

Medallion Hunt
Clue #5

Three little poles
Sitting in an alley
One holds the prize
Don't dilly dally

Sledding
Fun
C1



\$1

Tuesday, January 5, 2016

Serving Blooming Prairie and Steele County since 1893

Steele County stays relatively safe during 10 inches of snowfall

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

When the weather outside is frightful, Steele County stays safe. With over 7 inches of snowfall recorded in Owatonna within about a 24 hour period, local law enforcement were happy to say that there were few accidents in Steele County.

The snow started falling early afternoon on Dec. 28 and went pretty steadily through afternoon of Dec. 29.

The Waste Water Treatment Plant in Owatonna recorded 7 inches of snowfall before 8 a.m. on Dec. 29, a number confirmed by the National Weather Service. The following morning, the Waste Water Treatment Plant recorded another three inches for a total snowfall count of 10 inches.

Andrew Montes of Owatonna saw first-hand what the weather was like. He walked almost a mile from his place of work to home. He wore a face mask to keep the wind from blowing on his face. "It was really cold, windy and there was deep snow," he said. "I tried to walk on the sidewalk to avoid the



Staff photo by Alan Van Ormer

Scott Doucette of Medford spent some time shoveling his vehicle out of a snow drift during the Dec. 28-29 snowstorm that accumulated as much as 10 inches of snow in areas of Steele County.

SNOWSTORM

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Staff photo by Alan Van Ormer

All types of different snow equipment were out on Dec. 29 clearing away snow that soaked the Steele County area. This snow plow was clearing the sidewalks along an Owatonna elementary school.



Staff photo by Laura Berndt

It was a family affair on Tuesday, Dec. 29, as siblings 8-year-old Milayna Davis, 16-year-old Haley Ryks and 13-year-old Levi Ryks shoveled snow together. Along with their mom, Nikki, the family clears driveways for many Blooming Prairie residents and, last week, there was plenty of work for the family following Monday evening's snowstorm. Above, Milayna, Haley and Levi clear off a Blooming Prairie resident's sidewalk and porch while mom (not pictured) cleans the driveway.

16-year-old involved with stabbing incident will be tried as a juvenile

By LAURA BERNDT
News Editor

A recent ruling indicates that one of four people involved with a July stabbing incident will be tried as a juvenile.

The case stems from an incident that took place on July 10, 2015, when Andrew Zavala, 19, of Owatonna, arrived at the doorstep of a home rural in Meriden Township. Zavala said that he had been stabbed multiple times and left in a nearby cornfield.

After investigation, police took four suspects into custody: 18-year-old Carlos Alfred Sosa-Venegas, 17-year-old Jameson Smith, 17-year-old Seth Brandenburg and 16-year-old Jose Sosa-Venegas, all of Owatonna.

The four suspects were initially charged with

STABBING SUSPECT
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Olmsted attorney clears Westfield board

By RICK BUSSLER
Publisher

Members of the Westfield Township Board did nothing inappropriate in handling a special meeting related to feedlot issues, a top attorney has found.

Olmsted County Attorney Mark Ostrem announced last week that he found no evidence to sustain criminal prosecution for failure or refusal of the township supervisors to carry out the duties of their office.

In his determination, Ostrem noted nothing irregular or offensive to the duties of the supervisors transpired. In fact, Ostrem said, "The board of supervisors went out of their way to have an open discussion with their electors allowing a significant amount of oral and written comments to be heard before determining the issue."

At issue was whether township officials did something illegal when they declined to hold a vote to determine if tougher zoning standards should be devel-



WESTFIELD BOARD
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Sailor Renee Lea is Blooming Prairie's First Baby of the Year

By HOWARD LESTRUD
Staff Writer

Sailor Renee Lea, six hours into the new year of 2016, officially joined the family of her parents, Colette and Tony Lea and brother Beckett, 6, of Blooming Prairie.

Sailor thus becomes the First Baby of the Year in Blooming Prairie and will receive a myriad of gifts from local merchants. Rules of the contest state that the baby must be born after 12 a.m., Jan. 1, 2016, and parents must live in Blooming Prairie Independent School District 756.

"We are so happy to have a healthy baby and Beckett wants to hold her all the time," remarked mom Colette.

Weighing 7 lbs. 13 ozs., Sailor or Renee measures 20 inches in length. She has black hair and blue eyes. Sailor was born at 5:57 a.m. at the Austin Medical Center. Colette came to the

Medical Center at 8 p.m. the night before New Year's Day.

Maternal grandparents are Tony and Renee Holmes of Ellendale and paternal grandfather is Randy Lea of Blooming Prairie.

Tony and Colette have owned The Pizza Cellar and The Cue Company in Blooming Prairie for the past nine years.

Prior to leaving the Austin Medical Center on Saturday morning, Jan. 2, the Leas received special gifts. The gifts included a Pack and Play, a toy car and diapers from the Austin Medical Center; a diaper cake from the hospital and a cake and flowers from the Hy-Vee Food Store.

Gifts detailed in the Dec. 29, 2015, Steele County Times include:

- Vandal's Family Market of Blooming Prairie, coupon for \$10 in baby products
- Sportsstitch of Blooming Prairie, gift certificate for a free

personalized baby blanket

- Holman Insurance of Blooming Prairie, \$25 in BP Bucks
- Timberlodge Steakhouse of Owatonna, \$10 gift certificate
- Farmers & Merchants State Bank of Blooming Prairie, new account for baby and providing first \$25
- Dr. Debora Lien of Blooming Prairie, free dental care kit for newborn toddler
- The Cutting Edge of Blooming Prairie, gift certificate for baby's first haircut
- The Bakery of Blooming Prairie, baby's first homemade birthday cake
- Haberman's Gallery of Owatonna, \$25 gift certificate
- Steele County Times, free one-year subscription
- Dairy Queen of Blooming Prairie, gift certificate for a free ice cream cake
- Kernel Restaurant of Owatonna, \$25 gift certificate



Submitted photo

Sailor Renee Lea is the First Baby of the Year as recognized by a First Baby of the Year Contest sponsored by Blooming Prairie area merchants. Brother Beckett, a kindergartner, greeted his baby sister with fond admiration. Parents are Tony and Colette Lea.



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4B.....LEGALS

C: 3CELLENDALE
6C.....MEDFORD

D: 2D.....FARM LIVING
4D....EMPLOYMENT

YOUR OPINIONS MATTER

in the Steele County Times

84 of our readers contributed to the Mailbag in 2015 compared to 55 in 2014

STEELE COUNTY Times
Always local, all the time.

Here’s a sampling of our reader opinions.

We love our hometown, Blooming Prairie

Dear Editor:
Here it is the 23rd of December and I am just getting off from work. I am excited about Christmas and the fact that this is my last chance to get the last or most of my Christmas presents done.
Arriving at home, I rush into our big blue house, get out of my work clothes and get ready to run to pay some last minute bills before shopping. Out the door I go being careful as our weather had given us 2-4 inches of new snow that made things white. Looking up I saw one of my neighbors going to get her mail with her cane. She slipped and fell.
I rushed over to help thinking, “ok 911 or we’ll first see and get her out of the street.” She was already trying to get back up so I offered to call for help and asked if she needed help. She was so embarrassed. Bless her heart, she said no, just help me up. I was

so afraid she was hurt, but she assured me it was not so. I made sure she got back to her house and still wondered if she was ok.
I went back to my car and headed uptown to get some cash at the bank. When I arrived at the bank, I realized my checkbook and a bill were missing. I thought oh crap I needed to pay the bill and now my checks were lost as well as the bill statement.
This is where being in a small town with people that look out for each other really makes me love living here awesome. I drove back the same route that I had gone uptown. I recalled that I had thrown them on the trunk when my neighbor slipped. Twice back over the route, asking at the bank and giving me an excuse to check on my neighbor again.
My mind went through this thing as to what else got added to my shopping and paying bills. I called the bank to report the checks I

lost. I had to go to Owatonna to sign a stop payment. As I was doing this, here is what was happening at home.
Someone had picked up my checkbook with the bill in it and turned it into the police. The police were looking for me to return it. Unfortunately, no one was home. At this time, I was not going to let my holiday spirit get down. I said a prayer asking for help, then got my bill paid and shopping done.
When I got home and in two hours of arriving, the police came to my door with my checkbook and papers. I would love to know who it was that found my items and turned them in. Thank you for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Our police department is the best there is in this country. God bless all.

John and Laura Knudsen
Blooming Prairie

Where’s other opinions about feedlots?

I find it interesting that for the past few months we have been reading in The Steele County Times how high a percentage of contamination to the environment is caused by feedlots. It’s also interesting that only two members of the Concerned Citizens of Dodge County, both having the same family name, write letters. Does no one else have an opinion? What’s the real concern? I wasn’t aware that animal manure was toxic.
I would like to ask you, Ms. Sonja Trom Eayrs, if your father, brother or whoever farms your land, sprays chemicals on the soil to kill weeds and insects? If so, they also contribute to the pollution of the soil, ground water and air. You live in the city. Do you have a lawn service spray your lawn for crab grass, dandelions, weeds, etc.? If so, you are contributing to pollution. Those

chemicals go straight to the river versus storm sewers. We all cause pollution to the environment in some way no matter how little or large of an amount.
Forty years ago, the family farm was 320 acres or less. Every farm had dairy, hogs, chickens, etc. We didn’t have a need for feedlots. Times have changed. The family farm is pretty much gone. Farmers are now farming hundreds or thousands of acres. If not for feedlots and farmers who want to provide our dinner table with dairy and animal products, where is this food to come from? I like eating my dairy products, beef, pork, chicken, turkey and lamb. I prefer these animals be raised in our country.
Farmers work hard; they not only feed our country, but also they feed the world.

Rita Goodnature
Owatonna

Lawmakers need to act on roads

Dear Editor,
A majority of Minnesota’s roads are more than 50 years old, and in the next three years one in five will pass its useful life. Forty percent of our bridges are 40 years old or older. And in the next 10 years, most will be past their useful life.
Gov. Mark Dayton has a plan to fix Minnesota’s deteriorating roads and bridges. This is great news for drivers tired of dodging pot holes and feeling bridges shake beneath their cars and businesses that lose money when their shipments are stuck in congestion and products are late to market.
Gov. Dayton’s plan is also good news for Dodge County. Under the Governor’s proposal, counties will receive a transportation funding increase in funds constitutionally-dedicated

for repairing roads and bridges. Dodge County would receive an additional \$1.2 million under Gov. Dayton’s plan.
In contrast, the Republican majority in the Minnesota House of Representatives has floated a funding proposal that would fix approximately one bridge in the state, nowhere near the true need of repairs that need to be done.
The time to act is now, and I encourage our Dodge County Republican legislators, including Rep. Duane Quam, Rep. Steve Dratzkowski and Sen. Dave Jenjem, to support Gov. Dayton’s plan.

Bernita Reding
Mantorville

7 reasons to adopt planning and zoning

1. What is the population of the State of Minnesota? 50 million as measured by manure

output. According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (“MPCA”), it has been estimated that the amount of manure generated by livestock in Minnesota is equivalent to that of a human population of 50 million people. The population of Dodge County alone, if measured by manure output, is nearly 900,000. How much is enough?
2. What is the maximum number of animals allowed per feedlot in Dodge County? 3,000 animal units are allowed per feedlot in Dodge County. This equates to 3,000 mature cows or approximately 10,000 hogs per feedlot. Do you want a feedlot of this magnitude near your home?
3. In Dodge County, how close can a feedlot operator construct a feedlot near your residence? Only 1,000 feet are required between a feedlot and your home.

7 REASONS
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7 REASONS Continued from Page 2A

4. Is there a minimum acreage requirement for construction of a feedlot in Dodge County? No. The County is permitting feedlots on just 6 acres of land.
Is there a 6 acre parcel near your home?
5. Is Dodge County requiring odor mitigation technologies on feedlots? No. Although the County has required bio-filters in the past to reduce concern of public impact from odor, Dodge County is not requiring bio-filters on large feedlots nor is the County requiring tree buffer zones.
6. How do feedlots impact the environment? According to the Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”), the environmental impacts resulting from mismanagement of wastes include, among others, excess nutrients in water (such as nitrogen and phosphorous), which can con-

tribute to low levels of dissolved oxygen (fish kills), and decomposing organic matter that can contribute to toxic algal blooms. Contamination from runoff or lagoon leakage can degrade water resources, and can contribute to illness by exposing people to wastes and pathogens in their drinking water. Dust and odors can contribute to respiratory problems in workers and nearby residents.
7. A study by the MPCA, “Nitrogen in Surface Waters,” shows elevated nitrate levels, particularly in southern parts of the state. Studies show that nitrate in surface water is toxic to fish and the aquatic life food chain and nitrate in drinking water is potentially harmful to humans.
How do you stop the construction of new feedlots in Dodge County and the danger-

ous affects to the air and water? Attend your Township annual meeting on Tuesday, March 10 and elect supervisors who are not afraid to put in place local planning and zoning. If you want controls in place regarding feedlots, you must do so at the township level. Through local planning and zoning, you can limit the number of animals per feedlot, adopt a minimum acreage requirement, require an owner/manager to live on site, limit wear and tear to township roads and other essential terms to protect all of the citizens in the township.

Sonja Trom Eayrs on
behalf of Dodge County
Concerned Citizens
www.dodgecc.org
Maple Grove

NRHEG bond referendum

Dear Editor:
As a retired educator and program administrator, I am writing this letter speaking with the “voice of reason” on behalf of the property owners who will have to pay for these project improvements for the next 20 years if it is voted in.
The elementary school project improvements are needed and necessary for the student population increase, safety and educational program administration. The cost of the elemen-

tary project is 40 percent of the bond cost, or \$5,702,000.
The high school project improvements are not needed. These improvements fall into the “wanted” category. These improvements would be nice to have, but are not needed nor are they a necessary aspect of delivering educational programs. The cost of these improvements constitutes 60 percent of the \$14,255,000 bond cost or \$8,533,000.
Spending millions of dollars to build a show case gymnasium, locker rooms for visiting sports teams and a state of the art fitness facility does not fall into the category of needed

or necessary. These high cost improvements are not needed or necessary to meet the objectives of educational program delivery for this school.
The impact on the property owners who will be paying for this needs to be considered. This \$14,255,000 bond is going to place a tremendous and excessive tax burden on all of us, especially the farmers, the elderly and small business owners. Farmers are experiencing rising production costs and falling crop prices and land values. How many farm families will be affected by this tax burden? What percentage of each of these four towns is

Yuriel Justin
Ellendale

Moody’s considering Steele credit downgrade

March 31st I went to a commissioner’s meeting and at long last some transparency in Steele County. The truth came from a Moody’s Investors Report on Steele County finances. It was very revealing.
Moody’s are considering a possible downgrade of our credit rating. Steele County Communities for a Lifetime (SCCL) failed to make their debt payment in March. You know this as our wonderful new nursing home – the KODA/Benedictine creation of Tom Shea and the old county commissioners.
We also have been funding the ice rink operations from day one. It has never been self-supporting.
Our jail was over sized so it is a gift to the state and other counties. They give us their prisoners and we subsidize each one, as they don’t pay the full cost of their care. If we hadn’t oversized we wouldn’t find our self in this predicament.

The incompetence with which this county has been run is a complete disgrace. At the same time the people responsible for this walk about proud as a peacock. There is not a tournament large enough to stem this bleed. So now you know why taxes and market value continue to increase and you still don’t have anything to show for it.
I say not one more dime of bonded debt for Steele County. We have a huge mess to clean up. This new MN Prairie Alliance I predict will be an even bigger bleed than the above named ones. If Moody’s downgrade our credit rating it will be more expensive to borrow.
So now you see “The Emperor has no clothes.”

Marlene Nelson
Owatonna

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the mailbag in 2015!

John and Laura Knudsen • Marlene Nelson • Gene Trom • Howard Lestrud • Jennifer Elseth • Sara Larson • Laura Resler • Marlene Nelson • Howard Lestrud • Sonja Trom Eayrs • Andy Price • Elaine L. Leach • Jeff Tank • Bruce Schmol • Bernita Reding • Sonja Trom Eayrs • Pastor Myrwood A. Bagne • Herman Beede • Dodge County Farm Bureau Federation • Jan Svenby • Gene Trom • John Beal • Mrs. LaVerne Johnson • Gene Trom • Ruth Anderson • Marlene Nelson • David Nielsen • Gene Trom • Joshua Kiel • Sonja Trom Eayrs • Luella Heim • Rebecca Adams • LeMar Nelson • Laura Resler • Brad Trom • Tim Penny • Jim Riddle • Sonja Trom Eayrs • Sonja Trom Eayrs • Rita Goodnature • Ken Trom • Dan Deml • Muriel French • Kristina Maharenlo • Brad Trom • Herman Beede • JoAnn Eichten • Rep. Paul Anderson • Marlene Nelson • Shelley Johnson • Doug Pichl • Karen Duncan • Phillip Meads • Gary Schwarz • Royal Staver • John Steele • Rep. Joe Atkins • Sen. Jim Metzzen • Marlene Nelson • Sen. Al Franken • Lowell Trom • Philip Heim • Yuriel Justin • Carol Raetz • Dale Schmeling • Sen. Amy Klobuchar • Peter Miller Russo • Sonja Trom Eayrs • Stormy Trom • Thomas Kuntz • Randy Wilson • Toys for Tots of Steele County

News

Winter is here. . .where are the snow scrapers?

By **HOWARD LESTRUD**
Staff Writer

It wasn't the first snowfall of the 2015-16 winter season but it was the most significant thus far. The snowstorm had people trying to remember where they put their ice and snow scrapers.

A mammoth winter storm had been forecast for the first part of last week, and the snow gods held true by starting to bring a winter blanket to most parts of Steele County by mid-day Monday, Dec. 28. By the end of the day on Tuesday, most accounts recorded 8-10 inches of snow with more falling in the Owatonna and surrounding areas.

"The snow slowed everything down but, all in all, people did well in allowing time to get to their destinations and by keeping their distance from other drivers," said Steele County Sheriff Lon Thiele.

Thiele did not have a number of accidents his department investigated because of the snow but did say his department helped Minnesota State Troopers deal with crashes on Interstate 35.

Bloomington Police Chief Greg Skillestad echoed Thiele's report that drivers handled the conditions well, and many stayed away from the roadways because of the storm. "We only had one fender bender caused by the snow and there were no injuries reported to us," said Skillestad.

"This storm was rather uneventful, and it just proves that people are learning to slow

down for the road conditions," Skillestad remarked.

Snow removal was a high priority for the Steele County Highway Department as it had 10 snow plow trucks and two motor graders on duty at mid-day to begin plowing the 366 miles of roadways the county maintains, reported Beth Brady, county highway maintenance manager.

"Our coverage area is like driving to Chicago," Brady said.

County snow removal equipment was called in at 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 28, and returned to the roadways at 5 a.m. the next day. All trucks are equipped with front plows, an under body scraper, a wing and a sander. The motor graders were designated for high traffic routes with gravel roads.

Brady said windy conditions actually did road crews a favor by blowing much of the snow off some roadways. "We had a couple of inches to contend with rather than three feet," she added.

Each county truck covers about 37-40 miles and depending on the heft of the snow, the job for each truck can be done in 4 to 4 ½ hours, Brady said. All county roads are "hit" at least twice, Brady stated. The county unveiled some new snow removal equipment this winter season, just putting a new truck and an upgraded 2012 motor grader into action.

"It's Minnesota and snow removal is part of our mission, but we've been really fortunate in November and December to be able to do other things on the



True Minnesotans don't wait long to remove snow from a heavy snowfall on Monday, Dec. 28. Jeff Zwiener is shown blowing out a driveway in downtown Blooming Prairie. The snowfall was recorded at 6 inches. New Richland had 8 inches, Owatonna 8 inches and Rochester 7 inches.

roadways rather than plowing snow," Brady informed.

"We've been very busy with the storm," said Darrick Schewe, owner of Darrick's Preferred Auto of Blooming Prairie. His business did about 10 tows a day during the three-day monitoring of the snowfall and came to his shop by customers Googling on their phones.

Schewe said he had four trucks on the road with many of his calls being AAA generated. His service territory includes

Bloomington, Albert Lea, Austin, Dodge Center, Kasson and Hayfield.

Dean Wordelman, owner of Dean's Westside Towing in Owatonna and Faribault, dispatched six of his tow/plow trucks during most of the day and said the snowfall was "a nice shot of adrenaline" for the company checkbook.

Benji Bishop, owner of Bishop Excavating of Blooming Prairie, agreed that snowfalls are good for the local economy.

Bishop oversees snow removal jobs mostly in commercial areas. He said the snow brings out snowmobiles and more snow removal equipment.

Jeff Zwiener of Blooming Prairie has a snow removal business and said his jobs went well with the help of his son Dennis and son-in-law John Bruns. "They saved me another four hours of work," Zwiener related. He estimated the snowfall in the seven to eight-inch category.

"We should be good for an-

other five days," he said.

Tom Sweet of Sweet Towing & Repair of Owatonna said his workers manning five trucks were busy around the clock with street plowing and towing. "Bad roads make our job a busy one," he said.

"I'm leaving for a tow in Wisconsin Dells right now but 90 percent of our snow work (tows and plowing) is done in Steele County," Sweet said. "I don't worry about the weather. When it happens, it happens. I know it's bad weather when I get awakened in the middle of the night."

Fresh snow over ice can make snow removal a tougher job because it causes slippery conditions, admits Dean Wordelman of Dean's Towing.

Because this latest storm came during daylight hours and on days other than a weekend, more professional drivers were on the roadways, making traffic flow more smoothly, Wordelman believes.

Wordelman said his trucks get called out in other than snowy conditions. He said he responded to a couple of serious crashes on Interstate 35 on Dec. 22 caused by icy conditions, one involving a fatal pickup truck crash and another involving a semi-truck. He said cable guard rails on the interstate medians are doing their job but end up "shredding" the vehicle, in one case a semi-trailer.

Watching weather reports can be "an exercise in frustration," says Wordelman. "You can't just twiddle your thumbs waiting for the snow to come," he said.

Residents, snow removal operators advised not to push snow on public roadways

With the recent snowfall, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) reminds residents and snow removal operators that it is unlawful to deposit snow on or next to a public highway or street.

Minnesota law and many local ordinances prohibit the plowing, blowing, shoveling or otherwise placing of snow onto public roadways. This includes the

ditch and right of way area along the roadside. Pushing snow on public roadways becomes an increasing issue with each snow storm during the winter because snow piles become larger and more difficult to manage.

Violations are considered misdemeanors, but civil penalties also apply if the placement of snow creates a hazard such as a slippery area, frozen rut or

bump that contributes to a motor vehicle or pedestrian crash. The civil liability can extend to both the property owner and the person who placed the snow.

Other hazards created by improper placement of snow on or near a public roadway include drainage problems, drifting, sight obstruction and safe accessibility. Special attention should be made to keep crosswalks, in-

tersections, entrances and exits clean and unobstructed.

MnDOT maintenance crews plow and maintain nearly 3,700 lane miles of roadway in the 11 southeastern Minnesota counties in MnDOT District 6. Motorists will see snowplows working along the highways before, during and after snowstorms.

Motorists should remember to:

- Check road conditions – For real-time traffic and travel information in Minnesota, visit www.511mn.org or get the free smartphone app at Google Play or the App Store.
- Be patient – Remember snowplows are working to improve road conditions for your trip.
- Stay back - At least five car lengths behind the plow, far

from the snow cloud; snowplow operators will pull over when it is safe to do so to allow traffic build-up to pass.

- Stay alert – Snowplows turn or exit frequently and often with little warning; they may also travel over centerlines or partially in traffic to further improve road conditions.
- Slow down – Snowplows typically move at slower speeds.

SNOWSTORM

Continued from Page 1A

snow. It was tougher to walk in the deep snow."

In Medford, Scott Doucette had worked at least 15 minutes in front of his residence trying to shovel out his snow from a deep drift that had been placed there by the city's snow plow. "Hopefully, I will get out of this," he said.

A few minutes later with the help of a city employee, Doucette was able to drive his car out of the snow drift.

The combined snowfall, wind and tough visibility made for harsh driving conditions, but Owatonna Fire Department Chief Mike Johnson and Chief Deputy Sheriff of Steele County Scott Hanson agreed that Steele County remained pretty safe during the storm.

Johnson even commented that safety was up compared to storms in years prior, as he said emergency crews only responded to a few minor accidents.

"The National Weather Service and media does a good job to inform people of what is coming so that people can change their plans, maybe do their shopping earlier, so that they can avoid driving altogether," said Johnson. "That makes a big difference."

Hanson also reported that it was relatively quiet on the Sheriff Office's end, though he noted that the freeway stretch in Steele County was a problem area. He thought that the storm was timely for less travel, as it was in between holidays and schools were already off for winter break.

While Johnson agreed, he said that the safety of the interstate has improved during winter conditions due to the addition of median guard rails a few years ago. "They are a big life saver, especially when a car goes into

the ditch and goes head on into the alternate lane of traffic," remarked Johnson. "Those are serious accidents."

Fortunately, Johnson and Hanson only reported a few minor accidents between 12 p.m. of Dec. 28 and 12 p.m. of Dec. 29.

Unlike Steele County, Troy Christianson of the Minnesota State Patrol reported a different story for the total 11 counties in southeastern Minnesota.

Between 12 p.m. of Dec. 28 and 12 p.m. of Dec. 29, the Minnesota State Patrol reported 66 vehicles gone off the road, 55 property damage crashes and four injury crashes. The injuries are reported all non-life-threatening. He was unable to specify statistics to Steele County.

"Accidents have been pretty much significantly high compared to what we usually have for a storm of this caliber," said Christianson. "Being that it was the first big storm and that it is a holiday weekend, people are pretty much driving too fast."

Christianson, like most other officials, suggests that drivers first and foremost should slow down! "The weather doesn't cause crashes. Driver's error causes crashes," he said.

