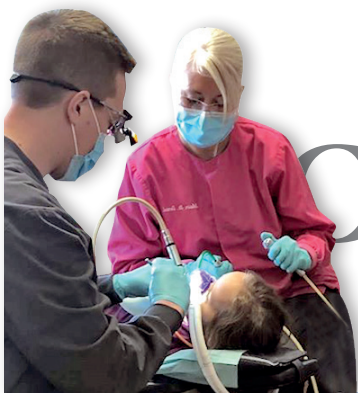




# STEELE COUNTY Times

FREE SMILES A10

THE ODD COUPLE B4



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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2020

Bloomington, Minnesota

## Record set at Geneva auction

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

It will go down in the record books as an all-time collection high to date.

The Geneva Cancer Auction totals for 2020 reached \$120,645, the best ever, said Barbara Kuchenbecker, secretary-treasurer of the Geneva Cancer Group. The grand total for the 37th annual cancer auction includes \$26,000 earned at the Geneva Wild Game Feed, she said.

All funds go to the Eagles Telethon in Rochester and to the Hormel Institute for research.

Outstanding crowds were reported the first weekend of the auctions on Jan. 10-11. A snowstorm caused postponement of the second weekend in Jan. 17-18. The second weekend was moved to Jan. 24-25 and crowds packed into the Geneva Bar & Grille.

The second weekend proved to be very emotional with many cancer survivors telling their stories. "People came out in force," said Kuchenbecker.

Jess Nielsen, a young cancer survivor at age 30, told about her journey. A benefit was held for her last summer. She was in

SEE RECORD SET, A2

## Benefit to help kids get good sleep

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

It's something that's often taken for granted. Getting a good night's sleep in warm beds isn't always a reality for children.

Matthew Stanislav of Owatonna is on a mission to provide beds to children in need. As president of Beds for Kids, which serves Steele and Waseca counties, Stanislav hopes to draw attention to the plight some children face in not having beds through an upcoming fundraiser.

The 2020 fundraiser event, "A Night in the Tropics," is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 22 from 6-9 p.m. at the Steele County History Center in Owatonna. The evening will be catered by local chefs Tim Cockram and Mark Beland. Spontaneous Productions will provide the entertainment. There will also be a silent auction.

There are a limited number of tickets available for the fundraiser. Last year's event attracted 120 people and was sold out. Tickets for \$30 may be purchased at Stanislav's Edward Jones office in Owatonna. For more information call 507-213-6312.

Fundraising has become a top priority for Beds for Kids, Stanislav said. He noted the group has very little overhead in costs and that "all funds go into the

SEE BENEFIT TO HELP KIDS, A5



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

This is what a destructive fire can do. Debris is everywhere as fire reportedly started in the northwest corner of The Bakery's basement. Seven fire departments fought the Jan. 28 fire. It's still unknown what will happen with the building, but it is likely it will be demolished soon.

## 'It's like a death in the family'

### Bakery owner's life turned upside down by fire

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Gregg Fristedt, owner of The Bakery in Bloomington, said his world has been turned upside down since the Jan. 28 fire that destroyed his place of business.

"It's like a death in the family," he confesses. Fristedt has owned The Bakery the past 23 1/2 years. "It's been my life," he admits, saying he put in 70-90 hours a week.

Fristedt has granted no interviews until now, The Times getting an exclusive.

This business has been successful because of planning for tomorrow, the next week and the week after that, Fristedt says.

The fire, which reportedly started in the northwest corner of the basement, is believed to have been electrical, says Bloomington Fire Chief Dean Naatz.

SEE IT'S LIKE A DEATH, A3



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

The Bakery of Bloomington specialized in the making of rosettes. Alieshia (Alie) Strand and her father Gregg Fristedt show the finished product after frying rosettes inside The Bakery last fall.

"It's been a real mess to deal with and controlling emotions has been tough."

**Gregg Fristedt**  
The Bakery Owner

## Benefit set for Saturday to help businesses ravaged by fire

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

"It's just unbelievable," says Connie Trom when speaking about the support being received for a benefit planned for The Bakery and Sportstitch on Saturday, Feb. 15.

One day after the fire in Bloomington on Jan. 28, members of the Bloomington Cancer Group announced it was planning a benefit for The Bakery (Gregg Fristedt) and Sportstitch (Linda Klemmensen).

The benefit will be held at the Pizza Cellar from 4-8 p.m. Organizers expect a large crowd.

Many silent auction items will be featured, including 10 dozen M & M cookies baked and donated by Gregg Fristedt, owner of The Bakery.

He says the cookies will be packaged in the normal box of The Bakery and will feature The Bakery stamp. They will be sold by the dozen. "I just hope I don't burn them," Fristedt joked.

Benefit organizer Connie Trom said auction items can be dropped off at The Pizza Cellar or Krejci Ford. Artist P. O'Neil is donating a painting of The Bakery and of Sportstitch.

SEE BENEFIT SET, A3



This is how a local artist views The Bakery of Bloomington. The painting will be one of many silent auction items featured at a Benefit for Gregg Fristedt (The Bakery) and Linda Klemmensen (Sportstitch).

## Fiery BP crash claims life

One person was killed in a fiery crash outside of Bloomington early Friday morning.

The State Patrol identified the victim as Keith Prescott Crape, 27, of Austin. He was killed instantly in the crash at 5:40 a.m. on U.S. Highway 218 about a mile south of Bloomington in Dodge County.

Responding officers attempted to perform life-saving measures on Crape, but he was pronounced dead at the scene.

Crape's Toyota Camry was traveling southbound on Hwy. 218 when it collided with a northbound GMC Acadia driven by Oscar Agustin Perez Morales, 44, of Austin. After the collision, the Camry caught on fire.

According to the patrol, Crape was not wearing his seat belt and it is unknown whether alcohol played a role in the crash with him. The patrol said Morales was buckled up and no alcohol was involved with him.

Morales was transported to a hospital in Austin with non-life threatening injuries.

The roads were snow and ice covered at the time of the crash, the patrol said.

Assisting the patrol were Bloomington Fire, Bloomington Ambulance and sheriff's offices from Steele, Dodge and Mower counties.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation.

## Mardi Gras in BP

If you are unable to participate in the Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans, Louisiana, come to a Mardi Gras celebration in Bloomington on Saturday night, Feb. 22.

The special Mardi Gras night is sponsored by the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 52 and will be held at the Bloomington Prairie Servicemen's Club.

Assisting the Sons are the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, VFW, VFW Auxiliary and BP Servicemen's Club.

Social hour starts at 5 p.m. and continues to 6 p.m. when dinner begins and will continue to be served until 8 p.m.

Revelers have long celebrated Mardi Gras in the City of New Orleans.

It is not just one day, but an entire season. The culmination of Mardi Gras is Fat Tuesday, which is always the day before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. This year, Fat Tuesday falls on Feb. 25.

Mardi Gras is about the food, the music, the costumes, the beads, and the masks. The carnival like celebration generates great excitement.

Revelers wear colored costumes of purple, green, and gold. The purple stands for justice, gold stands for power and green stands for faith.

SEE MARDI GRAS, A5

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### AREA DEATHS

Larry Pence, 75, Albert Lea

*Serving  
Bloomington  
and Steele County  
since 1893*



OUR VIEW

Local libraries are social glue that binds us

Some have claimed that public libraries will become obsolete while others feel libraries are no longer important. But this is not the case at all.

While libraries have faced an uphill battle with the advent of kindles and the internet, the bigger picture is that libraries are part of the social glue that binds us. Simply put libraries aren't becoming obsolete. They are evolving to meet the needs and demands of our communities. Steele County is fortunate to have strong library system that reaches out into both Owatonna and Blooming Prairie and the rest of the county. Library director Mark Blando runs the Owatonna library while Nancy Vailancourt keeps things popping in Blooming Prairie. They have done a commendable job in keeping this great public resource strong and viable in our communities.

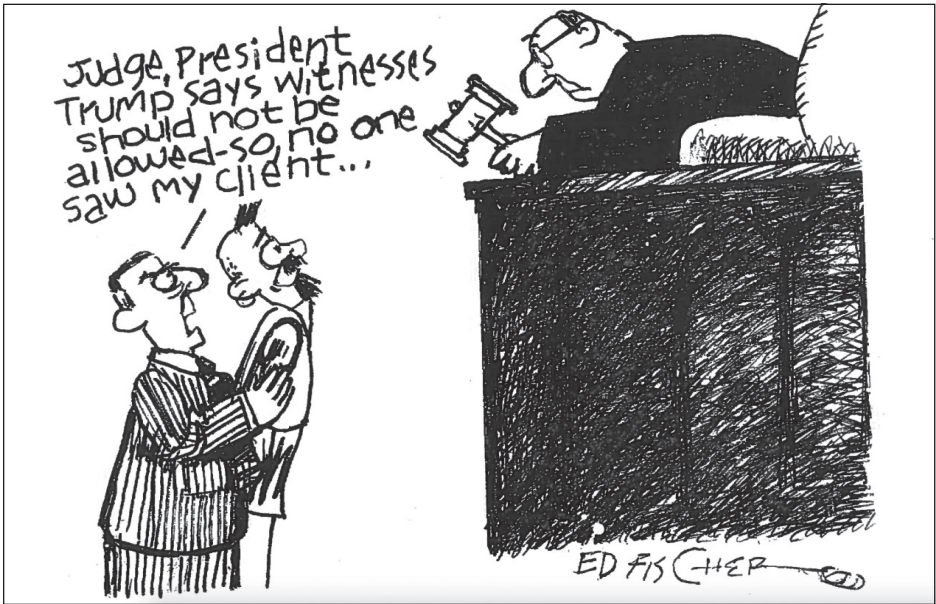
The library's mission is to provide for the informational, recreational, education and cultural needs of all residents through organized collections of various media and access through technology to other resources. What makes the library even a greater resource to enjoy is the fact that most services are free.

Rather than accept the grim fate of becoming obsolete, progressive libraries across Steele County and elsewhere put plans in place to evolve with the times, adapt to technological changes and continue to meet the changing needs of the populace. Libraries continue to be a hub of education, information and community.

Our libraries ramped up programming, enticing people of all ages into the library with reading incentives, interesting presentations and movie events.

As our local libraries celebrate "I Love to Read Month" throughout February, now seems to be the appropriate time to tip our hats to our local libraries and librarians and the people who volunteer and advocate on their behalf.

The efforts of these folks have heightened the quality of life for all of us. Once condemned by some to be heading the way of the dinosaurs, libraries remain a hub of community.



GUEST COLUMN

A preview to the legislative session

BY PEGGY BENNETT

It's hard to believe, but in a couple of days the 2020 Legislative Session will begin.

So what do we need to accomplish?

Though it is not a budget year, we do have a projected \$1.3 billion budget surplus to allocate. I have no doubt there will be some lawmakers competing for that money to start new government programs. Adding new expenses, and the permanent funding obligations that are attached to them, makes no sense to me – not when we have current obligations like the special education funding gap and nursing home needs that are not adequately funded.

Quite honestly, I think we need to focus our surplus on some long due tax relief for the people of Minnesota. One of my tax relief priorities has been and continues to be the complete repeal of the Social Security income tax. Our seniors have spent a lifetime working and paying taxes and many are now on fixed incomes trying every month to make ends meet. We've made a few good steps toward this tax repeal since I've been in office, but it's high time we finish it.

We also need to continue to address the need for affordable and accessible health care in rural Minnesota. I'm working on a bill this session that isn't the complete solution, but it would bring more options and be another tool in the toolbox to help address the problem. My legislation deals with

direct primary care clinics. The plan would strengthen the doctor/patient relationship while lowering health care costs and improving access. Hopefully it will be moving forward soon in the Minnesota House.

There is also the debate that has been taking place in the Minnesota Department of Human Services over the past year, where we have numerous, proven reports of waste, fraud, abuse, and poor treatment of employees within the agency. This mismanagement needs to be addressed.

This year is also a bonding year, which means we are likely to see a capital investment bill moving forward. To me, this proposal should focus on the "meat and potatoes" projects such as road and bridge repair needs, current assets that are owned by the state (think a new roof on a college campus building), flood mitigation, water quality infrastructure, and wastewater treatment facilities.

The City of Albert Lea is hoping a few local projects will also make the final capital investment proposal. They include flood mitigation on Main Street, the Blazing Star Trail and the Blazing Star Landing. The Shell Rock River Watershed Board would also like additional funding to continue dredging our lakes.

Finally, I will be working on a proposal that would reform the omnibus bill process that both Republicans and Democrats utilize. For those that

don't know, an omnibus bill is one huge bill that contains multiple (sometimes dozens) of bills that pertain to a certain area of government, such as K-12 Education. I believe these huge bills are one of the root causes to the huge impasses we see at the end of every session, as well as a very "un-transparent" way to do government.

The issue is when a very controversial bill is among the dozens that are included in an omnibus bill lawmakers are faced with a difficult choice: vote for the omnibus bill and in doing so support the controversial proposal that you might hate, or vote against the omnibus bill due to the controversial proposal's inclusion, and in doing so vote against many other good provisions that you strongly support.

My bill would force the controversial issues to be debated as a single topic on the House or Senate floor rather than allow them to be attached to an omnibus bill.

Those are just a few of the topics I expect to see debated over the next few months. As session moves along, please let me know your thoughts and opinions. I look forward to hearing from you!

**Peggy Bennett is a state representative for District 27A, which includes most of Freeborn County, southern Dodge County and the City of Blooming Prairie. She lives in Albert Lea and can be reached at 651-296-8216 or by email at rep.peggy.bennett@house.mn.**

Getting the pulse on a community

Something that I learned early on in my journalistic career dating back to the early 1990s is that if you ever want to get a pulse on the community and find out what's going on, stop in and talk to the local chamber directors.

Chambers have a vast amount of knowledge about what's happening in the community, especially with local business. This is certainly the case in Steele County where Brad Meier runs the Owatonna Area Chamber and Becky Noble the Blooming Prairie Chamber. I love to talk to both of them because they are always so full of energy and enthusiasm about their respective communities.

Last week I ventured into Meier's office unexpectedly and boy did I get an earful, all in a positive way, of course. Earlier in the day, the Owatonna Chamber found out that the city was named No. 24 in the list of best cities to raise a family in Minnesota. Chaska, Woodbury and New Ulm were tops on the list.

"That's a good one for us," Meier pointed out about Owatonna's selection. He was quick to add Owatonna beat out Rochester, Faribault, Red Wing and Mankato.

Meier is quite certain that Owatonna's "small town feel" and "quality of life" are two big factors in pushing the community high on the list of the best. He said such a ranking adds



Hot Pursuit  
RICK BUSSLER

one more credibility piece to the chamber's statement that "this is a good place to come back and raise a family." He hopes to reach out to alumni from Owatonna with that particular message.

What Meier finds that sets Owatonna apart from other communities is the support of businesses. "Our businesses support the community," he says. "They are involved with their people."

Meier also shared another ranking that just recently came out in which Owatonna cracked the top 10 of having the most affordable housing. The only other area community to make the list was Kasson, which ranked No. 4. Hibbing came out on top followed by Montevideo and New Ulm.

"That one kind of surprised us a little bit," Meier admitted. Last year, Owatonna ranked 29<sup>th</sup> on the same list. It's interesting to note that Owatonna has the largest population (25,656) of any city on the top 10 list. The next largest is Hibbing at 16,106 residents.

The two most important things to think about when it comes to being able to afford if you can live comes down to: how much money do I make and how much do I have to spend to live there. The median home price in Owatonna is \$154,000 and the median income is just under \$61,000.

Meier didn't stop with those two rankings in tout-ing what's going on around Owatonna. In addition to the manufacturing expansions taking place in the city's industrial park, there are several other projects in the works. Some of them are Kwik Trip opening its sixth location in town along Hoffman Drive, Dollar General going into the old Family Video store, Starbucks replacing Hometown Credit in the Hy-Vee Store and Caribou Coffee building a new drive through along Bridge Street.

Owatonna typically experiences growth of about 1% or 250 residents each year. Meier would like to double that to 2% or 500 residents. "We are hoping we will continue to draw people in," Meier said.

And with a strong selection of jobs, amenities, schools, housing and health-care, things should be looking bright for Owatonna's future. Meier expects the new high school will also be a big help to the community.

Business has been blooming around Owatonna, and now city officials are going in hot pursuit of reaping the benefits.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

**Brenna Hagen, a volunteer for the Geneva Cancer Auction, balances a bar tray on her head while soliciting donations at the 37th annual event in January. Over two weekends at the Geneva Bar & Grille, the auctions raised \$120,645. Brenna's grandparents, Whitey and LeJune Hagen, started the auctions.**

RECORD SET: at Geneva auction FROM A1

attendance at the second cancer auction weekend and donated \$1,000 back to the Cancer Group.

Victor Mrotz of the Hope Creamery again donated some Hope butter. Part of his donation was a bit different this year as he donated a case-and-a-half that had been made by the late Jay Logan, Hope buttermaker killed in a car crash last fall.

The first case brought \$700 and the second man-aged \$350.

Mrotz has always been a regular donor, said Kuchenbecker and Whitey Hagen, originator of the Geneva Cancer Auction.

The auctions became even more emotional when the parents of 8-year-old Finley Budach of New Richland donated a gift basket to the auction. The basket was sold for \$2,300 and then donated back to the auction. On the second go-round, the basket fetched \$1,700, making the total over \$4,000.

Auction organizers used

Whitey Hagen's old trick of taking a bar tray, balancing it on a volunteer's head and making the rounds through the bar, paper money being placed in the tray.

