



STEELE COUNTY Times



HARVEY RETIRES A6 | **STUDENT ART** B1

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022

County takes auditor, treasurer positions off the ballot

BY JONI HUBRED
STAFF WRITER

Over the past 30 years, Steele County Auditor Laura Ihrke's job has grown to include more work with laws, rules, and finances.

"There's quite a bit more complexity," said Ihrke, who was elected in 1990 after working for a decade in the Auditor's office. "We do tax calculations, so it requires some background in finance. Elec-

tions are more complex. Absent ballot voting has tripled... A couple of years ago, we had five elections in one year."

The increased burdens on Ihrke and Treasurer Cathy Piepho led Steele County com-

missioners to look last fall at turning both into appointed, rather than elected, positions. They finalized the change Tuesday with a unanimous vote.

County Administrator Scott Golberg said the

state legislature "kind of greased the skids" with a 2019 law that makes for a smooth transition. Supported by the Minnesota Association of County Officers, the law allows elected officials to make the change:

· when there's a vacancy,
· when notified that an auditor or treasurer will not file for re-election, or (as in Steele County's case)
· when there's a signed contract with the official
See **COUNTY** on A4 ▶



Amy Hinzmann, left, chairwoman of the Leo Augusta Children's Academy Board of Directors, answers questions during a tour of the building that houses a 6,000-square-foot gymnasium and a school-age room. From right are Sen. Gene Dornink; Prairie Manor Administrator Joseph Mason; Chuck Ackman, regional outreach director for U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar; and Rae Jean Hansen, vice president of the early childhood program with SMIF.

Leo Augusta officials provide first look at facility

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

It was one of the first up-close and personal looks at Leo Augusta Children's Academy, and it brought out some key players.

State Sen. Gene Dornink (R-27), of Hayfield, joined the tour, as did Chuck Ackman, U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar's regional outreach director. Blooming Prairie Mayor Curt Esplan was there with City Administrator Andrew Langholz.

Rae Jean Hansen, vice president of the early childhood program of Southern

Minnesota Initiative Foundation, attended and so did Joseph Mason, administrator at Prairie Manor Care Center.

The couple who started it all, Craig and Robyn Kruckeberg, were also there.

"We certainly wouldn't be here without Craig and Robyn," said Amy Hinzmann, chairwoman of the LACA Board of Directors.

They donated the former Minimizer buildings and land — three acres of green space, "which is absolutely outrageous," Hinzmann said.

"We have mature trees, we have green space, we have soft landings for children, so it's really fun. We've been actively pursuing this now for a year; we're knee-deep in it and we're almost to the finish line," she said.

The 10,000-square-foot building that houses the majority of the classrooms will be equipped with multiple cameras and features a secure entrance with buzzer system.

"We really want this to be not only for the academy children's families, but also for the community," Hinzmann said, so a

commercial kitchen was built.

With that amenity, plus an 8,000-square-foot building that includes a gymnasium, "we envision a lot of opportunity to bring in seniors from Prairie Manor; studies show seniors and children together helps both. If we want to host certain events, we'll have that ability," Hinzmann said.

The kitchen features a window into the STEM/arts and activity room on the west side, allowing kids to watch what's happening in the kitchen.

See **LEO** on A4 ▶



STAFF PHOTO BY KAY FATE

Blooming Prairie Police Sgt. Mark Lang gives his final 10-7 — signing out of service — during a celebration of his retirement from the force. An impromptu parade of emergency vehicles marked the end of Lang's time with BPPD, where he'd worked since 1999.

Council ends Lang's police service in BP

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

At 6 p.m. Monday, Blooming Prairie Police Sgt. Mark Lang reluctantly climbed into a squad car parked on Main Street. He took a deep breath, and tearfully gave his last 10-7: His final broadcast that

he was "out of service" at the end of his shift.

Ninety minutes later, members of the City Council went into closed session, then emerged to terminate Lang.

But in between those two events, Lang was congratulated and thanked by members of
See **COUNCIL** on A3 ▶



STAFF PHOTO BY WYONNE PRIEBE

This is the tree that caught on fire early Saturday morning after being hit by a vehicle on Lemond Road south of Owatonna. A 19-year-old driver died in the wreckage.

Man killed after vehicle hits tree

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A 19-year-old man was killed in a single vehicle crash involving a tree early Saturday morning in Steele County.

Sheriff Lon Thiele identified the victim as Brett Alan Delhanty of Owatonna. Thiele said Delhanty was pronounced dead at the

scene of the crash in the 3600 block of Lemond Road, also known as County Road 7, south of Owatonna around 5:20 a.m. Saturday.

When emergency responders arrived on the scene, they found the vehicle and tree on fire, Thiele said. Mayo One helicopter landed at the scene, but did not transport Delhanty as he was
See **MAN** on A10 ▶

Editor leaves after cancer diagnosis

After devoting her entire professional life to journalism, Deb Flemming, news editor of the Steele County Times, is being forced to step away due to medical reasons.

Within the past two weeks, Flemming has been diagnosed with progressed lung cancer. She is battling the disease with the assistance of friends and family members at her side.

"We are incredibly saddened that cancer is preventing Deb from doing what she loves to do—community journalism," said Rick Bussler,

publisher of the Times. "Our staff is stunned that this has developed so quickly and led to Deb being taken from our newspaper operation instantly."

Flemming has been an icon in Minnesota journalism circles for decades. She began her career at her hometown newspaper, the Waseca Daily Journal. She is a former editor of the Owatonna People's Press from 1985 to 1992 and the Mankato Free Press from 1995 to 2005. She has been the news editor of the Times since 2020.

Bussler said, "It is tough to find someone as passionate about journalism as Deb has been for so many years. Deep in her soul she believes journalism is an important foundation to any community."

One of Flemming's most recent accomplishments was leading the Times in January to earning the statewide general excellence award—long considered one of the benchmarks of a successful newspaper in Minnesota.

With Flemming's



Deb Flemming

immediate departure, no new editor has been named.

For more on Flemming, see Bussler's Hot Pursuit column on Page A2.

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507-583-4431 | news@steelecountytimes.com
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AREA DEATHS
Randy Kruckeberg, 70, Owatonna
Barbara Klinger, 67, Owatonna

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OUR VIEW

Is it time to dip your toe into the political pool?

People who want to share their political views with you almost never want you to share yours with them.

If you hate politics, this ... is not your year. Our newspaper is full of those stories this week, from township elections to the swelling ticket for the special election in U.S. Congressional District 1, which includes Steele County.

But even if you're not interested, you're affected. Townships are the oldest form of government in Minnesota, and continue to play a crucial role across the state.

They control almost half of the roads in Minnesota, either providing or contracting for maintenance services, and they offer anything from park to volunteer fire department services. They also often maintain those rural cemeteries.

And don't write them off as predictable: Voters in Somerset Township last week elected a write-in candidate who defeated the incumbent by a vote of 19-4. Not all politics is flashy.

The people involved locally are, for the most part, just like the rest of us. They usually have a "real" job, essentially volunteering their time to research issues and represent their neighbors in topics from hanging flower baskets to local sales taxes.

They are people like Tom Soukup, of Aurora Township, who volunteered to be a delegate to the Steele County GOP Convention. He'd never been involved in politics, other than to cast a vote.

Last weekend, though, he had the opportunity to be one of the delegates involved in endorsing this year's state and national candidates.

We need more people like Soukup, who put his metaphorical money where his mouth is.

He doesn't have all the answers, but "I complain enough," he said, "and I thought this was something I could do."

Indeed it is. The only requirement for becoming politically active is a genuine desire to do so. You don't need a degree, a bunch of money or a family history of politicians.

Getting involved is a good way to get past the intimidation or boredom, and a good way to understand the process.

Otherwise, buckle up. It's a long time until November.

GUEST COLUMN

Give the surplus back to taxpayers

BY JOHN JASINSKI

A few weeks ago we received the latest budget forecast from the state's budget office. The February forecast is what legislators use to guide decisions for the remainder of the legislative session.

The latest forecast shows that the state has a budget surplus of \$9.3 billion. When we received the previous forecast in early December, the surplus was \$7.7 billion.

That means one thing: you are way, way, way overtaxed. The state took too much from taxpayers, plain and simple.

Senate Republicans are committed to giving it back to you. In fact, we are proposing the largest tax cut in state history. If Democrats agree, it would provide \$8.51 billion in tax relief to taxpayers over the next three years. Our plan has two key elements:

First, we are going to eliminate the tax on Social Security income. I hear about this almost everywhere I go. The tax on Social Security income is a double tax - you are taxed on this benefit once during your working life, and again when you collect the benefit after retirement. That's not fair. Most other states already wiped this tax

off the books. We are one of only 13 states that still tax Social Security income. We're going to get rid of it.

Second, we are going to provide real, significant tax cuts to every Minnesota taxpayer. Instead of election-year gimmicks like a one-off check of a few hundred bucks, our permanent tax cuts will make your paychecks bigger every week. Under the Republican proposal, a Minnesota family making \$100,000 would see a tax savings of \$1,000 each year. A typical individual making \$37,000 would receive about a \$500 annual reduction.

Ever since we learned the state has a record budget surplus, I've heard the same things from my constituents: Give it back. I agree. The government took far, far too much from taxpayers. We're going to give it back the right way, through permanent, significant tax relief that makes your paychecks bigger month after month and year after year.

Parent bill of rights bills

Last week we also passed the first two components of our Parents Bill of Rights package. These first two bills affirmed

See GIVE on A8 ▶

The dreaded diagnosis hits us all



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

It's something we write about far too often. We have profiled survivors, families coping with cancer, medical efforts to eradicate the disease and organizations rallying to raise funds for additional research.

Despite this country's best efforts at research, it seems as if cancer is still all around us and remains the second highest cause of death in America.

Within the past month, U.S. Congressman Jim Hagedorn fell victim to kidney cancer.



Deb Flemming has served as news editor of the Steele County Times since 2020. She was forced to leave last week after being diagnosed with lung cancer.

Sadly, we are forced to share our own story about cancer this week. Long-time journalist Deb Flemming, who

has faithfully served as news editor of this newspaper, has been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. The

diagnosis prompted her immediately to leave behind the profession she has worked in for more than three decades.

It has been the one-two sucker punch to the gut for all of us at the Times. It's agonizing to see yet another cancer patient.

Deb isn't one who seeks attention no matter what the subject matter may be and actually discourages it when it comes to the newspaper. As a passionate journalist, Deb strongly believes in covering the news, and that journalists should not be part of the news. There will probably be a hint of disgust with her as she reads the front-page news story and my column this week.

In fact, it was challenging for me to get a photo of her as we accepted state awards just a couple months ago. See DREADED on A11 ▶



Reflections
HOWARD LESTRUD

Many people as they reach an advanced age put together a Bucket List, a compilation of things one wishes to accomplish prior to signing off.

On my Bucket List is a hope to visit the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y. I gave it some serious thought in 2001 when the Minnesota Twins' Kirby Puckett and the New York Yankees' Dave Winfield (Minnesota native) were enshrined. I didn't make it.

I have another promising chance to achieve my wish this summer with the enshrinement of former Minnesota Twins Tony Oliva and Jim Kaat.

Oliva and Kaat take their places in the Baseball Hall of Fame on July 24.

It's been a long wait for both Oliva and Kaat to reach the ultimate goal of reaching the Baseball Hall of Fame. Oliva and Kaat were two of the 10 candidates on the Golden Days Hall of Fame ballot, which considered players who

Hats off to Twins Hall of Famers Oliva and Kaat

played between 1950 and 1969.

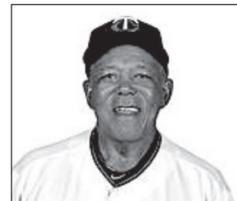
These two former Twins players are big reasons why I love Minnesota Twins baseball as much as I do.

Oliva represented the image of a pure hitter. He was chosen the American League Rookie of the Year in 1964 and won the American League batting championship three times.

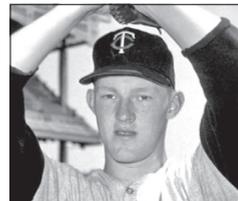
Had he not experienced serious knee problems, Oliva would have played beyond the 15 years he did log in Major League Baseball. He also won a Gold Glove for his fielding abilities in right field.

Tony Oliva was born on Wednesday, July 20, 1938, in Pinar del Rio, Cuba. Oliva was 24 years old when he broke into the big leagues on Sept. 9, 1962, with the Minnesota Twins. He and his wife Gordetta continue to live in Bloomington.

I've had many occasions to meet Oliva. When he wasn't playing or coaching, Oliva was making his rounds at Metropolitan Stadium, the Metrodome and Target Field. He became an ambassador for the Twins and was always willing to sign an autograph when met by Twins fans, young and old.



Tony Oliva



Jim Kaat

Seeing Oliva on a bench outside the Metrodome, I nervously approached Oliva for an autograph. "I am your main man," I told Oliva. I should have said, "You're my main man." Son Troy got a kick out of that mis-statement by me.

Over last Christmas, Judy and I visited our son and family in Arizona. Troy took me into my grandson's room and showed me a framed 8 x 10 photo of me interviewing Oliva. He even has it autographed by Tony.

I saw both Oliva and Kaat play in Game 2 of the World Series in 1965 against the Los Angeles Dodgers. Lefty Kaat pitched a Complete Game and won over eventual Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax.

I first met Kaat in the late 1960s when I worked for a daily newspaper in Albert Lea. Kaat was a guest at a roundtable, representing the Twins and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

I also remember clipping a story and photo of Kaat from the Minneapolis Star Tribune. The photo showed Kaat holding a baseball that knocked out two of his teeth. His teeth marks were on the ball.

Kaat played 25 years in the Big Leagues over four decades. He played 15 years for the Senators/Twins. He also played for the Chicago White Sox, the Philadelphia Phillies, the New York Yankees and the St. Louis Cardinals. Kaat's record was 283-237. He recorded 180 Complete Games and he won 16 Gold Gloves.

The closest I have been to the Baseball Hall of Fame was when a traveling exhibit came to the Twin Cities. Walking the exhibit with Twins Hall of Famer Harmon Killebrew (1984), I was told by him that he definitely thought both Oliva and Kaat deserved to be in the Hall.

Killebrew was right.

STEELE COUNTY Times

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news@steelecountytimes.com
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Times Staff:

• Rick Bussler, Publisher and Owner
952-224-6331, rbussler@steelecountytimes.com
• Deb Flemming, News Editor
507-583-4431, dflemming@steelecountytimes.com
• Sherrie Pechan, Office Manager
507-583-4431, news@steelecountytimes.com
• Wyonne Priebe, Sales Specialist
507-456-4299, wpriebe@steelecountytimes.com

• Johnnie Phillips, Sports Editor
507-583-4431, jphillips@steelecountytimes.com
• Kay Fate, Staff Writer
507-583-4431, kfate@steelecountytimes.com
• Joni Hubred, Staff Writer
248-568-0581, jhubred@steelecountytimes.com
• Charlene Wolff, Owatonna Office/Sales
507-583-4431, cwolff@steelecountytimes.com
• Chris Baldwin, Staff Writer
507-583-4431, news@steelecountytimes.com

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2022 - 12 state awards (1st place- General Excellence)
2021 - 16 state awards
2020 - 9 state awards
2019 - 7 state awards
2018 - 6 state and 4 national awards
2017 - 2 state and 3 national awards
2016 - 8 state and 6 national awards
2015 - 7 state and 4 national awards
2014 - 3 state and 3 national awards
2013 - 7 state and 2 national awards
2012 - 2 state awards
2011 - 4 national awards

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



COURTESY MNDOT

Crews with the Minnesota Department of Transportation are busy removing trees infected with Emerald Ash Borer along Interstate 35 in Steele County. On March 9, they removed several trees by the Bridge Street exit in Owatonna. Officials say “dozens” of trees will be removed in a path from Owatonna to Albert Lea over the coming weeks.

MnDOT hopes to slow spread of Emerald Ash Borer

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Trees are being removed along Interstate 35 in Steele County as crews with the Minnesota Department of Transportation hope to slow the spread of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) recently identified Steele County as a hot spot for the infestation of the EAB. Last week, MnDOT crews began working in the Owatonna area and will continue south along I-35 into Freeborn County to

remove ash trees. “All the ash trees will come down,” said Michael Dougherty, spokesperson for MnDOT. “Even if it’s not detected now, if it’s next to one, it becomes a liability.” Dougherty didn’t have an exact count of how many trees will be removed, but he said it is safe to say “dozens of trees.” It’s unknown exactly how old most of the trees are, but Dougherty said many of them seemed to be “small younger trees.” Steele County was

placed under a tree quarantine after MDA discovered EAB in several trees in Medford in September 2019. EAB kills ash trees, and all ash trees are susceptible to EAB. Minnesota has the highest volume of ash trees in the U.S. with nearly a billion forestland and urban ash trees combined. Millions of ash trees have already been killed across the Midwest, eastern U.S. and Canada, according to MDA. Dougherty said there are two preferred ways MnDOT utilizes in re-

moving the trees. They are chipping them into a wood chipper on the spot or burning them at another location. He noted the trees can’t move far as they must remain within the county. Similar efforts have occurred elsewhere along MnDOT’s right of way, including in 2014 on U.S. Highway 63 north of I-90 south of Rochester, Dougherty said. Once the trees are removed, they won’t be replaced at least right away. However, Dougherty expects there will be some sort of replacement in the future.

Township voting brings upset to Somerset

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

Township elections rarely get a second glance in the grand scheme of politics, but longevity has to count for something: Townships are the oldest form of government in Minnesota – dating back to before it was even a state. They’re historically viewed as rural areas with agriculture as the primary industry, but are evolving into areas of residential, light commercial and industrial development. Townships are governed by a board of supervisors, elected to staggered two- or three-year terms on an annual basis; challenges to those seats are infrequent. Election turnout – in Steele County, anyway – is typically in the low two digits.

That’s why the election results from Somerset Township were a surprise: Supervisor candidate and incumbent Jerry Rysavy was upended by write-in candidate Jacob Stanke by a vote of 19-4. Stanke also collected a write-in vote for the position of clerk, but candidate and incumbent Cindy Finch won it easily, 21-1. The other 12 townships had predictable results, with each supervisor and clerk on the ballot winning their race. Voter turnout ranged from seven people in Clinton Falls Township to 28 in Deerfield Township. Summit Township hadn’t reported its results as of March 14. All supervisors were elected to three-year terms unless otherwise noted; clerks were elected to two-year terms.

- Aurora:** Supervisors: Troy Krejci (2-year term); Phillip Hildebrandt
Clerk: Alicyn Prestegard
- Berlin:** Supervisor: Bradley Hagen
Clerk: Helen Schmidt
- Blooming Prairie:** Supervisor: Robert Haberman
Clerk: Missy Anderson
- Clinton Falls:** Supervisor: Dan Simon
Clerk: Susan Rypka
- Deerfield:** Supervisor: Joel Dulas
Clerk: Nicole Wacek
- Havana:** Board Chairman: David Joachim
Clerk: Laurie Wolhart
- Lemond:** Supervisor: Wayne Sommers
Clerk: Jennelle Olson
- Medford:** Supervisor: Troy Borwege
Clerk: Angie Finholdt
- Meriden:** Board Chairman: Matt Herget
Clerk: Rebecca Kubicek
- Merton:** Supervisor: Matt Keller
Clerk: Brandon Balzer
- Owatonna:** Supervisor: Dan Stursa
Clerk: Joe Elbert
- Somerset:** Supervisor: Jacob Stanke
Clerk: Cindy Finch

County’s GOP convention draws delegate hopefuls

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

The steady stream of Republicans joining the race for the late U.S. Rep. Jim Hagedorn’s seat in Congress has even the most active of politicians scratching their heads. “I’m just listening to them as they come to these events,” said Carol Linde, of Albert Lea. She was there stumping for Lisa Hanson, who is challenging Sen. Gene Dornink for the newly-formed Senate District 23. Linde said she’s waiting to see which of the Congressional candidates best aligns with her views on education, economy and election integrity. Dean Spies, of Berlin Township, said he was “still open; it’s one of the reasons I’m here today.” That seemed to be the consensus at last week’s Steele County GOP Convention, where the party elected state and district delegates and alternates, and formalized its resolutions to forward to the district convention. There were 72 delegates at the event, many

who volunteered at the caucus last month. That included Tom Soukup, who had never been very politically active. At the time, Soukup said he thought “our country and our state are going in the wrong direction. I complain enough, and I thought this was something I could do.” He was excited to attend the county convention – and last weekend, that’s just what he did, making good on his desire to learn the process. In fact, he was nominated as one of the 17 delegates who will attend the April 23 GOP District Convention in Mankato and the state convention in May in Rochester. There, they’ll join more than 2,200 other delegates to endorse candidates for statewide races. There were 19 alternates elected, as well. The names of the locally-elected delegates were not made public. There was plenty of campaigning throughout the day: Jeremy Munson was there in his bid to succeed Hagedorn; gubernatorial candidates Paul Gazelka, Rich Stanek,



STAFF PHOTO BY KAY FATE

Stephan Nelson, co-chair of the Steele County GOP, welcomes delegates and guests to the convention. The day’s business included electing delegates for the state and district conventions as well as moving resolutions forward to the district convention. Mike Murphy, Michelle Benson and Scott Jensen were also scheduled to appear. Sen. John Jasinski (R-24), of Faribault, was there in a wheelchair, still recovering from a serious snowmobile crash Feb. 4 in northern Minnesota. Dornink (R-27) and Rep. Peggy Bennett (R-27A) also attended. All 201 seats in the Minnesota Legislature are up for election this year, as are all of the statewide constitutional offices. Kim Crockett, who is challenging Secretary of State Steve Simon, spoke early in the convention, making a pitch for election judges.

