcowatonna.org Worship: Saturday: 5 p.m. Sunday: 8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. Sunday School: 8:15 a.m. & 9:30 a.m. tlcowatonna.org/worshipschedule TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 104 First St. SE., Hayfield Pastor Paul Hauschild 507-477-2248	www.trinityhayfield.org Worship: 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m. TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS 108 Third Ave. SW., Medford Pastor Mark Biebighauser 507-451-0447 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Study TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS 57043 300th St., Waltham Pastor Jesse Krusemark 507-567-2272 Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m. ZION LUTHERAN – ELCA 7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith Worship: 8:30 a.m.	Adoration: 8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Thurs. ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC 114 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie Father Thomas Niehaus 507-583-2784 www.stcolumbanuschurch.com Mass: 10 a.m. Sun. & 8:30 a.m. Friday Reconciliation: 9 a.m. First Friday & Saturday ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH 512 S. Elm Ave., Owatonna Father James Starasinick Deacon Patrick Fagan 507-451-4845 Saturday Mass: 4 p.m. Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m. Reconciliation: 3-3:30 p.m. Sat. Daily Mass: 8 a.m. Tues., Wed. & Fri. (Communion Service 8 a.m. Thursday) Adoration Chapel available Mon. – Fri. 7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Key fob required after hours or weekends	CHRISTIAN CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT 540 SE 18th St., Owatonna Dr. V. Brent Carlson, Pastor 507-451-1032 Worship: 9 a.m. Sun. Sunday Connections: 10:15 a.m.	PENTECOSTAL FIRST UNITED PENTECOSTAL 230 Locust Ave., Owatonna Pastor Eliazar Talamantes 507-363-2240 Worship: 10 a.m. Sunday; 6:30 p.m. Wednesday	METHODIST BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST 43089 180th St., Medford (Seven miles west of Medford on CR 23) Pastors JJ & Stefanie Morgan 507-835-8726 Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST 200 Sixth St. NW., Ellendale Pastor Randy Cirksema 507-684-2731 www.ellendaleumc.org Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m. OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST 815 E. University, Owatonna Loren Olson, Pastor Linda Boorman, Associate Pastor Joyce Parker, Associate Pastor 507-451-4734 www.owatonnaumc.org Traditional Worship (Pathways): 9	NON-DENOMINATIONAL BRIDGES OF HOPE COMMUNITY 130 W. Bridge St., Owatonna Pastor Keith Haskell 507-215-2249 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. Biblestudy: 9 a.m. Sun. Reformers Unanimous Meetings: 7 p.m. Friday CEDAR CREEK 30 E. Main St., Hayfield Pastor Aaron de Neui 507-477-2255 www.cedarcreekchurch.org Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. DESTINY CHRISTIAN Owatonna Campus 422 North St., Owatonna Pastors Tyler & Jessica Braucht 507-254-8514 www.destinycc.org Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. ELEVATION NORTH 2002 Austin Road, Owatonna Pastor Doug Jones 507-363-3099 www.elevationnorth.blogspot.com Worship (English): 10 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 10:30 a.m. Worship (Spanish): 2 p.m. Sun. Bible Study: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday Spanish Evangelism & Prayer: 7 p.m. Friday NEW BEGINNINGS 332 14th St. NE., Owatonna Pastors Scott & Joan Peterson 507-413-0209 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. SIMPLE CHURCH 4515 NW 22nd Ave., Owatonna (Country Goods building across the freeway from Cabela's) Pastor Todd Lundgren 507-451-5661 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun. Bible Study: 7 p.m. Wednesday	Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ 800 Havana Road, Owatonna 507-451-1546 www.associatedchurch.org office@associatedchurch.org Sunday Worship: 9 a.m. (Fellowship, Church School, and Adult Discussions follow) Wednesday Activities: Sept – May (see website for schedule) FIRST PRESBYTERIAN 109 E. Main St., Hayfield Pastor Kirk Johnston 507-477-2631 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN P.O. Box 66, Claremont 507-528-2320 Pastor Douglas Walters 10 a.m. Worship
			CHRIST THE KING 203 Second Ave. NW., Medford 507-451-6353 Father James Starasinick Deacon Patrick Fagan Sunday Mass: 8:30 a.m. Monday Mass: 9 a.m. CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS 307 SW First St., New Richland Father Raul Silva Fr. Adam McMillan, Parochial Vicar 507-465-8217 Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL 9946 SE 24th Ave. Owatonna Father John Sauer, Pastor 507-451-5588 www.litomysl.webs.com Sunday Mass: 9:30 a.m.c with Children's Church Reconciliation: 8:45 a.m. - 1st & 3rd Sundays Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.: Faith Formation for K thru Confirmation Second Sunday of month: Family Faith Formation Litomysl Finance Council: 2nd Thursday Litomysl Pastoral Council: 2nd Thursday every other month SACRED HEART CATHOLIC 150 NE Second St., Hayfield Father Thomas Niehaus 507-477-2256 Mass: 8 a.m. Sun. & 8:30 a.m. Thursday Reconciliation: 7:30 a.m. Sun. SACRED HEART PARISH 810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna Father John Sauer Fr. Jose Morales, Parochial Vicar 507-451-1588 www.sacredheartowatonna.org Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday; 8:30 a.m. & 10 a.m. Sun. Spanish Mass: 11:45 a.m. Sun. Daily Mass: 7:15 a.m. Reconciliation: 4 p.m. Sat.	CHRISTIAN CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT 540 SE 18th St., Owatonna Dr. V. Brent Carlson, Pastor 507-451-1032 Worship: 9 a.m. Sun. Sunday Connections: 10:15 a.m.	PENTECOSTAL FIRST UNITED PENTECOSTAL 230 Locust Ave., Owatonna Pastor Eliazar Talamantes 507-363-2240 Worship: 10 a.m. Sunday; 6:30 p.m. Wednesday	METHODIST BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST 43089 180th St., Medford (Seven miles west of Medford on CR 23) Pastors JJ & Stefanie Morgan 507-835-8726 Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST 200 Sixth St. NW., Ellendale Pastor Randy Cirksema 507-684-2731 www.ellendaleumc.org Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m. OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST 815 E. University, Owatonna Loren Olson, Pastor Linda Boorman, Associate Pastor Joyce Parker, Associate Pastor 507-451-4734 www.owatonnaumc.org Traditional Worship (Pathways): 9	NON-DENOMINATIONAL BRIDGES OF HOPE COMMUNITY 130 W. Bridge St., Owatonna Pastor Keith Haskell 507-215-2249 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. Biblestudy: 9 a.m. Sun. Reformers Unanimous Meetings: 7 p.m. Friday CEDAR CREEK 30 E. Main St., Hayfield Pastor Aaron de Neui 507-477-2255 www.cedarcreekchurch.org Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. DESTINY CHRISTIAN Owatonna Campus 422 North St., Owatonna Pastors Tyler & Jessica Braucht 507-254-8514 www.destinycc.org Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. ELEVATION NORTH 2002 Austin Road, Owatonna Pastor Doug Jones 507-363-3099 www.elevationnorth.blogspot.com Worship (English): 10 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 10:30 a.m. Worship (Spanish): 2 p.m. Sun. Bible Study: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday Spanish Evangelism & Prayer: 7 p.m. Friday NEW BEGINNINGS 332 14th St. NE., Owatonna Pastors Scott & Joan Peterson 507-413-0209 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. SIMPLE CHURCH 4515 NW 22nd Ave., Owatonna (Country Goods building across the freeway from Cabela's) Pastor Todd Lundgren 507-451-5661 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun. Bible Study: 7 p.m. Wednesday	Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ 800 Havana Road, Owatonna 507-451-1546 www.associatedchurch.org office@associatedchurch.org Sunday Worship: 9 a.m. (Fellowship, Church School, and Adult Discussions follow) Wednesday Activities: Sept – May (see website for schedule) FIRST PRESBYTERIAN 109 E. Main St., Hayfield Pastor Kirk Johnston 507-477-2631 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN P.O. Box 66, Claremont 507-528-2320 Pastor Douglas Walters 10 a.m. Worship
			UCC CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST 211 Main St. S. Medford Rev. Richard Waters 507-451-4596 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.	UCC CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST 211 Main St. S. Medford Rev. Richard Waters 507-451-4596 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.	ASSEMBLY OF GOD VIBRANT LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD 702 Third St. S., Ellendale Pastor Patrick Stitt 507-684-3421 www.vibrantlifeag.com Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun. Kids Church: 10:30 a.m. Sun.	BAPTIST FIRST BAPTIST 104 First Ave. NE, Blooming Prairie Pastor Matt Fennell 507-583-2673 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. & 6:30 p.m. Wednesday Sunday School: 9 a.m. Bible Study: 11:30 a.m. Sun.	ASSEMBLY OF GOD VICTORY LIFE 105 2nd St NE Geneva Pastor Diane Butler 507-402-0960 Worship on Sundays Prayer Service: 7:30 a.m. Church Service: 9:30 a.m. Children's Church: 9:45 a.m.	

