STEELE COUNTY Times
Wednesday, November 11, 2020
www.SteeleCountyTimes.com
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

It turned out to be a historic election all across America as well as close to home. On Tuesday, Nov. 3, Chris Jongbloebt of rural Owatonna exits the Owatonna Township Town Hall after voting in her first election ever. See Page A6 for a story on her voting experience as well as several other inside pages for complete election coverage.

District 27 flips to GOP as Dornink ousts veteran senator

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

For the first time in 18 years Minnesota Senate District 27 will be flipped from DFL to GOP after last Tuesday's general election.

Republican newcomer Gene Dornink of Hayfield captured the District 27 senate seat after ousting veteran DFLer Dan Sparks of Austin. Dornink earned 19,750 or 49% of the votes while Sparks had 17,833 or 44%. District 27 covers southern Dodge County, City of Blooming Prairie and most of Freeborn and Mower counties.

The last time a Republican sat in the District 27 seat was in 2000 when Grace Schwab of Albert Lea defeated DFL incumbent Pat Piper of Austin. Schwab held the seat for only one term when the DFL regained control after Sparks defeated Schwab in a cliffhanger race by just seven votes in 2002.

Gene Dornink

Dornink's victory helped the Republicans maintain control of the Minnesota Senate, though the majority appears to have shrunk to a 34 to 33 split. Besides Sparks, Republicans also ousted DFL incumbent Matt Little of Lakeville.

Acknowledging he faced an uphill battle going against a veteran senator, Dornink was extremely happy with the outcome of last week's election, especially after being on the losing end during the 2016 election. "I've been on both sides. I like this side better," said Dornink after beating Sparks. "It makes it

SEE **DISTRICT 27, A5**

Miracle officer pays football player a sideline visit

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Injured Waseca police officer Arik Matson offers his best wishes to a dear friend of his, Medford football player Josiah Hedensten on his 18th birthday, during Friday night's gridiron contest against Randolph. Matson's comeback is nothing short of a miracle after he was shot in the head while answering a prowler call in Waseca in January. Hedensten and his family have remained at Matson's side the entire time pulling for him to recover. Also shown is Matson's wife, Megan.

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Josiah Hedensten got the best birthday gift he could have wished for on his 18th birthday Friday.

The Medford senior football player received a visit from a hero who has been a lifelong role model of his. Injured Waseca police officer Arik Matson made a special appearance at Hedensten's game. And Josiah made sure he wasn't disappointed with what he saw. Hedensten scored five touchdowns in the game against Randolph.

Matson's comeback has been nothing short of a miracle after he was shot in

SEE **MIRACLE OFFICER, A3**

Steele breaks previous COVID record

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

It took less than a week for Steele County to break its own COVID-19 positive case record.

There have been 165 new coronavirus cases over the past week, according to Public Health Director Amy Caron. The previous record was set last week with 95 new cases. "Steele really spiked. Our positive cases have quadrupled in two weeks," said Caron.

With the onslaught of new cases, Steele's total has eclipsed the 1,000 mark at 1,022 since the outbreak began. There have been four deaths and three people are currently hospitalized. Public Health reports that 734 people have recovered.

Caron said the virus is affecting all ages from 1 year to 80 years old, but the main contributors remain people in the 20 to 50 year range. There have been a couple workplace outbreaks and some schools are experiencing COVID cases, she said. However, the majority of the cases

SEE **STEELE BREAKS, A3**

Farmers aid in rescue of burning cornfields

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Firefighters have water and hoses while farmers have plows and tractors. The combination of the two proved to be just what was needed to control a wild fire in rural Steele County Saturday afternoon.

Ellendale Fire responded to a field fire in Lemond Township north of Beaver Lake around 2:30 p.m. About 160 acres of corn spread over three farms was on fire. What made things even worse was the 35 mph winds at the time.

While three area fire departments battled the blaze, farmers in the area quickly put out the word and showed up with their tractors and plows to turn black dirt in an effort to stop the fire. Their efforts are being called heroic in keeping the fire from getting more out of hand.

"We can't thank them enough as they were a godsend," said Logan Busho, chief of the Ellendale Fire Department. "We're fortunate to live in a

SEE **FARMERS, A3**

$1.00 | Volume 129, No. 16
507-583-4431 | bptimes@frontiernet.net

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AREA DEATHS

LaFaye Farrow, 92, Ellendale
Colleen Loken, 78, Owatonna
Keith Phillips, 66, Pittsburg, Texas
Marcia K. Pesch, 77, Waltham
John Nechanicky, 98, Owatonna

Serving Blooming Prairie and Steele County since 1893

OUR VIEW

Solidarity shines in battling a rural fire

It was an amazing show of solidarity Saturday afternoon in rural Steele County.

Armed with their tractors and plows, farmers in Lemond Township north of Beaver Lake came to the rescue of helping area firefighters battle a stubborn corn field fire that threatened not only crops, but nearby hog buildings.

Without any prompting from fire officials, the farmers simply showed up and began plowing up dirt in an effort to create a buffer around the standing corn and snuff out the fire. There were no less than eight tractors helping put out the fire.

As Ellendale Fire Chief Logan Busho points out, the farmers stood to lose more than the fire department with its equipment. Busho said most of the tractors cost well over $100,000 each while the fire trucks are worth maybe about half that amount.

Busho is thankful for the sacrifices made by the farmers in helping his firefighters bring the blaze under control, which took three area departments nearly five hours to complete. He says the farmers kept the situation from getting worse and saved the land owners from suffering thousands of dollars in crop losses.

In this era of living in a divided world on many issues, it's gratifying to see that there is still human decency left in our lives. People are willing to help others when push comes to shove. And that was no more evident than last weekend outside of Ellendale.

Such unity seems to happen more often in smaller communities. We want to applaud the firefighters and farmers for risking their lives and equipment to prevent a situation from having a tragic outcome.

As Busho made a point of saying after it was all over, this is definitely a great reminder of why we live in such a great community, which in this case is not only Ellendale, but also the greater community of Steele County.

GUEST COLUMN

How about spreading encouragement to others?

BY JAN MITTELSTADT TIPPETT

Way back when Abraham Lincoln said: *In times like the present, men should utter nothing for which they would not willingly be responsible through time and in eternity.*

I would like to think that an updated version of that call would include women, of course. Unfortunately, there are way too many people (men and women) in our world who do not follow the 16th president's plea. Way. Too. Many.

As we approach the national holiday of Thanksgiving, a holiday that will be different from many other Thanksgivings that we have celebrated, I offer my encouragement to the dear readers three and anyone else who could be listening (or reading) to celebrate the positive and to offer encouragement and support to those around us.

Let us start with the simple phrase, "thank you." I don't understand why some people have trouble showing those who serve and help them that they are appreciated. Those two words are part of basic good manners and using them is simply common sense. Those who receive thanks know how much the job they are doing is appreciated. And in these Covid times, the appreciation for people who show up and work should be even more loudly and persistently thanked.

Then there's thanking the people in our lives who are gifts, huge gifts to us. I am fortunate to have friends and family members who by their very presence make me feel better. I'm lucky and I bet that many of you share that same gratefulness for the people in your life who make you feel special and who will listen to you, encourage you, and support your decisions without sharing those actions and thoughts with the world.

I fail at times to let these people just how much they mean to me. It's one of those failures that comes, not from a lack of appreciation, but instead from not being deliberate and intentional. Bad excuse, I know.

There are probably hundreds of different ways to offer your encouragement. Back in Contact training with leaders Jackie Ostlund and Lonna Lysne, we were given a handout from the Family and Education Center in Mankato. This piece of paper is one of the sheets that I have kept and hauled around for decades. It offers 50 ways say "good for you."

I'm not going to list all 50, but here are 10:

- Thank you very much
- I like being with you
- Good for you
- I appreciate what you have done (what you mean to me…)
- I can tell you really care
- It looks as if you put a lot of work into this
- That's a very good observation
- I'm so glad to be here with you.
- Terrific effort
- Good thinking

For example, saying "that's an interesting way of looking at it" or "that's an interesting point," or "very interesting" or "that's one way of looking at it" can keep the conversation going and is certainly more positive that shouting "are you out of your mind?" or "you are as dumb as a hammer" or "losers act like that" or other even less attractive words.

However, tempting it would to resort to negativism and harsh words, President Lincoln would not be proud.

Thanks for reading.

Jan Mittelstadt Tippett is a retired daily newspaper editor and publisher. She returned to her hometown of Owatonna in 2015. She can be reached at jtippett@midco.net.

Fighting the curse of the postal service

Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

It's the curse of the postal service.

That's what I am fighting once again with the U.S. Post Office, the agency that I rely on to deliver this newspaper each week to our readers.

We have been experiencing unusually long delays in recent weeks with some of our readers getting their newspaper. For example, the Oct. 28 edition did not reach the homes of the readers outside of the four county area of Steele, Dodge, Mower and Freeborn counties until Thursday, Nov. 5, more than one week after the paper was published. How agonizing and absurd, to say the least! Many of these same readers generally get the paper within two to three days after it is printed.

I'll admit my blood pressure goes through the roof when readers can't get our product when they are supposed to. As I continue to deal with a host of complaints, I know the same goes for our readers who are equally upset about not getting their paper. And I can't say I blame them.

I'd like to share what happens with our newspapers so that everyone understands our process. Unless it's a major holiday, the newspaper arrives back from our printing plant in Madelia early Wednesday afternoon. Depending on where you live, the papers are immediately dropped off at post offices in Blooming Prairie, Ellendale or Owatonna. If you don't live in either of those communities, the papers are funneled into the Blooming Prairie post office.

But here's where it gets complicated and sets us up for disaster with readers.

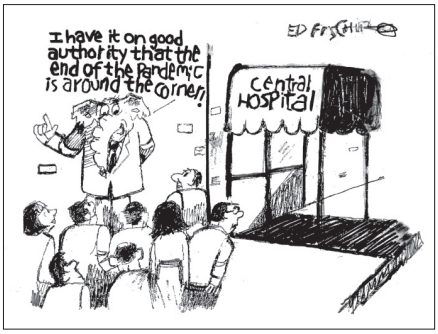
The Blooming Prairie office sends the papers on the mail truck to Rochester Wednesday afternoon. Once they arrive in Rochester, the papers are routed to the Twin Cities and then sent out to whichever post office. So, for example, if you live in Austin, the paper goes from Blooming Prairie to Rochester to the Twin Cities and back down to Austin.

From what I have been able to determine with little help from the postal service, the black hole in the process seems to be at the Twin Cities distribution center where the papers sit in the corner and accumulate dust for days before being shipped out. Why this is happening is anybody's guess. And, don't expect anybody to give an answer, at least in a timely manner.

Of course, nobody wants to take any accountability and provide me with answers as to what is going on. I've requested several times through the Blooming Prairie postmaster to speak to her supervisor regarding this matter of which has been to no avail. Not even a return phone call. In fact, the BP postmaster commented something to the effect when I asked to speak to her boss, "I don't know why you would want to call her because she doesn't even return my calls."

It's beyond my comprehension how an organization can operate in a manner like that. I understand there are going to be a few hiccups now and then with things, but

SEE **FIGHTING, A3**



YOUR VIEW

PRICELESS stories make me want to read the Times

Dear Editor,

As I read the story in the Nov. 4, 2020 issue about the Priceless Photo, I became very intrigued with the story. I do not know any of the people in the story, but it still kept me very interested in reading the whole story. The more I read, the more I wanted to keep reading. The writer, Rick Bussler took a very sad and emotional happening for the Rogotzke family, where Rocky died soon after the wedding photo and turned the fun-loving photo into something that the family will be able to cherish forever.

As sad as this is for Rocky to die soon after the wedding, I think that Rick did a great job of putting the story together using the photo taken at the wedding by Skye Devoe.

The family will be able to cherish this story forever with the great writing of Rick. Of course, there would not be a story if it were not for the photo taken by Skye. She did a fantastic job of capturing one of the special fun loving moments.

I send my best wishes to Logan and Bailey in starting their life together and with this photo and story to remember the fun-loving times of Rocky.

Thank you goes to Skye for taking the photo, the Rogotzke family for sharing this photo and a thank you to Rick for writing this story to share with everyone.

This is one of the reasons that we subscribe to the Steele County Times, the stories are more in depth and sincere, and to use part of the caption, PRICELESS!

Carl Wieman
Owatonna

STEELE COUNTY Times

Founded in 1893
Bussler Publishing, Inc.
www.SteeleCountyTimes.com
Email: bptimes@frontiernet.net

USPS 058-340
Published weekly on Wednesdays
Postmaster: Send address changes to:
Steele County Times
P.O. Box 247
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917
Phone: 507-583-4431

ETHICS: The Steele County Times editorial staff strives to present the news in a fair and accurate manner. Please bring any grievances against the Steele County Times to the attention of the Managing Editor.

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Office Assistant ..... Sherrie Pechan
Staff Writer ..... Howard Lestrud
County Writer ..... Karen M. Jorgensen
County Writer ..... Chris Baldwin

DEADLINES
News: Noon Fridays.
Web: 11 p.m. (Daily)
Advertising: 4 p.m. Thursdays.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
Steele, Dodge, Freeborn & Mower $46
Elsewhere in Minnesota $49
Out of state $52

A state and national award winning weekly
MINNESOTA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

2020—9 state awards
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

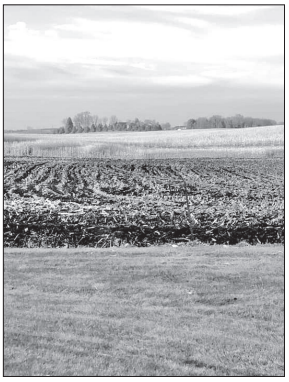
(Awards presented by the Minnesota Newspaper Association and the National Newspaper Associations)

Hands-Off during COVID

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Even during COVID times, Tri M Graphics in Owatonna took advantage of the beautiful Saturday weather to host its annual holiday open house. Left: During the open house, Tri M unveiled its 2021 calendar, which attracted 703 photo entries this year. Middle: Children take advantage of a fishing game to win some prizes. Right: Annette Duncan, president of the Steele County United Way, and her children, Amelia (being held) and Indya Frank, distribute craft kits through fun and innovative Hand-Off stations at the open house. There were also mascots on hand as well as Santa letters.

FARMERS: *aid in rescue of burning cornfields* FROM A1



COURTESY ELLENDALE FIRE

Ellendale area farmers came to the rescue of firefighters Saturday in battling a cornfield fire north of Beaver Lake in Lemond Township. The farmers brought their tractors and chisel plows to create a buffer of black dirt and contain the fire in an effort to save the rest of the cornfield.

community with such selfless people," he added.

Busho estimates there were 30 to 40 farmers who showed up with at least eight tractors to help fight the fire. Most of the tractors were equipped with chisel plows.

Busho said the farmers were "Johnny on the spot" in responding to the fire. "We had one tractor after another pulling in," he said.

He estimates there were 30 to 40 farmers who showed up with at least eight tractors to help fight the fire. Most of the tractors were equipped with chisel plows. "They can knock down a huge area in a short amount of time," he said. "They put themselves at risk to save the corn field."

The fire chief said they have had similar fires in the past, but nothing to the size or scope of Saturday's fire. In the past, they have had one or two farmers show up to help put out a fire, but never a turnout of solidarity like last weekend. "Nobody there had to do what they did," said Busho. "We would have lost the whole corn field if it wasn't for those guys," he explained.

Busho didn't know all the farmers who helped out, but some of them included Brad Hagen, Troy Hagen, Todd Hansen, Mark Hansen and Kevin Klemmensen.

Besides the Ellendale department, Geneva and New Richland also responded to the blaze. About 40 firefighters were on hand with many of them concentrating their efforts on saving some nearby hog barns.

The cause of the fire, Busho said, appears to have been a neighbor who had been burning garbage earlier in the day.

COURTESY ELLENDALE FIRE

Area firefighters battled a stubborn cornfield fire on Saturday in southern Steele County. Farmers came to the rescue with their tractors and plows to save the standing corn.

Busho was happy to see all the show of support they had in helping during an emergency crisis.

"This is exactly why living in our rural community is so amazing," Busho said. "In this dark and gloomy world lately, it's great to see a ray of sunshine."

STEELE BREAKS: *previous COVID record* FROM A1

point to community spread where people are unknowingly transmitting the disease to others.

Another key indicator used by Public Health is the positivity rate of cases. Steele County was at 15% last week, above the state average of 12%. "I believe it will be higher this week," Caron said, noting the numbers are released on Thursdays.

Public Health expected about 1,200 people to take advantage of free testing Monday and Tuesday at the National Guard Armory in Owatonna. Based on the county's current 15% positivity rate, there could be 180 new cases alone reflected in next week's total, though some of the people tested are from outside the county and would not be counted in the total.

Caron is concerned about where the county's numbers are headed. She expects the upward trend to continue in the coming weeks. "We are climbing at a higher rate than the metro area," she said. Asked why greater Minnesota is seeing such a spike in cases, Caron said she believes the metro area is following stricter mask requirements and practicing more social distancing. "They (metro area) are complying more than out state," she added.

It would not surprise Caron if the recent spikes in COVID cases lead to another shutdown across Minnesota. "We are trying to convince people to put practices into place to avoid another shutdown," she said. "Do your part personally so we don't have to come to this again with another shutdown."

Caron said the problem remains people are not wearing masks when they should be and they are congregating in groups of people by not practicing social distancing. "We should assume everyone is a positive contact and act accordingly," she said.

The health leader hopes people will start taking notice of the huge increase in numbers and change their attitudes and ways. Caron is especially frustrated with people who say the vulnerable population should be isolated from others and stay home. "That is unfair and very self centered thinking," she stressed. "This is real affecting our friends and family. We don't want to lose anyone. One death is one too many deaths," she said.

COVID-19 AT GLANCE

Steele County

Oct. 4-11:	68 new cases
Oct. 12-18:	63 new cases
Oct. 19-25:	42 new cases
Oct. 26-Nov. 1:	95 new cases
Nov. 2-8:	165 new cases
Total since March:	**1,022**

MIRACLE OFFICER: *pays football player a sideline visit* FROM A1

the head while responding to a prowler call in Waseca in January. His prognosis initially did not look promising. But after months of hospitalization in the Twin Cities and rehabilitation in Nebraska, Matson returned back home last month. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, he hadn't seen family members in person since February.

"It meant a lot to me to have him at my game," said Hedensten, who reached out to Matson's wife, Megan, to invite him to the game. "It felt good that he got there to get his mind off things he has been going through and feel normal again," he said.

Earlier in the day, Matson spoke in a Waseca County courtroom where his attacker was sentenced to the maximum 35 years in prison. "I would still respond to that call if it was tomorrow," Matson told the court. "I have gratitude for being here today with everyone. It's amazing one day you have everything and the next day it is gone," he said. "I had so much stolen from me this year, from my daughter's eighth birthday to celebrating Father's Day and other special events. My wife and daughts lost out on so much this year as well."

Hedensten, who grew up being a neighbor to Matson in Freeborn, has always enjoyed hanging out with Matson. He was saddened and devastated to see what happened to Matson on Jan. 6 at the hands of a man with an extensive criminal history. Hedensten and Matson have watched football together as well as played catch in the front yard while growing up. The two have also enjoyed hunting trips together.

Despite what has happened to his role model, Hedensten isn't discouraged about pursuing his own career in law enforcement. He says the two of them often talked about becoming a police officer while on hunting trips in the past. He plans to go to college after graduating next year. Hedensten would like to become a DNR officer some day.

While Hedensten admits it was tough not knowing how Matson would recover from this shooting, Hedensten knew he is a fighter. "I believe he is going to come out strong because of the way he is," Hedensten said. "He is fighting every day trying to be the best he can be.

Hedensten's father, Jason and his girlfriend Amy Schak, also joined in escorting Matson at Friday's football game. Jason, who has been an EMT for nearly 30 years, has been pleasantly surprised at Matson's recovery. "When someone gets shot in the head, you don't expect good," he said.

Jason was in the hospital by Matson along with others right after the shooting took place. "I didn't think he would make it. It has been a hard strain. Many sleepless nights," Jason said. "There was unbelievable support for him," he said, adding he credits the support from family and friends with pulling Matson through this ordeal.

Jason described his son as playing for Matson in Friday's game. Following halftime where he gave Hedensten a quick pep talk, Matson left the game because he was tired after spending all day in court.

Hedensten credits Matson's appearance with inspiring him to play even harder in the game.

"He means a lot to me," Hedensten says. "He's someone I can look up to and joke around with and have a good time."

FIGHTING: *the curse of the postal service* FROM A2

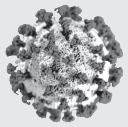
to experience this on a regular basis is getting quite old. And then to top it off without getting any satisfaction, or let alone just a simple return response, from the powers-at-be is mind-boggling.

The bottom line is that once we drop off the papers at the post office, they are out of our hands. I wish I could control it beyond, but there is nothing I can do at that point. Our readers are at the mercy of the postal carriers and when they decide to release our papers from being hostage.