Council ends Lang’s police service in BP

◀ COUNCIL from A1

his department and the community for 20 years of service with awards, applause and an impromptu parade of emergency vehicles. Two of the people who thanked him in the middle of the street later sat in on the meeting that ended his law enforcement career in Blooming Prairie, “due to his inability to physically perform his duties as required to be employed as a sergeant for the Blooming Prairie Police Department.” According to the statement released by the city, Lang “is being terminated in good standing from the city of Blooming Prairie. His termination is not due to any sort of lack of performance, misconduct, or disciplinary reasons.” “We appreciate everything you’ve done,” Mayor Curt Esplan told Lang. “It might be hard for Kelly to keep you home all the time.” Lang and his wife

Kelly were both emotional after the meeting. He was hired by the city in 1999, giving him more than 20 years of service with the department. “He’s always been wonderful to work with; he’s going to be missed,” said Chief Greg Skillestad. “He was my right-hand man; he was the patrol supervisor – and he would take care of things when I wasn’t there.” Skillestad presented Lang with a Certificate of Retirement in recognition of his “many years of sacrifice and service as Sergeant, K-9 handler, FTO and SWAT.” Lang also received an engraved plaque thanking him for his years of work. Data privacy laws prevented city officials from commenting further about Lang’s employment. In other business, council members approved the conditional hire of Joseph Martin as a part-time officer.

Farm show back from 2-year absence

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

After a two-year hiatus spurred by the pandemic, the North American Farm & Power Show is ready to roll again in Steele County. The show gets underway Thursday at the Four Seasons Centre in Owatonna. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. Admission is free. “The same great things are coming back,” said Brock Nel-

son of Tradeexpos, the Austin-based company that sponsors the show. “We are ready to get back to it.” Nelson said the number of exhibits is down slightly from 170 in 2019 to 150 this year. However, the show will still feature large equipment displays from major dealers and farm-related workshops like it always has in the past. This year’s show will feature daily prizes instead of one large prize at the end of the show, Nelson said. The

daily prizes include: 522L trimmer bundle on Thursday, 525LK trimmer bundle on Friday and 455 rancher chainsaw bundle on Saturday. There will be a silent auction throughout the show benefiting Minnesota FFA. Some of the workshops being offered are farm business succession planning at 10 a.m. and crop cover considerations at 1 p.m. on Thursday and value of farmland at 9 a.m. and beef cattle management

at 12:30 p.m. on Friday. The Linder Farm Network and the University of Minnesota Extension sponsor the workshops. A food stand, Don’s Crumbled Beef, will be available on the grounds throughout the show. In 2019, the show attracted about 21,000 people from southern Minnesota and surrounding states, according to Nelson. But Nelson already knows it likely won’t be back to 100% yet this year because of

the lingering effects of COVID-19. He hopes to attract at least 75% of the previous attendance, which is what Tradeexpos has experienced at its other shows this year in Topeka, Kansas and Fort Wayne, Ind. This is the 23rd year of the show with the past 20 in Owatonna. The show was previously held in downtown Minneapolis. When asked why the show was moved, Nelson paused and laughed, “We found farmers don’t like to pay

for parking and they like to be sprawled out.” Nelson said the Four Seasons Centre facility is a fantastic spot to host the show as it provides a nice mixture of indoor and outdoor space. Tradeexpos is offering an outdoor farm show later this summer in Steele County. The North Star Ag Expo will be July 26-28 at Ritchie Brothers in Medford. Nelson said that show will be totally outdoors and provide even more space for equipment to be displayed.

Super Cheap Smartphone Plans for Scrimping Seniors

Dear Savvy Senior, Can you direct me to some really cheap wireless smartphone plans for seniors who don't use much data? I use my smartphone primarily for texting and talking but need some data for checking my email and a few other things when I'm away from Wi-Fi. Right now, I pay \$30 per month but am looking for a better deal.

Senior Scrimper

Dear Scrimper, There are several super cheap wireless providers I can recommend for older smartphone users who are looking to save money by paring down their cell phone plan. Here are three of the cheapest options available that you can switch to without sacrificing the quality of your service.

Cheapest Wireless Plans

For extremely light smartphone data users, the very cheapest wireless plan available today is through Tello (*Tello.com*), which lets you build your own plan based on your needs or budget. For as little as \$6 per month you can get unlimited texting, 100 minutes of talk time and 500 megabytes (MB) of high-speed data. Increases in talk time or data can be added in \$1 increments.

Tello uses the T-Mobile network and gives you the option to bring your existing phone or purchase a new device, while keeping your same phone number if you wish. If you want to keep your phone, it must be unlocked. Just enter your phone's ID (press *#06#



THE SAVVY SENIOR

Brought to you by:

Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus

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

on your keypad to get it) on Tello's website to make sure that it's compatible with the network.

Another super cheap plan to consider is the annual prepaid plan offered through Boost Mobile (*BoostMobile.com*). For only \$100 per year (or \$8.33 per month) this plan provides unlimited talk, text and 1 gigabyte (GB) of 5G or 4G data each month. If you need more data, their \$150 annual plan (or \$12.50/month) gets you 5 GB.

Boost Mobile uses the T-Mobile and AT&T networks and lets you use your existing phone (if compatible) or buy a new one.

And a third option to look into is Mint Mobile (*MintMobile.com*), which is recommended by Consumer Reports and has one of the best values for a cheap plan. Mint offers a \$15 per month plan (plus taxes & fees) that provides unlimited talk and text, and 4 GB of 5G/4G data each month. They too use the T-Mobile network and will let you use your existing phone (if compatible) or buy a new one.

Lifeline Program
If your income is low enough, another option you should check into is the Lifeline Assistance Program. This is a federal

program that provides a \$9.25 monthly subsidy that could go towards your phone or internet service.

To qualify, you'll need to show that you're receiving certain types of government benefits such as Medicaid, SNAP (food stamps), SSI, public housing assistance, veterans' pension and survivors' benefit, or live on federally recognized Tribal lands. Or, if your annual household income is at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines – \$17,388 for one person, or \$23,517 for two – you're also eligible.

To check your eligibility or apply, visit *LifelineSupport.org*. If you do qualify, contact a wireless provider in your area that participates in the Lifeline program and sign up for service with them. You can also ask your current company to apply your Lifeline benefit to a service you are already getting, if it offers the benefit.

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

Community Band officers



The 1983 officers for the Owatonna Community Band included: advisor Gordie Vavra, president Tom Brown, advisor Janette Stromley, president-elect Julie Bauer, treasurer Berlyn Staska and director John Holland. This photo is included in the musical exhibit currently on display at the Steele County History Center in Owatonna.

10 Years Ago

March 13, 2012

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

More than 90 students from Blooming Prairie Elementary participated in the science fair held March 5. The students put together 86 unique projects. Every single sixth-grader participated. Kayla Andrist, the new fifth grade teacher and coordinator of the science fair was very pleased with the results and participation she had for the event. "We had about 30 volunteer judges and I am so grateful for them to take time out of their schedule to help with the science fair," said Kayla. The judges awarded 24 purple ribbons and those winners will move on to the regional science fair in Mankato in April.

20 Years Ago

March 12, 2002

ELSIE SLINGER, EDITOR

The United States Achievement Academy has announced that Ben Hansen, a junior at Blooming Prairie has been named a National Award winner in Mathematics. The award is a prestigious honor very few students can hope to attain. Ben was nominated for this by John Bruns, teacher at BPHS. Ben is the son of Rae Jean and Harlean Hansen.

The BPHS junior and senior band and chorus concert will be held March 25. The concert is open to the public and will be a little different in that there will be a tribute to three recently deceased educators for their contributions to the music department. Former Supt. Maurice McFarlin and teachers Cliff Jones and Milo (Mike) Hoel who both directed the band programs for many years. All three of these people have contributed significantly to the instrumental program and the recognition is truly deserved.

50 Years Ago

March 15, 1972

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

A disastrous fire destroyed a barn and wiped out the dairy herd at the Glen Starman farm. In addition to the barn, the head of cattle and 19 hogs were lost in the blaze, along with 2,000 bales of hay, some straw and other contents. An adjoining silo also damaged beyond repair by the intense heat. The fire was discovered at 9:15 p.m. and was burning out of control when the Blooming Fire Department arrived. The firemen were able to save the other buildings on the farmstead.

County takes auditor, treasurer positions off the ballot

◀ **COUNTY** from A1 that retains their tenure, pay, and benefits. Commissioner Jim Abbe said while Steele County is fortunate to have good people in both positions, he has heard about other counties running into trouble when an elected official stopped showing up for work.

"We're just trying to save our county and our taxpayers from going through that," he said.

While no one appeared to testify during a Tuesday public hearing, Abbe acknowledged talking to some constituents who felt that appointing the auditor and treasurer took away their right to choose at the polls.

"But after some discussion, they understood," he said. "The public doesn't realize that our electeds don't have to punch a time clock. These are highly technical jobs."

In addition to handling property taxes and elections, the county auditor issues auctioneer, liquor, tattoo, transient merchant, and peddler licenses, records minutes at Board of Commissioner meetings, and manages internal accounts.

The treasurer serves as the county's finance director, managing millions of dollars on a day-to-day basis and investments. The office collects tax payments on 19,000 parcels and 4,800 mobile home properties.

Commissioners said Tuesday—and Ihrke agrees—that the county should have professionals in those positions.

"You don't necessarily go to school to learn some of the things we do," she said, "but having some educational background, especially in finance, would be helpful."

Golberg said that across Minnesota, about half of counties have appointed auditors and treasurers. However, he said, more appear to be exploring the option.

Commissioners approved both contracts on Tuesday. The appointments will become effective on April 9. In the event officials change their minds, they can reconsider their options in three years.

Leo Augusta officials provide first look at facility

◀ **LEO** from A1

"One of our goals and missions is hands-on learning," Hinzmann said.

Each age level – infant, toddler, preschool and school-age – will have two rooms to accommodate the children.

There is a laundry facility near the infant rooms.

The preschool rooms are separated by gating, each accommodating 20 children and each with its own restroom.

Transportation to and from the elementary school will be provided during the school year.

"I think we're unique; I don't know that there's a model exactly like this with what we're going to provide," said Doug Anderson, executive director of the academy.

"We're going to have not only the child care piece, but a strong emphasis on education," he said.

"When we think about ourselves, we're not a daycare, we're not a school," Hinzmann agreed. "We're a child

care and education center, and what makes us really unique is the property, first. It's so large."

They were able to create play areas for each age level as well, using "strategic" fencing and that expanse of green space, providing three times the room required for each child by state licensing.

LACA recently wrote an application for a grant from the DNR, to provide an outdoor classroom.

"Play is so critical," said Hansen, of SMIF. "Kids need to use their imagination and get out and get dirty and have fun, because so many things are structured once they do get to school, that play has kind of been eliminated."

The play time "is such an educational piece in itself," said Anderson, who retired after 25 years in the classroom and another 11 as the NRHEG Elementary School principal.

The whole idea behind the LACA model is hands-on demonstrations.

"I'd love to have community members come

in, whether it's construction crews coming in to build some birdhouses, or welders coming in to show how they can put things together," Hinzmann said. "Whatever it is, we know there's a desperate need to get people back into the trades, so why not expose the children and let them make those choices."

If there's passion behind it, "success usually follows," Anderson said.

The curriculum they'll use will address cognitive, social-emotional and physical pieces that are "important to growth and development," he said. Life skills are also included.

It will be individualized learning, said Sara Winzenburg, secretary of the board and a licensed in-home daycare provider with a degree in early childhood education.

"We're going to meet the child at their needs, at their level," she said. "We're going to help them follow their own path, versus what has been prescribed" by their age.

"I can hardly wait for a couple years to pass, and hear the difference that the district notices when children enter kindergarten," Anderson said. "They will be well-prepared."

A 2018 survey indicated there are 884 children in a 20-mile radius of Blooming Prairie who need adequate, quality child care; more than 100 of those are in Blooming Prairie.

"We do have family providers in Blooming Prairie who are doing the best they can, but they only have so much capacity, so this will certainly help give parents additional options," Hinzmann said.

LACA will be able to serve 144 children, from infants through age 12.

It has raised \$1.25 million of its \$3 million fundraising goal, thanks in large part to the Kruckeberg family's \$1 million donation of buildings, land and money. It is the largest single donation in Blooming Prairie history.

An opening date has not been set.



New Richland • Hartland • Ellendale • Geneva

PANTHER OF THE WEEK



This week's Panther of the Week is **Carlo Garcia**. Carlo is the son of Jose and Stephanie Garcia, and he resides in New Richland. He is in Mrs. Buendorf's first grade class.

Carlo is a great helper in our classroom and around the school. His smile makes your day, he cares about others, and is always looking out for his friends. Carlo tries hard in the classroom and is always willing to learn new things. He makes good choices and shows his Panther Pride throughout the building.

Carlo enjoys playing video games, riding his bike, spending time with his family, and playing games with his mom. Carlo's favorite food is spaghetti, and he likes turtles.



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BP Education Foundation plans 19th auction on April 2

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Most everyone enjoys a summer barbecue with baby back ribs, baked beans and a special dessert.

Be part of a group of 10 to enjoy the barbecue talents of Greg Johnson and Dave Wradislavsky. A meal for 10 featuring delicious, smoked ribs created by these two award-winning barbecue guys will be one of the many Blooming Prairie Education Foundation auction items.

Get your taste buds ready for the ribs and for many other tasty food items that will be up for auction on Saturday, April 2 at the 19th annual BP Ed Auction.

The auction, which has raised over \$1 million for the benefit of education in the Blooming School District, will be held at the Cue Company. A silent auction goes from 2-4 p.m. and the live auction follows at 5 p.m.

"Blooming Prairie is amazing," says Sue Zwiener, one of the founders of the auction in 2004. "Everybody loves their kids," she adds.

Zwiener says her involvement with the Ed Foundation is easily explained by the fact she has many grandchildren in the Blooming Prairie school system. "The kids are our future," she emphasizes.

Auction committee members have been meeting for weeks on Monday nights to coordinate the auction day's activities. Karen Fouarge is chairman of the auction committee.

Proceeds from the silent and live auctions are turned into benefits for students of the Blooming Prairie School District.

Maybe you have tasted Pat and Julie Noble's

pickled eggs, or you have drooled over Sue Helgeson's raspberry cake. Those items plus many, many more will be in the auction lineup.

Judy Bishop is donating a dilly bean basket and Judy Lestrud donates her famous

Brainerd, donated by Neal Narveson, a 1984 graduate of Blooming Prairie High School.

- Two Minnesota Vikings tickets for a regular season game, donated by Mary and Pete Kittelson.
- Two ticket to Chris

rience for six persons

- Geneva Meats always donates some tasty meat items.
- Four tickets to an ARCA race at the Iowa Speedway in Newton, Iowa.
- Nick Schiefer of the Blooming Prairie Dairy

and Lisa Vaith sold the house, which brought in \$90,000 to the Foundation treasury.

After participating in a St. Mary's Catholic School auction and visiting auctions in Adams and Dover-Eyota, Sue Zwiener said she and other Foundation board members thought, "Let's try an auction here," she said. It then began in 2004.

In the first years of the auction fundraisers, lots of data entry was required. It was supervised by John Bruns,

BP teacher and coach. He later developed a special auction computer program on Excel.

Zwiener said she was hopeful that the first auction would bring in \$10,000-\$12,000. It brought in \$30,000.

The profits increased as the years advanced. Other communities including Ellendale, Triton, Faribault BA and Waseca have watched Blooming Prairie's Ed Foundation success.

Funds have multiplied with one auction bringing in over \$80,000.



Sue Zwiener and John Bruns have retired from the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation Board but they are still actively involved with the annual fundraising auction. They are shown with a couple of items donated for an auction in the past. The gun cabinet was donated by Butch Anderson and the art print was given by an anonymous donor.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

chocolate chip cookies presented in a colorful cookie jar. Her cookies have drawn bids of over \$100 in past auctions.

Andrea Kvalsten is donating an authentic Mexican dinner for six.

Becky Noble and Judy Bishop are donating four dozen krum kake and two dozen lefse.

Doug and Tamzen Johnson are donating a wine, beer and pizza Party for two couples.

Let's take a look at some of the other items to be auctioned on the special date of April 2:

- Week's stay at Kosters' condo in Fort Myers Beach, Fla.

- 2 dental baskets donated by Dr. Deborah Lien, including two certificates toward ortho treatment. Value is over \$1,000.

- Seven-night stay at Breezy Point Resort in

Stapleton concert at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. Elle King and Morgan Wade are also on the venue. The tickets are donated by Paul and Haley Tollefson, BP graduates.

- Three BP water tower canvasses (2 12 x 18 and 1 at 16 x 24), photo by Sarah (Behnken) Bianucci; design by Julie Noble and prints done by KIK Graphics.

- Stained glass flower hanging, donated by Midwest Stained Glass.

- H. Peterson painting, outdoor scene. He donates a painting every year of the auction.

- Every elementary grade will have a basket that the class members put together. Sandy Jones helps with the art work. Baskets may contain a variety of books including recipe books.

- Axe throwing expe-

Queen is donating a Blizzard of the Month for a year, and he will also have a DQ basket, including 3 8-inch cakes; 10 blizzards; 15 small cones and 10 meal coupons.

- Two quilts donated by Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church.
- Many antique items donated by Doug and Judy Myers.

- Kids Murder Mystery Party for 6-8 kids with the BP Police Dept., includes snacks and drinks.

Auction items are always welcome and can be dropped off at Prairie Eagle Insurance.

In the early years of the Foundation since its beginning in 1999, various fundraisers were staged. One involved a house donated by Chuck Halstenson. The house was owned by his parents. Steve

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GARDENING TIP OF THE WEEK

TIME TO THINK SPRING • MARCH GARDENING TIPS

- Order seeds or buy seed packets off the racks early for best selection.
- Save your seed catalogs, they can be very helpful with growing instructions.
- Carefully check houseplants, with new spring growth, insects and plant insects multiply rapidly. Treat only if necessary, at the recommended rates.
- Starting a new vegetable garden or perennial bed? Draw up a design and remember to start small!
- Clean up outdoor pots now, if you didn't get a chance to wash them up last fall.
- Time to start seedlings indoors, read the information on each seed packet to determine exactly when to start them.
- Pot up tender perennials starting mid-March through early April. For example, cannas, dahlias, tuberous begonias and caladiums.

COURTESY: Julie Wanous • Steele County Master Gardener

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DAY 6: NANTUCKET ISLAND
DAY 7: CAPE COD - BOSTON FLIGHT HOME

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Live Auction 5 PM

Stella Kvalsten
Photo by Kaly Nantz
Design and Printing by KIK Marketing

Items shown were donated to BP schools by the BP Education Foundation using funds raised from previous auctions!

Come join the **"Biggest Party of the Year"** under the big tent at the BP Cue Company!

SERVING STUDENTS FROM PRESCHOOL TO GRADUATION

'He treated it like his own'

Farr retires after 37 years at Metal Services

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

After working 80-plus hours every week for 36 years, Harvey Farr is working hard at ... not working hard.

He retired last month after 37 years at Metal Services of Blooming Prairie, a metal fabricating, welding and laser cutting company owned by Dennis Heimerman.

Farr has also owned J&H Liquors for 36 years; he and his wife, Nancy, have put the business up for sale.

"No, we're not going away," he said, "because I just became a great-grandpa, and (the baby lives) in Hope. We may go away for a while in the winter, but we're never moving."

Last week, he and Heimerman reminisced about their time together at the business that was just a year old when Farr was hired.

Sitting at a table inside J&H, the two have an easy give-and-take, forged through nearly four decades of hard work and friendship.

"I'm still struggling to not wake up at 4:30 in the morning," Farr said of his adjustment to just one full-time job.

"You still wake up that early?" Heimerman asked.

Farr, who spent the last 17 years at Metal Services as the shop foreman in addition to his welding duties, always arrived at 5 a.m.

"I listened to the news, had everything ready by 7 when the guys arrived," he said.

"Now I get up, ramble around the house, watch a little TV, then go back to bed and sometimes I sleep until 7:00."

"I told him he'd learn, eventually," Heimerman laughed.

The two men graduated from Blooming Prairie High School two years apart, but knew each other from their participation in FFA.

After graduation, Heimerman worked in metal fabricating for about six years, but knew early on he wanted his own business.

Meanwhile, Farr said, "I wasn't really doing a whole lot."

He worked on that farm, then at Oriole - now Tandem Products, then for a national tree company, which had him on the road and away from his little boy. He didn't like it.

A year after Heimerman opened Metal Services, he hired Farr as a welder, doing mostly ag and commercial repairs.

He'd picked up welding from the farmer he worked for during and after high school, but an uncle had planted the seed years earlier.

"I'd stand there with a helmet, watching them do that, when I was just a little kid," Farr said. "I thought it was pretty interesting, watching that bright light."

"He's obviously very skilled," Heimerman said. "He took welding to a whole new level, doing anhydrous ammonia welding."

Farr has taken his welding skills to jobs



STAFF PHOTO BY KAY FATE

Harvey Farr, left, began working for Dennis Heimerman a year after Heimerman founded Metal Services of Blooming Prairie. Farr retired last month after 37 years at the metal fabrication and welding business.

throughout the Midwest, in Washington and New Hampshire. He and Heimerman worked together on the road, piping fertilizer plants, connecting tanks to pumps on co-ops.

"We found out we work well together," Heimerman said.

"Some people, you can be upset at each other, then you can let it go, and Harvey and I could always do that. Sometimes I had to pull the boss routine, but a lot of times, he was right. We always got along well. As far as employees go, he was loyal and dedicated."

Now starting its 39th year, Metal Services has 42 employees. When Farr started?

"One, two," he said, pointing to Heimerman, then to himself.

Farr had been there about a year when another opportunity presented itself: Friends were selling their liquor store, "and they made it pretty appealing," he said.

Heimerman had his doubts.

"He came in and said he and John were going to buy this, and I said, 'that's really good,' but I thought to myself, 'oh, wow. This is never going to work.'

"But honest to God, those guys worked every other night, they both worked Friday and Saturday nights and I honestly couldn't tell you when he walked in the shop in the morning whether he worked all night or whether he slept all night," Heimerman said.

"Never could. He came in charging every day; I don't care if it was 3 a.m. when he went to bed."

How did that happen?

"Just ... a farm kid," Farr said. "I was raised on a farm. You started at 5 in the morning, no matter what."

