



STEELE COUNTY Times

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TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2019

Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

‘Mr. Happy’ loses his battle to cancer

By RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A man known for his gift to gab and inherited the name, “Mr. Happy,” from his colleagues while keeping the Steele County Free Fair at the top of Minnesota’s county fairs has lost his battle with cancer.

On April 3, Jim Gleason of Owatonna died surrounded by his family after an 18-month battle with an aggressive form of brain cancer. He was 65.

Gleason served as the manager

of the Steele County Free Fair since 2012 before being forced to step down because of his medical condition in January 2018.

“This was his dream job,” said Todd Hale, former publicity director for the fair who worked under Gleason. “He seemed to be a natural for it. I called him Mr. Happy because he was always happy.”

Hale first became acquainted with Gleason about 30 years ago when Hale and his radio partner hired Gleason as sales manager at KRFO-Radio in Owatonna. “He always came with a smile on his

face,” Hale recalls. “You never knew he had a bad day because he was always happy and smiling,” he added.

During his tenure at the fair, Hale called Gleason “a good guy to work for.” The two spent about five years together as part of the fair’s administrative team. “He had such appositve outlook on everything he did,” Hale said. “I admired him for that.”

As fair manager, Gleason solved problems before they became



GLEASON

SEE JAMES GLEASON, A3

Mayo supports new high school

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

More business support continues to pour in for the proposed new high school in Owatonna.

On Friday, Mayo Clinic Health System announced it will be funding a new scoreboard for the main gymnasium, outfitting the new athletic training room and providing funds for the health care learning lab.

The proposed 340,000 square foot high school would provide the future high school population with high-tech and career learning spaces to ensure that all students are college, career and life ready.

Brian Bunkers, M.D., president of Mayo Clinic Owatonna said Mayo is committed to participating in projects that benefit our community as a whole. “We believe strongly in the need for a new high school in Owatonna and our financial commitment is just part of our support for this project,” Bunkers said. “A new high school is a key element needed for the clinic to recruit and retain the staff that provides the health care needs of this community.”

School officials are ecstatic about the latest business to jump on-board with support-

“A new high school is a **key element** needed for the clinic **to recruit and retain the staff** that provides the health care needs of this community.”

Dr. Brian Bunkers
Mayo Owatonna President

ing the new high school.

“The support from Mayo Clinic Health System to provide funds specially for the health care learning lab is a tremendous step in the right direction in the vision of where we want to take the career pathways initiative,” said Mark Randall, principal of Owatonna High School. “By engaging our students with relevant learning experiences, it will ultimately lead our students to make informed decisions on their pathway to success.”

With backing from numerous organizations, the high school project is a testament to the city and local business’ commitment to remain a growing and vibrant community that is attractive for future and current employees and their families, according to Jeff Elstad, superintendent of Owatonna Schools. “We can not say thank you enough to the local businesses for their continued support in education,” Elstad said.

Mayo joins Viracon, Wenger Corporation, Wenger Foundation and Federated Insurance in support of the new high school.

A referendum has been set for Tuesday, May 14 for voters to decide on issuing general election bonds to build the new high school. The district is seeking \$116 million to build the new school.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A full house attended the final service at Trinity Lutheran Church on Dec. 30. In the last few years, the church had only about 12 regular worshippers.

RURAL CHURCH CLOSES THE BOOK ON WORSHIP

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

It’s not the outcome that parishioners had hoped to usher 2019 in with, but their declining membership and changing rural landscape made the decision inevitable.

Trinity Lutheran Church of rural Blooming Prairie ended 144 years of ministry on Dec. 30, the latest victim of churches closing their doors over the rural landscape of Minnesota.

Over the last few years of services, the average worship attendance dipped to about a dozen members, according to Rev. Stephanie Wood, who served as pastor for the congregation’s final three years.

But there was no shortage of worshippers at the final service. “It was a full house,” Wood said, adding friends, families and people who grew up in the church over nearly a century and a half came together for the final time. Included in those worshipping

was Robert Hansen, who at 90 years old was the oldest active member of Trinity.

Hansen grew up in the church and remained faithful until the very end. Wood noted Hansen’s parents and grandparents were instrumental in helping to form the church.

The final service didn’t come without some fanfare. Rev. Steven Delzer, bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod was in attendance to preach at the service and hold a ritualistic passing of the

church records. “He gave thanks for the ministry while proclaiming the church closed,” Wood said.

During the final sermon, Rev. Delzer told the congregation, “Rest assured that you did nothing wrong that has led to the closing of Trinity. It really is more a matter of the changing demographics of the world in which we live.”

Delzer said God has blessed Trinity over the years, not with

SEE TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, A3



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Trinity Lutheran Church located along Steele County Road 26 west of the Blooming Prairie Country Club closed its doors and had a final service on Dec. 30. The congregation hopes to preserve the church, something similar to what has been done with the Westfield Church located northeast of Blooming Prairie.

Steele County crowns its new dairy royalty

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

There were five Dairy Princesses and one Ambassador named at this year’s Steele County Dairy Banquet, and all of them got a chance to tell the audience about their experience of working within the dairy industry and what it means to them.

Crowned dairy princesses for this year are Olivia Dantzman, Lilly Zollner, Alicia Kath, Chloe Schroeder and Lacey Nelson. Anthony Manderfeld is being recognized as this year’s dairy ambassador. Of the princesses, Nelson will be competing May 17 in St. Cloud to be one

of the 12 finalists for Princess Kay of the Milky Way, the highest honor for dairy royalty.

“First you’re a part of it, but then it becomes a part of you,” Olivia Dantzman said. “This organization is near and dear to my heart.” Dantzman, who is involved in 4-H, said that one of her favorite things was working with kids. “I had so much fun teaching little kids about the dairy industry.”

To her, it is important to always be educating the next generation. “I believe that speaking to the kids is the most important because they are the next generation, and as adults they be more supportive of the dairy industry.”

“It means a lot to me to get to serve the community with a group of amazing people,” Dantzman concluded after relating to the audience on how the skills she’s developed working in the dairy industry have translated to other aspects of her life such as her job.

This year’s Ambassador, Anthony Manderfeld, explained the need to always expect the unexpected on a dairy farm. “As they say, life on a dairy farm doesn’t always go as expected,” he said. “It takes true strength to hold composure under pressure.”

Manderfeld implored those with-

SEE DAIRY ROYALTY, A4



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

This year’s Dairy Princesses and Ambassador are crowned during the Steele County Dairy Banquet. They include, from left: Lilly Zollner, Alicia Kath, Olivia Dantzman, Lacey Nelson, Anthony Manderfeld, and Chloe Schroeder.

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AREA DEATHS

Henry Shawback Jr., 86,
Blooming Prairie
James Gleason, 65, Owatonna
Allan Madsen, 92, Owatonna

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OUR VIEW

Cameras should be allowed in courtrooms more often

Last week our sister publication, the Dodge County Independent, fell victim to rules that are clearly outdated, when it was denied the right to take photos and videos of the sentencing hearing for ex-Kasson police officer Julio Baez.

The DCI, along with KIMT-TV, petitioned the court in hopes of being able to take photos and videos at one of the most high profile hearings for Dodge County residents in recent history.

In Minnesota, media outlets are only allowed to bring cameras into courtrooms for hearings in which a guilty conviction has already gone on the record. The only other way that the media is allowed to cover is cases is if both parties agree to cameras in the courtroom, but the likelihood of that happening is very slim. This essentially means that the only hearings in which media is allowed to bring their cameras to is for sentencing hearings.

In a perfect world, the media would be allowed to cover any sentencing hearing without any issue, but that is far from the truth.

In order to even be considered to cover sentencing hearings by the means of audio or visual coverage, a media outlet must first file a petition with the court.

From that point, the prosecution and defense have the right to object to it for any reason they see fit. On top of that, any victims or victims' families also have the right to express their concerns about having cameras there.

After filling a petition with the court, the DCI and KIMT were notified that our petitions were denied by the court.

In a memo, the presiding judge stated that both the defense and prosecution expressed the fact that they don't want the hearing to be recorded. The judge in the case also explained the difficulty that would come for the victims of these sexual assaults to potentially make impact statements with cameras in the courtroom.

"Three young women have been sexually assaulted. The victims, their families, and friends may attend this hearing. They may choose to address the court. It would be inappropriate to subject them to video or audio recording on this occasion in addition to the trauma and suffering they have been through," Judge Hayne wrote in her memo. "It would be inappropriate to create, much less broadcast, a permanent audio/video record of them at this moment of emotional exposure. Possibly coverage could be permitted with some limitation on who or what could be recorded. However, policing compliance with such a restriction seems potentially troublesome to me; and more importantly, I do not want victims, family or friends of the victims to be at all concerned about the presence of cameras in the courtroom."

While it is understandable that prosecutors, the defense, and the judge wouldn't want to make victims be subject to being recorded while they testify, it doesn't seem appropriate to eliminate coverage completely.

In many courtrooms across the state, cameras are allowed in courts during sentencing hearings. However, there are restrictions that are explained by court staff before the hearing begins. Often times one of the biggest restrictions is not allowing the recording of any victim impact statements, which could have been done in this case.

Furthermore, in respect to the privacy of the victims, news media outlets do whatever it takes to protect victims' identities, including not publishing names of sexual assault victims. To say that media outlets shouldn't be allowed to use cameras in courts because of the fear that reporters may record victims statements is inappropriate.

The reality is that many states have much more liberal and modern rules when it comes to covering courts.

In some states, for example, the media has the right to cover cases from the time a defendant is brought into court for arraignment to the time the judge hands down the sentence.

While Minnesota has gone a long way in recent years when it comes to allowing cameras in courts, there is still more that needs to be done.

Newspapers, and other media outlets, have an obligation to inform the public about public safety in their communities. Anytime someone is charged with a felony in Minnesota and is over the age of 16 years old, their charges are outlined and becomes public record. There should be absolutely no reason that, at the minimum, journalists can't bring cameras into courts for sentencing hearings.

We urge our state representatives to take action to promote transparency by allowing more access to cameras in Minnesota Courtrooms. The public's right to know hangs in the balance.

The county has lost a passionate fair promoter



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

He was referred to as "Mr. Happy," by those closest to him. For five years, Mr. Happy led the Steele County Free Fair as its manager and top cheerleader.

According to Todd Hale, the former publicity director of the fair, running Minnesota's largest county fair was Jim Gleason's dream job. He had strong public relations and marketing skills to enhance the reputation of the fair.

Unfortunately, all good things come to an end. And sometimes they even come to a heartbreaking end, which was the case with Gleason. In October 2017, he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer and the prognosis wasn't good. Just a few months later, he was forced to step down from his dream job

in order to fight the greatest challenge of his life.

Gleason gave it a tremendous effort with his cancer battle, but sadly, it was just too much to overcome. Gleason died April 3 in Owatonna at the age of 65.

I had the pleasure of working with Gleason during his reign as manager of the fair. He was one of the most personable people I've ever come into contact with and always had a good word to say no matter what the topic was.

He always had a sparkling glimmer in his eye about the fair and making it better. With a broad smile and positive tone radiating from him, he always made himself available to promote the fair. For me, that was always helpful because I love

fairs and work hard to get the message out about how special and unique the Steele County Fair is to this county and state.

With a strong gift of gab, Gleason was never at a loss for words when it came to talking about the fair or anything else for that matter.

County fairs are more than just a yearly carnival in the middle of summer. The electric atmosphere of the fair stimulates cultivation of a vibrant community and showcases the achievements of young and old alike. They're a chance for community building and leadership development opportunities. The tradition of county fairs goes back decades and is woven into the fabric of nearly every American community.

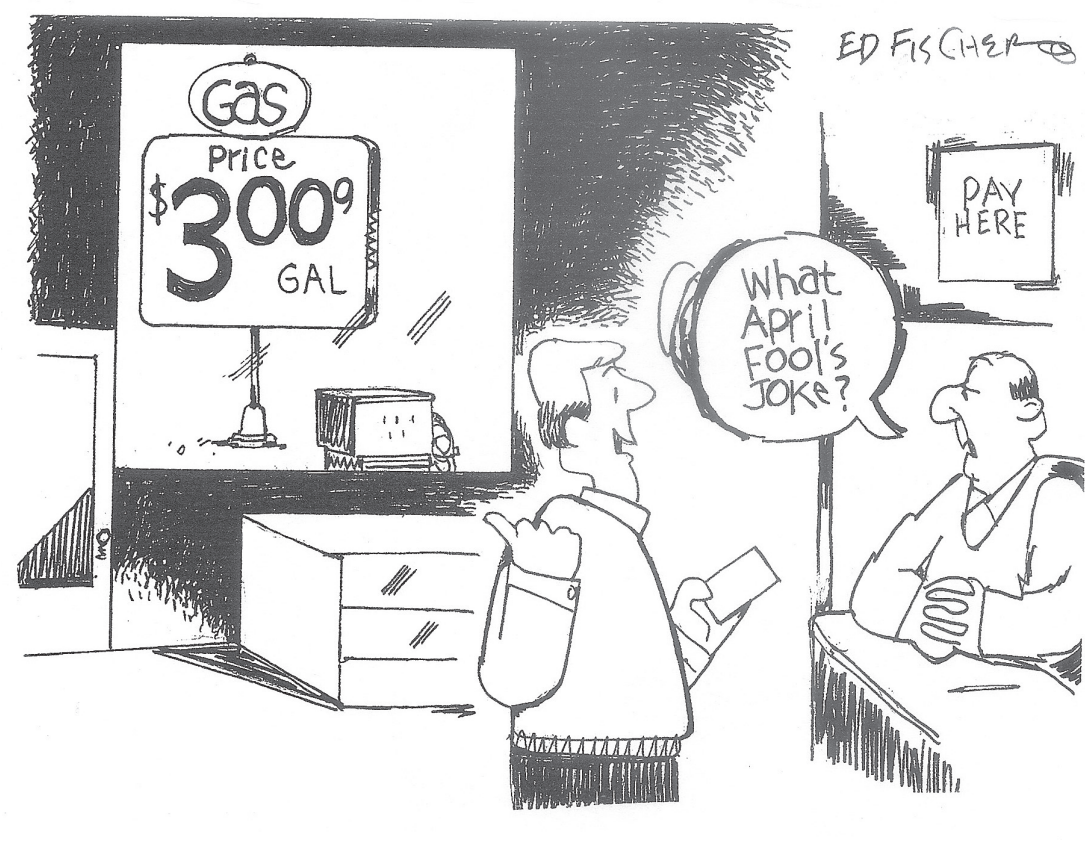
It's too bad that Gleason's time was cut way too short of steering the fair to new heights. At only 64 when he stepped down, Gleason had planned to stay with it

until at least 70 years old. Our communities have lost a gentle giant who loved the fair and bringing recognition to Steele County for having the best fair in the state.

Hale, like others who worked around Gleason, found him to have such positivity with the fair and life in general. Asked what he admired most about Gleason, Hale responded, "His continual positive attitude on everything he did." Hale went on to say that he never once heard Gleason say anything negative about anyone.

Gleason was just a natural for the fair's top position. With his absence, the entire county is going to lose for years to come.

It's a sad day when we lose someone who was so passionate about the fair and went in hot pursuit of keeping it at the high level we've all come to expect from the Steele County Free Fair.



GUEST COLUMN

Some bills are not good news for taxpayers

By JOHN PETERSBURG

The contents of the bills that will fund state government over the next two years are beginning to move forward in the Minnesota House. And from my perspective some of them are not good news for taxpayers.

We have already begun to work up the House transportation finance proposal. There are a lot of things in this bill that I find concerning.

Obviously the increased costs for Minnesota's drivers are going to add up quickly. Much like Governor Walz, House Democrats have proposed a 70% increase in the gasoline tax, or at least 20-cents per gallon. While this is troublesome, it's worth noting that about half of that increase is being put in place just to cover the loss of general revenue that is being pulled out of transportation and going back into the general fund to increase spending elsewhere.

In other words, House Democrats want to take \$420 million that is allocated for roads and bridges, use that money to fund other state government programs, and force you to pay 20-cents per gallon more at the pump to make up for that lost transportation money.

Our omnibus taxes bill is scheduled to be published on April 8. We'll then hear testimony and try to write some amendments to improve the proposal so we'll see where that ends up.

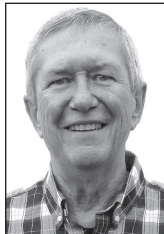
One final note, I am also a member of the conference committee for the "hands free" bill. The approved legislation would allow voice activated cell phone use only in Minnesota, along with one-touch or headsets.

What we're trying to do is figure out the best way to change the behavior and thinking about what distracted driving is. Staring at your cell phone behind the wheel is dangerous, not only for those inside the vehicle but outside who are depending on the person driving without distraction. Our goal in this conference committee is to come up with a plan that will be approved by both bodies, and ensure that more people will keep their eyes on the road and not on their phone.

I will be sure to update you with any progress we make.

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

Rocco Baldelli makes an early impression



Reflections
HOWARD LESTRUD

Who is Rocco Baldelli?

Hopefully, we Minnesota Twins fans can say some day that Rocco Baldelli led the Minnesota Twins to a world championship.

Baldelli, who was named Minnesota Twins manager in November of 2019, is currently the youngest manager in Major League Baseball at age 37.

Baldelli would love to follow in past Twins Manager Tom Kelly's footsteps. Kelly was named Twins manager late in the 1986 season and in his first full season as Twins manager in 1987, he led his team to a world championship.

Kelly was Twins manager in 1987 and 1991 when they won the World Series. He managed the team from 1986 to 2001 to become the Twins' longest tenured manager and carved out a record of 1,140-1,244. He was named American League Manager of the Year in 1991.

But, let's forget about Kelly for the moment and talk about Baldelli.

From the moment Baldelli was introduced to the media and to the public last November, words swirled around Major League Baseball that this untested leader would no doubt succeed as a Major League manager.

