



Master gardener Julie Wanous shows off some of her flowers in one of the many flower beds scattered around her house. See story on Page B1.

STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

Built for future generations



STAFF PHOTO BY DEB FLEMMING

Participating in the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new Owatonna High School last week were representatives of the first four classes scheduled to graduate from the new school once it's complete. Pictured, from left, are students Davaeh Williams, Class of 2027, Will Halverson and Christian Flores, Class of 2026. Istahil Hassan, Class of 2025 and Donte Miller and Kate Sande, Class of 2024.

Construction begins on new high school

BY DEB FLEMMING
NEWS EDITOR

Superintendent Jeff Elstad stood in front of the crowd gathered last week for the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Owatonna High School and smiled.

"This new high school will make Owatonna a better place to live," said Elstad, adding his thanks to a myriad of organizations, partners, community members and staff who helped bring the project to fruition.

The new \$94 million high school, which is now under

construction, is part of a \$112 million district bond referendum that voters passed in November 2019.

The district's business partners, including Federated Insurance, Mayo Clinic Health System, Viracon, Wenger Corporation, Wenger Foundation,

and Gopher Sport, donated a combined \$22 million to the project – reducing the tax impact for the community by 20%.

"This is a great day for Owatonna," said Mark Sebring, school board chair. "I'm an Owatonna guy."

See **BUILT** on A3 ►

CLA named Best Place to Work

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

"The thought of working for a large CPA firm once crossed Brittany Wencil's mind, but she settled for working at a smaller firm in her hometown of Owatonna six years ago. And it's a decision she has never looked back on, especially

in light of a recent honor for her firm.

Clifton Larson Allen (CLA) has been named one of the 2021 Best Places to Work and an Employment Equity Leader in southeast Minnesota by Workforce Development Inc. CLA employs 74 people at offices in Owatonna, Austin and Rochester.

There are 30 employees in Owatonna.

"I could work for a larger CPA firm, but I prefer the hometown feel and get to know everyone really well," said Wencil, a senior associate CPA with CLA. The "Big Four" is the nickname used to refer to the four largest accounting firms in the U.S. Wencil

said CLA offers her more opportunities than the Big Four would be able to.

Wencil said CLA is a perfect fit for her. "I see this as my long-term career path. I want to keep serving the clients I serve and keep growing," she said, adding she would like to become a managing principal. the

See **CLA** on A7 ►

Fair board parts ways with Ikes

Tells group to leave the building by June 7

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Last week, the Steele County Fair Board opted against renewing its lease with the Izaak Walton League and asked the group to vacate the building it has occupied for more than 80 years by June 7.

This decision, which was unanimous with one abstention, comes after several months of back-and-forth negotiations between the board's executive committee and the Izaak Walton League. Before deciding to take over the building, the board toured it and said work needs to be done to get the building back into tip-top shape.

See **FAIR** on A3 ►

BP police chief's appeals hearing set for May 15

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

An appeal hearing before the Minnesota Department of Administration for Blooming Prairie Police Chief Greg Skillestad is scheduled June 17-19 in Blooming Prairie.

Skillestad is appealing an evaluation, written reprimand and a performance improvement plan directed at him by City Administrator Andrew Langholz.

Chief Skillestad appealed the performance review to the Blooming Prairie City Council, and after a closed meeting on Sept. 14, the council voted to uphold the performance review, which reflected negatively on Skillestad.

See **CHIEF** on A12 ►



Greg Skillestad

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AREA DEATHS

Carl Haffinger, 96, formerly of BP Dean Harne, 76, Inver Grove Heights Larry Mueller, 76, Austin Kent Bozrucker, 62, Owatonna Mark Mullaly, 60, Owatonna Stephanie Radel, 92, Apple Valley

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Live auction is a 21+ event
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the BP Cue Company!

Silent 1 PM - 3 PM

Inside the Pizza Cellar

OUR VIEW

Help Rachel's Light fight homelessness

Homelessness is something many people associate with larger communities. But on any given night, more than 300 of our neighbors in Steele County are homeless, according to Kimberly Stewart, housing specialist for South Central Human Relations Center in Owatonna. This includes small children and families. And the reasons are many, ranging from a lack of life skills and domestic violence to jobs that don't provide a living wage and the lack of affordable housing. For some, mental health or substance abuse issues factor into the equation.

About 6% of the county's population live in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Imagine trying to raise a child and living on \$10 per hour or less.

Unfortunately, that's a reality for too many. Minnesota's minimum wage is currently \$8.21 an hour for smaller companies and \$10.08 an hour for larger ones.

Stewart, who spoke at the recent Rachel's Light "Celebrating Women Everywhere" fundraiser, said 40% of Americans are one paycheck away from being homeless.

Imagine the fear these people live with - each and every day.

That's why the work of Rachel's Light and other transitional housing programs is so critical.

Since opening in the fall of 2019, Rachel's Light has received 143 referrals and has served 66 women and their children. Of those, 47 have found permanent housing and are still in permanent housing.

Talk about a success story.

But the fact is the demand for transitional housing services, including Rachel's Light, far exceeds the resources available.

That's why last week's fundraiser for Rachel's Light was so important. It costs \$58 a day for one person to be a Rachel's Light.

Unfortunately, the pandemic impacted the bottom lines for nearly all non-profits last year, as a fundraiser after fundraiser was forced to cancel or downsize.

"This issue of homelessness is immense. But Rachel's Light offers a glimpse at how the battle can be won. Consider helping Rachel's Light to 'bring the homeless home.'"

Financial contributions can be mailed to Rachel's Light, P.O. Box 118 Owatonna, MN 55060

GUEST COLUMN

The goal posts keep moving

BY PEGGY BENNETT

Minnesota is now in its 14th month of a governor-declared "state of emergency." Next week, Governor Walz will announce his intentions on whether or not he will extend his emergency powers again for another thirty days.

When the governor first declared a state of emergency in March of 2020, he said he needed these powers in order to make sure our hospitals were equipped to handle the COVID-19 virus. I think most of us understood and agreed with that.

However, once it was clear that hospitals were prepared, the governor then declared that he needed to continue his emergency powers in order to control the virus spread until a vaccine was available. Later, when the vaccine became available and well on its way into the arms of the public, the governor told us that he needed to retain his emergency powers to continue distribution of the vaccine.

Do you feel like the "goal posts" are constantly being moved?

We are no longer in a virus emergency -

we're in management mode and have been for quite some time. Given the opportunity, the state legislature could immediately give the executive branch the authority to manage the vaccine distribution and any other pertinent virus-related issues.

Last week, Gov. Time Walz told us he expects the Minnesota State Fair will be open "pretty close to normal." I'd say that's a good indication that the emergency is over. Last week, the governor announced more turns of his "dial." While I appreciate the positive changes, it troubles me that he has repeatedly made these adjustments with no input from legislators or stakeholders. This has resulted in decisions made behind closed doors and devised by political consultants instead of doing what's best for the state.

Recently, emails were uncovered as part of a data practices request which show that the Walz administration used politically motivated decisions to attempt to blame kids in youth sports and their

See GOAL on A8 ►



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

As a child, we all likely embraced heroes at one time or another.

We often equate heroes to music stars, political figures, war giants, TV celebrities, or sports icons.

Prince, Queen Elizabeth, Audie Murphy, Walter Cronkite and Babe Ruth are just a few that come to mind. They may even be fictional.

Super Man, Mickey Mouse, Batman or Spider Man have most likely influenced our lives at one time or another.

But there are heroes in our communities that often go unnoticed: police officers, sheriff's deputies, paramedics, firefighters, dispatchers and EMS workers.

Public safety workers may not have the most

Heroes that go unnoticed

attractive jobs in the world, but they are men and women committed to keeping us safe as we go about our everyday lives.

It's always interesting to me how people condemn the police for their actions, yet who's the first person those same folks reach out to when they are in trouble? You guessed it, police officers. When things go terribly wrong, we lean on the police to clean up the mess.

Many public safety workers are paid, while some are volunteers, especially in the smaller communities. No matter their status, I believe they are all underpaid and often underappreciated for what they do.

The one commonality in nearly every one of them is that they have a strong passion to serve others.

This week the Steele County Times has produced a special section devoted to the public safety professionals and volunteers in the county. Our tribute coincides with National Police Week, which honors law enforcement across the

nation. It's a time for us to respect, honor and remember those officers killed in the line of duty.

While talking to a couple of special deputies who recently retired from Steele County, they commented about how things had drastically changed from when they started 30 years ago. They have noticed how many younger people do not have respect for authority any longer.

Respect is something we need to make a priority in teaching our young children again so they can grow up and treat police with the respect they deserve. Perhaps ditching the violent video games may be a step in the right direction. As retiring special deputy Mark Kreutter pointed out, "You are what you eat and you become what you see."

We want to thank all the men and women in public safety who are committed to keeping our communities safe from the lawless, rebellious and unruly folks who pose great danger in our society.

It's easy for us to forget about the sacrifices these public safety warriors make for us to live in the comforts of our homes and go about our daily living. Police officers, for example, work all hours, holidays and weekends, often spending time away from their families.

After a tumultuous year of riots and protests aimed at police in the Twin Cities, it's easy to get sidetracked and think all officers are like Derek Chauvin. That's not the case. Nearly 100% of officers are hard-working and want to do the best possible for their communities.

Public safety heroes are invested in making the world a safer place for all of us. Please remember these heroes and thank them for all the work they do.

All police, fire and EMS truly are heroes who seek very little recognition. They are unsung heroes who are selfless and heroic every time they answer a 911 call for help.

The least we can do is go in hot pursuit of showing our appreciation.



Owatonna Proud
JEFF ELSTAD

We are nearing the end of a school year like no other. To say our teachers, students and families have been through a lot would be an understatement. I liken the end of a school year to running a race - and in this case, it's been a marathon. As a former track and field coach, the best advice I could give my athletes was to start every race strong, maintain your pace during the middle, and finish strong. And that is exactly what our staff and students are doing! May is when lots of awards and honors are given. We recognize our

Finishing #OwatonnaStrong

scholarship recipients, hard-working teachers, retirees, student artists, student athletes and our families, we have remained #OwatonnaStrong, and for that we should all be #OwatonnaProud.

Given the challenges the pandemic created for schools, I hear people wonder if students lost learning. I can assure you that our students learned a lot this year - in new ways and about new things. Dealing with adversity can bring out the creativity in people, young and old alike. Our teachers learned how to juggle

changing schedules, new uses for technology and engaging with students at a distance. Our students learned how to manage their time, work collaboratively from afar and find new ways to communicate.

Although this school year has not been exactly what we had planned and hoped for, I can tell you that our educators have risen to the occasion and made this the best year it could be. Our passionate and caring teachers are poised to finish this school year strong and do all we can to keep our students engaged in learning while making them hungry for more as we think ahead to next school year.

Learning is a process and not a product. As we move forward and gain more and more in-person time with our students, I am reminded that finding "normal" is not as easy as flipping a switch. We remain

attentive to the growing needs of mental health, re-introducing in-person collaborative learning, and navigating what it means to be safely in school with many students.

As educators, we have the privilege and the joy of working with our future leaders when they are still young. We see amazing growth and resilience every day - even under these strange circumstances. Thank you for the honor of being your Owatonna Public Schools superintendent. On even the most difficult of days, I am so proud and humbled to lead this great school district - thanks to this great community, our talented staff, our supportive families and our amazing students!

Jeff Elstad is the superintendent of Owatonna Public Schools. His column runs monthly in this newspaper.

CORRECTION

In last week's story, "Missing piece added to History Center," the original settler of Blooming Prairie

was misidentified. He is Thomas Bray. He was mentioned in regards to a stained glass window from

the Episcopal Church in Blooming Prairie in 1877. The Times apologizes for the incorrect name.

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Staff Writer.....Chris Baldwin

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Web: 11 p.m. (Daily)
Advertising: 4 p.m.
Thursdays.

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Steele, Dodge,
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Out of state \$56

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

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

COVID restraints lifted by summer

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Say goodbye to social distancing and mask mandates.

That's the news Gov. Tim Walz delivered last Thursday as he outlined plans to lift COVID-19 restrictions by July 1.

The mask-wearing mandate will end by July 1 or sooner if 70% of people in Minnesota ages 16 and above get vaccinated. While Minnesota is at 60%, Steele County is slightly lower at 56%, according to Amy Caron, director of

Public Health for Steele County.

"Let's just go get it done and end this thing," said Walz. "That is what we're really asking you to do."

Restrictions on business and social gatherings will end May 28 under the governor's plan rolled out last week. Walz hailed this as a path to a "great summer" for Minnesota.

Having a summer free of restraints comes somewhat as a surprise to Public Health's Caron. "I have mixed emotions about it," she said, adding that she

still wrestles with what could happen with not everyone being vaccinated. "I worry about transmission, especially with no social distancing and no masks."

Caron said no kids under age 16 have been vaccinated yet, though Public Health is putting together plans to go into the schools before the end of the school year to do just that.

She also said there are conflicting opinions in the medical field about herd immunity. "I don't know if we are quite there yet," Caron said.

"It's great we are

opening up, and I am cautiously optimistic about it," she said.

Meanwhile, Steele County saw an increase of 62 new cases over the past week, bringing the county's total to 4,848 with 15 deaths since the pandemic began. There are currently 144 people isolating in the county,

Caron said.

In Dodge County, there were 32 new cases over the past week. Dodge has experienced 1,836 COVID cases and four deaths.

Caron said both counties will continue vaccination clinics for at least two more weeks on Wednesdays

in Steele County and Thursdays in Dodge County. Vaccinations will be available beyond that time frame but will be moved to the local Public Health offices in Owatonna and Dodge Center, where drive-thrus will still be offered.

PATH TO NORMALCY

- **Outdoor events:** No more capacity limits or social distancing. Mask requirement lifted if an event is 500 or fewer people.
- **Masks:** As of July 1, masks will not be required. This could happen sooner if 70% of people in Minnesota 16 and above get vaccinated.
- **Indoor events:** Capacity and social distancing restrictions end May 28.
- **Restaurants/Bars:** No limits on outdoor dining; indoor capacity will be 75% up to 250 people; no mandatory closing time. All restrictions end May 28.

Freeborn fair is back on again

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

The on again, off again Freeborn County Fair is back on again.

On Monday, the fair reversed its decision from late April and decided to proceed with the annual fair Aug. 3-8 after all.

Previously, the fair decided to cancel when it was unclear what restrictions may be in place later this summer because of COVID-19. But on Thursday, Gov. Tim Walz loosened all restrictions and basically came out saying Minnesotans should be able to enjoy a normal

summer by no later than July 1.

Freeborn County ran into a deadline with booking entertainment as for the reason in canceling to begin with. Fair officials say the entertainment originally scheduled for 2020 will all perform this year.

Among the top performers booked for this year's fair are Michael Ray, Oak Ridge Boys, Newsboys United and Sawyer Brown.

The fair will now be held without any limitations.

"We look forward to seeing you all in person at the 2021 Freeborn County Fair," officials said in a release.

Fair board parts ways with Ikes

◀ FAIR from A1

In a good-faith move, the fair had given the Izaak Walton League agency over the building; however, the board said the lack of upkeep had gotten to be an issue. "It turned into kind of a reversal of what we were hoping," director Roger Noble said. "There were over 30 years of begging that maintenance be done on the building they were responsible for."

After receiving notice to vacate the building, Izaak Walton League President Ted Mittelstadt said he hadn't anticipated the board's action and disagreed with the assertion that the Ikes

hadn't maintained the structure properly. "We painted the outside of the building seven years ago and replaced the roof 15 years ago."

The wooden shakes are original to the building and do need to be replaced, said Mittelstadt, adding that the Ikes had been working with the fair board to obtain a grant to cover the \$50,000 improvement to the building. Because the county owns the building, Mittelstadt said, the Ikes were unable to get a loan or obtain a grant on their own.

While the building and its outdoors-themed attraction was a staple for the fair, the board

felt that the time was right to move on and perhaps reimagine that space. The building houses two ground-level pits typically filled with water and stocked with carp and a wall of fish tanks which the Minnesota DNR also stocks.

"What we want to do with the building is something we will have to consider after we make a decision," director Wayne Steele said to the board. While the building's exact future is unknown, many ideas were floated during the meeting. "The Ikes have been a great partner over the years, no question about it."

Once the Izaak Walton League vacates

the building, the board said it will begin fixing the building and finding a temporary use during this year's fair.

"I think unless you get someone who wants to ante-up right away, you're going to have to do something just to get through this fair and then look long-term," said Josh Prokepec, who manages the buildings and grounds.

The Ikes will be packing up the 30-plus taxidermy mounts that have hung in the building for years and other items they have displayed during the fair. Mittelstadt also said that the filter system the Ikes installed for the fish tanks will be moved.

Built for future generations

◀ BUILT from A1 and I'm Owatonna proud... The future is bright for future generations of students and educators."

Designed by Wold Architects and Engineers, the three-story, 317,000-square-foot high school located on a 90-acre site with parking lots for 890 vehicles, will accommodate 600 students.

The project also includes a 3,451-seat football stadium, four-court gymnasium, eight tennis courts, four soccer/lacrosse fields, two softball fields, two baseball fields, and a synthetic turf field and full track at the stadium.

"I am grateful for the amazing team of students, staff and community members that partnered with Wold to set our vision that sees all and makes a space for all," said Principal Kory Kath. "I can absolutely see the progress we are making to see all of our students and ensure that our school building is able to realize their future as well."



STAFF PHOTO BY DEB FLEMMING

Chairman of Federated Mutual Insurance Jeff Fetter and CEO of Mayo Clinic Health Systems in Owatonna Dr. Brian Bunkers participated in the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new high school.

Just before the group began grabbing shovels and lining up for groundbreaking photos, Owatonna Education Association President and teacher Todd Andrix noted that Owatonna, as a community, has a way of keeping educa-

tion in the forefront. And, he said, OHS staff is committed to continuing its pursuit of excellence in education well into the future.

Construction of the new high school is expected to be completed in the summer of 2023.

Safety Council video reminds drivers to slow down

Even as many Minnesotans stayed close to home, the pandemic year increased risk on the roads and led to an epidemic of excessive speed and more crash fatalities. In its new animated video series, the Minnesota Safety Council reminds drivers to slow down and pay attention, especially as warmer weather means more roadside work projects.

"Beyond its direct health impacts, a year of COVID-19 has sparked an epidemic of safety issues on our roadways, resulting in increased crashes and fatalities," says Lisa Koms, Minnesota Safety Council Traffic Safety Programs manager.

The statistics are startling. Even as many Minnesotans stayed close to home, the pandemic year increased risk on the roads and led to excessive speed - with an unprecedented number of drivers going 100 mph or more - and a related jump in crash fatalities. Minnesota's

hands-free cellphone law is nearing its second anniversary, but distracted driving remains a serious issue. Preliminary data for 2020 shows distracted driving contributed to 5,580 crashes and 30 fatalities. Excess speed contributed to 120 fatalities, the most since 2008.

Koms, who also serves as Minnesota Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) state coordinator, says this is especially troubling with spring's arrival, as roadside work crews will be out in force and at even greater risk due to excessive speed and distracted driving. Although initial reports show work zone crashes declined 9% for 2020 compared to the five-year baseline, fatalities

increased 7% despite reduced traffic.

"Our new video series reminds motorists that the power to keep themselves and others safe is literally in their hands each time they get behind the wheel," she adds. The three videos address excessive speed, distracted driving and work zone safety. They were produced in partnership with Minnesota NETS and State Farm. Minnesota will mark 2021 Work Zone Safety Week April 26-30 with additional safety awareness activities.

The Minnesota Safety Council is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preventing injuries on the road, at work, at home, and in the community. For more information, see www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org.

Mayo offers vaccines to anyone 16 and up

Mayo Clinic Health System in Owatonna is now providing COVID-19 vaccinations to anyone 16 and up. Patients and community members no longer need to wait to be contacted to get vaccinated for COVID-19, and appointments are readily available.

"It is important for everyone - not just those who are high-

risk - to take steps to get vaccinated as soon as possible," says Jennifer Horn, M.D., regional chair for practice, Southeast Minnesota Region, Mayo Clinic Health System. "Many people have been waiting to be invited by their care provider or until people with the most need get vaccinated. To anyone who hasn't been vac-

inated, it's your turn now. We need you to get vaccinated now to make our communities safer and return to a normal way of life."

Anyone, including non-Mayo patients, can schedule an appointment to get vaccinated for COVID-19 at Mayo Clinic in Rochester and at Mayo Clinic Health System sites across Minnesota. Those

seeking vaccination appointments do not need to be a resident of Minnesota to get vaccinated in Minnesota.

For those who wish to schedule an appointment, call the appointment line at:

• Mayo Clinic in Rochester: 507-538-4040
• Mayo Clinic Health System in Southeast Minnesota: 507-434-9929

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STEELE COUNTY Times

COVID-19 UPDATE			
World.....	158,000,000	Freeborn.....	3,407
Deaths.....	3,290,000	Deaths.....	29
Recovered.....	94,400,000	Recovered.....	
U.S.....	32,700,000	Mower.....	4,637
Deaths.....	581,000	Deaths.....	32
Recovered.....	22,265,000	Recovered.....	
MN.....	588,000	Deaths.....	15
Deaths.....	7,324	Recovered.....	1,771
Recovered.....	480,000		
Steele.....	3,848		
Deaths.....	15		
Recovered.....	3,704		
Dodge.....	1,836		
Deaths.....	4		
Recovered.....	1,771		
AS OF MAY 10, 2021			

BLOTTER
SPOTLIGHT

Behind The Badge
SHERIFF SCOTT ROSE

South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem tells Seattle officers, "To those Seattle officers leaving the force: Instead of demonizing you, we will stand WITH you." She is offering them jobs with the state.

Missouri Governor Mike Parson lights up their state capital dome blue in honor of law enforcement.

Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds introduces a bill to protect law enforcement, penalizing local governments who attempt to "defund" police.

What has our Minnesota Governor done to support law enforcement? Here are few recent comments from Governor Walz regarding the Brooklyn Center Incident.

"I am closely monitoring the situation in Brooklyn Center. Gwen and I are praying for Daunte Wright's family as our state mourns another life of a Black man taken by law enforcement."

"That unimaginable love I have for my son Gus, I can't imagine the daily traumas," Walz said. "I don't worry about

Criminal Sexual Conduct: On May 3, Owatonna Police arrested a subject for criminal sexual conduct in the 2100 block of 3rd Ave. NW at 3:11 p.m.