Even Steele Waseca Electric saw a quiet 24 hours during the storm, and they serve nine counties total. As of 12 p.m. of Dec. 29, Kim Huxford of Steele Waseca Electric said that they received no calls about outages.

"The snow was pretty much without rain or ice," said Huxford. "The system held out pretty good. It's been quiet. We do ask for drivers to stay away from lines if hit or fallen. If someone does hit a powerline or an underground box, we ask that they remain in their vehicles and

call immediately. Then, we will make sure everything is safe."

Many organizations worked with social media or other outlets to get the word out about the storm and safe driving tips.

According to Steele County Administrator Laura Elvebak, all 10 snow plows were out clearing roads by early afternoon on Dec. 28. She estimated that the plows stayed out until approximately 5 p.m. on Dec. 28 and then begin again at 5 a.m. the next morning. She said that each plow route is approximately 35 to 40 miles long.

"We do urge the public to travel with caution," said Elvebak while snow was still falling. "The best advice for people is to allow extra time for travel, particularly when traveling around snow plows, as they might have to turn quickly. We want people to be cautious of snow plows, emergency operators, tow trucks and other vehicles that will be out today."

Elvebak said that the Steele County Facebook page has been an "effective tool" in providing updates on the snow removal and operations process, and the Facebook page says that they have been preparing for the storm since this morning: "Steele County Highway crew members are busy getting things ready in preparation of the snow! Crews are currently replenishing our supplies and loading trucks."

Minnesota Department of Transportation, National Weather Service and Minnesota State Patrol pulled together to create a list of simple driving tips to remain safe during travel. They also made efforts to prep drivers and warn against unnecessary travel.

Drivers are also encouraged

to increase the safe stopping distance between vehicles, buckle up and check that child restraints are secured tightly. Emergency survival kits are recommended for travel during harsh winter conditions.

Before driving a vehicle, drivers are encouraged to clear snow and ice from the vehicle's windows, hoods, headlights and brake lights. Headlights should be on when snowing or sleeting.

If a vehicle has an anti-lock braking system (ABS), drivers are urged to apply a steady firm pressure to the brake pedal and never pump ABS brakes.

As storms such as this one wrap up and residents move into the "clean up stage," Johnson recommends that people remain safe in the heavy lifting of the snow during shoveling.

"There are always injuries from people slipping on the ice, and those injuries can usually be avoided by proper shoveling and spreading a little bit of sand so people don't fall," said Johnson. He also asks that people be wary of heart conditions that might be pushed too far during shoveling heavy snow.

"For elderly people, you know, it's nice to see neighbors helping neighbors," said Johnson. "That is what makes Minnesota so special."

Also, with more snow build-up, Minnesota Energy Resources reminds residents to avoid the dangers of snow and ice buildup on exhaust vents and natural gas meters, as snow and ice accumulation on furnace vents can lead to the possibility of deadly carbon monoxide levels in homes.

This can be avoided by lightly brushing snow off of meters with a broom, use caution while removing snow around a meter, and remove icicles that may drip

water onto meters.

National Weather Service Meteorologist Jim Taggart predicted that Steele County would likely not see another big snow

storm for at least seven days after this storm, since the air will stay "warm" in the low 20 degree area with low precipitation.

On Sale Now!

SISTER ACT

A DIVINE MUSICAL COMEDY

"Heavenly unbridled joy!"

—Huffington Post

"Breathlessly cheerful!"

—Newsday

Regina Mada Williams

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Public Safety

Blotter spotlight:
Arrests. Police made arrests following traffic stops in the 1400 block of Oak Ave. S. at 2:38 p.m. and on Interstate 35 northbound at 8:15 p.m. on Dec. 25 in Owatonna.

Not a very Merry Christmas Eve



William A. Thomas



Colleen M. Thomas

Christmas Eve was not very merry for William A. Thomas and Colleen M. Thomas.

Both were arrested and face drug charges. William Thomas, 48, was formally charged with 5th Degree Possession of a Controlled Substance. The passenger, Colleen M. Thomas, age 24, was formally charged with 5th Degree Pos-

session of a Controlled Substance and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

According to Owatonna Police Department reports, on Christmas Eve, an Owatonna officer on routine patrol ran a license plate on a vehicle out near the Owatonna airport. The license plate check came back that the registered owner of the

vehicle was wanted out of Rice County on a felony warrant.

The vehicle was stopped and the registered owner was found in the car; he was arrested without incident. The report states the car was occupied by a second person, the driver's daughter and she was also found to be wanted on a felony warrant; she too was ar-

rested without incident.

According to reports, while searching the vehicle, an officer uncovered a Sharpie permanent marker that been altered to create a cavity within the marker housing. Inside the housing, the officer found a baggie which contained 2.7 grams of presumptive positive methamphetamine.

In an interview, the driver admitted ownership of the marker. When the female passenger was taken to the jail, her purse and contents were searched. Inside the purse, a container was found that contained trace amounts of methamphetamine and a pipe.

Medford fire damages mobile home

A mobile home unit in Medford's Lazy U Mobile Home Park was damaged on Wednesday, Dec. 30.

According to Medford Fire Chief Rick Hager, residents were returning to their home in the park after an outing, when they realized there was a fire in the bedroom. They called the fire department and Medford firefighters arrived on the scene at approximately 2:45 p.m.

As of Thursday, Hager said that the cause for the fire was

not yet known. The fire was contained to the bedroom, and Hager said that the scene was cleared by 4:15 p.m.

There were no injuries, as everyone had evacuated the structure, but there was some damage to the building's interior.

Medford firefighters requested that the Owatonna Fire Department bring a tanker to the scene. Gold Cross Ambulance also responded to the call.

Burglary. At 9:36 p.m., police responded to a burglary in the 400 block of Vine St. E.

Dec. 27
DWI. Police arrested a motorist for driving while intoxicated in the 1100 block of Jadden Lane SE at 1:30 a.m.

Harassment. A citizen reported being the victim of harassing communication in the 800 block of Myers Dr. NE at 11:08 a.m.

Shoplifting. Shoplifting incidents occurred in the 200 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 2:21 p.m. and in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W. at 6:04 p.m.

Theft. Officers received theft reports from Riverside Ave. NW and Sylvan St. NW at 9:27 a.m. and the 100 block of Pearl St. W. at 9:06 p.m.

Dec. 28
Drunken Driving. Police made a DWI arrest in the 200 block of Pearl St. E. at 1:43 a.m.

Shoplifting. At 9:19 a.m., officer issued a citation for shoplifting in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W.

Burglary. Police began a burglary investigation in the 700 block of 22nd St. NE at 9:02 a.m.

Crash. A crash with injuries occurred in the 300 block of Mineral Springs Rd. NE at 2:20 p.m.

Restraining Order. At 8:20 p.m., police arrested a subject for violating a restraining order in the 400 block of State Ave. NW.

Warrant. Officer made a warrant arrest in the 1200 block of Oak Ave. S. at 10:05 p.m.

Dec. 29
Shoplifting. Officers responded to a shoplifting incident in the 400 block of North St. W. at 12:06 a.m.

Child Protection. Police took a child protection report in the 200 block of Pearl St. E. at 9:54 a.m.

Hit and Run. A hit and run crash resulting in property damage occurred on Interstate 35 southbound at 10:14 a.m.

Weapon Violation. Shots were heard fired in the 800 block of Cardinal Dr. SE at 5:04 p.m.

Dec. 30
Crash. Police and paramedics responded to a personal injury crash at North St. W. and Oak Ave. N. at 7:48 a.m.

Child Protection. At 10:22 a.m., officer took a child protection report in the 200 block of Pearl St. E.

Theft. A theft report was received from the 300 block of Rose St. E. at 12:44 p.m.

Compliance. Police responded to five compliance checks

Wanted man may be in area



Ray

According to Mower County law enforcement and a press release from the U.S. Bail and Fugitive Enforcement (USBFE), a man wanted for a felony violation of a domestic no contact order may be in the area.

Shanthin Michael Ray, age 27, of Austin, was last seen in Austin on Saturday. According to the US-

BFE, Ray frequents the Austin and Rochester areas and could be driving a silver minivan with unknown plates.

Members of Mower County law enforcement have maintained contact with Ray over the past few years, following incidents that resulted in a domestic no contact or-

der.

Mower County law enforcement sated that citizens should not approach this man. If anyone has information about Ray, they should contact their local police department or the USBFE at 612-567-3390.

POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

Bloomington Police

Dec. 29

Crash. At 7:49 a.m., police responded to a crash resulting in property damage.

Owatonna Police

Dec. 23

Crash. Paramedics and officers responded to crashes with injuries in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 11:05 a.m. and at 24th Ave. NW and Park Dr. NW at 1:18 p.m.

Shoplifting. Police issued a citation for shoplifting in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 5:07 p.m.

Criminal Sex. At 5:35 p.m., police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct in the 900 block of El Dorado St. SE.

Theft. Officer took a theft report in the 300 block of School St. E. at 6:03 p.m.

Search Warrant. At 7:42 p.m., police executed a search warrant in the 900 block of El Dorado St. SE. They arrested a subject at the scene.

Dec. 24

Theft. Police took a theft report in the 300 block of Havana Rd. at 7:49 a.m.

Noise. At 9:57 a.m., officers responded to a noise complaint in the 400 block of 14th St. NE.

Burglary. Police began a burglary investigation in the 1100 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 11:06 a.m.

Arrest. Officer arrested a motorist following a traffic stop at 43rd St. NW and Runway Rd. at 8:14 p.m.

Dec. 25

Arrests. Police made arrests following traffic stops in the 1400 block of Oak Ave. S. at 2:38 p.m. and on Interstate 35 northbound at 8:15 p.m.

Dec. 26

Assault. Officers advised on an assault at 25th St. NE and 7th Ave. NE at 10:09 a.m.

Stop Arm. A school bus driver reported a stop arm violation in the 200 block of Prospect St. E. at 3:04 p.m.

Theft. A theft was reported in the 1200 block of 21st Ave. NW at 3:37 p.m.

Warrant. Police made warrant arrests in the 200 block of Main St. E. at 4:15 p.m. and in the 400 block of Kriesel Place NE at 5 p.m.

throughout the city.

Warrant. At 7:15 p.m., officer arrested a subject for an outstanding warrant in the 400 block of Cedar Ave. N.

Steele County Sheriff

Dec. 23

Trespassing. At 9:22 a.m., deputies responded to a trespassing incident in the 4000 block of 66th St. NW.

Fraud. Deputies took fraud reports in the 300 block of 3rd St. SW at 12:58 p.m. and in the 500 block of Central Ave. W. at 1:18 p.m.

Dec. 24

Animal Bite. Deputy took a report of an animal bite in the 9900 block of 118th St. SW at 2:10 p.m.

Dec. 25

Assault. At 1:12 a.m., deputies responded to an assault in the 6200 block of 82nd Ave. SW.

Thefts. Deputies took theft reports in the 5000 block of 60th St. NE at 11:52 a.m. and in the 300 block of 4th Ave. W. at 6:57 p.m.

Burglary. Deputies began an investigation of a burglary in the 11000 block of 52nd Ave. SW at 8:40 p.m.

Dec. 26

Theft. Deputy received a theft report from the 3700 block of 69th St. NE at 11:04 a.m.

Dec. 27

Crashes. Deputies responded to property damage crashes at 24th Ave. NE and 36th St. NE at 7:31 a.m. and at 8th Ave. W. and Simplicity Dr. at 10:56 a.m.

Arrest. At 4:34 p.m., deputies arrested an adult in the 200 block of Pearl St. E.

Dec. 28

Recovering Property. Deputy took a report of recovered stolen property in the 6800 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 1:42 p.m.

Dec. 30

Criminal Sex. Deputies began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct in the 2400 block of County Rd. 45 S. at 4 p.m.

COURT NEWS

Steele County

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Dec. 21 with Judge Karen R. Duncan presiding:

Abdi O. Ikar, 21, Roseville, previously appeared and was convicted of felony controlled substance crime. The defendant was sentenced to \$100, 52

days in county jail, no possession of firearms, chemical dependency evaluation, mental health evaluation, must be involved in at least 20 hours per week of school, community service or job and 3 years of supervised probation.

Kyle W. Krause, 28, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony receiving stolen property. Krause was sentenced to \$581, 85 days in county jail, no contact with victim, and 3 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Dec. 21 – 25:

Bloomington Police Department

Samuel Z. Ramirez, 34, Brownsdale, revoked license, \$281.

MN Dept. of Natural Resources

Joshua D. Killen, 40, Owatonna, take fish without a license, \$181; Kenneth L. White, 38, Owatonna, deer hunting with aid or use of bait, \$381.

MN State Patrol Rochester

Tyler G. Cozine, 20, Bloomington, speeding, \$121; Anthony G. Dunn, 27, Rose Creek, speeding, \$121; Katherine J. Gasner, 24, Owatonna, speeding, \$381; Terry L. Gulbrandson, 56, Waseca, speeding, \$121;

Meghan D. Hanson, 28, New Richland, seat belt, \$106; Taylor J. Heir, 24, Roseville, speeding, \$121; Brittany C. Lark, 26, Albert Lea, speeding and no insurance, \$331; Jeremiah J. Lurken, 36, Mankato, speeding, \$131; Alberto Mata-Corona, 38, Columbia Height, no insurance and window tint violation, \$331; Jason M. Matundura, 29, St. Louis Park, speeding, \$141;

Jehovah J. McClain, 32, Duluth, speeding and revoked license, \$341; Nadia S. Nibbs, 26, Minneapolis, speeding, \$121; Joseph L. Oestreich, 39, Fairfax, tandem axle weight violation, \$281; Chelsea M. Roman, 29, Owatonna, expired registration, \$111; Douglas A. Schell, 27, Northfield, revoked license, \$281;

Nikki L. Skadburg, 30, Albert Lea, speeding, \$131; Jonathan D. Slegh, 29, Hollandale, speeding, \$121; Megan E. Smith, 18, Burnsville, speeding, \$141; Vanessa A. Stoltz, 29, Albert Lea, speeding, \$381;

Aaron E. Ulrich, 32, Waseca, seat belt, \$106; Claudia Vargas, 24, Weslaco, TX, texting while driving and unsafe lane usage, \$181; Patrick A. Young, 52, Miami, FL, seat belt, \$106.

Owatonna Police Department

Damion L. Andrews, 39, Owatonna, no insurance and suspended license, \$481; Jonathan E. Cozad, 40, Owatonna, cancelled license, \$381, 3 days in county jail, and 2 years of supervised probation;

Dustin D. Craft, 24, Owatonna, violation of order for protection, \$281, 6 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, attend AA, no contact with victim, domestic abuse evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Hector Delgado, 59, Owatonna, interference with 911 call and violation of order for protection, \$981, 30 days in county jail, psychological evaluation, domestic abuse evaluation and 2 years of supervised probation;

Travis A. Edwards, 20, Marion, IL, minor consumption, \$181; Vincent R. Garr, 33, Owatonna, suspended license, \$281; Florence D. Glenn, 29, Owatonna, no insurance, \$281; Jeannie A. Guerrero, 21, Owatonna, suspended license, \$281; Craig M. Heiden, 35, Owatonna, seat belt, \$106; James D. Hoggard, 24, Owatonna, suspended license, \$281;

Jessica M. Paulson, 21, Dodge Center, suspended license, \$281; Matthew J. Peters, 28, Claremont, suspended license, no insurance and expired tabs, \$511;

Christopher S. Prince, 30, Owatonna, DWI, \$606, 180 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, obtain permission to leave the state, attend therapy, and 3 years of supervised probation; Jose L. Rodriguez, 37, Alamo, TX, no MN license and no insurance, \$381;

Stephen J. Seufert, 38, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$111; Andrew W. Swant, 36, Owatonna, disorderly conduct, \$381, 2 days in county jail, 20 hours of community service and 1 year of supervised probation; Paw B. Wah, 41, St. Paul, no MN license, \$181; Delmer G. Weiss Robbins, 21, Albert Lea, revoked license, \$281; Cyrus J. Williams, 38, Owatonna, seat belt, \$106; Sal-

lie M. Wilson, 33, Owatonna, revoked license, \$281.

Steele County Sheriff's Office

Gary S. Ayers, 67, Owatonna, speeding, \$131; Thomas F. Best, 43, Waseca, speeding, \$141; Donovan P. Casey, 41, White Bear Lake, seat belt, \$106; Jill N. Craig, 19, Rochester, speeding, \$121; Deandre J. Forbush, 19, Blooming Prairie, speeding, \$381;

Braxton C. Hanten, 17, Eagle Lake, speeding, \$141; Jodi G. Jenos, 55, Owatonna, speeding, \$221; Brandon P. Kath, 26, Morristown, license plate light violation and speeding, \$261;

Brandie A. Klingfus, 31, Owatonna, speeding, \$141; Benjamin D. Lundberg, 16, Ellendale, speeding, \$221; Alan J. Nicholson, 57, New Richland, speeding, \$121; Kyle L. Novitski, 23, Blooming Prairie, speeding, \$141;

Harley D. Olson, 56, New Richland, seat belt, \$106; Denise M. Olzenak, 51, Edina, speeding, \$121; Craig N. Pesch, 51, Hayfield, speeding, \$121; Destiny D. Peterson, 19, Owatonna, speeding, \$121; Deluna Robert, 47, El Paso, TX, railroad stop sign and no insurance, \$321;

Samantha K. Root, 25, New Richland, expired license, \$181; Jan Sala, 53, Des Plaines, IL, speeding, \$221; Douglas A. Schell, 27, Northfield, revoked license, speeding and no insurance, \$531; Scott H. Sokol, 40, Plymouth, speeding, \$131;

Charles R. Steward, 38, Janesville, no MN license and seat belt, \$206; Matthew M. Taylor-Rasmussen, 20, Morristown, speeding, \$131; Jody A. Thostenson, 33, Hartland, stop sign, \$131; Amanda K. Tilson, 22, La Crosse, WI, speeding, \$121.

POLICE BLOTTER

Dodge County

Dec. 23

Suspicion. Deputies checked

PUBLIC SAFETY

Continued on Page 8A

SHERIFF'S TIPLINE

866-878-7964



If you have information about any crimes in Steele County, call the sheriff's tipline. You may remain anonymous.

The following individuals as they have active warrants in Steele County.

The sheriff makes this information available as a public service.

Abel Santamaria-Peres – invalid license - \$500 bail
Jose Saucedo – theft - \$3,000 bail
Teresa Saucedo – DWI - \$12,000 bail
Benjamin Savedra – DWI – no bail
Curtis Schumann – drugs – no bail
Jorge Sebastian – invalid license - \$500 bail
Todd Senholtz – order for protection violation - \$6,000 bail

Benjamin Shannon – theft - \$3,000 bail
Aman Sheikh-Yusuf – theft by check – no bail
George Shelton – possession of pistol – no bail
Oscar Sias – terroristic threats - \$25,000 bail
Pedro Sifuentes – DWI – no bail
Angela Silvas – assault - \$1,000 bail
Mohinder Singh – civil warrant - \$431.66 bail
Michael Sinn – revoked license, no insurance - \$1,000 bail

Dustin Lee Sjuts – DWI - \$2,000 bail
David Kenneth Smith – theft - \$20,000 bail
John Smith – assault – no bail
Milton Lamar Smith – DWI - \$6,000 bail
Paul Randall Smock – possession of stolen property - \$20,000 bail

Disclosing active warrants promotes public safety and aids in the identification & apprehension of those individuals wanted on a warrant.

ACTIVE WARRANTS

Paying income tax on social security benefits

Dear Savvy Senior,
Will I have to pay federal income taxes on my Social Security benefits when I retire?
Approaching Retirement

Dear Approaching,
Whether or not you'll be required to pay federal income tax on your Social Security benefits will depend on your income and filing status. About 35 percent of Social Security recipients have total incomes high enough to trigger federal income tax on their benefits.
To figure out if your benefits will be taxable, you'll need to add up all of your "provisional income," which includes wages, taxable and non-taxable interest, dividends, pensions and taxable retirement-plan distributions, self-employment, and other taxable income, plus half your annual Social Security benefits, minus certain deductions used

in figuring your adjusted gross income.
How to calculate
To help you with the calculations, get a copy of IRS Publication 915 "Social Security and Equivalent Railroad Retirement Benefits," which provides detailed instructions and worksheets. You can download it at irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p915.pdf or call the IRS at 800-829-3676 and ask them to mail you a free copy.
After you do the calculations, the IRS says that if you're single and your total income from all of the listed sources is:
• Less than \$25,000, your Social Security will not be subject to federal income tax.
• Between \$25,000 and \$34,000, up to 50 percent of your Social Security benefits will be taxed at your regular income-tax rate.

• More than \$34,000, up to 85 percent of your benefits will be taxed.
If you're married and filing jointly and the total from all sources is:
• Less than \$32,000, your Social Security won't be taxed.
• Between \$32,000 and \$44,000, up to 50 percent of your Social Security benefits will be taxed.
• More than \$44,000, up to 85 percent of your benefits will be taxed.
If you're married and file a separate return, you probably will pay taxes on your benefits.
To limit potential taxes on your benefits, you'll need to be cautious when taking distributions from retirement accounts or other sources. In addition to triggering ordinary income tax, a distribution that significantly raises your gross income can bump the proportion of your Social Security benefits subject to taxes.

How to file
If you find that part of your Social Security benefits will be taxable, you'll need to file using Form 1040 or Form 1040A. You cannot use Form 1040EZ. You also need to know that if you do owe taxes, you'll need to make quarterly estimated tax payments to the IRS or you can choose to have it automatically withheld from your benefits.
To have it withheld, you'll need to complete IRS Form W-4V, Voluntary Withholding Request (irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw4v.pdf), and file it with your local Social Security office. You can choose to have 7 percent, 10 percent, 15 percent or 25 percent of your total benefit payment withheld. If you subsequently decide you don't want the taxes withheld, you can file another



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W-4V to stop the withholding.
State taxation
In addition to the federal government, 13 states – Colorado, Connecticut, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont and West Virginia – tax Social Security benefits to some extent too. If you live in one of these states, check with your state tax agency for details.
For questions on taxable Social Security benefits call the IRS help line at 800-829-1040, or visit an IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center (see www.irs.gov/localcontacts) where you can get face-to-face help.
Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

History from the news archives

10 Years Ago
Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2006
Dan Evans, Publisher
On April 30, 1903, a terrible snowstorm hit the area. Families were stranded in their homes and unable to get out. A doctor braved the weather and went to the Austin home of John W. and Emily (Blomiley) Mackie. There he delivered baby Robina, now Blooming Prairie's oldest resident. In the 1920s, Robina moved to Colorado to attend the University of Colorado where she continued her love for playing the organ. She moved back here after attending school. "The good Lord has been good to me. He has walked with me and gave me good health, for the most part," she says, adding, "He has given me a family that's been good to me. I've been pretty lucky."

20 Years Ago
Tuesday, Jan. 9, 1996
Elsie Slinger, Editor
The Blooming Prairie Jaycees announced their Distinguished Service Awards for 1996. This year's winners include Mary Malherek, Distinguished Teacher; Kevin Spinler, Outstanding Young Farmer; Lloyd and Emma Schoer, Distinguished Service Award; and Leanne Hanson, Outstanding Young Minnesotan.
The Rev. David Mead began serving the Blooming Prairie United Methodist Church on Jan. 1, 1996, upon the retirement of former Pastor David Hallberg. The appointment of Rev. Mead was made by Bishop Sharon Christopher, United Methodist bishop for Minnesota. Rev. Mead serves the Dodge Center United Methodist Church and resides in Dodge Center with

his wife, Gwen. They have three grown children.
50 Years Ago
Thursday, Jan. 6, 1966
Victor, Vernon and Vyrle Krejci, Editors
Apollo astronauts will be given particular attention by a local family when they make their attempt to reach the moon's surface in the next few years. Dr. William G. Kubicek, second cousin of Frank Kubicek of Blooming Prairie, is doing research under a grant from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s manned speed craft at Houston, Texas. Dr. Kubicek is primarily concerned with developing and evaluating a measuring method that can be used for monitoring the cardiac output of the moon-based astronauts. Dr. Kubicek's

contract with NASA calls for his services at the manned spacecraft center during the flights and afterwards, as well, for the subsequent evaluation of data.
Clayton Swenson, employee at the Farmers Elevator, has taken over the management of the feed mill, effective Jan. 1, it was announced today by Frank Plunkett, general manager. Mr. Swenson succeeds Ed Rowe, who is now operating the delivery truck.
Secretary of State Joseph Donovan urged Minnesota motorists today to get their 1966 license tags soon to avoid the rush that always comes before the Jan. 10 deadline. Starting Jan. 11, a penalty of \$1 will be charged. On Jan. 20 it will rise to \$2 and after Feb. 1 to \$2.50. With only a few days to go, there are still nearly a million cars and

trucks to be registered, Donovan said.
75 Years Ago
Thursday, Jan. 9, 1941
Frank Krejci, Publisher
Steele County will send eight selective service volunteers to For Snelling Jan. 22, it was announced this week. Two Blooming Prairie youths will be among the eight draftees. They are Herbert Jurgenson and Allen Peterson. Both boys were among the first to volunteer in this county. Herbert Jurgenson is the son of Fred Jurgenson, secretary of the Steele County Draft Board.
A Milwaukee passenger train and a car driven by N.P. Hanson, a farmer living south of Blooming Prairie, crashed on the main street crossing one block south of the depot here last Saturday afternoon. The northbound train

struck the Hanson car as it was traveling eastward across the tracks. Mr. Hanson, who was alone in the car, was seriously injured. His doctor states he is still in serious condition but not critical. A freight train was on a siding near the crossing, waiting for the passenger train. A member of the freight crew saw Mr. Hanson approaching the crossing as the passenger train drew near. Signaling to Mr. Hanson, the train-man attempted to stop him. Apparently Hanson confused the signals as a "come on" and continued directly into the path of the train. One fortunate aspect of the crash was the fact that Mrs. Hanson had just got out of the car a few seconds before the crash.