A separate group has led drives to earn more scholarship monies for Finley's Wings.

Hagen, his wife LeJune and former Geneva Bar & Grill owner Hank Thompson and his wife Judy (since passed from cancer) sat down one afternoon in 1984 and decided something should be done to fight cancer.

Hagen's brother Richard died from cancer at age 47 in 1983. "Hank told me, why don't you have an auction in memory of your brother," Hagen recalls. Hagen had previously worked with a fundraising auction in Albert Lea at Eddy's Bar, thus he knew some of the tricks to make such an event successful.

Hagen was missing in action at the second weekend

of the auctions because of a hearing aid malfunction.

The auction, Hagen said, is now run by his three sons, Keith, Greg and James. Other key volunteers are also involved, he emphasized. Whitey still is nearby to lend his support.

"People who come to this event are looking for ways they can help you," said Hagen. "There are a lot of people involved, the donors, buyers and workers; it takes them all," he said.

"It has taken a lot of people to make this successful and you could trust them with your fortune if you have one," Hagen said.

The auction definitely energizes Hagen and anyone who associates with him. His wife of 63 years, LeJune Hagen, is also near his side to help in any way she can.

Both Whitey and his wife LaJune are cancer survivors.

"It's pretty great what small towns can do," said Kuchenbecker thankfully.





Now, the salvage begins at The Bakery. Insurance and State Fire Marshal investigators have been on the site of The Bakery and Sportstitch on many occasions since the Jan. 28 fire.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

# Tenants over The Bakery find new home

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Sadie Burnett had just dressed for work at the Prairie Manor Care Center and waved to The Bakery owner Gregg Fristedt as she walked by his building. Sadie and Travis Marth were tenants above The

Bakery. Travis had also left for work at Minimizer. It was just minutes after their departure that Fristedt noticed a fire coming from the basement. He had one of his employees call 911 to summon the Blooming Prairie Fire Department. As the fire gained

strength, more departments were summoned. Seven departments in all fought the fire. Sadie and Travis lived with friends in the early days after the fire and were then going to locate in an apartment above the Prairie Sports and Chiropractic office.

A benefit for Sadie and Travis was held on Saturday, Feb. 1 at Prairie Manor. Sadie said over \$2,000 was raised by the benefit. Travis had lived for seven years in the apartment above The Bakery. Sadie had lived there for two years.

## BENEFIT SET: for Saturday to help businesses ravaged by fire

FROM A1

Soup, chili and a dessert will be served. "It's really wonderful to see where the donations are coming from," said Trom. "It's quite amazing," she continued. For more information,

contact Connie Trom at 507-456-8431; Colette Lea at 507-4933; Cheri Krejci at 507-438-6895 or Miranda Camery at 507-402-9688. In anticipation of overflow crowds for the benefit,

J & H Liquors has generously offered another soup and silent auction location. The Chamber and other BP businesses have also offered to help. This has to be a first, a multiple location for a

silent auction and soup benefit. Cash donations can be sent to The Bakery and Sportstitch Benefit at Farmers & Merchants State Bank in Blooming Prairie.

## IT'S LIKE A DEATH: in the family

FROM A1

Smoke engulfed the adjoining business, Sportstitch. Some of her embroidery equipment and her business books were saved. Sportstitch owner Linda Klemmensen intends on continuing her business at her home for the time being. She is exploring other options, too. "We're in limbo right now," Fristedt said, indicating that he still hasn't made up his mind as to whether he will continue his bakery tradition in Blooming Prairie. Pressed further about his future plans, Fristedt said, "Hopefully, we're not going anywhere." Referring to ancient Greek mythology, Fristedt said his business could be reborn. "It's like the Phoenix, out of ashes comes new life," Fristedt said.

According to Wikipedia, a Phoenix is a long-lived bird that cyclically regenerates itself or is born again. Mythology further states that a Phoenix obtains new life by arising from the ashes of its predecessor. Some legends say it dies in a show of flames and combustion, others that it simply dies and decomposes before being born again. Fristedt's daily routine has changed greatly since fire destroyed his business. "I've been busy," he says, talking to insurance adjusters and others who may hold a key to his future. It is almost a given, Fristedt says that the building will need to be demolished. Insurance reportedly will only cover a small portion of that

cost. Fristedt has been working closely with city and county officials. Fristedt has been trying to salvage some items but points out that all of his equipment "is toast." When Fristedt first heard a benefit was planned for him and Klemmensen, he said he thought maybe just a few might attend. Organizers of the benefit are claiming otherwise after accepting numerous silent auction items. Fristedt is very appreciative of the community support he has received. "When people talk about The Bakery, their eyes begin to well up (with tears)," Fristedt said. "It's been a real mess to deal with and controlling emotions has been tough but it's getting better," Fristedt remarked.

At age 63, Fristedt said he wonders what he could do next. "I think I would be a rotten employee because I am used to being my own boss," he said. Also, who wants to hire a 63-year-old man? Fristedt asked. Fristedt said he has seen how many lives The Bakery has affected. The support and caring thoughts from the community have been appreciated by him and his employee force of six. "Every town needs a bakery," Fristedt believes. "There aren't many small-town bakeries left," he said. "We brought in many people from outside of this area, too," he pointed out. Fristedt was not remiss in mentioning how much gratitude he had for what the firefighters did and do. "They put themselves in danger," he said.



The Bakery has done business in the old First National Bank building built in 1875. The bank vault is shown at left. Fire did considerable damage to The Bakery and to Sportstitch.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

# He's dad to The Senator next door



Reflections  
HOWARD LESTRUD

Many people have never heard of Blooming Prairie. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who by the way is still running for president of the United States, has a dad who can attest to knowing where Blooming Prairie is located on a Minnesota map. Jim Klobuchar, 91, was a newspaper columnist for the Minneapolis Star Tribune for more than three decades. He visited Blooming Prairie on two different occasions, one to gain column material while attending an ecumenical banquet and the other while participating in a bicycle ride across Minnesota.



JIM KLOBUCHAR

Klobuchar became well known for his creativity in writing a newspaper column. His subjects were many. He even wrote a couple of books on the Minnesota Vikings. Blooming Prairie resident Phyllis Dandeleit, just a shade under Klobuchar's age at 90, called me the other day and said she had some fun material that she thought might make a good newspaper article. Phyllis remembered journalist Klobuchar coming to BP in March of 1985. "That's a long time ago but when I pulled out a newspaper column by Klobuchar, I remembered the event Klobuchar attended and wrote about," Phyllis said. The newspaper column was sent to Phyllis 35 years ago by her niece from the Twin Cities, Julie Margarit. Let's have some fun by sharing snippets from Klobuchar's March 27, 1985 column in the Star Tribune: "If you can't pronounce ecumenical, try Blooming Prairie, Minn. "Blooming Prairie is a place where the Lutherans and Catholics and Methodists not only speak to each other but also sit at the same tables in church without noticeable fear of contamination. "I spent three hours in Blooming Prairie Monday night and came away with the conviction that there is still hope for the Iranians and Iraqis and possible for KSTP and WCCO. "There is nothing in the city charter nor the tax assessor's rolls to suggest why this unhurried town of 1,800 in the cornfields oath of Austin would gather itself in such snug garments of good will and exuberance as it did Monday night in the basement of St. Columbanus Catholic Church. "The townspeople ate stuffed pork chops and lemon meringue pie together in their annual inter church banquet. Call that a marvel. They often listened – without any apparent risk of damnation – to an Irish priest and a Lutheran minister. For those needing more marvels, they imported a gospel-singing combo from Kasson, Minn. to splice the country chords of "Elvira" into Jonah's

odyssey in the whale. All of this spread a mellow patina of forgiveness over the scene. For this I was grateful. I was grateful because I was the last speaker, which gave the congregation its ultimate test of forgiveness. "Blooming Prairie doesn't claim to be particularly sanctified. Nobody in town has heard voices recently, and very few of the citizens walk around in sandals and robes. It is blessed, apart from the high school girl (Kruckeberg) who runs the mile under five minutes, the visitor isn't stunned by its county. Farm folk from the surrounding country are grubbing this year and so are some of its merchants... "But you couldn't drive out of Blooming Prairie Tuesday night without some pensive and comforting thoughts about being in the presence of something rare and lovely in its unshowy way... "The Festival in Blooming Prairie is not intended to submerge the character of the churches but to make the obvious point: That God can't be all that enthralled

by doctrinal squabbling, and en route to Heaven we might help ourselves by first learning something about the guy across the street. So, here was Paul Halloran, the pastor of St. Columbanus, who claims he went into the priesthood because his duffel bag was full of black shoes when he got out of the Navy. "For the past few weeks he and the Lutheran and Methodist ministers have been working a rotation, presiding at Lenten services of a different church each week. He is a durable, self-squelching sociable guy with friends in every congregation. He maintains that he knows about women he learned from his mother, four sisters and 20,000 sailors. "A few chairs down the table is Cliff Schroeder, the pastor of the First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie. He is the kind of guy who credits every other minister and penitent in the county with creating the climate that exists in Blooming Prairie today. "But you have the impression that a lot of it flowed from Cliff Schroeder's relaxed sense of what's available in the way of human understanding. "The churches in Blooming Prairie started by hiding their father-and-sons banquets together, then moved to couples dinners and later decided this was a pretty awful slight against singles. "So, somebody said, 'Why not have a banquet, and switch churches every year, and see if we can do that without starting a fist fight or a new synod?' "The chances of avoiding a riot seemed better than avoiding another synod, but absolutely no disasters have surfaced. It is amazing. When I was growing up, if a Catholic kid kissed a Lutheran girl, he needed to get absolution on Saturday afternoon in confession. "The Lutheran girl got a lecture in hygiene." Thanks Phyllis for finding this old column written by Klobuchar. It's always interesting to read the thoughts of a city guy about a small town. We are Blooming Prairie strong. Just ask its residents.



BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

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

# Sheriffs take the plunge



Five sheriffs from southeastern Minnesota got into quite a predicament Saturday in Rochester as they doused themselves in the chilly waters of Foster-Arend pond for the 19th annual Rochester Polar Plunge. Included are, from left: Sheriff Marty Kelly of Goodhue County, Sheriff Steve Sandvik of Mower County, Sheriff Kevin Torgerson of Olmsted County, Sheriff Lon Thiele of Steele County and Sheriff Scott Rose of Dodge County. More than 900 plungers took part in the annual fundraiser to raise money for Special Olympics Minnesota. This year more than \$260,000 was raised. The Rochester plunge is the second largest in the state behind the Minneapolis event.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

## CRIME BRIEF

### Threats lead to felony charges



Alexander Willcox

A man accused of making threatening calls is now facing felony charges. Alexander Willcox, 23, of Owatonna has been charged with terroristic threats in Steele County District Court.

On Jan. 25, Owatonna Police investigated a threat complaint. A person reported receiving threatening phone calls after ending a relationship. In one phone call that was recorded, Willcox allegedly threatened to kill the victim four times and that the victim needed to “watch their back.” The victim tried to block Willcox from making further calls and when the victim did so, Willcox allegedly sent a txt message asking if the victim was trying to block his calls. The following day Willcox was located at his residence and taken into custody.

## COURT NEWS

Steele County

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Jan. 27 with Judge Joseph A. Bueltel presiding: Kurtis B. Etherton, 56, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult. He was sentenced to 180 days in county jail, \$581 and \$37,072 in restitution, no alcohol or controlled substance use, psychological evaluation, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of firearms, maintain employment and 5 years of supervised probation. Shannan M. Mitchell, 37, Northfield, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of cocaine or methamphetamine. Mitchell was sentenced to \$381, 7 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 5 years of supervised probation. The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Jan. 27 – Feb. 2:

## BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Zoey E. Bina, 18, Austin, speeding, \$115.

**MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER**

Christian T. Abell, 27, St. Petersburg, FL, speeding, \$125; Deborah L. Alexander, 45, Brooklyn Park, speeding, \$215; Cody J. Arrizola, 27, St. Peter, suspended license, \$275; Bassai J. Bodjona, 34, Iowa City, IA, speeding, \$135; Lakia R. Courtney Powell, 29, Raytown, MO, speeding, \$115; Devin D. Driscoll, 52, Faribault, seat belt, \$100; Brenda N. Espinosa, 44, Rochester, speeding, \$135; Molly E. Evans, 37, Inver Grove Heights, speeding, \$115; Richard Gonzales, 26, Blooming Prairie, speeding, \$125; Ellen L. Helgeson, 30, Marshall, speeding, \$115; Isabel A. Hernandez, 18, Waseca, speeding, \$115; Jacob A. Hughes-Odegaard, 18, Cameron, WI, speeding, \$215; Nathan T. Invie, 23, Woodbury, speeding, \$125; Robert L. Iverson, 48, Clarks Grove, speeding, \$115; Tracey A. Kubitz, 54, Wayzata, speeding, \$115; Komemba J. Lohese, 35, Mounds View, speeding, \$115; Fernando Lorenzo Andrade, 18, Columbia Heights, permit violation, \$125; Aginda G. Lu, 33, Des Moines, IA, speeding, \$115; Zaira T. Pintor, 30, McDonough, GA, speeding and hands free violation, \$175; Yvette Quintana, 27, Storm Lake, IA, speeding, \$215; Gary W. Riding, 53, speeding, \$115; David K. Sherman, 18, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Moo Soe,

22, Albert Lea, speeding, \$115; Jaime Soto, 36, Omaha, NE, passing parked authorized vehicle, \$125; Valentino C. Starnes, 25, Brooklyn Park, speeding, \$375; Braden J. Stork, 24, Claremont, seat belt, \$100; Daniel A. Tamez Garza, 31, Mankato, speeding, \$115; Phi P. Tran, 48, Shillington, PA, unsage change of course, \$125.

## OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Charles R. Bultman, 62, Owatonna, failure to yield, \$125; Melissa A. Castillo, 32, Owatonna, controlled substance crime, stay of adjudication, \$50, 33 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 2 years of supervised probation; Melissa A. Castillo, 32, Owatonna, possession of paraphernalia, \$125; Miguel A. Cordova, 20, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Derek S. Dittrich, 31, Owatonna, DWI, \$606, 30 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, attend MADD impact panel, chemical dependency assessment, 224 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Vincent F. Guggisberg, 27, Owatonna, unsafe equipment, revoked license and no insurance, \$515; Alex T. Halvorson Johnson, 26, failure to yield, \$125; Jason D. House, 39, Owatonna, possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, \$300, 19 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, 88 hours of community service and 5 years of supervised probation; Cindi M. Luna, 21, Owatonna, provide alcohol to minor, stay of adjudication, diversion program and 2 years of supervised probation; Cesar R. Martinez, 26, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Meghan E. McMahon, 29, theft, stay of adjudication, \$50, maintain employment and 1 year of supervised probation;

Rajhaun R. Miles, 24, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$105; Brennan C. Millhouse, 20, Albert Lea, possession of marijuana, \$381, 53 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 3 years of supervised probation; Tamara J. Olson, 36, Dundas, theft, \$126.99 and 75 days in county jail; Benjamin L. Stockwell, 35, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Darryle L. Thacker, 56, Janesville, revoked license, no insurance and stop sign, \$525; Jesus Vazquez Zavala, 27, Medford, domestic assault, \$381, 33 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation and 18 months of supervised probation.

## STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Benigno Bravo, 21, Austin, speeding, \$115; Joshua M. Burns, 20, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Amber R. Caron, 21, Warsaw, possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, \$300, 1 day in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, psychological evaluation, obtain permission to leave the state and 2 years of supervised probation; Hawque M. Christensen, 18, Waterville, speeding, \$115; Laura W. Ebeling, 20, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Chad C. Hacker, 42, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$105; Jade M. Huseby, 20, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Lauren J. Hylle, 20, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Gabrielle C. Kramer, 19, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Haylee E. Kremmin, 26, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Madelyn A. Kuck, 20, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Sylvia M. Lee, 69, Medford, no insurance, \$375 and 6 days in county jail; Paul J. Mason, 21, Adams, invalid license, \$131; Isaiah J. Meixner, 19, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Jama W. Mohammad, 53, Des Moines, IA, speeding, \$131; Ahmed O. Mohamud, 23, Owatonna,

possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, \$300, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, substance abuse subtle screening inventory, obtain permission to leave the state, 240 hours of community service and 3 years of supervised probation; Gerardo J. Morales Sandoval, 22, Austin, speeding, \$115; Daniel J. Nelson, 45, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Daniel J. Rivera Escandon, 19, Blooming Prairie, speeding, \$135; Devon T. Sather, 19, Medford, expired tabs and no insurance, \$305; Stuart A. Swygman, 43, Hayfield, speeding, \$135; Landon B. Thurnau, 19, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Eric R. Torres Santini, 21, Austin, speeding and permit violation, \$185; Joseph J. Wallin, 23, Owatonna, domestic assault, \$381, 12 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, obtain permission to leave the state, cognitive skill training, chemical dependency evaluation and 2 years of supervised probation.

## POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

### BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

**Feb. 1 Domestic:** Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 100 block of 3<sup>rd</sup> St. NE at 11:34 a.m.

**Feb. 5 Theft:** Police took a theft report in the 200 block of 4<sup>th</sup> St. NE at 1:59 p.m.

### OWATONNA POLICE

**Jan. 31 Criminal Sexual Conduct:** Police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct in the 2200 block of 26<sup>th</sup> St. NW at 1:20 a.m.

**Arrest:** Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at St. Paul Road NE and 14<sup>th</sup> St. NE at 1:33 a.m.