Perhaps the postal fairy will dazzle her magic with our papers moving forward, but I'm not guaranteeing that with anyone, especially after my dealings with the postal service. I feel your pain when you don't get the paper at the normal time. I just want you to realize it most likely has nothing to do with anything we've done.

Some days I wonder if it would be best to explore going back to the era of the Pony Express. Seriously, I don't know what it will take to shake things up at the post office because obviously in my case, nobody really seems to care.

It's time to go in hot pursuit of shaking the curse of the postal service. If anybody knows how, feel free to let me know right away.



COVID-19 UPDATE

World	50,600,000	**MN**	181,000	**Steele**	1,022	**Dodge**	500
Deaths	1,260,000	**Deaths**	2,710	**Deaths**	4	**Deaths**	0
Recovered	31,200,000	**Recovered**	94,416	**Recovered**	734	**Recovered**	385
U.S.	10,100,000						
Deaths	238,000						
Recovered	4,880,000						

Freeborn	903
Deaths	5
Recovered	
Mower	1,683
Deaths	21
Recovered	

AS OF NOV. 9, 2020

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT: At 12:18 p.m., a hit and run accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 1600 block of Cedar Ave. S.

Parking becomes restricted starting Sunday in Owatonna for winter

Beginning next week, winter parking restrictions will take effect in Owatonna.

At midnight on Nov. 15, the city ordinance restricts on-street parking on many of Owatonna's streets between the hours of midnight and noon through March 31.

On even-numbered days, vehicles may be parked on the near side of the street adjacent to lots and houses that have been assigned even numbers. On odd-numbered days, the same applies to lots and houses with odd numbers.

The winter parking restrictions exist to expedite and make more efficient snow removal throughout the community.

Police advise the local ordinance is not tied to a snow emergency declaration so it's in effect every day throughout the winter months.

Any questions regarding the winter parking rules can be directed to the city's hotline at 507-444-4399.

CRIME BRIEF

Domestic abuse order lands 2 in jail

A domestic abuse no contact order resulting from an assault case has landed two people in jail.

Joseph Davis, 35, of Owatonna, has been charged with violating the order, which is a felony. In addition, Angelica Montemayor, 34, also of Owatonna, was charged with aiding and abetting violating a no contact order and two counts of third-degree tampering with a witness.

Joseph Davis

Angelica Montemayor

According to police, a detective interviewed a victim of a previous domestic assault investigation on Oct. 29. Based upon that investigation, a no contact order was served prohibiting Davis from being at a specific residence.

During an interview, the detective learned Davis may be staying at the unauthorized residence. A second interview was conducted with another person who confirmed Davis was staying at the prohibited residence and was told to not be truthful about him living there.

Police executed a search warrant and found Davis at the residence. Officers also arrested Montemoyer, who allegedly told police she did not care about the court order and planned to keep Davis in her life.

During the investigation, police also learned that Montemoyer had punished a witness to the previous domestic assault for telling the truth to police and the punishment would remain in place until the witness told police the initial statement wasn't true.

COURT NEWS
Steele County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Oct. 26 – Nov. 1:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Keith L. Bartlett Jr., 56, Sargeant, cancelled license, $481 and 1 year of supervised probation; Tentzohua T. Erasmo, 39, LeRoy, invalid license, $175; Blas A. Hernandez Rodriguez, 21, Austin, expired license and speeding, $135; Haylee E. Kremmin, 27, Owatonna, suspended license, $275; Samantha S. Weir, 32, Albert Lea, unlawful equipment, $115.

MN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Daniel A. Garbers, 19, Owatonna, take migratory birds with aid of bait, $475; Noah S. Ihrke, 19, Owatonna, take migratory birds with aid of bait, $425; Dakota J. Nelson, 22, Owatonna, take migratory birds with aid of bait and take migratory waterfowl without stamp, $425; Logan M. Nelson, 20, Ellendale, take migratory birds with aid of bait, $375; Michael D. Thom, 22, Owatonna, take migratory birds with aid of bait, $375.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Jose E. Amaya Garcia, 52, Clive, IA, speeding, $275; Shay A. Brandvold, 24, Owatonna, seat belt, $100; Solomon E. Brown, 22, Burnsville, speeding, $115; Tristen L. Brown, 37, Waseca, unsafe passing, $125; Derrick L. Drake, 26, Isanti, speeding, stay of adjudication, $145 and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without adjudication; Eric A. Esquivel, 23, Owatonna, speeding, window tint violation and license plate violation, $215; Christian K. Hart, 19, Owatonna, speeding, $115; John A. Hosterman, 55, Northfield, speeding, $125; Menglan Ke, 26, Plano, TX, speeding, $125; Mason B. Lohberger, 29, Lakeville, DWI, $406, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Carletter Y. Lovett, 39, St. Paul, speeding, $125; Lukas R. Lysne, 22, Plymouth, speeding, $115; Anthonie J. Marx, 47, Shoreview, speeding, $125; Cameron J. Moehrle, 20, Owatonna, speeding, $300; Prescott A. Olson, 48, Duluth, cancelled license, stay of adjudication, $50 and 1 year of supervised probation; Ricky A. Severtson, 69, Austin, revoked license, $275; Joseph Z. Vargo, 29, Sibley, IA, speeding, $215; Grant J. Weis, 21, Sunfish Lake, speeding, $125; Donald E. Williams, 59, Milwaukee, WI, speeding, $135; Carol C. Wood, 57, Evergreen, CO, speeding, $115.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Justin T. Ambrus, 33, Owatonna, failure to stop for traffic control signal, $125; Allie R. Balausky, 27, Owatonna, speeding, $125; Foster A. Borger, 21, Owatonna, DWI, $400, 2 days in county jail, do not enter liquor establishments, no alcohol or controlled substance user, attend MADD impact panel and 1 year of supervised probation; Kelly A. Castellano, 34, Owatonna, no insurance, $125; Jordyn L. Daley, 20, Owatonna, possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, $75, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, no possession of firearms, 80 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Ricardo Degollado, 49, Owatonna, restraining order violation, $131, 3 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no contact with victim, domestic abuse evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use and 1 year of supervised probation; Augustin A. Gallardo, 46, Owatonna, DWI and possession of marijuana, $400, 2 days in county jail, substance abuse subtle screening inventory, attend MADD impact panel, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 1 year of supervised probation; Christopher M. Hamilton, 28, Owatonna, DWI, $575, 2 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, Ignition Interlock program and 1 year of supervised probation; Ashley A. Hernandez, 41, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, $475; Rakeem D. Jones, 19, Calunet Park, IL, theft, $125 and 2 days in county jail; Mario G. Mares Mayagoitia, 29, Owatonna, invalid license and no insurance, $375; Camille A. Nelson, 60, Albert Lea, expired tabs, $105; Alicia M. Price, 36, Owatonna, seat belt, $100; Megan J. Pridie, 33, Owatonna, speeding, $115; Scott L. Rasmussen, 43, Owatonna, possession of marijuana, $131, 1 day in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation and 2 years of supervised probation; Anita M. St. John, 67, Owatonna, failure to yield, $115; Alexis R. Thompson-Langley, 22, Rochester, speeding, $135; Alex J. Wagner, 32, Owatonna, seat belt, $100; Abby J. Wilker, 23, Owatonna, DWI and possession of paraphernalia, $375, 2 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, do not enter liquor establishments, 30 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Juan D. Chanto Carvajal, 56, East Peoria, IL, speeding, $115; Tanner J. Cole, 22, Owatonna, possession of pistol without permit, $375, 2 days in county jail, chemical assessment, attend gun safety course and 1 year of supervised probation; Jose I. Herrera, 21, Minneapolis, invalid license, $175; Adrian Ibarra, 21, invalid license and expired registration, $205; Qamar M. Mohamud, 36, Rochester, speeding, $135; Anthony J. Nelson, 27, Waseca, speeding, $115; Jeffrey J. Nelson, 56, Chandler, AZ, speeding, $115; Yeferson S. Perez, 19, Medford, invalid license, $175; Lonna R. Rieger, 34, Waseca, speeding, $115; Nolan D. Sackett, 47, Medford, DWI, $575, attend MADD impact panel, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 2 years of supervised probation; Adebayo G. Tella, 31, Austin, speeding, $275; Macy E. Vonruden, 23, Owatonna, speeding, $215; Dale E. Waage, 78, Ellendale, burning violation, $175; Tyler J. Wubben, 16, Owatonna, speeding, $135.

POLICE BLOTTER
Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

Oct. 30
Restraining Order: Police responded to a restraining order violation in the 100 block of Main St. E. at 1:36 p.m.
Nov. 1
Restraining Order: At 3:28 p.m., a restraining order violation occurred in the 100 block of Main St. E.
Nov. 5
DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest at Highway 30 and 130th Ave. in Westfield Township at 8:47 p.m.

OWATONNA POLICE

Oct. 30
Suspicion: Police responded to suspicious activity at 26th St. NW and 4th Ave. NW at 3:08 a.m.
Criminal Sexual Conduct: Police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct in the city at 4:14 p.m.
Mental Health: Officers responded to a mental health incident in the 100 block of Landmark Dr. NE at 5:52 p.m.
Trespassing: At 7:14 p.m., a subject was trespassing in the 2200 block of 46th St. NW.
Oct. 31
Assault: Police responded to an assault in the 1100 block of Grove Ave. S. at 12:59 a.m.
Arrest: Police assisted another agency with arresting a subject in the 700 block of State Ave. NW at 2:22 a.m.
Shoplifting: At 8:37 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 400 block of North St. W.
Juvenile: Police received a juvenile complaint from the 1100 block of Grove Ave. S. at 8:46 p.m.
Domestic: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1600 block of Wedgewood Dr. NE at 9:01 p.m. They took a subject into custody.
Nov. 1
Disturbance: Police responded to a disturbance in the 200 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 12:16 a.m.
Restraining Order: At 1:54 a.m., a restraining order violation occurred in the 100 block of 22nd St. NW.
Domestic: Police arrested a subject following a domestic disturbance in the 1400 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 5:01 a.m.
Assault: Police issued a citation following an assault in the 100 block of Bridge St. W. at 9:29 a.m.
Child Protection: Police received a child protection report from the 1200 block of Woodridge Place NE at 6:55 p.m.
Nov. 2
Mental Health: Police responded to a mental health incident in the 700 block of Paris Place SE at 1:36 p.m.
Theft: Officers took theft reports in the 300 block of Grove Ave. S. at 3:03 p.m. and the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 7:28 p.m.
Disturbance: Police responded to a disturbance in the 2200 block of 26th St. NW at 3:42 p.m. They issued a citation.
Nov. 3
Property: At 2:31 a.m., stolen property was recovered in the 300 block of Oak Ave. S.
Juvenile: Police received a juvenile complaint from the 1400 block of Greenleaf Road SE at 10:39 p.m.
Nov. 4
Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 900 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 12:22 p.m.
Child Protection: Police received a child protection report from the 1800 block of Austin Road SE at 7:14 p.m.
ATV: Police received an ATV complaint from the 400 block of 26th St. NW at 8:10 p.m.

ARRESTS
Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

Angelica Montemayor, 34, arrested at 2:32 p.m. Oct. 30, felony witness tampering and aiding an offender, held for court.
Nichole Zankou, 37, arrested at 9:11 p.m. Oct. 31, domestic assault, assault, disorderly conduct and obstruct legal process, held for court.
Abraam Rodriguez, 20, arrested at 5:07 a.m. Nov. 1, domestic assault, held for court.
Isaac Guerrero, 21, arrested at 10:07 a.m. Nov. 2, warrant arrest, held for court.
Melanie Jean Maki, 50, arrested at 10:42 a.m. Nov. 5, probation violation warrant arrest, body only.
Barbara Ann Guggisberg, 61, arrested at 6:42 p.m. Nov. 5, domestic assault, held for court.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

Timothy Moberg, 43, arrested at 5:07 p.m. Nov. 1, DWI, held for court.
Rebecca Blair Maas, 37, arrested at 7:07 p.m. Nov. 5, DWI, cancelled license and open container, held for court.

COURT NEWS
Dodge County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Oct. 25 – Nov. 1:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Cesar E. Alvardo, 19, Dodge Center, animal at large, $100; Sergio Fernandez Ibarra, 23, Dodge Center, speeding, $120; Allen L. Greenslade III, 18, Kasson, tampering with motor vehicle, $180; Alexann I. Johnson-Lloyd, 22, Rochester, assault, stay of adjudication, $75 and 1 year of supervised probation; Anders J. Jorstad, 34, Hayfield, possession of paraphernalia and marijuana, $280; Michael H. Kellogg, 65, Mankato, speeding, $140; Scott A. Krook, 48, Zumbro Falls, DWI, $75, 30 days in county jail, write legger of apology, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, 40 hours of community service, 26 days of electronic home monitor and 2 years of supervised probation; Tylor J. Lentz, 30, Eyota, revoked license, 90 days in county jail; Peter L. Mathias, 44, Byron, interfere with privacy, $75, 3 days in county jail, psychological evaluation, 30 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Kevin L. Nawrocki, 63, Dodge Center, parking violation, $32; Alexandra M. Prigge, 21, Byron, speeding, $130; Dennis R. Riedemann, 59, Brownsdale, seat belt, $105.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jeffrey J. Glessing, 48, Mantorville, stop sign, $130; Mary K. Goulette, 57, Claremont, revoked license, $280; Nathan M. Reller, 38, Kasson, hands free violation, $130; Martin Rodriguez-Montes, 23, Kasson, revoked license and speeding, $420; Steven L. Torsch, 49, Dodge Center, seat belt, $105.

MN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Nicholas J. Boddicker, 34, Byron, hunt pheasants without a stamp validation, $130.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Dawn M. Conwell, 50, West Concord, speeding, $120; William B. Cross, 22, Kenyon, speeding, $220; Codie A. Janssen, 32, Kasson, seat belt, $105; Sabrina J. Jensen, 25, Scottsdale, AZ, speeding, $130; Cindy M. Marks, 38, St. James, speeding, $130; Megan R. Peterson, 20, Mora, hands free violation, $130; Rachael L. Thomka, 20, Bloomington, speeding, $220.

WARRANTS: The following individuals have active warrants in Steele County. The Sheriff provides this information as a public service

1. Sandy Pack – theft – no bail
2. Rocky Padilla – revoked license - $3,000 bail
3. Jose Parajon – fleeing in motor vehicle – no bail
4. Julie Patrin – card fraud – no bail
5. Edward Persell – revoked license - $1,000 bail
6. Emmanual Puentes – theft - $500 bail
7. James Reed – predatory offender - $25,000 bail
8. Juan Reyes – criminal sexual conduct - $50,000 bail
9. Bradley Richards – drugs – no bail
10. Paulina Rivera – warrant – no bail
11. Mario Rocha – domestic assault - $10,000 bail
12. Antonio Rodriguez – DWI - $1,000 bail
13. Carlos Rodriguez – DWI - $12,000 bail
14. Carlos Rodriguez – terroristic threats – no bail
15. Joseph Rodriguez – theft by check - $1,000 bail
16. Jeffrey Roehling – cancelled license, no insurance - $3,000 bail
17. Deandre Rogers – revoked license – no bail
18. Pedro Roldan-Minjarez – false name - $3,000 bail
19. Jose Rosales – criminal sexual conduct – no bail
20. Alex Salazar – DWI – no bail

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

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What Happens to Medicare if Obamacare is Overturned?

THE SAVVY SENIOR

Brought to you by: Prairie Manor Care Center

Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus
220 3rd St. NW, Blooming Prairie
583-4434

Dear Savvy Senior,
Will my Medicare benefits be affected if Obamacare is overturned by the Supreme Court?
Concerned Beneficiary

Dear Concerned,

Unfortunately, yes. If the Affordable Care Act (ACA) – also known as Obamacare – gets repealed by the Supreme Court next year, it will weaken Medicare and increase costs for beneficiaries. Here's what you should know.

Currently, about 60 million people are covered under Medicare, the federal health insurance program for people 65 and older and people of all ages with disabilities. Even though the main aim of the ACA was to overhaul the health insurance markets, most people don't realize that the law also touches virtually every part of Medicare.

Without the ACA, Medicare beneficiaries will have to pay more for preventive care services, which are now free; they'll have to pay more toward their prescription drugs; their premiums and deductibles will rise faster; and Medicare will face insolvency much sooner because of lost funding and cost cutting measures. With the help of Kiplinger's Retirement Report, here is a more detailed breakdown of what happens to Medicare if the court invalidates the law.

Preventive care services will no longer be free: Thanks to the ACA, there's no copayment or deductible for potentially life-saving screenings for cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other illnesses. Flu shots and annual wellness visits are also free. Before the ACA, beneficiaries had to pay 20 percent of the cost for most preventive care services, after their deductible was met.

The doughnut hole will return: Since 2011 the ACA has been steadily closing the prescription drug coverage gap, also known as the doughnut hole, in Medicare Part D by requiring drug manufacturers and insurers to pick up more of the cost. The hole was finally closed this year with seniors paying 25 percent of the cost for both generic and brand-name medications and manufacturers picking up 70 percent of the tab, while insurers kick in the remaining 5 percent. Before the ACA, seniors paid 100 percent of Part D prescription drug expenses while in the doughnut hole.

Medicare premiums and deductibles will rise faster: The ACA also curbed Medicare payments to providers to help keep Medicare Part A deductibles and copayments in check. Similarly, Part B premiums and deductibles are much lower than projected before the ACA became law. From 2011 to 2020, Part B premiums increased 23 percent. From 2000 to 2009 – the nine years before the law's passage – Part B premiums rose almost five times faster, increasing 112 percent over that period.

Medicare Advantage plans will be more expensive: The ACA requires Medicare Advantage plans to spend 85 percent of premium dollars on health care, not profits or overhead. The plans also can't charge more than traditional Medicare for chemotherapy, renal dialysis, skilled nursing care and other specialized services.

Those restrictions dramatically lowered costs for Medicare Advantage plan enrollees. Since the ACA became law in 2010, the average Medicare Advantage premium has decreased by 43 percent while enrollment has increased 117 percent.

Insolvency accelerates: The ACA extended the solvency of the program's trust fund by eight years to 2026, mostly by finding new sources of revenue and slowing the growth of payments to all providers. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that reversing those changes would cost the program $700 billion over 10 years, which would make Medicare almost immediate insolvent.

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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History from the News Archives

10 Years Ago

Nov. 16 2010

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

The Board of Directors of SCFF met following the annual meeting and elected officers: President, Corky Ebeling; Vice-president, Bruce Busho; Treasurer, Dan Deml; Secretary, Elmer Reseland. The Board also recognized Bob Jurgensen for 57 years of service to the horse racing at the fair. Bob resigned as Superintendent of Speed. Earl Bruhn was elected to fill his vacancy. Four directors were reelected to serve on the Fair Board for 3 years – Bob Ringhofer, Dan Deml and Paul Arnfelt of Owatonna and Jerry Ingvalson of Blooming Prairie.

If anyone missed seeing a performance of the BPHS musical "Annie Get You Gun," they missed one of the finest and most professional musicals we have had for many years. The talent displayed by all the students involved, the music, the sets costumes and props were all of top quality. A big congratulations to Director, Frank Iacovino, Assistant, Allison Jacobson, Musical Director, Karla Iacovino, Choreographer, Stacy Humphrey and Set Designer, Mark Roelfsma. It was a memorable production.

20 Years Ago

Nov. 14, 2000

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

Four Daughters Vineyard and Winery is excited to announce that official groundbreaking ceremony was held on Nov. 15. This officially starts the construction for the winery building, which will include a tasting room, restaurant and event space. The business is expected to be completed and open the summer of 2011.

50 Years Ago

Nov. 11, 1970

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

Ken Behnken will be the new basketball coach at Blooming Prairie High School, succeeding Jim Poole, who retired at the end of the 1969-1970 season. Ken is a familiar figure to basketball fans as he has been the "B" squad coach for the past four seasons. Assisting the new varsity coach will be: Dean Meshke, Sophomore Coach, Dave McDowell, Freshman Coach and Roger Sorenson and Don Shelton who will handle the 8th and 7th grades.

The District 9 "Make It Yourself with Wool" Contest was held Oct. 31st in Austin. Diane Angell, 16, was the winner of thew Junior division and will represent District 9 in the contest in Minneapolis in December. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Angell. Kristi Jolson, 10, was also a runner-up in the Sub-division. Kristi is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Jolson. The garments were made of 100% wool and were made by the girls themselves.

75 Years Ago

Nov. 15, 1945

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

Fifteen uninvited guests gathered last Wednesday evening at the home of Superintendent Emil Estenson's home. They gathered to celebrate Supt. Estenson's birthday.

The first one of the six Oswald brothers serving in the armed forces to get his honorable discharge is Sgt Louis W Oswald. He was discharged from army air forces on Nov. 4th. He entered the service June 26, 1941 and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. H O Oswald who still have five sons serving their country.

Publisher and Mrs. Frank Krejci received news on Wednesday advising them that their son is homeward bound. Pfc. Vernon Krejci was a member of the Times staff who has been stationed in Germany should arrive home in December. He will take up his former work at the Times office. With Vernon returning home we hope to be getting the paper back to its former self and more punctual delivery. Everyone is looking forward to his return.