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CITIZENS: honored

FROM A1

marked. The Chamber first presented a top citizen award in 2006. Past BP Chamber President Greg Johnson will present the award.

Mike attended Leroy-Ostrander Schools, one of the first consolidated school districts in the state. Sandy attended school in Adams.

"I grew up on the south side of the railroad tracks," says Mike. "I lived as that neighbor some people complained about," Mike says. "We kids had the image of getting into trouble whether it was climbing the water tower or town elevator and jumping on a train and riding it to school."

Mike lived in town and raised a calf named Charlie Beefsteak. "We traded him for a horse," he laughs.

Mike spent much of his growing up days on his grandparents' farm.

"We had neighborhoods back then and played ball and hide and seek," Mike said. "There was always some kid at the screen door looking in," he confided.

Sandy grew up on a dairy farm near Adams as one of eight children. "We had plenty of work to do, milking cows, doing field work, gardening and taking care of siblings. But, mom and dad found time for fun with neighborhood softball games and visiting cousins."

Mike and Sandy met on the dance floor at the Rusty Rail in Taopi, a small community near the Iowa-Minnesota border. "We still love to dance," Sandy confesses.

Mike and Sandy married in the Bicentennial year of 1976. Their wedding reception was at the Rusty Rail.

Mike worked on Sandy's

parents' farm for two years. Mike attended Austin Community College and hired on as a staff accountant at an Austin accounting firm. Sandy worked for the Cedar Branch Developmental Achievement Center, an agency dedicated to handicapped adults.

The Joneses bought a house in Rose Creek. Mike was then recruited by Wayne Carlson to work as an accountant in Blooming Prairie. "I didn't want to go to Blooming Prairie because I didn't know where it was," he says truthfully.

After three requests to join the firm in Blooming Prairie, Mike relented and commuted over six years from Rose Creek to Blooming Prairie. He later purchased the firm from Carlson and named the business, Mike Jones Accounting.

He was a self-employed accountant from 1986 to 2000. He then sold his practice to Tamzen Johnson after interviewing for an interim city administrator post in Blooming Prairie.

"Why not, I thought," Mike recalls about deciding to apply for the city job. As a city employee, Jones said he was thrilled to get a wage, holiday pay and sick pay. "I never thought it would last 18 years," he says.

Jones continued with an accounting practice in Adams and then moved his clients to Blooming Prairie. He still

does about 200 tax returns a year.

Sandy relied on her artistic talents to join three other partners, Leanne Hanson, Laura Kirby and June Trom to found the business, A Touch of Charm, 30 years ago. Sandy also worked a short time as Mike's secretary but honestly told Mike he needed to find a different secretary because she chose to work on more creative projects. She taught Arts in the Parks for children and also taught adult education art classes. In addition, she worked at B to Z Hardware.

Sandy continues to volunteer her time and talent on various projects around Blooming Prairie. Sandy was asked to take on the Artists in Residence program at the Blooming Prairie Elementary School 10 years ago and continues to teach there today.

She also taught the artist in residence program in Waseca, at Austin Pacelli Elementary School and she is employed one day a week teaching art at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Adams. She teaches there every Monday and stays overnight with her 93-year-old mother on Sunday nights.

In addition to her arts projects, Sandy has worked with Chamber executive director Becky Noble on many Chamber projects, including the Holiday Dazzle promotion at Christmas time. She also is a member of the American Legion and VFW auxiliaries and most recently has served the past four years on the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial Committee. She is an active member of St. Columbanus Catholic Church and has been on the Fourth of July committee for more than 20 years.

Mike logged 22 years with the Blooming Prairie Fire Department. He was past president of the Blooming Prairie Jaycees, served three years on the BP Servicemen's Club board of directors (1 1/2 years as president), was a BP Golf Club board member and represented Steele County on the Cedar River Watershed Board as treasurer.

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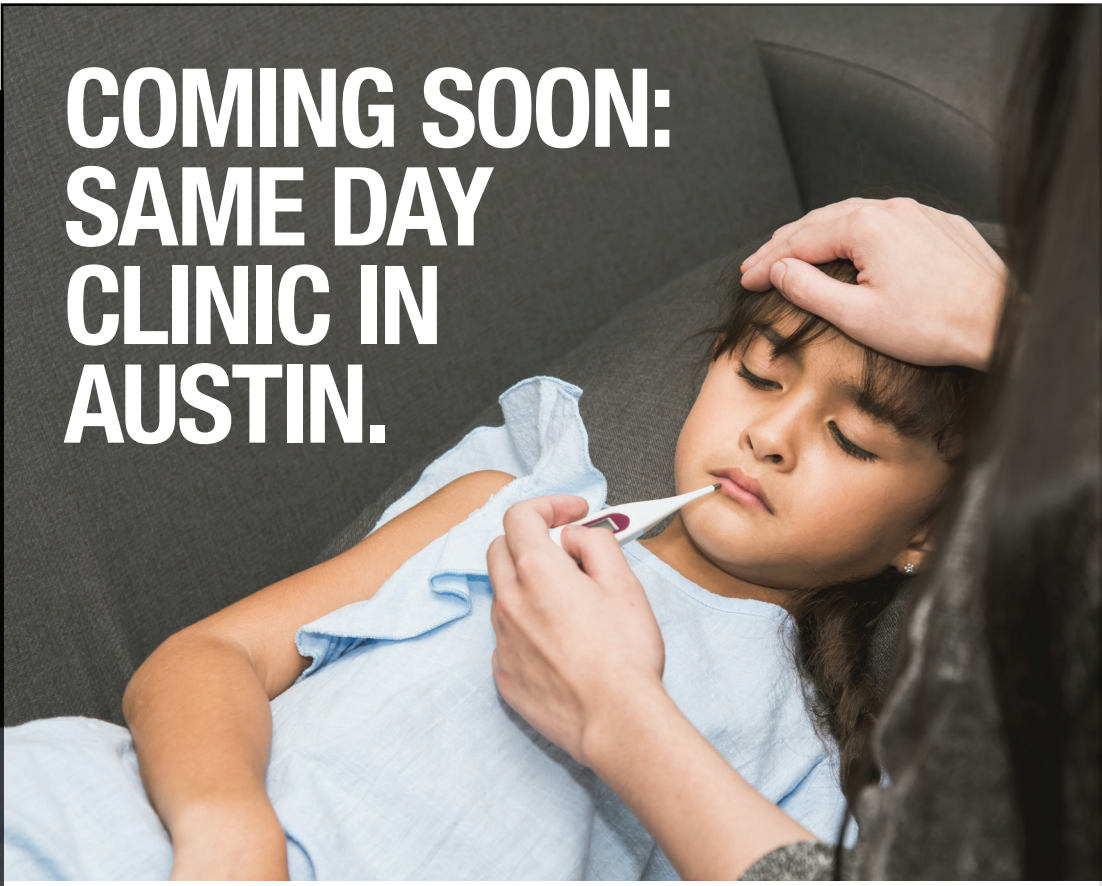
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GYMNASTICS

Huskies have sights set on fourth straight trip to state meet

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna gymnastics team defeated Northfield 146.625-138.275 on Thursday at the Owatonna Gymnastics Club.