**Hit and Run:** Hit and run accidents occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 10:04 a.m. and the 200 block of 18<sup>th</sup> St. SW at 1:35 p.m.

**Property:** At 2:21 p.m., stolen property was recovered in the 200 block of Larch Ave. NE.

**Theft:** Officer took a theft report in the 200 block of

Broadway St. E. at 4:29 p.m.

**Domestic:** At 6:17 p.m., a domestic disturbance occurred in the 100 block of Bridge St. W.

**Burglary:** Police arrested a subject for burglary in the 800 block of 25<sup>th</sup> St. NE at 10:19 p.m.

**Feb. 1 Arrest:** At 1:06 a.m., police arrested a subject following a mental health incident in the 500 block of Oak Ave. S.

**Mental Health:** Officers responded to a mental health incident in the 700 block of Paris Place SE at 9:02 a.m.

**Vandalism:** Property damage was reported in the 400 block of 18<sup>th</sup> St. SE at 11:57 a.m.

**Domestic:** Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 500 block of Kim Lane SW at 12:27 p.m.

**Theft:** Police received a theft report from the 200 block of 21<sup>st</sup> ST. NW at 3:17 p.m.

**Criminal Sexual Conduct:** Police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct in the city at 6:19 p.m.

## ARRESTS

Steele County

### OWATONNA POLICE

Michelle Evony Nin, 20, arrested at 2:49 a.m. Feb. 6, felony controlled substance and drug paraphernalia, held for court.

Victor Hugo Martinez-Villalobos, 37, arrested at 6:17 p.m. Feb. 6, felony possession of pills and marijuana, held for court.

Brandon Bradley Hammond, 29, arrested at 12:43 a.m. Feb. 7, warrant arrest, held for court.

## COURT NEWS

Dodge County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Jan. 26 – Feb. 2:

### DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sharon M. Davern, 63, Mantorville, obstruct parking space, \$180; Casey L. Lowell, 32, Zumbrota, trespassing, \$120 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Dayana Y. Partida, 22, Kasson, speeding, \$220; Mark D. Ray, 64,

SEE BLOTTER, A5

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

1. Katrina Doig – false name - \$2,000 bail

2. Laura Dominguez – DWI – no bail

3. Austin Drake-Moreno – disorderly conduct - \$500 bail

4. William Durham – domestic assault - \$2,000 bail

5. Hal Edelman – drugs, DWI - \$10,000 bail

6. John Eppel – predatory offender – no bail

7. Mark Erschens – DWI – no bail
8. Darin Esplan – DWI – no bail

9. Francis Feeley – domestic assault - \$3,000 bail

10. Romero Fernandez – criminal sexual conduct - \$200,000 bail

11. Jequinnson Fisher – DWI – no bail

12. Luis Flores – traffic - \$100 bail

13. Rogelio Flores – DWI, revoked license - \$12,000 bail

14. Kewana Freeman – card fraud - \$5,000 bail
15. Juan Gallegos – DWI - \$500 bail

16. Anthony Galloway – DWI – no bail

17. Ezequiel Garcia – failure to register as sex offender – no bail

18. Jose Garcia – revoked license - \$3,000 bail

19. Jose Garcia – drugs – no bail

20. Alfredo Garza Jr. – no insurance, cancelled license - \$9,500 bail

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



# When Should Dementia Patients Stop Driving?



**THE SAVVY SENIOR**  
Brought to you by:  
**Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus**



220 3rd St. NW  
Blooming Prairie  
**583-4434**

Dear Savvy Senior,  
Is there a good rule of thumb on when dementia patients should stop driving? My 82-year-old mom has early stage Alzheimer’s disease but still drives herself around town just fine.  
Inquiring Daughter

Dear Inquiring,  
Most doctors agree that people with moderate to severe dementia should never get behind the wheel, but in the early stages of Alzheimer’s, driving performance should be the determining factor of when to stop driving, not the disease itself.

With that said, it’s also important to realize that as your mom’s driving skills deteriorate over time from the disease, she might not recognize she has a problem. So, it’s very important that you work closely with her doctor to monitor her driving and help her stop when it is no longer safe for her to drive. Here are some additional tips that can help you.

**Watch for Warning Signs**  
The best way to keep tabs on your mom’s driving is to take frequent rides with her watching out for key warning signs. For example: Does she have trouble remembering routes to familiar places? Does she drive at inappropriate speeds, tailgate, drift between lanes or fail to observe traffic signs? Does she react slowly or make poor driving decisions? Also, has your mom had any fender benders or tickets lately, or have you noticed any dents or scrapes on her vehicle? All of these are red flags.

If you need some assessment help, hire a driver rehabilitation specialist who’s trained to evaluate older drivers. See [AOTA.org/older-driver](http://AOTA.org/older-driver) or [ADED.net](http://ADED.net) to locate one in your area.

**Transition Tips**  
Through your assessments, if you believe it’s still safe for your mom to drive, you should start recommending some simple adjustments to ensure her safety, like driving only in daylight and on familiar routes, and avoiding busy roads and bad weather. Also, see if she will sign an Alzheimer’s “driving contract” (see [ALZ.org/driving](http://ALZ.org/driving) to print one) that designates someone to tell her when it’s no longer safe to drive.

You may also want to consider getting a GPS car tracking device (like [MotoSafety.com](http://MotoSafety.com) or [AutoBrain.com](http://AutoBrain.com)) to help you keep an eye on her. These devices will let you track where she’s driving and allow you to set up zones and speed limits that will send you alerts to your smartphone when she exits an area, or if she’s driving too fast or braking harshly.

**Time to Quit**  
When your mom’s driving gets to the point that she can no longer drive safely, you’ll need to talk to her. It’s actually best to start having these conversations in the early stages of the disease, before she needs to quit driving, so she can prepare herself.

You also need to have a plan for alternative transportation (including a list of family, friends and local transportation options) that will help your mom get around after she stops driving.

For tips on how to talk to your mom, the Hartford Center for Mature Market Excellence offers a helpful guide called “At the Crossroads: Family Conversations About Alzheimer’s Disease, Dementia and Driving” that you can get at [TheHartford.com/Publications-on-Aging](http://TheHartford.com/Publications-on-Aging).

**Refuses to Quit**  
If your mom refuses to quit, you have several options. First, suggest a visit to her doctor who can give her a medical evaluation, and prescribe that she stops driving. Older people will often listen to their doctor before they will listen to their own family.

If she still refuses, contact your local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to see if they can help. Some states require doctors to report new dementia cases to the DMV, who can revoke the person’s license.

If these fail, consider hiding her keys or just take them away. You could also disable her vehicle by disconnecting the battery, park it in another location so she can’t see it or have access to it or sell it.

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

## 10 Years Ago Feb. 16, 2010

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

There will be a new sheriff in town. Steele County Sheriff Gary Ringhofer announced on Friday he plans to step down from the position in a few months. Ringhofer made his intentions clear in a memo circulated to the Steele County Board of Commissioners and law enforcement personnel. Ringhofer’s term doesn’t expire until the end of the year, but he plans to leave the office of sheriff April 30. The county board will take up the issue of how to fill the sheriff’s job at its next meeting Feb 23. A replacement will be needed until this fall’s election.

It has been an expensive winter for the city of Blooming Prairie, trying to combat the large snowfall and keeping the roads clear. With an estimated 52 inches of snow falling so far. The city is over their snow removal budget about \$3000. Factored into the budget are salt and the transportation of snow off Main Street. The biggest cause for being over is the cost of salt. Not included in the budget is cost of labor and repairs of the equipment. “We are trying to keep the streets as good as we can,” Keith Doerhoefer. Although the budget is over, the city will not change anything. If the roads need to be plowed, they will.

Feb. 8-12 was FCCLA week at the high school. FCCLA stands for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. It was founded in 1945, known as FHA (Future Homemakers of America) and changed in the 1980’s FLA (Future Leaders of America). The name changes occurred as the scope of family and consumer sciences modernized with our country. The organization promotes personal growth, knowledge, leadership and character. The moto for FCCLA this year is “Life is a canvas – paint it!” “The idea is to be yourself and make your life what you want it to be,” explained chapter president, Ashley Campbell.

## 20 Years Ago Feb. 15, 2000

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

The Blooming Prairie junior high wrestlers had a good day at their own invitational tourney on Feb 5, earning one first and five seconds as well as four other places. The 8-team even featured teams from the area bot A and AA schools. Jay Salinas took first by winning all three of his bouts, including a final victory over Joe Peterson of Kenyon-Wanamingo. Taking second for the Blossoms were Sam Tashima, Grant Johnson, Billy Lindquist, Ryan Kelley and Brandon Servantez. Third place, Adam Si-

mon and fourth place, Collin Kelley joined by Jeff Wondra, fifth place and Shelby Parks in sixth. The meet was a good one to give the younger Blossoms some valuable experience in tough competition.

Two local students, Karissa Kokoschke and Megan Gifford through their writing efforts will get them on a summer trip to their favorite country overseas. The \$1,000 scholarship to each from the Lion’s Club scholarship will be more than enough to pay for their six-week stay in Europe. The Lions Club has sponsored 12 students to come to Blooming Prairie since 1990. Although the opportunity to travel abroad is there for American youth, it isn’t taken advantage of as club members would like. So, to encourage more participation, offering scholarships has been one way to entice students to write about their reasons for going across the seas and then they are judged. Megan wrote her essay on why she wanted to go to Ireland. “I don’t know why Ireland intrigues me so much, but has always fascinated me.” Although Megan is not sure of the details of her trip she is excited. Karissa shared her feelings about visiting Germany. She will be going near Hanover, Germany. After three weeks at the North Sea Camp, she will go to her host family. “I want to improve my German and do some traveling, if I can, plus see what the culture is like.”

The American Legion Auxiliary delivered 50 handmade Valentines to the VA Hospital in Minneapolis. These Valentines will be given to the hospitalized vets on Valentines Day. The cards were made by students at the grade school and will be much appreciated by those who receive them.

## 50 Years Ago Jan. 28, 1970

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

Eagle Scouts from the Wasioja District, along with other parts of the Gamehaven Council, Boy Scouts of America, will be honored at the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Eagle Recognition Dinner on Feb. 12 in Rochester. Eagle will be hosted by the business and professional men in their life interest field and will spend part of Feb. 12 exploring this field with their host. Attending from the Wasioj District will be Paul Brakke and Wayne Carlson of Blooming Prairie, Bruce Dodge, James Cottrell, Wesley Bachman and Marvin Stafford of Dodge Center and Roger Chladek and David Fretham of Owatonna.

J. K. “Jens” Jorgenson has resigned as Blooming Prairie’s Police Chief, climaxing 26 years as a law enforcement officer. He has informed the Village Council of his resignation effective sometime in March. “I have had a strong urge to enter private business and have purchased a grocery

store on Lake George, popular resort area north of Park Rapids. I expect this new venture will permit me to spend more time with family and to enjoy leisure time activities I enjoy,” explained Jorgenson. My 2 ? years in Blooming Prairie have been most rewarding and enjoyable. In the short time that Jorgenson was in Blooming Prairie, his value and past experience has been greatly appreciated and he has proven numerous times that he has been a most capable law enforcement officer and a dedicated and faithful village employee.

## 75 Years Ago Feb. 15, 1945

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

If you are interested in what Uncle Sam pays his fighters, here is the official figures per month:

Buck Pvt., \$50; Pvt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class, \$54; Corporal, \$66; D ty Sgt., \$78; Staff Sgt., \$96; Technical Sgt., \$114; 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt., \$138; Master Sgt., \$138. Officers are paid yearly basis: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, \$1,800; 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, \$2,000; Captain, \$2,400; Major, \$3,000; Lt. Colonel, \$3500; Colonel, \$4,000; Brig General, \$6,000; Major General, \$8,000; Lt General, \$8,000; General, \$8,000. The same pay with according rank applies to navy officers and non-rated men.

Hayfield nosed out Blooming Prairie Friday, Feb 9<sup>th</sup> by the none too wide margin of six points, final score 33-27. The game was very fast and inclined to be rough, but all scoring was kept to a minimum. Blossoms led at the half by six points. Turner and Estenson were bot high point men for the Blossoms at nine points each. Thompson and Nielson were tied as aces for Hayfield with 10 points each. The next match up is at the sub-district tournament to be held in Blooming Prairie March 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

A number of letters from recent graduates and servicemen have come into our office this week. Capt. G. E. Peterson, who is in the Philippine Islands, has written a very interesting letter. He tells of the conditions over there and describes the attitude of the Philipinoes when the Americans came ashore. It was not only a thrill to the inhabitants, but also to the Americans whose privilege it was to bring freedom again to the islands. Capt. Peterson stated that the guerillas have been very effective in getting information that was invaluable to the soldiers in regard to the advance on Manilla.

Pfc. Neil J. Zwiener also wrote. He has been in the Pacific for better than a year and a half and is looking forward to the time when he can set sail for home. From his letters we infer that he has been very active in his island hopping. In spite of the hardships that he has gone through, he has not lost his sense of humor!

## MARDI GRAS: in BP FROM A1

Revelers try to outdo each other wearing beads, trinkets, and medallions thrown from floats. Multi-colored masks complete the “look” for Mardi Gras in New Orleans and the French Quarter!

The BP Servicemen’s Club becomes the “French Quarter” for a night, Feb. 22. The Boil will be served “NOLA-Style” at tables set for eight.

The menu will include shrimp, sausage, sweet corn, potatoes and onions, dessert and beverage.

Masks and beads will be given to the first 50 quests to arrive. Special music and karaoke continues throughout the evening in the Liberty Room. There will be multiple drawings for \$10 gift certificates to the Foxhole!

Tickets are \$15 each and can be purchased at the BP Servicemen’s Club. Call 507-583-7884. Everyone must have a ticket to attend the Mardi Gras celebration.

All proceeds benefit the BP Servicemen’s Club and veterans activities.

## BLOTTER: FROM A4

Claremont, cancelled license, \$280; Sean T. Rutledge, 31, Kasson, speeding, \$120; Jake K. Schulz, 21, Mantorville, careless driving, \$480, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Nycolis C. Setterlund, 26, Mantorville, parking violation, \$32; James D. Tibbals, 46, Mantorville, parking violation, \$32; John W. Walbruch, 71, Mantorville, parking violation, \$32.

### KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Coty J. Allen, 27, Mantorville, suspended license and failure to keep to the right, \$130; Lyle D. Allen Jr., 47, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Abdusalan A. Hilowle, 25, Rochester, revoked license, \$280; Brandon J. Lastine, 33, Spring Valley, violation of order for protection, 90 days in county jail; Kade M. McNamara, 26, Rochester, stop sign, \$130; Shannon S. Roberts, 46, Egota, DWI,

\$505, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Chelsey M. Smith, 30, Byron, parking violation, \$37; Escudero Velasco, 28, Alexandria, parking violation, \$32; Curtis R. Warren, 26, Rochester, cancelled license and no insurance, \$480; Sally A. Weness, 35, North Mankato, DWI, \$505, attend MADD impact panel, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of probation.

### MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

David P. Becker, 43, Faribault, speeding, \$120; Jasmine J. Campbell, 28, Rochester, no license, \$180; Rebekah J. Hale, 26, Rochester, DWI, \$480, 3 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 2 years of supervised

probation; Carol J. Helvig, 62, Kasson, no insurance, \$280; Kate O. Huemoeller, 17, Kasson, speeding, \$130; Mercedes A. Machin, 30, Stewartville, speeding, \$140; Eronn D. Swain, 44, Waseca, speeding, \$120; Jason W. Todd, 42, Sanborn, revoked license and headlights violation, \$320; Jacob D. Vieth, 19, Dodge Center, speeding and no insurance, \$420; Dylan L. Wood, 24, Kasson, speeding, \$140.

### WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jared N. July, 21, West Concord, speeding, \$120; Alexandria K. Reichstadt-Woelfel, 27, Lonsdale, revoked license, \$280; Gina L. Stroud-Murphy, 54, West Concord, parking violation, \$32.

## BENEFIT TO HELP KIDS: get good sleep FROM A1

beds.” He added that the organization is the only nonprofit that doesn’t have a paid director. The directors, Shari and Jeff Kropp, are volunteers.

Other board members are Amy Shornock, Tracie Parker, Stacey Ginskey, Jen Drake and Abby Majerus.

The local Beds for Kids organization began 10 years ago by Jim Packard when his eyes were opened to the fact that some kids did not have beds. “I had a job that required me to go into homes for service work,” Packard said. “I

discovered children sleeping on floors or sharing beds with their parents.”

Packard eventually pitched the idea to his men’s Bible study and the organization got off the ground. They began by making four beds. They took the attitude that if only one kid got a bed, it would be well worth it.

“It’s inspiring.”

### Matthew Stanislav

Beds for Kids President

According to Stanislav, Beds for Kids is the only one of its kind in Minnesota. In fact, he said, there are only a couple others in the entire country. The organization expanded a few years ago to include Waseca County.

Stanislav got involved with the organization about five years ago and has served as president for two years. “They knew I had young kids and had a passion for young children,” he said.

Beds for Kids is dedicated to providing beds for children in need throughout Steele County. Since its inception, the organization has provided more than 1,500 beds in both counties.

Every delivery includes a twin mattress, box spring,

frame, mattress pad, sheets, comforter and pillow. It runs about \$190 to outfit the average bed. Stanislav hopes to raise enough funds to do at least 25 beds over the next year.

All items given out by the group are purchased new. “We want them to be proud of what they are getting,” Stanislav said.

