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Blooming Prairie, Minnesota



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Pastor Mike Walerius of First Lutheran Church of Blooming Prairie holds a Tootsie Roll bank that will be used as a fundraiser for a Blooming Prairie community Feed My Starving Children project.

Tootsies to help hunger

Feed My Starving Children coming to BP in May

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

An ambitious goal it is, admits the Rev. Mike Walerius, associate pastor of First Lutheran Church of Blooming Prairie. Pastor Walerius said the goal of a Blooming Prairie community project is to pack 101,000 meals in two days and send them to the needy in all parts of the world. The work project will take place in the Luther Rooms of First Lutheran Church on May 10-11 of this year. The program is most commonly known as Feed My Starving Children. The organization was founded in 1987 by a Minnesota businessman, the late Richard Proudfit. He said he was challenged by needs he saw on a mission trip to the Honduras in 1982. FMSC is a Christian non-profit that

provides nutritionally complete meals specifically formulated for malnourished children. Its mission is feeding God's starving children hungry in body and spirit. Donations fund the meal ingredients and volunteers hand-pack the meals. The meals are donated to FMSC food partners around the world, where kids are fed and lives are saved. Pastor Walerius and the Rev. Heidi Heimgartner, senior pastor at First Lutheran Church, became convinced after becoming involved in a local Feed My Starving Children project involving 10th grade confirmation students. The students were part of a group of 50 volunteers who packed 17,000 meals in two hours. After seeing the spirited benefits of the First Lutheran confirmation students

helping pack food in Eagan, Pastors Walerius and Heimgartner thought, "We should host one." Walerius, who joined First Lutheran Church just last June, said he has been involved in the FMSC program at Trinity Lutheran Church and St. John's Lutheran Church, both located in Owatonna. Interest was elevated to an all-time high with the pastors and confirmation students, thus planning began. The local project is called Blooming Prairie Feed My Starving Children Mobile Pack. The community project will not only involve First Lutheran Church. It will also involve St. Columbanus Catholic Church, Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church and Holy Trinity Catholic Church of Litomysl. Expanding the project into more than a

SEE TOOTSIES, A3

BODY CAMS

A new layer of protection for police

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

An extra layer of protection is finding its way onto the uniforms of some area police officers. It's something that could protect them from potential civil and criminal liability down the road. Police body cameras are in the experimental phase at the Owatonna Police Department. A couple weeks ago some select officers within the department began wearing the body cameras during a 30-day test. Another 30-day trial period will begin right after the first one with a different vendor. The department is experimenting with two of the leading vendors of body cameras, Axon and WatchGuard, before making a decision about having them standard for all police officers, according to Captain Jeff Mundale, who is leading the project for Owatonna Police. While no final decision has been made at this time, the department is operating under a draft policy for the operation of body cameras during the trial period. The policy, which has been posted on the department's website, is currently open for public comment by writing to the Owatonna Police, 204 E. Pearl St., Owatonna, MN 55060. Mundale said a public meeting will be held during a regular council meeting in



"It's **not** like you're watching Cops on TV. The filming won't be done from a safe and controlled environment."

Captain Jeff Mundale
Owatonna Police

the future prior to the department officially launching the program. The primary purpose for body-worn cameras is to capture evidence arising from police encounters with citizens. Under the temporary policy, officers are required

to activate the cameras when responding to all calls for service, during all law enforcement-related encounters and activities and during any police-citizen contact that becomes adversarial. Officers have no duty to inform people that a camera is

being operated, according to the policy. However, if officers are asked, they must clearly tell citizens if they are or are not being recorded. All body camera data shall be retained for a minimum period of 90 days, the policy states. Certain kinds of data must be retained for six years, including the use of deadly force or other sufficient type of use of force and incidents that resulted in an adversarial encounter, complaint against

SEE BODY CAMS, A3



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Payton Simon and Rachael Oswald stop by their lockers while finishing their senior year of high school in Blooming Prairie. Both were recently saluted as Triple "A" award winners for their contributions in athletics, arts and academics.

Trifecta excellence

Simon, Oswald earn Triple A awards

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Blooming Prairie High School seniors Payton Simon and Rachael Oswald are both immersed in humility as they react to their selection as a Triple "A" award winner. The Triple "A" award is a competition sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League. Oswald and Simon are prime examples of high achieving students involved in a number of school activities outside of athletics and fine arts, said Mary Worke, senior

high counselor. Both Simon and Oswald are local winners. They did not advance at the sub-section and section level. "To me, the award symbolizes hard work, dedication and good time management," remarks Simon, 18. "It's like a blessing to live in this community; people have given us so much and now it is my turn to give back by doing the best I can," said Oswald. The Triple "A" winners agreed that the Blooming

SEE TRIFECTA, A3

BP Youth Club bash benefits many

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

The Blooming Prairie Youth Club Benefit Bash may have fallen short of its \$25,000 goal, but officials are still pleased with the outcome. "It was still awesome," said Kelli Naatz, executive director of the Youth Club. The bash took place Feb. 2 at the Servicemen's Club in Blooming Prairie. Parking stretched for blocks as people came to support the Youth Club by participating in a silent auction, a live auction and various raffles. Nearly 100 items were on the live auction. Auctioneers were

Steve Seykora and Jon Kraling. Kelli Naatz, director of the Youth Club, said she "was just blown away by the community support" of the Benefit Bash. She also praised all the volunteers who helped make arrangements for the benefit. Goal for this year's Bash was \$25,000. A Florida week's vacation was 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. Angie Carlson of BP won the vacation at a price of \$1,550. She

was battling Nancy Hansen of BP to the end. Nancy bowed out at \$1,500. Another big item was an adult wood-fired pizza party donated by Bryce and Jaclyn Schlichter and Breauna and Ty Riewe. Sam Romeo won this item at a price of \$500. Sue Zwiener was the lucky bidder on a half hog processed by Geneva Meats. It was donated by Kaye and Orlo Toquam. After the silent auction ended and the live auction began, two prize drawings were held. Becky Noble had the lucky key to open a treasure chest full of gift cards, and Ken Esplan won the heads/tails contest and came away with

\$170 in cash. Special awards were presented prior to the live auction. The Generous Giver award was given to Nick and Amanda Schiefert of the Blooming Prairie Dairy Queen. Nancy and Harvey Farr of J & H Liquors were announced winners of the Super Supporter Award. The Awesome Advocate award was presented by Andrea Kvalsten and Kelli Naatz to Ashley Rye. Kvalsten, Rye and Kelli Naatz were tri-chairs of the Bash. Raffle ticket winners were Katrina Staska, first place-half hog; Greg Nirk, second place- Amazon Fire tablet and John Abbe, third place- \$100 cash.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Kelly Naatz, left, director of the Blooming Prairie Youth Club, presents the Awesome Advocate Award to Ashley Rye, at the BP Youth Club Benefit Bash on Saturday night at the BP Servicemen's Club.

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INSIDE

Opinions..... A2
Business Section.....A4-A5
Public Safety.....A6
History.....A7

Faith.....A9
Hometown Living.....B1
Community Calendar.....B3
Sports.....B4-B6

Tax Guide.....B7
Public Notices.....B8
Classifieds.....B9

AREA DEATHS

Cindy Andersen, 55,
Blooming Prairie
Marianne Warner, 90, Owatonna
Harlan O. Schultz, 75, Owatonna

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YOUR VIEW

Police body cams needed for everyone’s safety, protection

Soon the standard uniform for area police officers could include something entirely new and different. In addition to handguns, tasers and radios, officers may soon be wearing body cameras.

Police body cameras are small cameras, often worn on an officer’s chest or head, with a microphone to capture sound and internal data storage to save footage for later review.

Currently all three police agencies in Steele County are exploring the use of body cameras for their officers. Owatonna Police is the closest to enacting a body camera program as it began the initial experimental stage a few weeks ago. Police officials hope to make a final decision by mid-summer. Blooming Prairie Police and Steele County Sheriff’s Office are also in the preliminary stages of exploring body cams.

There are currently 43 police agencies, large and small, across Minnesota utilizing body cameras. In a 2017 survey by the Minnesota Chiefs of Police, 60 percent of police agencies expressed their biggest concern about body cameras as being the burdensome retention of data.

Body cameras for law enforcement officers were first trialed in California in 2012. In response to the number of high profile shootings of unarmed black men by police, President Obama in 2015 pledged funding for a nationwide program to equip departments with body cameras. More than \$58 million has been spent on body cameras since that time.

The use of body cameras creates transparency and accountability and reduces police violence. Body cams often provide evidence that proves or disproves police misconduct allegations. They have, for obvious reasons, garnered strong support from the public.

There is also a downside to body cams. Opponents argue the cameras negatively affect the physical and mental health of officers by overburdening them with equipment and placing them under the stress of constant video surveillance. They also say that body cams increase the risk that sensitive or vulnerable victims and witnesses of crimes are exposed, and that their use damages community trust. There is also a concern of invading the privacy of citizens.

In 2013, Blooming Prairie Police faced a \$1 million civil rights lawsuit for allegedly forcing its way into a home and pinning a person to the wall regarding a civil dispute. In basically what amounted to a “he said, he said” case between the officers and the homeowner, the case was eventually resolved about 18 months later for a smaller settlement. If body cameras had been available in this case, it likely would have been resolved much sooner and perhaps not even filed at all.

We believe if implemented correctly, the use of body cameras will be a great protection for the officers as well as the citizens they serve. Everyone’s safety would be improved through the use of body cameras.

GUEST COLUMN

Workforce development and education on the minds of locals

By JOHN PETERSBURG

A pair of meetings over the past few days with local leaders drew attention to some need within our communities, particularly Owatonna.

For example, take the City’s workforce development office that used to exist but was closed due to insufficient funds coming from the Workforce Development Fund and other programs that were supporting it to keep it alive.

Owatonna is the only city with a population of greater than 20,000 residents that does not have a workforce development office, and it is sorely missed. Not for unemployment per se, but rather that a significant number of people in our area are underemployed.

The reality is there are many jobs available for people who have higher level skills, and workforce development helps retrain individuals who are looking to gain these skills in order to secure higher paying jobs. This not only benefits the businesses looking for new help, but also the community itself.

Programs like this are funded by money employers pay into the Workforce Development Fund. Right now, Owatonna employers are receiving little bang for their buck. This is why I’m working on legislation that would reopen a workforce development program locally.

Obviously, to be successful this is going to require solid collaboration with other education programs that are available. But it’s a good start for us to help the economy of Owatonna and help fill needed job openings locally.

Equitable education funding

Recently I participated at a legislative panel in Rochester with local school boards and superintendents to discuss K-12 Education initiatives for the 2019 session. Not surprisingly, these folks are interested in equitable education funding per pupil unit, but also rules, regulations and mandates.

Owatonna Schools superintendent Jeff Elstad was there to talk with the panel about the mandates and requirements that are handed down from the state. He wanted us to understand that there is no such thing as a funded mandate or an unfunded mandate, but that all of them require additional cost and concern by local school districts.

It was a good meeting, and the information presented will help us greatly as we debate the upcoming K-12 Education budget in the weeks ahead.

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

NEW state flag proposed...



Why do we live in Minnesota?

This winter snow blast that we have been enduring for the past few weeks has been exposing my weaknesses.

I’ll be the first to admit that I am not mechanically inclined. The thought of trying to repair something just makes me quiver in my skin. And makes me run for the Tylenol bottle as a pounding headache settles in quicker than Mother Nature can deliver her surprise to us.

A few weeks back I used my Toro snow blower for the first time this season. All went fine. I glided up and down my driveway throwing snow all over the yard with no problems.

Last week during the first of who knows how many snow storms (I’ve actually lost count by now), I went to engage my snow blower. It started up fine, but as soon



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

As I engaged the thrower, K-thunk, K-bop, K-pow it went with a few extra sputters that made it sound like the machine was going to explode. Some smoke even came billowing out from underneath somewhere. I could not operate the thrower.

Upon closer examination, I determined a belt had broken. Of course, it was no problem ripping out the old belt. But when it came to replacing it, it’s an entirely different story. After a few cuss words thrown around for good measure and no where closer to getting the new belt on, I gave up as the snow continued to pile up in my driveway.

It always amazes me how something used so sporadically throughout the year is the first thing to go down. Just when I need it the most, it decides to mess with me and drive me crazy.

I reverted to the trusty old shovel to clear away Old Man Winter’s latest grip on our lives. I guess a little physical exercise with shoveling doesn’t hurt anyone. At least that’s what I’ve tried to tell my aching body ever since I’ve had to shovel several days over the past week. For some reason my bones and joints aren’t listening.

With no relief in sight from my lack of mechanical knowledge, I think I’m going to have to break down to haul the snow blower in for repair. I was hoping I could avoid the inevitable, but no luck.

And why do we live in Minnesota?

That’s what I’m trying to figure out as it seems like it’s treacherous to even venture out anywhere walking or driving. I can’t even get beyond my driveway without nearly slipping on my butt.

Old Man Winter, you’ve won the battle. I’m done with you. Bring on spring before winter sends me to the funny farm.

It’s time for me to go in hot pursuit of some warm spring thoughts to keep me from going completely kooky.

GUEST COLUMN

Why I love where I live

By TIM PENNY

There have been moments throughout my life when opportunities arose to move to a different part of the state of Minnesota, or even a different part of the country. Anyone who knows me, knows that I love living in southern Minnesota and that there are many reasons why I choose to stay here. As the president of Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), I can’t imagine a better way to serve this region, which has always been my home.

In 1862, my great-great grandfather homesteaded in rural Freeborn County northwest of Albert Lea on the shore of Penny Lake. Our family lived and farmed in that same area for the following three generations. My generation and my children’s generation are the fifth and sixth to call rural southern Minnesota home.

As a young man, I aspired to serve this region and was fortunate to do so for six years in the state senate and 12 years in Washington. Upon leaving Congress, I was determined to make a future for myself and my family in rural Minnesota close to my home roots. The presidency at SMIF culminates my commitment to and passion for southern Minnesota, and I am so fortunate that the 20-county region served by SMIF is much the same as the region I served while in Congress.

As I travel throughout the area I have the pleasure of visiting with many partners and hearing their hopes and dreams for their communities. People live here because of family, work, good schools, open spaces and beautiful landscape. They stay here because there is a common vision for a future that embraces change, diversity and innovation.

This commitment to a bright future for our children, business owners, small towns, and new immigrants directly connects to the work that we do at SMIF in Early Childhood, Economic Development and Community Vitality. Over the past 32 years SMIF has listened to the needs of this region and aligned our resources with those needs, investing more than \$111 million back into southern Minnesota. In each county there are loan clients, grant recipients, or program participants that we have had the honor of supporting throughout the years.

There are so many reasons why people love living here, and at SMIF we are

infusing that theme into the work we do over the next few years as we embark on a \$3.5 million “Love Where You Live” endowment campaign to strengthen our region’s future. We believe this theme gets at the root of everything we do at SMIF. This campaign will allow us to support more entrepreneurs, prepare more children for their future, and increase financial investments in our communities, putting SMIF in a position to continue making this region a place people want to call home.

I can’t believe how lucky I am to have served this region for so much of my life. I love where I live because of the people. You are what makes southern Minnesota special.

You can find more about our new campaign at smifoundation.org/love-whereyoulive.

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

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

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Winter wallop taxes area tow services

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

While most hid inside during the recent arctic deep freeze that paralyzed the Midwest, freezing water mains, causing power outages and canceling flights, others braved the cold to help those stranded and in need.

Representatives of three area companies say the arctic blast that hit in late January was great for business but tough on employees and equipment.

“It’s hard to say for the whole business, but the towing part of the business saw at least a 50 percent increase compared to a normal day,” said Aaron Sletten of Automotive Towing and Repair. “It helps us out quite a bit. A lot of people don’t like and I don’t want to say we like it either, but it is good for our business and keeps us busy.”

Sletten estimated he jumped or towed somewhere between 70 and 90 vehicles and only slept for about six hours in a 72-hour period.

“Just to give you an idea of volume,” he continued. “I have two Industrial jump-packs that are made to jump a lot of cars and on those two coldest days, I wore out both of those and ended up jumping cars off of my truck.”

The first night of the deep freeze Sletten towed a truck from Albert Lea to Clear Lake, Iowa.

“I believe we counted 19 or 20 semis that were gelled up and shut off on the side of the road on the way there and back,” he said. “Also there were a couple of plows that were shut off on the side of road. A lot of bigger trucks were gelling up and freezing up.”

Diesel fuel gelling happens when the paraffin usually present in diesel starts to solidify when temperatures drop. The wax in liquid form will crystalize and leave the fuel tank clouded at 32 degrees and it will finally start to gel and clog the tank and fuel filter at 10 to 15 degrees.

“When it’s gelled it looks like vaseline in there,” said Jodi Keck of Keck’s Repair. “It’s gross.”

Even after things warmed up on Friday, Feb. 1, many school districts were forced to close school because the fuel lines on their busses diesel fuel was gelling.

“Ninety-five percent of the drivers that we tried to help did the preventive treatment,” Keck said. “It was just so darn cold that it didn’t help.”

It got to the point where roadside crews couldn’t get trucks warm enough to start.

“We were telling them they can have \$400 to \$600 service call, but the last couple that we have tried to

start, won’t and they have had to be towed,” she said. “Are you opened to having it towed here and we will get it fixed?”

Keck’s responded to between 80 and 100 service calls week of the deep freeze (Monday through Friday), while in a normal week it’s somewhere between 10 and 30.

“By 9 a.m. one morning we had 18 service calls,” she said. “At that point I was telling people we were six to eight hours out because we physically couldn’t get there faster than that.”

Keck said her husband, Brian, told her he never had to work so hard trying to get trucks going.

“We haven’t seen calls like this for 30 years,” she said. “It affects the business on the income side because your just doing more service calls. You’re not sleeping much, but the income is up.”

Dean’s Westside Towing Manager Noah Kreitinger said at any given time they were 48 hours behind with 15 to 20 customers waiting.

“In this cold, the biggest concern is safety,” he said. “We had people call, and we had to tell them that they were going to have to call 911 and have a police officer come take them somewhere warm and we will get to you as soon as we can.”

Things started to really get out of control for Kreitinger on Wednesday

morning.

“I got home Wednesday morning and finally got one hour of sleep and overflow calls started coming to me at 7 a.m.,” he said. “I had 35 missed calls by 7:15 a.m. The brutal thing about this cold was that everything takes four times as long and is four times as hard to do anything.”

Kreitinger said Dean’s call volume was up 400 percent.

“It’s good, but you also have to factor in the wear and tear on your trucks,” he said. “When you got guys out there in the cold like that it’s so much easier to make a mistake. Yeah, you make more [money], but at the same time it is so taxing. For the most part, people drove well and did get off the road. It was really nice. It went as well as it possibly could have.”

On Wednesday, Jan. 30, the Minnesota Iowa AAA saw a 700 percent increase in number of calls in Minnesota, compared to that date of last year.

A spokesperson said most of the calls have been for weak batteries, flat tires and fuel problems. The agency posted an alert on its website that said, “Weather conditions continue to be treacherous. At this time, we are only prioritizing service requests involving emergency situations including stranded motorists.”

Medford tackles growth in considering wastewater options

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

APrior to the Jan. 28 Medford City Council meeting, developer Todd Nelson of Faribault pitched a development proposal to the council concerning the 16-acre parcel of land commonly referred to as the old football field.