“The season is going very well and we are really starting to click,” Owatonna head coach Tom Smith said. “This is the fourth year we have gone undefeated in the conference and section 1AA.”

Owatonna’s Sydney Kretlow won the vault with a 9.5, Cheyenne Petersen won the balance beam with a 9.05, Lindsay Bangs earned gold on the uneven bars with a 9.6 and the floor exercise with a 9.4.

Bangs was also the all-around winner with a 37.325.

Owatonna also took silver and bronze in the all-around competition with Allison An (36.5) and Lucy Macius (36.075).

Smith said the Huskies have progressed greatly since losing six senior from this past season’s squad.

“We had to feel voids in our line up,” he said. “Our underclassmen are finally stepping up and filling those voids. It always take a while for newcomers to understand how our team works and how we support everyone. We are always one team, no matter if you are on JV or varsity.

“I teach them to believe in themselves, their team, and their coaches,” he continued. “The most drastic change has been getting the young gymnasts to believe in themselves. They’re very talented and we will need their help to go undefeated again. They are finally seeing their potential.”

The Huskies are currently ranked No. 2 in Class 3A and recently won the Faribault Invite for the first time in program history.

“We have our conference meet on February 9,” Smith said. “Hopefully will win. There are potential teams that could upset us. But after that, win Sections on February 15 and make our fourth straight state appearance.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF OHS MAGNET

Owatonna’s Sydney Kretlow performs her floor exercise routine at the 2017 MSHSL State Meet.

Awesome Blossoms pulverize Tigers, 68-39, in Steele County rivals clash

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

Playing with much more confidence than earlier in the week, the Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossom boys basketball team ran up the score, 68-39, in a conference win over Medford on Friday at BPHS.

The win improved the Blossom record to 9-2 overall and 4-2 in the Gopher Conference. “The boys really got after it on defense,” BP head coach Nate Piller said. “Getting better in that department was very important for us. We also found balance on offense, as three players reached double figures, and two other scored eight points each.”

Kaden Thomas counted 15 points for the the Blossoms, while Isaac Ille contributed 13 points, Zach Weber chipped in 12 and Edel counted 11 points for the visitors.

BUCS THUMP BLOSSOMS

One of the hottest teams in the area took it out on the BP boys at home on Tuesday, January 8, whipping the Blossoms 83-59 at Waterville.

In a nutshell, the Bucs played well on the home floor, while the Blossoms struggled throughout the game.

The loss was only the second for the locals, while WEM played with just one defeat on their record.

“We had too many turnovers, our guards didn’t play that well and the home team played much more aggressively than we did,” Piller said. “Hopefully, it was a game that got our attention, and we use the experience to get better.”

Karson Vigeland counted 13 points for the Blossoms, seven in the second half, and Hagen added 11. WEM had four players score in double figures.



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Blooming Prairie’s Gabe Hagen scores in the paint against Medford on Friday at BPHS.



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Awesome Blossom Zach Weber works in the post against the Medford Tigers at BPHS.



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Blooming Prairie’s Trenton Swenson goes up over the Medford Tigers’ defense for an easy bucket on Friday.



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Awesome Blossom Kaden Thomas finishes a fast break in BP’s 68-39 victory over Medford on Friday.

LAST WEEK IN SPORTS

The Blooming Prairie basketball teams did the splits last week, with both splitting a pair of games. The Awesome Blossom boys got ambushed by a hot Water-Elysian-Morristown contingent at WEM High School early in the week, but then rebounded to keep Medford winless with a runaway win on the home court Friday.

Historically, the Blossoms have had difficulty with the Buccaneers, both on the road and on their home court.

I think I can count on one hand the times we have taken a season series from them, as they always seem to have a sharpshooter or two that gets hot in the games.

This year seems to be no exception, unless the Blossoms can find a measure of revenge when WEM makes a return

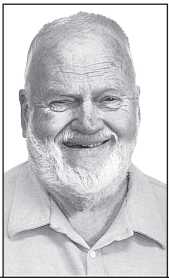
engagement to Blooming later in the season.

The Blossom girls also managed a split for the week. The team earned a big wins over WEM early in the week, as the Bucs came into the contest with just one loss on the season.

BP got an early lead, and the team played a very good game to take down the visitors. Last Friday, however, the girls got a lesson in good basketball from a very good undefeated Medford team.

The neighboring Steele County school is going through one of those high cycles that every school goes through at one time or another. The Tiger volleyball team had a great season last fall, and the basketball team is currently undefeated for the season and in the tough Gopher Conference.

Medford used a good



Outside the Lines
LEMAR NELSON

defense and some hot outside shooting to down the Blossoms last week. Hopefully, the locals can make a good showing, when Medford plays in Blooming Prairie on February 15.

Of the three winter sports teams, it was the wrestling team that had the toughest week. The team ran into some real

tough competition when it lost dual matches to Tri-City United and Maple River in a triangular at Hayfield Thursday.

The team has done well until that meet, with the top three weights for the Blossoms carrying the success of the team. All three of the wrestlers at the top three weights have compiled an enviable won-lost record, and will be favorites to advance when the playoffs start next month

STILL IN TRANSITION

For several immediate members of my immediate family, frequent moves have become rather commonplace lately because of career opportunities, or just because a different location suited them better. That is quite a contrast to my situation, as I made my first move to an apartment in over sixty years just

recently.

I spent 35 years of my teaching career just a block diagonally from the school where I taught, and I have to admit that I am still adjusting to my new situation. I miss my friends and acquaintances, singing in the church choir and frequent short trips to neighboring places.

But on the plus side, I am thankful that my publisher has given me the opportunity to continue my newspaper career penning my column and writing game reports from the various sports. But most importantly, I am pleasing my daughters with the move, after they have gently prodded me to make a move for a couple of years. It became an easier decision, noting my physical and medical problems. I just hope that readers continue to

SEE OUTSIDE THE LINES, B3



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BASKETBALL



Medford's Kinsey Cronin pulled down a rebound over multiple opponents.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL



Medford's Bailey Purrier drives past a NRHEG defender in a Gopher Conference clash earlier this season.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Tigers smash Blossoms girls

Medford improves to 12-0

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

After an exhilarating victory over Water-Elysian-Morristown earlier in the week, the Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossom girls ran into a block in the road, when Medford kept its unbeaten string alive at 12-0.

The Tigers romped to the victory on their home floor, 73-45, Friday, January 11.

Medford now has 7-0 mark in Gopher Conference.

“We have been pleased with the work ethic our kids bring to practice every day,” Medford head coach Mark Kubat said. “We are getting better every day. I feel we have grown as a team all season.”

Emma Kniefel led the Tigers with 20 points. Izzy

Reuvers scored 13, Kinsey Cronin added 11, Kiley Nihart had nine, Jenna Berg and Bailey Purrier each finished with six and Isabella Steffen and Alorah Weise chipped in four a piece.

“Hopefully, we are prepared for some tough games ahead,” Kubat said. “Our health is great. The off-season conditioning program helps to make these kids tough. We will keep working toward our goals to compete for a conference championship and play at MSU in the sections. We will constantly add new goals.”

The Blossoms stayed with the Tigers early, but a relentless defense for the home team and some pinpoint outside shooting soon found Blooming

Prairie falling behind.

Medford led 44-24 at the half and kept the pressure on through the second half.

“We lost tonight on the road to a very talented Medford team,” Blooming Prairie head coach John Bruns said. “Their relentless defense and outside shooting proved too much for us to keep up with. We learned some things tonight that will make us a better team down the road”

Julia Worke led the Blossom offense with 16 points, with Bobbie Bruns adding 12. The team record dropped to 8-4 overall and 4-3 in conference play.

GOOD DEFENSE WINS FOR BP

The BP girls used a good defense to defeat Water-Elysian-Morristown, 42-36, on the home court Tuesday,

January 8 to earn a tie for second place in the tough Gopher Conference.

The Buccaneers came into the game 10-1, with their only loss to league-leading Medford.

The Blossoms got off to a great start, with Maggie Bruns and Worke both making a 3-pointer.

BP continued to roll and forged a 26-11 lead, aided by great defense.

At one point BP played defense for two minutes and then got the stop they needed.