Governor Walz needs to stop demonizing law enforcement

him being killed in a traffic stop... just because of how he looks and how that is viewed when they walk up to that car."

"Minnesotans who are Black should not have to live with a fear that expired tabs could put their lives at risk."

While these comments may make him political points, they are simply encouraging distrust and fear of the great men and women that serve our communities day and night. His comments paint us all as racist. This incident was absolutely tragic, but there are no facts to suggest it was anything but a terrible mistake. It had nothing to do with color. Comments like his encourages anti-law enforcement behavior and aggression towards the men and women who work day and night to keep us safe. Frankly, our Governor's continued comments demonizing law enforcement makes are jobs that are tougher and more dangerous.

In our schools, the Governor supports the book "Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story about Racial Injustice," which features conversations among multiple families about a white police officer shooting a Black man who didn't have a gun. Different family members offer different perspectives. One

family member says the shooting was a mistake. Another responds that the shooting was "a mistake that was part of a pattern." One character refers to cops "sticking up for each other."

Proponents argue that this book will help teach kids about racism. I would argue the opposite. Read the book. How is this book not going to program kids at a young age to fear police? The book paints law enforcement as unfair, violent, and racist.

Many agencies use minor traffic stops as an opportunity to have positive contacts with the public, headlight, taillight, expired tabs, license plate light, etc. Now after the Brooklyn Center shooting, our leadership at the capital thinks we need to ban these kinds of stops? I for one stopped a ton of cars for these types of violations, especially license plate lights out. Why? I would use them as a courtesy stop, to let the vehicle owner know the light is out and that getting it fixed will be a lot cheaper than a citation. I rarely wrote citations for these, usually had a nice visit with the driver, and made the stop a positive experience. That's how most of these stops are conducted.

Prager University released some interesting facts about law

enforcement:

– There are an estimated 3.75 million us police interactions with citizens

– In 2019, 999 ended in shooting fatalities by police (0.00003%)

– 14 of those were unarmed black subjects (0.000004%)

– 1 of those was not attempting to resist or evade arrest (0.0000003%)

The facts don't support the narrative of systemic racism in law enforcement – they never have, but the media chooses not to report the facts. The facts do support one very important statistic – in nearly all of these incidents, the victim in the vehicle fought with or resisted with law enforcement. Had they complied with the officers and not escalated the situation, they'd likely still be here. Ninety-nine percent of the men and women serving in law enforcement have worked very hard over the years to not trust within the communities we serve – with our school resource officers, National Night Out, at city events and festivals, etc. It's hard not to be concerned that our Governor's comments, and his actions along with many others in leadership at the Capitol, are unraveling a lot of that hard work we tried to do over the years. Our men and women serving

CRIME BRIEF

Child leads police to man soliciting for sex

A man is facing felony charges for soliciting a young child.



Erick Mendoza

Erick Mendoza, 40, of Owatonna has been charged in Steele County District Court with soliciting a child into sexual conduct, soliciting a child through electronic communication to engage in sexual conduct and fifth-degree criminal sexual conduct.

The charges stem from an incident in which Mendoza is accused of exposing himself and telling the child he wanted

more than their relationship.

According to police, text messages and an inappropriate picture were found on Mendoza's phone by family members.

The child reported to police that Mendoza exposed himself and made inappropriate suggestive sexual comments in person and via a social media app.

Mendoza told police that he sent the messages, but said "over there in our countries it was normal conversation."

in law enforcement in Minnesota deserve better from our state government.

As parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, we need to teach our kids to respect law enforcement, that law enforcement is here to help them, that their local officers are their friends that they can trust. Treat these officers the same way you want them to treat you and we can avoid most of these tragedies. If someone believes they were not treated right by an officer, they need to know they can

always report that after the fact and the agency will address it. We are always open to discussing any concerns here in Dodge County. Our door is always open.

Our men and women serving in law enforcement here deserve better from our state government. Thank you for all your support! Your Sheriff, Scott

Scott Rose is in his second term as sheriff of Dodge County. His current term runs until 2022.

COURT NEWS Steele County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of April 26 – May 2:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Nijlboj B. Bithow, 35, Minneapolis, revoked license, \$275; Drayton M. Cisneros, 19, Blooming Prairie, possession of marijuana and paraphernalia, \$275; Levi M. Denherder, 16, Hollandale, stop sign, \$125; Mikiah M. Greer, 23, Minneapolis, suspended license, \$275; Jose T. Guaman Simbaina, 30, Minneapolis, invalid license, \$175; Rebecca S. Olson, 55, Clarke Grove, revoked license, \$275; Shawn M. Payne, 25, Brownsdale, no insurance and expired tabs, \$305; Carolyn M. Rousseau, 69, Madison Lake, expired tabs, \$105; Kevin J. Stanton, 62, Hopkins, speeding, \$115; Nyabthang S. Wal, 19, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Gilberto Amaro, 21, Blue Earth, revoked license and speeding, \$355; Kyle L. Bellecourt, 21, Albert Lea, possession of marijuana, \$225; Christina N. Brunner, 31, Hudson, WI, speeding, \$115; Tanner J. Cole, 22, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Melvin L. Combs, 37, Minneapolis, speeding, \$125; Amia A. Ed, 20, Carol Stream, IL,

speeding, \$125; Dwight P. Ferguson, 50, Ellendale, speeding, \$135; Samuel B. Finegold, 27, Minneapolis, speeding, \$125; Cody J. Halvorson, 27, Waseca, seat belt, \$100; Lowell C. Johnson, 19, St. Paul, speeding, \$125; Jake M. Karow, 35, Owatonna, seat belt, \$100; Jamie J. Kotek, 47, Faribault, hands free violation, \$125; Dah D. Lay, 31, St. Paul, speeding, \$135; Sara L. Maranto, 43, Mokena, IL, speeding, \$275; Michelle L. McKinney, 49, Des Moines, IA, no license in possession, \$65; Lucinda L. Mitchell, 57, Ellendale, no insurance, stay of adjudication, \$75 and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Anthony J. Moore, 46, Kenyon, revoked license, \$275; Quinton L. Moran, 33, Burnsville, suspended license, \$275; Cody J. Nuesse, 29, Rochester, speeding, \$115; Jessica Prado, 44, Alton, TX, speeding, \$135; Elizabeth Ruiz, 23, New Brighton, no license, \$175; Austin S. Seavers, 23, Cave in Rock, IL, hands free violation, \$125; Shannon E. Shotwell, 43, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Bobby J. Smitty, 27, Owatonna, no license, \$175; Heather M. Terry, 50, Plymouth, speeding, \$115; Anthony W. Troumbly, 39, Coleraine, speeding, \$115; Laverio S. Wilson, 33, Cottage Grove, speeding and revoked license, \$475; Scott M. Wolff, 44, Owatonna, seat belt, hands free violation, \$150.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Ann L. Adams, 63, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Brett A. Andrist, 16, Sargeant, enter road from non-roadway, \$125; Kassandra D. Collins, 43, Brooklyn Center, speeding, \$135; Connor W. Durham, 28, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Alexis P. Forsberg, 17, Owatonna, failure to stop for traffic control signal, \$125; Katherine A. Green, 30, Sherburne, theft and possession of paraphernalia, \$175; Joe A. Hernandez Casado, 33, Owatonna, invalid license and stop sign, \$225; Benjamin J. Hunt, 31, Faribault, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Nereus R. Montanier Jr., 33, Owatonna, violation of order for protection, \$375, 30 days in county jail; electronic home monitor, domestic violence inventory, 30 hours of community service and 3 months of supervised probation; Kallej R. Morales, 23, Moorhead, seat belt, \$100; Elizabeth A. Reineke, 49, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Aaron P. Rykhos, 36, North Mankato, suspended license, expired tabs and no insurance, \$505; Julio C. Salvador, 32, revoked license, \$275; Jeff A. Starch, 52, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Edward W. Thorson, 27, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$105; Melissa J. Toot, 25, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Tom A. Vanbinsbergen, 55, Medford, following vehicle too closely, \$125; Blake A. Vearling, 23, Owatonna,

restraining order violation, \$175, 1 day in county jail, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of firearms and 1 year of supervised probation.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Hassan A. Abdi, 34, Louisville, KY, speeding, \$215; Kalewana Q. Abela, 21, Kansas City, MO, speeding, \$275; Mary A. Ahrens, 51, Medford, seat belt and revoked license, \$500; Danielle M. Christensen, 22, Lonsdale, speeding, \$115; Jesus Dominguez, 27, Owatonna, invalid license and no insurance, \$375; Anthony L. Esquivel, 22, Claremont, revoked license, \$275; Michelle Estrada Salazar, 25, Minneapolis, suspended license, \$275; Martha Y. Franco, 30, Schaller, IA, speeding, \$115; Jayson R. Fritz, 28, Waseca, speeding, \$135; Gary V. Good, 65, Owatonna, speeding, \$135; Tara A. Gulbertson, 43, Waterville, speeding, \$115; Garron E. Hoffman, 16, Waseca, speeding, \$115; Cory M. Jensen, 30, Red Wing, speeding, \$115; Kendra R. Judd, 23, Austin, seat belt, \$100; Keith T. Merrill, 68, 25, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Randy R. Michel, 49, Faribault, speeding, \$375; Cassandra E. Muel, 20, Waseca, suspended license and

no insurance, \$475; Zachary J. Oldenburg, 27, Rochester, speeding, \$135; Ashley M. Padilla, 29, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Crystal Plata, 19, St. Paul, speeding, \$135; Jay K. Quinnell, 62, Faribault, prohibited passing, \$125; Andrea Ramirez-Hernandez, 23, Waterville, speeding, \$115; Madison M. Rich, 22, Eaton Rapids, MI, speeding, \$215; Guillermo R. Rodriguez, 29, Farmersville, CA, speeding, \$115; Carter H. Stone, 25, Minneapolis, speeding, \$155; Siena M. Storm, 21, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Kaitlyn J. Walker, 22, Mankato, speeding, \$115; Jenna L. White, 32, Austin, expired tabs, \$115; Carver J. Wright, 21, Waseca, speeding, \$275.

POLICE BLOTTER Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

April 30
Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at Highway Ave. N. and 4th St. NE at 1:04 a.m. **Crash:** At 10:53 a.m., a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 100 block of Highway Ave. S. **May 1**
Criminal Sexual Conduct: Police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct in the 200 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 8:03 p.m.

OWATONNA POLICE

April 30
Shoplifting: At 10:50 a.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 3900 block of Cabela Dr. NW. **Juvenile:** Police received a juvenile complaint from the 500 block of 15th St. NE at 5:03 p.m. **Assault:** Officers responded to an assault in the 600 block of Rice Lake St. E. at 3:04 p.m. **Theft:** Officer took a theft report in the 1200 block of 3rd Ave. NE at 3:17 p.m. **May 1**
Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 100 block of 26th St. NE at 9:32 a.m. **Fight:** Police responded to a fight in the 700 block of State Ave. NW at 5:26 p.m. They took a subject into custody. **DWI:** Officer made a DWI arrest on the Frontage Rd. W. at 11:17 p.m. **May 2**
Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1900 block of 4th Ave. SE at 12:18 a.m. **Shoplifting:** Shoplifting incidents occurred in the 400 block of North St. W. at 6:27 a.m. and the 2100 block of Bridge St. W. at 12:10 p.m. and 5:23 p.m. **Domestic:** Police arrested a subject following a domestic disturbance in the 1100 block of School St. E. at 2:18 p.m. **Juvenile:** Police received a juvenile complaint from the 2200 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 2:23 p.m. See **BLOTTER** on A8 ►

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

- Carlos Rodriguez – DWI – \$12,000 bail
- Joseph Rodriguez – theft by check – \$1,000 bail
- Deandre Rogers – revoked license – no bail
- Pedro Roldan-Mirquez – false name – \$5,000 bail
- Jose Rosales – criminal sexual conduct – no bail
- Legenda Rostas – theft – \$2,000 bail
- Sonny San – DWI – \$2,000 bail
- Demetrius Sanchez – theft – \$5,000 bail
- Roberto Sanchez – criminal sexual conduct – no bail
- Shandra Saufferer – warrant – no bail
- Agnes Sajghy – false name – \$5,000 bail
- Jerome Schronenberg – careless driving – \$1,000 bail
- Kelsey Schueller – trespassing – \$1,000 bail
- Abbie Segura – theft – \$500 bail
- Yennifer Serban – drugs – no bail
- Jerred Sheets – domestic assault – \$6,000 bail
- Ricky Shelton – assault – no bail
- Thomas Siagannis – seat belt – \$1,000 bail
- Oscar Siles – terroristic threats – \$25,000 bail
- Danielle Sicard – drugs – \$1,000 bail

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

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Visit
federatedinsurance.com
for COVID-19 resources.

Medicare coverage options for retirees eager to travel



Dear Savvy Senior, What are the best Medicare coverage options for COVID-vaccinated retirees who are eager to travel? My wife and I will both turn 65 over the next few months and would like to know which Medicare plans are best for extensive travelers. Almost 65

Dear Almost, The best Medicare plans for retirees who plan to travel will vary depending on your destinations. But, before you book a trip make sure you know the current CDC COVID-19 travel recommendations (see [CDC.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers)), and research your destinations so you can know if restrictions apply wherever you're going.

Medicare Review Before we dissect how Medicare works for travelers, let's start with a quick review of your different Medicare options.

One option is original Medicare, which covers (Part A) hospital services and (Part B) doctor's visits and other medical services.

If you choose original Medicare, you may also want to get a Medicare (Part D)

prescription drug plan (if you don't already have coverage) to cover your medications, and a Medicare supplemental (Medigap) policy to help pay for things that aren't covered by Medicare like copayments, coinsurance and deductibles.

Or, you could get a Medicare Advantage (Part C) plan instead, which is sold through private insurance companies, and covers everything original Medicare covers, plus many plans also offer prescription drug coverage and extra services like vision, hearing and dental care all in one plan.

To help you evaluate your options contact your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (see [SHIPCenter.org](https://www.shipcenter.org)), which provides free Medicare counseling. You can also shop and compare Medicare health and drug plans and Medigap policies at [Medicare.gov/find-a-plan](https://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan).

Also note that whatever Medicare plans you choose to enroll in, if you find that they are not meeting your needs or your needs change, you can always switch to a different plan during the open enrollment period, which is between Oct. 15 and Dec. 7.

U.S. Travel If you and your husband are planning to travel domestically, original Medicare may be the better option because it provides coverage everywhere in the U.S. and its territories as long as the doctor or hospital accepts Medicare.

Medicare Advantage plans, on the other hand, which have become very popular among new enrollees may restrict your coverage when traveling throughout the U.S. This is because most Medicare Advantage plans are HMOs or PPOs and require you to use doctors, hospitals and pharmacies that are in the plan's network within a service area or geographic region. So, if you're traveling outside that area you may need to pay a higher fee, or your services may not be covered at all.

If you do decide to enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan, be sure you check the benefit details carefully to see what costs and rules apply when traveling outside your service area. **Traveling Abroad** If you're planning to travel abroad much, a Medicare Advantage plan may be a better option because many Advantage plans today offer emergency care coverage outside the U.S. But be sure you check before you choose a plan because not all plans offer it.

Original Medicare, on the other hand does not provide coverage outside the U.S. and its territories except in rare circumstances (see [Medicare.gov/coverage/travel](https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/travel)), and Medicare drug plans will not cover prescription drugs purchased outside the U.S. either.

But if you do choose original Medicare, you can still get some coverage abroad through a Medigap policy. Plans D, G, M and N plans will pay for 80 percent of medically necessary emergency care outside the U.S. to new enrollees, but only for the first 60 days of the trip, and you have to meet an annual \$250 deductible first. There's also a lifetime limit of \$50,000, so you'd need to cover any costs above that amount.

Some beneficiaries, regardless of their Medicare coverage, purchase travel medical insurance for trips abroad, which you can shop for at [InsureMyTrip.com](https://www.insuremytrip.com) or [SquareMouth.com](https://www.squaremouth.com).

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

History from the News Archives

Award-winning captains



FILE PHOTO

Owatonna's McKinley Elementary School patrols were awarded the outstanding safety award, which is the highest award given by the Minnesota Safety Council, in recognition of their outstanding performance in May 1991. Nicole Bemmel is proud of the bike she won at the youth conference in St. Paul. Jenny Esenrich and Sara Johnson are holding crossing flags. Jason Bursch is displaying the plaque the patrols received and Gabe Hovden is holding a book about patrol duties.

10 Years Ago May 10, 2011

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

Entering the maximum number of entries, the BPHS art students had great success at the MSHSL Art Festival in Rochester on April 30. Marie Helkenn and Kristin Hagen received the "Best in Category" in printmaking and drawing respectively. The Superior ratings went to Kathryn Weiss, Kristin Hagen, Shelby Bailey (four awards), Marie Helkenn, Jessica Bremseth, Rebecca Lark, Emily Soto, instructor, Nathan Piller, stated, "I am very proud to report these outstanding results for our students."

Seven farms in Steele County will be recognized as "Century Farms" at the Livestock Hall of Fame induction at the Steele County Free Fair. Farms recognized this year include those owned by: Noreen Jensen, Ellendale (two farms), Bruce Kubicek, Ellendale, Barb Kasper, Medford, Philip Milton, Blooming Prairie, Jane Middlestadt, Owatonna and Jim Schafer, Owatonna.

20 Years Ago May 8, 2001

ELSIE SUNGER, EDITOR

As they defeated Triton 13-3 at home on Friday. An eight run third inning proved more than enough for the Blossoms baseball team. Craig Olson and Bryan Kramer singled to start the inning. Kody Thurnau and Sam Romertold her team walked and Glen Valek singled. Aaron McDonald's hit, sandwiched between walks to David Kramer and Jake Lemke kept the inning alive, and Kramer then cleared the bases with a triple. That was all the Blossoms needed.

Blooming Prairie Elementary Triathlon Coach, Christy Myers if they won, she would treat them to a pizza party. It's a pizza party time! The team captured first place in the competition on April 28. The team consisted of Merissa Kittleson, Chelsie Hansen, Marcus Zellmer, Kate Fogarty, Patrick Rumpza, Lori Pirkl. The team competed against all sizes of the state schools in the competition.

50 Years Ago May 12, 1971

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

Ed Butler, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Butler, was named Star Farmer, last week at the 14th annual Blooming Prairie FFA banquet. The Star Farmer Award is the highest honor given at the chapter level. Also recognized at the banquet were Dale Hasrud, and Robert Farr who were presented with Gold Keys for achieving the State Farmer degree. Marvin Ingvaldson and Merrill Bacon were installed as Honorary Chapter Farmers in recognition of their devoted service to the chapter.

An estimated \$3,900 worth of television sets, radios and other small appliances were stolen from Sorenson's TV & Appliance in Geneva sometime during the night of Wednesday, May 5. The thieves gained entrance to the building by breaking a window on the north side of the structure. Among the

merchandise taken were 13 portable colored television sets. The loss was not covered by insurance according to Warren Sorenson. The Freeborn County Sheriff's Department is investigating.

75 Years Ago May 9, 1946

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

Esther Kruger, who is valedictorian of the class of 1946, had a scholastic rating of 97%. Esther is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Kruger of Austin, Rt. 1. She is the vice president of the senior class, is on the Student Council, in journalism for two years and was in the senior class play this year. This fall Esther will go to Normal Training at Austin. Mildred Baach, who is the salutatorian of 1946, has a scholastic rating of 96%. Mildred is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Baach of Rt. 2 Faribault. Mildred will enter Macalester College this fall to take up journalism. She was in the band for four years and in the class play.

Blooming Prairie Fire Department responded to more calls this past weekend than any previous time in history. They fought two destructive fires virtually within the very outskirts of Austin. Thursday, they answered a call to the Harold Murphy farm. It started in the tool house quickly fanned into a roaring inferno that laid the building in ashes and spread to a large modern barn. Friday night another call for help from the Holgar Mumm farm, Austin. The department arrived at the farm within 8 minutes, but even with the quick response, the flames were beyond control. A cow and 100 young chickens perished. They were able to save the chicken brooder house and the dwelling next to the Mumm farm. Friday, a chicken house on the John Flannagan farm near Victory Field was totally destroyed by fire. The fire was not discovered until the building was completely in flames and all the department could do was keep the fire contained to the chicken house.

Owatonna Photo News

May 10, 1990

TOM SHEA, PUBLISHER

A number of Owatonna High School students came home with top honors from "A Vous La Parole," the Minnesota State oral French competition held at the UofM, Minneapolis. Seven hundred students from 40 schools participated. Student participants won two first place and three second place awards. Students were: Shelly Shore, Kristin Peterson, Jenie Leath, Ellice Jensen and Allison Plathe. The students are coached by Jan Peterson, French teacher, Richard Lund, student teacher from Mankato State University and Leona Taftille, an exchange teacher from Belgium.

The following individuals have been named Lincoln School "Students of the Week;" grade 1, Erica Blomquist and Katy Hartle; grade 2, Tom Flint, Amanda Ziemann, Anne Schreiner and Kyle Atkinson; grade 3, Amber Auringer, Alisha Davidson, Steve Ohnstad and Traci Hanson; grade 4, Aaron Miller and Mandra Soland; grade 5, Beth Pribyl, Natalie Salcedo and Jenni Drake.

Recipe Corner Breakfast Egg Soufflé

2/3 lb grated cheddar cheese
8 slices de-cruised bread
8 beaten eggs
4 C milk
Dash salt
Dash dry mustard

Put bread in a well-buttered pan and sprinkle cheese on top. Pour milk and egg over that. Refrigerate overnight. Bake at 350-degrees for 1 hour.

Combine 1 can cream of mushroom soup and 1/2 can milk. Mix soup and milk together and bring to a boil and serve over soufflé if desired.

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STEELE-DODGE BUSINESS

Wray-Raabolle to head Mayo in Owatonna and Faribault

Jason Wray-Raabolle, M.D., has been named site lead physician for Mayo Clinic Health System in Owatonna and Faribault, effective Wednesday, May 12. The site lead physician role will combine the responsibilities of Brian Bunkers, M.D., CEO of Mayo Clinic Health System in Owatonna and Faribault, and Diane Wallner, M.D., medical director.

"I've worked with Dr. Wray-Raabolle for

20 years, and have seen firsthand his commitment to our patients, staff and the community," said Bunkers. "He is the right leader for this time and the years ahead, and I look forward to supporting him as I continue to see patients in Owatonna."

