

Local mom is on the road to recovery after battle with cancer

By LAURA BERNDT
News Editor

Amy Svoboda is thankful for many things. Most of all, she is thankful to spend another year with her family. Svoboda was diagnosed with cancer this May, and is now cancer-free.

Svoboda and her family live in the country near Hollandale, between Geneva and Blooming Prairie. Svoboda and her husband, Marshall, have been married for 13 years and have three

children: 12-year-old Gadge, 11-year old Graci and 3-year-old Kaleb. Although the last few months have been difficult for the family, Svoboda said that, little by little, her life is returning to “normal.”

In April of this year, Svoboda said that she was not feeling well and went to the doctor. She had trouble swallowing and also had a dry cough. Initially, doctors believed that she had bronchitis but, when her throat began to swell, doctors decided to run

more tests. After multiple tests, Svoboda tried visiting a different doctor and, within three days, learned that she had non-Hodgkin lymphoma, a type of cancer that begins in the lymphatic system.

“I was completely healthy, so to go from that to getting this kind of diagnosis, it was a shock,” reflects Svoboda.

Svoboda’s treatment was suc-

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Submitted photo
Amy Svoboda is a wife and mother of three. She's also a cancer survivor. She is pictured here with her three children, Kaleb, Graci and Gadge.

Health care discussed at legislative meeting

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

A few years after the Affordable Care Act came into play many are still trying to understand the impact it is making on a person’s life.

“What I’m hearing is that the small group market is stabilizing,” said Dist. 24 Sen. Vicki Jensen (DFL-Owatonna) during a discussion on health care issues at the Elks Lodge in Owatonna on Saturday. “I believe once we get through these couple of years of claims with those people that are going to be in that pool it will stabilize too.”

She also appeared at Out to Lunch in Waseca and The Coffee Shop in Faribault. Joining her in Owatonna were Denise Robertson, Southeast Minnesota Coordinator for Health Access Minnesota who helps people enroll in the MNsure program and Peter Brickwedde, Assistant Commissioner of Government and External Affairs for the Minnesota Department of Commerce.

The Affordable Care Act regulates all different groups for health care, but Jensen said the reason the individual market is being discussed is because it is the section where people had the least amount of access if they were sick.

It is estimated that approximately 5 percent of people buy their own health care insurance without assistance from an employer.

In Minnesota, 90 cents out of every \$1 has to go toward health care. At first, the state tried to make projections about who came into the individual markets that weren’t in them before, because they didn’t have access. People with higher claims are now in the market.

According to a stat sheet that Jen-

HEALTH CARE
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Blooming Prairie fourth-grader Macy Lembke is principal for a day



Staff photos by Howard Lestrud
Principal for the Day Macy Lembke, fourth grader at Blooming Prairie Elementary School, observes the classroom of third-grade teacher Mrs. Stephanie Murphy while two students, Nash Fawver and Mallory Pena, work on their assignments.

By HOWARD LESTRUD
Staff Writer

How many fourth-graders get to be a principal for the day?

Blooming Prairie Elementary School fourth-grader Macy Lembke, 9, had her dream realized on Monday, Dec. 7,

when she held the reins as a co-principal with Mr. (Chris) Staloch.

The opportunity to become principal came when Macy’s parents, Mandy and Lonnie Lembke, won a Blooming Prairie Education Foundation auction item to become principal for the day last fall.

It was a day tiny Macy will long re-

member. Her smile is dominant in her personality and just grew wider and wider as the day moved along.

She began her day working with the school patrol, greeting students, parents and staff in the hallway and making an announcement over the intercom, introducing herself as principal.

“My name is Macy Lembke, I am a fourth-grade student, and today I get to be co-principal with Mr. Staloch... You, too can have this opportunity next year. I wish everyone a great start to

PRINCIPAL FOR A DAY
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Mixed reaction to Renewable Fuel Standard changes



Sen. Klobuchar



Sen. Franken

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

A recent Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) volume release for the next few years is having mixed reactions.

Those in the soybean industry are “thankful” for the end amount on biodiesel. Several in the corn industry see the new RFS as a “step backward in American energy policy.”

The U.S. Environmental Protec-

tion Agency (EPA) final renewable volume obligations for 2016 cut the amount of homegrown corn ethanol blended into fuel supply by 500 million gallons below what Congress originally called for when passing the RFS in 2007, according to a Minnesota Corn Growers Association press release.

The RFS is legislation that sets annual targets for the amount of cleaner-burning biofuels.

Jerry Demmer, who is a director

on the Minnesota Research and Promotion Council, doesn’t think there will be a major impact. “It is not negative or positive. It is neutral,” Demmer said. “The EPA didn’t reduce it as much as it initially thought last summer. So that is positive. But, it reduced it by one half million gallons less than what Congress set as RFS as law a few years ago.”

On the soybean side, the biomass-based diesel volumes increased from 1.63 billion gallons in 2014 to 1.90

billion gallons in 2016 and 2 billion gallons in 2017.

“We didn’t get everything we requested. We did get a sizable increase,” said Minnesota Soybean CEO Tom Slunecka.

Slunecka hopes there are a couple of positive effects to the increase. First with the largest soybean crop

RFS CHANGES
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Opinion

Our view

Economy and health care go together

Just recently, the 15th annual Grow Minnesota annual luncheon was held in Owatonna. The word from Bill Blazar, who is an expert on Minnesota’s economy, summed it up by saying 2015 was a “better start than finish.” He admitted that it is growing but not at a rate you would have seen 8-10 months ago.

On Saturday, there was a meeting discussing the Affordable Health Care Act and MNsure in Owatonna, Waseca and Faribault. Dist. 24 Sen. Vicki Jensen (DFL-Owatonna) presented a stat sheet that showed that in 2013, persons were paying on average \$283 per person for health care. In 2014, that number bumped up to \$417.

There is no question that these two go hand-in-hand.

Both are based on decisions that are made a year or two before. For example, for the 2016 economy, Blazar looked to 2014 to forecast what will happen. He predicts that recessions and difficulties in the global economy and limited number of new products will challenge and slow economic growth in 2016.

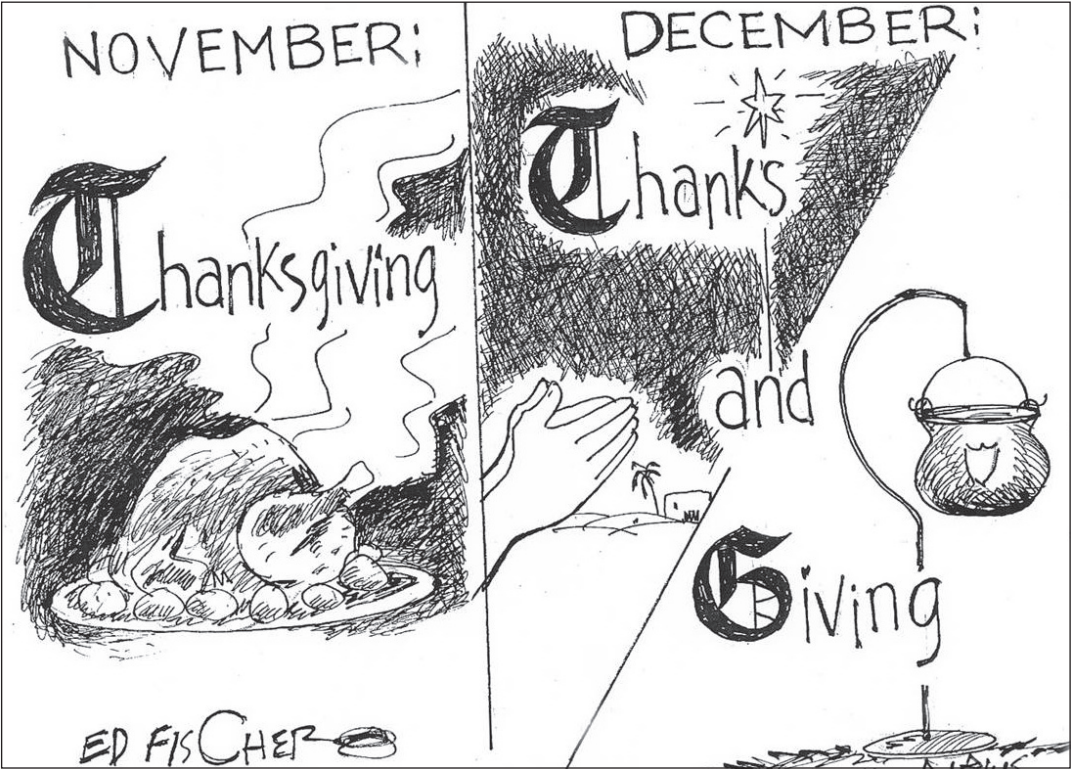
There are many issues that stand in the way of business success. They include taxes, transportation and workforce. You can also add health care. Premiums continue to increase for individuals and for businesses throughout the region. Unfortunately, this impacts what a company or business can do.

From an individual standpoint, when you are worrying about your premium costs and health care costs, your productivity is naturally going to drop. The costs are devastating and take a huge amount of money out of an individual’s pocket. At times, people go without health care insurance because they just can’t afford it.

And there are smaller businesses that cannot afford any kind of group health care plan. This is devastating to them because it limits the type of employee that they can hire. It is going to be harder and harder to find a quality employee because that business cannot provide health care benefits.

This is something that will stifle the economy unless the economic and health care experts can continue to find ways to ease the burden for those businesses that cannot provide health care programs and help those individuals with affordable premium rates so they are willing to choose working at a small business.

So maybe in 2016 the experts can find a way to make this work for both the individual employee and the small businesses so it benefits all parties involved.



Excitement over making a big move

It’s been moving time over at our sister publication in Dodge County.

Excitement has been building as the Dodge County Independent is taking up new digs on the Main Street of Kasson. For decades, the newspaper has been headquartered in the old creamery building along First Avenue NW. But we finally found a new spot on the main drag that should better serve the public for years to come.

The move also includes Dodge County Printing, which is a shop devoted to small print jobs like business forms and envelopes. The greatest hurdle we ran into was moving some humongous printing presses weighing in excess of a ton.

It was kind of comical, yet nerve wracking at the same time last week when a hole was carved into the building to get the presses moved out. The machines had not been moved for at least a half-century.

We brought in a large equipment moving company to aide in the delicate task of inching the presses out the door, down the street for about three blocks and into a new spot. A forklift was used to carry the 2,500-pound Heidelberg press to its new home. It proved to be

HOT PURSUIT



RICK BUSSLER

quite the spectacle for people to watch. Luckily, the weather cooperated and we didn’t have to fight snow, slush and ice.

It certainly was no easy task, but I’m happy to report the equipment was successfully moved. Now comes the task of getting everything established in the new office.

As I sat back to watch this move, it made me think about the importance of Main Street. One of the things I have always admired about the Times office is how it is centrally located on Main Street in Blooming Prairie. It has been nice to have the higher visibility on the city’s main drag.

When I took over the DCI

last summer, I was disheartened to find that the newspaper office was not located on Main Street. But with this move, both of my operations will be prominently showcased on Main.

I have always felt it is important for the local newspaper to have a high profile presence in the community, not just from the paper itself.

For generations, small family-owned businesses on Main Street were the lifeblood of local economies in most corners of America. They provided local jobs, added to the tax base and were usually the first to contribute financial resources to causes within the community.

However, Main Streets have struggled in many communities in recent years. Main Street matters more than ever before. The last thing we want to see is another building sitting empty on the main drag. A thriving Main Street denotes a thriving community.

And now I’m fortunate to have that in both communities where I own newspapers.

Serving citizens in both counties is something I love to be in hot pursuit of... from Main Street locations, that is.

Feeling safe in our communities

A GLIMPSE OF STEELE COUNTY



ALAN VAN ORMER

Last week I received a call from a person that was concerned about safety in our communities. This person referenced the attacks in California and the death of many people. This person and many friends were concerned about something like that possibly happening in our neck of the woods.

I’m not going to make light of this person’s concern. And I’m not going to say that anything like that will never happen in Steele County. But, it did make me wonder about it. As I was driving back home one night from covering a basketball game I started thinking about what this person had to say. And I asked myself the question, “Do I feel safe?” And without hesitation the answer was “yes.”

And there are several reasons why I feel that way.

First, there is the family dynamics. Our family is very close and we have contact with each of the two boys and their loved ones at least once a week. One time without hearing from their mother and father and these kids will find out what happened quickly. I’m sure that there are many families like that in the communities of Steele County.

Next are the neighbors. One example of that occurred in our neighborhood not too long ago was a lady who had not been seen on her regular daily routine. The neighbors called right away and the Owatonna Police Department was there checking it out pronto. As many know, you can’t keep anything away from a neighbor. They know everything, see everything and hear everything.

Third, our emergency service personnel are well trained on any kind of incident that may occur. Police departments, the county sheriff office, firefighters, EMTs and other emergency personnel spend countless hours each year on the new techniques to keep us safe in our homes and in our communities.

Yes, I do feel safe. And I hope that the words above will help soothe the fears of those who read and hear about tragedies in our country and around the world.

See more opinion items and Mailbag letters on Page 9A

Guest column

An unsung hero

Guest Column: Caleb Bussler

Unsung heroes are people that receive little recognition for their tremendous work.

My father has fit this role throughout the past twenty plus years of being a father. As his 48th Birthday has come and past this Saturday, I think it is necessary to recognize his dedication to his job, family and God.

My father, battling all odds, was able to successfully raise two children and manage a full-time job, as a single parent. He completely sacrificed his social life and selfish desires to provide for his family, unlike many men would do in that situation. He has always been a great example of the kind of man I want to be. Even though

I have different aspirations than him, he has always instilled the core values of faith, family, and hard work in my sister, Kyrie and me. Throughout all of this, he still managed to make home-cooked meals each and every night and attend all of our sports and school events. Whether he was in a police uniform or reading a paper, he was always in attendance cheering us on.

Someday when I look back on my childhood, the thing I will remember most is my father’s tremendous faith. Each and every Sunday he would make time so that he could attend church with his family, whether that meant going late into work or getting home late for the Vikings vs. Packers game (which always frustrated me). He never forced us to be involved in anything but his heart for God has been a tremendous example for all of his children to continue to pursue

our faith.

Without his guide, I don’t know how I would have been able to get through the trials of my childhood, including not having my mother in my life and the loss of a very good friend two years ago. His faith paved the way for me and gave me an example to not go down a path of drugs or destructive behavior. Even though the death of my very good friend, Alyssa Ettl, ripped him apart as well, he was a strong figure for me and his first priority was tending to my needs, supporting my friends and their families in time of crisis.

His support for my friends and me was a great eye-opening experience to see how often doing the right thing isn’t always the easiest thing. His decision to speak out against road conditions after this hor-



Submitted photo
Steele County Times publisher Rick Bussler and his son, Caleb, enjoy a day at the lake.

GUEST COLUMN
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A STATE AND NATIONAL AWARD WINNING WEEKLY

2015
4 National Awards
7 State Awards
2014
3 National Awards
3 State Awards
2013
2 National Awards
7 State Awards
2012
2 State Awards
2011
4 National Awards



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

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LETTERS POLICY

The opinions of our readers in the form of Letters to the Editor are a vital contribution to the healthy exchange of ideas on the Steele County Times opinion page. All letters must be signed by the writer/writers and include a telephone number for verification purposes. Letters are accepted through personal delivery, by mail or by email at bptimes@frontiernet.net.

Opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Steele County Times and the editor reserves the right to edit letters when necessary. Please limit opinions to no longer than 350 words.

The Steele County Times encourages readers to write letters to the editor as a means of communicating ideas and opinions with others, with a goal being to make the community better for all people.

ETHICS

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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Second Front Page

Area families receive holiday meals in a basket

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

This year, 50 Steele County families will receive holiday baskets with all of the ingredients for a Christmas meal.

“There are families out there that would not have a special Christmas dinner without these baskets,” said Salvation Army’s Social Services Director Gina Shepherd.

Salvation Army employees and volunteers will prepare the food baskets a few days before Christmas.

Each basket contains either

a turkey, ham or gift card to a grocery store to purchase a meat of choice. “Not every family has means to transportation, so if that is the case, we will bring them the ham or turkey,” said Shepherd.

The baskets will also include fresh potatoes, vegetables, fruit and a dessert.

Local quilt makers have donated quilts, so the baskets will also be arranged with handmade quilts. Shepherd said that the baskets will also contain toys for the young ones.

“We keep with the Christmas theme and have fun with it,” said

Shepherd.

Of the 50 baskets, 10 will go to Ellendale, 10 to Blooming Prairie, a couple to Medford and the rest to Owatonna.

“We always want to remember all of Steele County. Owatonna is the bigger of the cities, but that doesn’t mean that the need is less elsewhere,” said Shepherd.

The families receiving the baskets are either registered clients of Steele County Salvation Army or they are recommended by school counselors.

“If you think back to Christmas meals with family, it’s not

even about the food, it’s about the conversation. It is about slowing down and enjoying each other’s company,” said Shepherd. “It is a time to remember the reason for the season.”

Due to a successful Red Kettle campaign last year, the Salvation Army was able to increase its typical 35 Christmas baskets to 50 this year.

To support the Salvation Army in its many programs like the Christmas Baskets, consider volunteering as a bell ringer during the last few weeks of the campaign.

The campaign runs from be-

fore Thanksgiving to Christmas. Shifts are available in two hour periods. Bells are rung between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. during the week and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The red kettles are placed primarily in Owatonna at various shopping locations, including: Cash Wise, Hy-Vee, Fareway, Fleet-Farm, Wal-Mart, Sterling Drug, Walgreens and Cabelas. There are also miniature kettles placed at local businesses.

To volunteer, call 507-413-6700.

Last year alone, Salvation Army helped 699 families in

Steele County through the Crisis fund, money raised from the Red Kettle campaign. The fund helps families with basic necessities, such as warmth, shelter, hunger and clothing.

In total, Salvation Army served 2,646 community members this year alone.

Beyond volunteering as a bell ringer, community members might consider dropping pocket change into the red buckets as they do their holiday shopping. An estimated 87 cents of every dollar donated stays local.

PRINCIPAL FOR A DAY

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the school week. I will be out and about today working to make our school a safe and positive place to learn. Have a great day!”

Mr. Staloch helped structure Macy’s day and said every day as principal includes movement around the school building, visiting with staff and students in all classrooms. “You have to have comfortable shoes because you put on a lot of miles in this job,” Mr. Staloch advised Macy.

An important early part of the principal’s day is to observe teachers and to meet with grade level teachers. Macy’s smile grew brighter as she met with Mr. Staloch and three fourth-grade teachers, Andrew Hardecopf, Matt Kittelson and Kayleena Miller.

Principal Lembke and Principal Staloch asked for ideas from fourth-grade teachers on how to improve the school day. Macy, a student of Mr. Kittelson, joked, “I was told to fire Mr. Kittelson.” Mr. Kittelson replied that “making kids laugh” is important to him.

The three fourth-grade teachers told Macy that “making the class fun” is important and reviewing questions before a test is essential. Effort is important, said Mr. Kittelson. Taking responsibility for turning in homework is another important part of a student’s day, said Mrs. Miller. “Ask questions,” Mr. Hardecopf urged Macy and her fellow students.

Mr. Staloch asked Macy if she liked to talk with classmates or to Mr. Kittelson. She quickly replied, “both.”

Following her meeting with the fourth-grade teachers, Macy visited some classrooms to observe the teaching style of other grade level teachers. Using 3x5 index cards, Macy wrote comments about Mrs. Stephanie Murphy, third-grade teacher, which said, “Students are working very hard and silently. You’re a great teacher. - Macy Lembke, Principal”

Mr. Staloch explained to Macy that these observations, prefaced by a pre-conference meeting, help make principals and teachers better leaders.

Onto another teacher observance, Macy visited second-grade teacher Kim Lea. Mr. Staloch told Macy a challenge is “to try to remember everything” while circulating the school building.

Next visit was the gymnasium to observe Steve Swenson’s physical education class. Macy dropped the puck for a game of floor hockey with fifth-graders. “Have you fired Mr. Kittelson yet?” Mr. Swenson teased Macy.

“It is important to be visible as principal because it shows you care,” Mr. Staloch coached Macy.

“Do the best you can to keep the school safe and greet students with a smile,” Mr. Staloch told Macy. He said she had no problem producing a smile.

At mid-morning, Macy was in charge of announcing a Code Blue drill to lock down the school building. She made the announcement in the presence of Mr. Staloch and Blooming Prairie Police Chief Greg Skillestad.

Five of these drills are mandated during the school year, Mr. Staloch said. These drills cover all emergencies. Teachers and students know their responsibilities, Chief Skillestad said. “Everyone did a fantastic job, and we’re not here to scare anybody with these drills,” Skillestad added.

Following the drill, Mr. Staloch and Macy focused on more work to make the school a better place. Mr. Staloch said the school is currently working on a Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) program called “Prairie Pride the Blossom Way.” The program to be implemented next year is designed to teach behaviors and expectations up front and being proactive rather than reactive, Mr. Staloch said.

Teaching life skills of being responsible and respectful is most important, Mr. Staloch told Principal Macy.

Finding time in between her walks through the building, Macy signed recognition certificates of “Caught Being Awesome.” She signed three “Awesome” certificates for first



Fourth grade Blooming Prairie Elementary School student Macy Lembke tries out the principal's chair during her day as principal on Monday, Dec. 7. She is shown in a grade level staff meeting with Principal Chris Staloch and fourth-grade teachers Matt Kittelson, Andrew Hardecopf and Kayleena Miller.

-grader Daisy Heimer, second-grader Alex Newman and third-grader Colton Braaten. “We catch kids when they are doing the right things,” Mr. Staloch emphasized.

Macy’s half day as principal ended with recess and lunch. A special table was set in the lunchroom for the principals and two of her friends, Mason Simon and Addison Doocy.

Will Macy be a principal when she grows up? She doesn’t rule out that possibility, but says she likes to work with horses, having three mules and three horses on her family acreage. Macy has an older sister, Maya, an eighth-grader.



Principals get right in the middle of phy-ed activities, too. Here, Blooming Prairie Elementary School Co-Principal Macy Lembke gets set to drop the puck for Cyprus Schleicher and Ethan Marzolf.

DEFEATING CANCER

Continued from Page 1A

cessful, but was also difficult. She completed a total of six treatments, spending five days in the hospital each time.

“They hit me with a really hard dose,” said Svoboda. “I was fine when I was in the hospital, but it was after I got home that I started to not feel good.”

Side effects, including exhaustion and weakness, from the treatment lasted for a few weeks. Svoboda said she usually started to feel better just days before her next scheduled treatment.

For Svoboda, who has been a dedicated stay-at-home mom, being away from her kids was the worst part of her treatments. “Since I’ve had Kaleb, I’ve never been away from them for more than a night or two,” Svoboda said.

Marshall’s career also requires him to travel frequently,

so Svoboda’s treatments forced the whole family to adapt to a new routine.

“It’s been a long time since he’s had to get kids ready in the morning and he’s never had to be the only parent, so it was a huge shock for everybody,” said Svoboda, with a laugh. “It took a lot of getting used to.”

With lots of help from family and friends, the family made it through some difficult months. “It wasn’t easy, but it could have been worse,” said Svoboda. “And I had a huge support group, as far as family and friends. That helps, when you have a lot of people behind you, and all the prayers.”

Svoboda’s friends joke that she “blew up Facebook” after sharing her diagnosis on her Facebook page. Svoboda said that she is a private person who

does not normally share personal details on Facebook, but found that the site was a convenient way to keep her many supporters updated about her treatment and progress.

Svoboda is also grateful to the staff at the Rochester Methodist Hospital, who tried to be as accommodating as possible as she battled the disease. This summer, Svoboda learned that she would have to spend the Fourth of July in the hospital. Her family cut their vacation short, and Svoboda joked with the doctors that she wanted to get a room with a view so she could watch fireworks while in the hospital. The hospital staff took the request seriously, and went out of their way to ensure the holiday was still special for the family.

“I got the best view,” said Svoboda, with a big smile. “So

the kids came over and got to watch the fireworks with me.”

Her treatments wrapped up in late September and, in October, Svoboda was declared cancer-free. Every three months, she returns to the doctor for blood work. On occasion, Svoboda said she will also go visit some of the nurses and doctors she now calls her friends. “Every once in a while, I’ll stop in and visit, but I’m not coming back to stay!” Svoboda added.

Today, Svoboda is elated to be cancer-free. Her journey, however, wasn’t completely a negative experience. “I think it brought me closer to some of my family and friends, especially my kids,” she said. “It makes you appreciate things more.”

Positivity and faith also helped Svoboda navigate some of her darker days. “Don’t get

me wrong... when I first found out, I cried my eyes out,” admits Svoboda. “Then, one day, I just said, ‘You know what? This is not going to get me. I’m going to fight this and be done with it and not let it change my life.’”

While Svoboda said that the disease did slow her down, she also still accomplished many of her short-term projects and goals, such as canning food from her garden.

“I still did as much as I could,” she said. “You have to have a positive attitude. We all had to have a positive attitude; not just me, but the rest of my family.”

Svoboda’s parents were very helpful during her treatment and recovery, and Svoboda also said she was grateful for the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group. “I want to say thank you to Blooming Prairie Cancer group for

their generous donations,” she said. “They were very, very kind.”

In addition, Svoboda said that the members of her church have been extremely supportive. “There were a lot of prayers,” she said. “I think our faith in God, and all the prayers, are the strongest thing. And I think He’s mainly the one that pulled me through it.”

Svoboda said that she feels blessed to be on the road to recovery. Although she still gets tired, Svoboda continues to make small victories each day. “I made it through,” she said. “I had something that was very curable and treatable. I didn’t get as sick as some people do... I’m still here to take care of my kids.”



Dear Santa,

War do you live?
Santa, I am good Santa.
Please Santa you will
give me a hat and a cat.
I will give you cookies and
milk. Love Claire

Student name Claire Lovelace Age 7 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

How is Ellie the Elf on the
shelf doing? I am mostle gud.
Santa may I have a rip stick plez.
I hop I will get the Randers
and Santa catits and melck and
cues. Love Cooper Foster

Student name Cooper Age 6 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

Have you say my
santa a soris I is my
stuff and am I am
mostlee a good day.
I want wood tele want
a ex box 360
piece and a nice
shrt piece and a nice
pore up pants piece.
I will keep milk
and cookees. Love Evan
westgal

Student name Evan westgal Age 6 1/2 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

HOW IS ROOF DOEN?
Ile ncita gub I wat?
Forcismiz Woken
minions.
I wat Forcismiziz
heli keep
I wies milk in mircs.
Olivia Johnson

Student name Olivia Age 7 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

How is Rodof doing? I hav
ben nody but I promis I
will be good. Can I ples have
a tablit and a book and some
hatwels and a ex box? All leve
out cookies for you. And milk.
And kit kat. All leve out carits
out for the Randeer. Love
madsan

Student name Madsan Slawinski Age 6 1/2 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

This year I really would a mininings
a simins a lookinrichers
a bonaron hock are you elf home are
your reader.
LOVES
Jasper

Student name Jasper Age 7 Grade 1A

Dear Santa,

do you live in
a hoos? I am sumtime
dun. Ples santa
I want a hogborn.
I hop the Randeer
erd safe.
Luv Cole Lindeman

Student name Cole Lindeman Age 7 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

WUT RAR RAR the
elf rar rar doin?
I pm stat a sumtim nob.
Ples stat a I.
wat a wat etoke and
a irad.
I am gointo
giv mit the elf
mit a nd coe!
Luv Riley Johnson

Student name Riley Age 6 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

I want to no how miss
clas is doing? I am mostle
good for my parnts. I want
a play dog ples. Dress
worn santa. Love Kaylynn
Nelson.

