



STEELE COUNTY Times

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TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2019

Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

BP School selects familiar face as new supt

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
STAFF WRITER

The Blooming Prairie School District has hired longtime elementary school principal and teacher Chris Staloch as the district's new superintendent, officials said on Monday.

Staloch, who has served for the past eight years as the principal at Blooming Prairie Elementary School, was selected after two finalists were interviewed on Wednesday, Feb. 27.

"Mr. Staloch, absolutely, was the best fit for our school and community," School Board Chairman Rodney Krell said. "He's done a great job as the elementary principal and he was tremendous teacher before that."

Staloch taught at the elementary school for 12 years before making the jump to principal.

"We have great community and school system," Staloch said. "I enjoyed moving up from teacher to a principal and working with all different publics. This is an opportunity for me to use my skills at a different level."

Staloch was also BP's varsity baseball coach for 12 years, and he coached seventh and eighth-grade football and B-Squad basketball and football.

Staloch and Fosston School District Superintendent Kevin Ricke were the district's finalists. They took part in three different interviews last Wednesday. First they were

"Through the superintendent role, I can definitely **make positive changes** to our already positive environment."

Chris Staloch
New BP Superintendent

interviewed by the district's administration team that included High School Principal John Worke and Associative Principal/Activities Director Allison Mach, among others. Next they were interviewed by a group of at least four Blooming Prairie staff members, including one from each of the district's buildings.

Finally, each finalist was interviewed by the school board, which was open to the public. School board members rotated asking questions about ranging topics.

Krell said, "Staloch came out on top with all the groups that interviewed him."

Staloch received his superintendent license from St. Mary's University in 2017.

"I care a lot about the kids in this community," Staloch said. "Through the superintendent role, I can definitely make positive changes to our already positive environment."

Contract details are still in the process of being finalized.



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

New Blooming Prairie Superintendent Chris Staloch interviews with school members on Feb. 27 at the high school.



STAFF PHOTOS BY RICK BUSSLER

A row of spruce trees planted in the mid-1970s is creating controversy along Interstate 35 at Highway 30 by Ellendale. Snow drifts of 5 to 14 feet high piled up in the area, forcing officials to close the freeway for more than 36 hours during the Feb. 23 blizzard. Motorists are concerned about the safety hazard the trees create.

SNOW FENCE OR SAFETY RISK?

Motorists claim row of trees pose safety hazard along I-35 by Ellendale

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A line of spruce trees along Interstate 35 at Highway 30 by Ellendale is drawing new criticism of being a safety hazard during blizzards for motorists.

The recent Feb. 23 blizzard caused substantial drifting along the I-35 corridor outside of Ellendale that led to drifts from 5 to 14 feet high. The significant build-up of snow forced an "all hands-on-deck effort" by crews from the

Minnesota Department of Transportation to clear the area. In addition to all available equipment in southeast Minnesota, snowplows, snow blowers and operators from the Twin Cities were deployed by MnDOT to give their colleagues a helping hand to open the freeway, which was closed to traffic for more than 36 hours over two days.

One of the worst stretches along the 40-mile closure

SEE ELLENDALE TREE, A7



Legion to mark major milestone

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

It's not very often that an organization gets to celebrate a major milestone like a 100th birthday, but that's exactly what will happen next week with the American Legion.

Blooming Prairie's Otto T. Lund Post will be celebrating the 100th birthday of the American Legion on Friday, March 15 in grand fashion. Post 52 Commander Karl Luiken is throwing a big party at the Servicemen's Club in Blooming Prairie on exactly the same day that the Legion was founded in 1919.

The Legion will be offering a dinner, special music and a program to commemorate the early

AMERICAN LEGION 100th BIRTHDAY

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5 p.m.

Servicemen's Club-
Blooming Prairie

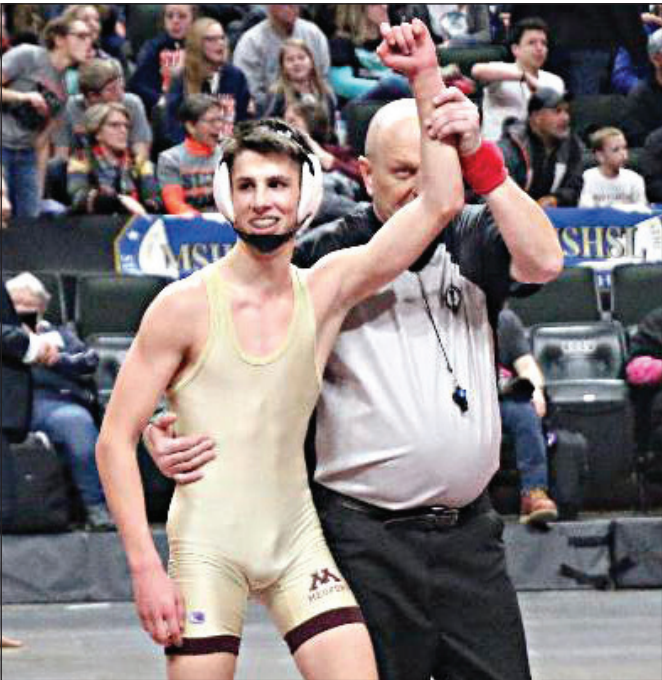
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beginnings of the veterans organization. Luiken also has a few surprises that he plans to reveal at the party.

During the festivities, Luiken plans to share the story of Otto T. Lund, the person whom the local Legion is named after. Lund, who grew up in Denmark,

SEE LEGION, A10

TOP AT STATE!



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Medford's Charley Elwood was all smiles after he wrestled his way to a state championship Saturday at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. Elwood captured the Class A wrestling title at 113 pounds. He was the only wrestler from Steele County schools to go all the way to the top. See special wrestling section for more highlights from the state wrestling tournament.

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OUR VIEW

Problem with Steele County’s transportation system needs attention

During the recent blizzard, there were many trouble spots along Interstate 35 from Owatonna to the Iowa border. But one of the most significant hazards came in the area of I-35 at Highway 30 outside of Ellendale.

In that particular stretch, especially on the southbound side of I-35, snow drifts mounted up from 5 to 14 feet high. The Minnesota Department of Transportation was forced to close the freeway for more than 36 hours from early Sunday morning to late Monday. MnDOT had to deploy help with extra personnel and equipment from the Twin Cities to get the roadway opened again.

Motorists who live in the Ellendale area and travel on that stretch regularly are concerned for their safety before the roadway reaches the point of closure and point to one likely culprit—a row of spruce trees on the west side of the freeway planted in the mid-1970s.

Officials at MnDOT are well aware of the potential safety hazard in the Ellendale area. In fact, Mark Schoenfelder, engineer with MnDOT, agrees the trees are problematic. For starters, he says the trees were planted too close to each other. Lack of sunlight and disease are also causing problems for the trees.

Seems like a simple solution—remove the trees, right? Well, not quite so fast. The bureaucracy of MnDOT seems to be getting in the way and slowing things down more than it should take.

MnDOT is looking at ways to fix the problem with the trees outside of Ellendale. “There needs to be a better system there, and that’s why we are having discussions on how to address it most effectively and how that might cost and work with our overall construction program,” Schoenfelder said.

While MnDOT officials debate what to do, residents and motorists are urged to make their voices heard. People need to help tell the story of why changes need to be made. Everyone who lives along that corridor as well as others who have an interest in what’s planted or built and what’s removed need to be engaged in this issue.

Contact MnDOT directly or even better yet put some pressure on your local lawmakers. Brian Daniels is the state representative for District 24B, which covers the Ellendale area. Senator John Jasinski also represents that area.

As we have found with the funding to expand Highway 14 for the past 25 years, transportation issues often work at a snails pace.

A problem in our transportation system in Steele County has been identified so let’s work swiftly to correct it before it becomes an even larger issue.

YOUR VIEW

Phenomenal job during recent blizzard

To-the-Editor:

I am a member of our local CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) and was the manager of the Winter Storm Shelters that we manned this last February. I would like people to know all the hard work everyone did. You see, just recently, CERT has been given the responsibility of sheltering whether it be a snow storm or an apartment fire.

Wherever there is a large amount of displaced people. In the past, they were run by Red Cross. But, because of their restructuring, it has been passed onto us.

As many of you may already know, we filled the Armory on Bridge Street and had to open a second shelter at Trinity Lutheran Church located on Lincoln Avenue. Trinity Church also supplied their bus and drivers to shuttle people from the shelters to and from the tow companies. The total people we serviced between the two locations was 298!

Some of our CERT people slept on cots to get a little rest before getting back at it, never going home the whole time. And to think, CERT is a voluntary agency.

I want to thank the people of Trinity Church for letting us in and helping us get set up. They were so understanding. I would also like to thank the Red Bull National Guard for being so patient with us and all of our requests.

I want people to know what a phenomenal job Chris Gannon did. He had to step up to the plate as the Emergency Manager while Mike Johnson was out of town. He was constantly in touch with everyone and coordinating all agencies. He made himself visible and available at all times.

It was amazing how well all of the agencies worked so well together.

Lon Thiele, Steele County Sheriff; Iris Johnson, Red Cross (and CERT) made sure everyone was fed also a cot and blanket to keep warm.

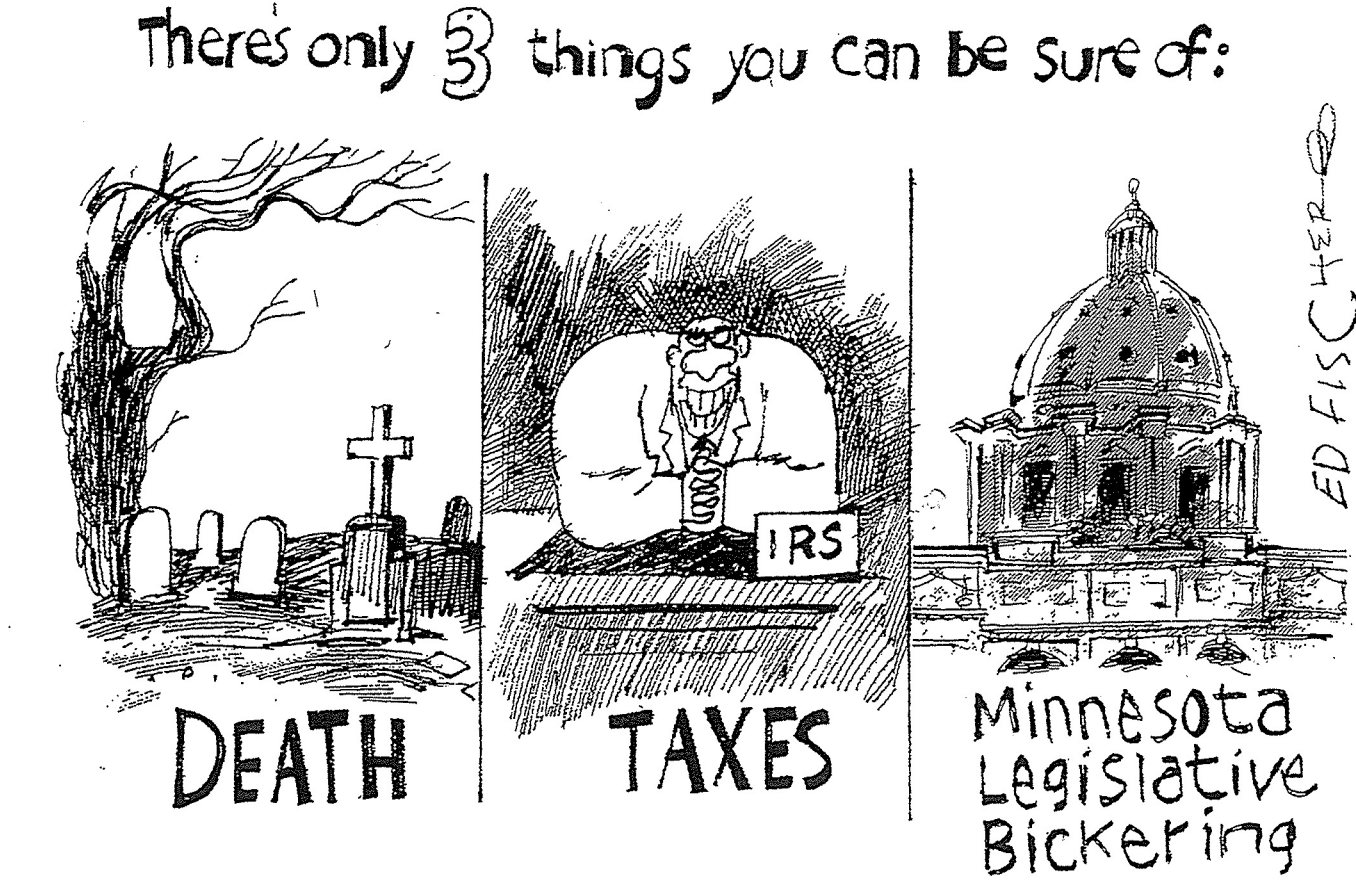
Roger Wencil, Salvation Army, the Owatonna Bus Company and the National Guard. There were even the people who plowed the roads so that the tow trucks could get the stranded vehicles moved so that the Owatonna Bus Company could pick up the people along the way. Dispatch worked endlessly taking calls. I also want to acknowledge the Owatonna Fire Department, along with the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses who made donations.

I am very proud to say, “I am from Steele County!” Bonnie Johnson Owatonna

CORRECTION

In last week’s story about Owatonna Business Women celebrating 100 years, the Times erroneously reported that Judge Karen Duncan was awarded the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award. Last year Duncan had the honor and privilege of presenting the Lifetime Achievement Award to the amazing and very deserving Judy Srsen.

The Times apologizes for this error.



Perhaps a glimmer of mechanical talent

A few weeks ago I shared how I’m not really mechanically inclined. After this past weekend, I’m rethinking that statement. Well, maybe just a little.

On Sunday I enlisted the help of my parents to put together a new entertainment center. Of course, my worst fears were confirmed when I opened the box and found a large number of wood pieces, along with more screws, casings and nails than I’ve never seen in my life. Shear panic instantly set in.

With my mother reading the directions and guiding us, my dad and I figured out which pieces go together and worked to carefully put them together. It’s like a maze with no end in sight.

Not surprisingly, we took

a few wrong turns here and there that likely added to the overall length of what it should have taken to complete the project. But finally after nearly three hours, we mastered it and got the entertainment center together. Almost.

We ran into one little snafu. One of the pieces to the drawer did not come with drill holes for casings like its matching partner so we couldn’t finish the drawer. We need the casings to lock in some of the other parts. I’m hoping it won’t be a major struggle to get a new piece from the manufacturer,



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

but that remains to be seen.

During the construction party, we lamented how we’re going to join my cousin’s construction business to help out. He builds houses and other buildings in central Minnesota.

We also questioned throughout

the afternoon how neither my dad or I developed the mechanical talents of my grandfather. He was a construction genius and even helped out building an addition of our old country church. Somehow those traits never trickled down.

Despite my lack of mechanical talent, we were pretty pleased that we got the

entertainment center together. What a way to bond with family on a miserable winter Sunday afternoon.

Don’t worry I’m not going to get too cocky about our construction success. I’m planning to stick to my writing talents for the foreseeable future.

By the way, I never was able to get the belt changed on my snow blower and ended up taking it in to get repaired. Good thing because they sold me the wrong belt to begin with so I don’t think I would have made it too far. I’m back to blowing snow again instead of shoveling. Bring it on Mother Nature!

It’s time for me to go in hot pursuit of finding my next mechanical adventure.

GUEST COLUMN

Ice out coming to Four Seasons

By STEVE SCHROHT

Greetings from the Four Seasons Centre. My name is Steve Schroht, and I am the director of the Four Seasons Centre/ Steele County Park and Recreation. As I write this, we are once again in a winter storm warning! UGH!! When will it end? Spring can come any day now!