Steele County Times Professional Directory

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Community

Gone but not forgotten

The following obituaries appeared in the 2015 editions of The Steele County Times:

Eldred Peterson, 91, Blooming Prairie
Veronica Underwood Zoller, age 88 of Rochester
James Mills, 92, Blooming Prairie
Marvin Harold Jensen, 80, Owatonna
Esther Margie Wiese, 91, Blooming Prairie
Willis ‘Bud’ Miller, 89, of Blooming Prairie
Elaine Johnson, 88, formerly of Austin
Ann Klemmensen, 85, Ellendale
Anna L. Nelson, 89, Blooming Prairie
Kinley Mervin Peterson, 93, Blooming Prairie
Veronica L. (Underwood) Zoller, age 88, Rochester
Dorothy Bauder, 74, Detroit Lakes
Alice J. Henry, 96, Owatonna
Sharon M. Katzung, 70, Owatonna
Leonard Lawrence Kramer, 96, Redwood Falls
Melvin ‘Mel’ J. Ptacek, 81, Owatonna
Helen I. J. Larson, 88, Owatonna
Barbara A. Peterson, 58, Blooming Prairie
LaVonne Simonson, 84, Owatonna
Kenneth Lee Nihart, 92, Austin
Melissa Kay Eastberg, 39, Owatonna
Loretta M. Moe, 78, Owatonna
Charles Thompson, 94, Austin
Melissa Kay Eastberg, 39, Owatonna

Marty Toquam, 56, Claremont
Clarence Wincentsen, 78, Blooming Prairie
Rita Schiller, 83, formerly of Blooming Prairie
David Ferguson, 80, Austin
Anna Nelson, 89, Blooming Prairie
Alex Jorgenson, 15, Blooming Prairie
Elmer Mees, 92, Owatonna
Doris Kraay, 90, Owatonna
Thomas Remker, 46, Owatonna
Loren Rasmussen, 79, Blooming Prairie
Ronald Malecha, 71, Blooming Prairie
Jerald Cartin, 66, formerly of Blooming Prairie
Austin Johnson, 87, formerly of Austin
Lyla Sargent, 89, Hayfield
Judith Kollar, 69, Blooming Prairie
Gerald VanRavenhorst, 68, Blooming Prairie graduate
Raymond Beckman, 104, Blooming Prairie
Virginia Cashman, 91, Blooming Prairie
Elizabeth (Betty) Marsh, 95, Rochester
Adela Ochoa-Dominquez, 87, Blooming Prairie
Shirley Burton, 62, formerly of Blooming Prairie
Glenn Naatz, 77, rural Waltham
Betty Fierro, 61, formerly of Blooming Prairie
James A. Mowers, 62 formerly of Ellendale
Paul Jeffery Polen
Judy Valentine, 69, formerly of Blooming Prairie
Marvin Vasey, 68, Blooming Prairie
Wilma Brase, 84, Medford
Victor J. Rysavy, 88, Owatonna

tonna
Sylvia Plunkett, 91, Blooming Prairie
Eric John Isenor, 64, Blooming Prairie
Myles Daniel Scott Stucky
Doris May Halstenson, 90, of Blooming Prairie
Roger Gene Anderson, 57, of Aurora Township
Evelyn M. Balzer, 95, of Blooming Prairie
Sylvester (Sal) L. Thompson, 96, of Austin
Kenneth (Ken) S. Prestegard, 68, of Owatonna
John H. Splitt, 100, of Blooming Prairie
Ken A. Christiansen, 61, of Blooming Prairie
JoAnn (Bohrer) Borchert of Blooming Prairie
Darrin Orlen Stemson, 48, Ocala
Roger Lynn Saathoff, Blooming Prairie
Eric Daniel Nelson, 77, Pearl City, Hawaii
Bonnie Strong, 69, Trapper Creek, Alaska
Marsha Ann Pacolt (Nana), 67, of Mantorville
Harland P. Peterson, 88, Blooming Prairie
Donald “Don” Kasper, 1932–2015, Owatonna
Joseph “Joey” Patrick Ptacek, 78, rural Owatonna
Lorene V. Gosewisch
Harriet Orlanda Carlson, 86, Goodhue
Julia Beth Oswald, 23
Ella Marie Benson, 97, Blooming Prairie
Tillie Ressler, 98, Blooming Prairie
Clifford Bartsch, 86, Owatonna
Michael Bartsch, 57, Claremont

Irma Wradislavsky, 74, Blooming Prairie
Jeppe Bremer, 88, Blooming Prairie
Edward Lindquist, 92, formerly of Blooming Prairie
Thomas Donnelly IV, 63, Geneva
Clement Christianson, 93, Owatonna
Jovie Kay Pilcher
Shirley Arett, 91, Austin
Sharon (Johnson) Lundahl, 64, Blooming Prairie
Wilma Katherine (McCracken) Mast, 94
Gerald E. Nelson
Anna “Ann” M. Fischer, 97, formerly of Minnesota Lake
Theda Morton, 87, Blooming Prairie
Richard Green, 70, Blooming Prairie
Loren Williamson, 89, Blooming Prairie
Donald George Hope, 85, Austin
Inez Spitzack, 89, Blooming Prairie
Joyce Trom, 88, Blooming Prairie
Linda Mirsky, 67, Cape Coral, Florida
Patricia Ille, 83, Blooming Prairie
Marilyn Knutson, 85, Blooming Prairie
Donald Fisher, 87, Owatonna
Viola Pittman, 89, Owatonna
Raymond Pelinka, 94, Owatonna
Elaine Wondra, 94, rural Blooming Prairie
Jens Andersen, 72, Blooming Prairie
Christy Olsen, 87, Blooming Prairie
Earl Raymond Kinley III, 55, Eagan
Dennis Repp, 55, Osakis

Birth announcement



Someone new to love:
Alecia Peterson and Jacob Peterson of Blooming Prairie have announced the birth of their daughter.
Brooklyn Grace Peterson was born at MCHS Austin, on Dec. 21, 2015. She weighed 7 pounds, 6 ounces and was 18 1/2 inches long. She joins siblings Mason and Peyton.
The maternal grandparents are Bob and Kim Brunkow of Durand, Wisconsin. The paternal grandparents are Donald Peterson Jr. of Blooming Prairie and Nancy Russell of Owatonna.

Education news

Minnesota State University, Mankato presented 1,740 degrees during summer/fall commencement exercises on Saturday, Dec. 12 in Taylor Center on the Minnesota State Mankato campus.
Graduates of the College of Arts & Humanities, College of Business and College of Science, Engineering and Technology participated in a 9 a.m. ceremony, and graduates of the College of Allied Health and Nursing, College of Education and College of Social and Behavioral Sciences participated in a noon ceremony.
From Blooming Prairie, the following degrees were presented:
Jonathan Hines, BS, Communications Arts & Literature Edu, Magna Cum Laude
Kaylene Jensen, SPEC, Educational Leadership
Ranell Kittelson, MS, Special Education
Ashley Warner, AA, Liberal Studies

The following Blooming Prairie individuals are among the more than 1,900 prospective candidates for degree attending University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
The commencement exercises are scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 20, in Milwaukee. Local graduates include Lukas Robert Hueman, Engineering &

Applied Science, Bachelor of Science in Engineering; and Brenna Leigh Nelson, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science.
UWM is the second largest university in the State of Wisconsin, with more than 27,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

Milestones

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

Jan. 5
Kassie Ann Lueth
Deb Brown
Lori Pirkil

Jan. 6
Kyle Williamson
Randi Long
Andy Weiss
Mary Amundson

Jan. 7
Tammy Callahan
Christine Wencl
Leah Jenzen

Jan. 8
Rick DeYoung
Dick Kruckeberg

Jan. 9
Shawn Kadlee
Chris Schaffer

April Konz
Kory Rafdal
Kate Borchert
Adeline Christianson

Jan. 10
Paula Abbe
Clara Seibenaller
Nolan Christianson

Jan. 11
Dustin Doocy
Nikki Nielson-Bakker

Anniversaries

Jan. 7
Mike and LaNell Sunde

Jan. 9
Phillip and Jennifer Milton

Jan. 11
Karl and Tricia Steckelberg

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Wednesday - Turkey

Thursday - Your Choice
Friday - Beef

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SEMCAC senior menu

Jan. 5: Vegetable Soup, Crackers, BBQ on Bun, Macaroni Fruit Salad, Apple Pie
Jan. 6: Chicken ala King Over Biscuits, Peas & Carrots, Citrus Fruit Cup, Dutch Cookie
Jan. 7: Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Squash, Fresh Fruit
Jan. 8: Pork Chop Medley, California Blend Veggies, Dinner Roll, Strawberry Shortcake
Jan. 11: Chili Con Carne, Crackers, Peach/Cottage Cheese, Corn Muffin, Moon Cake
Jan. 12: Pork Steak, Dressing w/Gravy, Cauliflower/Pimento, Blushing Pears, Peanut Butter Cookie
Jan. 13: Teriyaki Chicken,

Baked Potato w/Sour Cream, Italian Green Beans, Cranberry Sauce, Peaches

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Prairie Family & Sports Chiropractic

Happy 90th Birthday Dale Mowers

Dale Mowers of Albert Lea will be 90 years old on Jan. 14, 2016.
His family is having an open house from 1-4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 16, 2016 for him at the Leo Carey American Legion Post 56, 142 N. Broadway, Albert Lea, MN 56007.
Please stop by and put a smile on this old guy’s face. No gifts please.
Hope to see you there.

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Area Church Spotlight



First Lutheran Church, Blooming Prairie

Pastor's corner

Opportunities in the new year

Happy New Year! As we welcomed 2016 to our lives, chances are we were also likely surrounded with opportunities for resolutions. The new year feels like a new start. A new chance. Optimism that change is possible. And so, many of us embark on new challenges to fill our lives with more joy and life. In and of itself, there is nothing wrong with that. Yes to chances to live a fuller life! Yes to opportu-

nities to fill our days with more joy (or friendships or healthy food or walks or whatever it is)! But we also know all too well what can tend to happen with those resolutions. We miss a day. Or we don't feel better instantly. Or we simply settle back into old habits. Been there. Done that. Sigh. But here's the deal: your dedication or your misgivings or your resolutions or your current self in no way

determine your worth. They do not define you. We can be pretty hard on ourselves and that's really not helpful to anyone! So what about this resolution – remind yourself every day, every moment of this absolute truth: You are God's beloved child, called and sent to make a difference in the world. Start the new year reminding yourself over and over again of whose you are and that you are called to make a



difference. No matter what other resolutions you keep or don't, those words will always be true.

Pastor Lindsay Stolen
Red Oak Grove
Lutheran Church

Area Church Schedule

Lutheran

AURORA LUTHERAN
6329 SE 38th St., Owatonna
Pastor Stephanie Wood
(507) 676-5696
9:15 a.m. Sunday School
10 a.m. Sunday Worship Service

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
5881 S.E. 118th St., Blooming Prairie
Interim Pastor David Hurtt
(507) 633-9331
8:30 a.m. worship 9:30 a.m. Sunday school 10:30 a.m. worship

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH—ELCA
434 First St. SW., Blooming Prairie
Charles Leonard, Senior Pastor
Heidi Heimgartner, Associate Pastor
(507) 583-6621
firstlutheranbp.com
Worship: 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
8953 S.W. 37th Ave., Hope
Pastor Sandy Miller
(507) 451-3854
Services: 9 a.m. Sunday School, Adult Ed: 10:15 a.m.

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN—LCMS
2500 Seventh Ave. N.E., Owatonna
The Rev. Mark Rosenau, the Rev. Gregory Schlicker
(507) 451-4125
www.goodshepherdowatonna.com
Services: 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
9651 SW 75th Street Ellendale
(507) 465-8366
Family Choir 9:00-9:15 a.m.
Sunday School/Adult Education 9:15 a.m. Sunday, Worship 10:15 a.m.

ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN—ELCA
30450 570th Ave., Waltham
Minister Dwight DoBell
(507) 567-2474
Service: 8:30 a.m. Sunday Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN—ELCA
30456 Mower-Freeborn Road, Austin
Pastor Lindsay Stolen
(507) 583-2038 or (507) 437-3000
www.rog.lutheran.org
Service: 9 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School (Sept-May): 10:15 a.m.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS
1054 Truman Ave., Owatonna
Pastor Kirk Griebel
(507) 451-2720
www.redeemrowatonna.org
Service: 9 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS
4532 S.E. 84th Ave., Claremont
The Rev. Alan Broadwell
(507) 528-2404
sjlcoffice@frontiernet.net
www.peaceclaremont.otshost.org
Weekly Church Service
Saturday Evening (Starts September 19th) 6 p.m. Sunday Morning Services held at 10:30 a.m.
Holy Communion Offered each Saturday Evening Service and 2nd & 4th Sunday Service of each month. Sunday School - starts September 20th at 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS
28959 630th Ave., Sergeant
The Rev. Ronald Prigge
Service: 10:15 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9 a.m.
TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH—ELCA
104 First St. S.E., Hayfield
The Rev. Paul Haaschild
(507) 477-2248
www.trinityhayfield.org
Services: 8 & 10:30 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN—LCMS
57403 300th St., Waltham
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
(507) 567-2272
Service: 10:15 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9 a.m.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN—LCMS
202 E. Park Ave., Hollandale
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
(507) 567-2272
Service: 8:00 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH—ELCA
106 Third St. S.E., Geneva
Pastor Krisin Venne
(507) 256-4288
Service: 9:30 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH - ELCA
7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale



Pastor Patti Meyer
(507) 451-2165
Worship 8:30 AM
Sunday School 9:30 AM
TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS
108 Third Ave S.W., Medford
Pastor Mark Biebighauser
(507) 451-0447
Service: 9 a.m. Sunday
Education hour: 10 a.m.
ST PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
2781 S.W. 92nd Ave., Meriden
Pastor Patti Meyer
(507) 451-2165
Sunday School 9:15 AM
Worship 10:30 AM

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH—ELCA
609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
Todd Buegler, Senior Pastor
Dean Smith, Associate Pastor
(507) 451-4520
www.tlcowatonna.org
9:00 am Worship
10:15 am Sunday School
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, AFLC
Ellendale, Minnesota
Pastor Richard Sliper
Saturday - 8 a.m. Men's Bible Study Sunday - 9 a.m.
Worship: 10:10 Sunday School: 10:15 Coffee and Fellowship Tuesday - 6 a.m. Call to Prayer, open to all Churches; 7 p.m. Call to Prayer Wednesday - 9:30 a.m. Bible Study; 6 p.m. Call to Prayer; 6:15 Hands of Praise; 6:30 Confirmation; 6:30 p.m. Youth Group

Catholic

St. AIDEN CATHOLIC PARISH
Hwy 30 Ellendale
507-465-8217
The Rev. Raul Silva, Pastor
The Rev. Adam McMillan, Parochial Vicar
Sunday Mass: 8 a.m.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PARISH
Rural Geneva
The Rev. Raul Silva, Pastor
The Rev. Adam McMillan, Parochial Vicar
(507) 465-8217
Sunday Mass: 11:00 a.m.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC
150 NW Second St. Hayfield
The Rev. Thomas Niehaus
(507) 477-2256
Service: 10:30 a.m. Sunday
Reconciliation: Before Mass
Adoration: Tuesdays 9 to noon
CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS
307 First St. SW., New Richland
The Rev. Raul Silva, Pastor
The Rev. Adam McMillan, Parochial Vicar
(507) 465-8217
Services: 9:15 a.m.

ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC PARISH
114 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie
The Rev. Thomas Niehaus
(507) 583-2784
stcolumbanuschurch.com
Reconciliation: 4:30 p.m. Saturday
Sunday Mass: Vigil 5:15 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 a.m. Sunday.
Adoration: Mondays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Office hours: M-F, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL
9946 SE 24th Ave., Owatonna
The Rev. John Sauer, Pastor
The Rev. Brian Sutton, Parochial Vicar
(507) 451-1588
www.litomysl.webs.com
Service: 9:30 a.m. Sunday with Children's Church
Reconciliation: after Mass 1st Sunday
Family Faith Formation and Adult Bible Study after Mass with noon potluck; 2nd Sunday of month
Confirmation class: 2nd Sunday and Wednesday evening

SACRED HEART PARISH
810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna
The Rev. John Sauer
The Rev. Brian Sutton, Parochial Vicar
(507) 451-1588
www.sacredheartowatonna.org
Sunday Mass: Vigil 5 p.m. Saturday, 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m., & 10:30 a.m.
Spanish Mass: 1 p.m. Sunday
Daily Mass: 7:15 a.m.
Reconciliation: 4 p.m. Saturday
Adoration: Thursdays 9 a.m.- 10 p.m.
ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH
515 E. Main St., Hayfield
The Rev. Emmanuel Sylvester
218-695-2641
Mass & Religious Ed: 11 a.m. Sunday

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH
512 S Elm, Owatonna
507-451-4845
Rev. Edward F. McGrath, Pastor
Deacon Patrick Fagan
Sunday Mass: Vigil Sat. 4 p.m. 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.
Reconciliation 3-3:30 p.m. Saturday
Daily Mass Tues.-Sat. 8 a.m.
Adoration in Chapel - 24 hours each day

CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING
205 NW Second Ave., Medford
(507) 451-6353
The Rev. Edward McGrath, Parochial Administrator
Sunday Masses: Vigil Saturday 5 p.m., 10 a.m. Sunday
Services: 5 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m. Sunday
Monday Mass: 8 a.m.

CHRIST THE KING PARISH MEDFORD
Sunday Mass: Vigil Saturday evening, 5 p.m., 10 a.m.
Monday daily Mass: 9 a.m.

CORPUS CHRISTI PARISH
Deerfield
507-451-4845
The Rev. Edward McGrath, Parochial Administrator
Sunday Mass 8:30 a.m.
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Winter at Christ the King, Medford

Christian

DESTINY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
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422 W. North Street, Owatonna
Pastors Sam and Cheri Benson
507-254-8514 www.destinycc.org
Service: 10 a.m. Sunday

Methodist

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(507) 835-8726
Service: 10:45 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. Sunday
ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
200 Sixth St. N.W., Ellendale
Pastor Randy Cirksema
(507) 684-2731
www.ellendaleumc.org
Services: 9:30 a.m. Sunday
Free home style meal on the first Sunday of the month through Dec. 2016. Worship is at 10:30 a.m. followed by the free meal at 11:30 a.m. All are welcome.

OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
815 E. University, Owatonna
Loren Olson, Pastor
Linda Boorman, Associate Pastor
(507) 451-4734
www.owatonnaumc.org
Worship: Sunday 9 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday 6:30 p.m.
Sunday School: 10 a.m.

Non-Denominational

BRIDGES OF HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH
303 North Cedar Ave, Owatonna,

Pastor Keith Haskell
507-215-2249
Sundays 10:00 AM
enter through Owatonna Fit Lab
CEDAR CREEK CHURCH
30 E. Main St. P.O. Box 224, Hayfield
Pastor Aaron de Neui
(507) 477-2255
www.cedarcreekchurch.org
Service: 10 a.m. Sunday

ELEVATION NORTH CHURCH
2002 Austin Rd.
Pastor Doug Jones
(507) 363-3099
www.elevationnorth.blogspot.com
Sun 10 a.m. English Service
10:30 a.m. Service & Kids Zone
2 p.m. Spanish Service
Wed. 7:00 Bible Study
Fri 7:00 Spanish Outreach

NEW BEGINNINGS CHRISTIAN CHURCH
332 14th St. N.E., Owatonna
Pastor Scott Peterson
(507) 213-9194
Service: 10 a.m. Sunday
Bible: 7 p.m. Wednesday

DESTINY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
Owatonna Campus
422 W. North Street, Owatonna
Pastors Sam and Cheri Benson
507-254-8514
www.destinycc.org
Service: 10 a.m. Sunday

SIMPLE CHURCH
Pastor Todd Lundgren
507-451-5661
Sundays 9:30
Meeting in the Country Goods building across the freeway from Cabela's.
Other gatherings? Please call.

Mennonite

PRAIRIE MENNONITE CHURCH
13638 750th St., Blooming Prairie
Dennis Martin
(507) 583-2081 & (507) 477-3216
Services: 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and 10:30 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

Mormon

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
404 31st St. N.W., Austin
Bishop Rick Bremner
(507) 433-9042
Service: 9 a.m.-10:10 a.m.

Presbyterian

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
109 E. Main St., Hayfield
Pastor Vanessa Syvertsen
(507) 477-2631
Service: 10 a.m. Sunday

Seventh-Day Adventist

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
2373 Seventh Ave. N.E., Owatonna
Pastor Robert Brauer
(507) 340-7143
Service: 11 a.m. Saturday
Sabbath School: 9:30 a.m. Saturday

UCC

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
211 Main St. S., Medford
Pastor Louise Bender
(507) 451-4596
Confirmation: 9 a.m. Sunday
Service: 10 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 10 a.m. Sunday

Assembly of God

VIBRANT LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD
702 Third St. S., Ellendale
Pastor Patrick Stitt
(507) 684-3421
Service: 10:30 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9 a.m.
vibrantlifeag.com

Baptist

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
104 First Ave. N.E., Blooming Prairie
Pastor Matt Fennell
(507) 583-2673
Services: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday and 10 a.m. & 11:30 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School: 9 a.m. Sunday

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Funeral processions and lights on non-emergency vehicles



Question: I encountered a funeral procession along a two-lane highway (no roads entering this section of highway) and the lead funeral home vehicle had a light bar on the dash flashing an alternating red and blue light. Everyone on the highway going opposite the procession pulled over to the shoulder, thinking it was a police officer. Is this legal for the funeral home to do and what is the protocol for vehicles encountering this?

Answer: Funeral home vehicles may utilize flashing red

lights for the purpose of escorting funeral processions. Blue flashing lights are not permitted in this instance.

According to Minnesota State Statute (M.S.S.) 169.64: “Flashing lights are prohibited, except on an authorized emergency vehicle, school bus, bicycle as provided in section 169.222, subdivision 6, road maintenance equipment, tow truck or towing vehicle, service vehicle, farm tractor, self-propelled farm equipment, rural mail carrier vehicle, funeral home vehicle, or on any vehicle as a means of

indicating a right or left turn, or the presence of a vehicular traffic hazard requiring unusual care in approaching, overtaking, or passing. All flashing warning lights shall be of the type authorized by section 169.59, subdivision 4, unless otherwise permitted or required in this chapter.”

M.S.S. 169.04 allows red lights stating, “specifically the use of motorcycles or vehicles that are owned by the funeral home and that utilize flashing red lights for the purpose of escorting funeral processions.”

M.S.S. 169.20 covers funeral

processions - “When any funeral procession identifies itself by using regular lights on all cars and by keeping all cars in close formation, the driver of every other vehicle, except an emergency vehicle, shall yield the right-of-way.”

“Right-of-way” is the privilege to proceed with precedence over others in a particular situation or place. To yield to the right-of-way, you must safely move to the right and stop. If you are in an intersection, proceed through before stopping. Remain stopped until all those

with the right-of-way have passed. You are not required to stop if the approaching procession or emergency vehicle(s) are separated from your lane of traffic by a physical barrier such as a fence, wall, or median strip.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson – Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Continued from Page 4A

on a suspicious fire in the 12100 block of Hwy. 30 in Blooming Prairie at 1:49 a.m.

Apprehension Order. At 9:31 a.m., deputies transported a subject to the Steele County Jail following an apprehension and detention order in the 200 block of 2nd St. SE in Hayfield.

Harassment. A Dodge Center woman reported being the victim of harassment in the 800 block of 1st Ave. NW at 4:26 p.m.

Crash. Deputies responded to a one vehicle accident with no injuries at 120th Ave. and 595th St. in Claremont at 9:36 p.m.

Dec. 24

Juvenile. Deputies received a juvenile complaint that a juvenile was driving a pick-up through a yard in the 500 block of 3rd St. NW in Dodge Center at 1:38 a.m.

Fire. At 2:16 p.m., deputies responded to an oven fire in the 900 block of 3rd Ave. SE in Hayfield.

Suspicion. Deputies responded to a suspicious activity report of a possible break-in in the 200 block of 3rd Place in Claremont at 3:52 p.m.

Dec. 25

Burglary. Deputies responded to a burglary in a shed in the 53100 block of 170th Ave. in West Concord at 10:09 a.m.

Order for Protection. At 3:36 p.m., an order for protection was violated in the 200 block of Front St. W. in Claremont.

Dec. 26

Domestic Assault. Deputies

responded to a physical domestic assault in the 800 block of Center Ave. S. in Hayfield at 12:24 a.m. They issued citations for domestic assault harm, disorderly conduct and obstruction of legal process.

Juvenile. At 1:36 a.m., deputies checked on two juveniles walking at 2nd St. NW and 5th Ave. NW in Hayfield.

Rape. Deputies began an investigation of a rape in the 20300 block of 650th St. in Dodge Center at 8:42 a.m.

Harassment. Deputy took a report of harassment on Central Ave. N. in Dodge Center at 7:54 p.m.

Dec. 27

Disturbance. Deputies responded to a report of a male party destroying a home in the 100 block of 6th Ave. NE in Hayfield at 3:53 p.m.

Suspicious Activity. At 11:11 p.m., a Hayfield citizen reported that there were footprints around his home in the 400 block of Main St. E. It appeared that someone had tried to get in.

Dec. 28

Shoplifting. Deputy took a report of shoplifting at the Hardware Hank on 3rd Ave. SW in Dodge Center at 5:09 p.m.

Dec. 29

Animal Abuse. At 1:04 p.m., deputies received a report that animals had been locked in a barn for over a week with no food or water in the 2000 block of Mantorville Ave. N. in Kasson. Al-

legedly, the residents had been evicted. However, deputies were unable to locate the animals.

COURT NEWS

Dodge County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Dec. 21 – 28:

Dodge County Sheriff’s Office

Dalia U. Lopez, 36, Kasson, invalid license, \$180; Nicole R. Schmoll, 29, Owatonna, speeding, \$120.