Student name Kaylynn Age 6 Grade 1B

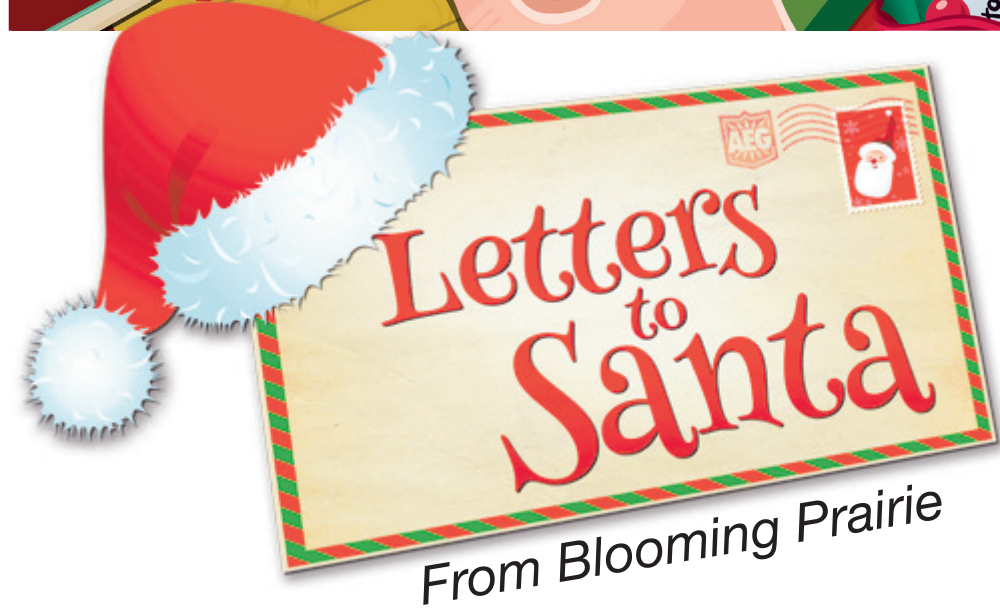


SMILE!
LOWEST FEES
EXCEPTIONAL
RESULTS
BEST FEE GUARANTEE

Did you know AGE 7
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Dear Santa,

How is my elf on the shelf? I have ben a good girl. Ples Santa Will you get me a ipod? I will Lev you some milk and coikes! I will Lev some raindeer food out! Love Isabella Nico Schiller

Student name Isabella Age 6 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

How is the Elf? I have ben a good girl. Ples Santa can I have a Gloria toy. I hop you have a safe trip to my hous. Love Gloria Hernandez,

Student name Gloria Age 6 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

Have you see my cat? I have kind of be a good boy. I wan a dog. He is a cat. I hop you have a saf trip to my hous.

Student name Conorrennie Age 7 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

This year I really would like a Ples a kids kamra, a rrs, a solingmashing, a trampol, and a sparkie flar. How are the Elfs that work at my hous?

Love, Aubrey

Student name Aubrey Kicke Age 6 Grade 1A

Dear Santa,

What cinde of hows do you live in Santu clod? Ples cen you get a sumie truck. Ples cen you get me a mote Cantrall truck. Ples have fun giving cids presins. Love Brice Spinler

Student name Brice Age 6 1/2 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

This year I really would like a book and a baby toy

Love Ava

Student name ava Age 6 Grade 1a

Dear Santa,

Are you haveing fun dallivring chickens presens? I wudlike a nuthr car and a nuthr costum for my dall pless. I want a nuthr thing that holds a bike on a car. Sumtimes I'm noty but I will be nice from now on but at school I am not. I hop you have a safe travls to the wackshop.

love Ellie!

Student name Ellie Harthan Age 6 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

How is all of the Elfs dooing? How is Road the red nose randeur? I have kind of gud I ges we will lev trees for you and the randeurs ab.

Love Gabe Staloch

Student name Gabe Staloch Age 7 Grade 1B

Dear Santa,

How is Rudolf? I have been maslee a good girl. Can I have a horse photo? I will leve you milk and cookes. Travl safe! Love Jayden Wench

Student name Jayden Wench Age 6 Grade 1B

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Season's Greetings

Community

Obituary

Elaine Wondra, 94, rural Blooming Prairie

Elaine E. Wondra of rural Blooming Prairie died Dec. 7, 2015, at Prairie Manor Care Center in Blooming Prairie. Mass of Christian Burial was held Dec. 12, 2015, at Holy Trinity Catholic Church at Lito-mysl. Elaine was born Aug. 8, 1921, in Geneva Township, rural Free-born County, the daughter of Frank and Jessie (Mosher) Jen-sen. She attended country school in rural Steele County. Elaine was married to Alfred Wondra on June 14, 1941, at St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Newry Township. She was a home-maker for all of her life. Along with her husband Alfred, she was a member of the American Motorcycle Association and Holy Trinity Church. Elaine enjoyed gardening, canning with her best friend Mary



Haberman, as well as baking. Elaine enjoyed having the grandchildren stay on the farm. Elaine is survived by seven children Judy Molloy of Faribault, Tom (Rosi) Wondra of Owatonna, Alfred (Al-fie) Wondra of Bloom-ing Prairie, Mary (Doug) Goff of Blooming Prairie, Pat (Larry) Motl of Ellendale, Joe (Terry) Wondra of Blooming Prairie

and Ann (Steve) Winzenburg of Blooming Prairie; 23 grand-children; 30 great-grandchildren (two on the way); and two great great grandchildren. Elaine is preceded in death by her husband; granddaughter Amanda; son-in-law Mike; two brothers and an infant sister. To leave a message go to www.brick-megerfuneralhome.com.

SEMCAC senior menu

Dec. 15: Meatloaf, Baked Potato w/Sour Cream, Green Beans w/Mushrooms, Ice Cream
Dec. 16: Baked Ham, Alt: Beef Pattie, Sweet Potatoes, Green Beans/Mushrooms, Din-ner Roll, Ice Cream
Dec. 17: Chicken Alfredo Lasagna, Peas & Carrots, Fresh Green Salad, Yogurt-Fruit Cup
Dec. 18: Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy, Corn, Dinner

Roll, Fruit Cup
Dec. 21: Chicken Pot Pie, Cucumbers w/Sour Cream, Beet Pickles, Dinner Roll, Citrus Fruit Cup
Dec. 22: Hunter Style Beef

Tips Over Noodles, Brussels Sprouts, Fresh Green Salad, Cranberry Bog Dessert
Dec. 23: BBQ Beef, Red Potatoes, Baked Beans, Pickle Spear, Cherry Crunch Dessert

Milestones

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays	
Dec. 15 Isaiah Toquam Ian-Thomas Campbell Rick Hocking Gregg Fristedt Darrell Erickson	Henry Post Stephen Brandt Kaylin Wolf
Dec. 16 Wally Wilke Norma Henefeld Laverne Johnson Brennen Toquam Keith Holman Dwayne Paulson Devin Zilm	Dec. 19 Elijah Adams Ava Lea
Dec. 17 Mariesa Rossow Hannah Vogt Jessica Alves Jean Peterson Tim Pirkel Matthew Hansen Dorothy Peterson Violet Lane Lauren Doyle Holly Vogt	Dec. 20 Easton Valek Kay Noble Jared Schewe
Dec. 18 Scott Carlson Erin Naatz Amy Doerhoefer Layla Coleman	Dec. 21 Amanda Schiefert Sam Esplan Michelle Wallace
Anniversaries	
Dec. 15 Mr. and Mrs. Mervin Nelson Todd and Erica Nelson	
Dec. 17 Wayne and Donna Gullickson	
Dec. 20 Paul and Betty Ingvaldson	
Dec. 21 Tom and Chris Butler	

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Star Wars bug hits the Blooming Prairie Branch library

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Has the Star Wars bug hit your house just in time for the new movie, Star Wars Episode VII: the Force Awakens?

If your household has devotees of C3PO, R2D2, Chewbacca and other fantastical creatures, stop in at the library to see our display of Star Wars materials. A young college student whose last name begins with V has unknowingly shared his Star Wars collection for our display case. But that is not all we have...

Of course, there are Star Wars

movies to check out, although you may want to call ahead to make sure copies are available when you need them. The Star Wars books fill up several shelves and include adult science fiction, youth and children’s books, graphic novels, LEGO® character encyclopedias and books that show the cross-sections of vehicles and the Death Star so you could make your own!

One of my favorite Star Wars books are William Shakespeare’s Star Wars, which are

the plots of the Star Wars movies written in Shakespearean format and language. Other favorites are the 3-D owner’s guide to the Millennium Falcon and the Star Wars Craft Book, which gives instructions on making your very own Chewbacca sock puppet or a Jabba the Hutt body pillow, just in time for Christmas giving.

Stop by the library or call us at 507-583-7750 to reserve your own Star Wars items. See you at the library!

RFS CHANGES

Continued from Page 1A

in Minnesota being produced in 2015, the industry has to find a home for all of the oil.

The second impact is over a five-year period it will increase from 1 billion to 2 billion of usage across the United States.

“Biodiesel plays an important role in the economy,” Sluneka said.

He said that the soybean industry is thankful for the end amount on biodiesel. “The ethanol number was not nearly as good,” he said. “There is room for growth and advancements as we start to look for 2017 and 2018 RFS numbers.”

Two Minnesota U.S. senators weighed in on the decision in press releases.

Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) said the Renewable Fuel Standard doesn’t just support home-grown jobs and homegrown energy; it enhances national security, reduces dependence on foreign oil, cuts our carbon footprint and increases demand for local farm products.

“Scaling back the RFS targets

is the wrong decision, plain and simple. For years, I have been pressing the Obama Administration to keep the RFS as strong as possible, and while I’m glad they raised levels from what was proposed, these final numbers just don’t cut it – especially for ethanol,” Franken stated in the press release.

U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) said in a press release that the RFS has helped create American jobs, drive innovation and boost local economics across Minnesota and the country, all while reducing carbon emissions.

“That is why after a very disappointing proposed rule was put forth, I led bipartisan efforts to improve the final rule. While we clearly made some progress in strengthening the rule, it still falls short, which is why I’ll continue to call on the Administration to promote biofuels to the extent that Congress intended in the law,” she said in the press release. “I’ll also continue my work in the Senate to create

policies that generate economic gains across rural Minnesota, including the Farm Bill energy programs I helped put in place that are supporting critical bio-

fuels research, innovative projects and infrastructure development.”

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Pill splitting dos and don'ts

Dear Savvy Senior,

Is pill splitting safe? I have several friends who cut their pills in half in order to save money, but I have some concerns. What can you tell me?

Cautious Kim

Dear Kim,

Pill splitting – literally cutting them in half – has become a popular way to save on pharmaceutical costs but you need to talk to your doctor or pharmacist first, because not all pills can be split.

The reason pill splitting is such a money saver is because of a quirk in the way drugs are manufactured and priced. A pill that's twice as strong as another may not be twice the price. In fact, it's usually about the same price. So, buying a double-strength dose and cutting it in

half may allow you to get two months worth of medicine for the price of one. But is it safe? As long as your doctor agrees that splitting your pills is okay for you, you learn how to do it properly, and you split only pills that can be split, there's really no danger.

Ask your doctor

If you're interested in splitting your pills, talk to your doctor or pharmacist to find out if any of the medicines you use can be safely split. It's also important to find out whether splitting them will save you enough money to justify the hassle.

The pills that are easiest to split are those with a score down the middle. However, not every pill that's scored is meant to be split. Pills that are most commonly split include:

- Cholesterol lowering drugs, like Crestor, Lipitor, Mevacor, Pravachol and Zocor.
- Antidepressants, like Lexapro, Celexa, Serzone, Paxil and Zoloft.
- High blood pressure medicines such as, Accupril, Zestril, Diovan, Avapro, Norvasc, Tenormin, Toprol and Cardura.
- Erectile dysfunction pills, like Viagra, Cialis and Levitra.

Use a splitter

Having the right equipment is very important too. Don't use a knife or scissors to cut your pills in half. It can cause you to split them unevenly resulting in two pieces with very different dosages, which can be dangerous. Purchase a proper pill cutter that has a cover and a V-shaped pill grip that holds the pill securely in place. You can find them at

most pharmacies for \$3 to \$10.

For convenience, you might be tempted to split the whole bottle of pills at once. But it's best to do the splitting on the day you take the first half, and then take the other half on the second day or whenever you are scheduled to take your next dose. That will help keep the drugs from deteriorating due to exposure to heat, moisture, or air. It will also help ensure that any deviation in the size of one dose is compensated in the next. It's also important to know that pills are only safely split in half, and never into smaller portions, such as thirds or quarters.

Don't split these

Some pills should never be split. Drugs that are time-released or long-lasting and tablets that contain a combination



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of drugs probably shouldn't be split, because it's difficult to ensure a proper amount of active ingredient in each half. Pills with a coating to protect your stomach, and pills that crumble easily or irritate your mouth shouldn't be split either, along with chemotherapy drugs, anti-seizure medicines, birth control pills and capsules containing powders or gels.

Again, your doctor or pharmacist will know which drugs can and cannot be split. If you're

taking a medicine that can be split, you'll need to get a prescription from your doctor for twice the dosage you need. Then you can start splitting safely and saving.

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, Dec. 20, 2005
Dan Evans, Publisher**

It's not often you get to ride a limo, let alone before reaching the seventh grade. That was the case on Thursday, Dec. 15, when students were rewarded for a successful fundraiser with the special ride. Blooming Prairie students who sold 40 items or more for the Blooming Prairie PTA earned a trip in the limo. Each child had a 20-minute limousine ride around town and then went to Dairy Queen for lunch.

When Albert and Lu Noble began their family in 1934, they made sure to always stress the importance of family and family values. Even though Albert and Lu are no longer around, the Noble family has a strong tradition, according to Chuck Noble, the youngest child of Albert and Lu. The tradition began in the

early 1960s when Lu wanted all of her family to celebrate Christmas together. However, with six sons (David, Jack, Bobby, Billy, Tom and Chuck, five of which were married) and one daughter, Ann, getting everyone together was going to be rather difficult. Lu decided her family would celebrate the Sunday before Christmas. For the last 15 years, the Noble Family Christmas has been at the Servicemen's Club here in Blooming Prairie.

**20 Years Ago
Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1995
Elsie Slinger, Editor**

Bloomington Elementary School was hit hard this week with children missing school or children going home from school because of the flu. On Thursday, 84 children missed school with sickness; 61 were called in and 23 were sent home. School nurse Nancy Peterson

said that there were over 60 children gone each day of the week last week. The normal absentee rate at the elementary school, which has 473 students, is 10 to 15 absent students per day.

The medallion has been found in the first annual Medallion Hunt during the holidays here in Blooming Prairie. In fact, Roger Hanson found the medallion with relative ease Tuesday, Dec. 12. After only two clues, Hanson found the golden prize hanging on a fence post in Victory Field. He climbed up the snowdrift to fetch it.

**50 Years Ago
Thursday, Dec. 16, 1965
Victor, Vernon and Vyrle Krejci, Editors**

Truman Tilleraas, vocational agriculture teacher at Blooming Prairie High School, was one of three teachers to win \$500 cash awards for outstanding

service and contributions to the FFA program of one of his students, Roger Pfeifer of Blooming Prairie, the 1965 National FFA winner in livestock farming. The awards were presented at the Carillon Hotel in Miami Beach, Florida, site of the 1965 annual meeting of the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association (NVATA.) Mr. Tilleraas is married and has two sons, Perry and Steven. They are in the 10th and 11th grades and are both FFA members. Tilleraas and his family reside on a small farm where the boys raise registered Hampshire sheep and hogs.

Arrangements for a full-time kindergarten in Blooming Prairie School District 756 are now complete, and a round-up for pupils and mothers has been scheduled for Friday of this week, Dec. 17, Superintendent Maurice McFarlin announced

today. News was received here last week by Supt. McFarlin that District 756 had been allotted \$24,054.10 under the preschool Headstart Program, recently set up by the federal government, to establish a full-time kindergarten. According to information given to school officials, Blooming Prairie was the 11th project in Minnesota to receive a federal grant. Mrs. Jack Shaw and Mrs. Maylon Heinz have been secured to teach the four sections of kindergarten in which 110 students are enrolled.

**75 Years Ago
Thursday, Dec. 19, 1940
Frank Krejci, Publisher**

Christmas mailing is the heaviest in years thus far this season, says postmaster Geo. Carroll. Parcel and greeting card business started much earlier than in previous years, Mr. Carroll stated Wednesday. The vol-

ume indicates that 1940 will ring up the heaviest total of Christmas mail handled in Blooming Prairie in the history of the office.

Blanketed under 15 inches of fresh snow, Blooming Prairie and all of Minnesota dug out Monday night as a two-day storm tapered off from the heaviest snowfall of the year. Accompanied by a slight wind, the snow piled up on country roads and kept main highway workers working long hours to keep traffic moving. Only the absence of the extremely low temperatures and high winds kept the storm from surpassing the paralyzing Nov. 11 blizzard.

City officials stated today that repairs for the city snow-plow will be made today, thus enabling them the workmen to complete the clearing out of one or two side streets, which are still closed.

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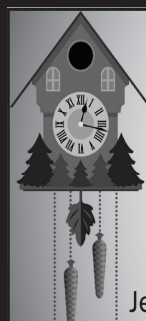
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WOTUS provides no clear direction



Photo courtesy of Minnesota Farm Bureau

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit Court issued a temporary stay of the Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Waters Of The U.S. (WOTUS) rule that is effective nationwide. The two agencies have focused on navigable waters, but are now trying to broaden their authority beyond traditional navigable waters, according to Amber Hanson, associate director of public policy for the Minnesota Farm Bureau.

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

There is still no clear direction on what farmers, ranchers and landowners can do under the Waters Of The U.S. (WOTUS) rule.

“It is so broad and vague that farmers, ranchers and landowners will be liable under the Clean Water Act if they violate what they may not know under WOTUS,” said Amber Hanson, associate director of public policy for the Minnesota Farm Bureau. “Impacts of violations are huge. It could be up to a civil penalty

of \$37,500 per discharge per day. This can snowball into huge fines.”

In October, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit Court issued a temporary stay of the Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers WOTUS rule that is effective nationwide. The Corps of Engineers or EPA cannot enforce the decision means the new rule, which went into effect on Aug. 28.

Hanson said that in the past the two governmental entities have focused on navigable waters. “Over the past two years, there

have been rules broadening their authority under the Clean Water Act beyond traditional navigable waters,” she said. “WOTUS rules go into anything within the presence of physical indicators of bed, bank and ordinary high water mark. It encompasses many water features.”

Prairie potholes are a big one for Minnesota, Hanson added. “New definitions aren’t clear and are broad,” she said. “Part of the problem with definitions is that there doesn’t need to be water there. It could be historical.”

Under the Clean Water Act,

building fences and digging holes to put in fences or moving dirt is considered a pollutant, Hanson adds.

Currently, she said that there are at least 12 different lawsuits across the country. “There is a lot of confusion,” she added. “Because of the broad impact, and it so impactful on farming and ranching, the community needs to speak out on the issue. We are trying to address it legislatively. Part of our argument is that the Army Corps of Engineers went above the Clean Water Act. The legislature needs to take a stand on this.”

Making a list

ON THE FARM



Karen Anderson

The holiday season is upon us, and it’s fun to receive cards with letters in the mail recapping our friends’ and families’ 2015 year. Now is the time to recap 2015 for your farming operations and establish some goals to accomplish in 2016!

When you think through all the things that you accomplished on your farm in 2015, what went particularly well? Are there ways to maintain or improve this success for 2016? On the flip side, what farm activities didn’t go quite as planned? What can we learn from those experiences and how can we make it or do it better the next year? This method of reflecting on the past to improve the future of your farming operation will prove to be helpful especially in tight financial years.

Now that we have reflected on the past, we need to look toward the future and establish some goals for the New Year. When contemplating your goals and future that pertain to a business, it is a good idea to sit down with your spouse, family, or others involved to get their input. This will allow those parties to add their ideas and, in turn, everyone will be aware of the goals and the steps needed to achieve

them. As you are writing your goals, remember to make them “SMART” goals:

S: Specific – To be specific when developing goals, answer the six “W” questions. Who is involved? What do I want to accomplish? Where is it going to take place? When will it happen? Which requirements or constraints do I need to be aware of? Why is the goal important?

M: Measurable – Goals need to be measurable to ensure that progress is being made to complete them. To determine if a goal is measurable ask questions such as: How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

A: Attainable – Do you have the necessary attitude, abilities, skills and financial capacity to reach your goal? If not, can you develop or obtain these attributes to make your dream come true?

R: Realistic – Goals need to be based on an object that you are willing and able to work for. Goals are realistic if you truly believe that you can accomplish them.

T: Timely – Goals should have a firm time-frame or deadline for completion. This provides the goals with a sense of urgency that helps you attain them in a timely matter.

Now is the time to make your list and check it twice! Remember that goals can be powerful motivators to advance your personal well-being or business. Put a pen to paper and make your goals visible to make it easier for you to accomplish each goal in your everyday activities. By establishing SMART goals, we can all have a successful 2016.

Karen Anderson is the Agriculture Extension Educator with the University of Minnesota Extension in Rice and Steele Counties. She can be reached at 507-444-7685.

Midwest Soil Health Summit is Feb. 17 and 18 in Alexandria

The Sustainable Farming Association’s innovative Midwest Soil Health Summit, set for Feb. 17-18, 2016, at Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria, features soil health experts and farm leaders for two days of education and farmer networking, all geared at improving soil health for all farmers.

Speakers include Jay Fuhrer, NRCS Soil Health Specialist in Bismarck, N.D.; Dr. Allen Williams, a leader in cutting-

edge grazing methodology; Kent Solberg, SFA Livestock & Grazing Specialist; Grant Breikreutz, a producer from Redwood Falls, Minn.; Todd McPeak, a producer from Burleigh County, N.D.; Dr. Michael Lehman, South Dakota State Research Microbiologist; Dr. Shannon Osbourne, Research Agronomist; and John

Mesko, SFA Executive Director. Also planned is a Wednesday night cocktail reception and casual Q&A with John Mesko, Jay Fuhrer and Allen Williams; discussion tables where attendees can network with presenters; a premiere screening of the new film by Dr. Daphne Miller, “In

Search of Balance;” a separately ticketed soil health training curriculum for professionals; and more.

Cost for the MSHS is \$150 for SFA members and \$200 for non-members; the separate curriculum for professionals is \$100. Exhibitor and sponsor space is also still available. For more information or to register, visit www.sfa-mn.org/midwest-soil-health-summit.



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AgPower ENTERPRISES

Mailbag

Big Ag is marching into northern Minnesota

Nothing is sacred anymore. Big Ag, led by Big Pig, is moving into northern Minnesota lake country. Rather than change the way that industrial agriculture raises animals, Big Pig is moving north to limit disease outbreak. Amid thousands of factory farms in southern Minnesota, disease spreads like wildfire within the feedlot and quickly leaps to dozens of neighboring factory farms. Northern Minnesota is considered safe territory for expansion. Bill Crawford, a long time member of the Minnesota Pork Board, is leading an investor group that plans to construct a 3,300 hog confinement unit in Cass County in northern Minnesota, right in the heart of lake

country. This single feedlot will produce manure equivalent to a human population exceeding 10,000. And this is probably only the start. Factory farms are no longer only a rural issue. They’re an issue for every Minnesotan who owns a cabin or loves the outdoors. Big Ag has ruined the lakes and streams in southern Minnesota – they’re marching into our beloved northern Minnesota unless you help stop it. You can run or you can help us stand and fight! Come and make your voices heard at the next Byron Township meeting on Tuesday December 8th at Leader Community Hall at 7 p.m. (one mile north of Leader on Hwy 64). Tell them to vote YES on the Moratorium to help save Big Swan creek, Crow Wing river, and our northern Minnesota lakes, streams, and Family

Farming way of life!

*Peter Miller-Russo
Motley, MN
On behalf of Cass County
Concerned Citizens Alliance*

*Sonja Trom Eayrs
Maple Grove, MN
On behalf of Dodge County
Concerned Citizens*

Thank you for supporting the Holiday Train

Thanks to the many, many friends and family of the Steele County Food Shelf community who helped to make this year’s Canadian Pacific Holiday Train stop the best ever. Thank you to the Canadian Pacific Rail Company, whose organization brought Owatonna fabulously decorated train cars with a

sound stage featuring the Canadian band, Doc Walker, backing Juno Award nominee Kira Isabella; encouraged money and “healthy food” donations to benefit those dealing with food insecurity and, on top of all that, presented us with a check for \$7,500. Thanks to Ryan Gillespie and to Chris Harris and the OHS Christmas Carolers who caroled the crowd into the holiday spirit before the train arrived. Thanks to the City of Owatonna and Park and Recreation employees who set up and hauled away the donated sound stage used by the singers. Thanks for publicity provided by the Owatonna Today show, the Owatonna People’s Press, Steele County Times, radio stations KOWZ and KRFO and Jennifer Libby and staff at the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce. Thanks for hot chocolate from Kwik

Trip and for cookies, napkins, cups and more from local grocers, Hy-Vee, Cash Wise and Fareway Foods. Thanks for musical equipment from Jerry Besser at Tone Music and to American Rent All for coffee containers and portable toilets. To all of the great students who participate in DECA for serving hot cocoa and all members of CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) for collecting food and cash donations, thank you. Thanks to Lowe’s and Wal Mart for letting us use their store lots as remote pick up points and thanks to Owatonna Bus Company for freely shuttling folks to and from those locations. Thank you most especially Chief Mike Johnson (and the whole Owatonna Fire Department) for all your time and

work behind the scenes in the months before the event, during the event and in making sure everyone stayed safe in leaving the event. The collective efforts of everyone listed here (and the many I know I’ve forgotten to thank) made the Holiday Train event a great holiday occasion for a crowd of families estimated by Mike Johnson to be between 2,000 and 2,500. With all that help, it’s no wonder we, as a community, were able to raise and I am proud to report 1,571 pounds of food and over \$900 in addition to the check from the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

*Stormy Trom, Director,
Steele County Food Shelf*

GUEST COLUMN

Continued from Page 2A

rific tragedy ultimately sparked a chain reaction and lost him his job as a Lakeville Police Officer. This hurt me in so many ways because I have witnessed his dedication to the people in the Lakeville, and Southern Minnesota communities. He comes home wearing his emotions on his shoulder and often times asks me for advice on such minor details. His big heart has translated to his career and his extreme dedication often takes a toll of his personal time and sleep schedule. I urge you to go back a few years and look at the extreme improvements he has made in your newspaper. Anything from picture quality to improvement in stories, he has done. This is a direct byproduct of his hard work and desire to serve those in the community. Throughout everything in the past 19 years, I am most thankful that my father has ALWAYS held me accountable for each and every one of actions. Making a wrong decision was never acceptable to him and allowing the consequences to play out for me has made me a better man. He has held me accountable for making decisions about schoolwork, what I want to



Submitted photos
Steele County Times publisher Rick Bussler's children, Caleb, Kyrie and Cailyn, look to their father for guidance and support.

be involved in, and any of my other daily actions. Back in my sophomore year of high school I got in trouble for cheating on a test even though everyone else in my class was cheating on that same test. Once I came home I

explained what happened and expected some kind of sympathy. He simply responded, “If you cannot take responsibility for your actions, you are not prepared for the rest of your life. Sometimes you get dealt a bad hand but that doesn’t give

any excuse to whine or make poor decisions.” This has stuck with me ever since. My father is certainly a man that more often than not has been dealt a bad hand but his toughness and extraordinary faith has always got him through whatever life



Caleb and Kyrie are pictured by the Christmas tree during a holiday season gone by.

may throw his way. I am extremely proud to see my father, your publisher, pour everything he has into a passion that started when he was young. I have learned that you have all you need when you have faith, family, and a passion that extends far beyond yourself. No matter where life takes

him, my father will always remain an unsung hero in my heart and the hearts of many. Happy birthday Dad and thanks for being the strongest man I know.

*Love,
Caleb, your son*

HEALTH CARE

Continued from Page 1A



Staff photo by Alan Van Ormer
Southeast Minnesota Coordinator for Health Access Minnesota Denise Robertson and Dist. 24 Sen. Vicki Jensen (DFL-Owatonna) help lead a discussion about health care issues at the Elks Lodge in Owatonna on Saturday.

Jensen provided those attending Saturday, in 2013 it cost \$283 per health care claim. After information was gathered, that cost jumped to \$417 per month in 2014. Prescription drugs, especially brand name drugs, are the major drivers of increasing that cost, Jensen said. Robertson stated that after the

first couple of years that MNsure came into effect, rates are starting to be more in par with what they should be. MNsure is Minnesota’s marketplace where individuals, families and small businesses can shop, compare and choose health insurance coverage that meets their needs. MNsure is the only place a person can qualify

for financial help that can lower the cost of a monthly insurance premium. “Because of the procedures of MNsure – long wait lines, computer problems – people didn’t bother signing up under MNsure to see if they qualified for a subsidy. Our rates were so low anyway, why would they need to bother with MNsure,” she said.