This proposal comes after the time limit on a purchase agreement between the school district and developer Timbercrest, LLC ran out and put the plot of land back on the market. The issue, which dogged that past purchase agreement, involved the drainage of water from the property.

Last year, Medford City Engineer Joe Duncan had recommended that the potential buyer not proceed any further with development on the parcel until having a plan in place to remedy possible storm water overflow.

Nelson’s pitch would include said solution by adding a pond in the middle, which may or may not entirely solve the problem. As the potential plan stands now, development would include two 16-unit apartment buildings, an 8-unit building, along with adjacent garages, and six 4-unit townhouses.

Although Nelson has reached a purchase agreement with the school district, the proposal has a way to go before any possible progress on the plan. City Administrator Andy Welti called the proposal to the council a “concept plan,” to which no official action was taken.

“The developer was seeking input,” Welti explained. “If the developer proceeds, he will go through the development process, which will include public hearings.”

Also on the docket during the Jan. 28 meeting was the consideration of wastewater options available to the city. Welti and Mayor Lois Nelson had approached both Owatonna and Faribault about possible wastewater connections last summer but the city could also update and expand its own facility.

Medford’s Wastewater Treatment Facility was originally constructed in 1968 with a 20-year lifespan in mind. In 1993, the facility was upgraded to accommodate biosolids storage and ultraviolet disinfection. The facility was expanded in 2006, two clarifiers were constructed, and a process tank was converted into an aeration basin along with other modifications.

In order to gauge its options moving forward, the council was presented with a study which detailed current flow levels and future flow estimates.

“The council received the study and in February the council will be discussing the potential project,” Welti explained. “We will see if the council can come to a consensus. There will be no decisions yet, but they will be receiving info.”

“The city is several months, if not a year or more, away from making any final decisions,” Welti said of Medford reaching a possible conclusion to their wastewater options.

Medford could seek assistance on any possible expansion of its current

facility through either the PFA (Public Facilities Authority) or by obtaining a bond through the state legislature. “The PFA typically helps with wastewater assistance,” Welti said. “Part of the decision comes down to the city receiving assistance or financing.”

Currently, Medford has an average dry weather flow of 84,000 gallons per day, and the Lazy U has a current average dry weather flow of 20,000 gallons per day. The regionalization study of the City, Lazy U and any possible new development, had a projected average dry weather flow of 200,000 gallons per day.

A week later, during a special session comprised of a capital projects upgrade, the council was filled in on some of the limitations and details of pursuing large scale projects during the upcoming years.

The last time the council was given a capital projects upgrade was in 2015. “This is basically a big picture of the major projects we’ve been considering these past few years,” Welti said to the council prior to the update.

Some of the projects being considered include the wastewater connection or facility upgrade, a street improvement project, and the possible addition of a municipal complex.

Mike Bubany of David Drown Associates was on hand during the special session to describe some of the effects that each of the projects could have on taxes and water and sewage bills. Although there were no decisions made, the council was able to see a general estimate of what

effect different combinations of these projects could have.

In order to foster more development, Medford will need to update its wastewater facility and or make a connection with Faribault or Owatonna to allow for larger volumes of flow, and therein lies the rub. “If we don’t do the wastewater or the water, you’re not going to get any of them,” council member Matt Dempsey said of possible developments in Medford’s future.

“In order to do all of the development that was proposed, that is if the developers stay and are interested in a longer way and join us in this journey, we would have to do water and wastewater,” Welti explained. However, if the city opts to only do certain developments they can choose to go forward with wastewater while waiting on any water improvements.

After Bubany was finished with his presentation, the council had a few moments to soak in the information presented. “The reaffirming thing is that we’re not doing this by the seat of our pants,” Mayor Nelson said.

“Are we going to grow or are we not going to grow,” she said of the council’s looming decisions on these projects. “We’re on the cusp of that, and there’s pluses and minuses to both options.”

“You’re in a good place right now,” Bubany told the council as the session wrapped up. “So, don’t forget about that. You have healthy reserves.”

The next city council meeting is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m.

TOOTSIES: for hungar

church project, Walerius said the local schools and area businesses have also been asked to help FMSC.

In addition to the First Lutheran pastors, other members of the committee include Ruth Johnson, Cheri Krejci, Lindsey French, Michelle Southworth, Monica Anderson, Emily Heimer, Ron Kubista, Amy Staloch and Michelle Vigeland.

Friday, May 10 will be the set-up day for the project. A semi load of dry food will arrive on that day. A crew from the Twin Cities will set up the food lines.

Six to eight packing stations will then be created in the Luther Rooms for both days.

The dried food will consist of rice, dried vegetables and vitamins. The scientifically designed food is placed in mana packs and is aimed at

malnourished children or people in poverty-stricken countries including Haiti, Tanzania and South America.

Following the second packaging day on Saturday, the food will be completely ready to ship, says Pastor Walerius. He pointed out that 99.8 percent of the food goes to the people who need it.

“It goes to the poorest of the poor,” he emphasized. Missionaries will then distribute the food to the recipients.

To undertake such a huge project takes financial support, \$22,300 to be exact. That total equates to 20 cents a meal.

Already, fundraising has begun and prior to last Sunday’s Super Bowl fundraiser, the committee had raised \$7,800. Some of those funds came from the First Lutheran women’s group.

On Sunday, the FMSC committee sponsored a Super Bowl appetizer auction. Snack items were placed on a silent auction.

Walerius said the FMSC project has borrowed some of the successful fundraising ideas used by the First Lutheran Church Youth Gathering students who went to Houston, Texas last summer.

First Lutheran, Red Oak Grove and St. Columbanus will sell Tootsie Roll banks filled with candy and then asked to turn it into a bank receptacle. This drive started Feb. 3 and continues through March 3.

Another Youth Gathering successful fundraiser was a meat sale, coordinated with Geneva Meats. The Geneva Meats truck will be on site at First Lutheran Church on Sunday, March 17 and at St. Columbanus Catholic Church on Palm Sunday, April 14.

If those fundraisers are not enough, another is planned at the Pizza Ranch in Austin on Thursday, April 25. Volunteers will work from 4-9 p.m. and will earn a percentage of sales plus tips. Emily Heimer has helped coordinate this fundraiser.

“We are still looking for 400-450 volunteers to help with the actual packing of the food,” Walerius said. Two-hour shifts will be arranged.

Volunteers ages five and above are welcome. Walerius said his daughter Maddie, now 13, worked on a FMSC project when she was five and “loved the experience.”

Each working shift will involve 60-70 people. A video will also be shown to volunteers before they begin their work. “This video will help people learn a lot about poverty and hunger,” Walerius said.

Volunteers will be able to register online. More information on this process will be available at a later day.

Walerius said he is excited about the “flurry of activity” that will be present in Blooming Prairie on May 10-11. “I hope we will have decent weather on those days,” he added.

“People in our community are so caring and generous so I believe we can accomplish our goals,” said Walerius.

BODY CAMS: protection

an officer or triggered an internal investigation. The discharge of a firearm by a peace officer must be maintained for at least one year.

Data privacy, Mundale said, is different on body cameras than other recording devices. “Body cameras have different statutory protections unlike an inside squad camera,” he said.

One concern Mundale has is the amount of storage it will take to save all the department’s citizen encounters. “It’s enormous the amount of data it takes,” he said.

Mundale expects the biggest concerns that will be shared by the public are cost and privacy issues. Body

cameras run between \$300 and \$500 each. However, it’s not the cost of the camera itself that is the concern. “The biggest expense is if you house your own data,” he explained. For that reason, the department is exploring leasing options as well as utilizing cloud-based programs for storage.

While body cameras can provide great evidence under ideal conditions, Mundale warned that officers are often involved in less than ideal conditions. He related how he has seen body camera footage where there is no clear view of what happened because the camera is flying all over and may end up pointed toward the sky or at

the ground.

“When you get in tight and you’re in a bare hug, what are you going to see?” Mundale asked. “When things are dynamic, you don’t know what kind of quality you’re going to get,” he said. “It’s not like you’re watching Cops on TV. The filming won’t be done from a safe and controlled environment.”

But Mundale acknowledges body cameras are what the public wants to see. “When there is a use of force, they want to see the body camera video,” he said.

Mundale said the body cameras have been working well during the initial phase of testing. He noted they are finding how important positioning of the cameras is on the officers, especially with outer coats.

A final decision is expected to be made by mid-summer.

The Steele County Sheriff’s Office is also very interested in exploring the use of body cameras. Sheriff Lon Thiele said his office has already purchased equipment that could be compatible to the cameras to save money.

“I need to protect my team anyway I can,” Thiele says. “If someone makes a claim against a deputy and the footage shows differently that is beneficial to the county to prevent negative lawsuits,” he said, adding the mobile cameras have already proven that.

Thiele expects to implement a program within the next year. He said his office is still exploring which body camera would be the best fit for them. His biggest concern is the storage of the

body cam data.

Blooming Prairie Police is also considering body cameras. Chief Greg Skiles-tad said he doesn’t have a specific timeline as he is still in the preliminary stages of implementing a program.

“We have a lot of work to do with policy and procedures,” he said.

TRIFECTA: Simon, Oswald

FROMA1

Prairie community is “amazing” in the way it responds with support for those in need. “It’s so easy to succeed when everyone wants you to succeed,” Simon said.

Both will receive their awards at the halftime of the Blooming Prairie-PEM girls basketball game on Thursday, Feb. 7.

Simon is the son of Amy and Jeremy Simon. Oswald is the daughter of Kathy Paukner and Phil Oswald.

Purpose of the Triple “A” award is to recognize and honor high school seniors who have excelled in the classroom, on the athletic field, and in the fine arts.

The program also is designed to elevate academic standards and create greater awareness of League-sponsored activities and their values.

“It’s like a blessing to live in this community.”

Rachael Oswald
Triple A Winner

Triple “A” provides member schools of the Minnesota State High School League with the opportunity to participate in a statewide program that supports, promotes, and recognizes academic and extra-curricular achievements.

Candidates for this award must have a strong Grade Point Average and must participate in League-sponsored athletic activities and fine arts activities.

Simon is a three-sport participant in football, wrestling and baseball. He did not go out for wrestling this year, however, due to health concerns.

On the arts side, Simon and Oswald helped run a blood drive for the BP Honor Society. Both also participated in high school musicals, “Legally Blonde” and “The Wizard of Oz.”

Simon also participated in the chamber choir. He serves as a volunteer at the BP Elementary School, tutoring fifth graders in reading. “It’s fun and rewarding and I remember when I was in second grade, my uncle mentored to me,” he shared.

Oswald was chosen Homecoming Queen last fall. Simon was a candidate for king.

Since seventh grade, Oswald has been a member of the Blooming Prairie Future Farmers of America. She recently was part of a small animals team in FFA competition. Her team made it to state. Other team members were Courtney Espe, Riley Millam, Paul Sunde and Micah Donnelly.

She also competed in sports, volleyball and track. “Now, I watch my younger sister play basketball; it’s fun.”

Oswald attended Girls State, courtesy of the BP American Legion Auxiliary. She also participated in FCCLA (Family, Career and Community Leaders of America) and helped package CARE gifts for military service men and women. It’s called Operation Gratitude.

Both winners have GPA’s over 4.0. They have their eyes on college and have taken college classes in high school.

Looking at the final months of their senior year, Simon and Oswald know their lives will change. “I plan to soak it up as a senior since college is coming quick,” commented Simon. “I have to step out of my comfort zone because life will change in college,” interjected Oswald.

Principal John Worke praised both of the award winners for their drive to be successful. “Their work ethic plays an important role in their success,” Worke believes.

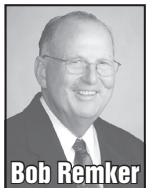
“Both Payton and Rachael have shown great leadership over the years and they have left a positive impression with many,” Worke continued.



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PRAIRIE HOME CUTS RIBBON AT OPEN HOUSE



It was a Grand Opening type of day at Prairie Home Floral, Decor & Gifts for Jacqueline Reiter-Vorlice, scissors in hand. Members of the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce participated in the ribbon cutting. Jackie's husband Jason is at her immediate right and Greg Johnson of the Chamber is to her immediate left.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

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A new taste for downtown

Torey's Restaurant & Bar adds flavor to downtown Owatonna

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

After 15 years located just off Bridge Street in Owatonna, Torey's Restaurant & Bar decided to make a move to downtown when the opportunity to scoop up a good location fell into their hands.

"The possible opportunity for this building was available and we talked about it and slowly pursued it and it just became a reality," owner/chef Torey Statlander recalled of the decision. Renovation and construction work on the building began last March, and the restaurant at the new location opened its doors to the public on Dec. 1.

It was not easy to convert a building that had been designed for a hardware store into a restaurant complete with a banquet hall, bar, dining area, and kitchen, but they made it work, and brought along a lot of the old flavor from their first building. "We had a lot of challenges, but we had a great team and great contractors," Statlander said of the move.

Now Statlander and his team can count themselves as members of Owatonna's resurgent downtown. "We're happy to be here, and we're getting additional opportunities to cater events like weddings or large business meetings," he said.

Statlander explained that the previous building didn't have a big enough banquet hall space to do large-scale on-site catering jobs, something this new building provides. "It's nice to do stuff in-house, and we can do



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

Torey's Restaurant & Bar at its new downtown location at 208 North Cedar Ave. in Owatonna. The restaurant recently completed a move and opened its doors in December of last year.

"The more options we have, the more we can keep people in downtown and keep shopping close."

Torey Statlander

Torey's Restaurant Owner

a lot more options for people who are holding events," he added.

Although Torey's will still provide off-site catering, this gives them a steady place to schedule events just a few steps from their kitchen, which means they can provide their clients with more catering options. "We can't always do everything off-site, and plus it helps with working around the weather and hauling equipment around," Statlander said.

There is also the added benefit of more parking space, something which gave Statlander and his

team another reason to look into a possible move to the new building. "There's a lot more parking space here," he added.

While it is a bit of a new look, Statlander and his team have kept the cozy atmosphere that customers have always known while helping to become part of the revitalization effort being sparked in downtown Owatonna. "It's a chance for us to keep business in town," he said of the opportunity to become part of the effort.

"It's not just going to help us but it's going to help the other stores in town as well,"

Statlander said of what a new presence can bring to the downtown space. "It'll help all of the businesses around. The more opportunities for people to shop and dine, and eat, that's going to help people stay in town," he continued, adding, "it's just going to help everybody."

Statlander said that he and his wife have found themselves frequenting many of the downtown stores and shops. "It's fun to keep things growing, the more options we have the more we can keep people in downtown and keep shopping close," he said.

"We want people to stop by so they can see what we have to offer," Statlander said.

Torey's Restaurant & Bar is located at 208 N Cedar Ave. in Owatonna and provides fine dining and a relaxed atmosphere.



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Business Briefs

Hagedorn to serve on Committee on Small Business



HAGEDORN

U.S. Rep. Jim Hagedorn (MN-01) will serve on the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business.

"I'm thankful for the opportunity to serve on the House Committee on Small Business," Hagedorn said. "This will give us an opportunity to energize rural entrepreneurship and bring prosperity to Main Street," he added.

"Small businesses are the job-creating backbone of our economy. To make America prosperous, I support policies to reduce the cost of business, as well as enable small businesses to innovate, access new markets, secure adequate financing

and expand operations that create high-wage jobs," Hagedorn said.

"This means fighting for tax incentives, intellectual property rights, patient-centered healthcare reform, eliminating onerous federal regulations, reinstating work requirements for welfare and achieving U.S. energy independence to support hardworking southern Minnesotans."

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, Minnesota is home to more than 500,000 small businesses. These small businesses employ more than one million people.

4 new board members elected to Kasson Chamber

During the annual Kasson Chamber of Commerce dinner meeting on Jan. 17, four new board members were elected to serve.

They include Matt Bradford of Home Federal, Kelly Braun of KM Schools, Angie Bowman of Midwest Flooring Solutions and Kevin Krippnar of Culligan.

Aside from electing the new officers, two different awards were also handed out during the evening.

Winning the 2018 Business Person of the Year was Greg Kuball from Hardware Hank in Kasson.

Also coming home with awards were Folmer and Randy Carlsen, both former owners of the Dodge County Independent. The father-son duo was recognized with the 2018 Legacy Award.

STEELE-DODGE BUSINESS

Finally a business for old hardware store in WC?

BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN
COUNTY WRITER

It's been several years since the hardware in West Concord closed its doors but it is looking like there may be a buyer who wants to start a business in the community.

Theresa French, of West Concord, told council members at their last meeting that she was interested in entering into a lease with an option to buy agreement. Her plan, she said, is to open a dance/fitness studio.

When the hardware store closed the city bought the building with the intent of selling to a new business. Although there have been inquiries from potential buyers, nothing concrete has surfaced until French's idea.

In the interim the building, which is now off the tax rolls as a city-owned property, has been used to host various city events and is now the temporary home of the West Concord Public Library.

French says her studio would be based on free style dancing along with a fitness component.

"I really see an opportunity for bringing something of health to West Concord," she said.

There would be no routine to the dance, she said, although sessions would be having various themes including 1930s, 1950s, sock hops and ballroom. She said she anticipates having all music genres so it would



STAFF PHOTO BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN

A new business may soon be coming to West Concord located at the old hardware store.

appeal to all ages.

There would also be optional heart rate training and monitoring for fitness available for those who wanted it, she said. The program, she said, would be lead by a certified group fitness instructor. French is also a group fitness instructor.

And for those who were not as involved in the fitness aspect, she said, they could "just dance for fun."

Initially, she said, the studio would be open three nights a week. If all goes as planned, she said, she would expand to more hours and days a week.

Phase One of the program would involve classes offered three days a week.

Moving into Phase Two, she said, she plans to offer personal training and

nutrition coaching, personal development classes and some merchandise such as supplements, retail and apparel. At this point she also plans to have childcare for busy moms while at the studio.

Ultimately she hopes to offer hosting for celebrations such as children's birthday parties, anniversary celebrations, reunions and baby showers. Also down the line she sees guest DJ and band nights for community dances, guest dance instructors/choreographers for kids and adults and a yoga or Pilates guest instructor.

French said she has been thinking about the studio for several years.

"Everyone has a dream," she said, "mine is simple. To create a place in my home town where neighbors

of all ages, who share a love of music and dance, can come together for fun and fellowship in the name of health and mental wellbeing."

Not only will it strengthen bodies, she said, but also the community through the new relationships forged.

For now, the next step is to meet for a second time with the Economic Development Agency, which will then make a recommendation to the city council.

French said her timing is flexible and any agreement with the city will take into account how long the library needs to use the space. The library has been relocated to the building while repairs and remodeling are completed at the library facility in city hall.

Business Briefs

Minimizer designs new steerable axle fender bracket kit

Minimizer of Blooming Prairie has developed a new steerable axle fender bracket kit for use with a Watson Chalin SL20K-2065 axle.

"This is about meeting demand," Minimizer technical manager Gordon Eby said. "This particular Watson Chalin axle is fairly new, and we started getting a number of requests for a kit that would work on that axle, so we designed a solution."

This new bracket kit is designed for MIN2220 fenders.

"The tires that are normally on this Watson Chalin axle fit the MIN2220 best," Eby said.

The new steerable axle fender bracket kit – part number 104264 – features an easy bolt-on design for quick installation.