In the second half, the Blossoms extended their margin to 20 points, before the Bucs made a run to make the final score competitive.

Some key stops and made free throws preserved the win.



Blooming Prairie's Bobbie Bruns brings the ball up the court against Chatfield earlier this season.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

“This was a big conference victory for us tonight,” Bruns said. “We got off to a good start, and that carried through the entire game. I thought our defense played particularly well tonight also.”

Worke led the BP scoring with 13 points, but

Maggie Bruns and Megan Oswald had 10 each, and Bobbie Bruns handed out four assists. Oswald and Worke had eight and seven rebounds in the defensive effort. Shelby Hermel and Toryn Richards both had nine points for WEM.

WRESTLING

Razorbacks hit hard

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The Westfield Razorbacks suffered a double whammy at Hayfield on Thursday, losing matches to Tri-City United and Maple River by large margins.

TCU rolled to a 54-13 victory, and Maple River followed with a 50-16 drubbing of the Razorbacks.

In the TCU match Alex Phenix pinned Brant Lemieux in 5:01 at the 136-pound weight class, but the locals did not score again until two of the last three bouts.

Colton Krell scored a major 10-0 decision over Tyler Schroer at 182 pounds

and Dylan Nirk won an overtime 3-2 verdict over the Titans' Sam Miller at 220.

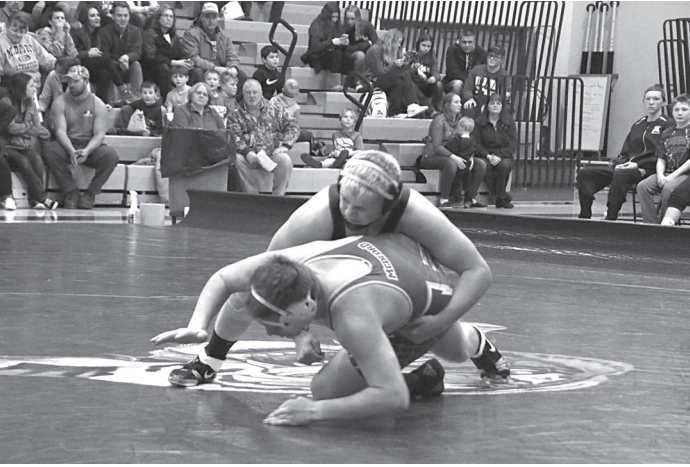
The final bout went to Jose Reyes by a forfeit.

TCU used four forfeits as part of their winning run.

Maple River jumped to a 50-0 lead in the second match, helped by four forfeits.

Krell took a 15-5 major decision at 182 to get Westfield on the board.

Nirk and heavyweight Tristan Rieken both scored falls in the first minute of their bouts. Nirk pinned Thayne Decker in just 28 seconds, at 220 and Rieken followed with a pin over Eston Battles in 39 seconds.



Westfield's Dylan Nirk takes down an opponent in a Gopher Conference match earlier this season.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

BASKETBALL



NRHEG's Devin Buendorf goes up for layup against TCU on Jan. 4.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PAM AGRIMSON



NRHEG's Brady Agrimson finishes strong above two TCU defenders.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PAM AGRIMSON



NRHEG's Blake Ihrke drives to the basket against TCU on Jan. 4.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PAM AGRIMSON

Panthers ground Eagles, Cardinals

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

Playing the best overall game o the season, the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva boys defeated a strong Maple River team 77-50 on Friday at Mapleton.

A fast start set the tone for the game, and the Panthers used that start to control the game.

NRHEG opened with a 17-7 lead and when the Eagles came back with a changed offense and forced some turnovers, the Panthers responded for a 33-26 margin at the half.

The second half belonged to NRHEG on both offense and defense.

The team scored a season high 44 second half points and did a good job of pushing the ball up the floor to result in easy baskets.

Brady Agrimson pushed the lead up with three consecutive 3-pointers midway through the half.

“This was the best overall game we have played this season,” NRHEG head coach Isaiah Lundberg said. “We moved the ball well, had a good half court game and shot the ball well all night. It was a great team win. Everyone

brought a lot of energy into the action.”

Jacob Schuller and Agrimson each had 22 points to lead the scoring, but Blake Ihrke chipped in 14 and Lonnie Wilson added nine.

Mason Sohre launched 30 points for Maple River. The Panthers improved to 7-8 for the season and will play Medford on Friday, January 18.

PANTHERS EDGE CARDINALS

A good defensive basketball game turned in NRHEG's way, as the Panthers edged Faribault Bethlehem Academy 47-44 at NRHEG High School

SEE PANTHERS GROUND EAGLES, B3

BASKETBALL



NRHEG's Alexis Anderson passes to a teammate earlier this season in a Gopher Conference contest at Medford.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL



NRHEG guard Sidney Schultz bring the ball up the court for the Panthers.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL



NRHEG's Alexis Anderson and Olivia Christopherson played defense at Medford earlier this season.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

NRHEG upsets Maple River

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

Focus on defense paid off for New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva, as the girls defeated Maple River, 57-53 at NRHEG High School on Thursday.

The Eagles trailed at the half 30-27, but they came out strong to take a big lead midway into the second half.

The Panthers then went on a scoring binge and finally took a lead in the closing minutes.

“This was a great team win tonight,”

NRHEG head coach Onika Peterson said. “We put the focus on defense, and it paid off with the victory. The girls never gave up and battled back to get the W”.

Sidney Schultz and Sophie Stork each had 13 points to lead the scoring and Darian Pearson and Alexis Anderson added 10 and nine, respectively.

Stork also pulled down a whopping 18 rebounds.

NRHEG also fell on Saturday to Grand Meadow, 65-50, at Kasson-Mantorville High School.

The Panthers record is now 6-9 overall and 4-3 in Gopher Conference action.

SOFTBALL

Moran named Owatonna softball coach

STAFF REPORT

Owatonna High School announced the hiring of Jeremy Moran as the new head coach of the softball program in a press release on Thursday.

Moran has spent the past four seasons as the head coach of the junior varsity Owatonna softball team and

has been involved as both a volunteer coach and head fastpitch coach for youth programs in the area.

“We are very excited to announce Jeremy Moran as our head softball coach,” said Owatonna Athletic Director Marc Achterkirch in the release. “Moran brings a wealth of knowledge to the position

and with being apart of the program for the past four years, he will be able to hit the ground running to continue to advance our softball program.”

Moran replaces Brian Pilcher, who was 36-57 overall and 2-9 in the playoffs in his four year tenure with the Huskies.

OUTSIDE THE LINES:

Last week in sports FROM B1

support my efforts.

A BIG EVENT

The big event in the community this week is the annual Chamber of Commerce banquet and the well-deserved recognition of Mike and Sandy Jones as the Citizens of the Year.

Mike has been an exemplary city administrator for almost 20 years, and Sandy has exhibited her considerable artistic talents in many places in the community through the years.

If citizens are honored for the good they do in the community, Mike and Sandy certainly qualify for that recognition. Both are always upbeat and friendly, and both have done much volunteer work in the community. My hat is off to these two

Blooming Prairie residents.

WATHER BLUES

People always say that when no topics are up for discussion, that weather can always become a topic. I can't remember a period of time in the winter, when the weather has been so predictably so blah and so steady. I feel sorry for those businesses that depend upon winter activities for a livelihood.

Snowmobies, skis snow blowers, shovels and sleds all rest in their areas with sales practically non-existent.

I suppose, as in many years, winter will descend in March or April, but until then, temps remain almost above freezing, and life has taken on a monotonous routine of October-like weather in January. Have a great week, and we'll talk again.

PANTHERS GROUND EAGLES:

FROM B2

on Tuesday, January 8.

The team struggled a bit the first half, but closed to 22-21 at the break.

The second half proved all-important for NRHEG, as a little different attack on the Cardinal zone defense opened up some holes, and when BA switched to a man defense, more offense and some easy layups resulted

in an eight-point lead.

The defense stayed solid, and a few key free throws saved the game after BA had fought back to tie the game at 44. It was a good conference win, keyed by a good defensive effort.

“I give credit for a good second half, both on offense and defense,” Lundberg said.