Baldelli's players have been most complimentary to their new manager. They recognize a young former Major Leaguer who knows baseball from A to Z.

Baldelli doesn't spend much time on the first step of the

dugout. Instead, he's right on the bench beside his players. He is also most often a leader who let's his players be themselves.

A young manager who is not afraid to try something new, strategy wise, Baldelli thrives on decision making. In his first exposure to managing against a National League team (Phillies), Baldelli was credited by former Twin Roy Smalley with doing "a perfect job."

Baldelli didn't win that first National League foe but he took it on the chin as a tough competitor. He praised his troops for their performance, even though it was in a loss. "They really kept battling," he said.

Analytics are big in sports, and especially baseball. Baldelli cut his teeth on analytics when he worked for the Tampa Bay Rays.

From Wikipedia, we learn that Baldelli quickly progressed through the minor leagues and made his MLB debut with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays on opening day 2003. During his first two seasons in the majors, he established himself as an excellent offensive and defensive outfielder, coming in third place in voting for American League Rookie of the Year.

Baldelli's career was derailed by a rare metabolic/muscular disorder that caused frequent soft tissue injuries, fatigue, and other ailments, according to Wikipedia. He was unable to play

in 2005, and missed significant time over the following seasons as doctors struggled to diagnose and treat his condition.

Baldelli struggled with retirement and finally called it quits in October of 2010 playing with the Rays.

Following retirement, Baldelli spent three years in the Tampa Bays organization as a roving minor league instructor and special assistant to baseball operations.

Baldelli became a first base coach for the Rays in 2014. He was promoted to major league field coordinator in November of 2017.

It's refreshing to have some new blood, and young blood at that, in the manager's seat for the Twins.

Let's face it though, Baldelli will only be as good as the players that Derek Fawley and Thad Levine supply him.

WIN TWINS! WIN BALDELLI!



ROCCO BALDELLI

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2019—7 state awards
2018—6 state and 4
national awards
2017—2 state and 3
national awards
2016—8 state and 6
national awards

2015—7 state and 4
national awards
2014—3 state and 3
national awards
2013—7 state and 2
national awards
2012—2 state awards
2011—4 national awards

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

Realistic safety training a must at Arkema in BP

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Safety is of major importance to the 45 workers employed at Arkema, Inc., a chemical plant located near the center of Blooming Prairie. That safety is reinforced every day by an emphasis on company safety.

Safety goes much further when management schedules a special training session involving emergency personnel of Blooming Prairie. That one step further took place Saturday morning, April 6, when plant employees teamed with the emergency personnel to train through some special scenarios designed by Health Environment and Safety officials.

Emergency personnel were represented by Arkema supervisors, by 19 members of the Bloom-

ing Prairie Fire Department, by six from the BP Ambulance Service and by four BP police officers. “You can never be too safe in the work environment,” said Plant Manager Michael Green.

Arkema’s chemical plant produces over two dozen finished products. These products are manufactured by chemically bonding oxygen to unsaturated bonds found in natural vegetable oils, such as soybean, linseed or other olefinic oils.

“This training is especially beneficial for our workers and it also helps local emergency personnel know more about the inner workings of our plant so they can respond accordingly,” said Loan Trinh, manager of HES.

Trinh planned the safety training exercise with advance planning involving Arkema employees and emergency



Arkema, Inc. Health Environment and Safety manager Loan Trinh briefs Blooming Prairie emergency personnel on scenarios to be followed during a safety drill at the chemical plant on Saturday, April 6.

personnel. She was on the loud speaker, announcing the next phase of the day’s training.

The key parts of the training were divided into two scenarios.

The first scenario simulated response from the night shift crew of limited personnel (three individuals). The scenario simulated a situation requiring ambulance service response and fire department help to assist in bringing the victim down to ground level from Production Facility 2B on the fourth floor.

In the first scenario, an operator complained about not feeling good. Two of his fellow workers had not heard from him for a short time and began searching for him. They found the worker lying unconscious, no breathing and no pulse.

A worker then performed CPR on the

victim. One of the workers called 911 and brought an AED to the site of the victim. The other worker went down to ground level to meet the responding ambulance and crew.

The ambulance arrived at the scene and continued AED and other treatment to the victim. After shocking with the AED, the victim had heart rhythm.

Fire department and ambulance crews then brought the victim down to ground level using a back board (actually, for safety reasons, a live body was not used and rather a satchel was used).

As an aside, the ambulance and fire department crews demonstrated how use of a stair chair (owned by the ambulance service) could be used to transport a victim down stairs.

The second scenario

SEE ARKEMA, A4



Arkema, Inc. Plant Manager Michael Green observes some realistic safety drills on Saturday, April 6. It involved a team of Arkema employees working with local emergency responders.

GLEASON FROM A1

bigger problems, Hale said.

“He did his dream job well,” Hale said. “Unfortunately, it came to an end before he wanted it to.”

Fair president Dan Deml is well aware that Gleason’s end came much too soon. “He was going to stay with us for many years,” Deml said. “He had a strong feeling to be a manager until he was 70,” he added. Gleason stepped down when he was only 64.

“He was just a friend to everyone,” Deml said of Gleason. “He was an incredible ambassador to the fair. He brought a lot of good will and drew a lot of people to the fair because of his personality,” he said.

Deml was a part of the executive committee that hired Gleason in 2011 when Elmer Reseland was still manager. Deml said what drew him to wanting Gleason was the fact that he spent his entire career in Owatonna. “He knew the people of Owatonna very well,” Deml said. “We realized that’s a quality we wanted in a manager. You can’t teach someone to be a people pleaser and go out and sell the fair.”

Calling Gleason a picture of perfect health, Deml was shocked in 2017 when Gleason came down with brain cancer. If anything, Gleason’s fate shows that “cancer doesn’t discriminate,” Deml said.

Deml said the fair is “terribly sad” to see that Gleason has passed away. But, he is quick to add, the fair is in a

better position this year to deal with Gleason’s absence than it was a year ago when it went five months without a manager.

Hale will always remember Gleason’s positive attitude in no matter what he tackled. “I can’t remember him ever to have anything negative to say about anyone,” Hale said, adding it didn’t take fair board members long to realize Gleason was the kind of person they wanted representing the fair.

“He always had a positive and smiling attitude,” Hale said.

Funeral services were held Monday at St. Joseph’s Church in Owatonna. A complete obituary may be found on page B7.

CHURCH: Closing FROM A1

large numbers or a big building, but through treasured bonds with family and friends all sharing in the joy of the good news. “We do not grieve the end of Trinity. We celebrate the life that this congregation has lived,” he said. “Like an old friend whose time has come, we now must let Trinity go.”

Wood called the last service “bittersweet” for everyone in attendance. She said the service took on the feeling of more like a memorial service. “There was a lot of love and support in that room,” she said. “It was sad to see it end.”

And, for Wood, it was perhaps even more emotional. “Saying the blessing for the last time was difficult,” she said, adding there were a few tears shed.

“You’re grieving the loss of the community that will no longer be gathering that you developed a lifelong relationship with,” Wood said.

The council had kicked around closing the church since January 2018, Wood said. It simply came down to lack of membership to keep the church alive.

When the church began in 1874, there were a lot more farmers in the area that worshipped by traveling to church on horse and buggy. “Now we have larger farms and fewer farmers,” Wood said. “It’s hard to continue forward when there is not the same population attending.”

As hard as the closing was on those parishioners left, Wood said, “It was time for Trinity to close and find new life elsewhere.”

Though the church closed with only a handful of members, Trinity has touched so many lives over the years. Wood said one of the most touching moments in the final service came when Rev. Delzer asked if people were baptized and confirmed at the church. Nearly everyone in the church indicated they had been.

“So many had been touched by the work of God at Trinity,” Wood said. “Trinity made such a difference in the community.”

Over the years Trinity became a place where many of the pastors had accepted their first call. “Trinity contributed to the future of the church by forming pastors,” Wood said.

AURORA’S FATE?

While Trinity had been evaluating what to do over the past year, its sister congregation, Aurora Lutheran Church located in rural Owatonna, is also in the process of deciding its future. Aurora, which averages weekly attendance of 40, has decided for this year it will break away from the ELCA synod and be an independent church with Wood serving as a full-time pastor. “This is a time to discern where we should be going,” Wood said of Aurora. The church will re-evaluate the situation early next year.

One of the positive things at Aurora this year is a larger than normal Sunday School with about 20 kids. “That’s really unique for a

rural congregation,” Wood said. Both churches had been with the ELCA synod since 1988, six years after the ELCA was formed.

It hasn’t been easy for those involved with the churches, especially Trinity, whose members will now go to Aurora or find somewhere else entirely different. “Closing churches has been growing because of the changing demographics of the rural landscape,” Wood said.

But Wood stressed that it’s not only the rural areas facing church closings. There are also city and urban churches facing the same dilemma. She said the question really boils down to: How many churches do you need in a world that has less attendees?

TRINITY’S ROOTS

The congregation got its early start in the spring of 1874 under the leadership of Rev. Claus L. Clausen. A small group of people gathered for the first time to plant a new church known as Straight River Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church.

One of the greatest changes over the years has been the name of the church. In 1879, the name was changed to Brorson Danish-Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in honor of the Danish bishop and hymn writer Hans Adolf Brorson. In 1940, in an effort to have a wider appeal beyond the Danish community, the name was changed to Trinity Lutheran.

Trinity teamed up with Aurora for calling a pastor in 1965. The two congregations have split a pastor since then—75% Aurora and 25% Trinity.

Extensive remodeling and enlargement of the existing church took place in 1951.

Rev. Paul Edwin Nelson was the longest serving pastor of Trinity and Aurora with more than 30 years of service. All other pastors served nine years or less.

During its long history, Trinity was well known for its Aebleskiver. The congregation also continued to support the community by collecting for a Mitten Tree, a Christmas tree that they decorated with winter garments. In 2018, Trinity’s tree was decorated with 11 pairs of mittens, 51 pairs of gloves, 60 hats, 23 pairs of socks and several other items. All donations were given to the Blooming Prairie Wish Tree Project and Blooming Prairie Elementary School.

The exact future of the church building, which is located on County Road 26 west of the Blooming Prairie Country Club, remains unknown. Gary Hansen, who served as council president, is leading an effort to determine what will happen to the church. “We have a group of people trying to put something together to preserve the building like the Westfield Church,” said Hansen, 73, a life-long member of Trinity. He added they are hoping to make a decision this spring.

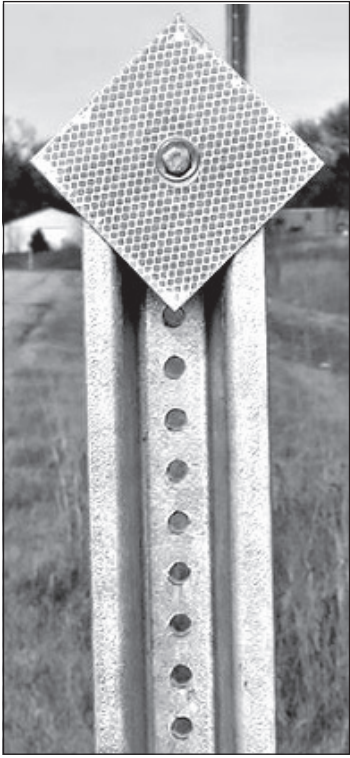
MnDOT installing delineator posts to improve safety on four-lane highways

Motorists should be alert beginning April 8 for construction crews installing delineator posts that are part of a safety improvement project in southeast Minnesota, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

A MnDOT contractor is installing 5,540 delineator posts in southeast Minnesota along all unlighted, four-lane rural highways. The posts are installed about 1/10th of a mile apart. The statewide project is designed to aid traveler safety, especially during night and adverse weather conditions when pavement markings may be hard to see.

In southeast Minnesota, the work will begin April 8 on Interstate 35 near Elko and proceed south to the Iowa border. Portions of other highways in southeast Minnesota scheduled for the work during the two-month project will be Highway 14, Highway 21, Highway 13, Highway 65, Highway 218, Interstate 90, Highway 63, Highway 52, Highway 61 and Highway 43. Motorists should be alert for work crews and lane closures during the work. Motorists should slow down and move over when encountering workers.

The delineator post project is aimed at providing visual separation between road and the surrounding land through the use of a square-shaped reflector set on point at the top of each post. The project began in fall 2018 and will



COURTESY MnDOT

MnDOT is installing 5,540 of these delineator posts across southeast Minnesota over the next two months. They will be installed along all unlighted, four-lane rural highways.

be completed at the end of summer 2019.

“This is a low-cost, high effectiveness initiative to aid motorists, especially during times of Minnesota weather that make it difficult to see pavement markings,” said Adam Wellner, MnDOT District 6 acting traffic engineer.

A HUGE SUCCESS!!! A HUGE THANK YOU!!!

The Blooming Prairie Education Foundation would like to thank you for helping make our 2019 16th Annual Education Foundation Auction a great success! With more than \$76,500 in proceeds, this will definitely help us give the children of the Blooming Prairie Schools the opportunities that would not otherwise be possible. Over the years, we have been able to provide in excess of \$500,000 in programs and activities to our kids. This year’s auction results are nothing short of amazing! The thought that we can raised \$76,000 in one night is truly a statement of the kind of community we live in. Whether you are a bidder, donor, or just a school supporter, your contributions are appreciated so much! Whether your contributions are large or very small, or whether they are of services, material items, or if you helped in any way, we want you to realize that it is all of those things together that make our efforts a success. It is because of this entire community and the love of its kids and school system that allows our foundation to be able to continue to help give the children of School District #756 the best education possible.

True meaning of AWESOME!!!

DAIRY ROYALTY

FROM A1

in the audience to always fill one's life with as much as possible. "Life is a game of waiting," he said. "It is up to each person how to spend this time."

Lilly Zollner considered how important of a factor dairy farming was in her life. "Dairy farming, these two words bring many memories and emotions to my mind when I hear them," she explained. "But if you were to say them to me when I was 8 years old, I wouldn't have given them a second thought."

She singled out the values of

teamwork, kindness, work ethic, and responsibility. "Knowing that I need to take care of these animals and have a responsibility to help these kids shows me just how important responsibility is," Zollner said.

Working with young kids at Cow Camp, the fair, and while volunteering in 4-H, Zollner expressed pride in knowing that she is able to bestow her knowledge and experience upon others. "I'm proud to share with the public why dairy is so amazing and why it is a part of who I am," she said.

Alicia Kath recalled her first show calf and the often humorous difficulties that came with it. "This taught me that hard work and dedication will pay off," Kath said. "If you really love something, you'll work hard to

have it."

"There is a lot of time and effort that goes into people's passion," she said. "Many people will go above and beyond in order to succeed at something they are passionate about." Kath also expressed the importance of the experience of showing cows, and the value that those memories will have years later.

Lacey Nelson began her speech by describing some of the changes within the dairy industry over the years. "There's a lot of things that have changed from then to now, but there's always the constants," she said. "One of those constants is the traits of a dairy farmer."

Nelson described these traits, including dedication, optimism and

passion. "Many farmers put their cows above themselves," she said as dairy farming relates to dedication. "They take care of them before they take care of themselves."

"Dairy farmers are eternal optimists," Nelson added, mentioning that the industry has seen its share of ups and downs. "There's something about going to a farmer's place and seeing the little glimmer in their eyes and the glow radiating off them."

Chloe Schroeder described dairy farming through the metaphor of cooking recipes. "Although there are many dairy farmers," Schroeder said, "no two farms are alike."

She said that while there are many similar ingredients, such as passion, perseverance, and a good work ethic,

there is also a secret ingredient unique to each farm. "Knowledge, it is passed down through the generations and is like a secret ingredient," she explained. "It has been in the family for years."

"On a dairy farm, there is a job for everyone of every age," Schroeder said. "Each new generation adds something new to the recipe."

After presenting this year's Junior dairy Ambassadors and Dukes and Duchesses, the evening's banquet concluded with the coronation of all six dairy royalty. Bob and Sue Wencil were given the Lifetime Award, while Pete and Karen Kasper were awarded the Pull Together honor. Brad Kubat of KOWZ and KRUE Radio won the Milk Pitcher Award.

ARKEMA DRILL

FROM A3

involved a fire and explosion on Production 3 first floor. Simulation had an overhead pipe exploding and releasing C10 Alpha Olefin oil. An operator suffered chemical splash and burns as simulated by a \$50 mannequin, said Trinh.

Emergency personnel pulled the victim from the plant and treated metal shrapnel wounds, bleeding and cuts/wounds to the thigh and leg. Burns were also found on the victim's face and neck.

Fire was also extinguished by firefighters in the second scenario.

Following successful completion of the two scenarios, firefighters and Arkema employees practiced the operation of a water cannon. Two water cannons are found on site.

All safety participants participated in a critique fol-



Arkema workers and local emergency responders try out a water cannon, one of two located at Arkema.

lowing the training. "We're not emergency responders at Arkema and we need input from our emergency people," Trinh emphasized. "We made the training as realistic as possible," he continued.

"I thought the training went quite well," said Trinh.

Fire Chief Dean Naatz agreed and said many of the emergency responders

had participated in previous Arkema safety drills.

"Training is helpful and you just hope you don't have to use it," remarked Assistant Chief Rick Hansen.

"The turnout was fantastic and we appreciate the commitment of the emergency personnel to give up part of their weekend for the training," said plant manager Green.

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Brace yourself for road heartache

MnDOT embarks on 221 projects across the state

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Motorists throughout Minnesota will find themselves testing their patience behind the wheel over the next six months as they begin dodging orange cones and construction zones at 221 spots across the state.

The projects were unveiled April 4 by officials with the Minnesota Department of Transportation in St. Paul. Of the projects outlined, there are several in the southeastern corner of Minnesota, including Steele, Dodge and Freeborn counties.