Steerable kits are made



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A new steerable axle fender bracket kit has been developed by Minimizer of Blooming Prairie. Minimizer is one of the largest manufacturers of fender products.

to bolt on using existing holes on the brake assembly, allowing the fender to raise, lower and steer with the axle.

To learn more about the new steerable lift axle bracket kit, visit www.minimizer.com.

Hy-Vee expands discount medications list at all pharmacy locations

Hy-Vee, Inc. has announced the expansion of its discount medications list to assist customers with lowering their health care costs, making their lives easier, healthier and happier. The new medication list went into effect Feb. 1, and is available to all patients with no enrollment fees.

The new list includes an increased number of cholesterol, diabetes, gastrointestinal, mental health, women's health and men's health medications offered at the discounted price. It also includes commonly prescribed antibiotics. Generic prescriptions will be

available for as low as \$4 for a 30-day supply or \$10 for a 90-day supply.

Additionally, a new 90-day supply discount is available for common medications in the cholesterol, diabetes and heart health/blood pressure categories, making it easy for patients to get a 90-day supply for a great value.

Hy-Vee remains dedicated to providing medications at a low cost to help our patients achieve better health outcomes. Prescription management, including transfers, is easy via the free Hy-Vee mobile app for both iOS and Android devices, and customers are welcome to call or visit their local Hy-

Vee pharmacy for assistance.

"Health care is the fastest-growing expense for many of the patients and families we serve," said Kristin Williams, chief health officer and senior vice president for Hy-Vee. "We care deeply about each customer, from the fresh foods we offer to the medications we dispense. By enhancing our discount medications list, we hope this lightens the load of our customers' health care costs."

For Hy-Vee's complete discount medications list, visit <https://www.hy-vee.com/my-pharmacy/services/four-dollar-generics>.

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BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT: Hit and Run: At 3:51 p.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 200 block of 4th Ave. NW. .

COURT NEWS

Steele County

TThe following case was heard in Steele County District Court the week of Jan. 28 with Judge Joseph A. Bueltel presiding:

Nathan L. Vigil, 22, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony motor vehicle theft. Vigil was sentenced to \$693, 215 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, obtain permission to leave the state, no contact with victim and 5 years of supervised probation. *The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Jan. 28 – Feb. 3:*

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT
Aaron P. Ebeling, 44, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$111; Luis E. Medina Macias, 18, Austin, invalid license, \$181; Christian Padilla, 24, Dexter, no insurance, \$231 and 6 months of unsupervised probation; Darrell A. Schneider, 23, Rochester, speeding, \$221.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER
Abdirizak H. Aden, 32, Faribault, speeding, \$151; Santrihko Andon, 44, Austin, no license, \$181; Lawrence A. Arkfeld, 59, Omaha, NE, speeding, \$131; Max P. Bahr, 38, Rochester, speeding, \$121; Ethan R. Cap, 18, Faribault, speeding, \$121; James E. Feryan, 73, Mukwonago, WI, commercial vehicle equipped with radar detector, \$181; Bernardo Flores, 23, St. Paul, no license and no insurance, \$381; Backiyanathan Kasi Venkatachalam, 25, Maryland Heights, MO, speeding, \$100; Andrew P. Kemp, 39, Overland Park, KS, speeding, \$221; Lester C. Kroeger, 74, Waseca, husbandry violation, \$100; George M. Leemasters, 26, Aitkin, uncased firearm in vehicle, \$131; Cody J. Meyer, 26, Owatonna, suspended license, \$281; Hailey J. Meyer, 18, Faribault, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$115 and 6 months of unsupervised probation; Nasteha A. Mohamed, 20, Burnsville, seat belt, \$106; John P. Murtha, 48, Northfield, speeding, \$121; David J. Paetzel, 21, Northfield, speeding, \$141; Mariah E. Peterson, 20, West Concord, speeding, \$131; Abel Sanchez, 39, Lubbock, TX, no license, \$181; Adam S. Shams, 42, Rochester, speeding, \$221; William T. Storch, 19, Waterville, speeding, \$221; Carl M. Thoreson, 59, Martinez, CA, seat belt, \$106; Zachary M. Wellentin, 31, Faribault, revoked license, possession of paraphernalia and no insurance, \$531; Clayton T. Wright, 25, Des Moines, IA, speeding, \$141.

Owatonna Police Department
Robert O. Barnett, 40, Northfield, failure to stop for school bus, \$381 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; David A. Barrera, 30, no license and no insurance, \$381; Victoria D. Berge, 38, Kenyon, no insurance, \$281; Hanna J. Bongers, 28, Dodge Center, revoked license, \$281; Keton C. Brown, 20, Owatonna, give peace officer false information, 30 days in county jail; Veronica Coronado, 36, Weslaco, TX, no insurance, \$281; Tiersa L. Damitz, 43, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$111; David Deluna, 41, Bricelyn, damage to property, give peace officer false information and trespassing, \$131 and 65 days in county jail; Taylor M. Dishar, 26, Waseca, suspended license and no insurance, \$481; Harvey F. Ehrich, 64, Faribault, speeding and failure to yield, \$231; Stetson P. Fox, 32, Owatonna, suspended license, \$281; Josue Gutierrez, 23, Minneapolis, revoked license, \$281; Ashley E. Kolar, 34, Owatonna, cancelled license, \$131, 2 days in

county jail and 1 year of supervised probation; Kristen M. Koster, 23, Austin, assault, \$1,066.98, 2 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, obtain permission to leave the state, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Nathan D. Mathiason, 37, Faribault, DWI, \$406, attend MADD impact panel and 1 year of supervised probation; John T. McGuire, 38, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$481; Meghan E. McMahon, 28, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$481; Miranda K. Nielsen, 23, Winnebago, revoked license, \$281; Cynthia K. Null, 53, Owatonna, malicious punishment of a child, \$381, 30 days in county jail, no contact with victim, obtain permission to leave the state and 2 years of supervised probation; Blender J. Olais, 23, Waseca, theft, 30 days in county jail; Isaiah D. Ranslow, 17, Owatonna, speeding, \$121; Steven R. Schwering, 27, Dodge Center, no license, no insurance and use of wireless communications device, \$656.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Jesse Alejo, 19, Austin, speed-ing, \$281; Michael J. Anderson, 51, Owatonna, suspended license, stay of adjudication, \$75 and 1 year of unsuper-vised monitoring without con-viction; Jacob M. Christenson, 24, Owatonna, possession of paraphernalia, \$131; Abraham J. Groth, 27, Ellendale, revoked license, \$281; Elizabeth A. Lewis, 49, Owatonna, speed-ing, \$121; Angela L. Lopez, 30, Eagle Pass, TX, no insurance, \$281; Nicholas A. Morch, 19, Barrington, IL, speeding, \$120; Donald R. Morency, 26, Hay-field, speeding, \$141; Guada-lupe C. Penafort, 44, Garland, TX, no license, \$181; Richard A. Plasschaert, 54, North Manka-to, speeding, \$121; Matthew A. Reiter, 31, Ellendale, theft, \$381, no possession of fire-arms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 1 year of supervised probation; Andrei Santamaria, 23, Weath-erford, OK, speeding, \$221; Abdul S. Shardi, 22, Faribault, speeding, \$141; Wesley N. Smith, 36, Waterville, can-celled license, \$281, Ignition Interlock program and 1 year of supervised probation; Ricky R. Tollefson, 49, New Richland, speeding, \$121; Noe M. Za-valeta, 27, Owatonna, posses-sion of paraphernalia, \$131..

COURT NEWS

Dodge County

TThe following case was heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Jan. 28 with Judge Jodi L. Williamson presiding:

Scott L. Rasmussen, 41, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony burglary. He was sentenced to \$2,390, 7 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, cognitive skill training, no possession of firearms, 100 hours of community service and 10 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Jan. 28 – Feb. 4:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Ahmad M. Almahasheir, 23, Rochester, revoked license, \$280; Jesus D. Almanzer Cortes, 29, Rochester, invalid license, \$180; Allen M. Armstrong, 28, Hayfield, DWI and possession of marijuana, \$480, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 1 year of supervised probation; Sydney M. Arndt, 25, Dodge Center, parking violation,

\$32; Gwen M. Boe, 44, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Victor Castillo, 27, Owatonna, parking violation, \$32; Chad R. Cordie, 37, Hayfield, speeding, \$120; Julio F. Cortez, 44, Hayfield, cancelled license, \$280; Dravon T. Hodges, 24, Rochester, revoked license, \$280; Laura J. Hoebing, 27, Hayfield, parking violation, \$37; Dustin F. Lamoree, 48, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Shelly M. Lau, 54, Blooming Prairie, registration violation, \$110; Fernando Martinez- Sanchez, 29, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Daniel J. Mead, 20, Mason City, IA, speeding, \$220; Michele D. Meyer, 61, Dodge Center, speeding, \$120; Sydney K. Miller, 20, Owatonna, parking violation, \$32; Ryan J. Newman, 21, Mantorville, suspended license and registration violation, \$310; Nicko Z. Rabe, 27, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$37; Nelly Ricardez, 50, Dodge Center, expired registration and speeding, \$170; Chelsea M. Roman, 42, Ellendale, permit offense, \$180; James R. Rongve, 34, West Concord, cancelled license, stay of adjudication, \$75, 2 days in county jail and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Brady M. Tibbetts, 18, Rochester, DWI, \$505, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical assessment and 1 year of supervised probation.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT
Kurt A. Albrecht, 57, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Zachary T. Allen, 18, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Joseph T. Briggs, 21, Zumbrota, minor consumption, \$180; Austin A. Burgener, 20, Merrill, WI, possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, \$50, 2 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation and 2 years of supervised probation; Samuel J. Cook, 26, Kasson, permit violation, stop sign and no insurance, \$380; Jesse J. Faro, 26, Mantorville, parking violation, \$32; Anthony D. Fjerstad, 28, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Nathan J. Gathje, 31, Kasson, DWI, \$505, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical assessment and 1 year of supervised probation; Quillan L. Hovey, 24, Wabasha, parking violation, \$32; Megan M. Hurton, 23, Rochester, speeding, \$140; William J. Mayer, 33, Kasson, seat belt, \$105; Baillie M. Mehling, 23, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Michael A. Sackett, 50, Dodge Center, parking violations, \$52; Christopher M. Weatherly, 38, Kasson, parking violation, \$32.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER
Melissa N. Goodman, 36, Bloomington, speeding, \$120; Thomas R. Johnson, 21, Savage, failure to yield, \$130; Kristen A. Marweg, 35, Owatonna, speeding, \$140; Ian S. Ovrebo, 18, Byron, speeding, \$130; Olvin S. Valleriano Alvarez, 24, Rochester, speeding and no license, \$230; Maurice L. Walker, 41, Dodge Center, speeding, \$130.

WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT
Jacqueline Zuniga, 39, West Concord, parking violation, \$32.

ARRESTS

Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE
Corey Jay Gilbertson, 18, arrested at 2:26 p.m. Feb. 1, warrant arrest, held for court.
Hannah Jean Anderson, 20, arrested at 7:53 p.m. Feb. 1, felony possession of stolen property, held for court.
Adam Hunter Pattishall, 19, arrested at 8:26 p.m. Feb. 1, felony possession of stolen property, held for court.
Scott Kevin Sawesky, 48, arrested at 2:27 p.m. Feb. 2,

domestic assault/assault, held for court.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF
Zachary Richard Savoie, 27, arrested at 11:50 a.m. Jan. 31, felony fleeing, DWI, possession of stolen vehicle, suspended license and warrant arrest, held for court.
Shane Joseph Anderson, 27, arrested at 4:30 a.m. Feb. 3, warrant arrest, held for court.
Faye Eller Roberts, 50, arrested at 3:25 p.m. Feb. 6, extradition hearing, \$60,000 bail.
Brian Joseph Maestre-Rea-vis, 31, arrested Feb. 7, war-rant arrest, held for court.
Travis Ryan Martin, 35, arrested at 10:05 a.m. Feb. 7, warrants arrest, \$1,000 bail.

POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE Feb. 6
Hit and Run: At 3:51 p.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 200 block of 4th Ave. NW. Owatonna Police
Feb. 1
Truancy: At 9:03 a.m., police received a report of a truancy violation in the 200 block of Pearl St. E.
Theft: At 11:14 a.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 800 block of Oak Ave. S.
Crash: Officers responded to a motor vehicle accident in the 300 block of Bridge St. W. at 11:16 a.m. They issued a citation to one of the drivers.
Weapons: Police responded to a weapons-related incident in the 1400 block of Oak Ave. S. at 5:01 p.m.
Property: At 6:34 p.m., police arrested a subject for being in possession of stolen property in the 500 block of Cedar Ave. S.
Hit and Run: At 7:15 p.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 800 block of 14th St. SE.
Feb. 2
Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 600 block of Agnes St. E. at 7:26 a.m.
Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 100 block of South St. E. at 1:07 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

Feb. 3
Domestic: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 300 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 6:59 p.m. They arrested a juvenile at the scene.
Feb. 4
Crash: At 8:02 a.m., a motor vehicle accident with injuries occurred at School St. E. and Elm Ave. S.
Theft: Police took a theft report at the law enforcement center at 4:26 p.m.
Feb. 5
Disturbance: Police responded to a disturbance in the 1100 block of School St. E. at 3:15 a.m.
Theft: Officers received a theft report from the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 10:04 a.m.
Hit and Run: At 2:23 p.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 400 block of Academy St. E.

Feb. 6
Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 100 block of 21st St. NW at 10:33 a.m.
Crash: At 11:11 a.m., police responded to a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage at Rose St. E. and Cedar Ave. N. They issued a citation to one of the drivers.
Accident: Paramedics and officers responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries at 26th St. NE and Landmark Dr. NE at 4:37 p.m.
Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 200 block of Hobart St. SE at 11:16 p.m.
Feb. 7
Warrants: Police made warrant arrests in the 600 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 9:14 a.m. and the 800 block of School St. E. at 10:21 a.m.
Vandalism: Property damage was reported at State Ave. NW and Hoffman Dr. NW at 4:46 p.m.

CRIME BRIEF

ON-STAR HELPS TRACK STOLEN VEHICLE IN OWATONNA



ZACHARY SAVOIE

Police in Owatonna recovered a stolen vehicle with the help of On-Star. On Jan. 31, Owatonna Police received a call from On-Star that they were tracking a stolen vehicle in Owatonna. A 2015 Chevy pick-up was stolen from a garage in LeSueur County. On-Star reported the vehicle was eastbound on McKinley Street. A patrol sergeant was just a few blocks away and quickly spotted the stolen vehicle, which sped off and a pursuit began. The pursuit continued for several blocks in the south end of Owatonna and culminated when the driver of the stolen vehicle lost control navigating a turn and ended up stuck in a snow bank. After arresting the driver without incident, police learned a stolen handgun was in the vehicle and kicked into a snow bank by the driver before he was apprehended. Police recovered a .38-caliber revolver. Zachary Savoie has been charged with motor vehicle theft, illegal possession of a firearm and fleeing police in a motor vehicle. He has also been charged with DWI-controlled substance. Savoie admitted that he used methamphetamine and heroin earlier in the day, police said.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF Feb. 1
Threats: Deputies responded to a subject making threats in the 500 block of 3rd St. NE in Medford at 11:05 a.m.
Crash: At 3:06 p.m., a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 6400 block of 58th St. SE in Aurora Township.

Feb. 2
Accident: Deputies responded to a fatal crash on Highway 14 in Havana Township at 4:57 p.m.

Feb. 5
Crash: At 2:29 p.m., a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage occurred on Interstate 35 in Medford Township.
Accident: Paramedics and deputies responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries on Interstate 35 in Somerset Township at 7:19 p.m. One of the drivers received a citation.

Feb. 6
Crash: At 11:04 p.m., a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage occurred at Interstate 35 and 26th St. NW in Owatonna.

Feb. 7
Fraud: Deputy took a report of a fraud incident in the 6600 block of 89th Ave. SE in Aurora Township at 8:57 p.m.

OWATONNA FIRE

Feb. 1
Carbon Monoxide: At 2:10 a.m., a carbon monoxide incident occurred in the 2600 block of 3rd St.

Feb. 2
Fire: Firefighters responded to a passenger vehicle fire on Oak Ave. at 4:57 p.m.
Extrication: Fire rescue extricated a victim from a vehicle on Highway 14 at 5:16 p.m.

Feb. 4
Crash: Firefighters responded to an accident involving a motor vehicle and a pedestrian on School St. at 8:06 a.m.

Feb. 6
Accident: At 11 a.m., a motor vehicle accident with injuries occurred on Interstate 35.

Word Search Corner

Ice Cream Flavors

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- WARRANTS: The following individuals have active warrants in Steele County. The Sheriff provides this information as a public service
1. Cody Johnson – warrant - \$3,000 bail

2. David Johnson – dishonored check - \$1,000 bail

3. Lawrence Johnson – domestic assault - \$1,000 bail

4. Robert Johnson – criminal vehicular operation - \$10,000 bail

5. Scott Jones – disorderly conduct - \$300 bail

6. Brandi Junak – DWI - \$12,000 bail

7. Mikael Kaijansinkko – DWI, speeding - \$500 bail

8. Tongyik Keirkow – DWI - \$12,000 bail

9. Marie Kinard – DWI – no bail

10. Carissa King – theft - \$300 bail

11. Georgia Kingswan – DUI – no bail

12. Larry Kittelson – DWI – no bail

13. Joseph Kleaver – revoked license – no bail

14. Vern Klostreich – DWI - \$12,000 bail

15. William Knutson – DWI - \$3,000 bail

16. Timothy Koger – DWI - \$12,000 bail

17. Eric Kovacevic – traffic - \$300 bail

18. Jeffrey Krieger – burglary – no bail

19. David Kujac – domestic assault – no bail

20. Percy Lacey – revoked license – no bail

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

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Dear Savvy Senior,

What tips or resources can you recommend to help elderly seniors extend their driving years? My dad, who's 82, is still a decent driver; but I worry about his safety going forward.

Inquiring Daughter

Dear Inquiring,

With more than 40 million licensed drivers in the U.S. over the age of 65, there are lots of resources available today to help keep older drivers safe and behind the wheel longer. Here are some simple steps you can take to help keep your dad driving safely.

Get his eyes checked: Because about 90 percent of the information necessary to drive is received through our eyes, getting your dad's eyes checked every year to be sure his vision and eyewear is up to par is an important first step.

Check his meds: Does your dad take any medicine or combination of medicines that make him sleepy, light-headed or loopy? If so, make a list of all his medications (prescription and over-the-counter) and dietary supplements, and take it to his doctor or pharmacist for a review. You can also get help with this online at RoadwiseRX.com.

Evaluate his driving: To stay on top of any potential driving issues, you should take a ride with your dad from time-to-time watching for problem areas, such as: Does he drive at inappropriate speeds, tailgate or drift between lanes? Does he have difficulty seeing, backing up or changing lanes? Does he react slowly, get confused easily or make poor driving decisions? For more tips, see the National Caregivers Library driving assessment checklist at

SeniorDriverChecklist.org.

If your dad needs a more thorough evaluation, you can turn to a driver rehabilitation specialist who's trained to evaluate older drivers. This type of assessment typically costs between \$100 and \$200. To locate a professional in your area, visit AOTA.org/older-driver or ADED.net.