Both teams had leads at one point, but our defense and some clutch free throws made the difference in this game.”

Agrimson and Schuller counted 18 and 15 points for the winners, while Damon Trump and Jack Clark notched 16 and 15 for the Cardinals.

STARS OF STEELE



Julia Worke, Blooming Prairie Girls Basketball

The junior forward has provided a spark to the Awesome Blossoms girls basketball team this season. Worke has led BP in scoring the past three games: 18 versus Chatfield on January 4, 16 versus Medford on Friday and 13 against W-E-M on Saturday.



Willie VonRuden, Medford Wrestling

The junior grappler has been a vital reason the Tigers wrestling team has started the season 6-0. VonRuden earned the gold in the 152-pound weight class at the Buffalo Invitational on January 5.

Stars of Steele is brought to you courtesy of

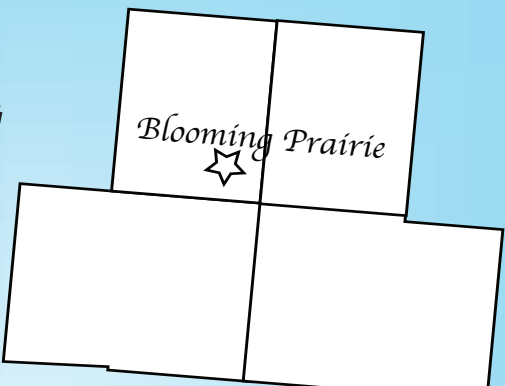
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We have the news you want to know and the hometown coverage you expect.

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STEELE COUNTY Times
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BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT: DWI: Police arrested a motorist for driving while intoxicated at 26th St. NW and Interstate 35 at 9:32 p.m.

COURT NEWS
Steele County

The following case was heard in Steele County District Court the week of Dec. 24 with Judge Joseph A. Bueltel presiding:

Daniel J. Meyer, 39, Faribault, previously appeared and was convicted of felony theft. He was sentenced to \$381, 3 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, do not enter liquor establishments, no alcohol or controlled substance use, no contact with victim, obtain permission to leave the state and 5 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Dec. 24 – 28:

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER
Alexander W. Bealles, 21, Dundas, speeding, \$141; Cora L. Collis, 71, Ankeny, IA, unsafe lane usage, \$131; Lorraine M. Kral, 44, Owatonna, no license, \$181 and 1 year unsupervised probation; Joy C. Kroll, 62, Omaha, NE, speeding, \$131; Jason E. Ludwig, 22, Waterloo, IA, failure to use designated lane, \$131; Andrea Ramirez-Hernandez, 21, Austin, speeding, \$121; Ray M. Sellers, 48, Blooming Prairie, seat belt and revoked license, \$306; Joseph B. Torkelson, 20, Lake Oswego, OR, speeding, \$131; Billy B. Welch, 45, Wood Dale, IL, no license, \$181; Cody B. Williams, 30, Kansas City, KS, no license, \$181.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT
Benjamin Arellano Jr., 22, Owatonna, suspended license and no insurance, \$481; Kimberly A. Bonilla, 36, Waseca, theft, \$181 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Linda L. Castillo, 40, Faribault, failure to yield, \$741; Sarah S. Eaton, 30, Owatonna, theft, \$131 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Christina M. Melhouse, 33, Owatonna, no insurance, \$281; Tracey A. Nagel, 50, Minneapolis, theft, \$81 and 8 days in county jail; John M. Schroeder, 53, Owatonna, indecent exposure, \$381, no possession of pornography, no contact with victim, obtain permission to leave the state, therapy and 2 years of supervised probation; Rahma O. Sheikhamin, 31, Owatonna, permit violation, \$131; Katie J. Williamson, 39, Owatonna, permit offense, \$181.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Mason K. Bongers, 18, Faribault, speeding, \$121; Juana N. Garibay, 35, Madelia, speeding and suspended license, \$321; Daniel J. Heinen, 21, Faribault, speeding, \$221; Thomas G. Kimbro, 58, Owatonna, speeding, \$141; Zoe A. Morrissey, 17, Faribault, speeding, \$131; Scott D. Olson, 61, Owatonna, no insurance and revoked license, \$181 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Vanessa Rodriguez, 31, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$481; Michael R. Stadler, 30, Faribault, speeding and revoked license, \$341; Daltan W. Wincell, 17, Owatonna, speeding, \$281.

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Dec. 31 with Judge Joseph A. Bueltel presiding:

Andrew J. Roseland, 36, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony violation of order for protection. He was sentenced to \$181, 30 days in county jail, no possession of firearms,

maintain employment, therapy, obtain permission to leave the state, cognitive skill training and 4 years of supervised probation.

Eloy Tarango, 40, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony assault and gross misdemeanor possession of marijuana, \$469.98, 91 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, no contact with victim, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, anger management, obtain permission to leave the state and 5 years of supervised probation

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Dec. 31 – Jan. 4:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT
Tangelia P. Jones, 34, Austin, expired tabs, \$101; Phong H. Le, 26, Austin, expired tabs, \$111; Anthony M. Panichelli, 26, Austin, speeding, \$121; Kyle T. Phillippi, 20, Blooming Prairie, revoked license, \$281; Megan P. Plants, 25, Faribault, expired tabs, \$111; Samuel D. Simerson, 20, Austin, expired tabs, \$111.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER
Brady R. Agrimson, 18, New Richland, speeding, \$131; Jared R. Brinkman, 38, Bellechester, suspended license, \$281; Skyler R. Brown, 19, Blooming Prairie, speeding, \$221; Amy L. Haycraft, 36, Mankato, speeding, \$141; Troy L. Heagy, 46, Lancaster, PA, driving less than minimum speed, \$131; Nicholas S. Kol, 18, Faribault, failure to use designated lane, \$131; Anna M. Lawrence, 22, Rochester, speeding, \$141; Anastacio A. Martinez, 46, Fairmont, window tint violation, \$131; John A. McCollum, 26, Medford, revoked license, \$381 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Amy E. Peterson, 34, Owatonna, seat belt, and no child passenger restraint system, \$156; John M. Powell, 56, Rosemount, speeding, \$121; Charlotte D. Reed-Vidler, 51, Flower Mound, TX, speeding, \$221; Brendan J. Seals, 31, Northfield, no insurance, \$281; Kevin Sin, 27, Rochester, speeding and suspended license, \$341; Andrea M. Stadler, 48, Faribault, speeding, \$121; Olga P. Velez, 39, Brownsville, TX, speeding and no license, \$241; Sally J. Wright, 39, Minneapolis, speeding, \$131.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT
Jeffrey D. Cummins, 54, Owatonna, speeding, \$121; Joseph M. Davis, 33, Owatonna, no insurance, \$281; Muhim A. Farah, 21, Owatonna, lights violation, \$100; Daniela Gallegos Mariscal, 35, Owatonna, no license, \$181; Hector U. Garza Monsivais, 27, Owatonna, cancelled license, expired tabs and no insurance, \$511; Donald R. Greenleaf, 26, Owatonna, domestic assault, \$381, 28 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, domestic abuse evaluation, obtain permission to leave the state, do not enter liquor establishments and 1 year of supervised probation; Mitchell G. Harding, 25, Owatonna, failure to stop for school bus, \$111 and 6 years of unsupervised probation; Sara J. Hart, 27, Geneva, revoked license and speeding, \$321; Laurel G. Hoban, 32, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$111;