We are currently wrapping up another successful ice season at the Four Seasons Centre. The Four Seasons Centre hosted the Section 1A and 1AA H.S. Girls Hockey Championships on Feb. 14, which drew big crowds. We are very fortunate to host these Championships every year. It is a great opportunity to showcase the great facility we have. Our youth teams have been successful as well. This season we have three squirt teams, two GU10 teams, two GU12 teams, two bantam teams, two peewee teams as well as Park and Rec. New this past season was a H.S. Girls JV team. Our hockey numbers are growing and ice time was a challenge to find this past season. We also house two men’s groups and our Owatonna Figure Skating Club. The Figure Skating Club will be hosting its annual ice show on Saturday, March 9 at 2 p.m. Hope to see you all there!

As we look forward to the end of the ice season, we are preparing for our annual ice out of both arenas. The ice in the West Arena came out on March 2 and ice will come out of the East Arena on March 9. Ice out is a pretty big task as we keep the ice in as long as we can. The process goes like this: Ice is shaved down with the Zambonis all the way until we have roughly 1/8 of an inch of ice left on the concrete. Next, the ice that is left sits for approximately 5-6 hours. As the ice is sitting, slowly the bond between the ice and concrete will let go. Once the bond is released between the ice and concrete, we can take a skid loader out and break up the remaining ice and push it out of the rink. Then, we begin the process of sucking up all water on the concrete with our floor scrubber. Once all the water is sucked up and the inside of rink is scrubbed, we begin the process of taking the boards down. Bleachers are cleaned and pushed back, players boxes and scorers boxes are taken apart, and finally all boards are stacked strategically in the Zamboni room. This whole ice out process for the East Rink (Big Rink) begins on Saturday around 6 p.m. and should be completed around 4 p.m. on Sunday.

The Farm and Power Show begins its set up on Monday morning. We have the whole ice out process pretty much down to a science! We may not be the Xcel Center, but we are

pretty efficient with the number of staff and resources we utilize to make this process a success!

As we transition from the Ice Season to the Dry Floor Season, we will once again have a very busy Dry Floor Season. Our calendar of events is pretty full! Many events happen year after year, and we will be hosting some new events this year too! Our Dry Floor Season is always highlighted by the North American Farm and Power Show which will be held March 14-16 followed by the KOWZ Home and Recreation Show on March 22-24. These two shows alone bring in over 30,000 people, which is a great economic impact for our community.

If the weather continues to stay cold and snowy, the Four Seasons Centre will again be called upon for indoor practice space for LaCrosse, Softball, and Soccer teams. Last spring, there were approximately 100 practice hours utilized for these activities due to the cold and rainy weather. One of our larger events of the year is graduation which will be held on June 9 and our largest event will be the Steele County Free Fair, which will be held August 13-18.

Ice will return in the West Arena for six weeks. Summer ice will be available June 10 – July 21. The ice comes back out for the fair and is put back in immediately after the fair. Ice in the West Rink will be available for the fall/ winter ice season on Sept. 7. Ice returns to the East Arena three weeks later and will be available around Oct. 5.

The Four Seasons Centre is utilized all year long by a variety of facility users. The Four Seasons Centre is a GREAT asset to the community/county, as it brings in many people to the community, which in turn has a positive economic impact for the community.

I truly love my job and all it entails! I especially enjoy working with the variety of people and the many different events all year long. I have a GREAT staff and we take pride in what we do and how we maintain the facility. Customer service is our number one goal and we are here to serve you.

For more information about the Four Seasons Centre, visit our website at: www.co.steele.mn.us or email the Four Seasons Centre at: fourseasons@co.steele.mn.us or give us a call at: 507-451-1093.

Steve Schroht is the Director of the Four Seasons Centre/ Steele County Park and Recreation for Steele County. He may be reached at steve.schroht@co.steele.mn.us.

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

County suspends worker for power line mishap

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Distracted driving has been cited as the primary factor in a power line incident late last year in Owatonna involving a veteran Steele County highway worker who has since retired.

County administrator Scott Golberg said David Jensen violated the county's cell phone use policy when the truck he was operating hit power lines. "He was using his cell phone when driving," Golberg said, adding the incident happened because of "negligence due to distracted driving."

The incident took place on Nov. 13 in the area of Hartle

Avenue SE and 18th Street SE. Jensen was operating a Tandem truck when he inadvertently left up the box of the truck and crashed into a power pole causing lines to snap.

Total damages incurred from the incident are \$26,697, according to Golberg. He said all of the damages except for a \$1,000 deductible were covered by the county's insurance policy.

Golberg said the county leveled a 10-day suspension without pay against Jensen. He served the suspension prior to his retirement effective Feb. 28. He served the county as a highway maintenance technician for 39 years. With Jensen's

suspension and retirement, Golberg said the case is now closed.

"This is unfortunate that it happened at the end of his career," Golberg said. "He has taken full accountability for it. It's too bad it ended this way."

Golberg said he and the county board are appreciative of Jensen's long career with the county. "He served the residents of the county well," Golberg said. "We want to thank him for his dedicated service and wish him well in retirement," he added.

Last week the county board approved the hiring of a replacement to fill Jensen's position. The process will begin in the coming weeks.

The county has had a no cell phone use policy while driving county vehicles for several years, Golberg noted. In addition to the county policy, there are federal and state regulations banning cell phone use for commercial vehicle drivers of which Jensen was at the time of the incident. There are acceptable uses of cell phone in emergencies under the county's policy and other regulations.

There were no criminal charges filed against Jensen in this incident.

The Minnesota Legislature is currently debating hands-free legislation for all drivers this year.

County considers entering into Cannon River Watershed

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

At Tuesday's Steele County Board of Commissioners meeting, Planning and Zoning Director Dale Oolman presented the board with an agreement to cooperate with the other counties that fall within the Cannon River Watershed on a One Watershed, One Plan arrangement.

One Watershed, One Plan was developed by the Board of Water and Soil Resources in 2012 after the State Legislature required the entity to institute a process in order to transition from a county water plan to a watershed-based plan.

This locally-led process will align with state strategies to develop a resulting plan that will address the highest priorities to restore or protect the state's water resources.

There were 63 major watersheds within the state identified by the BWSR, and of those recognized five major watersheds have already approved a plan, while 11 more are currently in the process of developing a plan for adoption. One of those is the Cannon River Watershed Planning Area, a region that Steele County comprises 24.1 percent of.

The current five-year plan the county is operating under is set to expire in 2022, which means that the county will either have to opt into the joint powers watershed board or else devise a plan of its own.

Although the board was favorable to the joint powers plan, some felt that the issue needs to be dissected further before any commitment is made on the matter.

"When I read this, I'm

a little hesitant about the fact that three counties are 70 percent of the area here, and we have to pay \$5,000," Commissioner James Brady said of the potential arrangement. "In the end, I don't know if I like that idea where everybody's equal, because we have the lion's share."

Brady also said that there could be issues with taxing authority. "I know it says no taxing authority," he said of the current plan. "But that could be something that could change in the future."

Oolman indicated that this was something which was discussed by the policy committee which helped to decide on the language of the plan. "There was a lot of discussion on how adequately to divvy it up," he said on the matter.

During the board's discussion, Commissioner Rick Gnemi suggested that if the county were to forego entrance into the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board, an individual plan might be costlier. This was a notion which Oolman agreed with, saying, "it would probably cost more

SEE CANON RIVER WATERSHED, A8

Cannon River Watershed At Glance

- 963,717 acres

- 1,506 square miles

- Counties include:

Rice 27.8%, Steele 24.1%, Goodhue 22.1%, Dakota 9.9%, Le Sueur 9.6%, Waseca 5.2%

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Edging toward expansion

Medford opts for growth as it continues wastewater analysis

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Finding itself at a juncture due to the possibility of development and the need for a solution to its limited wastewater volume, the Medford City Council chose to move forward and continue to analyze its options during this month's meeting in order to allow the city to grow.

At a special session prior to the meeting, the council heard from Seth Peterson of Bolton & Menk concerning its current options going forward. These included staying put with what they have and maintaining their current state, or else making a wastewater connection with a neighboring community, or improving their current facilities.

"What we're looking for from the council," Mayor Lois Nelson said to the city council members, "is are we going to continue discussing to look at growth and opportunities, or stand pat with where we are."

Those on the council were in agreement that growth would be the best option. "I don't think it's either or, I think

you have to check the possibilities," Council Member Marie Sexton said of the city's options. "You can't just tell people that can add to this city's value that they can't do anything."

"I think we're in a unique position right now where you have developers that appear to be serious that want in and what we have left for capacity, we can't really encompass anyone of them totally," Council Member Chad Langeslag said of the situation. "It seems to me almost wrong to shut the door totally."

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. By upping its capacity, the city will be able to allow any possible developers to continue with their plans, which could potentially add to the city and return any wastewater investment with additional tax revenue.

"I know there's going to be expenditures," Langeslag said. "There's going to be investment on the tax payers' part, but in the long run it will help."

Regardless of whether or not the council opted for growth, there was still the need for an update to its current facility, which was originally constructed in 1968 and was last expanded in 2006.

Although the council was in agreement on the prospect of growth, Council Member Matt Dempsey said that he was a little hesitant due to the fact that the decision would impact the cost of living within the community.

After the special workshop, the council added two new items to the agenda. The first authorized Seth Peterson of Bolton & Menk to continue with engineering analysis of the city's wastewater options. The second authorized City Administrator Andy Welti to start preliminary discussions with prospective developers.

During the meeting, the council also reviewed a proposal from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric on the city's options as it relates to the installation of 93 new LED lights in Medford and the removal of 93 old lights.

The city had two options: the first gave SWCE agency over the lights'

SEE EXPANSION, A8

Pacelli student becomes champion speller

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Twelve spellers (six from each Regional Spelling Bee) competed in the Final Spelling Bee on Feb. 27 at the Southeast Service Cooperative in Rochester.

These 12 students were narrowed down from 75 students from 36 districts in Southeast Minnesota who participated in the two Regional Spelling Bees on Feb. 11, coordinated by the Southeast Service Cooperative.

Neha Thawani Nanda, an eighth grade student from Pacelli Catholic Schools in Austin was declared the champion after correctly spelling the word "PATRONAGE."

Two winners in the Blooming Prairie District Spelling Bee competed in the first round of the Southeast Service Cooperative Regional Spelling Contest. They were seventh grader Jaylee Schleicher and eighth grader Abby Smith. They did not advance after the first round of the regional contest.

Twenty-four students in grades 5-8 participated in the popular BP contest.

Nanda has been working hard to be the champion since fourth grade, said Jeanette Hauschildt, former elementary school secretary for 24 years, who has coordinated the spelling bee in Blooming Prairie the past five years.

The champion now advances to the 92nd annual Scripps National Spelling Bee from May 26-June 1.

She won a trip (for herself and one adult) to Washington, D.C. (donated by Southeast Service Cooperative). She also received a first-place trophy, Webster's Third New

International Dictionary (provided by Scripps National Spelling Bee), 2019 United States Mint Proof Set (The Samuel Louis Sugarman Award from Scripps), a subscription to Britannica Online Premium and Valerie's Spelling Bee Supplement Booklet.

Shreemayi Undavalli, a seventh grade student from St. Mary's Owatonna, was the first runner-up. Undavalli received a trophy, and a Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, Valerie's Spelling Bee Supplement Booklet, and a \$100 Barnes & Noble Gift Card.

Josie Koenigs, an eighth grade student from Chatfield, was the 2nd

SEE PACELLI STUDENT, A8



(STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD)

They competed against one another but they were best of friends after the 28th Annual Blooming Prairie District Spelling Bee went into the history books. Giving one another high fives are Abby Smith (second) at left and Jaylee Schleicher (first), right.

PUBLIC INVITED

THE AMERICAN LEGION'S 100th BIRTHDAY

BP SERVICEMEN'S CLUB

FRIDAY MARCH 15TH

Social Hour 5:00pm
Supper 6:00pm
Program 7:00pm

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By Mariah Miller

Cole Christianson, son of Aaron and Jessie Christianson, is the acting treasurer of the Blooming Prairie FFA chapter.

Cole participates in many of the chapter activities particularly organizing FFA Week and Feeding the Homecoming Royalty. Cole is a member of the varsity General Livestock Judging Team and is working towards earning his State Degree. He currently has a herd of eight cows- three cow calf pairs and two heifers.

When Cole isn't working on the family farm, he works for H2O on the Go. Cole is an outstanding student with a bright future ahead of him.

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Blooming Prairie FFA Spotlight

Cole Christianson



Are Americans falling out of love with Valentine's cards?

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

People used to send cards on Valentine's Day, now they send emails, texts, and tweets.

The holiday was originally declared as a feast day by Pope Gelasius in 498 A.D. and to fall on Feb. 14 in order to celebrate St. Valentine, or Valentinus, a Roman priest jailed by the Emperor Claudius II. The legend goes that Valentinus helped to cure his jailer's blind daughter's vision, and that before his execution he wrote her a note signed, "from your Valentine."

Valentine's Day has been celebrated since at least the Middle Ages, with the oldest known Valentine being a poem from 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans, to his wife after being captured by the forces of Henry V during the Battle of Agincourt. So, the tradition seemed to have passed from one prisoner to another.

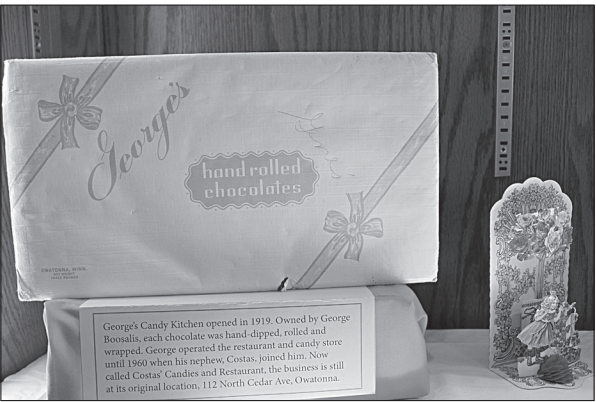
Today the holiday is observed around the globe, and is a boon for America's economy, however the

mode by which people send their Valentines has shifted. According to the National Retail Foundation, the purchase of physical cards has been steadily declining. In 2017, only 46.9 percent of consumers purchased cards, down from 47.9 percent in 2016.

Perhaps there is a little bit of the holiday lost in the slow abandonment of this tradition. "I think the biggest difference is today people seem to send their Valentines or their cards via email or social media," said Stephanie Kibler, meetings and events manager at the Steele County History Center. "I think technology and social media has played a huge role in the dwindling of Valentine's Day cards."

To celebrate the holiday, the History Center featured an exhibit of Valentines from the past, some as old as 1919. Among the artifacts was an old box of chocolates from Costas Candies, back when it was known as George's Candy Kitchen.

Also featured were old cards and handmade items from the holiday, including several humorous or



Valentine's Day artifacts featured at the Steele County History Center. Included in the exhibit was an old box of chocolates from Costas Candies which featured the original name of the establishment: George's Candy Kitchen



Valentine's from the past. The Steele County History Center featured a variety of Valentine's Day artifacts in its most recent exhibit.

intricately designed cards. Some even had moving parts. "I think the goat one is my favorite," Kibler said while looking over the exhibit. "I like that it has a little satire to it."

With a holiday that centers around human interaction and communication, the means by which people do so in turn have affected the holiday itself. However, for many

Americans, the tradition of sending and receiving cards will never get old.

"There's something romantic about getting a card," Kibler said of the tradition and the value of receiving a card or a gift. "It's the thought that someone went through all the effort, picked it out, wrote a message, and went to post office."