Take a refresher course: AAA and AARP both have older driver refresher courses that can help your dad tune-up his driving skills, and learn how to adjust for slower reflexes, weaker vision and other age-related changes that affect driving. Taking a class may also earn him a discount on his auto insurance. To locate a class, contact your local AAA (AAA.com), or AARP (AARP.org/drive, 888-227-7669). Most courses cost around \$15 to \$30 and can be taken in the classroom or online.

Another good resource to look into is CarFit. This is a free assessment program that will help your dad adjust his vehicle for a better fit, making it easier and safer to drive. CarFit events are held around the country in select locations. See Car-Fit.org to look for one near you.

Make some adjustments: Recognizing your dad's driving vulnerabilities and making small changes on when and where he drives can go a long way in helping keep him safe and driving longer. Adjustments may include not driving after dark or during rush hour traffic, avoiding major highways or other busy roads, and not driving in poor weather conditions.

You can find more tips at AAA Senior Driving at SeniorDriving.AAA.com.

And finally, when it gets to the point that your dad's driving isn't safe anymore and he needs to quit, The Hartford Financial Services Group and MIT AgeLab offers two helpful resources. Go to **TheHartford.com/lifetime** – click on "Publications" on the menu bar – and download or order the "At the Crossroads" and/or "We Need to Talk" guides.

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

History from the News Archives

10 Years Ago Feb. 10, 2009

DAN EVANS, PUBLISHER

Owatonna High School social worker Sharron Feischtinger garnered a special honor when she was named the 2008 School Social Worker of the year: Guidance counselors at OHS nominated her for the award.

Bloomington Prairie High School math teacher John Brunns is one of 27 semi-finalists for the 2009 Minnesota Teacher of the Year. Brunns teaches advanced math courses, such as statistics, college algebra, physics, calculus and algebra II.

Jason Keck of Owatonna is Steele County's pork ambassador for 2009. Currently he is a freshman at UW-River Falls studying crop and soil science with minor in Farm Management and Animal Science.

20 Years Ago Feb. 9, 1999

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

Butch Miller, the national commander of the American Legion, made a short stop in Bloomington Prairie last week, returning to his home Minnesota turf for a four-day tour.

After 140 words and 24 rounds of competition, sixth grader Zach Fogarty, the son of Bill and Ann Fogarty, was named champion of the Bloomington Prairie Elementary School annual spelling bee.

50 Years Ago Feb. 5, 1969

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

The Hayfield Elementary School was destroyed by fire early Tuesday morning. The blaze was discovered about 7 a.m. and

was still burning out of control at 10:30 a.m. with little hope of saving the structure. The smoke was visible in Bloomington Prairie located 10 miles away. Bloomington Prairie Fire was called to assist in battling the blaze.

Personal property tax payments in Bloomington Prairie will total only \$23,607 in 1969, down \$1,014 from the \$24,622 assessed the previous year; according to the Steele County treasurer: Personal property taxpayers in Bloomington Prairie total just 86, the identical number as last year.

Victor F. Hurdlik, rural mail carrier and highly respected Bloomington Prairie resident, passed away unexpectedly at his home here about 5:30 p.m. Jan. 31 at the age of 52.

75 Years Ago Feb. 10, 1944

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

The fox population of Steele County was reduced by three Sunday when hunters in the fox hunt sponsored by the Bloomington Prairie Gun Club bagged the animals. Two red and one grey fox will no longer prey on chickens, young pigs and small game in this community, but evidently plenty more remain to carry on the nightly raids of destruction.

Joe Hoffman of Carroll, Iowa has purchased the old Ole H. Lampland farm operated for years by Sam Ingvalson. Hoffman and his father came up Tuesday of last week to close the deal. The farm consists of 260 acres. Hoffman takes possession March 1.

Local War Bond chairman Geo. Burtness announces to the Times Wednesday that \$88,706 in war bonds have been sold in Bloomington Prairie in the Fourth War Bond Loan, leaving approximately \$14,000 before the town can be placed in the "over-the-top" column. Bloomington Prairie has always been shouldered with the largest war bond quota of any village its size in Minnesota or the entire nation for that matter.

COLLEGE NEWS

Area students honored for academics

Several area students have been named to the Dean's List for fall semester at their respective colleges.

Macaela Jensen of Bloomington Prairie has been named to the Dean's List for fall 2018 semester at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter.

To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a 3.7 GPA or higher for the semester ending in December.

Wyatt Grundmeier of Waltham and Isaac Baker and Abby Zylstra of Bloomington Prairie have been named to the President's List at Riverland Community College.

To be eligible for the president's list, students must have completed 12 credits per

semester and have earned a GPA of 4.0.

Elijah Baker of Bloomington Prairie has been named to the Dean's List at Riverland.

Students qualifying for the dean's list must have completed 12 credits and have a GPA of 3.25 to 3.99.

Riverland is located in Albert Lea, Austin and Owatonna.

India Enter of Medford has been named to the Dean's List at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for fall semester 2018. Enter is a freshman music major.

Enter was one of more than 5,300 students at Nebraska named to the Dean's List.

Two BP students graduate from RCTC

Two Bloomington Prairie area students have graduated from Rochester Community and Technical College.

Morgan Johnson received an AS in nursing

while Cara Ramsey was awarded an AAS in health information technology.

Commencement ceremony for all graduates will take place on May 16.



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OBITUARIES

Harlan O. Schultz, 75, Owatonna



Harlan O. Schultz, age 75, of Owatonna, passed away Feb. 4, 2019 at Birchwood Cottages in Owatonna.

Memorial service will be 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 16, 2019 at the Brick Meger Funeral Home, friends may greet the family one hour prior to the memorial service at the funeral home starting at 9:30 a.m. Military honors will be provided by the Steele County Funeral Unit.

Harlan was born March 30, 1943 in Albert Lea, the son of Floyd and Angeline (Kuiper) Schultz. He attended high school in Alden. Harlan was enlisted in the Army in January 1965 and was honorably discharged on Oct. 30, 1966. He spent 14 months in Vietnam.

He was united in marriage to Mary Eisen on April 15, 1967 at Associated Church in Owatonna. They moved

to Twin Lakes and raised two children. Harlan hauled milk for Mid-America and later worked as a diesel mechanic for Dairyland Power Cooperative.

He was member of the city council, water and sewer department, and a volunteer fireman for Twin Lakes. He served as Twin Lakes Mayor in 1986. In 1987, he moved to Wabasha with the transfer of his job to Dairyland Power in Alma, Wis.

With the arrival of grandchildren, they moved to Owatonna in 1994. Harlan started working at Cybex in 1995 until his retirement in September 2016.

Harlan loved to spend time with his family, especially his grandchildren. Enjoyed woodworking, refinishing antique furniture, growing roses, gardening, feeding the birds, classic car shows, old tractor and farm equipment shows, going

to flea markets, collecting vintage wood planes.

Harlan is survived by his loving wife, Mary Schultz; daughter, Melissa (James) Garbers Owatonna; son, Darren (Britt) Schultz, Blooming Prairie; grandchildren, Sam (Lauren) Garbers, Matthew, Sarah, Timothy, Daniel Garbers, Lainey, Shelby, William Schultz; siblings, Bertha (Gary) Ravnkilde, Florence (Rollie) Wagner, Jerry Sr. (Kathy) Schultz, Judy (Blaine) Lewer and many nieces, nephews and great nieces, nephews.

Harlan was preceded in death by his parents Floyd and Angeline Schultz.

The family would like to thank Birchwood Cottages and St. Croix Hospice for taking such wonderful care of Harlan. For more information or to leave an online condolence message go to www.brick-megerfuneralhome.com.

Cindy Andersen, 55, Blooming Prairie



Cindy L. Andersen, age 55, of Blooming Prairie, passed away peacefully Saturday afternoon, Feb. 2, 2019 surrounded by her loving family at her son's home in Hastings.

Cindy was born on Nov. 5, 1963 in Austin to Jens and Faye (Marshall) Andersen. She was a lifelong Blooming Prairie resident and graduated from Blooming Prairie High School in 1982. She loved working on a hog farm and really enjoyed working with her friends at Amesbury Truth in

Owatonna.

Cindy enjoyed auctioning, fishing, and loved her animals, especially her two cats. She will be missed dearly by all who knew and loved her.

Survivors include her mother, Faye (Don) Cassidy of Claremont; two sons, Dylan (Kayla) Andersen of Hastings, Dalton Andersen of Owatonna; one grandson, Walker Andersen; two brothers, Paul (Ronee) Andersen of Iowa, Troy (Candace) Andersen of Blooming Prairie; and other friends

and family, and her two cats, Babes and Buzzy.

She was preceded in death by her father, Jens Andersen.

Memorial services were held on Thursday, Feb. 7, 2019, at the Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home Chapel. The interment will be a private family service. Memorials are preferred to the family. Worlein Funeral Home in Blooming Prairie is assisting the family with arrangements. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com.

Marianne Warner, 90, Owatonna



Marianne Catherine (Seykora) Warner, age 90, of Owatonna, passed away Feb. 2, 2019, with her family at her side.

Mass of Christian Burial was Wednesday, Feb. 6 at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Owatonna. There was a parish rosary recited at the funeral home on Tuesday, Feb. 5 before the visitation.

Marianne was born Feb. 25, 1928 in a Somerset Township farmhouse, the daughter of John and Elizabeth (Steinkemper) Seykora.

She met her future husband, Alex Warner, when he was part of the other couple on a double date. The two were later married June 1, 1948 at St. Joseph's Church in Owatonna making her home on a farm near Pratt.

She had a 58-year love affair with her husband, Alex. Since 1979, they spent winters in South Texas and the last 12 years she went alone. She enjoyed traveling. She went to Alaska and Hawaii, which were gifts from her children. Also, Switzerland, Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico and Ireland. She enjoyed

watching sports, especially those her family participated in, and was an avid fan of the Vikings and the Twins. She loved playing dominoes and card games like Hand and Foot, Pinochle and 500 with family and friends.

Marianne was a member of Pratt Progressive Extension Club, Catholic Workman and St. Isadore's Guild. She was a 4-H leader and in World War II, she was a member of the Ground Observer Corps whose duty it was to spot planes.

Marianne enjoyed being a housewife, caterer, and an amazing baker renowned for baking wedding cakes, breads and kolackys.

Survivors include her seven children, Terry (Patty) of Owatonna, Sharon of Arizona, Debra (Randal) Ryan of Hager City, Wis., Brian (Michele) of Owatonna, Scott (Karen Carroll) of Denver, Colo., Alison of Ketchum, Idaho and Bradley of Denton, Texas. Marianne is also survived by her 12 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren and 2 great, great grandchildren. Sisters, Genevieve Webster and Donna Carlton,

sisters-in-law, Jan Seykora, Betty Seykora, and Marie Warner and numerous nieces and nephews.

In 2015, she lost her best friend and sister, Bunny Butler.

She was preceded in death by her husband Alexander P. Warner, parents John and Elizabeth Seykora, her brothers, Richard, Robert and John Seykora, sister, Bunny Butler, granddaughter, Lacey Warner. She will be buried in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Mary's School and Allina Hospice in Owatonna. For more information or to leave an online condolence message go to www.brick-megerfuneral-home.com.

Funeral arrangements were handled by Brick Meger Funeral Home in Owatonna.



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Recipe Corner

Lemon Coconut Bread

INGREDIENTS:

1 lemon cake mix

1 sm. pkg instant lemon pudding

1 c. water

1/2 c. oil

4 eggs

3/4 c. coconut

DIRECTIONS:

Mix all ingredients except coconut at medium speed for 3-4 minutes. Mix the coconut in by hand. Pour into loaf pans. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350 degrees. Makes 1 large and 1 small loaf or 3 small loaves. Cool bread for 20 minutes before removing from pan.

Can also mix 1/4 c. powdered sugar with lemon juice & lemon zest and pour over bread when cooled.

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NANCY VAILLANCOURT

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Have you ever read books out loud together, or to yourself? That experience is different from silent reading. You can play around with voices or choose a character for yourself to become. A local husband and wife are reading their way through Shakespeare's plays. When

they complete one, they come to the library to get a BBC production of that play.

When my children were little, we spent winter days inside blanket forts reading together or acting out simple stories such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears. In our busy lives, sometimes we need a day in which there is nothing to do but listen to a child who is so proud of their newly acquired ability to read. Take home a book that has simple experiments or fun stories for the children to read to you.

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Will Hinzman

Bobbie Bruns

Judy Remker

February 14

Haley Ryks

Jim Severtson

Jon Peterson

Rita Goodnature

Creed Chladek

Owen Braaten

Harley Haley

Doug Krell

February 15

Emily Iversen

Steve Glynn

Raylee Miner

Elijah Peterson

February 16

Eloise Yvonne Jenzen

Mark Swenson

Maveda Peterson

Sophiia Johnson

Jerry Ingvalson

Mary Jo Wallace

February 17

Garret Farr

Blake Christianson

Derek Ingvalson

Thomas Farr

Dawn Gross

Brandy Munson

February 18

Carly Jo Iversen

Holly Ann Olson

Amy Snider

Maynard Johnson

Rod Koster

February 19

Lance Lembke, Jr.

Madysan Slowinski

Riley Thompson

Diane Boyd

Jason Jensen

Anniversaries

February 15

Kurt and Barb Blome

Galen and Dorothy Peterson

February 18

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A treasure to return to



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As the Polar Vortex of 2019 swept through our region in late January, and one fierce day stretched into another, I found out that it IS possible to finish a to-do list. It was a winter triumph! And at the end of my personal list was this task: to catch up on correspondence.

I enjoy emails and texts, but maintain that letter-writing is a lost art, worthy of at least some of my modern attention and time. Children's author Susan Lendroth remarked, "To write is human; to receive a letter: divine." I agree.

So, each evening, I settled in to write. Responses to Christmas cards, especially ones that contained confessions of struggle or change. Newsy letters to

elderly friends who have settled in new homes, away from Blooming Prairie. Cards to my nephews with silly inscriptions, a word of encouragement, and a little spending money. My children, ever curious, even got into the act.

What I thought was a chore, pushed down to the end of the chore list, brightened our spirits so much that we wondered why we don't allow ourselves the pleasure more frequently. Plus, the joy of receiving these meager letters far outweigh the bit of time we spent in composing them.

On Wednesday mornings, First Lutheran in Blooming Prairie maintains a decades-long tradition of ecumenical Bible Study. A hot breakfast is served, and a gathering of souls opens an an-

cient book: the Word of God. Currently, the group is reading continuously though Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. Even with supremely deft study Bible scholarship at our disposal, there is so much we cannot know about the author. There is so much we can only guess about for the small community of Christians in Corinth. But as we read these words aloud weekly—parse translated phrases, imagine the setting, learn the culture—in a small way, even thousands of years on, what we experience most vividly, most consistently, is the connection. This lengthy letter of St Paul gives witness to an indelible bond between church planter and congregation, between missionary and mission field. There is a proclamation

to speak, something to urgent to share, a message that effortlessly bridges their span of miles...and ours. Even in its moments of rebuke and correction, St Paul cannot hide God's loving care, nor his own. Like our experiences with precious notes and cards, this letter to Corinth is a treasure we can return to, again and again.

To receive a letter is...divine.

Furthermore, I commend you to pick up your pen—even if it's been years—and address a note or two. To a godchild, a former neighbor, your only living aun. Like our experiences with precious notes and cards, this letter to Corinth is a treasure we can return to, again and again.

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

LUTHERAN AURORA LUTHERAN 6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna Pastor Stephanie Wood 507-676-5696 Worship: Sunday at 9 a.m. Sunday School: 10:15 a.m. COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 106 Third St. SE., Geneva Pastor Kristen Venne 507-256-4288 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun. FIRST LUTHERAN – AFLC 503 Radel Ct., Ellendale Pastor Richard Sliper 507-684-2451 Saturday: 8 a.m. Men’s Bible Study Sunday: 9 a.m. Worship; 10:15 a.m. Sunday School/ Confirmation Tues.: 7 p.m. Call to Prayer, open to all churches Wed.: 9:30 a.m. BibleStudy; 3:30 – 5 p.m. Jesus and Me; 6 p.m. Call to Prayer; 6:30 p.m. Youth Group 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 – 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 Pastor Todd Buegler Pastor Amanda Weinkauff Deacon Kris Oppegard 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. CATHOLIC CHRIST THE KING 205 Second Ave. NW, Medford 507-451-6353 Father James Starasinich Deacon Patrick Fagan Mass: 5:30 p.m. Sat. Mass: 9 a.m. Mon. & Fri. 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 507-451-1588 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. 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 a.m. Sunday 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 2515 Harvest Lane NW Owatonna Pastors Joe & Vicki Braucht www.destinycc.org Worship: 6 p.m. Sat. 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 MENNONITE PAIRIE MENNONITE 13638 750th St., Blooming Prairie Bishop Dennis Martin 507-583-7532 Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. Prayer Meeting: 7:30 p.m. Wed. MORMON THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS 404 31st St. NW, Austin Bishop Rick Bremner 507-433-9042 Worship: 9 a.m. Sun. PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATED CHURCH Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ 800 Havana Road, Owatonna 507- 451-1546 www.associatedchurch.org office@associatedchurch.org Sunday Worship: 9 a.m. (Fellowship, Church School, and Adult Discussions follow) Wednesday Activities: Sept – May (see website for schedule) FIRST PRESBYTERIAN 109 E. Main St., Hayfield Pastor Kirk Johnston 507-477-2631 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN P.O. Box 66, Claremont 507-528-2320 Pastor Douglas Walters 10 a.m. Worship SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST 2373 Seventh Ave. NE, Owatonna Pastor Brian Beavers 507-340-7143 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sat. Bible Study: 11 a.m. Sat. 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. FIRST BAPTIST (Owatonna’s oldest church) 123 E. Main St., Owatonna Pastor Cindy 507-451-2803 www.firstbaptistowatonna.com Fellowship: 9:30 a.m. Sun. Worship: 10:30 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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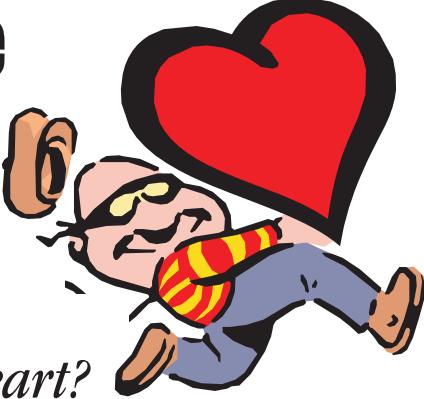
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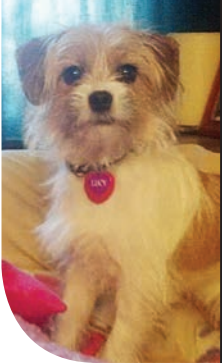
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Unity during tough times

Blossoms show support for Hayfield family in need

BY ALEX MALM
STAFF WRITER

For many years, the Klennert family has been a huge part of the Hayfield community. Grant is the High School principal at Hayfield, and his wife Michele is a fifth grade teacher with the district. Aside from working for the schools they have found themselves apart

of the local community in many ways, including reffing, coaching the academic triathlon team, coaching and being apart of local service organizations. That's why it's so fitting that the local area communities have been very supportive of the family as they have gone through a difficult time. In December, after experiencing back pains, Michele was diagnosed with Ependymoma, which is cancer of the spinal cord. Since that time, many organizations, including the school, have come together to organize fundraisers for the family. The first fundraiser that took place was during a basketball game against Maple River on Jan. 15.