Kasson Police Department

Thomas G. Fenske, 55, La Canada, CA, speeding, \$280; Jesse J. Higgins, 37, Lino Lakes, falsely reporting crime, 90 days in county jail; Alexander R. Peterson, 24, St. Paul, speeding, \$140; Jesse A. Wilker, 39, Owatonna, speeding, \$130.

MN State Patrol Rochester

Julie A. Johns, 58, Rochester, move over law violation, \$130; Bradley D. Novacek, 33, Kasson, speeding, \$140; Quentin L. Pena, 26, Rochester, suspended license, \$280; Tyler J. Vangrinsven, 19, Claremont, speeding, \$120; Jaden

M. Wait, 19, Sleepy Eye, speeding, \$140; Mitchell T. West, 28, Owatonna, speeding, \$120.

Steele Arrests

Owatonna Police

Colleen Marie Thomas, 24, arrested at 8:27 p.m. Dec. 24, felony

possession of controlled substance, held for court.

William Arthur Thomas, 48, arrested at 8:27 p.m. Dec. 24, felony possession of controlled substance, held for court.

David Ray Kujac, 36, arrested at 11 p.m. Dec. 28, order for protection violation, held for court.

Chad Allen Smith, 28, arrested at 7:37 p.m. Dec. 30, warrant arrest, \$1,000 bail.

Steele County Sheriff

Marquita Anita Bena Hernandez, 29, arrested at 4:28 p.m. Dec. 24, warrant arrest, \$150 bail.

Raymond Michael Scovill, 32, arrested at 4:31 p.m. Dec. 27, felony possession of stolen property and possession of narcotics, held for court.

John Robert Bulver, 28, arrested at 5:04 p.m. Dec. 27, felony burglary, held for court.

STABBING SUSPECT

Continued from Page 1A

conspiracy to commit first-degree murder, and Minnesota law allows juveniles to be tried as adults in specific circumstances.

To try a juvenile as an adult, the court must first “certify” the juvenile as an adult. The juvenile must be age 14 to 17, in addition to other criteria. The juvenile must meet the required criteria to be tried as an adult, and a prosecutor must first file a delinquency petition and a motion to have the juvenile tried as an adult.

The state did certify the proceedings of this case to adult court, since conspiracy to commit first-degree murder carries a presumption of adult certification, as one juvenile in question, Jose Sosa-Venegas, was age 16 at the time of the offense.

On Aug. 21, the court found that there is probable cause that Jose Sosa-Venegas committed conspiracy to commit first-degree murder, the first step in the process.

Continuing the process, two separate people examined Jose Sosa-Venegas. According to a ruling released on Dec. 23, both examiners “independently concluded that public safety could be maintained by keeping the Child (Jose Sosa-Venegas) in Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction, rather than certifying the Child to adult court.”

Findings from the certification studies indicated that Jose Sosa-Venegas had been diagnosed with a chromosomal abnormality and has no “significant history of delinquency,” except for truancy from school. Both evaluations recommended that Jose Sosa-Venegas undergo treatment under an Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction.

The Dec. 23 ruling, from Judge Joseph A. Buelstel, stated that, “The seriousness of the crime and the Child’s limited capability are troubling. But the Child has shown by clear and convincing evidence that public safety is served and he is very well suited for Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction.”

The ruling further stated that, under Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction, Jose Sosa-Venegas would have access to a wide array of programs and intervention methods and that his age allows him to spend sufficient

time receiving the treatment he needs.

Following the ruling, Jose Sosa-Venegas has been designated as Extended Jurisdiction Juvenile, meaning that he will be tried as a juvenile.

BP CANCER GROUP

pancake breakfast & Silent Auction

Pancakes, eggs, sausage, muffins, milk coffee and juice

Giant jar for kids to put coins in & register for prizes!

Sunday, January 17 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Pizza Cellar - Downtown BP

FREE WILL DONATION All donations to benefit to BP Cancer Group

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Fun for the whole family!

Save the date 5:00 p.m. February 6, 2016 BP Servicemen’s Club

Kid Party for school aged children at the Boys & Girls Club when the live auction starts until it is over. Transportation and adult supervision will be provided. All proceeds to benefit the Boys & Girls Club of Blooming Prairie

Includes Silent & Live Auction Raffles and Games

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Contact Lianna Doocy 583-7096 or Cheri Krejci 507-438-6895 for details

Cancer Corner

Support the fighters, Admire the survivors, Honor the taken.

Donating during holiday season is special

By ALAN VAN ORMER Managing Editor

someone would hurry up and find a cure for cancer.

The Hormel Institute receives many gifts from donors in the community who desire to help further cancer research. Just recently, the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group gave a \$15,000 donation in support of the Institute’s breast cancer research.

Mandie Siems, communications associate for The Hormel Institute, said donations are given in many different ways, most often in memory of family and friends. “All donations to The Hormel Institute support cancer research, and currently, gifts are also given to the expansion project which will provide more space for cancer research, the Live Learning Center.”

Siems adds the reason people think about gifting during the holiday season is because of the connections to friends and families. “The holidays bring out some memories,” she said.

Johnson has thought about cancer and the depressing effect it has on people when losing a loved one. “It is very sad,” she said. “I was glad to be

able to help them or someone to develop a cure for cancer. We have to figure out something because it is too difficult for families to lose someone. They can’t come back and all you have is memories.”

Over the past three years, Johnson has donated several hundred dollars to The Hormel Institute. She has also donated to the Live Learning Center that will be unveiled in June. “It is important that people learn how to cope with the loss of a loved one,” she said.

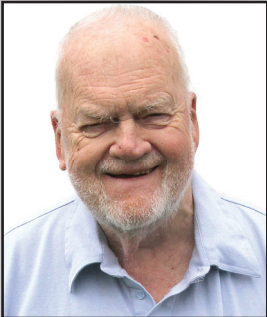
The main focus with the Live Learning Center is technology, collaborating and working with scientists all over the world. And that excites Johnson immensely. “Every country has brilliant people,” she said. “We, here in Austin, are very fortunate to have a lot of brilliant people working at the institute.”

Johnson said if you’ve lost a family member to cancer you never forget how that person died. “If they died from cancer, you think maybe I can help some other family from losing a loved one, especially during the holidays,” she said.

Lavona Johnson and Mandie Siems, communications assistant for The Hormel Institute, University of Minnesota look at the honor wall for donations. For the past three years, Johnson has made various donations to The Hormel Institute to help with cancer research.

Sponsored by KREJCI Ford

OUTSIDE THE LINES



LEMAR NELSON

Another year past

I don't know about the rest of you, but the time between Christmas and New Year seems to stand still in the great theme of things. Too often, we are still basking in the cheerfulness and wonder of Christmas and the family gatherings that accompany them. Because of that the week before the New Year itself just seems to drift aimlessly by.

Maybe that is a good thing, as it gives us a chance to reflect on the passing of one year and the anticipation of a new one. I know that was the case for me. Now I am prepared to start a new adventure with a new year. Again, I wish readers a happy and prosperous new year.

Brief interlude

The brief interlude between the pre-holiday and post-holiday sports gives me a chance to spend a few minutes on the other sports making news. Of course, the biggest publicity has centered on the Minnesota Vikings and their surprising resurgence. Their victory over Green Bay Sunday night earned them the North Division title and a home game against Seattle next Sunday. With all the injuries the team has dealt with during the season, I think it is quite remarkable that they ended the season with such a good record.

OUTSIDE THE LINES

Continued on Page 2B



NRHEG guard Oakley Baker clears this rebound during Saturday's loss to Hayfield in high school boys basketball action.

Panthers split four games; finishes third in Bethany tourney

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

64-47. The third place matchup saw the Panthers roll to a 62-50 win over Fairmont.

Hayfield rallies to defeat NRHEG

NRHEG had a 10-point lead in the first half, but the Vikings climbed back into the game, tying it 23-23 at the half. The second half was close throughout. Hayfield took a five-point lead with about eight minutes to go in the second half.

five the rest of the way," said NRHEG Coach Pat Churchill.

Churchill said he thought the Panthers had a chance to get out ahead early in the first half. "Hayfield did a nice job of executing and hitting some shots in the first half that allowed them back in the game," he said.

Oakley Baker led the way for the Panthers with 25 points. Chad Agrimson chipped in with 15 points and Tyler Raimann contributed 12 points. Trace Tebay poured in 27 points to lead Hayfield. Drew Olive added 25 points and Adam Younge ended with 15 points.

Hayfield squeaked by in the junior varsity contest, 39-36.

Panthers capture third place contest

NRHEG jumped out to a quick start against Fairmont to claim third place in the Bethany Holiday Tournament. The Panthers were up 16-2 and rolled to the 62-50 win.

"I felt that defensively we had a nice start," Churchill said. "We took them out of their rhythm

PANTHERS

Continued on Page 5B

Teams back in action

By LEMAR NELSON
Staff Sports Writer

Now that the annual holiday vacation is complete for another year, the area high school sports teams are ready to dive back into action. With the winter season now almost half over, some exciting contests remain on the schedule for four area schools.

At Blooming Prairie High School the basketball girls finished the pre-holiday schedule with a better than anticipated outcome. The team compiled a 7-2 record, including a big win in the last game before Christmas over big rival New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG). Among some of the bigger games still on the schedule, home games against Waterville-Elysian-Morristown (WEM), Kenyon-Wanamingo, United South Central and Byron are on tap.

Games still to be played in enemy territory include contests at WEM and state-ranked Lyle-Pacelli. The team has received some balanced play from a mix of seniors and underclassmen, and it will be interesting to follow the team to see how they fare after the holidays. Blossom fans are hoping for a successful run the rest of the season.

After three straight losses to end the pre-vacation part of the schedule, the 4-7 Blossom boys will be striving for better results now that play has continued. Anthony Nelson has been the unquestioned leader and scorer, but he has received some good support from a sophomore class.

Marten Morem and Jake Ressler give the team better height and scoring, and three sophomores have been in the starting lineup almost every game. The team has home games coming up with WEM and NRHEG, have to travel to Maple River and Kenyon-Wanamingo, and struggle with Maple River and Hayfield later on the home court. Maybe the experience gained in the first part of

BACK IN ACTION

Continued on Page 2B

2015: Steele County Sports Year in Review

July 7
Students and athletes at Medford Public School are enjoying a new gymnasium floor that was completed in June. Basketball and volleyball players started using the gym floor for summer practices.

July 14
The Medford trap shooting team qualified for its trip to state and placed 13th out of 30 teams. The team advanced to state after placing fourth at the Minnesota State Clay Target league in Alexandria.

The team members who advanced to state were Jake Gedicke, Tate Romnes, Wyatt Volkmann, Ricky Iverson and Brennan Hanson. Individually, Nick Meixner and Zach Gedicke both competed as well.

July 21
High school football teams across the state are facing shortened preseason schedules, due to a scheduling conflict with the 2015 Prep Bowl site. The Prep Bowl, usually played the third week of November, was not available because the University of Minnesota had a football game that weekend.

The Medford Diamond Association has seen growth over the past few years and this year was able to expand its program to provide room for more players.

The softball program expanded into three groups – 10U, 12U and 14U.

July 28
On July 25, the Owatonna U17 boys soccer team took home the title of state champions. In the final, Owatonna defeated the Rebels, a team from the Brooklyn Park area, 3-1.

The Owatonna community showed its support for the high school girls basketball program during the second annual golf scramble fundraiser. An estimated 14 teams participated at Brooktree Golf Course.

Those participating competed in challenges on



Medford is looking to gain some yardage in a high school football game earlier in the season.

the course. The event also featured a silent auction for the first time.

Aug. 4
Medford School held several summer sports programs during the week, including football and volleyball for youth, grades first through 12th.

Youth 1st handed out an estimated 60 awards this summer to teams around southern Minnesota. The Real Winning Team Award honors teams for their outstanding sportsmanship during summer tournaments. This involves players' conduct on the field, but it also includes coaches and fans.

Four teams received the award in Steele County so far this year: Owatonna U11 Silver and Blue baseball teams, Owatonna U14AA baseball team and the Medford U13 baseball team.

Aug. 11
Four empty coaching positions remain at Blooming Prairie, including the softball position recently vacated by Alison Mach, who started her first term as the athletic director for the school district.

Students flooded Owatonna's football fields for the annual youth football camp. The 19th annual football camp involves students from third-grade to age 16 and includes different drills and plenty of scrimmages.

Aug. 18

A Blooming Prairie softball team of sixth- and seventh-grade girls steamrolled the opposition to win the league title.

Aug. 25
Despite changing the game time from 7 p.m. to 11:30 a.m. to avoid potential storms, there were still high winds that added an extra difficulty factor to the first game of the year between Blooming Prairie and Rushford-Peterson. The Blossoms eked out an 8-6 win.

Steele County Times launches Front Row Football; a section devoted entirely to prep football and specifically the teams within Steele County.

Sept. 1
New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva pummeled Lester Prairie/Holy Trinity, 34-6, to start the season 2-0 in high school football action. Elsewhere, Owatonna slipped by Rochester John Marshall, 27-21, Bethlehem Academy rolled over Blooming Prairie, 28-12, and Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) beat Medford, 41-28.

Byron sweeps Blooming Prairie to start the high school volleyball season. Byron swept the Blossoms in three straight games. In other volleyball action, NRHEG swept Alden-Conger, 3-0. All the matches were decided by three points or less.

Sept. 8
Owatonna rushed for more than 400 yards in a 55-0 win over Faribault in high school football action. In other games, Waterville-Elysian-Morristown (WEM) slipped past NRHEG, 13-7, Blooming Prairie raced past St. Clair, 24-3, and JWP whipped Medford, 41-14.

Blooming Prairie, Medford and NRHEG all started their cross-country season at the Stewartville Invitational. None of the teams had enough runners for a team score, but Blooming

YEAR IN REVIEW

Continued on Page 3B

Sports

BACK IN ACTION

Continued from Page 1B

the season will help the team thrive the rest of the way. They are improving, and that is all

that fans can ask.

The BPHS wrestling team has already matched its win total of

last year with a second win before Christmas. Except for the numerous forfeits forced on the

team each match, the record may even be better. Several Blossoms are having banner years individually with Ethan Arett leading the way (currently Arett is ranked seventh in the state). The team record is 2-8.

Colton Krell, Jon Hansen, Dylan Nirk, Mitchell Oswald and Seth Peterson all have winning dual records for the season. The team will get back into action Thursday, Jan. 7, at Maple River in a triangular meet with Tri-City United and Maple River.

Medford back in play

Both basketball teams at Medford have struggled some in the early season play. The boys have a 1-7 record, with some tough losses thus far. In three of the games played, the team has either been ahead or just slightly behind at the half, only to give up too many points in the second half. Tyler Stenzel and Wyatt Volkman have been two of the scoring leaders, but the team is looking for better play now after vacation.

The girls have played several tough teams, losing by fewer than a dozen points, but they have been hurt by a lack of rebounding, poor shooting percentages and too many turnovers.

The team has games yet with Schaffer Academy and Bethlehem Academy, both of which they will make a concentrated effort to win. The team still has a good attitude, and it will be a plus when and if another victory is theirs.

The wrestling team is in a rebuilding mode, but a couple of Coach Dennis Whitman's squad are compiling very good dual records. The team competed at a tournament at Pipestone Saturday, Jan. 2, and gets back into action again after vacation in a triangular meet on the home mat Thursday, Jan. 7.

NRHEG teams find success

At New Richland, the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) girls won their first five games to open the season, but then lost back-to-back games to St. Peter and Blooming Prairie. One more win during the holidays has left them with a 6-2 record, as they begin play after the school vacation.

A couple of quality wins are included in their season-opening streak. Junior twins Maddie and Marnie Wagner lead the Panthers, but they have gotten good help from Gretchen Ramaker and Kayley Camerer as well, and the girls are eager to continue the winning season.

The Panther boys get back into action with a 7-4 record so far. Junior Oakley Baker recently joined the 1,000-point career club and leads the scoring, but

he has gotten help from several sources. John Cole, Tyler Raimann and Chad Agrimson have all taken turns in backup roles. It will be an interesting second half of the season.

The wrestling team has competed in some tough matches so far and wrestled last weekend at the Pipestone invitational tournament. Heavyweight Wyatt Fitterer is a state ranked wrestler and leads a contingent of strong competitors. The team will be in contention for a conference title, for sure.

Owatonna in action

Three of the Owatonna teams saw action over the holidays, with the basketball boys winning two games, and the hockey teams both losing games last week. Getting back to action after vacation, the basketball boys will entertain Albert Lea, while the girls travel to the home of the Tigers. The boys' hockey team travels to Northfield and the girls play Austin on home ice. The wrestling team travels to Winona on Thursday, Jan. 7. All of the other contests are on Tuesday, Jan. 5.

Gopher Conference Standings

Girls Basketball		
NRHEG	Conf. 2-0-0	Overall 5-0-0
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	2-0-0	3-2-0
Blooming Prairie	1-1-0	6-2-0
United South Central	1-1-0	5-2-0
Bethlehem Academy	0-1-0	3-3-0
Maple River	0-1-0	0-5-0
Medford	0-2-0	0-5-0
Boys Basketball		
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	Conf. 3-0-0	Overall 7-1-0
Maple River	2-0-0	6-1-0
NRHEG	2-1-0	5-3-0
United South Central	1-1-0	5-2-0
Blooming Prairie	1-2-0	4-6-0
Bethlehem Academy	0-2-0	3-6-0
Medford	0-3-0	1-8-0
Wrestling		
United South Central	Conf. 3-0-0	Overall 4-0-0
Maple River	2-1-0	3-3-0
WEM/JWP	1-1-0	2-6-0
New Richland-H-E-G H.S.	1-1-0	2-4-0
Blooming Prairie	1-3-0	1-7-0
Medford	0-0-0	1-3-0

Big 9 Conference Standings

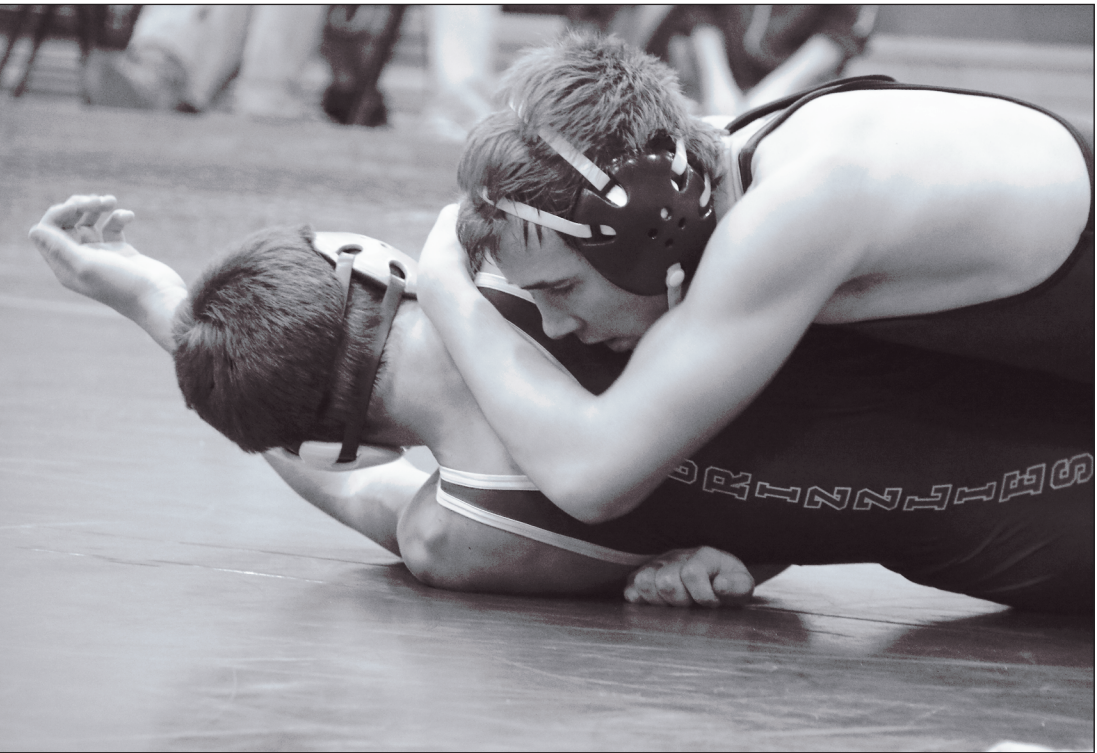
Girls Basketball		
Rochester John Marshall	Conf. 5-1-0	Overall 6-2-0
Winona	5-1-0	6-1-0
Rochester Century	5-1-0	6-2-0
Rochester Mayo	4-1-0	6-1-0
Red Wing	4-2-0	4-4-0
Austin	3-3-0	3-3-0
Owatonna	2-2-0	3-2-0
Northfield H.S.	3-4-0	3-4-0
Faribault	1-4-0	2-4-0
Mankato West	1-4-0	2-4-0
Mankato East	1-5-0	2-6-0
Albert Lea	0-6-0	0-6-0
Boys Basketball		
Red Wing	Conf. 7-0-0	Overall 9-0-0
Rochester John Marshall	7-0-0	7-1-0
Austin	4-2-0	5-2-0
Mankato East	4-2-0	4-3-0
Owatonna	4-3-0	4-4-0
Mankato West	4-3-0	4-4-0
Faribault	4-3-0	4-4-0
Northfield H.S.	4-4-0	6-4-0
Rochester Mayo	2-6-0	2-7-0
Winona	1-6-0	1-7-0
Rochester Century	1-6-0	1-8-0
Albert Lea	0-7-0	0-8-0
Wrestling		
Rochester John Marshall	Conf. 4-0-0	Overall 8-3-0
Albert Lea Area	3-0-0	14-0-0
Owatonna	3-1-0	4-1-0
Northfield	3-1-0	3-1-0
Faribault	2-1-0	4-2-0
Rochester Mayo	2-3-0	5-5-0
Winona/Winona Cotter	1-2-0	1-5-0
Mankato West	1-3-0	1-3-0
Austin	0-2-0	2-4-0
Mankato East	0-3-0	3-8-0
Rochester Century	0-4-0	0-5-0

Source: Minnesota Scores website



File photo

ABOVE: Blooming Prairie's Anthony Nelson puts up a shot in last year's action. Steele County teams are back in action this week.
BELOW: Medford's Bo Noble is on his way to an early season wrestling victory.



OUTSIDE THE LINES

Continued from Page 1B

The other teams in the state have had varying degrees of success. One could say that the Wild hockey team is doing about what fans have expected. The team has certainly had a much better December this year when compared to a losing month a year ago.

In the tough Western division of the NHL, the Wild should make the playoffs again, if they can avoid any losing streak of several games. Then it will be a real test to get back the first two rounds.

I think the Timberwolves will win more games than last year, although they still may not make the playoffs. Their young stars continue to improve, and as they improve, the team presents more opposition game after game.

No matter how many games they win this season, they are a much more exciting team to watch.

Here we go again

Now that school is back in session, the high school sports teams are already back in action also. Just about every team has

contests this week, and the action will be almost nonstop now for two months until playoffs in the various sports begin. Let's hope that success is on the agenda for all the teams, but more importantly, athletes and fans alike display that good sportsmanship. Let's make the rest of the season one to remember.

At BPHS it will be a good year if the basketball girls can continue their winning ways, and maybe the boys have gained enough experience to warrant more victories for them. And it should be exciting to follow some of the individual wrestlers as they continue to compete in matches. There is nothing like high school sports to break the monotony that winter generally brings to everyone.

Another star dimmed

Last week saw the departure of another great entertainer, when Natalie Cole died of congestive heart failure in Las Angeles. Cole, the daughter of the famous Nat King Cole, reached her greatest fame in

re-recording songs that her dad made famous in the 50's. Those songs and albums earned her several Grammys in the late 80s and 90s. She also became rather famous in several music mediums like Soul, R & B, Soft Rock and Jazz.

She worked for seven different record companies in her career, and she almost left the music scene entirely for a few years when battling drug addiction. In her return to the music scene, her song "Unforgettable" sold four million copies, and she captured Best Album of the year. Her death at age 65 was a culmination of several years battling health issues. Cole married three times, and her records sold over 39 million copies all together worldwide. Many fans will miss her.

They're back

I returned home from the Christmas weekend with my daughter Sunday afternoon with the expectation that Red Elf and his pals would be here to greet me. However, that was not the case and I resigned myself to the fact that they had found

something interesting to see on the way home and stayed to visit.

I was somewhat relieved Monday morning when I arose to find both Green Elf and Gold Elf perched in a familiar spot on the Christmas tree. But no Red Elf.

This isn't the first time that he has gone off on an adventure of his own, but now I will worry until he gets back home. I just hope it won't be too long.

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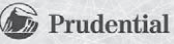
ONLY \$1

Stay tuned.

Let's close with a couple of thank you notes from Jimmy Fallon's monologue on The Tonight show: "Thank you to taco shells for surviving the long journey from factory to

supermarket to my plate and then breaking the moment I try to put something inside you," and "Thank you, exercise, for being the only thing stopping me from getting in shape."

We'll talk again.



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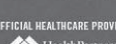
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Sports

YEAR IN REVIEW

Continued from Page 1B



File photo

ABOVE: NRHEG's volleyball players attack the net.
RIGHT: Blooming Prairie's Alec Ille was a state cross-country competitor.

Prairie sophomore Alec Ill recorded a 10:48 time to finish fourth.

Sept. 15

Five former Owatonna High School athletes were inducted into the Hall of Fame. Among the inductees were former Huskies Coach Ed Draheim, 1982 graduate Jody Neuleib-Young, 1986 graduate Scott Kostelecky, 2000 graduate Mike Lundstrom and 1999 graduate and current running back coach Matt Skala.

In high school football action, Owatonna defeated Northfield, 34-23, Blooming Prairie was too much for JWP, 39-23, NRHEG raced past GFW, 41-6, and Bethlehem Academy slipped past Medford, 18-13.