Though there are several big projects slated for southeastern Minnesota, Steele County will not experience any major construction this year like it has in the past few years. The only two projects scheduled for Steele are the I-35 Straight River Rest area reconstruction on the southbound side and the U.S. Highway 14 expansion from Owatonna to Dodge Center. However, the bulk of the Highway 14 project will not get underway until next year.

During the Straight River Rest Area reconstruction, the rest stop will be closed. Crews will be repaving existing parking lots and access ramps on the southbound side as well as reconstructing sidewalks along the rest area parking lots and upgrading and expanding parking lot lighting systems.

MnDOT has assembled a team to focus on the Highway 14 project with the intention to start construction in 2020. MnDOT anticipates letting the contract for the project later this year.

Some of the other large projects to take place in the southeastern region include resurfacing

SEE ROAD TO HEATACHE, B2



Blooming Prairie VFW Post 878 Auxiliary women have been working on creating fleece blankets for veterans at the Veterans Hospital in Minneapolis. Shown from left are: Vikki Wacek, Doreen Blome, Marilyn Meshke, Joyce Johns, Rita Goodnature and Judy Lestrud.

STAFF PHOTOS BY HOWARD LESTRUD

FLEECE FOR VETS

VFW Post 878 Auxiliary makes blankets for veterans

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

The Blooming Prairie Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 878 Auxiliary is one very active group that cares for its veterans.

Just last week, a group of Auxiliary members gathered at First Lutheran Church of Blooming Prairie, to finish a project of donating 20 fleece blankets to the Veterans Administration Hospital of Minneapolis.

Marilyn Meshke is chair of the sewing and hospital project that has involved up to 10 Auxiliary members working on four different occasions at First Lutheran Church. “We are

very grateful for the church donating its Luther Room facilities to us to do this work,” Meshke said.

The VA of Minneapolis made a request to the local VFW post to provide these fleece blankets to veterans when they are sent home.

The no-sew blankets involve tying one-inch strips together in double knots. The final product measures 52 by 65 inches and fits a twin bed.

Meshke boxes the blankets and takes them to the Veterans Service Office in Owatonna. A van picks up daily and will take them to Minneapolis. “This is one of the most important projects we do to support the VA Hospital,” she said.

The blankets often carry a

patriotic theme, and sometimes the blankets carry a theme of the Army, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard.

Auxiliary volunteers also make wheel chair bags, children’s activity bags and supplies, laundry bags, neck pillows and heart pillows.

Thrivent has donated some funds for the project. Sewing material has also been donated by Auxiliary members.

VFW Auxiliary members also make blankets for residents of Prairie Manor Care Center and the Heather Haus.

Three fleece blankets will be raffled off at a Veterans Memorial breakfast on Sunday, Sept. 29.

St. Mary’s School to hold 33rd annual auction

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

After more than three decades, the Night of Knights Auction has become a staple in Steele County. This year participants will get the chance to bid on 300 silent auction items and 40 live items.

The silent auction will begin at 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 13 at St. Mary’s School in Owatonna, with the live auction starting at 7:30 p.m. All of the proceeds will go to benefit the school and its students.

Big-ticket items this year include a basketball hoop, a lawn mower, and an HVAC system from Central Heating and Refrigerating. There are also lots of experiences, including theatre and music trips, and sports packages for the Wild, Twins, and United. Also on the list are a host of baskets and group packages such as a brewery tour, a winery tour, and a traveling

Night of Knights Auction
Saturday
4 p.m. - Silent Auction
7:30 p.m. - Live Auction

St. Mary’s School
Owatonna
All proceeds benefit the school and students

tour of the cities.

“We have a good variety,” auction organizer Karen Spielman said. “There is always a lot of excitement in the gym with the live auction.”

The auction will also feature the Spirit of the Knight portion, which will see donations matched that will go to new bleachers in the gym. “Anybody that comes to a St. Mary’s event in the gym will notice that those bleachers are getting pretty old,” Spielman said.

Spielman and her fellow auction committee members

SEE ST MARY’S SCHOOL, B2

Fair Board considers options to replace or restore collapsed barn

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

After a weary winter that saw record numbers of snowfall, the Steele County Fairgrounds was left with a collapsed cattle barn. The barn was traditionally used by 4-H members to show their livestock and will need to be either restored or replaced before this year’s fair in August.

At this month’s board of directors meeting, Fair Manager Scott Kozelka informed the board of the \$137,940 estimate received from the insurance adjuster. The fair has already been given \$63,700 of that estimate in advance to begin work on the barn.

Two estimates were already received by the fair in order to fix the dilapidated barn, this includes a low bid of \$78,000 from the same company that built the

Radel Pavilion. If the board were to go this route, they could essentially save the remainder of the insurance money for future endeavors.

While they have options, including repairing the collapsed roof and barn, or demolishing the building and replacing it, the fair will have two years to complete any replacement if they go that route. There is also the matter of a second old barn, which was not damaged during the winter season but is of a similar age as the collapsed barn.

Many on the board felt that the best option would be to replace both buildings, rather than simply repairing the damaged one. This would give any newly constructed barn a much more uniform look with the much newer Radel Pavilion and would allow for better offseason rental opportunities.

The board looked over the master plan set in place for the future of the fair and fairgrounds and felt that a new barn would not necessarily have to be as large as the Radel Pavilion, but that it could be somewhere near it in size.

“We already have a ‘Cadillac’ building,” director Jim Abbe said of the Radel Pavilion. “I am in favor of building a new building that looks like it so it matches the aesthetics and it meets the needs of the cattle group. We don’t need another Cadillac, but we could at least have a Chevy.”

Although there were no decisions made during the meeting, the board did seem to be trending towards the decision to replace both old cattle barns in one fell swoop and upgrade them into a single, larger building before the fair gets underway this August.

Kozelka suggested to the board that he would seek out estimates for a new building and get back to the board in a special meeting later this month. He will also look at estimates for demolishing both of the older barns.

With the fair slowly but steadily approaching, Kozelka and the directors will have to move fast on any decision they make and be sure that construction can be completed in time for this year’s fair. The fair is currently scheduled Aug. 13-18.

During the meeting the board of directors also gave updates on sponsorship, grandstand events, and the Beer Garden lineup. “We’re ahead of the game in sponsorships,” Kozelka said. “We have some new sponsors this year and we’ve increased others.” Kozelka also mentioned they will continue to work closely with Sen. John Jasinski moving forward.

With a little over four months to go before the fair, the board will keep steering the ship and do its best to prepare for the largest free fair in the state.

Spring brings new transitions



Steele Talkin’
STEPHANIE KIBLER

One of my favorite things about Minnesota is our four seasons. As each season arrives there is anticipation – spring flowers and the smell of fresh tilled dirt, warm summer nights with fireflies dancing in the yard, the leaves turning and the smell of marshmallows roasting, the first snow and an occasional snow day. I love all of these!

Now that spring has arrived I am eagerly awaiting the tulips and daffodils. I have started my “to do” list and have even managed to check a few items off. This spring brings new transitions for me personally. As I am preparing to leave the Steele County Historical Society (SCHS) I have mixed emotions. I have been met with open arms at SCHS, become acquainted with wonderful people, learned so much from amazing mentors, and I am so grateful for all of them being a part of my journey. I am definitely richer having made these connections.

As I transition out of my position as manager of meetings and events at

SCHS, I am preparing to take on a new role in a new community. It is with great anticipation that I will be starting as the executive director of the Freeborn County Historical Museum (FCHM) in Albert Lea. This process has started a separate “to do” lists for both SCHS and FCHM. Lists of FYIs, questions on roles and responsibilities, little tidbits that I have picked up here and there, new ideas, strategies, you name it I have it on a list.

Whether we are watching the seasons change or experiencing our own transition, there are always new possibilities. William Bridges said, “It is when we are in transition that we are most completely alive.” This is a perfect quote for how I feel with the changing of each season, and about moving to my new position – ALIVE!

Embracing new experiences is as exhilarating as the arrival of a new season. While we know some of what will come, we never know all that it will bring. My hope is that each of us can embrace the transitions in our lives and feel the thrill of being alive.

Stephanie Kibler is the meetings and events manager at the Steele County Historical Society in Owatonna. Steele Talkin’ is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

The Steele County Fair Board is deciding what to do with one of the cattle barns that collapsed under the weight of the snow last month. The fair will receive about \$138,000 in insurance coverage.

BP VFW Auxiliary patriotic art winners chosen

By **HOWARD LESTRUD**
STAFF WRITER

Three young artists will be honored for their patriotic art creativity after they participated in the Blooming Prairie VFW Auxiliary Post 878 Patriotic Art Contest for 2019.

Sixteen students participated in the contest.

Any student in grades 9-12 who is enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States may participate in the contest.

Grace Robbins earned the first place award of \$100. Second place award of \$75 went to David Kartest. Third place award of \$50 was given to Garret Farr.

The three winners will be recognized and presented their awards at the 2019 Memorial Day festivities at the Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club on Monday, May 27. The Times will publish the award-winning art pieces following the award presentation.

Carol Holman was chair of this year's event and has had that position for the past 16 years.

Judging the contest were VFW Auxiliary members Joyce Johns, Judy Lestrud and Marilyn Witzel.

The Blooming Prairie Library will have winning posters on display during April.

The first place winner goes to Owatonna to be judged on the district level.

The first-place winner from each state competes for national awards totaling \$29,500.

"We want to give a huge thank you to all students who took their time to participate in the Patriotic Art project.

Each year, more than 3,500 high school students from across the country participate in the VFW Auxiliary's Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest.

The contest began in 1979 to recognize up-and-coming artists and encourage patriotism in youth. View the 2017-2018 state winners or all the previous first-place national winners at <https://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/young-american-creative-patriotic-art-contest/previous-winners/>.

Kayla Juds, a high school senior from Greendale, Wis., was last

year's winner. Her entry was entitled "Life and Memories of a Patriot." The entry was sponsored by VFW Auxiliary 10519.

Here's what Juds said about her art piece:

"Life and Memories of a Patriot" | Medium: Oil Paint

Sponsored by VFW Auxiliary 10519 | Greendale, Wis.

"This painting of my grandfather is a historic reflection of a patriot who, in decades past, proudly went to battle.

"The memories of serving his country honorably years ago in Korea, along with many other patriots, have faded. My parents told me how he served proudly, as did his father in World War II.

"What I know most about my grandfather is the love, honor and commitment that he has demonstrated his entire life. As my grandfather prepares to travel with my brother this summer on his Honor Flight to Washington, D.C., along with many other brave veterans, my family and I will reflect on his patriotism, loyalty and devotion.

"While specific memories serving



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

Kayla Juds of Greendale, Wis., painted this portrait of her grandfather. The entry in the VFW Auxiliary Patriotic Art Contest won first place honors on the national level

in Korea have faded, some things have not, including his love and honor of country, family and God.

As civilians, we should remember and respect the sacrifices made by our nation's heroes." – Kayla Juds

The Decennial Census is coming



Mayor Lois
LOIS NELSON

The Decennial Census is coming! The Decennial Census is coming! The official information and promotional launch date for the 2020 Census was April 1 of this year and that is no fooling! During the past 18 months, the city has received communication from the Federal Government-Census Bureau and the Minnesota State Demographic Center collecting data. The official 2020 census begins on April 1, 2020.

The U.S. Constitution empowers the Congress to carry out the census in "such manner as they shall by Law direct" (Article I, Section 2). The Founders of our fledgling nation had a bold and ambitious plan to empower the people over their new government. The plan was to count every person living in the newly created United States of America, and to use that count to determine representation in the Congress. In 1790, the first official census was successfully taken and this practice has continued every decade since.

Every man, woman and child living in the United States is a part of the census. Why is this important? 1) In Minnesota, during the past 10 years, \$15,459,175, 947 Federal financial assistance program dollars have been sent to us. The largest programs (73%) are Medicaid, Federal Student Loans, Highway Planning & Construction, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicare Supplemental-Medical Insurance; 2) This census determines the number of seats each state has in the House of Representatives.

In Minnesota, we currently have eight legislative districts. The state has

increased in population during this decade, but other states have grown at a faster rate. Whether we will continue to have eight districts will depend on the census totals. If we should lose one of them, the other seven districts would have to absorb 100,000 residents and cover larger geographic areas.

After the census, all senate and legislative district boundaries will be redrawn in a process called redistricting. This is true, too, of our county commissioner districts and in larger cities, ward districts will also be redrawn. Our country's organizing fathers' way back in the 1700s had the vision of equal representation so we follow their vision to this day.

Next year, the census form includes 10 or 11 questions. (The actual number will be determined in June this year by the courts due to challenges from the State Attorneys in New York and California.) The census form is available in Spanish and twelve other languages. Every one living in the residence as of April 1, 2020, is to respond to the same questions. For the first time, the census can be completed on-line.

The American Community Survey will also be sent to around 250,000 households. This is the long-form of

survey data that is collected throughout the decade. By law, both forms are mandatory for completion as this data impacts policy and funding decisions at the local, state and federal levels.

Jurisdictions are encouraged to organize a Complete Count Committee to inform residents of this process. In Minnesota, there are three census area offices located in Duluth, Minneapolis and Rochester. They will also be hiring 7,500 census takers who make personal visits to those not responding by mail or email. A recent workshop on the census process indicated concern in finding this many capable people when statewide, today there are 140,000 job openings and 80,000 people looking for employment.

The Medford City Council voted on the proposed resolution at our March meeting for Supporting the 2020 Census Partnership by: Supporting the goals and ideals for the 2020 Census; Encourage all City residents to participate in events and initiatives that will raise the overall awareness of the 2020 Census and increase participation; and support census takers as they complete an accurate count.

Information regarding the whole census process is available at: demography.helpline@state.mn.us or www.mn.gov/admin/demography/census2020. Next April 1, watch for the census forms arriving by mail, complete and return. Be counted!

Lois M. Nelson is serving her seventh year as Mayor of Medford. She writes monthly for this newspaper.

Livestock Hall of Fame deadline nears

A reminder from the Steele County Free Fair that May 1 is the deadline to submit nominations for this year's Steele County Livestock Hall of Fame.

Nomination forms are available at the fair office and also on-line at SteeleCountyFreeFair@scff.org.

There are two types of awards. The first type is the Hall of Fame membership. These nominees are judged on their impact or influence upon the livestock industry – county, state, and national, their leadership

in the livestock industry, and other relevant contributions with county being a priority.

The other type of award is the Hall of Fame Service award. These nominees are to be individuals that grew up or live in Steele County and went on to do outstanding work in the livestock industry outside of the county. State and national contributions are the priority for this award.

Inductees into the Livestock Hall of Fame will be recognized on Tuesday, Aug. 13 at 2 p.m. in the livestock show arena.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

FROM B1

are thankful for all of the support that the auction receives each year. "It's incredible, and we're grateful for the generosity in the community, both from businesses and individuals," she said. "We feel very blessed."

She also credited the entire committee and those who volunteered as key assets to putting on the auction. "It's a huge event, the amount

of planning that goes into it is very large," Spielman explained. "It is a total group effort, and we have great helpers and people planning this year's event."

"I feel honored to be a part of this committee," Spielman added. "It's wonderful to get to know people in the school, and the community better."

The night's auction will also feature a raffle. The

raffle tickets will be on sale until Friday. Perhaps the biggest prize of the evening's raffle will be a fishing and ski boat provided by Northstar Powersports and Marine, located in Albert Lea.

Those who win any of the night's five raffles will get the choice between taking the prize or a cash amount option. The boat is priced at around \$15,000.

Cancer Corner

Blooming Prairie Cancer Group



2nd designer purse BINGO brings in \$16K

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

"Isn't that crazy?"

That's the reaction of Blooming Prairie Cancer Group treasurer Cheri Krejci when reporting earnings from the Second Annual Designer BINGO held Saturday, April 6 at the BP Servicemen's Club.

"We brought in \$16,000, which is \$6,000 above the total earned at the first designer purse BINGO last year," said Krejci. Krejci, Lindsey French and Denise Krell were organizers of the locally sponsored purse bingo.

It was Krell who suggested that the BP Cancer Group try the purse BINGO. Try it they did, and guess what, it's another BP Cancer Group successful fundraiser.

The BINGO party was sold out with 277 attending. The crowd was mainly made up of women, but there were a couple of men in the crowd.

Rudy Perez was a repeat player from last year. He won a purse and said he still has the purse and wants to give it to the woman in his life. "I haven't found her yet," he laughed.

Eleven designer purses and six wallets were given away as BINGO prizes. They were valued at several thousand dollars, Krejci said.

A mystery prize was given to the winner of a special raffle. The winner was Sara Gordon-Dowd, Hayfield. The contents of the mystery prize included a purse and many other items, totaling over \$1,200.

Doors opened at 11 a.m. and caller Caleb Ostrander called the first BINGO game



Cannon Falls High school senior Jenna Skaggs received a special high school graduation gift from her grandmother Phyllis Tennell of Zumbrota. It was a designer purse given as a gift at the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group Designer Purse Bingo on Saturday, April 6 at the BP Servicemen's Club. (Staff photo by Howard Lestrud)

beginning at 1 p.m.

"There were lots of emotions and happy tears shed because of the sponsorship of purses by families who were affected by cancer," Krejci said.

First BINGO winner and recipient of a purse was Brady Block of Lyle.

Phyllis Tennell of Zumbrota won a purse and gave it to her granddaughter Jenna Skaggs as a graduation present. Jenna will graduate this year from Cannon Falls High School.

BINGO organizers Krejci, French and Krell said the purse BINGO will definitely be held again next spring. They thanked Jenny Cashman and her crew for serving tasty food and special Bloody Mary's.

"It was a busy day but really a lot of fun," said Krejci.

Next BP Cancer Group event will be the motorcycle/car cruise in June.

Sponsored by **Krejci**

ROAD HEATACHE

FROM B1

westbound Interstate 90 with concrete from Highway 13 to County Road 46 by Albert Lea.