“Now this year when finally the rates are catching up, we’re starting to deal with what the rest of the country is. This year they are coming, applying and qualifying for a subsidy.” She added as the rates are rising we are bringing more people into the marketplace. “Ideally, everyone should be using whatever is available and we’re finally getting a clearer picture,” she said. “We had a lot of people come to us in a big panic because rates were literally doubling. After they saw us, they were paying the same as last year. As the rates increase, the subsidies increase.” Robertson said she ended up being part of the individual market and it impacted her for at least a year. She was married, got divorced and then paid into Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), but later stopped because she couldn’t afford it. She couldn’t qualify for any public programs and because of a pre-existing condition any policy she purchased was at least \$800 a month. “I wouldn’t be able to eat if I paid \$800 a month,” she said. She was hospitalized in November and then the next year she had no insurance. Robertson

stated she went a year without insurance because she couldn’t afford it. “It was the longest year of my life,” she said. The Affordable Care Act passed, and it changed some of the qualifications and Robertson said she was able to qualify for Minnesota Care, found a better job and is now under employer-sponsored coverage. “The nice thing about the Affordable Care Act is it lets people move up and down the system.” Robertson said a major challenge is education. “This is a whole new health care system. It is just way different than it was before,” she said. Brickwedde mentioned that the individual markets and the small group markets are coming together. “One of the things we are working at in the commerce department is trying to get ahead of that issue so that individual

market rates don’t continue on that upward trajectory, but rather stabilize.” He said that the major thing he has been hearing is that costs are going up and that people are having trouble affording the health care. “That’s the key question we really, as a state, have to wrap our arms around to make sure that care that people are getting is also affordable,” he said. “It is good to have insurance. If you can’t afford it because the cost of the care is so high, then you still have a problem we still have to solve.” Jensen is hoping that with knowledge and more transparency on claims, the state can tackle why these issues are happening. “Changes like this is incredibly impactful because it hits you right in the pocket book with things you don’t know for sure,” she said.

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Owatonna Business Incubator to have a new name

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

Soon, the Owatonna Business Incubator will have a new name to better represent their services and the broader Owatonna area that the nonprofit serves.

The incubator has been serving the community since 1988. Ex-

ecutive Director since late July, Bill Owens, spoke to the county commissioners at the meeting on Nov. 24 about the update.

“The changes essentially confirm what we have been doing all along,” said Owens. He told the commissioners that the organization wants to be “appealing to all businesses.”

The new name is to be

Owatonna Area Business Development Center, though he admits that it is likely to be referred to as the “incubator” out of habit for some time.

He broke down the name change. “Owatonna Area” indicates the broader geographical range.

“I have been here since July, and I have worked with people

from all over the county,” said Owens. “We want the name to reflect that inclusiveness that we are already practicing.”

Owens said that the “Business Development” aspect of the new name indicates the business growth and change guidance that the organization is able to provide.

“The word ‘incubator’ makes

you think about eggs or at least an idea at inception. We are here for startup businesses but also businesses that are more mature and are experiencing a change,” he said. “Maybe they want to expand and venture into something new. It is our business and in the best interest of the community we serve to help them.”

The “center” aspect of the new name Owatonna Area Business Development Center is to be more specific to what the facility has to offer.

“Not only do we have manufacturing and office space, we have an in-house Business Consultant with the Small Business Development Center,” said Owens. According to the incubator’s website, counseling services are

free to those seeking assistance and can range from “brainstorming ideas through registration with state and federal agencies to development of business plans.”

The incubator is located at 1065 SW 24th Street. “We are geographically tough to beat, right between Highway 14 and I-35,” said Owens.

“It is not so much a change in what we are doing. It is more a change in how we want the business community to see us,” commented Owens. “We are here to help.”

The official date of the name change was unavailable at the time of print. To learn more about the incubator’s services, visit www.owatonnaincubator.com.



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There will also be a drawing with all the entries from the last four weeks on Monday, Dec. 22, for one lucky reader to win the **GRAND PRIZE** of two tickets to Chanhassen Dinner Theatre!

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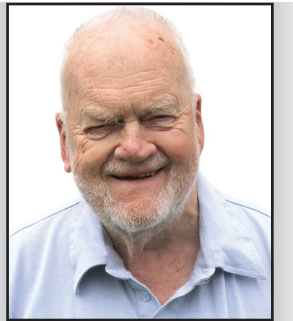
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OUTSIDE THE LINES



LEMAR NELSON

Younger athletes burst into prominence

This has nothing to detract from the upper-class athletes, but the last weeks or so have put a spotlight on a number of sophomores who have burst into prominence on the BPHS athletic scene. The standard of success ranges from both basketball teams to wrestling, and it is certainly heartening to see this happen.

Sophomores to the front

In wrestling, Mitchell Oswald currently has lost only two bouts and won two straight in action last week. But it is in basketball where the success has been most evident. For the girls Sam Wurst and Marissa Larson have taken turns leading the team in scoring with Larson counting 18 points in two different occasions.

Both girls have given great support to senior co-captains Kalyn Naatz and Lauren Larkoski, and together the team has compiled a 5-1 mark for the season so far. A big hiccup at the state's No. 1 ranked Goodhue is the only blemish on the record, and with continual improvement, they will be a team to be reckoned with all season long.

Stars are born

There's no question but that senior Anthony Nelson is the glue that holds the Blossom boys' team together, but three sophomores hold down starting positions, and two have taken turns in leading the Blossom scoring. Jake Ressler is approaching 6-foot-7-inches in height, and he has done a good job defending the paint and also having a prolific game in scoring with 28 points.

Marten Morem has also stepped up in the last two games, both wins, with 28 points against Medford and 18 last Saturday at Alden-Conger. His ability to score from three-point range or in close really keeps opponents alert. Nick Thompson, the third sophomore starter doesn't score much, but his play on the court is steady and efficient. The team evened its record with a win last Saturday.

Seniors still leaders

With all the buzz about sophomore athletes, it is well to remember that seniors are still in charge. Naatz, Larkoski and Hannah Ahrens still provide the leadership necessary for the underclassmen who are slowly coming into their own on the basketball court, while Nelson and Dawson Heuer are doing the same for the boys. The team is improving daily with the sophomore talent blending into the team concept, largely thanks to the senior leadership.

A distant honor

I think most readers are aware that I truly enjoy relating anecdotes and exploits of former

OUTSIDE THE LINES

Continued on Page 3B

BLOOMING PRAIRIE BOYS BASKETBALL

Boys dominate Knights; beat Medford

By LEMAR NELSON
Staff Sports Writer

After a first half that was closely contested the full 18 minutes, the Blooming Prairie boys basketball team scored 40 second half points to defeat Alden-Conger 71-57 on Saturday, Dec 12.

The non-conference victory climaxed a rare Saturday doubleheader, with the Blossom girls playing the first game. The team evened its season record at 4-4

"It was a close first half as the home team used some aggressive floor play and strong rebounding to stay within a point at the half," remarked Coach Nathan Piller. "We got into a little better rhythm in the second half, and our rebounding really picked up. We showed some good motivation and a desire to compete."

Anthony Nelson counted 27 points on 13 of 22 shooting, and Marten Morem added 18 on 11 of 23 shots. Both Jake Ressler and Dawson Heuer added eighth points. Nelson handed out six assists and had six steals in the game, and Heuer added two assists and three steals. The team did have too many mistakes, turning the ball over 20 times and had only 24 rebounds in the contest.

BP junior varsity took a 32-12 halftime lead over Alden-Conger and coasted to a 41-25 victory. All 17 Blossoms had a chance to play in this game, and Cameron Kubista and Max Romeo counted 18 and nine points to lead the local scoring.

BP gets past Medford

Getting by a pesky Medford Tiger five, the Blooming Prairie boys basketball team managed



Bloomington's sophomore Marten Morem attempts to make the rebound during Friday evening's game against the Medford Tigers in Blooming Prairie.

to split the week's activities, as they outscored the visitors 71-62 on Friday, Dec. 11.

With three of the five starters sophomores, the locals still found a way to subdue the Tigers.

This time sophomore Marten Morem had the hot hand, as he scored 28 points, including six three-pointers. BP led only 7-0 after four minutes, but they outscored Medford 19-7 over the next five minutes to open up a 26-7 margin. Nine of those points came from three straight treys from Morem. BP led at the break 31-16.

The Blossoms kept the pressure up in the second half, twice

upping the lead to 20 points, but the losers staged a late rally to get within 12 points twice in the last minute. Reserves played the last two minutes for the home team.

Morem had nine rebounds to go along with his 28 points, and Anthony Nelson, though not the leading scorer for the locals the first game all season, did get 18 points and dished out three assists. Dawson Heuer had his best night of the season scoring 12 points and gathering in five rebounds. BP shot 48 percent for the night on 28-of-58 attempts.

The team record went to 3-4 with the win.

OWATONNA GIRLS BASKETBALL

Starting the season with three tough games

By ALAN VAN ORMER
Managing Editor

Despite a 1-2 start the first week of the season, Owatonna Girls Basketball Coach Tricia Hoffman is happy with the team's ability to score, balanced scoring and the defensive intensity in all three games.

"Tuesday was a prime example of how good our defensive intensity can be when shut John Marshall down," she said.

Rochester John Marshall won the game 50-33 in the Huskies' home opener.

Senior Carli Langeland said that the three games last week went well. "We've had some tough competition," she said. "Against John Marshall and Prior Lake we played pretty good defense. Our first game we didn't really shoot well and the second game against Prior Lake, we finally knocked them down."

Another senior, Rachel Williamson said she thinks the team is doing a good job of what coach wants with the defense. She also said the team is communicating, working on taking care of the ball and being quick and not hurrying.

Winona wins shootout

Hoffman said she liked the fight that the girls showed in the 91-83 loss to a top-five rated Class 3A squad after coming off an away game the night before. "The starters played a lot of minutes," she said. "In the second half you could see they were getting tired. They continued to play as hard as they could, sprinted the floor, took care of the basketball and kept their focus when they were physically and I'm sure they were mentally tired, being our third game of the week."

The Huskies knew going into the game that they were facing



Kirstin Pumper of Owatonna (12) battles Rochester John Marshall's Taylor Fautsch for the loose basketball in the opening game for Owatonna High School girls basketball team. John Marshall posted a 53-30 win at Owatonna High School on Dec. 8.

a good squad that can hit the three-point shot and have four players at 6 foot.

"It was a fun game to be part of," Hoffman said. "When you put up 83 points in the game, I don't think we're going to lose very many games."

The key to the game was Winona hitting some big shots down the stretch. "They nailed a couple of threes with defense in their face, so you have to give them some credit," Hoffman said. "Again, we were down for much of the game, but we continued to scrap back with our defense, knocked down the big shot or took the ball to the basket."

Syd Schultz led Owatonna with 20 points, Langeland chipped in with 16, Megan

Peglow added 13, Williamson scored 11 and Jenna Zeman added 10.

Huskies defeat Prior Lake for first win

Several times throughout the game Owatonna was behind by double digits, but the Huskies battled back to win 76-67.

After trailing 44-33 at halftime, Zeman knocked down a couple of three-point shots to start the second half comeback. "We started being aggressive taking the ball to the basket," Hoffman said. "Carli Langeland did an excellent job penetrating the zone and getting easy baskets. We just picked it up on the defensive end."

The big key in the game was



Owatonna senior guard Carli Langeland goes around a screen set by teammate Rachel Williamson in the Huskies' season girls basketball opener at Owatonna High School on Tuesday evening. Rochester John Marshall pulled out the victory.

free throws. Owatonna hit 28-of-32 free throws in the game. Langeland and Zeman each had 21 points for Owatonna. Williamson added 16 points.

Poor shooting dooms Huskies

Owatonna went 0 for 18 from the three-point line and shot an over 22 percent in a 53-30 loss to Rochester John Marshall.

"We executed the offense, but we didn't knock down shots," Hoffman said. "If we could have knocked down three-point shots in the first half, it could have been a different outcome."

Being the first game of the season, Hoffman said that might have played a role in the poor shooting. "The girls have been knocking down shots in practice," she said. "I'm happy with them not losing their confidence. We're looking forward to another chance."

NRHEG GIRLS BASKETBALL

Panthers still perfect

By LEMAR NELSON
Staff Sports Writer

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) girls stayed perfect for the season with a 54-38 victory over visiting Maple River on Friday, Dec 11. Kayley Camerer had a big night for the Panthers, as she scored 25 points.

"I thought we struggled running the offense at times tonight," remarked Coach Onika Peterson, "but we came out in the second half and played much better. We have just one game next week, and that will give us a chance to get some quality practice time in."

Besides Camerer's prolific scoring and team-leading 16 rebounds, Marnie Wagner had 12 points and 11 rebounds; and Maddie Wagner added six points, six rebounds and four assists.

The team shot just 27 percent on 16 of 60 attempts, while the Eagles shot the same percentage on 15 of 53 tries. The winners had a 46-42 edge in rebounding. The JV team prevailed 46-35 in the prelim.

Panthers edge Waseca

With Gretchen Raimaker sidelined with an injury, the rest of the NRHEG girls stepped up

NRHEG Girls BB

Continued on Page 3B

BP BOYS BB

Continued on Page 3B

Sports

MEDFORD WRESTLING

Wrestlers can't overcome open weight classes

By **ALAN VAN ORMER**
Managing Editor

Forfeiting five different weight classes was just too much for the Medford wrestling team to overcome in a dual meet with Waterville-Elysian-Morristown/Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (WEM/JWP) on Thursday night at the Medford Schools.

“We were missing a couple of kids tonight and that made a big difference,” Tiger Coach Dennis Whitman said. “The kids we put on the mat did well.”

Several of the Medford wrestlers are nursing injuries. WEM/JWP won the match, 45-29.

One highlight for Medford was the last match of the night. Heavyweight Trevor Spatenka pinned Grizzly Andrew Larson to the mat in 38 seconds. This is the senior’s first year wrestling at heavyweight.

“It was nice to see him get the win,” Whitman said. “It was nice to see him get a pin at the end.”

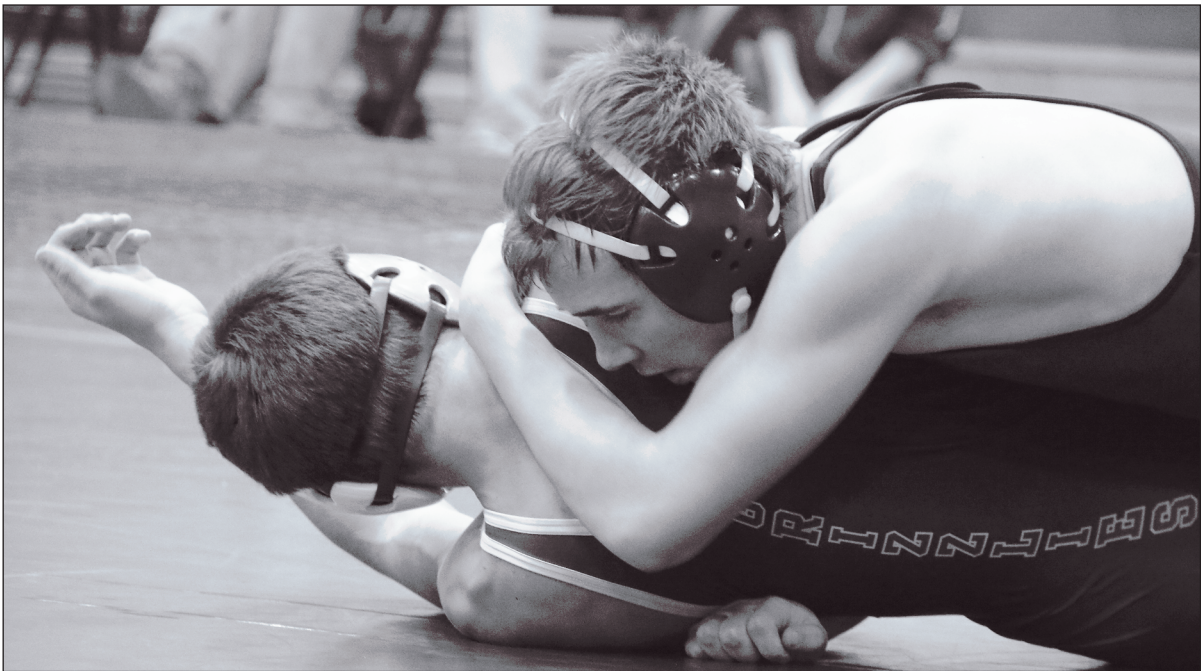
Medford scored the first 11 points. WEM/JWP scored the next 24 points with a pin and three forfeits. However, the Tigers battled back to narrow the gap to 24-23.

Sophomore Bo Noble started the comeback at 145 pounds. He defeated Wyatt Storch, 11-1. Nick Masso followed at 152 pounds with a 7-2 decision over Luke Borneke. At 160 pounds, Marcus DeLeon had a major decision at 17-0 over Levi Wolter.

The Grizzlies then took control putting it out of reach over the next few matches. Spatenka ended the evening with his pin.

Whitman stated that WEM/JWP always has a good team and usually a full lineup. “They have a tough lineup,” he said. “We had a better showing then what the scoreboard showed tonight.”

Whitman said the team wrestled hard and was aggressive. His concern is conditioning.



Staff photos by Alan Van Ormer

(ABOVE) Bo Noble of Medford is maneuvering to pin WEM/JWP's Wyatt Storch in the 145-pound matchup at Medford High School. Noble won his match 11-1 in dual wrestling action on Thursday night.

(RIGHT) Medford's Nick Masso has a hold on Waterville-Elysian-Morristown/Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton 152-pound wrestler Luke Borneke during Thursday evening's dual at Medford High School. Masso came away with a 7-2 win over the Grizzlies' wrestler.



“They competed hard and that is all you can ask for.”

On Saturday, Medford will compete in an individual tournament at Kenyon with eight other teams. Blooming Prairie is also expected to compete. The meet starts at 10 a.m. at Kenyon-Wanamingo High School.

“There will be a good mixture of schools including a couple of 3A schools,” Whitman said. “We are going to see some teams we don’t normally see.”

BLOOMING PRAIRIE WRESTLING

Matmen drop pair to Madelia-Truman, USC

By **LEMAR NELSON**
Staff Sports Writer

A forfeit at heavyweight gave Madelia-Truman (MT) a 39-36 victory over Blooming Prairie in the second match of a triangular meet on the home mat Thursday, Dec 10.

Mitchell Oswald put the Blossoms up 36-33 with a pin over Jeremy Stoker at 220, but the forfeit won the match for MT.

Oswald led in his bout 4-0 after one period and then pinned Stoker at just 2:47 of the second period. The visitors had taken a 33-30 edge over the locals when Riley Olson dropped an 8-5 decision at 195. A reversal and near fall in the third period made the difference.

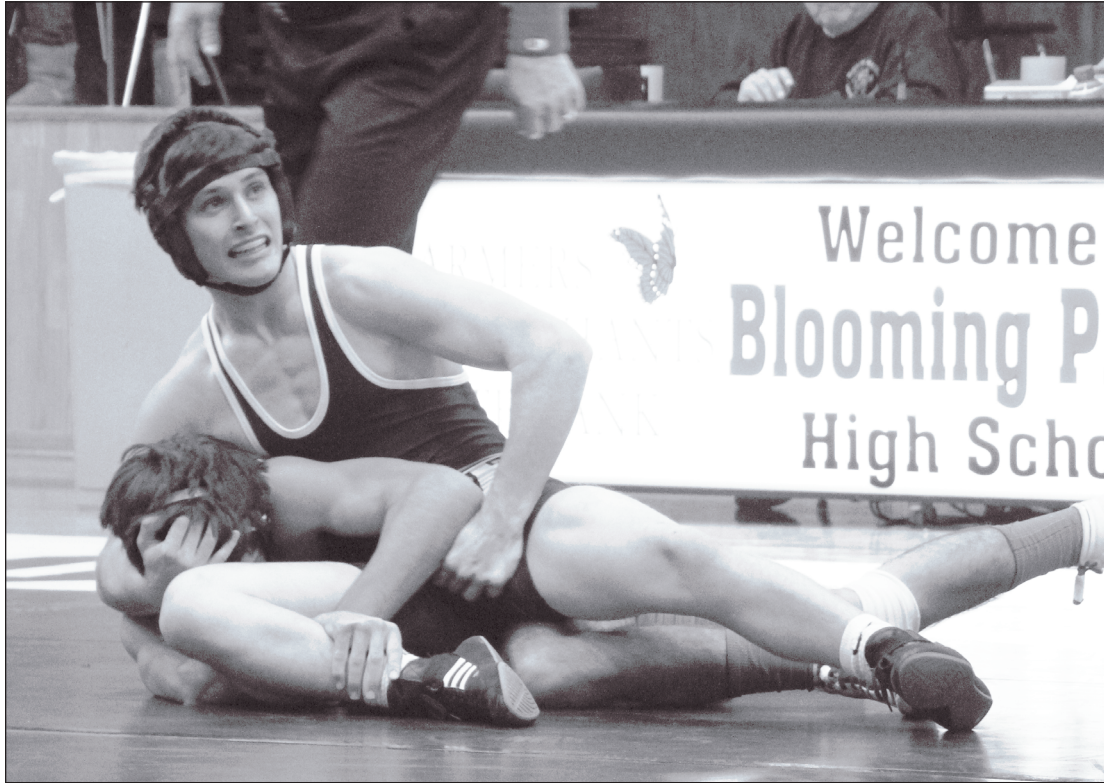
Ethan Arett, Payton Simon, Colton Krell and Jon Hansen all won by forfeit, Seth Peterson pinned James Hodge in just 1:49; and Oswald earned his pin. Three forfeits and three falls by the visitors proved the difference in the match.

BP falls to USC

Arett lost his first bout of the year by a 7-5 decision, and United South Central defeated the home team 51-25 in the meet opener. Three straight forfeits in the lower weights gave the Rebels too much of a cushion, and the locals could not get past those results.

Krell and Dylan Nirk both won by falls, in the third period, Hansen won by forfeit, Payton Simon won a tough 5-4 decision over Hunter Johnson with a near fall and a takedown in the last minute and Oswald romped over Mitch Hampstead 9-0, at 220.

The team record dropped to 1-4. Jon Hansen and Colton Krell are both 9-1 for the season, Arett is 7-1 and Oswald is 7-2 in dual bouts. Simon and Seth Peterson also have winning records in the season so far.



Staff photo by Laura Berndt

Blossom's Payton Simon has a hold on Rebels' Hunter Johnson during the match on Thursday night in Blooming Prairie. Simon won the match-up, although Blooming Prairie would ultimately lose 51-25 to the visiting United South Central Rebels.

Records in the season so far.

BP 5th in Invite

The Blooming Prairie wrestling team finished fifth of seven teams in the Badger Invitational meet at Springfield on Saturday, Dec. 5.

Eight individuals placed for the Blossoms, led by Arett, who claimed the championship, at 106 pounds. The locals also earned a second, four thirds, a fourth and a fifth. Redwood/River Valley (RV) won the team title.

In his title run Arett drew a first round bye, pinned his second round opponent in just 59 seconds and then took 2:56 for another pin in the first place bout.

Mitchell Oswald claimed second

place with a first period pin, a second round bye and lost by a fall in the finals.

“I was pleased with our efforts,” remarked Coach Chad Gimbel. “In fact, of the bouts that were actually wrestled, we had the highest win percentage of any team in the competition. We just need more wrestlers.”

Payton Simon, Jon Hansen, Colton Krell and Dylan Nirk all placed third in the meet, Riley Olson placed fourth and Seth Peterson finished fifth. Simon, Hansen, Krell and Nirk all won three bouts and lost one, Peterson went 2-2 in the meet and Olson took fourth with only four wrestlers in the competition.

In the team competition, GM-LOS finished second behind

RRV (209) with 173 points. BP finished with 114 points for its fifth place finish.

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Gopher Conference Standings

Girls Basketball

	Conf.	Overall
NRHEG	1-0-0	4-0-0
Blooming Prairie	1-0-0	5-1-0
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	1-0-0	2-1-0
Bethlehem Academy	0-0-0	2-3-0
United South Central	0-1-0	2-2-0
Medford	0-1-0	0-2-0
Maple River	0-1-0	0-3-0

Boys Basketball

	Conf.	Overall
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	2-0-0	5-1-0
Maple River	2-0-0	5-1-0
Blooming Prairie	1-1-0	4-4-0
NRHEG	1-1-0	3-3-0
United South Central	0-1-0	2-2-0
Bethlehem Academy	0-1-0	3-5-0
Medford	0-2-0	1-5-0

Wrestling

	Conf.	Overall
United South Central	2-0-0	3-0-0
WEM/JWP	1-0-0	2-2-0
New Richland-H-E-G H.S.	1-0-0	2-3-0
Maple River	2-1-0	3-3-0
Blooming Prairie	1-3-0	1-5-0
Medford	0-1-0	1-3-0

Big 9 Conference Standings

Girls Basketball

	Conf.	Overall
Rochester John Marshall	4-0-0	4-1-0
Rochester Mayo	3-0-0	5-0-0
Rochester Century	3-1-0	4-2-0
Red Wing	3-1-0	3-3-0
Winona	2-1-0	3-1-0
Northfield H.S.	3-2-0	3-2-0
Austin	2-2-0	2-2-0
Faribault	1-2-0	2-2-0
Owatonna	0-1-0	1-2-0
Mankato West	0-3-0	1-3-0
Albert Lea	0-4-0	0-4-0
Mankato East	0-4-0	1-4-0

Boys Basketball

	Conf.	Overall
Red Wing	6-0-0	7-0-0
Rochester John Marshall	5-0-0	5-1-0
Austin	3-1-0	4-1-0
Northfield H.S.	4-2-0	6-2-0
Mankato East	3-2-0	4-3-0
Owatonna	3-2-0	3-3-0
Mankato West	2-3-0	2-3-0
Faribault	2-3-0	2-4-0
Winona	1-4-0	1-5-0
Rochester Mayo	2-4-0	2-5-0
Albert Lea	0-5-0	0-6-0
Rochester Century	0-5-0	0-7-0

Wrestling

	Conf.	Overall
Albert Lea Area	3-0-0	10-0-0
Owatonna	3-0-0	4-1-0
Rochester John Marshall	3-0-0	6-2-0
Northfield	2-1-0	2-1-0
Rochester Mayo	2-2-0	3-3-0
Faribault	1-1-0	1-1-0
Winona/Winona Cotter	1-1-0	1-4-0
Austin	0-1-0	2-3-0
Mankato East	0-2-0	1-5-0
Mankato West	0-3-0	0-3-0
Rochester Century	0-4-0	0-5-0

Source: Minnesota Scores website

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Sports



Staff photo by Alan Van Ormer

NRHEG guard Maddie Wagner heads toward the basket during Friday's girls basketball game against Maple River. The Panthers remained unbeaten with a victory at NRHEG High

NRHEG Girls BB

Continued from Page 1B

to earn a 57-50 non-conference victory over visiting Waseca Tuesday, Dec. 8.

The win kept the Panthers perfect with an early season 3-0 record.

The Wagner twins led the scoring for the winners, as Maddie Wagner had 20 points in an aggressive display, and Marnie Wagner had 12 points. Hailey Schuller contributed 10 points, and free throw shooting proved the difference, as the Panthers made 16-of-20 attempts in the second half alone.

“With one girl down,” commented Coach Onika Peterson, “the other girls really stepped up. We were able to attack the basket, and we crashed the boards pretty well. Free throws made near the end ultimately decided the game.”

NRHEG outrebounded the Jays 37-34, with Marnie Wagner pulling down nine and Maddie Wagner eight. Both teams had a tough night shooting from the floor, but the free throw shooting of the Panthers spelled the difference.

OUTSIDE THE LINES

Continued from Page 1B

students and their families. This week I have a great example of outstanding accomplishment. BPHS graduate Katherine (Kubista) Mair, a 1986 graduate, and husband Brent (1985 Austin graduate) are parents to Maren, who recently earned a volleyball scholarship to play in the NJCCC for Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas.

Maren, who is a freshman, brings a long list of accomplishments to the college. She earned first team All-American honors, first team All-District middle hitter, All-East Jayhawk conference and Conference Freshman of the Year accolades. According to her coach, Maren was a player that made you notice her because of her intelligence and her offense. Her mother, Katherine, was an All-Conference volleyball player for the Blossoms in 1985.

Maren is returning for another year and looks to become just the third two-time All-American for the college. She plans to transfer to a four-year college after her sophomore year and enter the RN program. Maren ended the current season ranked second in the Jayhawk conference, with 321 kills and 88 blocks, including 10 solo blocks at the net. As I mentioned earlier, it pleases me to read about the successes of former graduates and their families. A tip of the hat to Maren Mair.