Blooming Prairie cross-country runner Alec Ille won the first cross-country race of his career at the Hayfield 12-team invitational. He overtook Peter Torkelson of Grand Meadow (GMLOS) over the last mile to win in a time of 17:01.

Sept. 22

Owatonna High School running back Sam Hylle broke the school's single game rushing record with 320 yards against Austin. The Huskies blasted Austin, 77-41. In other games, Blooming Prairie blew past Mankato Loyola, 48-8, NRHEG blitzed Sibley East, 34-19, and Kenyon-Wanamingo handled Medford, 40-8.

Medford's volleyball team won its seventh straight game defeating Blooming Prairie and NHREG.

Sept. 29

Blooming Prairie raised its record to 5-1 with a convincing 53-16 win over Medford in high school boys football action. In other games, Owatonna defeated Rochester Mayo, 35-14, and NRHEG handled LeSueur-Henderson, 35-14.

Blooming Prairie edged NRHEG, 3-2, in girls' volleyball action. Bethlehem Academy also defeated Blooming Prairie during the week.

Oct. 6

Medford is now 0-7 after falling to St. Clair, 37-20, in high school football action. In other games, Owatonna blanked New Prague, 52-0, Blooming Prairie was two scores better than United South Central, 18-6, and NRHEG was three touchdowns better than LCWM, 24-6.

NRHEG, Medford and Blooming Prairie all competed in a cross-country meet in Blooming Prairie. The NRHEG girls were fifth out of eight teams, while the Medford girls finished eighth. Medford's boys team was fourth and NRHEG was fifth. Blossom Alec Ille won the boys event helping the team finish second at the meet.

Oct. 13

Owatonna claimed the sub-district football championship with a 35-13 win over Rochester Century. In other action, Kenyon-Wanamingo edged Blooming Prairie, 42-40, Maple River slipped past Maple River, 24-23, and USC was one touchdown better than Medford, 14-8.

The Owatonna boys soccer team won its eighth straight and is set to host Rochester Century to start section play.

In volleyball action, Blooming Prairie lost three straight at home. WEM defeated the Blossoms, Southland stopped Blooming Prairie and Goodhue did the same.

Oct. 20

The football season ended for Medford and NRHEG. WEM defeated Medford, 42-12, and Blue Earth Area rolled over NRHEG, 48-22. Blooming Prairie remained alive in the football playoffs with a 34-6 whipping of USC. Owatonna had a bye.

The Owatonna boys soccer team will be playing for the section championship after defeating Rochester Century and Lakeville North.

The NRHEG cross-country teams headed to Wells for a meet. NRHEG girls' team placed four of its five runners in the top 25 led by Jade Mely's ninth-place finish in a 23:38 time. Tyler Schlaak finished 22nd for the boys team in 19:18.

Oct. 27

Blooming Prairie and Owatonna ended the football season with losses. Bethlehem Academy defeated Blooming Prairie, 28-14, while Northfield held the Huskies to a field goal in a 15-3 win.

Owatonna's boys soccer team lost 2-1 in overtime to Rochester Mayo. The loss ended the Huskies season.

Blooming Prairie's volleyball team never trailed in winning three matches against NRHEG. Blooming Prairie's boys cross-country team wound up third in the Gopher Conference meet. Alec Ille finished second in the

boys division. Alison Pryor was eighth in the girls division.

Nov. 3

Blooming Prairie's Alec Ille earned a spot in the state cross-country meet after finishing eighth at the Section 1A meet at Northern Hills Golf Course in Rochester.

Owatonna's volleyball team advanced to the semifinals with a 3-2 win over Farmington. NRHEG's volleyball team rebounded to earn a section win over Waseca, 3-1. Hayfield ended Blooming Prairie's volleyball season and faces Medford.

Nov. 10

Blooming Prairie's Alec Ille finished 90th at the state cross-country meet in a time of 17:38. There were 176 that participated in the state cross-country meet.

Owatonna started the girls hockey season with two wins. The Huskies defeated Mankato East at home and Albert Lea on the road.

Top-seeded Kenyon-Wanamingo ended NRHEG's volleyball season in three games, 25-18, 25-7 and 25-12.

Nov. 17

After winning its first two girls hockey games, Owatonna dropped its next two. Red Wing and Bloomington Jefferson handed the girls their first two losses. Also, Dodge County girls hockey team won two of its first three games to start the season.

Nov. 24

Blooming Prairie's boys basketball team split its first two games of the season. The Awesome Blossoms edged Kenyon-Wanamingo, 49-47, and lost to Triton, 67-62, in the Triton Invitational Tournament.

NRHEG opened the season with an 80-63 loss to Redwood Falls in boys basketball action.

Dodge County girls hockey team defeated Bloomington Jefferson, 3-2, and Holy Family-Waconia, 4-3, in overtime. The two wins raised the team's record to 4-1.

Former Medford athlete – Madison Strodman – has offi-



cially signed a letter to play volleyball at Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall.

Dec. 1

The Owatonna boys hockey team started the season with a three-game home stand. The Huskies finished 1-2 with the only win coming against Rochester Century. The team lost to St. Paul Academy and Rochester Mayo.

Medford's boys basketball team started the season 0-2. St. Peter defeated Medford, 82-23. Medford managed a much closer score in its home opener, falling to Mayer Lutheran, 54-46.

St. Clair defeated Blooming Prairie, 72-63, in the Awesome Blossoms home opener.

NRHEG's wrestling team ended up fourth in the Rochester Duals. NRHEG defeated Pine Island, 40-36, then lost to Stewartville, 51-20, and Rochester John Marshall, 51-27.

Dec. 8

Blooming Prairie's wrestlers finished 1-2 in a quadrangular at St. Clair to start the season. The Awesome Blossoms defeated St. Clair, 40-25, and lost to Mankato East, 39-31, and Maple River,

60-19.

Medford earned its first win of the boys basketball season defeating Glenville-Emmons, 55-52. However, the Tigers lost their next game, 49-28, to Cleveland.

Blooming Prairie's girls basketball team started the season 3-0 after wins over JWP, 56-42, Grand Meadow, 36-35, and Triton, 43-38.

Dec. 15

Owatonna's girls basketball team started the season 1-2 facing three tough opponents. Poor shooting doomed the Huskies in a lost to Rochester John Marshall, 53-30. Owatonna rebounded with a 76-68 win over Prior Lake and then fell to Winona in a shoot out, 91-83.

The Blooming Prairie boys basketball team evened its record at 4-4 with a non-conference win over Alden-Conger, 71-57, and a 71-62 victory over Medford.

NRHEG remains perfect in girls basketball action after defeating Maple River, 54-38. Earlier in the week the Panthers edged Waseca. On the boys side, Oakley Baker scored his 1,000th point in a 69-64 win over St.

Clair. The Panthers also defeated Kenyon-Wanamingo and lost to Maple River.

Dec. 22

One Medford wrestler earned a title at the Kenyon-Wanamingo Wrestling Tournament. Willie Von Ruden finished first in the 120-pound weight class. Jonny Meyer was fourth in the 106-pound division. Six other wrestlers – Bryce Lisowski, Bo noble, Marcus DeLeon, Nate Meixner, Josh Schauer and Trevor Spatenka – all finished fifth.

Both NRHEG basketball teams had good nights against Medford. The girls defeated the Tigers, 58-51, while the boys improved to 5-1 with a victory.

The Blooming Prairie wrestling team split at a triangular. After losing to Stewartville, the Awesome Blossoms came back and defeated Hayfield.

Blooming Prairie girls basketball team split two games. The Awesome Blossoms rallied to defeat Southland, 52-47, but lost a contest to USC, 68-38. The boys lost two games: 60-55 to USC and 67-50 to Southland.

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Legals

Foreclosure

15-100715

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage: DATE OF MORTGAGE: February 7, 2008 ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$116,400.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Mark A. Boehme and Amanda D. Wacek, each a single person MORTGAGEE: Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON THE MORTGAGE: Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation SERVICER: JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Filed February 8, 2008, Steele County Recorder, as Document Number A000352523 ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A.; Dated: February 7, 2008 filed: February 8, 2008, recorded as document number A000352524 LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot Ten (10), in Block One (1), in Olson's Addition to the Village of Blooming Prairie PROPERTY ADDRESS: 250 2nd St SE, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917 PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 14-105-0110 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$105,944.15 THAT all pre-foreclosure requirements have been complied with; that no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said mortgage, or any part thereof; PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: January 28, 2016, 10:00am PLACE OF SALE: Sheriff's Main Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, MN 55060 to pay the debt secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any, on said premises and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys fees allowed by law, subject to redemption within 6 months from the date of said sale by the mortgagor(s) the personal representatives or assigns. TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: If the real estate is an owner-occupied, single-family dwelling, unless otherwise provided by law, the date on or before which the mortgagor(s) must vacate the property, if the mortgage is not reinstated under section 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under section 580.23, is 11:59 p.m. on July 28, 2016, or the next business day if July 28, 2016 falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday.

"THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES SECTION 582.032 DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN 5 UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED."

Dated: December 4, 2015

JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association Assignee of Mortgagee

SHAPIRO & ZIELKE, LLP

BY

Lawrence P. Zielke - 152559
Diane F. Mach - 273788
Melissa L. B. Porter - 0337778
Randolph W. Dawdy - 2160X
Gary J. Evers - 0134764
Tracy J. Halliday - 034610X
Attorneys for Mortgagee
12550 West Frontage Road, Ste. 200
Burnsville, MN 55337
(952) 831-4060

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR

12/8, 12/15, 12/22
12/29, 1/5, 1/12

Foreclosure

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage: DATE OF MORTGAGE: December 8, 2006

ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$76,500.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Joseph L. Erler, Married and Jeremy J. Erler and Brittany L. Erler, Husband and Wife MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Rochester Mortgage Company TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. MIN#: 100021278104656389 SERVICER: U.S. Bank National Association LENDER: Rochester Mortgage Company DATE AND PLACE OFFILING: Steele County Minnesota, Recorder , on December 12, 2006, as Document No. A000346321. ASSIGNED TO: U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION Dated: July 14, 2015 , and recorded July 15, 2015 by Document No. A000403064. LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot Ten (10), in Block One (1), in Pettit's Addition to Town(now City) of Owatonna, Minnesota. PROPERTY ADDRESS: 144 E Rose Street, Owatonna, MN 55060 PROPERTY I.D: 17-104-0110 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: Seventy-Three Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety-Seven and 44/100 (\$73,897.44) THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt secured by said mortgage, or any part thereof; that there has been compliance with all pre-foreclosure notice and acceleration requirements of said mortgage, and/or applicable statutes; PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: 10:00 AM on January 29, 2016 PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, in the Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, Minnesota 55060 to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is 6.00 months from the date of sale. If Mortgage is not reinstated under Minn.Stat. Section 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under Minn. Stat. Section 580.23, the Mortgagor must vacate the property on or before 11:59p.m. on July 30, 2016, or the next business day if July 30, 2016 falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday. "THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED."

Dated: December 15, 2015 U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION Randall S. Miller and Associates, PLLC Attorneys for Assignee of Mortgage/Mortgagee Canadian Pacific Plaza, 120 South Sixth Street, Suite 2050 Minneapolis, MN 55402 Phone: 952-232-0052 Our File No. 15MN00585-1 THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. A-4553824

12/15, 12/22, 12/29
1/5, 1/12, 1/19

Foreclosure

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that default has occurred in conditions of the following described mortgage: DATE OF MORTGAGE: June 15, 2005 MORTGAGOR: Curtis M. Christianson and Patricia Y. Christianson, husband and wife MORTGAGEE: Farmers and Merchants State Bank of Blooming Prairie DATE AND PLACE OF RECORDING: Recorded June 24, 2005 Steele County Recorder, Document No. A000333009. ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Merchants Bank, National Association. Dated June 15, 2005 Recorded June 24, 2005, as Document No. A000333010.

TRANSACTION AGENT: NONE TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER ON MORTGAGE: NONE LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON MORTGAGE: Farmers and Merchants State Bank of Blooming Prairie RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE SERVICER: Merchants Bank, N.A. MORTGAGED PROPERTY ADDRESS: 114 3rd Street Northeast, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917 TAX PARCEL I.D. #: 14.101.0109 LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 8, Block 1, in Feeny's

Addition to the Village of Blooming Prairie, Steele County, Minnesota COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$100,000.00 AMOUNT DUE AND CLAIMED TO BE DUE AS OF DATE OF NOTICE, INCLUDING TAXES, IF ANY, PAID BY MORTGAGEE: \$86,114.03 That prior to the commencement of this mortgage foreclosure proceeding Mortgagee/Assignee of Mortgagee complied with all notice requirements as required by statute; That no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said mortgage, or any part thereof; PURSUANT to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 23, 2016 at 10:00 AM PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, MN to pay the debt then secured by said Mortgage, and taxes, if any, on said premises, and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys' fees allowed by law subject to redemption within six (6) months from the date of said sale by the mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns unless reduced to Five (5) weeks under MN Stat. §580.07.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: If the real estate is an owner-occupied, single-family dwelling, unless otherwise provided by law, the date on or before which the mortgagor(s) must vacate the property if the mortgage is not reinstated under section 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under section 580.23 is 11:59 p.m. on August 23, 2016, unless that date falls on a weekend or legal holiday, in which case it is the next weekday, and unless the redemption period is reduced to 5 weeks under MN Stat. Secs. 580.07 or 582.032.

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None "THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED."

Dated: December 21, 2015

Merchants Bank, National Association Mortgagee/Assignee of Mortgagee

USSET, WEINGARDEN AND LIEBO, P.L.L.P. Attorneys for Mortgagee/Assignee of Mortgagee 4500 Park Glen Road #300 Minneapolis, MN 55416 (952) 925-6888 94-15-009995 FC

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

12/29, 1/5, 1/12
1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9

Foreclosure

15-101130

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage: DATE OF MORTGAGE: May 5, 2006 ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$68,600.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Steven T. Gilman and Becky E. Hohenstein, both single MORTGAGEE: Aames Funding Corporation DBA Aames Home Loan LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON THE MORTGAGE: Aames Funding Corporation DBA Aames Home Loan SERVICER: New Penn Financial, LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Filed May 10, 2006, Steele County Recorder, as Document Number A000341133 ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Countrywide Home Loans, Inc.; thereafter assigned to BAC Home Loans Servicing, LP. Thereafter assigned to The Bank of New York Mellon FKA The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the benefit of the Certificateholders of the CWABS, Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-SD4. LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: That part of the Southwest Quarter of Southeast Quarter of Section 25, Township 105 North, Range 19 West, described as: Commencing at a point on the South line of 5th Street of Village of Blooming Prairie, 475.6 feet West of the point of intersection of West line of Oak Street with South line of 5th Street, thence due West along the South line of 5th Street, 60 feet, due South 170 feet, due East 60 feet, due North 170 feet to point of beginning. PROPERTY ADDRESS: 239 1st

Street SE, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917 PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 14-025-2022 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$72,750.08 THAT all pre-foreclosure requirements have been complied with; that no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said mortgage, or any part thereof; PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 16, 2016, 10:00am PLACE OF SALE: Sheriff's Main Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, MN 55060 to pay the debt secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any, on said premises and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys fees allowed by law, subject to redemption within 6 months from the date of said sale by the mortgagor(s) the personal representatives or assigns.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: If the real estate is an owner-occupied, single-family dwelling, unless otherwise provided by law, the date on or before which the mortgagor(s) must vacate the property, if the mortgage is not reinstated under section 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under section 580.23, is 11:59 p.m. on August 16, 2016, or the next business day if August 16, 2016 falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday.

"THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES SECTION 582.032 DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN 5 UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED."

Dated: December 23, 2015

The Bank of New York Mellon FKA The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the benefit of the Certificateholders of the CWABS, Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-SD4 Assignee of Mortgagee

SHAPIRO & ZIELKE, LLP

BY

Lawrence P. Zielke - 152559
Diane F. Mach - 273788

Melissa L. B. Porter - 0337778
Randolph W. Dawdy - 2160X
Gary J. Evers - 0134764
Tracy J. Halliday - 034610X
Attorneys for Mortgagee
12550 West Frontage Road, Ste. 200
Burnsville, MN 55337
(952) 831-4060

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR

12/29, 1/5, 1/12
1/19, 1/26, 2/2

Summons

STATE OF MINNESOTA

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT DISTRICT COURT FAMILY DIVISION

COUNTY OF STEELE

District Court File No.: 74-FA-15-2578

SUMMONS AND NOTICE

In Re the Marriage of: Sherice Monique Marshall and Dereck Marshall

TO: Dereck Marshall

A Summons and Petition for Dissolution was filed with this Court on December 18, 2015. A copy of said Summons and Petition is on file with the District Court, Steele County Courthouse, 111 East Main Street, Owatonna, Minnesota 55060 and is available for inspection.

Dated: 2015.12.21

Karen R Duncan Judge of District Court

12/29, 1/5, 1/12

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WEEKLY CROSSWORD

Answers on Page 6C

CLUES ACROSS

- Engine additive
- Soluble ribonucleic acid
- Subdue
- One long, three short
- Morally bad
- With collapsible shelter
- Central church parts
- Summer shoes
- Intestinal
- Transgressors
- Meeting expectations
- Clutch
- Autonomic nervous system
- What you can repeat immediately after perceiving it
- Favorite summer

- sandwich
- An accountant certified by the state
 - Cologne
 - Norma Jean Baker
 - Galaxies
 - Bluish greens
 - Detected
 - Having 3 dimensions
 - Made level
 - The destroyer (Hindu)
 - Uncovered
 - Ooze slowly
 - Aerie
 - Point midway between S and SE

CLUES DOWN

- Having beautiful natural views
- Fanafuti is the capital
- Shrub used for hedges
- Polishing tools
- Slow down
- Christmas carols
- & & &
- Sound of sheep or goat

- A long flag, often tapering
- Atomic #73
- Schilling (abbr.)
- Female sibling
- Long sandwich
- In a way, necessitated
- Mayan people of SW Guatemala

- Cleaned up
- Prohibit
- Upright cupboard
- Cyclone center
- Metric linear units
- Young male
- Securities market
- City across from Dusseldorf

- Animal disease
- Mount of __ east of Jerusalem
- Get free
- Variable stars
- One point N of NE

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Jay Braaten,
Financial Advisor

Legals/Sports

BP ISD

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT #756
BLOOMING PRAIRIE,
MINNESOTA 55917
TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2016
HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER

PROPOSED TENTATIVE AGENDA

6:00 a.m. Thursday, January 14,
2016 Regular School Board Work
Session-High School Board Room

5:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 19,
2016 Open Public Forum-High
School Media Center

5:15 p.m. Tuesday, January 19,
2016 Regular School Board
Meeting-High School Media
Center

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

I. CALL TO ORDER – CHAIRPERSON

II. ROLL CALL – CLERK

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IV. PRINCIPAL REPORTS

V. ITEMS ON WHICH BOARD ACTION IS REQUESTED

- A. Installation of Newly-Elected School Board Members
- B. Rotation of School Board Officers
- C. School Board Committee Assignments
- D. Consent Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Bills
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Resignation
 - Employment
- E. Designation of Local Depositories, Newspaper, and School Attorney
- F. Promulgation of Seniority List for the Teaching Staff
- G. MSHSL Foundation Resolution (Form B/C)

VI. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ONLY

- VII. 6:00 p.m. Monday, December 21, 2015 Budget/Levy Discussion
- A. Technology
 - B. Committee Reports
 - C. Enrollment Data
 - D. Dates to Note

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

* Agenda may be subject to changes

1/5

BP City

Proposed
City of Blooming Prairie
City Council Meeting Agenda
January 11, 2016
7:00 P.M.

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes of December
Regular City Council Meeting

Financial Report

- Committee/Commission Reports
- 1. B.P. Public Utilities
 - 2. E.D.A.
 - 3. B.P. Planning & Zoning
 - 4. B.P. Fire Commission
 - 5. B.P. Ambulance Commission
 - 6. B.P. Police Commission

- Business
- 1. Official Appointments, Official Depository and Official Newspaper
 - 2. Review Expense Reimbursement & Mileage Rate
 - 3. Review Fee Schedules
 - 4. Summary of Closed Session
 - 5. State of Minnesota Joint Powers Agreement
 - 6. Application for an Exempt Gambling Permit – American Legion
 - 7. Set Date for Board of Review
 - 8. Mayor & Council Members Workers Compensation Insurance Coverage

- City Administrator's Report
- 1. Pedestrian Yield Sign Update
 - 2. Ice Rink
 - 3. Three-year Revenue Average

City Attorney's Report

Council Members' Reports

Adjourn

This Proposed Agenda is Subject to Change

1/5

Foreclosure

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage: MORTGAGOR(S): Jason P. Fast and Alonna R. Fast, husband and wife MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a Delaware corporation as nominee for Advisors Mortgage, LLC, a Minnesota limited liability company ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. by assignment recorded on April 11, 2012 as Document Number A000383998 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota. ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$155,406.00 DATE OF MORTGAGE: May 28, 2010 DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on June 3, 2010 as Document Number A000371493 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota. THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$180,014.35 LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 12, Kubiatawicz Addition, Owatonna, Steele County, Minnesota. STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 355 NE 15TH STREET, OWATONNA, MN 55060 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele County, Minnesota TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Advisors Mortgage, LLC, a Minnesota limited liability company RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-224-0112 TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 100199600012386757 THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part. PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: March 1, 2016 at 10:00 AM PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, Minnesota to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of sale. TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on September 1, 2016. THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED. MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None

Dated: December 31, 2015

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.
Mortgagee
SCHILLER & ADAM, P.A.

By: /s/
Rebecca F. Schiller, Esq.
Sarah J.B. Adam, Esq.
N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq.
Curt N. Trisko, Esq.
Samuel R. Coleman, Esq.
Attorneys for Mortgagee
The Academy Professional
Building
25 North Dale Street
St. Paul, MN 55102
(651) 209-9760
(15-2010-FC01)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

1/5, 1/12, 1/19,
1/26, 2/2, 2/9



NRHEG center Emily Eder flips the ball to sophomore center, Betsy Schoenrock (45) who goes in for the basket.

Panthers roll to win over Hayfield

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

Heading into the girls basketball contest against Hayfield, New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) Coach Onika Peterson was concerned about the height advantage. The Panthers handled it well in cruising to a 60-46 win at the New Richland gym on Jan. 2.

Peterson said the key to the win was rebounding. “We know they do a good job crashing the boards and get a lot of points on second and third shots,” she said. “It was

nice to keep them off the boards.”

In addition, NRHEG came out shooting the ball well. “That is nice to see,” Peterson said. “We were able to run and gun like we like to.”

Marnie Wagner led the way with 19 points. Maddie Wagner chipped in with 17 points, while Hailey Schuller added eight points. Marnie Wagner and Kayley Camerer each had six rebounds for the Panthers.

As a team, NRHEG had six steals, 10 assists and two blocked shots.

Over the past week, NRHEG had lost a couple of girls to injuries. However, Pe-

terson said the girls handled it pretty well and came out and competed throughout the week.

“They are doing a lot of nice things,” she said. “This (upcoming) week is going to be big for us.”

After Tuesday’s home game against Kenyon-Wanamingo, the Panthers were also expected to face Waterville-Elysian-Morristown in a second home game on Friday evening, before travelling to Hayfield for a girls varsity invitational tournament.

PANTHERS

Continued from Page 1B



Staff photo by Alan Van Ormer
NRHEG's Dempsey Tucker battles for the shot against Hayfield.

and that led to some good opportunities offensively.”

Fairmont battled back to cut the deficit to eight points at half-time, 31-23. NRHEG pushed the lead to start the second half

and went on for the victory.

Baker poured in 23 points to lead the Panthers. John Cole added 18 points and Raimann contributed 11. For Fairmont, Walker Tordsen was the game’s high scorer with 24 points. Sam Schwiager added 16 points.

Fairmont won the junior varsity contest, 55-42.

Maple River too much for NRHEG in semifinals

A missed dunk and a technical foul for hanging on the rim

turned into a six-point swing for Maple River on its way to the 64-47 win in semifinal action. Maple River took advantage and hit both free throws and made a basket.

The game was an eight-point contest throughout the first half before Maple River canned two, three-point shots in the last minute to go up 13, 31-18 at half-time. NRHEG chopped the lead to six points late in the second half.

“We got some stops but could not get the ball to go through the hoop for us and eventually Maple River pushed the lead to double figures, and it stayed there the last six minutes,” Churchill said.

Baker led the way for NRHEG with 19 points and Cole added 10. Brandon Sohre counted 19 points for Maple River. Cole Sohre added 12 and Will Keller contributed 10.

The Panthers won the junior

varsity matchup, 38-30.

Panthers roll in tourney opener

NRHEG rolled to an 81-49 win over LCWM in the opening round game. A sizable run at the end of the first half pushed the score to a 16-point, 36-20 half-time lead for the Panthers.

“I thought offensively we were carried by our big three tonight,” Churchill said. “John, Oakley and Tyler had nice nights. We were able to build the lead in the second half with our size in the paint. They did a nice job on the boards.”

Cole led the way with 18 points for NRHEG. Baker and Raimann each chipped in with 16 points. Brady Isebrand was high scorer for the game with 20 points for LCWM. Lane Hemish added 11 points.

NRHEG won the junior varsity contest, 62-36.

Women's Bowling League

TEAM STANDINGS: Week 11

1. F&M Bank	28-20
2. Pizza Cellar/Cue Co.	28-20
3. Epic Contracting	24-24
4. Kosters' Kar Corner	22-26
5. J&H Liquor/Dairy Queen	21.50-26.50
6. DOE	20.50-27.50

INDIVIDUAL STATS

High Game:

1. Judy Esplan	159
2. Carol Heimerman	153

High Series:

1. Carol Heimerman	432
2. Judy Esplan	427

Frost beautifies Blooming Prairie



Staff photo by Howard Lestrud
Sub-freezing temperatures brought about fog and a gathering of hoarfrost Monday morning, Jan. 4. Hoarfrost is shown on trees by First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie. Hoarfrost is a white coating of ice crystals formed by sublimation of atmospheric water vapor on a surface. It is also called white frost.