Owatonna Photo News –

31 Years Ago

Nov. 9, 1989

TOM SHEA, PUBLISHER

New arrivals this week at Health Central of Owatonna are:
Candace and Kevin Prestegard, Owatonna, boy, Oct. 30.
Mary Mowry and Todd Boettger, Owatonna, girl, Nov 2.
Heather Klein and Chad Chilson, Medford, girl, Nov. 2.
Nancy and Timothy Sletten, Owatonna, boy, Nov. 3.
Kathleen and Richard Leopold, Owatonna, boy, Nov. 4.
Betty Lou and Eric Edon, Owatonna, girl, Nov. 6.

Reflections

HOWARD LESTRUD

These rank as my top stories, top columns

It really is fun to reflect back on my six years as a busy staff writer for the Steele County Times.

As a young lad, I remember my parents having a subscription to the Blooming Prairie Times, a weekly newspaper. I also remember them having subscriptions to two daily newspapers, the Austin Daily Herald and the Evening Tribune of Albert Lea.

Thus, I gained an admiration for the written word. I began to write for fun and in high school became the editor of my school newspaper, the Sentinel (Austin).

The rest is history. I thought I was retiring from the busy pace of newspapering but I was wrong. I continued part time for former Minnesota Gov. Elmer L. Andersen's newspaper group.

I retired in 2011 and still worked part time for Andersen's newspapers while living in Blooming Prairie.

That bond with ECM Publishers ended when I started working for Bussler's newspaper.

I was helping him out for a few weeks while his editor recovered from a fall. He must not have ever recovered because I am still here. He did recover and moved on to an Iowa newspaper.

I have now set the stage for selecting the Top 10 stories I covered while here in Blooming Prairie. Here they are, not necessarily in chronological order

1) Lois Riess Captured; Lois Riess pleads guilty to murder husband and killing a woman in Florida.

2) Awesome Blossom football team wins Class 1A state title.

3) Merle McNutt turns 98, 99 100, 101, 102 (Nov. 14, 2020).

4) Minimizer is sold; Craig Kruckeberg builds Kruckeberg Industries.

5) Bloomimg Prairie turns 150

6) Veterans Memorial hits goal of $250,000; total now at $330,000.

7) LeMar Nelson, well known BP educator, writer passes.

8) Main Street is resurfaced in Blooming Prairie; Main Street Bakery burns; BP Cancer Group, BP Ed Foundation, BP Youth Club raise tons of money for their causes.

9) Krejci Ford franchise resigned.

10) COVID-19 punches BP in gut.

Next week, I will choose the 10 columns I wrote for The Times and feel they are my best.

DISTRICT 27: *flips to GOP as Dornink ousts veteran senator* FROM A1

fulfilling to win when you weren't expected to," he added.

Dornink said he has often found himself in the underdog role throughout his life. He said his parents faced many hardships throughout their lives. He also has faced the challenges of raising a large family of 12 children. In 2009, he lost a job while still having 10 kids at home. "Life experience helps you," he said.

The new senator acknowledges name recognition became a huge factor in this year's race. "I didn't have it in 2016," Dornink said.

Dornink, 57, attributes a large part of his success this time around to a vigorous campaign in which he went door knocking most of the summer and fall, though he admits it was a challenge with COVID-19. His philosophy is to meet the people, listen to them and represent them.

District 27 became one of the key races in Minnesota this year with both political action committees dumping significant money into the campaigns. Dornink himself raised about $95,000 for his campaign.

Dornink said he "stayed on message" throughout his campaign and did not attack his opponent. "We had a plan and we worked on the plan," he said. His message focused on reforming and trimming government to make it more efficient.

As he takes office in January, Dornink says his goal is to represent the people of his district and be available to them. "I'm a people person," he said. He added the answers as to how government should run lie with the farmers, businessmen and common people in the district.

Dornink will also draw upon his own experience as a small business owner and past connections with the carpenter's union. He owns a carpentry business in the Hayfield area.

"I'm going to try to be a guy that's more of a peace maker," Dornink says. "I'm all about making things more functional in government and being more transparent."

Looking back at this year's campaign, Dornink says he is most proud of his volunteers and family members working together for "a common goal and being successful in winning."

Asked why he chose to get into politics, Dornink said a former senator encouraged him to run 10 years ago. Dornink did not at the time, but he always carried that in the back of his mind. He has also always had an appreciation for government and history.

Dornink is a proponent of term limits. He would like to serve as a senator for about 12 years.

Dornink wishes to thank Senator Sparks for his 18 years of public service to the district. "He certainly deserves our respect and thanks," he said.

This will be the first time a republican has held both the state representative and senate seats in District 27 since 1980. Rep. Peggy Bennett, R-Albert Lea, easily won re-election to District 27A in last week's election by defeating DFL candidate Thomas Martinez 63 to 36%.

Dornink will be sworn into office on Jan. 4.

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STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Voting in a pandemic

Election officials throughout Steele County provided a safe environment for citizens to cast their ballots on Election Day as evidenced at this voting poll at the Steele County History Center in Owatonna. Voters wore face masks while most election officials wore masks or plastic shields. Voting was reportedly heavy throughout the county, though no official results will be known until later this week.

Medford voters oust mayor and council member

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Sharp criticism over the Main Street project in Medford appears to have spilled over into the voting polls as voters have ousted the city's long-time mayor and a council member.

Former mayor Danny Robert Thomas unseated current mayor Lois Nelson by a landslide in last week's general election. Thomas gained 508 votes or 74% compared to Nelson's 175 votes or 25%.

Medford voters also removed Matt Dempsey from office. Voters elected Mandy Mueller with 302 votes and Chad Merritt with 272 votes. Dempsey had 240 votes.

"They want change, they want to be heard and they feel they haven't been heard," said incoming mayor Thomas. "It's being run by one person and we want a team atmosphere," he said. "I'm going to work totally by a team atmosphere."

Thomas, who previously served as mayor prior to Nelson being elected in 2012, says he will approach his return as being the quarterback. "I'm going to bring the team together," he said.

Thomas has secured the assistance of Marie Sexton to help out in the transition next year. Sexton is leaving the council after serving for 24 years, but has agreed to help out the new council, Thomas said. "She means a lot to the community. She is on top of everything," he said.

While the Main Street project has become a divisive issue within the community over the past few years, Thomas says he is not opposed to the project. However, he wants it scaled back from what has been proposed by current city leaders. "It doesn't need to be as big as it is, but I want the project to move forward," Thomas said.

Thomas thanked the work of community members in getting him elected as mayor. He said ever since people approached him about running, he made it clear that he would not do any of the work to get elected. "I never went door-to-door in the community," he said, noting he did not feel comfortable doing so because of COVID-19. "I told them I would run, but they have to do the work," he added.

The mayor-elect admits he himself was surprised with the outcome of the election. "I never dreamed it would be like this," Thomas said. "I woke up this morning (day after election) and went wow."

Nelson also found herself surprised with the outcome. "I feel a little bruised," she said. "I expected a close vote, but not one that would be 3-to-1. I felt I deserved a better break than that."

But Nelson is taking the results in stride and focusing on the future. "When one door closes, another one opens. We'll see what the next door brings," she said, declining to speculate on what they may be.

Nelson claims she inherited a city in a financial mess eight years ago from Thomas. She said she has worked diligently over time to improve the city's finances. In sending a congratulatory message to Thomas, Nelson told him that the city is in better shape than he left it. "Don't muck it up," she warned him.

The outgoing mayor said she will hold her head up high with what she has accomplished over the past eight years. "It has been a good run," said Nelson.

Nelson encourages the new council to "think about the next generation" as it moves forward. "We don't have very forward-thinking individuals here," she said.

Danny Thomas

Nelson has devoted 23 years to public service in Medford, including nine years on the school board with five as its first female chairperson. She said one thing is certain. "I won't be running for an office again," she said.

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Chris Jongbloebt proudly displays an "I Voted" sticker on her purse after voting at the Owatonna Township Town Hall on Election Day. It was her first time ever voting.

Voting in a divided world for the first time

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

As Chris Jongbloebt exited the voting poll at Owatonna Township Town Hall south of Owatonna last week, she had a wide smile on her face.

Despite being 53 years old, it was Jongbloebt's first time ever voting. "I feel good," she said as she proudly displayed a red "I Voted" sticker attached to her purse.

Jongbloebt said she was especially motivated to vote in this year's election "because everything has been messed up." With the country being on the brink of one of the most divided elections ever, she said she wanted to make sure the right one gets in office.

"This world is so divided right now," Jongbloebt says. "It shouldn't be that way," she said, noting she is usually quiet and doesn't say much. But this year she felt it was necessary to make her voice heard at the polls.

The first time voter said she does not like all the negative campaigning that takes place with candidates. "They are always slamming the opponents. I'll be glad when it's over," Jongbloebt said. "I don't think the world needs any more negativity."

Jongbloebt said she was especially turned off with the presidential campaign. "They both have their ups and downs," she said. "There are so many lies where you have to think about what you are listening to," she added.

Asked why she hasn't voted in the past, Jongbloebt said she had always been focused on work by holding down two jobs. She said things were made easier this year by her having only one job and getting off at 3 p.m. She went right to the polls after work.

"I'm glad I did it," Jongbloebt said of voting. "I should have done it a long time ago."

And as for future elections, one thing is certain for Jongbloebt. "I will vote again," she says.

Owatonna school faces big cuts after split referendum

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Voters in the Owatonna School District provided mixed results on funding in last week's levy referendum.

In the first portion of the referendum, voters approved a levy renewal by 8,209 (52%) yes votes and 7,471 no votes (48%). However, voters resoundingly defeated the second portion of the level with 9,529 no votes (61%) to 6,103 yes votes (39%).

The levy renewal will maintain $2.5 million in annual funding.

The failed portion of the referendum would have approved a phased-in increase to the district's operating levy that would have generated an additional $300 per student in 2022 and 2025. The levy would have provided the district an extra $1.6 million per year over 10 years.

Superintendent Jeff Elstad said there will likely be significant cuts as a result of the failed referendum. He said the school board will meet early next year to begin the painstaking process of budget cuts.

"In these challenging times of COVID-19, we knew it was important to balance our needs with our community's ability to support our schools," said School Board Chair Mark Sebring. "Our hope was that by combining budget cuts with a phased-in operating levy increase, our community would recognize this as a shared approach to solving our financial challenges. The levy renewal helps, but does not solve those challenges."

The district had previously approved budget cuts of $500,000 in 2019-20 and $2 million in 2020-21 to balance its budget. Without the levy increase, the district will now need to identify $2 million in budget cuts for 2021-22. Cuts will result in class size increases through teacher and staff layoffs, with cuts to other areas likely as well. Ongoing annual cuts will be needed until additional revenue comes from the state or other sources.

Elstad said the district is grateful to the community for renewing the levy. "On top of last year's approval for a new high school it shows an important level of support for our schools," he said. "Now we need to determine why the community did not feel it could approve a levy increase, as this loss will have a big impact on our future financial planning," he added.

The superintendent said he does not anticipate any new funding from the state next year. "The costs of goods and services continues to go up, but our revenue stays flat," Elstad explained.

This year's presidential election did not play into the local school's favor, Elstad said. "It was hard to get messaging out because the national and state (campaigns) were so loud," he said.

Jeff Elstad

Another challenge the district faced with the COVID-19 pandemic. Elstad pointed out the district could not use its typical ways of reaching people. "I like to meet up close and personal with people," he said. "I felt like we were trying this with one arm tied behind our back."

The district could reach out to voters again, but the earliest another referendum could be held is next November.

More information about the levy requests is available at isd761.org/levy.

In the school board race, voters re-elected Timothy Jensen (26%) and Eric Schuster (25%) to the board as well as newcomer Deborah Bandel (19%). Current board members Christina Ingvaldson did not seek re-election.

Voter turnout high as mail-in votes challenge election officials

Each election has its own challenges and the 2020 general election was no exception.

"This year, it was the mail-in ballots," said Steele County Auditor Laura Ihrke, who serves as the county's chief election official. "We wondered how we were going to do it, but we did it."

About 40% of the ballots casts in Steele County were casts before Election Day.

Ihrke said she and her staff began opening and counting the mail-in ballots 14 days before Election Day as allowed by law. There were trays and trays of them, she said, noting that her staff work many long days. to get the job done.

"Even though we were fortunate enough to be able to open them early, it was kind of overwhelming," she said.

As for election day itself, Ihrke said there were no major problems reported in Steele County.

Of Steele County's roughly 23,000 eligible voters, 21,252 cast ballots this year – 8,591 through absentee/early voting and another 12,661 or at the polls on election day.

About 93% – or 8,591 of the 9,188 voters in Steele County who requested absentee ballots – returned them by mail or in person to the auditor's office.

Once the votes are certified on Friday, Ihrke said she anticipates that voter turnout will exceed the last presidential election, which hit a record of 82.99%.

Before submitting final results to the Secretary of State, state law requires the county canvassing board to select two Steele County precincts to be audited. The state mandated post-election review of voting systems will take place on Nov. 16.

UNOFFICIAL STEELE COUNTY ELECTION RESULTS

	Total Votes	Absentee Ballots
2020	**21,252**	**8,591**
2018	16,445	2,595
2016	**19,352**	**2,837**
2014	12,645	960
2012	**19,228**	**1,623**
2010	14,850	824
2008	**19,760**	**1,734**
2006	15,358	N/A
2004	**18,904**	**N/A**
2002	15,819	N/A
2000	**16,245**	**N/A**

Key: Bold denotes presidential elections
Source: Steele County Auditor's Office

Voters return Petersburg in District 24A

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

John Petersburg

John Petersburg is ready to conquer a fifth term as state representative after easily winning re-election to the District 24A house seat last week.

Voters returned Petersburg, R-Waseca, to office by a wide margin over his DFL opponent Tom Shea of Owatonna. Petersburg earned 9,417 votes or 60% compared to Shea's 6,136 or 39%.

"I appreciate and thank all the people that supported me," said Petersburg, who was first elected to the house in 2012. He said the resounding approval is indicative of him doing what he is asked to do by the residents of district.

Petersburg admits this campaign season was unlike any others in the past. "It was a strange year for the campaign season," he said. He pointed out there were no parades, fairs or large campaign gatherings for him to attend. The large functions were replaced with "small meet and greets" at people's houses, he said.

The legislator says the greatest challenge facing the state next year will be trying to balance the budget through a COVID crisis. Petersburg said he would like to find more funding for K-12 education. "There could be some shifts to bridge the gaps of funding," he said. "The better the education we can provide our children, the better they will be."

Petersburg said his key to surviving as a representative has been listening to the needs of the people. "I'm willing to listen first and talk second," he said, noting he always is available to accept emails and phone calls from residents. "I think I have a good finger and pulse on the direction of this community," he added.

Shea, who previously served as a state representative in the early 1980s, attributed his unsuccessful bid at the strong support of President Trump throughout southern Minnesota. He said he was disappointed at the final numbers of his race, but he is ready to move on. "I accept it and respect it," he said. "I wish Petersburg well."

Shea found his campaign crippled because of COVID-19 and his choice to not go door-to-door campaigning or participate with in-person meetings. "The nature of the political environment was a factor," he said.

He is pleased that his message seemed to resonate with people throughout the district. "I don't think anybody rejected my message of having a more respectful and dignified campaign," Shea said. "You can have a respectful and dignified campaign without trashing your opponent," he added.

Shea, who is retired, will continue volunteering in the community and serving as chairman of Benedictine Living community. "I'm definitely going to stay retired and work on my golf game," he said. He added he doesn't plan to run for public office again.

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER
Valerie Bomar of Owatonna wipes down a table at the voting polls Tuesday. Bomar was one of the election judges at the Steele County History Center.

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER
With a face mask in place, Beatrice Oberg of Owatonna handles registration as voters come out to vote in a pandemic on Election Day.

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER
Voters in Owatonna cast their ballots during last week's election.

Steele Board incumbents stay put

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Jim Abbe

Rick Gnemi

Unlike the 2016 election, there were no surprises in this year's commissioner races for Steele County Board.

Incumbents Rick Gnemi and Jim Abbe, both of Owatonna, easily were re-elected to their positions by defeating the former commissioners whom they unseated in 2016.

In District 3, Gnemi captured 2,001 votes (63%) over his challenger Mark Schultz, who came in with 1,114 votes (35%).

In District 4, Abbe earned 2,560 votes (62%) over James "Corky" Ebeling, who had 1,539 votes (37%).

Greg Krueger ran unopposed in District 5.

Both Abbe and Gnemi are looking forward to serving residents again for another four years.

"I'm thankful. I don't take anything for granted," Abbe said of being reelected to another term. "I'm extremely grateful to the citizens of Steele County for their support and putting their trust in me. It's not a commitment that I take lightly," he said.

As Abbe takes another term, his focus will remain being transparent and communicating with residents.

"I really enjoy it," Gnemi said of serving as a county commissioner. He credits his wife, Debra, with helping him behind the scenes.

Moving forward, Gnemi said the Steele County Detention Center will be a big issue that the board needs to address. There is currently a study underway to determine what can be done with the facility that many people believe was overbuilt and a burden to the county budget.

"The jail no matter what we do can never make any money," said Gnemi. He noted that it costs the county $140 per prisoner per day. The county currently houses prisoners for other counties, but only collects less than $60 per prisoner per day. This year has been especially difficult as the facility is holding its population in the mid 40s due to COVID-19 concerns.

"This thing is never going to be profitable," Gnemi stressed.

Gnemi called the jail "the biggest deficiency" in the county's budget. "We need to make it the most useful and effective as possible," he said. "We're trying to give everyone the best bang for their buck."

Abbe agrees that the jail needs to be the county's focus in 2021. "We are looking for a solution to the Detention Center," he said. "It behooves us to get some professional in there to give us some options. We can't accept status quo."

In the only other contested county race, Michael Klecker outperformed Alex Wayne 64% to 35% for Soil and Water supervisor.

Election officials focus on safety while voting in a pandemic

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

As head election judge for a precinct in Owatonna, Peter Kehler admits he was a little concerned about having an election in the midst of a pandemic.

The dangers of COVID-19 have been real for Kehler this year as he lost his 99-year-old mother to the coronavirus. And Kehler wasn't about to take any chances.

"We wore a mask or shield all the time," Kehler said of running the polls.

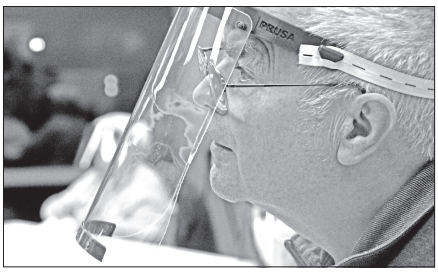
Kehler and other election volunteers also watched out for the safety of voters. After each voter left the polls, Valerie Bomar came along wiping down and disinfecting everything from the polling booths to the tables and even the pens used to vote with.

The same cleaning ritual, Kehler said, was repeated throughout the day. "This was way over the top," he said. "I'm hopeful we kept things clean and sanitary," he added.

Kehler was greeted with a line of voters outside the History Center at 7 a.m. when the polls opened. The election officials were able to catch up on the line pretty quickly, he said. He added the longest anyone had to wait at his precinct was 15 minutes.

Despite the extra focus on cleaning, Kehler admits he was a little disappointed with the in-person voting. He realizes many people voted in advance to avoid dealing with the polls during a pandemic. "Participation was higher than in the

SEE **ELECTION OFFICIALS, A11**



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER
Peter Kehler of Owatonna serves as the head election judge for the voting precinct at the Steele County History Center. He has been serving as a judge for about 12 years.