"I think Harvey got a lot of satisfaction out of having his own place," Heimerman said. "He proved that he could take something on and succeed at it."

Three years later, Farr married Nancy, who worked in Owatonna at the time. When their full-time bar manager moved on, Nancy stepped in - and has been there since.

"I always tell people I'm Harvey's other boss," Heimerman laughed.

Farr's retirement from his day job is allowing him to "give Nancy some relief. She's been up here for 35 years."

Before he left Metal Services, he played a role in hiring his successor, Justin Steinbach, of Austin.

"I was getting a little bit worried, because nobody was applying for the job - and I wasn't going to leave Denny hanging," Farr said. "If I had to stay, I would've. I want the shop to continue, because 37 years ..."

No need for that, but the offer to return is open, Heimerman said.

"If he sells this place, he can work part-time if he wants to, but he'll find plenty to do."

That's a bit of an understatement.

In addition to those 80+ hours every week, Farr has organized the Bikers of Blooming (BOB) Ride for the Toys for Tots campaigns in Blooming Prairie and Steele County, spearheading drives that have brought in thou-

sands of dollars; served as president of the BP Lions Club; was just elected vice-president of First Lutheran Church Council, and keeps busy with his three children, three grandchildren and that new great-granddaughter.

Still, he admits, "I was getting tired - but I still enjoy doing things, no matter if I'm tired or not."

All that hard work, Farr said, "teaches you if you work hard, you're going to be successful, no matter what, but you've got to keep your nose to the grindstone."

It's about more than hard work for Heimerman.

"I guess it's just about the dedication for me," he said. "You couldn't ask for anybody more dedicated. My dad used to work for

us part time, and sometimes he'd be kind of upset when guys weren't working as much as they should, and I'd say, 'you know, Dad, this isn't theirs. I'm your kid and it's mine and you get it, but it isn't theirs.' But in Harvey's case, he treated it like it was his own.

"In fact, many people - many people - thought he owned the repair shop," Heimerman said. "Seriously."

"I couldn't have asked for a better boss than Denny and Ryan; they kinda kept an eye on the place when I was on the road," Farr laughed.

A retirement celebration is planned for Farr from 3 p.m. to close on March 26 at J&H Liquor, with drink specials and munchies. The public is invited.



STAFF PHOTO BY KAY FATE

Harvey Farr is pictured here in his early days at Metal Services of Blooming Prairie. "People are always surprised that I had hair," he laughs. Farr was hired the year after the business opened, and just retired last month after 37 years.

High Bar Brands adds new manager

Tim Burdett is certainly familiar with High Bar Brands' Northern Territory.

The native Montanan now lives in Colorado. His familiarity with a region that also includes Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota was one of the things that drew him to his new position of northern territory manager for the Owatonna-based company.

"I am truly excited to be back on a team traveling familiar territory and revisiting some old relationships," Burdett said.

"With Tim's vast experience as a district manager, sales manager, and other various roles in sales, I am very confident that he will bring to us a balanced and professional approach to the northern territory," HBB Director of Sales Derek Quys said.

While Burdett feels his experience is a positive, he says it's not the only positive he brings



Tim Burdett

to High Bar Brands.

"I have over 25 years of experience in sales, but I think I can bring a new perspective as well," Burdett said.

"Our client partners will enjoy his personality, lead by his integrity and organizational skills," Quys said.

In addition to his new role at High Bar Brands, Burdett is also a new grandfather to Henry. He also spends a lot of time outdoors, enjoying whatever nature throws at him.

"I love the mountains and taking pictures of whatever presents itself," Burdett said.

Burdett can be contacted at tburdett@highbarbrands.com.

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COVID hobby becomes successful biz for Owatonna senior

BY JONI HUBRED
STAFF WRITER

Lots of people took up new hobbies during the COVID-19 pandemic, but Owatonna High School senior Ava Hess turned hers into a business.

The 17-year-old's ArtAvieCo shop on Etsy.com features stationery and art prints in four dozen different designs. But it all started with greeting cards she made now and then for her loved ones.

band, symphony orchestra, and pit orchestra for the recent production of "The Addams Family." Hess is a member of Students Helping Others Choose and the Link Crew, which helps freshmen adjust to high school life. Last fall wrapped up her career with the Huskies soccer team.

As if that wasn't enough, Hess also serves as historian for the Student Council and National Honor Society. How does she cover it all?

orders that came in," she said. "That was also when the musical was rehearsing, and it was the end of the semester."

Far from discouraged, Hess said she will bring her business along when she moves this fall to Drake University in Des Moines. She plans to major in graphic design.

"I signed up for a single room, so I'll have space for my printer," she said, with a grin.

Hess' parents, Jesse and Barry, have supported their daughter's journey. Along with the start-up funds (which she has since paid back), her father showed her how to track and manage finances using spreadsheets, while her mother promoted the ArtAvieCo shop on Facebook.

Running a business, Hess said, has been a constant learning experience. She has picked up a lot of information by watching YouTube videos and looking at what other creators are doing.

The toughest nut to crack has been marketing online.

"I didn't expect, if you want to get bigger, how much work it is to get yourself out there on social media," she said. "The algorithms are always changing... it's tricky to figure it out."

While she's excited about reaching customers in other states and even other countries, Hess also plans to make more connections locally, including this year's Farmers Market. She also hopes to place her products in Owatonna shops and the Steele County History Center.

Long-term, Hess sees herself making a living as a creator of products that bring something special to people's lives.

"I want to spread joy," she said. "Getting a text message is different from getting a card in the mail. It shows love and appreciation for others through something physical."

To view Ava Hess' creations, visit etsy.com/shop/artavieco.



STAFF PHOTO BY JONI HUBRED

Owatonna senior Ava Hess sells these items in her Etsy.com shop. She's still working on a design for the waterproof stickers.

"For three or four years, I was doing hand-drawn cards for family and friends," she said. "It wasn't anything more than my grandma saying, 'Could you do a sympathy card?'"

When schools closed, Hess started to think about starting a business. The idea of working for herself has always appealed to her, largely because it offers flexibility. And with her schedule, Hess needs plenty of that.

In addition to classes, she plays flute in the marching band, pep

"It's hard to balance out, but I really enjoy all the things because of the friendships I've made," she said.

Hess has only faced one tough time since opening her shop in October of 2020. At first, she sold mostly to family and friends. Then this past Valentine's Day, as romantics scoured the internet for unique expressions of love, they found Hess' Etsy shop.

"That was the hardest thing I've experienced so far, because there were so many

Businesses join Owatonna Chamber



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Ambassadors from the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism are busy making stops throughout the community. Top: They visit with Guaranteed Rate at 124 North Cedar, to welcome them as a new member. Aubrey Meier is the branch manager and Mark Meier is the mortgage lender. Guaranteed Rate wants to get you into your dream home. They offer low rates, a fast application process and fast closings. Second from top: Ambassadors visit with Mary Kay Cosmetics Sales Director Sandy Fritz to welcome her as a new member. Fritz has over 40 years of service with Mary Kay Cosmetics and specializes in skin and body care along with color cosmetics and fragrances. Middle: Service Solutions Center at 134 26th St. N.W. in Owatonna, has joined the Chamber. Melissa Davis is the president and managing partner and Cheyenne Wood is the operations manager. Service Solutions Center is a locally owned and operated janitorial and building maintenance solutions company. Bottom: Another new member is A Taste of the Big Apple at 104 Broadway St. W. Marilyn McParland is the owner. A Taste of the Big Apple offers pizza, pasta and subs for dine-in, takeout and delivery.

OSHA uncovers unsafe working conditions at Dollar General in 2 states

A series of federal workplace safety and health inspections at four Dollar General stores in Alabama and Georgia in the summer of 2021 found the nationwide discount retailer's long history of exposing employees to dangerous working conditions continues.

Since 2016, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has proposed more than \$3.6 million in penalties in 55 inspections at Dollar General locations nationwide. OSHA inspections

of the retail stores consistently reveal employee exposure to hazards associated with obstructed exit routes, unstable stacking and blocked working space around electrical panels. These violations represent hazardous and unsafe conditions and place workers at risk of injury.

In August 2021, following inspections at three Mobile stores - Stores 6556, 8083 and 13064 - OSHA inspectors identified five willful violations for failing to keep receiving areas clean and

orderly and stacking materials in an unsafe manner - hazards which expose workers to slips, trips and being struck-by objects. The employer also exposed workers to fire hazards by failing to keep exit routes and workspaces around electrical panels clear. As a result of the three Mobile inspections, OSHA proposed \$683,680 in penalties.

In Dalton, Ga., during another August 2021 inspection, OSHA issued citations to Dollar General Store 18688 for two willful and one repeat violations.

There, investigators found similar violations. OSHA proposed \$364,629 in penalties.

"Dollar General's long and extensive history of workplace safety violations and repeated failures to protect its workers shows willful recklessness," said OSHA Regional Administrator Kurt Petermeyer in Atlanta. "Their blatant and continued disregard for the safety of their employees must come to an end. The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration will make every effort to

hold them accountable for their failures."

Based in Goodlettsville, Tenn., Dolgencorp LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Dollar General Corp. and operates about 17,000 stores and 17 distribution centers around the nation, and employs more than 150,000 workers. There are two stores in Steele County, including Blooming Prairie and Owatonna, and three in Dodge County, including Hayfield, Kasson and Dodge Center.

Dollar General has 15 business days from receipt of its citations

and penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director, or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to ensure these conditions for America's workers by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance.

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common sense ideas: The first bill simply bans the requirement for a parent or citizen to disclose their full address in order to speak at a school board meeting. The second reaffirms

a parent's right to see school curriculum by requiring schools to disclose this option to parents and make materials available without cost. The most important teacher in a child's life

is their parent. Parents should be working in partnership with schools, but that's not always the case when they try to obtain information about their child's education. These bills clarify that parents have a right to basic information, and do not

have to give out their private information to make their voices heard at school board meetings.

If you have any questions about the issues we are working on at the legislature, feel free to contact me any time at sen.john.jasinski@senate.mn or 651-296-0284. It is a privilege to serve you!

senate.mn or 651-296-0284. It is a privilege to serve you!

John Jasinski serves District 27 in the Minnesota Senate. District 27 is made up of mostly Steele and Rice counties. He lives in Faribault.





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BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

Theft: Police arrested a subject for stealing a vehicle at Cedar Ave. S. and Oakdale Lane SW at 10:21 p.m. on March 4.

Man sentenced to 17 years for park murder

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

The Owatonna man accused of killing another man nearly two years ago in a city park has been sentenced to nearly 17 years in prison.

Hassan Nur Hassan, 29, pleaded guilty in January to one count each of second-degree murder without intent and second-degree assault with a dangerous weapon. In exchange

for the plea, additional felony counts of second-degree intentional murder and car theft were dismissed.

Steele County District Court Judge Joseph Bueltel sentenced him Friday to consecutive terms of 180 months for the murder charge and 21 months for the assault charge, with credit for 606 days already served. With Minnesota's two-thirds rule, Hassan could be eligible for parole in

about 10 years.

He's been in custody since his arrest two days after the July 12, 2020 incident.

The case began when Owatonna police were called to Dartts Park for a report of a stabbing. The victim, Mohamed Aweis Mohamed, 32, had been stabbed once in the chest and was pro-



Hassan Nur Hassan

nounced dead at the scene.

Officers found a knife and two sets of brass knuckles at the scene.

Witnesses told police that Hassan and Mohamed had argued earlier in the day at a different Owatonna park, then saw each other again at Dartts Park, where a fight broke out. One of the witnesses said

when he walked over to check on Mohamed, Hassan stole his car and left the scene.

Another man said he saw Hassan chasing Mohamed with a knife, with brass knuckles on each hand.

Hassan pleaded guilty after learning prosecutors planned to introduce evidence of additional offenses at his trial.

The motion said Hassan had used the brass knuckles/knife combination on another

man the same day of the murder. In that incident, Hassan allegedly damaged the man's vehicle with the brass knuckles and chased him "in a threatening manner," the document said.

Hassan believed that victim's brother had reported him for driving under the influence of marijuana a week earlier.

He will serve his sentence at the Minnesota Correctional Facility in St. Cloud.

Stolen vehicle found in Medford leads to chase, woman's arrest

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

A pursuit that started in Medford and lasted nearly 30 minutes has resulted in felony charges against a Mankato woman.

Kenessa Marie Fagin, 31, made her first appearance last week in Steele County District Court, where she faces one count each of fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle and theft of a motor vehicle.

She was conditionally released without bond and is due back in court for a settlement conference June 2.

The incident began about 3:15 a.m. March 9, when a Steele County Sheriff's deputy saw a car parked outside a gas station in Medford; the vehicle

was running, but appeared to be empty.

The deputy learned the car was reported stolen out of Mankato, and drove around the business to look for a possible driver. As he did, the vehicle drove away, eventually exiting northbound onto Interstate 35 – with the deputy following.

The driver, later identified as Fagin, exited the freeway at Faribault, drove north through town, and got back onto I-35 northbound. A few miles later, the car ran over stop sticks that had been deployed by a Rice County deputy.



Kenessa Marie Fagin

About 10 miles later, with deputies still following, the vehicle exited the interstate, but immediately returned to the northbound lanes.

An Elko New Market police officer deployed stop sticks five miles down the road, successfully flattening the passenger side tires.

The car – which had reached speeds of 80 to 90 mph during the pursuit – slowed to about 40 mph and the driver appeared to struggle to maintain control. The driver exited the interstate again and tried to turn east; as she did, the Steele County deputy purposely struck the passenger side of

the car, making it spin out and stop.

Another Elko New Market officer stopped bumper-to-bumper with the vehicle to keep it from leaving.

According to the criminal complaint, the deputy found a clear plastic pipe on the passenger floorboard and tin foil scattered throughout the car; Fagin admitted she smokes Fentanyl, using the pipe and foil.

A bolt cutter and crowbar were also found in the passenger area.

Fagin reportedly said she didn't stop because she was afraid of getting in trouble.

A review of her criminal history reflects multiple charges of assault, including a 2016 conviction for felony domestic assault.

BP man accused of financial exploitation

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

A Blooming Prairie man accused of writing more than \$24,000 worth of unauthorized checks has made his first appearance in Steele County District Court.

Abraham Lawrence Lysne, 48, has been charged with one count of financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult, a felony.

He was conditionally released without bail, and is due back in court June 2 for a settlement conference.

The investigation began in July, when the victim's daughter told an adult protection case-worker that two checks, each for \$12,222.22, were written to two members of Lysne's family, the criminal complaint says.

Lysne had been named power of attorney in 2018 for the alleged victim's banking transactions because of the man's cognitive memory loss.

Court documents say

the victim told the case-worker he hadn't seen Lysne's family members in "a long time," didn't remember writing the two checks and said the handwriting wasn't his.

Lysne told the case-worker he had been the victim's primary caregiver since January 2021, and saw blank checks signed by the man on his desk. He allegedly admitted to writing the checks out to members of his family who "have never received anything (from the victim) their whole life prior to this."

The checks were dated June 1 and cashed July 13.

According to the complaint, the victim's daughter told an investigator that Lysne had been taking cash out of the man's account; when she checked the account, she discovered the check transactions.

If convicted, the charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, a \$20,000 fine, or both.

COURT NEWS

Steele County

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 28 with Judge Joseph A. Bueltel presiding: Jorge L. Acosta Valdes, 56, Albert Lea, previously appeared and was convicted of felony check forgery. He was sentenced to \$785, 44 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, no contact with victim, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 3 years of supervised probation. Robert C. Atkinson, 49, Albert Lea, previously appeared and was convicted of felony assault of peace officer and misdemeanor damage to property. Atkinson was sentenced to \$2,649.15, 130 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of firearms and 3 years of supervised probation. Tierrah V. Wells, 35, Waseca, previously appeared and was convicted of felony assault. Wells was sentenced to \$175, 88 days in county jail, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, no possession of firearms, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 4 years of supervised probation. The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 28 – March 6:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Kaedan B. Ankeny, 20, Austin, possession of marijuana and expired tabs, \$255; Dustin D. Caudill, 40, Blooming Prairie, DWI, \$375, chemical dependency evaluation, attend MADD impact panel, do not enter liquor establishments and 1 year of supervised probation; Destiny E. Davis, 19, Austin, possession of paraphernalia, \$125; Krystin N. Dyche, 33, Blooming Prairie, DWI, \$325, chemical dependency evaluation, attend MADD impact panel and 1 year of supervised probation; Ochonge N. Gilo, 19, Austin, revoked license, \$275; Craig D. Halicki, 27, Austin, careless driving, \$375, attend MADD impact panel, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Jose L. Lopez Rosales, 35, Austin, invalid license, \$175; Jose L. Olivia, 24, Shakopee, speeding, lane violation and invalid license, \$265.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Casey A. Abrahamson, 30, Inver Grove Heights, speeding, \$115; Kristy L. Bady, 46, Amerly, WI, speeding, \$115; Martha N. Caballero, 44, Waseca, seat belt and no insurance, \$300; Cassandra A. Carter, 37, Millville, speeding, \$115; Joseph L. Clark, 35, Rice Lake, WI, hands free violation, \$125; Bryan I. Coss-Osnaya, 19, Des Moines, IA, speeding, \$215; William A. Fritz, 37, Waseca, speeding, \$135; Jacob F. Howe, 25, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Michael F. Hubbard, 55, Duluth, speeding, \$215; Abbey M. Hutzell, 34, Ankeny, IA, speeding, \$135; Nugzar Meskhi, 66, Brooklyn, NY, no license and parking violation, \$200; Cory G. Oestreich, 42, Medford, speeding, \$125; Alex C.

Pentico, 29, Waseca, speeding, \$115; Michael R. Priebe, 24, St. Louis Park, hands free violation, \$125; Trevor S. St. Martin, 43, Faribault, revoked license, \$275; Marcos A. Trevino, 29, Waseca, speeding, \$135; Tai J. Ward, 43, Fairfield, IA, speeding, \$135; Kaylee M. Williams, 25, Lakeville, speeding, \$115.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Lauren E. barber, 32, Owatonna, DWI, \$375, chemical dependency evaluation, do not enter liquor establishments, Ignition interlock program and 2 years of supervised probation; Melina A. Cavazos, 24, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$105; Eliseo Cortes, 44, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Nyijon T. Joak, 28, Des Moines, IA, invalid license, \$175; Chase S. Johnson, 33, Kasson, no insurance and suspended license, \$475; Steven R. Luebber, 23, Owatonna, seat belt, \$100; James D. McKeig, 63, Cottage Grove, failure to obey traffic control device, \$125; Mackenzie E. Meier, 28, Waseca, suspended license, \$275; Kenneth J. Miller, 51, Faribault, speeding, \$115; Tishyra E. Powell, 28, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Jose L. Reyes Jr., 26, Owatonna, speeding, \$125; Laverne I. Roberts, 39, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Dane M. Schroeder, 31, Owatonna, DWI, \$375 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Ricardo B. Torre, 25, Owatonna, no insurance and stop sign, \$325; Jada F. Trom Padilla, 20, Blooming Prairie, suspended license, \$275; Jayme J. Walsh, 42, Mason City, IA, possession of paraphernalia and marijuana, \$175; Josh D. Watkins, 35, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$475.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Scott M. Armendariz, 40, Eagle Lake, speeding, \$115; Toriquiesha J. Bolden, 33, Waukegan, IA, no insurance and invalid license, \$375; Andrea L. Briggs, 17, Ellendale, speeding, \$135; Mac E. Ferris, 21, Mankato, speeding, \$135; Jesse M. Greenslade, 20, Kenyon, speeding and revoked license, \$415; Kendra M. Hausen, 39, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Jeffrey L. Jones, 34, Owatonna, DWI, \$450, 1 day in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, attend MADD impact panel and 1 year of supervised probation; Gisela D. Mendoza Lopez, 21, Medford, careless driving, \$175; Jeffrey C. Michel, 36, Blooming Prairie, speeding, \$135; Brydon M. Mitchell, 20, Batavia, IL, speeding, \$135; Cameron L. Moore, 21, Owatonna, speeding, \$135; Gerardo J. Morales Sandoval, 24, Austin, speeding, \$275; Kiera T. Nolan, 16, Rochester, speeding, \$215; Sarah K. Rewey, 30, Waseca, speeding, \$115; Brandon L. Swee, 25, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Patricia M. Trevino, 25, Waseca, speeding and expired tabs, \$165; Paul J. Ulrich, 34, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Lizbeth Vazquez, 18, Medford, invalid license, \$175; Aaron S. Wiederhoeft, 31, New Richland, speeding, \$115; Zenebe G. Woldu, 43, Calgary, AB, improper change of course, \$125; Austin C. Yearling, 21, Owatonna, speeding, \$135.

SPENDING BLOTTER

Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

March 8
Crash: At 11:23 a.m., a motor vehicle accident re-

See **BLOTTER** on **A10** ▶

Man accused of assault at clinic appointment

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

An Owatonna man is facing criminal charges after allegedly sexually assaulting a woman during a medical appointment.

Glen David Johnston, 64, made his first appearance Friday in Steele County District Court, where he's been charged with fifth-degree criminal sexual conduct, a gross misdemeanor.

He was conditionally released without bond, and is due back in court March 25.

The investigation began March 10, when police responded to Mayo Clinic Health System in Owatonna to meet with an employee.

The woman said she had helped Johnston put his shoes and socks on after an exam, then walked across the room to get his cane.

When she turned around with the cane, Johnston was right in

front of her; according to the criminal complaint, he grabbed her breast over her clothing and squeezed.

The woman said she told Johnston to stop, pushed his arm away with her hands and

told police she felt threatened. He then allegedly tried to hug the woman, who said she "felt like he was trying to push me into the wall."

The victim, who had never worked with Johnston before, described it as "a sexual touch. It was not an accident," the report says.

When police spoke to Johnston, he said, "I am a hugger. I went to go hug her and my hand ended up on her um, I moved it right away ... I told her two or three times that I didn't mean to do that ... I wasn't going to pull her in or anything like that. I don't do that unless they want to," the complaint says.