Another BPHS graduate made local news lately, when Richard Kubista sang “Amahl and the Night Visitors” with a group from the Delano area. The production, written by Menotti, has been a popular Christmas offering through the years and remains popular during the Christmas season each year.

Kubista, who has performed in this play before, sang with the group that presented the performance at Buffalo, St. Michael’s, and in the Minneapolis Basicilla. It has also been a Christmas special on television at various times. Another tip of the hat to Kubista for being a part of a talented group of singers.

Patience rewarded

It sometimes pays to have patience. I arose yesterday morning to discover that Red Elf and his sisters (brothers?) were perched in different branches of the Christmas tree. Red Elf sat on the top branch naturally, with Yellow Elf and green Elf lower down on the tree. I assume they crept out of the basement sometime during Saturday night.

Now my biggest worry will be how they will find a way to travel to my granddaughter’s home in Apple Valley where we plan to spend our family Christmas on the day after Christmas. I probably needn’t worry, however, as, if I remember correctly, they made it to the same location last year. For those readers who may have forgotten my Red Elf tradition, each year, beginning many years ago when my children were very young, three little rag creatures appeared on our family Christmas tree, and the tradition has continued to this season. I have told the whole story several times before in this column, and I won’t do it again this year, but the whole story seems pretty real to me and my family. I will keep readers informed as the season progresses. Enjoy our continued spring in December, and we’ll talk again.

Women’s Bowling League

TEAM STANDINGS: Week 10

1. F&M Bank	24-16
2. Pizza Cellar/Cue Co.	23-17
3. Epic Contracting	21-19
4. Kusters’ Kar Corner	19-21
5. DOE	17.50-22.50
6. J & H Liquor/Dairy Queen	15.50-24.50

INDIVIDUAL STATS

High Game:	
1. Kathi Peterson	182
2. Alysa Alves	172

High Series:	
1. Kathi Peterson	462
2. Alysa Alves	443

NRHEG Boys Basketball

Eagles fly past Panthers

By LEMAR NELSON
Staff Sports Writer

Maple River played an unwelcome host to New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG), as the boys basketball team defeated the Panthers, 62-41 on Friday, Dec. 11.

The Eagles came out with aggressive style and dominated the entire contest. Panther leader Oakley Baker was kept in check by the home team, although he still led the visitors with 19 points.

As Coach Pat Churchill commented on the game, “I was impressed with how hard they played on both defense and offense, and their efficiency with the ball. They punished us on the offensive bard, especially in the first half, when they turned 11 offensive rebounds into 15 points.”

Baker’s 19 points and eight rebounds were followed by Tyler Raimann with six points and six rebounds and John Cole’s four points and seven rebounds. Benji Lundberg and Jack Schultz both added four points. Will

Keller and Cole Sohre both counted 16 points for the Eagles.

NRHEG is now 4-2 for the season.

Baker scores 1,000

NRHEG scored a big non-conference victory on Tuesday, Dec. 8, when the Panthers edged St. Clair in an exciting game, 69-64.

But big news came from Panther Oakley Baker who joined an elite club when he counted his 1,000th point in the first half of the contest.

The game itself proved a very good contest, with neither team taking a lead of more than five points. Despite some early foul trouble that forced the Panthers into a zone defense, the winners held a one-point edge at the break 34-33.

Baker scored his milestone point midway through the first half and piled up 16 points in the first half. The junior finished the game with 25 points to lead the team.

As Coach Pat Churchill remarked, “This was a very good high school basketball game to-

night. Both teams had runs during the contest, but the key to the win came from the defense that forced tough shots from the Cyclones on their last three possessions down the court. I congratulate Baker, also, for reaching that goal of 1,000 points. He is a gifted athlete who deserves all the praise he has received.”

John Cole and Chad Agrimson joined Baker in double figure scoring. Cole counted 16 points and pulled down six rebounds, and Agrimson added 14 points, including 4-of-4 from three-point range. Cole and Luke Overgaard made treys late in the game to ensure the win. Mitchell Weber and Paul Lang each had 18 points to lead St. Clair scoring.

NRHEG improved its record to 3-2 with the victory, and the Panthers also won the junior varsity game 59-33. The team traveled to Maple River for the first conference tilt of the season last Friday, Dec. 11.

NRHEG downs Knights

As far as Coach Pat Churchill was concerned, the best thing,

BLOOMING PRAIRIE VOLLEYBALL

Coach summarizes season

By LEMAR NELSON
Staff Sports Writer

If there were one word that Blooming Prairie first-year Coach Ranell Kittelson would use to describe the 2015 volleyball team, that word would be improvement. “Overall, the girls grew wonderfully as skilled players and teammates both on and off the court,” she said. “It was a rebuilding year as the team spent a lot of time early, as several contributing seniors left for farther education. But we had a group of five seniors that really stepped up and

became good leaders.”

The team spent a large amount of time in strength and conditioning, and that time translated into good play at the end of the season. The team also used practice time to work on serve receives, defense and more aggressive play by the middle hitters at the net.

The team finished the season 9-16, but held a 3-3-conference record and third place. The Blossoms played well in a first round sub-section victory over LeRoy-Ostrander, before falling to Hayfield in the semifinals for the second straight year.

Lauren Larkoski led the team in kills with 178 and Alyssa Krohnberg contributed 163 kills. Sophomore Sam Wurst led the blockers with 41, but Courtney Wobschall and Marissa Larson chipped in 35 and 23. Libero Bria Baldwin led the team in digs with 308, followed by Larkoski with 263 and Leah Inwards at 251.

Wobschall served 26 aces serves, with Krohnberg adding 20 and Abby Wayne, Inwards and Larkoski all chipping in 18. Wayne piled up 509 assists, 27 kills and 178 digs; Inwards contributed 49.

“As a first year varsity coach, I could not have asked for a better group of girls. The girls worked hard every day, and the hard work showed with their big improvement over the season,” Kittelson said. “We feel pretty good about ourselves and Gopher Conference volleyball. I doubt if there were any other conferences that could boast the state champion and the state runner-up in their class as our conference did. We competed against the best, and the girls can take that accomplishment with them forever.”

BP BOYS BB

Continued from Page 1B

The Superlarks jumped to a big early lead and never let the locals into the game.

“We were beaten by a pretty good team,” commented Coach Nathan Piller. “We try to be the hardest-working, most energetic team, but we weren’t in this game. The winners brought great energy and great effort to the game, and our goal of improving each game got tested tonight. Hopefully, we can learn

from this experience.”

Grand Meadow scored 45 first half points to lead by 18 at the break, and they added 35 points in a prolific second half, as well. Besides Buschmann’s 33 points, Terrel Rieken had 16, while Jake Ressler counted 12 and Anthony Nelson chipped in nine for the Blossoms. The Blossoms shot 41 percent from the field on 20 of- 48 attempts, but the hosts shot even better. Ressler

also led the rebounding for BP with eight and a block, and Nelson handed out four assists.

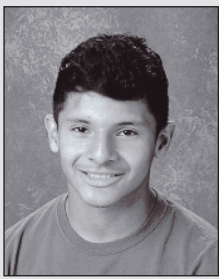
This time the JV team de-

feated Grand Meadow 43-23. Ten players scored points in this game, led by Trent Swenson with 11 and Hagen with 10.

ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



Marissa Larson



Jon Hansen

A Blossom junior, Marissa Larson gets the nod as the female athlete of the week. Larson has scored 42 points over the last three games including 18 in two of the three. A presence inside, she also is one of the leading rebounders for the basketball girls and is counted on more and more by Coach John Bruns and her teammates as a leader.

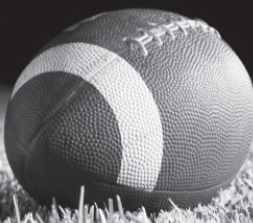
One of the very few seniors out for wrestling, Jon Hansen has gone through six team matches with only one loss in his dual bouts. In two matches last week, he won two bouts, both by a forfeit, and he is one of the quiet leaders on the team.

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Public Safety

Blotter spotlight:
Drunken Driving. Deputy made a DWI arrest in the 200 block of Holly St. SW at 1:01 a.m. on Dec. 5 in Owatonna.

Emergency crews respond to fatality near Medford

By LAURA BERNDT
News Editor

A 35-year-old Waseca man died on Monday, Dec. 7, while working on his semi equipment. According to Steele County Sheriff Lon Thiele, Brandon

Tune, of Waseca, was unresponsive when emergency personnel responded to the scene just after 5 p.m. on Monday, in the Northwest corner of Deerfield Township. Tune had been working on equipment for his semi when he fatally injured himself.

Sheriff Thiele said that he believes the incident would most likely be ruled as an accidental death. At the time, however, this information has not been officially confirmed.

The Steele County Sheriff's Office, Medford Rescue, Mor-

ristown Fire, Gold Cross Ambulance responded the incident. According to his obituary, Tune enjoyed working in his shop and had worked for Wayne Transport, of Rosemount.

Owatonna driver injured in 2-car crash

Claudia P. Cordova, 30, of Owatonna, received non-life threatening injuries after a two-car crash at the Interstate 35 northbound ramp from Hoffman Drive in Owatonna on Dec. 10.

Cordova was taken to Owatonna Hospital.

According to the Minnesota State Patrol, Marjorie G. Holzemer, 71, of Medford, was driving westbound approaching the stoplight. Cordova's vehicle was

stopped at the stop light when it was rear ended by Holzemer's vehicle and was pushed onto the ramp.

The report stated that no alcohol was detected on either driver and both were wearing their seat belts. Gold Cross and the Owatonna Police Department assisted in the incident.

South Central Drug Investigations Unit arrests 3



Mills



Richards



Rose

The South Central Drug Investigations Unit (SCDIU) recently conducted surveillance work resulting in the charging of three people recently.

Christopher A. Mills, 30, has been formally charged with a felony charge of fifth-degree sale of a controlled substance.

On Dec. 2, SCDIU agents were conducting surveillance from a vehicle in the Target parking lot. According to reports, while conducting the surveillance, they observed a vehicle unrelated to their investigation enter the Target parking lot and park near the agent vehicle. A second vehicle entered the parking lot and parked behind the first vehicle. The agents observed a male exit the first vehicle, approach the second vehicle with a baggie tucked into his palm.

According to the report, the male dropped the baggie into the open window of the second vehicle. The male then retrieved an

item from inside the vehicle and placed it in his sweatshirt pocket.

Believing a drug deal just took place in front of them, the agent directed the first vehicle be stopped by a uniformed officer. The vehicle was stopped a short distance away and a small amount of cash and marijuana was seized, the report stated.

In addition, the report says that in an interview with the male, he admitted making a marijuana sale.

In a separate incident, a SCDIU agent conducting surveillance directed an Owatonna officer to a vehicle driven by a subject known as 'Bear Cub,' who was known to be revoked and with a warrant.

According to reports, the officer stopped the vehicle and found 'Bear Cub' to be the driver. He was placed under arrest. A female was also in the vehicle and the officer had her step out of the vehicle.

As she did, the officer observed a rolled up plastic bag that contained a white powdery substance in the female passenger's seat. The report said the substance was suspected to be methamphetamine.

A further search uncovered additional meth, drug paraphernalia and marijuana.

Brad Richards, aka 'Bear Cub,' 30 and Shanna L. Rose, 34, were arrested and jailed.

Richards has been charged with second-degree possession of a controlled substance, while Rose faces fifth-degree possession of a controlled substance charges, the report said.

POLICE BLOTTER Steele County

Blooming Prairie Police
Dec. 4
Warrant. Officer arrested a subject for an outstanding warrant at 12:31 p.m.

Owatonna Police
Dec. 5
Shoplifting. A shoplifting incident occurred in the 1400 block of 21st Ave. NW at 4:58 p.m.

Theft. Police received a theft report from the 300 block of 20th St. NE at 6:47 p.m.

Dec. 6
Vandalism. Officer took property damage report in the 2000 block of St. Paul Rd. NE at 8:48 a.m.

Theft. A theft was reported in the 400 block of State Ave. NW at 11:48 a.m.

Drugs. At 2:53 p.m., drug activity was reported in the 500 block of State Ave. NW.

Shoplifting. Officer responded to a shoplifting incident in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 4:59 p.m.

Dec. 7
Burglary. Police began an investigation of a burglary in the 200 block of Beech Ave. NE at 5:26 p.m.

Dec. 8
Theft. A theft was reported in the 500 block of Adams Ave. NW at 2:26 p.m.

Criminal Sex. Police responded to a criminal sexual conduct incident in the 400 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 7:27 p.m.

Assault. At 8:25 p.m., officers responded to the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. for an assault.

Vandalism. Property damage reports were received from Fairgrounds Dr. SE and Foundation Dr. at 6:55 p.m. and the 1600 block of Austin Rd. SE at 11:13 p.m.

Dec. 9
Property Damage. Officer took a vandalism report at 16th St. NE and St. Paul Rd. NE at 8:59 a.m.

Shoplifting. At 12:26 p.m., officer issued a citation for shoplifting in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W.

Trespassing. Police responded to a trespassing incident in the 200 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 4:23 p.m.

Drunken Driving. Officer ar-

rested a motorist for driving while intoxicated at 16th St. SW and Sherwood Place SW at 9:43 p.m.

Dec. 10
Fraud. A citizen reported being the victim of a fraud incident in the 400 block of North St. W. at 7:14 a.m.

Shoplifting. Officer issued a shoplifting citation in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W. at 1:34 p.m.

Domestic. Police advised on a domestic disturbance in the 300 block of Oak Ave. S. at 4:20 p.m.

Assist. Officers assisted another agency with arresting subjects in the 200 block of Pearl St. E. at 4:09 p.m. and in the 2100 block of 4th St. NW at 6:53 p.m.

Warrant. At 10:45 p.m., police made a warrant arrest in the 1100 block of Hoffman Rd. NW.

Steele County Sheriff
Dec. 4
Welfare. Deputies responded to the 2400 block of County Rd. 45 S. for a welfare check at 12:45 p.m. However they were unable to locate the situation.

Dec. 5
Drunken Driving. Deputy made a DWI arrest in the 200 block of Holly St. SW at 1:01 a.m.

Domestic. At 3:40 a.m., deputies responded to a domestic disturbance in the 4100 block of 66th St. NW.

Vandalism. Property damage was reported in the 700 block of School St. at 4:28 p.m.

Warrant. Deputy arrested a subject for an outstanding warrant in the 10000 block of 37th Ave. SW at 10:06 p.m.

Dec. 6
Child Protection. Deputy took a child protection report in the 7900 block of 88th St. SW at 10:24 a.m.

Dec. 7
Death. At 5:07 p.m., deputies began a death investigation in the 9800 block of 66th St. NW.

Dec. 8
Burglary. Deputies responded to a burglary in the 300 block of 3rd Ave. W. at 3:32 p.m.

Domestic. At 3:01 p.m., deputies responded to the 8900 block of 13th St. SW for a domestic disturbance.

COURT NEWS Steele County

The following case was heard in Steele County District Court the week of Nov. 30 with Judge

Karen R. Duncan presiding:

Aaron B. Zuckman, 22, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony assault. He was sentenced to \$4,015.48 and 33 months in St. Cloud State Prison.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Nov. 30 – Dec. 4

Blooming Prairie Police Department
Harley D. Prentis, 24, Mankato, possession of Marijuana and Paraphernalia, \$181; Collin R. Standke, 18, Owatonna, failure to yield, \$131; Lucas D. Wuerflein, 20, Faribault, possession of Paraphernalia, \$131.

MN State Patrol Rochester
Terri L. Combs, 58, West Des Moines, IA, speeding, \$141; Terrence A. David, 55, Steen, speeding, \$131; Teresa E. Davis, 46, Owatonna, seat belt, \$106; Adam Diadie, 21, Atlanta, GA, speeding, \$131;

Jonathan W. Dodson, 32, Carlton, suspended license, \$281; Cassidy R. Ehret, 17, Austin, speeding, \$141; Lance A. Ellefson, 25, Adams, seat belt, \$106; Connor J. Frederick, 18, Champlin, speeding and no MN license, \$231;

Darin J. Grant, 48, Nerstrand, speeding, \$121; James B. Harris, 25, Crystal, no MN registration and no insurance, \$281; Ethan W. Hollingsworth, 18, Owatonna, speeding, \$141; Ayao T. Hukporti, 26, Arlington Heights, IL, speeding, \$141;

Thomas M. Johnson, 60, New Hope, speeding, \$131; Alex J. Keane, 23, Owatonna, move over law violation, \$131; Craig A. Kennedy, 34, Owatonna, legal table weight, \$481; Gordon J. Lawes, 34, Henderson, NV, expired registration, \$181; Lanny R. Louks, 40, Owatonna, speeding, \$131;

Dennis L. Martinson, 50, Austin, expired registration, \$111; Heidi L. McMillan, 43, St. Michael, speeding, \$121; Rogelio Melendez, 25, Albert Lea, suspended license, \$281; Shyane M. Mensing, 28, Rock Valley, IA, revoked license, \$281;

Thomas E. Minert, 68, Charles City, IA, speeding, \$121; Melvin L. Moreland, 43, Dodge Center, no insurance, \$281; Michael M.

Nyabuto, 26, Eules, TX, speeding, \$141; Martin W. Osmund, 52, Medford, no insurance, \$281; Daniel G. Quintana, 31, Minnesota City, suspended license, \$281; Emma M. Schroeder, 26, Eden Prairie, speeding, \$121;

Carissa L. Schweiss, 21, Maple Grove, speeding, \$131; Elena F. Segovia, 37, Altoona, IA, possession of Paraphernalia and Marijuana and allow illegal operation, \$281; Nelson A. Segovia, 30, Altoona, IA, speeding and no MN license, \$221; Belinda R. Tucker, 23, Kenyon, speeding, \$121;

Brady D. Waldhauser, 22, Owatonna, cargo securement violation, \$381; Shannon D. Wilson, 52, Owatonna, no current medical certificate in possession and failure to maintain parts and accessories in safe and proper operating conditions, \$331; Jaime L. Zuniga, 28, Rochester, speeding, \$381.

Owatonna Police Department
Susan J. Ayen, 65, Meriden, assault, \$381, no contact with victim and 1 year of supervised probation; Benjamin Banda, 56, Blooming Prairie, revoked license and no insurance, \$481; Julio F. Benitez, 42, Columbia Heights, shoplifting, \$75 diversion program and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without conviction;

Corrin A. Christensen, 23, Faribault, expired tabs, \$111; Derek P. Denelsbeck, 34, Owatonna, possession of Marijuana and Paraphernalia, \$181; Drew R. Ferguson, 23, Faribault, cancelled license and no insurance, \$481; Brandon A. Goff, 30, Owatonna, cancelled license, \$281;

Vincent F. Guggisberg, 23, Owatonna, suspended license and no insurance, \$481; Wyatt L. Jackson, 32, Owatonna, suspended license, \$281; David R. Kujac, 36, Owatonna, invalid license, \$181; Lisa E. Lien, 28, New Brighton, shoplifting, \$75, diversion program and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without conviction;

Chelsea M. Pederson, 22, Faribault, open bottle, no insurance and suspended license, \$581; David M. Perez, 52, Owatonna, violation of harassment restraining order, \$381, 45 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, attend AA, no contact with victim, and 2 years of supervised probation;

Ann M. Pickett, 35, Waseca, seat belt, \$106; Sunday P. Puot, 19,

Highway 218 temporarily closed due to medical incident

Last Wednesday, a portion of Highway 218, near Dodge Mower Road in Blooming Prairie, was temporarily closed while Mayo One responded to a medical incident.

At approximately 11:15 a.m., Blooming Prairie emergency crews were called to Dodge Mower Road, just off State Highway 218, for a medical emergency. The road was open once again shortly after noon on Wednesday.

According to Blooming Prairie Police Chief Greg Skillestad, the incident technically occurred in Dodge County, but local emergency personnel responded. The Blooming Prairie Police Department, Blooming Prairie Ambulance Department, Blooming Prairie Fire Department and Mayo One assisted at the scene.

Due to privacy laws, the nature of the medical incident has not been released.

Owatonna, assault, \$581, 66 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, attend AA, and 2 years of supervised probation; Duol L. Ret, 23, Owatonna, failure to signal for turn and no MN license, \$231; Cohl J. Schwartz, 20, Owatonna, speeding, \$201;

Alexandra F. Simon, 19, Faribault, possession of Paraphernalia and Marijuana, \$181; Maribel G. Torres Garza, 32, Owatonna, no MN license, \$181; Travis J. Troska, 36, Owatonna, revoked license, possession of Paraphernalia and no insurance, \$531; Jorden M. Watkins, 26, Faribault, possession of Marijuana, \$131;

Robert M. Williams III, 33, Medford, open bottle, \$181 and 2 days in county jail; Sharon Williams, 57, Owatonna, revoked license, \$281.

POLICE BLOTTER Dodge County

Dec. 2
Intoxication. A woman called deputies to report that she was very intoxicated and needed to go to Detox at 2 p.m. Deputies responded to the 300 block of Front St. W. in Claremont and transported her to St. Mary's Hospital.

Restraining Order. Deputy responded to a violation of a harassment restraining order in the 500 block of 2nd St. NE in Hayfield at 7:15 p.m.

Dec. 3
Burglary. Deputies began a burglary investigation in the 100 block of 4th Ave. NE in Dodge Center at 4:37 a.m.

Domestic. Deputies responded to a domestic disturbance on Central Ave. N. in Dodge Center at 1:26 p.m.

Disturbance. At 4:24 p.m., a verbal domestic occurred in the 200 block of Main St. E. in Dodge Center. The parties were separated.

Animal Neglect. Deputies received an animal neglect report that a dog was left outside in the cold without food, water or shelter while the owners are gone in the 62900 block of 200th Ave. in

PUBLIC SAFETY
Continued on Page 5B

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.

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

ACTIVE WARRANTS

The following individuals as they have active warrants in Steele County.
The sheriff makes this information available as a public service.

Mel Prange – writ of attachment - \$300 bail	Jacob Reed – DWI – no bail	- \$3,000 bail
Diana Quintanilla – assault - \$700 bail	Tesa Reno – criminal vehicular operation – no bail	Maria Reyes – false name - \$500 bail
Angel Ramirez – no MN license - \$500 bail	Erasmio Resendez – assault - \$2,000 bail	Ruben Reyes – invalid license - \$500 bail
Gypsy Ramirez – disorderly conduct – no bail	Benjamin Restrepo – theft - \$200 bail	Bartolo Reyna – theft - \$1,000 bail
Daniel Ramos – disorderly conduct - \$500 bail	Antonio Reyes – suspended license, no insurance - \$500 bail	Kelly Reynolds – no MN license - \$1,000 bail
Johntez Randle – cancelled license - \$6,000 bail	Juan Reyes – criminal sexual conduct - \$50,000 bail	Norberto-Ricardez – no insurance - \$200 bail
Shaninth Ray – violation of Danco – no bail	Margarito Reyes – criminal property damage	
Daniel Reb – drugs – no bail		

Public Safety

2015 Minnesota road fatalities surpass last year's totals

Minnesota has now surpassed last year's traffic fatality count, a sad reminder that all motorists need to make safe driving behaviors a priority when they are behind the wheel. With a month to go in the year, preliminary numbers from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS) show 365 people have died so far on Minnesota roads compared with 361 for all of last year.

The numbers are more than statistics, and they represent lives gone too soon. In the last week, Minnesota lost:

- A 24-year-old Byron man who died after a head on collision in Olmsted County.
- A 60-year-old Rochester man who was killed while standing at an intersection in Olmsted County.

- A 42-year-old Pine River man who lost control of his vehicle, hit a sign and rolled.
- The 365 traffic deaths to date included:
 - 61 motorcyclists, compared with 45 this time last year.
 - 36 pedestrians, compared with 16 this time last year.
 - 10 bicyclists, compared with five this time last year.

A challenge to motorists

With winter weather conditions upon us, state officials are asking motorists to recommit to safe driving habits so they can spend their holidays at home with family and friends and not at a funeral home planning to bury a loved one.

“The choices we make on the road affect all of us,” said Donna Berger, Office of Traffic

Safety director. “When someone dies in a crash, dreams are shattered, lives are changed and those left behind feel the effects for a lifetime. Make the choice this holiday season to give your family the gift of paying attention, slowing down, wearing your seat belt and never driving drunk.”

- Road fatality contributing factors in Minnesota**
- Speed: one in five deaths.
 - Drunk Driving: one in four fatalities.
 - Distracted Driving: one in five fatalities.
 - Half of motor vehicle occupants killed were not wearing their seat belt.

Making a difference

While the increase in 2015

traffic fatalities is cause for concern, motor vehicle deaths have steadily declined over the last decade. With a focus on education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical services, Minnesota road fatalities have dropped 35 percent since 2005.

Extra DWI patrols now on Minnesota roads

More than 300 law enforcement agencies are working overtime this holiday season to prevent drunk driving tragedies on Minnesota roads.

The extra DWI enforcement campaign runs every weekend now through Jan. 2. The statewide enforcement involves police departments, sheriff's offices and the State Patrol. Officers, deputies and troop-

ers work overtime enforcement with funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

DPS-OTS coordinates the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over enforcement and education effort.

DPS-OTS is an anchoring partner of the state's Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) traffic safety program. A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes – education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma response.

Recent DPS-OTS activity and statistics

- During October's Click It or Ticket campaign, law enforcement reported 5,550 motorists were cited for seat belt violations from Oct. 9 – 25, a 33 percent drop from last year's October wave when 8,195 motorists were ticketed and the lowest since 2010.
- Officers, deputies and troopers made 1,513 arrests during the enhanced DWI enforcement campaign Aug. 21 – Sept. 7; that's compared with 1,340 during the campaign a year ago.
- Minnesota Motor Vehicle Crash Facts 2014 is a summary of traffic crashes derived from law enforcement reports and describes how, why and where crashes occurred and who was involved.

Safety improvements in Blooming Prairie



Workers install new LED-lighted crosswalk in Blooming Prairie on Tuesday, Dec. 8. The new crosswalk sign is located at the intersection of Highway Avenue South and Second Street Southeast.

Staff photo by Laura Berndt

PUBLIC SAFETY

Continued from Page 4B

Dodge Center at 6:39 p.m.

Threats. At 7:03 p.m., a subject was making threats in the 61600 block of 140th Ave. in Claremont.

Dec. 4

Threats. A Dodge Center resident was receiving threats in the 66500 block of State Hwy. 56 at 10:15 a.m.

Animal Neglect. At 11:51 a.m., deputies received a report of animal neglect in the 55600 block of State Hwy. 57 in West Concord.

Dec. 5

Suspicion. A Dodge Center resident called deputies when an unknown male was sleeping on his couch in the 600 block of 3rd St. SE at 7:01 a.m. The subject was released to a responsible party.

Marijuana. Marijuana was found in the Casey's parking lot in the 700 block of 2nd St. NW in Hayfield at 2:27 p.m.

Threats. A Dodge Center resident was receiving threats by the phone in the 66500 block of State Hwy. 56 at 7:58 p.m.

Dec. 6

Farm Accident. Deputies and Hayfield Ambulance responded to a farm equipment accident involving a female run over by a skid loader in the 21500 block of 680th St. in Dodge Center at 10:35 a.m. She was transported to St. Mary's Hospital.

Dec. 7

Disturbance. At 6:19 a.m., people were fighting in the 400 block of East St. N. in Claremont.

Fraud. Deputy took a report of a fraud incident in the 300 block of 2nd St. NE in Hayfield at 12:09 p.m.

Juvenile. Deputies responded to a complaint of an out-of-control juvenile on 6th Ave. SE in Hayfield at 2:53 p.m.

Dec. 8

Fraud. A Hayfield citizen reported being the victim of a fraud incident in the 100 block of 6th Ave. NE at 9:58 a.m.

Intoxication. At 12:53 p.m., deputies responded to a report of an intoxicated male in the 100 block of 2nd Ave. SW in Dodge Center.