A look back at the year 2015 in Medford

2015 was a busy, challenging year for all of us in Medford. The city staff and council committed to a great deal of time and energy into budgeting, capital planning and financing this year that will provide an excellent foundation for the city's future. We know we have major work of street infrastructure in the coming years and conversations are underway about our current and future facility needs.

We are fortunate to be located along Interstate 35 in a region that has shown strong economic growth with very low unemployment. Our challenge continues to be positioning Medford in the best possible place to benefit with managed growth both residentially and commercially.

Thank you for your interest in our Medford community! Mayor Lois

Medford's 2015 Year in Review
January

New Council member, Linda Dusek and re-elected members; Chad Merritt and Keith Maas are sworn into official office at the organizational meeting.

Public Hearing scheduled for Medford's Comprehensive Plan with Community Economic Development Associates (CEDA) Vice President Cris Gastner providing overview. Council adopted resolution accepting updated plan.

Veteran's Committee recommends and Council supports the establishment of the Veteran's Memorial to city property at the corner of County Road 12 and 3rd Street NE. Fundraising continues.

CJ's Grocery closes after operating in Medford since the early 1970's. Fuel pumps accessible.

Residents living in homes built prior to 1970 received information about available housing rehabilitation programs.

Human Resources Committee reviewed and recommended the updated job descriptions for City Administrator and City Clerk. Council supported and now amended to City Code

Councilor Dusek attended League of MN Cities newly elected officials conference.

February
FEMA reimbursement paperwork relating to incurred costs of June 2014 flooding report and Storm Sewer Outfall repairs presented by Department of Public Works Director Rich Kucera.

Council and fulltime city staff participates in a retreat updating StrengthsFinder information, identifying characteristics of working together along with discussion on capital projects.

City Council hears summary of meeting with County Engineer concerning future area projects-County Road 12-West of Medford at the earliest in 2017 and County Road 45 in 2018-2020. Also, finishing work of County Road 12/West



LOIS M. NELSON

Central project this spring.

Steele Co Park Board awards \$2500 to assist with expense of resurfacing the pool area this spring.

Two named stones for the Veteran's Memorial are approved and ordered for installation early summer.

March
City Administrator Andy Welti starts in fulltime position March 2.

New members of the Volunteer Fire Department are welcomed and sworn into office.

Plans, specs and bid advertising resolution supported for finishing street project in Scenic Heights.

Mayor Nelson attends annual Legislative Day in St Paul for city, township and county officials.

Final approval of City Well-head Protection Plan, Part 2, received.

April
Wireless equipment for water towers ordinance, rental fees and policy implemented.

2015 Pool Manager and staff hired.

New garbage and recycling contract for Medford Muni initiated.

Mayor Nelson attends annual Mayor's Conference.

Grant awarded from OSHA/MN Department of Labor & Industry for trench box & equipment.

May
Work session for council and staff held for further capital and financing planning supported by systems software contracted through David Drown Associates.

Initial installation of concrete pad, lighting and flag poles done at Veteran's Memorial site.

EDA recommends approval of loan for expansion at Medford Sr Care to Del & Julie Sprunk.

West Central punch list of remain project items reviewed. Tree replacements planted with others to be planted this fall.

Pool deck area redone and ready for new season.

Fire Department authorized to purchase new helmet gear for department. Grant from Centerpoint Energy will help cover some of the costs.

City face book page has been initiated.

2000 Sterling L-8511 snow plow truck to be purchased.

June
City changes Agent of Record

to TPS Insurance, Owatonna, to assist in administering the League of MN Cities Insurance Trust.

City Administrator and City Clerk attend League of MN Cities annual conference.

Blandin Community Leadership Program Steering Committee begins recruiting candidates for fall program.

Small cities to receive state funds for street improvements resulting from recent legislative year with Medford receiving \$19,255.

MN Landscape Partnership Cooperative Agreement and grant funding received for fall planting of native prairie grasses and wild flowers around west roundabout.

Rich Kucera recognized by MM Pollution Control Association for exemplarily wastewater management.

July
Official notification received from Steele Waseca Electric Cooperative on acquiring the former Alliant Energy territory; and now, serving all of Medford.

DOT Employee Drug Testing policy implemented.

Construction underway for Medford Senior Care expansion.

New lease agreement for John Deer loader is negotiated and supported.

Discussion of 2016 budget and level commences with a possible 2.51 percent increase.

August
Scenic Heights' street project completed.

South East Minnesota Association of Regional Trails (SMART) President Andru Peters meets with Park Board about potential project in our area.

September
Twenty-six volunteers planted the west roundabout with city staff.

Appointed Facilities Committee meets with staff to discuss the current and future needs of city buildings.

Senator Vicki Jensen & Representative Brian Daniels attend regular Council meeting offering insights on new legislative session and visiting us about our current and future challenges.

October
Casey's begins site work on west end of city near interstate.

Nine area residents participate in the week-long Blandin Community Leadership Program with others representing Blooming Prairie and Ellendale at Sugar Bay Lodge, Grand Rapids.

State Senate Investment Committee visits Medford to see and hear about future projects for bonding consideration.

Veteran's Memorial has granite memorials installed, additional lighting, signage and landscaping completed.

November
City Administrator Welti reviews state pay equity report,

employee health insurance and compensation with Council.

Ag Star Grant Award for assistance in design of possible city municipal complex received.

December
Open house at newly completed Medford Estates scheduled. City Council moves to support a 0 percent levy for 2016.

Council supports Facilities Committee recommendation to initiate a request for proposal for an engineering/architectural firm to complete a preliminary design document for a new municipal complex.

Owatonna Foundation receives donation from PowerBlock

The Owatonna Foundation recently received a \$3,000 donation from PowerBlock.

PowerBlock Inc., a health and fitness company was founded in 1993. They invented the nested dumbbell concept and remain an industry leader. The company, which is headquartered in Owatonna, holds over 30 patents, distributes its products globally, and continues to invent products and expand its market presence.

"We're so appreciative of this donation from PowerBlock. It is this continued community support that keeps the Foundation's mission to improve the quality of life for present and future generations by supporting Owatonna projects that focus on community, education, the arts and recreation a reality for all of us that live in Owatonna," said Foundation Executive Coordinator, Laura Resler.

The Owatonna Foundation, now in its 58th year of serving the Owatonna community, provides "brick and mortar" grants in Owatonna and its environs in four areas: recreation, education, arts and community projects. The Foundation also provides both traditional and non-traditional scholarships for 2-year colleges and technical schools.

Since 1957, the Owatonna Foundation has committed more than \$11.5 million dollars in grants and scholarships to local organizations and students. For more information about the Owatonna Foundation, please visit our website at: www.owatonnafoundation.org, or call our office at 455-2995.

Home Economics Association offering scholarship

Steele County Home Economics Association is offering its Jean and Jessie Partridge Memorial Scholarship.

The \$500 scholarship is offered to individuals majoring in Home Economics, Family Consumer Sciences or related fields (Consumer Sciences, Textiles, Food Science, Child Development and Parenting, Housing,

Family Social Sciences, etc.) at any accredited college or university. Eligible students must have completed two years in the major.

For more information please call Judie Buerman at 507-451-2537 or Barbara Paulson at 507-451-9686. The deadline for applications is Jan. 15.



Baby of 2016

Sailor Renee

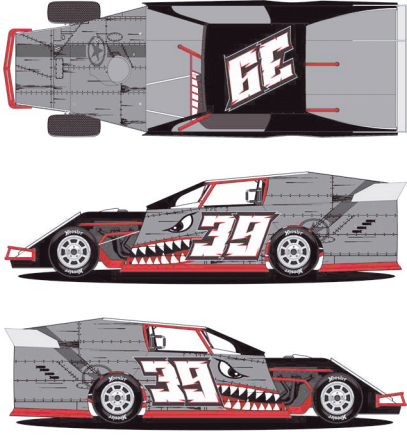
Parents: Colette and Tony Lea and brother Beckett, 6, of Blooming Prairie.

Born 1/1/2016 at 5:57 a.m.
Weighing 7 lbs. 13 ozs.

KIK

GRAPHICS & PRINTING

YOU PICK IT WE STICK IT



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Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

Steele County prepares for solar farms

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

The Steele County Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted a solar energy ordinance, which ultimately calls for solar farms to work out the fine details of the design and placement of solar panels.

Steele County Planning and Zoning Administrator Dale Oolman explained at the Dec. 15 county commission meeting that up to this point, Steele County only had been governing through accessory use permits for solar panels on a resident’s own farm

or home through the accessory use permit.

In order to be considered “accessory use,” the ordinance defines it as the solar energy is “secondary to the primary use of the parcel on which it is located and which is directly connected to or designed to serve the energy needs of the primary use.”

Oolman said that the solar energy ordinance will allow the county to govern solar energy when a solar energy system is the primary use of the parcel on which the land is located through the “conditional use permit.”

Why is Steele County choosing to

go forward with a solar energy ordinance now?

“Solar energy is becoming more popular, and the state has mandated a certain amount of electricity be generated from solar energy,” said Oolman. “Up until now, Steele County didn’t have an ordinance that addresses it (that is beyond the accessory use)... but we didn’t really have anything in place to address solar farms per se.”

Oolman said that the solar energy ordinance adopted will not change much for the accessory use, other than some performance standards, setback and height requirements, and electri-

cal codes.

According to the solar energy ordinance, the conditional use permit will be used for primary use solar energy systems on agricultural, interim agricultural, residential districts, general business, industrial and conservation properties.

“The exception there would be shore land areas. They would not be permitted. That’s mostly for aesthetic reasons,” said Oolman. “Our shore land areas are mostly around Beaver

SOLAR ENERGY
Continued on Page 8C



MÄREN DELAITSCH

New way of peace

I love this time of year – New Years! It’s a time to start over, try again and have new beginnings in the areas of my life that need a fresh start. I like to reflect where I’ve been the past year, and what ideas I have to make the next year one of growth and improvement.

As public health nurses, we also are called to help our communities strive forward each year to improve health and wellness. What shall it be for 2016? Expanded farmers markets? Less tobacco smoke? One hundred percent seat belt use? How about peace? That’s right. Peace. Peace among everyone, regardless of skin color, race, culture, ethnicity, religion - with peace, tolerance, understanding, friendship and support as our goal.

In 2015, too many innocent human lives were lost due to violence. After the tragedy in Paris, Douglas Greenaway, president and CEO of the National Women, Infant & Children Association (WIC) wrote, “There are no adequate answers for why this happens. Yet, we can come to understand some of it if we are willing to journey in goodness with one another and be agents of service in a broken world.” He continues to say; “It is our call to love generously with all of our hearts, minds and souls, and to love each other as ourselves. And in so doing we are able to create circles, endless circles of love, and build and share lasting memories of the heart.”

Greenway asserts, “It is that privilege of knowing and experiencing generous love that allows us to rejoice and celebrate the blessings of our own lives. It is that same privilege that allows us to shed tears for those we know, or those we will never know.”

Greenway adds, “Our sadness, our sorrow, even our tears are coping gifts. They allow us to express the depth of our feelings. These feelings well up in us each time we realize the impermanence of our existence. But while much is passing away, much remains. There is a beginning, there is a here and now and there is a future.”

At first, I was surprised that a National CEO of a Public Health organization would come forward with such a strong statement about loving our neighbors as a response to these violent tragedies. And, yet, is it such a surprise? Consider again that Public Health is charged with care for our full health and well-being: mind, body and spirit of all community members.

When you come to our WIC offices, one of the posters that will greet you is of the Statue of Liberty declaring “And Justice For All”. We are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. The CEO of our national WIC organization was calling us to an even higher order, not to simply “not discriminate” against a neighbor, but to love.

Another speaker I heard after the California attacks put it this way. We can tolerate our neighbor who is different, and be “Minnesota Nice” by smiling and waving, or we can travel the Way of Peace and bring over a casserole, complement them on their casserole, and ask for the recipe. Reach out, learn, understand and love. Which way will it be in our Steele County communities in 2016? New ways of peace?

Let’s go sledding



Staff photos by Anna Segner

ABOVE: Patty Jo Procopio was all smiles when she was sledding as the snow fell on Dec. 28.

RIGHT: Patty Jo, Joe and Rosie Procopio enjoyed a day of family sledding together.



32nd annual Geneva Cancer Auction kicks off Jan. 8

By LAURA BERNDT
News Editor

Each year, the community of Geneva comes together to raise funds for cancer research. This year marks the 32nd annual Geneva Cancer Auction, which will take place at the Geneva Bar & Grill.

The annual event always takes place during the second and third weekends in January, and this year’s auction will be Friday, Jan. 8, and Saturday, Jan. 9, and again the following weekend, Friday, Jan. 15, and Saturday, Jan. 16. Friday auctions begin at 7 p.m. and auctions begin at 2 p.m. on Saturday. Each auction lasts for a few hours. Chelsea Hanson, who owns the Ge-

‘When it comes to cancer, Geneva really pulls together. It’s fun to see that.’

— Chelsea Hanson, co-owns the Geneva Bar & Grill with her husband, Greg

neva Bar & Grill with her husband, Greg, said that the event is well supported by the community.

“It goes to a great cause,” she said. “When it comes to cancer, Geneva really pulls together. It’s fun to see that.” Proceeds from the auctions will go to the Fifth District Eagles Cancer Telethon, which raises funds to help support of cancer research.

Although the auctions only take

place four days per year, Hanson said that the community works to promote the event and raise funds to benefit the cause all year long. “The Geneva Cancer Auction is like a pyramid, with the auctions at the top, and then you have all these different committees underneath.”

Throughout the year, other events also take place to raise funds, which are also donated to the Fifth District

Eagles Cancer Telethon. Supplementary events include the Wild Game Feed, Matt Felt Memorial Cancer Benefit Pool Tournament, Geneva Cancer Run and another “mini” auction, scheduled for April 2.

Last year, proceeds from the auctions and other events allowed the community to donate \$100,000 to the Fifth District Eagles Cancer Telethon.

Hanson said that the auctions and other events have continued to grow in popularity.

This year, the annual Wild Game Feed served approximately 1,000 people, which Hanson believes is a

CANCER AUCTION
Continued on Page 3C

Steele Talkin’ is a weekly column featuring officials representing various organizations throughout Steele County. Mären M. DeLaitsch is a Public Health, WIC (Women, Infant and Children) and Immunization Nurse. You can reach her at Steele County Public Health, 507-444-7650.

Blooming Prairie Living

CARE Act unveiled

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

Minnesota House Republicans are unveiling the Caring for the Aging, Retiring and Elderly (CARE) to allow people to keep more money in an effort to stay home longer.

“I think anything that allows people to be more independent and to live their lives fully is a good thing,” said Rep. Peggy Bennett (R-Albert Lea.) “This is for our seniors and retired people to allow them that option.”

According to a press release, the CARE Act builds on historic, bipartisan reforms made during the 2015 legislative session that boosted funding for nursing homes and will help to grow Minnesota’s long-term care workforce. The CARE Act also establishes partnerships with high schools and adult basic education programs to produce more certified nursing assistant certification classes to grow the workforce and a study of the role technology plays in improving seniors’ quality of life, safety and independence.

Bennett is a member of the CARE Act Legislative Working Group, which meets to discuss and explore options for Minnesota’s aging adults.

According to statistics, 60,000 Minnesotans will turn 65 in the next year and before the end of the decade, there will be more



Rep. Peggy Bennett
(R-Albert Lea)

seniors in Minnesota than K-12-age students. The proposed policy changes aim to improve options in health care, financial security, housing, transportation, nutrition and careers for Minnesota’s growing population of aging adults, the press release states.

“It is time for Minnesota to join the more than forty other states who exempt social security from state income taxes,” said Rep. Tam Theis (R-St. Cloud), the vice chair of the Aging and Long-Term Care Policy Committee. “These proposals allow seniors to stay in their homes and close to their families.”

CARE Act legislation is slated for introduction in early 2016.

Blooming Prairie school menus

BPES Breakfast Menu

Jan. 5: Long John, Vegetable Selection, Juice, Milk

Jan. 6: WG Muffin, String Cheese, Vegetable Selection, Fresh Fruit, Milk

Jan. 7: Banana Loaf, Vegetable Selection, Juice, Milk

Jan. 8: UBR Round, Vegetable Selection, Fresh Fruit, Milk

Jan. 11: Breakfast Pizza, Vegetable Selection, Canned Fruit, Milk

Jan. 12: Cinnamon Roll, Vegetable Selection, Juice, Milk

Jan. 13: WG Bagel w/Cream Cheese, Vegetable Selection, Fresh Fruit, Milk

BPES Lunch Menu

Jan. 5: Cheeseburger on WG Bun, Sweet Potato Fries, Fruited Gelatin, Chicken Bacon Ranch Melt, Sweet Potato Fries, Romaine Lettuce, Baby Carrots, Beets, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 6: Pork in Gravy with Mashed, Potatoes, 2 Slices WG Bread, Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, 2 Slices WG Bread, Black Beans, Celery Sticks, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 7: Hotdog on WG Bun, Mexican Rice, Chicken Taco, w/Lettuce & Cheese, Mexican Rice, Broccoli, Black Beans, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 8: Chicken Tenders, Garlic Breadstick, Italian Pasta Bake, Garlic Breadstick, Romaine Lettuce, Green Onions, Tomatoes, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 11: Hot Dog on WG Bun, Baked Beans, Crispy Chicken Sub, Baked Beans, Broccoli Florets, Cherry Tomatoes, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 12: Hamburger on WG Bun, Tri Tator, Deli Sub, Tri Tator, Baby Carrots, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 13: Turkey & Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, WG Dinner Roll, Frank n’ Blanket, Mashed Potatoes, Chopped Lettuce, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

BPHS Lunch Menu

Jan. 5: Chili, Cornbread, Fruited Gelatin, Corn, Baby Carrots, Beets, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 6: Chicken Fajitas, Lettuce / Cheese, Refried Beans, Broccoli, Garbanzo Beans, Celery Sticks, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 7: Pork & Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, 2 WG Sliced Bread, Green Peas, Baby Carrots, Garbanzo Beans, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 8: Italian Pasta Bake, Garlic Breadstick, Romaine, Green Onions, Tomatoes, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 11: Crispy Chicken Sub, Tri Tator, Green Peas, Pinto Beans, Cherry Tomatoes, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 12: Hot Dog, Mac n’ Cheese, Baked Beans, Broccoli Florets, Baby Carrots, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 13: Mexican Pasta, Tortilla Chips, Fruit Crisp, Spring Corn Salad, Pinto Beans, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

A musical holiday



Members of the Blooming Prairie High School band played at Tuba Christmas in Austin on Saturday, Dec. 5. Above are Blooming Prairie band members Kyler Christianson, Viridiana Villarreal and Phil Ramsey at Tuba Christmas.

Blooming Prairie residents named 2015 Outstanding Conservationist of the Year

Lynn and Brenda Schmeling, of rural Blooming Prairie, were selected by the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as the 2015 Outstanding Conservationist of the Year.

The two were recently honored for the award at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, held Dec. 6-8, 2015, in Bloomington.

Each year the state’s Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognize individuals and organizations for their outstanding accomplishments in implementing conservation practices and improving Minnesota’s natural resources. The award program is conducted with support from The Farmer magazine.

According to Adam King, Dodge SWCD District Manager, Lynn and Brenda Schmeling were recognized for a variety of reasons.

They operate a 417 acre cash grain farm, of which 352 acres is situated along the Cedar River. Over the years, the Schmelings have established 25 acres of CRP on the portion of their farm that is located in the Cedar River Watershed.

These acres include: a 5,000 tree riparian buffer planting, filter strips along their drainage ditch, “Back Forty Pheasant Habitat” and a food plot. In addition, grassed waterways with block chute outlets, water and sediment basins and a farmstead shelterbelt have been installed. Their farming operation balances production needs with land stewardship which



Lynn and Brenda Schmeling, of rural Blooming Prairie, were selected by the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as the 2015 Outstanding Conservationist of the Year.

will preserve water quality and wildlife for future generations.

“We’re really proud of Lynn and Brenda Schmeling and what they and their family have done for conservation in Dodge County,” said King. “Their farming operation balances production needs with land stewardship which will help preserve soil and water quality for future generations.”

HENEFIELD LAW OFFICE, LLC

Welcomes
Jason Iacovino



Pictured: Frank Henefield, Jason Iacovino,

415 E. Main St. Blooming Prairie, MN
(507) 583-6663
Frank.bplaw@gmail.com | Jason.bplaw@gmail.com

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RECIPE CORNER

Fun Taco Cups

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning
- 1 (10 oz.) can refrigerated biscuits
- 1/2 c. shredded cheddar cheese

By Rhonda Underdahl

Prepare taco meat; drain. Spray muffin pan with Pam nonstick spray. Press biscuits into bottoms and sides of muffin pan. Fill biscuits 3/4 full with taco meat. Bake at 400° for 15 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 2 to 3 minutes or until cheese melts. Serve with taco sauce. May garnish with lettuce, tomato and olives.

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Ellendale Living

A performance in front of the school board



Staff photos by Alan Van Ormer

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) Readers' Theatre performed a shortened version of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" during the NRHEG School Board meeting on Dec. 21 in the NRHEG Media Center. The Readers' Theatre is a performance that brings a written work to life in a new way, using readers' voices almost like instruments to place emphasis on words and ideas. Pictured from left to right, Carma Pederson, Will Rudau, Justin Mortenson, Maci Surat, Dalton Kraay as the Grinch, Michaih VanSyckel, Grace Cummins and Aubrey Johnson.



Standing, from left are Justin Mortenson, Will Radau, Dalton Kraay, Michaih VanSyckel, Maci Surat. Kneeling, from left, Carma Pederson and Grace Cummins. (Not pictured is Ben Lewer.)

NRHEG Strategic plan continuing; superintendent contract negotiations starting

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

The strategic planning process is continuing in the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) School District. At the December NRHEG Board of Education meeting, Superintendent Dr. Dale Carlson shared a document that had a timeline of the planning process. Board members are being asked to be part of the process starting with the listening sessions that begin on Feb. 18. Consultants will be spending a day in both the Ellendale and New Richland buildings talking with students and staff and wrapping up the day with a public session at both sites. The timeline also includes committee meetings and the development of the strategic plan committee that could include as many as 25 members, including each member of the school board, members of the administration, staff members, community members and parents.

Board approves best work force plan
The school board also approved the planned development of the "World's Best Workforce." Minnesota statutes requires school districts, at a public meeting, to adopt a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the world's best workforce. Carlson explained that the intended focus of the original passage of the legislation in 2013 was to increase student performance. The document includes clearly defined goals in five areas: all children are ready to start kindergarten, all third-graders can read at grade level, all achievement gaps between students are closed, all students are ready for career and/or postsecondary education and all students graduate from high school. He told the school board that when setting goals, you would identify gaps in each of the areas. "That is not necessarily the only gaps we have, but when we are estab-

lishing a plan, we want to get very targeted and focused on things we want to set as priorities," he said. Carlson added that the world's best workforce plan would be part of the strategic plan. "We are focused on student achievement and supports that go into that," he said. "We hear from our consultants how important to the strategic planning process the world's best workforce plan is." **School district moving forward with superintendent contract negotiations**
School board members have approved moving forward with contract negotiations with Carlson after the members accepted the superintendent's performance evaluation report. Under state law it is required that the board chair report the outcome of the superintendent's evaluation. Carlson was graded on six performance areas. Board Chair Rick Schultz said that in summary the NRHEG Board of Education

believes that Dr. Carlson has either met or exceeded all performances measured. The performance measured are relationship with the school board, staff and personnel relations, labor negotiations and relations, community relations, business and finance and personal qualities. In other business, the school board:
• approved the use of the board member district e-mail as the primary e-mail address to be used by board members for board-related business;
• agreed to purchase Chromebooks for each board member to assist with board and district-related business. The total cost is \$2,100; and
• set a special board meeting for 6 p.m., Jan. 4, at the media center in New Richland. The primary purpose is the school district's annual organizational meeting, committee and other requirements. In addition, the school board will also discuss an upcoming district-wide survey.

6 percent budget levy decrease for school district

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) School District will see a 6 percent decrease in its levy for 2015-16. It is the second straight year that the levy has decreased. Last year, it decreased 10 percent, while in 2014 the levy had increased 16 percent. The total proposed school tax to be levied in 2015 to be collected in 2016 is more than \$1.3 million. The school board unanimously approved the proposed tax levy. During the December NRHEG School Board meeting, Superintendent Dr. Dale Carlson presented a general overview during the Truth in Taxation public meeting. He didn't get into budget details other than giving board overview of different fund accounts. Carlson felt the primary purpose was to provide the board a general accounting of the school district, as well as informing the impact of the levy. An estimated 85 percent of the

budget is in people-related cost. "We know our people on a daily basis makes the greatest difference," Carlson said, adding that ongoing facility and safety needs will continue to impact the budget. According to a presentation, an estimated 61 percent of the taxes are used for the general fund. The general fund provides money for district instructional programs, operating capital expenses, building and land lease and health and safety costs. An estimated 34 percent is for debt service for repayment of principal and interest on district debt and the remaining 4 percent is for community education programs. There are certain variables that cause property taxes to decrease or increase. These variables include changes market values, classification or class rates, changes in property tax credits, referendums, increases or decreases in levy amounts caused by changes in state funding formulas and property value increase or decrease.