Some of the situations Bed for Kids have helped out over the years are families where parents are unemployed, families that have relocated due to hardships, domestic abuse and house fires. Stanislav said they mostly deal with families that are relocating, and “they just don’t have the funds to purchase beds.”

The highest number of beds done in one year came in 2015 when the organization donated 250 beds.

“It’s inspiring,” Stanislav said of seeing what work his group has done in the community.



STEELE-DODGE

BUSINESS

# Car Time slides into new facility

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

An exciting new chapter has opened for Car Time of Owatonna as owner Justin Johnson recently moved into a new building replacing a decades-old facility.

The old building served many different venues since it was built in 1973. It has been a restaurant, headquarters for U.S. Representative Tim Penny, Kuehn Motors and finally Car Time.

“It served its purpose,” says Johnson, who has been with Car Time for 17 years, 10 of the last as owner. “It was either nurse that along for another 15 years or get something new,” he said, adding people often enjoy a better atmosphere like the new facility will be able to offer.

Johnson said he toyed with the idea of building new for the past five years. He admits that the thought of fixing up the old building scared him. “You open up a whole new can of worms when you remodel,” he said.

In the end, Johnson elected to construct a new building and demolish the old facility. “This way I was able to make it the way I need,” he said. “It’s a bigger and newer Car Time.”

Through the new construction, Johnson found that it was a fairly seamless process. “Everybody dreads working with the City of Owatonna in terms of inspections,” he said. “They were a pleasure to deal with.”

The building was designed in Iowa and came as pre-made energy panel structures. It took about three months to construct the facility. Car Time moved into the new building in November.

Up to four vehicles can be brought into a temperature-controlled environment. Previously, Car Time could only bring in one vehicle.



Justin Johnson, owner of Car Time of Owatonna, is operating out of a new facility along Hoffman Drive. The building was constructed right next to the old facility, which was recently demolished. Johnson has owned Car Time for the past 10 years.

Johnson utilized some of his own customers with the new construction. He hired all local contractors who have purchased vehicles from Car Time.

Car Time has a deep commitment to Steele County by offering used cars and trucks as well as service and repair, which in Johnson’s words is what sets them apart from other independent dealers. “They don’t have a service facility,” he said. Car Time employs three mechanics/service technicians in

addition to office staff and drivers used as runners for transporting vehicles.

Johnson built a shop for service work five years ago adjacent to the new facility. “We can take care of our customers after the sale,” he said. He noted Car Time offers the “least expensive labor rate” of anyone in the area.

The dealer doesn’t only service the local area. Car Time also serves Faribault, Rochester, Albert Lea, Waseca and Mankato areas in addition to reaching into

the Twin Cities metro area.

Car Time prides itself on providing affordable vehicles in outstanding condition. At any one time, the dealer has 30-40 vehicles on the lot. The vehicles are often company cars, lease vehicles and trade-ins.

One thing that clearly sets Car Time apart from other dealers is that Johnson stays away from going to car auctions as much as possible. “I hate going to auctions,” he said.

Instead of auctions, Johnson is big on develop-

ing relationships with new car dealers. He said when trust is established between dealers, it saves them money, which in turn saves their customers money.

Johnson’s goal is to provide his customers with “a laid back fun experience.” Johnson also offers “full transparency on everything” to his customers.

He said the new facility allows transparency. “We like the open concept, the open floor plan so people can see how transparent we are,” said Johnson. The

office area also features an enclosed area for customers who want privacy.

Johnson said most of Car Time’s customers are repeat. “When you’ve been doing a good job for as long as we have, people come back,” he said. “When people come back, you know you’ve done your job,” he added.

Dealing cars has become a dream job for Johnson. “I never dread coming to work as every day is different,” he says. “You get to meet new people, and I like to take care of people.”

## National Entrepreneurship Week to be celebrated in Owatonna

For the first time, National Entrepreneurship Week will be officially recognized and celebrated in Steele County.

National Entrepreneurship Week is an initiative first authorized by the United States Congress in 2006. Now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year, this week will be recognized and celebrated in Owatonna from February 17-21, with events taking place on three days.

Spearheaded by the Owatonna Area Business Development Center, along with support from several other local businesses and organizations, the events will begin at 10 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 17 at the Steele County History Center. This day will shine the spotlight on local entrepre-

neurs of the past with entrepreneur presentations and interviews, lunch, and several hands-on activities, including construction and use of a “Gandy Wheel,” a measurement tool originally developed in Steele County. Interested Owatonna High School students and members of the school’s DECA program will participate in these events.

The festivities continue Wednesday, Feb. 19, starting at 9 a.m. at the Owatonna High School Auditorium. The day begins with live interviews conducted with successful entrepreneurs sharing stories about the development of their business, along with presentations from other Steele County

based organizations that play a key role in entrepreneurship. The afternoon includes bus tours around the community with stops at select local businesses, with the bus tour guides providing history and background information on each business. Everyone is welcome to attend this day’s events.

The celebration concludes on Friday, Feb. 21 at 11 a.m. with an invitation-only luncheon in the Morehouse Room at Owatonna Public Utilities. The program will include naming the inaugural Steele County Entrepreneur of the Year, along with the announcement of the first five inductees into the Steele County Entrepreneurs Hall of Fame.

“National Entrepreneurship Week is the perfect time to celebrate the many innovators who have called Steele County home,” said Bill Owens, executive director of the Owatonna Area Business Development Center. “Our plan, both this year and in the future, is to recognize the achievements of those entrepreneurs of the past and present, while providing awareness of the many tools at our disposal to assist current and future entrepreneurs.”

For more information regarding the week’s events, including business sponsorship opportunities, please visit the Owatonna Area Business Development Center’s website at [www.owatonna.biz](http://www.owatonna.biz).

## Peterbilt medium-duty floor mats offered by Minimizer

Minimizer has long claimed that its custom molded floor mats cover the vast majority of heavy-duty trucks. Now, more than five years after their introduction, Minimizer floor mats are making inroads with medium-duty trucks, as well.

The Tested & Tortured company recently released custom molded floor mats that fit Peterbilt 337 and 348 models.

“This was definitely a customer-driven expansion,” Minimizer CEO and President Christopher (“CT”) Thorpe said. “We have received numerous pleas to make medium-duty floor mats, and Peterbilt models are one of the most common requests.”

“We think Peterbilt owners will find these new floor mats offer the same durability and value they’ve come to expect

from Minimizer,” Director of Marketing Steve Hansen said.

The new release features four unique floor mat kits that cover Peterbilt 337 and 348 trucks within model years 2010-2020.

Minimizer floor mats are laser-measured to ensure an exact fit, and their tray system features a raised edge that keeps everything on the mat. They also come with the Minimizer lifetime guarantee.

“Floor mats have become one of our most popular products, and we certainly aren’t done with new medium-duty kits. We’ll continue to keep up with demand by releasing new floor mats as the need arises,” Hansen said.

To see the new Peterbilt floor mat kits, visit [www.minimizer.com](http://www.minimizer.com).

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STEELE-DODGE BUSINESS

Mantorville's Chocolate Shoppe features yummy treats

BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN  
STAFF WRITER

For residents and visitors alike, a stop at The Chocolate Shoppe is a must when in downtown Mantorville.

The store is currently run by Lynnette Nash, who along with family members, makes hand-dipped chocolates as well as offering ice cream cones and a variety of old-fashioned candies.

The Chocolate Shoppe has been in Mantorville since 1976 and in Nash's family since 1989 when her mother, Lynne Kenworthy, bought it. The Nash family bought the business from Kenworthy in 2012. Alexia Nash, Lynnette and Luke's daughter, is now the third generation actively involved in the making of candy while Luke is described by his daughter as the "creative director" now that he is retired. He also makes the caramels and does the business website, she said.

The business has always been a family affair, Alexia recalled, saying that when she a baby she had a crib in

the shop and "just sat there." Later, she recalled using chocolate to paint pictures.

As she got older, she said, she began to learn about the business and now is helping to do the same with her 8-year-old great-niece Ava.

All the chocolates are hand-dipped at the store, Lynnette said.

While the store features such standard items as chocolate caramel pecan clusters, chocolate covered caramels, chocolate covered butter toffee, truffles, creams, fudge, chocolate peanut butter cups and, if ordered in advance, caramel apples, it also has a few more unusual items such as chocolate covered potato chips.

Not all potato chips are suitable for chocolate dipping Alexia pointed out, saying it took a lot of trial and error before they found a brand of rippled chips that was strong enough to withstand the dipping in chocolate.

Another item that has been offered, at the request of customers, she said, is chocolate covered gummy bears.

However the chocolate is presented, however, Lynnette said, none of their chocolate has any preservatives.

In addition to chocolate, The Chocolate Shoppe features eight different ice cream flavors, which vary from time to time.

There is also a variety of other candies such as jelly beans, rock candy, pop rocks, hard candies and gum along with a selection of Sioux City Sodas.

While a favorite with the locals, it also draws a lot of visitors from Rochester and the surrounding area, the Nashs said. It has also become a favorite of those being treated at the Mayo Clinic who might be looking for a trip out of the city.

Candy is made every day with the exception of Mondays when the store is closed, Lynnette said.

In addition to shopping in-person, candies can also be purchased through Amazon or from The Chocolate Shoppe's online store.

The Cholate Shoppe is open 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, closed Monday.



Alexia Nash weighs a customer's chocolate order. Chocolates can be bought by the piece or a box.



In addition to their hand-dipped chocolates, visitors to The Chocolate Shoppe can also choose from a variety of hard candies, Sioux City Sodas and eight flavors of ice cream for cones.



Lynnette Nash prepares an order for a customer who stopped by The Chocolate Shoppe.

Hy-Vee cuts 24-hour service

Hy-Vee Foods is ending its 24-hour shopping. Beginning Monday, Hy-Vee stopped being open to customers 24 hours a day. Stores in Owatonna, Faribault, Austin, Albert Lea and all Rochester locations are among the greater Minnesota stores affected by the trimming of hours. Hy-Vee is also implementing the reduction of hours at its locations in the Twin Cities metro area.

The local stores in Owatonna and Faribault will have new hours of 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. Hy-vee announced that all Twin Cities-area stores will also be open from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. while store hours at the greater Minnesota stores will vary. No jobs are expected to be lost because of the new hours. Late night workers will be moved to other shifts during the day.

Minn. unemployment rate holds steady

Minnesota's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained a steady 3.3% during December, according to data released by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). The national seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for December also held a steady 3.5%. Minnesota gained 3,978 jobs from December 2018 to December 2019, a 0.1% increase.

The private sector average wage rate was up 24 cents in December for a 4% rise over the year. "Minnesota remains a national leader in labor force participation rates as more Minnesotans are stepping from the sidelines to employment, however we continue to experience a tight labor market and slowing job growth," said DEED Commissioner Steve Grove. Minnesota's labor force participation rate

held at 70.3 percent, compared to the national rate of 63.2%. The state's employment-to-population ratio ticked down one-tenth of a percent to 68%, compared to 61% nationally. Four supersectors gained jobs in December. Trade, Transportation and Utilities saw the largest jobs gain (up 1,500), followed by Other Services (up 1,300), Leisure and Hospitality (up 1,200), and Government (up 300).

Supersectors losing jobs in December included Education and Health Services (down 1,600), Manufacturing (down 1,200), Information (down 500), Financial Activities (down 400), Construction (down 200), and Mining and Logging (down 100). Minneapolis-St. Paul MN-WI MSA gained 2,178 jobs over the month, followed by St. Cloud MSA (up 755), Mankato MSA (587), and Rochester MSA (up 102).

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OBITUARIES

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Larry Pence, 75, Albert Lea

Larry D. Pence, 75, of Albert Lea, passed away on Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020 at his home in Albert Lea.  
Funeral services will be at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020 at the United Methodist Church, 702 US Hwy 69, Albert Lea.  
Visitation will be from 4-8 p.m. on Friday at Bonnerup Funeral Service, 2210 E. Main St., Albert Lea and again one hour prior to the funeral service at the church. Bonnerup Funeral Service is assisting the family. www.bonnerupfuneralservice.com.

Legion Auxiliary sponsors essay contest

The Blooming Prairie Legion Auxiliary is once again sponsoring the Americanism Essay Contest for students in grades 3-12, including students with special needs.  
This year's essay title is, "How can we address the health and well-being of our veterans, military and their families?"  
Grade levels are divided into six classes. One award in each of the six classes will be presented in each division. Winners will receive \$50 and a \$50 donation in the student's name will be made to the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship fund.  
National winners will be posted at www.ALAforVeterans.org after the convention.  
Forms to enter the contest are available at the Blooming Prairie Public Library.

SCHOOL LUNCH MENU

BP Elementary

Feb. 12- Corn dog, cheeseburger, baked beans  
Feb. 13- Meatlover's Pizza, turkey BLT wrap, cupid corn, sweetheart cookie  
Feb. 14- NO SCHOOL  
Feb. 17- NO SCHOOL  
Feb. 18- Crispy chicken tenders, roast turkey & gravy, mashed potatoes, soft pan roll

BP High School

Feb. 12- Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes & gravy, BBQ rib sandwich, yogurt pak with pretzel bites, taco bar  
Feb. 13- Pizza, crispy chicken nuggets, chef salad, baked potato bar  
Feb. 14- NO SCHOOL  
Feb. 17- NO SCHOOL  
Feb. 18- Italian meatball sub, garden peas, crispy chicken sandwich, pizza, chicken Caesar salad, turkey deli sandwich

YOUR AD COULD BE HERE!

Contact the Steele County Times Today!

STEELE COUNTY Times 507-583-4431

Birthdays & Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

Feb. 12  
Emily Trihus  
Justin Esplan  
Alan Schaefer  
Gary Polinder  
Adam Esplan

Feb. 13  
Bobbie Bruns  
Judy Remker  
Laura Mans  
Jim Trotman, Jr.  
Will Hinzman  
Layne Krell

Feb. 14  
Doug Krell  
Haley Ryks  
Jim Severtson  
Jon Peterson  
Rita Goodnature  
Creed Chladek  
Owen Braaten  
Harley Haley

Feb. 15  
Elijah Peterson  
Emily Iversen  
Steve Glynn  
Raylee Miner

Feb. 16  
Mary Jo Wallace  
Eloise Yvonne Jenzen  
Mark Swenson  
Maveda Peterson  
Nolan Toquam  
Jerry Ingvalson

Feb. 17  
Brandy Munson  
Garret Farr  
Blake Christianson  
Thomas Farr  
Dawn Gross

Feb. 18  
Rod Koster  
Carly Jo Iversen  
Holly Ann Olson  
Amy Snider  
Maynard Johnson

ANNIVERSARIES

Feb. 15  
Galen & Dorothy Peterson

Feb. 17  
Mark & Diane Lembke

Feb. 18  
Tom & Paula Ressler

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Council announces deadlines arts grants

The Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council (SEMAC) is accepting proposals for arts projects.  
All proposed projects must begin no earlier than June 1, and be completed within 12 months, culminating in a capstone event that is accessible and open to the public. Online applications will be available throughout March. The LOI stage of the application must be completed by March 25, with an April 1 submission deadline.  
· All categories require at least 20% in matching funds.  
· Individual artists are not eligible to apply.  
· Offered twice a year; the next deadline will be October 1.  
SEMAC, a non-profit arts agency, is designated by the State of Minnesota Arts Board as the regional arts council for 11 southeastern Minnesota counties: Steele, Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Wabasha, and Winona.  
For information about the grant application process, eligibility, or assistance setting up an online account, contact the SEMAC office at 2778 D Commerce Dr. NW, Rochester, MN 55901 or call 507-281-4848.  
Information may also be found at the website at www.semac.org. With limited funding available each fiscal year, every SEMAC grant category is competitive and includes an LOI stage used as an initial screening for eligibility.  
Arts & Cultural Heritage Grants  
The Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund supports arts focused activities in three key areas: 1) Arts and Arts Access, 2) Arts Education, and 3) Arts and Cultural Heritage. SEMAC encourages applicants to research and develop proposals that incorporate two or more of the key areas with an emphasis on creating lasting partnerships among regional nonprofit arts organizations and other nonprofit groups.  
In addition to eligible arts organizations, nonprofits that do not have arts as a primary focus, such as schools, senior centers, community education, cultural groups and colleges are invited to apply.  
Future funding of Arts and Cultural Heritage Grants depends on appropriate use of current funding. SEMAC urges arts organizations, non-arts organizations with an arts component, and government entities to apply. Due to the larger awards available, this is a highly competitive category.  
Presenter/Production Assistance Grants  
Presenter Assistance grants are intended to help regional arts organizations and educational institutions sponsor appearances by touring artists or companies who have demonstrated high levels of artistic quality. These grants are not for local productions or artist residencies in schools.  
Production Assistance grants support activities by arts organizations directly involved in the creation, performance, publication, and exhibition of art. The two distinct subcategories within Production Assistance grants are: 1) Arts Production Projects, and 2) Administrative Support Projects.  
Small Towns/Rural Areas Grants  
SEMAC wishes to support and encourage the creation and development of art and arts organizations in communities with populations under 7,500. This support may be used for assistance in activities, which directly involve the creation, performance, publication, or exhibition of art. Applicants may include arts organizations, government entities and public or non-religious private schools, either individually or in cooperation. These grants cannot be used to cover the costs of school residencies.

BOOK NOOK

Bookish BINGO!