The next small exhibit to be featured at the Steele County History Center will be spring themed, complete with hand painted and hand decorated eggs as well as wall art. Large exhibits that will be featured until next fall include Over Here, Over There: The Great War and Toys & Play, 1970 to Today.

Johnson Construction helps with BP Memorial

By Howard Lestrud
STAFF WRITER

It is very fitting that Keith Johnson Construction has put its stamp of involvement on the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial.

The memorial is significantly completed, but more work is yet to be done. Contributors to the project must continue to be recognized, says BP Veterans Memorial chairman Tom Peterson.

Monies are still coming in, even though the \$250,000 goal has been achieved. The extra funds will be used for maintenance, says Peterson.

Squadron #52, the Blooming Prairie Sons of the American Legion and the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial Committee recognizes and thanks Keith and Krystal Johnson of Keith Johnson Construction Inc. for their part and generous contribution to the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial.

Keith and Krystal donated all the material and labor for the concrete footings under the granite pieces of the Memorial.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Keith and Krystal Johnson donated all the material and labor for the concrete footings under the granite pieces of the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial. The memorial is open to all visitors even on these recent snowy days. Tom Walters and other veterans greet visitors at an open house at the Memorial.

how best to set the footings for the walls and for the main center footing for the military clips, Johnson remarked.

"It looks good, because Fran made sure it looks good," Johnson continued.

There is another very important reason why Keith and Krystal stepped forward with their donation, Peterson explains.

Both of Keith's grandfathers, Selmer A. Johnson and Levern M. Ebeling, were veterans and served our country during World War I.

Ronald A. Johnson, Keith's father, is also on the Memorial, having served his country from 1953-1955. It is fitting that both grandfathers, and father, are on the Memorial,

Keith says that the service and sacrifice of both of his Grandfathers was worth his contribution to the Memorial and their memory.

Blooming Prairie should be indebted to those many contributors to the project, says Peterson.

The memorial will officially dedicated on Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

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of the Week



Gus Bethke

This week's Panther of the Week is August (Gus) Bethke. Gus lives in New Richland with his parents Amanda and Aaron. His three younger brothers are Adler, Asa, and Amos. Gus is in Mrs. Ihrke's second grade class at NRHEG.

He loves to learn and especially enjoys STEM activities at school. He is a great friend and is always kind to others. Gus is a deep thinker and it naturally inspires others to do the same. He's a great role model in our class because he is always showing Panther Pride. Gus is very respectful to his teachers and works hard every day at school. Gus LOVES all things Pokémon! His favorite foods are Hawaiian pizza and taco salad. He enjoys cheetahs, reading Pokémon books, and collecting Pokémon cards.

Keep up the great work Gus!



STEELE COUNTY

Times

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all the time.

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Word Search Corner

HAPPY NEW YEAR

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

SPARKLERS	FIREWORKS	MIDNIGHT	COUNTDOWN
CONFETTI	PARTY	RESOLUTIONS	CELEBRATE
HAPPY NEW YEAR	KISS	TOAST	BALL

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BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT: Theft: Police arrested a subject for theft in the 1200 block of 12th Ave. NW at 1:51 p.m.

Man faces second felony for DWI

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A man previously convicted of felony drunk driving faces yet another felony for the same offense.

Jeffery Allen Sipes, 58, of Owatonna has been charged by the Steele County Attorney's Office with two counts of felony DWI and a gross misdemeanor for a restraining order violation.

He previously had been convicted of felony DWI in April 2006.



JEFFERY ALLEN SIPES

Owatonna Police responded to a property damage crash involving two vehicles on Feb. 20 at about 5:17 p.m. in the 2100 block of Third Avenue NE. Upon arrival, officers found Sipes behind the wheel of one of the vehicles. While speaking to him, police discovered he was slurring his speech heavily. His eyes were also found to be bloodshot and watery.

Sipes failed field sobriety tests as well as a portable breath test, according to the complaint. A criminal history on Sipes showed

he was previously convicted of felony DWI in 2006. He also has a B-Card limiting his driving privileges to any use of alcohol invalidates the license.

During the arrest process, a nearby resident informed police that Sipes is not supposed to be at Skyline Gardens because his ex-wife has a restraining order against him and she lives in the park. The order states Sipes cannot be within 500 feet of his ex-wife's residence. A review of GIS map showed that it would have been impossible for Sipes to enter the park without traveling within 500 feet of the trail-

er, the complaint said.

Sipes became uncooperative with police at the Steele County Detention Center. He took a breath test, which showed his alcohol level at .17.

He faces a maximum of seven years in prison and a \$14,000 fine if convicted on the felonies.

Sipes has a previous domestic violence-related conviction, which caused the most recent restraining order violation to be enhanced.

Owatonna man pleads guilty in Dodge County bus crash

BY ALEX MALM
STAFF WRITER

An Owatonna man has admitted his involvement in a Dodge County bus crash.

Leif Elijah Haugland, 36, pleaded guilty to one felony charge of fleeing police in a motor vehicle and gross misdemeanor third-degree DWI.

According to the complaint, on Nov. 16 a Dodge County deputy was informed about a crash involving a school bus and minivan. The minivan left the scene at a high rate of speed and witnesses were able to provide a description of the male driver and the plate number. The deputy was able to catch up to the vehicle, where he then activated

his emergency lights and sirens, but the vehicle did not pull over and stop for several miles. When the vehicle pulled to the side and stopped, Haugland exited the vehicle and was placed into custody without incident. The deputy observed that Haugland's speech was slurred, his eyes were watery, and Haugland had difficulty standing on his own. Haugland also had a strong odor of alcohol on his breath and person. At this time a PBT was administered and registered .18, which is more than twice the legal limit.

A Dodge County sergeant located a partially used bottle of Crown Royal Apple on the passenger's front floor. The minivan had substantial damage to the left

front end and a smashed windshield. It was also observed that the minivan had fresh yellow paint from the hood to the mid windshield. At that point the deputy transported Haugland to the Sheriff's Office for further testing. During the transport, Haugland freely spoke about the incident, stating that he had too much to drink, is having problems with alcohol, and stated that he had interest in pressing charges against the bus driver since his neck hurt during the incident where Haugland stated the bus pulled out in front of him.

Haugland provided a breath test, which registered at .16.

Sentencing is scheduled for March 27.

Police probe armed robbery of pizza driver

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A pizza delivery went awry in Owatonna Feb. 25 after the delivery person ended up with a gun pointed at him.

Owatonna Police received a report of an armed robbery involving a Pizza Hut delivery person at about 10:28 p.m. in the 400 block of St. Paul Place. The victim told police he was robbed at gun point while making a delivery to an apartment.

According to police, an unknown man standing by a building approached the delivery driver and demanded money. The victim reported the suspect displayed a handgun that was covered by a black or dark colored towel, police said. The victim observed the exposed barrel of the gun.

Police said the victim complied with the suspect by handing him a bank bag that contained about \$65 in cash. The suspect took off running from the area.

Officers requested assistance from Faribault Police with a canine. They searched the area, but were unable to locate the suspect or any evidence of the crime.

The suspect is described as a man about 6'2" and 150 pounds wearing a black mask, blue windbreaker and darker pants.

Captain Eric Rethemeier said no arrests have been made and a suspect has not been identified. Anyone with information is encouraged to call Detective Christian Berg at 507-774-7220.

CRIME BRIEF

FAR FROM ROUTINE ON ALL TOO FAMILIAR CALL



TRAVIS BECKJORDEN

It proved to be far from routine for Owatonna Police on a familiar call they frequently handle.

Police responded to Fleet Farm in Owatonna for a shoplifting-in-progress Feb. 28. Loss prevention reported a man had concealed a knife during the theft and alerted officers that he was wearing clothing that may signify membership to a motorcycle gang known for violence.

When police arrived, officers immediately detained the man in handcuffs. During a search, two knives were found, including the stolen knife from the store and a fully loaded 9mm handgun. Police also discovered a small bag of methamphetamine.

Travis Beckjorden, 38, of Rochester, has been charged with illegal possession of a firearm, fifth-degree controlled substance and theft. His criminal history revealed he was a felon convicted of crimes of violence and ineligible to possess firearms.

COURT NEWS

Steele County

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 18 with Judge Karen R. Duncan presiding:

Heather J. Holte, 31, Maple Grove, previously appeared and was convicted of felony theft. She was sentenced to \$2,234.96, 2 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, obtain permission to leave the state, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, no trespassing, psychological evaluation, write letter of apology and 3 years of supervised probation.

Raymond K. Scott, 40, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony violation of order for protection. He was sentenced to \$131, 180 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, chemical dependency evaluation, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 5 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 18 – 24:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jose L. Aguilar, 32, Austin, revoked license and no insurance, \$481; Adan C. Dominguez, 40, St. Paul, cancelled license, \$281; Jennifer M. Nelson, 36, Faribault, expired tabs, no insurance and no license in possession, \$331; Jennifer Ramirez Hernandez, 18, Austin, no license, \$181.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

James E. Dietz, 48, Faribault, speeding, \$131; Shawki M. Elsaid, 34, Golden Valley, unsafe change of course, \$131; Antonio A. Francisco, 23, Omaha, NE, speeding, \$131; Maria L. Goodpaster, 35, Owatonna, speeding and texting while driving, \$181; Prince Kannah, 28, Philadelphia, PA, no license and speeding, \$241; Manuel Luna, 22, Austin, no license, \$181; Scott A. Mulder, 54, Orange City, IA, stop sign, \$131; James E. Schieltz, 66, Luxemburg, IA, seat belt, \$106.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Matthew J. Adams, 30, Owatonna, animal cruelty, \$131, have no animals in

the house and 1 year of supervised probation; Cody J. Altepeter, 25, Owatonna, speeding, \$131; Shane M. Baldus, 44, St. Cloud, driving without headlights, \$121; James A. Beucier, 74, Medford, failure to obey traffic control device, \$131; William R. Bronson, 41, Austin, disorderly conduct, \$131 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Mark A. Burciaga, 31, Dundas, theft, \$181 and 1 day in county jail; Eric A. Esquivel, 22, Owatonna, following vehicle too closely, \$131; Guadalupe Gutierrez, 20, Owatonna, stop sign, \$131; Billy J. Hensley, 40, Rochester, no insurance and expired tabs, \$311; Della A. Johnson, 41, Owatonna, failure to yield, \$181; Kasey K. Kamholz, 59, Owatonna, speeding, \$121; Jose Martinez, 33, Onamia, revoked license, \$281; Shawn P. McDowell, 40, Owatonna, DWI, \$231, 3 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation and 2 years of supervised probation; Francisco J. Menchaca, 26, no insurance, \$281; Macey E. Misgen, 40, Mankato, theft and trespassing, \$142.23, 20 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, no trespassing at Kwik Trip and 1 year of supervised probation; Michael D. Urch, 25, Owatonna, failure to obey traffic control device, \$131; Joseph M. Wencil, 18, Owatonna, speeding, \$121.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

April L. Adams, 39, Owatonna, no insurance, \$281; Okony O. Gilo, 23, Austin, revoked license, \$281; Jorge B. Marchand, 46, Faribault, speeding and cancelled license, \$321; Nathan V. Martin, 25, Waseca, speeding and improper information on license, \$161; Carrie S. Mines, 42, Rochester, suspended license, \$281; Jordan B. Myers, 28, Burnsville, possession of firearm with altered serial number and DWI, stay of adjudication, \$50, 197 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, maintain employment, attend MADD impact panel, mental health evaluation, no possession of firearms, obtain permission to leave the state and 3 years of supervised probation; Robert D. Olson, 56, Owatonna, DWI, \$406, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Ogud O. Oman, 25, St. Paul, speeding, \$121; Christan M. Pickett, 31, Waterville, DWI, \$131 and 13 days in county jail; Anne E. Pommerenke, 30, Rochester, DWI, \$381, 3 days in county jail, chemical

dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Evangelina Ramirez, 29, St. Michael, speeding, \$121; Drew D. Roemhildt, 23, Faribault, expired tabs and no front plate, \$141; Raymond K. Scott, 40, Owatonna, give peace officer false information, \$131 and 73 days in county jail; Dawn A. Taggart, 47, Rosemount, speeding, \$121; Tisha N. Whitcomb, 37, Northfield, revoked license, \$281; Nicholas L. Willis, 23, Owatonna, speeding, \$131; Aleighya M. Zak, 17, Waseca, speeding and failure to drive in single lane, \$171.

ARRESTS

Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

Nashid Asmir Abdul-Zahir, 43, arrested at 4:10 p.m. Feb. 21, warrant arrest, \$10,000 bail.

Benjamin Robert Drabek, 24, arrested at 11 a.m. Feb. 22, felony probation violation, held for court.

Tavean Gregory McRelly, 24, arrested at 10 a.m. Feb. 23, felony domestic assault by strangulation, assault and interference with 911, held for court.

Ruon Yang Tut, 25, arrested Feb. 25, assault/domestic assault, held for court.

John Clements Eppel, 51, arrested at 7:50 p.m. Feb. 26, felony receipt of stolen property, held for court.

Harley Leroy Norberg, 63, arrested at 6:29 p.m. Feb. 26, felony theft and controlled substance crime, held for court.

Matthew Dale Harthan, 38, arrested at 8:45 p.m. Feb. 26, DWI, held for court.

Dawn Marie Joyner, 49, arrested at 10:52 p.m. Feb. 26, DWI, held for court.

Jeffrey Letray Jones, 31, arrested at 10:34 p.m. Feb. 26, warrant arrest, held for court.

Steele County Sheriff

Thiwat Luk Ret, 25, arrested at 2:40 a.m. Feb. 23, DWI-test refusal, held for court.

Jacob Clinton Carlson, 26, arrested at 2:47 p.m. Feb. 25, felony drug court violation, held for court.

POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE Feb. 22

Domestic: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 8:27 a.m.

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 600 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 10:37 a.m.

Assault: Police responded to an assault in the 300 block of Bridge St. W. at 12:26 p.m.

Criminal Sexual Conduct: At 4:58 p.m., police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct on Riverside Ave. NW.

Feb. 23

Arrest: At 2:09 a.m., police assisted another agency with arresting a subject at Highway 14 E. and Cedar Ave. S. in Owatonna Township.

Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 500 block of Adams Ave. NW at 12:06 p.m. Feb. 24

Crash: Paramedics and officers responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries in the 3600 block of County Road 45 N. at 2:45 p.m.

Feb. 25

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 2200 block of 3rd Ave. NW at 1:54

p.m.

Fraud: Police took a report of a fraud incident in the 500 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 6:27 p.m.

Robbery: Officers responded to a robbery in the 400 block of St. Paul Place NE at 10:18 p.m.

Feb. 26

Domestic: At 12:47 p.m., officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Pearl St. E. They arrested a subject at the scene.

Theft: Police arrested a subject for theft in the 1200 block of 12th Ave. NW at 1:51 p.m.

Feb. 27

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 800 block of Mineral Springs Road NE at 8:45 a.m.

Shoplifting: At 3:11 p.m., police arrested a subject for shoplifting in the 2100 block

of Bridge St. W.

Feb. 28

Crash: Police responded to a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage at Lincoln Ave. S. and University St. E. at 8:18 a.m. They issued a citation to one of the drivers.

Shoplifting: Officer issued a shoplifting citation in the 1600 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 1:24 p.m.

Hit and Run: Hit and run accidents occurred in the 300 block of Prospect St. E. at 4:30 p.m. and at School St. E. and Elm Ave. S. at 5:12 p.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 400 block of Fairview St. NW at 5:32 p.m.

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 700 block of Bridge St. W. at 7:50 p.m. Steele County Sheriff

SEE BLOTTER, A10



*United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Minnesota
In re Diocese of Winona-Rochester, Case No. 18-33707*

DIOCESE OF WINONA-ROCHESTER

If you were sexually abused by any person connected with the Diocese, a parish in the Diocese, a school in the Diocese, or have any claim against the Diocese, you must file a claim by April 8, 2019.