Wray-Raabolle is a Family Medicine physician who has practiced in Owatonna since 2001. He is vice chair of Primary Care for the Southeast Minnesota

Region and has served as chair of the Department of Family Medicine in Owatonna.

After earning a Bachelor of Arts at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, Dr. Wray-Raabolle received his medical degree from the University of Minnesota and completed a family medicine residency at Waukesha Family Practice in Waukesha, Wisconsin.

As the site lead physician, Dr. Wray-Raabolle



Jason Wray-Raabolle

will partner with David Berg, senior administrator, and Shelly Olson, nurse administrator, to

oversee operations in Faribault and Owatonna, and ensure alignment with regional goals and targets.

Wray-Raabolle will work closely with Drs. Bunkers and Dr. Wallner to ensure a smooth transition as they rotate out of their leadership roles.

"We are so very grateful for these two physicians' many years of dedicated service to our patients, staff and local communities, and

extremely happy that they both will continue to practice in Owatonna and Faribault," says Robert Albright Jr., D.O., regional vice president, Southeast Minnesota Region, Mayo Clinic Health System. "As Dr. Wray-Raabolle begins his new leadership role, we welcome his vision and insight for the future in helping to provide the best care for our patients in Owatonna and Faribault."

Country Crafts and More settles into Owatonna location

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Early in March, businesswoman Wanita Wilkie and her daughter Cindy Noll opened Country Crafts and More in Owatonna. Before that, the two operated their store out of the Faribault West Mall for two years.

The store offers a myriad of homemade crafts and other fun knickknacks and items, many of which are handmade by Wilkie or her family members.

"Most of our items are all homemade," Wilkie said of their wares.

Wilkie is a longtime Medford resident and Noll hails from Owatonna. The two of them have run craft shops for many years, including a shop in downtown Medford. "I think we are doing much better here than in the mall," Cindy Noll said of the move.

"What got me drawing on it was that I did craft shows and traveled around to craft shows at malls and when that slowed up and then COVID hit, we thought that we should put all of those items in a store," Wilkie explained of the impetus to get back into a fulltime shop.



Wanita Wilkie and her daughter Cindy Noll show off some of the handmade items Wilkie crocheted for their store, Country Crafts and More, located at 328 West Bridge St. in Owatonna.

One of Wilkie's hobbies is crocheting and sewing items to sell at the store. "I do a lot of crocheting," Wilkie said. Some of her favorite things to make are dishcloths, quilts, and clothes. "I think it's kind of a lost art."

"She's got many, many hours and years into making this stuff," Noll said of her mother's continued craft making. "It would be a shame for somebody to just dispose of it, so it's nice to be able to sell it to someone who's going to cherish it."

Wilkie finds a lot relaxation in her craft making. "It's something to sit down and do. I'm not really into watching TV, so I'd rather sit down and do handwork or sewing or stuff of that order," she said.

"I've been crocheting for around 50 or 60 years."

For an 83-year-old, Wilkie shows no signs of slowing up. She has also challenged us with many other things, such as severe weather and an influx of devastating yet preventable vehicle crashes.

Year-end highlights included:

- Record-setting total assets, \$9.6 billion; invested assets, \$8.6 billion; policyholder surplus, \$4.01 billion; total property and casualty and life premium, \$2.04 billion; property and casualty net premium, new property and casualty premiums, total accounts, total life applications, and in-force life insurance.

Fetters shares Federated's risk management message

Federated Mutual Insurance Company hosted its 117th Annual Meeting of Policyholders last month in Owatonna.

"While 2020 wasn't what we hoped for or expected, it reaffirmed what makes Federated an extraordinary organization," said Chairman Jeff Fetters.

"It also allowed us to do what we do best – be a source of comfort and knowledge during times of uncertainty. And while the pandemic seemed to take center stage, the year also challenged us with many other things, such as severe weather and an influx of devastating yet preventable vehicle crashes."

Year-end highlights included:

- Record-setting total assets, \$9.6 billion; invested assets, \$8.6 billion; policyholder surplus, \$4.01 billion; total property and casualty and life premium, \$2.04 billion; property and casualty net premium, new property and casualty premiums, total accounts, total life applications, and in-force life insurance.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

During Federated Insurance's annual policyholders meeting, Chairman Jeff Fetters thanked the more than 40,000 policyholders who allowed Federated Insurance to help protect their businesses.

- Federated Life® Company saw \$233 million in premium (including annuities), \$2.26 billion in assets, and \$506 million in capital and surplus.

- Federated Insurance offered the COVID-19 Client Relief Credit – investing \$23 million in premium relief to help qualifying clients.
- Federated also provided 1,200 qualifying clients billing flexibility, including extended due dates and grace periods, opportunities to develop payment plans, and moving payment amounts to future months when on installment.

- Federated was rated A+ (Superior) by insurance industry analyst A.M. Best® for the 22nd consecutive year.

- The 2020 Federated Challenge raised a record-breaking \$3.087 million for Big Brothers Big Sisters® three Minnesota agencies and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America®.

- Federated Insurance was named a Star Tribune Top 150 Workplace for the third consecutive year.

- During a record-breaking year, Federated employees raised nearly \$300,000 – coupled with a \$100,000 corporate gift – for the United Way.

- More than 500 employees participated in Federated's 2020 employee gift matching program – the highest participation ever – and raised \$175,000 to be donated to the qualifying non-profit or higher education institution of the employee's choice.

- Federated Insurance supported more than 250 nonprofit organizations across the country.

- Federated Insurance donated meals to healthcare workers; called every non-profit in Minnesota in March 2020 to inquire about volunteer needs we could help meet; and processed non-profit donations early.

- "We promoted volunteering opportunities among our employees, and I am tremendously proud of how they rose to the challenges 2020 presented," said Fetters. "It warmed my heart to see everyone working together to fulfill our mission despite unprecedented circumstances. Employees also selflessly served their communities during the past year, donating to worthy causes, volunteering, and lending their time and talents to help their neighbors in need."

- "I am also proud of the significant steps our organization took to develop and install the next generation of leadership at Federated in 2020 with the appointment of Michael G. Kerr as president and chief executive officer and Nicholas R. Lower as executive vice president – chief operating officer," said Fetters.

- "The past year reaffirmed our commitment to our culture," said Fetters. "We are proud to be an organization that builds relationships with its clients, associations, and employees face-to-face, eye-to-eye. We truly are better together."

Henefeld & Iacovino Attorneys at Law

Henefeld & Iacovino Attorneys at Law has been in business in Blooming Prairie and a member of the Chamber of Commerce since 1990. Jason Iacovino, who is a Blooming Prairie native, bought the business in 2017, and we appreciate both Jason Iacovino and Leanne Downey for their continued support of the Chamber and the Blooming Prairie area community.

Henefeld & Iacovino Attorney's at Law is located at 415 Main St. E. They offer a wide range of services for the Blooming Prairie area: city attorney, estate planning, real estate, wills and trusts, family business contracts and title insurance agent – just to name a few!

Give them a call at 507-583-6663 or visit their website at www.handlawoffice.com.

Congratulations to Henefeld & Iacovino Attorneys at Law for being recognized as the Chamber of Commerce Business of the Week!

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Tattoo parlors put fresh ink to work

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Over the past year, lockdowns caused many businesses to take a break, among them tattoo parlors. However, now that everything is opened back up, tattoo artists are back putting some fresh ink on their patrons.

"We were closed mid-March until last June first when we reopened," Adam Bertram, an award-winning tattoo artist who works at Thee Dragon's Lair in Owatonna, recalled. "We're still at a 50% capacity limit."

"I've been doing it for 13 years," he said. "Every year you progress, you don't feel like it really but after

you come back and look years later you realize that you've come a long way."

"When I got my first tattoo, I fell in love with it, and I've always done art growing up so it's just something I was drawn to," Bertram explained of what drew him to take up a career as a tattoo artist.

Tattoo artistry is still very much an emergent field, and skilled artists such as Bertram work with clients to produce elaborate works of art. "The one I'm working on right now is really cool," Bertram said. "I feel like everyday there's a different one and they're all unique." "I like working with the people and being able to be myself and

coming up with really cool ideas," Bertram said. "I just love tattooing and I just love everything about it. Coming up with tattoos is usually a little bit of half and half, sometimes they send me reference photos and I'll take what they give me and come up with something for them that seems to suit them."

According to Bertram, tattoos and tattoo artistry is rising in popularity. "I'd say ever since around 2012 or 2013 it seems that it's gotten really busy and right now is the busiest time tattooing has ever been, all around. Everyone's booked out months in advance," he said.

During the time they were closed Thee Dragon's Lair looked to remodel and open back up ready to go. "We did some remodeling in here, we redid the ceilings and put some TV's up," Bertram explained. "We got to spend some extra time with our families and sit back and relax a little bit."

Tattoo parlors are licensed by the county each year. "I currently look over the inspections for the Body Art Establishments in Steele County," Steele County Public Health Director Amy Caron said. "Steele County has held this delegation of licensing since 2011." "The establishments apply for an annual license and this is



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

Tattoo artist Adam Bertram works on a piece. Tattoo parlors were closed for several months during COVID and have seen renewed enthusiasm since reopening their doors.

approved by the County Board. I go out and inspect the establishments annually," Caron said. "We currently have two Body Art Establishments in Steele County that are located in Owatonna."

Now that things are returning back

to normal the staff at Thee Dragon's Lair is looking to continue to create tattooed works of art. "We're just really thankful for all the support, since we've opened it's been really busy," Bertram said. "If you want a tattoo, come to Thee Dragon's Lair."

Community Bank Owatonna announces new director

Locally owned and operated Community Bank Owatonna and its Board of Directors are pleased to announce that David M. Otterson has been named to the bank's Board of Directors.

Otterson is a North Dakota native and a long-time Owatonna businessman. After working in the insurance industry for eight years, he purchased Heinz Insurance Agency in 1998. For the past 23 years Otterson has served as the agency's president with responsibilities for management and business development activities.

Otterson graduated from Moorhead State University with a double major in business adminis-



David Otterson

tration and marketing. He and his wife Sheila have lived in Owatonna since 1997, and the family has three children. His community activities include participation and leadership positions in the Owatonna Early Edition Rotary Club, Steele County Ducks Unlimited, and Trinity Lutheran Church,

among others.

"We are excited for David to join the Community Bank Owatonna Board of Directors," said David "Ole" Olson, chairman of the Board of Directors.

"He has a long history of service to the community and will bring additional business expertise to our Board."

"I am honored to join the Community Bank Owatonna Board of Directors," said Otterson. "I value the importance of local community banking and appreciate the service that the bank provides. I look forward to working with the bank's management team in serving our customers, staff, directors, and shareholders."

More new Chamber members



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Ambassadors from the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism visit with Hidden Rose Boutique at 130 E. Vine St. to welcome them as a new member. Melissa Ward is the owner. Hidden Rose Boutique offers women's clothing from sizes small to plus sizes. They also carry shoes and jewelry. The ambassadors also went to Owatonna Fitness and Wellness Center and Fresh Café located in the same building to welcome them as a new member. Reagan West is the owner. Owatonna Fitness and Wellness Center has all your health needs in mind. From fitness classes, including cycling, yoga and bootcamp as well as nutrition and personal training.



CLA named Best Place to Work

▲ CLA from A1 company's top position, someday.

Asked what attracts her to CLA, Wencil said: "The people. There is something about the genuine people that work here."

Tori Gaedtko, who began as an intern last year and was just recently hired full time, concurs with Wencil's assessment of CLA. "I interviewed with quite a few accounting firms after college," Gaedtko said. "Something with CLA stuck out. The people make it."

CLA, Wencil said, offers great flexibility to its workers.

For Gaedtko, it's all about the opportunities CLA offers. She said accounting professionals are often stuck doing the same thing with many companies, but CLA allows workers to handle different aspects of accounting.

Wencil said she cred-

"We need to outdo ourselves on the fun and flexibility."

Dale Buytaert
CLA Managing Principal

its CLA's management for making the firm such a great place to work. She pointed out how even though CLA has 120 locations all over the U.S.; there is no company headquarters and managers are spread out at various locations.

"We act like a family at the office and it starts with management," Wencil said, adding

managers always make time for their employees no matter what they have going on.

Dale Buytaert, who works out of Owatonna, is a managing principal and oversees the southern Minnesota region for CLA. He has been with CLA for 26 years.

In his role, Buytaert focuses on the work-place atmosphere. "We try to make it fun and flexible for them," he said.

During the middle of the day recently, Buytaert allowed his workers to take a fun break. They responded by breaking out a small basketball and began throwing it around to each other while standing at the end of their workstations.

"We need to outdo ourselves on the fun and flexibility," Buytaert said.

He acknowledged how work habits have changed with the younger generation from when he orig-



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSLER

Tori Gaedtko, left, and Brittany Wencil are two accounting professionals at CLA in Owatonna. CLA has been recognized as the Best Place to Work in southeast Minnesota by Workforce Development, Inc.

inally got into the business. And it has caused him to alter his expectations. "Let's let the younger kids work the way they want and trust they will get the work done," Buytaert said. "They are free to be what they want to do as long as the work gets done."

While many have worked remotely during the pandemic, CLA is mostly back in the office. And Buytaert likes

having everyone back. "We just work better together," he said. "We feed off each other's energy."

Buytaert said CLA's recent honor as being the best workplace is representative of the people. "We have Brittanys (pointing to Wencil) that drive our culture," he said. "Having the best place to work is what we want."

The Best Places to Work awards program

was a commissioned study by Workforce Development, Inc. The purpose of the program is to recognize the best employers and provide vital information to companies about the practices they use to attract and retain employees.

Each company participating was required to complete a 40-question survey that allowed their employment practices to be analyzed by a Florida consulting firm.

Data was measured on such parameters as turnover, rate of growth, promotion rates, employee evaluations and feedback, employee injuries, diversity of management, training and benefits.

"It's nice to have our name out there and be recognized," Wencil said. "This is a good career for a young person," she added.

Asked if she's ready to head for the Big Four, Wencil smiled and said, "Not even if you paid me."

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PUBLIC SAFETY

BLOTTER from A4

Fraud: Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 1300 block of State Ave. NW at 11:18 a.m.

Restraining Order: At 3:10 p.m., a restraining order violation occurred in the 1100 block of School St. E.

May 4

Theft: At 9:25 a.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 1900 block of Lemond Road SW.

Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 1800 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 11:22 a.m.

Arrest: Police arrested a subject from the 600 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 1:16 p.m.

May 5

Crash: Police responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries at Bridge St. W. and Allan Ave. SW at 8:23 a.m. They issued a citation to one of the drivers.

Warrants: Police made warrant arrests in the 1200 block of Kast Ave. SE at 3:02 p.m. and the 200 block of Linden Ave. NE at 4:53 p.m.

Restraining Order: Officer arrested a subject for a restraining order violation in the 400 block of State Ave. NW at 8:37 p.m.

Obscenity: Officers responded to a report of indecent exposure in the 100 block of St. John Dr. NW at 8:47 p.m.

May 6

Fraud: Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 200 block of Pearl St. E. at 3:24 p.m.

Steele County Sheriff

May 1

Thefts: Deputies took theft reports in the 200 block of 3rd Ave. SE in Medford at 8:13 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Domestic: Deputies responded to a domestic disturbance in the 11300 block of 34th Ave. SE in Summit Township at 7:49 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

May 3

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 400 block of 7th Ave. W. in Ellendale at 4:19 a.m.

Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest in the 800 block of 7th Ave. W. in Ellendale at 5:38 p.m.

Suspicion: Deputies responded to suspicious activity in the 3300 block of 21st Ave. NW in Clinton Falls Township at 9:10 p.m.

Domestic: Deputies responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1800 block of 44th Ave. SE in Havana Township at 9:29 p.m.

May 4

Theft: At 5:53 a.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 4600 block of 64th Ave. SE in Havana Township.

Theft: Deputy took a theft report in the 4800 block of County Road 45 N. in Clinton Falls Township at 1:21 p.m.

May 6

Theft: Deputies received a theft report from the 4100 block of 69th St. NW in Medford Township at 9:24 a.m.

Restraining Order:

Deputy arrested a subject for a restraining order violation in the 1800 block of 44th Ave. SE in Havana Township at 8:10 p.m.

Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest at the detention center at 9:12 p.m.

ARRESTS
Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

Nicholas Greg Bergan, 27, arrested at 11:40 p.m. May 1, DWI, held for court.

Jamie Anthony Deshawn Jeffries, 26, arrested at 11:05 p.m. May 2, domestic assault/assault, held for court.

Erick Edgar Mendoza Cruz, 40, arrested at 8:11 p.m. May 3, held for court.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

Janiffer Lyne Miller, 37, arrested at 8:32 p.m. May 1, domestic assault/assault and cancelled license, held for court.

Jason Alan Dalbec, 43, arrested at 6:46 p.m. May 6, warrants arrest, \$1,000 bail.

Duane Reginald Bostic II, 29, arrested at 9 p.m. May 6, DANDG violation, held for court.

COURT NEWS

Dodge County

The following case was heard in Dodge County District Court the week of April 25 with Judge Jodi L. Williamson presiding:

Jacob P. Banks, 28, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of marijuana. Banks was sentenced to \$130, 4 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, mental health evaluation, cognitive skill training and 5 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of April 25:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Kyle F. Burnes, 39, Stewartville, revoked license and registration violation, \$310; Addison C. Bzozek, 16, Kasson, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$120 and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without adjudication; Danielle L. Darlert, 31, Rochester, DWI, \$555, 4 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 2 years of supervised probation; Brycen N. Gregor, 18, Egota, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$140 and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without adjudication; Ronald D. Hall, 66, Muskegoe, OK, speeding, \$130; Mason L. Holecek, 24, Kasson, speeding, \$140; Alex R. Kruckeberg, 18, Claremont, hands free

violation, \$130; Oliver B. Lee, 32, Austin, cancelled license and no insurance, Cole R. McGuire, 24, Chatfield, controlled substance crime, stay of adjudication, \$975, 2 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use and 1 year of supervised probation; Michael O. Myers, 32, Dodge Center, speeding, \$130; Robert W. Rettmann, 50, Apple Valley, parking violation, \$32; Joseph W. Simmons Jr., 22, Rochester, revoked license, \$280; Milton R. Smith, 31, Rochester, child passenger restraint system violation, \$130; Christa R. Terwilliger, 29, Clear Lake, IA, DWI, \$505, 4 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, attend MADD impact panel and 1 year of supervised probation.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Tamika A. Buchholz, 30, Minneapolis, DWI, \$250, 7 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 1 year of supervised probation; Byron A. Collier, 62, Dodge Center, no insurance and registration violation, \$310; Joseph C. Hornsby, 23, Rochester, DWI, \$1,005, 3 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, write letter of apology,

chemical dependency evaluation, ignition interlock and 2 years of supervised probation; David F. King, 60, Sauk Center, domestic assault, 90 days in county jail; Riley M. Rainey, 25, Rochester, hands free violation, \$130; Fidencio Tellez-Tamayo, 43, Owatonna, DWI, \$505, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 1 year of supervised probation.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Ricky A. Berner, 57, Mantorville, speeding, \$120; Timothy J. Brown, 38, Cambridge, limited license violation, \$180; Nathan A. Burke, 18, Preston, speeding, \$120; Lindsey A. Flynn, 35, Farmington, speeding, \$140; Mitchell L. Learmont, 29, Rochester, speeding, \$120; Oliver B. Lee, 32, Austin, cancelled license and seat belt; Atley J. Lutz, 19, Kasson, speeding, \$120; Hari N. Prakashah, 30, Rochester, speeding, \$220; Cassandra M. Rodriguez, 33, Rochester, speeding, \$280; Guadalupe Zamarrin, 34, Dodge Center, suspended license, \$280.

WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Derek M. Dehoff, 34, West Concord, parking violation, \$32; Marissa E. Jacobson, 32, Rochester, parking violation, \$32.

BLOOMING PRAIRIE GARAGE SALE SATURDAY, MAY 15 • 8 A.M.

#	Address	Items
#1	110 2 nd St. NW	Support the Blooming Prairie Women of Today so we can continue to support the community of Blooming Prairie
#2	173 3 rd St. SE	Multi-family garage sale - women's clothing and shoes, furniture, exercise equipment, home decor, miscellaneous household items
#3	131 8 th St. NW	Home goods, clothing, exercise bike & misc
#4	133 Main St. W	Huge baby kids sale - infant and kids boys & girl size clothes, swings, bouncers, jumper, changing table, high chair, toddler mattresses, cribs, riding toys, pack & play, toys, children's books, games, kids bedding, Mini fridge, Desk, Leaf Blower, Water genesis grill, wood cooking chair
#5	821 N. Center Ave.	Over 60 collector plates (Kirkade, Sandra Kuck, Grossman, others), 16-piece china, other dishes, kitchen items, sear-cracked magnetic books, costume jewelry, clothing, etc. \$57 reg. AND MORE!
#6	Vandal's Family Market 237 Highway Ave. S.	Multi-family sale in parking lot and Bldg to benefit the Blooming Prairie Youth Club. Hot dogs-\$1, brats-\$2, or donation you choose, all proceeds go to the Club!
#7	106 7 th St. SE	Estimate 2 family sale - MEGA household, kitchen, decor, misc, furniture
#8	425 5th Pl. SW	Tons of kids size boys clothing, kids size 4 Girls Clothing, Kids Shoes, Stroller, Thomas the Train Items, Legos, Toys, Children's Books, Home Decor, Oak Shadow Boxes, Frames, & Shelving
#9	401 4 th St. SE	Little bit of everything (clothing, household items, furniture, piano, miscellaneous and more)
#10	313 1 st St. NE	Kids clothing, Boys 12 months summer & winter, Girls 3T and 4T summer & winter clothing, women's clothing, toddler boy shoes, rain boots, girl shoes, boots, coats, American girl furniture, dolls, and clothes, dress up clothes, lay boy recliner, shelving, picture frames, cribs, laundry baskets, and several other household and children's items. All priced low to sell!
#11	143 8 th St. NW	7 & 8 youth girls, women's clothes (Nike, pink, under armor, American eagle), boys clothes (Nike, under armor, American eagle), men's clothes, shoes, stroller, household, tools, bikes, games, movies, books, and everything in between
#12	First Baptist Church 104 7 th Ave NE	A fundraising garage and take sale behind the church. Our youth group is raising money to go to camp this summer. All sales will be by donation!
#13	424 3 rd St. SW	Multi-Family Sale: Household misc., copper tubing, girls, women's small & men's clothing, vintage wood folding chairs, something for everyone!
#14	Friends of the Library 138 Hwy Ave. South	Highly Used books - fire wall donations
#15	11414 200 th St.	House Decor, Furniture, Clothes (men, women, kids), home tack & misc.
#16	643 2 nd St. NE	Flower Planters & Misc
#17	252 2 nd St. NW	Lower Price, Boys Clothes, Toys, Household Items & misc.
#18	212 2 nd Ave NW	Books, Minerals, Gems & Kids Stuff
#19	318 4 th St. NW	Multi-Family household items, furniture
#20	103 4 th St. NW	One Chair, Vacuum, Carpet Sweeper, Microwave, Household Items
#21	10444 Dodge/Mower Rd	Household items, pictures, clothes, lawn tractor (blower & blade), power tools, swimming pool, patio furniture
#22	451 2 nd St NW	Kitchen, Tablecloths, Clothes, FREE STUFF!
#23	13225 BP th Ave SE	40' glass top patio table, kitchen table, quilt rack, oak chair set, misc. wood chairs, Heywood Wakefield step end table, wood desk, Nordic Track Ski Machine, computer monitor, turbine vents, seat heater, anchor, tie-down and various misc.
#24	399 Memorial Dr. NW	Girls Clothes (NB-100) Boys Clothes (NB-14-16), Women's and Men's Clothing, Hockey Equipment, Baby Equipment, Toys, Kids Bedding, Misc.