Our second annual adult winter reading program has begun at the Blooming Prairie Branch Library.  
Stop in the library to pick up your bingo card or print your own from the website www.owatonna.info. Just read any five books between Feb. 1 and March 31. It's great if you read five books that match the bingo categories on your card; however, any five books will do!  
Read five books, then turn in your completed bingo card at the library. Just one card per person please. You'll receive a reward and also be entered into a drawing for the grand prize. Thanks to the Friends of the Library for providing prizes for the participants.  
Any kind of book counts! eBooks? Great! Listening to an audiobook? That's perfect! We just want to get you through the late winter months with some good books. If you're not sure what to read, stop by or call the library at 507-583-7750 to get a reading recommendation.  
If you need a crafty project, join us at the library on Wednesday, Feb. 26 at 1:30 p.m. Brad Trom will be giving a hands-on demonstration of how to make envelopes out of calendar pages. If you have tape, scissors, or an extra calendar (old or new), please bring them along.  
We will survive this winter!

NANCY VAILLANCOURT

Sudoku Corner

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

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| £ | 5 | 8 | † | 9 | 6 | 1 | 7 | £ |
| 6 | £ | 1 | 5 | £ | 7 | † | 8 | 9 |
| † | 7 | 9 | £ | 1 | 8 | £ | 6 | 5 |
| 5 | £ | 7 | 1 | 8 | † | £ | 9 | 6 |
| 8 | 1 | £ | 9 | 6 | £ | 7 | 5 | † |
| 9 | 6 | † | 7 | 5 | £ | 8 | 1 | £ |
| £ | 9 | 5 | £ | 7 | 1 | 6 | † | 8 |
| 7 | † | 6 | 8 | £ | 5 | 9 | £ | 1 |
| 1 | 8 | £ | 6 | † | 9 | 5 | £ | 7 |

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Recipe corner

Hamburger Vegetable Soup

2 lb browned seasoned hamburger and onion  
2 C diced potatoes  
2 C sliced carrots  
1 C uncooked rice  
1 can Veg All mixed vegetables

1-1/2 qt canned tomatoes or can tomato juice  
3 qt water  
4 tsp salt

Bring vegetable, meat and rice to a boil in the water. Add tomatoes. Simmer 30-45 minutes. Serves 6 or more.

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# Reflecting the light



**Pastor Paul Hauschild**

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
HAYFIELD

*“The next day (John the Baptist) saw Jesus coming toward him and declared: ‘Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’”* (John 1:29)

The Gospel of John makes it very clear that Jesus, God’s Son, is the life and light of all people (John 1:4). John the Baptist told everyone he was not the light but only reflected the light of Jesus. Ah, that’s our mission today, too, isn’t

it? To reflect the light of Christ?

When I was a little boy I remember several trips to my grandpa and grandma’s little farm house outside of Marshall. As the adults sat in the kitchen drinking coffee and visiting, I sat alone in the living room. It was such a small room and quite dark. Only two little windows let in the sunlight.

One day I sat in my grandpa’s big recliner and

examined the TV tray stand next to it. Grandpa kept is shaving kit there. I lifted up the mirror and took on the task of turning the little mirror toward the sunlight that came in through one of those small windows. As I angled the mirror, I was able to reflect the light to the opposite wall. I was surprised how I could reflect the light into the darkest corners of the living room. It was quite fun!

As God’s people we, too, can reflect the light... of Christ! Not with mirrors but with our actions, words, and attitudes. We are not the light. Only Jesus is the light. We are but conduits of the life and light Jesus can give to the world. As John reflected the attention on Jesus rather than on himself, he exclaimed that Jesus is the one who can take away our sins. What great news! We can find forgiveness, grace,

hope and fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ. On our own we can’t do much, but with Jesus we can do it! We can give this promise of forgiveness and hope to a world so desperately seeking to find purpose and fulfillment.

As Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 – *“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”* God bless your week!

## AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### LUTHERAN

#### AURORA LUTHERAN

6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna  
Pastor Stephanie Wood  
507-676-5696

Worship: Sunday at 9 a.m.  
Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.

#### COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA

106 Third St. SE., Geneva  
Pastor Kristen Venne  
507-256-4288

Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.

#### FIRST LUTHERAN – AFLC

503 Radel Ct., Ellendale  
Pastor Richard Sliper  
507-684-2451

Men’s Bible Study: 8 a.m. Saturday  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sunday (Kids church- 9 a.m. and Confirmation- 10:15 a.m.)  
Jesus and Me: 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesday & Thursday  
Call to Prayer: 7 p.m. Tuesday  
Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. Wednesday  
Wednesday School: 6:15-7 p.m. followed by Youth Group- 7-9 p.m.

#### FIRST LUTHERAN – ELCA

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

#### FIRST LUTHERAN – LCMC

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

#### GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN – LCMS

2500 7th Ave. NE., Owatonna  
Pastor Greg Schlicker  
Pastor Mark Neumann  
507-451-4125  
goodshepherdowatonna.com  
Worship: 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

#### MOLAND LUTHERAN – ELCA

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

#### PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN – ELCA

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

#### REDEEMER LUTHERAN – LCMS

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

### RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN – ELCA

30456 Mower-Freeborn Road, Austin  
Rev. Suzanne Froelich, Interim Pastor  
507-583-2038 or 507-437-3000  
www.roglutheran.org

Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School (Sept. – May): 10:15 a.m.

### ST. JOHN’S LUTHERAN – LCMS

4532 SE 84th Ave., Claremont  
Pastor Alan Broadwell  
507-528-2404  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

### ST. JOHN’S LUTHERAN – LCMS

28959 630th Ave., Sergeant  
Pastor Collin Duling  
507-251-5568  
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9 a.m.

### ST. JOHN LUTHERAN-ELCA

1301 Lincoln Ave. Owatonna  
Pastors Dave Klawiter and Jacie Richmond  
507-451-7293  
stjohnowatonna.org  
Worship: 5 p.m. Thursday & Saturday; 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sunday  
Summer Services: 8 a.m. & 9:30 a.m. Sunday

### ST. MICHAEL’S LUTHERAN – ELCA

30450 570th Ave., Waltham  
Pastor Dwight DoBell  
507-567-2474  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.

### ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN – LCMS

202 E. Park Ave., Hollandale  
Pastor Jesse Krusemark  
507-567-2272  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

### ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN – ELCA

2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden  
Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith  
507-451-2165  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sunday  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

### TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA

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

### TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA

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

### TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS

108 Third Ave. SW., Medford  
Pastor Mark Biebighauser  
507-451-0447  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sunday  
Education Hour: 10:15 a.m.  
Wednesday Worship: 6:30 p.m.

### TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS

57043 300th St., Waltham  
Pastor Jesse Krusemark  
507-567-2272  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

### ZION LUTHERAN – ELCA

7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale  
Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sunday  
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

### CATHOLIC

#### CHRIST THE KING

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

#### CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS

307 SW First St., New Richland  
Father Antony Arokiyam  
507-234-6244  
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday

#### HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL

9946 SE 24th Ave. Owatonna  
Father John Wilmot  
507-583-2784  
www.litomysl.webs.com  
Sunday Mass at 8:30 a.m. with Children’s Church  
Sacrament of Reconciliation Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.  
Faith Formation classes for K thru Confirmation  
Second Sunday of month: Family Faith Formation  
Litomysl Finance Council: 2nd Thursday  
Litomysl Pastoral Council: 2nd Thursday every other month

#### SACRED HEART CATHOLIC

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

#### SACRED HEART PARISH

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

### ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC

114 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie  
Father John Wilmot  
507-583-2784  
www.stcolumbanuschurch.com

Mass: 10:30 a.m. Sunday  
Reconciliation: 9 a.m.  
Biblestudy: 9 a.m. Sun.  
First Friday & Saturday

### ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH

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

### CHRISTIAN

#### CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT

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

### PENTECOSTAL

#### FIRST UNITED PENTECOSTAL

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

### METHODIST

#### BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST

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

#### ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST

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

#### OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST

815 E. University, Owatonna  
Rev. Scott Jakel  
Linda Boorman, Associate Pastor  
Joyce Parker, Associate Pastor  
507-451-4734  
www.owatonnaumc.org  
Traditional Worship (Pathways): 9 a.m. Sunday

### NON-DENOMINATIONAL

#### BRIDGES OF HOPE COMMUNITY

130 W. Bridge St., Owatonna  
Pastor Keith Haskell  
507-215-2249  
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.  
Biblestudy: 9 a.m. Sun.  
Reformers Unanimous Meetings: 7 p.m. Friday

#### CEDAR CREEK

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

#### DESTINY CHRISTIAN

2515 Harvest Lane NW Owatonna  
Pastors Joe & Vicki Braucht  
www.destinycc.org  
Worship: 6 p.m. Sat.

#### ELEVATION NORTH

2002 Austin Road, Owatonna  
Pastor Doug Jones  
507-363-3099

www.elevationnorth.blogspot.com  
Worship (English): 10 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.  
Worship (Spanish): 2 p.m. Sun.  
Bible Study: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday  
Spanish Evangelism & Prayer: 7 p.m. Friday

#### NEW BEGINNINGS

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

#### SIMPLE CHURCH

4515 NW 22nd Ave., Owatonna (Country Goods building across the freeway from Cabela’s)  
Pastor Todd Lundgren  
507-451-5661  
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.  
Bible Study: 7 p.m. Wednesday

### MENNONITE

#### PRAIRIE MENNONITE

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

### MORMON

#### THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

404 31st St. NW, Austin  
Bishop Rick Bremner  
507-433-9042  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.

### PRESBYTERIAN

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Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ  
800 Havana Road, Owatonna  
507-451-1546  
www.associatedchurch.org  
office@associatedchurch.org  
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.

(Fellowship, Church School, and Adult Discussions follow)  
Wednesday Activities: Sept – May (see website for schedule)

#### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

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

#### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

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

### SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

#### SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

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

### UCC

#### CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

### ASSEMBLY OF GOD

#### VIBRANT LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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

### BAPTIST

#### FIRST BAPTIST

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

#### FIRST BAPTIST (Owatonna’s oldest church)

123 E. Main St., Owatonna  
Pastor Cindy 507-451-2803  
www.firstbaptistowatonna.com  
Fellowship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.

### ASSEMBLY OF GOD

#### VICTORY LIFE

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

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# Main Street Dental gives free smiles

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

It's the absolute truth. Every kid who sat in a dental chair at Main Street Dental offices in Blooming Prairie and New Richland, left with a wide smile.

The smiles were provided free of charge by Main Street dentists and staff on Saturday, Feb. 1 as part of Give Your Kids a Smile program.

Five Main Street Dental clinics participated in the program. This year, the free dental visits for kids were sponsored by the Blooming Prairie and New Richland offices.

Main Street Dental Clinics also have offices in Owatonna, Rochester and Mankato.

Calista Lembke of the Blooming Prairie business office said 40 kids between the ages of 3-18 were seen by Main Street Dental staffs.

All eight Main Street dentists participated in providing dental care to kids during the event. The dentists include: Dr. Chad Hanson, Blooming Prairie; Dr. Jeffrey Campbell, Blooming Prairie and Mankato; Dr. John Fabian, New Richland; Dr. Chris Stenzel, Rochester; Dr. Brian Burmeister, Owatonna; Dr. Robert Kess, Owatonna; Dr. Daniel Schafer, Mankato and Dr. Orman Swedeh, Rochester.

Doctors Hanson, Campbell, Stenzel, Burmeister and Swedeh worked the Blooming Prairie clinic.

Assisting the dentists at both locations were 17 hygienists and assistant volunteers and five business office volunteers.

Assistants helping in



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Working the one-day kids clinic at Blooming Prairie's Main Street Dental Office were these volunteers. Dr. Chad Hanson is in the very front bottom right. First row (kneeling): Dr. Brian Burmeister, Heidi Anderson, Gavin Burmeister, Eve Simon, Kelly Glander, Debbie Lewison and Emma Lewison; second row: Dr. Jeffrey Campbell, Karen Bartsch, Jamie Jacobson and Tami Shafer and third row: Dr. Osman Swedeh, Melanie Mendenhall, April Helle and Becca Langen. Standing in the back: Calista Lembke. Not pictured is Kate Taylor.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dr. Chad Hanson and dental assistant Debbie Lewison examine a youngster at the Main Street Dental Clinic in Blooming Prairie during the Give Your Kids a Smile program on Saturday, Feb. 1.

Blooming Prairie were: Kate Taylor, Debbie Lewison, Karen Bartsch, April Helle, Tami Schaefer, Melany Mendenhal and Kelly Glander. Hygienists helping with the program in BP were: Becca Langan and Jamie Jacobson. Business office employees helping in BP were: Eve Simon, Calista Lembke and Heidi Anderson.

Doctors working the New Richland Give Your Kids a Smile program were Fabian, Kess and Schafer. Bonnie Isder from the business office helped in New Richland as did assistants Nikki Broitzman, Sam Pederson, Shaunna Quandt and Laura Kaderlik. Hygienists helping in

"This program is a wonderful way for our dental clinics to give back to their communities."

**Calista Lembke**  
Main Street Dental

New Richland were: Paige Overgaard, Holly Nissen, Kristin Rutt and Paige Holland.

Four young helpers handed out dental gift bags plus balloons and bananas. New Richland Hartland Ellendale Geneva (NRHEG) and University of Minnesota graduate Carly Wagner was at the New Richland office helping greet the young patients.

Lembke said the Give Kids a Smile program was

started in 2002 by a small dental clinic in St. Louis. "The program has grown over an 18-year span allowing dental clinics to give back to their communities," said Lembke, adding nationwide, the program helps 400,000 kids each year.

Main Street Dental Clinics adopted the program in 2003 and have held the event every year since at one of two of its locations out of the five.

Main Street dentists provided exams, cleaning and X-rays to kids who walked through the dental clinic doors in Blooming Prairie and New Richland. The kids smile program takes place every year from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first Saturday of February.

"We started planning this day last July," said Lembke. Main Street reached out to the Henry Shrine Dental Supply Co. and to local businesses.

Businesses helping with this community program were: Metal Services, donated helium for the balloons; Vandal's Family Market, donated bananas; Steve's Meat Market of Ellendale, donated meat and

cheese; Nancy Jones Bakery of New Richland; Red Leaf Cafe of New Richland and Hy-Vee of Owatonna.

"This program is a wonderful way for our dental clinics to give back to their communities," Lembke said.

Everyone visiting the Main Street offices in Blooming Prairie and New Richland on Smile Day was impressed with the relationship created between dental staff and the kids.

"The kids were happy, smiling and joking with their parents and with dental staff," said Lembke. "Our dentists love doing this program," she added.

It was a day when kids looked forward to going to the dentist. It was pain free.

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# Owatonna tops housing of similar-sized cities

**BY RICK BUSSLER**  
PUBLISHER

A healthy surge of residential housing activity in Owatonna is pushing the city to being in the top three of cities throughout southern Minnesota showing the most growth.

In 2019, Owatonna recorded 35 new homes, more than what three similar-sized communities had

all combined. Faribault had 17 new homes while Austin had 14 and Albert Lea five. The only cities that recorded more were Mankato and Rochester.

Owatonna's 35 new homes, however, is a far cry from the growth the city experienced prior to the recession that began in 2008. In the last few years prior to 2008, the city added about 180 new homes each year,

according to Troy Klecker, community development director for Owatonna.

Klecker doesn't anticipate new housing to get back to the pre-2008 levels any time soon largely because of the cost of new construction. "We'll see a slow ramp up," he said.

Even though Owatonna was down slightly from 2018 when 44 new homes were built, Klecker is happy with the numbers Owatonna is producing. "We're doing very well compared to other cities," he said.

One area that Klecker expects Owatonna to increase in the coming year is apartment building construction. He noted that the city has gone a 10-year period in the past without adding any new apartment housing stock. Five apartment buildings have been added in the last

years with up to four more being added this year. "The national trend is that there is more of a demand for apartments," Klecker said. He added people want to be more mobile and not tied down to a house.

Chamber director Brad Meier said the city needs all levels of housing from low-income to higher end homes to meet the demands of expected business growth throughout the area. Several new companies are building or expanding in Owatonna over the next year.

Meier noted that historically Owatonna experiences 1% growth, which amounts to about 250 new residents per year. In order to meet the demands of business growth, Owatonna needs to grow by 2% or 500 residents in the coming years, Meier said.

| REGIONAL RESIDENTIAL GROWTH NEW HOMES 2019 |           |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Rochester.....                             | 289       |
| Mankato.....                               | 66        |
| <b>Owatonna.....</b>                       | <b>35</b> |
| North Mankato.....                         | 25        |
| New Ulm.....                               | 24        |
| Faribault.....                             | 17        |
| Austin.....                                | 14        |
| Albert Lea.....                            | 5         |

# An odd twist at Little Theatre



Something a little peculiar will be taking place as the Little Theatre reveals its latest production, "The Odd Couple," beginning this weekend in Owatonna. The show begins Friday night and runs for the next two weekends. See page 4B for more details on this performance.

# Grandstand lineup takes shape for fair

**BY CHRIS BALDWIN**  
STAFF WRITER

With three big name music acts set to take the stage, this year's fair is already looking to be an exciting and entertaining one.

While Tuesday's entertainment is yet to be determined, the fair board has already booked country singer and "America's Got Talent" finalist Jason Pritchett for Wednesday, 80's cover band and fan favorite Hairball on Thursday, returning musician Chris Hawkey on Friday, and a rodeo and demo derby on Saturday and Sunday.

"He's very energetic, and I think he'll do a good job for us," director Bruce Busho said of new addition Jason Pritchett. Busho and some of the other directors were impressed with Pritchett's performance at the Minnesota Confederation of County Fairs Convention and decided he would be a great addition to their entertainment.