20 ☑ 20 VOTE

2020 ELECTION RESULTS

STEELE COUNTY ELECTION RESULTS BY PRECINCT

	PRESIDENT		U.S. SENATOR		U.S. HOUSE		MN SENATE 24		MN REP 24A		MN REP 24B		MN SENATE 27		MN REP 27		STEELE-DIST. 3		STEELE-DIST. 4	
	Trump	Biden	Lewis	Smith	Hagedorn	Feehan	Jasinski	Steinkamp	Peters-burg	Shea	Daniels	Marti-nez	Dornink	Sparks	Bennett	Marti-nez	Gnemi	Schultz	Abbe	Ebeling
Aurora Township	260	75	229	79	227	90	250	75	X	X	254	67	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Berlin Township	190	79	164	87	161	93	186	81	X	X	193	69	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City-Blooming Prairie	638	424	548	409	548	451	X	X	X	X	X	X	562	426	654	396	X	X	X	X
Blooming Township	180	83	167	80	168	90	182	78	X	X	189	71	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Clinton Falls Township	199	73	186	65	173	83	197	70	196	72	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Deerfield Township	294	81	273	80	265	91	297	75	295	77	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City-Ellendale	190	93	152	98	157	102	183	96	X	X	184	89	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Havana Township	277	98	250	96	226	126	284	89	X	X	278	85	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lemond Township	246	83	221	87	203	101	230	86	222	94	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City-Medford	466	227	415	212	419	234	491	197	X	X	485	188	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Medford Township	237	100	218	90	204	106	236	98	X	X	222	102	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Meriden Township	286	103	246	106	246	122	283	98	279	103	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Merton Township	184	45	162	58	156	66	180	51	X	X	181	46	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City-Owatonna-W1,P1	723	632	623	604	621	647	754	615	734	639	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City-Owatonna-W1,P2	973	660	890	622	849	701	1 028	583	998	615	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City-Owatonna-W2,P1	703	501	587	454	585	525	718	499	693	519	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	677	464
City-Owatonna-W2,P2	1 118	748	1 073	704	1 055	765	1 215	653	1 186	673	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1 158	622
City-Owatonna-W3,P1	512	443	462	377	437	436	530	400	518	414	X	X	X	X	X	X	533	288	X	X
City-Owatonna-W3,P2	684	505	559	473	578	521	674	496	652	515	X	X	X	X	X	X	685	400	X	X
City-Owatonna-W4,P1	797	592	725	531	699	614	847	550	823	578	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City-Owatonna-W4,P2	960	673	847	623	860	677	991	609	967	630	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City-Owatonna-W5,P1	779	599	737	560	712	628	819	554	797	571	X	X	X	X	X	X	783	426	X	X
City-Owatonna-W5,P2	736	558	683	490	661	555	780	499	746	529	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	725	453
Owatonna Township	311	111	288	112	278	117	309	105	311	107	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Somerset Township	326	144	304	137	290	157	330	135	X	X	334	127	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Summit Township	203	64	180	75	179	79	190	64	X	X	193	61	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

OTHER LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL RESULTS IN STEELE COUNTY

PRESIDENT		
Donald J. Trump	12,472	60%
Joseph R. Biden	7,794	37%

U.S. SENATOR		
Jason Lewis	11,189	55%
Tina Smith	7,309	36%

U.S. SENATOR		
Jim Hagedorn	10,957	53%
Dan Feehan	8,176	40%
Bill Rood	1,273	6%

MN SENATE 24		
John R. Jasinski	12,184	64%
Roger Steinkamp	6,856	36%

MN SENATE 27		
Gene Dornink	562	53%
Dan Sparks	426	40%

MN REPRESENTATIVE 24A		
John Petersburg	9,417	60%
Tom Shea	6,136	39%

MN REPRESENTATIVE 24B		
Brian Daniels	2,513	73%
Ashley Martinez-Perez	905	26%

MN REP DISTRICT 27A		
Peggy Bennett	654	62%
Thomas Martinez	396	38%

SUPREME COURT		
Michelle MacDonald	7,446	44%
Paul Thissen	9,328	55%

BLOOMING PRAIRIE MAYOR		
Curtis Esplan	557	53%
Tom Blome	494	47%

BLOOMING PRAIRIE CITY COUNCIL		
* Greg Johnson	767	41%
Joseph Motl	305	16%
Trevor Kruckeberg	323	17%
* Marcy Sundine	483	26%

CLAREMONT MAYOR		
Kiel Schleusen	52	24%
Tasha Dahl	86	39%
Rick Butler	29	13%
David Stein	51	23%

CLAREMONT CITY COUNCIL		
* Deborah Ellis	112	36%
* Jacob Klejeski	109	35%
Andrew Rucker	71	23%

ELLENDALE MAYOR		
Matthew Bartsch	251	97%

ELLENDALE CITY COUNCIL		
* Duane Goebel	170	36%
* Jackie Froman	153	32%
Derek Bartness	148	31%

GENEVA MAYOR		
Steven Bailey	215	76%
Write-In	69	24%

GENEVA CITY COUNCIL		
* Susan Phillips	221	46%
* Taff Worrell	236	50%

GENEVA COUNCIL SPECIAL ELECTION		
Kathleen Crabtree-Wayne	139	47%
Jacob A. Jensen	99	34%
Jordan Carroll	54	18%

HAYFIELD CITY COUNCIL		
Arnold (AJ) Anderson	477	49%
Steven Feist	367	38%

HAYFIELD SPECIAL ELECTION COUNCIL		
Adam Anderson	520	91%
Write-In	51	9%

HOLLANDALE CITY COUNCIL		
Bennett Schlag	26	10%
Henry Manges	31	12%
* Debbie Majeske	80	32%
* Rodney Zimmerman	68	27%
Bennett Drenth	48	19%

MEDFORD MAYOR		
Danny Robert Thomas	508	74%
Lois M. Nelson	175	26%

MEDFORD CITY COUNCIL		
Nick Sorensen	182	15%
* Chad Merritt	272	23%
Matt Dempsey	240	20%
Cory Samora	129	11%
* Mandy Mueller	302	26%

MEDFORD SCHOOL BOARD		
John Sutherland	974	22%
* Jackie Berg	1,072	25%
Betsy Chambers	986	23%
* John Anhorn	1,305	30%

NRHEG SPECIAL ELECTION		
JoAnn Hagen Maloney	2,302	98%

NRHEG SCHOOL REFERENDUM		
Yes	951	34%
No	1,850	66%

OWATONNA MAYOR		
Ethan Cords	3,553	28%
Thomas Kuntz	9,231	72%

NRHEG SCHOOL BOARD		
* Terri Engel	1,324	19%
Nancy Lageson	719	10%
* Dan Schmidt	1,351	20%
Karen Flatness	1,015	15%
Tami L. Tufte-Lacanne	717	11%
Jennifer Johnson	620	9%
* Loren Schoenrock	1,025	15%

OWATONNA COUNCIL AT LARGE		
Matt Durand	5,475	45%
Douglas Voss	6,573	54%

OWATONNA CITY COUNCIL-Ward 2		
Greg Schultz	2,446	99%

OWATONNA CITY COUNCIL- Ward 4		
Kevin Raney	2,332	99%

OWATONNA SCHOOL BOARD		
* Eric Schuster	8,323	25%
* Timothy Jensen	8,644	27%
Dom Korbel	5,375	17%
* Deborah Bandel	6,259	19%
Abdulahi A. Osman	3,685	11%
Write-In	159	.5%

OWATONNA REFERENDUM		
Question 1:		
Yes	8,211	52%
No	7,474	48%
Question 2:		
Yes	6,104	39%
No	9,533	61%

STEELE COUNTY COMMISSIONER- District 3		
Rick Gnemi	2,001	64%
Mark Schultz	1,114	35%

STEELE COUNTY COMMISSIONER- District 4		
Jim Abbe	2,560	62%
James Cory Ebeling	1,539	37%

STEELE COUNTY COMMISSIONER- District 5		
Greg Krueger	3,553	99%

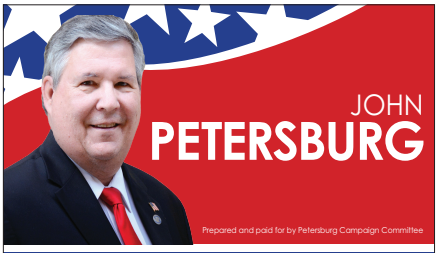
STEELE SOIL AND WATER SUPERVISOR- District 2		
David Melby	16,308	99%

STEELE SOIL AND WATER SUPERVISOR- District 4		
Dan Hansen	16,057	99%

STEELE SOIL AND WATER SUPERVISOR- District 5		
Michael Klecker	10,546	64%
Alex Wayne	5,825	35%

WALTHAM MAYOR		
Sean Arndt	67	88%
Write-In	9	12%

WALTHAM CITY COUNCIL		
* Brooke Carpentier	45	36%
* Lucas Berndt	59	48%
Write-In	20	16%



Thank You!

I would like to thank you for the confidence that you placed in me to represent District 24A for another term. I look forward to working for you. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns as I want to represent you the citizens of District 24A.

John Petersburg

Phone: 507-461-4377 • Email: JPfor24A@live.com

Thank You

Our campaign message was that each of us need to take personal ownership of the conduct of our governmental institutions and the leaders we elect. I believe if our democracy is to survive and thrive, these qualities are essential.

At the end of the day, it's the voter's choice. I have personally congratulated Representative Petersburg and expressed my support of his leadership efforts to heal the political divide.

Stephanie and I are truly humbled and appreciative of the support we experienced from so many in our community and we will continue to be committed to the values we promoted in our campaign.

Sincerely,
Tom Shea

THANK YOU

RICK GNEMI

Steele County District 3 Commissioner

I would personally like to thank you for your support and encouragement these past four years. I look forward to serving all the citizens of Steele County. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Home telephone: 507-451-3813
Steele County phone: 507- 444-7427
Email: rick.gnemi@co.steele.mn.us

I look forward to fighting for YOU and Steele County to protect your tax dollars and to build unity within the county.

Prepared and Paid for by Rick Gnemi for County Commissioner

JOHN

JASINSKI

MINNESOTA SENATE DISTRICT 24

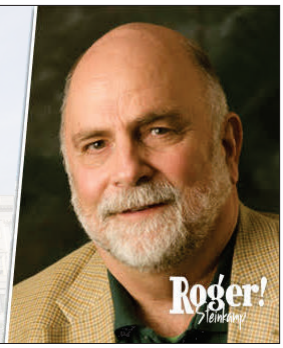
I would like to thank the citizens of Senate District 24 for your continued support and encouragement. I will do my best to continue to earn your trust - **I WORK FOR YOU!**

- Senator John Jasinski

JASINSKIFORSENATE.COM

Heartfelt gratitude to all who supported my campaign and voted!
We can't hibernate until the next election.
We can hold our elected officials to account.

- Roger



Paid for by Roger Stenkamp MN Senate Committee PO Box 1177 Faribault, MN 55021

COVID Hasn't Kept The Turkeys From Gobbling With Thanks!

Area businesses want to show their thanks for supporting them through a difficult year with the coronavirus. We encourage you to get out and register for turkeys just in time for THANKSGIVING!

Contest rules:

- Clip registration coupon from newspaper and enter at any of the businesses listed. Only coupons from the newspaper will be accepted.
- Entries will be accepted until 12 Noon on Friday, Nov. 20.
- Drawings will be held and turkey winners contacted by Monday, Nov. 23.
- Winners will be awarded 10-12 lb. Open Acres turkeys from Vandal's Family Market in Blooming Prairie. Limit one winner per family.

MINER'S Outdoor & Rec
Happy Thanksgiving!
507-583-2712
Hwy 218 South,
Blooming Prairie, MN
www.minersoutdoor.com
Hours:
Monday-Friday: 8:00am-5:30pm
Saturday: 8:00am-Noon

Name: _____
Town: _____
Phone: _____
Miner's Outdoor & Rec

Happy Thanksgiving To You & Yours
Orthodontic Specialist
Building Healthy Smiles
New Patients Welcome • Free Consultations
Dr. Deborah J. Lien, DDS, MBS
132 2nd Ave. NE Blooming Prairie
507.583.6613

Name: _____
Town: _____
Phone: _____
Dr. Lien

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

Name: _____
Town: _____
Phone: _____
Vandal's

STEELE COUNTY Times
411 E. Main St.
Blooming Prairie
583-4431

Name: _____
Town: _____
Phone: _____
Steele County Times

Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.
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We understand small business because we are a small business
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Phone: _____
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583-6691

Name: _____
Town: _____
Phone: _____
Hometown Insurance

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Your source for all your flooring needs
Call Us Now for a Consultation!
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Name: _____
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PRAIRIE HOME
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330 Main Street E
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917
507.583.7637

Name: _____
Town: _____
Phone: _____
Prairie Home

usbank
Blooming Prairie Branch
236 East Main St.
507.583.6627
usbank.com
Member FDIC
happy Thanksgiving

Name: _____
Town: _____
Phone: _____
US Bank

Happy Thanksgiving! November 26

Sacking cancer

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Medford sacks cancer to help one of its own during Friday night's football game against Randolph. Calab Svenby and his wife Val and daughter Cici enjoy the game from the stands as Calab's brother, Ty, is one of the assistant coaches. The Tiger Touchdown Club sponsored the Sack the Cancer fundraiser to help the Svenby family with medical expenses as Calab has been fighting colorectal cancer for the past year.

Hwy. 56 reopens after pavement repairs in Dodge County

Hwy. 56 reopened Monday, Nov. 2 between West Concord and Hwy. 14 in Dodge County as crews completed the concrete pavement repairs, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

The concrete pavement repairs began in early October on Hwy. 56. There were 236 repairs needed on the concrete highway ranging from damaged concrete panels and failed joints. Traffic was detoured during this time. The repair work helps lengthen the life span of the pavement.

Some road construction projects still continue in the region. MnDOT urges motorists to always be attentive, drive with caution, slow down in work zones and never enter a road blocked with barriers or cones. Following guidance from state and federal health officials, and to prevent further spread of COVID-19, crews will maintain safe physical distances while working.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times

Owatonna Proud

JEFF ELSTAD

This famous quote taken from "A Tale of Two Cities" by Charles Dickens has been used many times in our history. We may all agree that this phrase provides a perfect description of our current times. We are faced with many daily reminders of the pandemic, political divisions, social unrest and more. Yet we are also finding ways to spend time creatively with those we love, we are discovering new ways to provide education to our kids and we may spend more time learning from self-reflection.

The results of our two levy requests on the November ballot offer another example of Dickens' quote. We were very happy that voters approved renewing our existing levy – which provides critical funds for operating our schools and supporting our staff. We were also terribly disappointed that voters did not approve increasing that levy. Our hope was that by combining budget cuts with a phased-in operating levy increase, our community would recognize this as a shared approach to solving our financial challenges. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

Because the levy increase was not approved, we now need to identify an additional $2 million in budget cuts for next school year. These cuts will result in class size increases through teacher and staff layoffs, with cuts to other areas likely as well. And the cuts will be on top of $2.5 million already cut for last year and this year. We are grateful for the renewal – but now we need to determine why the community did not approve a levy increase, as this loss will have a big impact on our future financial planning. We welcome any insights community members may have on this split vote.

On the national level, we are near the end of a very contentious presidential election season, with final votes cast and results being tabulated. Regardless of who is elected President, some of us will be happy and some of us will not. It's the unfortunate reality of our divided nation at this point in our history.

Whatever the outcome, we must remember these things:

- We are all humans, deserving of respect and dignity.
- Our children are watching and listening. What we say and do matters.
- The safety and well-being of all Owatonna Public Schools students is our number one priority.

Regardless of the outcome of the election, words and actions that are racist, sexist, or generally toxic to the fabric of our country are not acceptable – especially in our schools. Even remarks made in jest can be misunderstood and hurtful, making it even more difficult for us to come together as a nation. Our students may have questions, which we need to answer in as neutral, educational and comforting a way as possible. Our students will be our future leaders, and it's up to all of us to provide them with the opportunity to learn and grow without fear.

If you are a parent concerned with how to talk with your children about the election results, please contact me (*jelstad@isd761.org, 507-444-8601*) and I can share a resource from the National Association of School Psychologists that may help. Even those without children may find some of these suggestions valuable.

Thank you for helping provide a safe environment for everyone in the Owatonna community following this election. We have amazing students, we are all in this together, and we are #OwatonnaProud.

MnDOT advances more than 200 road projects

The Minnesota Department of Transportation advanced or completed more than 200 road and bridge projects during the 2020 construction season that is now wrapping up throughout Minnesota. An additional 36 projects enhanced safety at railroad crossings, and 15 projects extended or repaired runways or other infrastructure at local airports.

"Minnesota's 2020 construction program represented a broad mix of projects that improved all modes of transportation and provided jobs throughout the state during a challenging year," said Jay Hietpas, MnDOT assistant commissioner, operations. "While COVID-19 created challenges in some areas, the reduced traffic volumes we saw early in the season helped in some cases to minimize disruptions to travelers. We want to thank everyone in both the private and public sectors who helped make this season a success, and worked diligently to keep projects on track."

Notable projects completed in 2020 include the Highway 5 "Around the Airport" construction near MSP International Airport; the new Highway 63 bridge in Red Wing; concrete resurfacing and safety improvements along 18 miles of Highway 23 between Cottonwood and Granite Falls; and reconstruction of five miles of Highway 210 west of Fergus Falls. In addition, two important multi-year projects that began in 2020 include the Twin Ports Interchange in Duluth, and improvements to Interstate 94 between Maple Grove and Clearwater.

Some of the construction highlights in Southeast Minnesota include:

- **Highway 14, Dodge Center to Owatonna** – Constructed bridges over new four-lane sections, paved new road west of Claremont. Work continues in 2021-2022.
- **Highway 63/I-90 interchange** – Replaced northbound Highway 63 bridge over I-90, reconstructed I-90 off-ramps to northbound Highway 63, included acceleration lanes and rerouted Highway 30 intersection. First year of two-year project.
- **Highway 60/Highway 57 roundabout in Wanamingo** – Constructed new roundabout.

ELECTION OFFICIALS: *focus on safety while voting in a pandemic*

FROM A7

past, but it came from advanced voting," he said. "A lot of people didn't feel comfortable going to the polls."

He credits his staff for making things go flawlessly at the polls. "Our election officials were absolutely wonderful," Kehler said. "I felt so good about how things went yesterday. I think it was as good as it can get," he said on the following day of the election.

Kehler, who retired about a decade ago after working at Federated Insurance for 45 years, plans to continue being an election judge as long as he remains healthy. "Your health at any age can change quickly, but it can change even quicker when you are older," he said, adding he will be close to 80 years old by the next presidential election in 2024.

> "We wore a mask or shield all the time."
>
> **Peter Kehler**
> Election Judge

GUEST COLUMN

Defiance of newspapers

BY DON HEINZMAN

I've dedicated 50 years of my professional life to editing and reporting the news, believing when readers have all the facts, they usually make the best decision. That's what makes Democracy work.

So I am shocked when readers say the news is "fake" and President Donald Trump says that the news media is the enemy of the people.

I've always believed that a community of citizens wants to know what's going on around them and how legislators, school board members and city council members are spending their tax dollars to provide services and education.

Furthermore, I believe readers want editors to write editorials and print guest opinions on major issues, so they can stay informed and vote for the best political office seekers.

That's what the media do at great expense and dedication.

Your newspaper publisher packs a lot of positive powers by going out of their way to make life better for their readers with special campaigns.

With that in mind, let me tell you about Lynn Smith, publisher of the Monticello Times with 2,500 subscribers in a town of 1,800 back in 1974.

Smith quit smoking cigarettes when he realized how bad it was for his health. He wrote a full, front page editorial on "The Tyranny of Smoking" that got a lot of media attention. But he wanted to do more, so he came up with the idea of getting the smokers in Monticello to give up smoking cigarettes for one day.

He called the campaign D-Day for Don't Smoke Day and with some help got 293 smokers to sign a pledge not to smoke.

Smith picked Jan. 7, 1974, for D-Day and four weeks before that day he published the names of all the pledge signers on Page One of his newspaper.

The idea attracted state and national attention and on D-Day the media descended on Monticello to tell the story.

Grocers put their cartons of cigarettes under the shelves and pharmacies pulled all of their cigarettes off their shelves. Three months later, Smith contacted all those who signed the pledges and found 10% had quit for good.

Later that same year, the Minnesota Cancer Society was so impressed with Smith's campaign, it organized the first Minnesota D-Day Oct.7, and named Smith its first chairman.

Two years later, The Cancer Society of California changed the name to the "Great American Smokeout" that is observed to this day in November. Other countries also celebrate the Smokeout.

Imagine how many people have quit smoking because one newspaper publisher, like so many, found a way to do more than just inform his readers. He probably saved their lives.

The next day, someone complains about the news media and its fake stories, tell them about Lynn Smith who went out of his way to give his readers and thousands of others the GIFT OF LIFE.

That's the American Way.

Don Heinzman is a retired community newspaper journalist who lives in the Twin Cities. He has provided editorial guidance for the Steele County Times over the past 10 years.

OBITUARIES

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

LaFaye Farrow, 92, Ellendale

LaFaye Farrow

LaFaye M. Farrow, age 92, of Ellendale, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2020 at Whispering Oak Place Assisted Living in Ellendale.

LaFaye Muriel Hegna was born Aug. 9, 1928 in Hayfield, to Oscar and Fern (Petersen) Hegna. She attended Hayfield High School and graduated in 1946. In 1948, she married Stanley Johnson. Together the couple had four sons. They later divorced.

LaFaye then married Lerald "Larry" Farrow on May 29, 1971, at the First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie. In addition to being a homemaker, while her children were in school, LaFaye worked at the Owatonna Tool Company. She also worked at the Blooming Prairie Bakery. She served as a member of the V.F.W. Auxiliary, Eastern Star Auxiliary, and the First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie.

LaFaye enjoyed traveling. She and Larry wintered in Texas every year and enjoyed the warm weather. The couple also loved traveling to Mexico and throughout the United States.

She enjoyed playing bingo and many card games. Some of LaFaye's favorites were playing 500 with her friends and Skip-Bo with her kids, who would always have to play by her rules. LaFaye was a wonderful cook and enjoyed cooking for a large group. Her specialties were lefsa, rosettes, krumkakes, and all kinds of Norwegian baked goods. She would always look forward to annual lutefisk dinners. LaFaye enjoyed caring for her garden and canning in the summer. She also liked feeding and watching birds, rummaging, and collecting turtle figurines.