Hassan Nur Hassan

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Vandal's Lucky in BP



STAFF PHOTO BY KAY FATE

Amelia Johnson, 8, takes the St. Patrick's Day treat offered by her mom, Chrissy Olson, night manager at Vandal's Family Market. Olson was working during Saturday's "Get Lucky in BP" celebration in downtown Blooming Prairie when Amelia came in to visit. Some of the cones had a gold coin in the bottom; Vandal's owner Brandy Holmberg also offered gift certificates to other businesses in town. Olson said she was "very surprised when people arrived at 10 a.m." for their sweet green treat.

Steele Corrections flips the script on probation practices

BY JONI HUBRED
STAFF WRITER

Based on the most recent reports available, Steele County Community Corrections department sees few "repeat offenders."

But the goal for a new four-year comprehensive plan is to drive recidivism rates even lower, using the latest evidence-based practices. Director Tim Schammel told commissioners March 8 that the department has moved away from a model that had probation agents trying to catch people breaking the rules.

"Our mission the last five years has been making sure our clients are employed, they're paying taxes and contributing to the community," he said.

When a violation does happen, a Screening Team now reviews cases guided by principles that include a reduced reliance on jail time, while still holding the client accountable. According to the report, research shows jail time for a probation violation, on its own, isn't effective and slightly increases the likelihood of repeat crimes.

Statistically speaking, Steele County is launching its four-year plan with a solid baseline.

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) statistics for 2016 show a whopping 98.5% of felony offenders on probation and 90.3%

on supervised release stayed out of trouble one year after completing their programs.

The three-year success rate drops a little, with 94.1% and 79% steering clear of additional crimes.

BCA statistics also show that while the county's population has held steady, serious crimes dropped from over 5,000 in 2012 to around 3,700 over each of the past three years.

Assistant director Steve Rick said the county also ranks well among its neighbors in crime rates and the percentage of crimes cleared by law enforcement.

"We're just a spoke in the wheel," he said, "but I think it shows some promising data for the county as a whole."

In 2020, Steele County Community Corrections handled 733 clients, serving more than twice as many men as women. More than half had committed felony or misdemeanor level crimes; 29 were juveniles.

There were 94 drug-related arrests, with nearly half of the crimes involving marijuana.

Schammel said new practices include separating clients based on their risk of reoffending. Those at higher risk see agents at least once a week and appear to do better with more face-to-face contact.

Those clients struggled with remote

check-ins during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns, he said. The department resumed high risk in-person visits as soon as possible, while some at lower risk—for instance, college students—have continued with remote check-ins.

Under the new structure, Rick said, "We want to make sure that the contact we're having with clients is quality contact."

The report also documented the department's \$1.8 million budget. Along with \$1.1 million in local property taxes, the department receives \$621,000 in state subsidy and grant dollars. Nearly 92% of the budget is spent on personnel expenses.

Schammel said Minnesota ranks near the top when it comes to using probation as an alternative to incarceration, and near the bottom when it comes to state funding for corrections. He also pointed out that his department's 2022 budget increased just 1.3% over last year.

"You guys have done a great job of creating a program that works and saving the taxpayers some dollars," commissioner John Glynn said. "That's appreciated."

The Community Corrections Department must submit a Comprehensive Plan every two years to qualify for state funds.

No shortage of candidates for U.S. District 1 race

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

With just 24 hours before filing closed, there were 17 candidates vying for the late Jim Hagedorn's seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Hagedorn died of kidney cancer Feb. 17, forcing a series of elections to find his successor for the remainder of his term, which expires in January, and to select a new Congressman for 2022-24.

Hagedorn's widow, former state GOP Chairwoman Jennifer Carnahan, filed Monday morning.

She battled scandal while in office, resigning in August after a close friend and GOP donor was charged in federal court with sex trafficking. That same month, Carnahan was recorded saying, "Jim's gonna be dead in two years. So be it." She later called the words "absolutely regrettable" and said they were made "in grief" after drinking.

There were also allegations of her role in a toxic workplace, which Carnahan has denied.

Less than two weeks ago, there were just five

candidates; the floodgates opened last week, with notable names like former Hormel CEO Jeff Ettinger and state Rep. Nels Pierson (R-26B), of Rochester, joining the race.

Also filing were Brad Finstad, a former Republican state representative from New Ulm; Republican Matt Benda, an attorney from Albert Lea; and Sarah Brakebill-Hacke, a political consultant who went from homelessness in Rochester to graduating from Yale University.

Brakebill-Hacke, running as a Democrat, lives in Preston.

State Rep. Jeremy Munson (R-23B), of Lake Crystal, threw his hat in early; he's already announced he won't run for re-election at the state level.

According to the Minnesota Secretary of State website, Republicans Bob "Again" Carney Jr. and Ken Navitsky have also filed for the seat.

Readjusted boundary lines for the district brought both Wabasha and Goodhue counties into the district, which in turn has brought Red Wing resident and businessman Richard DeVoe into play.

He joins Richard Painter, a law professor at the University of Minnesota who has said he will move to Faribault, on the Democratic ticket. Ettinger is also running as a Democrat.

Other Republicans in the mix are Roger Ungemach, Kevin Kocina and J.R. Ewing — from Glenville, not Dallas.

Other Democrats include George Kalberer and Warren Lee Anderson.

Richard Reisdorf has filed as a member of the Legal Marijuana Now party.

The filing period for the special election ended Tuesday; this edition of the *Steele County Times* went to press Monday night. The primary for the special election is May 24; the special election — with the winner filling Hagedorn's seat until January — is Aug. 9.

The filing period for the general election is May 17-31. The primary for the general election will also be Aug. 9, and will set the ballot for the Nov. 8 general election.

The winner of that election will serve a full two-year term in the U.S. House of Representatives.

PUBLIC SAFETY

◀ **BLOTTER** from A9
sulting in property damage occurred in the 400 block of 2nd St. SE.
March 10 Animal: Police responded to an animal call in the 100 block of Highway Ave. S. at 4:41 p.m.

OWATONNA POLICE
March 4 Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 3000 block of Hoffman Dr. NW at 10:54 a.m.
Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 100 block of Bridge St. W. at 9:09 p.m.
Theft: Officer issued a theft citation in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 10:26 p.m.

March 5 Domestic: Police arrested a subject for a domestic disturbance in the 1400 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 2:39 a.m.
Fraud: Officer took a fraud report in the 2400 block of Hoffman Dr. NW at 12:07 p.m.

March 6 Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 400 block of Cherry St. NE at 1:19 a.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.
Hit and Run: At 1:10 p.m., a hit and run accident occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.

Shoplifting: At 9:17 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.
March 7 Theft: Motor vehicles were reported stolen from the 3700 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 6:59 a.m. and 9:24 a.m.

Vandalism: Property damage was reported in the 3700 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 10:54 a.m.
Hit and Run: At 6:42 p.m., a hit and run accident occurred in the 100 block of Broadway St. W.

Domestic: Officers responded to domestic disturbances in the 200 block of Hobart St. SE at 8:37 p.m. and the 600 block of Mound St. SW at 11:34 p.m.
March 8 Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest in the 2200 block of 46th St. NW at 4:28 a.m.

Child Protection: Police received a child protection report from the 1400 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 10:54 a.m.

Theft: Officer took a theft report on 12th Place NW at 12:13 p.m.
Welfare: Police arrested a subject during a welfare check in the 400 block of Oak Ave. N. at 5:22 p.m.

Hit and Run: At 7:32 p.m., a hit and run accident occurred in the 1700 block of Cedar Ave. N.

DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest in the 400 block of North St. W. at 9:31 p.m.

March 9 Theft: At 3:12 p.m., identity theft was reported in the 600 block of Elm Ave. S.
Arrest: Police assisted another agency with arresting a subject in the 300 block of Grove Ave. S. at 10:09 p.m.

March 10 Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 9:50 a.m.
Criminal Sexual Conduct: Police arrested a subject for criminal sexual conduct in the 2200 block of 26th St. NW at 1:42 p.m.

ARRESTS

Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE
Jeremy Marvin Jennings, 39, arrested at 11:37 p.m. March 4, felony possession of stolen property, controlled substance and suspended license, held for court.
Altaaf Joshua Persaud, 23, arrested at 3:10 a.m. March 5, domestic assault/assault, held for court.
Jenny Maria Contreras, 19, arrested at 2:20 a.m. March 6, domestic assault/assault, held for court.
John Leo Haase, 46, arrested at 6:40 p.m. March 8, warrant arrest, held for court.
Glen David Johnston, 64, arrested at 3:26 p.m. March 10, criminal sexual conduct, held for court.
Randi Ann Kremer, 25, arrested at 12:52 a.m. March 11, DWI, held for court.
Steele County Sheriff
Bryan Anthony Dupris, 24, arrested at 4:10 a.m. March 8, DWI, held for court.
Kenesha Marie Fagin, 31, arrested March 9, felony fleeing in motor vehicle and possession of stolen vehicle, held for court.
Beau Jason Twaddle, 43, arrested at 12:30 p.m. March 10, warrant arrest, \$12,000 bail.

COURT NEWS

Dodge County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Feb. 20 – 27:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Kaylee C. Anderson, 20, Kasson, speeding, \$220; Tiffany D. Ellington, 28, Hayfield, parking violation, \$32; Raul Gerardo Guel Jr., 25, Claremont, parking violation, \$32; Clint T. Jennings, 42, Hayfield, parking violation, \$32; Jose M. Palacios, 40, St. Paul, revoked license, \$280; Madelyn R. Petit, 19, Dodge Center, invalid license and no insurance, \$380.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Randall S. Hadrath, 48, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Lee J. Howlett, 36, St. Charles, parking violation, \$32; Latrell J. Springer, 20, Rochester, revoked license and speeding, \$320.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Jocelyn S. Ballanger, 19, Rochester, seat belt, \$105; Chayanna L. Boettcher, 16, Owatonna, speeding, \$140; Katie M. Gerlach, 36, West Concord, speeding, \$130; Carrie L. Jensen, 50, Kasson, speeding, \$220; Ryan A. Knudson, 46, Byron, speeding, \$120; Colby L. Kuefner, 20, Owatonna, speeding, \$140; Bryan L. Ripley, 29, Kasson, speeding, \$140; Melissa K. Smith, 44, Owatonna, speeding, \$140; Andrew P. Vorwerk, 35, Chatfield, speeding, \$140; Aaron M. Veigh, 19, Byron, speeding, \$140.

WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Danya H. Burtis, 35, West Concord, parking violation, \$32.

Man killed after vehicle hits tree

◀ **MAN** from A1 already deceased, he added.

Thiele said Delhanty was the lone occupant in the vehicle, which was traveling northbound on Lemond Road.

Mayo Ambulance and Owatonna Fire assisted the Sheriff's Office at the scene of the crash. Thiele said the State Patrol also

helped by performing a reconstruction of the crash.

No further details would be released about the crash as it remains under investigation, Thiele said, adding an autopsy was being performed on Delhanty to help determine what happened.

Saturday's crash was in the same area

as a fatal head-on between two dump trucks in July 2020.

However, Thiele cautions people to not draw any conclusions about the safety of the roadway as a medical condition with one of the drivers was found to be the major factor in the 2020 crash.

This is the first fatality in Steele County in 2022.



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Farrs hit jackpot with 5 generations



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

It doesn't happen all that often with families celebrating five generations. It happened recently to Harvey Farr (Jean's son), top left. Great grandma Jean Farr is holding her new great grandchild, Oaklee May Voigt. Harvey's son Joe (grandson) is at far right and great granddaughter Mia is in the middle.

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Harvey Farr, owner of J & H Liquors of Blooming Prairie, hit the jackpot recently.

No, he didn't win the Lottery, nor did he hit a JACKPOT at a casino.

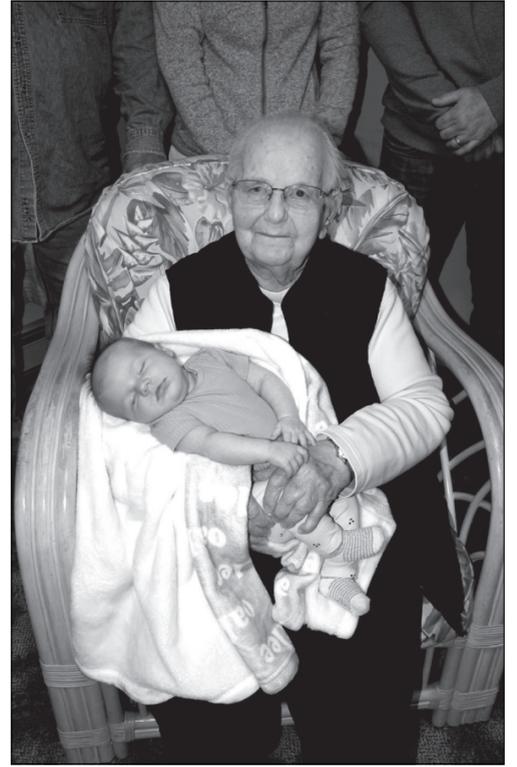
In actuality, Harvey became a great grandfather and is now part of five generations in his family.

The Farrs got together recently for some family photos.

Jean Farr, 88, of Blooming Prairie, started it all. This is how it goes: Jean Farr (Great Great Grandma), Harvey Farr (Son), Joe Farr (Grandson), Mia Farr (Great Granddaughter) and Oaklee May Voigt (great great granddaughter).

Jean has 21 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren and two great great grandchildren.

Star of the day, of course, was little Oaklee May. She was born on Jan. 26, 2022 and weighed in at 8 pounds. Her parents are Mia Farr and Kylie Voigt.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Jean Farr of Blooming Prairie is a very proud great great grandmother. Here, she holds tiny Oaklee May.

The dreaded diagnosis hits us all

◀ **DREADED** from A2 ago at the Minnesota Newspaper Association. She has always been one to shy away from the limelight.

She has truly been a cornerstone to journalism in Minnesota for many years. Besides working for the Times, she also worked at several daily newspapers across southern Minnesota. She served on the Minnesota Newspaper Foundation as well as an adjunct professor

for St. Cloud State University's Department of Mass Communication.

Her heart has always been in journalism so that's why it makes it extremely tough for me to see cancer taking away one of the most passionate journalists I have ever worked with. She has always had a bulldog attitude and believed in digging for the truth and getting the story out there for readers to digest.

But there is a caring

side to Deb that her own staff got to see many years ago at the Mankato Free Press. Facing budget cuts and staff reductions at the Free Press in 2005, Deb voluntarily gave up her position as editor in order to save several staff positions occupied by younger journalists.

"By eliminating my position, it allows more reporters on the street," Deb said at the time. Quite simply, she was disgusted with the corporate demands to

meet budget targets and cared enough about the quality of the product given to readers.

The company postponed staff cuts and proceeded to hire more part-timers.

Needless to say, Deb's action created quite the buzz in the industry on the national level at the time.

I have been fortunate to work with Deb for the past year and a half. During that time, she has been focused on helping me provide a quality news product for our readers. I challenge anyone to find

someone as passionate about newspapers as Deb has been throughout her professional life. She is a rare breed that's becoming extinct in this industry.

She also has taken tremendous pride in recruiting, training and mentoring Johnnie Phillips, a recent college graduate who became our sports editor last fall. As I'm sure Johnnie will attest to, Deb is no softie when it comes to learning the business. However, he has been so lucky to work with one of the best in the industry.

Deb is truly a professional who will sorely be missed by our staff in the day-to-day news cycle. More importantly, she is leaving behind a legacy on journalism that has helped make communities across Minnesota better places to live.

A breast cancer survivor from about 20 years ago, Deb now faces the greatest battle of her life.

Deb, we love you and wish you the best as you go in hot pursuit of battling cancer. Please know you're not traveling that road alone.

OBITUARIES

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Barbara Klinger, 67, Owatonna



Barbara Klinger

Barbara Klinger, 67, of Owatonna, died on Sunday, March 6, 2022.

She was born on Aug. 29, 1954 in Waseca, to Earl and Janis (Nesdahl) Klinger. She graduated from Ellendale in 1972. She attended South Central Technical College in Faribault where she received an associate degree in accounting.

She worked various state jobs, taught CPR in community education, activities director for the deaf and worked at a group home. She was very active in the Owatonna Art Center

and Son's of Norway.

Barb was very artistic and loved to make a craft out of anything she could find. She had a deep love for animals, over her life she cared for many different pets. She is survived by her sister, Cynthia Olson; nephew, Brian Olson of Rochester; niece, Gena Olson of Los Angeles.

She is preceded in death by parents.

No funeral arrangements have been announced.

BRICK-MEGER & MEDFORD
FUNERAL HOME

Randy L. Kruckeberg, 70, Owatonna



Randy Kruckeberg

Randy Lee Kruckeberg, 70, of Owatonna, died Friday, March 11, 2022 at St. Marys Hospital in Rochester.

He was born Feb. 27, 1952 in Owatonna, the son of Calvin and Florence (Pachl) Kruckeberg. He graduated from Claremont High School in 1970.

He married Marlene Mensing and they had a son, Jeremy. The couple later divorced. Randy drove truck for a trucking company before beginning his career with Steele County Highway Department from which he retired in 2017.

He enjoyed baseball, football and

Nascar and spending time with his family. He was especially proud to be grandpa to his granddaughter, Aubrey.

He is survived by his son, Jeremy Kruckeberg (Mary Huebsch) of Owatonna; sister, Sally (Wade) Mulari of Omaha and nephews, Adam Mulari of Woodbury and Brian (Kim) Mulari of Omaha.

He was preceded in death by parents, Calvin and Florence Kruckeberg. A private graveside service will be held at Hillside Cemetery in Claremont. A Celebration of Life gathering will be held at Michaelson Funeral Home on Saturday, March 19 from 12-2 p.m.

Michaelson Funeral Homes of Owatonna is handling the funeral arrangements.

Gentleman with Parkinson's wants to maintain connections

Dear Live Grand: I'm a 68-year-old man who uses computers and smartphones, but I have advancing Parkinson's disease so my abilities will change. So far, my symptoms are mild, however, they will worsen with time. Even dementia is a possibility, so I'm considering both my present cognition and future changes. I want to maintain connections with friends and extended family, and I've read that GrandPad offers a simple way to conduct video calls. How does this work? Will I still get junk calls and spam? My family says that so far, my judgment seems good, but we're aware that could change. What additional benefits would I have with this tablet? Thank you. - DP

Dear DP: Congratulations on your forward-thinking which will help you continue to enjoy life even with the challenges presented by Parkinson's disease. We have no doubt that your family is grateful for your realistic approach.

You mentioned that your primary concern is maintaining connections with friends and family. With a GrandPad, you'd find that doing so would remain safe and simple even as the disease progresses. Your family admin would add the phone numbers and images of the people you'd like included in your Contacts. Then, if one of these people called you, you'd see their image, touch Answer,

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and your video call would connect. If you wanted to place a call, you'd simply tap the Call icon and then tap the Call button under their image.

GrandPads have built-in 4G enabled cellular service, so they don't require an Internet connection or password. Since only the people added to your contacts can get through, you'd be protected from spam calls and emails. Speaking of emails, if you wanted to convey information at a time when a call was inconvenient, you'd have the alternative option of sending a voice email.

You're used to computers, so you probably like to browse select websites. With GrandPad's safe Internet you could explore worry-free. Options like YouTube, Wikipedia, and NPR are available with one click. Your family admin could also add additional websites that you currently use including your online newspaper.

You could easily view photos and videos that the family admin uploads to the family admin and if you like taking pictures, there's a great camera.

The Radio app

could bring you varied entertainment, and the Music app offers different genres and decades to choose from so you could build your personalized Music Collection.

If you enjoy playing cards, word games, and memory challenges you'd find plenty to challenge you within the Games app. Great for brain maintenance!

You could check your local weather with one click and access a calculator, flashlight, or magnifying glass from within the Toolbox app. Setup is easy and should you need assistance, you'd just tap the Help button, and your own representative would answer your questions.

You can see why we think that you'd be pleased by GrandPad's flexibility, DP.

Best wishes that you can keep the worst of the Parkinson's symptoms at bay for a long time.

Live Grand is a weekly column brought to you by GrandPad - the simplest, safest tablet-based solution that helps reconnect families.

To submit your question see: www.LiveGrand.me.

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BIRTHDAYS

March 16
Caleb Kubista
Cork Drexler
Ryan Heimerman
Aaron Krejci
Diane Eaker



March 17
Landon Allison
Isabel Lindeman
Erik Anderson

March 18
Mary J. Olson
Shannon Spinler
Olivia Trotman
Mary Ramsey



March 20
Dillon Easton
Sandy Christianson
Hunter Borg
Tom Walters

March 21
Calla Staads
Mary Ann Betlach
Pam Farr
Sue Rossow
Jackie Olson
Jan Anderson
Dwayne Gross

March 22
Robert Haberman
Kevin Christianson
Tom Donnelly
Dustin Hensrud

ANNIVERSARIES

March 16
Mr. & Mrs. Laverne Johnson

March 17
John & Barb Stenzel

March 19
Jessie & Aaron Christianson

March 20
Larry & Gerry Wurst

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BOOK NOOK

Let's see how much you know about reading



NANCY VAILLANCOURT

What do you know about reading? In addition to the fact that you enjoy it and can't live without it, what benefits does it have? One of our Blooming Prairie Branch Library patrons recently brought in a post from the blog Bound4escape.com that lists 5 indisputable facts about reading. See if you agree!

1. **Reading can make you a better conversationalist.** At a family reunion

last summer I was surrounded by distant cousins who I had never really talked to. The reason that I was so popular was that they found out I worked at a library! We exchanged book ideas and recommendations and developed a bond together.

Remember this library fact when you are at a social event (remember those?). Many people will respond well to, "Have you read any good books lately?" or "I just read the best book about...." You have to read the social cues though - Mr. Muscles might not want to hear

about your love of Jane Austen novels.

2. **Neighbors will never complain that your book is too loud.** As opposed to your loud rock music or my accordion playing.

3. **Knowledge by osmosis has not yet been perfected. You'd better read.** If you have any hope of appearing intelligent, books are a necessity. Yes, you can read articles online or watch news shows 24 hours a day, but if you want to find in-depth knowledge on a specific subject or event, books are indispensable.