Audiences who may not be familiar with Pritchett are likely to enjoy his set, according to the fair board. "He has four songs that have been on the charts and he's a showman, he'll put on a good show," manager Scott Kozelka said.

After missing the last few



80's rock band Hairball is set to return to this year's Steele County Free Fair. Hairball has been absent since 2017 but are ready to rock the grandstand again this year

years, the fan favorite 80's rock band Hairball will be ready to bring some nostalgic excitement to this year's festivities. Hairball has been a consistent request from many fairgoers after being absent for two years.

Chris Hawkey, meanwhile, is no stranger to the fair after playing a crowd-pleasing and memorable Thursday night show last year. The musician and Minnesota celebrity sings a variety of rock and country songs sure to prove entertaining for grandstand guests.

Following the three-night concert, a Saturday rodeo and a demolition der-

by booked for Sunday will cap-off the week's entertainment. Tuesday's slot is still up for grabs but everything is beginning to take shape. "It's all coming together," Kozelka said.

The board also briefly discussed some possible options for the north end of the track area. Director Josh Prokopec mentioned the possibility of skimming some of the dirt off and filling it with asphalt or gravel rather than try to seed it with grass. "I just don't think it's ever going to take without taking it all out and putting new black dirt in," he said. "I think we're going to be battling it every year."

Seeding the area with grass would be the preferable option for the board, but if drainage and wear continues to be a problem, then they are ready to accept alternatives. "That's our number one priority this spring is getting that done, however you guys want to do it," Kozelka told the board. "All we wanted tonight was to get the wheels going."

As the months slowly tick closer to fair week, everything is coming together nicely for the Steele County Fair Board, who are looking to continue to bolster its entertainment for the annual festival, to be held Aug. 18-23.

# Republicans set precinct caucus

The Steele County Republican Party will meet for the Minnesota Precinct Caucus on Tuesday, Feb. 25, at 6:30 p.m. at the Owatonna High School.

The party will initially meet in the small group forum for a pre-caucus rally at 6:30 p.m. and then disperse to classrooms according to township and precinct at 7 p.m.

The precinct caucus is the grassroots beginning of the political candidate process that leads up to local and state party conventions and endorsements and it all begins Feb. 25. "Going to a caucus gives you the opportunity to meet with your like-minded neighbors to talk about issues that are important to you, show support to your candidates, and influence who the party will endorse for office," said Pam Seaser, co-chair of the Republican party.

Per state statute, to participate in a precinct caucus, you must be eligible to vote in the November 2020 general election, live in Steele County, either voted in the past for the party's nominee or plan to vote this year for the party's nominee, and you also must generally agree with the principles of the Steele County Republican Party who is hosting the caucus.

What happens at the caucus? At the 6:30 p.m. pre-caucus rally, you will hear from our current legislators on

what to expect in the 2020 legislative session. Following that, there are three main activities at a caucus: We meet in separate rooms according to our neighborhood or rural township. We choose delegates who will endorse candidates at future conventions, which will include state representatives and state senator, congressional candidates and U.S. Senate candidates. (This year's state Republican Party convention is nearby in Rochester in May). There is an opportunity to discuss issues and suggest additions or changes to the Party Platform. Candidates are always seeking out volunteers to help with upcoming 2020 events including parades, door knocking, and literature drops.

"Even if you have never participated in the past, we encourage you to attend on Tuesday, Feb. 25," Seaser said.

State statute dictates the time of day when voting for delegates and business can be done. Generally, the caucus will end by 8:30 p.m.

Anyone with questions can go to steele-countyrepublicans.com or call co-chairs Stephen Nelson at 507-456-5320 or Pam Seaser at 507-455-1709.

Seaser urges people not to forget to vote in Minnesota's first Presidential Primary one week later on Tuesday, March 3 at regular polling places.

# A lot on the burner in Ellendale



**Steele Talkin'**  
STEPHANIE KIBLER

A goal of the City Council is to encourage growth and development. This is true for any city. The Council brainstorms on what would be best for the residents and businesses, evaluates the infrastructure and all that a city has to offer, and begins to reach out to partners in the community that can make the ideas come to fruition.

As a small city in a rural community, Ellendale is fortunate to have an active main street along Hwy. 30 with staple businesses like Lerberg's Foods, Steve's Meat Market and First National Bank. We are also welcoming three new business owners to Hwy 30 with R.J.'s on 5<sup>th</sup> (formerly the Ellendale Muni) and the Ellendale Caf? being recently purchased, and Two Doves Boutique opening soon.

In 2018, BioPlastic Solutions, an industry leader in bioplastic engineering and the manufacturing of proprietary bio-based poly resins and products, relocated to Ellendale. The move filled an empty manufacturing plant and brought new jobs to the community. Our partnership with The Community Support Program of Community & Economic Development Associates (CEDA) made it possible for Ellendale to be a viable option for BioPlastic Solutions.

As we see renewed growth in the City, there

is a need for additional housing in the city. The Council has a rezoning plan in the works and conversations with local developers on the possibility of a housing complex with one and two bedroom apartments. We are also fortunate to have building lots available in Country View Estates and Crown Ridge.

The City's Codification Manual, now in its final stages, will offer a one-stop-shop for city ordinances and regulations. You may be asking what does this have to do with development and growth. Pride in community plays a key role in pulling in new residents, which increases the tax base, ensures local businesses have the customer base they need, fills our churches and community groups, and brings children into the school system. City ordinances are vital to creating a healthy, progressive community that works for all residents.

As the City Council continues to work with CEDA and finalizes the Codification Manual, we are optimistic that the growth of the city will continue. If you have feedback for the Council you are welcome to attend a Council meeting or call the City office. After all, this is your community, and we want you to have a voice in how it grows.

*Stephanie Kibler is a resident of Ellendale and serves on the city council. She is also the executive director of the Freeborn County Historical Museum in Albert Lea. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.*



# United Prairie donates gift to Owatonna Foundation

United Prairie Bank recently made a donation of \$1,500 to the Owatonna Foundation.

“We are extremely grateful to United Prairie for their ongoing support,” said Laura Resler, executive director of the Foundation. “Their commitment helps us to continue the Foundation’s mission of improving the quality of life for present and future generations by supporting Owatonna projects that focus on community, arts, recreation, and education.”

The Owatonna Foundation, now in its 62nd year of serving the Owatonna community, provides capital grants in Owatonna and its environs.

The Foundation was established in 1957 with the goal of improving the quality of life for present and future generations of Owatonna residents. Since then, the Foundation has committed more than 12 million dollars in grants to Owatonna projects and annually awards \$30,000 in scholarships for both traditional and non-traditional students.

For more information about the Owatonna Foundation, please visit [www.owatonnafoundation.org](http://www.owatonnafoundation.org), or call 507-455-2995.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

United Prairie Bank has donated \$1,500 to the Owatonna Foundation. Involved in the donation were, from left: Brandon Wayne, Bob Heers, Kelly Grems, Josh Burgess, Dave Seykora, Cory Shaw, Dave Ramsey, Jen Frazier, Corey Samora, Chris Holten, Scott Bradley, David Einhaus, Ben Lempiainen, Dale Gandrud, Caleb Whalen, Rylee Muhr, Sharon West and Chad Lange.

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## SMMPA plans to be 80% carbon-free in 2030

Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA) has announced its plan to reshape its generation portfolio through the retirement of the Sherco 3 coal-fired power plant and replace it primarily with wind and solar generation.

The plan would result in a 90% reduction in CO2 emissions from 2005 levels and 80% carbon-free energy on an annual basis in 2030.

“We have a unique opportunity to reimagine SMMPA and are excited to take the

Agency in this new direction,” said Dave Geschwind, executive director and CEO. “We will be taking our commitment to sustainability to a new level while maintaining our legacy of reliability and affordability.”

SMMPA currently owns 41% of the 900-megawatt Sherco 3 coal-fired generating unit located in Becker, Minn. Sherco 3’s majority owner, Xcel Energy, announced plans in 2019 to retire the plant in 2030. SMMPA expects all its outstanding debt on Sherco 3 will be paid off in 2027.

Natural gas and other non-coal fossil-fueled generation will continue to play an important role in maintaining reliability for SMMPA’s members. The Agency expects these facilities to provide a relatively small percentage of its energy needs on an annual basis, but to continue to facilitate the increase in intermittent renewable resources, like wind and solar, while maintaining reliability and affordability.

“SMMPA’s member communities support this strategic initiative to reduce carbon emissions,” said Joe

Hoffman, SMMPA Board President and Preston Public Utilities general manager. “We are excited about capturing this opportunity to address important environmental objectives while maintaining an affordable energy supply.”

Geschwind cautions that there are still important decisions to be made. “While we are optimistic that technological breakthroughs are on the horizon, the cost of achieving the last 10-20% reduction in carbon emissions in the power sector is currently projected to be prohibitively high with today’s technology. We believe society will need to evaluate whether further reductions beyond 80% in this sector are the most economical and practical path to deep carbon reductions economy-wide.”

In outlining its strategic direction, SMMPA also highlighted the potential of beneficial electrification in applications like electric vehicles (EV) as well as energy efficiency to be important elements of meeting societal sustainability goals.

In November 2019, SMMPA announced plans

to create an “EV Charging Network” connecting its member communities. SMMPA’s energy efficiency programs have been recognized four times with ENERGY STAR® Awards from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Geschwind says SMMPA will need the support of the member communities, elected officials and SMMPA staff to successfully implement the plan. He also urges policymakers to provide utilities with flexibility and to resist one-size-fits-all mandates where there is clear evidence the industry is already moving to meet public policy goals.

SMMPA understands this transformation will not happen overnight and will not be easy. Nonetheless, the Agency says it will strive to keep its rates competitive and limit wholesale rate increases to levels at or below the rate of inflation during the transition.

As it launches this strategic initiative the Agency labels as “SMMPA 2.0,” it is adopting a new logo and tag line – “Your Partner for a Bright Energy Future.”

“We are proud of our past and honor the successes achieved by SMMPA for the forty years we’ve been in existence,” said Geschwind. “We are building on that legacy but also recognize this is a turning point for our organization. The new logo and tag line capture that spirit and our excitement as we begin this new strategic journey.”

To learn more about SMMPA’s strategic initiative, please see [www.smmpa.com/SMMPA2.0](http://www.smmpa.com/SMMPA2.0).

SMMPA provides power to 18 cities around the state, including Owatonna, Blooming Prairie and Austin.

# BENEFIT FOR THE BAKERY AND SPORTSTITCH

Soup, Chili, Dessert, Silent Auction & Celebration of Friends!

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15 FROM 4 PM - 8 PM AT THE PIZZA CELLAR

Free will donation and silent auction to support Greg and Linda who have always been great supporters of our community. Let's do the same for them!

Silent auction items can be dropped off at The Pizza Cellar or Krejci Ford. Contact Connie Trom (507) 456-8431, Colette Lea (507) 438-4933, Cheri Krejci (507) 438-6895 or Miranda Camery (507) 402-9688 with questions.

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Winners will receive \$50 and a \$50 donation in student's name will be made to Children of Warriors National President's Scholarship fund.

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Forms available at Blooming Prairie Public Library

### A HEARTFELT THANKS

Blooming Prairie Community and beyond:

Thank you for the outpouring of support and love following the passing of our dad, LeMar Nelson. Your many tributes, heartfelt words, and stories of the influence he had on so many lives have deeply touched the family during this difficult time. We knew him as an amazing father, but you all knew him as so much more. The people of this town meant the world to him. While the family worried about him during the past several years as his health declined, we knew that he was never really alone. He had all of you. Thank you so much to all who kept an eye on him, helped him when he needed it most, and allowed him to be a part of the community even after he had moved from his home. He will forever be a Blossom!

As we continue to work on setting up a scholarship in his honor, we appreciate the contributions and know LeMar would be so pleased. He loved everything about Blooming Prairie, but his biggest love of all was the impact he had on students.

Daughters, Anne, Teri and Renee



# Jumping Worms in Southern Minnesota



On The Farm  
CLAIRE LACANNE

In my world of agriculture and gardening, earthworms are important ecosystem engineers that break up compacted soils, help with soil aggregation, and decompose plant residue. Finding earthworms in fields and gardens is typically considered an indicator of healthy soil. Oddly enough, there are

no native species of earthworms in Minnesota. There are native earthworms in unglaciated regions in the United States, but even if Minnesota had native earthworms at some point, our glaciers wiped them out. Our ecosystems developed without earthworms since the glaciers receded about 10,000 years ago. Many of our earthworms were likely brought over in soils and plants by European settlers. Because our ecosystems evolved without them, earthworms aren't essential to our natural spaces. In some cases, earthworms can actually disrupt our natural ecosystems; researchers have found that earthworms can break down leaves in forests too quickly, creating

problems for other species. Their non-native status doesn't diminish the fact that most species of earthworms have become important players and are considered beneficial to gardens and fields. However, one type of earthworm has recently been found to negatively impact yards and gardens. Jumping worms (*Amyntas spp.*) strip the soil of nutrients, change the texture of soil to the point where it looks like coffee grounds, and can kill plants. Jumping worms were first found in the Minnesota in 2006, mostly around the Twin Cities. However, there were confirmed cases in Goodhue, Olmstead, and Winona counties in 2018 and 2019.

Prevention is the best way to manage jumping worms, because there are no pesticides labeled for earthworms in the United States. This means no products can legally be used to control jumping worms. To prevent jumping worms from getting in to your yard or garden, you'll want to know what they look like. As their name implies, they jump, flail, and are extremely active when disturbed. They often move across the ground in an "S" pattern like a snake. They're similar in size to nightcrawlers, but their coloring and clitellum (collar-like ring) are different. The clitellum is located about one-third of their body length down from the head and it is

smooth, cloudy-white and flat to their body, unlike the swelled saddle-like clitellum of other earthworms. Be on the lookout for jumping worms in soil, potted landscape plants, mulch or compost. If you see soil that looks like coffee grounds or notice unusually jumpy worms in your mulch, don't move it, and report any suspected jumping worms. Also, don't purchase worms advertised as "snake worms", "Alabama jumpers" or "crazy worms" because they are jumping worms. Jumping worms should be reported. Include close-up photos with a clear view of the location of the clitellum. Make your report using one of the following methods:

1. Use the EDDMapS Great Lakes Early Detection Network (GLEDN) mobile app.
2. Use the EDDMapS Midwest web-based system for documenting invasive species.
3. Report to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: Laura.Vanriper@state.mn.us or 651-259-5090.

*Claire LaCanne is the agricultural extension educator for the University of Minnesota in Steele and Rice counties. She may be reached at lacanne@umn.edu or 507-332-6165. Her column appears in this newspaper regularly*

## Small grain workshops set in Southern Minnesota

University of Minnesota Extension is offering several small grain workshops across southern Minnesota in February to address successful small grain management. "Whether you are a farmer or crop consultant already producing small grains, or a farmer looking for another crop to add to the rotation, these workshops are for you," says Jared Goplen, Extension Educator in Crops. "Workshops will focus on production agronomics, variety selection, and economics, and include an open-forum discussion for related topics and on-farm experiences."

Workshops are sponsored by the Minnesota Wheat Research and Promotion Council. Lunch is included at all sites except Mora. Registration is free, and is strongly encouraged to assist with meal planning. Please register by visiting <https://z.umn.edu/southern-small-grain> or contact Jared Goplen at 320-589-1711 x2128 or [gople007@umn.edu](mailto:gople007@umn.edu) for more information. Workshops scheduled in this region include:

- Monday, Feb. 17 –

Rochester, Heintz Center 12:30 – 4 p.m. (Contact Ryan Miller at 507-529-2759).  
\* Private Pesticide Applicator Training will precede the small grains program from 9:00 – 12:30.  
– Tuesday, Feb. 18 – Le Center, 4-H Building, Le Sueur County Fairgrounds 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. (Contact Shane Bugeja at 515-708-3486)  
Presenters may vary by location, but include Jo-chum Wiersma, University of Minnesota Extension Small Grain Specialist and Jared Goplen, University of Minnesota Extension Crops Educator.

## Crops Day set for Steele and Rice counties

University of Minnesota Extension, KDHL Radio, and KRFO Radio are hosting the annual Rice and Steele County Crops Day on Tuesday, Feb. 25 from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Crop producers and Ag stakeholders in Steele and Rice counties are invited to attend the event at the Rice County Extension Office, 1900 Fairground Dr. #17, Faribault. The morning will consist of pest and pathogen updates presented by University of Minnesota Extension Entomologist, Anthony Hanson, University of Minnesota Extension Plant Pathologist, Dean Malvick, and University of Minnesota Extension Crops Educator, Liz Stahl. The afternoon topics focus on grain marketing with presentations from University of Minnesota Extension Ag. Business Management Educator, Dave Bau, and Larry O. Olson from AgroTech Marketing, Inc. The presentations will cover:

- New problems and new pests: managing insecticide-resistant soybean aphid and updates on soybean gall midge

– Crop disease updates and management strategies  
– Hot topics in weed management: putting the pieces together  
– How to get \$4 Corn  
– My Option Advantage: a New Marketing Tool  
There is no fee to attend this event thanks to generous funding from KDHL and KRFO radio. Pre-registration is not necessary, but is appreciated to ensure enough handouts and for a meal count. Please contact Claire LaCanne, Extension educator for Steele and Rice counties with any questions at 507-332-6165 or [lacanne@umn.edu](mailto:lacanne@umn.edu).