Survivors include her sons, Thomas (Barbara) Johnson, James (Shirley) Johnson, David (Peggy) Johnson, Kevin (Tammy) Johnson of Blooming Prairie, MN; step-children, Larry Farrow of Blooming Prairie, Leon Farrow of Wells, Lori Farrow of Owatonna, Cheryl Weber of Garden Grove, Calif.; nine grandchildren, Eric (Ramona) Johnson, Davin (Jennifer) Johnson, Christopher (Shannon) Johnson, Corey Johnson, Rebecca Johnson, wife of the late Derek Johnson, Melissa (Justin) Kormann, Stacey (Steven) Busho, Katie (James) Bissel, Lance (Chelsea) Johnson; six step-grandchildren; 23 great grandchildren with one on the way.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Oscar and Fern Hegna; husband, Larry Farrow in 2019; grandson, Derek Johnson; two brothers; and two sisters.

Funeral services were held on Sunday, Nov. 8, 2020 at First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the church was limited to no more than 80 people for the service. Visitation took place one hour prior to the service at the church on Sunday.

Interment was in Danish Baptist Cemetery, Blooming Prairie. Services are prearranged and performed by Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home in Blooming Prairie. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com.

Colleen Loken, 78, Owatonna

Colleen Loken

Colleen A. Loken, 78, of Owatonna, died Tuesday, Oct. 27, 2020, at Traditions 1 of Owatonna.

She was born Sept. 24, 1942, in Nevada, Iowa, the daughter of Mike and Carolgene (Hobein) Dassenko. Colleen graduated from Oak Park Academy in 1960 and attended Southern Missionary in Tennessee.

On Aug. 12, 1962, she married Dale Loken at the Le Sueur River Lutheran Church in New Richland. Colleen worked at Jostens for a few years. Colleen was a city girl who turned into farm girl where she drove tractor and combine. She worked side by side with her husband, Dale and their family.

She had many hobbies such as doing puzzles, square dancing, macram?, knitting, sewing and quilting. Colleen made a special quilt for each of her grandchildren. She was an excellent cook and baker especially her pies. Colleen was known for entertaining, planning the food around the event with family and friends. She was able to travel to many places including, Germany, Ukraine, Moldova, throughout the United States to the east and west coasts, trips to the mountains, a cruise to Alaska and also wintering in Texas for many years. Colleen will be remembered as a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

She is survived by her husband Dale Loken of Owatonna; children, Brian (and Tracy Spinler) Loken of Medford, Joan (and John) Maxwell of Donahue, Iowa and Jennifer (and Jeff) Therring of Hayfield; grandchildren Katherine (Jacob) Riffe, Whitney (Christopher) Kyllo, Ashley (Jesse) Osmundson, Heather (Dustin) Hale, Miranda (Joseph) Mizar, Joshua Therring and Jaelynn Therring; great-grandchildren, Mason Kyllo, Morgan Hale, Clara Osmundson, Garrett Riffe, Wyatt Osmundson, Hunter Hale, Aubrey Kyllo and Reagan Riffe; sisters, Mary (and Carlos) Schwantes of Ballwin, MO and Lola (and John) Shannon of Overland Park, KS; many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Mike and Carolgene Dassenko; sister, Sonja Williamson; nephew, Jon Williamson and son-in-law, Gary Richards.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020, at 11 a.m. at Christ The King Lutheran Church, Waseca with Pastor Cary Larson officiating with a visitation one hour prior to the service at the church. Interment will be at a later date in the Le Sueur River Lutheran Cemetery in New Richland.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to Christ The King Lutheran Church, Waseca.

Michaelson Funeral Home of Owatonna is handling the funeral arrangements.

Marcia Pesch, 77, Waltham

Marcia Pesch

Marcia K. Pesch, age 77 of Waltham, passed away Friday, Nov. 6, 2020 at Mayo Clinic Hospital Rochester, St. Mary's Campus.

Marcia Karen Cordes was born March 7,1943 in Red Wing to Floyd and Clara (Kohrs) Cordes. She attended Lake City High School and graduated in 1960. Following graduation, she went to work as a telephone operator until 1966.

On June 18,1966, she married James Pesch in West Florence, Minn. Together the couple had three children. She worked hard raising the children and helping James on the farm in many different ways. Marcia was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church, Waltham. She was a dedicated member who participated in many ways including, ladies aide, teaching and being the superintendent of Sunday School, and LWML.

She was also involved in the Birthday Club and Bowling League. She loved spending time with her children and grandchildren, especially attending their school and sporting events. She enjoyed traveling and reading. She will be dearly missed by all that knew and loved her.

Survivors include her husband, James Pesch of Waltham; son, Rodney Pesch, of Austin; Karen (Robert) Inwards of Waltham, and Janet Pesch of Racine, Wis.; two grandchildren, Leah Inwards of Winona, and Nicole Inwards of Lacrosse, Wis.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Floyd and Clara (Kohrs) Cordes.

A graveside service will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020 at Trinity Lutheran Cemetery Waltham one forth mile north of Trinity Lutheran Church on 570th Ave. Due to COVID, the family requests that you wear a facemask and practice social distancing at the cemetery. If you wish to have a chair, please bring one to the cemetery for the service.

Memorials are preferred to the Trinity Lutheran Cemetery Fund. Services are being arranged by Worlein Funeral Home in Austin. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com.

Keith Phillips, 66, Pittsburg, Texas

Keith Phillips, 66, son of Emerita Phillips and the late Rayfield Phillips, of Pittsburg, Texas, passed away on Nov. 2, 2020 from complications of COVID-19 virus.

He is survived by one daughter, Ann Taylor, one sister, Amanda MacKay, two brothers, Doug and John Phillips.

He was preceded in death by his father, and one sister, Linda.

At this time there will be no services.

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Recipe Corner

Banana Bread

1-1/2 cups sugar

1/2 cup margarine or shortening (1 stick)

2 eggs

1/2 cup milk

1 teaspoon baking soda (stir in with milk)

1 teaspoon baking powder

2 cups flour

1 cup or 2 to 3 mashed bananas (over ripe)

Optional: chopped walnuts

Mix all of the ingredients together in a bowl. Pour into two loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Sponsored by Steele County Times

BOOK NOOK

Catch the Creativebug to new activities

NANCY VAILLANCOURT

Are you looking for new ideas on how to spend your time at home? Do you want to give handmade gifts for the upcoming holidays? If so, your Blooming Prairie Branch Library card can help you out! Don't have a library card?! Then call or stop in at the library (in the City Center building) and we will get you your very own library card. It just takes a few minutes.

Your library card will give you unlimited access to Creativebug, a database with thousands of award-winning video classes. New classes are released daily. Like to crochet? Sew? Paint? All those crafts, plus many, many others are featured on Creativebug. There are also downloadable patterns, templates, recipes, and more.

All skill levels are included for the crafts, from beginner to almost expert. There is a special kids section online to give you ideas and instructions for some cute, easy to do crafts.

Try Creativebug by going to the website: https://www.creativebug.com/lib/owatonna. This database is made available to the patrons of both the Owatonna Public Library and Blooming Prairie Branch Library through the financial support of the Owatonna Public Library Foundation. As Creativebug's material states, "You're more creative than you think!"

John Nechanicky, 98, Owatonna

John Nechanicky

John L. Nechanicky died on Nov. 9, 2020 at Timberdale Trace in Owatonna, he was 98 years old.

A private family Mass is set for Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020 at 11 a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Owatonna. Burial will take place at Holy Trinity Catholic Cemetery at Litomysl with Military Honors by the Steele County Funeral Unit. A parish Rosary will be recited at 10:30 a.m. at the church. It will be required that all participants follow the COVID-19 guidelines, wear a mask and the family requests social distancing.

John was the son of Frank and Jeannette (Staricky) Nechanicky and was born on May 13, 1922 at Ellendale. He graduated from Ellendale High School in 1940. He entered military service in September 1942. John was the first, World War II veteran to serve as Commander of Post 296 American Legion of Ellendale.

He was a farmer all of his life and an auctioneer for 35 years. He served on the Summit Town Board for 33 years as well as councilman for the City of Ellendale for four years. On May 5, 1947, John married Lucille Buelow at Owatonna. They remained married for 69 years. Mr. Nechanicky is survived by three daughters and one son: Teresa (Peter) Von Ruden of Algona, Iowa; Marcella (James) Cook of Mankato; Michael (Connie) Nechanicky of Owatonna; and Susan (Jon) Knopik of St. Cloud. He is also survived by 10 grandchildren, four step-grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and five step great-grandchildren.

John was preceded in death by his spouse of 69 years, parents, seven sisters, four brothers, and one great-grandson.

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

BIRTHDAYS

Nov. 11
Kai Robert Luna
Lee Trotman
LinKynn Doocy
Kristin Schneider
Gina Gimbel
Samone Hernandez
Darrel Trom

Nov. 12
Jason Williamson

Nov. 13
Dylan Heuer
Erica Nelson

Nov. 15
Chase Wangen
Chloe Joe Tocko

Nov. 16
Daniel Krell
Vivian Polinder
Matthew Esplan

Nov. 17
Terri Underwood
Talon Arndt
Jeffrey Doerhoefer
Tom Trotman
Salem Cremeans

ANNIVERSARIES

Nov. 11
Doug & Kristi Miner
Steve & Becky Braaten

Nov. 12
Ricky & Nancy Hansen

This weekly feature sponsored by:
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HAYFIELD

We have hope

Deacon Kris Oppegard
TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
OWATONNA

Married people make it their business to remember how love began. Anniversaries recall their wedding day, year after year. Wedding rings remind them of their commitment. Wedding photos capture the moment when 'two became one.' In remembering the beginning of their love, couples find new hope for the future.

Forgetting, on the other hand, is bad news. That is not a good situation. If one person forgets the all-important anniversary, tears and emotions may follow.

The book of Psalms remembers, too. When things get bad, these poems refer to the past – particularly to the great events when, under Moses, the Israelite nation began. God freed the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, carried them through the Red Sea, gave them directions for living and ushered them into the promised land.

The memories were not all positive, however. The Israelites could, in fact, be brutally frank about their early failings. Even as they remembered how persistently wonderful God had been, they also remembered how rebellious, complaining, and forgetful they had been. Yet they remained hopeful because they had one great, happy reason to celebrate: God had continually kept his promise to love them.

Psalm 77 is a 'remembering' poem entitled, "God's Mighty Deeds Recalled." It starts with deep despair. "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?"

Then thoughts turn, deliberately, to the past. Remember the turmoil at the banks of the Red Sea, could anything be worse? But in that turbulent water, they had seen God's power: God had led them through to safety. He would do the same again.

For most of 2020, it feels like we have been living in turbulent water. From COVID-19 to natural disasters to civil unrest to political divisions, it has been so uncertain and so emotional. However, that is not the end of our story. As children of God, we have hope. The book of Psalms invites[KO1] us, along with the Israelites, to relive history, either from a long time ago to just a few months ago. Like married couples remembering back, we can remember back and recall God's amazing work over the ages– his powerful victories, his promises, and proofs of love toward his people, to us. Through such remembering, we are strengthened to face the uncertain future, with hopeful hearts, and to recommit ourselves to trusting in God's never-ending care for us.

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

LUTHERAN

AURORA LUTHERAN
6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna
Interim Pastor:
Rev. Dale Svendsen
507-451-2819
office@auroralutheranchurch.org
Worship: Sunday at 9 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA
106 Third St. SE., Geneva
Pastor Kristen Venne
507-256-4288
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sunday

FIRST LUTHERAN – AFLC
503 Radel Ct., Ellendale
Pastor Richard Sliper
507-684-2451
Men's Bible Study:
8 a.m. Saturday
Worship: 9 a.m. Sunday
(Kids church- 9 a.m. and Confirmation- 10:15 a.m.)
Jesus and Me: 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesday & Thursday
Call to Prayer:
7 p.m. Tuesday
Bible Study:
9:30 a.m. Wednesday
Wednesday School:
6:15-7 p.m. followed by Youth Group- 7-9 p.m.

FIRST LUTHERAN – ELCA
434 First St. SW.,
Blooming Prairie
Senior Pastor:
Rev. Heidi Heimgartner
Associate Pastor:
Rev. Mike Walerius
507-583-6621
firstlutheranbp.com
Worship Service- 9 a.m.
Sunday School- 10 a.m.

FIRST LUTHERAN – LCMC
8953 SW 37th Ave., Hope
Pastor Sandy Miller
507-451-3854
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School, Adult Ed:
10:15 a.m. Sun.

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN – LCMS
2500 7th Ave. NE.,
Owatonna
Pastor Greg Schlicker
507-451-4125
goodshepherdowatonna.com
Indoor Worship: Sundays 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Online Worship: Sundays 9 a.m. or anytime on website

MOLAND LUTHERAN – ELCA
7618 NE 84th Ave., Kenyon
Pastor Nancy Edwardson
507-789-6661
Worship: 10:45 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN – ELCA
9651 SW 75th St., Ellendale
507-465-8366
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9 a.m. Sun.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN – LCMS
1054 Truman Ave.,
Owatonna
Pastor Kirk Griebel
507-451-2720
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Education Hour:
10:15 a.m. Sun.

RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN – ELCA
30456 Mower-Freeborn Road, Austin
Leandra Anderson, Pastor
507-583-2038 or
507-437-3000
www.roglutheran.org
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN – LCMS
4532 SE 84th Ave.,
Claremont
Pastor Alan Broadwell
507-528-2404
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN – LCMS
28959 630th Ave., Sargeant
Pastor Collin Duling
507-251-5568
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9 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

ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA
30450 570th Ave., Waltham
Pastor Dwight DoBell
507-567-2474
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – LCMS
202 E. Park Ave., Hollandale
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
507-567-2272
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – ELCA
2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden
Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith
507-451-2165
Sunday Worship Indoor:
10 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA
609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
507-451-4520
tlcowatonna.org
Senior Pastor:
Rev. Todd Buegler
Associate Pastor:
Rev. Amanda Floy
Deacon: Kris Oppegard
Worship: 5 p.m. Saturday;
8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School:
8:15 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.

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

TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS
108 Third Ave. SW., Medford
Pastor Mark Biebighauser
507-451-0447
Worship: 8 a.m. & 10 a.m.
Education Hour: 9 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.

ZION LUTHERAN – ELCA
7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale
Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith
Sunday Worship Indoor:
8:30 a.m.

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN – ELCA
1909 St. Paul Road,
Owatonna
Senior Pastor:
John Weisenburger
Associate Pastor: Lisa Carlson
507-451-4853
oursaviorsowatonna.com
Worship: 8:15 a.m.- Traditional, 9:30 a.m.- Sunday School/Adult Education
10:45 a.m.- Contemporary

CATHOLIC

CHRIST THE KING
205 Second Ave. NW,
Medford
507-451-6353
Father James Starasinich
Deacon Patrick Fagan
Mass: 5:30 p.m. Sat.
Mass: 9 a.m. Mon. & Fri.

CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS
307 SW First St.,
New Richland
Father Brian Mulligan
507-234-6244
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL
9946 SE 24th Ave
Owatonna
Father John Wilmot
507-583-2784
www.litomysl.webs.com
Sunday Mass at 8:30 a.m.
Litomysl Finance Council:
2nd Thursday
Litomysl Pastoral Council:
2nd Thursday every other month

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC
150 NE Second St., Hayfield
Father John Wilmot
507-477-2256
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday
Reconciliation: 3:45 pm Saturday

SACRED HEART PARISH
810 S. Cedar Ave.,
Owatonna
Father John Sauer
Parochial Vicar
507-451-1588
www.sacredheartowatonna.org
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday;
8:30 a.m. &10 a.m. Sun.
Spanish Mass:
11:45 a.m. Sun.
Daily Mass: 7:15 a.m.
Reconciliation: 4 p.m. Sat.
Adoration: 8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Thurs.

ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC
114 E. Main St.,
Blooming Prairie
Father John Wilmot
507-583-2784
www.stcolumbanuschurch.com
Mass: 10:30 a.m. Sunday
Reconciliation: 9 a.m.
First Friday & Saturday

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH
512 S. Elm Ave., Owatonna
Father James Starasinick
Deacon Patrick Fagan
507-451-4845
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m.
Reconciliation:
3-3:30 p.m. Sat.
Daily Mass:
8 a.m. Tues., Wed. & Fri.
(Communion Service 8 a.m. Thursday)
Adoration Chapel available Mon. – Fri. 7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Key fob required after hours or weekends

CHRISTIAN

CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT
540 SE 18th St., Owatonna
Dr. V. Brent Carlson, Pastor
507-451-1032
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Sunday Connections:
10:15 a.m.

PENTECOSTAL

FIRST UNITED PENTECOASTAL
230 Locust Ave., Owatonna
Pastor Eliazar Talamantes
507-363-2240
Worship: 10 a.m. Sunday;
6:30 p.m. Wednesday

METHODIST

BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST
43089 180th St., Medford
(Seven miles west of Medford on CR 23)
Pastors JJ & Stefanie Morgan
507-835-8726
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST
200 Sixth St. NW., Ellendale
Pastor Randy Cirksena
507-684-2731
www.ellendaleumc.org
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST
815 E. University, Owatonna
Rev. Lisa J. Vick Pastor
507-451-4734
www.owatonnaumc.org
Traditional Worship (Pathways):
9 a.m. Sunday

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

CEDAR CREEK
30 E. Main St., Hayfield
Pastor Aaron de Neui
507-477-2255
www.cedarcreekchurch.org
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.

DESTINY CHRISTIAN
2515 Harvest Lane NW,
Owatonna
Pastors Rich and Amy Pettet
507-456-4775
www.destinycc.org
Worship: 9 a.m. Sunday
6:30-7:30 p.m. 1st and 3rd Wednesday

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

NEW BEGINNINGS
332 14th St. NE., Owatonna
Pastors Scott & Joan Peterson
507-413-0209
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.

MENNONITE

PRAIRIE MENNONITE
13638 750th St.,
Blooming Prairie
Bishop Dennis Martin
507-583-7532
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Prayer Meeting: 7:30 p.m. Wed.

MORMON

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
404 31st St. NW, Austin
Bishop Rick Bremner
507-433-9042
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.

PRESBYTERIAN

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
109 E. Main St., Hayfield
Pastor Kirk Johnston
507-477-2631
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
P.O. Box 66, Claremont
507-528-2320
Pastor Douglas Walters
10 a.m. Worship

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
2373 Seventh Ave. NE,
Owatonna
Pastor Brian Beavers
651-955-4032
Worship: 11 a.m. Sat.
Bible Stud: 9:30 a.m. Sat.

UCC

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
211 Main St. S., Medford
Rev. Richard Waters
507-451-4596
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

VIBRANT LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD
702 Third St. S., Ellendale
Pastor Patrick Stitt
507-684-3421
www.vibrantlifeag.com
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.
Kids Church: 10:30 a.m. Sun.

BAPTIST

FIRST BAPTIST
104 First Ave. NE,
Blooming Prairie
Pastor Matt Fennell
507-583-2673
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.
& 6:30 p.m. Wednesday
Sunday School: 9 a.m.
Bible Study: 11:30 a.m. Sun.

FIRST BAPTIST (OWATONNA'S OLDEST CHURCH)
123 E. Main St., Owatonna
Pastor Carla Nelson
507-272-9834
www.firstbaptistowatonna.com
Fellowship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.

BETHEL BAPTIST
1611 Hemlock Ave.
Owatonna
Pastor Michael Simmerman
507-451-8548
www.bethelowatonna.com
Worship: 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sunday

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

VICTORY LIFE
105 2nd St NE Geneva
Pastor Diane Butler
507-402-0960
Worship on Sundays
Prayer Service: 7:30 a.m.
Church Service: 9:30 a.m.
Children's Church: 9:45 a.m.

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11/ST3

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(Search under Blooming Prairie High School)

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Shrek is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International. All authorized performance materials are supplied by MTI at www.mtishows.com.

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HONORING OUR VETERANS

A lifetime of service for this vet

BY ALEX NUEHRING
STAFF WRITER

The Tet Offensive was a major escalation of the Vietnam War and it caused U.S. generals to request reinforcements in Vietnam. One of those soldiers sent to Vietnam was Blooming Prairie resident Karl Luiken, who was deployed from Fort Campbell in Kentucky to Nha Trang, a city on the southeastern coast of Vietnam.

A member of the U.S. Army, he served in an administrative capacity from 1968 to 1969.

Even though he wasn't on the front lines, Luiken said there really was no safe territory and there was always the risk of crossfire wherever you went.

In 1969, he was sent home and entered the U.S. via Fort Lewis in Washington.

He said his transition to civilian life was inconspicuous.

"I wasn't treated poorly like I heard some other soldiers were, but I wasn't welcomed home either," Luiken said.

Nearly half a century later in 2015, he and his wife built a house on their farm in Blooming Prairie and he became involved with the American Legion. A couple years later he was named commander of the Blooming Prairie American Legion, a position he held from 2017 to 2019.

Luiken said his work with the American Legion is meaningful to him because, "It's how we lobby on behalf of veterans and veterans' affairs and honor the memory of our soldiers."