For more information, visit www.dowr.org

For U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Minnesota information, visit mn.uscourts.gov

For advice about your rights, contact an attorney

BLOOMING PRAIRIE

- MARCH 7**
1 p.m. – Movies, BP Library
7 p.m. - Ham Bingo, Pizza
Cellar
- MARCH 8**
5 p.m. - KC Fish Fry,
Servicemen's Club
- MARCH 11**
7 p.m. – BPHS Choir
Concert, First Lutheran
7 p.m. – City Council
Meeting
- MARCH 12**
10:30 a.m. – Storytime, BP
Library
2:30 p.m. – BPPU Meeting
4:30 p.m. – Fire Commission
Meeting
7 p.m. – Planning & Zoning
Meeting
- MARCH 13**
10:30 a.m. – Storytime, BP
Library
4:30 p.m. – Economic
Development Authority
Meeting
- MARCH 14**
4 p.m. – Police Commission
Meeting
- MARCH 15**
American Legion 100th
Birthday Dinner
- MARCH 19**
5 p.m. – Ambulance
Commission Meeting
- MARCH 20**
Chamber of Commerce
Meeting
- MARCH 30**
Education Foundation
Auction



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ELLEDALE/HOPE/GENEVA

- MARCH 7**
3 p.m. – 4-H – Water
Noodle Engineering, Ellendale
Cafeteria
- MARCH 8**
10 a.m. – SEMCAC,
Community Building
3:30 p.m. – Girl Scouts
Meeting, NR HS Lower
Commons
5 p.m. – Fish Fry,
Community Building
6 p.m. – Community Ed-
Dino-Mite Dinosaur Day,
Ellendale Preschool Room
- MARCH 11**
10 a.m. – SEMCAC,
Community Building
6 p.m. – NRHEG Band
Boosters Meeting
- 6 p.m. – ECFE Class,
Ellendale Preschool Room
6 p.m. – Referendum Open
House, Ellendale Media Center
7 p.m. – Berlin Township
Meeting
- MARCH 12**
5 p.m. – Berlin Township
Annual Election
6:15 p.m. – Tae Kwon Do,
Ellendale Gym North
7:30 p.m. – NRHEG High
School Choir Concert, NR HS
Gym
- MARCH 13**
10 a.m. – SEMCAC,
Community Building
6 p.m. – NRHEG After Prom
Meeting, Ellendale Media
Center

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

- MARCH 7**
9:30 a.m. – Farm Transition
& Estate Planning Workshop,
South Central College:
Faribault Campus
1 p.m. – Family Story Time,
Owatonna Library
6:30 p.m. – History
Detectives, History Center
7 p.m. – HERstory, National
Women's History Month,
Women in Politics, History
Center
- MARCH 8**
11 a.m. – Red Cross Blood
Drive, Cabela's
6 p.m. – Woman of
Achievement Celebration,
Torey's Restaurant
- MARCH 9**
8 a.m. – “Building Capacity,
Courage and Community”
Leadership Series, Trinity
Lutheran
2 p.m. – “When There's
Good to be Done” concert,
Owatonna Arts Center
5 p.m. – Little Black Dress,
Owatonna Country Club
5 p.m. – Owatonna
FFA Alumni Get Together,
- Owatonna Eagles
- MARCH 10**
9:30 a.m. – Conceal Carry
Class, Cabela's
2 p.m. – Concert, Owatonna
Art Center
- MARCH 11**
4 p.m. – Owatonna Park &
Rec Board Meeting, City Admin
Building
7 p.m. – Medford Park &
Rec Board Meeting, City Admin
Building
- MARCH 12**
9:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. –
Tale Time, Owatonna Library
1 p.m. – So Many Books...So
Little Time, Owatonna Library
2 p.m. – Healing Arts
Reception, Owatonna Hospital
4 p.m. – Steele County
Board Meeting, County Admin
Building
5:30 p.m. – Owatonna
Human Rights Commission
Meeting, City Admin Building
5:30 p.m. – Owatonna
Planning Commission Meeting,
City Admin Building

Scholarships available for special ed students

Advocates for Developmental Disabilities of Steele County (ADD) is offering a scholarship for students who received special education services during their high school years. Criteria for the scholarship includes being accepted at a two or four year college or vocational school and involvement in school and/or community activities.

Scholarship applications may be picked up from your career center or counselor at area schools in Owatonna, Medford, or Blooming Prairie. The application is also on ADD's website at: www.advocatesfordevelopmentaldisabilities.com

Applications need to be returned to the schools by April 15 or the ADD office by April 30.

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.

Four Seasons Centre in Owatonna 2019 activities

- MARCH:**
9 Figure Skating Show
14-16 North American Farm & Power Show
22-24 KOWZ Home and Rec Show
- APRIL:**
6 Habitat for Humanity BrewFest
8, 10-11 Youth Soccer
27 Munchkin Market
28 Trinity Lutheran Church Celebration
- MAY:**
4 Rustic Mama's Craft Show
5 Owatonna Bike Blessing (Fairgrounds Outside)
OHS Prom
Just for Kix Dance Recital
Memorial Day Service
Youth Baseball Kickoff Event
Safe Summer Expo
Smokin in Steele BBQ Contest (Fairgrounds Outside)
- JUNE:**
1-2 Smokin in Steele BBQ Contest (Fairgrounds Outside)
9 OHS Graduation
10 Summer Ice Begins
15 Private Party
17 George Carden Circus
21 Federated Event
29 Private Party (Summer Ice June 10th – July 21st)
- JULY:**
6 Private Party
21 Summer Ice Ends
- AUGUST:**
3 Private Party
13-18 Steele County Free Fair
26 OFSC Registration
27-28 OYHA Registration
- SEPTEMBER:**
Ice in West Rink
6-8 Pool Tournament
14 Craft Show
- OCTOBER – DECEMBER:**
Ice in Both Rinks: Hockey Tournaments will be announced at a later date

BOOK NOOK

More movies coming to the library

Please mark your calendars for events that will be happening at the Blooming Prairie Branch Library during March and April. As reported last week, due to popular demand we have added more Thursday afternoon movies to our schedule. Join us at 1 p.m. on these dates; I have given a few clues about which movies they are since our licensing agree-



NANCY
VAILLANCOURT

ment won't allow us to publish the names of the movies.

March 7 - A jilted woman needs a change of pace and finds it in England. She also learns that life can bring a second dance to all.

March 21 - A book that is a mixture of blue and yellow contains the answers to where African Americans could safely travel.

March 28 - The group will vote on the movie to be shown

this day.

Wednesday, March 20 at 2 p.m. - A special SELCO Legacy program will feature stories and photographs by James A. Bowey. The program, When Home Won't Let You Stay, tells the stories of refugees in America. I'll share more about this presentation next week.

Thursday, April 4 at 6:30 p.m. - As part of the 2019 SELCO

Author Tour, Mankato author Nicole Helget will be speaking at the library. Nicole's book The End of the Wild won the Minnesota Book Award for Middle Literature last year. She has written a variety of books: young adult, kids non-fiction, and adult fiction.

Who says small towns don't have anything to do? We'll see you at the library!



Steele Talkin'
STEPHANIE KIBLER

Despite snow, shooting sports underway

The phrase separation of church and the state was originally stated by Thomas Jefferson in a letter to the Danbury Baptists on Jan. 1, 1802. The purpose of the letter was to placate the fears of Baptists, and so he told them that this wall had been erected to protect them. The statement was used to keep the state out of the church's business, not to keep the church out of the state's business.

Today the implied meaning of the phrase, separation of church and state, implies the opposite, the church staying out of the state's business.

Perhaps both are correct. The government should not be able to dictate to the church, and the church should not use Christianity (or any other religion) to influence the government. To go a step further, the church should denounce anyone using Christianity as a way to incite hate.

In recent weeks, we have seen Nick Sandmann, a teenager in a MAGA hat, and Ilhan Omar, a U.S. Representative, receive death threats. Sandmann and Omar likely have nothing more in common than this. In both cases some of these threats were made on the ideals of Christianity. This stumps me. How can any Christian use their religion to make threats to another human being? This goes against everything I have been taught.

What has become of our compassion for our fellow man? How can we completely disregard the lessons we are taught as Christians?

The more we opt for

vulgarity, hatred and violence the less likely we are to be civil, to have empathy; the more likely we are to continue to lose our humanity. I find this unacceptable. Imagine living in a world where there is no respect or care for our neighbors, for our community. A world where we simply look out for ourselves and not one another. What a cold, lonely existence this would be.

We, each of us, have the ability to choose kindness over hate. Let's stop buying into the rhetoric we see many of our leaders spewing, stop making room for hate on social media—stop sharing memes promoting inequity, stop feeding into hate filled comments, stop attacking people based on assumptions. Imagine what we could accomplish if we instead worked to build one another up, help someone else to shine. The possibilities are endless. I choose humanity.

Stephanie Kibler is the meetings and event coordinator with the Steele County Historical Society in Owatonna. She is also a member of the Ellendale City Council. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.

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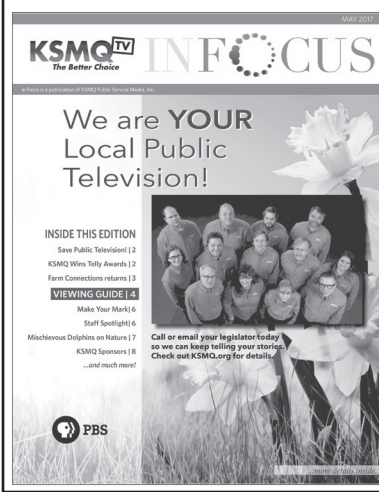
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History from the News Archives

10 Years Ago March 3, 2009

DAN EVANS, PUBLISHER

One important staple in the Blooming Prairie business district is Bunkies Grille and Lanes on Main Street. Bunkies is the 12th oldest bowling alley in Minnesota. Long-time BP resident George Ressler built the alley in 1946 and in 1947 bowling leagues began in town.

Karen Kruckeberg is no longer going to be in charge of the popular Blooming Prairie Fourth of July Parade after this year. It has been three years since Dick Kruckeberg asked Karen to run the parade, and she wants a rest and to be able to enjoy the fantastic summer celebration.

Senator Dan Sparks recognized five area fire departments for their efforts in fighting the fire that consumed several Austin Main Street businesses and buildings on Jan. 15. Among them was the Blooming Prairie Fire Department. Chief Kurt Underwood accepted the honors on behalf of the local fire department.

20 Years Ago March 2, 1999

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

Three times the charm! The Blooming Prairie girls basketball team won the first basketball sub-section championship ever by defeating N-R-H-E-G Monday night in Mankato. They are one game away from the state tournament.

Tony Lea joined Todd Kruckeberg as the Blossoms’ only 1,000 point scorers. Coach Scott Pierce presented Lea with a plaque last Tuesday night. Lea is a 5-foot, 10-inch guard.

In an effort to increase recycling countywide, the Steele County Environmental Services made some changes, which became effective Monday. On March 1, a two sort system went into place where all containers, whether aluminum, plastic, bottles, tin or steel cans and clear, green or brown glass bottles may be placed together in the bottom of the recycling bin.

50 Years Ago Feb. 26, 1969

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

A bill introduced in the Minnesota State Legislature last week should prove to be a big step forward for the Prairie Manor, Inc., nursing home project in Blooming Prairie. Recently the Blooming Prairie Village Council adopted a resolution to request that the State Legislature pass a law, which would permit the village to lease the nursing home to a non-profit organization.

The Blooming Prairie Development Corporation is studying a proposal made by Byron G. Benson for starting a new business here. The proposal is for setting up a business to assemble and market refrigeration units in Blooming Prairie.

Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Lindquist received the sad message Tuesday morning that their daughter, Lonna, had been killed in an accident in California. She was 20 years old. Her vehicle exploded from the impact of a crash with a truck and she died instantly.

75 Years Ago March 2, 1944

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

Blooming Prairie's cooperative creamery started buying whole milk for drying. March 1 was the initial day in this new venture for the local creamery that in turn will do much to furnish much needed food for the armed forces fighting the axis.

The Louis Vavra 80-acre farm located six miles west of Blooming Prairie was sold at public auction Monday for \$4,000, or an even \$50 per acre to Geo. Thompson and Obert Mumson of Ellendale.

Mrs. Archie Bell, proprietor of Alice's Beauty Salon for the past eight years, sold her business to her assistant, Mrs. George Skalicky, the former Lucille Blilie. Mrs. Skalicky took over management of the salon Feb. 13.

Farmers and their families of the Blooming Prairie area “took over the town” Wednesday afternoon as they gathered 300 strong to attend M. Nelson and Company's appreciation meeting at the community building. The talk on how to save \$25 in raising a good calf was one of the program's outstanding features.

BLOTTER: FROMA5

Feb. 23
DWI: At 2:05 a.m., deputies arrested a motorist for driving while intoxicated at Highway 14 E. and Cedar Ave. S. in Owatonna Township.

Feb. 25
Crash: Paramedics and deputies responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries in the 8300 block of Crane Creek Road in Meriden Township at 10:20 a.m.

Feb. 26
Hit and Run: At 1:06 p.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 200 block of 5th Ave. W. in Ellendale.

Crash: A motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage occurred at 46th St. NW and Interstate 35 in Clinton Falls Township at 8:33 p.m.

Feb. 27
Accident: At 8:19 p.m., a motor vehicle accident occurred at Kenyon Road NE and Mineral Springs Road NE in Owatonna. Feb. 28

Fraud: Deputy took a report of a fraud incident in the 41000 block of 168th St. SE in Blooming Prairie Township at 9:01 a.m.

Suspicion: Deputies responded to suspicious activities in the 2300 block of Rose St. in Owatonna Township at 12:38 p.m. They

arrested a subject at the scene.

OWATONNA FIRE

Feb. 22
Assist: Fire personnel assisted with a police matter in the 1000 block of St. Paul Rd. at 6:27 p.m.

Feb. 24
Carbon Monoxide: Firefighters responded to a carbon monoxide incident in the 400 block of Chestnut St. at 4:28 a.m.

Crash: At 2:53 p.m., a motor vehicle accident with injuries occurred in the 3600 block of County Road 45.

Medical: Fire rescue assisted with a medical emergency in the 1800 block of Austin Road at 4:35 p.m.

Feb. 25
Smoke: Fire personnel assisted with smoke removal in the 600 block of 15th Ave. at 6:22 p.m.

Wiring: Fire personnel responded to an electrical wiring problem in the 700 block of State St. at 7:53 p.m.

Feb. 26
Crash: At 6:27 p.m., a motor vehicle accident occurred on Havana Road.

Does Medicare Covers Vision Services?



THE SAVVY SENIOR

Brought to you by:

Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus



220 3rd St. NW,
Blooming Prairie
583-4434

Dear Savvy Senior,
I will be enrolling in Medicare in a few months, and would like to know how Medicare covers vision services? I currently have vision insurance through my employer but will lose it when I retire.

Looking Ahead

Dear Looking,
Many people approaching 65 are unclear on what Medicare does and doesn't cover when it comes to vision services. The good news is that original Medicare covers most medical issues like cataract surgery, treatment of eye diseases and medical emergencies. But unfortunately, routine care like eye exams and eyeglasses are the beneficiary's responsibility. Here's a breakdown of what is and isn't covered.

Eye exams and treatments: Medicare does not cover routine eye exams that test for eyeglasses or contact lenses. But they do cover yearly medical eye exams if you have diabetes or are at high risk for glaucoma. They will also pay for exams to test and treat medical eye diseases if you're having vision problems that indicate a serious eye problem like macular degeneration, dry eye syndrome, glaucoma, eye infections or if you get something in your eye.

a specialized lens that restores full range of vision, thereby reducing your need for glasses after cataract surgery. The extra cost for a specialized lens can run up to \$2,500 per eye.