The goal posts keep moving

◀ **GOAL** from A2 families for Minnesota's tragically high nursing home death rate. These internal emails clearly show that political consultants were seeking to long-term care deaths based on politics rather than using actual data and evidence to shut down youth sports. Deflecting blame like this and turning our families and kids into scapegoats is unconscionable.

Why are the people's voices being left out of these decisions and politics inserted? This is wrong! Our government is intended to be a people-powered government, not a government demanding power over the people.

Whether you believe that lockdowns worked or didn't work (and I have definite opinions on that), the reality is that these lockdowns have produced a lot of hurting businesses, employees, hospitals, schools, kids, and more. How about our local county fairs? Why weren't they given some predictability so they can be open like the state fair? Why aren't protocol restrictions adjusted so that schools can get kids back into classrooms full-time and in-person? Is this more politics instead of following the data?

Tragically, the governor's emergency powers have turned some law-abiding business owners into criminals. Why are the governor and attorney general continuing to attack and go after these hurting businesses long after the emergency has ended? How does this help anyone? We should be supporting our businesses and helping them. They provide jobs, goods and services, and pay taxes that support our local schools, local governments, and our state.

Though the governor just announced that some of his COVID restrictions now have an endpoint, he failed to announce an endpoint for his stubborn and questionably partisan hold on these never-ending emergency powers. The Governor doesn't need to keep scaring people by claiming he needs to retain these powers "just in case." The Legislature is fully capable of joining the Governor in managing this virus.

There have been eighteen occasions in the Minnesota House where we have taken a vote (many times bipartisan) to end these emergency powers. I voted every one of those times to end these powers and return Minnesota to its constitutionally directed three coequal branches of government. I did that because I believe it is the right thing to do for our state and for the people.

Should governors, no matter what side of the aisle they may be on, have the right to decide whether or not the people you have elected to represent you get a voice in these matters? I should think not!

Ending the emergency powers should not be used as an end-of-session bargaining chip by the governor - emergency powers are meant for emergencies, not to be used as political leverage. It is time for Walz to end his emergency powers now and work with the legislature as a co-equal branch once again. The people of Minnesota deserve that.

Peggy Bennett is a state representative serving Minnesota District 27A, which covers the City of Blooming Prairie, southern Dodge County and most of Freeborn County.

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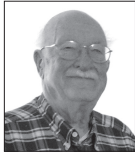
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Carl Haflinger, 96, formerly of BP



Carl Haflinger

Carl Edward Haflinger, resident of Blooming Prairie 2009-2016, entered into peaceful rest Oct. 12, 2020, at Pikes Peak Hospice, Colorado Springs, Colo.

He was the son of Alfred and Florence Haflinger, born on Aug. 22, 1924 in Chicago. Carl was the second child of three, and their only son. He graduated from Kelvyn Park High School in 1943.

His family attended Cragin Covenant Mission Church and later The Salvation Army in Chicago. At age 10, Carl, his mother, and sister, Ruth, became Christians, receiving Christ as their Lord and Savior. He attended confirmation classes, and quickly grew in his knowledge of the Bible and in the strength of his faith in Christ. His younger sister Grace was born in 1937.

After high school, Carl enlisted in the Army Air Corp (Air Force) in April 1943, and was trained in radio mechanics and operations. He flew domestically in a Piper J-3L & 3C, learning

radio communications. In February 1946, Carl requested and received an Honorable Discharge, wanting to focus his vocation on religious radio broadcasting.

In 1948, he began his 40-year career at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, initially as Institute Messenger and Elevator Operator. At the same time, he enrolled at DeVry Technical Institute and attained his First-Class Operator license from the FCC. In 1953, he was promoted at WMBI as radio technician, and in 1958 as control room supervisor. In 1963, he became supervisor of Control Room Engineers. Many in the Broadcasting department expressed appreciation for Carl's faithful service and how he supported and encouraged them.

Carl met Joyce Ditlevson while working at Moody, delivering mail to her desk in the music department. He asked her to marry him on her birthday at Buckingham fountain, downtown Chicago, on Aug. 11, 1950. One year later to the day they married.

The happy couple adopted two children: Elizabeth in 1960, and Jonathan in 1964.

Many hobbies and interests were important parts of Carl's life: writing poetry and songs, The Boy Scouts, The American Legion, The Pacific Garden Mission, The National Rifle Association, teaching himself

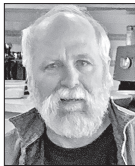
financial investing, Chicago sports teams, electronics, and radio. He volunteered with Joyce at International Ministries to Israel. Carl served on various boards in his church and led the worship and hymn singing many Sundays.

Carl and Joyce lived in Chicago over 50 years and had the great joy of retiring to Blooming Prairie for eight years. They attended First Baptist, "the church that Carl loved" from 2008 to 2016. Later, he and Joyce moved to Colorado Springs to live near their daughter. During his time there, Carl became a fan of Veterans Affairs and the Sunday afternoon hymn sing where he knew nearly every verse from memory.

Carl is survived by his sister, Grace (Ron) Jonassen of Palatine, Ill.; brother-in-law, Roger Sorenson of Elly; his daughter, Beth (Tim) Gansol of Colorado Springs, Colo.; his son, Jon (Debby) Haflinger of Antioch, Ill.; grandchildren, Lauren (Taylor) Floyd, Trenton Gansol; and Ian Haflinger; and great-grandson, Kyden Floyd.

He was preceded in death by Joyce, his parents, and his sister, Ruth. The memorial service will be held Saturday, May 22, 2021 at First Baptist Church and interment at the Danish Baptist Cemetery, both in Blooming Prairie.

Kent Boxrucker, 62, Owatonna



Kent Boxrucker

Kent A. Boxrucker, 62, of Owatonna, died Friday, May 7, 2021 at his home.

He was born March 31, 1959 in Maryland the son of Arthur and H. Irene (Barb) Boxrucker. Kent graduated from Prairie Du Chien High School before attending vocational school in LaCrosse.

He moved to Owatonna where he met and married Mary Grob-

ner on Sept. 14, 1985. He worked as a tool maker for OTC, WSI, EP Johnson, IFF and most recently Daikin. Kent retired early in 2019.

Kent loved Mopar muscle cars and was an avid collector. He enjoyed gardening, making salsa, hunting asparagus, his dog Maxx, and attempting to tell jokes. When his children were young, he enjoyed coaching 4-H softball. Kent loved his family, especially his grandchildren, and spending time with all of them.

He is survived by sons, Matt (and April) Grobner, Brian (and Danielle) Boxrucker; daughter, Andrea (and Kris Ferch) Boxrucker; grandchildren, Dylan, Tyler, Dixie, Erik, Kya, Mela, Sofia; siblings, Bruce (and Jeanette) Boxrucker, Gail

(and Andy) Howard, Paul (and Lauri) Boxrucker, John (and Jodi) Boxrucker, Monica (and Dan) Schneider, Scott Boxrucker and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Mark Boxrucker; nephew, Kyle Boxrucker. Visitation will be at Michaelson Funeral Home on Thursday, May 13 from 4-7 p.m. and at St. John Lutheran Church in Owatonna on Friday, May 14 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Funeral services will be held Friday, May 14, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. at St. John Lutheran Church with Pastor Jackie Richmond officiating. Interment will be in the St. John Cemetery in Owatonna. Funeral arrangements are being handled by Michaelson Funeral Homes of Owatonna.

Mark Mullally, 66, Owatonna



Mark Mullally

Mark Gregory Mullally, age 66, of Owatonna, died unexpectedly after a brief illness at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester.

Mark was born Dec. 10, 1954 in Milwaukee. He was the oldest child of James and Kathryn (Peabody) Mullally.

Mark worked part-time at the Human Relations Center in Owatonna and enjoyed collecting coins and stamps, playing cards, listening to music, playing computer games and watching the Minnesota Twins.

He is preceded in death by his father, Jim; his sister and brother-in-law, Jane and John Kreuch. He is survived by his mother, Katie; brothers Michael (Sue), Jim, Kevin (Karen), Michael Paul Mahoney (Lynn Anderson); and sisters Patricia Mahoney McQuillan (Daniel) and Sarah Peterson (Brian). He was a proud uncle to 18 nieces and nephews and five great nieces

and nephews who will remember him fondly.

A Mass of Christian burial was Saturday, May 8, 2021 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Owatonna, with the Rev. James Starsich officiating. Interment followed at Sacred Heart Cemetery. Memorials to St. Joseph Catholic Church, St. Mary's School, National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) or the Owatonna Area Serra Club are preferred. For more information or to leave an online condolence message go to www.megercare.com.

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Dean Harms, 79, Inver Grove Heights



Dean Harms

Dean Allen Harms, 79, of Inver Grove Heights passed away

suddenly on April 26, 2021.

Dean is survived by loving wife, Beverly; children, Tanya (Dennis) Mooney, Tara, Thad (Andrea); grandchildren, Tanner, Kaidence, Riley, Ava and Jacob; mother, Eleanor Harms; siblings, Juanita (Dennis) Ingvaldson, Darla (Ken) Hjelm, Dan (Barbara) Harms; nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

He is preceded in death by father, Doede Harms.

A Celebration of Dean's Life will be held on Friday, May 14, 2021 from 4-8 p.m. at Drkula's 32 Bowl, 6710 Cahill Ave., Inver Grove Heights. Funeral arrangements are being handled by Roberts Funeral Home in Inver Grove Heights. For more information go to www.robertsfuneraland-cremation.com.

Larry Mueller, 76, Austin



Larry Mueller

Larry Byron Mueller, age 76, of Austin, passed away peacefully on April 23, 2021 at St.

Mary's Hospital in Rochester, surrounded by his family.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years Joyce (Murphy) Mueller; his children, Todd Mueller, Melissa (Bill) Capocasa, and Michelle Johnson; his daughter-in-law Jill Mueller; his grandchildren, Nicole and Bethany Mueller, Kaley, Bradley and Addison Capocasa, and Claudia, Ava, and Kendall Johnson; his siblings Linda (Bill) Vaith and Brian Mueller.

Larry was preceded in death by his parents Byron and Nora Mueller; his in-laws Eugene and Bernice Murphy; his infant daughter Teresa; and his son Troy Mueller.

Larry was known for his sarcasm, being the "jack of all trades," and his love for gardening. He will be dearly missed by his family, especially his wife of 57 years.

The family will gather privately for a burial and celebration of life at a later date.

Stephanie Radel, 32, Apple Valley



Stephanie Radel

Stephanie Jo Radel of Apple Valley died Thursday, May 6, 2021.

A memorial service is planned for Saturday, May 15, 2021 at 11 a.m. at Brick-Meger Funeral Home in Owatonna. Friends may greet the family on Friday, May 14, 2021 from 5-7 p.m. at Brick-Meger Funeral Home and one hour before the memorial service on Saturday at the funeral home. Burial will follow in the Radel family plot at Owatonna Memorial Gardens. Weather permitting the service will be held outdoors, please dress accordingly.

Stephanie Jo was born on Christmas Day in 1988 at the Owatonna

Hospital, the daughter of Allan and Randee Radel. She attended Associated Preschool, Lincoln Elementary School and Owatonna High School, graduating in 2007. While in high school, Stephanie was a cheerleader, she excelled in soccer and track and served as captain for the soccer team her senior year.

Following high school, Stephanie attended the University of Minnesota graduating with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education. Stephanie had such a gift and love for children. She used this gift and her teaching degree loving and teaching students in various pre-schools. She was a member of the Minnesota Teachers Association known as Education Minnesota. Her goal was to obtain her master's degree in early childhood education.

Stephanie Jo had a zest and a zeal for life, her infectious smile would always light up a room and she brought joy to people she was

around. Her family provided her with great support and she always looked forward to coming home to visit mom and dad.

Stephanie will be greatly missed by her parents, Allan and Randee Radel of Owatonna; brothers, Jeffrey (Terri) Radel of Columbia, Mo., and Kyle Radel of Bloomington, MN; sister, Kim Radel (Bob Tabor) of Owatonna; niece, Katie Radel; nephews, Jacob Radel, Justin Radel and Dylan (Jennifer) Radel; aunts, uncles and cousins; significant other, Trevor McCauley; and her precious kitty, Lo. Stephanie was preceded in death by her brother Scott Radel, uncle Kenny Radel, grandparents Elwood and special grandma Kaye Mahlman, and Harlin and Loraine Radel. For more information or to leave a condolence message go to www.megercare.com.

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ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

HOME OF THE SHINING KNIGHTS

Students of the Week

Jenna 2ND GRADE



Jenna, you are a positive influence on us all. Thank you for being our Shining Knight!

Parents are Matt & Jamie | Jenna was nominated by Mrs. Connor

Phillip 1ST GRADE



PHILLIP is an excellent example of what it means to be a Shining Knight. Phillip enters our classroom each day with an eagerness to learn and a willingness to help. He puts his all into everything that he does. He is helpful, kind, and friendly to all. Phillip always has a story to share with great enthusiasm. He brings great joy to all those around him. Congratulations, Phillip, on being our Shining Knight.

Parents are Jeff & Jenny | Phillip was nominated by Mrs. Peterson



730 South Cedar Ave.
 Owatonna
 507-446-2300
stmarys-owatonna.org

THIS FEATURE SPONSORED BY A PROUD ST. MARY'S ALUMNUS.



The Lights of Litomysl sing songs of praise Thursday at the National Day of Prayer outside Owatonna City Hall. Members of the praise band include, from left: Brian Johnson, Darcy Kubat, James Konz, Andrea Johnson, Monica Anderson and Troy Anderson.

National Day of Prayer inspires hope

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

They all come from different backgrounds, but they have the same thing on their minds: prayer.

Under a beautiful backdrop of spring colors and Christian music in front of the West Hills government complex in Owatonna, about 110 people gathered Thursday afternoon for the National Day of Prayer, an annual observance of prayer that has taken place for 70 years.

Pastors from various area churches offered prayers of comfort, healing, hope, unity and protection in a world that has been anything but

normal on many fronts over the past year. The individual prayers focused on repentance and petition. The pastors also offered prayers for the Owatonna community, Steele County, public safety, schools and the nation.

"Prayer is the backbone of what we do," said Mayor Thomas Kuntz in delivering a proclamation for the day. "Without it, we would be one lost community."

Rev. Loren Olson prayed for all public safety workers, including police, fire and EMS crews. As a chaplain for Owatonna Police Department, Olson said he knows about the

challenges facing police officers and "prays for them often." Police officers, he said, do important work that serves the greater community.

"We thank them for the work they do," said Olson. "Keep them safe in responding to emergencies. We just pray for their safety each day."

Rev. Amanda Flay prayed for anyone who works in public service ranging from judges to landfill workers in Steele County. She asked God to guide those public servants and provide them with deeper wisdom to help others.

In his prayer focusing on the nation, Rev. Kirk Griebel asked for

unity. "Save us from violent discord and evil," Griebel said. "We pray that we can be united people. Take away hatred and give us love."

A prayer was also offered related to the pandemic thanking God for the vaccines that have been made and for those who have taken on the role of helping others who suffered during the coronavirus.

Rev. Brent Carlson of Christ Community Covenant Church organizes the prayer observance. The Lights of Litomysl provided songs of praise during the event. Everyone ended the prayer service by singing, "God Bless America."

MetroNet helps Habitat for Humanity

The future for two families getting affordable housing in Owatonna got a boost of support from MetroNet on May 4.

MetroNet's marketing manager Albert Brand made a check presentation for \$5,000 to the Hops for Habitat volunteers at Mineral Springs Brewery. That money will go to the construction mission in Owatonna with Two Rivers Habitat for Humanity.

Two Rivers Habitat is currently building two new homes along Linn and Mosher Avenues.

"We're excited to be the title sponsor for Hops for Habitat," said Brand. "MetroNet is growing in town and our company is



MetroNet Marketing Manager Albert Brand recently made a check presentation for \$5,000 to the Hops for Habitat volunteers.

all about giving back to communities. The money is going to a great cause to help these two families have a better opportunity for their futures."

Hops for Habitat is a yearly beer sampling fundraiser that will take place on Sept. 11 at the

Four Season Centre in Owatonna. More than 20 breweries from locally owned to statewide will be on site with live music from Owatonna native Travis Thamer and a food truck from Evan's Eatery.

"This donation is really kicking off the event

in the right direction," Hops volunteer Curt Orchard said. "We all believe this year's Hops for Habitat will be even bigger and with a sense of urgency as both homes are going up at the same time and every dollar counts especially with the skyrocketing cost of construction materials. All of us from Hops for Habitat and Two Rivers Habitat for Humanity are very grateful for MetroNet's generosity."

Tickets may be purchased at tworivershabitat.org. Volunteers are also needed to host the event. A digital sign up calendar has been set up on the Hops for Habitat section.

Preschool to launch school year with new name

Trinity Nursery School of Owatonna announces a new name starting with the 2021-2022 academic school year.

Trinity, which has provided 55 years of quality preschool education in the community, felt that it was time for a new look. Starting with this coming school year, Trinity Nursery School will change its name to Trinity Preschool, complete with a new logo.

Trinity Preschool is a ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church. Todd Buegler, senior pastor at

Trinity, said the image of the tree, from its deep roots to growing branches and leaves, represent the growth that takes place in the life and faith of the children.

"The three leaves represent the Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with the veins of the center leaf forming a cross, reminding us of the presence of Jesus in our midst," said Buegler. "The splash of colors in the soil is



Trinity Preschool

a playful reminder of the promises that God makes and of joy and hope. The single root extends beyond the boundary of the circle, to form the heart in the preschool name, showing how this work is rooted in love," he said.

"The voices of children laughing, learning and playing, and the sound of the teachers working with the students is joyful and infectious," said Brenda Jensen, director

of Trinity Preschool. She went on to say, "We wanted the new logo and name to reflect who we are and the service that we provide in this community. We are so fortunate to have a dedicated staff of early childhood educators that are committed to preparing our children for the world that is in front of them."

Trinity Preschool is a "Parent Aware 4 star rated" preschool, the highest possible rating.

To learn more about Trinity Preschool, please visit www.tlcowatonna.org/preschool.

BOOK NOOK

Happy 45th anniversary!



NANCY VAILLANCOURT

Last week's Book Nook was about the early unsuccessful attempts to start a library in Blooming Prairie. Bookmobile service in the county began in 1972 with weekly stops in Blooming Prairie.

However, community members still wanted their own library. About the same time, South East Libraries Cooperating, a regional library system, was being formed for area libraries. The formation of a regional library system brought a renewed emphasis on libraries for all residents.

Citizens here regrouped and voiced their need for a library to the Blooming Prairie City Council, which agreed to help finance the facility. The Blooming Prairie Library Committee, headed by Jackie Balstad, approached the Owatonna Public Library board for

assistance. Under the direction of Graham Benoit, a contract was drawn up, making the Blooming Prairie library an official branch of the Owatonna Public Library. The Owatonna library would do all necessary cataloging and would provide reference service over the telephone as required. Additionally, Ray Ogden, SELCO director, offered about \$2,000 worth of materials through a SELCO grant and the money from the SELCO operating fund.

The library's grand opening was held in May 1976 at its first location, the building on Highway 218 (now KIK Graphics). The media noted that this was the culmination of over 50 years of effort. Five-foot orange banners expressed the community mood: Bloom with Books. At the time of its opening, the branch had 600 adult books, 200 children's books, and 500 paperbacks for a total of 1,300 items. Today, we have a total of 24,597 books in those categories. My, how we have grown!

Next week — what has changed in 45 years of library service? (Hint: it's a lot!)

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.

If interested, please email
Rick Bussler at rbbrick@frontier.com.