CANCER AUCTION

Continued from Page 1C

ple, which Hanson believes is a record-breaking number. During the auctions, Hanson said the Geneva Bar & Grill is packed full of people who have come to show their support for the cause. "It'll be wall-to-wall people in here; we always get a huge turnout," she said. "It's so much fun." Every year, the auctions feature hundreds of items and, this year, Hanson estimates that there are over 250 items. The 2016 auction will also include two "big-ticket items," including a Browning rifle and a Vikings jersey signed by Paul Krause. The rifle's auction time and date is yet to be announced, but the jersey will be auctioned off at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 16. Krause was a football safety who played with the Vikings for 11 years. Krause was also inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1998 and played in all four of the Vikings' Super

Bowl appearances (Super Bowl IV, VIII, IX and XI). There are also a number of other items to bid on, including everything from baskets to gift certificates. Hanson noted that donations will continue to come in up until the day of the auctions. "People will come in as the auction's going on and they'll donate stuff," Hanson said. Hanson encourages people who would like to make a donation for the auction to do so prior to Jan. 16. She also noted, however, that donations are welcome any time. Donations can always

be "saved" for the next year. As usual, food and drinks are also available during the auctions. Hanson said the event is always a fun, social experience and encourages people to come check out the auctions. "We have a blast," she said. "It's a big deal in this community." To learn more, visit the Geneva Bar & Grill's Facebook Page, or <http://genevabarandgrill.com>.

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More opportunities will be available at the new location of KIK Graphics in Blooming Prairie. Minimizer is one of the top customers of KIK Graphics, managed by Tyler Kruckeberg, a 2008 graduate of Blooming Prairie High School.

(Right) Tyler Kruckeberg, owner of KIK Graphics and Printing, cuts the ribbon during an official Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce ceremony at an open house for KIK on Wednesday night, Dec. 23. Chamber members Jeremy Wangen, far left, and Luke Swenson (President) hold the ribbon.



Minimizer owner and chief visionary Craig Kruckeberg leads a tour of the newly remodeled historic building at 110 Highway Ave. N. in Blooming Prairie. Kruckeberg is shown at an open house for the new KIK Graphics building. He shows off an old historic freight elevator while visiting with BP Mayor H. Peterson and his wife Jean.

Congratulations Minimizer & KIK Graphics

KIK Graphics has found a new home at the corner of Highway 218 and Main Street. In addition, Minimizer has moved its marketing department next door to KIK. The Kruckeberts should be congratulated on the commitment they've made to their hometown.

We want to extend our best wishes on your newly renovated building on Main Street.
This is a wonderful addition to the community!

Thanks for investing in the future of Blooming Prairie...
and best of luck to you in the future!



Tyler Kruckeberg is the head of operations at KIK Graphics, which just moved to a new location on Highway 218 and Main Street in Blooming Prairie. The Blooming Prairie Chamber of Commerce led a ribbon cutting for the new location on Wednesday, Dec. 23.



Cash Kruckeberg, 2 1/2, does some measuring with his trusty tape measure while attending an open house for KIK Graphics and Printing in Blooming Prairie on Wednesday night, Dec. 23. More than 200 attended the special night's activities.

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Photos by Howard Lestrud

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MedfordLiving

Medford City Council takes a step forward in Municipal Complex project exploration

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

As the Medford Fire Hall and city shop are getting tight for space, the City Facilities Committee has strategically made recommendations to the city council based on a list of needs.

On Dec. 21, the City Facilities Committee recommended that the “city should build a facility to address future needs,” according to agenda report. Committee members were given a tour of both the fire hall and city shop area.

City Administrator and City Facilities Committee Co-Chair and facilitator, Andy Welti, explained that the committee has a goal to build a complex that will serve as a City Hall and Fire Hall at an affordable price. Ultimately, the committee recommended the council to contract with an engineering firm to prepare an alternate engineering plan for the municipal complex with a maximum cost of \$2.4 million.

“Build it to meet the future needs now instead of building

a structure then facing the task of building another structure in 20 to 30 years to meet future needs,” states the recommendation from the City Facilities Committee.

Beyond Welti, the City Facilities Committee consists of co-chair and facilitator Rich Kucera of the Department of Public Works, council members Marie Sexton and Keith Maas, fire department chief Rick Hager, fire department assistant chief Greg Sanborn, and residents Bruce Paulson, Jerry Roberts, Grace Bartlett and Juanita Paulson.

The municipal complex was discussed by the council in 2008 when the city council looked into purchasing the old school property, north of Medford Senior Care’s location, on 3rd Street Northeast for a city building.

After purchasing the land, a facilities work group hired I&S Group of Faribault to design a municipal complex for a grant application. The design included relocating the city hall and fire department ended up with a price of nearly \$3 million.

While the municipal complex

was discussed in great detail then and ultimately trumped by streets as priority, Mayor Lois Nelson appointed a City Facilities Work group to examine current facilities and make a new recommendation to the council on how to move forward.

Their first meeting of the City Facilities Committee was Sept. 29. According to Welti’s memorandum, committee members were given a tour of current facilities, reviewed the 2009 proposal of a complex, and considered a scaled back version of the 2009 blueprint which included a new shop and fire bay.

The committee then modified a list of needs and wants for the complex. The city of Medford has \$5,000 budgeted and was awarded a \$5,000 grant from AgStar for city complex engineering through the Rural Feasibility Study Grant Program.

Some of the “needs” as identified by the committee for the fire department are storage of current fire trucks and equipment; storage for new fire trucks, which are much larger than older models; fire department facility that would withstand strong

wind or tornado; fire hall meeting space; and additional space for fire department training.

Storage for all city public works equipment was a highlighted need at the Dec. 21 meeting as the council walked through the snug city shop area. Storage for all public works equipment was reported as “not met,” since the reports state that the city currently pays \$3,600 per year to store the Jetter truck at an off-site location.

Other needs on the City Facilities Committees’ list include City Hall office space and council meeting room; expanded city council room; community room in City Hall; insulate the existing fire hall attic; shop door that accommodates a truck with plow attachment; and more.

Councilors expressed their belief that the municipal complex project should be brought to the community for referendum.

“I did get the timeline for when a referendum question would have to be submitted to the county, and that’s not until August, so what I’m looking for is that you guys wouldn’t have to make a decision tonight,” said

Welti to the councilors. “I think that’s probably best, so you guys have time to absorb the information, ask questions.”

Though it could be later, Welti said that the deadline for a November ballot would be August. “I definitely would like to have this go to referendum to see if our town is even going to support it,” said councilor Linda Dusek. “If the community is on our side, it makes it easier. If not, we’ll just figure out what else to do.”

Councilor Chad Merritt expressed concern as to whether now would be the right time to move forward with the project. He was also skeptical to the 2008 plan’s design, in which he felt there was “too much office space” for a small staff.

Councilor and facilities committee member, Keith Maas, believes in the efficiency of “building for the future,” and expressed that viewpoint at the meeting.

Nelson expressed similar visions: “I think the future is what we need to look at here...If we don’t come up with something, it’s just going to become more

costly as time goes along, and the need will continue to be great.”

Councilor and facilities committee member, Marie Sexton, was an active voice in advocating for the continuation of the project. “That’s what I want, to make sure that what we don’t do is spend the same money twice on this.”

“This doesn’t mean build. It means check it out,” Sexton said about the City Facilities Committee’s recommendation. “You can’t present something that you don’t have a plan for that’s better than this.”

After much discussion, the council unanimously voted to move forward with hiring an engineering firm to improve the municipal complex plan to greater fit the identified needs with the use of the AgStar grant.

From there, Welti shared his plans to contact engineering firms for quotes. He said that he would report back to the council in January or February.

Medford School Board listens to various issues

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

Medford School Board discussed a variety of topics before the holiday bustle began.

The meeting started on Dec. 21 with a special education services update from Director of Special Services for the Owatonna School District, Mark Krug, though he reported on Medford School District’s special education and support services.

In his presentation, Krug reported 107 students participat-

ing in some form of special education or support services at the Medford school in 2015.

Out of those 107 students, Krug said that six disabilities primarily make up the disabilities of those 107 students. The six disabilities are specific learning disabilities, developmental delay, emotional or Behavioral Disorders, autism spectrum disorders, speech or language and other health disabilities.

He shared that autism effects one of every 65 students.

The 107 students receive specialized instruction provided by

licensed teachers, professionals and paraprofessionals. Krug shared that each student has an individualized education plan that adheres to their needs.

“We gladly provide these services, because we as a school district because we believe that every child has a right to a public education,” he said about the severity of disabilities served and the services that are provided.

High School Principal Chris Overbo reported on the 35-45 percent attendance rate for high school parent teacher conferences. He said that the number is lower than they had hoped. However, he thinks that the availability of Infinite Campus Portal might have an impact on attendance, for more parents are able to access grades digitally.

Superintendent Rich Dahman informed the board that the enrollment for Medford School is at 890 students, which is “up three from a year ago but down seven from November.” He said this decrease since November is pretty nor-

mal, as families relocate.

Dahman also forecasted topics of discussion for the 2016 Minnesota Legislature session. He predicts that a major topic of discussion will be about what to do with the \$1.871 billion surplus in the state budget due to lower than expected costs for Medicare.

In his report, Dahman shared that of the surplus amount, \$594 million is required to go to the budget reserve and \$71 million to the Environmental Fund, leaving \$1.206 billion available balance. His report states that “he most commonly heard areas for increased spending include transportation, infrastructure (including rural broadband), LGA and education.”

He said that the most positive impact area for Medford school are “issues that would increase the equity in school funding between districts.”

School board member William Cronin stressed to his fellow board members the importance of advocating for state legislative actions that will posi-

tively impact Medford school, saying “I’m not sure that we as a board do that.”

Action items included the approval of the 2015-2016 Revised Budget, certification of the Final Property Tax Levy 2015

payable 2016, approval of the proposed 2016 School Board meeting dates, approval for a second assistant coach for the speech team, and the approval of the 2015-2017 Master Teacher Agreement.

Medford school menus

Medford School Breakfast Menu

Jan. 5: Cinnamon Roll OR Choice of Cereal, Graham Crackers, Vegetable Selection, Apple Juice, Milk

Jan. 6: Blueberry Loaf OR Choice of Cereal, Graham Crackers, Vegetable Selection, Fresh Fruit, Milk

Jan. 7: Cheesy Omelet, Tri Tator OR Choice of Cereal, Graham Crackers, Vegetable Selection, Orange Juice, Milk

Jan. 8: Ham-N-Eggwich OR Choice of WG Cereal, Graham Crackers, Vegetable Selection, Fresh Fruit, Milk

Jan. 11: Ham and Cheese Bagel OR Choice of Cereal, Graham Crackers, Vegetable Selection, Canned Fruit, Milk

Jan. 12: Mini Pancakes OR Choice of Cereal, Graham Crackers, Vegetable Selection, Apple Juice, Milk

Jan. 13: Chocolate Chip Loaf OR Choice of Cereal, Graham Crackers, Vegetable Selection, Fresh Fruit, Milk

Medford School Lunch Menu

Jan. 5: Pizza Parlor Pizza,

Mixed Vegetables, Fruited Gelatin, Pretzel Bites w/Cheese, Deli Sub, Romaine Lettuce, Baby Carrots, Beets, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 6: Hotdog on WG Bun, Mexican Rice, Chicken Caesar Salad, Combo Sliders, Black Beans, Celery Sticks, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 7: Chicken Alfredo, Green Peas, Crispy Chicken Salad, Deli Sandwich, Broccoli, Black Beans, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 8: Chicken Nuggets, Garlic Breadstick, WG Cookie, Turkey BLT Salad, Yogurt Pak, Romaine Lettuce, Green Onions, Tomatoes, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 11: Sausage Patties w/Cinnamon Roll, Tri Tator, Chicken Caesar Salad, Crispy Chicken Wrap, Broccoli Florets, Cherry Tomatoes, Seasonal Fruit

Jan. 12: Frank n’ Blanket, Baked Beans, Taco Salad, Deli Sub, Baby Carrots, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

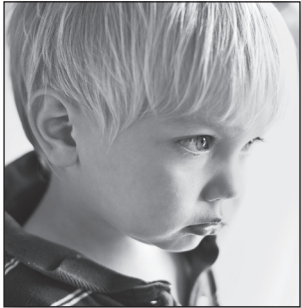
Jan. 13: Chicken Patty Sandwich, Tortilla Chips, Turkey BLT Salad, Buffalo Chicken Wrap, Chopped Lettuce, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

Weekly crossword on Page 4B

PUZZLE SOLUTION

S	T	P						S	R	N	A
C	U	R	B					P	A	E	O
E	V	I	L				T	E	N	T	E
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E	V	E	N	E	D				S	I	V
B	A	R	E	D					S	E	E
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GRIEF RELIEF



Sometimes children don’t seem to care. It’s not uncommon for some children, especially those under age 5 to show

little feeling when told of the death of a relative. And while it may seem a child should feel sad, the child may have little understanding of the meaning of death. The child may not have been particularly close to the deceased or realized that death is permanent. Allow and accept the child’s honest expression and don’t make the child feel guilty or pressured.

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Owatonna Living

Music Boosters of Owatonna prepare for evening of tunes

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

There is little reason to be glum after the holidays because the Music Boosters of Owatonna 6th annual Concert is coming up on Saturday, Jan. 9.

Starting at 6 p.m., the silent auction will begin and at 7 p.m. the concert tunes will begin to fly. Concert tickets cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for students.

The lineup for this year’s concert, according to MBO secretary Rebecca Baldwin Rand, is going to be “quite the talent” as Owatonna High School Choir Director Chris Harris is organizing the performance lineup.

Rand anticipates “all kinds of wonderful variety,” including a men’s vocal group, violin and viola trio and a ukulele performance. The OHS Dinner Ensemble will perform before the concert and perhaps during intermission. Rand knew that Jenna McMains and Wyndom Anez will be performing a duet.

The musicians are students, parents, community members and faculty. The popular group in Owatonna, the Bad Tangerines will be performing a song or two.

“It’s always very creative,” she said. “People enjoy coming, and they love watching the faculty perform.”

During intermission, attendees can purchase Costas candy truffles and Starbucks coffee. The silent auction winners will be confirmed for intermission.

The silent auction will feature items donated by individuals and local businesses, including Wenger, Tone Music and the Strings Academy. Rand said that some popular items are the chair and music stand donated by Wenger, sleigh ride, family night basket, gift cards and the chance to have the jazz ensemble or strings ensemble perform for you.

“Local businesses have shown a great amount of support,” said Rand.

The first MBO silent auction and concert was in 2011, where it was more of a success than they were anticipating. “It became a tradition,” laughed Rand.

They raised about \$3,600 in the first year. In 2012, they raised about \$5,000. The past few years, they have been reaching \$9,000.

Rand said that there is no specific dollar amount goal; however, MBO would like to reach over \$9,000 again.

Each year, either the Owatonna High School choir, band or orchestra will pick a special project to raise money for at the concert. One year it was for new choir robes, and last year it was for a new euphonium. The next project goal will

be for the orchestra and will be announced at the event.

MBO works to support all the music departments in the Owatonna school district, including elementary, middle school, junior high and high school. Sometimes that support is financial support, and oftentimes that support is through volunteering time to take tickets or help set up for concerts.

There are 10-12 members on the MBO board that give their time to better the music programs and opportunities for students in Owatonna.

Rand said that the silent auction and concert is their biggest fundraiser of the year, but they do smaller fundraisers like the Cash Wise food truck in the summer.

It is also possible to become an MBO member by filling out the form often found in concert programs and donating a sum of money. Rand said that they do not require a set dollar amount for donations to qualify as a member.

As for the silent auction and concert, Rand said that they typically have a “good crowd.”

“You would think that right after Christmas that people would be tired, but people are always ready to get back to it,” she laughed. “So we have a good time!”

Minnesota in need of families willing to adopt children from foster care

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

Over the holidays, many families gather to enjoy one another’s company and treasure togetherness. Children without permanent homes find temporary families over the holidays in foster care; however, the need for family permanence is strong.

As of October 2015 according to Minnesota Department of Child Services data, 840 children in Minnesota are under state guardianship. Of the 840, 499 children are in need of adoptive families immediately, and 341 of the 840 are in pre-adoptive families, typically relatives or foster parents with plans to adopt them.

Children’s Home Society of Minnesota and Lutheran Social Service (CHLSS) of Minnesota work in collaboration to find permanent homes and families for children and children for families that feel called towards adoption. CHLSS is one of five agencies providing adoption services.

Director of Social Work, Domestic Adoption, Pregnancy and Birth Parent Services, Heidi Wiste, said that there is a strong need for children of all ages to be placed through adoption.

When parents’ rights of guardianship of their children are terminated, the child or children are then under the state guardianship.

County social service agencies then place children in foster care and if courts ultimately terminate parents’ rights, children are under the guardianship of the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Children are placed in foster homes until adoption.

The hope is to place children

in permanent families as quickly as possible. However, CLHSS makes sure that families are fully prepared for adoption.

They provide orientation and 20 hours of training sessions for interested families. Wiste said that training for families is always “move at your own pace.”

“We help families explore concurrent planning and if this is a possibility for them in addition to their motivation to learn more about becoming an adoptive resource for waiting youth,” said Wiste. “We have been so happy to help families along their journey, explore how they can play a role in the permanency continuum for waiting children.”

How long does it take to adopt a child? Wiste calls this the “magic question,” because it is different for every family.

“The application process is very involved. They do a couple assessments, so there are a lot of steps,” said Wiste. “We want families to be realistic about the possible struggles they might face, whether they are open to teenagers or whether there is a four-year-old with mild special needs. We want placements to be successful.”

Wiste said that some issues that children that are in need of adoption struggle with “trauma and trust issues,” so adoptive parents have to be ready to heal those scars with children.

CHLSS research states that “of the 840 children waiting for adoption, most have been traumatized during their critical developmental years. Many will need additional educational, medical or psychological help as they grow toward maturity.”

Of the 840 children in need, 59.1 percent have a documented physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disability, 58.5 per-

cent are siblings who need to be adopted together, 54.1 percent are children of color, 41.3 percent are 12 to 18 years old, 32.3 percent are 6 to 11 years old and 26.3 percent are under 6 years old, though many of the younger children are part of sibling groups who need to be adopted together. This is from information provided by the Minnesota Department of Child Services.

While many of the current children in need of adoption live in the seven county metropolitan area (359 of the 840 children), Wiste said that there is need everywhere.

“As of July 2014, we have placed children into seven adoptive homes in the Steele, Dodge, Freeborn, Waseca county area,” said Wiste. “We have been involved with helping 15 children from the same counties, find permanency through our program, including through our Child-Specific Recruitment services.”

Wiste encourages those that feel that they might be a good fit to consider looking into CLHSS by visiting chlss.org.

“You start with a two hour orientation in person or webinar,” said Wiste. “It never hurts to take that first step. It is not a commitment beyond your own time and energy, but the commitment comes when you look at the child and are working towards placement with that child.”

Placement decisions are based on a CLHSS team effort, so each child’s needs are evaluated to find the perfect family fit. “It’s an amazing group of people,” said Wiste. “The kids are at the heart of the work.”

Steele County Historical Society to host Little Theatre of Owatonna’s 50th Anniversary Roundtable Discussion

The Steele County Historical Society (SCHS) is pleased to announce a Roundtable Discussion on Thursday, Jan. 14, at 7 pm in the Wenger Room of the History Center located at 1700 Austin Road, Owatonna.

The topic for the evening is Little Theatre of Owatonna’s 50th Anniversary, which complements one of the exhibits currently being displayed at the History Center.

The first part of the program will feature a panel of six presenters who represent different aspects of theatre – with on-stage and backstage perspectives. The panel will be made up of Jeffrey Jackson (an LTO director), Sharon Stark (LTO history and administration), Tim Van Gelder (LTO actor), Mary Gontarek (play selection, makeup and costuming), and Mark Kuklok (LTO set production). The roundtable will be facilitated by Jerry Ganfield, a board member for the Steele County Historical

Society, and long-time supporter of LTO.

“Following the panel presentations, we encourage the audience to share their memories and stories about their involvement with LTO”, said Kim Purscell, Executive Director of the Steele County Historical Society. “LTO has provided an incredible community resource that was the impetus for long-term friendships, professional relationships, and rich memories. Please come to engage with

fellow theatre lovers, and enjoy the LTO exhibit in the grand exhibition gallery in the History Center.”

Admission to the Roundtable Discussion is free to SCHS members and \$2 per person for non-members. The History Center is open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., Thursday from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. For more information, please call 451-1420 and ask for Kim.

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PROPOSALS WANTED

The City of Owatonna Parks and Recreation Department owns and operates Brooktree Golf Course. The City wishes to receive proposals to operate the Clubhouse Grill, which is located within the clubhouse facility. Specifically, the City is seeking an operator to provide food and beverage services with the owner/operator leasing space from the city.

Proposals are Due
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For more information, the RFP and draft lease are available on the Parks & Recreation website www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/parksrecreation or by calling 507-444-4321.



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Owatonna Living

2015 challenging year for two of Steele County's newest leaders

By **ALAN VAN ORMER**
Managing Editor

It was a challenging 2015 for two of the newest administrators in Steele County.

Cathy Piepho took over as treasurer on Jan. 5. Laura Elvebak became the county administrator not too long after.

“We walked into some pretty fun stuff right off the bat,” Elvebak said.

The more challenging issue dealt with Steele County Communities for a Lifetime (SCCL), Koda Living and Park Place and the default situation. “That was certainly a challenge,” Elvebak said.

Then there was the public works building. It boiled down to making a decision and securing the bonding money to get the project underway, Elvebak said. In addition, the bond rating provided much work for the two to do throughout the year.

There were also organizational changes that took place, staff resignations and retirements, two brand new commissioners and finding ways to make the management teams work efficiently together.

“It has been challenging, but very exciting as well,” Elvebak said.

The SCCL issue was one that took a lot of energy for the two administrators, as well as other Steele County staff. There was also a good deal of work with bankers for the forbearance agreement.

Earlier in 2015, the Steele County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a forbearance agreement addressing its future with SCCL. SCCL is a nonprofit organization with equal representation from the county and Benedictine Health System that owns Koda Living Community and Park Place Senior Living in Owatonna.

SCCL notified Steele County in mid-February that it was unable to make its March debt-service payment on its bonds resulting in a default.

Piepho said what was difficult was trying to make something good out of an issue that was tough.

“This was difficult because there were a lot of players involved,” she said. “We had bankers, SCCL members, our group, the credit raters; it was



Piepho

difficult to find a happy medium. When we did we just ended up doing the right thing for Steele County.”

The original forbearance agreement had a stipulation that said Steele County would fund the SCCL unlimitedly. “This put more liability and responsibility onto the county,” Elvebak said. “It was far outside the scope of the SCCL and the intent of that origination when it was created.”

Because of that forbearance



Elvebak

agreement, Piepho stated that the county is holding stable. “We haven’t had to transfer any more funds over to them,” she said.

One other major issue involved the public works building and the work that needed to be done to make sure there was accurate information, Elvebak said. “There is a lot of misinformation out in the community,” she said. “You want to make sure the public has the right information so they have good

discussions with the commissioners.”

Moving forward, Piepho said that transparency is important.

Steele County is also looking at a lean program.

“We’ve gotten a lot of support from the county board to dig into our processes to make sure we are cutting out the waste,” Elvebak said. “There is a lot of excitement among the staff to make sure they are working smarter and not harder.”

Piepho stated that the ultimate goal is to give better service to taxpayers. “As exciting as the lean process is, it is also a challenge,” she said. “You do have to take time out of your day. Everybody is busy doing their normal routine and asking them to think differently and make changes, that is also a challenge.”

Despite the challenges, both have enjoyed working with the people at Steele County.

“The staff at the finance division has been working on ways to be more efficient,” Piepho said. “It’s been a pleasure seeing the staff come up with ideas and actually doing some of those, making the workload more efficient. I enjoy hearing people

telling me they understand the budget or things maybe they didn’t know before.”

For Elvebak, it is very similar to Piepho. “We’re creating a new position, working with the staff and looking at new ways of doing things,” she said. “Both of us being in a new position, we’ve really been able to look at it very globally.”

Piepho said Steele County is moving in the right direction. “We’re taking a look at all the processes and services we give to the public,” she said. “A couple of years ago the board put together a strategic plan. We’ve moving into that plan.”

Elvebak added the county has good relationships and partnerships going. This includes communications with the public, private, with communities, townships and chambers and the private industry.

“We’re trying to make sure we’re out and about hearing what they’re doing and what they’re needs are and be accommodating to that,” Elvebak said. “And let them understand our barriers and what we’re permitted to do as well. That is beneficial to the county.”

Penny George™ Institute for Health and Healing – Owatonna Hospital receives generous donation

Penny George™ Institute for Health and Healing – Owatonna Hospital received \$5,000 from the Festival of Tables Committee.

“We’re so grateful for the generous donation by the Auxiliary,” said Linda Hoffman, Penny George™ Institute for Health and Healing – Owatonna Hospital manager. “The services we provide add great value to our community, and we couldn’t have gotten our start without the help of the Auxiliary.”

In order to bring this nationally-recognized leader in holistic care to the area, Owatonna Hospital was required to fundraise a portion of the cost. The Penny George Institute Foundation then matched those funds in order to establish the clinic on the healthcare campus.

In total, Owatonna Hospital Auxiliary donated \$25,000 and was instrumental in establishing Penny George Institute at Owatonna Hospital.

The Festival of Tables Committee is a group that raises money to support the Owatonna Hospital Auxiliary through an annual fundraiser, and supporting funds were provided by the Owatonna Chapter of Thrivent Financial.



Submitted photo

Owatonna Hospital Auxilians and members of the Festival of Tables Committee present Penny George™ Institute for Health and Healing – Owatonna Hospital with a \$5,000 check.

United Way at 99 percent of campaign goal

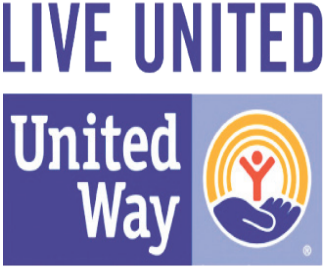
United Way of Steele County is very close to achieving its 2015 Campaign goal.