During the game, they were able to raise about \$6,000 through different raffles and other fun activities. The next sign of unity came during the boys basketball game against Blooming Prairie on Feb. 5 where both teams wore matching shirts as a way of showing their support for the family. In addition to showing its unity by wearing the same shirts as the Hayfield team, the Blossoms also raised money for the Klennert family through a variety of other ways. The girls basketball team had a cookie sale at its game against Faribault Bethlehem Academy. The girls also wore purple shirts at their

SEE UNITY, B2



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Blooming Prairie High School students showed their generosity for a Hayfield family in need on Feb. 5 during a boys basketball game in Hayfield. Both teams wore matching purple shirts as a sign of unity. The Blossoms included: back row, from left: Jacob McHenry, Preston Rieken, Karson Vigeland, Jarrett Larson, Gabe Hagen, Trent Swenson, Zach Weber and Isaac Ille; front row: Kaden Thomas, Parker Vaith, Zach Archer, Matthew Pryor and Tim Wolf.

HIGH-RISK VENTURES

SWAT competition exposes life lessons for Scouts

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Nine Explorer Scouts and three chapter advisors returned home from Arizona recently fully energized about law enforcement and emergency services. "There's always something new to learn," says Rick Ellingson, founder of the local Explorer Scout group in 1988. Explorer Scouts range in age from 14-20. The local Explorers are tagged Emergency Services Mentoring and previously went under the name of Emergency Services Explorer Post 007. The name was recently changed. Last month's trip to Chandler, Ariz., to attend the Chandler Tactical Assault Competition was Ellingson's 12th trip. Ellingson, Dan Peach and Christina Conati chaperoned the group and worked with the Explorer Scouts in the national SWAT competition. Peach and Ellingson are both part-time officers in Blooming Prairie and in Janesville. Peach can also be found working at B to Z Hardware in Blooming Prairie. Ellingson is a full-time paramedic for the Gold Cross Ambulance Service. Conati is a 911 dispatcher. Explorers are between ages 14-20, and they typically join the program to find a career path, says Peach. Members of Post 007 are from Owatonna, Blooming Prairie, Ellendale, Medford, Waterville and Janesville. They represent Steele, Rice, Waseca and LeSueur counties. Peach and Ellingson say the Explorers purpose is to teach and show youths what is out there for emergency services career opportunities. The Explorers, mentored by Ellingson, Peach and Conati, came back with two trophies, a second place and third place they earned in competition at Chandler.

The competition on Jan. 18, 19 and 20 featured 75 police departments and more than 1,000 Explorers. Some of their competition represented members of the Las Vegas and Los Angeles police departments. The EMS group took a 15-passenger van on the trip west. The Explorers drove to Las Vegas and then toured the area. "It was really fun to see the kids' response; many had never been to Vegas," said Peach. Peach has been affiliated with the Explorers since age 16. He is now 24. Ellingson became involved with the explorers when he worked for Gold Cross Ambulance 31 years ago. Ellingson said Explorer Scouts helps young people become a better adult and it also may direct them to a job in emergency services. "I love teaching kids and giving them the opportunities to explore other areas," Ellingson says. "This Explorers learn team work which is very important in life," he believes. With the Explorers, the young people not only work in the classroom setting but more



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Emergency Services Mentoring Explorers act out an active shooter scenario at Chandler, Ariz.

"They learned a lot in law enforcement and even more about **every day life skills.**"

Dan Peach
BP Police Officer

importantly, in hands-on situations, Ellingson explained. "I enjoy seeing the young Explorers have an eye opening experience in the competition," remarked Peach. The Chandler Police department has sponsored the tactical training the past 21 years. The numerous events where local Explorers were competitors and included active shooter, officer down rescue, tactical EMS, vehicle assault, hostage negotiations and hostage rescue scenario. More than 20 different SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics) team scenarios were offered to the combatants. Explorer 007 took a second place in tactical EMS and a third place in the officer down rescue category. In this competition, the Explorers rescue an officer in a squad car and eliminate the threat. The local explorers traveled the farthest of any team. Most of the teams came from the southwestern states. While at the competition, the Explorers had the opportunity to meet with other police officers, including those with the Nevada Highway Patrol. Following the competition, the young Explorers and their advisors motored to Los



SUBMITTED PHOTO

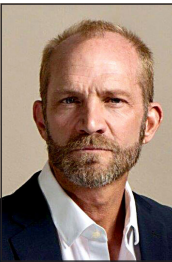
The Emergency Services Mentoring Explorer Scout troop did well in competition recently in Chandler, Ariz. Pictured with two trophies they won are: bottom row, from left: Kaden Lopez and Dameon Holleback; second row: Aaron Larson, Mel Pitz and Matt Schendel; third row: AJ Thoreson, Malichi Carlson, Caleb Kubat and Cole Graves; last row: Dan Peach, Chritina Conati and Rick Ellingson.

Angeles where they visited Santa Monica Beach. They also toured Hollywood. "They learned a lot in law enforcement and even more about every day life skills," said Peach. The Explorers also learned how to change the brakes on their van. "The brakes were grinding and since we had extra time, I told

SEE SWAT COMPETITION, B2

Blossom turned actor to come back to BP

Blooming Prairie's Prince Charming is coming home. Jay Alan Christianson, who starred as Prince Charming in the 1977 Cinderella musical at Blooming Prairie High School, will be returning to the school on Thursday, Feb. 21 to share his experiences as a professional American actor.



JAY ALAN CHRISTIANSON

Christianson will be at the High School Media Center to speak to students at 10 a.m. The general public is invited and encouraged to attend at 11 a.m. After graduating from Blooming Prairie in 1979, Christianson went to Concordia University in St. Paul where he received a bachelor's degree in organized behavior. He received his Screen Actors Guild card portraying Agent Jongsma, Season 3 The Sopranos in 2001 and his Equity Card playing multiple characters in A.R. Gurney's The Dining Room in 1998. Other television guest starring appearances include Law & Order SVU, Without a Trace, Strong Medicine and The Young & The Restless, among others. Christianson is a guest artist at the California Institute of the Arts outside Los Angeles where he resides. He also volunteers on On-Camera acting class in Hollywood.

Tips to prevent falls

With the temperatures dropping and ice forming, it is important to be cautious of falling. Falls can contribute to significant injuries that could reduce independence and require long term support. Additionally, the Minnesota Department of Health has reported elderly Minnesotans have a fall rate resulting in death that is three times greater than the national average.

Tips to prevent falls include:
• Plan ahead. Leave enough time as to not be in a rush.
• Reduce hazards. Precautions should be taken to reduce dangers such as salting and clearing walkways. This includes assisting your friends and neighbors who need support completing these tasks.
• Wear appropriate footwear. Often dress shoes lack the adequate traction to grip in the winter-time. If wearing dress shoes will be necessary, wear your winter boots and change into dress shoes upon



Steele Talkin'
ANDREA MARSHALL

SEE STEELE TALKIN', B2

Vintage run brings in \$2K for Ellendale

By DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Ellendale Municipal Liquor Store has received a \$2,000 donation after recently hosting a vintage snowmobile run. MLS Manager Ralph Diaz said the event had a "fair turnout." The Ellendale City Council accepted the donation from the Steele County Snowmobile

Association to be used for expenses at the Municipal Liquor store at its bimonthly meeting on Thursday, Jan. 31. Diaz said new bathroom stall doors have been installed at the MLS, the addition looks nice and has received some positive feedback and they will hosting a pool tournament in the near future. In other news, the council:
• Heard an update from City Attorney Mark Rahrhick

regarding information on what would be needed to be done to rename a street.
• Received a report from City Clerk Lee Ann Hojberg, who said the electric and plumbing has been completed in the community center shower room, but the washer the fire department wants to purchase will not fit through the space. "It was shared that we will need to remove the interior wall or at least some

of the brick," Hojberg said. "It was suggested that we write a letter to the Steele County Gambling Association to see if they would donate some money to this."
• Approved the repeal of Resolution 01-10-19-02 Service Fee Schedule for 2019 with resolution 01-24-19-02.
• Presented and discussed the Data Practice Policy for the Public.
• Heard a report from

Mayor Russ Goette, who discussed his recent meeting Community and Economic Development Associates. Some of the items discussed were a new apartment complex in Ellendale and the city's need for an Action Plan.
• Received a report from Council member Scott Groth, who stated he would like to thank Nelson Electric for its assistance in putting up the Christmas lights across

Main Street. Goette shared that he was approached about purchasing additional lights going out to the west side of town.
• Received a handout from Council member Steve Engel on the liquor license fees that are being charged by other cities in the area. The council put this item on the agenda as new business for the next meeting to discuss as a full council.

Love, murder and revenge take stage at LTO

Little Theatre of Owatonna (LTO) has announced its winter musical production of “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet” that opens Valentine’s Day, Feb. 14.

The Tony Award-winning musical is a dark, witty tale of love, murder and revenge set against the backdrop of 19th century London. The theatrical treat has simultaneously shocked, awed and delighted audiences across the world.

The infamous tale tells the story of Sweeney Todd, an unjustly exiled barber who returns to London seeking revenge against the lecherous judge who framed him and ravaged his young wife. The road of vengeance leads Todd to Mrs. Lovett, a resourceful proprietress of a failing pie shop. Above her shop, Todd opens a new barber practice. Mrs. Lovett’s luck sharply shifts when Todd’s thirst for blood inspires the integration of an ingredient into her meat pies that has the people of London lining up. And the carnage has only just begun.

A live, 12 piece orchestra, directed by Suzette Kuklok, will perform Stephen

Music and lyrics are by Stephen Sondheim with book by Hugh Wheeler. Jeffrey Jackson is the artistic director, Bev Cashman the music director and Kathy Purdie the technical director.

This production is for mature audiences.

Performances will be at 7:30 p.m., Feb. 14-16 and 21-23, with matinee performances at 2 p.m. Feb. 17 and 24. Online tickets are available at www.LittleTheatreofOwatonna.org for the general public. The LTO Box Office opens Feb. 11. Adult ticket price is \$17; student ticket price is \$14.

“Sweeney Todd” is presented with special arrangements through Music Theatre International and is sponsored by the Wenger Foundation.

Sondheim’ music for this production. Sondheim has received an Academy Award, eight Tony Awards (more than any other composer, including a Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre), eight Grammy Awards, a Pulitzer Prize, a Laurence Olivier Award, and a 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom.

BP Area Chamber budget approved for 2019

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

At a regular membership meeting held at Bunkie’s on Wednesday, Jan. 31, the membership approved the budget for 2019.

Becky Noble, executive director, reported a membership total of 122.

On the income side, these totals were reported: dues, \$18,500; Golf Fun Day, \$6,000; Fourth of July, \$7,000; Visitors/beautification, \$1,000; wine tasting, \$2,500; garage sales, \$130; meals, \$700; Christmas promotions, \$500; annual meeting/ banquet, \$3,000; donations/ misc./interest, \$250; recycling, \$1,208 and account transfer, \$500.

Total income amounts to \$41,288.

Expenses are as follows: total member support, \$31,068; total membership meeting, \$500 and total program, \$9,720.

Total expenses amount to \$41,288.

In other business, the membership approved a monthly gambling report submitted by gambling

manager Amanda Schumacher. Net profit was reported at \$4,026.76.

The chamber started charitable gambling last year at the Blooming Prairie Country Club, Bunkie’s and the Cue Company.

Chamber president Dan Peach encouraged members to attend a ribbon cutting on Saturday, Feb. 2 for the Prairie Home Floral, Decor and Gifts store.

Linda Klemmensen, chair of the Junior Entrepreneur Program said the fifth graders were scheduled to begin their learning sessions on Feb. 4 and complete the curriculum on Feb. 8. Second graders have already completed their program.

Peach and Miranda Camry, vice president, are finalizing plans for student ambassador monthly meetings.

Chamber secretary Sarah Esplan gave an update on the rTown telephone application. She encouraged all members to utilize this helpful app.

Next meeting of the chamber will be at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 20 at the Blooming Prairie Dairy Queen.

STEELE TALKIN’: *Fall prevention*

FROM B1

arriving safely inside your destination.

- Use railings even when conditions may seem optimal. Contrary to popular belief railings aren’t just there for decoration. Rails can effectively help with balance in the event of slipping.
- Carry a cellphone so you can call for help. If you’re alone and unable to obtain assistance immediately, a cell phone can save your life as your connection to the outside world.

If a fall should occur, it is important to seek help from a medical provider so an examination can be

completed and appropriate measures can be taken for wellness. The earlier you seek an evaluation, the sooner you can be on the road to recovery.

Thinking ahead and making proper preparations can make all the difference in prevention of falls throughout the population and especially in the elderly.

Andrea Marshall is a health educator with Steele County Public Health. Steele Talkin’ is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.

UNITY: Klennert Family

game against Hayfield.

“It was a team effort with both basketball teams and members of our student council,” said Alison Mach, activities director at Blooming Prairie. She noted a number of different kids passed a basketball to raise money for the family.

For Blooming Prairie, showing its support for the Hayfield community is important.

After being stricken with tragedy last fall with the loss of Rachel and Emerson Harberts, the Hayfield school district showed its support for Blooming Prairie. Mach explained that returning the favor was important.

“Our staff and students felt it was important to

reciprocate the same kindness towards the Hayfield community as they did for us this past fall,” Mach said. “Our goal as educators has always been to teach our students the importance of not only being great students but great people. We are very proud of our students and staff and the entire community of Blooming Prairie for always stepping up to support other communities,” she added.

John Worke, principal of Blooming Prairie High School, echoed the same sentiment.

“This is just what small schools and communities do. We have experienced a lot of tragedy throughout the years and many of the area schools step up to offer support in many different ways. We do

the same when other schools experience tough times.”

There will also be an upcoming fundraiser on Sunday, Feb. 24 from 2-5 p.m. at the Rohler Rink in Brownsdale.

During the fundraiser, the admission, skate and blade rental will be a free will donation with 100 percent of the proceeds going towards the family.

At the fundraiser there will also be a raffle along with a tupperware fundraiser with 40 percent of the sales going to support the family.

Chris Pack, the activities director for Hayfield and the organizer of the basketball fundraiser, said that he and the Klennert family are very appreciative of the support that they have received.

For Grant Klennert, seeing

the support that his family has received is special.

“The support of our communities has been unbelievable,” Klennert said. “This is an incredibly difficult journey and challenge for any family to endure, and we are incredibly grateful, from the bottom of our hearts, to have this many people behind us fighting this battle with us.”

Klennert went on to say, “We have always been a firm believer in the power of small towns, especially Hayfield. To see this generosity and support for us whether in time, talents, fundraisers or prayers has met the world to my family, and we are forever grateful for the actions of our students, parents, and community members in Hayfield and the surrounding areas.”

SWAT COMPETITION

FROM B1

them we were going to change the brakes,” Peach said.

The 007 Explorers meet every Sunday with the location being rotated. Explorers also compete in state First Aid competition which is approaching in late February.

Ellingson said it is most gratifying to him when an Explorer will tell him that something they learned helped them in their future lives. An Explorer thanked Ellingson for lessons he learned and was able to use in fire fights in Iraq. “We train in all emergency services,” he said.

Ellingson and Peach invite other young people to join the Explorers. If interested, they may contact the Blooming Prairie Police Department at 507-583-7885.

“The only qualification needed to join is to have fun and possibly open an opportunity to a future vocation,” concluded Peach. Check out the local Explorers on their Facebook page.

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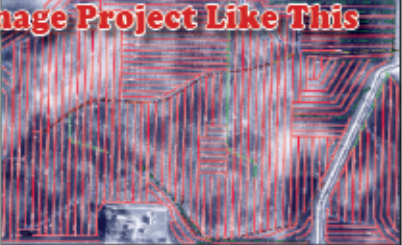
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Mardi Gras Night coming to BP

The Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club becomes the "French Quarter" for a night on Saturday, March 2 with a Mardi Gras Night fundraiser.

Squadron #52 of the Blooming Prairie Sons of the American Legion, with help from the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, and the Servicemen's Club is putting on a Low Country Boil long to be remembered.

The Boil includes: shrimp, sausage, sweet corn, potatoes and onions, dessert and coffee and milk.

The Boil will be served "NOLA-Style" at tables set for eight.

Social hour continues from 5-6 p.m. with dinner from 6-8 p.m.

The party continues after dinner with karaoke in the Foxhole.

Masks and beads will be given to the first 50 quests to arrive. Throughout the evening, there will be multiple drawings for \$10 gift certificates to the Foxhole.

Tickets are \$15 each and can be purchased from members of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, the Sons of the American Legion, and the Servicemen's Club.

Call for your tickets. The Servicemen's Club telephone number is 507-583-7884.

All proceeds benefit the Servicemen's Club and veterans activities.

Women to be honored at fundraiser

The 47th annual Woman of Achievement Scholarship Awards and Fundraiser Celebration will take place Friday, March 8.

The event will be at Torey's Restaurant and Bar, 208 Cedar Ave. N. in Owatonna beginning at 6:15 p.m.

Women of Steele County will be honored in the following categories: Woman of Achievement, Young Careerist and Lifetime Achievement.

Owatonna Business Women will also be awarding \$4,600 in scholarships to six women from Steele County.

For more information, check out www.owatonnabusineswomen.org or call 507-451-3580.

KC fish fry coming to BP

The Blooming Prairie Knights of Columbus #4323 will host a fish fry from 5-8 p.m. on Friday, March 8 at the BP Servicemen's Club.

The menu will include mouth-watering fish fillets, cheese bread, baked potato, dessert, vegetable, juice and coffee.

Amateur radio license class to be offered in Owatonna

In Conjunction with Steele County Emergency Management, the Owatonna Steele County Amateur Radio Club (OSCAR) is offering free to the public a Ham Radio license class.

The class will run Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. from Feb. 12 through March 7 at the Owatonna Fire Station, 107 West Main St. Along with learning about the many facets of ham radio, including its use for emergency communications, volunteer instructors will prepare students to pass the No Code Technician Class license examination. Class instruction is free. Cost for the study guide is \$30. Check out oscarhamradio@gmail.com and click on "2019 Technician Class" under "General Announcements" for the latest details.

Students will be able to take the license exam on March 7. The exam session is open to anyone wishing to take one or more exams. All levels of Amateur Radio license examinations will be available at the exam session. Walk-ins are welcome. The exam fee is \$15.

The class is open to all ages. Children 12 years and younger must be accompanied by an adult. To register, or for more information, call Tom Karnauskas at 507-444-9133 or e-mail to oscarhamradio@gmail.com.

Eagles offers scholarships

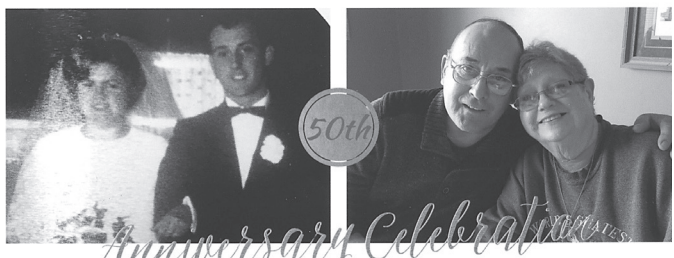
The Owatonna Eagles would like to invite all traditional and non-traditional students to apply for three \$1,000 scholarships that will be awarded in May 2019.