4. **Books have stopped bullets.**

Reading might save your life. There are several examples of bullets being stopped by books. While a glass case partially deflected a bullet, Theodore Roosevelt survived an assassin's attempt thanks to a multi-page folded speech in his pocket. During World War I Leonard Knight's life was saved by a pocket Bible. The German bullet embedded in the Bible 50 pages from the end of the book.

5. **Dinosaurs didn't read. Look what happened to them.**

Come and get all the books you need at the library!

Recipe Corner

PIZZA BURGERS

1 lb. ground beef 1 can pizza sauce
2 onions 1 can mushrooms
1/2 tsp. garlic salt 1/2 lb. mozzarella cheese, grated
3/4 tsp. oregano hamburger buns

Brown ground beef and onions. Cool. Drain mushrooms and add all ingredients. Toast split buns. Spread with mixture and broil.

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Impersonating a groundhog



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A kindergarten student in Stephanie Kingland's class in Blooming Prairie does his best groundhog impersonation during the class's lesson on shadows. Kingland takes her students outside for lessons as often as possible, hoping to teach them to appreciate the outdoors and to be good environmental stewards.

SEMAC awards arts grants

Several groups throughout the region have received arts grants from Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council (SEMAC).

On March 8, SEMAC's board of directors awarded **35 arts programming grants for a total of \$155,335 in funding** to applicants throughout southeastern Minnesota. This included 25 Individual Artist Grants for \$100,335, five General Operating Support Grants to arts organizations for \$50,000, three School Residency Grants for \$9,000, and two Opportunity Grants for \$1,000.

Among the groups receiving grants was Steele County's Minnesota Association of Community Theatres, which was awarded a \$500 Opportunity Grant for Fast Fest 2022.

In Freeborn County, the Albert Lea Community Band received a \$5,000 General Operating Support Grant for administrative expenses. Quake Jones in Mower County was awarded a \$3,000 Individual Artist Grant for Uniting the 507 Music

Scene. Kasson-Mantorville Community Education received a \$500 Opportunity Grant for the Fabulous Armadillos Live in Concert.

SEMAC is the State Arts Board-designated granting authority for local/regional arts producing and sponsoring organizations and disburses funds allocated for this purpose by the Minnesota State Legislature. The SEMAC region includes the counties of Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, and Winona.

For information about the grant application process, eligibility, or grant writing assistance, contact the SEMAC office at 2778 D Commerce Dr. N.W., Rochester, MN 55901 or call 507-281-4848. Information may also be found at www.semac.org.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

SCHOOL LUNCH MENU

Blooming Prairie Elementary School

March 17- Meatballs and gravy, brown rice, whole grain dinner roll, ham deli sub sandwich, roasted broccoli, celery sticks, fresh fruit bar.

March 18- Cheese bread, marinara sauce, BBQ chicken sandwich, steamed green beans, cranberry pear salad, canned fruit bar.

March 21- Crispy chicken tenders, brown rice, pizza munchable, green beans, Caesar side salad, fresh fruit bar.

March 22- Sloppy Joe on a bun, cheesy ham melt, baked beans, baby carrots, radish, canned fruit bar.

March 23- Beefy nachos with cheese sauce, turkey ranch wrap, romaine lettuce, onions, diced tomatoes.

Blooming Prairie High School

March 17- Meatballs and gravy, brown rice, whole grain dinner roll, ham deli sub sandwich, cheese pizza, roasted broccoli, celery sticks.

March 18- Cheese bread, marinara sauce, BBQ chicken sandwich, crispy chicken salad, steamed green beans, cranberry pear salad.

March 21- Crispy chicken tenders, brown rice, pizza munchable, turkey BLT wrap, green beans, Caesar side salad.

March 22- Sloppy Joe on a bun, cheesy ham melt, pepperoni pizza, baked beans, baby carrots, radish.

March 23- Beefy nachos with cheese sauce, turkey ranch wrap, crispy chicken sandwich, romaine lettuce, onions.

BLOOMING PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BLOSSOMING INTO LEARNERS AND LEADERS

LOOK WHO'S BEING AWESOME!
Blossoms Students of the Week
Blooming Prairie Elementary School

Olivia Evenson - 2C
Mrs. Anderson's Class
Parents: Adren Magnuson and Peter Evenson
Olivia is a spectacular second grade student! She was caught being awesome for all of the good work she is doing in reading. She works hard each day and loves to lend a helping hand whenever she can. She often shares stories with us about all her animals, and we love listening to them. We are very proud of Olivia and so glad she is in 2C!

Knox Bartelt - 3C
Ms. Schmidt's Class
Parents: Kyser & Emily Bartelt
Knox is an Awesome Blossom! He is a kind and caring friend and shows good sportsmanship. Knox loves to share interesting facts and participate in class discussions. He is always willing to help out the teacher and his friends and takes pride in doing his best work. We are so proud of you!

Emmerson Nelson - 5C
Mrs. Hadrath's Class
Parents: Nicholas & Samantha Nelson
Emmerson is a wonderful student with a kind heart. She is a role model and a helper to her classmates. She does her very best in everything she does and loves taking on a challenge. She is an "awesome blossom!"

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COLLEGE NEWS

Gebur ranks near top at Iowa State

An Owatonna area student has been ranked among the top scholars at Iowa State University in Ames. Hannah Gebur is a senior in the College of Engineering. She is in the top 2% of students at Iowa State.

Lindholm named to Dean's List at Baylor
Reese Lindholm of Owatonna has been

named to the Dean's List for fall semester at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

Lindholm is a student in the College of Arts & Sciences at Baylor.

More than 5,000 students were named to the Dean's List. Students honored must earn a minimum semester GPA of 3.7 with no grade lower than a "C" while enrolled in at least 12 graded semester hours.

STEELE COUNTY Times

Always local, all the time.

A care that casts out fear



Pastor Micheal Simmerman

BETHEL CHURCH
OWATONNA

Currently our church is in the middle of a series in the book of Mark (in an effort to focus on Jesus as we approach Easter) and we just hit the account that

might be my very favorite in ALL the Gospels, for sure is one of the most famous, BUT its also kind of confusing the same time. It's the account of Jesus calming the storm in Mark 4:35-41 (its only seven verses – you should read it quick right now if you can!).

The reason this story is one of MY favorites is because of the glimpse you get of Jesus power here. Its kind of one of those “can you imagine being there moments” where in the middle of a huge storm, Jesus *talks to the weather* and it listens to him! I LOVE

seeing how powerful Jesus is, and I LOVE the reminder that all creation answers to him!

Here's where it gets confusing though, Jesus asks two corrective questions of the disciples in v40: “Why are you so afraid?” and “Do you still have no faith?”

Seems a little harsh right? If that were me with my kids in that boat and they were freaking out, I think I'd hug them afterwards and say something like: “It's okay now – and sorry I fell asleep!” Why does Jesus seem so corrective here?

Two reasons. And I think both will help US TODAY as we face into the “storms of life” that come our way.

Number 1, the doubt the disciples have here is whether or not Jesus CARES. Verse 38 quotes them as saying: “Don't you *care* that we drown.” That's very different from them saying “Help!” or “Hey we're going to drown if you don't do something fast!” They've allowed their circumstances to cast doubt on God's love and care for them – and because that's a dangerous place to be they are corrected

here for it. 1 Peter 5:7 invites us to “cast our cares on Him, because he CARES for us.” This means we will never be chided for bringing our concerns to God's attention – and you'll never have to doubt whether he CARES for you in the midst of a storm that has come your way.

The second thing to note here is that we can always trust GOD'S WORD. In verse 35 Jesus says: “Lets go to the other side.” Maybe this was not a Word that *seemed* hugely important to the disciples when Jesus said it; but when things around

them seemed to say the opposite of God's Word (namely that they might not make it to the other side because of the storm) they should have trusted God's Word and NOT the circumstances around them. You can do the same today. Anchor yourself to the Word of God, so that when life's storms come and tempt you to believe something different – you can confidently hold on to the One we're meant to cast our cares upon.

Cheering for you this week as you look to the one with power over everything you'll face!

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

LUTHERAN

AURORA LUTHERAN
6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna
507-451-2819
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.
Sundy School: 10:15 a.m.
office@auroralutheranchurch.org

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA
106 Third St. SE, Geneva
507-256-4288
Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.
Every 3rd Saturday at 5 p.m.
communitylutherangenevamn@gmail.com

FIRST LUTHERAN-AFLC
503 Radel Ct., Ellendale
507-684-2451
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Sunday School and Adult Bible Study 10:15 a.m.
Call to Prayer Monday 7 p.m.
Bible Study
Wednesday 9:30 a.m.
Confirmation
Wednesday 6-7 p.m.
Youth Group
Wednesday 7-9 p.m.
Men's Bible Study
Saturday 8 a.m.
firstlutheranellendale@yahoo.com

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507-583-6621
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Sunday School 10 a.m.
firstluthoffice@yahoo.com

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Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Sunday School and Adult Ed 10:15 a.m.
flchopemn@gmail.com

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN – LCMC
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507-451-4125
Sunday Hymn Service 8:30 a.m.
Sunday Praise Service, Sunday School & Bible Class 10 a.m.
info@gsowatonna.com

PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN – ELCA
9651 SW 75th St., Ellendale
507-213-0281
Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m.
Sunday School 9 a.m.
pontoppidanlemond@outlook.com

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1054 Truman Ave., Owatonna
507-451-2720
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Sunday Education Hour 10:15 a.m.
redeemerowatonna@outlook.com

RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN- ELCA
30456 Mower-Freeborn Rd., Austin
BP: 507-402-9333
Austin: 507-437-3000
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
www.rogolutheran.org

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507-528-2404
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. (2nd & 4th Sunday Holy Communion)
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Wednesday: Advent 7 p.m. (with Holy Communion)
sjlcoffice@frontiernet.net

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN – LCMC
28959 630th Ave., Sergeant
320-674-0351
Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m.
Sunday School 9 a.m.
www.saintjohnsargeant.jimdo.com

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1301 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
507-451-7293
Sunday & Summer Worship 8 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.
Thursday Worship 5:30 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
info@stjohnowatonna.com

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30450 570th Ave., Waltham
507-567-2474
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
Pastor Barbara Finley-Shea
FB - St. Michael's Youth Activities Waltham, MN

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN – LCMC
202 E Park Ave., Hollandale
507-567-2272
Sunday Worship 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
www.motorcitychurch.org

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2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden
507-451-2165
Sunday Worship 10 a.m.
deaconbilliejo@gmail.com

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609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
507-451-4520
Sunday Worship -Sanctuary 8:15 a.m. & 9:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall 10:45 a.m., Live Stream 9:30 a.m. at facebook.com/tlcowatonna and tlcowatonna.org/worshiplive
Live broadcast 9:30 a.m. on KRUE 92.1 FM, Video on Spectrum (CH181)
Metronet TV (Ch 900) and owatonnaalive.com Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday at 6 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m.
www.tlcowatonna.org/

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Sunday Worship 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
www.trinityhayfield.org

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108 Third Ave. SW, Medford
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Wednesday 6:30 p.m.
tlcmedfordoffice@gmail.com

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507-567-2272
Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

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www.litomysl.webs.com

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507-477-2256
Saturday Mass: 5p.m.
www.stcolumbanuschurch.com

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Saturday Mass: 5 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 12 p.m. (Spanish)
Reconciliation 4 p.m.
Saturday Adoration Thursdays 8 a.m. and 7 p.m.
www.sacredheartowatonna.org

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Sunday Mass: 10:00 a.m.
www.stcolumbanuschurch.com
columbanusbp@gmail.com

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Communion Service 8 a.m. Thursday
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m.
Adoration Chapel available Mon-Fri. 7 a.m. -5:30 p.m. (Key fob required after hours or weekend)
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Sunday Worship 9 a.m.
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Sunday Service: 10 a.m.
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Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.
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www.churchofjesuschrist.org

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www.ucc.org

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www.associatedchurch.org
office@associatedchurch.org

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Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
www.firstpresbyterianhayfield.com

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121 East St. N., Claremont
507-528-2320
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
www.faithstreet.com

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507-583-2673

Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
Sunday School: 9 a.m.
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Sunday School: 8:45 a.m.
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gracebaptistministry.org
info@gracebaptistministry.org

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Wednesday Evening: 7 p.m.
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Dodge County Wind project is back on track

BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After several delays that put the project on hold, Dodge County Wind's plan to build a wind farm that will produce almost 260 megawatts of renewable energy is back on track. The project will include 79 wind turbines in Steele and Dodge

Counties, said Mark Lennox, project manager for NextEra's wind projects in Minnesota. Dodge County Wind is a subsidiary of NextEra Energy.

The turbines themselves will be either 98 or 81 meters tall, Lennox said. That is an increase in height from the original plan, he said, but means that the same number of

turbines will be able to produce 259 megawatts of energy as opposed to the 170 megawatts originally anticipated.

The project's boundary, he said, is similar to the original one with the exception that the route for the 345-kV high-voltage transmission line will go to the Pleasant Valley substation instead of the Byron substation in the original plan.

There was some opposition to the original route of the transmission lines, but the company said at the time it was shelving the original plan because of the costs of connecting to the Byron substation. They also said they would resubmit their applications when an alternative location was found.

With the decision to connect to the Pleasant

Valley substation, the company resubmitted its applications for a certificate of need, site permit and transmission line permit to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Initial public meetings have been held and the PUC has been accepting comments from the public and all interested parties.

See WIND on B9 ▶



Mark Lennox

Arts Center showcases K-12 artists during Youth Art Month

BY JONI HUBRED
STAFF WRITER

Families, students, and teachers crowded into the Owatonna Arts Center Wednesday evening for an event celebrating young artists.

The opening reception welcomed works from Owatonna Public Schools K-12 students, which will be on display through March 27.

Standing proudly in the crowd, Aiden Klaehn pointed a reporter to his depiction of a tall tree with multicolored paper leaves attached to the branches. He used a sponge to paint a blue sky.

The Washington Elementary second grader said he loves art because "I get to use my hands and to paint."

His mother Shawna said Aiden's interest in art is especially encouraging, because he has a hearing impairment.

"Him being able to express himself (through art) is a real plus for us," she said.

Aiden's artwork was among a handful chosen from around 500 produced by Bridget Johnson's K-5 students. Each year, she selects two to four entries from each section she teaches.

"I try to pick kids who really put their heart and soul in it," she said.

Johnson mentions the show to her students at the beginning

See K-12 on B9 ▶



STAFF PHOTO BY JONI HUBRED

Washington Elementary second grader Aiden Klaehn proudly stands near the tree art he created as part of the Owatonna Public Schools K-12 Art Exhibit.

Here's how to snap out of a sour, depressed mood

It is that time of year again... Daylight Saving Time (DST).

Here are some quick DST trivia questions for you: Did Benjamin Franklin invent it? Nope, it was just supposed to be a joke.

Do farmers love it? Nope. They opposed it.

Does it save energy? Not recently. It is good for the economy? Nope. Does it have health benefits for animals and humans? That's a HUGE nope!

Feel free to do your own fun-fact-checking on Daylight Saving Time – it has quite an interesting history.

So why do we have Daylight Saving Time? Don't most people hate watching the sunset at 4 p.m. in the winter? And losing an hour of sleep has been proven that it isn't good for a lot of reasons.

Setting aside the DST debate, for now, I want to dig a little deeper into this last fact. Sleep loss... Is it that big of a deal? It feels to me, that people understand the basics of needing around eight hours of sleep for optimal health, but that MANY people do not make it a priority. So, what happens if you are lacking sleep anyway? What does all this sleepless fatigue result in? The answer is a lot of bad stuff.

First of all, it puts people in a sour, depressed mood. Some studies have shown increases in suicide numbers after the switch. A greater number of workplace injuries happen, and scariest of all, the first Monday after daylight saving time sees a shocking 25% spike in heart attacks. So yeah, messing with an entire population's biological clocks twice a year can have serious consequences.

The short-term consequences of sleep deprivation include poor judgment, depressed mood, decreased ability to learn and retain information, and the increased risk of serious accidents and injury. While these are definitely in the bad column, what happens if you are chronically lacking sleep? I mean, how many of you are feeling tired multiple times a week, month, or heck-going on years of not getting enough

See DEPRESSED on B11 ▶



Steele Talkin'
ANDREA MARSHALL



Newspaper clippings from the era reveal some of the history of the bootlegging operation located on a farm near Blooming Prairie.

A bootlegging lesson minus the booze

History Center reveals Steele County's seedy past

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

On Thursday evening residents packed into the Steele County History Center in Owatonna for a special presentation on the history of Prohibition era bootleggers in Steele County.

The presentation was given by Nancy Vaillancourt and Steve Wencil and was followed by historic pub trivia, where teams of attendees competed. Refreshments were served prior to Vaillancourt introducing Wencil, who delved

into the seedy history of the time.

Marked by a constitutional ban on alcoholic beverages and the consequent homebrewing and distributing of what at that time were elicit concoctions, the Prohibition era in American lasted from 1920 to 1933.

"Like many counties in the area, Prohibition sparked illegal alcohol consumption," Vaillancourt said in her introduction. "In Steele County it started early as it wasn't that difficult since many recent immigrants had already

been distilling at home."

Germans, Danes, Czechs, and Norwegians were already enjoying homemade drinks made from apples, plums, pears, potatoes, and grains. "All they had to do was tweak grandpa's recipe to their needs and no doubt grandpa was willing to help," Vaillancourt said.

As Prohibition and illegal alcohol distilling became the norm, stills popped up across the United States, including a large still and operation in the countryside near Blooming Prairie.

Wencil detailed the goings on in this later era of prohibition when Federal authorities began to crack down.

"Early on it was sheriffs and local," Wencil said. By the time Federal agents began sniffing around, a syndicate of bootleggers stretching from Milwaukee across southern Minnesota and into South Dakota had already been established. "Around 1928 they attracted the attention of the Wisconsin syndicate."

The people in the syndicate were im-

See BOOTLEGGING on B11 ▶



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Life lessons in after-school classes

BY KAY FATE
STAFF WRITER

Hilary Birdsell has been teaching Family and Consumer Sciences, or FACS, to sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students at Owatonna Middle School for almost seven years.

The course is a requirement for the two lower grades, and Birdsell admitted that some of those students aren't very excited to be there.

So imagine her surprise when some of those same students signed up for the after-school enrichment class she's teaching this month — a cooking class.

Enrichment is the key word: "These kids don't have to be here," she said. "They chose to do this."

The majority of the participants are sixth-graders, since they're not able to participate in sports yet, but there was a healthy blend of all three grades.

The four-week classes, which also include American Sign Language, climbing club and personal safety/self-defense, are held each Monday from 2:50-3:50. After a two-year hiatus because of COVID, the classes quickly filled up, said Sean Hughes, the activities director at OMS.

"We reached out to staff to see what they're willing to teach," he said of what subjects were offered. "Then we let the parents know — they're always told what the students chose, and what's involved."

This year, the classes are free, and judging by the looks on the kids' faces — valuable.

COOKING CLUB

"Back in the day, there was an old ... metaphor? ... that a watched pot never boils," Birdsell told her group of 24 young cooks, "so you're going to put the lid on it and walk away."

They were making bacon mac and cheese, done the old-fashioned way: boiling noodles, adding grated cheese and herbs, frying bacon and using some of the fat to make a roux with flour, milk and water.

"I think it's a mixed bag," Birdsell said of the varying skill levels in the kitchen. "I think during the pandemic, some of them had to step up and do some of the cooking."

Eighth-grader Boldin Krause, who is taking the elective FACS class during school hours, is acting as Birdsell's sous chef for the enrichment course.

"It's just like, all these little things can come together and make this great end product," Boldin said. "It's just like science: If there's too much or too little of something, it changes the result."

That's just what Birdsell likes to hear.

"They're getting more comfortable in the kitchen, they're getting more comfortable with themselves, they're problem-solving," she said. "They're building relationships outside of class, because it's a common interest. Everybody has memories about food, so it's a bond — and they can take home what they learn."

CLIMBING CLUB

Amanda Flohrs waited until after her class was over to talk about her young climbers — a wise decision when pre-teens are dangling dozens of feet in the air.

The climbing wall at OMS just went in last fall; she's one of three physical education teachers who has been trained in all of the safety measures, and is able to train others.

Still, not all the students have had a chance to scale the wall in gym class, so this is their first chance at it.

"It's going really good," Flohrs said. "We're glad it fit in" to the enrichment schedule, since getting into the gym can be difficult because of sports practices.

"Not all of the kids are gung-ho on joining athletics," she said, "and they're recognizing it's not just a 'gym' activity."

One of her students has plans to go rock-climbing with his grandpa, Flohrs said, proving that it's a skill that has few limits.

Like the kids in the cooking club, they're building relationships,



STAFF PHOTO BY KAY FATE

Eleanor Studnicka, left, measures the milk needed for her group's bacon mac and cheese, while Jaylin Kilwine scoops the shredded cheese they'll need. Both are members of the Owatonna Middle School's Cooking Club enrichment class.



STAFF PHOTO BY KAY FATE

Brielle Goodnature, right, puts the lid back on her group's pan of boiling water after a brief boil-over incident. Kayla Pastika, left, kept her distance from the steaming pot. The sixth-graders are in the Cooking Club enrichment class at Owatonna Middle School.

learn the action, but if you practice the first three, that can protect us from needing the action," Meagher said.

"It's not so much self-defense as personal safety; these kids are still at risk of abduction," he said — not necessarily from a stranger kidnapping, but getting out of situations they may have been manipulated into.

"I stress to avoid isolation at all costs," Meagher said. "There's more to personal safety than learning how to fight," though they will be taught how to use their feet and knees as "disrupters," as well as some grappling.

The students are an equal mix of boys and girls, as well as grade levels.

Perhaps most important, he said, is teaching them all "to communicate and to treat others with respect."

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

Bridget Gilormini knew she was doing something right with just one question: "Is this class available at the high school?"

It's not, but Gilormini, a speech/language pathologist at OMS, is considering offering a community ed class in ASL.

Though she's not an interpreter, she has "foundational knowledge of its use," thanks to her work in college.