COURT NEWS

Dodge County

The following case was heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Nov. 30 with Judge Jodi L. Williamson presiding:

Renee R. Drews, 31, Farmington, previously appeared and was convicted of felony receiving stolen property. Drews was sentenced to \$1,000, 70 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, mental health screening, no contact with victim, 100 hours of community service and 5 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Nov. 30 – Dec. 7:

Dodge County Sheriff's Office

Hamad A. Al Hashel, 21, Winona, invalid license, \$180; Michael B. Bauer, 44, Hastings, speeding, \$120; Alexandra M. Carlson, 56, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, speeding, \$120; Delaney J. Chomjak, 23, Loves Park, IL, DWI, \$580, and 1 year of probation; Brent D. Espenson, 30, Rochester, fleeing peace officer, \$280;

Amanda L. Fjerstad, 38, Byron, speeding, \$140; Rebekah R. Flatness, 37, Dodge Center, expired license, \$180; Richard L. French, 31, Kasson, speeding, \$220; Joshua J. Grebin, 34, Rochester, seat belt, \$105; Luke E. Hottel, 33, Windom, suspended license, \$280;

Jeffrey A. Johnson, 30, Eyota, revoked license, \$280; Mary C. Keener, 30, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Grace E. Mack, 17, Kasson, speeding, \$220; Mark J. Oeltjenbruns, 32, Claremont, speeding, \$120; Ryan O. Olson, 37, St. Paul, revoked license, \$280;

Nicklas E. Rongve, 29, Clare-

mont, disorderly conduct, \$155, and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without adjudication; Randy L. Starkson, 55, West Concord, suspended license, \$280;

Eric R. Twite, 43, Kasson, DWI, \$580, chemical assessment and 1 year of supervised probation; Miesha K. White, 24, Austin, suspended license, \$280.

Kasson Police Department

Shelly A. Baker, 44, Kasson, seat belt, \$105; Christopher J. Grendahl, 31, Pine Island, seat belt, \$105; Matthew C. Schleich, 20, Kasson, no insurance, \$280.

MN Dept. of Natural Resources

Bryan J. Heimer, 44, Dodge Center, hunting violation, \$280.

MN State Patrol Rochester

Christopher M. Ausrud, 43, Hayfield, speeding, \$140; Susan R. Brein, 43, Owatonna, speeding, \$120; Corey C. Hinsch, 25, Hayfield, speeding, \$140; David A. Isaacson, 34, Mankato, speeding, \$120; Sylvia J. Keller, 47, Claremont, speeding, \$130; Kelvin K. Kleber, 20, Kasson, window tint violation, \$130; Jason D. Wendolek, 45, Buffalo, speeding, \$220.

West Concord Police Department

Jon R. Ackerman, 50, West Concord, speeding, \$120; Todd A. Wenner, 40, Austin, revoked license, no insurance and speeding, \$540.

Steele Arrests

Owatonna Police

Julie Ann Flicek, 43, arrested at 3:16 p.m. Dec. 6, felony possession, held for court.

Steven Michael Olson, 40, arrested at 4:04 p.m. Dec. 6, felony possession, held for court.

Johnathan David Siebold-Deml, 33, arrested at 10:40 p.m.

Dec. 7, felony possession of controlled substance, held for court.

Tessa Ann Sjol, 20, arrested at 10:40 p.m. Dec. 7, felony DWI, possession of controlled substance and possession of dangerous weapon, held for court.

Timothy Raymond Crosby, 51, arrested at 1:40 p.m. Dec. 8, DWI-test refusal, held for court.

Steele County Sheriff

Kristen Merrill Hurd, 33, arrested at 1:13 a.m. Dec. 5, DWI, \$12,000 bail.

Christopher Patrick Brunner, 27, arrested at 6:42 a.m. Dec. 8, probation violation warrant, body only.

Todd Anthony Kraft, 35, arrested at 7:04 p.m. Dec. 8, warrant arrest, body only.

Daniel James Stockwell, 28, arrested at 11:10 p.m. Dec. 8, warrant arrest, body only.

Sonya Lee Al-Ramahi, 41, arrested at 3:32 p.m. Dec. 9, warrant arrest, \$500 bail.

Jake Michael Karow, 29, arrested at 6 p.m. Dec. 10, warrant arrest, \$10,000 bail.

Owatonna Fire

Dec. 7

Extrication. At 7:57 a.m., fire rescue extricated a victim from machinery in the 600 block of Eisenhower Dr.

Fire. Fire fighters responded to a brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire in the 4300 block of Havana Rd. E. at 5:13 p.m.

Gas Spill. A gasoline or other flammable liquid spill occurred in the 1000 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 9:31 p.m.

Dec. 10

Crash. Fire rescue responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries on Interstate 35 at 2:34 p.m.

Wearing reflective apparel

Question: I cannot find it in any of the laws, but I am sure it has to be there. Isn't it required by law for a tow truck operator who is operating on public roads to wear reflective safety apparel at all times? Only asking this because I am curious because I think it's a Federal OSHA law yet you see so many drivers wearing nothing but a black shirt or hard to see apparel.

Answer: Yes, tow truck drivers who are working and exposed to moving motor vehicle traffic are required to wear high visibility garments. The high vis. garment may be a Class 2 vest or a Class 3 jacket. More information on this law can be found under Minnesota Administrative Rule 5205.0030.

This rule is enforced by Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA.) There are also requirements from Federal OSHA and the Federal Highway Administration that require the use of high visibility garments when employees are working on a street, road, highway, etc., where the workers are exposed to moving motor vehicle traffic.

Everyone who is working on the scene of a crash; police, fire, EMS, tow truck operators, MN-DOT, etc. must be wearing a high vis. garment to be in compliance. High vis. garments are also required when directing traffic.

The rule also talks about the maintenance and condition of the garment. "If the high visibility personal protective equipment becomes faded, torn, dirty, worn, or defaced, reducing the equipment's performance below manufacturer's recommendations, the high visibility personal protective equipment shall be immediately removed from service and replaced."

Emergency responders working on the shoulder of the road have got your back. Do you have theirs? Minnesota's Ted Foss

ASK A TROOPER



SGT. TROY CHRISTIANSON
MN STATE PATROL

Move Over Law was named in honor of the State Patrol Trooper who was killed while on a traffic stop on the shoulder of I-90 near the Lewiston exit in 2000.

The law states:

- When traveling on a road with two or more lanes, drivers must keep over one full lane away from stopped emergency vehicles with flashing lights activated — ambulance, fire, law enforcement, maintenance, construction vehicles and tow trucks.
- Reduce speed if unable to safely move over a lane.
- Failing to take these actions endangers personnel who provide critical and life-saving services.

Fines can exceed \$130.

Moving over not only helps protect the lives of emergency workers, but also helps protect you.

Hitting a vehicle on the side of the road can result in injury or death for you or those in your vehicle.

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) Twitter: MSPPIO_SOUTH



RICK'S RETIRING!

Monday, Dec. 21

is Rick Kittelson's last day as the Blooming Prairie Public Utilities' general manager!

Stop in at the new Public Utilities Office, located at 333 Second Avenue Northeast in Blooming Prairie, to wish him well and congratulate him on his retirement from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Monday.

Coffee and treats will be served.

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Dear Santa,

I have been a good girl this year. How are you and Mrs. Claus doing? What kind of cookies do you like? I like chocolate cookies. Please put an iPad and a lego in your bag for me. How do you answer questions? I hope you have a Merry Christmas. I like to open presents to. Can I get candy please?

Your friend,
Payge P.

Student name Payge Age 9 Grade 2



Dear Santa,

What is your favort kind of candy cane, and what is Mrs. Claus's favort kind kind? I have been a good girl. What is your favort kind of cookie? My favort kind is Macademia nut. I think they're awesome! What do you want for Christmas? I want bunchums, chocolate pen, nifluns, and Candy. What do your d's want for Christmas? I will leave carrots for your reindeer. Is it cold in the northpole? How fast can you go?

Student name Atley Age 7 Grade 2



Dear Santa,

How is Mrs. Claus? What's your favorite Cookies? Mine is chocolate chips. I've been a good girl. How is Rudolph? How Old are you Santa? For Christmas, I want a huge Kitty toy, a soccer shoe, soccer ball, and a hat. My favorite part about christmas is when we get to play in the snow. Your friend,
Quinn V.

Student name Quinn V. Age 7 Grade 2



Dear Santa,

How are you and Mrs. Claus? How are your reindeer and elves? I want an art set with a paint, crayons, colored pencils, pencils an American girl doll, and cool outfits. Before bed on Christmas eve I will put milk, cookies and a gingerbread house out for you. My favorite part of Christmas day is eating the rest of your cookies and drinking the rest of your milk. I love Christmas and you!

Love,
Zoe W.

Student name Zoe W. Age 7 Grade 2nd



Dear Santa,

I want Little Live Pets, Paint set and an iPad. How do you reindeer fly? I like Christmas because I like to open my presents. I've been a good girl this year. I like to play with my new toys on Christmas. Get my big Sister five nites of Freddie's stuffed animal and get my little sister a doll house.

Love,
Isabelle D.

Student name Isabelle D. Age 7 Grade 2



Dear Santa,

Do you know how to make every toy in the world? How much toys do you even make? Santa, can you cut a big lollipop in my stocking that's pink and purple? I also want a huge jolly rancher, a real elf, and a little little hedge, huge. Have a holly dolly Christmas!

Your Friend,
Chloe R.

Student name Chloe R. Age 7 Grade 2



Dear Santa,

How is Rudolph? Do you like cookies? How old are you? I am 8 years old. I have been a girl this year. I want a toy train for my brother, a stuffed animal for my Sister and an iPad for me. My favorite part of Christmas is celebrating with my family.

Merry Christmas,
Molly J.

Student name Molly J. Age 8 Grade 2



Dear Santa,

I've been a good girl this year. Can you bring a microphone and an iPad for me? You are the best! What is your reindeer's name? What is your favorite candy? My favorite candy is all suckers.

Love,
Bailey D.

Student name Bailey Age 8 Grade 2

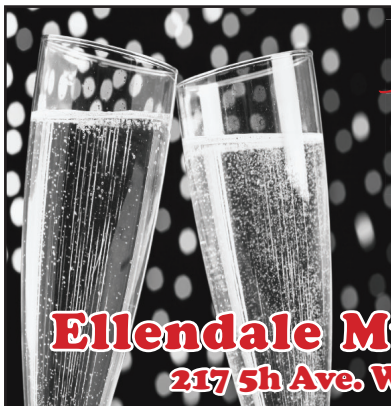


Dear Santa,

I have been very good. How are you? Have a merry Christmas! How are your elves? What is your favorite holiday? My favorite holiday is Christmas. I want an iPad and a note book. My favorite thing about Christmas is opening presents. Merry Christmas!

Love,
Brenna D.

Student name Brenna Age 8 Grade 2



*filled with our thanks
at year's end*

May you enjoy a vintage year filled with many glad tidings and much success. We know we're bubbling over with gratitude for all of the folks who have helped to make this past year, a very good year for us ~ thanks!

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52c

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The Dodge County Independent newspaper, along with its printing operation, Dodge County Printing, is accepting applications for a part-time office assistant to handle general office duties and be the point of contact to the public.



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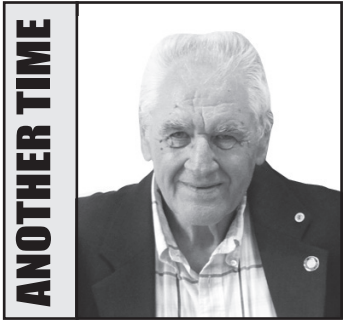
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336c

Fire destroys five Medford businesses in November 1929

It was in December 1883 that a huge fire destroyed five Medford businesses along the west side of what is now North Main Street. Fortunately, no lives were lost and new wooden buildings eventually replaced those consumed by the flames.

Nearly half-a-century passed. On Sunday, Nov. 10, 1929, a front-page headline in the OWATONNA DAILY PEOPLE'S PRESS read: "Entire Block is Swept Away Saturday; Fifth Fire in Three Years." Unfortunately, history had been repeated the previous day in Medford



JOHN GROSS

when a huge fire destroyed five businesses on the same block.

Here is what the article said about the fire:

"An entire block in the Medford business district was swept by fire yesterday morning. Five buildings which housed Linter's Restaurant, a shoe and harness shop, the Medford garage, a general department store and the Medford Meat Market, were burned to the ground with an estimated loss of \$40,000 in one of the most disastrous and spectacular fires ever witnessed in Medford.

The blaze started at about 7:45 o'clock yesterday morning

in the Linter Restaurant. The furnace was the cause of the fire, but the exact method was undetermined.

The block of five buildings, four of which were wooden structures, is a total loss. All were burned to the ground and many surrounding residence houses and other buildings were scorched by the heat of the lapping flames.

One of the buildings, the McInnis Department store, opened for business Friday morning 24 hours before the fire, with a complete stock of new goods

and fixtures. The building was not a new one.

Another of the stores, the Ellingson Shoe and Harness shop, was to have its opening Monday morning. Fortunately there was very little stored in the structure, which formerly housed the Medford post office, as Ellingson's accessories had not yet arrived in Medford.

The majority of the stock was removed from the Medford Meat Market and a few of the smaller show cases were saved. There was little saved in any of the other buildings, however,

as the fire spread rapidly after getting a start, meeting little resistance until the Owatonna and Faribault fire departments arrived.

The Medford Garage, which Mr. Corson has operated since Aug. 1, 1928, is the property of Dave Butterfield of La Crosse, Wisconsin. The building was covered by insurance, while the loss of accessories is about one-half.

The fire was the second in the

ANOTHER TIME
Continued on Page 9C



Switch jobs with grace and decorum

Women leave jobs for various reasons. Some women cite disparities in pay, an inability to advance through the company or incompatibility with a particular place of business as their reasons for seeking new employment, while others leave jobs to take time off for family obligations, only to reenter the workforce at a later time.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics say the average person changes jobs 10 to 15 times (with an average of 11 job changes) over the course of a career. Reports about employees in Fortune 500 companies have found, while women make up nearly 50 percent of these companies, they represent just 7.5 percent of top earners. Dissatisfaction with their income encourages some women to look for greener pastures.

Transitioning between jobs is common, but professionals can take certain steps to ensure their transition works out for them and does not burn any bridges along they way.

Have a definitive reason for leaving. It's foolish to change jobs on a whim. Be clear about why you are leaving and whether problems can be remedied by speaking up or if leaving for another company really is the best solution. Having firm reasons for your resignation will enable you to

leave with more confidence and conviction.

Provide enough notice to the company. If you have been working in a particularly poor environment, it may be tempting to run out the door even before your written resignation has finished printing. This may not bode well for future recommendations and leave your name tarnished within the industry. Instead, give ample notice and find a mutually acceptable window of time in which your position will be filled. While two weeks is standard, some positions may require more or less time. It's best not to drag your exit out too long though.

Meet with your boss first. Don't let a boss find out about your intentions to leave the company through the workplace gossip mill. It is always more professional to keep plans to yourself and



show your boss the respect of hearing about your decision to leave first. Do so in person and not over the phone or via email.

Continue to do your job to the best of your abilities. Giving notice is not a ticket to goofing

off or participating in an office vacation. Slacking off damages good will and is a surefire way to burn some bridges. Put in your best effort until the day you leave the company behind.

Avoid making negative comments. When discussing your reasons for leaving, be diplomatic but honest. Similarly, do not talk poorly about your former job to your new employer. You may inadvertently portray yourself as a disgruntled employee. Furthermore, word travels fast within many industries, and a loose tongue may compromise future networking opportunities.

Maintain decorum even if it was not your idea to leave. Being fired or downsized can hurt, particularly when you thought you were doing a good job. Remain cool and always be professional. How you conduct yourself when facing adversity could speak well to your future employers.

William Shakespeare may have said that a person is remembered for his entrances and exits, and this is particularly true in the workforce. When it is time to leave an employment position for a new one, do so with grace and humility.

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SMIF seeks new AmeriCorps VISTA sites

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), is seeking proposals from organizations interested in hosting full-time AmeriCorps VISTA members.

The AmeriCorps VISTA program is part of SMIF's goal to create economic vitality by ensuring equal access to employment and financial literacy across southern Minnesota.

The VISTA program is an excellent way for organizations to build sustainable processes for new initiatives and programs.

Members will engage with nonprofit organizations that focus on creating economic opportunities for diverse populations through employment or financial literacy training. At partner sites, VISTA members help build program capacity, but do not engage in direct service activities.

Their activities are designed to create a lasting impact on an organization's ability to serve low-income communities.

Additionally, VISTA members cannot be engaged in activities that could be considered replacement for a paid staff. VISTAs serve in 501(c) non-

profit organizations; educational institutions; faith-based organizations; tribal, state, and local government agencies to build organizational capacity for conducting anti-poverty work.

Organizations that focus solely on advocacy and lobbying are not eligible.

The deadline for community partner site applications is Feb. 1, 2016. This is a competitive application process across SMIF's 20-county region. For application, visit www.smi-foundation.org or contact Pam Bishop for more information.

SMIF, a donor-supported foundation, invests for economic growth in 20 Minnesota counties.

The Foundation has provided more than \$55 million in grants and loans within the region during the past 29 years. SMIF's key interests include early childhood and economic development. To learn more about our work and mission, visit www.smi-foundation.org.



The primary goal of Toys for Tots is to deliver, through a new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to less fortunate youngsters that will assist them in becoming responsible, productive, patriotic citizens.

The Steele County Times is an official Toys for Tots drop-off site. You can bring in your toys beginning Nov. 10 through Dec. 15. Our office hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We're located at 411 East Main Street.

To learn more visit www.toysfortots.org



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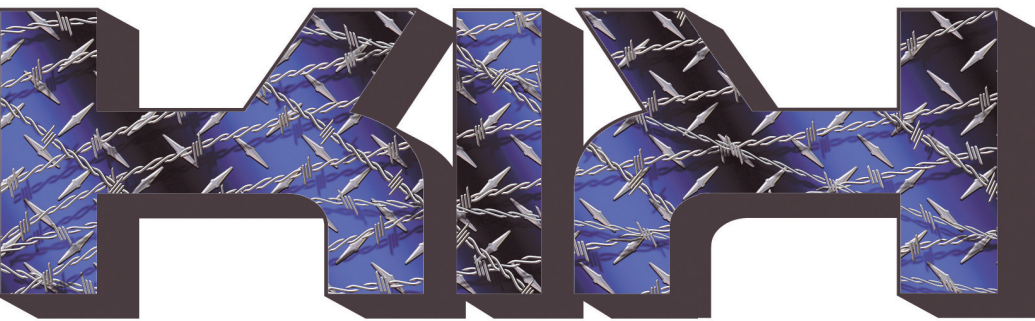
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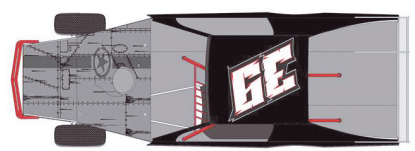
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Cancer Corner

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Relationships helping cancer research

By **ALAN VAN ORMER**
Managing Editor

Throughout the years, the Bloomington Cancer Group and The Hormel Institute, University of Minnesota in Austin have built a bond that is strong enough to help with cancer research.

"Cheri (Krejci) and her group is very energetic," said Tim Ruzek, Communications Representative for The Hormel Institute. "They are just awesome fundraisers and supporters for cancer research."

Krejci said the Bloomington Cancer Group decided to give some of its research funds directly to The Hormel Institute because it is close to home, The Hormel Institute is doing a lot of good research and one-third of the funds that go to the Eagles Cancer Telethon end up at The Hormel Institute.

"We decided to give some directly to them," she said in an e-mail.

In the past two years, the Cancer Group has donated \$5,000 to The Hormel Institute.

In the past, Bloomington Cancer Group members toured The Hormel Institute. "They are so interested and enthusiastic. I remember them asking great questions," Ruzek said. "They are dedicated and are really passionate about it."

Krejci added that the Bloomington Cancer Group has a wonderful relationship with The Hormel Institute. "Gail Dennison came to the cancer auction this past year and spoke to the crowd," she said. "It was dead silent when she spoke. That never happens at the cancer auction."

Dennison, who is the Director of Development and Public Relations for The Hormel Institute, said that for the scientists at The Hormel Institute, it is very encouraging to them to have this warm support from communities. "Many of them have commented on how much they appreciate just the friendships, the inspiration and the encouragement," she said. "It is very inspirational to their research. They hear about the cancer stories that affect lives."

Dennison said she knows that the scientists appreciate being able to conduct their research in a rural community. "When the whole community gets behind their work and they hear the personal stories about cancer and they receive the support, there is just a greater sense of inspiration," she said. "They understand how important their mission is."

This year, like past years, the Bloomington



Photo submitted by The Hormel Institute

Because they provide funds for cancer research to The Hormel Institute, the Bloomington Cancer Group is represented on the donor wall panel at The Hormel Institute in Austin.

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Sounds of the Season scheduled for Dec. 20

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

Music has been known to bring people together, especially during the holidays. The music ministries of Sacred Heart and St. Joseph church brings the two catholic congregations together through sounds of the season.

In fact, the second annual Christmas concert that the two music ministries will perform is called “Sounds of the Season.” The performance has five different parts that take listeners from advent to the epiphany.

“Sounds of the Season” Christmas concert takes place 3 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 20, at Sacred Heart Church in Owatonna. The concert is free, but a free will donation is welcomed. Cookies and refreshments will be served after.

This concert is one of two annual concerts put on by the combined music ministries. The

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON
Continued on Page 5C



Instrumentalist such as India Enter on the cello (back) and Caroline Nelson on the violin (front) will perform in the Christmas concert “Sounds of the Season” at Sacred Heart on Sunday, Dec. 20, at 3 p.m.

Staff photo by Anna Segner

People spread Christmas cheer with Operation Christmas Child

By LAURA BERNDT
News Editor

Christmas is a time to celebrate faith, family and love. For countless children across the world, however, Christmas is just another day. That’s why several local people have teamed up to support Operation Christmas Child.

Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan’s Purse, a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization that strives to aid people in need across the world. Families and individuals can prepare shoeboxes filled with basic necessities and small gifts, which are then distributed to children worldwide by Operation Christmas Child volunteers. Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church, in Owatonna, served as a drop-off site for the program again this year.

According to the Rev. Brian Wright, this was the fifth year that the church has been a collection site for Operation Christmas Child.

“It’s so much more than just providing the shoeboxes or gifts,” said Wright. “Those distributed boxes really help families and communities. It’s a great way to have people hear about Jesus, and a great way to express that God loves them. The boxes go all over world.”

This year alone, nine churches located in Rochester, Red Wing, Albert Lea and Owatonna collected approximately 12,800 boxes. Altogether, Minnesota contributed 170,000 shoeboxes to the cause. Although organizers have not yet tallied the final number of donations, it’s estimated that 11 million children will receive personalized shoeboxes, each filled with presents, this year.

Sarah Metraus, Media Relations Coordinator for Operation Christmas Child, said that she’s heard that the gifts have truly changed children’s lives. “The reason I think it’s a worthy cause is because I have personally met people who’ve received a shoebox in another country and heard their personal testimonies,” she said. “Alex, who received a shoebox after fleeing the Rwandan genocide, was living in an orphanage. When he received something of his own, it meant the world to him. His favorite thing in the

CHRISTMAS CHILD
Continued on Page 4C

Ladies that make the lefsa



The First Lutheran Holiday Bake Sale was held on Sunday from 8 a.m. to noon in Blooming Prairie. The fundraising activity has provided money for various items in the past including the Boys and Girls Club, Steele County Food Shelf and beautifying the church. Volunteers that worked last week to make 15 dozen lefsas included Cheri Krejci (top right), Barb Blome (top left), Karen Thoen (bottom left) and Pam Folkens (bottom right).

Staff photos by Alan Van Ormer



2015 Minnesota economy: ‘Better start than finish’

By ANNA SEGNER
County Staff Writer

Forecasting the Minnesota economy can feel like shaking a crazy 8 ball, but Bill Blazar of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce was able to give an economic judgement to a room full of local business leaders, bankers and government leaders.

Blazar admits that Minnesota’s economy in 2015 was a “better start than finish.”

“It’s still growing, but not at the rate you would have seen eight to 10 months ago,” Blazar told the group of local professionals gathered at Daikin Applied Americas Inc. for the 15th annual Grow Minnesota annual luncheon hosted by the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce and Tourism on Dec. 9.

With a title as long as “Minnesota Chamber Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Business Development,” Blazar is bound to know a



Ted Mittelstadt of Daikin Applied in Owatonna gave a tour of the recently expanded facilities to local business and government leaders of the community after the Grow MN annual luncheon at Daikin Applied in Owatonna on Dec. 9.

Staff photo by Anna Segner

thing or two about Minnesota economy.

He shared that each year’s economy depends on the decisions made two years ago. The

2013 economy was greatly shaped by the 2015 economy, and similarly, 2015 will shape 2017’s economy.

For the 2016 economy, Bla-

zar looked to 2014 for 2016’s forecast. He predicts that re-

GROW MN
Continued on Page 5C



JANE NYQUIST

Disease prevention in Minnesota

Minnesota can lower health care costs and improve community health by reducing risk factors that contribute to chronic disease.

Obesity rates have stabilized in Minnesota, but have increased in neighboring states and in the U.S. Tobacco use in youth fell from 18.1 percent to just over 10 percent, and the adult smoking rate fell to 14.4 percent from 16.1 percent in 2010.

Preventing illness saves money, period. In Minnesota, medical expenses due to obesity were approximately \$2.8 billion in 2009. Tobacco use and exposure cost us \$2.5 billion in 2014.

Steele County Public Health is working with the Minnesota Department of Health on the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) to improve the health of Steele County citizens through Policy, Systems and Environmental changes (P, S, E).

Evidence-based education programs can help individuals with chronic illness or those who might be headed toward chronic illness live with or prevent these illnesses. We are fortunate to have several of these programs in Steele County. I’d like to highlight the “I Can Prevent Diabetes” program today!

Individuals and Communities Acting Now to Prevent Diabetes© (I CAN Prevent Diabetes or ICPD) is an evidence-based lifestyle change program designed for people with pre-diabetes. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed in people with prediabetes when they make simple changes to increase physical activity and lose weight. The University of Minnesota Extension’s Health and Nutrition Program has trained lifestyle coaches who facilitate this program throughout the state.

Locally, Steele County Extension has partnered with Allina Health and Steele County Public Health to offer an ICPD course in Owatonna. The program will include a four-month core phase with weekly sessions and an eight-month post-core phase with monthly sessions. Participants will learn about diabetes prevention, with specific focus being put on nutrition and physical activity. Students will set goals around physical activity, food selection and intake, and other behaviors.

Andrea Kronbach, trained lifestyle coach for Extension’s Health and Nutrition SNAP-Ed Program, will facilitate the program. Classes will start on Jan. 12, 2016 and meet from 4 to 5 p.m. in the Steele County Public Health conference room (635 Florence Avenue, Owatonna).

This program is free of charge, and may be a good fit for you if you are 18 years or older, at risk for but NOT currently diagnosed with diabetes, are overweight and are not pregnant. You must qualify for this class, and pre-registration is required. Inquiries are open to all individuals who meet the risk qualifications, however, registration will be prioritized for limited income participants. Call Andrea at Steele County Extension (507-444-7693) to see if you qualify.

Steele Talkin’ is a weekly column featuring officials from various organizations throughout Steele County. For information on other evidence based prevention classes in Steele County, please contact Jane Nyquist, Health Educator with Steele County Public Health at 507-444-7661.

Blooming PrairieLiving

Blooming Prairie students create gingerbread houses for the holidays

By **LAURA BERNDT**
News Editor

Using everything from candy canes to coconut shavings, Blooming Prairie students are building a new holiday tradition and using their imagination to craft gingerbread houses of all shapes and sizes.

The project is an assignment for the Creative Foods class, taught by Jennifer Gaines. It encourages the young bakers to be creative as they decorate and design the homes. Once the houses are complete, they will be displayed in a central location at the high school. School staff will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite gingerbread abode. Although the assignment has fostered some friendly competition, most students are just eager to finish their projects.

The Creative Foods class, said Gaines, is a way to teach students some basic skills in the kitchen and also encourage creativity. This, she said, is also the goal of the gingerbread house project.

“This class has been about creating our own dishes,” she said.

Although she typically provides a basic recipe or template for the students to work with, they often branch out and find different ways to make their projects unique.

Although the students are currently focused on building and decorating their gingerbread houses, they’ve also completed several other projects in Creative Foods. The class recently held “Cupcake Wars,” with each group baking a set of cupcakes and decorating them with a Disney theme. Three school staff



Staff photo by Laura Berndt
Luke De La Cruz adds some icing to his gingerbread house.

members also served as judges for the Cupcake Wars.

Another Creative Foods assignment paid homage to the Food Network show, “Chopped,” a reality cooking show that challenges chefs to create dishes using “mystery,” or leftover (and often unusual) ingredients.

After winter break, Gaines is tentatively planning to teach a party-planning unit to help students learn different aspects

of planning snacks, hors d’oeuvres and other party essentials.