Eye surgeries that are usually not covered by Medicare include refractive (LASIK) surgery and cosmetic eye surgery that are not considered medically necessary.

Eyeglasses and contact lenses: Medicare does not pay for eyeglasses or contact lenses, with one exception: If you have had a conventional intraocular lens inserted during cataract surgery, Medicare will pay for eyeglasses or contact lenses following the operation.

Ways to Save
Although original Medicare's vision coverage is limited to medical issues, there are ways you can save on routine care. Here are several to check into.

Consider a Medicare Advantage plan: One way you can get extra vision coverage when you join Medicare is to choose a Medicare Advantage plan instead of original Medicare. Many of these plans, which are sold through private insurance companies, will cover routine eye care and eyeglasses along with all of your hospital and medical insurance, and prescription

drugs. See [Medicare.gov/find-a-plan](https://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan) to shop for plans.

Purchase vision insurance: If you get routine eye exams and purchase new eyeglasses annually, a vision insurance plan may be worth the costs. These policies typically run between \$12 and \$20 per month. See [Ehealthinsurance.com](https://www.ehealthinsurance.com) to look for plans.

Check veterans benefits: If you're a veteran and qualify for VA health care benefits, you may be able to get some or all of your routine vision care through VA. Go to [Vets.gov](https://www.vets.gov), and search for "vision care" to learn more.

Shop around: Many retailers provide discounts – between 10 and 30 percent – on eye exams and eyeglasses if you belong to a membership group like AARP or AAA.

You can also save by shopping at discount retailers like Costco Optical, which is recommended by Consumer Reports as the best discount store for good eyewear and low prices – it requires a \$60 membership fee. Walmart Vision Centers also offer low prices with no membership.

Or consider buying your glasses online. Online retailers like WarbyParker.com, ZenniOptical.com, and EyeBuyDirect.com all get top marks from the Better Business Bureau and offer huge savings. To purchase glasses online you'll need a prescription.

Look for assistance: There are also health centers and local clinics that provide free or discounted vision exams and eyeglasses to those in need. To find them put a call into your local Lions Club (see [DirectoryLionsClubs.org](https://www.directory.lionsclubs.org)) for referrals.

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

Saving lives through blood donations



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

A little support goes a long way to helping friends donate blood. Payton Simon, Rachael Oswald and Jillian Wigham support their friend, Maggie Bruns, as she donates blood Feb. 27 at Blooming Prairie High School. Members of the National Honor Society organized and volunteered at the event, which raised 52 units of blood. Right: Lonna Hefling was one of the people who came out to donate blood.

ELLENDALE: Tree Debate FROM A1

from Owatonna to the Iowa border was the Ellendale area.

Jim Lageson, who lives in the area and travels on that stretch regularly, feels the trees are a significant safety risk and should be removed to avoid future problems. "I can't understand why the trees are still up. I think they are ugly, and they are causing problems," Lageson said. "I just don't see any benefit to having them. It's how it drifts and drifts right over the freeway."

Over the years, Lageson has learned to avoid that area when the weather conditions are bad and use alternate routes. He said I-35 has been closed many times in that area because of poor road conditions. He remains frustrated that nothing ever seems to get done about the problem.

Lageson will be the first to admit that he's no expert when it comes to transportation issues like this, but it doesn't seem to be complicated at all to him. "It looks like an easy fix to me," he says. "Flatten it out and it wouldn't be a problem like it's now."

He has taken his concerns to MnDOT by making transportation officials aware of the problem. Lageson was encouraged last week when he received a response back from a MnDOT engineer regarding the issue.

MnDOT officials admit the extended row of spruce trees on the west side of I-35 by the exit ramp is a concern that warrants a closer review and possible action.

"I've been so confused as to why they don't do something. It looks like an easy fix to me if they could **just clear out those trees.**"

Jim Lageson
Frustrated I-35 Motorist

"We are aware of this issue and have been wrestling with how to counter it in a way that effectively addresses the corridor and how to find sufficient funding, so we can program a solution," Mark Schoenfelder, engineer with MnDOT, wrote in a letter to Lageson last week. He agrees that there needs to be a better system in place along that corridor.

The spruce trees were planted in the mid-1970s at a 6-foot by 6-foot spacing, according to Schoenfelder. "This is a very tight spacing for trees that develop 25-foot wide branch canopies and when the inner branches lack sunlight the branches die out," he said, adding those particular trees are highly susceptible to cancer disease and needle cast, which contributes to needle loss and branch dieback.

The needle loss in the lower canopy, Schoenfelder said, is providing ideal conditions for creating downwind snow drifts, especially when the trees are not set back far enough from the road to account for the blowing snow transport of more than 14 tons of snow per lineal foot of roadway.

"These spruce tree living

snow fences were planted along back slopes in cut sections of roadway," Schoenfelder said. "These plantings should have been set back further from the road and been longer in length to transition into the fill sections. By not transitioning, the snow fence between the cut and fill sections creates the potential for white out or blow ice condition off the edge of the snow fence."

Michael Dougherty, spokesperson for MnDOT, acknowledged that the record-setting blizzard highlighted what weather challenges can be seen in the stretch from Ellendale to Clarks Grove. "The terrain creates some of the challenges when we see strong, sustained winds follow a significant snowfall," Dougherty said. "Among the challenges is the area with the aging spruce trees," he added.

"Even with some benefits, there needs to be a better system there, and that's why we are having discussion on how to address it most effectively and how much that might cost and work with our overall construction program," Dougherty said.

As MnDOT moves ahead to develop ideas on how to best

address the problem in that area, Dougherty encourages people to reach out with their observations. "We'll need to hear from many people: the folks who live along that corridor, who witness the challenges, the people who travel it regularly and others who might have an interest in what's planted or built and what's removed," he said.

An eventual plan, Dougherty said, is likely to include some or all aspects of removal of the spruce trees and installation of new snow fencing (living or structural) and some grading and earthwork to minimize the amount of new right of way needed.

Dougherty said MnDOT plans to keep people updated as it moves ahead with a possible solution. "This past blizzard delivered a unique mix of snow volume, lengthy sustained high winds and then subzero temperatures," he said. "We don't know when we might face that trio of factors again, but we'd like to be in a much better position to counter it the next time we get something that challenges our efforts."

He is confident that MnDOT is moving closer to some type of solution that is comprehensive enough to ensure that its actions have long-term benefits.

For motorists like Lageson, relief in that area can't come soon enough. "I've been so confused as to why they don't do something," he said. "It looks like an easy fix to me if they could just clear out those trees."

Enormous drifts halt train



It's usually derailments or crashes that bring trains to a screeching halt. However, during the recent blizzard, it was gigantic snow drifts that brought rail service to a stop. This train heading south of Ellendale got stuck in the drifts and couldn't move any further. Another train was sent to assist, but also got stuck in the snow. The Freeborn County Sheriff's Office reported no injuries throughout the blizzard, but ended up rescuing many motorists as well as the crews from both trains. The blizzard dumped a foot of snow in the area and whipped it all around with 50 mph winds throughout much of the weekend.

COURTESY FREEBORN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

CANNON RIVER WATERSHED: FROM A3

than \$5,000, and \$5,000 is the max.” He also added that those amounts are not yet set in stone.

“I would echo what Commissioner Brady said,” Commissioner Jim Abbe remarked during the discussion. “I have a concern on entering another joint powers board. I’m a little concerned on losing our independence.”

“We’re one of 14 counties, and we get one voice, and we don’t get to make the decision on our own,” Abbe continued. “We’re talking about a \$5,000 annual cost.” Both Abbe and Brady were of the mindset that the board should wait rather than make a decision on the matter at this point.

This will allow them to further review the possible agreement as it stands now and reach out to some of the other counties’ commissioners to hear their feelings on the matter. “I’d like to talk to commissioners from

the other counties, and Soil and Water on this,” Brady said before suggesting to Board Chair Greg Krueger that they delay a vote on the agreement for two weeks.

In the end, Brady made a motion to table the final decision until the board’s next meeting. The motion passed, and the board will further consider the possibility of opting into the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board at its first meeting in March.

During the meeting, the board also appointed Mike Jones to the Cedar River Watershed District. Their GIS software was also upgraded using \$14,489 from the Compliance Fund which they also used to the tune of \$17,500 to purchase ChangeFinder software for aerial pictometry.

The next Steele County Board of Commissioners meeting is scheduled for 4 p.m. on March 12.

PACELLI STUDENT: Champion speller FROM A3

trophy, Valerie’s Spelling Bee Supplement Booklet, and a \$50 Barnes & Noble Gift Card.

Other students participating in the Southeast Minnesota Final Spelling Bee were:

Johanna Herfindahl-Quint, Kasson-Mantorville 6

Alex Howard, Lake City 8

Ellie Anderson, Lanesboro 7

Allie Hoffert, Northfield 7

Robby Curtiss, Plainview-Elgin-Millville 8

Lillie Van Buskirk, Rochester Catholic 5

Isha Kapoor, Rochester Friedell 7

Isaac Nerstad, Spring Grove 7

Mira Paul, St. Charles 6



STEELE COUNTY Times

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Birthdays

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March 6 Hannah Stoneburner CJ Coleman Sylvia Swenson	March 9 Jeremy Wangen Nicki Bishop Kylie Forystek	March 11 Harlan Hansen Jon Carlson Neila Nelson Marion Mast
March 7 Allyson Skillestad Marissa White Brendan McCabe Shirley Hinzmann David Miller	March 10 Elizabeth Noble Brenda Yentsch Ryan Glynn	March 12 Riauna Bishop Denise Thompson Charlotte Trom

Anniversaries

March 5 Henry & Lucy Post	March 16 Mr. & Mrs. Laverne Johnson
March 15 Jerry & Patty Ingvalson	March 17 John & Barb Stenzel Chip & Pat Decker

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COLLEGE NEWS

Kim earns Dean's award

Jeehyun Kim of Owatonna has earned the fall 2018 Dean's award with distinction.

Kim is a graduate of Global Prodigy Academy in Jeonju City. Kim currently attends Colgate University in Hamilton, N.Y. majoring in mathematics.

Colgate offers 56 majors to a diverse student population of about 2,900 undergraduate students.

EXPANSION: Medford opts for growth FROM A3

maintenance but carried less savings, while the second charged the city with the responsibility to maintain the new lights with higher savings. In the end, the council decided that it would be more reliable to allow SWCE to maintain the new lights.

Their decision was based upon the possibility for increased staffing and certification in order to maintain the new lights, as well as the probable need to hire an electrician if there was an issue with the newly installed LEDs.

Also on the agenda was a discussion of the 2021 Main Street Reconstruction Project. The council motioned to continue to proceed with the project as outlined by City Engineer Joe Duncan and Administrator Welti.

In the current outline construction is scheduled for 2021, but this will take significant planning and coordination and is still a preliminary estimate at this point. A cooperative agreement has been signed

for the project on CSAH 45 between the city and the county which will have the city take the lead.

“As the lead, the benefit of that for the city is that you would be better able to incorporate the improvements to your municipal utilities, as well as work more closely with your businesses and residents that are directly impacted by the project,” Duncan said of the arrangement.

Lastly Mayor Nelson and the council thanked Public Works Supervisor Cory Franek and the public works crew for their steadfast efforts in dealing with the record February snowfall. “We’re going to keep the streets cleared and provide safe travel for the community as best we can,” Franek said of the department’s work in combating the continued snowfall.

The next regular Medford City Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 25 at 7 p.m.

B. P. Cancer Group HAM BINGO

Thursday., March 7, • 7 p.m.

Pizza Cellar Party Room
302 Main St E, Blooming Prairie

Everyone Welcome!

25 GAMES

25 HAMS

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Craig Kruckeberg

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Blooming Prairie Cancer Group

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Recipe Corner

French Apple Dessert

INGREDIENTS:

4 c. diced, peeled apples	2 eggs
2 c. sugar	2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 c. oil	1/2 c. chopped nuts
2 c. unsifted flour	2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt	

DIRECTIONS:

Place apples in mixing bowl. Break eggs over apples and stir well. Mix sugar and cinnamon. Add to apples along with oil and nuts. Mix well. Sift flour, baking soda and salt. Add to mixture and mix well. Put into greased and floured 9x13 inch pan. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes. Cut into squares and serve with caramel sauce. Yield: 12 servings.

CARAMEL SAUCE:

1 c. packed brown sugar	1 c. heavy cream
2 T. flour	1 c. sugar
1/2 c. butter	2 tsp. vanilla

DIRECTIONS:

Put sugars, cream, butter and flour into heavy saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir until thickens. Stir in vanilla. Serve hot over squares.

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15th Presidents Award Winner
Blooming Prairie, 583-2046

PASTOR'S COLUMN

Time for a spiritual spring-cleaning



Pastor Sandy Miller
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
HOPE

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7

Enough of this snow already! It’s time for spring cleaning! A spiritual spring-cleaning that is. This week marks the beginning of the Lent-en season, that time between Ash Wednesday and Easter. But did you know that the word ‘Lent’ comes from the Old English word for “spring”? And since Lent is also known to be a time of fasting, you might say that Lent is a good time to do a spiritual spring-cleaning! A time to get rid of those things in our life that ‘clutter up’ our relationship with Christ. It’s funny. Just this week, I found

myself going through my ‘memory box’ in an effort to piece together the dates of some family events. In the process, I found some things that brought a smile to my face, some things that brought a tear to my eye, and some things that to be quite honest, stirred up some parts of my life that I’m not too proud of. It caused me to stop and take a moment to reflect on my life’s journey. Especially on some of those things that I had tucked far, far away....hidden in a box in the dark corner of my closet. My guess is that we all have a box like that. Whether it’s a literal box or a box in our mind, it’s a place where we hold the memories of our life relationships and experiences – those things that shape our identity. The only problem is that some of those things have

a tendency to ‘clutter up’ our relationship with Christ if we haven’t yet repented of them and brought them to Jesus for forgiveness and healing. Instead, we just pile other things on top of them....busyness, good works, substance use, etc....until eventually they get tucked away, hidden behind our more vivid and happy memories. This is why Lent is so valuable. It’s a time of year that we can clear the cobwebs and intentionally deal with some of those things that clutter up our life, those things that are still there, but aren’t at all useful to our life of faith. Lent is the perfect time to remember that Jesus graciously died for all of our sins. And if we would but turn to Him with repentance in our hearts, He is quick to forgive and completely remove those things that come in the

way of having a full and vibrant relationship with Him. I love “The Message” translation of 2 Timothy 2:20-22 which says, “In a well-furnished kitchen there are not only crystal goblets and silver platters, but waste cans and compost buckets—some containers used to serve fine meals, others to take out the garbage. Become the kind of container God can use to present any and every kind of gift to his guests for their blessing.” Again, Lent is the perfect time to do a ‘spiritual spring-cleaning,’ to bring those parts of our lives that tend to hold garbage to the foot of the cross. It’s there that Jesus promises to forgive us, renew us, and cleanse us from all our sin, making us beautiful in His sight and fit for service in His Kingdom.

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 <td> 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. 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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.destinyc.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 PRAIRIE 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 </td> <td> 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. </td>	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 Cirkseña 507-684-2731 www.ellendaleumc.org Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun. 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LEGION FROM A1

emigrated to the U.S. at 10 years old, and after a couple stops, he came to Blooming Prairie. He ended up going back overseas to France to fight in World War I before being killed three months prior to the end of the war at age 18.

Luiken will also show an original digital print highlighting the 15 original charter members of the local post. He will have displays and information of each of the charter members.

"I don't know of any other Legion going to this extent for this anniversary," said Luiken, who is a Vietnam vet-

eran. "Every Legion should be celebrating a birthday, especially this year when it's going to be 100 years old."