# Century Farm applications being accepted

Minnesota families who have owned their farms for 100 years or more are invited to apply for the 2020 Century Farm Program. Produced by the Minnesota State Fair in conjunction with the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation, the Century Farm Program was created to promote agriculture and honor historic family farms in the state. More than 10,500 Minnesota farms have been honored since the program began in 1976. Family farms are recognized as a Century Farm when three requirements are met. The farm must be:

- 1) at least 100 years old

according to authentic land records; 2) in continuous family ownership for at least 100 years (continuous residence on the farm is not required); and 3) at least 50 acres and currently be involved in agricultural production. A commemorative certificate signed by the

State Fair Board of Managers President, Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation President Kevin Paap and Governor Tim Walz will be awarded to qualifying families, along with an outdoor sign signifying Century Farm status. Applications are available online at [mnstatefair.org/about-the-fair/awards-and-recognition/](http://mnstatefair.org/about-the-fair/awards-and-recognition/); at [fbmn.org](http://fbmn.org); by calling the State Fair at 651-288-4400; or at statewide county extension and county Farm Bureau offices. The submission deadline is Monday, March 2. Recipients will be announced in May. Previously recognized families

should not reapply. Information on the Century Farm Program will be available at the Minnesota Farm Bureau exhibit during the 2020 Minnesota State Fair. A Century Farm database is also available at [fbmn.org](http://fbmn.org). This year's State Fair runs Aug. 27-Sept. 7.

fair.org/about-the-fair/awards-and-recognition/; at fbmn.org; by calling the State Fair at 651-288-4400; or at statewide county extension and county Farm Bureau offices. The submission deadline is Monday, March 2. Recipients will be announced in May. Previously recognized families

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## Mower County launches final septic phase

Mower County has launched an initiative to complete the final phase of its years-long effort to achieve countywide compliance for private septic systems to better protect ground and surface waters. During a regular meeting on Jan. 28, the Mower County Board of Commissioners and its Environmental Services staff announced their 2020 plan to complete the final phase of its subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) initiative. This effort will include public education, septic-ordinance revisions, low-interest loan program for septic system installation, community sewage treatment studies and collaborations with homeowners to bring their septic systems into compliance. Mower County commissioners are committed to the SSTS initiative. "Non-compliant septic systems contaminate our local rivers, streams and groundwater," Mower County Commissioner Tim Gabrielson said. "Groundwater is the source of drinking water for almost everyone in Mower County." Mower County, which first began permitting septic systems in 1958, started

the SSTS initiative in 2008 in response to growing concerns about bacterial impairments in local water bodies. The initiative's first stage involved completing a SSTS Imminent Public Health Threat (IPHT) inventory and responding to systems with the most-critical compliance concerns, including those considered "imminent health threats" and systems adjacent to rivers and streams. For more than 20 years, Minnesota has been identifying and replacing inadequate septic systems that total more than 500,000 systems across the state and treat sewage from about 25 percent of the state's citizens, according to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Since 2008, inspection triggers and other compliance programs used by local governments statewide have increased the number of septic systems that meet current state standards. Poorly functioning septic systems are a threat to human health and the environment because they might not remove pathogens, nutrients and other chemicals from the used water before it enters rivers, lakes or groundwater resources.

Overall, Mower County has approximately 3,445 private septic systems. Since 2008, Mower County homeowners have installed 953 new individual septic systems. Multiple community sewage-treatment systems also have been developed and numerous homes have been annexed into the City of Austin's municipal sewage-treatment system. This included pockets of homes along the Cedar River and Turtle Creek. Mower County has reached about 70% compliance and ranks 58th out of 87 counties in septic-system compliance, said Angela Lipelt, supervisor for Mower County Environmental Services. This final phase of the initiative will address the remaining 30% of septic systems that need to be evaluated for compliance, she said. Due to unusually wet conditions, only 34 septic systems were installed in 2019, Lipelt said. For this year, 26 septic systems are designed and awaiting installation. Another 44 systems have been identified as needing replacement but have not had their designs finalized yet. Those in need of a septic replacement, she said,

need to contact a septic contractor as soon as possible to get on the contractor's list. Septic contractors' schedules usually fill quickly and they already will be addressing a backlog of projects from last year. Homeowners can find a listing of licensed septic contractors on the Mower County Public Works' website. As part of the new septic initiative, Mower County hosted a free workshop presented by University of Minnesota's Onsite Sewage Treatment Program on Jan. 13 for homeowners on septic systems and private wells at the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center in Austin. About 80 people attended the workshop and received free guides for septic system owners in addition to well-testing kits. Mower County Environmental Services can assist with low-interest loans for septic replacements and help with other septic questions at 507-437-7718. The office is at 1105 8th Ave. N.E. in Austin. You can go online at: [www.co.mower.mn.us](http://www.co.mower.mn.us). MPCA and the EPA also offer extensive information on septic systems, including proper usage and maintenance.

## Corn and soybean growers targeted for annual survey

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is encouraging farmers to take part in its annual pesticide and fertilizer use survey. This year the phone survey is directed at corn and soybean growers. The data helps the MDA track the use of agricultural chemicals on Minnesota farms and provides guidance to education and research programs. The survey began last week and should be completed by Feb. 21. Questions will focus on the 2019 growing season and survey farmers on pesticide and fertilizer applications on corn and soybeans grown in Minnesota. The annual survey is completely voluntary and producers are not asked any personal questions.

The survey is conducted for the MDA by the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agriculture Statistics Service out of their regional offices in Missouri. Minnesota farmers may be getting calls from multiple agencies and companies conducting a variety of surveys this time of year, but the information gathered from this survey is critical for research purposes. If you have questions about the MDA's annual survey, or if you wish to view results of previous surveys, visit the MDA website at [www.mda.state.mn.us/pesticidefertilizersurveys](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/pesticidefertilizersurveys). Producers can also call the Minnesota Department of Agriculture at 651-261-1993 from 7 a.m. – 9 p.m., Monday – Saturday.

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Parents of three Blooming Prairie High School football players watch as their sons sign their letters of intent to play college football. Signing, from left, are: Karson Vigeland, Concordia of St. Paul; Gabe Hagen, Minnesota State at Mankato and Zach Weber, University of Wisconsin at Stout. Behind their sons are, from left, Erik and Michelle Vigeland, Joan and David Hagen and Heather and Ryan Weber.

# BP stars sign college commitments

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Lots of proud people gathered in the Blooming Prairie High School Library to witness the signings of letters of intent by three players from the state champion Awesome Blossom football team.

Applying ink to letters of intent last Wednesday, Feb. 5 to play college football were Gabe Hagen, Minnesota State at Mankato; Karson Vigeland, Concordia College of St. Paul and Zach Weber, University of Wisconsin at Stout.

All three Awesome Blossom football players were part of the 2019 state championship (Section 1A) football team.

Cameras were busy capturing the proud moment for

the athletes themselves and for their coaches and families.

“These kids worked hard and put in a lot of time to get to this moment,” remarked a happy Chad Gimbel, Blossoms head varsity football coach.

Hagen and Vigeland will play Division II football and will receive scholarship help. Weber will play football in Division III without scholarship assistance.

Alison Mach, BP School’s activities director, introduced the star athletes. “We are here to celebrate their achievements and to look into the future for more accomplishments,” Mach said.

Mach praised the three players for their leadership on the field, in the classroom and in the community.

“We look forward to your next endeavors,” Mach stated.

Vigeland, son of Erik and Michelle Vigeland, said the signing “means a lot” to him and to the Blooming Prairie football program. Vigeland said he was “very excited” about the opportunity to play college football.

“The hard work paid off,” Vigeland said. He will play outside linebacker for the Golden Bears. His field of study will be criminal justice. He hopes to become a police officer.

Weber, son of Ryan and Heather Weber, will attend the same college his father Ryan attended. In addition to playing football, Weber plans to study computer science.

Weber says he hopes to

play either corner or safety for the Blue Devils of Stout University. Weber thanked his “smart” coaches for their help during his high school football career and he said he appreciated the support of his family.

Hagen, an all-state football selection, is the son of David and Joan Hagen. He will attend Minnesota State University at Mankato and plans to play tight end.

Hagen plans to study nursing while enrolled at Minnesota State. “I can’t thank my great coaches enough for making me work hard during my high school career,” said Hagen.

All three Awesome Blossom college recruits, are currently playing basketball for Coach Nate Piller.

# Panthers comeback falls short

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
STAFF WRITER

Trailing by 12 points at halftime, the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) boys’ basketball team got within three points in the second half but couldn’t complete the comeback as they lost 74-79 to United South Central (USC) on Feb. 6.

NRHEG Head Coach Isaiah Lundberg said USC took control in the first half thanks to its strong shooting.

“Early in the game we went back-and-forth until USC got hot from three-point range. USC made seven three-pointers in the first half compared to our two,” he said.

In addition, he mentioned that the Rebels’ offense was boosted by AJ Kloos who scored 21 first-half points.

“We just didn’t do a good enough job containing him early,” he said.

Offensively, Lundberg said, “We got some really good looks, but couldn’t capitalize on those opportunities.”

NRHEG trailed 28-40 at halftime.

However, he noted that the Panthers played better in the second half.

“We looked like a totally different offensive team. We got the ball up the floor quicker, got some layups and hit six three-pointers, which is big for us and hasn’t been there this year,” he said.

Lundberg was also pleased with how his team attacked USC’s defense.

“We did a good job in the half court moving the ball and attacking their zones,” he said.

He mentioned that NRHEG trimmed USC’s lead to eight points a few times, but then the Rebels would go on a run to get their lead back up to double digits.

“At the end, we got it [their deficit] to three, 74-77, but missed a shot and had to foul them. They made free throws to seal it,” said Lundberg.

Despite the close loss, he was happy with the Panthers’ effort.

“It was the best effort we have played with all year,” he said.

NRHEG’s record is now 3-19.

After a game with Faribault BA Tuesday, the Panthers travel to Maple River Friday night and hosts Blue Earth Area Monday night. NRHEG closes out the regular season on Feb. 17 at Medford.

NRHEG stats: Porter Peterson scored 18 points, Lonnie Wilson 16 points, Kordell Schlaak 14 points, Ashton Johnson 12 points, Tyrone Wilson 8 points, Daxter Lee 2 points, Blake Ihrke 2 points and Jack Olson 2 points.

# Razorbacks rally to beat Tigers, rout Saints

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

The Westfield wrestling team trailed 21-29 after a loss by fall at 170 pounds, but the Razorbacks won the final three matches to beat Medford 36-29 on Thursday, Feb. 6. They later beat St. Charles 66-9 to end their regular season with back-to-back wins.

Westfield got off to a strong start when Bo Zweiner won by a 5-3 decision at 113 pounds, while Lane Lembke and Alex Lea won by forfeit at 120 and 126 pounds, respectively.

Trailing 0-15, Medford stopped Westfield’s momentum when the Tigers’ Charley Elwood won by fall.

However, the Razorbacks’ Cade Christians won

by fall to give Westfield its 15-point lead back, 21-6.

At 145 pounds, Medford’s rally started when Tate Hermes won by technical fall and George McCarthy won by fall at 152 pounds to trim the Tigers’ deficit to 17-21.

Medford then completed the comeback when Willie Von Ruden won by fall. The Tigers’ Josiah Hedensten



Westfield’s Bo Zweiner lifts the right leg of Medford’s Tommy Elwood into the air during their match on Thursday, Feb. 6. Zweiner won by a 5-3 decision.



Westfield’s Lane Lembke attacks the right thigh of his St. Charles opponent, while his opponent goes for his left thigh. Lembke won via a 8-2 decision.

also won by fall to give Medford a 29-21 lead.

After that, the tables turned starting with Westfield’s Dylan Ehmke who got a late takedown to win by a 5-4 decision.

Entering the final two matches of the dual, the Razorbacks trailed the Tigers 24-29, but Colton Krell won by fall at 220 pounds to give Westfield a slim 30-29 lead.

With just one point separating the two teams, it was still anyone’s game when the final match began.

The Razorbacks’ Dylan

Nirk ensured that his team didn’t lose the lead it had fought so hard to regain by winning by fall to give Westfield a 36-29 win.

Then, against St. Charles, the Razorbacks once again got off to a strong start when Hunter Simonson and Zweiner won by fall to give Westfield a 12-0 lead.

The Razorbacks’ momentum continued when Lembke and Keegan Bronson both won by decision.

Westfield’s lead increased to 23-0 when Chris-

tianson won by fall.

St. Charles got on the board when by winning by fall at 138 pounds. They followed that up with a win by decision at 145 pounds to cut their deficit to 9-23.

However, after that, it was all Westfield. They won the next four matches by forfeit, Sam Pirk won by fall at 195 pounds, and they won the final two matches by forfeit to give the Razorbacks’ a 66-9 win.

Westfield ends the regular with a 9-10 record, 6-3 in section play.

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# Blossoms girls snag big conference win



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
Blossoming Prairie senior Baylee Sorensen hauls down a rebound in action Tuesday, Feb. 4 against the Rebels of United South Central (USC). The Awesome Blossoms defeated the Rebels, 63-30.

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

The Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossoms girls varsity basketball team sank five three-point shots in the first half to help catapult the Blossoms to a 52-47 victory over Hayfield Feb. 6.

The big Gopher Conference win pushed the Blossoms' season mark to 18-3 overall and to 10-2 in the conference.

Maggie Bruns dropped three three-point baskets in the first half and Julia Worke followed with two three-pointers. Hayfield kept pace with Cela Carney hitting three three-pointers.

The Blossoms led 36-28 at the break. "Both teams played tough defense and didn't give up anything very easy," said Blossoms Coach John Bruns.

The Blossoms held the lead throughout but Hayfield closed the gap to within three with a minute remaining. Bobbie Bruns then stepped up and got a huge steal that turned into a fast break layup plus a foul, which stretched lead to six with about 40 seconds remaining.

"We got a couple more key stops to close the game and take the win," Bruns said.

Megan Oswald led the Blossoms with 16 points. She was followed by Bobbie Bruns with 12 points and by Maggie Bruns and Julia Worke with 10 points each. Carney led Hayfield with 13 points.

**BLOOMING PRAIRIE 52, HAYFIELD 47**

**HAYFIELD (47)**  
Kristen Watson 10 P; Cela Carney 13 P, 3 3-PT; Rachel Pack 10 P, 1 3-PT; Taylor Burt 4 P; Lila Gronseth 8 P; Aine Stasko 2 P.

**BLOOMING PRAIRIE (52)**  
Maggie Bruns 10 P, 3 3-PT; Bobbie Bruns 12 P; Julia Worke 10 P, 2 3-PT; Allison Krohnberg 4 P; Megan Oswald 16 P.  
Halftime: BP 36, HAY 28.  
Free throws: HAY 9-12, BP 11-14.  
Three-point goals: HAY 4, BP 5.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
Allison Krohnberg (31) and Maren Forystek (13) surround a USC (United South Central) player, Hannah Meyer (21) during Gopher Conference action at Blooming Prairie on Tuesday, Feb. 4. The Awesome Blossoms defeated USC, 63-30.

**BLOSSOMS CRUSH KINGSLAND, USC**

A 10-2 run by the Blossom girls basketball team before halftime helped lock up a 64-49 victory over the Kingsland Lady Knights of Spring Valley on the Blossoms home court Feb. 3.

The Blossoms played again Tuesday night and defeated USC, 63-30.

The score was tied at 16-16 before the Blossoms outscored the Knights, 10-2.

"We overcame a bit of a slow start on the offensive end in the first half and took control in the second half for a key section win," remarked Blossoms Coach John Bruns.

"We were able to turn up our defensive pressure in the second half and force turnovers that gave us some transition points," Coach Bruns related.

Bobbie Bruns led the Awesome Blossoms with 18 points. Megan Oswald followed with 15 points. Ellie Buchholz was the leading Lady Knight scorer with 18 points.

Coach Bruns praised the offensive efforts of Julia Worke, Allison Krohnberg and Maggie Bruns. "That balance was big for us," said Bruns.

The Blossoms played their entire roster in action at home against United



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
Maren Forystek and Megan Oswald protect the area beneath the basket in game action against USC of Wells on Tuesday, Feb. 4. The Awesome Blossoms won early, 63-30.

South Central (USC) of Wells on Feb. 4.

The Awesome Blossoms won the contest, 63-30.

"This was our fourth game in a row without a practice, and we did a nice job taking control of the game early," said Coach Bruns.

"We had 10 players who scored and everyone who dressed played quite a bit," Bruns said.

Megan Oswald and Bobbie Bruns led all Blossom scorers with 17 points each.

Izzy O'Rourke was the top USC scorer with 9 points.

The Awesome Blossom girls host Grand Meadow on Thursday, Feb. 13, and travel to Medford on Friday, Feb. 14. Section play begins on Thursday, Feb. 20.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
Blooming Prairie senior Gabe Hagen (33) passes to a teammate during a Gopher Conference game with Hayfield on the Vikings' home court Friday, Feb. 7. Hagen is guarded by Luke Dudycha (24) and Patrick Towey (2). The Awesome Blossoms won a thrilling game, 59-54.

## Blossoms grab thriller over Hayfield

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

After a slow start in a thrilling game on the Hayfield Viking boys basketball home court Feb. 7, Blooming Prairie's Awesome Blossoms used an aggressive defense to take command.

The Blossoms emerged victorious over the Vikings, 59-54. The victory upped the Blossoms' season record to 16-2, Gopher Conference mark to 8-1 and the Section 1A record to 8-0.

Down by 12 at one time, the Awesome Blossoms fought valiantly even without the services of starter Karson Vigeland for part of the first half and all of the second half. Vigeland suffered a knee injury at the four-minute mark of the first half.