A Link with more information and an application can be found at www.eagles1791.com.

The funding for the generous award is from the Don Tuerk Endowment. Don Tuerk was a community-minded Owatonna native, long-time Eagles member, and Owatonna fireman. The scholarship will be targeted, but not limited, to students with goals of public service, two or four year degrees. Scholarships will be used for improving our communities and helping others.

Please encourage everyone that you know to apply. Deadline is March 31.

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Sweet music for Valentine's



(PHOTO SUBMITTED)

It was sweet music at the fifth annual Litomysl Valentine Dinner at the Holy Trinity Catholic Church Saturday night. The dinner was attended by 175 sweethearts. Lucas Arndt is at the keyboard with the Czech Welcome sign behind him.

Auditions set for 'Farce of Habit'

Little Theatre of Owatonna (LTO) has announced auditions for its spring production of "Farce of Habit."

The auditions will take place from 6-8 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 17, and Monday, Feb. 18, at LTO, 560 Dunnell Drive in the West Hills Complex in Owatonna.

"Farce of Habit" is by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Home and Jamie Wooten. The artistic director is Sandee Hardy-Hagen, and the technical director is Kimberly Keck.

Comic fireworks explode in FARCE OF HABIT, an absurdly funny Southern-fried romp that takes us to the quaint Reel 'Em Inn, a fishing lodge in the Ozarks. Proprietor, D. Gene Willburn looks forward to a peaceful weekend on the lake. But only two chances of that happening: slim and none. Why, for example, has his wife, Wanelle, picked these three days to white-knuckle her way through caffeine withdrawal? Is his son Ty's marriage to Jenna falling apart due to the French can-can costume Ty is wearing? Why would D. Gene's feisty sister, Maxie, allow herself to get caught up in such a bizarre undercover police assignment? And that's just his family. Thwarting D. Gene's weekend plans is a gaggle of nuns converging on the Inn to experience a nature retreat revealing D. Gene's chronic fear of anything in a habit? Add the colossal ego of Jock McNair, nationally known relationship guru who threatens everyone's sanity; a shy retiree anxious to cut loose and embrace his "inner caveman;" throw in the storm of the century

quickly bearing down on Mayhew, Arkansas, and D. Gene has no prayer of baiting a hook any time soon. Oh, and did we mention there's an axe murderer on the loose? If you enjoy gloriously preposterous hilarity, then laughing your way through the take-no-prisoner's lunacy of a Jones Hope Wooten comedy is one habit you'll never want to break!

The cast of nine adults aged 30 to 60 has roles for five women and four men.

Audition packets will be available at the Owatonna Public Library, Old Town Bagels, Instry Prints of Owatonna, and online at <http://littletheatreofowatonna.org/upcoming-auditions/>.

Performances will be at 7:30 p.m. on April 26-27 and May 3-4 with matinee performances at 2 p.m. on April 28 and May 5.

"Farce of Habit" is presented with special arrangements through Dramatists Play Service and is sponsored by Old Town Bagels.

Sons of Norway to meet Monday

The Nortonna Lodge 1-638 of the Sons of Norway will meet on Monday, Feb. 18. Supper will be served at 6 p.m. for a cost of \$8 at the Owatonna Elks Lodge, 126 East Vine Street.

The February program is a 30-minute video called "The Viking Age: Wrath of the Northmen." Learn about the origins of the Vikings, factors that led to the raiding years, and long-term impacts of the Viking exploits.

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

Landowner workshop planned in Owatonna

Are you a non-operating farm land owner? Do you rent your farm land? Do you want to improve your farm's soil and water quality?

If you've answered yes to any of those questions, you're encouraged to attend the Farm Landowner Workshop on Saturday, March 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The workshop will be at the Albert F. Reding Environmental Education Center, 1546 SW 58th St., Owatonna.

The event is free, but registration is encouraged as lunch will be provided.

For additional information, check out www.ikes@minnesotaikes.org or contact Gary Schwartz at 507-363-1710.

The workshop is sponsored by the Owatonna Izaak Walton League as well as the state division.

**Meet And Greet
Prince Charming Turned
Professional Actor**



Jay Alan Christianson
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(He starred as Prince Charming in Cinderella at BP in 1977)

Learn about Jay's career in theatre and as a professional actor
**Thursday, Feb 21
11 a.m.**
Blooming Prairie High School Media Center

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Feb 14 Valentine's Day Love Me Chicken Tenders, Sweetheart Salisbury Steak, Be Mine Mashed Potato, Gravy, Cupid Corn, Whole Grain Dinner Roll, Valentine's Treat

Feb 15 No School

Feb 18 No School

Feb 19 Crispy Chicken Tenders, Roast Pork & Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Whole Grain Dinner Roll

Feb 20 National Muffin Day French Bread Pizza, Tuna Panini, Roasted Cauliflower, Pumpkin Apple Muffin

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Feb 13 Hearty Vegetable Soup, Hamwich Sandwich, Alt: Turkeywich Sandwich, 3-Bean Salad, Cranberry Bog Dessert

Feb 14 Lasagna, Green Salad/Dressing, French Bread, Banana Pudding Dessert

Feb 15 Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Peas with Onions, Home Made Dinner Roll, Orange Slices

Feb 18 Steak in Sauce, Baked Potato/Marg/Sr Cr, Green Beans, Pumpkin Nut Cookie

Feb 19 Tater Tot Hotdish, Coleslaw, Homemade Dinner Roll, Mixed Fruit Cup

Feb 20 Italian Chicken Breast, Rice Pilaf, Buttered Carrots, Green Salad/Dressing, Cranberry Sauce, Cream Puff

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GYMNASTICS



PHOTO COURTESY OF JULIE STREET
The Owatonna gymnastics team stands for a photo on Saturday at Winona High School after winning their fourth consecutive Big 9 title.

Owatonna claims fourth straight Big 9 championship

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna gymnastics team claimed their fourth straight Big 9 title on Saturday at Winona High School.

The Huskies finished with a team score of 147.175. Northfield was second with a score of 141.750, while Austin was third and Winona was fourth.

“It was just an amazing meet for having the best routines we have had all season,” Owatonna head coach Tom Smith said. “The girls definitely showed the talent they have at this meet. I was so proud how they all come together and competed like champions. It was just spectacular to see them win for the fourth straight year.”

Owatonna finished first in every event. Sydney Kretlow won the vault with a score of 9.625 and Ai An earned gold in the uneven bars (9.5), balance beam (9.4), floor exercise (9.5) and all-around (37.8).

An, Kretlow, Lindsay Bangs and Lucy Macius earned all-conference honors and Janessa Moore was honorable mention.

The Huskies will next compete in the 1AA Section meet at Farmington High School on Friday, Feb. 15

BIG 9 CONFERENCE MEET at Winona High School Team Results

Owatonna 147.175, Northfield 141.75, Austin 135.25, Winona 132.45, Red Wing 131.6, Mankato West 131.575, Rochester Century 128.725, Mankato East 126.475, Faribault 125.75, Rochester Mayo 123.575, Rochester John Marshall 98.775.

Owatonna Results

Vault: 1, Sydney Kretlow 9.625; 2, Lindsay Bangs 9.525; 6, Ali An 9.4. Uneven Bars: 1, An 9.5; 2, Bangs 9.475; 4, Lucy Macius 9.2. Balance Beam: 1, An 9.4; 2, Bangs 9.225. Floor Exercise: 1, An 9.5; 4, Bangs 9.3. All-Around: 1, An 37.8; 2, Bangs 37.525.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Medford celebrates conference title

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The eighth-ranked Medford girls’ basketball team (18-0, 12-0) continued its historic unbeaten start to the 2018-19 season on Friday evening, defeating Maple River 69-43 at MHS.

“We took care of business,” Medford standout Emma Kniefel said. “The keys to victory we’re going to be defense and rebounding both offensively and defensively. We didn’t rebound too well in the beginning, but it got a little better as the game went on, still something we are constantly working on to get better.”

At 12-0 in league play, the Tigers clinched its first Gopher Conference Championship since 2003, and their first outright title since 1984.

“It is a very satisfying accomplishment, as it was one of our goals in the beginning of the season,” Kniefel said. “Winning the Gopher at home, in front of our fans was very special. We have had outstanding fan support this season and we appreciate it all. We hope to build off this accomplishment by making a strong showing in the post season.”

Point guard Kiley Nihart led the Tigers with 22 points against the Eagles (11-10, 6-6).

“Kiley is absolutely fearless and a hands down just great worker,” Kniefel said. “She is one of the hardest working student athletes I know, and I love having a point guard like her. She can find people down the court and handles the ball with poise. She can get hot quick and hit the 3-pointer very well which is awesome. We are very lucky to have a player like her.”

Kniefel finished with 17, Izzy Reuvers chipped in 12, Isabella Steffen contributed eight, Kinsey Cronin scored six and Alorah Wiese had four.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SKYE DEVOE
Medford’s Jenna Berg shoots a 3-pointer in the Tigers’ 69-43 victory over Maple River.

WRESTLING

Owatonna wrestlers dominate, three-peat as Big 9 champions

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna wrestling team earned its third consecutive Big 9 Conference Championship on Friday by slaughtering Faribault 57-12 at FHS.

The victory gave the Huskies (22-3, 10-0) their fifth conference championship in the past seven seasons. Owatonna had to defeat every team in their section in order to win the conference title.

“That means we are on the right path for reaching one of bigger goals of making the state tournament as a team,” Owatonna head coach Adam Weitalla said. “That’s really what this conference championship means to us and our program.”

This was the third season in a row the Huskies clinched the Big 9 title against the Falcons (14-10, 6-4).

“We are doing the right things,” Weitalla said. “We’re getting it done in school, in the practice room and we’re staying focused. We are holding each other accountable so that we can win as team. In order to do that you have to do the right things throughout the season and that’s what a conference title tells us we did.”

The Huskies started the meet strong and built an 33-0 lead after Blake West pinned JT Hausen in one minute and 20 seconds at the 106-pound weight class; YJ Evillard pinned D’Shaun Davis in 57 second at 133; Kanin Hable defeated Aiden Tobin 9-2 at 120;



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL
Owatonna’s Nick Staska takes on an opponent during the 2018 MSHSL State Meet.

Chase Dallman defeated Gael Ramirez 8-6 at 126; Jacob Reinardy defeated Riley Stoltz 13-11 at 132 and Landen Johnson pinned Cael Casteel in 1:27 at 138.

Owatonna won by forfeit at 145, but Faribault picked up its first win at 152 when Josh Oathout defeated Trevor Schroeder 5-0.

Matt Seykora got the Huskies back on track at 160 by pinning

Will Erickson in 3:30, but the Falcons answered with a win at 170 when Austin Underdahl pinned Ethan Stockwell in 1:41.

Owatonna and Faribault split the final two matches. Cade King pinned Dylan Lippert in 1:46 at 182 and Josh Heyda defeated Nick Staska 7-5 at 195. Faribault forfeited the final two matches at 220 and 285.

ATHLETICS

Local athletes participate in National Signing Day

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

All across the country, high school athletes participated in the formal signing ceremonies declaring where they will play college athletics on Wednesday, Jan. 6.

Athletes at Owatonna, Blooming Prairie and New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva signed national letters of intent during ceremonies at each high school.

Owatonna’s Joseph Stransky said he chose to continue this education and football career at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls because it was the only school that had what he wanted: An Agriculture Business Program and the opportunity to play football. He said he could have played at Division II Bemidji State University, but they did not have the major he wanted/

“I like the River Falls because it is a lot like owatonna,” he said. “I didn’t want to go live somewhere that would be congested like the [twin] cities. The coaches are really cool. They’re a great group of guys that will be a lot of fun to work with the next four years.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALISON MACH
Blooming Prairie football coaches Nate Piller, Matt Kittelson, Chad Gimbel and Karl Steckelberg stand for photo with Seth Peterson and Tim Wolf after the duo signed their national letters of intent on Wednesday, Feb. 6 at BPHS.

Stransky said River Falls recently built a new sporting complex and it’s one of the best in country for Division III.

“Coach Matt Walker is working on rebuilding the program and the facilities has helped with the recruitment,” he said. “The future looks really good for us, last season was tough but the year before they were in the top of the WIAC conference which is one of the toughest in the country. I’m just looking forward to meeting the guys and the experience of playing at the next level.”

SEE SIGNINGS, B5

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CHEERLEADING

NRHEG cheer earns academic award

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva cheerleading team was recently presented the Minnesota Cheer Coaches Associates (MCCA) Southeast Regional Academic Award at the MCCA Awards Banquet on Feb. 1 at the St. Paul RiverCentre.

NRHEG cheer coach Kari Buendorf said her squad was fortunate to win this award, something the Panthers are starting to grow accustom to.

Hailey Westrum was honored to the All-State Sideline Cheer Team. This was her second year making the team.

“It’s a well deserving of the honor,” Buendorf said.

Westrum performed with other all-state cheerleaders from around the state the following morning at a



PHOTO COURTESY OF KARI BUENDORF
NRHEG cheerleaders Karenna Strom, Laura Worrell, Sydney Schlinger and Hailey Westrum stand for a photo after being selected to the MCCA Honor Team.

competition.

NRHEG seniors Westrum, Laura Worrell, Sydney Schlinger and Karenna Strom were selected to the Honor Team, which is for leadership, community involvement and academic status.

This year the MCCA awarded six \$1,000 and six \$500 scholarships.

Worrell and Strom were each awarded \$1,000 scholarships.

Buendorf was also nominated for Coach of the Year.

“I was very humbled,” she said. “I am lucky to be able to coach some of the

most amazing athletes in something they love to do. I have wonderful support from them, they families, and the communities of NRHEG. Administration at both the Ellendale and New Richland buildings have been wonderful to work with and they support our cheer program which I am very grateful for.”

The Panthers varsity stunt team also competed at the competition on Saturday and placed fourth out of 13 teams.

“I was very proud of how they did,” Buendorf said. “I hope that next year we can do it again.”

BASKETBALL

BP falls to conference leader WEM

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossom boys basketball team tasted defeat two games in a row for the first time this season.

After losing a tough game to Hayfield (18-4, 11-1) earlier in the week, Waterville-Elysian-Morristown (17-1, 8-1) took it to the Blossoms 54-39 at BPHS on Friday, Feb. 8.

Much like the first game with the Buccaneers, turnovers really hurt the local effort.

“WEM does some things with their defense that we just struggle to deal with,” BP head coach Nate Piller said. “Turnovers were costly again, too, as we had 18 mistakes in the game, and many were turned into easy baskets.”

BP had just one offensive rebound in the first half, and that was a tough stat with which to deal. The Bucs are a very good team, with just a single loss in the season. The Blossoms stayed with them much of the way, until a stretch when WEM hit 3 straight 3-pointers and a layup to pull away.

Gabe Hagen and Kaden Thomas both had 12 points to lead the BP scoring, and Zach archer added eight. He Blossoms fell to 13-5 for the season and 6-4 in conference play.

HAYFIELD BOYS TOO MUCH FOR BP

A quick four points for the Awesome Blossom quickly disintegrated, and Hayfield took the game over in a 67-62 victory at Hayfield Tuesday Feb. 5.

The locals kept the game competitive, but the Vikings controlled BP misses, when a sudden cold spell of shooting beset the Blossoms.

Hayfield built a 31-18 lead at the break, thanks to the cold shooting by the visitors, and



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL
BP's Gabe Hagen goes up for uncontested layup in the Awesome Blossoms' 56-55 win over Grand Meadow on Jan. 31.

the advantage mounted to double-digit leads, before the Blossoms clawed their way back close. BP ran out of gas at the end, getting the lead down to three.

“We came out strong,” Piller said. “But then we went cold shooting and allowed the Vikings to build a lead. We were getting good shots, but we just couldn’t connect, and Hayfield controlled our misses. We did cut the margin to three, but we ran out of gas doing it.”

Mason Tapp counted 22 points for the winners, and Patrick Towey chipped in 17, with Luke Duducha and Slauthaug adding 10 each.

BP’s Hagen led all corers in the game with 23 points, and Thomas and Karson Vigeland contributed 14 and 13 points, respectively.

SIGNINGS: Peterson going to St. Thomas

FROM B4

Other Huskies to sign were Sydney Kretlow (track) with the University of Minnesota, Cade King (wrestling) with South Dakota State), Nick Anderson (lacrosse) with the University of Cumberland, Emily Rahrack (tennis) with the University of Minnesota-Duluth, Kiley Friedrichs (soccer) and Maylynn Prokopec (hockey) with Bethel University and Jordan Whalen (soccer) and Emma Zimmerman (track) with Gustavus Adolphus College.

Anderson will be making the farthest journey out of all the Huskies athletes who signed. He’ll be traveling nearing 850 miles south to the University of the Cumberland in Lebanon, Tennessee.

Anderson said the coaching staff first contacted him in early-August and since then he has really started to admire and respect the coaching staff.

“The campus is absolutely gorgeous and the community is very supportive of the university,” he said. “The coaches are encouraging and promote accountability in the classroom and on the field. The program is very successful and shows many attributes for future success.”

Blooming Prairie’s Tim Wolf will join Stransky at with the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, while Seth Peterson (football) signed



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAN STORK
NRHEG’s Alex Buckmeier, along with his parents Jody and Andy, signed his national letter of intent on Wednesday, Jan. 6 to play football at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa.

with the University of St. Thomas and NRHEG’s Alex Buckmeier (football) signed with Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa.

“They had my major which was a big factor,” Buckmeier said. “I also really liked the town and how the people from town support the athletic teams. I just liked everything about the football team.”

Buckmeier said he is most excited to get to continue playing the game he loves for at least four more years.

“I’m also excited to create friendships with all my new teammates,” he said. “The community is really supportive and friendly. Campus is about the perfect size that I was looking for. They just built a really nice

science building. They’re facilities are great. Their weight room is super nice and they have an indoor field house.

“The coaches actually care about each player as a person instead of just a football player which was super important to me,” Buckmeier continued. “They’re a great group of coaches and I can’t wait to play for them.”

Northwestern, an NAIA program, has a historically successful program. They have had just three losing seasons in the past 50 years. They have been to the national playoff 19 times and are two-time national champs.

Northwestern finished the regular season ranked fifth in the nation this past season.

HOCKEY

Owatonna girls eliminated

STAFF REPORT

Owatonna girls’ hockey season (11-13) came to end on Wednesday, Jan. 6 at the Dodge County Four Seasons Arena.

The Dodge County Wildcats (12-13-2) defeated the Huskies, 2-0, in the opening round of the Section 1AA tournament.

Dodge County’s Kayla Schubert and Olivia Smallbrock scored goals. Smallbrock and Natalie Ahern dished out assists.

Owatonna goalie Asia Buryska stopped 44-of-46 shots on goal. The Wildcats had 46 shots on goals while Huskies only managed seven.

Owatonna took its lumps this season, but figured to improve drastically next season with all but two members of team returning. The Huskies were mainly composed off sophomores, freshman and eight-graders this season. The team had only two juniors, and a pair of seventh-grades even saw varsity playing time.

Dodge County went on to loss to Lakeville North (17-9-1) on Saturday, 5-2, at The Lakeville Ames Arena.



STAFF PHOTO CHRIS SCHAD
Owatonna’s Kiley Friedrichs attempts a steal against Dodge County at the Dodge County Four Seasons Arena.