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BIRTHDAYS

May 12 Doug Hillson Alexandria Thompson Barb Brewington Kirsten Paulson	May 15 Angie Carlson Tamzen Johnson
May 13 Greg Johnson Cody Schmeling Randy Lea Aubryana Alves	May 16 Holly Ille Gavin Esplan Mitchell Fiebiger
May 14 Ron Schmeling Cole Ingvalson Alex Lea Tammy Wurst	May 17 Ashley Schmeling Nicholas Hanson
	May 18 Cody Christianson Bryan Fristedt Cade Christianson David Farr Chris Staloch

ANNIVERSARIES

May 12 Rick & Linda Kittelson	May 15 Jim & Nicole Richards Mary & Paul Master
May 13 Harvey & Nancy Farr Dave & Cheri Klug	May 17 Jason & Kaylene Jensen
May 18 Brian & Sue Bowman	

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DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Upcoming 4-hour refresher defensive driving classes

- Wednesday, June 2 - 6 to 10 p.m.
Blooming Prairie City Center community room
- Monday, July 12 - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Blooming Prairie High School room 206

\$24 cash or check made out to BPPS

Register by calling 507-583-4426 or email msouthworth@blossoms.k12.mn.us

BLOOMING PRAIRIE COMMUNITY EDUCATION



Pastor Lisa Vick
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH
OWATONNA

Greetings Brothers and Sisters of Faith... It sure feels like spring is finally here. The leaves are adorning the trees, the tulips are in full bloom and all around I hear lawn mowers doing their jobs of cutting the ever growing grass. Spring is a time of new birth and reawakening

for nature and for us. With some caution we are awakening to a new post-pandemic world. So everything is good, right? Well not quite. We should be bursting with joy yet many of us are not feeling joy - we are feeling drained and depleted. We are languishing. Adam Grant, an organizational psychologist at Wharton School of Business, wrote about this cultural phenomenon that is a result of our year plus pandemic in a recent New York Times editorial called: There's a Name for the Blah You're Feeling: It's Called Languishing. He writes: "languishing is the neglected

middle child of mental health. It's the void between depression and flourishing - it is the absence of well-being. You don't have symptoms of mental illness, but you're not the picture of mental health either. You're not functioning at full capacity. Languishing dulls your motivation, disrupts your ability to focus, and triples the odds that you'll cut back on work." I was so relieved when I read this article because I have felt this sense of languishing in my own life. I love every aspect of being a pastor, don't get me wrong, I am just finding it harder to get things done and more importantly

to feeling joy in my call to ministry again. I needed help and that help came when I heard God's holy word from the Gospel of John. In the 10th chapter Jesus is talking about sheep. Sheep lead a pretty dull life - they mostly just mill about with their heads down eating. Yet Jesus loves them, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." (John 10: 11) We are to love as Christ loves us, then we must be willing and ready to listen for his voice. "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me," just as the Father knows

me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd." For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. (John 10: 14-17) John reminds the early Christian church that the sheep know the voice of the shepherd and only then will they follow. If the voice call is a calling is a stranger's voice, the sheep resist and run away. In other words, Christian love is not merely our efforts to do good. Instead,

Christian love is the very presence of the living Christ actively transforming us as we attempt to offer Christ's transforming love to others. Thus, our way forward out of this dull stagnation or languishing of this past year to a new life of meaning and purpose. We must listen for our Shepherd's voice who is calling us to love as he loves us. For us to be transformed, to flourish, we must extend that love to others. Christian love is the very presence of the living Christ actively transforming us as we strive to offer Christ's transforming love to others. Blessings.

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 - ALC
503 Radel Ct., Ellendale
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,
Bloomington
Senior Pastor:
Rev. Heidi Hergert
Associate Pastor:
Rev. Mike Waterloo
507-583-6821
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 - LCMC
2500 7th Ave. NE, Owatonna
Pastor Greg Schlicker
507-451-4125
goodshepherdowatonna.com
Indoor Worship:
Sundays 9 a.m. & 10 a.m.
Online Worship: Sundays 9 a.m. or anytime on website

MOLAND LUTHERAN - ELCA
7618 NE 84th Ave., Kenyon
Pastor Nancy Edwardsen
507-789-6861
Worship: 10:45 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN - ELCA
9651 SW 75th St., Ellendale
507-465-6389
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9 a.m. Sun.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN - LCMC
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-Freeman
Pastor Dale Sieghausen
507-583-2038 or 507-437-3000
www.rog Lutheran.org
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.

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

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN - ELCA
1301 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
Pastors Dave Klaviter and Jackie 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
Vicar Jackie Short
507-567-2474
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN - LCMC
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
Interim: Deacon Billie Jo Wicks
507-451-2185
Sunday worship: 10 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN - ELCA
609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
507-451-4520
tciowatonna.org
Senior Pastor: Rev. Todd Bugler; Associate Pastor: Rev. Amanda Flay
Deacon: Kris Oppgaard
Worship: 8:15 a.m. & 9:30 a.m. - Sanctuary and 10:45 a.m. - Live Stream at facebook.com/tciowatonna and tciowatonna.org/worshiplive

9:30 a.m. - Live broadcast on KRUE 92.1 FM
Video on Spectrum (Ch. 181), Jaguar TV (Ch. 900) and owatonnaalive.com
- Tuesday at 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday at 6 p.m. and Sunday at 11 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 - LCMC
106 Third Ave. SW, Medford
Pastor Dale Sieghausen
507-451-0447
Worship: 8 a.m. & 10 a.m.
Education Hour: 9 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN - LCMC
57043 350th 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
Interim: Deacon Billie Jo Wicks
Sunday worship: 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 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
507-451-4845
Father James Starasich
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
507-254-6244
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL
9946 SE 24th Ave Owatonna
Father John Wilmut
507-583-2784
www.litomyslwebs.com
Sunday Mass at 8:15 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 Wilmut
507-477-2256
Masses: 5 p.m. Saturday
Reconciliation: 3:45 p.m. Saturday

SACRED HEART PARISH
810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna
Father Swaminatha Pothenreddy Parochial Vicar
507-451-1588
www.sacredheartowatonna.org
Masses: Saturday 5 p.m.
Sunday 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and Noon (Spanish)
Daily Mass 7:15 a.m.
Tuesday through Friday
Reconciliation 4 p.m. Saturday
Adoration - Thursdays 8 a.m.-7 p.m.

ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC
114 E. Main St., Claremont
Pastor Rich and Amy Pettet
Father John Wilmut
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 Starasich
507-451-4845
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 9 & 10 a.m.
Reconciliation: 3-3:30 p.m. Sat.
Daily Mass: 8 a.m. Tues., Wed. & Fri. (Communion Service 9 a.m. Thursday)
Adoration Chapel available Mon. - Fri. 7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Key job required after hours or weekends

CHRISTIAN
CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT
540 SE 18th St., Owatonna
Dr. V. Brent Carlson, Pastor
507-413-0209
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.
Sunday Connections: 10:15 a.m.

PENTECOSTAL
FIRST UNITED PENTECOSTAL
230 Locust Ave., Owatonna
Pastor Eliazar Telamantes
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 J. & 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 Cirkene
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.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
2373 Seventh Ave. NE, Owatonna

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2373 Seventh Ave. NE, Owatonna

DESTINY CHRISTIAN
2515 Harvest Lane NW, Owatonna
Pastors Rich and Amy Pettet
507-456-4775
www.destinyccc.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

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
507-885-7532
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

FREE CHURCH
CORNERSTONE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
1500 18th St. SE, Owatonna
Pastors Scott Sheets and David Shaw
507-446-5850
www.cornerstoneowatonna.com

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Zooming into spring



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BLESSER

While biting his tongue and displaying some deep concentration, Brantley Butters, 8, enjoys zipping around his Blooming Prairie neighborhood and zooming into spring with his brother, Grady Wytaske, 3, as a passenger on their battery-operated four wheeler on a recent spring afternoon. They are the sons of Tanner and Jenny Wytaske.

BP chief's appeals hearing set for May 15

◀ **CHIEF** from A1
The appeal was filed on behalf of Skillestad by civil rights attorney Richard Wylie of Minneapolis according to Minnesota Statutes Section 13.04, Subd. 4. The appeal basically says if a person thinks the public record on him/her is inaccurate or incomplete, a remedy exists with an appeal to the state.

Wylie and Langholz both said the appeal hearing before the Department of Administration will be held at the Blooming Prairie Government Center in the council room.

A backlog of cases before the state, partially because of COVID-19,

has caused the lengthy delay in hearing the Skillestad appeal. "We are operating on the schedule set by the Department of Administration and have no control over it," Wylie said.

Asked if the relationship between Langholz and Skillestad has improved, Wylie said his information is attorney-client privileged. Also asked if his client's intent was to have the evaluation and performance improvement plan removed from his record, Wylie said that, too, was attorney-client privileged.

Wylie did acknowledge that resolution of the matter could be

done by mediation. He said the Department of Administration may attempt mediation of the dispute.

If a settlement cannot be achieved, Skillestad can ask for the Department of Administration to provide an administrator sometimes called an administrative judge to conduct a hearing and decide if the information at issue is correct, incorrect, complete or incomplete.

In an Oct. 14, 2020 interview, Wylie said, "Chief Skillestad feels he is generally respected and liked in the community, and he took this criticism professionally and personally."

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Searching for normal in an abnormal world



Steele Talkin'
STEPHANIE KIBLER

What is "normal" anyway? It goes without saying that the past year has been a challenge for all of us in a variety of ways. Some struggled financially, others found distance learning unbearable, and many struggled with the lack of human connection. Over the past year, the statement I have heard most often is "I can't wait to get back to normal." I have now started asking, "what about your 'old normal' do you want back?" Oddly enough, I have yet to get an answer to this question. So, what is normal? And what was so great about the "old" normal? We are creatures of habit, and often when we are outside our comfort zone we struggle. So, it is logical that many found staying home, wearing masks, and six feet of space difficult to adjust to.

In all honesty, the thought of getting back to "normal" did not occur to me. As the pandemic continued, I looked for opportunities, and I found opportunities, that would allow me to follow the CDC guidelines and continue to keep staff working, volunteers safe, and my community supported. In doing this, I found many positives to take away from the past year.

See STEELE TALKIN' on B9 ▶



PHOTO BY MIKE OLDENBURG

Hundreds of Owatonna High School juniors and seniors attended this year's prom held Saturday at the Four Seasons Centre.

Four Seasons Centre takes on a carnival feel

BY DEB FLEMMING
NEWS EDITOR

"Everybody came together and made something beautiful," said Maria Versteeg, this year's prom committee adviser for Owatonna High School. Of the 42 students who volunteered to work on the decorations committee, 30 were planning to attend the event. Overall, 350-plus juniors and seniors were expected at prom.

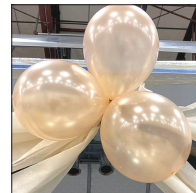
"When people come together, especially in hard times – it's magic," said Versteeg.

Because of COVID-10 restrictions, prom did not include a grand march this year and out-of-town guests were not allowed.

"The event is all about inclusion," said Versteeg, adding that students were encouraged to come in groups, in pods or by themselves. "We want everyone to feel like they belong at prom this year."

The committee began decorating early Friday morning in hopes of being ready for Saturday's guests.

See FOUR on B12 ▶



STAFF PHOTOS BY DEB FLEMMING

The decorations committee spent hours transforming the Four Seasons Centre in Owatonna into a carnival-like atmosphere for this year's prom, which was held Saturday. Left, Audrey Simon and Kilee Kleiber fasten lights near the entrance to the event.

Area gardeners begin spring planting

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

With the weather warming up and the sun shining, local gardeners are out and about getting some much-needed time to tend to their gardens.

Master gardener Julie Wanous is one of many local gardeners who have been busy planting these last couple of weeks. "I plant in waves," she said. Wanous has been gardening almost her entire life and finds that it is a relaxing and

rewarding hobby. "I liked to do it as a kid and I think that probably stems from the fact that my mom did not enjoy gardening, so anytime us kids were gardening she'd always say that we did such a nice job," Wanous said.

While a chilly April pushed some gardeners back, others got an early start. "Some people were out gardening in that first week when it was really warm and dry," Wanous said. "Then we went through this cold spell."

See AREA on B12 ▶



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

Master gardener Julie Wanous plants cauliflower in her vegetable garden. Wanous is one of many gardeners out planting as the weather warms.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

One of the perks of being co-principal for the day is Abel got to have a special lunch, pizza, with two of his friends, Jeffrey Bruns, left, and Owen Gimbel, and Principal Jacob Schwarz.

BP fourth-grader serves as Principal for the Day

BY ALEX NUEHRING
NEWS WRITER

Last Tuesday, Blooming Prairie fourth-grader Coen Abel got the opportunity of a lifetime when he got to serve as Principal for the Day at Blooming Prairie Elementary School.

Principal Jacob Schwarz said some of the perks that Abel got to do as principal for the day included making morning announcements, greeting each

class in the morning, giving a presentation on how to make maple syrup, receiving his own lanyard with his name and position and having an advising lunch meeting with some of his classmates and Principal Schwarz.

Blooming Prairie Education Foundation President Karen Fouarge said being principal for the day is a fun opportunity for the student and it

See BP PRINCIPAL on B9 ▶

Foundation could reach \$1M mark

BY ALEX NUEHRING
NEWS WRITER

This is a special year for the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation because with the funds it raises through the silent and live auctions on May 22, it will mostly likely reach \$1 million raised over its 18-year of running its annual auction.

It's a particularly special year for the original foundation members who have seen the auction grow from humble beginnings.

Becky Noble, who was the founding president of the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation, said the annual auction was first organized by board member Sue Zwiener and her daughter who was teaching at Owatonna's St. Mary's School, which always has a big auction, so they decided to try it in Blooming Prairie.

She remembers the auction got off to a slow start.

"We didn't make as much the first few years," she said.

However, she said that one of the first big donations was a donation of \$5,000 that was matched by the donor's

See FOUNDATION on B2 ▶

Wild Bill Cooper vanished into thin air



Reflections
HOWARD LESTRUD

Over the years, I have met some unique personalities, some of them highly intellectual and others who were woodsman types and always off on an expedition.

My two favorite explorers I have met are Buzz Aldrin, the second man to step on the moon, and Wild Bill Cooper, an explorer with the desire to make a snowmobile trip from Minnesota to Moscow, Russia.

Cooper has been linked to the Virginia Piper kidnapping 50 years ago. He also was linked to a drug running operation from Mexico to the U.S.

Yes, I actually shook the hand of Aldrin, who is the lone survivor of the three-man Apollo 11 crew that landed on the moon on July 20, 1969. I also shook the hand of Cooper, a grisly type of man with a distinguishable black beard.

It was in 1972 that I first met Cooper. He was at a press conference where Cooper and six compatriots told about their dream to make the longest snowmobile trip across country.

I was stunned while seated on the living room couch the other night when I saw a special report by FOX 9's investigative reporter, Tom Lyden. He was remembering the Virginia Piper kidnapping of 50 years ago. Cooper was mentioned as a suspect.

The snowmobile trip had its beginning in Forest Lake, Minn., where I was serving as a young news editor for the Forest Lake Times. I was there when seven explorers, led by Cooper, left on seven



Wild Bill Cooper is shown in his snowmobile attire as he leaves on his first Trans World Snowmobile Expedition in 1972. Cooper disappeared in the 1970s after being linked to a high profile kidnapping of Virginia Piper.

Moto-Ski snowmobiles. The snowmobiles were built in Forest Lake. Cooper actually tried to make the snowmobile trip twice and failed both times.

Following his failed attempt on the first Trans World Expedi-

tion, fellow writer Cliff Buchanan and I trekked to Willow River where Cooper lived. He also was proprietor of the Squirrel Cage Bar.

Cooper and I became friends mainly because of the publicity we gave him as newspaper

staffers in Forest Lake. I also bumped into him at the Forest Lake Airport. He also was a pilot. He did not have a pilot's license.

He was rumored to be the infamous D.B. Cooper, who hijacked a plane over the

Northwest in 1971 and parachuted out with \$200,000 and disappeared without a trace. Cooper is believed to be dead, the victim of a drug deal gone wrong. He also is believed to be alive and living in Canada. An Internet account says he was spotted wandering around in Arizona, and he's said to have been buried in Mexico.

He was wanted for failure to appear for sentencing on a drug charge and for smuggling narcotics. He was also wanted for bank robbery.

Filmmaker Mike Scholtz made Cooper the subject of his film, "Wild Bill's Run." Read more about Scholtz's film at www.duluth-newstribune.com/news/2324861-lawless-northland-legend-wild-bill-cooper-lives-film.

This story may never have an ending. Maybe, Bill Cooper is basking on a beach in sunny Florida, or he is waiting to take a trip on Space X to the moon.

NRHEG Grand March



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Ashton Raimann and Miranda LaCanne each give big smiles as they join their classmates at the conclusion of NRHEG grand march held Saturday at Harmony Park, south of Geneva. After the grand march, the prom-goers boarded buses and headed to Stillwater for a dinner and dance cruise.

Interim postmaster on the job in Blooming Prairie

BY ALEX NUEHRING
NEWS WRITER

When Gary Brolsma, of Austin, heard that Blooming Prairie postmaster Michelle Lawson would be retiring on April 30, he knew that would be a position that he'd like to have even if it's just on an interim basis for now.

So, he asked his boss if he could take over as the interim postmaster, or officer-in-charge, and last Monday was his first day in Blooming Prairie.

Before coming to

Blooming Prairie, he was the postmaster in Spring Valley and he'll continue to run that post office as well as Blooming Prairie post office until they can find someone to take over in Spring Valley.

Brolsma's hope is he won't return to Spring Valley position. He said he'll be one of the candidates for the permanent postmaster position in Blooming Prairie.

He said one of the main reasons he's applying to become the postmaster in Blooming Prairie is because its sig-

nificantly closer to home than Spring Valley. He expects the Blooming Prairie job will be posted by end of May and once that application window closes, the interview process will begin.

Brolsma's guess is the whole process of selecting a new permanent postmaster will probably take a couple months.

Until then, he's getting used to way things are done at the Blooming Prairie post office.

"The hardest thing is trying to learn the

scheme in a new office. You have to sort packages and letters to the correct carrier. Often times you're looking up the address until you know which carrier gets that piece of mail so you don't have to look them up all the time," he said.

While learning what mail goes to which carrier can be challenging, Brolsma has been enjoying his new position so far.

"They have a good staff here and they're all willing to help. That makes the transition much easier," he said.

Foundation could reach \$1M mark

▲ FOUNDATION from B1 company and another came from an alumni of Blooming Prairie schools who sold his house and the proceeds went to the foundation.

Each year after that the auction has bigger and bigger, but it's also changed in other ways too.

"Every year you have to come up with new ideas. There's been a lot of fun, different ideas for auction items from selling goats and puppies to a \$100 bill signed by Warren Buffett," Noble said.

When the auction started 18 years ago, Noble said she never would have imagined it hitting \$1 million dollars.

"It's taken a lot of

work and a lot of people who support it," she said. "We're very thankful for all the people that have donated items, bought items and come help us with the auction. It's a community effort because everybody cares for our schools and we want what's best for our kids."

Noble said that it has meant a lot to her and the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation that all the funds they raise benefit the Blooming Prairie students.

"We've given it all to the school," she said. "If the school can't fit it in its budget, the superintendent signs off on the teacher's application for the money and asks the foundation for the money. Our great ad-

ministration and school board makes sure they spend it well."

She also said the funds raised through the auction have bought every student an iPad and funded field trips and reading programs.

While raising as much as \$85,000 in past years is impressive, she said that it's even more impressive to raise \$1 million, especially from a small town like Blooming Prairie.

"It's wonderful to see that happen. It's taken a lot of people to make that happen," Noble said.

"I think the community can be very proud of themselves. It's a nice reflection on the community that they care enough about our kids'

education and they want them to become better readers and learners in this world," she said.

"Big thank you to everyone who has supported the foundations' banquet and auction."

If the Blooming Prairie community would ever like to make a donation, they can just contact Lori Arndt, the treasurer of the foundation, who is a CPA at Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner PA," she said.

"We owe a lot to [Blooming Prairie Superintendent] Irving Peterson because if it weren't for his vision and leadership starting this foundation in the school, we wouldn't have all this in our school so we him a huge debt of gratitude," she said.

Edward Jones[®] MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

First-time homebuyer? Follow these steps

Is homeownership a goal of yours? It does offer some benefits, in addition to meeting your basic need for shelter. The equity you build in your home can be a valuable financial asset, and you may get to deduct your interest payments on your taxes. But if you're a first-time homebuyer, what steps should you take?

First, make sure the time is right for you in terms of your personal and financial situations. For example, are you fairly confident that your employment is stable and that your earnings won't decline? Of course, external events can also play a role in your decision. A recent study by Morning Consult and Edward Jones found that 12% of respondents postponed purchasing a house during the COVID-19 pandemic.

But if you're ready and eager for homeownership, consider the following moves:

- Save for a down payment. The more money you put down for a home, the lower your monthly payments, although there's also a point at which overly large down payments can be financially unwise. However, if you can make a down payment of more than 20% of the purchase price, you can generally avoid having to pay for private mortgage insurance on top of your monthly payments. Also, as a first-time homebuyer, you might qualify for down payment assistance from your local or state housing authority or a nonprofit group.
- Check your credit score. A higher credit score gives you a better chance for a lower interest rate. You can request a credit report from annualcreditreport.com, and you might be able to get a credit score for free from your bank. If you need to improve your score, you may want to delay your home purchase.
- Learn how much you qualify for – and how much you should spend. Once you know you're ready to begin the home-purchasing process, you may want to contact a few lenders to determine the size of the mortgage for which you qualify. Be aware, though, that just because you can get a mortgage of a certain amount, does not necessarily mean that you should. You don't want to become "house poor" – that is, you don't want to spend so much on your house payments that you are cash strapped and can't afford to save for other goals, such as college for your children or a comfortable retirement. You may want to establish a budget for how much you can readily afford to pay for your mortgage each month – and try sticking to it before you buy the house. If you have extra savings, put it toward your down payment.
- Prepare for unexpected costs. You can plan for your mortgage, utilities, taxes and insurance – but when you own a home, you'll always encounter unexpected costs. You may need to get a new furnace, repair your roof or face any number of other maintenance issues. To help prepare for these costs, try to build an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. Without such a fund, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments or take on added debt to pay for these unanticipated expenses.

Homeownership can be a rewarding experience – and the rewards will be even greater when you've "done the numbers" and prepared yourself financially.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones financial advisor.

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MAY 13
6 a.m. — School Board Work Session
7 p.m. — Spring Concert at BPHS Gymnasium

MAY 17
7 p.m. — School Board Meeting

ELLENDALE/HOPE/GENEVA

MAY 14
11 a.m. — SEMCAC, Community Building

MAY 17
11 a.m. — SEMCAC, Community Building

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

MAY 14
11 a.m. — Youth 1st Baseball & Barbecue, Cash Wise

MAY 15
7 a.m. — Farmer's Market, Central Park

MAY 17
7 p.m. — Medford Planning & Zoning Meetings, City Hall

MAY 19
10:30 a.m. — Online Storytime, Owatonna Library Facebook
4:30 p.m. — Library Board Meeting,

MAY 18
10:30 a.m. — Online Storytime, BP Library Facebook

MAY 19
7 p.m. — Band Concert at BPHS Gymnasium

Community Building

MAY 19
11 a.m. — SEMCAC, Community Building

MAY 20
3:30 p.m. — Ribbon Cutting for Dalken Soccer Complex, 1102 Rice Lake St. E.

5 p.m. — Airport Commission Meeting, Airport Lounge
5:30 p.m. — Family Festival, Owatonna Community Education

West Bridge Street under construction

West Bridge Street between Park Drive and the Southbound I-35 ramp is closed because of a construction project and traffic is being re-routed around the work area via I-35 and Hoffman Road. The Park Drive and I-35 ramp intersections will remain open

to traffic at this time. West Bridge Street is anticipated to continue throughout the summer with traffic control changes occurring as work progresses. All work will be substantially complete no later than Oct. 30.