There are three projects slated for Dodge County. A two-mile stretch of eastbound Highway 14 will be repaved by Kasson in addition to the eastbound ramps of Highway 57. Several bridge replacements are slated for Highway 57 north of Mantorville. Highway 57 from north of Mantorville to southern Goodhue County will be closed beginning in early May. MnDOT will also be working on Highway 56 south of Dodge Center. Workers will be constructing a northbound right turn lane and southbound bypass lane south of the east junction of

Highway 14.

Transportation commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher says the projects will help maintain the state's roads and bridges, improve safety for motorists and support thousands of construction jobs across the state.

Despite the aggressive construction schedule across the state, Anderson Kelliher said the long-term transportation funding picture for Minnesota remains bleak compared to the state's overall needs.

Looking ahead, MnDOT projects an \$18 billion deficit in funding over the next 20 years, which will hinder the agency's ability to maintain

current assets, improve safety or plan ahead to meet the needs of Minnesota's growing population.

"These projects are critical investments in our aging infrastructure, but there are also more than 500 more projects across the state that are waiting for funding," Anderson Kelliher said. "Without additional revenue for transportation, our roads and bridges will continue to deteriorate and our overall system and economy will suffer."

There are 12,000 miles of roadway in Minnesota and more than 4,800 bridges. MnDOT oversees construction and maintenance of all of those highways and bridges.

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT: Crash:

Prevent hopes and dreams from dying

Beginning Monday, officers in Steele County are cracking down on distracted driving with motorists.

Distracted driving-related crashes claim an average of 53 lives each year, causing a lifetime of grief and pain for the families left behind and an untold story of what could have been.

In an effort to increase awareness and change dangerous behaviors, Minnesota law enforcement agencies will begin a three-week extra distracted driving enforcement wave, which began Monday and continues through April 30. The Steele County Sheriff’s Office, along with the Owatonna Police Department, will take part in extra enforcement along with more than 300 law enforcement agencies across Minnesota. The distracted driving campaign that runs through April 30 is coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS).

“Take a moment and describe your loved one out loud,” said Sgt. Jason Petterson of Owatonna Police. “Think about all of their loves, passions and accomplishments. Now think about saying those same things at your loved one’s funeral. That is what can happen when a driver decides to take their eyes off the road, even for a split second. Let’s protect the hopes and dreams of everyone around us by putting the distractions away and focusing 100 percent of our attention on the road.”

Dangerous Driving

- Continuing a 6-year trend texting citations climbed 30 percent from 2017 to 2018.
- Distracted driving contributes to one in five crashes in Minnesota.
- Distracted driving contributes to an average of 53 deaths and 216 serious injuries a year (2013 – 2017).

A Disturbing Trend

Distracted Driving	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Texting Citations	2,177	3,498	4,115	5,988	7,357	9,545
Fatalities	68	59	72	41	24	*27
Serious Injuries	241	196	173	254	218	*178

*PRELIMINARY DATA

- During the 2018 distracted driving extra enforcement campaign, law enforcement cited 1,576 people for texting and driving.
 - During the 2017 distracted driving extra enforcement campaign, law enforcement cited 1,017 people for texting and driving.
 - During the 2016 distracted driving extra enforcement campaign, law enforcement cited 972 people for texting and driving.
 - During the 2015 distracted driving extra enforcement campaign, law enforcement cited 909 people for texting and driving.
- Distracted Driving Behaviors**
- Posting on Facebook, checking that box score or Googling information on a device while driving are all against the law under Minnesota’s “Use of Wireless Communications Device” statute, which is commonly referred to as the texting and driving law.
- Distractions that could lead to a crash also include fiddling with controls for music, eating and drinking, children fighting or an adult passenger’s behavior.
- Consequences**
- With Minnesota’s “No Texting” law, it’s illegal for drivers to read, send texts and emails, and access the web while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic. That includes sitting at a stoplight or stop sign. Penalties for this violation can include:
 - \$50 plus court fees for a first offense.
 - \$275 plus court fees for a second and/or subsequent offense.
 - If you injure or kill someone because of texting and driving, you can face a felony charge of criminal vehicular operation or homicide.
- Drive Distracted-Free**
- Cell phones — Put the phone down, turn it off or place it out of reach. Owatonna Police Department – Exceeding Expectations!
 - Music and other controls — Pre-program radio stations and arrange music in an easy-to-access spot. Adjust mirrors and ventilation before traveling.
 - Navigation — Map out the destination and enter the GPS route in advance.
 - Eating and drinking — Avoid messy foods and secure drinks.
 - Children — Teach children the importance of good behavior in a vehicle and model proper driving behavior.
 - Passengers — Speak up to stop drivers from distracted driving behavior and offer to help with anything that takes the driver’s attention off the road.
- Distracted driving education is a component of Minnesota’s core traffic safety effort, Toward Zero Deaths (TZD). A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes — education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma response.

CRIME BRIEF

POLICE SEEKING PUBLIC’S HELP WITH ROBBERY



OWATONNA POLICE

This is a surveillance photo taken of the robbery suspect from Fuel and Food in Owatonna March 31. Anyone with information is asked to call police.

Owatonna Police are seeking the public’s help with information involving a robbery suspect at a local convenience store.

On March 31 at about 5:52 p.m., police responded to Fuel and Food for a robbery-in-progress. An employee reported a man wearing a ski mask, darker black or gray sweatpants, black and white jacket and black Nike tennis shoes entered the business and announced, “This is a robbery.”

According to police, the suspect then yanked the cash drawer from the cash register and fled the store on foot. A Rice County canine attempted to track the suspect, but was unable to come up with anything.

The suspect is described as 20-30 years old, 6 foot to 6 foot 2 inches with a medium build and deeper voice. Anyone with information regarding this robbery is asked to contact Owatonna Police at 507-774-7220.

Threat puts Medford Schools into soft lockdown

Medford Schools went into a soft lockdown mode on April 2 after receiving a threat.

During the late afternoon hours, administration was made aware of a potential threat against the school, according to Mark Ristau, superintendent of Medford Schools.

“At that time we went into a soft lockdown and the Steele County Sheriff’s Department was called in to assist in the threat assessment,” Ristau said. “After a thorough search and evaluation, the building was found to be safe.”

Ristau said the school takes all precautions necessary to ensure the safety of students.

COURT NEWS

Steele County

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of March 25 with Judge Ross L. Leuning presiding:

Abraam Rodriguez Jr., 18, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony aid and abet assault. He was sentenced to \$131, no possession of firearms, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, no contact with victim or co-defendant, no possession of firearms, anger management, do not enter liquor establishments, obtain permission to leave the state, 216 hours of community service and 5 years of supervised probation.

Holly R. Wilkie, 38, Geneva, previously appeared and was convicted of felony criminal vehicular operation under influence of alcohol. She was sentenced to \$381, 2 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, attend MADD impact panel, no contact with victim, obtain permission to leave the state, 224 hours of community service and 3 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of March 25 – 31:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Abby A. Gallaher, 24, Austin, speeding, \$121; Chad L. Roche, 27, Wells, stalking, \$3,081, 2 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no contact with victim, mental health evaluation, obtain permission to leave the state, maintain employment, domestic abuse evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Elmer R. Aguilar Funez, 45, Richfield, no license, \$181; Emma M. Bartkey, 23, Faribault, no insurance, \$281; Michael P. Burns, 50, Winona, seat belt, \$106; Lori J. Coppock, 56, Clive, IA, speeding, \$121; Maryann M. Fischer, 61, Sleepy Eye, speeding, \$121; Dawn M. Joyner, 49, Faribault, DWI, \$581, 30 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, 224 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Jerome R. Leichtnam, 52, Faribault, speeding, \$121;

Ashley M. Padilla, 27, Owatonna, no insurance, revoked license and no license, \$581; Abigail M. Schaper, 24, Waseca, speeding, \$131; Jason M. Studnicka, 48, Owatonna, seat belt, \$106; Nyeann W. Toe, 39, Brooklyn Center, no insurance, \$281.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Marcus J. Andrist, 16, Owatonna, cross road from non-roadway, \$131; Eric L. Anthony, 34, Northfield, theft, \$100.99 and 90 days in county jail, Vanessa L. Dicus, 38, Owatonna, revoked license, \$281; Bradley L. Fischer, 24, Kenyon, animal running at large, \$131; Henry C. Fox, 34, Owatonna, DWI, \$206, substance abuse subtle screening inventory and 1 year of supervised probation; De Andrea A. Gill, 25, Owatonna, domestic assault, stay of adjudication, diversion program and 2 years of supervised probation; Eugene T. Gritz, 64, Owatonna, failure to yield, \$131; Alexander S. Guildford-Morse, 31, St. Paul, abandoned vehicle, \$131; Matthew D. Harthan, 38, Owatonna, DWI, \$406, 2 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, attend MADD impact panel and 1 year of supervised probation; Levi J. Hunt, 17, Owatonna, speeding, \$121; Annalia C. Johnson, 16, Owatonna, failure to yield, \$131; Laurie D. Kann, 59, Owatonna, abandoned vehicle, \$131; James R. Krampitz, 70, Owatonna, abandoned vehicle, \$131; David A. Kvestad, 65, Owatonna, abandoned vehicle, \$131; Camille H. Lowell, 18, Owatonna, damage to property, minor consumption and motor vehicle theft, stay of adjudication, \$81, 30 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, 216 hours of community service and 5 years of supervised probation; Steven L. Mudd, 57, Owatonna, speeding, \$131; Nurdin A. Sheikh, 27, Owatonna, no insurance, \$281; Nollynn W. Tabor, 19, Owatonna, possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, 240 hours of community service and 3 years of supervised probation; Isaac Thomas, 50, Owatonna, revoked license, \$281; Araceli Vega, 35, Owatonna, rear lights violation, \$121.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE

Shalayna D. Belden, 28, Albert Lea, failure to drive in

single lane, \$131; Sidney N. Casas, 22, Owatonna, stop sign, \$131; Carla E. Coke, 44, Pine Island, DWI, \$606, 30 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, 232 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Gregory R. Daniel, 51, Rochester, speeding, \$121; Michelle D. Downer, 28, Austin, speeding, \$141; Britteny L. Gillis, 20, Medford, stop sign, \$131; Jennifer M. Johannsen, 37, Owatonna, speeding, \$121; Rebekah E. Kirgis, 42, Rochester, speeding, \$221; Michael J. Lee, 57, Waterville, speeding, \$141; Jenna E. McCarthy, 18, Kenyon, speeding, \$221; Rhonda I. Nappin, 44, Ellendale, expired tabs, \$111; Cristian E. Soto Ramos, 30, Faribault, invalid license, \$181; Myron W. Wunderlich, 31, Owatonna, suspended license and no insurance, \$481.

hit and run accident occurred in the 2500 block of Harvest Lane NW.

Drugs: Police responded to drug activity in the 300 block of School St. W. at 6:21 p.m.

April 3

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 100 block of Bridge St. W. at 3:30 p.m. Probation: Police arrested a subject for violating his or her probation in the 800 block of Oak Ave. S. at 7:23 p.m.

DWI: Officers arrested a motorist for driving while intoxicated in the 700 block of Bridge St. W. at 10:51 p.m.

Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at School St. W. and Oak Ave. S. at 11:37 p.m.

April 4

Suspicion: Police responded to suspicious activity in the 1200 block of Frontage Rd. E. at 1:17 a.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 1200 block of

21st Ave. NW at 10 a.m.

Steele County Sheriff

March 29

Suspicion: Deputies received a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of Sunrise Dr. NE in Medford at 5:46 p.m.

Domestic: At 8 p.m., deputies responded to a domestic disturbance in the 12100 block of 34th Ave. SE in Blooming Prairie Township. They arrested a subject on the scene.

Arrest: Deputies arrested a motorist during a traffic stop in the 4000 block of Crane Creek Road in Owatonna Township at 11:11 p.m.

March 30

DWI: Deputies arrested a motorist for driving while intoxicated on Interstate 35 in Owatonna Township at 4:17 a.m.

Domestic: Deputies received information regarding a domestic disturbance in the 11000 block of 89th Ave. SE in Blooming Prairie Township at

7:35 p.m.

March 31

Burglary: Deputies began a burglary investigation in the 300 block of 6th St. SE in Medford at 3:05 p.m.

Restraining Order: At 9:36 p.m., a restraining order violation occurred in the 8900 block of Dane Road in Merton Township.

April 1

Theft: Deputy took a theft report in the 500 block of 5th Ave. W. in Ellendale at 2:19 p.m.

April 2

Threats: Deputies assisted with a subject making threats in the 700 block of 2nd Ave. NE in Medford at 1:39 p.m.

Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest at the detention center at 7:22 p.m.

April 3

Theft: Deputy took a theft report in the 3900 block of Highway 30 W. in Ellendale at 6:31 a.m.

SEE BLOTTER, B6

POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE March 29

Hit and Run: At 11:54 a.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 1800 block of Cedar Ave. S.

March 31

Trespassing: Police arrested a subject for trespassing in the 200 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 12:23 a.m.

Theft: At 7:43 a.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 800 block of Oak Ave. S.

Disturbance: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 600 block of Agnes St. E. at 8:02 a.m. They arrested a subject on the scene.

Fight: Police took a subject into custody following a fight in the 2300 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 10:10 a.m.

Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 4400 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 12:13 p.m.

Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at Fremont St. E. and Grove Ave. N. at 5:05 p.m.

April 1

Vulnerable Adult: Police received a vulnerable adult report from the 100 block of Landmark Dr. NE at 12:32 a.m.

Shoplifting: Officer arrested a subject for shoplifting in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W. at 1:47 p.m.

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest at Hoffman Dr. NW and State Ave. NW at 3:11 p.m.

Stalking: Police responded to a stalking incident in the 3000 block of Northridge Lane NE at 9:30 p.m.

April 2

Hit and Run: At 5:15 p.m., a

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

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Support pours in for new high school in Owatonna

BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN
STAFF WRITER

A new, modernized high school will bring the Owatonna High School learning environment up to the 21st Century standards and add another public amenity to attract talent to the area, local business people agree.

With that in mind, the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism (OACCT) Board of Directors has given its support to the Owatonna School Board's decision to hold a bond referendum next month to build a new high school, said Chamber President/CEO Brad Meier.

"We are supportive of the (school) board," Meier said. A new high school, he said, will have a bond referendum. It will prepare Owatonna students for the jobs of the future and it will also help attract the talent that Owatonna businesses need now.

"The investment will bring the learning environment to 21st century standards and adds another public amenity to attract talent to the area," OACCT Board Chair Andrew Cowell said in announcing chamber support of

the project. "Our members tell us that attracting and developing talent is the largest challenge they face for the future of their companies."

Meier said that the support the project has received from the private sector is unprecedented. When the project first was presented last fall by a local task force that studied the issue it came with a \$138 million price tag.

Within a short period of time that figure had been reduced to \$116 million following a pledge of \$20 million from Federated Insurance and additional offers of cash and materials from Wenger Corporation and Viracon.

Last week Mayo Clinic Health System announced it would fund a new scoreboard for the main gymnasium, outfit the new athletic training room and provide funds for the health care learning lab.

"Mayo Clinic Health Systems is committed to participating in projects that benefit our community as a whole," said Dr. Brian Bunkers, president of Mayo Clinic Healthy Systems – Owatonna. "We believe strongly in the need for a new high school in Owatonna and our financial commitment is just part of our support for this project. A new high school is a key element needed for the

"The investment will bring the learning environment to 21st Century standards and adds another public amenity to attract talent to the area."

Andrew Cowell
Owatonna Chamber Chairman

Tyler Kortz joins RE/MAX venture

Matt Gillard, broker/owner of RE/MAX Venture is pleased to announce Tyler Kortz as the newest agent to join the Owatonna RE/MAX office.

"I have been working as a licensed service and sales associate in the plumbing, heating, air

searching for their first - or next - home."

Kortz adds, "I have known Matt and Deb for 10 years and have seen the team and culture they have built at RE/MAX Venture. Their dedication to providing personal and professional real estate guidance, and complete agent development were exactly what I was looking for when making this career move."

Gillard said Kortz is coming in to real estate with a true spirit of service. "He is hard working and a real go-getter. I know he is going to do the right thing by always having his clients' best interests in mind, and will represent RE/MAX Venture well in the community," Gillard said.

Located at 118 N Cedar Avenue in Owatonna, RE/MAX Venture serves Steele County and the surrounding areas, specializing in residential, small acreage, investment and commercial properties.

Stay connected this spring

Minnesota Energy Resources is encouraging customers who have fallen behind on natural gas bills to make arrangements to catch up before Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule period ends April 15.

Customers with significant past-due balances who have not set up a payment arrangement are at risk of disconnection starting the third week of this month.

Customers having difficulty paying natural gas bills can contact Minnesota Energy Resources throughout the year at 800-889-9508 for help managing past-due amounts. Customer service representatives can discuss a minimum payment option or payment arrangement that may be available to help customers stay connected. Bill messages, mail notices and phone calls are being provided to customers at risk of disconnection to inform them about the status of their accounts.

Customers also are reminded they may be able to receive energy assistance through Minnesota's Energy Assistance Program (EAP), administered by

the Minnesota Department of Commerce. There is no charge to determine eligibility or apply for assistance. More information about energy assistance through the EAP can be found on the Department of Commerce website or by calling 800-657-3710. Customers who receive an EAP grant may also qualify for assistance through Minnesota Energy Resources' Gas Affordability Program, administered by the Salvation Army.

Minnesota Energy Resources urges customers to be alert for scam attempts that can occur at this time of year. Common scams feature criminals threatening to disconnect a customer if an immediate payment is not made, often with a prepaid card (e.g., MoneyPak or Green Dot card). Minnesota Energy Resources reminds customers it never conducts business in a threatening manner, and does not require a specific payment type to pay natural gas bills. Disconnection is always a last resort only taken after all other attempts to work with a customer have been unsuccessful.