BASKETBALL

Bucs pillage Blossoms

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

A Waterville-Elysian-Morristown girls’ basketball team that has fashioned a 16-4 overall record went up early on Blooming Prairie and eased to a 47-31 win at WEM HS on Friday, Feb. 8.

The loss left BP at 10-8 for the season and 6-6 in the conference.

The locals had trouble finding any offensive rhythm in the game, although the defense played pretty well in the low-scoring contest.

The Bucs led 26-17 at the half, but the Blossoms felt that a few made shots would have made a difference. The second half was much the same, even though the defense played well.

“We got down early and could never find a rhythm against a very good WEM team,” BP head coach John Brunns said. “The Bucs play good defense, and we just couldn’t get any closer than seven points. Maybe next week will bring better results.”

Megan Oswald led the Blossom scoring with 13 points, and Bobbie Brunns chipped in 12.

Toryn Roberts, Paige Pittman and Shelby Hermel all had 11 points for the winners and the Bucs improved to 9-3 in the Gopher Conference.

HAYFIELD DROPS BP GIRLS

Hayfield (15-8, 5-5) took an early lead and defeated the Awesome Blossom 57-43 at Blooming Prairie on Tuesday, Feb. 5.

The home team kept the game competitive most of the way, getting within three points late in the first half.

Bobbie Brunns tallied 13 first half points to keep the score close, and the second half stayed close, but the



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL
BP’s Bobbie Burns passes to a teammate during an early season victory over Chatfield.

Hayfield balance proved a little too much and Vikings pulled away late.

Hayfield answered every run by the locals. Oswald counted 11 points and dished out some nice assists in the second half action.

“It was a good competitive contest,” Brunns said. “We managed to stay close, in the first half, thanks to Bobbie Brunns’ 13 points, and we were able to stay close in the second half, but a few too many turnovers and the Hayfield balance turned the tide. We held their high scorer to five points, but two other Vikings picked up the slack.”

Brunns scored 20 points to lead the Blossom offense, and Oswald contributed 17. Abby Staska counted 22 for Hayfield to lead all scorers. Elecia Brown added 16 for the visiting Vikings.

BP DEPLUME CARDINALS

BP earned a solid win at home on Monday, Feb. 4, rolling over Bethlehem

Academy (2-17, 0-12) in a conference battle. 55-37.

The Blossoms took a 30-18 halftime lead and went up by 24 points at one point in the second half.

“We led the entire game in a nice win at home,” said Brunns. “Oswald had 11 of her team-leading 16 points in the first half, and we kept good control of the second half action as well. with nice balance between offense and defense.”

Maggie Brunns counted eight of her 10 points in that second half, and Maya Lembke had six. The girls did a good job of taking what the Cardinal defense gave them in the game, and the team played a solid defense.

After Oswald’s 16 points, Maggie Brunns counted 10 points, and Julia Worke, Bobbie Brunns and Maya Lembke all chipped in eight points. Abby Strodtman and Mercedes Huerta counted nine and eight points for the Cardinals.

Sean Lassahn

This week’s Panther of the Week is Sean Lassahn. Sean lives in Ellendale with his parents, Dick and Becky. He is in Mr. Beynon’s third grade class.

Sean is such an inquisitive student. He’s a very curious student and always asking questions. Sean values friendship and loyalty above all. He’s easy going and loves to joke around in class. Sean is a sports fanatic and loves all Minnesota teams. You can’t get through a conversation without football being discussed. He’s an excellent receiver and an excellent student.

Keep up the great work Sean!

WRESTLING

Tigers edge Panthers

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Medford wrestling team is riding high and heading into the postseason like hammer after defeating New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva 31-26 in both team's regular season finale on Saturday at MHS.

The Tigers (10-1) started the meet with back-to-back wins by Alex Helgeson (113-pound weight class) and Charley Elwood (120). Helgeson pinned NRHEG's Annabelle Petsinger in four minutes in nine seconds and Elwood won by a 10-0 major decision over Nikolas Petsinger.

Clay Stenzel scored the Panthers' (7-10) first points at 126 when he defeated Kael Neumann, 10-3.

However, the Tigers rallied off another pair of wins by Garron Hoffman (132) and Tate Hermes (138) to extend their lead to 20-3.

NRHEG's Thor Routh won by pin at 145 and Medford's Willie VonRuden won by a technical fall at 152 before the Panthers earned victories in three of the final four matches.

"Two nights in a row we were very close, and unfortunately we were on the losing end again," NRHEG head coach Shawn Larson said. "It is a little difficult to take when you know there are so many ways during a match that you could make up five points. When this happens it is harder to move forward as you focus on all of the ways that it could be different. Usually, I encourage our guys to put it behind and move forward, though this time there is a very good chance that Medford will be the team we see for the Section 2A Tournament this coming week. We wrestled well in this match and it would have been nice to get the win, but we will be ready for the section tournament this week."

NRHEG and Medford will be back in action on Thursday, Feb. 14 in first round of section tournament.

However, their opponents are officially yet to be determined.

"It is to be determined, though there is a good chance that we will return to Medford," Larson said.

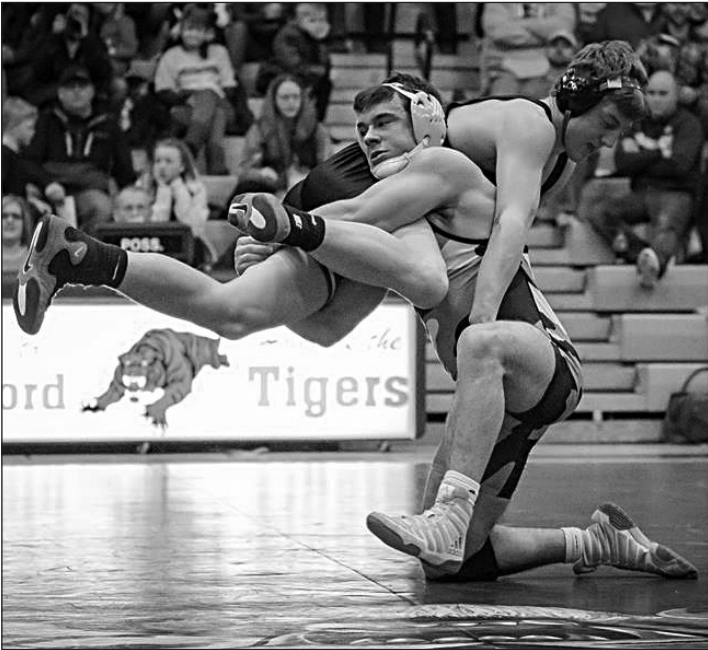


PHOTO COURTESY OF SKYE DEVOE

Medford's Zach Wetmore attempts to take down NRHEG's Tyler Jacobson during the Tigers' 31-26 win on Saturday.

NRHEG also had a good showing against Maple River (17-5) on Friday, but eventually fell to the Eagles 31-27.

"We knew coming into this match that it was going to be a good match, and we knew that this could be potentially for the conference title," Larson said. "We wrestled hard in all of the matches and it went well in general, but anytime you lose by four in wrestling it feels like you had the ability to win. It is going to sting a little but we have to put it behind us."

NRHEG's George Roesler wrestled strong at 138, earning a fall, and Ralph Roesler picked up a win against an opponent who had previously defeated him twice this season.

The Panthers closed at the meet with Misgen and Arndt pinning their opponents at 220 and 285.

NRHEG defeated Norwood-Young America (7-11) to finish off the home triangular meet on Friday.

The Panthers won the match 49-21.

"I felt like we did things the right way," Larson said. "We earned bonus points in matches we won, and found a way in many matches to not give bonus points in most matches we lost. That is how you win as a team. It is a good feeling to put a full team on the mat for the first time this season, and we got some good

wins in this match as well."

The Panthers' win was highlighted by Parker Bunn, who won his first varsity match at 106 with a major decision, and big wins from Reich, Routh, Gushwa, Jacobson, and Arnd. Who of whom earned their victories by fall.

- Complete Results**
Medford 31, NRHEG 26
113: Alex Helgeson (Medford) fall over Annabelle Petsinger, 4:09.
120: Charley Elwood (Medford) major decision over Nikolas Petsinger, 10-0.
126: Clay Stenzel (NRHEG) decision over Kael Neumann, 10-3.
132: Garron Hoffman (Medford) fall over Andrew Reich, 3:59.
138: Tate Hermes (Medford) major decision over George Roesler, 9-0.
145: Thor Routh (NRHEG) fall over Dillon Bartosch, 2:01.
152: Willie VonRuden (Medford) technical fall over Agro Gushwa, 15-0.
160: Ralph Roesler (NRHEG) fall over Curtis Ficht-Babcock, 1:23.
182: Tyler Jacobson (NRHEG) technical fall over Zach Wetmore, 18-2.
220: Brennan Hoffman (Medford) fall over Makota Misgen, 3:54.
285: Quinten Arndt (NRHEG) fall over Gavin Hermes, 1:18.

SWIMMING AND DIVING

Huskies tenth at Big 9 meet

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna boys' swimming and diving finished tied for 10th at the Big 9 Conference Meet on Friday and Saturday at Rochester Mayo High School.

Rochester Mayo won its fourth straight conference title with 399 points, while the Huskies managed 69 points.

"Overall I'm happy with how they swam," Owatonna head coach Peter Rhodes said. "We still had at least 12 lifetime best swims and while not everyone got lifetime or season best swims, we had a lot of guys right at those times. I would have been concerned if we would have had big time drops across the board, but we still have a week and a half of taper and rest before the end of the season."

Rhodes said he wasn't sure what to expect from the meet after how much practice the team had missed recently due the weather.

The top highlights for Owatonna were: Mason Piepho dropping four seconds off of his time in the 400-yard freestyle, all the sprinter in the 50 freestyle had their best swims of the season and 75 percent of the team's 100 freestylers swam their best times of the season.

"Logan Steckelberg really surprised me with his 100 back swimming a lifetime best swim," Rhodes said. "I wasn't expecting that since he was going for a week and was a little off in his 200 free."

Steckleberg was the Huskies only swimmer who ended up the podium after he placed in eighth in the 100 backstroke.

Owatonna divers Colten Kamholz and Jacob Fast ended up seventh and ninth overall.

Owatonna is back in action on Feb. 20 for section prelims at the Rochester Recreation Center. Finals take place on Feb. 22.

"Sections is the meet we preparing for with our taper and rest," Rhodes said. "After yesterday's meet I am expecting some really big time drops."

BIG 9 CONFERENCE MEET at Rochester Mayo High School
Team Results: Rochester Mayo 399, Northfield 374, Rochester Century 299,

Winona 264, Mankato West 191, Austin 174, Rochester John Marshall 172, Red Wing 105, Faribault 93, Mankato East 69, Owatonna 69, Albert Lea 24.

200-yard Medley Relay: 1, Rochester Mayo (Grant Reeves, Timothy Hough, William Yang, Aashish Yadav) 1:36.46 (New Big 9 Record).

200 Freestyle: 1, Grafton Parlette (Rochester Century) 1:45.11; 27, Logan Steckelberg (Owatonna) 2:04.34; 39, Mason Piepho (Owatonna) 2:22.40.

200 Individual Medley: 1, Reeves (Rochester Mayo) 1:54.18; 11, Fletcher Schulz (Owatonna) 2:13.79; 19, Payton Jorgenson (Owatonna) 2:21.28; 20, Ryan Peterson (Owatonna) 2:23.15; 31, Matt Larson (Owatonna) 2:52.04.

50 Freestyle: 1, Andrew Becker (Northfield) 21.45; 22, Caleb Belting (Owatonna) 24.92; 24, Payden Foster Erickson (Owatonna) 25.14; 29, Ethan Engels (Owatonna) 25.58; 32, Colten Kamholz (Owatonna) 25.95.

100 Butterfly: 1, Timothy Hough (Rochester Mayo) 51.13; 16, Schulz (Owatonna) 59.62; 31, Engels (Owatonna) 1:07.25.

100 Freestyle: 1, Jack Herczeg (Winona) 46.58 (New Big 9 Record); 18, Jorgenson (Owatonna) 55.22; 34, Tucker Jen0 (Owatonna) 1:02.21; 38, Garrett Dahlem (Owatonna) 1:03.23.

500 Freestyle: 1, Matthew Strom (Rochester Century) 4:48.40; 34, Foster Erickson (Owatonna) 6:15.45; 36, Trace Walderon (Owatonna) 6:29.57; 38, Piepho (Owatonna) 6:36.16; 40, Larson (Owatonna) 6:41.63.

200 Freestyle Relay: 1, Winona (Grant Wolner, Tony Coudron, Jack Herczeg, Alex Jorgenson) 1:28.69; 10, Owatonna (Walderon, Jorgenson, Engels, Kamholz) 1:42.37;

100 Backstroke: 1, Reeves (Rochester Century) 51.13; 8, Steckelberg (Owatonna) 58.85; 34, Jen0 (Owatonna) 1:17.70.

100 Breaststroke: 1, Hough (Rochester Century) 59.53; 15, Belting (Owatonna) 1:08.70; 28, Peterson (Owatonna) 1:14.35; 32, Walderon (Owatonna) 1:16.21; 38, Dahalen (Owatonna) 1:22.59.

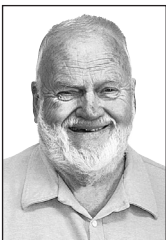
400 Freestyle Relay: 1, Winona (Wolner, Tanner Lozenski, Jorgenson, Herczeg) 3:13.46 (New Big 9 Record); 10, Owatonna (Jorgenson, Bradley Harris, Marcus Nguyen, Jameson Bragfrede) 3:41.92.

ARCTIC DEEP FREEZE PUTS HALT TO ATHLETICS

Mother Nature is certainly extracting her revenge on us for the mild weather we experienced over the first half of the winter. The last two weeks have necessitated a half dozen school closings or late starts, almost a dozen postponements or cancellations of athletic contests, and the disruption of numerous community activities or individual obligations.

The continuing predictions by weather forecasters indicate that more snow is still predicted in the coming days. No one can say that we live in an area that is bereft of excitement and changeable conditions. Soon we will be anxiously hoping that better weather is on the way, and we can voice expectations of a new season. In the meantime, enjoy winter and the adventures it generates.

THE WEEK IN SPORTS
Despite the weather problems for high school sports, the local basketball



Outside the Lines
LEMAR NELSON

teams fortunately did get games played. Unfortunately, results disappointed fans for the week. The boys lost two games straight for the first time all season, even though they were to two of the top teams in the areas. The team played

Hayfield close most of the game, but struggled against an old nemesis, when Waterville-Elysian-Morristown dominated BP for the second time this season. The Blossoms dropped their record to five losses with the defeats.

The girls managed to get a win over Bethlehem Academy in a make-up game, but the team took tough losses to Hayfield and WEM They finished the week with a 10-8 overall record, and an even mark in conference games. The boys have had good seasons from several players, and the girls, too, have had three or four girls with seasons above expectations. Now, it will be interesting to

note if the season still can improve with the three or four games that still remain on the schedules. We will hope so.

TRIVIA
Because of time restraints and deadlines, last week's column got crowded out of the paper. Hopefully, that column will be in this issue, and this shortened version for this week will satisfy readers' interest. This week is a rather uneventful week, although many are preparing for the Tail of Heeling at the Servicemen's Cub next Saturday, Feb. 16. This is a dress-up affair, and it should be a very entertaining evening.

Another thing of importance is the Chamber of Commerce membership drive now underway. I strongly urge all businesses and supportive individuals to join. The Chamber does many good things for businesses and individuals in the community, and joining is one way to show interest and support for that organization.

With more snow still in the forecast, I will close for now. Enjoy winter activities, and we'll talk again.

DANCE TEAM

Owatonna dance season ends

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna Dance team recently competed High Kick and Jazz at the 1AAA Section competition at Bloomington Kennedy High School on Saturday.

Huskies head coach Victoria Johnson said captains Morgan Blood and Elise Sande did a great job of leading the team and preparing them mentally and emotionally to compete.

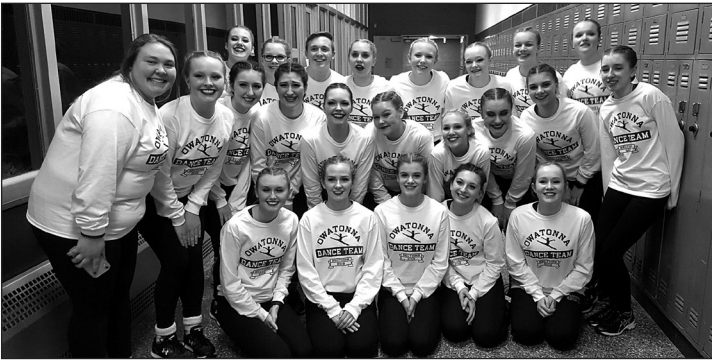


PHOTO COURTESY OF VICTORIA JOHNSON

The Owatonna dance team poses for a photo after the Section 1AAA meet on Saturday.

"The team improved from last year which is always a positive when you are a new team," Johnson said. "Our jazz performance was the best of the season."

Eastview, Prior Lake and Lakeville North advanced

to the state meet while the Owatonna season came to an end. The Huskies' dance team consists of approximately 40 athletes. They're coaches by Johnson, Nikki Burgmaier, Madie Conley, Samantha Hager and Diane Skala.

BASKETBALL

Panthers double up Cardinals

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva girls' basketball team celebrated senior night with a convincing 62-36 victory over Bethlehem Academy (2-17, 0-12) on the home court Friday, Feb. 8.

The Panthers' seven seniors were honored, as NRHEG scored early and often in the contest, and improved to 8-14 overall and 5-7 in the Gopher Conference.

The Panthers more doubled the Cardinals at the half with a 32-15 advantage, and the girls kept the pressure on throughout the game.

Sidney Schultz had 20 points to lead the offense, and Sophie Sork and Darian Pearson each added 10 points. Stork pulled down 14 rebounds, and Caitlin Goette chipped in 10 boards as well.

"The season is winding down and the snow days, missed practices, and make-up games have made it a difficult few weeks," NRHEG head coach Onika Peterson said. "I credit the girls, however, for their positive attitude and their hard work. We hope to continue to progress to playoffs."

MEDFORD PREVAILS OVER NRHEG

A big first half proved too little for the Panther girls, as Medford (18-0, 12-0) took

over the game in the second half for a 74-59 victory over NRHEG on Monday, Feb. 4, at New Richland.

The Panthers had a great first half and led the Tigers 40-38 at the break.

The second half was a different story, as Medford shut down the Panther offense and Emma Kniefel and Kiley Nihart scored 31 of the Tigers' 36-second half points.

Medford is a tough team, and it is to the Panther girls' credit that they hung with the Tigers as long as they did. Alexis Anderson led the local scoring with 22 points, and Stork added 15. Anderson and Stork also pulled down eight and seven rebounds.

Bethlehem outlasts NRHEG

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The Faribault Bethlehem Academy boys' basketball team (9-8, 4-5) defeated New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva on the home court, 49-41, Friday, Feb. 8.

Although the Panthers trailed by as many as 11 points in the first half, coach Isaiah Lundberg thought that his team played better than in the previous two contests.

The offense couldn't finish shots in the half, but the defense kept the Panthers in the game.