He pointed out that the Legion is the "strongest organization that represents veterans." The organization offers scholarships, a baseball program, supports Boys Scouts and sends young people to Boys and Girls State as well as Legionville.

While the Blooming Prairie post remains strong with 109 members, Luiken says they could always use more. He has found it a struggle to get younger veterans involved. He said there are several hundred veterans from the ages 30 to 50 that are eligible to be members in the local area.

Luiken noted that many Legion and VFW organizations are struggling to stay afloat.

"We are encouraging younger veterans to join these organizations to help them survive," Luiken said.

The menu for the birthday bash consists of Swedish meatballs. However, recognizing the time of the year during Lent, Luiken said a stand-by fish option will be available for those who request ahead of time. "That's going to cover us for our sins," he said with a grin.

Those interested in attending are asked to make reservations by calling the Servicemen's Club at 507-583-7884 by Monday, March 11. The public is invited to attend this party.

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Charley's in charge

8th-grader claims Medford's first state title since 2012

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

SAINT PAUL — Medford's Charley Elwood couldn't contain his excitement after winning the 113-pound Class A state championship on Saturday at Xcel Energy Center. So he took a victory lap around the backstage corridor area.

"It was just a little walk to let it soak in," he said moments after defeating Sibley East's Derek Steele (41-5) in the championship match. "I just feel a lot of relief that it's over and all that hard work paid off. It feels really good."

After placing second in his previous try at an individual wrestling state title, Elwood (35-2) took care of unfinished business.

Elwood entered the tournament ranked No. 1 in

the state and as the No. 1 seed in his respective weight class.

"I felt like I kind of had a target on my back, like everybody was coming for me, but you have to push that all aside and wrestle," Elwood said. "I came up short last year and it just makes it all that much sweeter to get it done this year."

Elwood became the Tigers' first state champion since Curt Maas in 2012 and just the sixth in the program's history.

In the championship match, Elwood played to his strengths and used his length to ward off the attacks of the much shorter Steele.

"I really like my length," he said. "I've figured out how to use it and it obviously helps me in my matches against shorter opponents."

Elwood controlled the match after securing an early



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Medford's Charley Elwood has his hand raised after winning the Class A 113-pound state championship at Xcel Energy Center.

takedown and eventually won by a 4-0 margin.

Steele was able to avoid the pin-fall defeat, as Elwood avoided any unnecessary risks and completely controlled the match.

"A win is win," Elwood said. "There is no team points or team title on the line here. It's just about winning and

moving forward."

Medford head coach Dennis Whitman said he loves the way Elwood handled the pressure of the weekend that came with being the No. 1 seed.

"He went out there and proved it," Whitman said. "Everyone was giving him their best shot and it was

impressive the way he handled everything."

Elwood earned his trip the state championship match after he won 9-5 over Crookston's Zach Brown (39-3) in the semifinals.

"He's incredibly savvy," Whitman said. "A lot of people make a big deal out of him being an eighth-grader, but

he's put far more time and effort into this than your average eighth-grader and it shows."

Elwood had his closest match of the tournament in the semifinals against Easton McCory (31-10) of Minnewaska in quarterfinals on Friday

SEE ELWOOD, B10



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Medford's Willie VonRuden prepares to takedown an opponent in the state tournament semifinals.

Medford's VonRuden earns silver at state meet

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

Medford's Willie VonRuden wrestled well enough to win a state championship on Saturday during the MSHSL State Wrestling tournament at Xcel Energy Center, unfortunately, he came away just short after a questionable penalty costed him in the title match of the Class A 145-pound weight class.

"Obviously, we are all heartbroken on the way that match ended," Medford head coach Dennis Whitman said. "The circumstances that led up to how it ended, there was a sense of it being a little unfair. But it's a credit to Willie and the person that he is because he's not dwelling on it and he doesn't feel like he got shortchanged. He will move on real quick, which is really

impressive to me because I'm still dwelling on it and haven't moved on yet."

VonRuden (35-2) led 4-2 late in the title match against Caledonia's Kyle Cavanaugh (40-0), however he was called for a one-point penalty and Cavanaugh secured a takedown to take a 5-4 advantage with less than one minute remaining in the match.

VonRuden said he didn't know he was called for the penalty until there was about 15 seconds remaining in the match.

"I got up and his coach yelled that he was up," VonRuden said. "I thought we were tied, but I looked at the clock and I was down 5-4. I tried to put a few moves together, but it was not enough."

VonRuden was the only opponent able to takedown Cavanaugh this season. He near

took him down again but went out of bounds.

"I tried to take a lot of fake shots to get him off balance and moving," VonRuden said. "My game-plan going in was to push the pace and put the pressure on him, but we pretty much had the same idea. I tried to push the pace, but he was a tough son of a gun. He was just a smart, technical wrestler and he came out on top."

VonRuden said he came into the tournament "prepared mentally, physically, with a good gas tank and ready to roll, after not being being completely there mentally at state season's state meet."

He started the tournament with by pinning Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg's Jared Carlson (31-9) in only 35 seconds. VonRuden

SEE MEDFORD, B10

Huskies place trio at state tournament

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

SAINT PAUL — It was a bit anticlimactic, but Albert Lea Area's Zach Grazier (47-0) wrestled a defensive masterpiece against Owatonna's Cade King (43-5) to win the a Class 3A wrestling state championship on Saturday at the Xcel Energy Center in Saint Paul.

Grazier defeated King 1-0 in the 182-pound championship. It was the fifth time Grazier had beaten King this season and the second consecutive 1-0 decision. Grazier and King were both state champions this past season. King at 182 and Grazier at 170.

"Cade is not going to back down or compromise from anything he believes," Owatonna head coach Adam Woitalla said. "He went out there and tries his best. He wasn't going to let anyone tell him otherwise or doubt him."

King could have dropped down or move up a weight class and likely

won a state championship, but he decided to take another shot at the undefeated Grazier.

"Cade is the type of kid who will tell you how it is," Woitalla said. "He doesn't sugar coat anything. Actually, his honesty is one of his best qualities. Ultimately, we have to give Cade credit for making that decision because he easily could have gone up a weight class and probably have won another state title, but he believed in himself and wanted a challenge. It's that determination and almost stubbornness that make him such a great athlete."

The final showdown between the No. 1 and No. 2 ranked wrestlers was a clash of contrasting styles.

King was ultra-aggressive. He attacked and kept moving forward. He tried to push the pace and get into scrambles. On the other hand, Grazier was the ultimate defensive wrestler. He stayed in a good



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Owatonna's Cade King battles Albert Lea Area's Zach Grazier for the Class 3A 182-pound state championship on Saturday at the Xcel Energy Center. Grazier defeated King 1-0 in the battle of defending state champions.

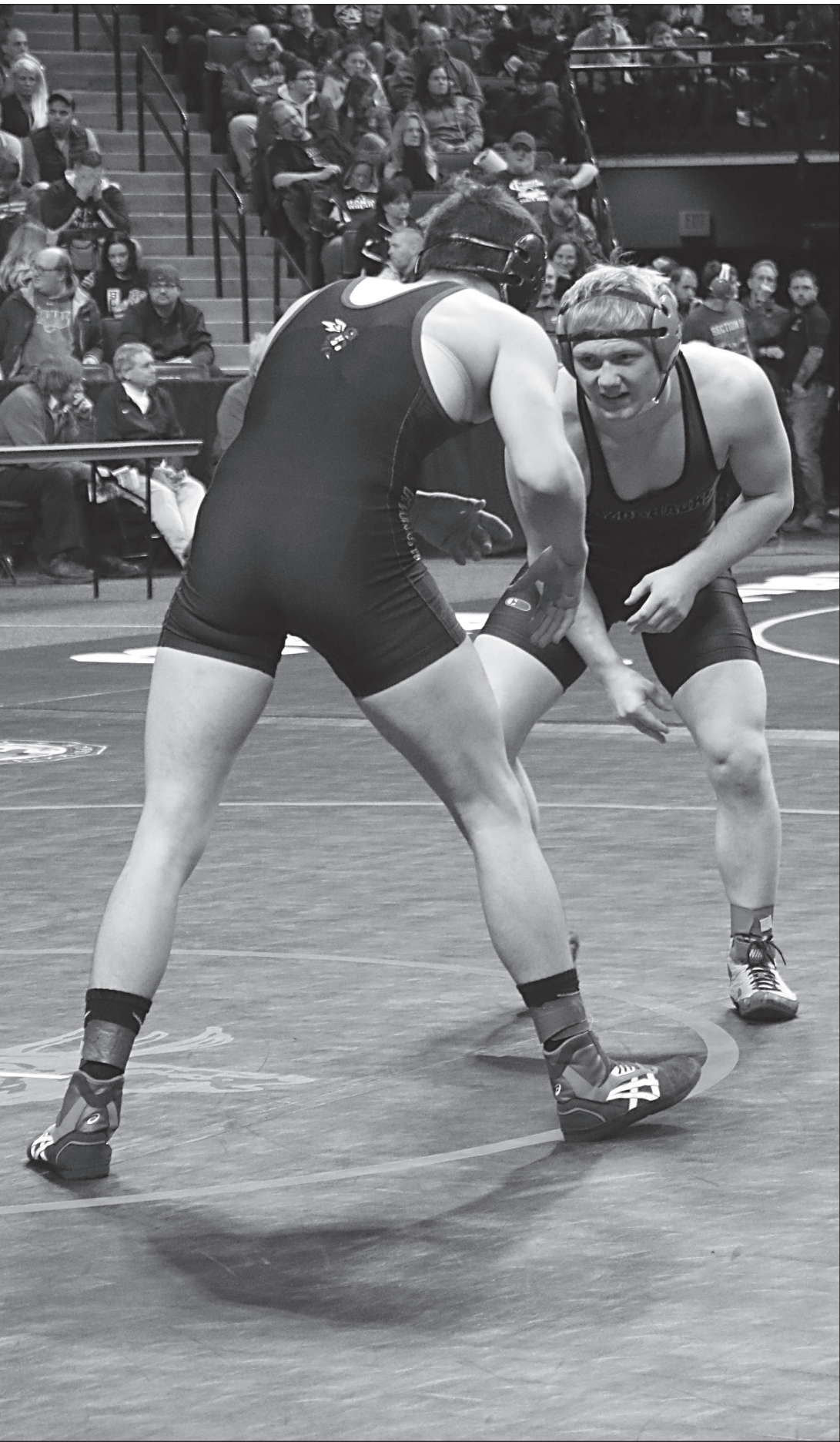
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Westfield's Krell upset in state meet, rebounds for bronze



Westfield's Colton Krell wrestles during the third place match of the Class A 170-pound weight class at the MSHSL State Tournament on Saturday at Xcel Energy Center.

BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

It wasn't what No. 1 ranked Colton Krell had envisioned when he was upset in the semifinals of MSHSL State Wrestling Tournament on Saturday at Xcel Energy Center, but the Westfield grappler still found some silver lining.

Krell (38-4) rebounded to win his final two matches and claim third place of the Class A 170-pound tournament after he was upset by Minnewaska Area's Tyson Meyer (39-0) in the championship semifinals 7-2.

"In my mind I would rather get third than second and go out on a win oppose to the loss," Krell said. "I wrestled my hardest and did everything that I could. It didn't work out the way I wanted it to, but I could have let it bother me and get in my head and end up sixth, but I wanted to show my heart and determination."

Meyer had a definite size advantage over Krell, but was somewhat of unknown after losing in the first round of the state tournament the past two years.

"He had good size and he knew how to wrestle me," Krell said. "I'm almost positive he's watched me wrestle because I watched him in the finals and he was extremely offensive and against me he didn't really take a whole lot of shots."

Meyer went on to win the tournament.

"He was very good wrestler," Krell continued. "Obviously, losing in the first round and not even getting a chance at third really bothered him enough to point that he improved a lot through a lot of work and he got the title."

Krell won a 10-4 decision over Minneota's Shawn Buysee (32-13) in the consolation semis and a 9-3 decision over Frazee's Brett Graham (37-13) in the third place match. He won his first two matches 9-1 and 9-3. to advance to match with Meyer. This was Krell trip to the state tournament.

He finished second at 170 in 2018 and fourth at

160 in 2017.

"I just have to get better," Krell said. "I wanted to be a three-time champion and I didn't get that. Then I wanted to be a two-time champion and I didn't get that. Now I just have to work even harder to be a state champion."

Westfield other state qualifier, Dylan Nirk (27-11), was eliminated after going 0-2 on Friday.

"I think he's hungrier than he has even been," Krell said. "That will really drive him and I really think he will dominate kids next year."

Despite the earlier exit, Nirk was competitive in his matches. He lost the two matches by a combined three points.

Westfield co-head coach Shane Masching said the sky is the limit for both Krell and Nirk next season.

"When you get the state tournament it's anyone's to win," Masching said. "The kids performed well. It's always good competition up there and we couldn't be more proud of them."

Masching said upsets are something that happen when you wrestle against the elite.

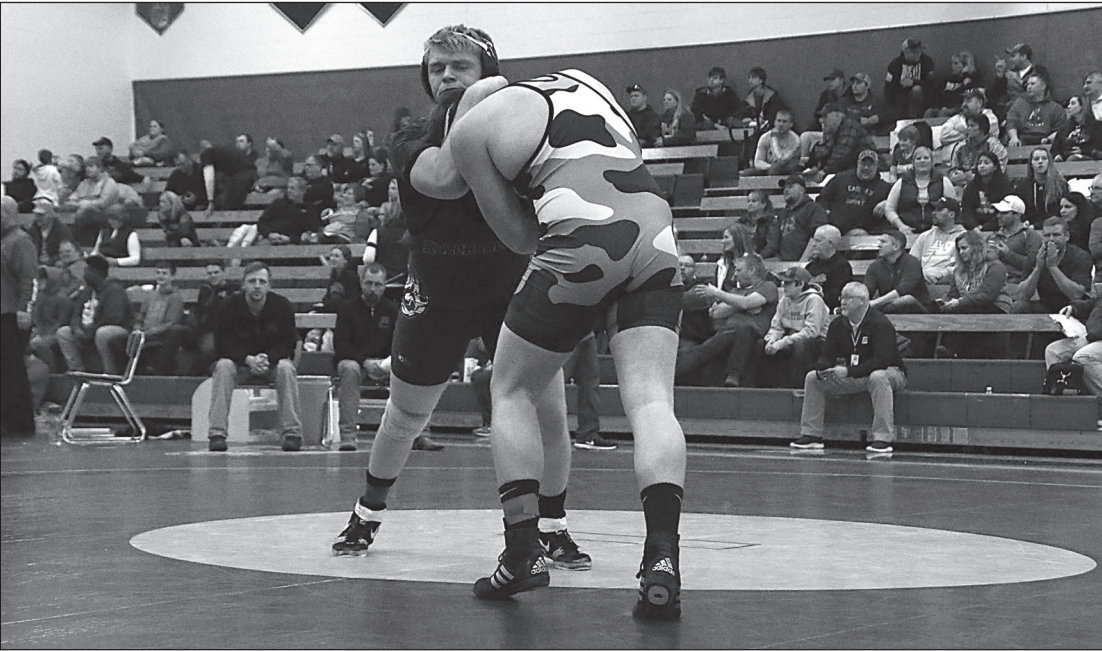
"Anything can happen," Masching said. "Every match is a grind. Meyer is a very good wrestler. He has a great style and great stagger on the mat. He hadn't been taken down all year until he faced Colton. They both wrestled well and the outcome didn't go our way."

Masching said Nirk and Krell were both great leaders for the Razorbacks this season and he's excited to have the multiple-time state qualifiers back for another season.

"Our future is definitely bright," he said. "We have some good talent coming up. I'm already excited and optimistic for next season."