Memorial Day events set for BP

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Blooming Prairie VFW Post 878 and American Legion Post 52 will host a special Memorial Day program on Monday, May 31 to honor deceased veterans.

The public is invited to attend the special occasion at the northeast corner of the Blooming Prairie Cemetery at 11 a.m.

"Memorial Day is a time to reflect and honor all those who have died, not just the veterans who served their country's call, but their family members and friends who are no longer with us," said Joyce Johns, president of the VFW Auxiliary.

This year's address will be presented by

former Blooming Prairie High School teacher Roger Sorenson of Blooming Prairie.

Musical selections will be presented by the Blooming Prairie High School Band, under the direction of Ross Reishus.

Military honors will be presented by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 878 and American Legion Post 52 Honor Guard members.

Preceding the ceremony at the cemetery, coffee and bars will be served at 9:30 a.m. at the Blooming Prairie Servicemen's Club. The band and Honor Guard will assemble at 10:30 a.m. in the Prairie Plumbing parking lot located on Highway 218 South.

The parade units

will not be marching through town. The parade starts at 10:45 a.m. at Prairie Plumbing and marches to the cemetery and through the 14 American flags. These flags were donated by Jesse and Lavon Hernandez.

Marchers will continue to the northeast corner of the cemetery for the program. Any veteran who is not able to march in the Honor Guard is invited to join in the formation at the cemetery.

The Memorial Service begins at 11 a.m. If it rains, the event will be held indoors at the BP Servicemen's Club.

Please call the Servicemen's Club at 507-583-7884 to make reservations.

A pulled pork sandwich basket will be available for \$5. There is no charge for veterans.

Following the noon luncheon, there will be a presentation and recognition of the 2020-21 Local first place and second place Voice of Democracy winner and BPHS student, Chloe McCarthy. She will be giving her Voice of Democracy essay.

McCarthy will be accepting a check award from the VFW and American Legion auxiliaries for the contest.

Also part of the Memorial Day program will be the presentation of 12 Quilts of Valor to area veterans.

"Celebrate Memorial Day by remembering our deceased veterans," Johns said.

Helping ease child abuse



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The Exchange Club of Steele County in April prepared 48 Care Bear pull-string bags for youth going through displacement or hardship situations as a project for the Prevention of Child Abuse Month in April. The bags included a small teddy bear, toothbrush, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, crayons, coloring book, stickers, and a note pad. A presentation of 25 bags was presented Friday, April 30, to Sheriff Lon Thiele, center, for distribution by sheriff's deputies. Shown with Thiele are Club Director Randy Sobrack, left, and Club President Mike Brown. The club also presented 23 bags on the same date to the Exchange Club Center for Family Unity in Owatonna. The presentation to Center Executive Director Jim Barnes, left, was made by Brown.

SCHS to hold open house Saturday

The Steele County Historical Society announces an **OPEN HOUSE** on Saturday, May 15 from noon-3pm at the Steele County Historical Society Campus, 1700 Austin Road, Owatonna.

This free event features the Story of Steele exhibit highlighting Steele County from

territory to present day; the new Parochial School exhibit sponsored by Kids Korner; Learning RX; Edward Jones — John Havelka, and Curt's Truck and Diesel; the newly redesigned Lange Theater Welcome Center; the Jerry's Supper Club mural and display; and our new Village of Yesteryear

Story Walk self-guided tour kiosks.

The County Junction gift shop will be open for shoppers to purchase spring and summer merchandise featuring local artisans from the area during the Open House. Regularly scheduled tours of the Village of Yesteryear will not be given, but select buildings will be open for the public to tour with building hosts available

to answer questions.

Refreshments will be available in the Wenger room with outdoor seating on the patio. SCHS board members and staff will be on site to answer questions and assist our guests. Please wear face coverings and maintain distancing when attending this event.

Please call for 507-451-1420 if you have any questions regarding this free community event.

BP city-wide garage sale set for May 15

BY ALEX NUEHRING
NEWS WRITER

It's been 14 months since COVID-19 hit Minnesota and finally the public can enjoy community events together. What better way to celebrate a return to somewhat normalcy than by participating in the first recognized community event of 2021: the Blooming Prairie city-wide garage sale.

Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Emily Glaser said the garage sale starts at 8 a.m. and goes until sundown on Saturday, May 15.

Some garage sales may start on Friday and others may continue on Sunday,

but she said Saturday is the main one for Blooming Prairie.

She said there will be 25 different garage sales throughout the city.

Glaser said community members and visitors can find a map of the different garage sales throughout Blooming Prairie at the chamber's website: bloomingprairiechamber.com and click Events or at one of the local businesses that are open on Saturday.

She hopes that a lot of visitors come into town to enjoy the garage sales and local business that will be open.

"We did a lot of advertising to bring See SALE on B9 ▶

Sudoku Corner

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

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Answers

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

Farm connections

Thursday Evenings, 7:30



Southeastern MN / Northeastern IA

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Harvey & Nancy Farr
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Monday - Wednesday - Friday 11:30 AM to close
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Sunday Closed

Bar: 1 AM Closing
Off-Sale: 10 PM Closing
Bar Bingo: Monday at 6:30 PM (Must be 21 to play)
Wine Club: Tuesday 7 - 8:30 PM
May 18th and June 8th
(Masks & Covid protocol will be followed - Reservations required)

JULY 3RD: Street Dance
"Red Dirt Road"
8 PM - Midnight
\$5 cover charge - 21 and over
July 4th: Off-Sale open 11 AM - 6 PM
=Bar - Closed
July 24th: B. O. B. Ride "Toys for Tots" - Details Later

PANTHER OF THE WEEK

This week's Panther of the Week is **AUBREE BECKER**. She is the daughter of McKayla Sikel and Jesse Becker and they reside in Geneva. Aubree is in Mrs. Dobberstein's Kindergarten class.

Aubree is one of the most positive students I've ever had! She is excited to come to school and learn new things everyday. She always has a smile on her face, does her best work, and encourages others to do the same.

Aubree brightens our classroom with her personality and hard work! Thank you, Aubree, for showing your kindness to others.



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OWATONNA PROUD

B4 | WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2021

OWATONNA SCHOOLS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Track and field excitement



SUBMITTED PHOTO

It may be hard to see, but there are some big smiles behind those masks as students at McKinley Elementary School had a great time competing and cheering each other on during their track and field day recently.

Sneak peek into graduation 2021

BY BRAYDEN TRUELSON
OHS MAGNET WRITER

This year's graduation will return to the OHS football field for the first time since the 1980s. All seniors will be in attendance and will be allowed to bring four guests.

The seniors' last day of school is on June 2. Graduation is planned for June 6 at 2 p.m. on the Owatonna football field. In case of inclement weather, it will be the next day, June 7, at the same time and place.

The students are not the only people in the building that are looking forward to having a somewhat normal graduation this year.

When asked what he is looking forward to going into graduation, Principal Mr. Kory Kath said, "I am looking forward to seeing the entire senior

class seated together as the class of 2021! It has been too long since we have come together as a whole class so it is fitting that this will be our first opportunity."

Many seniors are excited for this day as they will get a graduation ceremony this year after missing out on lots of senior activities over the past year.

Senior Mason Saufferer said, "I think it will be really cool to have our graduation on the football field. I am excited that we are able to walk across the stage this year because the seniors didn't get to last year and we have missed out on other senior memories throughout the year."

As seniors are about a month away from graduation, the excitement is building and it is starting to feel a tad bit normal around the school again.



OHS MAGNET PHOTO BY BRITTANY SACKETT

Senior Caleb Belting prepares for the face-off against his Northfield opponent.

Owatonna Boys Lacrosse is off to a great start

BY ZACH KUBICEK
OHS MAGNET WRITER

The Owatonna Boys Lacrosse Team is off to a great start to its season. They have earned an impressive record of 5-1. In the boy's last game against Rochester Mayo, they won 17-5.

After missing the season last year due to COVID-19, the boys are excited to be on the field competing again. So far the team has outscored its opponents 54-20 and average just under 14 goals a game.

Senior Captain Zack Kirsch said, "We are having a really good season. We're looking to continue our undefeated season." The team is solid all around with experienced leaders in

each position.

The team also has very talented players. As of Thursday, April 29, players Preston Meier and Zack Kirsch are in the top 10 for goals and assists in the state.

Head coach Scott Seykora said, "I am excited to actually have a season and watch the players' development from start to finish. We have a very talented group playing this year and I am excited to see their teamwork and determination." The team is off to a great start and hope to carry the good momentum through the duration of the season.

The boys next game is against the Northfield Raiders, Thursday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m.

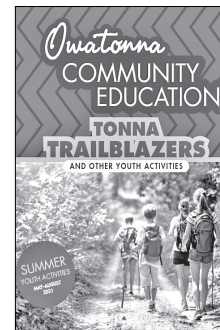
School Board meetings moved to high school

In order to accommodate in-person meetings, allow public attendance, and meet social distancing guidelines, school board meetings and work sessions will be held at Owatonna High School in the Small Group Forum (across from the gym).

For more information, including a list of meeting dates, visit the school district website: www.isd761.org/our-district/school-board/meeting-dates.

Upcoming school board meeting dates:
(Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m.)

Monday, May 24
Monday, June 14 (work session)
Monday, June 28
Monday, July 12
Monday, Aug. 9 (work session)
Monday, Aug. 23



Summer opportunities abound for students

Owatonna Public Schools has created a robust program of summer opportunities for all of our students. These experiences will provide important enrichment to re-engage learners with collaboration and cooperative learning. We look forward to offering these unique experiences in our continued work to Inspire Excellence for Every Student, Every Day!

Visit the Community Education website for more information: communityed.isd761.org/our-school/brochures. Register in person, online, or via phone.

Community Education Office
122 E. McKinley Street
Owatonna, MN 55960
Phone: 507-444-7900
www.owatonnacommunityed.org

Board recognizes activities department

At the April 26 school board meeting, Superintendent Jeff Elstad recognized activities director Marc Achterkirch and the activities secretary Nancy Benson for their organizational leadership this year in providing a safe and caring community for our students in high school activities during a pandemic. We are #OwatonnaProud of their dedication and commitment to our students!

Each month at the regular meeting, the School



Nancy Benson



Marc Achterkirch

Board of Owatonna Public Schools recognizes individual students and/or staff members who exemplify the district's mission of inspiring excellence - every learner, every day.

Owatonna Students of the Week

Elementary School



Miriam Lindee
Third Grade
Parents: Justin and Emily Lindee
Miriam is an amazing role model for her

classmates. She consistently demonstrates kindness, a positive attitude and has a fun, pleasant personality. Miriam sets high academic expectations for herself and we are fortunate to have her in our class.



Macey Jensen
Fifth Grade
Parents: Nicole Jensen and Derek Jensen
Macey Jensen consistently and accurately com-

pletes school work and challenges herself to grow both academically and socially. She is a determined student who not only works hard on her academic work, but she also makes other students feel welcomed and included throughout the school day.

High School



Jenna Bergeron
Senior
Parents: Jessica Northway and Jeremy Bergeron
Jenna asks

insightful questions and accepts feedback well as she constantly works to improve in all of her classes. She leads by example and helps her peers without hesitation. Her confident smile and warm greeting as she comes to class are truly appreciated. Congratulations, Jenna! We know you are bound for continued success!

Now is a good time to get started on back-to-school vaccinations

Providers will likely have a larger than usual amount of vaccinations to do before sending kids back to school this fall.

It's important to keep up with routine vaccinations during the pandemic to prevent a future outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease. School vaccination requirements are still in place to help ensure kids are safe and healthy in school. Consider calling the clinic earlier this year to avoid a rush later this summer.



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Late surge leads Huskies in lacrosse

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

After a 10-9 win over Northfield earlier in the season, Owatonna boys lacrosse Head Coach Scott Seykora figured it would be another close game. It was another close game and another win for the Huskies as they came away with a 7-4 win over the Raiders on Thursday, May 6.

The Huskies took an early lead when Caleb Belting scored just three minutes into the game.

However, about four minutes later, the Raiders tied the game up.

Owatonna responded with a goal of its own when Lucas Jensen scored just two and a half minutes.

The Huskies held onto that 2-1 lead until the end of the first quarter.

About four minutes into the second quarter, Belting scored his second goal of the game and extended Owatonna's lead to 3-1.

Through the first quarter and half the Huskies held the Raiders to just one goal, which was impressive considering Northfield scored nine goals in its first games against Owatonna and had been averaging at least 10 goals a game in its previous four games.

Seykora noted that playing better defense was a priority for the Huskies.

"We knew we had to step up defensively to win the game and the players rose to the challenge," he said. Unfortunately, the Raiders twice found and took advantage of cracks in the Huskies' defense in the final minute of the second quarter so the game was tied 3-3 at halftime.

Despite surrendering two goals in one minute, Seykora was proud of how Owatonna responded to that run.

"Lacrosse is a huge game of momentum and we have been on both sides of it this year. The biggest thing is to not panic and still stick to the game plan. Our kids



After a couple dodges to evade Northfield defenders, senior Dom Valento attacks down the middle of the Raiders' defense. Seconds later he scored to extend the Huskies' lead to 6-4 with just under three minutes left in the game.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

stayed calm and just kept playing the game," he said.

During halftime, he discussed a few adjustments that he wanted the Huskies to make in the second half.

"We wanted to pressure a little more when we were on defense and to get the on-field communication up. Offensively, we wanted to keep pushing the action and shoot more," he said.

In the second half, the physical nature of the game continued, but Seykora was pleased that the Huskies still didn't commit any penalties.

"That was the cleanest game I have seen our kids play. To be in a rivalry, have a close game and to be as physical as it was, I was surprised we didn't get any penalties. Our guys showed great self-control and played hard," he said.

In the third quarter, Preston Meier scored a goal, but so did Northfield so the game was tied 4-4 at the end of the



Owatonna junior Preston Meier tries to cut off the Northfield attacker or midfielder from taking the ball any deeper into the Huskies' defensive area during the second quarter of Owatonna's 7-4 win on Thursday, May 6.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

third quarter.

However, the score changed just 10 seconds into the fourth quarter when Belting scored his third goal of the game.

"We have been a high transition team and like to play the numbers game. We will take advantage of fast breaks and when we have more numbers on the fast

break their job is to put the ball in the net," Seykora said.

Thanks to Owatonna's midfielders, defense and goalie Korban Stricklin, the score was still 5-4 until the Huskies tucked two more goals in the final minutes of the game.

"It started with defender Dom Valen-

to. When he started running with the ball across half field, I knew what was on his mind... he was going to score. He made some great dodges and just fired the ball. Casey Johnson then took advantage of the next Owatonna possession and made a great dodge of his own to score his first goal

of the season to put the game out of reach. As a coach you have to love the aggressiveness of our team and to put a team away instead of holding on for dear life," he said.

The Huskies ended up winning the game 7-4 and their record improved to 6-1.

Stricklin saved nine of the 13 shots on goal he faced.

Seykora said the keys to the Huskies' defenders and midfielders limiting the Raiders to just four goals were lots of hustle and winning the ground ball battle.

"They are very fast team and our guys played right with them. [We] had great communication on defense and played great position all game," he said.

Additionally, he mentioned that were quite a few Husky defenders that played really well.

"The whole defense and our goalie Korban Stricklin had great games. We were missing one of our starting attack and Zach Kubicek switched from midfield to play attack. He did a great job of ball control and just out hustling their defense. Caleb Belting had three goals so he was very instrumental in the win and Preston Meier is as consistent as they come on both sides of the ball. As you can see by how many I just named, it was definitely a complete game win and everyone contributed in some way.

Overall, Seykora was very happy with how the Huskies played against the Raiders.

"We didn't let any adversity on the field get to us and our goal was to hold them to five goals or less. We did that and won the game," he said.

After a 15-3 win over Hermantown/Proctor last Friday, Owatonna's record is now 7-1.

It's last five regular season games are all on the road. Their next road game is against Rochester Century at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, May 14, at Rochester John Marshall High School.

Medford earns first place at Tiger Track Invite

Tiger long jumper Jackie Cole breaks nearly 50-year-old school record



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Medford freshman sprinter Jackie Cole opens up a lead over Blooming Prairie's Annaka Forsberg and Sierra Larson in the 100-meter dash. She finished the race in 13.11 seconds, nearly a whole second before anyone else.

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

It seemed like everything went the Tigers' way when they competed in the Tiger Invite on Thursday, May 6. The Medford boys team won first place by scoring 97 points, which is 25 more points than its closest competitor, while the girls team won first place by scoring 91 points, which is 15 more points than its closest competitor.

As if those two wins by 15 points or more wasn't impressive enough, Medford freshman Jackie Cole broke the school record in the long jump with a jump of 16 feet, 9.5 inches. The previous record was 16

feet, 6 inches set back in 1973 by Pam Ambler.

The Tigers' boys 4x800 relay team, which is made up of Cohen Stursa, Tyler Stursa, Brock Merritt and Garrett Fitzgerald, got the boys team off to a great start by winning its event by finishing in 9:12.53, winning by more than one minute.

In the 1600-meter run, Medford sophomore Cohen Stursa won first place by finishing in 5:09.25, beating his next closest competitor by 16 seconds. In that same race, Fitzgerald earned fourth place with a time of 5:31.19 so the Tigers came away with eight points in that event.

The Tigers scored 12 points in the 400-meter

dash. Henry Grayson won the race by finishing in exactly 53 seconds. Cohen O'Connor came in second place by finishing in 56.47 seconds and Riley Babcock finished in fourth place with a time of 1:03.83.

Medford track and field Head Coach Kevin Werk said Grayson has played a major role in the Tigers' success in the 400-meter dash.

"Henry is the leader of that group and he does a good job pushing everyone in practice. It just seems they are getting stronger each week," he said.

In the 800-meter run, Tyler Stursa won first place with a time of 2:12.56, beating the

See MEDFORD on B6 ►



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Blooming Prairie junior Bradley Simon tries to maintain a lead over Medford senior Tyler Stursa in the 4x100 meter relay. Thanks to Simon's and his teammates' efforts, the Awesome Blossoms won the race by finishing in 47.58 seconds.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Blossom girls earn second place, boys finish in third at Tiger Invite

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

The Blooming Prairie girls came in second place out of four teams by scoring 76 points at last Thursday's Tiger Invite at Medford High School. Meanwhile, the boys team scored 66 and finished in third place.

The Blossom girls team got off to a strong start when its 4x300 relay team, which consists of Anna Kittelson, Megan Oswald, Lila Quail and Emily Miller, was the only team competing in that event so they earned first place and six points with a time of 11:47.28.

While a Blooming Prairie sprinter didn't win the girls 100-meter dash, Sierra Larson and Annaka Forsberg combined to score even more points than the 4x800 team, seven, by finishing in second and third place, respectively.

Later, the Blossoms' 4x200 relay team, which is made up of Grace Krejci, Madison Lea, Abigail Hefling and Forsberg, also won first place by finishing in 2:03.40, less than half a second ahead of Medford's team.

In the 1600-meter run, Oswald earned the Awesome Blossoms three points by coming in third place with a time of 6:48.08.

Blooming Prairie's 4x100 relay team, which consists of Lea, Forsberg, Abby Braaten and Larson, came so close to winning its race, but lost out on first place by less than one-tenth of a second.

In the 400-meter dash, the Blossoms earned nine points thanks to Miller who earned first place with a time of 1:07.34 and Hefling who came in third place with a time of 1:13.20.

Blooming Prairie tacked on seven more points in the 200-meter dash when Larson finished in 29.27 seconds, which was good for second place, and Krejci finished in 31.28 seconds, good for third place.

The Blossom 4x400 relay team, which is made up of Kittelson, Hefling, Lea and Miller, won first place and six points by finishing in 4:44.57.

In the field events, Forsberg won first place in the high jump by reaching 4 feet 10 inches. Oswald came in third place in the triple jump by achieving 29 feet and half an inch and Micalyn Trihus and Oswald combined to score seven points in the shot put by finishing in third and fourth place, respectively.

Meanwhile, the boys team didn't do quite as

well, but still did very well in some events.

The 4x300 relay team, which is made up of Hosea Baker, Stephen Fennell, Jack Bruns and Ty Forystek, earned four points by finishing in second place with a time of 10:32.03.

Next, Blooming Prairie hurdler Xavier Rennie came in second place in the 110-meter hurdles. He missed out on first place by less than one-tenth of a second, while Cooper Clarke came in third place so the Blossoms earned seven points in that event.

In the 4x200 relay, the Blooming Prairie team, which consists of Brady Kittelson, Sam Smith, James Wohlfred and Sam Skillestad, won the race and earned the Blossoms six points by finishing in a time of 1:41.97.

The Blossoms earned five points in the 1600-meter run when Baker finished in 5:25.26, which was good for second place, and Forystek finished in 5:38.66, good for fifth place.

Blooming Prairie continued its streak of winning either first or second with its relay teams when the 4x100 relay team, which is made up of Ezra Kiley, Derek Kubick, Rennie and Bradley Simon, won first place with a time of 47.58 seconds.

Medford earns first place at Tiger Track Invite

4 MEDFORD from B5 second-place finisher by more than nine seconds. Junior Tyler Buck finished in 2:29.88, which was good for fourth place, so the Tigers earned eight points in that race.

Grayson won his second event of the day when he finished in first place in the 200-meter dash with a time of 24.42 seconds.

In the pole vault, the Tigers racked up 15 points because they were only school competing in that event. George McCarthy cleared 10 feet and six inches, Dylan Heiderscheidt reached 10 feet, Tyler Stursa cleared nine feet and Brock Merritt reached eight

feet so they earned first, second, third and fourth place, respectively.

Heiderscheidt also performed really well in the long jump. In fact, he won that event by jumping 18 feet, 1 inch. Meanwhile, Grayson came in third place by jumping 17 feet, 5.5 inches.

Last but not least for the boys team, Medford earned 10 points in the shot put thanks to Kael Hermanstorfer and Mason Nagel who achieved 45 feet, 1 inch and 36 feet, respectively, to earn first and second place in that event.

Meanwhile, the girls team also achieved success in the shot put. Senior Kinsey Cronin reached a distance of 35 feet, which was earned her first place and earned the Tigers six points.

Werk said Cronin along with Hermanstorfer and Nagel are the leaders and the most experienced among the Tigers' throwers.