BUSINESS TO THE RESCUE

Unprecedented business support for Owatonna's new high school

• **Federated Insurance:** \$20 million

• **Wenger Corporation:** Acoustic, stage and storage solutions

• **Wenger Foundation:** \$2 million

• **Viracon:** Glass throughout building at cost

• **Mayo Clinic:** New scoreboard, athletic training room, healthcare learning lab

clinic to recruit and retain the staff that provides for the health care needs of this community."

The oldest portion of the current high school was constructed almost 100 years ago. The first addition was added in 1959 and other additions have been made since then.

The district has invested in upgrading elementary and middle schools, Meier said, and has done a lot of "fixes" to the high school building. Putting more dollars into the high school at this point for more fixes, he said, would result in more money needed in another 10 years.

A bond referendum on the issue has been scheduled for May 14.

Showing appreciation



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUJ

A favorite watering hole in Blooming Prairie had a big celebration on Saturday, April 6. Harvey and Nancy Farr of J&H Liquor in Blooming Prairie threw a big party celebrating 33 years of serving Blooming Prairie and the surrounding area. Their theme was, "Food, Friends and Fun." J&H Liquor is located on Main Street in Blooming Prairie and offers both on and off sale liquor.

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STEELE-DODGE BUSINESS

'It's a rare opportunity'



Kristin Johnson and Kelly Poeschel will be the new co-managers of the new Chrysler Dealership, at Zumbrota Ford.

Zumbrota Ford opens new Chrysler Dealership

BY ALEX MALM
STAFF WRITER

For 47 years, Steve Johnson, owner of Zumbrota Ford, has been in the car dealership business.

Last week, one of his most successful accomplishments may have been completed, when the dealership opened its new building, as they will now also have a Chrysler dealership, along with its Ford dealership.

Johnson explained the process began about two years ago when they were approached by the Chrysler Corporation about creating a dealership in the area and that because of the strong sales for the Zumbrota dealership, they knew that it would be a good fit.

If someone had asked Johnson a few years ago if he would have the opportunity to add a Chrysler dealership, he wouldn't have believed it.

"Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought that this would have occurred," Johnson said. "It's a rare opportunity," he added.

The reason why it is such a rare thing to be able to have a Chrysler dealership in a small town like Zumbrota is mainly because of the small amount of Chrysler dealerships in Southeast Minnesota.

Johnson explained that they are the only dealership between Rochester and the Twin Cities and one of only a few in all of Southeast Minnesota.

When companies like Chrysler are looking for new dealership locations, one of the main things that they look for is the amount of cars that are sold at different locations. Because of the high volume of vehicles that have been sold at the Zumbrota location, especially as of recently, they knew that having a dealership there would be a huge success.

Over the past few years, Johnson explained that they have done some major

renovations, which include revamping every department.

By doing this, Johnson explained that they have been able to double their sales, going from selling about 100 vehicles a month to 200.

"We have grown a lot since we have invested in the renovations," Johnson explained.

Aside from the major renovations, that have been made, along with the increase in inventory that they offer customers, the success is also in part due to the exceptional staff that they have.

"We have a great staff here that takes care of our customers," Johnson said. He also noted that

they are always doing their research about new trends in the industry, which helps out greatly when it comes to matching up people with vehicles that will be the best fit for them.

The other positive that Johnson pointed to making their dealership a desirable one for Chrysler is the fact that the area has great

economic stability, and as The Destination Medical Center in Rochester continues to grow, the economics in the area will only become better.

"We are blessed to be in Southeast Minnesota with a great economy," Johnson said.

Although they had their soft opening last week for the new dealership, Johnson explained that they have been selling vehicles since December and have had plenty of success. Johnson feels that Chrysler has some of the most desirable vehicles on the market currently.

One of the things that Johnson is looking forward to with the new dealership is being able to keep the management in the family. Johnson explained that his two daughters, Kristin Johnson and Kelly Poeschel, will be the co-managers of the Chrysler dealership.

For Johnson, he is hopeful that one day, he can pass on his company to his daughters, and they can continue the success of putting local people in great vehicles that fit their needs as they have been doing at Zumbrota Ford for the last 20 years.

"They enjoy the business, and I like working with them," Johnson said.

Steve Johnson
Zumbrota Ford Owner

"We are blessed to be in Southeast Minnesota with a great economy."

New group formed to serve Minnesota farm equipment dealers

The Pioneer Equipment Dealers Association (Pioneer EDA), a newly-formed trade association serving farm equipment dealers in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota, has announced the commencement of operations as of April 1.

The Pioneer EDA was formed by a historic merger of the North Dakota Implement Dealers Association (NDIDA) and the Minnesota-South Dakota Equipment Dealers Association (MSDEDA). Both organizations have proudly served the region's farm equipment dealers for nearly 120 years.

Headquartered in Fargo, the Pioneer Equipment Dealers Association represents over 350 mainline and

shortline farm equipment dealerships across the tri-state region. Areas of focus include legislative representation, manufacturer relations, industry news, regulatory compliance, workforce development, and dealer education.

Jamie Melgaard of Minot, serves as Pioneer EDA's 2019 Chairman, with Mike Scharber of Rogers, Minn., as Vice Chairman. The 18-member Pioneer EDA Board includes dealers from across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Matthew Larsgaard of Fargo, has been named president/CEO and will manage all administrative activities.

The decision to merge MSDEDA and NDIDA followed months of due diligence and a ballot vote yielding an

overwhelmingly favorable member response to the merger.

"We're excited to harness the power of dealers in all three states and move forward as one highly effective organization," says Chairman Melgaard. "Our larger, stronger dealer base will offer better lobbying influence, enhanced manufacturer relations, and a single source for information and resources."

Vice Chairman Scharber adds, "Many of our members across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota now have dealerships in two or even all three states.

"The timing is optimal for dealers in the tri-state region to join forces, and we look forward to working together."



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Minimizer debuts new trade show booth at MATS

The long-awaited debut of the new Minimizer trade show booth was a smashing success.

End users, media partners and fellow suppliers stopped by to check it out during the Mid-America Trucking Show (MATS) held March 28-30 in Louisville.

Officials said 1,020 exhibitors represented 45 states/11 countries. Attendees totaled 72,584 from 50 states and 61 countries.

Overall, the huge MATS event took 1 million square feet for exhibitors.

"We're really excited about this," Minimizer Director of Marketing Steve Hansen said. "The feedback has been really positive. The booth design is certainly unique and stands out in the crowd."

The booth is broken down into Minimizer's three truck-specific areas – On The Truck, In The Truck, and Fix The Truck. The 'In The Truck' section includes full seat and mattress displays so customers can test those products. They can also engage with large tablet-inspired devices that display photos, videos, and information for each of the Minimizer product lines.

"We wanted to make sure that people could walk into this booth and get the full Minimizer experience, whether they're interested in testing a Long Haul Series seat or mattress, or watching videos of the fenders or floor mats," Hansen said.

A semi-private meeting area is positioned near the rear of the booth, complete with a 44-inch monitor, tables and chairs.

"We needed a space to meet with fleets, end users, and distributors,"



Minimizer's "tested and tortured" theme is emphasized at Minimizer's new trade show booth. It was on display at the Mid-America Trucking Show (MATS) held March 28-30 in Louisville, KY.

Hansen said. Nimlok designed and produced the new booth, which can be resized to fit two distinct spaces – a 20-by-30-foot and a 10-by-40-foot.

The 20-by-30 booth will be used at Heavy Duty Aftermarket Week and MATS, while the 10-by-40 booth will travel to TMC and the Great American Trucking Show.

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History from the News Archives

10 Years Ago

April 7, 2009

DAN EVANS, PUBLISHER

The sixth annual Blooming Prairie Education Foundation Auction brought a big crowd of supporters, and, once again, was the biggest party of the year. The auction was March 28 at the Cue Company /Pizza Cellar. There were 146 live auction items, 157 silent auction and a special auction of a dog. This year the auction raised \$47,800 for Blooming Prairie Schools.

The family that plays together stays together. That is definitely a statement that applies to Roger and Rhonda Toquam family. The couple as well as their sons love to snowmobile together. This year the family took a ride out west.

In Hope, there is a leader in the natural, organic, kosher and specialty food industries. That company is Sun Opta, and its history dates back to 1973. Laverne Klecker is grain manager for Sun Opta, which is one of the biggest players in the health foods sector.

20 Years Ago

April 6, 1999

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

In his first year as Prairie Manor Nursing Home administrator, Mark Robinson has been thrown a couple curve balls but has managed to stay on top of the count. Despite more government intervention and just the everyday challenges beset him and others in running a rural nursing

home, Robinson remains very positive and never sways on his enthusiasm for providing a top notch facility for the Blooming Prairie area.

The Minnesota Agricultural Education Leadership Council voted in March to provide \$3,460 to Blooming Prairie High School for the development of an ag education summer program. The local money will be used to increase summer time with ag students as well as funding two field trips and attend seminars.

50 Years Ago

April 2, 1969

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

The 1969-70 salary schedule has been adopted by the Blooming Prairie School Board. The new base has been set at \$6,500 for those teachers who have bachelor of arts degrees.

Truman Tilleraas, popular agriculture instructor at Blooming Prairie High School for many years, has resigned his position effective July 1. He has accepted a new position at the University of Minnesota Technical Institute at Crookston.

U.S. Air Force Sgt. Alvin J. Ashley of Blooming Prairie was presented the Air Medal recently at Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Neil C. Ashley of rural Blooming Prairie.

Dennis Heierman, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Heierman, placed second in the Regional FFA Creed Contest held at Waseca recently. Dennis won the District 14 contest and was overall second place

winner.

Prairie Farm Service, Inc., has leased the local properties of International Mineral Corporation in Blooming Prairie, manager Gunnar Balstad announced Monday. Effective immediately, Prairie Farm Service assumed management of the IMC fertilizer and chemical business.

75 Years Ago

April 6, 1944

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

Steele County's labor shortage is to be amalgamated this summer by the use of German war prisoners, the first of whom have already arrived in Owatonna to prepare grounds for the full contingent of approximately 100 men to follow soon. The prisoners are volunteer workers and are being brought here from a German internment camp in Kansas to assist in production at the Cashman Nurseries and the Owatonna Nursery Co. from April 1 to June 8.

Shortage of housing facilities in Blooming Prairie has reached an acute stage. Due numerous sales of town property, with the new owners moving in, tenants that are forced to move find no houses available. Every house and furnished apartment in Blooming Prairie is occupied and a large waiting list is held.

At the regular meeting of the council held Monday night, Geo Day was appointed to the water, light, power and building commission, succeeding Lawrence E. Lysne, who is waiting his call to join the U.S. Navy and who tendered his resignation to the commission several weeks ago.

Sound the horn: Summer camp offered for BP students

The Wenger Foundation has signed on to sponsor up to 15 Blooming Prairie High School students to attend BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture (MBV) business and leadership camp this summer. The first 15 students to apply will receive this full sponsorship, which covers the cost of the application fee, housing, meals, and all program materials and activities. These students will also receive a \$75 stipend to offset travel expenses, disbursed upon completion of the program. Space is extremely limited, but spots are being held until May 6 for these sponsorship recipients. Minnesota Business Venture is a week-long

residential program that provides high school students with real-world skills, offering a rare opportunity to learn about career options, develop financial literacy and workplace skills, cushion their resumes for college applications, and experience college life by living on a campus.

Students from across Minnesota work in small teams to develop an imaginary product and business plan to then present to a panel of judges, Shark Tank-style. Throughout the week, students also take part in mock interviews, experience career options, meet with a financial planner, sharpen networking skills, and attend breakout

sessions led by industry experts. Students leave camp feeling more confident and prepared for their futures, with increased leadership, teamwork, and presentation skills.

"MBV provides the perfect summer opportunity for students to explore college and a variety of careers, form valuable connections, and gain invaluable leadership experience in a fun and challenging environment. As the week goes on, it's incredible to watch how quickly the students flourish and grow," shared BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture Program Manager, Jonathan Filzen.

Minnesota Business Venture offers two sessions

and locations for students to choose from: July 7-12 at the University of St. Thomas (session now closed) and July 21-26 at St. John's University (limited space available). Applications are currently being accepted from Minnesota high school and home school students interested in attending. Additional scholarships are available to students in need. Students or parents can obtain an application and sponsorship information by contacting BestPrep at mbv@bestprep.org or online at bestprep.org/mbv. BestPrep expects 400 students from over 100 Minnesota high schools to attend one of the two sessions this summer.

BLOTTER: FROM B3

Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest at the detention center at 9:19 p.m. April 4

Fight: Deputies responded to a fight on Interstate 35 in Summit Township at 7:30 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest at the detention center at 10:27 p.m.

ARRESTS

Steele County

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF
Trereias Dishawn Harris, 35, arrested at 2:15 p.m. April 2, probation violation, body only. Daniel Harold Mittelstadt, 44, arrested at 1 p.m. April 2, theft, held for court. Sunday Paul Puot, 23, arrested at 1:21 p.m. March 23, felony armed robbery, held for court. Manuel Maciel-Garcia, 19, arrested at 7:10 p.m. April 3, felony controlled substance, held for court. Cody Lane Luchi, 22, arrested at 9:20 p.m. April 3, warrants arrest, held for court. Ricky Scott Steele, 44, arrested April 3, extradition hearing warrant arrest, held for court.

COURT NEWS

Dodge County

The following cases were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of March 24 with Judge Jodi L. Williamson presiding:

Leif E. Haugland, 36, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle and gross misdemeanor DWI. He was sentenced to \$1,080, 33 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, mental health screening, cognitive skill training, write letter of apology, 100 hours of community service and 5 years of supervised probation. Travis W. Jackson, 39, St. Cloud, previously appeared and was convicted of felony domestic assault. Jackson was sentenced to \$130, 245 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, domestic abuse evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 5 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of March 24 – 31:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Dwight R. Dreyer, 32, Dodge Center, speeding, \$140; Rachel R. Foster, 30, Albert Lea, no insurance, \$280; Kevin D. Lee, 26, Kasson, suspended license and expired registration, \$310; Jeffrey S. Locke, 45, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Izaiah T. Miles, 20, Dodge

Center, no insurance, \$280; James L. Nelson, 41, Kasson, possession of marijuana, \$980, 3 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical assessment, 90 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Bret R. Nordstrom, 36, Claremont, speeding, \$120; Shaylee C. Ortega, 18, Owatonna, possession of paraphernalia, \$130; Anthony J. Pra, 21, Rochester, possession of IV controlled substance mixture, \$980, 3 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical assessment, 90 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Cathleen A. Wolhart, 60, Hayfield, revoked license, \$280.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Kevin J. Banks, 18, West Concord, smoking or chewing tobacco in public school,

\$130; Lindsey E. Howell, 38, Rochester, parking violation, \$32; Jacob M. Kreisher, 27, Kasson, stop sign, \$130.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Robert Costello, 19, Chicago, IL, speeding, \$380; Eduardo M. Gutierrez, 34, Rochester, revoked license, \$280; Bonnie K. Johnson, 62, Owatonna, speeding, \$120; Claudia G. Macco, 19, De Pere, WI, speeding, \$120; Ryan A. Roessler, 39, Ham Lake, possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, \$980, 1 day in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical assessment, 90 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Feitje M. Ryzebol, 28, Mantorville, speeding, \$140.

WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Juan L. Juarez, 40, Kenyon, invalid license, \$180.

How SSI Can Help Low-Income Seniors and the Disabled



THE SAVVY SENIOR



Brought to you by:

Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus

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

Dear Savvy Senior,

What can you tell me about the Supplemental Security Income program and what are the eligibility requirements? My father is very low-income, so I'm wondering if this is something he may qualify for:

Searching Daughter

Dear Searching,

Supplemental Security Income (or SSI) is a program administered by the Social Security Administration that provides monthly cash benefits to people that are disabled or over 65 based on financial need. Currently, more than 8 million people are receiving SSI benefits. Here's what you should know.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for SSI your dad must be either age 65 or older; blind or disabled, and must be a U.S. citizen or lawful resident. He must also have limited assets and income.

His assets must be less than \$2,000 or \$3,000 for couples. This includes cash, bank accounts, other personal property, and anything else that could potentially be converted to cash. His home, household goods and one vehicle, along with life insurance policies and burial funds valued under \$1,500, do not count towards countable assets.

The income limit to qualify for SSI, however, is much more complicated. Countable income includes wages or any other kind of money your dad earned from working, plus money he gets from other sources like unemployment, Social Security retirement, or gifts from friends, but also, free food or shelter.

In 2019, the SSI allowable income limit is \$771 a month for an individual or \$1,157 a month for a couple. So, if your dad's countable income is over the SSI allowable limit (this is based on a complex set of rules and calculations – see SSA.gov/ssi/text-income-ussi.htm) he would not qualify. But if he's under it, he would qualify for some benefits depending on his countable income.

To help you determine if your dad is eligible for SSI, help him take the Social Security Administration's benefits screening test at SSAbest.benefits.gov. This online questionnaire takes approximately 5 minutes to complete and screens for a variety of benefits, not just SSI.

You should also know that most states – except Arizona, Mississippi, North Dakota and West Virginia – supplement the federal SSI payment with payments of their own. In some of the states that pay a supplement, your dad may qualify for the state payment even if he doesn't meet the federal SSI eligibility criteria.

HOW TO APPLY

If you think that your dad is eligible for SSI, call 800-772-1213 and set up an appointment to apply at his local Social Security office.

To help make the application process go quickly and smoothly, your dad should bring his Social Security number; birth certificate or other proof of age; information about the home where he lives, such as his mortgage, or lease and the landlord's name; payroll slips, bank books, insurance policies, burial fund records and other information about his income and the things he owns; his proof of U.S. citizenship or eligible noncitizen status; and if he is applying for SSI because he is disabled or blind, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of doctors, hospitals and clinics that have information related to his condition.

For more information visit SSA.gov/ssi or call Social Security at 800-772-1213 and ask them to mail you a copy of publication 11000 "Supplemental Security Income (SSI)." You can also read it online at SSA.gov/pubs/EN-05-11000.pdf.