Tyler C. Jewison, 27, Owatonna, prohibited lights, \$121; Sarah J. Kelly, 23, Owatonna, speeding, \$131; Sarah Kuichtoch, 30, St. Cloud, revoked license and no insurance, \$481; Patrick C. Lammers, 21, Owatonna, failure to stop for traffic control signal, \$131; Edwin Luhda, 43, Austin, failure to obey lane signs, \$131; Guillermo Padron, 32, Owatonna, domestic assault, \$131 and 90 days in county jail; Gary J. Peterson, 45, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$111; Jose L. Reyes, 23, Owatonna, failure to signal, no insurance and possession of paraphernalia, \$381; Elna M. Saucedo, 19, Dodge Center, theft, \$231.87, no trespassing at Walmart and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Codie J. Tesch, 20, Owatonna, failure to yield, \$50; Sam I. Thompson, 21, Geneva, theft, \$121 and 9 days in county jail; Serena D. Volk, 18, Vancouver, WA, suspended license, no insurance and expired tabs, \$511; Allison A. Waage, 26, Bloomington, IL, expired registration, \$111; Jody M. White, 32, Milford, NE, DWI and open bottle, \$406, 2 days in county jail, substance abuse subtle screening inventory and 2 years of supervised probation; Ariana M. Wilker, 17, Owatonna, texting while driving, \$131; Abdiwahid R. Yusuf, 21, Mankato, speeding, \$141.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Carlos Beascochea, 18, Waseca, speeding, \$121; Matthew C. Butler, 19, Hartland, speeding, \$281; Britany U. Epps, 30, Austin, speeding, \$121; Rudy Gomez, 37, Owatonna, speeding and expired tabs, \$251; Felipe Grimaldo, 23, Austin, speeding, \$131; Suzann L. Halla, 35, Owatonna, theft, \$133.88; Mohamed Z. Hammadelniel, 16, Rochester, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$135; Kaitlyn M. Hansen, 27, Waseca, speeding, \$121; Eric C. Hanson, 37, Blooming Prairie, speeding, \$121; Gary L. Henkensiefken, 59, Ellendale, speeding, \$121; Jacob J. Hill, 25, Waseca, speeding, \$141; Kyle D. Johnson, 44, New Richland, speeding, \$111; Jenny J. Koops, 25, St. Paul, speeding, \$121; Jeremy R. Lueck, 32, West Salem, WI, no insurance, \$281; Jose B. Martinez, 27, speeding and revoked license, \$581; Rafael Reyes, 30, Waseca, speeding, \$121; Raul Serna, 38, speeding, \$121; Robert M. Sikel, 44, Claremont, speeding and revoked license, \$341; Bobby J. Smitty, 25, Blooming Prairie, no insurance, \$281; Jeffrey J. Spatenka, 54, Blooming Prairie, no insurance, \$281; John H. Spence, 18, New Richland, speeding, expired tabs and no insurance, \$371; Earl C. Thibodeau, 52, Faribault, damage to property, \$81; James J. Wemple, 48, Blooming Prairie, speeding and no insurance, \$321; Cayle B. Wendorf, 24, Golden Valley, speeding, \$121; Markeontis R. Willis, 23, Minneapolis, speeding and suspended license, \$341.

POLICE BLOTTER
Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE Jan. 8
Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 100 block of Highway Ave. S. at 2:32 p.m.

OWATONNA POLICE Dec. 31
Restraining Order: Police received a report of a restraining order violation at the law enforcement center at

8:32 a.m.

Hit and Run: At 6:04 p.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.

Theft: A motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 200 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 7:42 p.m.

Jan. 1
Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Rose St. E. at 12:49 a.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at Hoffman Dr. NW and Rose St. W. at 9:55 p.m.

Jan. 2
Warrant: Police arrested a juvenile for an outstanding warrant in the 300 block of Main St. E. at 8:18 a.m.

Domestic: At 10:09 a.m., police arrested a subject for a domestic in the 200 block of Pearl St. E.

Mental Health: Officers responded to a mental health incident in the 600 block of Oak Ave. S. at 1:38 p.m.

Warrants: Police made warrant arrests in the 800 block of Elm Ave. N. at 6:06 p.m. and the 200 block of Main St. E. at 9:23 p.m.

Indecent Exposure: Officers responded to an indecent exposure incident in the 2200 block of Hartle Ave. SE at 6:42 p.m.

DWI: Police arrested a motorist for driving while intoxicated at 26th St. NW and Interstate 35 at 9:32 p.m.

Jan. 3
Warrants: Police made warrant arrests in the 500 block of Adams Ave. NW at 10:54 a.m. and the 500 block of Mound St. SW at 12:23 p.m.

Arrest: Officer assisted another agency with arresting a subject in the 600 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 11:49 a.m.

Disturbance: Police responded to a disturbance in the 200 block of 21st St. NW at 12:31 p.m.

Jan. 4
Disturbance: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1900 block of Rosewood Dr. NW at 7:58 a.m.

Assist: Police assisted another agency with arresting a juvenile in the 400 block of Hillsdale St. NW at 8:32 a.m.

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 500 block of 23rd St. NE at 1:34 p.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 400 block of Kim Lane SW at 2:25 p.m.

Crash: At 4:31 p.m., a motor vehicle accident with injuries occurred in the 600 block of Bridge St. W.

Shoplifting: A shoplifting incident occurred in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W. at 5:21 p.m.

Jan. 5
Domestic: At 1:49 a.m., police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Cedar Ave. N. They arrested a subject at the scene.

DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest at Park Square W. and Main St. W. at 3:42 a.m.

Criminal Sexual Conduct: Police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct 17th St. NE and 7th Ave. NE at 3:22 p.m.

Shoplifting: At 5:04 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W.

Jan. 6
Hit and Run: At 9:22 a.m., a hit and run accident resulting

CRIME BRIEF

WOMAN BUSTED WITH LARGE AMOUNT OF METH



JOHNSON

A woman is facing serious drug charges in connection with a bust in Owatonna. Alison Johnson, 32, of Owatonna, has been charged with first-degree possession of methamphetamine in Steele County District Court.

On Jan. 3, agents from the South Central Drug Investigation Unit executed a search warrant at a residence in the 400 block of 14th Street NE. When executing the warrant, agents took Johnson into custody and found she was in possession of a baggie of meth, police said.

Agents searched the rest of the residence and uncovered two small baggies of meth and a large zip lock baggie that contained four chunks of meth. In total, almost 110 grams, or a quarter pound of meth, was seized as evidence, according to police. In addition, more than \$1,000 in cash was seized.

When Johnson was booked into the Steele County Jail, an additional .08 grams of meth was found on her.

in property damage occurred at State Ave. NW and Glendale St. NW.

Juvenile: Police received a juvenile complaint from the 800 block of Willowbrook St. NE at 9:24 p.m.

Jan. 7
Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 600 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 12:56 p.m.

Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 600 block of Agnes St. E. at 9:27 p.m.

Criminal Sexual Conduct: Police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct in the 800 block of 25th St. NE at 11:15 p.m.

Jan. 8
Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 500 block of Prospect St. E. at 9:58 a.m.

Theft: Police took a theft report in the 700 block of Bridge St. W. at 11:53 a.m.

Suspicion: At 1:38 p.m., officers responded to suspicious activity in the 500 block of State Ave. NW. They arrested a subject at the scene.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 600 block of Agnes St. E. at 8:37 p.m.

Jan. 9
Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 200 block of McKinley St. E. at 9:34 a.m.

Drugs: Drug activity was reported in the 300 block of School St. E. at 10:49 a.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 600 block of Agnes St. E. at 5:52 p.m.

Shoplifting: At 8:23 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.

Jan. 10
DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest in the 100 block of Riverside Ave. NW at 1:24 a.m.

Warrant: Police made a warrant arrest in the 400 block of 16th St. NE at 2:18 p.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 600 block of Agnes St. E. at 3:50 p.m.

Theft: Officer arrested a subject for theft in the 200 block of McKinley St. E. at 5:40 p.m.

Crash: Police responded to a motor vehicle accident that resulted in property damage at Holly St. SW and Oak Ave. S. at 7:43 p.m. They issued a citation to one of the drivers.

Theft: At 10:17 p.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 600 block of Bridge St. W.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF Jan. 7
Fraud: Deputy took a report of a fraud incident in the 4100 block of Austin Road in Owatonna Township at 10:37 a.m.

Jan. 8
Crash: At 5:16 a.m., a motor vehicle accident with injuries occurred in the 8400 block of Crane Creek Road in Meriden Township.

Harassment: Deputies responded to a harassment incident in the 4100 block of 66th St. NW in Medford Township.

Jan. 10
Welfare: Deputy conducted a welfare check in the 600 block of School St. S. in Ellendale at 8:06 a.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 1500 block of 62nd Ave. SW in Meriden Township at 9:42 a.m.