“I want to make it fun,” she said, explaining that it’s important for students to be engaged as they learn.

Before creating the gingerbread houses, the students watched videos about building

GINGERBREAD
Continued on Page 10C

Taking a walk on a warm December day



Staff photo by Howard Lestrud
Damian Hein and son Kade enjoy the warm December temperatures and take a hike down the neighborhoods of Blooming Prairie. Temperatures rested in the 40s most of last week.

CHAMBER SPOTLIGHT

It tastes better when it’s homemade at Terry’s Diner

By **HOWARD LESTRUD**
Staff Writer

Almost everything served at Terry’s Diner at Bunkies on Main Street in Blooming Prairie is homemade, says manager Terry Pfister and owner Aaron Ressler.

Home-cooked meals are still preferred in a small town restaurant, Pfister and Ressler attest. Pfister began managing the diner at Bunkies this past July. Street reconstruction may have stalled the growth of the eatery for a while, but the smell and taste of a variety of foods has hooked many as customers.

“It’s getting better,” smiles Pfister as she prepares her grill for another day’s work.

Pfister operated Terry’s Diner on the Tracks in Byron for 13 months. Prior to that, she worked as a property manager in Byron, Plainview and St. Charles.

Terry’s Diner is open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. seven days a week. Seating can accommodate 80 in the restaurant. Bunkies, of course, is also open to bowling and parties can be easily arranged, says Ressler.

Start your day off right by ordering a breakfast skillet. Pfister says one of the more popular skillet offerings is the Skillet Scramble, which includes scrambled eggs, ham, onions and green peppers, topped with cheddar cheese on top of fresh-cut hash browns.

The Western Skillet is also a favorite of Pfister’s early morning customers. It features two sausage links, two eggs served over a bed of sautéed onions and green peppers over hash browns.

If you’re looking for waffle breakfast, try Terry’s Belgian waffle; one will satisfy, she says.

The regular menu at Terry’s Diner features some popular hamburgers: the Bunkie Burger with American cheese; Bunkie Burger with bacon and cheese; California Burger; Mushroom Swiss Burger; Patty Melt; Ragin’ Cajun Burger and the 4-Alarm Burger.

Terry’s also offers sand-



Staff photo by Howard Lestrud
Terry Pfister of Byron is now serving her breakfast and lunch specialties at Bunkies Grille & Lanes in Blooming Prairie. Bunkies owner Aaron Ressler, right, takes his turn at putting in an order.

wiches and melts, with the Classic Chicken Sandwich being very popular. It includes chicken, lettuce, tomato, onion and mayo. Try Terry’s Reuben Sandwich or grilled corn beef topped with Swiss cheese, kraut and Thousand Island dressing on grilled pumpernickel bread.

Terry makes her own buns and breads. Try some homemade soups: creamy chicken wild rice, chicken noodle, bean and ham and chili with a little spice. Side salads and appetizers such as onion rings, Mozzarella sticks, fresh-cut fries and cheese curds are also available.

Looking to introduce more people to her delicious menu offerings, Terry plans add some specials. On Mondays, she will offer a meatloaf bowl with meatloaf, mashed potatoes and a vegetable. Also on Mondays, Terry is offering all you can eat pancakes from 7 to 10 a.m. She also will give homemade orange juice or apple juice to customers ordering the pancake special in December.

On Wednesdays, Terry will feature her commercial beef dinner and also a second special, goulash.

Come Fridays, try some of Terry’s pasta dishes, which include spaghetti and meatballs, chicken alfredo and chicken noodle soup. Garlic toast will

be served the pasta dishes.

Since everything is fresh and homemade, Terry says customers sometimes will have to wait a bit, “but it is worth it,” she says.

Terry’s Diner also has a Kids Menu at \$4.99 featuring a junior cheeseburger, chicken nuggets, grilled cheese, hot dog, mini corn dogs and peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Kids breakfasts are also on the menu, with the Kids Classic Breakfast featuring one egg, choice of bacon or sausage and toast. Other kids offerings for breakfast include two pancakes, one French toast and Honey Nut Cheerios.

“People in this town are really nice and the downtown business people are great,” Pfister remarked.

Ressler and Pfister are looking at the possibility of adding coffee espresso. In addition to the common soft drinks and milk, Terry’s utilizes a shake machine, dated back to 1947 at Bunkies. “We can serve malts and shakes, chocolate and vanilla flavors,” Terry said.

Terry will make homemade pies on request including banana cream, coconut cream, apple and pumpkin.

“It’s nice to hear compliments about our food, but it does get stressful when it’s busy,” Terry admits. She is currently looking for help for a few hours a day.

Blooming Prairie school menus

BPES Breakfast Menu

Dec. 15: Long John, Vegetable Selection, Apple Juice, Milk

Dec. 16: Pillsbury Mini Bagel, Vegetable Selection, Fresh Fruit, Milk

Dec. 17: BBQ Beef, Red Potatoes, Baked Beans, Pickle Spear, Cherry Crunch Dessert

Dec. 18: WG Muffin, Vegetable Selection, Fresh Fruit, Milk

Dec. 21: Yogurt, Graham Crackers, Vegetable Selection, Canned Fruit, Milk

Dec. 22: Cinnamon Roll, Vegetable Selection, Apple Juice, Milk

Dec. 23: No School

BPES Lunch Menu

Dec. 15: Chicken Nuggets, Tator Tots, WG Dinner Roll, Pulled Pork Flatbread, Tator Tots, Baby Carrots, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 16: Spaghetti & Meat Sauce, Garlic Bread, Hamburger on WG Bun, French Fries, Broccoli, Celery Sticks, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 17: Beefy Nachos w/ Cheese Sauce, Refried Beans, Fish w/Cheese on WG Bun, Refried Beans, Cauliflower, Tomatoes, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 18: Pizza Dippers w/ Marinara Sauce, Broccoli, Sweet & Sour Chicken Bites, Rice, Broccoli, Baby Carrots, Garbanzo Beans, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 21: Grilled Cheese Sandwich, Tomato Soup, BBQ Riblet on WG Bun, Broccoli Florets, Radishes, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 22: Corn Dog, Green Peas, Chicken Cacciatore, Rotini, Green Peas, Garlic Breadstick, Baby Carrots, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 23: No School

BPHS Lunch Menu

Dec. 15: Turkey BLT, Flatbread, Tator Tots, Cauliflower, Baby Carrots, Beets, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 16: Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce, Garlic Bread, Broccoli, Garbanzo Beans, Celery Sticks, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 17: Cheese Calzini, Italian Roasted Veggie, Romaine, Green Onions, Tomatoes, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 18: Sweet & Sour Chicken over Fried Rice, Green Peas, Baby Carrots, Garbanzo Beans, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 21: Meatballs and Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, WG Bread, Baby Spinach, Black Beans,

Radishes, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 22: Grilled Cheese Sandwich, Tomato Soup, Green Peas, Baby Carrots, Cauliflower, Seasonal Fruit

Dec. 23: No School

Weekly crossword on Page 8C

PUZZLE SOLUTION	B	P	I		A	H	O	L	D		H	A	S	I	D
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For more information, you can contact Dr. Chad at Prairie Family and Sports Chiropractic, P.A. in Downtown Blooming Prairie, where he will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have regarding chiropractic and your health. You can phone us at 583-2271 or toll free at 1-866-5Dr-Chad, or e-mail Dr. Chad at drchad@drchad.org. Our website can also be helpful in answering any questions.

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EllendaleLiving

Ellendale City Council discusses raising water rates

By **LAURA BERNDT**
News Editor

Although changes have not been officially approved, the Ellendale City Council discussed the logistics of raising city water rates during its last regularly scheduled council meeting.

Rate changes will be effective on Jan. 1, and the council plans to review and approve the final resolution during its next meeting.

The council usually meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month but, this December, the second Thursday of this month also happens to be Dec. 24, Christmas Eve. In light of the holiday, council elected to reschedule the meeting for Tuesday, Dec. 29, at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers.

Earlier this December, Mayor Mark Skroch mailed a letter to city residents explaining the reasoning for raising rates. After reviewing the yearly audit report and receiving a letter from the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority, the council decided rates must be raised.

In the letter to Ellendale residents, Skroch stated, “the present water charges are not sufficient to meet our debt payments.”

Currently, the city is paying for bonds used to fund a new water treatment facility, water tower and water lines. The bonds, sold in 2006 and 2008, totaled \$1,628,000 and \$1,163,508. Each year, the bond payment amounts increase and, with the present rates, the city would not be able to make the required payments.

Council is proposing an increase of \$5 to the base water charges, raising the amount from \$27 to \$32. The per gallon rate will also increase by \$1. During Thursday’s meeting, council considered establishing a reduced price (by \$1) for customers using over 4,000 gallons per

billing period. Council plans to approve the official resolution, determining the rate changes, at its upcoming meeting.

In other business, the council also spoke with new city attorney, Mark Rahrlick of Smith, Tollefson, Rahrlick & Cass, a general practice firm in Owatonna. Rahrlick referenced a list of possible action items, provided by exiting city attorney Phil Kohl, and noted that he would like to review the list with council members to prioritize possible future projects.

He also noted that he would be willing to help the city sort through its ordinances for increased efficiency and accessibility, adding that city staff could help with the project to minimize the project cost. Council will revisit the ideas at a later date.

Council also discussed the Ellendale Firemen’s Relief Association. In past years, the city has made a contribution to the Association in addition to the state funds. As the state funds recently arrived, City Clerk Lee Ann Højberg inquired if council wished to make a donation again this year. In 2014, she stated that the council contributed \$3,000 toward the Association. Council briefly discussed the matter and agreed that it would like to make a contribution again this year, in the amount of \$3,000. “I think they deserve it,” said council-member Scott Groth.

Skroch also said that Steele County is in the process of forming an economic development authority (EDA) board. Groth had volunteered to represent the City of Ellendale on the board. Groth will report back to the council about EDA proceedings.

The council will meet again on Tuesday, Dec. 29 at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers to review end-of-year business, including the 2016 budget and water rates.

Cheering on the NRHEG Panthers



Staff photo by Alan Van Ormer
New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) cheerleaders showed their school spirit during Friday’s girls basketball home game against Maple River at NRHEG High School.

Frontier Communications offers faster broadband speeds to Ellendale

Network expansion brings faster services and additional connectivity to Southern Minnesota

Frontier Communications Corporation (NASDAQ: FTR) announced today that it has made advanced broadband technology and faster Internet speeds available to several hundred additional residences and businesses in Ellendale.

“As we upgrade our broadband network, residential and business customers now have better access to the Internet speeds they want in Southeast Minnesota,” said Darrell Hansen, general manager for Frontier Communications. “Frontier’s enhanced network now offers residential Internet speeds up to 24 Mbps.

“Frontier recognizes the increasing customer demand for higher speeds, and we are continuously working to invest in and improve our infrastructure in an effort to offer faster, affordable service to our customers.”

Customers can bundle broadband service with telephone and television services and realize substantial savings over a la carte services. Residential customers ordering Frontier broadband for the first time pay just \$19.99 per month with

qualifying phone service. In addition, Frontier is offering a free Amazon Prime account for new residential broadband customers, while business customers can participate in Frontier’s Price for Life promotion. All Frontier products and services offer 24/7/365 support.

New and current customers can take advantage of the new speeds by calling 1.888.FRONTIER.

Frontier Communications Corporation (NASDAQ:FTR) offers broadband, voice, video, wireless Internet data access, data security solutions, specialized bundles for residential customers, small businesses and home offices, and advanced communications for medium and large businesses in 28

states. Frontier’s approximately 18,600 employees are based entirely in the United States.

More information is available at www.frontier.com.

NRHEG school menus

NRHEG Breakfast Menu

Dec. 15: Muffins
Dec. 16: Cinnamon Roll
Dec. 17: Toast Sticks
Dec. 18: Breakfast Pizza
Dec. 21: Oatmeal Round
Dec. 22: Egg- Cheese & Sausage on English Muffin
Dec. 23: Cinnamon Roll (No Salad Bar Ellendale)

Dec. 21: Shrimp Poppers, Macaroni & Cheese, Peas, Baby Carrots, Pineapple

Dec. 22: Chicken Nuggets, Whipped Potatoes, Green Beans, Diced Pears, Ice Cream Treat (No Salad Bar Ellendale)

NRHEG Lunch Menu

Dec. 15: Mini Corn Dogs, Soft Pretzels w/Cheese Sauce, Green Beans, Broccoli w/Dip, Mandarin Oranges
Dec. 16: Hamburger on a Bun, Baked Beans, Chips, Cucumber Slices, Diced Pears, Fresh Fruit
Dec. 17: Turkey Gravy, Biscuits, Peas, Cranberry Sauce, Baby Carrots, Diced Peaches, Cottage Cheese
Dec. 18: BBQ Rib Patty on a Bun, French Fries, Pea Pods, Applesauce, Cookie

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Student of the week

Avary Riskedahl is this week’s NRHEG Student of the Week. She is a kindergartner in Mrs. Knudson’s class. Avary is the daughter of Ashley and Jade Riskedahl. She has two brothers, Ian and Dylan, and a little sister, Grace. Avary lives in the country near Hartland. Avary loves to bake and cook with her mom. She gets excited about almost everything and shows such an optimistic attitude towards school and life. Avary shows Panther Pride in a variety of ways. She is always very helpful to her peers and has no hesitation in doing so. From helpful shoe-tying hints to completing a project, Avary is always first to volunteer. She shows respect by quietly walking in the hallways, listening to her teachers and following the golden rule. School staff says that they are very lucky to have Avary represent NRHEG.



Student of the Week is sponsored by:

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Owatonna Living

Season of Giving: Spotlight on Owatonna Hospital Auxiliary volunteer Joanne Peterson

If you’ve ever been through the double doors of Owatonna Hospital, part of Allina Health then you’ve probably seen her—she’s the spirited, witty and kind-hearted woman behind the Information Desk, and her name is Joanne Peterson.

After retiring from a successful 40-year nursing career, Peterson knew she was going to miss the friends and relationships she’d built. “My husband and I moved from Minneapolis to Owatonna the day after I retired, and I believed that my life needed some sense of purpose after my long career of caring for people,” says Peterson.

But, what about hobbies? Peterson says that she had hobbies, but knew that it wouldn’t be enough. “Volunteering in some capacity felt like the right thing to do, an opportunity to meet people from Owatonna and be of service to the hospital,” she says.

Peterson volunteers her time at the Information Desk, one of five service areas open to individuals. She adds that volunteering in this service area is a great opportunity to welcome visitors and patients with a friendly smile, offer them directions or simply help...with whatever they need.

She likes volunteering for many reasons, but Peterson especially remembers hearing “thank you” when people leave the hospital and comments like, “What a lovely building you have.” She adds, “Being part of the scholarship committee is



Submitted photo
Joanne Peterson, center, pictured here enjoying time with her family. She's been a member of the Owatonna Hospital Auxiliary for over six years and volunteers at the Information Desk, is on the Auxiliary Scholarship Committee and has assisted with the planning of special events for the Auxiliary. She's given 575 hours of volunteer time.

very fulfilling, knowing you’re helping people on their career path.”

So, what’s the best way people can give back? Peterson explains that there are many ways you can give your time and many reasons to give back:

- You can make an impact and strengthen the community.
- It’s an opportunity to meet

others.

· You’ll feel good about yourself, and it provides a sense of purpose.

· It can reduce stress, when you focus on someone else other than yourself.

· It saves hospital resources, as volunteers fill the need of paid staff.

The Information Desk is fully

staffed by volunteers from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday-Friday, as well as 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays. Do you have a caring heart? If you’re interested in volunteering your time at the Information Desk or any of the other services areas, contact owatonnnavolunteer@allina.com or call 507-977-2778 for more information.

Megan Suter performs in Christmas at Concordia concerts

Christmas at Concordia weekend Dec. 4-6, 2015, included three events as part of Concordia University, Nebraska’s annual Christmas celebration: Christmas at Concordia concerts, a community open house and the Scholarship Parade of Homes. Video highlights of some of the weekend’s events and other Concordia community Christmas traditions can be seen at cune.edu/deckthehalls.

Four Christmas at Concordia concerts brought more than 3,000 Concordia students, faculty and staff, alumni and community members to St. John Lutheran Church near campus. The concerts featured the University A Cappella Choir, Male Chorus, Women’s Chorale, University Symphonic Band, Concordia Handbell Choir and University Brass Ensemble.

Megan Suter, a junior from Owatonna, participated in the concerts. She performed with the University Symphonic Band and percussion section.

Scripture readings, original music from Concordia faculty and traditional hymns that invited congregation participation were part of the celebration. Songs included “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” “Angels We Have Heard on High,” “O Come, All Ye Faithful,” and “A Stable Lamp is Lighted,” among others.

Concordia hosted the second annual community Christ-

mas open house, made possible through the generous support of Jones National Bank & Trust Co., on Dec. 6 in the Cattle Conference Room of the Janzow Campus Center. The open house also included the traditional Christmas tree lighting near the university’s Holthus Family Plaza just north of the Janzow Campus Center. The lighting of the tree was sponsored by the Seward associates of Thrivent Financial. Community members are invited to visit the Christmas tree and plaza at any time.

The other event of the weekend included the 21st annual Scholarship Parade of Homes, raising scholarship dollars for high school seniors in Seward County who will attend Concordia University, Nebraska in Seward or Southeast Community College in Milford. The featured homes were those owned by Kurth and Jessica Brashear, Roger and Carrie Fitzke, Kyle and Allison Garrett Johnson, Mark and Ingrid Minchow and Steve and Jenny Pinkall. All homes have unique structural and design elements and are decorated in celebration of Christmas. The Scholarship Parade of Homes has raised more than \$65,000 in cumulative scholarship funds since it began in 1995.

All events support Concordia’s mission of equipping men and women for lives of learning, service and leadership in the church and world.

CHRISTMAS CHILD

Continued from Page 1C

box was a candy cane. He had never seen one before and didn’t know what it was.”

Metraus also recalls hearing a story about a boy named Ted, living in a Romanian orphanage. Ted received a shoebox, which contained a washcloth.

“In the orphanage, children shared towels, and it was the

first time he had towel of his own,” said Metraus. “Something as small as a piece of candy or washcloth can really make a difference in life of child overseas.”

Wright also said that the project provides an opportunity for local people to work together. “It’s also great for our church

to get people involved and help serve,” he said. “We have kids from grade school on up helping with the project on our end.”

Many people from Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church volunteer their time to pack and organize the shoeboxes. During the summer, the church also hosts a garage sale. Rather

than setting a fixed price for the unwanted items, however, the church encourages people to simply make a donation in any amount they choose. Proceeds from the sale benefit the Operation Christmas Child efforts and also help purchase school supplies for local students in need, aided by partnerships with local organizations.

Community members are also welcome to bring in shoeboxes they’ve prepared for Operation Christmas Child. “We also had a lot of individuals this year who heard about it and decided to bring in a box,” said Wright.

This year, Wright said that many people from Owatonna, and other communities such as Medford, Ellendale and Clare-

mont, also dropped off boxes at the church. Usually, said Wright, the church contributes about 500 boxes.

Once all the boxes have been assembled and collected, they are delivered to a “relay center” in Rochester and finally to the processing center in Minneapolis. This year, 10 volunteers from Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church also spent a day helping out at the processing center in Minneapolis.

This season, the boxes from the Minneapolis processing center will be sent to Barbados, Burundi, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Suriname, Tanzania, Togo, Trinidad and To-

bago.

The processing center is still accepting boxes through Dec. 19. Shoeboxes can be prepared for girls or boys, ages two to four, five to nine or 10-14 years old. Boxes can include toys, school supplies, non-liquid hygiene items, or clothing, and should be mailed to the Operation Christmas Child Minneapolis Processing Center, 5001 Boone Ave North, Minneapolis, MN 55428.

Boxes can also be prepared year-around online at <http://www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child>.



Submitted photo
Children in the Dominican Republic receive shoeboxes filled with gifts and other necessities through Operation Christmas Child. Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church in Owatonna served as a drop-off site for the shoeboxes again this year.

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Owatonna Living

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

Continued from Page 1C

other concert takes place in the spring for Easter.

The music director of St. Joseph Church, Carol Hodapp, said that these concerts were born out of a desire to step up the musical integrity of the musical performance; however, one music ministry would not have been enough performers for a full concert.

In 2014, Hodapp and musical director at Sacred Heart Church, Christopher Fazzi, went for lunch to begin collaboration. "It's just grown since there," said Fazzi about their initial idea. "It's a pretty simple process really."

Hodapp said that the blending of the two choirs has been a natural transition, and the instrumental addition has been successful. "We've had practices and social hours afterwards for everyone to get to know each other," she said.

There is a full choir of between 30 and 40 adults, which Hodapp called a "good size." There are about 18 instrumentalists, as there are small strings, woodwind, brass and percussion sections and a pianist. This year, they are adding the traditional hand bells to a few of the songs.

"There are people of all ages from eighth-grade to people that

are... well, let's just say young at heart," laughed Hodapp.

The musicians started doing initial readings in October. Hodapp said that they more or less "started hitting it hard" in November.

Both Fazzi and Hodapp agreed that it can be tough to get the whole group together at once, as some of the performers are college students and won't be able to join them until they come home for winter break.

For the bulk of the performers, however, the Christmas concert offers a unique opportunity for the musicians to hone their skills.

"We practice every week during the year, but we are always just preparing ourselves for mass, so we are more or less busy reading through that material," said Hodapp. "Something like this takes a higher performance level, whereas church ministry moves the liturgy along. Some of the choir members don't have as much performance experience."

While the musicians are more used to liturgical performances each week that tend to be less in the spotlight, Hodapp said that there is an incredible amount of talent within the group.

"We have some awesome tal-



Staff photo by Anna Segner
The choir of over 30 members from both Sacred Heart and St. Joseph church makes for a beautiful chorus of Christmas hymns for the "Sounds of the Season" Christmas concert.

ent here and a lot of people that put in a lot of work," she said. "This takes a lot of work and practice."

Choosing the music and creating the program was something that Hodapp enjoyed, as it is the more creative part of her work. Hodapp and Fazzi had the opportunity to go to St. Thomas for

readings and samplings of new music, and some of that music will be performed during the concert.

Hodapp describes the creative process as a room covered with music scores everywhere. "I had the sketchy idea of following the Christmas story, and I would just kind of pull out pieces and

eliminate from there and chose order," said Hodapp. "It's a lot about where I can channel creative energies."

As mentioned earlier, there are five parts to the concert, including advent (awaiting the birth), the Christmas story, in a

manger, epiphany and Christmas joy. Narration connects the moving parts of the religious based story.

Each section brings a new sound, as Hodapp said that the concert program consists of great variety from old Christmas favorites to some fun new pieces.

Hodapp was particularly excited about a piece to be performed in the final section "Christmas Joy." The piece is called "El Nacimiento" by Ariel Ramirez to be performed by Fazzi himself. The song is a Spanish poem set to music.

There will be some old pieces such as J.S. Bach's "Prepare to Receive Him" and some more contemporary pieces. Christmas favorites such as "Joy to the World" and "Oh Come All Ye Faithful" will also be performed.

During their rehearsal on Wednesday, Dec. 9, they sang "Song of the Angels" by Mark Hayes. The piece is sure to emotionally move the audience members as it is passionate and energized.

The "Sounds of the Season" is an opportunity to hear the old and new songs of Christmas.

GROW MN

Continued from Page 1C

cessions and difficulties in the global economy and limited number of new products will challenge and slow economic growth in 2016.

Apparently Blazar considers 2014 a good year for Minnesota economy, but 2016 won't mirror that. "We won't get back to where it was in 2014 until we get through 2016," he said.

What can make a difference? Change.

"Change drives economic growth, to the extent that if we're not changing, we're no likely to grow," said Blazar. "We are still a homegrown economy. We depend on individual businesses to start and grow here."

Change and thinking now in 2015 is the key to thinking ahead to 2017. "That's when we'll see improvement," said Blazar. "We've seen great decisions in 2015...the trend for the region has been good and will help sustain growth in 2017."

As part of Grow Minnesota, Blazar and fellow state Chamber representatives have visited local Chamber of Commerce groups across the state. He shared what they have learned in their visits.

He shared that there are four decisions on the minds of business leaders: whether or not to innovate, whether or not to export to the U.S. and world, whether or not to invest and whether or not to add workers and train them.

Blazar said that many issues standing is the way of business success are taxes, transportation and work force. He said that many business owners feel helpless in that "they don't think that legislatures can solve their problems."

He said that taking local action is important, especially in building a capable work force. "This is something to work on one community at a time," he said. "It is a significant problem and needs our attention."

Of the 27 companies that Grow Minnesota visited in 2015, 12 or 43 percent said that they were going to add workers, but they had concerns about finding people to fill those positions.

Positions that were presented as hard to fill were installation, construction, automotive, maintenance, trade workers, assembly workers, production, architects, engineers, cartographers, sale agents and real estate agents.

Collaboration between educators and the business community to educate students on their possibilities is something that he recommended. This is something that the local Chamber of Commerce and Tourism and

United Way have been working towards, as they host not one but three "Made in Owatonna" days per year.

"I think we're seeing more companies saying 'I want to hire young people, say out of high school, train them or get them into an education program, while they're working at the company'," said Blazar. "Adaption is the key to solving problems...It is a more diverse work

force, but companies haven't changed the hiring process."

In conclusion, Blazar stated "I don't think we can solve the issues in one night, but with local initiative, we can improve the workforce outlet in communities like Owatonna."

Daikin's Director of Operations Craig Vastaas spoke to the products made at their facilities. He shared that Daikin is the world's number one producer

of air conditioning, heating and ventilation equipment.

Following the Grow Minnesota presentation, many professionals put on safety glasses to tour the Daikin Applied facilities that was recently expanded.

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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Cory Michaelson



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Education

Music fills the air at First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie

By **LEMAR NELSON**
Staff Sports Writer

Over 130 students, from grades 7-12, presented 14 holiday musical selections to a packed audience at First Lutheran Church on Monday, Dec. 8.

Four choral groups sang a wide variety of seasonal songs, from very quiet reflections to loud exuberance at the junior high level.

Because of the large number of seventh-graders who liked to sing, Director Kari Bottin divided the junior high into a seventh-grade and an eighth-grade chorus. From the standpoint of fearless singing, the seventh-grade set the tone for the entire concert. The students raised their voices with abandon on all of their selections, and even managed some two-part harmony on both “Fum Fum Fum” and “Cold and Fugue Season.”

Though considerably less in volume, the eighth-grade chorus did a nice job on “The Snow Lay on the Ground,” and imitated the beginning of a winter storm in a “Blizzard.” Some pleasant harmony earmarked “In Winter” and in the opening “Christmas Star”.

The Chamber trio offered a quiet change of pace with their rendition of “The Hushing Carols” and then displayed excellent harmony in “Joyous Bells.” The senior high chorus concluded the program with a varied selection of holiday music.

“A Classical Christmas” included several familiar songs and was sung with plenty of gusto. That and “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas” set the stage for the harmonious “Carol of Winter Peace.” “The Bells of Christmas” concluded the program and again demonstrated good harmony and plenty of volume.



Staff photos by Laura Berndt
Members of the Blooming Prairie Senior High Choir performs “A Classical Christmas” together on Monday evening at First Lutheran Church.



Seventh-grade choir members sing Aubrey Snyder’s “Christmas Welcome” during the Holiday Concert last Monday evening.



Members of the Blooming Prairie eighth-grade choir perform the song “Christmas Star,” from the movie “Home Alone 2.”

Celebrating the holidays in Medford



Staff photo by Alan Van Ormer
Medford kindergarten and first-grade students performed various Christmas songs at a Thursday evening concert at the Medford Schools.



Chamber choir members Jaclyn Hyland, Irasema Zamarripa and Rose Johnson sing “The Hushing Carols,” arranged by Linda Spevacek, during Blooming Prairie High School’s “A Holiday Concert.”

Collaborative effort for preschool education

United Way of Steele County, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, and SMART Transit are collaborating on bringing transportation opportunities for preschool education to Owatonna.

In early 2015, an Early Childhood Initiative was created by SMIF and facilitated by Owatonna Community Education. This group identified transportation as an important obstacle to successful preparation for kindergarten. Many families are unable to take advantage of preschool education opportunities in Owatonna because they are unable to get their children to and from school. Research indicated more than 300 children in Owatonna would benefit from a preschool transportation option.

A sub-committee was formed that spent months researching options and possibilities for

collaboration; finally walking away with a grant opportunity through the State of Minnesota, which SMART Transit applied for and received.