NRHEG took a 31-30 lead in the second half and held the Cardinals to just three points over the first nine minutes, the Panthers had chances to pad the lead, but too many unforced turnovers in this stretch cost the team dearly.

Down the stretch, the Cardinals made some big baskets and went 13-of-16 at the free throw line.

"Even though we lost, I thought we played a pretty good game," Lundberg said. "Our energy and effort was good, and I liked the fact that

we had a chance to win."

Brady Agrimson and Jacob Schuller counted 17 and 16 points for the Panthers, and Jack Clark and Damon Trump scored 18 and 13 for the Cardinals.

PANTHERS TAME TIGERS

A good defense triggered a 65-60 victory for the NRHEG boys over Medford (3-13, 1-9) on the Tigers' home court Tuesday, Feb. 5, and the offense picked up with some better shooting midway through the first half.

The surge in scoring gave NRHEG a 30-24 lead at the break, and the teams split the points in the second half. The Panthers were able to handle Medford's press in the first half, and also found ways to adjust to varying defenses in the second half. The Tigers started fast in the second half and took a brief lead, but the visitors regrouped and eventually made some easy baskets off the good defense.

"We started slow," Lundberg said. "But things went much better after the boys settled down. Medford came out strong in the second

half, but we settled in after a time out and built a lead. Credit Medford, however, for continuing to play hard and getting back into the game."

Schuller and Agrimson had 16 and 15 points for the victors, and Kordell Schlaak and Blake Ihrke added 14 and 12 points. Noah Pirk1 scored 16 points for Medford, and Devon Federly and Ryan Hermanstorfer chipped in nine and 10 points for the home team.

baskets off the good defense.

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New arrival hits the ice at Four Seasons

Recently, a new electric Zamboni ice machine arrived at the Four Seasons Center. The machine was funded in part with a grant from the Owatonna Foundation.

Citing new air quality standards mandated by the State of Minnesota for indoor ice facilities, the request for funding was granted by the Foundation’s Board of Trustees.

“We are grateful to the Owatonna Foundation for their continued support. With the new air quality standards it was necessary to acquire the electric machine and the Foundation helped to make it possible,” said Steve Schroht, Four Seasons Centre manager.

Foundation director Laura Resler said the foundation is pleased to be able to help fund this grant. “The Foundation’s long history of supporting community projects such as this electric Zamboni has helped to enhance the quality of life in our community for over sixty years,” Resler said.

Any 501C3 non-profit with a capital project is encouraged to submit a grant to the Foundation for consideration. The grants deadlines are May 1 and Sept. 1. Grants for \$25,000 or less may be approved for funding by the Grants Committee. Grants above that amount must first be recommended by the Grants Committee and then are presented to the full Board of Trustees for approval.



Four Seasons Center in Owatonna has received a new electric Zamboni thanks to funding from the Owatonna Foundation. Those joining in welcoming the new Zamboni to the ice are, from left: Scott Goldberg, Steele County administrator, Dave Seykora, Foundation trustee, Greg Krueger, County Board chairman, Bill Beer, Denny Meillier, Chad Lange, Corey Mensink, Julie Rethemeier (on the Zamboni), all Foundation trustees and Steve Schroht, Four Seasons Centre manager.

Owatonna Schools awarded SMIF grant for literacy

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) recently approved seven grants totaling \$120,490 to support asset-based collaborative approaches to meeting the needs of children birth to age five and their families.

Among the 2019 Early Childhood Grant award recipients is Owatonna Public Schools, which will receive \$20,000 to expand a high quality literacy curriculum in order to support PreK-Grade 1 alignment.

Kasson-Mantorville Schools also received \$20,000 to provide literacy support in an effort to get all students reading well by third grade.

Another \$20,000 grant went to the Jeremiah Program to provide education and mentorship to single mothers in southeastern Minnesota living in poverty with young children. This program will increase parenting skills and knowledge required to build their child’s social and emotional skills.

“We are proud to support these organizations that are doing the important work of preparing young children for school and educating parents and teachers in the region,” said Rae Jean Hansen, vice president of Early Childhood at SMIF. “SMIF’s Early Childhood Grants support the Foundation’s focus area of investing in the children and families of our 20-county region in southern Minnesota.”

For more information on SMIF’s grant programs, contact Jennifer Heien, grants coordinator, at 507-214-7040 or jenniferh@smifoundation.org.

Miracle Office sets in at RE/MAX



RE/MAX Venture of Owatonna has become a Miracle Office. RE/MAX members include back row, from left: Matt Gillard, Cole Orlovski, Janita Paulson and Grady Strand; front row: Deb Gillard, Rachel Springer, Sarah Buttera and Kayla Wobschall. Not pictured: Melinda Seykora and Jodi Gillard.

RE/MAX Venture of Owatonna has earned the distinction of CMN Miracle Office in 2018. Through the Miracle Home and Miracle Property programs, RE/MAX Associates can make a donation to Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals after each residential and commercial transaction. All RE/MAX Venture donations benefit Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare in Minnesota.

“The Miracle Home program is a simple yet impactful way to help raise awareness and funds for CMN Hospitals and Clinics in Minnesota,” said Matt Gillard, broker/owner of RE/MAX Venture. “We are proud to have 100 percent agent participation, with several agents reaching Miracle Agent status and RE/MAX Venture achieving Miracle Office distinction in 2018.”

Gillard added, “Sixty-two children enter a CMN Hospital for treatment every minute. As business leaders who believe in making a difference and

giving back, it’s vital that we show our support for local kids and their families.”

RE/MAX Miracle Agents, Offices and Teams have made a significant impact on the lives of sick and injured children treated at CMN Hospitals across the U.S. and Canada by raising more than \$165 million for 170 member hospitals. RE/MAX Miracle Affiliates are dedicated supporters who pledge to make a donation after each closed property sale. Over the years, their support of CMN Hospitals has helped provide life-saving treatments, advanced medical equipment and valuable research and education. The local hospitals determine the best way to allocate those funds based on local need.

Many homes on remax.com are flagged as Miracle Homes with a CMN Hospitals yellow and red balloon icon. For more information about the Miracle Home program or RE/MAX Venture, please visit www.remax.com or call 507-413-8100.



Tax Prep Guide 2018

2019 TAX TIP:

Taxpayers can file for free.

Join the millions of Americans who safely file their taxes and save money using IRS Free File. Seventy percent of the nation’s taxpayers are eligible for IRS Free File. The IRS’s commercial partners offer free brand-name software to about 100 million individuals and families with incomes of \$66,000 or less. Taxpayers who earned more can use Free File Fillable Forms. This option allows taxpayers to complete IRS forms electronically. It is best for those who are comfortable doing their own taxes.

Taxpayers can also use the Interactive Tax Assistant tool on IRS.gov to answer many tax questions.

For tax year 2018, all individual taxpayers will file using the new Form 1040. Forms 1040A and 1040EZ are no longer available. Taxpayers who previously filed these forms will now file Form 1040. The new Form 1040 uses a “building block” approach allowing individuals to add only the schedules they need to their 2018 federal tax return. Taxpayers with more

complicated returns will need to complete one or more of the new Form 1040 Schedules. This group of taxpayers includes those who claim certain deductions or credits, or who owe additional taxes.

Individuals who filed their federal tax return electronically last year may not notice any changes, as the tax return preparation software will automatically use their answers to the tax questions to complete the Form 1040 and any needed schedules.



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NOTICE

SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS
 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #756
 BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA 55917
 FEBRUARY 26, 27, and 28, 2019
 TENTATIVE TIME RANGE 4:00-8:00 P.M.
 HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER

PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRPERSON

II. ROLL CALL – CLERK

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IV. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ONLY

Interviews to be conducted for the Superintendent of Schools

V. ADJOURNMENT

*Agenda may be subject to changes

2/12

FORECLOSURE

STATE OF MINNESOTA COUNTY OF STEELE

IN DISTRICT COURT THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

COURT FILE NUMBER: 74-CV-18-1651

SUPPLEMENTAL ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE

In the Matter of the Petition of Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation. For a New Certificate of Title After Mortgage Foreclosure Sale.

For an Order directing entry of A new certificate of title after Mortgage foreclosure.

TO: TERRY FONNER, DAVID FONNER, ROBIN FONNER, SEAN FONNER, JENNY BROOKS AND THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF JUDITH A. FONNER, DECEASED:

Upon receiving and filing the Report of Examiner of Titles in

the above entitled matter, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that you and all persons interested, appear before this Court on the 4th day of March, 2019, at 1:30 p.m., Steele County Court-house, 111 East Main Street, Owatonna, Minnesota, and then, or as soon thereafter as said matter can be heard, show cause, if any there may be, why this Court should not enter an Order as follows:

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED: That the Registrar of Titles, upon the filing with him of a certified copy of this Order cancel Certificate of Title No. 17109 and enter a new Certificate of Title for LOT ONE, (EXCEPT THE WEST 70 FEET), IN BLOCK TWO IN HEGER ADDITION TO THE CITY OF OWATONNA, AND THAT PART OF SIXTH AVENUE SOUTHEAST AS VACATED, LYING IMMEDIATELY EAST OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED LOT AND BEING A PARCEL THIRTY THREE FEET EAST AND WEST AND 88 FEET NORTH AND SOUTH, ALL BEING IN BLOCK TWO IN HEGER ADDITION TO THE CITY OF OWATONNA. AND THE NORTH HALF OF LOT SIXTEEN (16), EXCEPT THE WEST SEVENTY (70) FEET, BLOCK TWO (2), HEGER ADDITION TO THE CITY OF OWATONNA, AND ALSO ALL THAT PORTION OF SIXTH AVENUE S.E. LYING IMMEDIATELY EAST OF THE NORTH HALF OF SAID LOT 16 AS VACATED, THE PORTION OF THE VACATED STREET HEREIN CONVEYED BEING 33 FEET EAST AND WEST AND 44 FEET NORTH AND SOUTH. SUBJECT ALSO TO A UTILITY EASEMENT TO THE CITY OF OWATONNA, MINNESOTA, ALONG THE REAR LINE OF THE LOT FOR ELECTRICAL AND TELEPHONE LINE INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE.

In favor of Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation and free of the memorial of the following documents: #T000061387; #T00003322; #T00003392; #T000052115; #T000052177; #T000054504; #T000055496; #T000055497; #T000061388; #T000061452; #T000061526; #T000070390;

#T000070432; #T000075885; #T000075894; #T000076043; #T000073809; #T000076109 and #T000076306;

and free of the memorial of this Order, but subject to all other memorials and recitals appearing on Certificate of Title No. 17109. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, that this Order be served: (a) at least 10 days prior to such hearing upon the above named parties residing in this State in the manner provided by law for the service of Summons in a civil action; (b) it shall be served at least 14 days prior to such hearing upon any of the above named nonresidents by sending a copy of this Order to such non-residents their post office address, by registered or certified mail, with a return receipt requested; (c) it shall be served upon any party who cannot be found by two weeks published notice and by sending a copy of this Order at least 14 days prior to the hearing by first class mail to their address as stated on the Certificate of Title if an address is so stated. (d) upon a dissolution, withdrawn or revoked business entity governed by Minn. Stat., Chp. 302A, 303, 317A, 322A, 322B or 323 in the manner provided by Minn Stat. 5.25. (Note: return date on the Order to Show Cause must be at least 30 days after the date of mailing by the Secretary of State).

YOU NEED NOT APPEAR IF YOU DO NOT OBJECT TO THE RELIEF REQUESTED.

BY THE COURT /S/ Joseph Bueltel JUDGE OF DISTRICT COURT Approved as to Form: /s/ David L. Einhaus, Steele County Examiner of Titles Attorney for Petitioner: Shapiro & Zielke, LLP Attn: Melissa B. Porter 12550 West Frontage Road Suite 200 Burnsville, MN 55337

2/12, 2/19

NOTICE OF TOWNSHIP ELECTION AND ANNUAL MEETING WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP

Annual meeting notice is hereby given that the Township of Westfield Township in the County of Dodge, State of Minnesota will be held on the second Tuesday of March being the 12th day of March , 2019 at 3:00pm. Polls will open at the close of the Annual meeting and close at 8:00 pm to elect the following officers for the following terms.

One Supervisor for a three (3) year term.
 One Treasurer for a Two (2) year term.

Business meeting at 3:00 pm to transact town business as required or permitted by law.

John Fouarge (Clerk)
 Westfield Township
 C/O 75020 118th Ave
 Blooming Prairie , MN 55917

2/12

CLUES ACROSS

1. Pea stems
 6. Type of music
 9. Leader
 13. Distant
 14. 5,280 feet
 15. Beloved Yankee great
 16. A female domestic
 17. Free from alcoholism
 18. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
 19. Entertains with song
 21. Wooden shoe
 22. Female horses
 23. Group of males
 24. Sodium
 25. Revolutions per minute
 28. Neither
 29. Woody climbing plant
 31. Dismounted
 33. Orbits the earth
 36. Female parents
 38. Separates acids
 39. Origins
 41. Stuffing and mounting animal skins
 44. Rupture
 45. Fathers
 46. Large primate
 48. Shape-memory alloy
 49. Halfback
 51. "Family Guy" daughter
 52. Irish mountain chain
 54. Paired

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13						14				15			
16					17					18			
19					20					21			
									23			24	
25	26	27		28				29				30	
31				32		33		34					35
36					37		38			39			40
	41					42				43		44	
				45				46		47		48	
49	50			51				52				53	
54		55					56					57	58 59
60						61					62		
63						64					65		
66						67				68			

56. Drinks
 60. Death notice
 61. Skirts
 62. Fertility god
 63. Where a curve intersects itself
 64. Red Sea port
 65. Mozambique seaport
 66. Leaver
 67. The human foot

68. Crash

CLUES DOWN

1. Excessively theatrical actors
 2. Wings
 3. French river
 4. Internet device
 5. Where Tony Bennett left his heart
 6. Flowering shrub that

- bears gooseberries
 7. Brews
 8. For each
 9. Dictatorships
 10. Slavic person in Saxony
 11. Nobel laureate Shmuel
 12. Lasso
 14. Tones down
 17. Lunar period
 20. Leavened Indian bread
 21. Military elite
 23. One thousandth of an inch
 25. L.A. footballer
 26. Land plan
 27. A satellite of Saturn
 29. "Cat Ballou" actor
 30. Obscure aspect of Sun God and a group of asteroids
 32. Indicates the fare
 34. _____ and feather
 35. Round Dutch cheese
 37. Begat
 40. Relaxing place
 42. _____ Hit'an of Alaska
 43. Belgian city
 47. Organ of hearing and balance
 49. Isolated Southeast Asian people
 50. "Power Rangers" villain
 52. Yellow-fever mosquitoes
 53. Heavy cavalry sword
 55. Laundry detergent
 56. A way to wait
 57. Mother and wife of Uranus
 58. Justly obtain
 59. Stony waste matter
 61. Helps you find places
 65. Oil company

MPCA: Livestock and septic systems contribute to Minnesota River E. coli

Water quality in the Minnesota River is expected to improve if a number of strategies are implemented to reduce current Escherichia coli (E. coli) levels, according to a report drafted for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The MPCA invites comments on the draft report through March 6.

The draft report addresses five specific segments, or "impaired reaches," of the main stem of the Minnesota River. The MPCA investigated bacteria levels, flow records, and water quality over time in order to develop the Total Maximum Daily Load study, or TMDL, for the E. coli bacteria. The TMDL establishes the maximum amount of pollutant the waterbody can assimilate while still achieving water quality standards, and outlines what pollution reductions are needed to meet those standards.

There are two primary sources of concern for E. coli entering the Minnesota River: livestock from unpermitted animal feeding operations, and septic systems that represent public health threats. This includes both faulty septic systems and the illegal use of straight pipes carrying raw sewage from homes or businesses directly to surface waters. The MPCA determined that a handful of other potential sources, including discharge from wastewater treatment plants, municipal storm sewer systems, and permitted animal feedlot operations that are in compliance, are not likely to be substantial sources of E. coli.

The most effective practice to reduce E. coli loads from human sources is to upgrade or entirely replace faulty septic systems. These actions eliminate a fecal bacteria source entirely, and should be a priority. Additional strategies include annual septic system inspections to ensure compliance with state and county codes, and increased education about the real public health risks of septic systems when they are not properly maintained.

Several best management practices could reduce E. coli loads from animal feedlot operations, including better waste

management through additional waste storage facilities and more effective land application of manure. Other best management practices involve using filter strips or riparian buffers to filter runoff and trap pollutants before they reach waterbodies. Limiting animal access to streams and providing alternative drinking water supplies for livestock away from streams will reduce E. coli loads, too.

Overall, the level of impairment outlined in this report is low to moderate when compared to the impairment of the Minnesota River's tributaries; however, addressing failing septic systems and adopting better manure management practices will help reduce bacteria levels and restore the impaired reaches to meet water quality standards for aquatic recreation.

The draft report is

available on the MPCA's Minnesota River bacteria TMDL and strategies report webpage or at the MPCA Mankato office, 12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 2165, Mankato, MN 56001.

Comments on the draft report should be sent to Scott MacLean, MPCA, 12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 2165, Mankato, MN 56001, or by email to scott.maclea@state.mn.us. Written comments must include a statement of your interest in the report and the action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to sections of the draft report you believe should be changed and the reasons for making those changes. Comments must be received by 4:30 p.m. on March 6.

Crossword solution

Q	N	V	H	d		S	E	d		H	E	O	Q
V	H	I	E	B		N	E	D	V		E	D	O
T	V	V	B		S	I	D	I	W		L	I	B
S	E	Q	V	H	E	A	E	B		D	E	L	V
			S	V	H	H	V		Q	E	W		B
V	W	S		E	P	V		S	E	H	I	S	
P	V	N	S		A	W	H	E	D	I	X	V	L
S	D	E	E	S		E	V	L		S	V	W	V
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L	O	B	V	S		S	E	D	V	N	E	H	E
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I	Q	O	A		E	T	I	W		F	O	O	T
H	V	S	L		P	V	R			S	W	T	V

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The MN Department of Agriculture (MDA) is hiring **Agric Technicians** (Forest Pest Surveyors) for the 2019 annual Gypsy Moth Survey. View job post (Job ID 29768) & apply online through Feb 28 at <https://mn.gov/mmb/careers>. MDA is an equal opportunity employer & provider. Questions: 651-201-6692 or gypsy.moth@state.mn.us

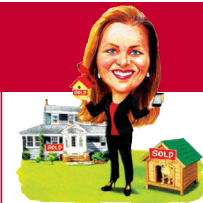
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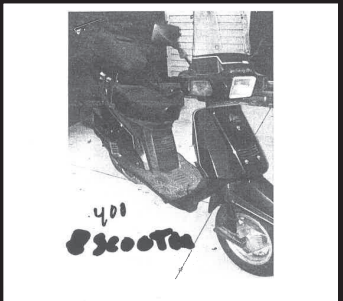
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Located: Hamilton Auction Co. off Interstate 90 at Dexter, MN exit #193 then ¼ mile East on Hwy 16
Consign your farm machinery including tractors, tillage equipment, sprayers, construction equip., trucks & trailers, pickups & cars & misc. items by the 25th of Feb. to have items advertised. **—NO TIRES—**Titled items must have a current certificate of title or registration when brought in to sell. Limited amount of small items accepted for this auction.
To consign call: 507-584-0133 office
HAMILTON AUCTION COMPANY
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