In addition to his service in the American Legion, he's also active in the VFW, the Blooming Prairie Honor Guard and the Veterans' Open Roundtable, which is a monthly presentation by veterans about their life experience and how they served their country. Those presentations have stopped due to COVID-19 but can be found online at owatonnalive.com

Through his work in the Honor Guard, Luiken and approximately 30 other members give full presentations at funerals of deceased veterans. Full presentations include the playing of taps, a 21-gun salute and the presentation of the American flag that covered the casket to veteran's widow or loved ones.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Blooming Prairie Honor Guard includes: front row, from left: Bob Prokopec, Ken Trom, Jim Prokopec, Jack Noble and Leroy Schroeder; back row: Howard Lestrud, Gary Hansen, Ken Vermilyea, Doug Johnson, Steve Wencl, Gary Thorson, Don Glynn, Tom Peterson, Ken Esplan, Karl Luiken, Paul Nelson, Maynard Johnson, Keith Holman, Tom Walters, Joe Wacek and Paul Stender. Not pictured: Burt Knutson, Mike Hoffman, Maylon Heinz, Bruce Kubicek, Bob Ingvalson, Ron Nelson, Kurt Blome, Harlan Hinzman, Ron Janning, Cletus Glenn, Joe Prokopec, Merle McNutt, Herman Clausen, William Hanson and Burnell Hanson.

"It's our way to honor the departed and give them one last goodbye," he said.

The Color Guard is also involved in activities on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July and Veteran's Day. This year, there will be a Veteran's Day presentation at 11 a.m. at the Servicemen's Club with lunch at noon. Luiken said only 150 people will be allowed to attend the lunch and those interested should call the club at 507-583-7884.

While he's experienced a lot of Veteran's Days, he said this day never loses its significance.

"It's a very important day for all veterans. It brings back memories of our service and reminds us of the sacrifices that all veterans have made for our country."

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A SPECIAL SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS!

On Veteran's Day 2020, we want to honor the brave men and women of our Armed Forces for their past and continued service to our great country. Their courage, dedication and patriotism make us proud to be Americans. Thanks for defending our freedom and our ideals. We owe you much gratitude!

Blooming Prairie Area Veterans

This list is provided by Blooming Prairie American Legion and may not be a complete list.

Dale Anderson
Allen Anderson
Merle Anderson
Jesse Banton
Tim Bass
Deanne Berdan
Quinn Berdan
Brian Berg
Michael Bibus
Kurt Blome
Tom Blome
Clarence Boyd
Calvin Boyd
Steven Boysen
Robert Braaten
Sam Brewington
Donald Broscoff
Luke Broulik
Harlan Buck
Galen Bungum
Joel Burr
Marvin Camerer
Don Carlson
Edward Christenson
Kenneth Christenson
Herman Clausen
Darrell Cowden
Dustin Doocy
Darrell Erickson
Kenneth Esplan
Lawrence Esplan
Major Brad Evans
Jeffery Fisher
Dean Froman
Steve Garness
Harold Garwood
Cletus Glynn
Don Glynn
George Goodew
David Goodnature
Brandon Gross
Carl Haflinger
Gary Hansen
James B. Hansen
Marlo Hansen
Burnell Hanson
Nick Hanson
Wayne Harvey
John Heinerman
Gary Hershley
Richard Hierlmaier
Sterling Himle
Harland Hinzman
Mike Hoffman
Dan Holland
Keith Holman
Brian Hoveland
Richard Hoveland
Terry Hughes
Craig Huinker
Philip Iacovino
Robert Ingvalson
Donald Iverson
Ron Janning
Jon Jelinek
Kenneth Jensen
Gary Jensen
Douglas Johnson
Maynard Johnson
Paul Johnson
Michael Jones
Robert Juhnke
Richard Kelly
Patrick Kennedy
Doug Kinny
James Kittelson
James Klecker
Burton Knutson
Larry Knutson
Mike Kollar
Scott Krampitz
Nick Kreckelberg
Glenn Kruckeberg
Keith Kruger
Bruce Kubicek
Andrew Kubista
Ian Kubista
Howard Lestrud
Harold Lassahn
Terry Lindquist
Richard Linskey
Jerome Loew
Karl Luiken
Del Martin
Merle McNutt
Gerald Mikel
Doug Miner
Peter Molland
Frank Moon
Alan Morton
Michael Musegades
Eugene Myre
April Nease
Anthony Nelson
Luke Nelson
Holli Naatz
Dwayne Nelson
Jerome Nelson
Paul Nelson
Peter Nelson
Ronald Nelson
Charles Nicholson
John Noble Roy Olson
Darwin Peterson
Donald N. Peterson
Galen Peterson
Harland Peterson
Robert Prokopec
James Prokopec
Joe Prokopec
Larry Rowe
Stanley Rudsenke
James Russell
Michael Ryan
Ken Ryks
Robert Salinas, Jr.
Ken Schaub
Bryce Schlicter
Jaclyn Schlicter
Richard Schwartz
LeRoy Schroeder
Noel Severson
Eric Shoden
Ed Skala
Greg Skillestad
Ron Skou
David Stahl
Paul Stender
Melissa Stolz
Roger Syverud
David Tabor
Buddy Thompson
Helen Thompson
Muriel Thompson, Sr.
LeRoy Thoreson
Gary Thorson
Bruce Tiegen
Dale Tollefson
Gaylord Tollefson
Kenneth Trom
Adam Trostem
Michael Underwood
Robert Vaith
Leonard Valek
Tim Van Ravenhorst
Wilford VanHal
Joseph VanWych
Kenneth Vermilyea
Jonathan Vogt
Joe Wacek
Scott Wagaman
Chuck Wagner
Thomas Walerak
Tom Walters
John Welch
Steve Wencl
Eric Webberson
Warren Winn
John Whiting
Walley Wilke
Charles Williams
Jack Williamson
Ralph Witzel
Bob Wolf
Jason Wolff

SPECIAL HONOR TO OUR WWII VETS

We want to thank the two known living veterans of World War II from Blooming Prairie for their incredible courage and dedication!

Merle McNutt - 101
U.S. Navy
(Happy Birthday on Nov. 14, turns 102)

Genevieve Peterson - 104
U.S. Army

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WITH RESPECT, HONOR AND GRATITUDE

On this Veteran's Day 2020, we want to honor our living veterans!

Medford Area Veterans

This list includes both living and deceased veterans from the Medford area. They are listed on the Veteran's Memorial in Medford.

Ronald O. Schultz
Jacob J Spinler
Silvin Pribyl
John H Hager
Kenneth C Arnold
Lloyd B Barker
Lyle A Tuttle
Sidney Wayne Jarva
Lester B. Kanne
Harlow Louis Pirkl
Harvey J Kniefel
LaVern Jeno
Roger Hagen
Wesley C Bettin
Francis Porter
John F Paul
Donald Clarence Pye
Verlyn F. Cornelius
Philip J. Heim
Steven P. Clark
David H. Nelson
Jorgen Milton Jorgensen
Robert A Hobgood
Merrill O. Jensen
Raymond a Pelinka
John Mickey Iverson
Milton L «Mickey» Iverson
James E Rowe
Delmer Borwege
Larry Houglum
Jeffrey G Dusek
Terry T Witter
Eugene Cott
Cody Allen Hager
Rondol Wayne Hager
Eugene Michael Hager
Raymond Spinler
Mark H Dressel
Peter Clare Thoreson
Dick McCann
John C Paul
Dennis J Hager
Theodore F Langeslag
Leo Joseph Chicos
Jim Beucler
Derald Gene Meixner
Roger H Borwege
Donald James Hagen
Paul Thomas Kavitz
Donald Hager
Vincent Steinbauer
Eugene F Keller
Bernard L Heim
Earl H Patten
Charles A Baumgart
Dean G Baumgart
John F Baumgart
Camille Joseph Condon
David Andrew Condon
Henry Edward Maas
Dennis K Kasper
Gerald J Mikel
George A Larson
David M Cammock
John R Nowak
William J Luedtke Jr.
Gene W Luedtke
Herbert H Jaster
Lyle W Jaster
Owen W Nagel
Nolan Sackett
Ben McAdams
Harlan B Matz
Richard Allen Tuttle
Ryan O'Hearn
Bud G Phillips
Fred Palmer
Edwin A Strohschein
James William Hoffman
Lawrence F Koneck
Emil Carl «Chuck» Johnson
Marie Monique Beaulieu Johnson
Lester J Schalm
L Joseph Schalm
Lowell Hellevik Jr
Charles M Wencl
Harry Lynn Robinson
Luverne Schlobohm
Albert J Maas
James Joseph VonRuden
Harry F Rosskopf
James D Rosskopf
Lowren F Blume
Elmer W Blume
Allen D Blume
Bernard Matejcek
Anton Edward Stadler
James C Schull
Harold A Schoenfeld
Kenneth E Jacobson
Mark Bartosch
Hollis H Root
Donald D Rafdal
Arnold L Beyer
Frank Reyant
Joseph F Matejcek
George B Matejcek
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Carlton Joseph Uselman
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Juel Sigward Halverson
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Glen Ellsworth Broughton
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Howard R Blume
Jerry Pacshke
Richard A. Thayer
William W. Quick
Darrel Vernon Pofahl
Urban Spindler
Richard W. Cain
Kenneth E. Morrow
Bernie LaCanne Sr
Francis Talbert
Santiago H Gonzales
Fernando Y Gonzales
Gregory Lloyd Grossbach
Hubert Prinzing
Jacob Nelson
Kivden Cornelius
John Cornelius
Edgar Burmeister
Frank Young
Bruce Young
Jerome A Wetzel
Glenn V Wetzel
Frank Talbert
Darrel Bruessel
Loren Bruessel
Alvin Volkmann
Charles Danks
Lorraine Cordova
Harland A. Blume
Robert Green
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Fair reflects on atypical year at annual meeting

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Typically, the annual meeting of the Steele County Agricultural Society serves as a recap for the Steele County Free Fair as well as a chance for members to get to see and steer the direction for next year. However, due to certain obvious circumstances, this year's meeting was not as typical.

With social distancing and COVID protocols adhered to at the Nov. 5 annual meeting, board members delivered remarks on this year's events and expressed their optimism for next year.

"This is really different, an annual meeting when there was no fair," fair board President Dan Deml said at the outset of the meeting. "Who would have ever imagined it a year ago."

With the fair canceled back in May the annual report was a bit unusual. "This is the first time since 1943 that that's happened," Manager Scott Kozelka. "The board put their heads together and said what could we do."

"We looked at a bunch of things and we looked at the dollars that were available to us and we got some maintenance done," he said of all the work that went on across the grounds during this extended offseason. "We never stopped."

Although the specter of COVID lingered over the proceedings, a tone of optimism and a special mention of the positives pervaded the meeting including hosting the OHS graduation, Red Ribbon week, and special events like Dairy Days.

"Working with the ADA we decided to put our heads tougher and we came up with Dairy Days," Kozelka said. "It was really amazing and we had long lines and it worked out and everyone was smiling and everyone got their fair food fix."

The board also organized a substitute event during fair week. "All along we knew we were going to do something during fair week," Kozelka said of the food stand drive through event held during fair week. "We had 15 booths and everyone had a great time."

Kozelka thanked his staff and all those involved with the summer's events including a special COVID-proof

SEE FAIR REFLECTS, B12

THE HUSKIE CONNECTION

Natural education

STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

This is the team who helped make McKinley's outdoor classroom a reality. The team consists of members of the PTO, McKinley garden staff, teachers, STEAM Coordinator Tom Meagher, and representatives from Mohs Homes.

Community works together to add outdoor classroom

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Sometimes in life timing is everything.

When district STEAM Coordinator Tom Meagher was first notified that the Minnesota DNR was going to be offering grants for outdoor education, COVID-19 was just barely on the horizon.

"I've taught at the nature center outside of McKinley for 20 years and I always thought that it would be nice to have a hub from which we could go out into nature and then regroup," Meagher explained of his initial idea.

As it turned out, there were others at McKinley who shared Meagher's enthusiasm for an outdoor learning space including second grade teacher Val Seath. "We were dreaming big and we knew we had a beautiful space with our nature center," Seath said.

After talking it over with the PTO and staff, Meagher went ahead and applied for the grant. "When we applied for the grant, we were one of 30 projects selected out of 600," he said. "It was a very competitive grant."

The $5,000 grant covered some of the cost while the PTO pledged its support for the remainder. "In the meantime, COVID happened and we sent it off for quotes," Seath recalled. "Mohs Homes gave us a good bid and we moved forward from there."

"I knew that when we got back to school that an outdoor space would be really important," Seath said. While the outdoor classroom is a great educational space it is also a perfect addition when it comes to teaching in the time of COVID.

With students and staff following protocol, having a space where students can get outside and take off their masks is a perfect fit. "Just being outside period is useful and it allows for more flexibility," Seath explained. "Kids can get fresh air and take their masks off."

"It's a fantastic way for kids to be learning where they can social distance but it's also safer outside," Meagher said. "There's easily enough room in the nature center for two to three classes to be outside and learn about nature in a safe and healthy manner."

The outdoor classroom, which is situated besides a 16-plot garden, is designed as a jumping off point for staff to introduce a lesson. "It's a good place to begin a lesson and the nature center is a few steps away," Seath said.

SEE NATURAL EDUCATION, B8

Area companies to build new home for Habitat for Humanity

Two Rivers Habitat for Humanity is teaming up with two area companies to build a new home in Owatonna.

Daikin Applied and Climate by Design International will be building a new home for a deserving family in spring of 2021. Both businesses will partner with Two Rivers Habitat for Humanity to build the home from the ground up.

The total donation of $100,000 for the home sponsorship will help fund the materials and labor needed to build the home. Both companies are also graciously asking employees to volunteer on the home build.

A family has already been chosen to receive the home, and they are anxiously awaiting the construction. Depending on the weather, Two Rivers is currently hoping to break ground on Linn Avenue in April 2021. That property was donated to Habitat for Humanity from the Kottke family in Owatonna.

"We are honored to have the opportunity to work with Daiken Applied

SEE AREA COMPANIES, B8

Changes during a crazy year

Steele Talkin'
JESS STROMLEY

Can you believe that it is November? What a crazy year 2020 has been. Our word of the year here at Community Pathways is "change." Changes seem to happen by the hour some days. First and foremost, we want to say thank you for all your support and cooperation during this challenging time.

Winter is knocking at our door and with that comes more changes. Marketplace is still doing curbside food distribution and has gone back to pre-packed boxes. Last month we applied for and received a grant through Hunger Solutions to go towards COVID related program adjustments. This grant has allowed us to purchase two cell phones and an electronic sign that will help with our curbside food ordering

SEE CHANGES DURING, B8

Medford inducts 17 to National Honor Society

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Seventeen students at Medford High School have been inducted into the National Honor Society.

This year's new inductees are Rian Clouti-er, Nicole Harfmann, Josiah Hedensten, Dylan Heiderscheidt, Josey Homeier, Grace Keller, Jessica Neuharth, Luz Peralta, Brooke Purri-er, Payton Ristau, Lily Roehrick, Nicole Schrot, Hannah Schull, Anna Sobrack, Tyler Steffen, Erika Thurnau and Ava Westbrock.

Honor Society consists of students in grades 10-12 who have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher. The application requires students to show how they have excelled in each of the four pillars, which include service, leadership, character and scholarship. Applications are reviewed by a selection committee of faculty members.

At the induction ceremony last month, Superintendent Mark Ristau and Principal Kevin Babcock shared with the inductees about the honor of being inducted into the organization.

Current members also spoke on each of the four pillars.

As a way to showcase the service portion of the organization, the Honor Society teamed up with the Red Cross on Nov. 3 to hold a blood drive at the school. The group collected 38 units of blood. "It was very successful," said Rebecca Mohr, Honor Society adviser.

The Honor Society is also gearing up for Giving Tree fundraiser where members ask the community to sponsor an ornament that represents a family or child from the community in need to purchase gifts for them.

"We have some other volunteer service activities in the works," Mohr said. "We are definitely excited about this year, and we have a wonderful group of students to make it all happen," she added.

PHOTO COURTESY SKYE DEVOE

Three of the new inductees to the National Honor Society at Medford High School are, from left: Anna Sobrack, Hannah Schull and Nicole Schrot.

STEELE-DODGE **BUSINESS**

Hayfield natives open upholstery shop in Owatonna

BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN
COUNTY WRITER

A casual stop at an Owatonna business to have some dining room chair cushions redone has led to a new business for a pair of Hayfield natives.

Nick and Haylee Brown both grew up in Hayfield and moved to Owatonna about four years ago.

Haylee Brown explained that one day she and a friend stopped by Rosebrock and Sons Upholstery in Owatonna. The business was owned by Steve and Patty Jessop, who had been operating the business for more than 25 years.

What happened next was unexpected to say the least.

"I wasn't sure what I was walking into when I first entered Jessop's shop to help drop off dining room chair cushions with a friend," Haylee Brown said. "Steve noticed my curiosity and excitement and pitched me the idea of owning and running the upholstery business sooner, rather than later, due to his known diagnosis of leukemia."

The Jessop's, she said, were well-known in Owatonna, having started the business in 1996 and being involved in re-covering booth seats, stools, chairs and other furniture. Steve Jessop, often with the help of his sons, reupholstered furniture in homes, churches, furniture stores and theaters.

With his leukemia diagnosis, Jessop was thinking about the future of the business.

Originally from Hayfield, Nick, 28, and Haylee, with their 2-year-old daughter have lived in Owatonna for four years, and they absolutely love the community.

"We had been seriously talking about starting our own business here, unsure what it would be," Haylee said. "After Steve's business proposal, I went home and talked to Nick. It seemed like a no-brainer. I work part time for Allina Hospice as a music therapist, and do a lot of crafting on the side. Nick works at Bosch as a welder on the weekend shift and is a hunter and outdoorsman in his spare time. We're both hands-on learners, and pick up new skills quickly, so re-upholstery felt right for us.

So, in October of 2019, the Browns began shadowing Jessop. He gave them many tips, she said, and increased their knowledge of the business. Haylee said she also shadowed Patty, who managed the consultations and did a lot of behind-the-scenes work.

Things quieted down in February and March of 2020 as the Jessops took a nice family trip to Mexico before COVID-19 struck hard. Upon returning, Steve's health took a turn for the worst and he passed away toward the end of May.

On Aug. 1, the Browns opened their business as The Upholstery Show of Owatonna. They are working out their home now building the business while maintaining their current jobs at Bosch and Allina Hospice. They are doing re-upholstery work Tuesday through Thursday, she said.

Haylee said that she and Nick learned a lot from Jessop, and while they wish they could have spent more time with him, he helped them to feel confident and they are ready to continue the Jessop's legacy, serving the Owatonna community.

"We want to thank the community for the outpouring support we've already received thus far," she said. "We're very excited to serve your home and business! The best way to learn more is by visiting our website, www.upholsteryshopowatonna.com."

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Nick and Haylee Brown are operating the Upholstery Show shop in Owatonna. They started the business in August.

Premier launches new website

Since launching its redesigned website on July 1, Premier Manufacturing has seen website traffic climb to record numbers.

Site traffic is up six-fold, according to Premier Director of Marketing Steve Hansen. The spike in site traffic is attributed to new built-in search engine optimization and increased social media activity with content marketing and search engine AdWords.

"We've made numerous changes to www.premier-mfg.com to make the site more user-friendly and incorporating high-resolution imagery that makes it easier for customers to search for the products they need," Hansen said.

Hansen says Premier has also updated its logo and branding images, as well as its territory and distributor maps. Each of these updates makes the new site more user friendly and enjoyable to visit.

"Updating the logos and branding is a critical first step to the overall redesign. Now that the site is rebuilt and incorporates the updated brand, our focus has shifted to driving customers to the site," Hansen said.

Notable updates to the site include the all-new 820ELA Saf-T-Latch, along with product filters for pintle hitches and jacks. Hansen says these product filters really help customers to select the correct part number based on their needs.

"We've also added a 'Get a Catalog' feature where site visitors can view or download a digital version of the catalog. Of course, we will also send them a physical copy if that's their preference," Hansen said.

To view the changes at Premier's website, visit www.premier-mfg.com.

Hy-Vee implements sterile cart system

Sterile Cart is fully automated and will be installed in the majority of Hy-Vee stores in November

Hy-Vee, Inc. is introducing an automated cleaning system that fully cleans and sanitizes shopping carts after every use.

By mid-November, more than 200 Hy-Vee stores across its eight-state region will have a Sterile Cart system in operation. Hy-Vee is the first grocery chain to implement the fully automated sanitization system across its company.

This innovative system cleans several carts quickly and consistently, eliminating the need for store employees to manually clean each cart throughout the day. Additionally, it cleans and sanitizes the entire cart and not just the handles and high-touch areas.

"Since the beginning of the pandemic, it has been our desire to put Hy-Vee customers' minds at ease with thorough sanitization measures. We are always looking at innovative ways to improve store operations, improve the shopping experience for customers and, most importantly, ensure the health and safety of our customers and our employees," said Randy Edeker, chairman, CEO and president of Hy-Vee, Inc.