Beginning in the fall of 2016, SMART Transit will have one new bus in its fleet and six hours of service each day Monday through Friday to transport preschoolers to and from school for an extremely affordable cost (that at this time we anticipate will be \$1 per ride).

In the Fall of 2016 we anticipate being able to provide 80-100 rides a day for preschool age children. For this pilot year, slots on the bus will be allocated based upon meeting the community need and maximizing the efficiency of the bus route. Applications for interested families will be available early in 2016.

MnDOT will subsidize 80

percent of the cost of a new bus, but the community of Owatonna is required to come up with the remaining 20 percent, which should be approximately \$15,000. Fundraising efforts for this need will begin in early 2016.

For additional information about this new project, call United Way of Steele County at 455-1180.



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St. Mary’s School

Christmas Concert

We hope that all friends and members of the St. Mary’s School Family were able to see the special performance by these talented students on December 10th. If this was not possible, we are pleased to bring you the performance on Owatonna Radio KRFO - 1390 AM.

There will be two broadcasts:

Wednesday, December 16th at 10:00 a.m., and Monday, December 21st at 2:00 p.m.

At this time Glen, Mike, our staff and families would like to extend our best wishes for a joyous and wonderful Holiday Season.



Glen A. Meger



Mike Meger

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Legals

Foreclosure

15-101570
**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 21, 2006 ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$116,000.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Joseph L. Erler and Barbara R. Erler, Husband and Wife; Jeremy J. Erler and Brittany L. Erler, Husband and Wife and Jeff T. Evans, a single person MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. MIN#: 100021278104668400 LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON THE MORTGAGE: Rochester Mortgage Company SERVICER: JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Filed December 22, 2006, Steele County Recorder, as Document Number A000346604, thereafter re-recorded March 28, 2007 as document number A000348663 to add additional mortgagors

ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association; Dated: July 27, 2015 filed: August 3, 2015, recorded as document number A000403434 LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 9 and the East 6 feet of Lot 8 in Block 23 of the Original Town (now City) of Owatonna, Minnesota; Excepting the South 55 feet to the above described premises. PROPERTY ADDRESS: 404 Elm Ave S, Owatonna, MN 55060 PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-100-2310 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$107,927.01 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 12, 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 12, 2016, or the next business day if July 12, 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: November 17, 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**

11/24, 12/1, 12/8,
12/15, 12/22, 12/29

Foreclosure

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That Default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage: DATE OF MORTGAGE: 09/23/2004 ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$100,700.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Dale L. Louks and Bonjonette Louks, Husband and Wife; and Lanny R. Louks MORTGAGEE: -Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Heartland Home Finance, Inc. DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: 10/12/2004 as Document Number A000326422 in the Office of the County Recorder, Steele County, Minnesota ASSIGNMENT OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to Ventures Trust 2013-I-H-R by MCM Capital Partners, LLC its Trustee TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: 03/05/2015 as Document Number A000401080 in the Office of the County Recorder, Steele County, Minnesota TAX PARCEL I.D. NO.: 17-016-1153 LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Commencing Ten (10) rods West of the Southeast corner of Lot Four (4) of Lot Eighteen (18) in the Northeast Quarter (1/4) of Section Sixteen (16) in Township One Hundred and Seven (107) North of Range Twenty (20) West, running thence North Ten (10) rods, thence West Four and one-half (4 1/2) rods, thence South Ten (10) rods, thence East Four and one-half (4 1/2) rods to the place of beginning. A B S T R A C T STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 240 Northview, Owatonna, MN 55060 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Heartland Home Finance, Inc. RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE SERVICER: BSI Financial Services Inc. TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER ON MORTGAGE: 1 0 0 3 1 1 0 1 0 0 0 0 1 1 0 4 1 2 THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE AS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE: \$103,796.01

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 Mortgage will be foreclosed, and the mortgaged premises will be sold by the Sheriff of Steele County, Minnesota at public auction as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: 01/19/2016 at 10:00AM PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, 204 E. Pearl, Owatonna, MN 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) or Mortgagor's personal representatives or assigns is six months from the date of sale. TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: If the mortgage is not reinstated under Minn. Stat. §580.30 or redeemed under Minn. Stat. §580.23, the mortgagor must vacate the mortgaged property by 11:59 p.m. on 07/19/2016, or the next business day if 07/19/2016 falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday.

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 MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

Dated: 11/24/2015 Ventures Trust 2013-I-H-R by MCM Capital Partners, LLC its Trustee, Mortgagee/Mortgage Assignee Klatt, Odekirk, Augustine, Sayer, Treinen & Rastede, P.C., By Brian G. Sayer, Attorney for Mortgagee/Mortgage Assignee 925 E 4th St., Waterloo, IA 50703

**THIS IS A COMMUNICATION
FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR
ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT
A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION
OBTAINED WILL BE USED
FOR THAT PURPOSE.**

11/24, 12/1, 12/8
12/15, 12/22, 12/29

Foreclosure

15-101819
**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: April 21, 2008 ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$159,101.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Lee Mullerleile and Christy Mullerleile, husband and wife MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. MIN#: 100249120000143128

LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON THE MORTGAGE: Marketplace Home Mortgage, LLC SERVICER: CitiMortgage, Inc. DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Filed April 25, 2008, Steele County Recorder, as Document Number A000356812 ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: CitiMortgage, Inc. LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 8, Block 6, Re-Plat of Highland Park Addition to the City of Owatonna, together with the North Half of the vacated alley lying directly South of said Lot. PROPERTY ADDRESS: 627 E Academy St, Owatonna, MN 55060 PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-136-0608 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$159,226.97 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 12, 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 12, 2016, or the next business day if July 12, 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: November 20, 2015

CitiMortgage, Inc.
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**

11/24, 12/1, 12/8,
12/15, 12/22, 12/29

Foreclosure

15-101690

**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: November 21, 2005 ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT

OF MORTGAGE: \$229,050.00 MORTGAGOR(S): Amado Mendez Solis and Lorna E. Mendez, husband and wife MORTGAGEE: Town and Country Credit Corp. LENDER OR BROKER AND MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR STATED ON THE MORTGAGE: Town and Country Credit Corp. SERVICER: Specialized Loan Servicing LLC DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Filed December 7, 2005, Steele County Recorder, as Document Number A000337562 ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Ameriquet Mortgage Company; Dated: December 2, 2005 filed: December 26, 2007, recorded as document number A000354323; thereafter assigned to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. dated December 2, 2005 recorded December 26, 2007 as document number A000354324. Thereafter assigned to U.S. Bank National Association, as Trustee, successor in interest to Bank of America, National Association, as successor by merger to LaSalle Bank National Association, as Trustee for Certificateholders of Bear Stearns Asset Backed Securities I LLC, Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-HE2 dated March 19, 2012 recorded April 9, 2012 as document number A000383927. LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot6,Block3,Radel'sFrancisAddition PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1283 BellflowerLane,Owatonna,MN55060 PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-437-0306 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$372,214.97 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 12, 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 12, 2016, or the next business day if July 12, 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: November 20, 2015

U.S. Bank National Association, as Trustee, successor in interest to Bank of America, National Association, as Trustee, successor by merger to LaSalle Bank National Association, as Trustee for Bear Stearns Asset Backed Securities I Trust 2006-HE2, Asset Backed-Certificates, Series 2006-HE2 Assignee of Mortgagee

SHAPIRO & ZIELKE, LLP

BY

Lawrence P. Zielke - 152559
Diane F. Mach - 273788
Melissa L. B. Porter - 0337778
Randolph W. Dawdy - 2160X
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12550 West Frontage Road, Ste. 200
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**THIS IS A COMMUNICATION
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WEEKLY CROSSWORD

Answers on Page 2C

CLUES ACROSS

- Characters in one inch of tape
- Carrier's invention
- Highest in degree or quality
- In a hold
- Jewish mystic
- Female horses
- A way to souse
- Serbian
- A small sharp knife
- Publicity
- Frogs, toads, tree toads
- Supporting structures
- Brew
- Actress Lupino
- Jobs
- Poetries
- Indian founder of Sikhism
- Expect eagerly
- Supporting structures
- Obstructing the view of something
- Denotes three
- Expression of uncertainty
- Capital of Zimbabwe
- Woman of charm and good looks
- Order
- Draft animal in desert regions
- Greek portico
- Unaccented syllable
- Bureau
- verse
- Electric battery
- Fail to keep pace
- Vapor density
- Sheath or shirtwaist
- Radioactivity unit
- Moss stalks
- Strive to equal or match
- Lilly, drug company
- Cologne

CLUES DOWN

- Exclamation of praise
- Top
- One of the Gershwins
- Indicates position
- Small cup
- 12th Greek letter
- Capable of being eliminated
- 12th Jewish month
- Rechristen
- In a way, imputes
- Hydroxyls + 2C
- Follows sigma
- Vegetable shrubs
- South African village
- Monetary unit of D.R. Congo
- First Chinese dynasty
- Divides evenly into (Math)
- Household god (Roman)
- Pakistani rupee
- American time

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Jay Braaten,
Financial Advisor

GINGERBREAD

Continued from Page 2C



gingerbread homes and also perused gingerbread house photos, drawing additional inspiration

Gaines said that she provided some basic gingerbread house templates, but some students sought out different designs, creating their own or locating others online.

“When it’s all done, they’re all going to be different,” she said, referring to the finished projects.

Gaines also provided a recipe for gingerbread dough and the students began making their batches on Friday, Dec. 4. The students each rolled, cutout and baked the ginger-

bread, then assembled the pieces using icing. They were also invited to bring in other items to decorate their houses, including candy and other edible elements. Each group of students will also write a description of their creation, which will be displayed beside the finished projects.

Last Wednesday morning, the students were busy assembling and decorating their edible artwork. While each group worked at its own pace, each also expressed encountering different challenges and triumphs during the process.

Elly Strunk was working with

group members to construct a Vermont-style house, set in the mountains. “So far, it’s been kind of frustrating because the gingerbread breaks, but maybe we’ll be able to decorate it a little bit better,” said Strunk, as she carefully added more icing to the gingerbread walls.

Other students enjoyed the opportunity to be innovative.

Student Emily Tynjala said that she enjoyed working with the frosting. Her group also used a mix of coconut shavings and sugar to produce the look of freshly fallen snow and even made a snowman out of marsh-

mallows. The snowman even had a tiny orange nose, which the students made by cutting apart a piece of candy corn.

Gaines hopes that the displayed gingerbread houses will showcase her students’ hard work, and also thinks that the display may generate some interest in the class. “It’s an elective course, so maybe next year I’ll have a bunch line up and I’ll be teaching it again,” she said.

Throughout the year, Gaines also teaches other classes including Foods 1 and 2, International Foods and Sports Nutrition.

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‘Christmas Vacation’ still a top pick for holiday flicks



Holiday films hold a special place in many people’s hearts, and perhaps no holiday movie of the last 30 years has resonated as much as “National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation.” The oft-quoted holiday favorite turned 25 years old in 2014, yet the film remains as popular as ever.

Fans of “Christmas Vacation” can no doubt quote their favorite lines from the film, but the following are a few tidbits that even the most ardent “Vacation” fan might be unfamiliar with.

- The movie is based on a story titled “Christmas 59,” which was written by the same man, John Hughes, who wrote and produced the film. The film pays homage to this story when Clark Griswold is rummaging through the attic and finds a movie reel named “Christmas 59.”
- Frank Capra III worked as an assistant director on the film. In one scene of the film, “It’s a Wonderful Life,” which was directed by Frank Capra III’s grandfather, is on a television in the background.

- Actress Mae Questrel (Aunt Bethany) provided the voices for Betty Boop and Olive Oyl in the 1930s. “Christmas Vacation” would be her final film.
- “Christmas Vacation” featured a handful of “Saturday Night Live” alumni. In addition to the film’s star, Chevy Chase, SNL alums Randy Quaid, Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Brian Doyle-Murray appeared in the film.
- The role of Cousin Rocky had no lines in the film.
- In the “Lampoon” films that preceded “Christmas Vacation,” Rusty was the older child of the Griswold clan. However, he is the younger sibling in this film.
- “Christmas Vacation” marked the directorial debut for Jeremiah Chechik, who went on to direct “Benny & Joon” and 1998’s “The Avengers.”
- The movie had a large budget (\$27 million) for a comedy with no special effects.
- Surprisingly, “Christmas Vacation” had its own sequel that few are familiar with. The made-for-television “National

- Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation 2: Cousin Eddie’s Island Adventure” was released in 2003.
- Cousin Eddie’s fashion style, in particular the sweater/Dickie combination, was the brainchild of actor Randy Quaid’s wife.
 - No part of “Christmas Vacation” takes place on Christmas Day. The film culminates with the antics that take place at the Griswold home on December 24.
 - Brian Doyle-Murray, who played Frank Shirley, is the brother of another famous comic actor: Bill Murray.
 - “Christmas Vacation” was the only movie in the series up until then that did not feature Lindsey Buckingham’s song, “Holiday Road.”

Exploring the colors of Christmas

Decorations adorning homes and businesses in the familiar colors of red and green are popular come the holiday season. Even gift wrap, greeting cards and clothing tend to lean toward red and green as the holiday season hits full swing. It is difficult to think of Christmas without envisioning everything awash in these popular colors, broken up only by the inclusion of gold, white or silver accents.

The colors of Christmas are often taken for granted, and many celebrants are unaware of how these colors became symbols of the holiday season and why they remain so to this day.

Several theories exist as to why red and green became the hallmarks of Christmas. One such theory is that the colors evolved from pagan celebrations similar to the

evolution of Christmas traditions. Prior to the arrival of Christianity, many cultures viewed the color green as the symbol of life. It is believed that, during harsh winters, evergreen trees were cut down and brought indoors to symbolize that life still exists and thrives despite the cold and darkness of winter. Other pagan holidays featured the use of green, red and gold, including the festival of Yule.

As Christianity spread across Europe and eventually other parts of the world, red and green were linked to Jesus Christ. Green still represented life, but now this was the eternal life offered by Christ. Red was said to symbolize sacrifice, namely the blood of Jesus when he died on the cross. Some Christians believe that Jesus



CHRISTMAS COLORS
Continued on Page 4D

HO...HO...HONk

If you Love Christmas

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Christmas tidbits to put you in the holiday spirit

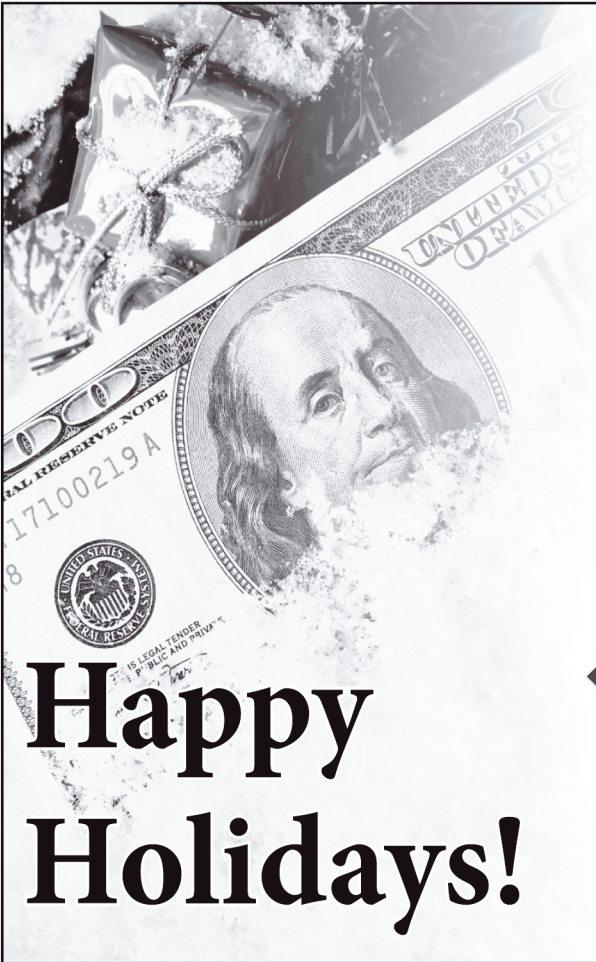
The holiday season has arrived, and millions of people across the globe will be celebrating Christmas with their families and friends. The following are some interesting tidbits to share with your loved ones this holiday season.

- Each year, more than three billion Christmas cards are sent in the United States alone.
- In 350 AD, Pope Julius I, bishop of Rome, proclaimed December 25 the official celebration date for the birth of Jesus Christ. Many historians and theologians have surmised that Christ really wasn't born this time of year, thanks to imagery and information from the Bible.
- Christmas carols began as an English custom called "wassailing." Individuals toasted neighbors to a long and healthy life.
- Despite the common tale that three wise men paid homage to baby Jesus, the Bible never specifically calls out a number. Similarly, there's no specific indication that they visited the infant Jesus. Their visit may have occurred when Jesus was older.
- Santa Claus' modern look was inspired by writings from The Knickerbockers of New York and imagery from Clement Clarke Moore's "A Visit from St. Nicholas." Moore denied authoring the famous poem for 15 years after it was published anonymously, feeling the poem was beneath his talents.
- Santa has his own official postal code. It's H0 H0.
- The song "Jingle Bells" was originally written for Thanksgiving and not Christmas. People loved

it so much that the lyrics were changed to fit Christmas.

- Christmas trees typically grow for 15 years before they're cut and sold. This means the trees sold today were likely planted in 1999.
- Christmas was not declared an official holiday in the United States until June 26, 1870.
- Before turkey, the traditional Christmas meal served in England was a pig's head and mustard.
- Male reindeer tend to shed their antlers in the winter. This means Santa's reindeer are likely female.
- Christ may have been born in a cave rather than a manger. According to the gospel of Luke, the shepherds that helped find shelter for Mary to give birth kept their flock in a cave. The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem is built over a cave called the Grotto of the Nativity, where Jesus is believed to have been born.
- Many people may be less inclined to stand under mistletoe waiting for a kiss if they knew what "mistletoe" means in the ancient Germanic language. It literally means "dung on a twig," for the bird who eats the berries and then leaves seeds in droppings to propagate new plants.
- Each holiday season, PNC Wealth Management calculates the costs of the gifts in the song, "The 12 Days of Christmas." The price index for the gifts went from \$12,673 in 1984 to more than \$24,000 in 2011. The most expensive gift is the swimming swans.





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Christmas tunes spread holiday spirit

Some stores start stocking Christmas decorations and wrapping paper as early as the end of October, and some families begin decking their halls in holiday finery in late November. But for many people, the holiday season has not truly begun until the music synonymous with this festive time of year has hit the airwaves.

Few things can make a person feel as festive as the holiday songs they know and love. Many families have a favorite musical artist whose music they consider synonymous with their holiday celebrations. While families have their own unique holiday traditions, over time certain holiday songs have emerged as favorites. These are the tunes you're likely to hear played over and over on the radio. Billboard, which tracks the music industry's most popular songs, compiled its own list of the most popular Christmas songs. The list measures the volume of people who have been exposed to the song on the radio, and is based on ranking rather than exact figures of listeners, and the following are the 10 most popular songs based on those parameters.

10. "Happy Xmas (War is Over)," by John Lennon: This song debuted in 1971 and was written by Lennon and his wife, Yoko Ono. Performed with the Harlem Community Choir, the song was originally a protest song about the Vietnam War before it eventually became a Christmas standard.

9. "Christmas Eve (Sarajevo 12/24)," by Trans-Siberian Orchestra:

According to Nielsen, this instrumental mash-up of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" and "Carol of the Bells" is one of the best-selling Christmas digital singles in SoundScan history. A combination of full, classical orchestra and rock, "Christmas Eve" is a memorable and powerful piece of music.

8. "White Christmas," by Bing Crosby: Crosby crooned this tune in 1942 in the movie of the same name, and Irving Berlin's song soon became one of the most popular holiday tunes of all time. It has been covered innumerable times and has become a holiday season standard.

7. "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year," by Andy Williams: This popular Christmas song was written by Edward Pola and George Wyle in 1963. The song celebrates the traditions and feelings of the Christmas season.

6. "Feliz Navidad," by Jose Feliciano: This Spanish-English pop song is recognized by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers as one of the 25 most-played and recorded Christmas songs around the world. Puerto-Rican born Feliciano has said that the song has always been a bridge to the cultures that are so dear to him.

5. "A Holly Jolly Christmas," by Burl Ives: This song was written by Johnny Marks, an American songwriter. Ironically, Marks was Jewish, but he specialized in Christmas songs

and wrote many of the holiday standards people love, including this upbeat tune and "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree."

4. "The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire)," by Nat King Cole: Believe it or not, this song was actually written in the summer when composers Bob Wells and Mel Torme were trying to cool off with winter imagery. Snow-covered images and phrases eventually turned into lyrics for this popular song that was most memorably recorded by Nat King Cole.

3. "Jingle Bell Rock," by Bobby Helms: This song has been performed by many, but Helms' version of the is perhaps the best known. The song highlights the crossover style known as "rockabilly" and merges the classic "Jingle Bells" with rock n' roll references of the 1950s.

2. "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," by Brenda Lee: Brenda Lee was a chart-topping female vocalist of the 1960s who owes much of her success to this beloved holiday classic. Despite the mature sound of her voice, Lee recorded this version when she was only 13 years old.

1. "All I Want for Christmas is You," by Mariah Carey: This up-tempo love song has become a Christmas classic and one of Carey's most popular hits. She cowrote and coproduced the song with Walter Afansieff. It is one of the few, modern, original Christmas songs to stand the test of time and become an official Christmas standard.




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Keep poinsettias looking great through the holidays

Along with the fragrant evergreens and twinkling lights synonymous with the holiday season, poinsettias make up a key component of holiday decorating.

Unlike holly and some of the other greenery that is commonly associated with the holidays, poinsettias do not naturally thrive in the colder temperatures. These plants originate in southern Mexico and were considered an exotic plant when first introduced to the United States by Joel Robert Poinsett, the first American ambassador to Mexico.

Poinsettias can be fickle plants and ones that gardening novices may find challenging to maintain. The plants are comprised of green foliage, colorful (often red) flower bracts, and the actual flowers of the plants, which are the red or green buttonlike parts nestled in the center of the bracts.

Because they are a tropical plant, poinsettias can be damaged by exposure to low temperatures, even if they are only exposed for short periods of time. They should be wrapped and protected against the elements when brought home. For maximum plant life, poinsettias need to be placed near a warm, sunny window, or another area that has ample amounts of light. They thrive in

temperatures between 60 and 75 F and should be kept away from warm or cold drafts.

Water the plant whenever the surface feels dry to the touch. Water until it drains out the bottom, but don't let the plant sit in water. Over- or under-watering can cause leaves to drop prematurely and wilt. If your home lacks in humidity, you may need to water the plant more frequently. Poinsettias do not need to be fertilized while the plant is in bloom.

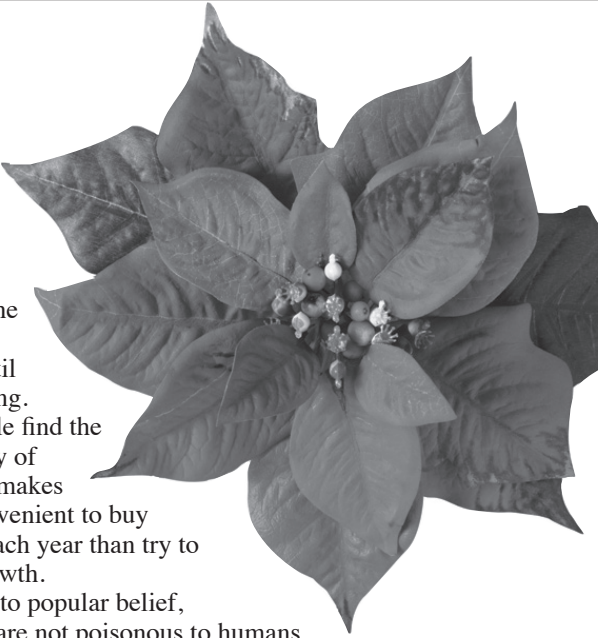
The Ohio State University Extension says poinsettias can be reflowered the following Christmas, but unless a yearlong schedule of care is observed, the results usually are not good. You can speak with a gardening expert or consult online resources for the proper care schedule. Caring for a poinsettia year-round involves gradually drying out the plant and storing it in a cool location. The plant later will be moved outdoors and then back inside and pruned to keep a full shape.

Poinsettias are short-day plants, which means they flower about 10 weeks after the daylight shortens to about 12 hours or less. Therefore, to have the plant in full flower by Christmas, it will have to be kept in complete darkness between 5 p.m. and 8

a.m. from the first part of October until Thanksgiving. Many people find the affordability of poinsettias makes it more convenient to buy new ones each year than try to foster regrowth.

Contrary to popular belief, poinsettias are not poisonous to humans or animals, but they should not be ingested due to the potential for allergic reactions. Poinsettias can help remove pollutants from indoor air, which is advantageous during the winter months when doors and windows are typically kept closed.

Select plants that have dark green foliage and no low or damaged leaves. This ensures the best success for keeping poinsettias looking healthy and vibrant throughout the holiday season.



DID YOU KNOW?

Christmas Day has become a big day in the movie business. Many studios now release big-budget films on December 25th, and audiences have recently flocked to the theaters to see some of their favorite stars in films that opened on Christmas Day or shortly before. According to Box Office Mojo, an online movie publication and box office reporting service, no film has fared better on Christmas Day than “Sherlock Holmes,” which premiered on December 25, 2009, earning just under \$25 million in its initial day onscreen. “Avatar,” the 2009 James Cameron film that would go on to gross \$760 million in domestic receipts alone, holds the distinction of earning the second most money on Christmas Day, when it earned a little more than \$23 million despite having already been out in the theaters one full week. The 2004 Ben Stiller film “Meet the Fockers” opened three days before Christmas but still managed to earn \$19.5 million on Christmas Day. A pair of 2012 films, the latest big screen adaptation of “Les Miserables” (\$18 million) and Quentin Tarantino’s “Django Unchained” (\$15 million), round out the top five highest grossing films on Christmas Day. Numerous films are slated to open on December 25, 2013, including Stiller’s “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” and “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit,” starring Chris Pine and Kevin Costner.

CHRISTMAS COLORS

Continued from Page 1D

Jesus wore a crown of holly thorns whose berries were originally white. As Jesus’ blood touched the berries, they turned red.

Some theorize that the red of the holiday season represents the apples on the tree of paradise in the Garden of Eden. Around the 14th century, the faithful would put on Paradise Plays on December 24 to share the story of creation with those who could not read. It is nearly impossible to find a fruit-bearing apple tree in the winter, so a pine tree adorned with red apples was used instead. Bishops also wore red robes, further tying the color red to religious masses and celebrations.

Gold is frequently used in holiday decorations as well. Gold can represent the sun and light, both

important ways to ward off the dark winter. In addition, gold was one of the gifts brought to baby Jesus, making it a color of significance within the Christian faith.

Red and green poinsettias also are a symbol of the holiday season, but they didn’t start the colorful tradition. Poinsettias are a relatively recent addition to Christmas symbolism, as they were only first introduced to America in 1828, when they were brought back from Mexico by Joel Poinsett.

The holiday season is filled with many different colors that brighten up homes and businesses. Combined with the many twinkling lights used on displays, red and green decorations can add vitality to the dark days of December.

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Ways to stay healthy this holiday season

With the holiday season upon us, many people's schedules are hectic once again. There are social events and family gatherings to attend, shopping ventures to make, and decorating to be done. While fun, the holiday season can be a time of added pressure, which leads to stress and other unhealthy situations.

At a time when you want to be at your best, stress can affect your physical well-being. The American Psychological Association says the hustle and bustle of the holidays has psychological consequences for some people. More people are inclined to feel that their stress increases, rather than decreases, around the holidays. The National Institute of Mental Health says chronic stress can lower immunity and cause excretory, digestive and reproductive systems to

stop working properly. Stress also may cause you to eat unhealthy snacks to cope, and that can lead to unwanted weight gain.

Stress is not the only potential health hazard that can arise around the holidays. A greater number of parties expose you to an abundance of foods and drinks you may not consume on a regular basis, and that can lead to a lot of mindless eating. Weight gained during this time of year can be difficult to shed come January, when colder temperatures challenge many people's motivation to exercise.

Also, social settings put you in close contact

with a greater number of people, potentially increasing your exposure to germs.

You can still feel your best during the holidays. Follow these tips for maintaining a healthy mind and body.