By the end of the four-week session, Gilormini's students will have learned 200-300 words, through finger-spelling and other gestures.

"They're having so much fun," she said, and learning a valuable skill: ASL is the third most commonly used language in the U.S., after English and Spanish.

Learning how to communicate is more than just the words; the students are also studying the different facial expressions and body language used, as well.

Though only one of the students has a personal connection with the need to use ASL, it's a way of life for up to a half-million people in the U.S. and Canada.

That simply adds to the value of the class, said Gilormini.

"There's nothing as beautiful as hearing your own language," she said.

she said, "and they only met each other because of this class."

PERSONAL SAFETY

"A lot of kids get excited about this because they think they're going to learn karate," said Tom Meagher, the STEM coordinator for the Owatonna School District.

He's a third-degree black belt, but that's definitely not the focus in his class of 20 students.

Instead, he emphasizes awareness, avoidance, assertion and action as ways to protect themselves and others when trouble occurs.

"They just want to

St. Mary's School Shining Knights



Student Name:
STELLA
Grade: **4th Grade**
Parents: **Eric & Tara**



Student Name:
GRAM
Grade: **1st Grade**
Parents: **Brian & Sarah**

Stella is a shining knight in our 4th grade classroom! She has a bubbly, friendly personality that instantly brightens your day. Stella is a wonderful example of what it means to follow Jesus. She has such a wonderful heart and genuinely cares about her classmates as well as her teachers. She is friendly, kind, helpful, and a thoughtful friend to all. Stella is always prepared to lend a hand when needed. She is a creative thinker and avid sharer of what she is passionate about. Stella is always ready to give her best and work her way through a problem. She sets a terrific example to her classmates and shows everyone what it means to be a shining knight at our school!

Gram is a very kind and caring student in our first grade classroom. He puts others first and is willing to help everyone. He leads by example with his listening skills, participation, and polite manners. He knows our class routines and gets started on tasks right away. Gram has a big heart and is always very thoughtful of his peers. Congratulations Gram on being our St. Mary's School Shining Knight!

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BLOOMING PRAIRIE

MARCH 17 Board Meeting
7 p.m.— Band Concert at High School

MARCH 22 10 a.m. — Online Storytime, BP Library

MARCH 21 7 p.m.— BP School

ELLEDALE/HOPE/GENEVA

MARCH 18 Community Building
11 a.m. — SEMCAC, Community Building

MARCH 23 11 a.m. — SEMCAC, Community Building

MARCH 21 11 a.m. — SEMCAC,

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

MARCH 17-19 9 a.m. — North American Farm & Power Show, Four Seasons Centre

MARCH 19 1 p.m. — Jazz Groove, The Fore Most 6 p.m. — Owatonna Business Women — Woman of Achievement Banquet, Owatonna Country Club

MARCH 21 7 p.m. — Medford Zoning Board Meeting, City Hall

MARCH 22 10 a.m. — Memory Café, History Center 10:30 a.m. — Online Storytime, Owatonna Library 4 p.m. — OPU Commission Meeting, OPU 5 p.m. — Steele County Board Meeting, County Admin Building

MARCH 25 3 p.m. — KOWZ Home & Recreation Show, Four Seasons Centre

Lenten benefit fish dinner in Owatonna Friday

The Knights of Columbus Lenten benefit fish dinner will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday, March 18, at the KC Hall in Owatonna. The "All you care to eat" dinner will be served in the KC Hall and in the Lounge and features baked and fried fish, whipped potatoes with country gravy, vegetable, roll, coleslaw, coffee and milk. Cost is \$13 in advance and \$14 at the door, with children under the age of 6 eating free. Advance tickets can be purchased from Knights of Columbus Council 945 or at the KC Hall, 820 S Elm Ave.

Nomination deadline nears for Book of Golden Deeds

The Exchange Club of Owatonna will be holding the bi-annual Book of Golden Deeds Banquet on April 21. Nominations for this award are due by March 24. The Banquet will be held at Torey's upper level starting at 6 p.m. Guest Speaker will be Annette Duncan, president of Steele County United Way. Questions or for nomination forms contact Sharon Klein at 507-363-0143 or sharonk1949@gmail.com. Nomination forms should be mailed to 240 15th St SW, Owatonna, MN 55060.

CERT is searching for volunteers, to begin new member class

When natural and human-caused disasters strike in a community the resulting damage can overwhelm local emergency responders and resources. They can interrupt transportation and utility and communication networks, leaving individuals and neighborhoods isolated from outside support.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) promotes a partnership between emergency services and the people they serve. CERT volunteers take classes in disaster preparedness, fire suppression, medical operations, light search and rescue, terrorism response, team organization and disaster psychology. Training requires 24 hours of instruction.

In Steele County, CERT volunteers have responded to events including road closures, flooding, tornadoes and missing persons. Some tasks performed include sand bagging, road closures, door-to-door canvassing, damage assessment, searches, river gauge monitoring, sheltering, Holiday Train perimeter safety. Other events include opportunities for more



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Steele County's CERT team is searching for new members to join the effort in helping the community during crisis events.

training and drills. As a volunteer, you participate in only those events you want to. Most importantly you will learn how to take care of yourself and family first in an emergency. You will meet some fantastic people in CERT, and you will have a special bond with your classmates. The next CERT class

runs from March 29 through April 26. If you are interested in joining the class, please call Bonnie Johnson at 507-390-2385. All participants that complete the class receive a free bag of CERT gear. You must be 16 years old and able to pass a background check to join CERT. You must register through Community Ed

in the spring/summer session. Call 507-444-7900 to register. The classes are free. Class Schedule: March 29, 31 and April 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21 and 26. All classes are from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on the third floor of the Owatonna Fire Station. To graduate all class sessions must be completed.

Senior Alliance to offer Advance Care Planning

Senior Alliance for Steele County will offer a free presentation explaining Advance Care Planning and Health Care Directives at 3 or 6 p.m., Thursday, March 31, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna. Pat Heydon, coor-

dinator and trained facilitator for Honoring Choices Advance Care Planning for Faribault and Owatonna, will tell those attending the importance of health care directives and the importance of honoring one's wishes for health care and treatment.

Persons of any age will find this presentation of interest as a health care crisis or life-limiting diagnosis can happen at any age in life. Oftentimes an unforeseen incident will force health related discussions and quick decisions. Heydon will

cover the process of writing your Health Care Directive while posing questions to help you determine the what if's as it pertains to your care choices. Admission is free to this to this informational session. Please RSVP to Melissa at 507-270-1450.

BP groups host Veterans Memorial Raffle

Blooming Prairie is gearing up for Memorial Day. Tickets are currently on sale for the Blooming Prairie Veterans Memorial Raffle to take place on Memorial Day,

May 30. The prizes include: first- 74 by 74-inch "Shenandoh" quilt pieced and quilted by Christine Butler; second- \$100 cash and third- \$50 cash.

It's not necessary to be present to win. Tickets may be purchased at the Servicemen's Club Fox Hole, American Legion and Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion.

People may also call Marilyn Meshke at 507-583-2439 or Tom Peterson at 507-456-2017. The raffle winners will be announced on Memorial Day at 12 p.m. at the Servicemen's Club.

NAMI offers free mental health classes

The National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota (NAMI) Minnesota has set up a wide variety of free online mental health classes for March and April, along with some in-person classes. They include classes such as Hope for Recovery, Family to Family,

In Our Own Voice, Creating Caring Communities, Ending the Silence, Understanding Early Episode Psychosis for Families, a suicide prevention class called QPR — Question, Persuade and Refer, a special QPR class for Agricultural Communities, and more.

The classes are designed for family members and caregivers, persons living with a mental illness, service providers, and also the general public. Find a complete listing of these classes and how to join in by going to namimn.org and clicking on "Classes" or go straight

to https://namimn.org/education-public-awareness/classes/scheduled/. NAMI is a non-profit organization that works to improve the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families through its programs of education, support and advocacy.

Parkinson's group to meet March 22

The Parkinson's Support Group will be meeting on Tuesday, March 22 from 2-3:30 p.m. in the Gainey

Room at the Owatonna Public Library. This month's speaker will be Edna Ringhofer, executive director of

Healthy Seniors of Steele County. She will be sharing the support services they have available.

The group meets the fourth Tuesday of each month. It is open to all who have Parkinson's and their caregivers.

Sudoku Corner

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

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

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HBC Luminet - 15
MetroNet - 13, 105, 106, 107
Mediacom - 2, 7, 11, 13, 118, 119, 120, 802, 813
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Huskies advance to section finals after dumping Lakeville North

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna Huskies boys basketball team brought down the Lakeville North Panthers 83-66 last Saturday to advance to the Section 1AAAA championship game on Friday.

Owatonna battled foul trouble in the game with senior forward and all-time school scoring record holder Evan Dushek receiving his fourth foul just 20 seconds into the second half.

However, on a night where Dushek was forced to sit on the bench longer than usual, it was the play of Huskies' guard Ty Creger that Owatonna head coach Josh Williams said sparked the Owatonna offense.

"Ty was a stud tonight. I mean there's no other way to put it... He was exceptional all night long. And we needed him to step up with Evan out dealing with foul trouble. I mean, 25 points, eight assists, zero turnovers... that's a pretty damn good stat line," said Williams.

Owatonna came out in its usual hot-shooting form and shot a blistering 57.1% from the field while also knocking down 50% of its three-point attempts in the first half.

Lakeville North was able to keep the game within double digits; however, it was the Huskies who took a 41-32 lead into halftime.

Coming out of halftime was where the game began to change for the Huskies.

Dushek recorded his fourth foul of the game just 20 seconds into the 17-minute second half, and was forced to be taken off the court by Williams to protect his big man from fouling out.

With Dushek's scoring and rebounding presence being sorely missed in the paint, it was Creger and Williams who put on a scoring clinic to fill in for Dushek on the scoreboard.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Owatonna senior guard Ty Creger passes the ball as he crosses the key against Lakeville North. Creger had a season-best 25 points in the Huskies' 83-66 win against the Panthers last Saturday.

Creger picked the right night to score a season-best 25 points while Williams continued his hot-streak with a team-high 29-point

performance. Both sides battled again in the second half; however, it was Owatonna that once again got the best of

Lakeville North by outscoring the Panthers 42-34.

Free throws and turnovers proved to be vital for the Huskies as Owatonna was more efficient in both categories.

The Huskies converted 18-24 free throws compared to Lakeville North's mark of 9-18, while the Huskies also won the turnover margin with four turnovers to the Panthers' 16.

Earlier in the week, Owatonna took home another win against

Rochester Mayo 70-52.

The Huskies dominated from the opening tipoff and more than doubled Mayo's score at halftime, 41-20.

Owatonna proceeded to close the game out in the second half and brought down the Spartans 70-52 behind a team-high 33 points by Evan Dushek.

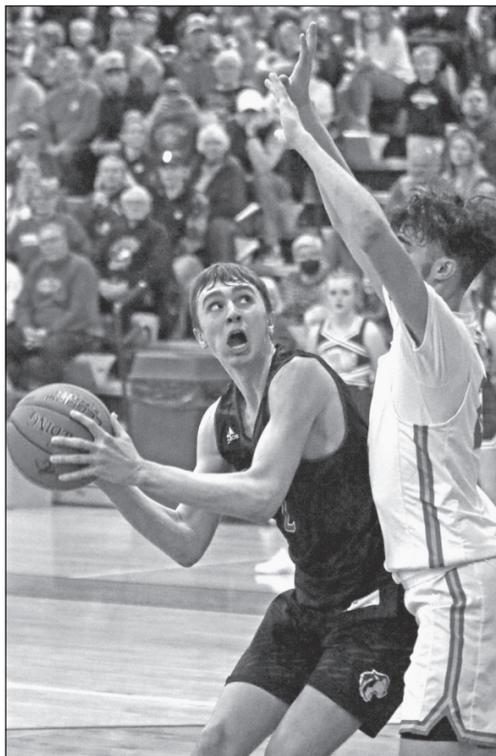
Huskies fans can watch their team compete for the Section 1AAAA championship at the Mayo Civic Center on Friday at 6 p.m.

Player Stats vs. Lakeville North

	P	R	A
B. Williams	29	9	6
Creger	25	10	8
Dushek	15	4	0
Burmeister	7	2	1
N. Williams	3	0	0
Ginskey	2	3	1
Hartman	2	0	0
Vick	0	4	0

vs. Mayo

	P	R	A
Dushek	33	12	1
B. Williams	18	8	8
Creger	10	7	4
Burmeister	4	0	2
N. Williams	3	2	0
Vick	2	3	2
Ginskey	0	4	0
Hartman	0	1	0



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

The Owatonna Huskies student section erupts after the Huskies nail a three-point shot against the Lakeville North Panthers. Huskies fans had plenty to cheer about in Owatonna's 83-66 semifinal win over Lakeville North.

Four Huskies achieve All-Conference

Four Huskies from the unbeaten conference champion team have been named to the Big Nine All-Conference.

Brayden Williams, Evan Dushek, Ty Creger and Blake Burmeister of Owatonna were all selected as Big Nine All-Conference athletes last week.

Williams, Creger and Burmeister were selected to the team for their consistent play as guards, while Dushek was selected to the team for his scoring



Burmeister Creger Dushek Williams

and rebounding prowess as a forward.

The Huskies' four selections are the most on the All-Conference roster and feature four of the Huskies' five starting athletes.

Williams, Dushek and Creger receive this year's honors as seniors while Burmeister will attempt to

repeat the feat when he returns next year as a senior.

Owatonna's four all-conference athletes will do their best to keep up their strong play when the Huskies head to the Mayo Civic Center on Friday for the Section 1AAAA championship game against Farmington.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Owatonna senior forward Evan Dushek focuses on the rim before a free throw attempt against Lakeville North. Dushek broke the Owatonna all-time scoring record last week by surpassing Drew Lundberg's previous record of 1,565 points.

Huskies' Dushek breaks school scoring record

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Senior forward Evan Dushek became Owatonna's all-time leading scorer with 1,588 points after dropping 33 points against Rochester Mayo in the Section 1AAAA quarterfinal game last week.

Dushek scored 33 points in the win, but only needed 12 to surpass former Husky Drew Lundberg's mark of 1,565 points set back in the 2007 season.

The senior broke the mark in a way most Huskies fans have seen him score his points

over the course of his career: on a drive to the basket.

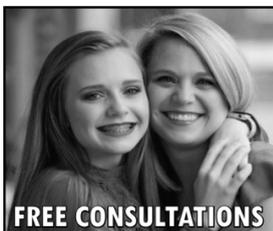
It's no secret that at six-foot-eight, Dushek is already a force to be reckoned with in the paint, but as teams have learned over the course of Dushek's career with the Huskies, he's a threat to score anywhere on the court.

Dushek added to his scoring title lead in his next game against Lakeville North last Saturday as well, dropping another 15 points in Owatonna's 83-66 semifinal win at home to move the record to 1,603 points.

Trailing close behind Dushek is fellow senior Brayden Williams, who currently sits in third place on the all-time scoring list with 1,468 points.

Williams will need to score 98 points before the end of the season to surpass Lundberg's 1,565-point mark and enter into second place behind Dushek.

Dushek will look to further improve the record this week as he and the Huskies prepare to face Farmington in the Section 1AAAA championship game at the Mayo Civic Center on Friday at 6 p.m.



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Huskies adapted floor hockey state-bound

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The Owatonna Huskies adapted floor hockey will compete at the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) state tournament at Bloomington Jefferson High School on Friday, March 18 after upsetting No. 3 White Bear Lake in the Section 1A championship game as a six-seed.

The section title brings Owatonna back to the state tournament for the first time in four years.

"There was a ton of excitement. When it was all said and done after the White Bear Lake game, the kids were so excited that now we get to go do this bigger, cooler thing than just a normal game. Personally, I was ecstatic," said Owatonna head coach John Scheil.

The Huskies finished the regular season with a 2-5 overall record. However, the team strung together two section wins when it counted to make its run to the state tournament.

Owatonna will look to earn its second adapted floor hockey state title, after having won the tournament back in 2004.

However, according to Scheil, winning state is not the Hus-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Owatonna's adapted floor hockey players are making their best performances when it matters most. Despite a 2-5 record, the Huskies qualified for this week's state tournament in Bloomington. The team consists of 12 players.

kies' only objective at the tournament.

"I'm so happy that our five seniors get to experience the state tournament. Some of them have been there before, but others have not and it's just so incredibly cool that they get to end their careers in such a big way."

Senior leadership at the tournament will come from center Javelle Higgs, forwards Ryan Gander and Jessica Parson, and defensemen Kerryn Keller and Chloe Talley.

When asked about a game plan for the tournament, Scheil said that all he's asked of his team is that they

go out, compete hard and find ways to put shots on net.

"We have a couple of kids who can score really well. Above and beyond that, this has been the best year for us in terms of growth. We've developed greatly as a team over the course of the season."

After eight years at the helm of the adapted floor hockey team, Scheil will look to take his athletes to the top of the Class A ranks and earn his first state title as Owatonna's head coach.

Fans can watch the Huskies compete at the state tournament at Bloomington Jefferson High School on Friday at 6:30 p.m.

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Way to go, Huskies!

Special congratulations to the Owatonna Adaptive Floor Hockey team on qualifying for this week's state tournament!

They will be competing at Bloomington Jefferson on Friday and Saturday.



Members of the Owatonna Adaptive Floor hockey team include:

back row, from left: Coach CW Wolfe, Isabel Ihrke, Jesse Fonner, Chloe Talley, Javelle Higgs, Ryan Gander, Head Coach John Scheil and Coach Kyle Burns; front row: Emilee Moffett, Alexis Talley, Josiah Aviles, Joseph Poole, Kyle Goergen, Jessica Parsons and Kerryn Keller.

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Williams earns Big Nine Coach of the Year

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Owatonna boys basketball head coach Josh Williams earned Big Nine Coach of the Year honors last Thursday after the Huskies finished the regular season 24-2 overall with a perfect 22-0 in-conference record.

Williams and his squad only lost two regular-season games to non-conference opponents Robbinsdale Armstrong and Park of Cottage Grove, with both losses coming by a combined total of eight points.

“It’s taken a lot of hard work to get to this point, but I say it a lot, ‘You’re only as good as who you surround yourself with.’ And that goes for both coaches and players,” said Williams.

Williams will look



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Owatonna head coach Josh Williams talks to seniors Brayden Williams, Ty Creger and Connor Ginskey in a huddle during a break in the game. Williams received Big Nine Coach of the Year honors last week after leading the Huskies to 26-2 overall and 22-0 in-conference records.

to make it back-to-back state tournament appearances with his Huskies squad this season as the team

prepares for the section finals against Farmington at the Mayo Civic Center on Friday at 6 p.m.

Aside from leading the boys team to a perfect in-conference record, Williams has seen plenty of team and individual athletes’ success over the course of the year.

The Huskies’ perfect in-conference record earned the team its seventh Big Nine Conference title in school history, while the team’s overall and in-conference records are the best since the 2006-2007 season when the Huskies went 25-3 overall and 15-2 in-conference.

As for individual player accomplishments, Williams saw his son, Brayden, score his 1,000th point against Park of Cottage Grove in January while also coaching senior forward Evan Dushek all the way to breaking the Owatonna school record for points with

1,603 and counting.

According to Williams, this season has been unlike any other year he has seen in his 19 years of being Owatonna’s head coach, and he and the Huskies are confident that this year is their year to make a state title run.

Williams said that he believes that his team’s biggest strength is its ability to create on offense, even noting that some nights he only has to call a couple of plays while for the most part letting his athletes run the offense themselves.

Owatonna fans can watch the Huskies face Farmington on Friday at the Mayo Civic Center at 6 p.m. in hopes of witnessing their team punch its ticket to the state tournament beginning on Wednesday, March 23 at the Target Center.



Steele Sports
JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

NFL quarterback carousel in full swing

Over the course of the past two weeks, one of the biggest topics amongst sports fans has been the chaos of the quarterback carousel currently going on in the NFL.

It seemed like months that we had to listen to rumors of the fate of the Packers’ franchise as Aaron Rodgers played pigskin-politics in deciding where he wanted to take his talents.

Ultimately, much to the chagrin of Vikings and Bears fans alike, Rodgers decided that he will be staying put in Green Bay, albeit for a handsome payday.

While it is currently unconfirmed, initial rumors said that Rodgers would be sticking around Green Bay for another for years to the tune of \$200 million.

However, Rodgers signing in Green Bay is honestly the least surprising move of the off-season so far.

Possibly the biggest move to date has been Russell Wilson being traded to Denver for draft picks, tight end Noah Fant and quarterback Drew Lock.

It appeared Wilson’s tenure in Seattle came to a close after tensions with the front office boiled over regarding Wilson’s financial future with the team.

Wilson will be stepping into an already loaded AFC West Conference with the likes of the Chiefs, Chargers and Raiders.

Also on the move was former Colts quarterback Carson Wentz, who will likely suit up as the first-ever Washington Commanders quarterback next fall.

Since being drafted second overall by the Eagles in 2016, Wentz has been hindered by injuries and inconsistent play.

While many may view signing Wentz as a gamble, I like the Commanders taking a chance on Wentz’s potential.

Wentz will step into a freshly rebranded team with a reinvigorated fanbase and hope to follow suit by reviving his career and proving the doubters and nay-sayers wrong.

Not yet on the move at the time of press, but potentially finding their way to new homes are Raiders’ quarterback Derek Carr and Vikings quarterback Kirk Cousins.

Rumors have been swirling that Carr could be traded to the Colts after Wentz’s departure; however, I find this unlikely as it would not make sense for the Raiders to give up a viable starting quarterback after Denver just upped its offense.

Such a move would likely put the Raiders out of contention in the AFC West and put them in a harsh position for a rebuild.

As for Cousins, rumors have connected the Vikings’ passer to the Seahawks and Colts as potential suitors.

While the Vikings front office has come See STEELE SPORTS on B7 ▶

Grunwald caps Huskies career with state title

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

As the end of the winter sports schedule draws near, a moment from the season that will stand out forever in Owatonna sports history is Rian Grunwald’s 114-pound state title at the Minnesota State High School League state meet.