Sterile Cart is manufactured by Minnesota-based IZZA Manufacturing and distributed by Ultra Green Packaging. Kristin Davidson of Ultra Green said the system was conceived and designed specifically to help mitigate the spread of the coronavirus.

"The Sterile Cart system uses a hospital-grade disinfectant that is proven to kill 99.9% of germs and viruses that cause illnesses, including coronavirus," said Davidson. "The system ships fully assembled, takes up minimal space and sanitizes 1-2 carts per second. The Sterile Cart system provides peace of mind knowing that the carts are cleaned after every use."

The Sterile Cart system uses a low-pressure spray system and a dry-in-place disinfectant. It has a small footprint (6x4 feet) and can easily be installed where shopping carts are returned and staged for customer use. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Hy-Vee stores regularly clean carts throughout the day, and have sanitation wipes available where customers grab a cart. This new system eliminates the need to manually clean each cart while providing a more consistent and thorough disinfecting process.

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AREA COMPANIES: *to build new home for Habitat for Humanity* FROM B6

and CDI to empower a family in Owatonna to have an affordable, safe, and healthy home by the end of 2021," said Kevin Worden, executive director of Two Rivers. "Strong corporate citizens coming together with dedicated residents who care about their community can accomplish amazing things, and we're excited that we are all coming together to partner with a hardworking future Habitat homebuyer. It's time to get building."

Daikin Applied is a manufacturer of heating and cooling equipment for commercial and industrial facilities. The company has three plants in Southern Minnesota – one in Owatonna and two in Faribault – and employs more than 1,200 people in the area.

Based in Owatonna, Climate by Design International designs and builds dehumidification and air-handling technology for use in ice arenas, hospital surgical suites, food processing facilities and other applications.

"We are honored to have the opportunity to work with Daiken Applied and CDI to empower a family in Owatonna to have an affordable, safe, and healthy home by the end of 2021," said Worden. "Strong corporate citizens coming together with dedicated residents who care about their community can accomplish amazing things, and we're excited that we are all coming together to partner with a hardworking future Habitat homebuyer. It's time to get building."

Habitat for Humanity will also be building a second home along Mosher Avenue SW by Lake Kohlmeier next year.

"You don't have to spend much time in Owatonna before you realize that this is a very special community where people truly care for one another. Because of this, we're thrilled to share that two families will have an affordable, safe, and healthy place to live through the construction of two new homes in 2021," Worden said. "Habitat for Humanity has a long and proud history of building strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter for Owatonna families, and we're honored to be able to build on that history next year."

Two Rivers Habitat for Humanity was created in 2018 by the merging of two affiliates. Rochester Area formed in the early 90s and Steele-Waseca Area merged together to create one affiliate that serves five counties, including Steele, Dodge, Olmsted, Wabasha and Waseca.

Since 1993 the Steele-Waseca area has built 23 homes and repaired around eight homes. Two Rivers builds strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter for local families.

NATURAL EDUCATION: *Community works* FROM B6

When it came to the actual design of the classroom, Meagher was inspired by his own experiences living on a Native American reservation for seven years. "One of the things with Native American education is that people are seated in circles so that everyone has an opportunity to speak and listen," Meagher said. "We wanted circular seating and partial shelter from the wind and rain."

The classroom is designed to function year-round, with partial shelter from wind or –as is likely the case in Minnesota– snow. "When we go outdoors there's not really bad weather, there's bad clothing," Meagher joked. "It's perfect for winter, and the nature center has a lot to offer that time of year."

Both Meagher and Seath are advocates for outdoor learning, and rightfully so. "My own personal background being a field biologist means this type of learning is something of a passion for me, and its shared by many of the teachers in the district," he said. "Kids these days don't have enough exposure to nature as when I was a boy."

"I think anytime the students can get outside they appreciate it," Seath said. "There's a natural curiosity about being outside and by learning through nature we can discover how other things work."

Seath and Meagher both attest to the teamwork that went into making this space a reality including from the PTO, McKinley garden staff, and Mohs Homes. "The community involvement and the amount of people who worked together is really inspiring, it's a perfect example of the community coming together to help our kids continue to get quality education," Seath said.

With the addition of the classroom, and including the nature center and garden, McKinley school sports close to 30 acres of natural space for students to get introduced to outdoor STEAM learning. "Combining the idea for an outdoor meeting classroom and agricultural learning seemed like a good fit," Meagher said.

McKinley is not alone in the district when it comes to the promotion of STEAM learning outdoors. The Owatonna Middle School is currently building an outdoor classroom on an acre of land. "We converted one acre of mown lawn to a natural prairie space," Meagher explained.

The nature center is designed to be used by all schools within the district and will continue to inspire students and teachers with new methods and approaches to learning and give them a new appreciation for nature.

CHANGES DURING: *a crazy year* FROM B6

process. Our customers park in one of the four parking spots and call the number listed on the building. A volunteer or staff member answers and takes their food order. The food is then placed on a cart and brought outside where our customers then unload it into their vehicle. This allows for less contact and keeps everyone warm and safe. The health and safety of our customers, staff and volunteers is always our top priority.

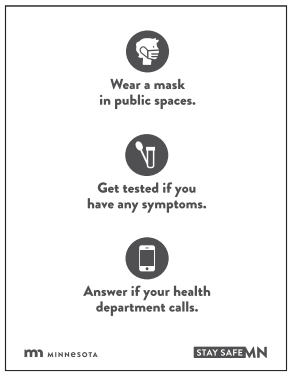
Marketplace Delivery has increased by 50% in number of households it serves since the beginning of this pandemic. The new trailer we purchased last month with a grant through Hunger Solutions has been a blessing for this program. It has allowed us to handle this increase and will allow us to do more community outreach in the months to follow.

Unique Finds continues to stay open at limited capacity. We are allowing three customers in to shop at a time. Face mask and temperature checks along with social distancing is required. We are accepting donations every Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. We are still in need of more winter coats, snow pants and boots of all sizes.

We are also in need of volunteers to help unload trucks. Channel One, our food bank out of Rochester, brings deliveries to us starting at 8:00 – 9:15 a.m. every second and fourth Friday of the month and every Wednesday morning from 9:00 – 9:45 a.m. We usually have approximately 10,000 pounds to unload off pallets and put on our shelves at these deliveries. If your businesses or organization has an employee or two that could help us just one day a month, it would make a big difference for us.

Due to COVID, many of our volunteers who previously help us with our customers are vulnerable and have not returned. That means we have a variety of 3 hour shifts throughout the day that are perfect opportunities for someone looking to get out of the house. We actively practice social distancing and wear our masks, so we feel our building is quite safe. Please contact Deborah at Community Pathways to talk about any of these opportunities. Our number is 507-455-2991.

Jess Stromley is the fund development and marketing coordinator for Community Pathways in Owatonna. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.



BLOOMING PRAIRIE

NOV. 17
5 p.m. – Ambulance Commission Meeting

NOV. 18
Noon – Chamber Meeting, Council Chambers

4 p.m. – Police Advisory Committee Meeting

NOV. 19
7 p.m. – BP Cancer Group Turkey Bingo, Pizza Cellar

ELLENDALE/HOPE/GENEVA

NOV. 13
10 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building

NOV. 16
10 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building

NOV. 18
10 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

NOV. 14
9 a.m. – Tri M Graphics Open House, Tri M Graphics

NOV. 16
7 p.m. – Medford Zoning Board Meeting, City Hall

NOV. 17
9:30 a.m. – Garden Time, Owatonna Library
10:30 a.m. – Storytime Online with Darla, Facebook Live

4:30 p.m. – Library Board Meeting, Owatonna Library
7 p.m. – Owatonna City Council Meeting, City Hall

NOV. 18
Owatonna EDA Meeting, City Hall

NOV. 19
10:30 a.m. – Storytime Online with Darla, Facebook Live

Holiday tea party set for Dunnell House

The Steele County Historical Society is taking reservations for the Children's Victorian Tea, which will be held on Saturday, Nov. 21 from 10:30 a.m. to Noon or 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Dunnell House.

Tables will be placed throughout the Dunnell House for this fun, pre-holiday event. Children will listen to the story 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, eat dainty sandwiches and desserts, as well as receive a take-home holiday craft. Holiday piano music will be played during your meal. Come dressed in your holiday best for this special day!

Reservations can be made by calling 507-451-1420. The cost of the event is $20 per adult/child combination and $10 for additional persons in your group. Face coverings will be required, social distancing will prevail, and hand sanitizer will be available at the door.

Toys for Tots kicks off annual drive

The Steele County Toys for Tots Program kicked off its annual Toy Drive on Nov.1. Volunteers delivered Toy Collection boxes to more than 50 participating businesses in Steele County.

New unwrapped toys may be placed in the boxes through Thursday, Dec. 10. For a full list of Steele County Toys for Tots Toy Donation Sites check the Steele County Toys for Tots website: http://owatonna-mn.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-sites/donate-toys.aspx

If you are interested in being a Steele County Toys for Tots Donation-Site please contact Mike, Toys for Tots drop-site manager, at 507-774-9094.

If you need to request toys for your child, applications for the Steele County Toys for Tots Program are available online at the Toys for Tots Website and also in Blooming Prairie, Ellendale, Hope, Medford, and Owatonna following locations:

- BP Public Library
- Ellendale Food Shelf
- Lerberg's Foods
- First National Bank – Hope
- State Bank of Red Wing – Medford
- Tone Music in downtown Owatonna
- Minnesota Prairie County Alliance
- Owatonna Public Library
- Salvation Army
- Steele County Employment Services
- Community Pathways of Steele County
- Steele County Public Health

Toys will be distributed to children ages 0-15 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Owatonna on Dec. 14-17. All recipients are required to wear a mask to pick-up their toys.

Parents/guardians must complete an application and drop it at Steele County Community Pathways, or put in the drop box at Minnesota Prairie County Alliance, or mail to Steele County Toys for Tots at P.O. Box 199, Owatonna, MN 55060. Emailed applications will not be accepted.

Because of COVID-19 Steele County Toys for Tots will select and bag your gifts. Recipients will not be selecting their own toys as they have in the past. Please print clearly and accurately and include the type of toys your children would like on your application.

Toys for Tots of Steele County has been in existence for more than 30 years. It operates within the national U.S. Marine Corp Reserve Toys for Tots program, which began in 1947. Its objective is to collect and distribute NEW and UNWRAPPED toys to Steele County needy children at Christmas. Cash and gift cards received are used to purchase toys as per directives from our national organization.

For more information about Steele County Toys for Tots visit their website http://owatonna-mn.toysfortots.org or check for updates on the Steele County Toys for Tots Facebook page.

Blood donations urged amid COVID-19 pandemic, upcoming holidays

The American Red Cross is urging healthy donors of all blood types to band together to give blood and help ensure a stable blood supply for patients this holiday season.

The traditional slump in blood donations between Thanksgiving and New Year's comes as the blood supply already faces challenges created by the coronavirus pandemic. Required medical treatments and emergencies don't pause for the holidays or a widespread coronavirus outbreak.

Make your appointment to give blood, platelets or plasma with the Red Cross by downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enabling the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device.

In thanks for making time to donate around Thanksgiving, those who come to give blood Nov. 25-28 will receive an exclusive Red Cross long-sleeved T-shirt, courtesy of Suburban Propane, while supplies last.

The Red Cross is testing blood, platelet and plasma donations for COVID-19 antibodies. The test may indicate if the donor's immune system has produced antibodies to this coronavirus, regardless of whether an individual developed COVID-19 symptoms. Red Cross antibody tests will be helpful to identify individuals who have COVID-19 antibodies and may now help current coronavirus patients in need of convalescent plasma transfusions. Convalescent plasma is a type of blood donation collected from COVID-19 survivors that have antibodies that may help patients who are actively fighting the virus.

COVID-19 antibody test results will be available within one to two weeks in the Red Cross Blood Donor App or donor portal at RedCrossBlood.org. A positive antibody test result does not confirm infection or immunity. The Red Cross is not testing donors to diagnose illness, referred to as a diagnostic test. To protect the health and safety of Red Cross staff and donors, it is important that individuals who do not feel well or believe they may be ill with COVID-19 postpone donation.

Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and additional precautions – including temperature checks, social distancing and face coverings for donors and staff – have been implemented to help protect the health of all those in attendance. Donors are asked to schedule an appointment prior to arriving at the drive and are required to wear a face covering or mask while at the drive, in alignment with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention public guidance.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities Nov. 16-30:

FREEBORN

Albert Lea
Nov. 20: 1 p.m. – 7 p.m., United Methodist Church, 702 Highway 69 S.
Nov. 25: 12 p.m. – 6 p.m., North Bridge Mall, 2510 Bridge Ave.

Geneva
Nov. 30: 1 p.m. – 6 p.m., Geneva Community Center, 314 1st Ave SE
Hollandale
Nov. 16: 12 p.m. – 6 p.m., Hollandale Christian Reform Church, 102 Amsterdam Ave. E.

MOWER

Austin
Nov. 23: 12 p.m. – 6 p.m., Austin Eagles Lookout Arie 703, 107 11st NE

Grand Meadow
Nov. 19: 1 p.m. – 7 p.m., Emergency Service Building, 210 2nd St. SE

STEELE

Blooming Prairie
Nov. 30: 1 p.m. – 7 p.m., Blooming Prairie Serviceman's Club, Blooming Prairie High School

Medford
Nov. 27: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Medford Outlet Center, 6750 W. Frontage Road

Owatonna
Nov. 20: 12 p.m. – 6 p.m., Associated Church, 800 Havana Road

Annual meeting of Historical Society planned for Nov. 12

The Steele County Historical Society announces its annual meeting to be held at 5 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 12, in the upper room of Torey's Restaurant, Owatonna.

This new location allows ample space for social distancing; masks will be required except while eating. Monday, Nov. 9 is the deadline for dinner reservation at $20 per person.

Dinner menu choices include entree' of either wild rice stuffed chicken, or smoked pork chop, accompanied with salad, potato, vegetable, and light dessert. Guests must specify choice of entr?e when registering.

The program will include the annual report, introduction of the new Executive Director Kellen Hinrichsen, volunteer awards, and election of five SCHS board members.

If you have any further questions, please contact SCHS at 507-451-1420.

Sudoku Corner

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

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PANTHER OF THE WEEK

ISABELLA MCKENNA
This week's Panther of the Week is **ISABELLA MCKENNA.** She is the daughter of Joshua and Emily and they reside in New Richland. She is in Mr. Beynon's third grade class.
Bella is the sweetest girl you'll ever meet. She comes to school prepared, works very hard on the days she learns from home, and loves being there for her friends. She's respectful and has a positive attitude.
Bella loves to draw, play games, and play outside. Her favorite food is frozen blueberries. Keep up the great work Bella!
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Hedensten, Tigers ground the Rockets

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

A Randolph defender latches onto and pulls down the uniform of Medford's Garron Hoffman (28) who is off running with the ball in Friday night's game. The Tigers cruised to a 47-18 victory over Randolph.

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS EDITOR

The Medford football team got off to a fast start and never took their foot off the pedal, beating Randolph 47-18 on Friday, Nov. 6.

The Tigers' offense clicked right away and scored four first-half touchdowns. Senior running back Josiah Hedensten scored two of those touchdowns, while sophomore running back Garron Hoffman and quarterback Justin Ristau each scored one touchdown.

Thanks to those four touchdowns and a stingy defense, the Tigers took a commanding 28-12 lead into halftime.

One of the most impactful plays of the first half was a 35-yard pass from Ristau to Hedensten, which set up Medford's fourth touchdown of the first half.

The Tigers' offense and defense continued to excel in the second half. The offense tacked on 19 more points, while the defense held Randolph to just six points in the final two quarters.

Medford (4-1) will play its last regular season game against Triton (3-2) in Dodge Center on Wednesday, Nov. 11.

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Senior Josiah Hedensten (17) celebrated his 18th birthday Friday by scoring five touchdowns for Medford. He is shown here taking off with the ball en route to one of his touchdowns.

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Three Tigers players with Brayden Beede (55) on the ground sandwich a Randolph ball handler Friday night.

Permission for liftoff denied; Huskies beat Rockets

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS EDITOR

After losing four of its past five games, the Owatonna volleyball team got a much-needed win when it beat Rochester John Marshall 3-1 on Monday, Nov. 2.

In the first set, the Huskies got off to a strong start and cruised to a 25-10 win.

Owatonna Head Coach Tai Tolle said the keys to the Huskies' early success were their serving and decision-making.

"We came out serving aggressively and were able to get John Marshall out of system offensively in the first set. We also played in control and made solid decisions at the net," she said.

The Rockets bounced back in the second set and narrowly beat the Huskies 25-22 to tie the game at 1-1.

"We were adjusting to a lineup change in serve receive/defense. Once JM started to find their rhythm offensively, it took us a moment to find our confidence and settle in," Tolle explained.

The third and fourth set were nearly as competitive, but both times it was Owatonna who came out on top, winning 25-20 and 25-18, respectively.

She noted that the difference in the third set compared to the second was how the Huskies' defense responded to the Rockets' offense.

"We started to pay attention to JM's offensive tendencies, keyed up our blockers on their offensive leaders and adjusted our defense to be in a good position to read those shots. It paid off with some nice defensive plays on our end, and our front line did a nice job of finishing at the net," Tolle said.

Additionally, Owatonna had a strong serving night collectively with a team total of 13 aces. Sophomore setter Isabella Barrie led the effort with 5 aces.

Other Huskies who had strong performances were senior libero Haylee Mullenbach who led the team with 19 digs, senior outside hitter Emily Hagen who led the team with 14 kills and fellow senior outside hitter Lanie Schuster who tallied eight kills.

The win over John Marshall improves Owatonna's record to 3-4.

Even though the Huskies have lost more games than they've won, Tolle is happy with how her team has played throughout the first half of the season.

"All season, our focus has been on the attitude of growth over outcome. How are we pursuing growth everyday? Our players and staff have that as our central focus in the gym. Our group has shown consistently, all season, that they're willing to put in the time and the effort to improve and grow, and doing so with a positive attitude. Regardless of the outcome, as a coach, that pleases me most," she said.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Huskies' senior outside hitter Lanie Schuster hits the ball over the net during the second set of Owatonna's 3-1 win over John Marshall on Monday, Nov. 2.

Owatonna was scheduled to play Mankato East (4-1) at home Tuesday, Nov. 10.

In order to beat the Cougars, she said, "We will continue to build on things we have been working on all season: Strong serving, movement on serve receive, aggressive blocking at the net and keying our middle blockers on the opposing setter to get a quick read."

PHOTO COURTESY DANIELLE NORRID

Owatonna's Logan Norrid gets ready to dive into the water after pushing off the starting blocks.

A swimming sensation

Owatonna sophomore strokes her way to state 3 years straight

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS EDITOR

Only a small percentage of high school student-athletes participate in a state tournament, even fewer make it back-to-back years and then there's the cream of crop: students like Owatonna swimmer Logan Norrid who make it three straight years.

She recently achieved that feat by beating the state cut time in two events: the 100-yard butterfly and the 100-yard breaststroke.

What makes Norrid's recent achievement even more impressive is she's just a sophomore.

She did all that and didn't perform as well as she can.

"My goal was to get [my] best times and I just missed both of my personal bests, but I am happy I did get both state cuts. I also am happy I finished in 10th in the 100 fly and 14th in the 100 breast in the state when all of Minnesota's AA section meets were compiled," she said.

What makes her such a fast swimmer, her head coach Isaiah Fuller said, is her technique and underwater kicking.

"Logan is very efficient through the water with her strokes, there is not much wasted motion- not many

people have a stroke as efficient as her. Along with her strong stroke, Logan [is a] very good underwater [swimmer], streamline and kick, which gives her another big advantage against other swimmers [because] underwater kicking, when done right, is much faster than swimming on top of the water," he said.

In addition to her swimming skills, Norrid thinks another key to her strong performance was her mental preparation.

"I think I was in a good place mentally and was really excited to race people again. I also got a new suit so I felt really fast. I was also happy to be with my little sister and helping her with her first section meet," she said.

As if that weren't enough, she also had her passion for swimming and competitiveness energizing her performance.

"There is no place I'd rather be than in the pool. I am also a very

SEE **A SWIMMING, B12**

Panthers outlast Blossoms in volleyball action

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS EDITOR

After losing its first six games, the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) volleyball team won its second consecutive game when it came from behind to beat Blooming Prairie 3-2 on Monday, Nov. 2.

The Panthers came out strong and that fast start propelled them to a 25-17 win in the first set.

"We were aggressive in game 1. We finished the first set with 7 ace serves and 5 of those came from Hallie Schultz. Our hitters were aggressive at the net and our backrow played extremely scrappy," said NRHEG Head Coach Onika Peterson.

However, the second set was an entirely different story as the Panthers' defense struggled against the Blossoms' offense.

"We struggled in set 2–we gave Blooming Prairie too many points. We had some mental errors and had difficulty keeping the ball in bounds. Blooming Prairie has a couple big offensive threats with Trihus and Oswald in the front row so you can't help them any by giving them points from our mistakes. We needed to make BP earn a couple more of those rather than give it to them," she said.