Theft: At 4:09 p.m., a theft occurred in the 6400 block of Frontage Rd. W. in Medford.

Drugs: Deputies responded to drug activity in the 600 block of School St. S. in Ellendale at 5:54 p.m.

SEE PUBLIC SAFETY, B8

Word Search Corner
Winter

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Upcoming area blood drives:

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Owatonna

Freeborn County

Albert Lea

Jan. 22: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Riverland Community College, 965 Alexander Dr. SW

Jan. 21: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Ramada, 2301 E. Main St.

Mower County

Austin

Jan. 28: 1-7 p.m.
National Guard Armory, 800 21st St. NE

Jan. 29: 12-6 p.m
National Guard Armory, 800 21st St. NE

Jan. 30: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
National Guard Armory 800 21st St. NE

Jan. 25: 2-7 p.m.
St. Theodore Catholic Church, 308 E. Fountain St.

Jan. 31: 1-7 p.m.
United Methodist Church, 702 Highway 69 South

Dodge County

Kasson

Jan. 31: 12:30-6:30 p.m.
Holy Family Catholic Church, 1904 N. Mantorville Ave.

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507-684-2100
12880 SW 72nd Ave, Ellendale

FORECLOSURE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:

DATE OF MORTGAGE: October 16, 2008

MORTGAGOR: Pamela S. Ingvalson, a single person

MORTGAGEE: Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union, a credit union organized under the laws of the United States of America

DATE AND PLACE OF RECORDING: Recorded October 24, 2008 in the office of the County Recorder, as Document No. A000360304, Steele County, Minnesota.

TRANSACTION AGENT: None

TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER ON MORTGAGE: None

LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON MORTGAGE: Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union

RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE SERVICER: N/A

MORTGAGED PROPERTY ADDRESS: 455 Main Street West, Blooming Prairie, Minnesota 55917

TAX PARCEL I.D. NO. 14-111-0107

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 7, Block 1, Prairie Villa Addition to the Village of Blooming Prairie, Steele County, Minnesota.

COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele

ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$89,240.00

AMOUNT DUE AND CLAIMED TO BE DUE AS OF DATE OF NOTICE, INCLUDING TAXES, IF ANY, PAID BY MORTGAGEE: \$84,731.06

INTEREST RATE AND PER DIEM: Current interest rate is 3.500%, with a per diem of \$7.64.

That prior to commencement of this mortgage foreclosure proceeding Mortgagee complied with all notice requirements by statute; That no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said mortgage or any part thereof;

PURSUANT to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:

DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 14, 2019, at 10:00 a.m.

PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, 204 East Pearl Street, Owatonna, Minnesota 55060, to pay the debt then secured by said Mortgage, taxes, if any, on said premises, and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys' fees allowed by law subject to redemption within six (6) months from the date of said sale by the mortgagor, their personal representatives or assigns.

DATE AND TIME MORTGAGOR MUST VACATE THE PREMISES: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by August 14, 2019, at 11:59 p.m.

"THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR IS 12/25, 1/1, 1/8, 1/15, 1/22, 1/29

GAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE (5) WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED."

Dated: December 20, 2018

MESSERLI & KRAMER P.A.

By: /s/ Jonathan R. Sepler

Jonathan R. Sepler (Lic. #390506)

1400 Fifth Street Towers

100 South Fifth Street

Minneapolis, MN 55402-1217

(612) 672-3600

Attorney in Fact for Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union

15845-928

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This communication is from a debt collector and is an attempt to collect a debt. Any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

12/25, 1/1, 1/8, 1/15, 1/22, 1/29

NOTICE

Minnesota Secretary of State Certificate of Assumed Name Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333

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

ASSUMED NAMED: Prairie Ridge Orthodontics

PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 475 26th St. NE, Owatonna MN 55060 USA

NAMEHOLDER(S): Name: Jeffrey D. Loveless, D.D.S., P.A.

Address: 475 26th St. NW Owatonna, MN 55060

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

SIGNED BY: Jeffrey D. Loveless D.D.S., President

Date: December 14, 2018

1/15, 1/22

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS FOR 2019

The Annual Meeting and Election of Officers of the Steele Co. Chapter of Minnesota Pheasants for 2019 will be held at the KC Hall, 820 S. Elm, Owatonna on Tuesday, Feb. 12 with social hour at 6:30 and meeting at 7:00.

Please Contact Dennis Thompson - 507-456-1644

1/15 ,1/22 ,1/29

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed Bids will be received by the City of Blooming Prairie, Minnesota, in the City Hall at 138 Highway Avenue South, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917 until 10 A.M., CST, on Tuesday, February 5, 2019, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud for the furnishing of all labor, materials, and all else necessary for the following:

2019 Street Rehabilitation Improvements

In general, Work consists of the reclamation and resurfacing of bituminous roadways, along with concrete curb and gutter spot replacement and structure rehabilitation and adjustments. The Project consists of the following approximate quantities:

26,650	SQ YD	Reclaim Bituminous Pavement
26,650	SQ YD	Bituminous Non Wear Course SPNWB230B (2.0-Inches Thick)
26,650	SQ YD	Bituminous Wear Course SPWEB230B (1.5-Inches Thick)
1,150	LIN FT	Remove and Replace B618 Concrete Curb and Gutter
29	EA	Remove and Replace Catch Basin
2,950	CU YD	Preparation of Reclaimed Aggregate Base (P)

Along with miscellaneous utility improvements, removals, restoration and correlated appurtenances.

Complete digital Bidding Documents are available at www.questcdn.com for \$20.00 by inputting **QuestCDN eBidDoc #6049049** on the website's Project Search page. Paper Bidding Documents may also be viewed at the City of Blooming Prairie and at Stantec, 6188 Rome Circle NW, Rochester, MN 55901, (507) 282-2100.

Direct inquiries to Engineer's Project Manager, Brett Grabau, at (507) 529-6030.

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.

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.

Mike Jones, City Administrator
City of Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

FULL PAGE

ADVERTISING

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Starting January and running through March 12, we're offering a limited number of FULL-PAGE ads in each edition of the Dodge County Advantage, Dodge County Independent and Steele County Times for insanely low rates.

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2 FULL PAGES	\$299 ea.	\$359 ea.
3 OR MORE	\$259 ea.	\$299 ea.

STIPULATIONS:

- Full pages must run in January, February, through March 12
- Ad copy must be in by Thursdays prior to the issue date
- Position, placement and color sold first-come, first-served
- Excludes front page of the Advantage
- Excludes special editions

Remember: We're limiting the number of pages per week. When they're gone, they're gone.

Call Annie Anderson at 507-319-1549 or email bpannie@frontier.com to place your full-page ad today!

ADvantage DODGE COUNTY INDEPENDENT STEELE COUNTY Times

NOTICE

STEELE COUNTY Times

Always local, all the time.

1/15,1/22

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids will be received by Steele County at the Steele County Auditor's Office located at 630 Florence Avenue, until 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 29, 2019, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud in the board chambers, for the furnishing of all labor and materials for the following project:

Steele County – Cold Storage Building

Owner
Steele County
630 Florence Avenue
Owatonna, MN 55060
Phone: 507-456-2470

Documents for the project may be obtained from the County via e-mail.
Contact: Alan Forsberg
Phone: 507-456-2470
E-mail: Alan.Forsberg@co.steele.mn.us

Documents are also available at:
1. Steele County Highway Department located at 635 Florence Ave

Bids shall be submitted on copies of the bid proposal form. One certified copy of the bid form shall be submitted in a sealed envelope, labeled with the project name as listed above and addressed to the Steele County Board. The bid shall be accompanied by a certified check, cashier's check or bid bond in the amount of five percent of the total bid price, made payable to Steele County, as a guarantee that the bidder will enter into the proposed contract within the time specified and at the price bid proposed.

The Steele County Board reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any irregularities and informalities therein and to determine whether a bid is responsive or non-responsive. The County further reserves the right to award the contract to the best interests of the County.