- Get the flu vaccine. The flu vaccine can protect you against various strains of the flu. Get a flu shot before the holidays so you are ready for cold and flu season.
- Carry disinfecting wipes. Germs

can linger on surfaces long after an infected person has come and gone. Studies from researchers at the

STAYING HEALTHY
Continued on Page 6D



Celebrating
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As we revel in the joy and festivities of the Christmas season, we are moved to remember the greatest gift of all: the birth of our Savior. His eternal love for us brings peace and contentment to our hearts at this holy time and all year.

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To our friends, neighbors, associates, and folks we've yet to meet, we'd like to extend our sincere best wishes for a holiday that's as beautiful as you are, and hope that all your dreams come true during this magical time of year.

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Wishing you and yours a happy and blessed Christmas.

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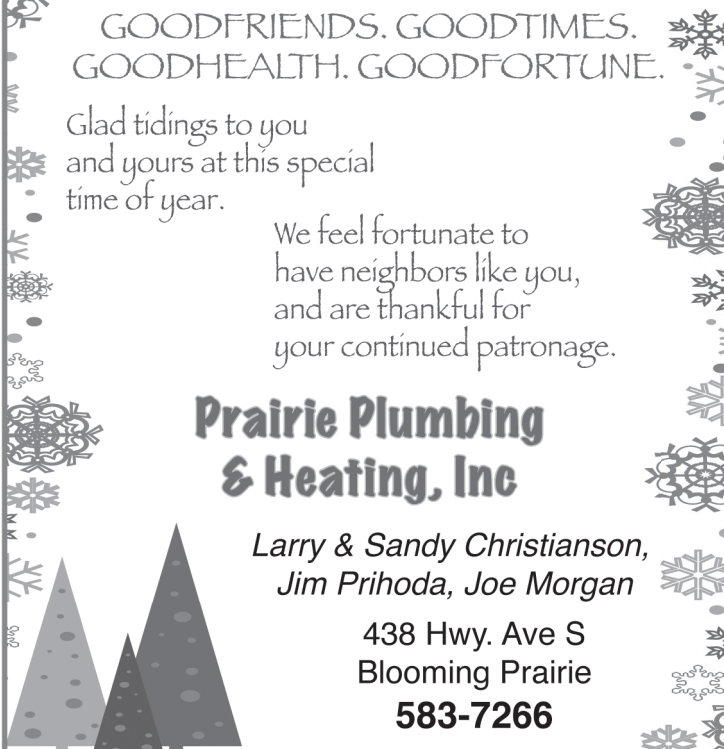
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A Flurry of Holiday Wishes

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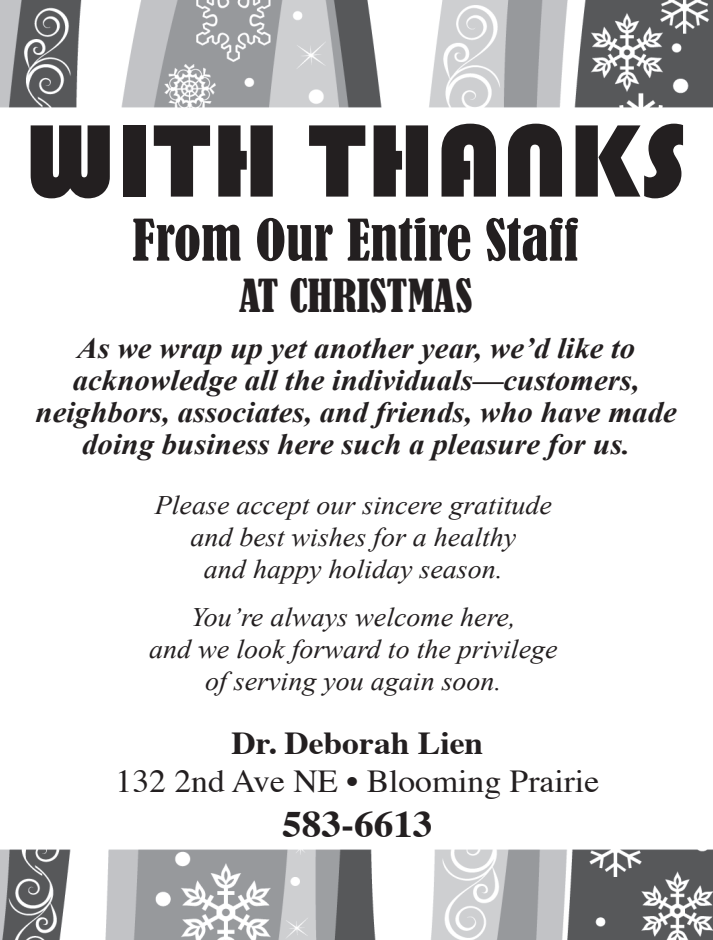
WITH THANKS
From Our Entire Staff AT CHRISTMAS

As we wrap up yet another year, we'd like to acknowledge all the individuals—customers, neighbors, associates, and friends, who have made doing business here such a pleasure for us.

Please accept our sincere gratitude and best wishes for a healthy and happy holiday season.

You're always welcome here, and we look forward to the privilege of serving you again soon.

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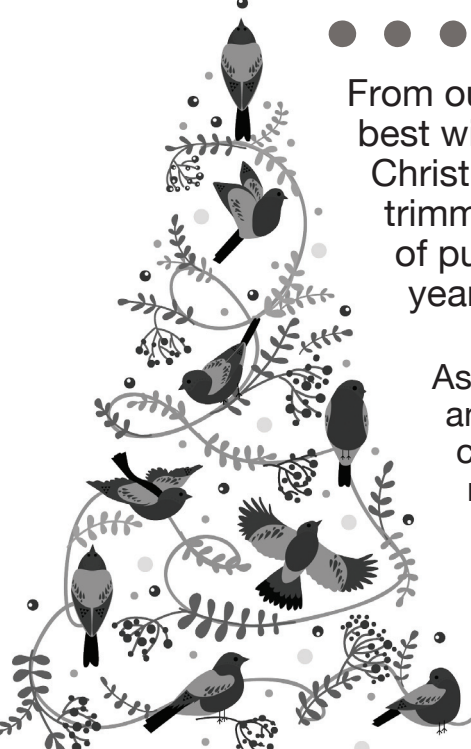


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From our flock to yours, go our very best wishes for a merry and magical Christmas. May your holiday be trimmed with beauty and a feeling of pure happiness that grows all year.

As we look forward to beginning another new year here, we simply can't think of a better place to make our nest than this fine community. Thanks for making us feel so welcome and at home, friends.
Happy Holidays!

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STAYING HEALTHY
Continued from Page 5D



Do your best to avoid stress or illness around the holidays.

Try delegating some tasks to others in the household so you don't take on too much responsibility.

- Keep up an exercise routine. Don't stray too far from your exercise schedule. You may have to move workout times to free up other time later in the day for shopping or parties. Early morning is a good time to exercise because it gets you moving first thing in the morning and might even encourage you to hit the sack a little earlier each night, ensuring you get all the sleep you need. Exercise also can

University of Arizona in Tucson have found the flu virus — and even the antibiotic-resistant bacteria MRSA — on airline tray tables. Buses, trains and doors all may be harboring germs. Wipe down surfaces with disinfecting wipes and allow them to air-dry before touching them. This can help you avoid coming into contact with germs.

- Balance your activities. It can be tempting to overbook your schedule with a ton of activities, but this may ultimately prove stressful. Leave days open to relax and do things you want to do, such as viewing Christmas light displays or even just unwinding at home with a good book.

improve energy levels and relieve stress.

- Don't focus on food. Focus more on enjoyable activities that keep you moving rather than always being seated around the table for a big meal. Save indulgences for one or two treats on the holidays and eat sensibly otherwise.
- Talk to someone. If the holidays have you feeling blue, talk to a friend or family member. If you need more professional support, find a social worker or psychologist that can help you work through stress and other feelings.

Christmas Bells Are Ringing

We're chiming in with our best wishes for a happy and harmonious season! May the sights and sounds of the holiday fill you with resounding joy.

Thanks to our loyal customers for your friendship and support. We look forward to ringing in the New Year with all of you!

Suidae

Algona, IA • Albert Lea, MN • Morris, MN
Harrington, NE • Lake City, IA • Sac City, IA

ROLL OUT THE JOY

We hope we've got everyone covered as we wish our customers, neighbors, associates and friends, a very merry holiday season. *For your continued support we are truly grateful.*

FLOOR TECH
Carpet - Vinyl - Laminate - Wood - Ceramic

322 E. Main, Blooming Prairie • 583-2276
2201 E. Main, Albert Lea • 507-552-1637

Happy Holidays & New Year

Thank you for a wonderful year

A string of good tidings to you and yours at Christmastime! You deserve the best, and we hope your season is delightful in every single way. Thanks for powering our success this year with your visits. Your friendship and patronage mean a lot to us, and we look forward to serving you again soon.

We'd like to wish all of our friends, neighbors, customers and associates here in town a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

.....

Mike's REPAIR

870 NW 32nd Ave • Owatonna, MN
507-455-0388

Happy Holidays to you and yours

We hope your Christmas season is full of warmth and cheer

CASH WISE FOODS

#1 IN LOW PRICES!

(507) 451-7220
495 W N. Street
Owatonna, MN

Merry.
Bright.
Magical.
Joyous.
Healthy.
Happy.
Lucky.
Blessed.

Here's hoping
 your Christmas is all
 that and more!

Seasons Greetings



marksrepair.net
 1181 Brady Blvd NW,
 Owatonna, MN 55060
 507-451-1412

*Thanks for
 your support*



tonysflooringmn.com
 206 Mineral Springs Road
 Owatonna
 507-451-2285

Merry Christmas



www.cartimeofowatonna.com
 1150 Hoffman Drive
 Owatonna
 507-446-9218

Peace & Joy to All



Mike Bishman
 www.farmers.com
 121 W. Broadway St.
 Owatonna
 507-451-0193

*Merry Christmas
 and Blessings to All*



flooring-frenzy.com
 223 N Cedar Ave,
 Owatonna, MN 55060
 507-446-0069

Blessings to you



owatonnaveterinaryhospital.com
 1930 S Cedar Ave
 Owatonna
 507-451-8153

Peace on Earth



Debra Schmidt
 helpusellowatonna.com
 245 18th St SE,
 Owatonna
 507-390-4030

Happy Holidays

**Kath Moving
 & Transfer**

1035 Minnesota Ave
 Owatonna
 507-475-2214

Merry Christmas



weepalschildcarecenter.org
 560 Dunnell Dr
 Owatonna
 507-451-8355

*Thanks for
 Your Support!*



owatonnaautoclinic.com
 902 Hoffman Dr NW
 Owatonna,
 (507) 414-2886

Peace on Earth!

**HAPPY FOOT
 DANCE STUDIO**

www.happyfeetdance.net
 209 5th Street
 Ellendale
 715-977-0226

Best Wishes!



www.kappysauto.com
 2490 SW 24th Ave
 Owatonna
 507-451-8989

HometownLiving

Community Calendar



Staff photo by Laura Berndt

Each year, the Wish Tree makes the holidays brighter for local children. Community members and organizations donated items, including both toys and clothing, which will benefit local children in need this holiday season. The items are sorted according to age and gender, and the Wish Tree forum allows families to request things their children need and want. Above, Cindy Lindquist, Lois Nelson and Judy Esplan help sort the toys and clothes at First Lutheran Church on Friday afternoon.

J&H LIQUORS
340 E. Main St. Blooming Prairie • 507-583-7557

JOIN US FOR THE HOLIDAYS

BAR BINGO: MONDAY @ 6:30 P.M.
WINE & WOMEN WED: 6-10 P.M.
MEAT RAFFLES: FRIDAY @ 5:30 P.M.
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

- Dec. 15:**
1 p.m. Red Cross Blood Drive, BP City Center
4:45 p.m. Boys N Girls Club Brd
- Dec. 16:**
10:30 a.m. BPBL Story time
12 p.m. BP Chamber of Commerce
- Dec. 22:**
BP Card Club & Luncheon
6 p.m. BPBL Book Club
- Dec. 23:**
No School
10:30 a.m. BPBL Story time

Servicemen's Club

210 Fourth St. N.E. • Blooming Prairie • 507-583-7884

- Raffle drawing first Saturday of every month
- Happy Hour 3 p.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday
- Taco Tuesdays every Tuesday at 5 p.m.

"BURGER NIGHT" SPECIALS
#1 - HOT TURKEY COMMERCIAL
#2 - CHEF SALAD

LUNCH SPECIAL (12/17 & 12/18):
CHICKEN BACON SWISS
SANDWICH & SIDE SALAD

ELLENDALE/GENEVA

- Dec. 15:**
7 p.m. NRHEG Karate, ES Gym North Ellndl
- Dec. 17:**
5:30 p.m. NRHEG Yoga, DAPE Rm
7 p.m. NRHEG Yoga, DAPE Rm
7 p.m. NRHEG Zumba, DAPE Rm
- Dec. 21:**
Truth in Taxation Meeting 6 p.m./Regular Bd Meeting 6:30 p.m. NR Media Center, NRHEG
6:20 p.m. NRHEG Yoga, Media Center Ellndl
- Dec. 22:**
7 p.m. NRHEG Karate, ES Gym North Ellndl

FIRST NATIONAL BANK
Waseca | Ellendale | Hope | Member FDIC
fnbwaseca.com | 507-684-2691

OWATONNA

- Dec. 15:**
7 a.m. Steele Co Public Works Policy Comm Mtg, St Co Brd Rm
10 a.m. OPL So Many Books...So Little Time Book Club
11 a.m. Red Cross Blood Drive, Lowe's, Owa
4 p.m. Steele Co Committee of the Whole Mtg, St Co Brd Rm
4:30 p.m. OPL Brd, Gainey Rm
6 p.m. Steele Co Special Brd Mtg, Final Budget/Tax Levy, St Co Brd Rm
6:30 p.m. Nat'l Alliance on Mental Illness Peer Support Group, Owatonna Hospital
7 p.m. Owatonna City Council, Council Chambers, City Hall
7 p.m. Steele Co Brd Mtg, St Co Brd Rm
- Dec. 16:**
4 p.m. Owatonna EDA, Council Chambers, City Hall
- Dec. 17:**
2 p.m. OPL Independent & World Films
6:30 p.m. OPL Family Story Time
- Dec. 18:**
1 p.m. Four Seasons Public Skate, Owa
- Dec. 20:**
11 a.m. Four Seasons Public Skate, Owa
- Dec. 21:**
9 a.m. Red Cross Blood Donation, Owa Hospital
10 a.m. Red Cross Blood Donation, Family Video, Owa
12 p.m. Owatonna Noon Rotary Club, Country Club
- Dec. 22:**
2:30 p.m. Caregiver Support Group, OPL
4 p.m. OPU Utilities Commission, Utilities Plant Office
5:30 p.m. Owatonna Planning Commission, Council Chambers, City Hall

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812 S. Elm Ave. • Owatonna • 507-455-3002 • 800-832-3002

MEDFORD

- Dec. 15:**
6:30 p.m. Court St Anne Catholic Daughters Meeting, Medford
- Dec. 16:**
7 p.m. Ft Robert Carlin Knights of Columbus Council, Medford
- Dec. 17:**
2 p.m. The Arthritis Foundation: Medford Senior Exercise Class, Whistle Stop Diner
- Dec. 21:**
2 p.m. The Arthritis Foundation: Medford Senior Exercise Class, Whistle Stop Diner

J&L Collision
406 1st Ave SE • Medford
507-456-1676
Check us out on Facebook!

SPOT LIGHT

Century Farm applications invited

Applications for the recognition of 2016 Century Farms in Steele County are now on line and also available at the office of the Steele County Free Fair. Century Farms will be recognized during the Steele County Livestock Hall of Fame program on Tuesday, Aug. 16.

Farms that qualify for the Century Farm recognition are those that are at least 100 years old in 2016 according to abstract of title, land patent, original deed, county land records, court file in registration proceedings or other authentic land records. The family must have owned the farm for 100 years or more. Ownership must be continuous.

To obtain applications on line go to Google, Mncenturyfarms. Deadline for applications is April 1, 2016.

OTHER COUNTIES

- Freeborn**
- Dec. 15:**
10:30 a.m. ALPL Story time
5:30 p.m. Parks and Recreation Board Meeting, AL
6 p.m. Nonfiction Book Club, ALPL
6 p.m. Rock Gym, AL
- Dec. 17:**
10:30 a.m. ALPL Story time
5:30 p.m. AL Council Workshop, City Council Chambers
6 p.m. ALPL Night-Time Story time
- Dec. 18:**
1 p.m. Red Cross Blood Donation, Bridge Community Church, AL
6 p.m. Rock Climbing Open Gym, AL
- Dec. 19:**
ALPL Library Closed
6 p.m. Rock Climbing Open Gym, AL
- Dec. 21:**
10:30 a.m. ALPL Story time
3:45 p.m. ALPL Book Pals (Gr 5 & 6)
- Dec. 22:**
10:30 a.m. ALPL Story time
6 p.m. Rock Gym, AL
- Dec. 23:**
AL No School

- Mower**
- Dec. 15:**
Annual Dobby Drive, APL
LeRoy Schl Brd Mtg
10 a.m. All Members Gallery Show, Austin ArtWorks Center
3:30 p.m. Mower Co, Southland ISD: Open Gym, M/Hs Gym
- Dec. 16:**
Annual Dobby Drive, APL
10 a.m. All Members Gallery Show, Austin ArtWorks Center
11:30 a.m. SEMCAC Meal, Heritage House, Lyle
5:30 p.m. Devore Silk Scarf Dyeing, Austin ArtWorks Center
- Dec. 17:**
Annual Dobby Drive, APL
10 a.m. All Members Gallery Show, Austin ArtWorks Center
2 p.m. History of Propaganda, Mower County Senior Center
3:30 p.m. Mower Co, Southland ISD: Open Gym, M/Hs Gym
5:30 p.m. Beginners' Wheel: Bowls, Austin ArtWorks Center
5:30 p.m. Uncork & Create, Austin ArtWorks Center
6 p.m. Brownsdale PL Puzzle Night (subject to change)
- Dec. 18:**
Annual Dobby Drive, APL
10 a.m. All Members Gallery Show, Austin ArtWorks Center
11:30 a.m. SEMCAC Meal, Heritage House, Lyle
2 p.m. Christmas Open House, Mower County Senior Center
7:30 p.m. Christmas at Home, Historic Paramount Theatre
- Dec. 19:**
10 a.m. All Members Gallery Show, Austin ArtWorks Center
10 a.m. The Artist's Way, Austin ArtWorks Center
1 p.m. Lyle Farmers Market
2 p.m. Christmas At Home, Historic Paramount Theatre
7:30 p.m. Christmas at Home, Historic Paramount Theatre
- Dec. 20:**
1 p.m. Grand Meadow Open Gym, Wrestling Room, Weight Room
- Dec. 21:**
Lyle EDA Meeting
10 a.m. Red Cross Blood Donation, Primrose Retirement, Aust
11:30 a.m. SEMCAC Meal, Heritage House, Lyle
4 p.m. Austin Farmers Market
- Dec. 22:**
8 a.m. Holiday Bake Sale, Mower County Senior Center
9:30 a.m. Mower Co Brd of Commissioners Mtg

Minimizer
Blooming Prairie
800-248-3855
www.minimizer.com

Area Church Spotlight



First Baptist Church, Blooming Prairie

Pastor's corner

Controversy and keeping Christ in Christmas

Have you heard the latest controversy about how our culture is turning away from Christian values and becoming more secular? Reportedly, Starbucks put out holiday cups that were less Christmas and therefore less Christian. It actually ended up being a lot to do about nothing. They never did have any religious Christmas symbols, but rather just holiday decor like snowflakes etc.

There is a lot of talk this time of year about the importance of keeping Christ in Christmas. I have some bad news and good news. The bad news is that it does appear

that our country is moving away from its Biblical and Christian roots. This probably means you will culturally see less emphasis on Christ during the Christmas season.

How should we as Christ followers address this concern? We could focus on whether Starbucks or any other company use Christian symbols, whether employees can say “Merry Christmas” or only “Happy Holidays” or whether a public place is allowed to display a nativity scene.

Could I make some suggestions that I think will have a greater impact? Consider:

*Spending less money on things we don’t need and more on the less fortunate (Galatians 2:10)

*Giving a kind word to a stressed out employee waiting on us (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

*Stopping to help someone in need (Luke 10:25-37)

*Reaching out toward someone who is experiencing recent loss, which hurts even more this time of year (Romans 12:15)

These suggestions may both keep Christ in Christmas and draw people to the savior, whose birth we celebrate this time of year!



Oh...and the good news. Since Jesus is the reason for every season, we are not limited to this impact just Thanksgiving through New Year’s. We can joyfully draw people to the Savior all year round, from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31. I have no controversy with that, do you?

*Pastor Aaron de Neu
Cedar Creek Church, Hayfield*

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 Hurr
(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.roglutheran.org

Service: 9 a.m. Sunday

Sunday School (Sept-May): 10:15 a.m.

REDEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS
1054 Truman Ave., Owatonna
Pastor Kirk Griebel
(507) 451-2720

www.redeemerowatonna.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.ots host.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., Sargeant
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 Hauschild
(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 9:00 AM

Sunday School 10:00 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

Catholic

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC

Rural Geneva

The Rev. Swamy Pothireddy
(507) 465-8217

Service: 10:45 a.m. Sunday

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC

Hayfield

The Rev. Steve Peterson
(507) 477-2256

Service: 10:30 a.m. Sunday

Reconciliation: 10:15 a.m. Sunday

CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS

307 First St. SW., New Richland

The Rev. Swamy Pothireddy
(507) 465-8217

Services: 5 p.m. Saturday

and 8 a.m. Sunday,

Sunday School: 9 a.m. Sunday

ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC CHURCH

114 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie

The Rev. Steve Peterson
(507) 583-2784

Reconciliation: 5 p.m. Saturday

Services: 5:15 p.m. Saturday

and 8:30 a.m. Sunday.

Office hours: M-F, 9 a.m.-1 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

Family Faith Formation and First

Communion class after Mass with noon

potluck second Sunday of month.

Confirmation class after Mass second

Sunday of month, and fourth Sunday of

month at 6 p.m.

St. Isidore School - 451-5876,
Preschool-fifth grade:
www.stisidoreschool.webs.com

SACRED HEART CHURCH

810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna

The Rev. John Sauer

(507) 451-1588

www.sacredheartowatonna.org

Services: 5 p.m. Saturday, 7:30 a.m.,

9 a.m., & 10:30 a.m. Sunday Spanish

Service: 1 p.m. Sunday

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

Deacon Patrick Fagan

Sunday Mass: Vigil Sat. eve 4 p.m.

8 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Daily Mass Tues.-Sat. 8 a.m.

CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING

205 NW Second Ave., Medford

(507) 451-6353

Services: 5 p.m. Saturday

10 a.m. Sunday

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

Sunday Mass 8:30 a.m.

Easter thru Christmas

Winter at Christ the King, Medford

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

Methodist

BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

43089 180th St., Medford

(7 miles west of Medford on CR 23)

Pastor Cindy Kennedy
(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: 10:00 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 Neu

(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

Owatanna 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



Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas

Here's hoping your holiday is filled to the brim with blessings! From the surprises under the tree to the company of good friends and family, may the gifts of the season be yours in abundance.

Jesse's Boots Store & Repair
112 Hwy Ave S • Blooming Prairie
507-583-9900
Mon - Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - Noon

Blooming Prairie Trading Company



You Deserve the Best

...and we hope you get it! Wishing all of our fine friends and neighbors here in the community a bright and wonderful holiday season, filled with good times and good fortune. We feel so fortunate to be here this holiday, and we look forward to seeing all of you in the coming year.

With Gratitude and Best Wishes,
Merry Christmas!

The Gateway Apartments
325 Hoffman Dr NW, Owatonna,
(507) 451-8000



Happy Holidays

to our friends and neighbors around town!

.....

Jostens®
148 Broadway St, Owatonna, MN 55060
(507) 455-6100 • www.jostens.com

Merry Christmas

Sweet Towing & Repair, INC.

Owatonna's Only Locally Owned Towing Company



Towing & Recover

We look forward to serving you!

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215 Cedardale Dr. SE, Owatonna
sweettowingandrepair.com



Happy Holidays & Thanks to Our Troops

As we reflect on the blessings for which we are most grateful at Christmastime, our freedom and those who protect it are at the top of our list. To the brave men and women of our military, go our sincere thanks, respect and best wishes for a great holiday. We salute your service and your sacrifice.

Poly Pak Plastics
7776 NW 21st Ave
Medford
507444-9550
www.polypakplastics.com

Amesbury Truth
700 W Bridge St
Owatonna
507-451-5620
www.amesburytruth.com

Ellendale Muni
217 5th Ave W
Ellendale
507-684-9422



Christmas Services

Wishing you Peace and Hope!



418 Highway Ave. S
Blooming Prairie,
507-583-7561

First Baptist Church, BP
Christmas Eve Service December 24,
at 4 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church, BP
9 a.m. Dec 25, Christmas Service.

Aurora Lutheran, Owatonna
5 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. December 25
Christmas Service

Redeemer Lutheran, Owatonna
5:30 p.m. Dec 24 Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
9 a.m. Dec 25, Christmas Day Worship

First Presbyterian, Hayfield
5:30 p.m. & 11 p.m. Dec 24
Family communion

Trinity Lutheran, Hayfield
7 p.m. Dec. 20
Christmas in the the Barn
10:30 a.m. Dec. 21 Children's Program
4:30 & 10 p.m. Dec 25 Christmas Eve
Service

Community Lutheran, Geneva
5 p.m. & 10 p.m. Dec 24, Christmas
Eve Worship and Communion

Good Shepard Lutheran Church, Owatonna
4 & 5:30 p.m., Dec 24
Christmas Eve Service
10:30 a.m. Dec. 25 Christmas Service

Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church, Austin
5 p.m. Dec. 24, Christmas
Eve Candlelightm Service
9 a.m. Dec. 25,
Christmas Day Worship.



Locally Owned & Operated

237 Hwy. Ave. S.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-6671

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH

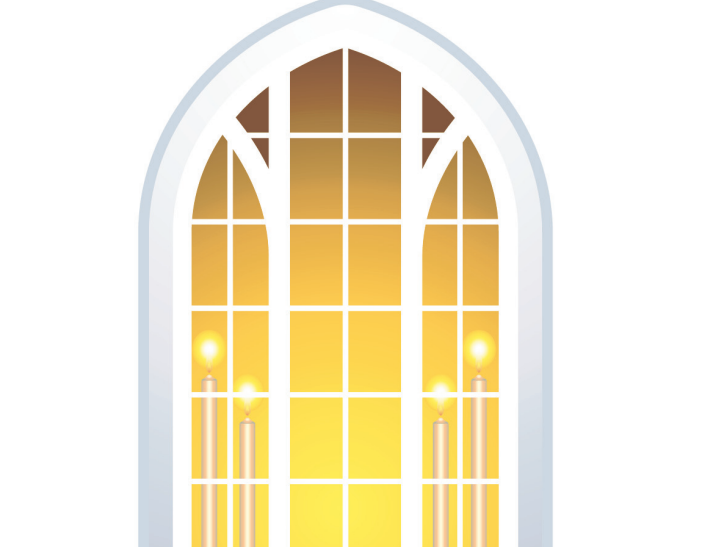
810 SO CEDAR AVE
OWATONNA, MN 55060

CHRISTMAS EVE
5:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.
7:30 p.m. (en Español)

CHRISTMAS DAY
9:00 a.m.
10:30 a.m.



www.sacredheartowatonna.org



"For unto you is born this day,
in the City of David, a Savior,
which is Christ the Lord."



St. John Lutheran Church

4532 S.E. 84th Avenue, Claremont

Christmas Eve
7 p.m. Children's
Christmas Program

Christmas Day
10 a.m. Service



Peace be with you

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Christmas Eve Services with Communion
3 p.m. - 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Christmas Day Service 9 a.m.

434 1st St. SW • Blooming Prairie



Feel the Warmth

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

Christmas Eve Services
Family Worship
3 p.m. & 5 p.m.
Holy Communion
10 p.m.

Christmas Services
Holy Communion
9:15 a.m.

1909 St. Paul Road, Owatonna

Have Yourself a
Merry Little Christmas

ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Christmas Eve - 4 p.m.
Christmas Day - 8:30 a.m.

114 E. Main Street Blooming Prairie

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH

Christmas Eve - 6 p.m.

150 2nd St. NE • Hayfield