Westfield would have likely had another state qualifier if not for a late-season injury that ended senior Tristan Rieken's season.

Rieken defeated Plainview-Elgin-Millville's Logan Wingert earlier this season. Wingert (44-7) finished second at 285 in Class 2A on Saturday.



Westfield's Dylan Nirk competes during the section tournament at Blue Earth High School.

Panthers make early exit from state tournament

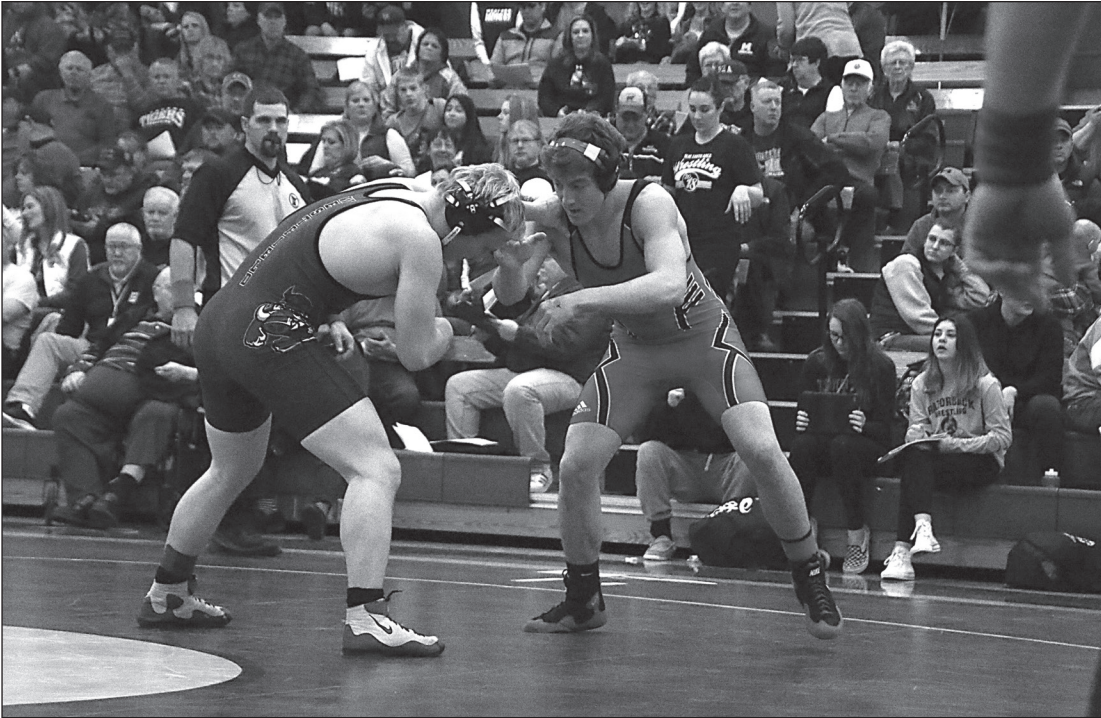
BY DENNIS MARSHALL
SPORTS EDITOR

New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva senior wrestlers Tyler Jacobson and Quinten Arndt each may have made early exits from the MSHSL State Tournament on Friday, but both represented their school and community well and left it all out on the mats at the Xcel Energy Center in Saint Paul.

"I am extremely proud of these two athletes," NRHEG head coach Shawn Larson said. "They both have worked very hard for many years and even though they did not make the podium, they were able to make the state tournament, which is something many athletes never get to do. Both of these wrestlers are going to be missed as we move on without them, as they are the example of what we at NRHEG want all of our athletes to be like. Again I could not be prouder of these boys."

Jacobson said he wishes he could have wrestled a little better in his second trip to the state tournament, but it was overall a good experience.

"It's always fun to get the opportunity to wrestle in the



NRHEG's Tyler Jacobson competes during the section tournament at Blue Earth High School.

Xcel," he said. "It's pretty cool up there. I'm obviously happy to be able to make it up there twice."

Jacobson (25-13) lost bu a 5-0 decision in his only match to Jace Paplow (47-4) of Tracy-Milroy-Balton-Westbrook-

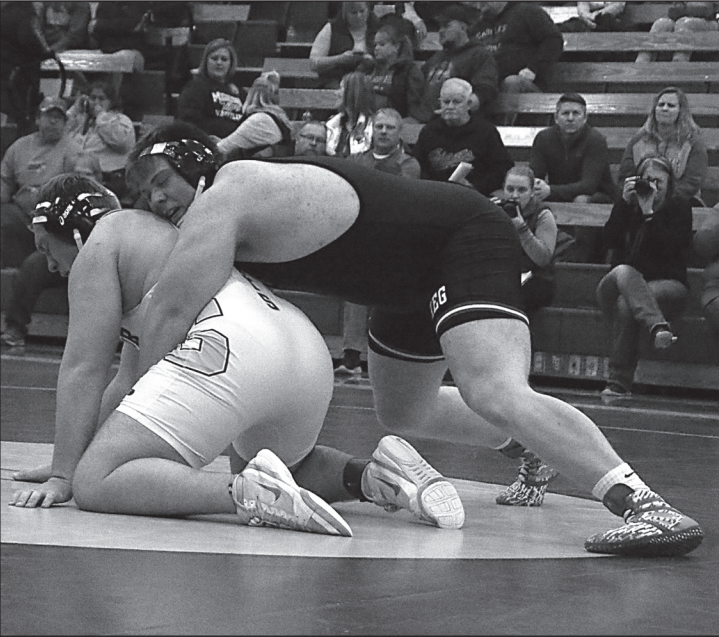
Walnut-Grove.

"He was really strong and didn't give up and position," Jacobson said. "I just couldn't do what I wanted."

Jacobson said he's grateful for the memories made the

past 14 years while wrestling for the Panther's program.

"It's awesome being to go to state in wrestling and football in the same year," he said. "It's been a fun ride that's for sure. There are a lot of good memories. I'm thankful for



NRHEG's Quinten Arndt competes during the section tournament at Blue Earth High School.

the opportunity."

Arndt (29-11) lost both of his matches. A 6-2 decision to Tanner Berghuis (46-3) of Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City and a 3-0 decision to Cian Buehler (33-11) of Ottertail Central.

"It was cool experience and I had a blast," Arndt said. "I

had lots of fun and enjoyed everything. The competition was very challenging. But I couldn't have asked for a better senior year. I'm very proud of how everything went and I couldn't ask for a better group of guys to compete with."



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BASKETBALL

BP boys open section with win

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

It proved much easier than thought as the Blooming Prairie boys' basketball team ran past Goodhue 69-38 in quarterfinal action of the Sub-Section 1A tournament.

The higher seeded Blossoms used the home court advantage Thursday, Feb. 28, to jump to a 33-13 halftime lead and coast into a semifinal game against Hayfield Tuesday at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester.

It pretty much told the story of the game to find the locals up by 23 points just ten minutes into the contest and the Awesome Blossoms did that with extremely balanced scoring in this one.

BP had four players in double figures, and all but one player scored points.

The Blossoms also had a wide edge in rebounding, with Karson Vigeland pulling down 12 and Gabe Hagen adding seven

"The boys really played well tonight," BP head coach Nate Piller said. "The offense really clicked, and defensively we set the tone early and continued to work hard. We had great balance in scoring, as well."

Hagen led the scoring with 16 points, and Vigeland and Kaden Thomas each had 14.

Zach Archer chipped in 12 points, nine of them on 3-pointers.

Dawson Evenson and Lucas Schumaker each had 12 points for the Wildcats.



BP's Tim Wolf and Kaden Thomas trap a Goodhue player on Thursday during the subsection game at BPHS.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

WEATHER STILL PREVAILS

It isn't very funny, but if February had been in a leap year, we would have set a record for the snowiest month in history, as March 1 duped another four-plus inches of snow upon us.

We did get a respite from the snow over the weekend, but then the extremely cold temperatures visited us again instead.

Our theater of seasons has finally gotten to just about all of us, and a moderation of snow and cold would be most welcome.

WINTER SPORTS ENDING

It has been a season often disrupted by cancellations and postponements, but the winter sports teams are in the final weeks of competition or have concluded their seasons in the playoffs. I have nothing but admiration for the basketball girls who finished their year with a tough loss to No. 2 seeded Grand Meadow.

The team compiled a winning record, and they did it without one senior to provide leadership. I guess that goes a long way to offer congratulations to the underclassmen for providing that leadership. We know that circumstances can change in a moment but, as of now, hopes and aspirations for the next season have reached a very optimistic outlook.

Congratulations are in order to the coaches and the players for their attitude this season, their obvious concern for each other, their willingness to learn and be coachable, and their determination to become a good team, despite the absence of senior leadership. Well done, team and coaches!

The basketball boys got their playoff experience off on the right foot with the easy win over Goodhue.

For the past half dozen seasons, Goodhue has had the upper hand on the Blossoms in just about every sport, and it is refreshing to watch the locals handle the Wildcats, at least for a couple of years.

Now the Blossoms go head to head with another arch-rival when they face Hayfield at Rochester Tuesday. The teams are seeded right next to each other, and it should be an interesting matchup. The team has had a very good season with just six losses, and the team would like to keep going a little longer. Good luck to the Blossoms in that battle.

In wrestling Westfield's Colton Krell won his first two bouts to advance o the semifinals, but Dylan Nirk lost his opening bout. Unfortunately the deadline for my column came before the final outcome, but I am sure that fellow writer Dennis Marshall will report the finals.

A STAR VISITS

A week ago students at the local high school had occasion to hear film star and BPHS graduate Jay Christianson recount some of his experiences as a Hollywood actor. I had the distinct privilege of spending some time twice last week with Christianson, as he was taking a break from his travels around the country. He is currently touring to many locations showing his feature film, "Garrow" at various film festivals in several cities.

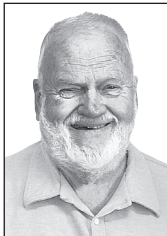
We had a good time reminiscing about our days in school, he as a student, and I as one of his teachers. He also regaled me with stories about his budding career and his other occupations pursued at various times. He was a flight attendant for a time and also spent time in New York at various jobs.

My other occasion to interact with Christianson came when he and his sister picked me up last Wednesday, and we saw the movie "Mary Poppins, The Return". That was quite a treat for me, as I hadn't seen a movie in a theater for almost 20 years. It was a fun afternoon, and I am grateful to the two of them for that excursion. I hope to see a little more of him, as he divides time between his film festivals and his sister's here in the Cities. Thanks for the experience.

COMING UP

I notice that plans are now well underway for the huge BP Ed Foundation coming up in just a few weeks. This is the biggest affair for the Foundation all year, and a lot of money is raised for many projects in the school system that couldn't be afforded without the help of that organization. I hope residents are making plans now to attend this great benefit and add their bids to the items offered. There are some great items, both in the silent and the live auction. Mark that date on your calendars now.

Let's all hope for a break in the weather soon, and we'll talk again.



Outside the Lines
LEMAR NELSON

Season ends for BP girls

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER



BP's Megan Oswald drives the baseline during a game earlier this season.

Defeating Grand Meadow girls' basketball team likely couldn't happen. But scaring the No. 2 seeded Super Larks certainly could and did. Grand Meadow edged the Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossoms 49-43 in the Class 1A Sub-Section playoffs at Rochester Tuesday, Feb. 26.

BP trailed just 42-40 with two minutes to play, before the winners made a 3-pointer and pulled ahead six points to preserve the win.

The underdog Blossoms made a great effort in the game, but fell behind early and trailed throughout.

BP did rally, but each time the team did, Grand Meadow answered every run.

The Super Larks led 28-24 at the break and scored the first six points of the second half to open up a ten-point margin. But the Blossoms chipped away at the lead until Julia Worke's 3-pointer pulled the locals to that two-point deficit.

"It was a great effort by the BP girls in this game," BP head coach John Bruns said. "We trailed throughout, but still had a chance by getting within two points. I am very proud of the girls and their determination, and they had season success without a single senior on the team. It should be a fun year next season."

Only four Blossoms scored in this game, led by Megan Oswald with 15 points. Worke contributed 12 and Bobbie Bruns chipped in 11.

Maggie Bruns scored five and dished out four assists, Bobbie Bruns had five assists and stole the ball three times.

Oswald recorded another double-double with 12 rebounds.

Riley Queensland and Jordan Glynn counted 16 and 14 points to lead the winners.

The Blossoms finished the season with a 13-10 overall record and a 7-7 mark in the conference, which landed them in fifth place. The team will return all the players next season.

Undefeated Tigers fall to familiar foe in subsection playoff

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The Medford Tigers girls' basketball was upset in the second round of the Section 2AA tournament on Friday at Mankato East High School.

The 46-33 loss to No. 4 seed Saint Peter (13-10) wasn't a complete shock, as the Saint walloped the Tigers in last season's playoff, 59-26.

"It was two teams playing great defense and they just hit a couple more shots than us," Medford head coach Mark Kubat said. "We didn't back down. I'm still trying to figure out a how they suffered a couple of their losses."

The Saints stormed out to 20-point advantage in the first half, but the Tigers' narrowed it to a 37-30 margin midway the second half. Saint Peter answered Medford runs by re-extending its lead never looking back from that point on.

Emma Kniefel and Izzy Reuvers led Medford with 10 points. Kiley Nihart had seven and Kinsey Cronin and Jenna Berg each had three.

The loss ended an incredible season by the Tigers.

The Tigers should be one of favorite to win the section next year as all but one player, senior Bailey Purrier, will return.

Kubat said while Purrier may not light on the stat book, she does provide the team with something

that can't be replaced.

"Nobody sees what she does in practice," Kubat said. "I call her the mother duckling because she takes care of all the younger chicks. She leads in a very positive way and everyone on our team really looks up to her."

The Tigers could possible move sections this summer with realignment on the horizon.

"We just have to keep playing and striving to be better," Kubat said.

NRHEG no match for Medford No. 1 seeded Medford outscored The New Richland Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva 43-27 in the first half and defeated the Panthers 78-58 in opening round action of the Class 2A subsection tournament.

The contest on Tuesday, Feb. 26, moved the Tigers into the next round of the playoffs and ended the season for the Panthers.

NRHEG came out playing hard and scoring well, but the Medford offense proved too much. The Panthers cut Medford's lead to ten points a couple of times, but it ballooned back to 20 every time.

The Tigers are a really tough team and were led in scoring by Kinsey Cronin, Kiley Nihart and Izzy Reuvers led Medford in scoring. Each scored 12 points. Emma Kniefel added 11, Isabella Steffen and Jenna Berg had eight, Purrier had four, Alorah Wiese had three and Jordyn Stadler and



Medford's Izzy Reuvers and NRHEG's Lexie Ignaszewski battle for a loose ball during subsection action on Tuesday, Feb. 26 at MHS.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Brooke Purrier had two.

The Panthers finished the year with a 9-18 overall record, and the team said goodbye to seven seniors.

"We had a tough draw facing the No. 1 Medford team," NRHEG head coach Onika Peterson said. "We hung with them for a time. It is hard to believe the season is already over. Tonight just wasn't our night, but I thank the girls for their attitude and their love of

the game. Thanks especially to the seniors for their leadership all season."