"That is our senior throwing group and they have all been out for track since seventh grade. Mr. Johannes, who is our throwing coach, does a great job with our throwings. The last time I counted we had 18 throwers out this year. I am really excited to see how those three perform as we get closer to the postseason," he said.

The Medford girls team also won the discus throw, but this time it was Abby Fitzgerald and not Cronin who finished in first place. Fitzgerald threw her discus 93 feet and three inches, which was almost seven feet farther than the second-place finisher.



Medford junior George McCarthy clears one of the last hurdles in the 300-meter hurdles race. He finished in third place with a time of 49.98 seconds.

However, the star of the girls team was Jackie Cole who broke the school record in the long jump by jumping 16 feet, 3.5 inches.

What makes Cole's record-breaking performance even more impressive is her inexperience competing in the long jump.

"That was actually only Jackie's third meet ever long jumping. She has been our top sprinter since she was in seventh grade and she was looking for a field event to try. She was jumping close to 16 feet her first practice. I am hoping she can increase her mark as the season continues," Werk said. The long jump wasn't the only event Cole excelled in last week. She was the anchor of the Tigers' 4x100 meter relay team that came from behind to win first place.

"We have had a few different combinations of runners in the girls' 4x100 this year, but it always helps to have Jackie anchoring. She made up at least 10 meters to win that race," he said.

On top of winning those first two events, Cole also won the 100-meter dash with a time of 13.11 seconds, almost a full second before anyone else finished, and the 200-meter dash with a time of 29.03 seconds. Overall, there wasn't an event that she competed in that she didn't win!

Cole and the rest of the Tigers' girls track and field team and the boys team will next get a chance to compete when they compete against Blooming Prairie, Hayfield, Kenyon-Wanamingo and Trinton at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 18, at Clarks Hill High School in Dodge Center.

ASK THE MOTOR MEDICS
From the Hosts of the Modern The Hood radio show
By Channon Nordstrom and Russ Evans

Dear Motor Medics, I drive a 2014 Ford F150 with a 5.4 engine and I have installed a lot of accessories because I use it as a pilot car, and I take it camping often. When I am on the road, I camp probably 30 times a year. My problem is with the battery. I am on my second battery in the truck and I feel they should last longer than they are, but I need your advice as to which battery would be the best choice. I have seen new batteries lately called AGM batteries but do not know what they are. Are they better?

Bill in Branson Missouri
AGM batteries stand for Absorbed Glass Mat and it is not a new technology, but an exceptionally good one that is coming down in price and is showing up in more batteries every year. AGM is a proven, very good strong battery design. AGM batteries typically can be discharged further and recharged fully more times than a traditional lead acid type battery and they work very well in the cars we have today with lots of either factory or aftermarket electronics added to them. These batteries are also less prone to leakage like a wet acid filled battery. We use them in many of our vehicles and we have installed them in our shop when a customer has a similar situation to yours and they need the absolute best possible battery that they can get.

Take care, The Motor Medics

Dear Motor Medics, My 2016 Ford Escape has a braking problem. When I drive it on short trip, less than 50 miles and apply the brakes, it shakes just before a stop. I mean as I approach the stop sign just before I stop at about 3 mph the brake pedal shakes and I lurch forward, and I am afraid that I may crash into the car in front of me. The shop cannot duplicate the issue and I do not know what to do.

Carry in Sheldon Iowa
Having a loss of brakes is always an uncomfortable and scary situation. We have experienced what you are going through before. The Ford Escape is not the only vehicle that this has happened to. Many cars and trucks with ABS which now encompass most every vehicle on the road have great braking systems but when they fail, any number of safety issues can come up. The one you have is most often caused by one or more of the wheel speed sensors not sending the proper signal to the ABS computer. If the computer thinks that one wheel is stopping faster than the others it releases pressure to that wheel and the car moves forward for a short time until the other wheels catch up. Often it is a simple sensor or wire that needs repair. As with any safety system it should be repaired right away, and it may take more time at the shop.

Take care, The Motor Medics

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Racing kicks off at Lansing for 65th season

BY MATTHEW GRAGE
RACING CORRESPONDENT

A beautiful Spring Day greeted fans and drivers as the 65th Anniversary season of racing got underway Friday night at Chateau Speedway in Lansing.

Seven classes of cars filled the night with plenty of excitement as everyone was anxious for the start of a new season.

Last year's Season Championship Trophies were handed out to add to the night's activities. The 2020 Point Champions were all on hand ready to try to defend their titles.

The French's Repair USRA A Mods ran the cleanest feature of the night as they ran 25 caution free laps of fast paced action with defending track champion of Stacyville, Iowa out dueling Zach Elward of Hayfield for second.

Heat wins went to Greg Lammers of Owatonna and Bernie Adams of Stacyville, Iowa.

In the Brauer Roofing WISSOTA Super Stock class, it was another defending track champion leading the way with Dan Nissalke of Winona scoring the feature win as he picked his way to the front from a row four starting spot. Jeff Brauer of Eyo-

grinstead of Austin chased him the whole distance but settled for the runner-up spot. A pair of Austin drivers, Matthew Brooks and Dustin Steinbrink, took heat wins along with Mankato's Jayden Larson.

Power 96 WISSOTA Pure Stocks were lead by Andrew Elschens of Taopi. The defending class champion picked up where he left off last year scoring the season opening feature win. Michael Wick of Faribault picked up the classes lone heat win.

Braden Brauer of Eyoata, after a year in the Super Stock Class settled back into the Adams Graphix WISSOTA Street Stock class and lead flag to flag in picking up the feature win. Defending Track Champion Kory Adams of Stacyville, Iowa out dueling Zach Elward of Hayfield for second.

Heat wins went to Greg Lammers of Owatonna and Bernie Adams of Stacyville, Iowa. In the Brauer Roofing WISSOTA Super Stock class, it was another defending track champion leading the way with Dan Nissalke of Winona scoring the feature win as he picked his way to the front from a row four starting spot. Jeff Brauer of Eyo-

ta and Dennis Dunbar of Winona took the heat wins for the Super Stocks.

Adam Martinson of Blaine had the feature win in the Action Builders WISSOTA Midwest Modifieds slip through his fingers. After taking his heat win Adams was leading the main event under caution when mechanical issues ended his night. Kadden Kath of Owatonna was the lucky recipient as he inherited the lead and went on to score the win. Greg Pfeifer Jr of Austin took the classes other heat win. Travis Underdahl of Northfield who picked up the championship hardware from last season had a nice run going sitting in third place when mechanical issues ended his night.

Dan Knish of Killeney ended the night's action by becoming the fourth defending track champion to score a feature win on opening night as he claimed the Skjeveland Enterprises/Owatonna Sanitation/Claremont Recycling WISSOTA Hornet Feature win. Troy Tuma of Owatonna, who had one of the heat wins on the night was leading early when mechanical issues bit him. Brian Schott of Red Wing had the other heat win for the class.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Kadden Kath of Owatonna kicks off the 2021 season with a victory in the Action Builders WISSOTA Midwest Mod feature Friday night at the Chateau Raceway in Lansing.

Racing action continues next Friday as excitement builds during May as everyone is looking forward to the "Spirit of 83 Memorial" and the 23rd Memorial of the Mike Guttormson Memorial

Event on Memorial Day Weekend, May 28. Fans, Businesses, and Sponsors are once again lining up to be a part of this years Memorial with the "83 for 83" Memorial Sponsors. Fans and all have the

opportunity to be a part of the night with their \$83 Sponsorships either as a business, or as a fan. Many fans sponsor in the name of some past driver or person who they felt showed the "Spirit of 83."

CHATEAU RACING RESULTS

French's Repair USRA Modifieds

A Feature 1 (25 Laps): 1. 71-Jason Cummins-New Richland[1]; 2. 24S-Charlie Steinberg-Kasson[2]; 3. 97-Cole Anderson-Northfield[3]; 4. 24-Aaron Benson-Clear Lake IA[4]; 5. 83-Kylie Kath-Claremont[5]; 6. 74-Mark Noble-Blooming Prairie[6]; 7. 23-Darwin Karau-Kasson[9]; 8. 4A-Joel Alberts-Mantorville[8]; 9. 55H-Aaron Hoff-Mantorville[12]; 10. 72-Doug Hillson-Blooming Prairie[10]; 11. 77-Jacob Stark-Austin[7]; 12. 15-Chris Loberg-Elma IA[13]; 13. (DNF) 90-Ryan Wetzel-West Concord[11].

Heat 1 (8 Laps): 1. 71-Jason Cummins[4]; 2. 97-Cole Anderson[1]; 3. 4A-Joel Alberts[2]; 4. 74-Mark Noble[3]; 5. (DNF) 80-Ryan Wetzel[6]; 6. (DNF) 55H-Aaron Hoff[5].

Heat 2 (8 Laps): 1. 83-Kylie Kath[2]; 2. 23-Darwin Karau[1]; 3. 24-Aaron Benson[3]; 4. 24S-Charlie Steinberg[4]; 5. 77-Jacob Stark[5]; 6. 72-Doug Hillson[7]; 7. 15-Chris Loberg[6].

USRA B-Mods

A Feature 1 (20 Laps): 1. 75-Cole Suckow-Cresco IA[1]; 2. 99-Noah Grinstead-Austin[5]; 3. 15-Zach Elward-Hayfield[4]; 4. 38C-Jayden Larson-Mankato[4]; 5. 22C-Michael Kennedy-St Anger[14]; 6. 44-Matthew Brooks-Austin[8]; 8. 83R-Kullen Kath-Owatonna[2]; 9. 3A-Taylor Ausrud-Hayfield[10]; 10. 45-Cole Lonergan-Dexter[5]; 11. 81K-Caleb Korp-Claremont[13]; 12. 40-Larry Scott-Northfield[18]; 13. 83-Braeden Allen-Corder[11]; 14. 71-Jamie Tapp-Myrtle[15]; 15. 33-Corbin Ludemann-Grand Meadow[22]; 16. (DNF) 25-Zach Nelson-Owatonna[23]; 17. (DNF) 67-Savvy Swatek-Ridgeview IA[6]; 18. (DNF) 15G-Michael Glomen-Faribault[21]; 19. (DNF) 35JR-Garitt Wyataske-Austin[17]; 20. (DNF) 33S-Dustin Steinbrink-Austin[7]; 21. (DNF) 51-Shawn Evans-Kenyon[2]; 22. (DNF) 54-Jett Sorensen-Rochester[10]; 23. (DNF) 0D-Thomas Rolles-Gar Carpenter IA.

Heat 1 (8 Laps): 1. 44-Matthew Brooks[1]; 2. 83R-Kullen Kath[4]; 3. 22C-Michael Johnson[8]; 4. 51-Shawn Evans[6]; 5. 81K-Caleb Korp[7]; 6. (DNF) 35JR-Garitt Wyataske[5]; 7. (DNF) 3A-Taylor Ausrud[2]; 8. (DNF) 33-Corbin Ludemann[3].

Heat 2 (8 Laps): 1. 33S-Dustin Steinbrink[3]; 2. 75-Cole Suckow[6]; 3. 54-Jett Sorensen[8]; 4. 45-Cole Lonergan[7]; 5. 15-Zach Elward[5]; 6. 02K-Hunter Kennedy[4]; 7. (DNF) 0D-Thomas Rolles[2]; 8. (DO) 25-Zach Nelson[1].

Heat 3 (8 Laps): 1. 36K-Jayden Larson[1]; 2. 67-Savvy Swatek[7]; 3. 99-Noah Grinstead[5]; 4. 83-Braeden Allen[3]; 5. 71-Jamie Tapp[4]; 6. (DNF) 40-Larry Scott[6]; 7. (DNF) 15G-Michael Glomen[2].

Power 96 WISSOTA Pure Stock

A Feature 1 (15 Laps): 1. 7K-Andrew Elschens-Taopi[5]; 2. 17-Michael Wick-Faribault[2]; 3. 31S-Jack Maas-Faribault[3]; 4. 96-Kyndra Guttormson-Chafield[4]; 5. 33-Jim Briggs-Waseca[1]; 6. 08-Kyle Kotak-Owatonna[6]; 7. (DNF) 31-Raej Hastings IV-Austin[7]; 8. (DNF) 00-Bobby Crews-Austin[8]; 9. (DNF) 44-Trey Hoppe-New Richland.

Heat 1 (6 Laps): 1. 17-Michael Wick[2]; 2. 31S-Jack Maas[4]; 3. 7X-Andrew Elschens[3]; 4. 96-Kyndra Guttormson[1]; 5. 33-Jim Briggs[5]; 6. 08-Kyle Kotak[7]; 7. 31-Raej Hastings IV[6]; 8. 00-Bobby Crews[9]; 9. (DNF) 44-Trey Hoppe[8].

Adams Graphix WISSOTA Street Stock

A Feature 1 (18 Laps): 1. 34JR-Braden Brauer-Eyota[2]; 2. 01-Kory Adams-Stacyville IA[3]; 3. 15-Zach Elward-Hayfield[4]; 4. 32-Jason Newkirk-Austin[4]; 5. 18K-Kevin Vogt-Rose Creek[8]; 6. 101-Bernie Adams-Stacyville IA[6]; 7. 42-Cody Hyatt-Waseca[7]; 8. K0134-Kolton Brauer-Eyota[10]; 9. 99-Greg Lammers-Owatonna[5]; 10. 2-Marcus Berndt-Austin[1].

Heat 1 (6 Laps): 1. 99-Greg Lammers[2];

2. 42-Cody Hyatt[4]; 3. 34JR-Braden Brauer[5]; 4. 2-Marcus Berndt[3]; 5. (DNF) K0134-Kolton Brauer[1].

Heat 2 (8 Laps): 1. 101-Ken Adams[1]; 2. 16K-Kevin Vogt[2]; 3. 01-Kory Adams[3]; 4. 32-Jason Newkirk[4]; 5. 15-Zach Elward[5].

Brauer Roofing WISSOTA Super Stock

A Feature 1 (15 Laps): 1. 22-Dan Nissalke-Winona[5]; 2. 28S-Spencer Stock-Racine[5]; 3. 229-Anthony (A.J.) Zvorak-Blooming Prairie[4]; 4. 34-Jeff Brauer-Eyota[4]; 5. 35-Dennis Dunbar-Winona[1]; 6. 2F-Jeffrey Frey-Ogilvie[5]; 7. 71-Brandon Clemens-Lakeville[10]; 8. 17-Harland Morehart-Rochester[2]; 9. SM-Jeff McFarland-International Falls[9]; 10. (DNF) 84S-Shawn Olson-Albert Lea[5].

Heat 1 (8 Laps): 1. 34-Jeff Brauer[2]; 2. 22-Dan Nissalke[5]; 3. 229-Anthony (A.J.) Zvorak[4]; 4. 84S-Shawn Olson[3]; 5. SM-Jeff McFarland[1].

Heat 2 (8 Laps): 1. 35-Dennis Dunbar[2]; 2. 2F-Jeffrey Frey[4]; 3. 28S-Spencer Stock[1]; 4. 17-Harland Morehart[5]; 5. (DNF) 71-Brandon Clemens[3].

Skjeveland Ent/Owatonna Sanitation/Claremont Recycling WISSOTA Hornet

A Feature 1 (15 Laps): 1. 183-Daniel Knish-Killeney[2]; 2. 14-Justin Schellitzche-Cologne[4]; 3. 41-Ashley Bell-Lakeville[6]; 4. 13-Mac McInstry-Rush City[8]; 5. 21S-Brian Schott-Red Wing[6]; 6. 15-Bo Noble-Faribault[9]; 7. 20K-Zach Korp-Elendale[10]; 8. 5-Nick Sillman-Janeville[12]; 9. 29-Tommy Tesch-Waseca[11]; 10. 97X-Josh Winsky-Rochester[15]; 11. 6-Timothy Barnett[16]; 12. 511JR-Maison Poston-Red Wing[14]; 13. 77-Aaron Morgan-Albert Lea[13]; 14. 45-Matthew Welch-Owatonna[17]; 15. (DNF) 25-Shawn Grabinger-Lakeville[7]; 16. (DNF) 3X-Brandon Blanchard-Chester IA[19]; 17. (DNF) 20T-Troy Tuma-Owatonna[3]; 18. (DNF) 19-Robert Schmidt-Faribault[11]; 19. (DNF) 511-Shawn Poston-Red Wing.

Heat 1 (5 Laps): 1. 20T-Troy Tuma[3]; 2. 14-Justin Schellitzche[6]; 3. 13-Mac Johnston[10]; 4. 29-Tommy Tesch[1]; 5. 15-Bo Noble[5]; 6. 19-Robert Schmidt[8]; 7. 77-Aaron Morgan[9]; 8. 97X-Josh Winsky[2]; 9. (DNF) 511-Shawn Poston[4]; 10. (DNF) 3X-Brandon Blanchard[7].

Heat 2 (5 Laps): 1. 21S-Brian Schott[5]; 2. 41-Ashley Bell[2]; 3. 183-Daniel Knish[4]; 4. 22-Shawn Grabinger[8]; 5. 20K-Zach Korp[1]; 6. 5-Nick Sillman[9]; 7. 511JR-Maison Poston[6]; 8. 6-Timothy Barnett[3]; 9. 45-Matthew Welch[7].

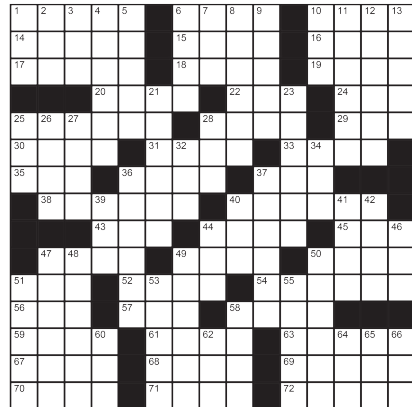
Action Builders WISSOTA Midwest Mods

A Feature 1 (20 Laps): 1. 83X-Kadden Kath-Owatonna[1]; 2. 18-Jason Vandekamp-Scandia[7]; 3. RED1-Dan Wheeler-Savage[9]; 4. 1M-Josh Mattick-Rosa Creek[11]; 5. 00JR-Greg Pfeifer Jr-Austin[6]; 6. 91Z-Ken Goergen-Stacyville[7]; 7. 83X-Kobie Kath-Owatonna[17]; 8. 79-Jeremy Misgen-New Richland[4]; 9. 5-Ryan McFarland-New Richland[14]; 10. 38-Kenny Wyataske-Austin[4]; 11. 20-Joe Frahm-Stewartville[16]; 12. 442-Anton Nelson-Hayfield[5]; 13. 68-Gary Wilde-Austin[18]; 14. 86-Noel Hoppe-New Richland[13]; 15. (DNF) 24M-Adam Martinson-Blaine[3]; 16. (DNF) 79H-Luke Hainka-Wannaming[12]; 17. (DNF) 17-Trevi Underdahl-Northfield[8]; 18. (DNF) 28-David Gustafson-Pine Island[18]; 19. (DNF) 33-Darryl Hainka-Wannaming[13].

Heat 1 (8 Laps): 1. 00JR-Greg Pfeifer Jr[1]; 2. 16-Jason Vandekamp[3]; 3. 17-Trevi Underdahl[5]; 4. 612-Ryan Goergen[4]; 5. RED1-Dan Wheeler[7]; 6. 1M-Josh Mattick[8]; 7. 28-David Gustafson[9]; 8. 5-Tyler McFarland[2]; 9. 20-Joe Frahm[16]; 10. 68-Gary Wilde[10].

Heat 2 (8 Laps): 1. 24M-Adam Martinson[2]; 2. 38-Kenny Wyataske[3]; 3. 83X-Kadden Kath[8]; 4. 442-Anton Nelson[5]; 5. 79-Jeremy Misgen[9]; 6. 79H-Luke Hainka[11]; 7. 86-Noel Hoppe[6]; 8. 33-Darryl Hainka[4]; 9. (DO) 83X-Kobie Kath[7].

CROSSWORD PUZZLE OF THE WEEK

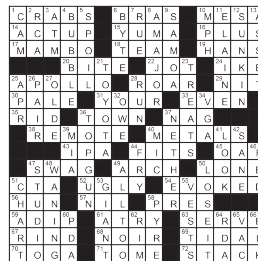


ACROSS

- 1 Grouches
- 6 Female supporters
- 10 Flat-topped hill
- 14 Misbehave
- 15 Arizona city on the Colorado
- 16 In addition
- 17 Latin American dance
- 18 Side
- 19 — Christian Andersen
- 20 Sharp flavor
- 22 Note hastily
- 24 34th President
- 25 Moonshot program
- 28 Sound of a lion
- 29 Louise egg
- 30 Washed out
- 31 Watch — step!
- 33 Not odd
- 35 Free
- 36 Settlement
- 37 Nudge repeatedly
- 38 Aloof
- 40 Conductive elements
- 43 Hoppy brew
- 44 Conforms
- 45 Blockhead
- 47 Pirate's plunder
- 49 Mischievous
- 50 Solitary
- 51 "L" operator
- 52 Unpleasant to look at
- 54 Conjured up
- 56 Attila, e.g.
- 57 Aught
- 58 Political top dog (Abbr.)
- 59 Brief swim
- 61 It's worth —!
- 63 Start playing tennis
- 67 Skin
- 68 Film genre
- 69 Flowing and ebbing
- 70 Roman wear
- 71 Large and scholarly book
- 72 Heap

DOWN

- 1 Coverts rotary motion into linear motion
- 2 Appliance and electronics maker
- 3 Bill dispenser
- 4 Hollow gas globe
- 5 Mar
- 6 Unit of computer memory
- 7 Reapet
- 8 Key with three sharps
- 9 Pacific country
- 10 Speed measure
- 11 Seinfeld cohort — Benes
- 12 Clicked
- 13 Valuable possession
- 21 Prius maker
- 23 Choice morsels
- 25 Interest charge
- 26 Two identical things
- 27 Shoppe adjective
- 28 Manage
- 32 Be in debt
- 34 Old kind of computer monitor
- 36 Fighter ace
- 37 Lower
- 39 "Rosemary's Baby" address — Farrow
- 40 Provides input for an amp.
- 41 Observe
- 42 Levelheaded
- 44 Cook in oil
- 46 Central bank
- 47 Artist's workshop
- 48 Diminishing
- 49 Extremely
- 50 Snap
- 51 Map
- 53 Enormous
- 55 Kevlar garments
- 58 Funeral wootdipie
- 60 Electronic helper just for you
- 62 Border
- 64 Old food label letters
- 65 Carpet cleaner (Abbr.)
- 66 Moose



9/12/2021

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Congrats to these students from Blooming Prairie High School on being inducted into the Minnesota Honor Society in April!