OTHER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Depending on your dad's income, needs and location there are other financial assistance programs that may be able to help him like Medicaid, prescription drug assistance, food stamps and energy assistance. To find out what he may be eligible for go to BenefitsCheckUp.org. This is a free, confidential Web tool that contains more than 2,500 programs.

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

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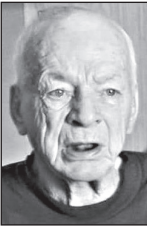
OBITUARIES

Henry Shawback Jr., 86, BP

Henry Richard “Hank” Shawback, Jr., age 86 of Blooming Prairie, passed away peacefully Sunday afternoon, March 31, 2019 at Prairie Manor Care Center in Blooming Prairie surrounded by his loving family.

Born May 14, 1932 to Getta (Gilbertson) and Henry William Shawback, Sr., Hank grew up near Hayfield where he graduated from high school in 1951. He married Arlis Robertson on June 7, 1958 in Ellendale. To this union five children were born.

Hank worked at Owatonna Canning Company for 22 years. After his retirement in



1991 he worked for area farmers. A member of the Owatonna Eagles, Hank enjoyed gardening, mowing his lawn and spending time with his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife Arlis Shawback of Blooming Prairie; children, Dale (Teresa) Shawback of Manchester; Julie Halla of Blooming Prairie; Lucy (Scott) Adank of Stratford, Wis.; Duane (Nikki) Shawback of Albert Lea and Gary Shawback of Blooming Prairie; 15 grandchildren; nine great grandchildren; brothers, Arthur (LaVonne) Shawback of Austin; Raymond Shawback of Texas; Cathy Shawback; of

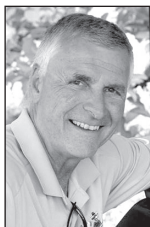
Blooming Prairie, many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Lee (Gladys) Shawback; John (Chlorice) Shawback; Joseph (Evelyn) Shawback; Merv (Helen) Shawback; Leslie Shawback; sisters, Marion Peterson; Carol (Donald) Decker, brother-in-law, Neil Robertson; sisters-in-law, Phyliss Shawback; Lilah Robertson.

Memorial services were held Saturday, April 6, 2019 at Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, the family prefers memorials. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com.

James Gleason, 65, Owatonna



James Michael Gleason of Owatonna died April 3, 2019 at Homestead Hospice House in Owatonna.

Funeral services were held Monday, April 8, 2019 at St. Joseph’s Church in Owatonna. Burial was at St. John’s Cemetery in Owatonna.

Jim was born June 17, 1953 in New Hampton, Iowa to John and Alveda (Bender) Gleason. He graduated

from Marian High School in 1971 and married Jean Klein in 1977. He worked in the radio business for three decades before becoming manager of the Steele County Free Fair in 2012. Jim was an active community

member and worked with many different organizations over the years in and around Owatonna.

Jim is survived by his wife, Jean; children, Nicole Gleason of Janesville, Wis., Nathan (Alexis) Gleason

of Owatonna, and Natalie Gleason of Berkeley, Calif.; brothers Terrence (Carol) Gleason of Littleton, Colo., and Charles (Sharon) Gleason of Omaha, Neb.; as well as three grandchildren, Lucy, Cora, and Lily.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents.

In lieu of flowers memorials can be sent Homestead Hospice House. For more information or to leave an online condolence message go to www.brick-megerfuneralhome.com.

Allan Madsen, 92, Owatonna

Allan W. Madsen “Al” of Owatonna passed away on April 2, 2019 in Rochester at the age of 92.

A memorial service will be held Thursday, April 18, 2019 at 11 a.m. at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church located at 1909 St. Paul Road, Owatonna. Family will greet friends one hour prior to the service at the church. Military honors will be provided by the Steele County Funeral Unit.

Al was born April 27, 1926 in Austin to Adolph and Astrid (Pedersen) Madsen. Growing up on their family farm in Blooming Prairie, Al and his four brothers were taught to appreciate the heritage of the “Old Country” – Denmark. During WWII, Al left Blooming Prairie High



School to honorably serve in the Navy. He returned to school to actively participate in sports, music and drama. He graduated in 1946.

In 1950, Al married Marilyn Roberts in Owatonna. They had three children. Marilyn passed away unexpectedly in 1959.

Al met his wife of 51 years, Tillie Woolison, at Jostens in Owatonna and were married in 1963. They later expanded their family.

Al worked in the tool and die department of Jostens for 42 years. Concurrently he owned and operated Madsen Nursery and Landscaping Service just shy of 50 years. The highlight of the summer for many was his fresh picked sweet corn. Al was a proud

member of the Elks for years and rose to the rank of Exalted Ruler.

During his free time, Al enjoyed fishing, bowling, and a good game of cribbage. Traveling was a true passion for Al. He had many adventures throughout the world.

Allan is survived by his children, Gwen (Wendell) Amstutz, Rochester; Larry (Mary) Madsen, Columbia Falls, Mont.; Jill (Dave) Sawyer, Gainesville, Va.; seven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Marilyn Madsen; wife, Tillie Madsen; son, James; four brothers and a granddaughter.

For more information or to leave an online condolence message go to www.brick-megerfuneralhome.com.

BOOK NOOK

Spring has sprung at the library

I’m almost afraid to write this, but here goes: Spring has Sprung at the Blooming Prairie Branch Library! Our topic of the week is “Get ready to grow.”

If your green thumb is itching and you can’t wait to get into your garden, prepare now by finding books that can show you new methods and ideas to try. Need to get rid



NANCY VAILLANCOURT

of those Japanese beetles? Tomato rot affecting your plants? Look over the items we have on display, or ask at the desk for your specific questions.

Our very first Bookish Bingo program concluded on March 31. Eighteen adults read at least five books, with some reading even more. Overall, during February and March, our program partici-

pants read a total of 111 books! Congratulations to those who completed their Bingo cards, and a pat on the back for those who have been reading all winter long. Seven readers received prizes for their participation. Those winners were Sandra Christiansen, Lori Pfeifer, Joyce Peterson, Layla Lujan, Vikki Wacek, Doris Rasmussen, and Reagan Dregge.

We have compiled a list of all the books that were read by our Bingo players. Stop in and pick up a copy to get new book ideas. See you at the library!

COLLEGE NEWS

BP student earns degree from River Falls

Sara Noble of Blooming Prairie has graduated from the University of Wisconsin at River Falls.

Noble received a bachelor of science degree in physics. She was one of 380 students to receive degrees from River

Falls in December. Bachelor’s degrees were awarded to 339 undergraduates while the rest received master’s degrees.

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Word Search Corner

Zodiac Signs

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G	C	N	A	R	Z	J	X	E	Y	W	L	P	V	E
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ARIES	LIBRA	STAR SIGN
TAURUS	SCORPIO	HOROSCOPE
GEMINI	SAGITTARIUS	ZODIAC
CANCER	CAPRICORN	SYMBOLS
LEO	AQUARIUS	COMPATIBILITY
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Recipe Corner

CHICKEN PARMIGIANA

INGREDIENTS:
6 chicken breast halves, skinless
3/4 c. seasoned bread crumbs
1/2 c. Parmesan cheese
1 lg. egg, beaten
1/4 c. olive oil
1 (26 oz.) jar spaghetti sauce
1 lg. garlic clove
1 tsp. dried oregano leaves
1 (8 oz.) pkg. Mozzarella cheese, cut into 6 pieces
3 c. hot cooked pasta
2 T. minced parsley

DIRECTIONS
Preheat oven to 350°. In a shallow bowl, combine bread crumbs with 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese. In another bowl, place beaten egg. Dip chicken in egg, then crumb mixture. In a large skillet, heat oil. Add chicken pieces and saute 5 minutes each side. In a small bowl, combine spaghetti sauce, garlic and oregano. Pour into 9 x 13-inch pan. Put chicken over sauce; mix. Cover loosely with foil; bake 50 minutes. Remove foil; add 6 slices of Mozzarella cheese. Bake 10 minutes, or until cheese is melted and sauce is bubbly. Toss cooked pasta with 1 tablespoon oil and parsley. Serve with chicken or just use spaghetti sauce from chicken for pasta.

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15th Presidents Award Winner
Blooming Prairie, 583-2046

Birthdays

April 9 John Dale Worke Carrie Farr	April 12 Jay Klemmensen John Dean Olson Joshua Winn Galen Peterson Kaiden Alwes Riley Johnson	April 14 Waco Vandal Linda Wolf Jayden Schewe Jaqueline Werks Taylor Klemmensen
April 10 David Long	April 11 Micah Andrews Jeremy Cochlin Carol Kirkebon Katelyn Eischens Anita Angell Felicia Krampitz	April 15 Anna Thorson Asher Miller Pat Ingvalson

Anniversaries

April 9 Chad & Julie Eischens	April 12 Tammy & Kevin Johnson
April 11 Lloyd & Jane Prihoda	April 14 Teresa & Luke Swenson

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Volunteer to help starving children

Are you looking for a way to get involved and help children in need? Do you personally want an opportunity to serve others but don't know how? Have you felt the need to be a part of a team but you are busy and don't have endless hours to give?

Well if this sounds like you... We've got the perfect opportunity!

Here in Blooming Prairie, we are excited to announce that we will be hosting a Feed My Starving Children Mobile Pack on May 10 and 11. At this event, we will be packing 100,000 meals in two days. In order to do that, we have committed to raising the funds necessary to pay for that food, and we have committed to have the necessary volunteers needed to pack that food. The 100,000 meals cost \$22,300, which equals .22 per meal, and we need 500 volunteers to actually pack the food!

Sounds like a good challenge. Well, we are up for it! With the support of the community, together we can feed starving children!

FMSC is a non-profit organization that has created a dry food source scientifically designed for malnourished and starving children. This food is rice based with vitamins, minerals, protein and vegetables in it that is called Mannapacks. The Mannapacks are shipped as a dry food that is boiled and served as a rice-based porridge to starving children. FMSC ships to 70



countries around the world.

And we will be bringing this event to town. On May 10 and 11, we will be packing 100,000 meals in two days with 500 volunteers at First Lutheran Church, and we hope you are part of it!

There are two ways in which people, and businesses, can get involved: You can donate money and you can volunteer to pack meals! We have currently raised just over \$18,000 dollars, but we are still looking to individuals and businesses for support. We are also doing

fundraising throughout the community, so you may see posters around town!

As of April 3, we are live with our volunteer signup. Individuals and groups can go to give.fmssc.org/blooming and sign up to volunteer for a two hour shift to pack food. There are five shifts you can sign up for, Friday evening and all day Saturday, and each shift will have 100 people working on them – so sign up soon spots will fill up fast! This event is open to people ages 5 and up and there are many different jobs, so we need all the people we can get!

Thank you for your support! Hope to see you in May!

For I was hungry and you gave me food (Matthew 25:35)

God Bless!

Give.fmssc.org/blooming

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

LUTHERAN	RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN – ELCA	Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.	NON-DENOMINATIONAL
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.	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.	TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS 108 Third Ave. SW., Medford Pastor Mark Biebighauser 507-451-0447 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Study	BRIDGES OF HOPE COMMUNITY 130 W. Bridge St., Owatonna Pastor Keith Haskell 507-215-2249 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun. Biblestudy: 9 a.m. Sun. Reformers Unanimous Meetings: 7 p.m. Friday
COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 106 Third St. SE., Geneva Pastor Kristen Venne 507-256-4288 Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.	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.	TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS 57043 300th St., Waltham Pastor Jesse Krusemark 507-567-2272 Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.	CEGAR CREEK 30 E. Main St., Hayfield Pastor Aaron de Neui 507-477-2255 www.cedarcreekchurch.org Worship: 10 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	ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN – LCMS 28959 630th Ave., Sergeant Pastor Collin Duling 507-251-5568 Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9 a.m.	ZION LUTHERAN – ELCA 7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith Worship: 8:30 a.m.	DESTINY CHRISTIAN 2515 Harvest Lane NW Owatonna Pastors Joe & Vicki Braucht www.destinyc.org Worship: 6 p.m. Sat.
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.	ST. JOHN LUTHERAN-- ELCA 1301 Lincoln Ave. Owatonna Pastors Dave Klawiter and Jacie Richmond 507-451-7293 stjohnowatonna.org Worship: 5 p.m. Thursday & Saturday; 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sunday Summer Services: 8 a.m. & 9:30 a.m. Sunday	CATHOLIC CHRIST THE KING 205 Second Ave. NW, Medford 507-451-6353 Father James Starasinich Deacon Patrick Fagan Mass: 5:30 p.m. Sat. Mass: 9 a.m. Mon. & Fri.	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
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.	ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA 30450 570th Ave., Waltham Pastor Dwight DoBell 507-567-2474 Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.	CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS 307 SW First St., New Richland Father Raul Silva Fr. Adam McMillan, Parochial Vicar 507-465-8217 Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday	NEW BEGINNINGS 332 14th St. NE., Owatonna Pastors Scott & Joan Peterson 507-413-0209 Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.
GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN – LCMS 2500 7th Ave. NE., Owatonna Pastor Greg Schlicker 507-451-4125 goodshepherdowatonna.com Worship: 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.	ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – LCMS 202 E. Park Ave., Hollandale Pastor Jesse Krusemark 507-567-2272 Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun. Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.	HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL 9946 SE 24th Ave. Owatonna Father John Sauer, Pastor 507-451-1588 www.litomysl.webs.com Sunday Mass: 9:30 a.m.c with Children's Church Reconciliation: 8:45 a.m. - 1st & 3rd Sundays Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.: Faith Formation for K thru Confirmation Second Sunday of month: Family Faith Formation Litomysl Finance Council: 2nd Thursday Litomysl Pastoral Council: 2nd Thursday every other month	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
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.	TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA Trinity Lutheran Church 609 Lincoln Avenue Owatonna MN 55060 507.451.4520 tlcowatonna.org Worship: Saturday: 5 p.m. Sunday: 8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. Sunday School: 8:15 a.m. & 9:30 a.m. tlcowatonna.org/worshipschedule Pastor Todd Buegler Pastor Amanda Weinkauff Deacon Kris Oppegard	SACRED HEART CATHOLIC 150 NE Second St., Hayfield Father Thomas Niehaus 507-477-2256 Mass: 8 a.m. Sun. & 8:30 a.m. Thursday Reconciliation: 7:30 a.m. Sun.	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.
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.	TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA 104 First St. SE., Hayfield Pastor Paul Hauschild 507-477-2248 www.trinityhayfield.org Worship: 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun.	SACRED HEART PARISH 810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna Father John Sauer Fr. Jose Morales, Parochial Vicar 507-451-1588 www.sacredheartowatonna.org Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday; 8:30 a.m. & 10 a.m. Sun. Spanish Mass: 11:45 a.m. Sun. Daily Mass: 7:15 a.m. Reconciliation: 4 p.m. Sat. Adoration: 8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Thurs.	PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATED CHURCH Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ 800 Havana Road, Owatonna 507-451-1546

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APRIL 11
6 a.m. – School Board Work Session, BPHS Board Room
4 p.m. – Police Commission Meeting

APRIL 15
6:30 p.m. – Board of Appeals Meeting
7 p.m. – City Council Meeting
7 p.m. – School Board Meeting, BPHS Media Center

APRIL 16
10:30 a.m. – Storytime, BP Library

2:30 p.m. – BPPU Meeting
4:30 p.m. – Fire Commission Meeting
5 p.m. – Ambulance Commission Meeting

APRIL 17
10:30 a.m. – Storytime, BP Library

APRIL 22
6:30 p.m. – Fire Relief Association Meeting

APRIL 29
7 p.m. – Special City Council Meeting



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ELLENDALE/HOPE/GENEVA

APRIL 11
6 p.m. – Pre-School Registration Open House, NR Preschool Room
7:30 p.m. – Ellendale City Council Meeting, Community Building

APRIL 12
10 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building
3:30 p.m. – Girl Scouts Meeting, NR HS Lower Commons
6 p.m. – ECFFE Easter Egg Extravaganza, NR Preschool Room

APRIL 15
10 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building
5 p.m. – Defensive Driving 4-Hour Renewal Class, NR High School

APRIL 16
6:15 p.m. – Tae Kwon Do, Ellendale Gym North
6:30 p.m. – NRHEG School Board Meeting, NR Media Center

APRIL 17
10 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

APRIL 11
9 a.m. – Jr. History Detectives, History Center
2 p.m. – Movies at the Library, Owatonna Library
5 p.m. – 2019 Y Pro Passholder Social, Elks Lodge
5 p.m. – Airport Commission Meeting, Airport Lounge
6:30 p.m. – History Detectives, History Center
6:30 p.m. – Family Story Time, Owatonna Library

APRIL 12
7:30 a.m. – Mystery Bus Tour, History Center
4:30 p.m. – 2019 Bowl for Kids Sake, Spare Time Entertainment

APRIL 13
8 a.m. – Owatonna Senior High Tour
9 a.m. – Young Life 41st Cake Auction, OHS
9 a.m. – 2019 Bowl for Kids Sake, Spare Time Entertainment

10 a.m. – Handmade Artisans of Minnesota Show, VFW
1 p.m. – Auditions for “One of This Island,” Little Theatre of Owatonna
7 p.m. – The Bad Tangerines Concert Fundraiser, Arts Center

APRIL 15
6 p.m. – Movies for All, Owatonna Library

APRIL 16
10:30 a.m. – Tale Time, Owatonna Library
4:30 p.m. – Owatonna City Council Study Session – Emergency Operations Plan & Elected Officials Roles & Responsibilities, City Admin Building
7 p.m. – Owatonna City Council Meeting, City Admin Building

APRIL 17
4 p.m. – Owatonna EDA Meeting, City Admin Building

Sailing the Viking Way comes to Owatonna

The Nortonna Lodge 1-638 of Sons of Norway meets Monday, April 15. Supper will be served at 6 p.m. for a cost of \$8 at the Owatonna Elks Lodge, 126 East Vine Street.