Not only did Grunwald take home the first girls state title for Owatonna High School by accomplishing the feat, but she also made Minnesota wrestling history by becoming the first-ever girls champ at 114 pounds.

“I think it was a moment of realization that everything that I had ever worked for paid off. It was an exciting moment to share with my coaches and teammates,” said Grunwald.

Grunwald’s storybook path to achieving Minnesota wrestling immortality involved more than just dominant wins, it also took adjustments and a winning mentality to put her atop the podium.

After taking second place to Aitkin’s Madelyn Strohmayer at the Pine Island Girls Tournament back in February, Grunwald



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Owatonna senior captain Rian Grunwald secures three near-fall points as she attempts to pin her opponent in the state championship match. Grunwald did not get the pin, but walked away as Minnesota’s first-ever 114-pound girls state-title winner with a dominant 10-2 major decision win.

“It was a moment of realization that everything that I had ever worked for paid off.”

Rian Grunwald
State Wrestling Champion

and Owatonna head coach Derek Johnson knew that they may face Strohmayer again at the state meet.

As fate aligned itself, Grunwald and Strohmayer both qualified for the state meet with dominant performances at sections and eyed one another at the opposite side of the 114-pound bracket.

After Grunwald beat Sauke Center-Melrose’s Lanna Walter and Strohmayer defeat-

ed New Prague’s Destiney Lofton in the semifinals, the two were slated to meet again in the state championship with the season on the line.

“For her, it was state title or bust. We were completely on the path to gold for her. We knew the adjustments that we had to make after the loss at Pine Island, and we drilled them constantly at practice in case they met again... she executed the game plan

perfectly when it counted,” said Owatonna head coach Derek Johnson.

Back in February at the Pine Island Girls Tournament, Grunwald found herself on the wrong side of a 6-4 decision loss against Strohmayer, and was forced to stand in second on the podium after a hard-fought tournament.

This time around, the senior left no doubt as to who the top 114-pounder in the state was.

Grunwald executed her shots perfectly and rode out her opponent with multiple near-fall attempts en route to a dominant 10-2 major decision win.

Smiles and cheers were abundant as Grunwald ran over to Johnson, who lifted his senior captain up and paraded her around the mat for a full Xcel Energy Center crowd to marvel at her accomplishment.

The state title win may have been Grunwald’s last go around in a Huskies uniform, however, the senior is slated to continue her wrestling career at the University of Wisconsin, Steven Point next season.

Panther girls fall in section semis

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

The NRHEG Panthers were defeated 70-64 by Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial (LCWM) in the Section 2AA semifinals last week to officially end the Panthers’ 2021-2022 season.

NRHEG’s record was finalized at 20-10 overall and 13-3 in-conference after the result.

“I am incredibly proud of this team and all that they have ac-

complished. Throughout the whole season, they battled and never gave up. They showcased that again tonight,” said NRHEG head coach Onika Peterson. “Going into halftime down by 10 with LCWM hitting big shots the easy way out would have been to give up. We never did, they battled until the last second... which is something I have witnessed all year long.”

Despite a strong offensive start for the Panthers, LCWM was

able to take a 10-point lead into halftime behind a blistering 40-point first half.

After making adjustments at halftime, the Panthers returned to the court and battled in the second half, but were unable to close the 10-point gap.

The Panthers managed to outscore the Knights 34-30 in the second half, but ultimately fell 70-64 to the Knights at the final buzzer.

Senior captain Sophie Stork put on

a show in her final game as a Panther, and put up a team-high 30 points in the loss.

Stork also led the team in rebounds with seven to go with one assist, one steal and one block.

The Panthers will miss Stork’s presence on the court next season, but will be happy to return all 10 other players on the roster.

Peterson said that she is proud of Stork’s hard work and leadership over the course of her career as a Pan-

ther. She added she is excited to see how her team comes back and develops next season.

The Panthers will be a senior-heavy team next year as five of the returning 10 athletes will be seniors.

Player Stats vs. LCWM

	P	R	A
Stork	30	7	1
S. Schultz	11	5	3
F. Nielsen	8	5	0
Jacobson	6	1	2
P. Nielsen	6	2	0
VanMaldeghem	3	4	0
H. Schultz	0	4	0
Murray	0	2	0

Medford on short end in triple digit blow out

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Maple River topped triple digits on the scoreboard in a one-sided 107-44 win against Medford last week.

The loss for Medford officially ends the Tigers' 2021-2022 season with an overall record of 1-26 and an in-conference record of 0-18.

The game got out of hand fast for the Tigers with the Eagles jumping out to a dominant 63-16 lead at halftime.

Medford had shown over the course of the season that it is a team that can score second-half points in bunches. However, there was no chance of a comeback for the Tigers against the Eagles offense.

While Medford added 28 more points to finish with 44, Maple River scored 44 more points to top the 100-mark for the first time on the season.

Despite the loss, Medford was rather effective from inside the arc and shot 64.7% on its two-point shots.

The difference in the game for Maple River came from points off of turnovers and offensive rebounds.

Medford gave up 23 turnovers over the course of the game, allowing Maple River to

have extra possessions and second-chance points on offense.

Leading the Tigers in scoring was junior Austin Erickson, who had 17 points in the game.

Medford had struggled against the Eagles all season with the first-place Eagles squad winning all three of the two teams' meetings.

Maple River took home a decisive 96-44 win against Medford on the road in December before totaling the Tigers 94-20 at home in January leading up to last week's game.

The Tigers knew it was going to be a tall task going into the game against the Eagles, who only lost one conference game against Hayfield in January and came into the game on a six-game winning streak.

The final loss puts an end to the Tigers' season, as head coach Steve Boehning will look to move forward and continue to shift Medford's culture in a positive direction for next season.

Player Stats vs. Maple River			
	P	R	A
Erickson	20	5	2
Grayson	9	6	3
Jones	5	1	1
Buck	4	0	0
Paulson	3	1	2
Sutcliffe	3	2	1

Bluejays eliminate NRHEG from playoffs

BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS
SPORTS EDITOR

Waseca officially ended NRHEG's 2021-2022 season after the Jays edged the Panthers 69-64 to eliminate NRHEG from the section playoffs.

The loss moves NRHEG's overall record to 15-11 to finish the season.

"We played an OK first half and had a good second half, but in the end, it wasn't quite enough for our season to keep going on. In the first half, I thought we had some good looks in the lane for shots and just missed them, but we also turned the ball over too much. Our defense was OK for the most part, but they had guys make shots from the outside with hands in their faces," said NRHEG head coach Isaiah Lundberg.

The missed shots and turnovers piled up fast for NRHEG as the Panthers fought to stay close with the Bluejays in the first half.

Waseca jumped out to a 32-18 lead at halftime as a result, while the Panthers tried to regroup at halftime.

In the second half, NRHEG found the answer for its offensive woes and went on to score 46 points, but it was still not enough to catch Waseca.

The Bluejays put together a 37-point second half, and while they were outscored by nine points, the Bluejays still managed to win thanks to its 14-point

lead at halftime.

"In the second half, we got down by as much as 18 before we started to get back into the game. We got more good looks and this time we made them. We also did a much better job of getting fouled and going to the free-throw line. We ended up getting the lead down to four points a couple of times in the second half... but we just ran out of time."

The majority of the Panthers' scoring came from its big three consisting of seniors Porter Peterson and Tyrone Wilson, as well as sophomore Daxter Lee.

Wilson led the Panthers with 22 points and 13 rebounds, while Peterson added 20 points and five assists, and Lee recorded 18 points.

Also scoring two points to round out the score for NRHEG were Jack Olson and Jaxon Beck with two points each.

"I just want to finish with how proud I am of not only my seniors for their hard work, but also for this team that never quit at any point during the season, always found a way to get back into games, and usually took the lead in these situations," Coach Lundberg said.

Player Stats vs. Waseca			
	P	R	A
Wilson	22	13	0
Peterson	20	0	5
Lee	18	0	0
Olson	2	6	0
Beck	2	0	0

NFL quarterback carousel in full swing

STEELE SPORTS from B6 out saying that they still have confidence in Cousins' ability to lead the offense, it would not be surprising to see the Vikings make a move if the price is right in my opinion.

Regardless, there is still plenty of action to come in the 2022 quarterback carousel and NFL fans looking for some football entertainment can feel free to follow the action on my Twitter at JohnnieP_SCT as I attempt to keep up with the chaos.

Weight shift works to King's benefit at SDSU

BY BARBARA BOXLEITNER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The move to a heavier weight class worked to Cade King's benefit.

The Owatonna High School graduate had a 14-9 record in the 184-pound class for the South Dakota State University wrestling team.

"He's gotten bigger. He's gotten stronger. It suits him a little better," South Dakota State head coach Darnion Hahn said. "He's wrestling the best we've seen him."

The junior competed in the 174 class the previous two seasons, compiling a 10-10 mark last year and a 9-19 one as a true freshman.

He said the coach asked him to move to the heavier class. "I'm a lot happier," he said. "They're a bit stronger. At 174 I felt pretty strong. Now I'm kind of average, if not smaller."

King had a season-best five-match winning streak during January and won nine of 12 matches from Jan. 15 to Feb. 20. He won a 13-6 decision over his Maryland opponent to start the streak. Eight of the victories were by decision.

Included in the streak was an upset victory over his ranked Missouri opponent during the team's away win. They were tied 4-4 at the end of regulation, and King prevailed 6-4 with a takedown for the sudden death victory.

"That was a big confidence booster. I don't need to go out there and do anything special," he said. "I've found a consistency. I've been the aggressor, always moving forward. They're having to react to what I'm doing. I'm moving my hands, moving my feet."

He also cited a better mental approach.



COURTESY DAVE EGGEN-INERTIA SPORTS MEDIA

Cade King of Owatonna has piled up a record of 14-9 for South Dakota State University. He wrestled in the 184-pound class.

"Coming in relaxed, not tense and be confident in my training," he said.

King was confident heading into the Big 12 Conference championship, where he was seeded fifth and hoping to earn a bid to the NCAA Championship. But he was eliminated after losing matches by 5-2 and 4-2 decisions, respectively.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Former Huskie Nolan Malo has been named to the all-Min-

nesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference second team. The Gustavus Adolphus College senior finished 10th in the conference with 6.1 rebounds per game. He had a 11.9 scoring average, second on the squad.

MEN'S INDOOR TRACK

Owatonna alumnus Braydon Kubat ran the lead leg of the University of Minnesota Duluth distance medley relay that placed third and scored at the Northern Sun Intercollegiate

Conference Championship.

Blooming Prairie resident Steven Miner tied for third in the high jump at the NSIC Indoor Challenge. The University of Sioux Falls senior scored by jumping 6 feet, 2 inches.

Barbara Boxleitner is a correspondent focused on providing updates on college athletes from the area. She may be reached at jdanddoc@gmail.com.

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EDITOR
DEB FLEMMING

SPORTS
JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

NEWS
KAY FATE
HOWARD LESTRUD
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Healing Arts debuts four new artists

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

The Owatonna Arts Center Healing Arts Program will feature a quartet of new artists this spring season. Their works will be on display at the hospital in Owatonna from March until June.

Each artist's works offer a unique experience for the viewer and each artist has a story to tell which lends itself to their creations. Mady Boison, Jenna Hestekin, Patricia Dunn Walker, and Tamsin Barlow will have their art featured throughout the hospital.

Boison, born and raised in Owatonna, specializes in interesting portraits. "I don't know if I consider myself a professional artist, but I guess I would say I'm a serious artist," Boison said. She first began taking a serious approach towards art after she was laid off from her job during the peak of the pandemic.

"I had this itch to create," Boison recalls. "I call my style of art intuition art because I don't use sketches and I don't use references, I get myself into a flow state and let myself create and I about art sometimes as a language, it's a universal language really."

Now back to work, Boison continues to create her intriguing profiles of faces drawn up from her memory. "My goal has never been photorealistic. I want to capture something that a camera can't and I think the simplistic nature of my art is relaxing," Boison explained. "I always think what can I accomplish in the least amount of brushstrokes."

"All of my pieces are portraits and all of them are very colorful, color can mean so much more I feel," Boison said of her work. "I like to think of my paintings as memory Xeroxes. Like a memory of a face of a face although all of my

portraits are probably deep down of someone I've met before."

Barlow, meanwhile, works with landscapes and has a more realistic approach while also adding a bit of creative abstraction to her works. "I was born in California and I grew up on the west coast," she said of herself. She now lives in Rochester.

"I originally trained as a science teacher and I always wanted to try to art rat but I wasn't sure if I could support myself," Barlow explained. "A few years ago, I decided that I wanted to see if I could do it and it's been so much work and so much fun that I wished I would have done it sooner."

Inspired by scenes of nature, Barlow wants to bring the serenity she finds in those spaces to her audience. "I love to hike a lot and I love the outdoors," she said. "I wanted to capture that same joy and feeling."

"I use a photo that I've taken and then I

enhance it with how I felt," Barlow explained of her process. "A plain picture doesn't give you as much info as your eyes do and so I have to remember that one I'm painting."

Like all of her fellow artists, Barlow is glad to be able to take people out of their doldrums and bring a little joy to their everyday lives. "Nothing gives me more pleasure than to be surprised that anyone likes what I do. I hope it makes them happy," she said.

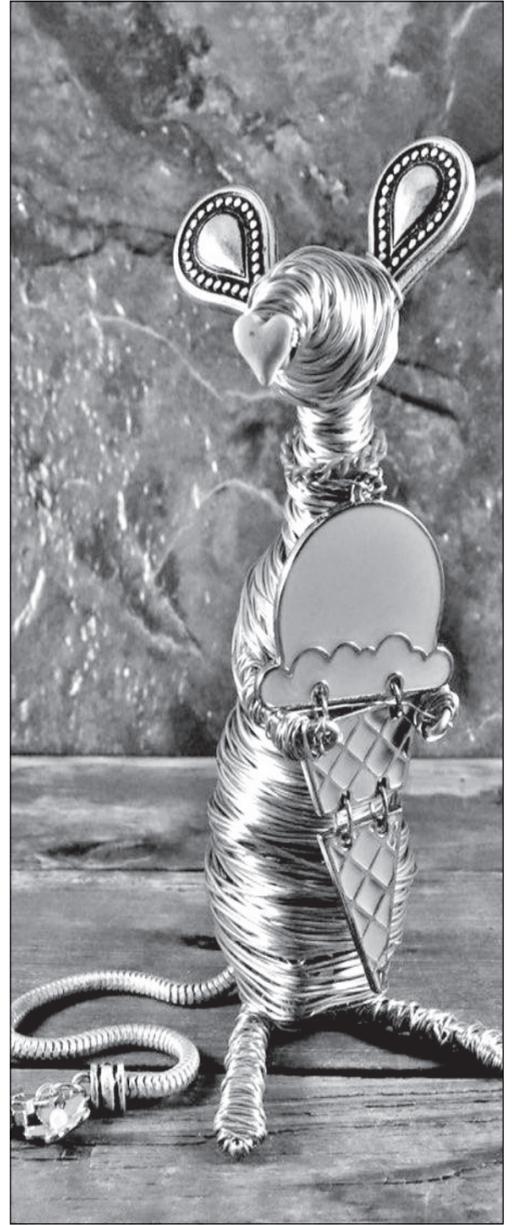
Artist Patricia Dunn Walker uses paint to compose abstract images complete with found media such as street fliers. "I'm totally addicted and really enjoy found paper from different sources," she said, "it's memories from my trips or my home or people I know will bring me something to use."

"My art doesn't strictly represent real objects," Walker explained of her unique and colorful compositions. "Although I do often find myself walking the line between the abstract and the representational."

In her years as an artist, Walker says that her style has changed as she has grown. "People start out making art often trying to represent what is in their world and I'd say that now with my art I am hoping that I can speak to things about the world and my hope for the future."

"Art can be a life-changing force for the better of humanity and I've thought of people who have gotten my paintings and whether they feel soothed or relaxed," Walker said. "I think it's wonderful to get this art out in front of people."

Walker said that she has noticed art in places like the Mayo Clinic before and understands the healing power that an image can carry. "I would say it's very engaging and if you can look at something and you're really intrigued by it



Artist Jenna Hestekin's wire sculpture work. Hestekin was previously featured for her scratchboard art and will return again as part of the Healing Arts exhibit.



Artist Patricia Dunn Walker paints while outdoors. Walker is one of four artists featured in the Healing Arts program for the spring season.

than that art has done a wonderful job."

Returning for her second appearance is Wisconsin-based artist Jenna Hestekin. Her scratchboard artwork was featured in the winter season and now her wire sculptures will be featured in this season. "This is my second time displaying my artwork for the Healing Arts program, and I am happy to share a very different medium," she said.

"Animals are my main inspiration, as they're always been an important part of my life," Hestekin said. "In my sculptures, I am able to portray the gestures and moods, whether it's an expression of joy, happiness, silliness, strength,

power, or even danger. I love capturing the attitudes of the animals I sculpt."

"A heartfelt thank you to the marvelous Healing Arts program not only for inviting me to share my work, but for bringing the arts into the healing process of patients and their families," Hestekin said. "It is an honor to take part in this program."

All four of these talented and unique artists and their creations are currently featured in the Healing arts exhibit at the Owatonna hospital. Their works will help patients, families, and healthcare workers through their day by providing them an outlet of escape and serenity.

Arts Center showcases K-12 artists during Youth Art Month

◀ K-12 from B1 of the school year. The younger ones often don't understand what it's all about until they see the exhibit in person.

"I'm just glad we can have an open house again," she said, noting last year's was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. "It's really exciting."

Owatonna High School art teacher Brian Kuehn said his students are a little less jazzed about the event. They're used to seeing their art on public display in cases outside the high school art room.

He sets the bar pretty high for the Arts Center display, considering not only technical skill but

also composition and creativity.

"This is my 36th year teaching art," Kuehn said. "I just tell the kids, you've got to impress a 58-year-old man. I've seen everything."

The greatest benefit of getting students involved in art, he said, is that they discover their voice. Kuehn believes his job is to help them find the 4-year-old who enjoyed art before people started telling them what art should be.

"After that, they learn an artist is just someone who makes art. They learn they can fall back in love with art again," he said.

Fostering that love is why the Owatonna Arts Center hosts the

annual exhibit during National Youth Art Month, founded in 1961 to stress the importance of children's participation in art. Dozens of pieces in a range of styles and media cover the walls, rest on pedestal displays and in glass cabinets.

"We're honored to do this, it's important," Creative Director Silvan Durben said. "Art is important, it's about critical thinking, exploration, and creativity."

The exhibit is open during gallery hours, 1-5 p.m., Tuesday-Sunday. You'll find the Owatonna Arts Center at 435 Garden View Lane. To learn more, call 507-451-0533 or visit oacarts.org.



SIMON FAMILY PHOTO

William Simon, a first grader at Lincoln Elementary, displays his entry in the K-12 Art Exhibit. He said he had fun creating the print by cutting designs into pieces of Styrofoam, then dipping them in paint and printing the hat and mittens on paper.

Dodge County Wind project is back on track

◀ WIND from B1

Next on the schedule, Lennox said, will be public scoping meetings to discuss the project, which will likely be held in April. He added that it is anticipated these meetings will be held in-person.

After the scoping meetings, a full envi-

ronmental review of the project will be conducted and there will be additional public meetings and an opportunity for the public to submit comments to the PUC.

If all goes as expected, Lennox said, the plan could get PUC approval by late 2022. The company would

begin construction in the spring of 2023 with an anticipated completion date of December 2023.

When operational, he said, the electricity generated will be sold to Great River Energy, a group of electric cooperatives that includes Steele-Waseca Coopera-

tive Electric headquartered in Owatonna.

Lennox said the project is a \$400 million investment in Steele and Dodge counties. Among the short-term benefits, he said, will be 870 construction jobs. Post construction, he said, NextEra will spend

approximately \$8.5 million annually to operate and maintain the site. That figure, he said, includes \$3.3 million going to local business in the counties, \$500,000 going to wage and benefits for at least six employees at the site and 23 total workers in the coun-

ties with an average wage of \$75,000, \$6 million estimated direct and ripple effect in annual activity, including \$180 million over the life of the project and \$1.2 million in labor annually.

The project has an expected 30 to 35-year lifespan, he said.

Tips for anxious gardeners



Mastering Gardening

LORRIE RUGG

This time of year, the weather loves to tease us into thinking spring has arrived. But we all know that we have at least one more snowstorm to get through. Gardeners are getting the itch to be outside and get those hands dirty. The smell of dirt the first time in the greenhouse in the spring is the best!

One way to help with those anxious feelings is to start seeds indoors. I know many of you do that, but I thought I would share some tips on how to be successful at the task.

First of all, you need to assemble some equipment to get you started. Seeds are the first requirement. If you are purchasing name brand seeds you can be assured they are good quality, however, if you are buying “off brand” seeds, and the varieties are the same for any given flower or vegetable there should not be any difference in the quality of the plants. There is a lot of information on the back of those seed packets, so read them carefully for things like days until germination, how deep to plant them among other things. There are many options for containers for you to use. From buying the cadillac of seed trays to recycled take out containers, use what you are comfortable with. One requirement is that the container has drainage holes. It is best to start seeds in smaller individual pots rather than using a larger pot with multiple seeds in it. The roots tend to get tangled and are likely to be injured during transplanting. If you don't have grow lights, select the sunniest window in your home, but not the windowsill, that tends to be colder right near the window. Your seeds like heat to germinate. A soilless mix is the best medium for you to use, it is sterile, lightweight and free from weed seeds.

When do I start my seeds? That is a very common question and my answer is, it

depends on what you are starting. It is also important to know the last predicted frost date for our area, which is May 15. But I remember one Memorial Day that we had snow!

Tomatoes are likely to be on your list, March 27—April 17 is the timeframe to start them. Peppers should be started around April 3, keep in mind pepper seeds take a while to germinate. Tomatoes and peppers should be set out in the garden a couple of weeks after that May 15 date. Those are the most popular garden plants in our gardens. Some seeds, like lettuce, spinach, and radishes can be directly sown into the garden in late April depending on the weather.