The third set came down to the wire, but it was the Blossoms who came away with a 27-25 win to take a 2-1 set advantage.

Despite the loss, Peterson was pleased with the improvement she saw from the second set to the third.

"I think we were able to cut down our mental errors. We kept the ball playable and when the girls started getting a little more comfortable they were able to be more aggressive as the set went on. Our blockers were able to get some nice touches on the ball and our backrow did a great job putting our setters in a good place," she said.

Due to those good signs, she liked her team's chances even though the Panthers were one lost set from losing the game.

"I think even though we lost set three we still had some momentum going into the fourth after such a great third set. We played much better in the third than the second. The girls had some confidence and a lot of fight and came out swinging in set four," Peterson said.

That confidence and aggressive playing style paid off as NRHEG won 25-18 to force a decisive fifth set.

The Panthers' momentum carried over into the fifth set and they ultimately won the fifth set 15-9 to win the game 3-2.

"Blooming has become a fun little rivalry over the last couple years. I think part of the team's fight came from not wanting to go 0-2 with them for the season," Peterson said.

She added that another key to victory was that it was a total team effort.

"I think this was a huge team win. We had seven girls that got kills up on the board, including five with 5 kills or more. We also finished the game with 18 ace serves," she said.

SEE **PANTHERS OUTLAST, B12**

Turnovers, Scarlets' potent offense doom Huskies

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna football team scored touchdowns on two of its first three possessions, but after that it was all Mankato West as the Scarlets scored four first-half touchdowns and held the Huskies scoreless in the second half to come away with a 35-14 win on Friday, Nov. 6.

Few fans would have thought Owatonna's defense would give up 35 points after watching them force a three-and-out on Mankato West's first possession.

The Huskies' offense kept momentum on their side by sustaining a long drive that culminated in a four-yard rushing touchdown by running back Tanner Hall.

The Scarlets' offense tied the game about a minute later thanks to a 45-yard receiving touchdown.

That score seemed to motivate Mankato West's defense as they played much better and forced Owatonna to punt from their own 42-yard line on their next offensive possession.

The Huskies' defense returned fire by sacking the Scarlets' quarterback on third down and forcing Mankato West to punt.

After being forced to punt on their previous possession, Owatonna's offense bounced back, drove the length of the field and scored its second touchdown when Truelson found Nick Williams in the endzone.

The Huskies led 14-7 at the end of the first quarter.

On the very first play of the second quarter, the Scarlets' tied the game when their running back scored a 64-yard rushing touchdown.

Once again the Scarlets' defense fed off their offense and forced a three-and-out on Owatonna's next possession.

The Huskies' defense held firm and gave the ball right back to its offense, but Truelson threw an interception and Mankato West took advantage of the good field position by scoring a six-yard rushing touchdown on fourth down to take a 21-14 lead.

Owatonna's offense got one more shot

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Owatonna linebacker Cole Earles, middle, and defensive back Zach Stransky (20) hold Mankato West's running back to a short gain.

before the end of the first half, but they couldn't find any offensive rhythm and were forced to punt from their own 39-yard line.

The Scarlets' offense continued to fire on all cylinders and scored its fourth touchdown of the half via a 2-yard reception.

The Huskies trailed 14-28 at halftime.

In the first half, Mankato West accrued 207 yards of total offense, while Owatonna was held to just 121 total yards.

The second half started on a good note for the Huskies when Payton Beyer made a leaping catch to convert on third-and-long, but the Scarlets' defense snared a Truelson pass shortly thereafter.

Mankato West's offense took over and scored its fifth touchdown of the game on a 20-yard reception.

Down 14-35 when the fourth quarter began, the Huskies were forced to throw the ball in order to have any shot at making a comeback and the Scarlets' caught two more interceptions, including one in Owatonna's red-zone, to seal the win.

Owatonna (3-2) will go on the road to take on Northfield (0-5) at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 11.

NOTICE

**SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #756
BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA 55917
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020
HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER
PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGENDA**

6:00 a.m. – Friday, November 13, 2020
*Regular School Board Work Session/Special School Board Meeting –High School Media Center. If election results are not available by the 6:00 a.m. Work Session, then a Special Meeting will take place at 4:00 p.m. for canvassing election results.

7:00 p.m. – Monday, November 16, 2020
*Open Public Forum – High School Media Center

7:15 p.m. – Monday, November 16, 2020
*Regular School Board Meeting – High School Media Center

Any person may raise a question to the School Board. The Board will not act on any item presented to them, which is not on the agenda, until the following Board meeting. Also, the Board would like persons to limit themselves to five minutes, with a maximum of 15 minutes per topic. These limitations are needed for us to run a timely and orderly Board meeting. Persons are requested to identify themselves prior to speaking.

I. CALL TO ORDER – CHAIRPERSON

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL – CLERK

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

V. PRINCIPAL REPORTS

VI. ITEMS ON WHICH BOARD ACTION IS REQUESTED
A. Consent Agenda
Minutes
Bills
Treasurer's Report
Resignation
Donations
B. Employment
C. Volunteer Coaches
D. Family/Maternity Leave
E. 2021-22 School Calendar
F. Annual Election Resolution
G. Potential Changes to Current Calendar

VII. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ONLY
A. Learning Model Update
B. CARES Act Funding
C. Committee Reports
D. Enrollment Data
E. Dates to Note

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

*Agenda may be subject to changes

11/11

A SWIMMING: *sensation* FROM B11

competitive person and I want to do whatever it takes to win," she said.

As just a sophomore, that competitiveness has provided Norrid the chance to qualify for five straight state meets, but in order for her to achieve that she'll have to become an even faster swimmer.

Even though that will take a lot of hard work, Fuller has no doubt she can do it.

"Logan isn't afraid of putting in the time/work to improve herself. I always tell the swimmers that the easiest way to get faster in season is to get stronger out of season," he said.

Norrid agrees that increasing her fitness will be key to becoming even better.

"I think at this point I'm not going to grow much more (I'm 5'2) and I have pretty good stroke technique so I'll need to work faster turns and underwaters. I will also need to get stronger," she said.

While she's the one who ultimately has to put the work in to become faster and stronger, she recognizes that her three wouldn't have been possible with her team of supporters.

"I'd like to thank my parents, Jacob and Danielle Norrid, for giving up so much of their time to drive me to practice, paying for my new equipment and suits, and letting me travel across the country to meets and camps. Another person I'd like to thank is my little sister, Dylann Norrid, she is my biggest cheerleader. I was very proud of her. She had the opportunity to swim varsity this year as a seventh grader. She swam at the section meet in the 200 IM and also won her varsity letter. Whenever my parents take videos of my races, she's the only one you can hear cheering.

"I'd like also thank Owatonna Live for streaming every meet, so everyone could watch, Mr. Eggermont for leading our strength training for most of the season, Owatonna Athletics and Owatonna Swimming Association for all the support for our program and finally, I'd like to thank all of my coaches including Isaiah Fuller and my club coaches for training me to become the best swimmer I can be."

PANTHERS OUTLAST: FROM B11

Even though NRHEG's record is just 3-6, Peterson is impressed with how her team is playing and its growth throughout the season.

"I am incredibly happy with how my team is playing and the progress that we have made. The team continues to get better every practice and every game. We have a tough conference so it is impressive that the girls have kept positive and continue to push to get better," she said.

The Panthers hosted the Medford Tigers (4-3) at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 10.

NRHEG Stats: Anna Jacobson – 6 kills, 2 digs, 1 block kill and 1 ace serve, Raquel Fischer – 5 kills, Grace Tufte 21 assists, 1 dig and 3 ace serves, Kendall Johnson – 13 kills, 10 digs and 3 ace serves, Bree Ihrke – 5 kills, Erin Jacobson – 3 kills, Hallie Schultz – 1 kill, 18 assists, 8 digs and 9 ace serves, Sidney Schultz – 8 digs, 1 ace serve, Elli Baker – 8 kills, Cambria Nissen – 2 assists, 16 digs and 1 ace serve.

FAIR REFLECTS: *on atypical year at annual meeting* FROM B6

4-H showcase. "We worked with 4-H and Extension staff to allow those kids to still get to show their animals and still get to show their static demonstrations," he said.

"The impact that it made on those kids was huge and everyone who came was so gracious and everyone was so thankful that we able to make that happen," 4-H Liaison Tracy Ignaszewski said. "Thank you to everybody who made that happen!"

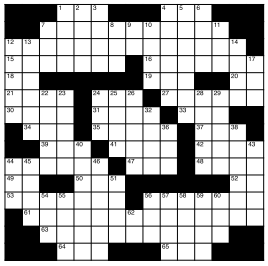
Some of the ongoing projects were also touched upon in the meeting, such as the possibility of partitioning off part of the south end of the track and continuing to convert to underground electrical wiring across the fairgrounds.

The meeting also yielded the reelection of several directors. Five incumbent board members were reelected for a three-year term: Mark Ditlevson, Glen Meger, Tim Arlt, Rick Ellingson, Jim Abbe and Brent Svenby.

The fair board of directors met following the annual meeting during which officers were reelected including Dan Deml as president, Wayne Steele as vice president, and Tim Arlt as treasurer. Fair dates for next year are Aug. 17-22. The theme for next year is "Bringing Back the Fun In 2021."

CLUES ACROSS

1. Measurement (abbr.)
4. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
7. Sorting
12. Attribute
15. Poked holes in
16. Angers
18. Doc
19. MLB journeyman pitcher Dillon
20. Not don't
21. Snubs someone
24. Where kids bathe
27. One might be in distress
30. Chair
31. Music industry honors (abbr.)
33. Dash
34. Owed
35. Caucasian language
37. One thousand (Span.)
39. Musical style drum and bass
41. Evergreen trees native to warm climates
42. Begin __; start fresh
44. Marshy outlets
47. A chicken lays one
48. Yemen's largest city
49. Conversion rate
50. Single Lens Reflex
52. Atlanta rapper
53. Reduce the importance of
56. Faces of buildings
61. Something achieved
63. Distribute again
64. Tooth caregiver
65. 007's creator



CLUES DOWN

1. Skater Lipinksi
2. Data
3. Single step
4. Destroyed financially
5. Fail to interpret correctly
6. Fava d'__: tree found in Brazil
7. Vehicle
8. Limited
9. Old English
10. Aussie golfer Norman
11. Job
12. Loose-fitting undergarments
13. Protected by balancing
14. Give up
17. Fifth note of a major scale
22. Extravagantly bright
23. Takes dictation
24. 19th letter of Greek alphabet
25. Rounded knob (biology)
26. French philosopher Pierre
28. Mothers
29. Dardic ethnic group
32. Supports the rudder
36. An ugly evil-looking old woman
38. Of a fasting time
40. Filled with passengers
43. Below the ribs and above the hips
44. Binary-coded decimal
45. 51 is a famous one
46. Goes into a funk
51. Chief O'Hara actor
54. Videocassette recorder
55. Scored perfectly
56. Type of tree
57. __ Spumante (Italian wine)
58. Popular commercial "pet"
59. Supreme god of Ancient Egyptians
60. Room in a home
62. __ and behold

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NOTICE OF SALE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that at the business location of **Countryside Machining,** located at **10374 Bixby Lane, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917,** on **December 1, 2020,** at **11:00 a.m.,** the Sheriff for Steele County will sell to the highest cash bidder property described as a Big 4 Tractor and parts. As of the date of sale, the amount due Countryside Machining for services, materials and storage fees shall be $57,073.43, exclusive of Sheriff's fees and the expenses of advertising said sale.

To the best knowledge of Countryside Machining, the owner of the property is Mid East Railroad Services, Inc.

11/4T3

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Blooming Prairie Public Schools

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Division of School Finance
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113-4266

District Revenues and Expenditures
Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 and FY 2021

ED-00110-43

General Information: Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.10, requires that every school board shall publish the subject data of this report.

District Name: Blooming Prairie Public Schools — District Number: 0756

Fund	FY 2020 Beginning Fund Balances	FY 2020 Actual Revenues and Transfers In	FY 2020 Actual Expenditures and Transfers Out	June 30, 2020 Actual Fund Balances	FY 2021 Budget Revenues and Transfers In	FY 2021 Budget Expenditures and Transfers Out	June 30, 2021 Projected Fund Balances
General Fund/Restricted	$ 317,622	$ 1,515,384	$ 1,157,098	$ 675,908	$ 810,030	$ 701,439	$ 784,499
General Fund/Other	$ 1,154,542	$ 8,337,214	$ 8,130,948	$ 1,360,808	$ 8,455,712	$ 8,705,629	$ 1,110,891
Food Service Fund	$ 60,518	$ 418,685	$ 395,655	$ 83,548	$ 456,926	$ 445,362	$ 95,112
Community Service Fund	$ 132,395	$ 202,718	$ 218,296	$ 116,817	$ 208,203	$ 239,442	$ 85,578
Building Construction Fund	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt Service Fund	$ 431,243	$ 1,227,734	$ 1,220,030	$ 438,947	$ 1,059,039	$ 1,214,980	$ 283,006
Trust Fund	$ 5,265	$ -	$ 5,265	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Internal Service Fund	$ -			$ -			$ -
* OPEB Revocable Trust Fund	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
OPEB Irrevocable Trust Fund	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
OPEB Debt Service Fund	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total - All Funds	$ 2,101,585	$ 11,701,735	$ 11,127,292	$ 2,676,028	$ 10,989,909	$ 11,306,852	$ 2,359,084

Long-Term Debt		Current Statutory Operating Debt per Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.81	
Outstanding July 1, 2019	$ 9,490,000	Amount of General Fund Deficit, if any, in excess of 2.5% of expenditures 06/30/2020	$0
Plus: New Issues	$ -		
Less: Redemeed Issues	$ 1,010,000	Cost per student - Average Daily Membership (ADM) 06/30/2020	
Outstanding June 30, 2020	$ 8,480,000		
Short-Term Debt		Total Operating Expenditures	$ 9,117,535.50
Certificates of Indebtedness	$ -	FY 2020 Total ADM Served + Tuitioned Out ADM + Adjusted Extended ADM	795.43
Other Short-Term Indebtedness	$ -	FY 2020 Operating Cost per ADM	$ 11,462.40

The complete budget may be inspected upon request to the superintendent.

Comments:
Financial information for 2019-20 has been audited. The fiscal year 2021 preliminary budget was approved on May 18, 2020 and will be revised during the school year. The district website is located at www.blossoms.k12.mn.us.

11/11

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FOR RENT: Large Apartment on Main Street, Kasson. Call 507-319-6762. TFN

GARAGE SALE

NEW HUNTING ACCESSORIES FOR SALE! Pistol cleaning kit, $13.99; AR barrel cooler, $49.99; wildlife attractor caller $19.99; Buck antler mounting kits, $14.99; PLUS, all new with tags clothing and sports jerseys 50% off. Plus, lots of new items great gifts for Christmas! Scruples Home Beauty & Bath, 50% off all candles. Dano's Consignment Store, 32 E Main St., Dodge Center. Open M-F 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Sat., 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. 11/05T2pd

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HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED: Dairy farm looking for milkers. F/T, P/T, evening shifts. Every other weekend required. Call Heather at 507-481-4292. 10/29t4pd

BARTENDER needed at the American Legion in Dodge Center. Call 507-259-7241. 10/29TFN

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Kasson-Mantorville School District is seeking substitute teachers to join our safe and enjoyable learning environment! Anyone with a 4 year college degree is eligible to apply for a short call substitute teaching license. Our welcoming staff will be there to train and assist all new candidates. Being a substitute teacher is a great way to be a KoMet every day and give back to the community. If interested, apply online at: https://www.applitrack.com/komets/onlineapp/default.aspx.
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More information & application available at www.semcac.org or contact Barb Thompson at **barb.thompson@semcac.org** or **507-864-8202.**
Applications must be received by **Nov 27, 2020**
E.O.E. 11/12T3

FREELANCE WRITER WANTED
The **STEELE COUNTY TIMES** is seeking a freelance writer & photographer to cover Blooming Prairie & Ellendale area news. Perfect opportunity for a retiree who loves to write & attend community events.
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Honor Society inducts new members

BY CLAIRE HEYNE
OHS MAGNET

Students at Owatonna High School celebrate being inducted into the National Honor Society at recent ceremonies. There were 52 juniors and 38 seniors inducted into the elite group.

For students who have been accepted into NHS, the induction ceremony is a formal celebration of their hard work and leadership from all of their years of school. Although COVID has changed and limited the ways events such as the NHS induction can commence, the NHS induction ceremony for OHS students took place in the OHS auditorium on Monday, Oct. 26.

There were two separate ceremonies for junior and senior inductees. The senior induction ceremony took place at 6 p.m. and the junior induction ceremony took place at 7 p.m. 52 juniors were inducted, as well as 38 seniors. Additionally, there are 40 returning members, for a total of 130 members, the largest group of NHS members in OHS history.

The NHS adviser for OHS is Ms. Tratz, who is also an English teacher at OHS. Tratz says, "In order to be in NHS, a student has to be formally inducted in a ceremony, which includes a token of induction, a pledge, and a welcome from the principal. But this is a time for students to be honored for their leadership, service, character, and scholarship over all of their years in school." On what induction means to new NHS members, NHS president for OHS, Maggie Newhouse, said, "I believe the induction ceremony is the start of lifelong leadership. I remember being inducted and feeling like I could do anything. I know that sounds cheesy, but I was ready to make a difference in our school."

At both of the ceremonies, Newhouse addressed the inductees. On her responsibilities as NHS president here at OHS, Newhouse said, "As President, I speak on behalf of the chapter of NHS here at the high school. I create agendas, run meetings, and communicate closely with our adviser." Additionally, NHS members Lauren Phelps, Lane Versteeg, Ashton Jensen and Cheryl Smith, all of whom are seniors, gave speeches for the candle ceremony. The new members were presented by seniors Emily Hagen and Versteeg, and Principal Mr. Kory Kath ended the ceremony with congratulatory remarks. Regarding how this year's induction ceremony was different from previous years due to COVID, Tratz said, "Students will only be allowed two guests and must sit with them in a pod, separated by at least six feet from other family groups. Everyone will wear masks. Students will not cross the stage to pick up the certificate or sign the book, but instead will sign the book in the lobby and their picture will be projected on the screen."

So far this year, NHS has had one blood drive on Oct. 21. Tratz said, "We collected 71 pints of blood (enough to potentially help over 200 people)." Additionally, they are planning to hold another blood drive as well as a talent show. Many school activities are being forced to make adjustments in order to remain safe and maintain social distancing protocols. Regarding how NHS will face challenges brought on by COVID this year, Tratz said, "We can still do some things in person, but we are looking for more opportunities for virtual service hours. This year, we are working with the counseling office for NHS students to provide tutoring, which can be done at school for some, but virtually for others. Because it is so challenging, we have a little more flexibility than usual in the number of required service hours." Newhouse said, "NHS will communicate with each other, and we will always have a back up plan; maybe even two."

A pumpkin lesson

SUBMITTED PHOTO
Owatonna elementary students enjoy a great time investigating pumpkins over the past few weeks. They also decided pumpkins taste the best in cookie form.

Walerius loves teaching in Owatonna

Tiffany Walerius has been a teacher for 20 years in Owatonna Public Schools. This is her second year teaching fourth grade. She also taught second grade, first grade, and Primary Connections. Primary Connections was an extended kindergarten program before all day kindergarten was available.

Her husband, Mike, is a pastor at First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie. Their daughter, Maddie, is a ninth grader and son, Josh, is a seventh grader. Their favorite thing to do is hang out in their backyard. They also enjoy pizza and movie nights.

Tiffany loves spending time with her family and friends.

SUBMITTED PHOTO
Tiffany Walerius has been a teacher for two decades in Owatonna. She is currently a fourth grade teacher at Washington Elementary School.

She also enjoys preserving their memories through scrapbooking.

Some fun facts about Tiffany: She was born and raised here in Owatonna, and grew up as a McKinley Monkey. She was the first Owatonna Husky mascot. She was an extra in the movies *Angus* and *Mighty Ducks 3*. She had the privilege to teach with her former first and second grade teachers.

Tiffany loves teaching in Owatonna Public Schools because "it has brought me back to my roots. This town has always been home, and I love giving back to the community that I grew up in. I am Owatonna Proud!"

Owatonna Students of the Week

Owatonna Elementary

Isla Jensen
First Grade
Parents: Alex and Maeve Jensen
Isla is an excellent example of a Lincoln Leader! She enters the classroom each day with a smile on her face, an air hug, and is ready to learn new things. Isla is not afraid to ask questions, she participates in class discussions, and puts 100% effort into her academic work.

Raegann Mitchell
Fifth Grade
Parents: Beth and James Mitchell
Raegann is a determined, persistent student who works exceptionally hard at her academic work and challenges herself to grow, both academically and socially. She also makes all other students feel welcomed and included. She is a strong leader and a very compassionate student.

I would personally like to thank you for your support and encouragement these past four years. I look forward to serving all the citizens of Steele County. Please feel free to contact me at any time.
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I look forward to fighting for YOU and Steele County to protect your tax dollars and to build unity within the county.
Prepared and Paid for by Rick Gnemi for County Commissioner