The April program is “Sailing the Viking Way” and features Dean Rau speaking about his experience as skipper of The Raven.

The small boat made a long journey through the remote North Atlantic Ocean from Norway back to Bayfield, Wis., following Viking and Norse routes. Come hear about the adventure!

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

Shoveling out the last of winter



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

It's hard to say if it's true, but these girls are hoping they are shoveling out the last of winter. The forecast doesn't look promising to keep winter at bay until at least later this year as snow is anticipated later this week. But for now, these sisters, Lily Fausett, 11 and Ruby Fausett, 8, made sure the snow vanished by chipping away at a snow bank on their grandmother Karen Pirk's front yard in Blooming Prairie.

Meatball dinner set for Geneva church

If you have a hankering for a meatball dinner, put Sunday, April 28 on your calendar.

It's on that date that the Community Lutheran Church of Geneva will be sponsoring this popular community dinner.

Worship service is at 9:30 a.m. Serving for the 17th annual dinner starts at 11 a.m. and continues to 1 p.m.

The menu includes: meatballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, coleslaw, buns, assorted pies for dessert, coffee and water.

A freewill offering is asked for the dinner.

A quilt raffle is also planned, the quilt being made by Joan Vandenheuvel. Quilt raffle chances are \$1 each and may be purchased in advance from WELCA (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) women, or at the door the day of the dinner.

Celebrate Earth Day by cleaning up in Owatonna

Want to help the earth? Owatonna Parks & Recreation has the perfect solution for you to accomplish this. On Sunday, April 28 from 2-4 p.m., Parks & Rec is sponsoring Earth Day, Park Clean Up in Owatonna.

Clean up will take place at Mineral Springs, Morehouse and Darts Parks. The event not only helps the environment, but promotes community involvement and fellowship, cookout and games.

Organizers encourage people to come to one of the three parks to help clean up.

All supplies will be provided. After the clean up at 4 p.m., there will be a cookout and games at Mineral Springs.

Celebrate Earth Day with the first annual park clean up.

School hosts info session on upcoming referendum

The Owatonna Public School District would like to invite the residents of Owatonna to the Public Information Session to learn more about the upcoming May 14 Building Bond Referendum.

The session will be presented by Superintendent Jeff Elstad and will provide the facts about the upcoming building bond referendum and will also give participants an opportunity to get their questions answered.

The next session will be Monday, April 29 at 6:30 p.m. at the high school.

To learn more about the public information session and the referendum visit www.owatonna.k12.mn.us.

Albert Lea Community Theatre to perform comedy 'Bedroom Farce'

Albert Lea Community Theatre (ACT) continues its 54th season with the comedy “Bedroom Farce” at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center, April 18-28.

Trevor and Susannah, whose marriage is on the rocks, inflict their miseries on their nearest and dearest: three couples whose own relationships are tenuous at best. This comedy takes place sequentially in the three beleaguered couples’ bedrooms during one endless Saturday night of codependence and dysfunction. Beds, tempers and domestic order are ruffled – leading all the players to a hilariously touching epiphany.

Cast members are Mark Place, Michelle Supalla, Kristi White, Luke Zacharias, Christy Compton, Kyle Nelson, Logan Petersen and Raquel Hellman.

“Bedroom Farce,” directed by Kris Bartley, will be performed at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center in downtown Albert Lea on April 18-20 and 24-28. Shows start at 7:30 p.m., with the Sunday, April 28, matinee, at 2 p.m.

Tickets may be purchased by calling 1-877-730-3144 (toll-free), online at actonbroadway.com or at the box office, which opens weekdays at 9 a.m. Tickets are also available at the Albert Lea Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Farm landowner workshop set for Owatonna

A farm landowner workshop focusing on managing rental agreements for stewardship is set for Friday, April 12 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Albert F. Reding Environmental Education Center, 1546 SW 58th St., Owatonna.

Sponsored by the Izaak Walton League Owatonna chapter and the Upper Mississippi River Initiative, the workshop will teach landowners how to make connections and learn more about working with their renters to improve the health of the land. Experts will be available in soil science, economics, watershed health, farmers and conservationists on how to implement regenerative and sustainable agriculture techniques while still making ends meet.

Lunch and refreshments will be served during the workshop. RSVP to Piper Donlin at 651-592-9192 or piper@minnesotaikes.org.

The workshop is sponsored by the Izaak Walton League Owatonna chapter and Upper

Mississippi River Initiative.

“Every Kind of Maker's Tool” opens at Arts Center

Ever wonder how cloth is made? Curious about the different types of tools and looms used to weave?

This exhibit showcases the creations of members of the Weavers Guild of Minnesota with a specific focus on the equipment used to create it! See woven and spun art made with a variety of tools, wheels, and looms, including everything from a backstrap loom to rigid heddle, pin looms to tapestry, and yarn spun on a wheel. Each piece is accompanied with a bit of information about the equipment used, to aid in the viewer's experience and understanding.

The exhibit is on display at the Owatonna Arts Center through Sunday, April 28. The gallery is open Tuesday-Sunday from 1-5 p.m.

Members of the Weavers Guild of Minnesota will be on-site April 28 from 1-5 p.m. to answer questions and offer demonstrations.

Exhibiting Weavers Guild of Minnesota members include: Robbie LaFleur, tapestry weaving; Margaret Stump, pin loom weaving; Christen Pentek, spinning on a spinning wheel; Becka Rahn, small loom weaving; Jan Hayman, floor loom weaving; Dan Brevia, table loom weaving and rigid heddle loom weaving; Keith Pierce, tablet weaving and backstrap weaving; Karen Mallin, floor loom weaving; Connie Kos, tapestry weaving; Carol Delak, potholder loom weaving; Bonnie Buzzza, pin loom weaving and circular loom weaving; Kelly Marshall, bobbin lace and floor loom weaving and Kala Exworthy, floor loom weaving.

The Owatonna Arts Center is located at 435 Garden View Lane.

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Wine Tasting Gala: May 7 @ 9 P.M.

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Panther of the Week



Aubrey Hendrickson

This week's Panther of the Week is Aubrey Hendrickson. Aubrey lives outside of New Richland with her parents Eric and Heather, and her brothers Eli and Wyatt. Something exciting about Aubrey is that she is a triplet! She is in Ms. Beenken's second grade class at NRHEG and has a very kind and caring heart!

Aubrey loves to help others and works hard each day in school. She is very responsible and is always showing panther pride. Aubrey is definitely a role-model and a great leader. Way to go Aubrey! Aubrey's favorite food is steak and her favorite movie is “Home Alone 2.” Her favorite book is the “Magic Puppy” book series. Aubrey enjoys to participate in gymnastics and she also loves to draw.

Some of her other hobbies include making homemade soaps and jewelry with her grandma. She also enjoys being outdoors on her farm with her four dogs. Keep up the great work Aubrey, we are proud of you!



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AMISH COUNTRY TOUR IN OHIO.....	APRIL 23-28, 2019	\$999
NEW ORLEANS & LAFAYETTE, LA.....	APRIL 26 - MAY 6, 2019.....	\$1799
VIRGINIA BEACH & LAFAYETTE, SC.....	MAY 4 - 12, 2019	\$1529
HOLLAND, MI TULIP FESTIVAL.....	MAY 10 - 12, 2019.....	\$499
ARK ENCOUNTER & CREATION MUSEUM.....	MAY 15 - 19, 2019.....	\$809
BRANSON, MO.....	MAY 16 - 19, 2019	\$629
NIAGARA FALLS & TORONTO, ONT.....	JUNE 11 - 16, 2019.....	\$999
MACKINAC ISLAND, MI.....	JUNE 14 - 16, 2019.....	\$499
CODY, WY & YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK.....	JUNE 18 - 24, 2019.....	\$1169
TRAINS IN THE COLORADO ROCKIES.....	JUNE 20 - 29, 2019.....	\$1659
CANADIAN ROCKIES & CALGARY STAMPEDE	JULY 6 - 14, 2019	\$1599
CHICAGO, IL GANGSTER TOUR	JULY 19-21, 2019	\$509
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MACKINAC ISLAND, MI.....	SEPTEMBER 13 - 15, 2019	\$499
AMISH COUNTRY TOUR IN OHIO.....	SEPTEMBER 17 - 22, 2019	\$999
ARK ENCOUNTER & CREATION MUSEUM.....	SEPTEMBER 18 - 22, 2019	\$809
NEW ENGLAND FALL COLORS TOUR.....	SEPT 28 - OCT 9, 2019.....	\$1949
WASHINGTON DC & GETTYSBURG.....	OCTOBER 5 - 11, 2019	\$1199
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Preparing for an Appointment at a community

You’ve done your home-work. You’ve narrowed down your senior housing options to a handful of choices, perhaps attended an on-site event or two. Now what? It’s time for an appointment. What can you expect when you get there? And how should you prepare? This list will help make your appointment productive and stress-free.

Life Plan Community (also known as a CCRC), campus or high-rise setting.
Preferred size of residence
Services important to you
Access to different levels of health care
Housekeeping
Dining options
Activities
Transportation

Lifestyle Wish List

What do you want to keep doing, and what do you want to try?
Fitness: swimming, water aerobics, strength training, yoga, Tai Chi, etc.
Social: book club, card games, current events discussions, financial investment club, etc.
Arts: painting, ceramics, jewelry, woodworking, knitting, etc.
Entertainment: theater, movies, music, dance, opera, etc.
Travel: local, national or international group trips
Questions About the Community

What else would you like to know?

Cost of living: monthly service fee, annual rate increase percentage
Future costs if more care is needed: assisted living, memory care or skilled nursing care
Move-in resources: help with planning, selling your home, moving in, etc.
Dining: sampling the food and understanding the dining plan
Family: opportunities for children and grandchildren to visit and participate
Pets: policies, outdoor areas, interaction with other pets

Snapshot of Your Finances
This information will help you know what you can afford.
Home value and home equity
Monthly income from all sources (include the amount from each source)
Outstanding obligations, loans and mortgages
Investments (IRAs, 401K, real estate, etc.)
Long-term care insurance

List of Your Priorities
What do you want in a senior housing setting? For example:
Type of community: rental,



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- George H.W. Busch Library & Museum
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- Cody Rodeo
- Grand Canyon of Yellowstone
- Mammoth Hot Springs
- Yellowstone Falls
- Paint Pots
- Old Faithful
- Lodge of Old Faithful
- Jenny Lake
- Jackson Hole, WY
- Grand Teton Mountains
- Snake River boat ride
- Wind River Canyon

Canadian Rockies.....July 6-14.....\$2089

- Banff National Park
- Jasper National Park
- Athabasca Glacier
- Peyto Lake
- Kootenay National Park
- Glacier Snowcoach Ride
- Sulpher Mountain
- Calgary Chuckwagon Races
- Gondola Ride
- Calgary Olympic Park
- Calgary Stampede Park
- Calgary Rodeo
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Southwest Circle.....July 20-Aug 2.....\$2919

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TRACK AND FIELD



The Huskies compete during a mixed relay on Friday at OHS during the Co-Ed Relays.

STAFF PHOTO BY DENNIS MARSHALL

Huskies impress in Co-Ed relay

STAFF REPORT

The Owatonna track teams started off the season with an impressive showing at the Owatonna Co-Ed Relays on Friday at OHS. The Huskies finished first with 165 points ahead

of Parker Center with 113 and Albert Lea with 81. Owatonna won 14 of 23 events. Individual winners for the Huskies were Jessica Gregory in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 50.38 seconds; Lindsay Bangs in the high jump with a leap of 5-foot-2-inches; Ava Wolfe win the long jump with a leap of 14-6; Skylah Conner in

the discus with a throw of 85-10.5; Keenon Young in the 300 hurdles with a time of 40.82 and Colton Kamholz in the pole vault with a jump of 12-3. Owatonna also won the mixed 1,600 relay, mixed 3,200 relay, mixed 6,400 relay, mixed 800 sprint medley, mixed 1,600 sprint medley, mixed distance medley and the mixed 400 shuttle hurdle.

FOOTBALL

Minnesota RB Jason Williamson suffers knee injury

STAFF REPORT

Minnesota's reigning Mr. Football and former Owatonna star Jason Williamson has suffered a tear to his anterior cruciate ligament, University of Minnesota officials confirmed Saturday. The true freshman Golden Gophers running back will likely missed the upcoming season rehabbing from the injury. The injury occurred Tuesday, Williamson limped off the field during an open-to-the-public practice at the school's indoor facility. Williamson could redshirt the 2019 season and return healthy in 2020 with four remaining years of eligibility. Williamson gained 3,003 yards, 47 touchdowns and competed the trifecta of major awards after claiming Mr. Football, Minnesota Associated Press Player of the Year and Gatorade Minnesota Football Player of the Year in 2018 while leading Owatonna to second straight Class 5A state championship. His rushing total was the second-most in state history for a season. Williamson finished his high school career with the most rushing touchdowns in a career (111).

BASEBALL

Blossoms win baseball season opener

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

A steady offense and two-hit pitching from Ian Wayne sparked the Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossom baseball team to a home opening,

11-3, win over Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (0-1) on Friday, April 5. The home win got the Blossoms off on the right foot for the nonconference portion of the season. BP scored once in the first, two in the second and single runs in the

fourth and fifth to lead 5-0. The Bulldogs struck for three runs in the top of the fifth to close the gap, but the home team put the game away with a big six-run sixth inning. "We scored in five of the innings," Blooming Prairie head coach Matt

Kittelson said. "That helped us win this opener. We also played pretty good defense, with just two errors in an opening season game. It is always good to get that first win." The Blossoms pounded out ten hits by nine different players, with

Colin Lerum's two hits and two RBIs leading the way. On the mound Wayne surrendered just two hits in five innings, with five strikeouts and two walks. Payton Simon took the last two innings and gave up a hit and a walk.

VOLLEYBALL



The Blooming Prairie 14-under volleyball stands for a photo after winning the MSF state championship on March 30.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNIFER WAYNE

BP 14U volleyball wins state tournament

STAFF REPORT

The Blooming Prairie 14-under volleyball team won first place at the Minnesota Sports Federation Championships in Austin on Saturday, March 30. The team won 2-0 against Austin Victory, Waseca Fusion, Southern Stars of Fairmont, United South Central, tied Maple River and split with Dodge Center, however, BP won the tiebreaker and placed first in its pool. The Blossoms moved on to bracket play

and defeated Blue Earth Area and Austin Victory, 2-0, to finish first among the 13 teams present. Sierra Larson had 18 ace serves for the day and Lexi Steckelberg had 14. "It was a great group effort," coach Jennifer Wayne said. In addition to Larson and Steckelberg, the included Grace Krejci, Kaylee Nirk, Claire Renne, Anna Reese, Madi Lea, Abby Hefling and coaches Lonna Hefling, Jennifer Wayne and Tricia Steckelberg.

SOFTBALL

Volgarino era begins with win

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

Jenna Volgarino's team earned her a victory in her first outing as the Blooming Prairie softball coach as the Awesome Blossoms won at Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton, 6-2, on Friday, April 5. Volgarino is a former BP athlete in her first stint as the Blossom mentor. Junior Riauna Bishop held sway in the circle, pitching a complete game and allowing two

earned runs in the process. Bishop struck out nine Bulldogs and kept control of the game all the way. The Blossoms pounded out ten hits, with Maggie Bruns and Bobbie Bruns each recording a pair of hits to lead the way. Bobbie Bruns drove in two runs for the Blossoms. The girls played solid defense in the game. "It was a good start to the season," Volgarino said. "We had a solid defense, and Bishop had control in the circle all the way. It was a good win away from home."

Panthers sweep Cardinals

BY LEMAR NELSON
STAFF WRITER

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva softball team opened its season by sweeping a doubleheader in the Austin Dome on Friday, April 5. The doubleheader sweep earned the Panthers a nonconference and a conference victory in the action. Against Blue Earth Area pitcher Sophie Stork hurled a four-inning one hitter, striking out seven batters and walking five. Sarah Johns mopped up one inning with a strikeout, and NRHEG delivered 10 hits in the game. Four Panthers scored two runs each, and Stork drove in two runs. "I was a total team win and a nice way to start the season," NRHEG head coach Wendy Schultz said. "The girls played a good defense with no errors and Stork was solid in the circle. Cloie

Arndt starred behind the plate and struck a home run over the centerfield fence." In the nightcap, NRHEG contributed 11 hits in a 15-5 victory over conference rival United South Central. The Panthers counted three runs in three different innings and then put the game away with six runs in the sixth inning. USC scored four runs in the fifth and one in the seventh to account for the Rebel runs. Alexis Anderson led the offense with a three for four game, including a double and a triple and eight RBIs. Erin Jacobson and Sarah Johns contributed two hits each. NRHEG had 15 runs, 11 hits, two errors; USC had five runs, three hits and four walks. "Defensively the team played pretty well," Schultz said. "It was a great start for the team, but we know there are plenty of things we will continue to work on."

More sports on Page C4

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FORECLOSURE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage: DATE OF MORTGAGE: September 11, 2015 ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$112,930.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Cory Stucky an unmarried man MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a Delaware corporation, as nominee for Envoy Mortgage, Ltd., a Texas entity DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on October 2, 2015 as Document Number A000404445 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota. ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Pingora Loan Servicing, LLC by assignment recorded on July 30, 2018 as Document Number A000419422 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota. LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 4, Block 4, Original Townsite of the Village (now City) of Blooming Prairie, Steele County, Minnesota. STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 119 2ND ST NE, BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MN 55917 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele County, Minnesota. THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$111,899.16 TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Envoy Mortgage, Ltd., a Texas entity RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Flagstar Bank TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 14-100-0404 TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 100273872511022451

THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part. PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: April 30, 2019 at 10:00 AM. PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, Minnesota. to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgag-

or(s), their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of sale.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on October 30, 2019.