The University of Minnesota has some great fact sheets of information on seed starting if you would like more information. Go to this website: extension.umn.edu — yard

See TIPS on B11 ▶

Exchange Clubs donate to Hospitality House

The Exchange Club of Steele County in collaboration with the Exchange Club of Owatonna, and the Moonlighters Exchange Club of Owatonna presented the Hospitality House of Owatonna with financial, household, and personal item donations from respective club members during the Steele County meeting March 4 at the VFW in Owatonna.

The collective financial donations amounted to \$750.

The Hospitality House offers temporary and emergency accommodations for men who are transitioning through homelessness.



Exchange Club members load household and personal items for the Hospitality House. Securing the load include, from left: Dean Schuette, Dallas Ketchum, Bruce Kubicek and Dan Wolfe. They represent the three Exchange Clubs in the area, except for Wolfe who is with the Hospitality House.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Several Exchange Clubs in the area teamed up to provide donations to the Hospitality House of Owatonna. Involved in the presentation included, from left: Dan Wolfe, Hospitality House board director; Sharon Klein, Exchange Club of Owatonna vice president and Lakes & Prairies District Exchange Division 4 director; Tim McManimon, Hospitality House board director; Ashley Von Ruden, Hospitality House program manager; Dean Schuette, Exchange Club of Steele County board director; Randy Sobrack, Exchange Club of Steele County board director; Rhonda Guthier, Moonlighters Exchange Club of Owatonna and Lakes & Prairies District Exchange secretary; and Katie Smith, Exchange Club of Owatonna and Moonlighters Exchange Club of Owatonna member, and Lakes & Prairies District Exchange vice president and volunteer field representative.

Edward Jones

MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Use your financial strategy like GPS

When you're driving these days, it's pretty hard to get lost because your smartphone's Global Positioning System (GPS) can get you just about anywhere. And as an investor, you can have a similar experience by employing another directional tool – a personalized financial strategy.

Let's look at the parallels between your GPS and this type of strategy.

To begin with, your GPS pinpoints your exact location at the start of your trip – in other words, it tells you where you are. And when you create a financial strategy, your first step is to evaluate your current situation by answering these types of questions: What are your assets? How much do you earn? How much do you owe? How much are you contributing to your IRA, 401(k) or other retirement accounts? Once you've got a clear picture of your finances, you'll be ready to begin your journey toward your long-term goals.

Once your GPS has identified your starting point, it will then show you where you want to go and the routes to help you get there. And it's the same with your financial strategy – you want it to help lead you to a particular place in your life. In fact, a well-designed strategy can show you the steps you need to take to help reach more than one destination – to a place where you can send your children to college, a place where you can retire comfortably, a place where you can leave the type of legacy you want, and so on.

Here's another element of your GPS that applies to your financial strategy – the warnings. You're certainly familiar with those thick red lines your GPS shows to indicate traffic slowdowns ahead. And while they're annoying, they're also useful in cautioning you that you may arrive at your destination later than you had originally planned. Your financial strategy can also express “warnings” about events that could hinder you from reaching your goals. These obstacles might include an illness or disability that could keep you out of work for a while, or the need for some type of long-term care, such as a nursing home stay or the services of a home health aide. Your financial strategy can not only identify these threats, but with the guidance of a financial professional, suggest potential solutions.

In addition to providing warnings about things such as heavy traffic and road construction, your GPS can change your route if you miss a turn or if you decide, for whatever reason, to go a slightly different way. Your financial strategy can also show you alternatives, if it's comprehensive and overseen by a financial professional, who, using specialized software, can create hypotheticals – illustrations that provide alternative outcomes for different steps, such as retiring at various ages, investing different amounts each year or earning different rates of return. These hypotheticals can be quite helpful to you as your chart your course toward your goals, especially if you need to change your plans along the way.

Your GPS and your financial strategy are two great tools for helping get you where you want to go.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

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A bootlegging lesson minus the booze

◀ **BOOTLEGGING** from B1 pressed by the Blooming Prairie brewers. “What happened is they found a perfect site for a still, they had a marsh there and two ways in and out,” Wencil explained. “After being approached the owner finally gave in and let them rent the property and set the still up in a barn.”

For local residents, the industry was a communal one and even kids helped the bootleggers. “You could make 3 cents if you brought the empty bottles to them and a nickel if it still had a cork in it, and a nickel was a lot of money back then,” Wencil said.

“This became like a community project for about 85% of the people. You were either doing something, or drinking it,” Wencil explained of how the operation grew

among locals. “There was a small percentage that didn’t of course.”

Trips to Wisconsin sometimes resulted in a local resident riding along for company and to look more casual as they passed authorities on the road. “You might ride along with them to Wisconsin and then on the way back it would be a different driver,” Wencil said. “They were more than glad to have you ride along. It was a good disguise.”

Names like Albert Wanous, Albert Cole, and Stub Jacobson repeatedly pop up in newspaper clippings from the era. These were some of the main players in the Blooming Prairie operation which involved that large still. “They put all of it together at night,” Wencil said. “The Feds decided to raid Blooming Prairie on New

Year’s Eve 1929.”

“They sent 18 Federal officers into Blooming Prairie and they caught eight people,” Wencil explained before joking. “They really put the screws to Blooming Prairie, two old guys out of the house and two women.” One individual happened to walk in during the raid and already had a warrant for his arrest.

Although this was an illegal operation, many of the stories and events read now like comedy, including the story of one man who was chased all over Blooming Prairie and escaped by merely walking away from his car.

This would all come crashing down in June of 1932 when 45 people were indicted for alleged liquor conspiracy, three of which were from



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

Steve Wencil of Blooming Prairie delivers a presentation on Steele County’s Prohibition history last Thursday evening at the History Center in Owatonna.

Blooming Prairie. Still raids were done in Wisconsin and by October of 1933 charges were filed for Wanous and Jacobson. Wanous was fined \$200 and Jacobson was already in prison for hauling alcohol.

Of course, even after Prohibition was repealed

the bootlegging and distilleries continued. “Good cheap whiskey was still hard to find right away so they stayed in business,” Wencil said. Now, the history has almost disappeared and all that remain are old stories and newspaper and police reports from the era.

Tips for anxious gardeners

◀ **TIPS** from B10 and garden news. Johnny’s Seeds has a great Seed Starting Date Calculator on its website, with a chart on when to start many different varieties of flowers and vegetables.

Lorrie Rugg is the coordinator of the Master Gardening program for Steele and Rice counties. She may be reached at brow3298@umn.edu or 507-444-7687.

Here’s how to snap out of a sour, depressed mood

◀ **DEPRESSED** from B1 sleep? Well, my tired and grumpy friends, let’s take a look at what is probably happening to you... a lack of sleep can lead to a host of health problems including obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and even early death. Yikes! Those are definitely in the bad column!

So if you are admittedly in the I’m tired, grumpy, and need to get more sleep category, what are some things you can do to get a good night’s rest?

First off, if you are like many people, you may need to put technology away sooner at night. Personally, I was scrolling through my phone far past my bedtime. In the past year, I switched to reading a book before bed and while that may not be a solution for everyone, it has been a huge win for me! It relaxes me and I am falling asleep much quicker. Other solutions to poor sleep include:

blackout blinds, which eliminate the light in the room, keeping a routine of waking and sleeping around the same time each day, avoiding too much caffeine or alcohol before sleeping, and getting a good workout in during the day have all been proven strategies to help improve sleep.

Although many problems with sleep can be dealt with through changes in routines or the sleep environment, sometimes a behavior change is not enough. If you are having a particular problem with sleep that goes on for some time, you might want to talk with a sleep specialist.

Sleep specialists are trained to evaluate you for sleep disorders. If you have a sleep disorder, it is important to get treatment. Sleep disorders are usually long-term problems and may lead to other health problems.

Sleep like many health habits requires a

person to first be aware of their habits, and then make the necessary changes to feel better. So take a pause here and think about your sleep habits for a moment and ask yourself how much sleep am I getting on average, what is the quality of the sleep you get, and how is this affecting you?

It may only take some small changes in your lifestyle, or it may take talking to a doctor that results in big wins for you. But the science behind it suggests it will most definitely have huge health benefits. So... sleep well my tired, grumpy friends, and wake up to a healthier and happier life!

Andrea Marshall is a health educator with Steele County Public Health in Owatonna. Steele Talkin’ is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.

MARCH BLOSSOMS OF THE MONTH Blooming Prairie High School



**Isabella Heiber
Senior**

The senior high student of the month is Isabella Heiber, who is a senior. Her favorite class is art because “it’s fun, relaxing and a nice way to be creative.”

“Bella Heiber is a ball of energy and positivity,” said one of her teachers. “She makes others better just by being around them.”

Other teachers added these comments about Isabella:

- “I love that Bella is her own person. She follows her own path.”
- “Bella does a great job working in class. She finds new and inspiring work. Keeps her work area clean and often takes on extra work to help others.”

Isabella’s special interests are art, music and cheer. She has three siblings: Lexi, 31; Sydney, 26 and Jamison, 10.



**Wyatt Magnuson
8th Grade**

The junior high student of the month is Wyatt Magnuson, who is in eighth grade. Her favorite class is gym. “I get to do sports and try something new and be active,” she said.

Some comments shared by Wyatt’s teachers include:

- “Wyatt comes to class with the materials needed to learn and never complains about what is expected of him. He is respectful and attentive when it is time to learn. He is enjoyable to teach.”
- “Wyatt likes FFA and 4-H especially when dealing with animals, especially sheep.”
- “Wyatt is a kind and courteous student who is very helpful and strives to do his best.”

His special interest is playing video games. Wyatt has a sibling, Olivia, who is 8 years old. He also has three dogs: Sparky, Lucky and Lady.

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TAX GUIDE

Tax credits that can help cover higher ed costs

Higher education is important to many people and it’s often expensive. Whether it’s specialized job training or an advanced degree, there are a lot of costs associated with higher education. There are two education tax credits designed to help offset these costs - the American opportunity tax credit and the lifetime learning credit.

Taxpayers who paid for higher education in 2021 can see these tax savings when they file their tax return. If taxpayers, their spouses, or their dependents take post-high school coursework, they may be eligible for a tax benefit. To claim either credit, taxpayers complete Form 8863, Education Credits, and file it with their tax return.

These credits reduce the

amount of tax someone owes. If the credit reduces tax to less than zero, the taxpayer could even receive a refund. To be eligible to claim either of these credits, a taxpayer or a dependent must have received a Form 1098-T from an eligible educational institution. There are exceptions for some students.

Here are some key things taxpayers should know about each of these credits.

The American opportunity tax credit is:

- Worth a maximum benefit of up to \$2,500 per eligible student.
- Only available for the first four years at an eligible college or vocational school.
- For students pursuing a degree or other recognized education credential.

- Partially refundable. People could get up to \$1,000 back.

The lifetime learning credit is:

- Worth a maximum benefit of up to \$2,000 per tax return, per year, no matter how many students qualify.
- Available for all years

of postsecondary education and for courses to acquire or improve job skills.

• Available for an unlimited number of tax years.

Taxpayers can use the Interactive Tax Assistant tool on IRS.gov to figure out if they’re eligible for either of these credits.

Source: IRS

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GUEST COLUMN

Less is better when it come to schools

BY PEGGY BENNETT

It has been a busy time at the Capitol with mostly committee work again, hearing bills that will be considered for future passage. I will share a few highlights below.

We have been hearing a lot of education related bills over the past few weeks in the education committees I serve on. There have been quite a few proposed state mandates for schools among these bills, some funded and some not. (Mandates mean that all Minnesota public schools would be required to comply without local choice or opt out.)

Two recent state mandate proposals that we heard in our education policy committee, which I would like to make you aware of, concern requiring certain classwork and instruc-

tion for all Minnesota students. I have linked the actual bill language below for your perusal. I would appreciate hearing your feedback on these proposed requirements.

Though I believe some statewide mandates are necessary, I am of the mind that less is better, especially when it involves our schools and children. I believe that we should do our best to default to local control whenever possible so that those who know their children best – parents, teachers, and locally elected school boards – can make the decisions that best fit their students.

The first bill I'd like to highlight is HF 3434, an ethnic studies requirement for our schoolchildren. This proposed legislation would require all students to successfully complete a semes-

ter-long "ethnic studies" course to graduate from high school. It also requires that ethnic studies must be taught in elementary, middle, and charter schools.

Here is how the bill defines ethnic studies: "Ethnic studies analyzes the ways in which race and racism have been and continue to be powerful social, cultural, and political forces, and the connection of race to other groups of stratification, including gender, class, sexuality, and legal status."

The ethnic studies bill would also require the Department of Education to hire "dedicated ethnic studies staff" as well as develop "a model ethnic studies curriculum" for school districts to use. The model curriculum must also include "a power, race, class, and gender analysis" and "an intersectional analysis of climate, health, food,

housing, education, and policy."

The second school mandate proposal I would like to highlight is HF 550, which would require "climate justice" instruction for all students in grades 1 – 12. Here is how the bill defines climate justice: "Climate justice means a framework that puts people first and views the effects of climate change as interconnected with forms of oppression connecting climate change to social and economic justice issues."

The bill continues to state that "school districts and charter schools are required to provide climate justice instruction for students in grades 1 through 12 aligned with current scientific research and integrated into existing programs, curriculum, or the general school environment of a district or charter school."

My concerns with these school mandates are twofold. First, both of these mandate proposals are very politically charged and will end up pitting parents against teachers. Teachers don't want that. Teachers don't want to be social justice warriors. They simply want to teach their students.

Secondly, as a state we continue to pour, and attempt to pour, mandate upon mandate onto our schools... ethnic studies (which by the way is already required in our social studies standards), climate justice, K-12 comprehensive sex education, bullying instruction, and the list goes on.

Many of these issues -and they are important issues - are things that should really be taught at home, but now our teachers are being expected to teach them

amidst all the other requirements that they already have to teach. This is not fair to teachers, and it is not sustainable. There is simply not enough time in the school day to teach all these things, much less to teach them well. And by the way, what about reading, writing, and math? These core responsibilities of education simply get pushed more and more to the wayside amidst all of the other requirements. This mandate madness has to stop.

I would like to hear your thoughts on these two mandate bills and school mandates in general.

Peggy Bennett is the Minnesota representative for District 27A, which includes the City of Blooming Prairie and most of Freeborn and Mower counties. She lives in Albert Lea.

FORECLOSURE

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Dear Motor Medics,

I recently had to have a suspension part replaced on my vehicle and I went the cheap route and found one on the internet at half of the price that my local store was offering and at that cost I could not pass it up. Being so cheap and with the free shipping I figured it made sense. The warranty was six months, but I figured they would not sell them if they all went bad and at that price I could by another one if it failed. I installed it myself and 1000 miles later was left stranded missing a wheel. The car was towed, and they found the part I had was very cheaply produced. I tried to call the company, but they have no phone and do not respond to my emails. Is there any way to know how good a part is when purchasing one from a source other than the vehicle manufacturer?

Bart in Wray Colorado

Dear Bart,

There are some great deals out there but also some very poor-quality parts that can fail and compromise your safety. How can you be sure you are getting good quality parts? Buy locally. You will have a real building you can walk into and real people who will help you if you have a failure. The store will also have the backing of the reputable companies that supply their parts, and you will be supporting your local economy.

Take care, the Motor Medics

Dear Motor Medics,

I took a trip overseas and rented a small car with a gas engine. It looked just like the Ford Focus I own here in the states but had more zip and the fuel economy was much better than what I get at home. I noticed two things when I refueled the car. One the very high cost as compared to ours and two the very high-octane content. I typically use 87-90 octane at home but the lowest available overseas was 95 and with 5% ethanol it was 99. This seems really high. Does this have something to do with the better mileage and power and if so, why don't we have it here in the states?

Martin in Shelton Washington

Dear Martin,

Most people would not have noticed the octane rating, good eye. You are correct about the octanes effect on fuel economy and power. With higher octane fuel the engines can run higher compression and more timing without detonation equaling more power and efficiency. Therefore, a car with the same cubic inch engine overseas could get better mileage than its counterpart in the states. I can only speculate on the reasons we don't see it here but would guess the price of the higher-octane fuel combined with emissions regulations probably play a part in it. Manufactures are continuously working on ways to increase power while using the same size engine and octane fuel available at American pumps today.

Take care, the Motor Medics

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The Weekly Crossword by Margie E. Burke

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<p>ACROSS</p> <p>1 Rigatoni, eg.</p> <p>6 Cry from a crib</p> <p>10 "Back In Black" band</p> <p>14 Stopped a squeak</p> <p>15 Ticks off</p> <p>16 Boo-Boo, for one</p> <p>17 Sensory stimuli</p> <p>18 Country singer Vince</p> <p>19 Certain sax</p> <p>20 Moving backward</p> <p>22 Fish stories</p> <p>23 Vicinity</p> <p>24 Extra helpings</p> <p>26 Richie's gal on "Happy Days"</p> <p>30 Glazier's sheet</p> <p>31 Costner flick "___ Range"</p> <p>32 December song</p> <p>34 Organ part</p> <p>37 Female soldier in WWII</p> <p>38 Baby food option</p> <p>40 NHL surface</p> <p>41 Melancholy verse</p> <p>43 Slangy assent</p> <p>44 ___ or less</p> <p>45 Surveyor's map</p> <p>47 Kitchen gadget</p> <p>49 Movie ship</p> <p>52 Coop group</p> <p>53 "Woe is me!"</p> <p>54 Type of pronoun</p> <p>59 Cropped photos?</p> <p>60 Miscellany</p> <p>61 Dentist's directive</p>	<p>DOWN</p> <p>1 Down and out</p> <p>2 Campaign worker</p> <p>3 Vegas coin-eater</p> <p>4 Topography</p> <p>5 Gather on the surface, chemically</p> <p>6 Like some birds</p> <p>7 "Carmen" selection</p> <p>8 Pinochle combos</p> <p>9 Dead to the world</p> <p>10 Pearly shell</p> <p>11 "Because You Loved Me" singer</p> <p>12 Like wood paneling, e.g.</p> <p>13 Church figure</p> <p>21 She played Thelma</p> <p>25 Toy gun ammo</p> <p>26 Rob, formerly of "The West Wing"</p> <p>27 Fall birthstone</p> <p>28 Container</p> <p>29 Start of a toast</p>	<p>33 Abhorrent</p> <p>35 "Race" anagram</p> <p>36 Wanton look</p> <p>38 Ink cartridge color</p> <p>39 Crowd maker?</p> <p>42 Bifocals, e.g.</p> <p>44 Minuteman, for one</p> <p>46 NBA game start</p> <p>48 Give a response</p> <p>49 Thin bark</p> <p>50 Like a pelvic artery</p> <p>51 Do a salon job</p> <p>55 Regal address</p> <p>56 Doing nothing</p> <p>57 Flying formations</p> <p>58 Coastal flier</p>
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OWATONNA PROUD

B14 | WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022

OWATONNA SCHOOLS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



Members of the Owatonna Middle School Science Olympiad team show off their medals after placing fourth at state recently.

Science Olympiad takes fourth at state

The Owatonna Middle School Science Olympiad team recently placed fourth at the state competition.

Science Olympiad competition resembles a track tournament with a variety of events ranging from earth science to physics to space science. Events challenge different student skills, some requiring scientific knowledge while others need process and

application skills. Most of the events require a combination of teamwork, group planning, and cooperation.

The mission of Minnesota Science Olympiad is to “promote STEM education for students in Minnesota K-12 schools by engaging communities in the thrill, excitement and challenge of science, technology, engineering and math competition.”

SUBMITTED PHOTO



Applications for fall preschool are available

Bright Beginnings Preschool applications are now available for four- and five-day programs with morning and afternoon options.

Admission to Bright Beginnings is based on the individual learning needs of children and their families. If your child will be 4 years old by Sept. 1, fill out a 2022-2023 application online at owatonna-communityed.org or in-person at Roosevelt Community School, 122 McKinley St. Applications are due March 24.

Making music for honor band



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Thirty-five schools from across southeastern Minnesota sent 177 students to perform in the fifth and sixth grade plus the seventh and eighth grade Southeast Minnesota Honor Bands. Thirty-two band members from Owatonna (13 fifth graders, 7 sixth graders, 8 seventh graders, and 4 eighth graders) were represented in the honor bands. Students are nominated by their teachers and selected by the Honor Band committee to participate in the one-day event. Students rehearse a total of 4-1/2 hours together, have a one-hour sectional with a teacher, and then perform in the concert. The bands were directed by Holly Guenther, elementary band director, and Peter Guenther, high school band director, from Owatonna. Fifth graders are pictured above.

Students of the Week Elementary School



Jacey Herron
Third Grade
Parents: Mark and Jessa Herron

Jacey tries her best in everything she does and shows resilience and determination in the classroom. She is always kind and helpful to others. Jacey is extremely respectful to all students and adults, and a great role model for everyone around her. Her work ethic and kind heart are admirable!

Middle School



Meika Hays-Kearns
Sixth Grade
Parents: Jason Kearns and Tanya Hays

Meika is a bright and kind-hearted young lady. She has demonstrated a great amount of grit during the quarter and it has been a pleasure to see her confidence grow. You should be proud of yourself, Meika! Keep up the great work!

High School



Maclean Pilcher
Junior
Parents: Matthew and Gwendolyn Pilcher

Maclean is a respectful and hardworking student. He participates well in class, and is always willing to work with his classmates. Maclean is a genuinely conscientious and kindhearted young man who will make a positive impact in this world!

Students capture the pitch of sound

Third graders in Mrs. Heinz's class at Lincoln Elementary recently completed a unit on sound. They learned all about how sound is produced, how to explain the relationship between the pitch of a sound and the rate of vibration, and how that affects pitch.

Students designed an instrument made entirely of recycled materials staff members contributed (except for tape and glue). The instrument needed to create at least two pitch-

es. It was a challenge for some to focus on function rather than appearance.

Students also had to explain how/why their instrument could create more than one pitch. They tested their instruments, and a few had to replan and improve their design when they discovered their instruments could not make more than one pitch. Then they showed off their instruments to a first grade class and were the experts!



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