Alexis Anderson and Hannah Budach led the scoring in this game with 12 points, and Sidney Schultz and Kim Johnson chipped in eight and seven points. Anderson had six rebounds, and Schultz dished out 11 assists in the game. Sophie Stork added two steals and four rebounds

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B Honor Roll

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				Grade 12 Alexis Anderson Alexander Buckmeier Madisyn Bueltel Devin Buendorf Lawren Demi Jayna Finseth Shaun Gullickson Khryssa Hodapp Jack Hegstad Tyler Jacobson Ellarose Jameson Madison Johnson Mackayla Knutson Dalton Kraay Atom Oquist Darian Pearson Mariah Posey Jacob Schuller Tanner Smith Vulcan Hailey Stenzel Karenna Strom Jadyn Surat 1Kallie Thompson 1Sawyer VanMaldeghem 1Hailey Westrum

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When deciding on the senior housing plan that's right for you, it's important to consider not only the needs you have now but also those you may have in the future:

Physical and medical needs. As you age, you may need some help with physical needs, including activities of daily living. This could range from shopping, cleaning, cooking, and looking after pets to intensive help with bathing, moving around, and eating. You or a loved one may also need increasing help with medical needs. These could arise from a sudden condition, such as a heart attack or stroke, or a more gradual condition that slowly needs more and more care, such as Alzheimer's disease.

Location and accessibility. Even if you are completely in-

dependent at this time, circumstances can change. It pays to think a little about your current location and accessibility of your current home. For example, how far is your home from shopping, medical facilities, or other services? If you can no longer drive, what kind of transportation access will you have? Can your home be easily modified? Does it have a lot of steps or a steep hill to navigate? Do you have a large yard that needs to be maintained?

Home maintenance. If you're living alone, your current home may become too difficult or too expensive to maintain. You may have health problems that make it hard to manage tasks such as housework and yard maintenance that you once took for granted.

Social and emotional needs. As you age, your social networks may change. Friends or family may not be as close by, or neighbors may move or pass on. You may no longer be able to continue driving or have access to public transportation in order to meet up with family and friends. Or you simply may want to expose yourself to more social opportunities and avoid becoming isolated and housebound.

Financial needs. Modifying your home and long-term care can both be expensive, so balancing the care you need with where you want to live requires careful evaluation of your budget. Making a budget with anticipated expenses can help you weigh the pros and cons of your situation.



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The future cannot be predicted. Financial troubles can delay memorial purchases, sometimes indefinitely, and disagreements can have the same effect. Pre-purchase is reliable protection against these uncertainties - your guarantee that your memorial will happen as you want it. This gives you and your family peace of mind.



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• Tomb of the Unknown Soldier	• Petersen House	Iwo Jima
• Changing of the Guard	• Kennedy Center	Lincoln
• George Washington's Home	• National Cathedral	Roosevelt
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NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF STEELE

DISTRICT COURT
CIVIL DIVISION
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Case No.: 74-JV-19-57

Summons and Notice
Termination of Parental
Rights Matter

NOTICE

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
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MINNESOTA 55917
MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2019
HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA
CENTER

PROPOSED TENTATIVE
AGENDA

6:00 a.m.
Thursday, March 14, 2019
Regular School Board
Work Session –High
School Board Room
7:00 p.m.
Monday, March 18, 2019
Open Public Forum–High School Media
Center
7:15 p.m.
Monday, March 18, 2019
Regular School
Board Meeting–High
School Media Center

1. A Termination of Parental Rights Petition has been filed in the Office of the Clerk of Juvenile Court located at **Steele County Court Administration 111 E Main St. Owatonna**, Minnesota, alleging that parental rights of the above-named parent(s) or legal custodian(s) to the child(ren) named in the petition should be permanently severed.

2. **Notice is hereby given** that the matter of said Termination of Parental Rights Petition will be called for hearing before the Juvenile Court located at **111 E Main St. Owatonna**, Minnesota, on **March 18, 2019** at **8:30 AM** or as soon after as the Matter can be heard.

3. **YOU ARE ORDERED** to appear before the Juvenile Court at the scheduled time and date.

4. You have a right to be represented by counsel.

5. If you fail to appear at the hearing, the Court may still conduct the hearing and grant appropriate relief, including permanently severing the parental rights of the above-named parent(s) or legal custodian(s) and taking permanent custody of the child/ren named in the Petition.

WITNESS, the Honorable Karen R. Duncan February 15, 2019

Judge of District Court

BY:

Robin Hoesley
Court Administrator

2/19, 2/26, 3/5

Treasurer's Report
Resignations
Donations

B. Employment
C. Superintendent Contract
D. Volunteer Coaches
E. Weather Days
F. Class Sizes/Sections
G. Prom DJ

VII. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ONLY

A. School Safety Grant Update
B. Transition Plan
C. Committee Reports
D. Enrollment Data
E. Dates to Note

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

*Agenda may be subject to changes

3/5

NOTICE

Proposed
City of Blooming Prairie
City Council Meeting
Agenda
March 11, 2019
7:00 P.M.

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance

Consent Agenda
1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes of February 11, 2019 – Regular City Council Meeting
3. Approval of Minutes of February 20, 2019 – Work Session
4. Application for Temporary Liquor License – Blooming Prairie Chamber of Commerce
5. Recommendation from Planning Commission – Approve Relocation of House into BP

Financial Report

Committee/Commission Reports
1. B.P. Public Utilities
2. B.P. Economic Development Authority
3. B.P. Planning & Zoning
4. B.P. Fire Commission
5. B.P. Police Commission
6. B.P. Ambulance Commission

Business

1. BPDF – Bylaw change – Attendance Based Incentive
2. BPDF – Retirement Benefit Increase
3. Blooming Prairie Ambulance Commission Annual Report
4. 2019 Street Rehabilitation Improvement Bonding

City Administrator's Report

1. Public Hearing - Codification of Ordinances Postponed
2. Permit Approved – Ditch Cleaning
3. Snow Events
4. MCFOA Conference – March 20-22

City Attorney's Report
Council Members' Reports

Closed Meeting – Personnel Discussion

Adjourn
This agenda is subject to change

3/5

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Blooming Prairie Township will hold its annual meeting and election on March 12h 2019.
Polls will be open from 4:00PM until 8PM.
The meeting will immediately follow the closing of the polls.

On the ballot
• Robert Haberman- Supervisor 3 year term
• Katie Zipse- Treasurer 2 year term

Blooming Prairie Township Board
Missy Anderson- Clerk
Jerry Wencil- Chairman

3/5

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Suns
5. Bog
10. Woodcutter hero Ali
14. Aquatic reptile (abbr.)
15. Cape Verde capital
16. Chemical compounds
17. Maple genus
18. "All ____ on deck"
19. Roman public squares
20. Leavened rum cakes
22. Quilting gathering
23. Large hero sandwich
24. Oprah's BFF
27. London radio station
30. Downwind
31. Frosty
32. Brake horsepower
35. In a way, removes
37. Bridge-building degree
38. Mother of the Titans
39. Nostrils
40. ____ choy: Chinese cabbage
41. A.K.A. rose-red spinel
42. Blue goose genus
43. Take in solid food
44. Speak incoherently
45. Chop with an axe
46. Wrapped package (abbr.)
47. Auricle
48. Former CIA
49. Highway Patrol's Crawford
52. Yemen capital
55. John ___, Br. statesman (1584-1643)
56. Expressed pleasure
60. First Chinese dynasty
61. Indian dresses
63. Swiss river

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34
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64. Teen skin disease
65. Takes dictation
66. Husk of wheat
67. Went quickly
68. Stud with jewels
69. Recess

CLUES DOWN

1. Wound crust
2. Killer whale
3. Leopold & ____
4. Bony piece of meat
5. Speed measure (abbr.)

6. Productive land
7. Rajah's wife
8. Close companion
9. Possesses
10. Make less visible
11. Buffalo
12. Tennis player Bjorn
13. Mountain range in Kyrgyzstan
21. Gross revenue
23. Honey (abbr.)
25. Affirmative
26. Frozen water
27. Carpenter's work table
28. ____ Danish astronomer
29. 1977 AL MVP Rod
32. Italian Air Marshal Italo
33. Mends
34. Bullfighting maneuvers
36. 1/100 yen
37. Board of Trade
38. Idle talk
40. Hairless scalp
41. Hannibal's surname
43. Old Tokyo
44. Spoken in the Dali region
46. Women's undergarment
47. Weasel's winter fur
49. Blatted
50. Medieval circuit courts
51. Muslim shrine in Mecca
52. Former ruler of Iran
53. Fungal spore sacs
54. Baseball team #
57. Stringed instrument
58. Geological times
59. Sandy piece of seashore
61. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
62. Drunkard

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Please apply online at:
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If you have any questions contact:
Chris (Byron & Claremont) 507-775-2900



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ELWOOD: *His goal is to be 5-time state champion*

FROM B1

when he squeaked out a 3-1 decision.

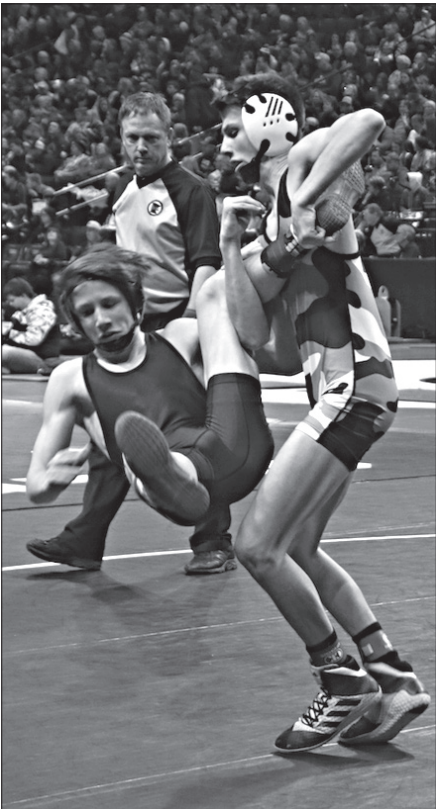
“There are times where it isn’t going to pretty,” Whitman said. “But the ultimate goal is to win and move on and that’s a credit to his mindset.”

Elwood suffered just two losses this season, one of which was due to a medical forfeit.

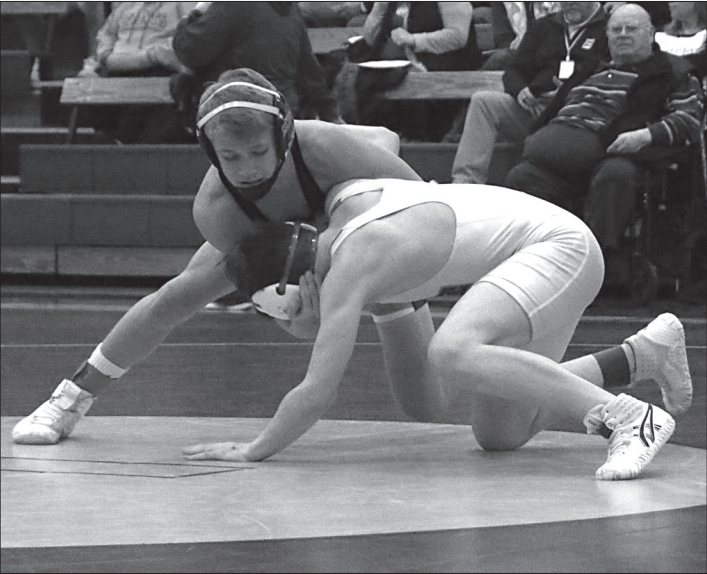
The other was to Winona’s Ryan Henningson (45-2), who lost in the Class AA 113-pound title match by the score of 6-5.

Elwood achieve the first step in some lofty goals he has set for myself. However, he does have a wrestling pedigree and his older brother Seth Elwood was an Division-II All-American at Minnesota State.

“I want to keep winning titles and hopefully being a five-timer state champ is in my future,” he said. “I’m just always trying to achieve my goals. I just have to keep grinding forward. I plan on getting in the weight room and eating good over the next year. Just get bigger and maybe jumping up a couple of weight classes.”



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL
Medford's Charley Elwood takes an opponent down in a hurry during the semi-finals of the MSHSL Class A 113-pound weight class state tournament at Xcel Energy Center on Saturday.



STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL
Medford's Alex Helgeson competes during the section tournament at Blue Earth High School.

MEDFORD: *Eighth-grader Helgeson has tough draw*

FROM B1

followed that up with a 9-1 mayor decision over Windom-Mountain Lake's Zack Spinks (29-11) in the quarterfinals and a 6-4 decision over Owen Novacek (45-4) in the semis.

“In the past, I kind of would psych myself out before matches by worrying about my opponents records or who they had beat,” he said. “This year I didn’t worry about that stuff. I focused on myself. I knew if I did that and wrestled my hardest then anything could happen. I was excited going into the finals and wasn’t nervous at all. I just wrestled a tough opponent and lost by one to good competitor.

“I’m proud of my team and coaches,” VonRuden continued. “The support we get from our small community of Medford is great and I’m just thankful to be a part of it.”

VonRuden said he was especially proud of teammate Charley Elwood for winning the Class A 113-pound title.

“We both set goals of being state champs, but he got the job done and I couldn’t be happier for him and his family,” VonRuden said.

Whitman said he’s been impressed with VonRuden all year, and not just with his wrestling.

“It’s his growth, maturity and preparedness for each match,” he said. “He is mentally ready to perform every time he steps on the mat. That’s a hard thing to do, especially in a state tournament. Those are some long hours and days, but his approach never changed.”

VonRuden finished third at 138 pounds last season, while Canavaugh was the state champ at that weight class.

Medford eighth-grader Alex Helgeson (24-12) also qualified for the state tournament at 106 pounds, but he was eliminated on Friday after losing his first two matches.

“He had a super tough draw, but he did phenomenal,” VonRuden said of Helgeson. “It was a tough break for him, but he improvement so much throughout the season and he has the right mindset. He will be back for the next four or five years.”

He lost by major decision 9-1 to Zumbrota-Mazeppa’s Michael Majerus (40-10) and 15-5 to United North Central’s Ethan Hendrickson (38-6). Majerus entered the tournament ranked No. 5 in the state, but was seeded No. 1 in the tournament. He finished second. Hendrickson entered the tournament ranked No. 3 in state. He

finished sixth.

“It was a horrible draw,” Whitman said. “But he battled. It’s easy to feel like you don’t have shot in that situation, but he went out there and gave him opponent all he could ask for. That’s something great to build onto for the next four years.”

Whitman said it was nice for Helgeson to get a taste of

the state tournament at such a young age.

“He got the nervousness and first-time jitters out of the way,” he said. “He realizes that he is an eight-grader and he will have plenty of chances moving forward. He took some giant steps this year. His future is bright and he knows it. I’m really looking forward to seeing what he can do.”

Cancer Corner

Blooming Prairie Cancer Group

Wanna play 25 games of BINGO?



Ethan Thompson, New Richland, and his grandfather, Hank Thompson of Ellendale were a lucky pair at the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group’s Ham Bingo last year at the Pizza Cellar in Blooming Prairie. (Staff photo by Howard Lestrud)

By **HOWARD LESTRUD**
Staff Writer

Yell BINGO and win a ham or some Hope butter.

The Blooming Prairie Cancer Group will be sponsoring its annual Ham Bingo night on Thursday, March 7 at the Pizza Cellar in BP. The BINGO party begins at 7 p.m.

More than 60 Bingo goers of all ages participated in the fundraiser at the Pizza Cellar party room in Blooming Prairie last year.

Last year at Ham Bingo, Ethan Thompson of New Richland hit the jackpot by winning two meat raffles, bingoing twice to win Hope Butter and a ham. Oh yeah, he also won cupcakes given as a door prize.

He and his grandfather, Hank Thompson, have been regular Bingo fanatics at BP Cancer Group Bingo events.

Twenty-five games will be played with the final game a blackout to claim a BIG Easter basket with all kinds of goodies. Mike Hoffman of BP won the basket last year. His wife Julie was sitting next to him and also won a ham. She won the grand prize in two previous Bingo parties.

The BP Cancer Group plans a Designer Purse Bingo at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 6 at the BP Servicemen’s Club. The event will also feature loaded Bloody Marys.

Ten games will be played and door prizes will be offered.

The event is already sold out.

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