New members of the Minnesota Honor Society for Blooming Prairie include: back row, from left: Bobbie Bruns, Josie Hoffman, Lindsey Baltazar, Melanie Winzenburg, Isabelle Sunde, Larisa Judy, Emily Miller, Asha Lighthizer, Piper Lund and Lauren Schammel; front row: David Kartes, Carson Wacek, Alivia Schneider, Rose Michaud, Colin Jordison, Gustaf Ogren and Bradley Simon.



Current members of the Minnesota Honor Society for Blooming Prairie include: back row, from left: Emily Kubicek, Taylor Wurst, Kiya Thompson, Greta Sunde, Micalyn Trihus, Megan Oswald, Maggie Bruns, Maren Forystek, Halle Strunk, Charlie Heimerman and Luke Larkoski; front row: Jessica Ressler, Rachel Thompson, Allison Krohnberg, Shyane Jorgenson, Joseph Pirkel, Dylan Johnson and Rachael Riley.

Current Minnesota Honor Society members

Maggie Bruns	Shyane Jorgenson	Reese Millam	Gretchen Sunde
Maren Forystek	Allison Krohnberg	Joseph Pirkel	Kiya Thompson
Charlie Heimerman	Emily Kubicek	Jessica Ressler	Rachel Thompson
Dylan Johnson	Luke Larkoski	Rachael Riley	Micalyn Trihus
	Megan Oswald	Halle Strunk	Taylor Wurst

New Members

Lindsey Baltazar	David Kartes	Emily Miller	Isabelle Sunde
Bobbie Bruns	Asha Lighthizer	Gustaf Ogren	Carson Wacek
Josie Hoffman	Piper Lund	Lauren Schammel	Melanie Winzenburg
Colin Jordison	Rose Michaud	Alivia Schneider	
Larisa Judy	Marquette Millam	Bradley Simon	



Honor Society members open the induction with a candle lighting ceremony. They include, from left: Maggie Bruns (character), Rachael Riley (service), Luke Larkoski (scholarship), Megan Oswald (leadership) and Maren Forystek (opening and pledge).

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Mastering Gardening
LORRIE RUGG

In my Master Gardener world we have access to a lot of information. Each one of us has an aspect of gardening that we are drawn to. Mine is perennial gardening.

I love watching them pop through the soil in the spring. What is coming back and what did not make it through the winter. My goal

in my perennial beds is to have something blooming all throughout the growing season. Perennials don't bloom all summer long like annual plants do, they have a time of the season that they bloom.

For instance, my asiatic lilies bloom in July, when not much else is showing color. Some bloom early spring, late spring, mid summer or fall. So when selecting a perennial, consider the bloom time you are looking for. Perennials also have different growth habits, some grow tall, some stay short, some spread and some stay small and

grow in a clump shape. These are things to consider when deciding which plant to add to your garden.

The best thing about perennials is that you can divide them to get more plants for your garden, or have some to share with friends. There are a few simple steps to take when dividing to insure your success. Dividing should be done when a plant dies out in the center or produces smaller leaves or the blooms are not as profuse. If plants become crowded that is another signal to get out the shovel. They need air to breathe just like

we do. It will help stimulate new growth on the plant as well as control the size of the plant.

It is best to divide the plants on a cloudy day to prevent them from drying out too quickly. It is best to dig up the whole plant you are to divide and then split the plant apart, returning part of the original plant in the spot. You can re-plant the other remaining plants throughout your garden or pot them up to share. Each division should have two or three healthy shoots and a nice clump of healthy roots.

Another rule of

thumb for perennial division is the time to divide fall blooming perennials is in the spring because new growth is smaller and they are easier to work with. Spring rains are more frequent to help them get reestablished. They have a whole growing season to recover before winter. Divide spring flowering perennials in the fall because gardening work has slowed down in the fall. It is easier to spot those plants that need to be divided. Remember to divide the plants four to six weeks before frost to help them have time to get established.

There is an excellent source of information on dividing perennials on the University of Minnesota Extension website, on the Yard and Garden page. The titles of the two fact sheets are Dividing Perennials and How and When to Divide Perennials. They provide more detailed information on the how-tos.

This cooler weather that we are having is a great time to get those perennial beds looking great for the season.

Lorrie Rugg is the coordinator for the Steele County Master Gardeners.

BP fourth-grader serves as Principal for the Day

▲ **BP PRINCIPAL** from B1 gives Schwarz a chance to hear a student's perspective on how the school is run.

"Whoever wins it, it makes the kid feel special and they get to give the principal some advice about what they feel could make the school run better," she said. "I think the principal has fun listening to the students."

Abel said he wishes there was more history being taught, more recess and that they didn't have to wear masks any longer.

In addition to having a pizza lunch, which was supplied by the Education Foundation, with his classmates and the principal, Fourage said she is sure Abel enjoyed not having to sit in the classroom most of the day.

The opportunity to be principal for the day

was an auction item at last summer's Blooming Prairie Education Foundation auction and was donated by Blooming Prairie Elementary School.

The chance to have your elementary son or daughter serve as co-principal for the day will again be one of the auction items in this year's Blooming Prairie Education Foundation, which is scheduled for Saturday, May 22.

The silent auction begins at 1 p.m. and goes to 3 p.m., while the live auction starts at 4 p.m. and goes to 11 p.m. As of last Monday, she said there were tickets still available at the Cue Company. Even though the Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted, she said the Education Foundation is still requesting that the golden tickets be purchased to get into the live auction.

Searching for normal in an abnormal world

▲ **STEELE TALKIN'** from B1 I forged new relationships, used creativity that had not been tapped in some time, and enjoyed my time at home. I participated in zoom meetings, virtual happy hours and baby showers, and Facetime family gatherings.

And, now that we

can see the light at the end of the tunnel we seem to be putting on the brakes. Anxiety levels seem to be increasing. So how eager are we to return to the way things used to be? What are we willing to do to get "normal" back?

Maybe instead of getting back to

normal, we should be working toward safely reconnecting.

This past year has been tough for everyone, let's use this as common ground and show empathy to one another and do our part to ensure we can safely reopen our communities and start a new normal.

Stephanie Kibler serves on the Ellendale City Council and is executive director of the Freeborn County Historical Museum in Albert Lea. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.

Garage sale set for Saturday in BP

▲ **GARAGE** from B3 outside folks into Blooming Prairie this day," she said.

She also said the opportunity to showcase Blooming Prairie to visitors is one of the goals of the city-wide garage sale.

"We want to bring recognition to our town and give the community members a chance to sell their items," Glaser said. "It should be a fun day of

enjoying the weather, visiting with friends, family and community members and supporting Blooming Prairie and our local businesses."

Since there will hopefully be quite a few people enjoying the garage sales and visiting local businesses, she said masks are recommended but not required.

Through the city-wide garage sale, she hopes to accomplish

community recognition and a sense of pride for our town and our events.

After they're done shopping and rummaging, Glaser said community members and visitors can enjoy some lunch and refreshments in downtown Blooming Prairie. She reported that The Cue Company is having a lunch special that day.

Whether they're visiting local businesses,

visiting the garage sale or both, she hopes a lot of community members and visitors participate in the festivities and support the Blooming Prairie community.

"It's important to support local businesses and our community because we're a small town and they're a significant part of our small town. We take pride in our town and in our members and we support each other," she said.

Owatonna

PARKS and RECREATION

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Office & Cancellation Line: **507-444-4321** • Tennis & Fitness Center: **507-444-4290** • Email: parksrec@ci.owatonna.mn.us • West Hills Social Commons: **507-444-4280**

Facebook: **Owatonna Parks and Recreation** • Brooktree Clubhouse: **507-444-2467** • Park Maintenance: **507-774-7086** • River Springs Water Park: **507-774-7370**

OUR MISSION
The city of Owatonna Parks and Recreation Department provides a diverse system of green spaces, trails, facilities, programs and services to enhance the quality of life for the community.

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Greg Posch, Angie Malo, Jonathan Thiel, David Christianson, Jonathan Douglas, Gina McGuire and Sara Baird

SUMMER REGISTRATION - CURRENTLY TAKING REGISTRATIONS:

- T-Ball: Boys and girls, current 5-year-olds or kindergartners (1st time players). Monday evenings. Early June through July.
- Mini Sluggers: Boys, current kindergartners who have played T-Ball, or current 1st graders. Tuesday evenings.
- Summer Camps: Ages 3-10. Campers will make new friends, experience new things, and learn new skills. Camps include Little or Big Outdoor Adventures, All About Summer (NEW!), and Little Tykes Sports Camp. Half day and evening camps available.
- Track & Field: Boys and girls who have completed 2nd through 8th grade. Program Practice Dates: June 14, June 15, June 21 at OHS Track from 10:00am to Noon. Track Meet Dates: June 16, June 23, June 30, July 7, July 14 at OHS Track from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.
- Lacrosse: Boys: Grades 1-2. May 25, 27 June 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, and 24. 6:00-7:15pm at OCS Field. Girls: Grades 1-4. May 26, 27 June 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, and 24. 5:30pm-7:00pm at Roosevelt Field.
- Hockey: We take to the ice on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the Four Seasons Center from 6:30-7:30 pm. Dates: June 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, July 8, 13.

15. Classes are held for anyone who wants to learn to skate or practice their beginning skating skills.

- Therapeutic Rec Friday Camp: A day camp designed for people with disabilities, ages 6-22. Dates: every Friday June 18 to August 13 (no camp July 2). Friday camp consists of typical camp activities such as hiking, crafts, and fun!

SUMMER REGISTRATION - REGISTRATION BEGINS MAY 17:

- Swimming Lessons: American Red Cross Swimming Lessons will be offered at River Springs Water Park, West Hills and OMS.
- Registration for June classes will begin May 17th
- Registration for July classes will begin June 14th
- Registration for August classes will begin July 12th
- Tennis Lessons: Lessons available for ages 5 and up. A variety of days and times offered.

REGISTRATION AVAILABLE:

- Online, on the Park & Rec website beginning at 7:00am
- Over the phone, 507-444-4321
- In person at the Park & Rec Office: Mon. - Fri. 8:00am to 5:00pm

*Scholarship recipients may complete online scholarship form and call 507-444-4321 to register over the phone, or register in person.

STAY CONNECTED:
We offer a variety of ways for you to stay updated and connected.

- Follow us on Facebook on the following pages:
 - o Owatonna Parks and Recreation
 - o West Hills Social Commons
 - o River Springs Water Park
 - o West Hills Tennis and Fitness Center
 - o Owatonna Dog Park
- Visit our website: www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/parksrecreation

WWW.CI.OWATONNA.MN.US/PARKSRECREATION

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kappysauto@gmail.com

Charlie and Al Kaplan

507-451-8989

NOTICE

**PROPOSED
CITY OF BLOOMING
PRAIRIE
CITY COUNCIL
MEETING AGENDA
MAY 17, 2021
7:00 P.M.**

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Public Hearing 7:00 –
New 3.2% Liquor License
Public Hearing 7:05 – Or-
dinance #50: Garbage
and Refuse; Dumpsters

Consent Agenda
1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes of
April 12, 2021 – Regular
City Council Meeting
3. Approval of Minutes of
April 12, 2021 – Public
Hearing – Ordinance #31
4. Approval of Minutes of
April 12, 2021 – Pub-
lic Hearing – Ordinance
#114
5. Approval of Minutes of
April 12, 2021 – Public
Hearing – Board of Equal-
izations
6. Approve Extension of
Beer Garden at Central

Park till 11:00 pm on July
3, 2021
7. Approve Hire of Sea-
sonal Public Works Em-
ployee
8. Approve Resolution Ac-
cepting Donation from the
Blooming Prairie Cham-
ber of Commerce
9. Approve Permit to Con-
sume Liquor in Park
Financial Report
Committee/Commission
Reports
1. B.P. Public Utilities
2. B.P. Economic Devel-

opment Authority
3. B.P. Planning & Zoning
4. B.P. Fire Commission
5. B.P. Police Commis-
sion
6. B.P. Ambulance Com-
mission
Business
1. Approval of Update to
Ordinance #50: Garbage
and Refuse; Dumpsters
2. Approval of Publishing
Summary for Ordinance
#50: Garbage and Re-
fuse; Dumpsters
3. Approval of Proposed

Ordinance #114: Regu-
lations and Fees for Mo-
bile Food Units and Food
Carts
4. Approval of Publishing
Summary for Ordinance
#114: Regulations and
Fees for Mobile Food
Units and Food Carts
5. Approval of Update
to Blooming Prairie
COVID-19 Preparedness
Plan
6. Approval of 3.2% Li-
quor License for Casey's
General Store
7. Approval to Request
Hwy 218 Utility Improve-

ment Feasibility Report
8. Approval of Resolution
to Issue the General Ob-
ligation Water Revenue
Refunding Bonds, Series
2021A
City Administrator's Report
1. Street Seal Coating
2. Mill & Overlay Target
Areas
City Attorney's Report
Council Members' Reports
Adjourn
*Agenda is Subject to
Change*

Steele County Detention Center • Detention Center Integrator Upgrades
Project # S20030C

**SECTION 00 03 00
ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**

TITLE:

**Steele County Detention Center
Detention Center Integrator Upgrades**

LOCATION OF WORK:

Steele County Detention Center
2500 Alexander Street SW
Owatonna, MN 55060

OWNER:

Steele County
630 Florence Avenue
Owatonna, MN 55060
(507) 444-7400

OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE:

ICS
1331 Tyler Street NE Suite 101
Minneapolis, MN 55413
(763) 354-2670

ARCHITECT:

Dewberry
401 SW Water Street #701
Peoria, IL 61602
(309) 282-8000

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Work will consist of replacement of the existing cabling and security system, cameras, card access system and associated server equipment and programming to support new system. Work to include replacing selected doors and security control connections including high volume doors from intake-to-intake corridor and intake corridor to main corridor. Modifications to master control room and alternates that will include renovation at professional visitation and medical areas.

BID DATE AND LOCATION:

Sealed bids will be received at Steele County Administration Building, 630 Florence Avenue, Owatonna, MN 55060 then publicly opened and read aloud. Base Bids will be received and stamped-in prior to 2 PM local time on Thursday May 13, 2021.

EXAMINATION OF DOCUMENTS:

Bidders may view drawings and specifications for the project by contacting the office of the Owners Rep. For Electronic access to the bidding documents, please contact the Owner's Representative at (763) 354-2670. The Owner's Representative can also provide locations of Builders Exchange's holding plans for contractors to access. Bidders are responsible for any and all costs associated with the production of plans and specifications for their use.

BIDDING REQUIREMENTS:

Each bidder must comply with the following requirements to reassure acknowledgment recognition of their bids.

Bids must be accompanied by bid security in form of certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond in amount of 5% of base bid submitted, made payable to owner, as guarantee that bidder will, if awarded, enter into contract in accordance with contract documents and submitted bid.

Completely fill in all blank spaces on the Bid Form, in ink or typewriter, in both words and figures.

Sign in longhand, executed by a principal duly authorized to enter into an agreement. If a bidder is a co-partnership, then signatures on the bid shall be by an authorized member of the firm, with names and addresses of each member of partnership.

Base bid and all alternate bids shall be stated both in writing and in figures. In all cases, written and numerical figures must agree; otherwise at Owner's option, it shall be cause for rejection of bid. Complete form without alteration.

Submit alternate prices (bid) for either increasing or decreasing the cost as called for on bid form and Description of Alternates. Submit a bid for all alternates.

Owner may make such investigations as he deems necessary to determine the ability and responsibility of the bidder to perform the work, and any bidder shall furnish to Owner all such information and data for this purpose, as the Owner may request. Owner reserves the right to reject any bid if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such bidder fails to satisfy the Owner that such bidder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete the Work contemplated therein. The competence and responsibility of bidder will be considered in making an award, including, but not limited to: (1) proof of financial responsibility, (2) quality of similar work, (3) amount of experience with similar projects, (4) facilities, personnel and equipment, (5) reputation for performance, and (6) ability to complete the work within specified time. Owner reserves the right to reject any Bid where there is reasonable doubt as to the qualifications of the bidder.

Owner reserves the right to (1) accept bidder's Base Bid only, (2) accept any one or more of bidder's Alternate Bids, in any order regardless of the order in which they were listed, (3) reject all Bids, (4) award contract based on his investigation of bidders, as well as acceptance of alternates, all of which Owner deems to be in his best interest, (5) waive informalities or minor irregularities in bids and waive minor irregularities or discrepancies in bidding procedure.

Upon award of Contract, Contractor shall provide AIA A312 Performance and Payment Bonds in the amount of 100% of Contract Sum in accordance with General Conditions and Amendments to General Conditions.

BIDDING DOCUMENTS & SITE REVIEW:

Each bidder (including subcontract bidder where appropriate) is required to visit the site and to fully inform himself and record their own investigations as to the extent of the Work, the extent of the work performed by other contractors under other construction packages, conditions under which the Work is to be performed, existing buildings and streets, conditions of the area, existing utilities and other features, type of soil, available facilities and difficulties that may be encountered in connection therewith, and other relevant items which will affect their bid or the Work.

Prior to submitting a bid, each bidder is required to examine all of the bidding requirements, all Contract Documents, all drawings and specifications for the Project (including those primarily for other Subcontracts), become thoroughly familiar with the scope of the Project and all factors and items of work which will affect their bid or the Work, whether shown or specified in documents primarily for Work of others or Work of this Contract.

No extras will be allowed to the Contractor as a result of misunderstanding of the extent of scope of the Work as a result of his failure to study and record their own findings. Submission of a bid shall be proof that such examinations have been made and that bidder has recorded their own investigation and has become thoroughly familiar with all contract documents (including all addenda). The failure or omissions of any bidder to examine any form, instrument or document shall in no way relieve any bidder from any obligation in respect to his bid.

PRE-BID CONFERENCE:

A pre-bid conference will be held at 10:00 AM on Thursday April 22nd at Steele County Detention Center located at 2500 Alexander Street SW, Owatonna, MN 55060. Please enter at the main entry on the southeast side of the building for the pre-bid conference. No extras will be allowed because of the bidder's misinterpretation to the amount of work involved, bidder's own error, negligence, or failure to examine the site.

START DATE:

Work may begin after receipt of the signed contract from the Owner. Pre-construction and submittals work related to the project is to commence immediately after receipt of the signed contract. The work onsite is anticipated to begin July 18, 2021.

SUBSTANTIAL AND COMPLETION DATE:

Owner requires work to be substantially complete on or before milestone dates as listed in Summary of Work, Section 01 01 00. Bids shall reflect all costs necessary to meet this schedule requirement. Work is scheduled to be complete by July 1, 2022. Bids shall reflect all cost necessary to meet this schedule requirement.

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We need people who will safely operate their truck to deliver equipment or materials to job sites, will secure loads for safe transport, and work closely with other crew members to coordinate work and ensure safety! Assists with loading and unloading truck as needed.

Qualifications needed include MSHA, Commercial Drivers License A, Current DOT Health Card and Tanker Endorsement. Check out our website for complete job details. We have other openings too! Give us a call!

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50% OFF SALE May 13-19. All sportswear including jerseys, shorts, pants, shorts, plus Lots more! Lots of new name brand merchandise. Ladies, mens & kids sizes available. At Dano's Consignment Store, 32 East Main St., Dodge Center. Open M-F 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. 5/12/21

FOR SALE: Rifle Ammunition. Factory new Remington 22-250 (20 rds.), \$25; Federal 300 Win Mag. 180 grain soft point \$45; 7 boxes New Components 22-250 CCI 200, 33.1 GR IMR 4064, 55 Hornaday V-Max 140 rounds \$15/20 rounds or all for \$95; 100 rounds of .300 Wby. Magnum cartridges \$100; 223/5.56 bulk ammo (50+1,000 rounds) \$11/round. 763-226-9775 for information. 5/12/21

NEED CASH? I give free appraisals of your older coins from 1964 and older. I am also looking to buy older coins such as silver dollars, halves, quarters, dimes and Indianhead cents. Please call Ron from Hayfield at 507-477-2427 or 507-259-6460. 4/17/21

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DODGE CENTER: 1-bedroom upper apartment in house, with private entrance. Stove, refrigerator, water and garbage serv. incl. Non-smokers only. No pets. Available now. \$600 per month, plus deposit. 507-374-6747. 5/12/21

2 & 3 BD - DODGE CENTER: Smoke free two-story townhomes with garages! Open May & June. \$1010 & \$1050 almo + util. Minutes from Hwy 14 & Rochester. 507-438-7935 or 507-

451-8524 or www.life-styleinc.net tdd 507-451-0704 EHO 4/23/21

STORAGE FOR RENT: Storage-Indoor-Kasson. 10 by 20 ft. \$90 month. 7 by 9 ft. \$60 month. Voice/Text 651-272-7970. 5/12/21

SERVICES

NICK'S LAWN CARE & LANDSCAPING. Weekly or vacation, residential or commercial, yard cleanup, mowing and trimming, satisfaction guaranteed. FREE estimates. Please call 507-696-3849 and leave a message. 4/17/21

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

CALEB'S PET SITTING, Cats and Dogs, please call me at 507-634-7907. 3/16/21

BARGAIN FINDERS

FOR SALE: Krause 16' type 1A industrial, extra heavy foldable ladder, 300# rating. \$50. Call: 507-528-2252. Leave message. 5/12/21

GARAGE SALE

BLOOMING PRAIRIE GARAGE SALE: 88339 320th St., Blooming Prairie May 15 and May 16, 9AM-4PM. Vikings memorabilia, craft supplies, musical instruments, plus size clothing, furniture, vases, fashion jewelry, CDs, Parts Washer. 5/12/21

GOT NEWS? EDITOR@DCI@KMTel.COM

CAREGIVER WANTED

for disabled female, Every other weekend day or every other Saturday overnight. 9 to 12-hour shifts. Will train. 4/27/21

\$13.25 per hour; \$14.25 after (short online course.) NW Rochester. 507-289-2756

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**Blooming Prairie Elementary School**

is accepting applications for a **Secretary/MARSS & ED-FI Coord.** (10 mo. work year/7.5 hours per day).

Student data reporting is an integral part of this position with the ability to multitask, possess excellent computer skills, perform general office duties, and be a team player is a must.

Complete the online application at <https://www.blossoms.k12.mn.us/page/2818>. Deadline for applications is May 14, 2021. 5/12/21

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