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

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None

Dated: March 6, 2019

PINGORA LOAN SERVICING, LLC Mortgagee

TROTT LAW, P.C.

By: /s/

N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq. Samuel R. Coleman, Esq. *Corbin C. Smith, Esq.* Attorneys for Mortgagee 25 Dale Street North St. Paul, MN 55102 (651) 209-9760 (19-0081-FC01)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

3/19, 3/26, 4/2 4/9, 4/16, 4/23

FORECLOSURE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage: DATE OF MORTGAGE: October 27, 2017 ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$142,373.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Alan Dominguez, an unmarried person. MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a Delaware corporation, as nominee for Mortgage Lenders of America, L.L.C., a Kansas Limited Liability Company. DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on November 1, 2017 as Document Number A000415593 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota. ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. by assignment record-

ed on January 31, 2018 as Document Number A000416786 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota. LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: The North half (N 1/2) of Lot 13, Block 2, Kelly's Addition to the City of Owatonna, Minnesota, Steele County, Minnesota. STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 409 E MAIN ST, OWATONNA, MN 55060 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele County, Minnesota. THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$154,917.86 TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Mortgage Lenders of America, L.L.C., a Kansas Limited Liability Company. RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-103-0213 TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 1002782-0000227993-2

THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part.

PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: April 30, 2019 at 10:00 AM. PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, Minnesota. to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of sale.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on October 30, 2019.

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

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None

Dated: March 4, 2019

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A. Mortgagee

TROTT LAW, P.C.

By: /s/

N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq. Samuel R. Coleman, Esq. Corbin C. Smith, Esq. Attorneys for Mortgagee 25 Dale Street North St. Paul, MN 55102 (651) 209-9760 (19-0124-FC01)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

3/12, 3/19, 3/26 4/2, 4/9, 4/16

NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA COUNTY OF STEELE

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT DISTRICT COURT PROBATE DIVISION

Court File No: 74-PR-19-244

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

In Re: Estate of

Barbara Ann Strand, a/k/a Barb Strand, Barbara A. Strand, Decedent

Notice is given that an Application for informal Probate of Will and Informal Appointment of Personal Representative was filed with the Registrar, along with a Will dated, March 11, 2008. The Registrar accepted the application and appointed Diane strand, whose address is 3825 Cedar Grove Pkwy, Eagan, MN 55122, to serve as the personal representative of the decedent's estate.

Any heir, devisee or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as personal representative or may object to the appointment of the personal representative. Any objection to the appointment of the personal representative must be filed with the Court, and any properly filed objection will be heard by the Court after notice is provided to interested persons of the date of hearing on the objection.

Unless objections are filed, and unless the Court orders otherwise, the personal representative has the full power to administer the estate, including, after thirty (30) days from the issuance of letters testamentary, the power to sell, encumber, lease, or distribute any interest in real estate owned by the decedent.

Notice is further given that, subject to Minn. Stat. section 524.3-801, all creditors having claims against the decedent's estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court within four (4) months after the date of this notice or the claims will be barred.

Kris Schmitz Registrar March 8, 2019

James A. Terwedo & Associates, P.A.

James A. Terwedo MN# 016513X 115 South Broadway Suite 100 Jordan, MN 55352 Telephone: 952-492-2800 Facsimile: 952-492-2806 e-mail: jim@terwedolaw.com

4/9, 4/16

NOTICE

Proposed City of Blooming Prairie City Council Meeting Agenda April 15, 2019

6:30 P.M. Board of Appeal & Equalization 7:00 P.M. City Council Meeting

Call to Order Pledge of Allegiance

Consent Agenda 1. Approval of Agenda 2. Approval of Minutes of March 11, 2019 – Regular City Council Meeting 3. Application for Temporary Liquor License – Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club – 4/28/19 4. Application for Temporary Liquor License – Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club – 5/5/19

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. Chamber of Commerce Request for Funding 2. Planning Recommendation – Rezone Parcel #14-130-0203 to R-2 1 & 2 Family Residence 3. 2019 Seal Coating Project

City Administrator's Report

1. Permit Approved – Ditch Cleaning 2. Pine Spring Pool Lifeguards – Dates June 10th – August 11th – 13 Total Lifeguards 3. Minnesota City Managers Conference – May 1-3

City Attorney's Report

Council Members' Reports

Adjourn

This Agenda is Subject to Change

4/9

NOTICE

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

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

ASSUMED NAMED: Chrome Hammer Transportation

PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 204 1st St. NW, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917.

NAMEHOLDER(S): Name: Jeremy Young

Address: 204 1st St. NW, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917.

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

SIGNED BY: Jeremy Young, Owner

Date: March 27, 2019

Email: Jeremydyoung184@gmail.com

4/2, 4/9

STEELE COUNTY Times

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

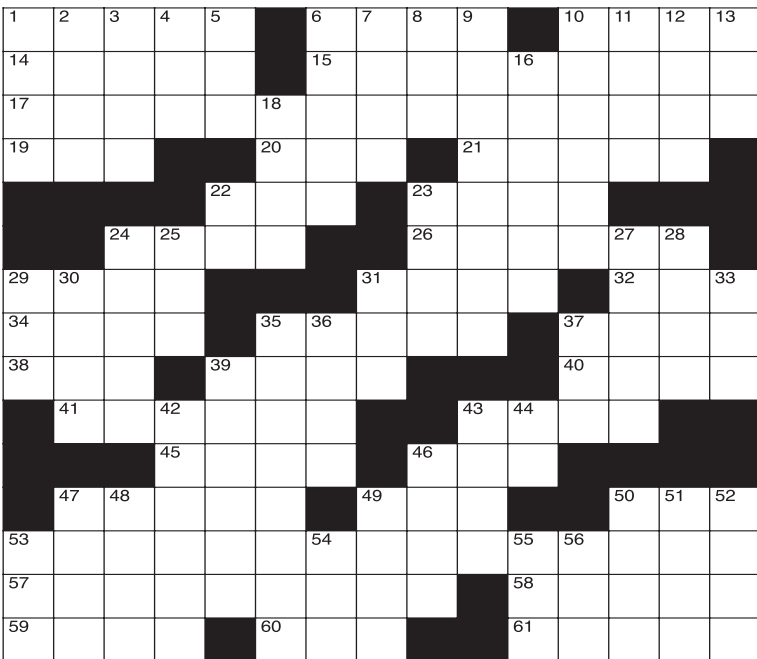
The Planning & Zoning Board for the City of Blooming Prairie will conduct a Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the City Center located at 138 Hwy Avenue South.

The purpose of this hearing will be to consider an application to rezone parcel #14-130-0203 located along 4th Place SW. The parcel is currently zoned as R-1 Single Family Residence and the request is to rezone the parcel to R-2 One & Two Family Residence.

For more information, contact the City Administration office at 507-583-7573

4/2, 4/9

- CLUES ACROSS
1. Malay sailboats
 6. Beach material
 10. Heroic tale
 14. Peers
 15. Unseen
 17. Plucking implement
 19. Radioactivity unit
 20. Stamping device
 21. Quake
 22. Foot (Latin)
 23. Living body covering
 24. Turfs
 26. Gate swinging devices
 29. Nail
 31. Sharp bodily pain
 32. Status equality
 34. Horse height measure
 35. Political Asylum Research & Documentation Service
 37. 20's - 30's art design
 38. Payment (abbr.)
 39. Food grain
 40. Indefinitely long period of time
 41. Rear
 43. Without (French)
 45. Wood sorrels
 46. Express pleasure
 47. Recurring artistic pattern
 49. Deaf language
 50. Runs PCs
 53. Minimal punishment
 57. Repeat
 58. Give extreme unction to



59. Inflammatory skin disease
60. Large Aussie flightless bird
61. Polish Air Show city

CLUES DOWN

1. Anjou or comice
2. ___ Nui, Easter Island
3. Towards the mouth or oral region
4. 4th Caliph of Islam

16. Setting up a golf drive
18. Lyric poems
22. Atomic #46
23. Genus Alosa
24. ___ Claus
25. Not even
27. Fencing swords
28. Conway, N.H. river
29. Brake horsepower
30. Wild leek
31. Prefix for before
33. "Splash" director Howard
35. Sleeveless apronlike dress
36. Book of the Apostles
37. V.P. Quayle
39. Dish directions
42. Revolve
43. Particular instance of selling
44. Exclamation of surprise
46. Wimbledon champion
47. Millisecond
48. Ammo & chemical corp.
49. Tip of Aleutian Islands
50. Expired
51. Norway's capital
52. Plant stalk
53. Macaws
54. Indochina battleground (slang)
55. Armed conflict
56. Ribonucleic acid



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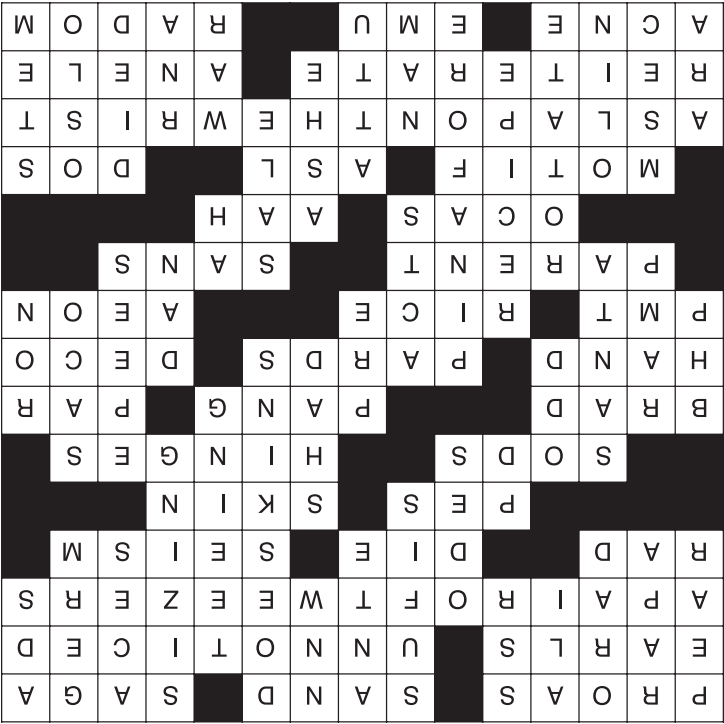
Jennifer Walsh 507-438-6676 email: jenwalsh@kw.com web: jenwalsh.kw.com



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bptimes@frontiernet.net
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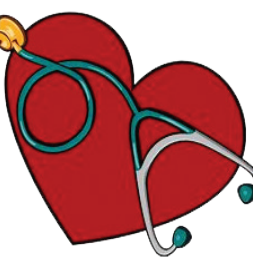
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Applications must be received by April 12, 2019. E.O.E.

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120 4th St NE Stewartville, MN *Affirmative Action Employer*

OPPORTUNITY
High School Clerical (Part-Time)

BLOOMING PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL is seeking applicants for a part-time clerical position. Position includes various clerical duties along with willingness to be a team player. Computer knowledge a must.

Apply online at
<https://blossoms-portal.rschooldtoday.com/page/2818>.

Deadline for applications is April 15, 2019.

4/2, 4/9



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Semcac is looking for a FULL TIME Transportation Operations Manager to oversee operations for our Public Transit Bus Service. Position requires a two year degree in related field, or three to five years transit related experience and/or training, or combination of education and experience. Solid working knowledge of computer-based software, internet, spreadsheets, and word processing software is required. Previous supervision and customer service experience is very desirable. Must have valid driver's license. Travel is required, office is located in Kasson, MN.

More information & application available at
www.semcac.org
or by contacting Barb Thompson at 507-864-8202 or barb.thompson@semcac.org.
Applications must be postmarked by **April 12, 2019.** E.O.E.



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STEELE COUNTY Times

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Stewartville Care Center is seeking a qualified individual to join our Nursing Department as a Scheduler!

The successful candidate will have high ethical standards, sound judgment, excellent communication skills and a desire to make a difference for our residents. Responsibilities include maintaining current nurse scheduling process with utilization of ShiftHound and the coordination of contracted nursing (pool) for the Care Center. The applicant will preferably have an RN/LPN license with computer knowledge; or have 2 years of office experience.

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STEELE COUNTY Times

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A GOOD OPENING

Although the season openers for the ball teams suffered a slight delay, both the baseball and softball teams won their season openers last Friday. The baseball team used good hitting and effective pitching to gain an easy victory on the home diamond, and The Awesome Blossom girls earned a win away from home at Janesville.

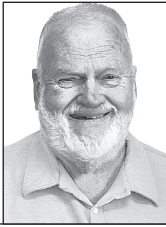
Both teams depended on some very good pitching for the success. Ian Wayne and Payton Simon combined to shut down JWP, with Wayne hurling the first five innings of two-hit ball, and Simon mopping up the final two innings. Riauna Bishop went all seven innings, as she led the girls to a 6-2 win on the road.

Surely one victory is no indicator of overall success, but it is always a spark for initial wins in the schedule. If the weather does cooperate, it will be almost non-stop sports action for the next month. Add in golf matches and track meets, and Blossom sports fans will get their fill.

DECISIONS

An important part of life for individuals concerns the decisions we have to make at various stages of our lives. What college do I enroll in to further our educational career? What company do I sign up with in taking my first job? What girl becomes the one for me in a lifelong relationship? These are all milestones in life, and I have now reached such a milestone in my personal life.

As many readers are aware, my physical health has deteriorated to the point where a walker has become a third leg for me. My health



Outside the Lines
LEMAR NELSON

overall is quite acceptable, but mobility is a problem without help. Thus, for the past three plus months, I have been renting an apartment in Richfield in close proximity to all three of my daughters.

I have another three months to decide if this situation should become a permanent one, and it is one that is occupying much of my waking moments. After living in one home for almost 60 years, a decision to change becomes a paramount concern. No one need feel sorry for me, as I am sure

my ultimate choice will be one with which I will be content. Stay tuned for further information

A LOT OF SPAM

Although there is no connection, the familiar term of Spam entered my conversation last weekend. Most of us are familiar with the mythical story of King Arthur, Camelot, and his Round Table. Many of us are also aware of the British production of Monty Python's Flying Circus, which translated into a hilarious spoof of the show at the Ordway Theater last Saturday.

The cast made fun of almost everything connected with the story of King Arthur and his knights, and it provided two

If the weather does cooperate, it will be almost non-stop sports action for the next month.

hours of high entertainment. It translated into a high point of my week, and it was a show that I thoroughly enjoyed. And no, it had no connection with the beloved meat for which Hormel became famous.

HARD TIMES

For individuals who make a living by writing, nothing becomes more irritating than the inability to come up with things about which to write.



Colin Lerum



Aidan Slowinski

The Blossom of the Month is sponsored by this community booster:

APRIL BLOSSOMS OF THE MONTH

Colin Lerum- Senior

The senior high student of the month is Colin Lerum, who is a senior. His favorite class is foods. "I like to cook," he says. "Colin is a quietly creative student who is well-liked by his peers," said one of his teachers. "He works well in class with any student and contributes to the learning environment regularly." Another teacher commented, "Colin is a mature, hard-worker who knows when to have fun and when to be serious. He looks out for other kids." A third teacher said, "Colin has been working hard in class on a glass project which has also accounted for about four weeks of additional study hall time thus far. He's been very responsible about class work and cleaning up his work area." His special interests are sports, especially football and baseball. He has two pet dogs, Bama and Murphey as well as a cat, Kitty. Colin has two siblings, Layla and Waylon.

Aidan Slowinski - 7th Grade

The junior high student of the month is Aidan Slowinski, who is in seventh grade. His favorite class is math, which he says "comes easily." Some comments shared by staff members about Aidan include: "Aidan is an incredibly hard-working and polite young man. He is an active participant in class and is also extremely intelligent. He is a joy to have in class." "Aidan is always courteous and polite and looks out for his fellow classmates. He is always punctual and on top of his studies in band. He's also got a great sense of humor and volunteers to help out in class frequently." "Aidan is one of our most hard-working math students. He always participates in the class discussions and works very hard on his homework assignments." Aidan's special interests are remote controlled cars. He has a pet dog named Charlie. His siblings are Jon Herron and Gavin.



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Tax Prep Guide 2018

2019 TAX TIP: IRS waives penalty for many whose tax withholding and estimated tax payments fell short in 2018

The Internal Revenue Service has announced that it is waiving the estimated tax penalty for many taxpayers whose 2018 federal income tax withholding and estimated tax payments fell short of their total tax liability for the year.

The IRS is generally waiving the penalty for any taxpayer who paid at least 85 percent of their total tax liability during the year through federal income tax withholding, quarterly estimated tax payments or a combination of the two. The usual percentage threshold is 90 percent to avoid a penalty.

The waiver computation announced today will be integrated into commercially-available tax software and reflected in the forthcoming revision of Form 2210 and instructions.

This relief is designed to help taxpayers who were unable to properly adjust their withholding and estimated tax payments to reflect an array of changes under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), the far-reaching tax reform law enacted in December 2017.

"We realize there were many changes that affected people last year, and this penalty waiver will help taxpayers who inadvertently didn't have enough tax withheld," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. "We urge people to check their withholding again this year to make sure they are having the right amount of tax withheld for 2019."

The updated federal tax withholding tables, released in early 2018, largely reflected the lower tax rates and the increased standard deduction brought about by the new law. This generally meant taxpayers had less tax

withheld in 2018 and saw more in their paychecks.

However, the withholding tables couldn't fully factor in other changes, such as the suspension of dependency exemptions and reduced itemized deductions. As a result, some taxpayers could have paid too little tax during the year, if they did not submit a properly-revised W-4 withholding form to their employer or increase their estimated tax payments. The IRS and partner groups conducted an extensive outreach and education campaign throughout 2018 to encourage taxpayers to do a "Paycheck Checkup" to avoid a situation where they had too much or too little tax withheld when they file their tax returns.

Although most 2018 tax filers are still expected to get refunds, some taxpayers will unexpectedly owe additional tax when they file their returns.

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