Greg Ilkka, County Engineer

1/8, 1/15

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bptimes@frontiernet.net
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call 507-634-4345



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\$2,700 OBO.
call 507-634-7097

FOR SALE

FOR SALE: New Waste Oil Furnace w/ 200-gallon underneath Tank \$450.00. Call 507-383-9024.
PIANOS, DIGITAL PIANOS, Rodgers Church Organs - New, Used, Sales & Service - Call **DEWEY KRUGER MUSIC,** Northwood, Iowa, 800-933-5830, deweykrugermusic.com Wk4,5,6,7

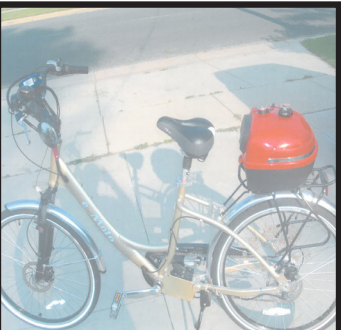
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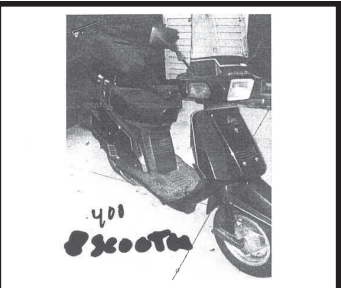
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Semcac's Energy Programs are seeking electrical, appliance, and mechanical contractors. Work is performed in Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Houston, Mower, Steele, Olmsted and Winona counties. Contractors must have current bonds, licenses, insurance, and ability to complete all work in accordance with MN energy program policies, standards and requirements.

Preference will be given to minority firms, women business enterprises and labor surplus area firms. If interested in an application, please visit our website **www.semcac.org** or contact Melissa Feine, Weatherization Program Coordinator at **(507) 864-8204**

Applications must be received by February 4, 2019.
Semcac is an EOE/AA/ADA Compliance Organization.



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Weekly crossword

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PUBLIC SAFETY FROM B4

ARRESTS
Steele County

STEELE ARRESTS

Owatonna Police

Brittany Elizabeth Gade, 27, arrested at 4:58 a.m. Dec. 29, domestic assault/assault, held for court.

Martin Jay Olson, 43, arrested Dec. 30, DWI and criminal vehicular operation, held for court.

Shane Robert Grundhoffer, 37, arrested at 2 a.m. Jan. 1, domestic assault/assault, held for court.

Kevin Jackson, 53, arrested at 12:29 p.m. Jan. 2, felony domestic assault, held for court.

Jessica Ann Tilden, 42,

arrested at 6:11 p.m. Jan. 2, warrant arrest, body only.

James Christopher Schmidt, 23, arrested at 10:54 p.m. Jan. 2, drugs and contempt of court, held for court.

Bobby Smitty, 25, arrested at 10:30 p.m. Jan. 2, felony DWI, drugs and suspended license, held for court.

Alison Marie Johnson, 32, arrested at 4:35 p.m. Jan. 3, felony possession of controlled substance, held for court.

Matthew Lee Lozano, 36, arrested at 2:58 p.m. Jan. 10, warrant arrest, \$10,000 bail.

Ricardo Padilla Buentello, 30, arrested at 8:12 p.m. Jan. 10, felony mail theft, held for court.

Steele County Sheriff

Steven Michel Olson, 43, arrested at 2:54 p.m. Dec. 28, warrant arrest, body only.

Kimberlee Denise White, 54, arrested at 1:37 a.m. Dec. 30, felony fleeing in a motor vehicle, held for court.

Bloomington Police

Anthony Michael Suazo, 22, arrested at 9:17 a.m. Jan. 3, domestic assault, held for court.

COURT NEWS
Dodge County

The following case was heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Dec. 31 with Judge Jodi L. Williamson presiding:

Justin L. Wroblewski, 30, Faribault, previously appeared and was convicted of felony domestic assault and terroristic threats. He was sentenced

to \$130 and 24 months in St. Cloud State Prison.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Dec. 31 – Jan. 7:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Alexander T. Armstrong, 22, Lino Lakes, obstruct legal process and give peace officer false information, \$80 and 90 days in county jail; Julie A. Arter, 23, Dodge Center, possession of marijuana, \$130; Michael J. Koebele, 46, Mantorville, speeding, \$120; Jamie L. Mergen, 26, Dodge Center, invalid license, \$180; Brady R. Mertz, 41, New Ulm, speeding, \$140; Mariah E. Peveto, 23, Hayfield, registration violation, \$180; Evonne E. Robbins, 42,

Hayfield, registration violation, \$180; Steven R. Schwering, 27, Dodge Center, invalid license and no insurance, \$380; Daron L. Taylor, 49, New Richland, domestic assault, violation of no contact order and stalking, \$980, 90 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, domestic abuse evaluation, no contact with victim, no possession of firearms, 90 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Andrew J. Witzel, 31, Austin, registration violation, \$180.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Cameron A. Akzam, 18, Kasson, suspended license and no insurance, \$480; Christopher T. Burshem, 40, Rochester, parking violation, \$32; Jordan L. Craft, 22, Rochester, parking violation,

\$32; Ryan T. Johnson, 43, Dodge Center, cancelled license, stay of adjudication, \$200 and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Robert J. Kochie, 50, Dodge Center, obstruct legal process, carrying pistol while under influence of alcohol and DWI, \$605, 3 days in county jail, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; David J. Moldenhauer, 56, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Jamie L. Morrow, 37, Rochester, speeding, \$220; Jennifer L. O'Connor, 41, Rochester, parking violation, \$32; Cory J. Papka, 48, Byron, seat belt, \$105; Carmen M. Radke, 43, Rochester, speeding, \$140; Christian M. Ruvalcaba, 19, Rochester, speeding, \$120; Frances D. Taylor, 27, Rockford, IL, suspended license, \$280.

Complete
CAR CARE

Your Car Guide for Steele and Dodge Counties

Nine steps for a winter ready car

The last thing any driver needs is to break down in cold, harsh winter weather.

A vehicle check now before winter arrives is a sensible way to be car care aware and avoid the inconvenience of being stranded out in the cold and with the unexpected expense of emergency repairs, says the Car Care Council.

"Winterizing your vehicle before the temperatures drop is a wise idea," said Rich White, executive director, Car Care Council. "An investment of an hour or two to have your vehicle checked is all it takes to have peace of mind and help avoid the cost and hassle of car trouble during severe

weather."

The Car Care Council recommends the following steps for winterizing your vehicle:

- If you're due for a tune-up, have it done before winter sets in. Winter magnifies existing problems such as pings, hard starts, sluggish performance or rough idling.
- Have the battery and charging system checked for optimum performance. Cold weather is hard on batteries.
- Clean, flush and put new antifreeze in the cooling system. As a general rule of thumb, this should be done every two years.
- Make sure heaters, defrosters

and wipers work properly. Consider winter wiper blades and use cold weather washer fluid. As a general rule, wiper blades should be replaced every six months.

- Check the tire tread depth and tire pressure. If snow and ice are a problem in your area, consider special tires designed to grip slick roads. During winter, tire pressure should be checked weekly.
- Have the brakes checked. The braking system is the vehicle's most important safety item.
- Have the exhaust system checked for carbon monoxide leaks, which can be especially dangerous during cold

weather driving when windows are closed.

- Check to see that exterior and interior lights work and headlights are properly aimed.
- Be diligent about changing the oil and filter at recommended intervals. Dirty oil can spell trouble in winter. Consider changing to "winter weight" oil if you live in a cold climate. Have your technician check the fuel, air and transmission filters at the same time.

Motorists should also keep the gas tank at least half full at all times to decrease the chances of moisture forming in the gas lines and possibly freezing. Drivers

should check the tire pressure of the spare in the trunk and stock an emergency kit with an ice scraper and snowbrush, jumper cables, flashlight, flares, blanket, extra clothes, candles/matches, bottled water, dry food snacks and needed medication.

The Car Care Council is the source of information for the "Be Car Care Aware" consumer education campaign promoting the benefits of regular vehicle care, maintenance and repair to consumers. For a copy of the council's Car Care Guide or for more information, visit www.carcare.org.

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