Community members and local businesses have donated \$665,206 to date, just short of the \$670,000 necessary to meet the growing need for services in 2016. They need just under \$5,000 in additional donations to meet the goal.

“We thank all of those local businesses and individuals whose donations have brought us this close to our goal. This illustrates that our community is at its core generous, caring, and action oriented,” said United Way Executive Director, Kim Schaufenbuel.

“We have had some new and unexpected gifts this season, and many of our regular donors have remained loyal to the mission of United Way. Now we just need a few more heroes in the community to push us over the edge of our goal.”

The United Way funds 24 local programs that strengthen families, assist community members to meet their ba-



sic needs, increase access to healthcare and affordable prescription medications, give seniors and disabled resident the support they need to live independent lives and youth the tools they require to succeed.

The mission of the United Way of Steele County is to change lives by mobilizing and optimizing the caring power of our community.

This year’s goal of \$670,000 will fund the 24 critically needed programs operated by local nonprofit agencies.

To make a contribution go to www.unitedwaysteelcounty.org or mail a check or pledge to United Way, Box 32, Owatonna, MN 55060.

SOLAR ENERGY

Continued from Page 1C

Lake and some 300 feet of river, so we don’t really see that as an ideal place for a farm anyways.”

Oolman addressed the third category to accessory use and primary use, which is “reflecting.” He said that the reflecting unit is not likely to appear soon; however, if it does, it will be handled under a conditional use permit.

The ordinance was designed by the Planning and Zoning Commission with other similar counties in mind, and Oolman called the ordinance “pretty basic.” The Planning and Zoning Commission had a public hearing, and he said that there “was not a lot of controversy.”

When time for public com-

ment at the county board meeting came, however, concerns were shared.

Dan Niles questioned the duration of the conditional use permit. To that Oolman responded “probably until such time that the solar panels are no longer there.”

“I don’t think they would be renewal type,” he said about the conditional use permit. “That would be up to the board at the time, but I don’t really see a need to renew them unless something changes.”

Chad Mifek was a concerned neighbor of a farmer that is considering selling or transforming land into a solar farm. “It would be surrounding my house and

my neighbor’s house,” he said.

“I guess I’d just like to put in consideration that these are residential homes that were built out there to see farmland and be out in the country—not to wake up every morning and look out and see solar panels,” said Mifek. “I think that the setback should be greater than what a building set back is, which is 20 feet from property line. I think that it should be greater when there is a residential house on that property.”

Mifek expressed concern that solar panels for neighbors would decrease the value of his property value, and he suggested that even tree lines or some sort of landscaping would be welcomed

to “block the view” of solar panels.

“I’m not against them, but I think they have the right places and right locations,” he said. “Right up to residential homes out in the country, I don’t feel is an appropriate place.”

His other concerns were about water run-off and tiling, and Oolman said that tiling was “an issue and concern” in the drafting process of the ordinance.

Duane Hebert of Novel Energy Solutions was able to provide insight from “the industry side” of solar energy issues such as tiling and run off.

“As far as tiling, we’ve run into this issue in other places as well. We make sure we have a

good solid map of the tiles, and work around them...If we need to pull a few panels, that can be done,” said Herbert. “That would be our expense. If we’re the ones creating the issue, the developer or the owner of the system would take care of that.”

“As far as storm water is concerned, under most of these systems, you do a low growth planting...that actually increases the storm water quality and the infiltration,” Herbert explained.

Prior to the decision for the adoption of the solar energy ordinance, the committee decided to adopt the ordinance with interim use permit rather than conditional use permit so that there would be an expiration date to

the permit.

This suggestion was made by Herbert. He said that many panels have a warranty of 25 years, so some communities have chosen interim use permit rather than conditional use permit. “That prevents it from being there forever if you don’t want it there forever,” said Herbert.

Oolman said that this was not considered in the planning, and it would be a relatively easy change. The expiration date and regulations for each solar energy systems would be determined decided upon during the interim use permit process for each application.



January is National Volunteer Blood Donor Month, a reminder of how vitally important our nation's blood donors are to the health of thousands of people every day. In fact, according to the American Red Cross, more than 41,000 blood donations are needed daily, and your blood donation can help save the lives of up to three people. Make a commitment to donate today, and feel good about the life-changing impact you're making on our community.



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St. Joseph's Church
512 S. Elm Ave, Owatonna
- February 8 - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.**
Riverland Community College
965 Alexander Drive SW, Owatonna
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Trinity Lutheran Church
609 S. Lincoln Ave, Owatonna
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Section 179 is now permanent



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Anna Boroff, senior public policy director
for Minnesota Corn Growers Association.

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

Possibly the most important and exciting piece of legislation – permanent improvements to the Section 179 expensing provision – for the farming community has made it through Congress.

“This is a pretty significant tax deduction,” said Anna Boroff, senior public policy director for Minnesota Corn Growers Association.

Under the legislation, the agreement will make permanent the increase in the amount that farms and small businesses can expense for new equipment. The bill would make permanent the improvements to the Section 179 expensing provision, which increases the deduction amount of \$500,000 from \$25,000 for the cost of manufacturing, production and other business equipment.

Recently, a bipartisan year-end agreement passed the U.S. Senate. According to a press

release from U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, the agreement is comprised of a tax extenders bill and omnibus appropriations bill that have also passed the House and are expected to be signed into law. The agreement advances many key rural priorities, including helping farmers lower energy costs while investing in renewable energy, boosting agriculture research and improving Section 179.

“Minnesota’s prosperity depends on supporting and strengthening our farms and rural communities throughout our state,” Klobuchar said in a press release. “Today’s bipartisan year-end agreement is a win for rural Minnesota. From helping a farmer buy a new tractor to supporting cutting-edge agriculture research, the agreement includes provisions that will help keep our rural communities strong.”

As for Section 179, Boroff stated that taxes are a pretty significant expense if purchasing large equipment if thinking about a large purchase. “Going forward they know the tax deduction is in place and it makes it more appealing to purchase some equipment,” she said.

Minnesota Farm Bureau President Kevin Paap agrees the passage of the tax deduction is good news. “This provides certainty to ag and others trying to do tax planning for the whole year,” he said. “It gives them the ability to reinvest back into the farm or ranch by making some of those capital purchases.”

Tom Sell, consultant for the Minnesota Corn Growers Association, stated that permanency is key. He said that this year the farming community can look and do some long range planning. “We think that is good,” he said. “As a general rule, when something is law it is hard to change. There is a reasonable level of certainty that this will be the law going forward.”

This is a significant provision for agriculture, Sell added. “It can really help manage tax liability and put those dollars to use in the economy,” he said.

COOL is repealed

The American Soybean Association is one group that is happy about the repeal of the mandatory country of origin labeling, or COOL.

According to a press release, the rule has been the subject of criticism from both ASA and the livestock industry that represents the leading consumer of U.S. soybean meal,

given the significant potential of the rule to disrupt trade and lead to \$1.01 billion in retaliation from Canada and Mexico following the World Trade Organization’s finding that the COOL language was discriminatory.

“Soybean farmers are relieved to put COOL behind us,” said ASA President Richard Wilkins, who raises both soybeans and beef cattle in southern Delaware. “This was an issue that impacted both feed grain and oilseed farmers, as well as livestock producers, and we’re happy to see it come to a satisfactory conclusion that avoids retaliation from our valuable trading partners in Canada and Mexico.”

Paap added that most of agriculture was supportive of the repeal of COOL. “The Farm Bureau is supportive of the ability to voluntary label, but not mandatory label it,” he said. “What it means is that Canada and Mexico will not be able to retaliate billions of dollars on our products.”



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Minnesota Farm Bureau President Kevin Paap.

Applications open for 2016 Made in Minnesota Solar Incentive Program

Program’s first two years support 692 solar PV installations and help increase state’s solar capacity by 10.4 megawatts

Applications for the third year of the Made in Minnesota Solar Incentive Program will be accepted from Jan. 1 through Feb. 28. Now in its third year, the program helps fund new solar electric and solar thermal systems for Minnesota residents, businesses and communities.

The program is administered by the Minnesota Department of Commerce.

“The Made in Minnesota solar initiative has expanded the state’s roof-top solar market and helped put us on track to meet Minnesota’s renewable energy and solar goals,” said Commerce Commissioner Mike Rothman. “The program has boosted our clean energy economy, making solar more affordable and creating more jobs for Minnesotans.”

Owners of Made in Minnesota solar photovoltaic (PV) electric systems receive an annual incentive payment for 10 years based on the system’s electricity production. For owners of solar thermal systems, the program offers a one-time rebate up to 25 percent of the installed cost.

Solar PV systems generate electricity for a home or building, while solar thermal systems provide heating or hot water.

Program boosts state’s solar industry

In its first two years, the Made in Minnesota program funded 692 solar PV projects and 32 solar thermal installations. The PV projects equal about 10.4 megawatts (MW) of electric capacity, providing a significant boost to the state’s current solar capacity of 28 MW.

During its 10-year duration, the program is expected to help fund 4,000 solar installations and increase Minnesota’s solar electric capacity by about 75 MW, more than a five-fold increase in the state’s capacity when the program began in 2014.

Who can apply for Made in Minnesota solar incentives?

The solar incentive program is available to utility customers who install solar PV or solar thermal systems using solar modules or collectors certified as manufactured in Minnesota.

Applications are accepted from January 1 through February 28 and will be selected by lottery.

The solar PV incentive program is open only to customers of the state’s investor-owned utilities (Alliant, Minnesota Power, Ottertail Power and Xcel Energy). Applicants can reapply if not selected in the previous year. The solar PV incentive is also available to developers of community solar gardens with less than 40 kilowatts (kW) of production.

Solar thermal rebate applications are open to utility customers throughout the state, with priority given to customers of the investor-owned utilities. After all solar thermal rebate applications received during the January-February application period have been funded, applications from all utility customers in the state are reviewed and approved on a first-come, first-served basis until the annual funding allocation is committed.

More information on the Made in Minnesota program, including the incentive and rebate amounts, is available at the Minnesota Department of Commerce website.

Questions can be directed to the department’s Energy Information Center by email at energy.info@state.mn.us or by phone at 651-539-1886 or 800-657-3710.

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Here is a timeline of human crop manipulation:

10,000 years ago farmers began selective breeding to produce better crops. This means breeding the female and male part of the plant of the same species for specific traits.

In the 1700s, farmers and scientists began cross-breeding plants within a species, mixing the genetic makeup of different plants together for new traits. The corn, oats, soybeans, tomatoes, potatoes, rice, wheat and barley that we eat today have been bred to improve pest resistance, yield and taste.

In the 1940s, researchers began seeking more genetic variations not easily found naturally in the gene pool of plants. They used a process called mutagenesis, which involves exposing DNA to any number of physical, chemical or biological agents in order to alter the genetic makeup of seeds. They would then plant those seeds and look for new, preferred traits. Many plants on the market today were developed with this technique, which is not genetic engineering, and over the years, more than 2,200 conventional and organic crop varieties have been created with mutagenesis breeding.

In the 1990s, the first GM crops were introduced to the marketplace. Genetic engineering or GMO means copying one gene from one plant or organism and placing it into another. This is more precise than any previous method and is possible because scientists are able to code a plant’s DNA and know exactly the genetic makeup of a plant.

AgPower

ENTERPRISES

HometownLiving Community Calendar



Staff photo by Howard Lestrud
An open house was held for longtime John Deere employee Wayne Hansen at the Ag Power Enterprises store in Owatonna on Monday, Dec. 28. Hansen is shown with the first two guests to greet him at his retirement party, his mother Verdelle Hansen, left, and his aunt Dorothy Gulbrandson, right. Hansen is retiring after logging 39 years for John Deere.

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WINE CLUB: TUES. 7-8:30 P.M.
JAN. 12, FEB. 9, MARCH 8,
APRIL 12, MAY 3
EUCHRE: JAN. 16, FEB. 20, MARCH 12

YOUR HOLIDAY HEADQUARTERS
DEC 24: OPEN 10 A.M.- 5 P.M.
DEC 25: CLOSED MERRY CHRISTMAS
DEC 31: NEW YEARS EVE
MUNCHIES & CHAMPAGNE AT
MIDNIGHT
JAN 1: NEW YEARS DAY:
OPEN 10 A.M.- CLOSE
HAPPY 2016

BLOOMING PRAIRIE

- Jan. 7:**
12 p.m. BP American Legion

Jan. 11:
5 p.m. BP Education Foundation, HS Library
7 p.m. BP City Council Mtg

Jan. 12:
BP Card Club & Luncheon
2:30 p.m. BPPU Comm Mtg
4:30 p.m. BP Fire Comm Mtg
6:30 p.m. Beginner Yoga, BP Community Educa-
tion, BPHS Media Center
7 p.m. BP VFW
7 p.m. BP VFW Auxiliary
7:30 p.m. BP Prairie Lodge Masons

Jan. 13:
10:30 a.m. BPBL Story time

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- Happy Hour 3 p.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday
- Taco Tuesdays every Tuesday at 5 p.m.

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ELLENDALE/GENEVA

- Jan. 5:**
7 p.m. NRHEG Karate, ES Gym North Ellndl

Jan. 7:
5:30 p.m. NRHEG Yoga, DAPE Rm
7 p.m. NRHEG Yoga, DAPE Rm
7 p.m. NRHEG Zumba, DAPE Rm

Jan. 11:
6:20 p.m. NRHEG Yoga, Media Center Ellndl

Jan. 12:
7 p.m. NRHEG Karate, ES Gym North Ellndl

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- Jan. 5:**
5 p.m. Owatonna Human Rights Commission, 2nd
Flr Conference Rm, City Hall
7 p.m. Owatonna City Council, Council Chambers,
City Hall
7 p.m. Hope City Council Mtg, Hope City Hall,
Council Chambers

Jan. 6:
3 p.m. OPL Adventure Club

Jan. 7:
6:30 p.m. OPL Family Story Time

Jan. 8:
11 a.m. Red Cross Blood Drive, Owa Hospital

Jan. 11:
12 p.m. Owatonna Noon Rotary Club, Country Club
12 p.m. Red Cross Blood Drive, St Joseph's Church,
Owa
4:30 p.m. Owatonna Park & Rec Brd, Council Cham-
bers, Brooktree Golf Course or City Park
5 p.m. Owatonna PS Wilson PTO Mtg
6:30 p.m. Owatonna PS Schl Brd Wrk Sssn

Jan. 12:
Steele Co Commission
8 a.m. Red Cross Blood Drive, St Joseph's Church,
Owa
1 p.m. Steele Co SDA Mtg
7 p.m. OPL Poetry Writers' Group
7 p.m. Steele Co: Co Brd Mtg, Admin Center, BR
7 p.m. Veterans Open Roundtable, Good Shephard
Lutheran Church, Owa

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- Jan. 7:**
2 p.m. The Arthritis Foundation: Medford Senior
Exercise Class, Whistle Stop Diner

Jan. 10:
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Exercise Class, Whistle Stop Diner

Jan. 13:
4 p.m. Medford Veterans Committee Mtg

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SPOT LIGHT

Bereavement support group starts

A five-week bereavement support group for those who have experienced a loss will begin on Tuesday, Jan. 12, and continue through Tuesday, Feb. 9.

This education and support group will provide materials and discussions on a variety of topics to assist participants in their grieving process. The group will meet weekly in the conference room at the Mower County Senior Center.

The meetings will begin at 10:30 a.m. with a different presenter each week and will be followed by an informal lunch gathering for anyone interested. All who feel this might be beneficial to their healing are invited to attend.

The support group is open to the public at no charge. If more information is needed please contact Mary at 507-433-5000 or 507-583-7561.

OTHER COUNTIES

- Freeborn**
Jan. 5:
10:30 a.m. ALPL Story time
5:30 p.m. Planning Commission, City Hall, Al-
bert Lea
6 p.m. Rock Gym, Albert Lea

Jan. 6:
7:30 a.m. Port Authority Meeting, Albert Lea
Economic Development Agency
3 p.m. Intro to Facebook, ALPL Computer Class-
es
Jan. 7:
10:30 a.m. ALPL Story time
1 p.m. Red Cross Blood Drive, Salem Lutheran,
AL
5:30 p.m. Council Workshop, City Council
Chambers, AL
6 p.m. ALPL Night-Time Story time

Jan. 8:
ACT Registration Deadline, AL High School
9 a.m. Red Cross Blood Drive, Salem Lutheran,
AL
6 p.m. Rock Climbing Open Gym, AL

Jan. 9:
ALPL Closed
6 p.m. Rock Climbing Open Gym, AL

Jan. 11:
10:30 a.m. ALPL Story time
3:45 p.m. ALPL Book Pals (Gr 5 & 6)
3:45 p.m. LEGO Time, AL Public Library
5:15 p.m. Human Rights Commission, City
Council Chambers, AL
7 p.m. City Council, Council Chambers, AL

Jan. 12:
8:30 a.m. Shell Rock Watershed Board Meeting,
AL
10:30 a.m. ALPL Story time
6 p.m. Rock Gym, AL
- Mower**
Jan. 5:
10 a.m. All Members Gallery Show, Austin Art-
Works Center
1 p.m. Mower Co Brd of Commissioners Mtg
3:30 p.m. Mower Co, Southland ISD: Open Gym,
M/HS Gym
Jan. 6:
Lyle 1st Responders Meeting
10 a.m. All Members Gallery Show, Austin Art-
Works Center
11:30 a.m. SEMCAC Meal, Heritage House, Lyle
6:30 p.m. Adult Hockey, Riverside Arena

Jan. 7:
1 p.m. Red Cross Blood Drive, Our Saviors Lu-
theran, Austin
3 p.m. Free Cross Country Ski and Snow Shoe
Rental, Jay C Hormel Nature Center
3:30 p.m. Mower Co, Southland ISD: Open Gym,
M/HS Gym
6 p.m. Brownsdale PL Puzzle Night (subject to
change)
7 p.m. Keepsake Quilters Guild Meeting, St
John's Lutheran Church, Austin

Jan. 8:
11:30 a.m. SEMCAC Meal, Heritage House, Lyle
5 p.m. Austin ArtWorks Gallery Opening, Austin
ArtWorks Center

Jan. 9:
8 a.m. Christmas Tree Pick-Up, Austin
5:30 p.m. Community Praise Service, First Unit-
ed Methodist Church, Austin

Jan. 10:
1 p.m. Grand Meadow Open Gym, Wrestling
Room, Weight Room
Jan. 11:
Lyle American Legion & Auxiliary Meeting
11:30 a.m. SEMCAC Meal, Heritage House, Lyle
4 p.m. Austin Farmers Market
5:30 p.m. Austin Schl Brd Mtg

Jan. 12:
Lyle Vol. Fire Dept Meeting
9:30 a.m. Mower Co Brd of Commissioners Mtg
12 p.m. Austin 7/8 Spelling Bee
3:30 p.m. Mower Co, Southland ISD: Open Gym,

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How to simplify your transition to a new career

Today’s professionals change careers and jobs much more frequently than those of past generations. While a person may have once thought themselves lucky just to have a job and hold on to it as long as they could, workers today tend to be more fickle and jump around until they find the perfect career fit.

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics says it is difficult to determine just how often a person changes a career, noting the difficulty with regard to defining the parameters of what constitutes a career change. However, one study by the NLS that looked at young baby boomers found the average number of jobs held by people ages 18 to 46 was 11.3. Other studies examining American and British employment patterns discovered Americans tend to move around more, having 10.5 jobs in a lifetime compared to Brits’ 6.9 jobs.

Although the job search was once considered a one-time event, today looking for a job is a larger part of career development. Staying on top of the job market and finding niches that offer the best opportunities for success is key. Transitioning from one job to another is more commonplace and these tips can make the move easier and more successful.

Have a valid reason to change careers. Boredom alone should not be the driving force behind a career change. If advancement opportunities seem nonexistent or if the job you’re in simply isn’t in tune with your interests, you may have a good reason to switch careers.

Be willing to learn a new skill. You may need to learn new skills to pursue a new career. If that’s the case, you may want to enroll in a continuing education course prior to job-hunting. Even if a job doesn’t work out on the first attempt, new skills always look good on a resume.

Be a courteous networker. Send handwritten notes to any and all people who helped you find new job opportunities. This reaffirms your relationship and you never know when you might need a reference or support in the future.

Educate yourself on office politics. It’s helpful to know a company’s rules in advance. This may be as simple as learning the dress code for employees and any other rules and regulations of the office. Do employees dine out for lunch, or do they eat primarily at their desks? What is the tendency for coworkers to mingle outside of the office? Learning these policies or habits may help you find a company that’s the best fit for you.

Go with the flow. You may have your own ideas on how

to improve performance, but assimilate into the routine first before you start becoming more vocal. There is plenty of time to lend your advice and show the team how they can grow.

Bring a treat for your new coworkers. Offer the first olive branch by bringing in a snack the office can enjoy or offer to take a few coworkers out for coffee. This can break the ice and facilitate new office friendships.

Take a lot of notes. A lot of new information will come at you in your first weeks on the job. There will be procedures and technological details. Jot down notes along the way, and do not be afraid to ask questions for further clarification.

Get cozy with the IT team. Many IT teams are increasingly becoming the backbone of many companies, ensuring everyone is online and working at peak potential. Get to know the IT department so you will not feel sheepish about turning to them when your computer freezes or your files vanish.

It can take several weeks for new employees to successfully transition to a new career. But there are several strategies men and women can employ to make that transition go as

smoothly as possible.

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Medford delegate assists with setting education legislative agenda

By **ALAN VAN ORMER**
Managing Editor

Being a delegate with the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA) can be an asset for any school district. That can be said of Medford School Board Chairperson Bill Cronin.

Cronin participated in the Minnesota School Board Association's Delegate Assembly in early December.

"It is interesting. It is an honor and it is a privilege," Cronin said. "You get exposed to state leadership in these sessions. It is a very enriching project."

MSBA represents all of the locally elected school boards across Minnesota. Cronin was elected by his peers from other school boards across the state to represent them as a delegate. MSBA's legislative platform is a list of the topics that school board members find important enough to promote with their legislators.

The platform items for the 2016 legislative session concentrate on equity in education



Cronin

funding. An estimated 20 different resolutions were debated. The delegate assembly passed 14 of those resolutions.

Cronin added that the association is focusing on proper finances and proper funding of schools, as well as local control.

Medford School Superintendent Rich Dahman said the funding piece is important because it is difficult to run a school district without adequate funding. "There are quite a few mandates

and not all are fully funded," he said.

One example Dahman used was special education. The federal government funds around 18-20 percent. "When legislation was put into place we were promised 40 percent," he said. "Local districts have to pick up the remainder of the funding."

Cronin, who served as a del-

egate for three years earlier in his career, said the funding is always important. "We can't do what we can't pay," he said. "Flexibility to have local control to use the funding how we need it is very important."

Dahman said that the local school board and school staff know what's best for the needs of the school district. "It is also

valuable for the school district to have one of our board members take part in that because the issues are important to us in Medford to have a voice," he said.

Dahman stated that the value to the school district having Cronin as a delegate is two-fold. "One it allows us to have a voice in the group that's making those decisions. He is somebody that

knows our needs locally and is part of the discussion," he said. "The other piece is that as part of the discussion he comes back to our school district and he is able to share that information. He is knowledgeable about what discussions are going on around the state and what is happening around the state."

WESTFIELD BOARD

Continued from Page 1A

oped than what Dodge County already has in place. The issue came about in March 2015 when a group of citizens presented a petition for a vote of electors. The board rejected the idea of conducting an election.

Dodge County Concerned Citizens (DCCC) filed a complaint against the township board last June. Through its attorney James Peters of Glenwood, DCCC had asked for criminal charges to be filed against the board.

In reacting to Ostrem's decision, Peters said there is disappointment. "On receiving the citizen petition for an elector vote, the Westfield Township supervisors had one simple job, which was to set up a ballot box and allow the residents to vote," Peters said. "The Westfield town board refused and disenfranchised the voters."

Peters went on to say, "Unfortunately, the press release from the Olmsted County attorney fails to address this simple fact, fails to protect the citizen petition and fails to protect the right to vote of citizens."

When the Times contacted the township board Monday morning for comment, it still had not received any notification about Ostrem's decision. "We don't have much of a reaction because we haven't heard anything," said Paul Fiebiger, a board supervisor.

The complaint had originally

been filed with the Dodge County Attorney's Office. But county attorney Paul Kiltinen declined to investigate the matter to avoid a conflict of interest. The issue was then handed off to Ostrem.

In an unrelated issue, the Dodge County Board is still awaiting a ruling from an Olmsted County judge on a lawsuit filed early last year by Lowell and Evelyn Trom. The lawsuit pertains to the county's decision to reapprove a conditional use permit for a 6-acre hog operation for the Masching Farms near Blooming Prairie.

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Bussler**
PUBLISHER

ORIGINALLY FROM: Brownnton, Minnesota. Graduated in 1986. Went to Mankato State University and graduated in 1990 with a degree in mass communications

FAMILY: Wife- Teri and three children: Kyrie, Caleb and Cailyn

FAVORITE PASTTIME: Spending time with family and going to the movies

PETS: A few cats

BEFORE THE TIMES: I was a news reporter/anchor at KAAL-TV in Austin and a police officer in Waterloo, Iowa and Lakeville

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THREE WORDS YOUR FRIENDS WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE YOU: Determined, driven and independent

FAVORITE BOOK: No time to read, just newspapers

IF YOU COULD EAT ONLY ONE MEAL FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE: Grilled steaks, garlic bread, potatoes and sweet corn

WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH A MILLION DOLLARS: Probably buy another newspaper, or two

LAST MOVIE YOU WENT TO: Cinderella with my daughter

IF YOU COULD HIRE AN ASSISTANT, WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE THEM DO: Keep the newspapers in order.

IF YOU COULD GO BACK IN TIME FOR A WEEK, WHAT YEAR WOULD YOU TRAVEL TO: Back to the late 1950s to spend time with my grandparents

SONG THAT ALWAYS MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE: Walk of Life- Dire Straits

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