The Blossoms went ahead for the first time at 22-21 and led 29-27 at the break.

The lead changed hands many times in the second half. The score was knotted at 40-40 with 9:24 remaining in the game. The game was tied at 54-all with 1:17 remaining. Two points by the Blossoms put them ahead 56-54 with a minute left.

With 23.6 seconds left, Kaden Thomas and Isaac Ille went to the free throw line and put the Blossoms ahead to stay.

"It was a very exciting game in a packed gym," said Blossoms Coach Nate Piller. "We fumbled the ball around and gave Hayfield the momentum early in the game," Piller related.

"Our boys are competitors and rarely lose com-

sure and their confidence is well founded," Piller said.

"They showed so much grit and so much heart. I am proud of how they battled in this one. This was a hard-fought game that had special meaning for both conference and section standings."

Junior Drew Kittelson led the Blossoms in scoring with 11 points. Senior Gabe Hagen followed with 10 points. Hayfield's Ethan Slaathaug, a junior, scored 24 points.

Coach Piller said the Blossoms got good news with Vigeland's injury and it was hoped he will be back in the starting lineup soon.

The Blossoms play United South Central in Wells on Thursday, Feb. 13 and are in action again on Friday, Feb. 14 at home against Medford.

## Anna Pauly's 16 points lead Blossom JV

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Blooming Prairie's girls Junior Varsity basketball team was led by Anna Pauly's 16 points in a 37-30 win Feb. 4 in the BP gym.

Other scorers were: Macy Lembke, 6; Anna Kittelson, 5; Shawntee Snyder, 5; Melanie Winzenburg, 2; Addison Doocy, 2 and Emily Miller, 1.

The Blossom JV girls trailed the USC Rebels, 18-15 after the first half. The Blossoms took the lead away early in the second half and held the advantage in the second half, outscoring the Rebels, 22-12.

USC's 1-3-1 defense gave the Blossoms trouble in the early going. "We didn't pass the ball very well and we made some poor decisions on shots," remarked Blossom JV Coach Cory Hendrickson.

"Our energy level improved in the second half and we finished the game strong," Hendrickson emphasized.

The win boosted the Blossom JV's season record to 12-8.

In action Feb. 3, the Blossoms JV used balanced scoring to defeat Kingsland 43-35.

Shawntee Snyder led the Blossoms with 10 points. Next were: Anna Pauly, 8; Haven Carl-

son, 6; Macy Lembke, 5; Emily Miller, 4; Anna Kittelson, 4; Melanie Winzenburg, 4 and Addison Doocy, 2.

The Blossoms trailed Kingsland by two points, 20-18, after the first half. Blooming Prairie held a 25-15 scoring edge in the second half.

"We got off to a slow start, trailing 14-4 early in the game. From that point, the Blossoms "played really well," said Hendrickson. "A good deal of credit goes to our bench players," he added.

Hendrickson praised the "ton of energy" the bench players brought into the game. "It's fun to have that type of depth on our team," he said.

## Split results for Blossoms C squad girls

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Blooming Prairie's girls basketball C squad team split two games last week, defeating United South Central, 30-11 at BP on Feb. 4 and dropping a one-point decision to Hayfield on Feb. 6.

The Blossoms outscored USC, 15-5 in the first half and 15-6 in the second half.

Macy Lembke led all scorers with 10 points. Other scorers were: Shawntee Snyder,

5; Sophie Thomas, 4; Emily Anderson, 3; Abby Smith, 2; Addison Doocy, 2; Haven Carlson, 2 and Madelaine Stoen, 2.

"Even though we got the win, we were a little too passive on both ends of the floor," said Coach Cory Hendrickson. "We need to be more aggressive and really try to make things happen on offense. We played well enough to win but we can definitely play better."

The win made the Blossoms C squad record stand at 5-6 on the season.

A rally by the Blossom C squad almost brought BP a win against Hayfield. The Blossoms were outscored 17-11 in the first half and outscored Hayfield, 22-21 in the second half.

Blossom scoring looked like this: Snyder, 5; Carlson, 5; Doocy, 4; Stoen, 4 and Lembke, 3.

"We did an outstanding job of coming back in the second half but just couldn't get a break at the end of the game," said Hendrickson. "I am so proud of our effort," he added.



# Rep. Daniels urges Minnesotans to get a Real ID now

The deadline to comply with new federal ID standards arrives later this year and State Representative Brian Daniels, R-Faribault, is encouraging people to sign up now and beat the rush.

Starting Oct. 1, every air traveler 18 years of age or older will need a Real ID, enhanced driver's license or ID, passport or passport card, or another acceptable form of ID to fly within the United States or enter federal facilities.

Reports show fewer than 10% of Minnesotans are currently compliant with the new ID standards and it is still taking several weeks for the state to turn around applications. Daniels said the pressures on turnaround time could intensify this fall as more people get in line to apply for a compliant ID.

"If folks are planning to fly sometime after Oct. 1, I strongly encourage them to begin the application process as soon as possible," Daniels said. "I'm concerned that the state will receive a rush of applications as

we approach the October deadline, leaving many without the necessary identification needed to board an aircraft. Getting ahead of the rush could save you a great deal of frustration this fall."

There are additional documents needed to obtain a Real ID driver's license or enhanced driver's License or state ID card. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) website has information detailing the requirements and documents needed. DPS also has a pre-application online page to help speed up the process for processing an application for the REAL ID.

The federal Real ID program was created in the wake of the 9-11 terrorist attacks. Congress raised ID standards in 2005, phased in over a number of years, with the stated goal of protecting our nation. While Minnesota's current standard IDs do not meet the heightened federal standards, legislation enacted in 2017 allows the state to come into compliance this year.

## GUEST COLUMN

# Mission critical for farming operations

BY JOE MARTIN

The clock is ticking... March 16 is THE LAST day to make what is likely one of the most important business decisions you will make for your farming operation this year.

If you have not already visited your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office to make your election for either the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program and to sign your annual enrollment contract, you should call and make your appointment now.

Many of you are gearing up to head to the field for spring planting, but I cannot stress enough the importance of not letting this deadline get lost in the hectic day-to-day obligations of farm life. *If you fail to enroll for 2019 ARC or PLC, you will be ineligible to receive a payment for the 2019 crop year.*

ARC and PLC provide financial protections to farmers from substantial drops in crop prices or revenues and are vital economic safety nets for most American farms. These programs cover 20 commodities produced in the U.S.

FSA anticipates more than 1.7 million producers

will enroll in ARC or PLC – that's a lot of producers to assist in a short period of time. As of Feb. 3, FSA records in Minnesota show 8,231 farms out of an expected 95,221 farms have completed ARC or PLC enrollment for the 2019 crop year.

Want to maximize your time visiting with FSA? Inquire about deadlines and options for also enrolling in 2020 ARC or PLC and updating PLC payment yields. Our staff will help you make the most out of your visit or set you up with a future appointment to help check FSA programs off your lengthy "to do" list.

If you're still unsure about the choice of ARC or PLC, we offer online decision tools to help you determine the best program election for your farming operation. To access these tools, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc).

Call FSA today for an appointment. To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](http://farmers.gov/service-center-locator).

We know that time is money... so make the time to avoid losing the money.

**Joe Martin is the state executive director in Minnesota for the USDA Farm Service Agency.**

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## PUBLIC RECORD

### STEELE COUNTY BIRTHS JUNE 2019

Afton Daniel Borland, Parents: Amber and Dana, June 3.  
Jacob Matthew McCusker, Parents: Heidi and Kevin, June 3.  
Ava Kathryn Anderson, Parents: Karen and Eric, June 5.  
Olivia Sandra Donna Caswell, Parents: Amber and Tavid, June 5.  
Charles John Hunt, Parents: Holly and Joel, June 6.  
Liam Dawson Bachtle, Parents: Courtney and Josiah, June 6.  
Amelia Rose Garza, Parents: Abygail Gonzales and Sammy Garza, June 7.  
Major Alessandro Williams, Parent: Virginia Flores, June 7.  
Audrey Mae Schlueter, Parents: Deena and Chad, June 7.  
Brady Silas Blitz, Parents: Karisa and David, June 7.  
Madeeha Abdulkadir Fakrudin, Parents: Shukri Abdirahman and Abdulkadir Sharifali, June 9.  
Everleigh Raelynn Manges, Parents: Nikole and Johnathan, June 10.  
Isabelle Marie Rose Randall, Parents: Yvette and Christopher, June 12.  
Jasper Paul Guse, Parents: Paulina and Brandon, June 12.  
Aria Lee Srock, Parents: Jordan and Johnathan, June 12.  
Jackson John Huisenga, Parents: Alyssa and Kyle, June 13.  
Serenity Lilit Clark, Parents: Jolene and Alexander, June 13.  
Gael Sebastian Ibarra, Parents: Sandra Torres and Jose Ibarra, June 14.  
Andrew Isaiah Jacobsen, Parents: Leah and Theodore, June 16.  
Colt Wesley Huston, Parents: Brianna and Lance, June 18.  
Hayden Lee Schultz, Parent: Ciara, June 19.  
Avery James Gruenwald, Parents: Jessica and Justin, June 19.  
Ellery Hayes Tellijohn, Parents: Christa and Caleb, June 20.

Riley James Prissel, Parents: Brandie Wroblewski and Devin Prissel, June 22.  
Aubree Sophia Bulow, Parents: Anne Sager and Nathan Bulow, June 22.  
Howard Michael Runden, Parents: Martha and Philip, June 22.  
Philomena Faith Marie Kuhlman, Parents: Jamie and Justin, June 23.  
Aurora Cameron Harvey, Parent: Katelyn Toshach, June 24.  
Reese Eloise Foels, Parents: Michelle and Matthew, June 26.  
Rose Edell Simon, Parents: Gloria and Andrew, June 27.  
Asif Fakhri Muhidin, Parents: Afafa Mohamed and Fakhri Sheikh, June 27.  
Abel Loren Hernandez, Parents: Samone and Bryan, June 30.

### STEELE COUNTY DEATHS JUNE 2019

Timothy John Miller, 55, Owatonna, June 2.  
Connie Lynn Holter, 71, Owatonna, June 3.  
Kevin Paul Johnson, 63, Owatonna, June 4.  
Dale Mowers, 93, Blooming Prairie, June 6.  
Dean William Imm, 85, Owatonna, June 9.  
Doris Eileen French, 96, Medford, June 10.  
Maurene May Grunwald, 94, Blooming Prairie Township, June 10.  
Helen Louise Scott, 87, Owatonna, June 10.  
Hendrina Aleida Hinton, 93, Owatonna, June 11.  
Robert Leon Goff, 90, Blooming Prairie, June 12.  
Albert Gordon Kath, 73, Waseca, June 13.  
Elizabeth Leona Anderson, 100, Owatonna, June 14.  
Michael Joseph Novak, 54, Deerfield Township, June 17.  
Jerry Thomas McCarthy, 76, Janesville, June 18.  
Francis Charles Krumholz, 92, Owatonna, June 20.  
Alfred Justin Jandro, 81, Owatonna, June 20.  
Margie Alyda Moore, 94, Medford, June 23.  
Eleonore Meta Andrist, 90, Rochester, June 24.  
James Robert Haugen, 87, Owatonna, June 25.  
Vaughn Fredrick Kispert, 87, Owatonna, June 25.

Thomas Harold Montgomery, 80, Owatonna, June 27.  
Roger Lee Dulas, 88, Ellendale, June 29.  
Hilda Anna Schmidt, 93, Owatonna, June 30.

### STEELE COUNTY MARRIAGES JUNE 2019

Jacob Seth Verdouw-Gustine and Melissa Jean Johnson, June 1.  
Laura Mary Schommer and Robert Lee Bryant, June 1.  
Roger Lee Niles and Queenie Javier Bihag, June 1.  
Spencer Dale Gallaher and Kelsey Jo Jensen, June 1.  
Joshua Jordan Gonnerman Huang and Alyssa Joy Levy, June 1.  
David Robert Schroht and Emily Elizabeth Riesgraf, June 1.  
Jackieleyndrea Barajas and Jesus Jonathan Simon Martinez, June 4.  
Paul Stephen Floy and Amanda Lanette Weinkauff, June 7.  
Elisabeth Ashley Desmond and Shane Thomas Lester, June 8.  
Rocklin Lee Branderhorst and Adela Torrez, June 8.  
Samantha Kay Haslip and Jeremy Michael Gauthier, June 8.  
Tracy Joe Seelhammer and Lorraine Lynn Krouze, June 8.  
Nathan Robert Heers and Nicole Mae Kain, June 8.  
Randall Loren Anderson and Linda Jane Healy, June 8.  
Melvin Talbot Hurst and Haley Michelle Kessinger, June 8.  
Kevin Michael Sundberg and Karina Martin Felipe, June 12.  
Larissa Faye Gustafson and Clayton Thomas Schultz, June 14.  
Theresa Jean Gallea and Kenneth James Seykora, June 14.  
Gisell Gonzalez Sanchez and Frankervin Paul Spartz, June 15.  
Hunter Christian Ryg and Stefanie Lynn Koppedryer, June 15.  
David Joseph Klecker and Patricia Lee Osborne, June 15.

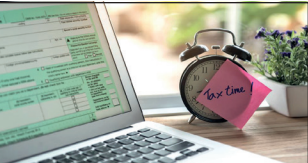
Omar Gutierrez and Jordan Elizabeth Borchert, June 15.  
Anders Bjorn Jacobson and Kelli Josephine Naatz, June 15.  
Gary Robert Wells and Julie Kay Hansen, June 17.  
Ritlu Gaxiola and Brian Joseph Fischer, June 21.  
Michael John Broll and Rebecca Kay Johnson, June 22.  
Nathan Seneca Richter and Jennifer Ann Ziegenhagen, June 22.  
Kenny James Peerboom and Amanda Mae Hartgers, June 22.  
Nicholas Ervin Nelson and Kayla Rae Nelson, June 28.  
Michaela Marie Gerry and Mitohell Cody Langer, June 29.  
Allan John Thomas Ptacek and Brenda Kay Zimmerman, June 29.  
Broderick Allen Voss and Katie Ann Peach, June 29.  
Tyler Dylan Burke and Aubrey May Hager, June 29.  
Dexter Jerrell Mack and Herminia Lynn Becker, June 29.  
Jonathan Michael Oeltjenbruns and Charissa Patience Hager, June 29.  
Stephanie Diane Woker and Jonathan Ross Pope, June 29.  
David James Lassahn and Kiley Jo Beenken, June 30.

### STEELE COUNTY DIVORCES JUNE 2019

Geraldine Marie Struss and Alan Wayne Struss, June 3.  
Waco Allen Vandal and Rochelle Leigh Shultz Vandal, June 5.  
Amanda Marie Benton and Gary Dean Benton III, June 7.  
Shanna Lynn Motl and Mark Anthony Motl, June 11.  
Mark Maass and Sheleen Maass, June 14.  
Lynne Marie Balfe and Nicholas Martin Balfe, June 20.  
Delmira Ortega and John Carlos Ortega, June 20.  
Kelsey Marie Morgan and Derek Robert Morgan, June 20.  
Brenda Ann Misgen and Loren Arlo Miller, June 24.



## TAX TIPS 2020



## Tax season stress busters

Even the IRS knows that tax season can be stress season for some people. The IRS wants to help taxpayers as much as possible. With the 2020 tax season here, taxpayers can keep in mind these tips. Following them will help get this year's taxes done accurately and on time.

**Gather records.** Good recordkeeping ensures nothing gets overlooked. Records such as receipts and cancelled checks can provide proof of expenses.

**Start with IRS.gov.** The IRS website is an excellent resource available 24/7. Taxpayers can click on the Filing tab for links to filing tips, answers to frequently asked questions, and IRS forms and publications. The IRS Services Guide (PDF) outlines the many ways to get help.

**Use online tools.** The IRS website is home to many useful online tools. One of these is the Interactive Tax Assistant, which provides answers to many tax questions. It gives the same answers that an IRS representative would give over the phone.

**File electronically.** Most taxpayers file electronically these days for its ease and convenience. The tax software uses the taxpayer's responses to complete the Form 1040 and any needed schedules. For taxpayers who filed paper returns in the past, this may be the year to consider the benefits of filing electronically.

**Get free help.** Taxpayers can use IRS Free File,

Free File Fillable Forms, or get help from trained volunteers at sites around the country.

**Explore other filing options.** Taxpayers have many options to file. They can self-prepare or use a tax preparer. IRS.gov has resources to help people choose a tax pro. The IRS Directory of Federal Tax Return Preparers provides information on who has a professional credential or participates in the IRS Annual Filing Season Program.

**Choose direct deposit.** The fastest and safest way to a refund is to file electronically and choose direct deposit. The IRS issues most refunds in less than 21 days.

**Report all income.** Taxpayers must report all their income from Forms W-2, Wage and Tax Statements, and Forms 1099. Other income may be reportable as well, even if the taxpayer does not receive a statement.

**Avoid errors.** Taxpayers should take extra time to review their tax return so they file accurately the first time. Filing electronically is the most accurate way to eliminate many common errors. Paper return filers should check all names and double check all Social Security numbers. They should also be sure to sign the tax return.

**Check out Publication 17.** This guide, which is available on IRS.gov and as an eBook, covers a wide range of tax topics to help people file their tax returns.

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NOTICE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:

DATE OF MORTGAGE: April 12, 2002

ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$75,000.00

MORTGAGOR(S): Kevin P. Johnson and Kimberly K. Harpel, husband and wife

MORTGAGEE: Sterling State Bank, Corporation

DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on April 17, 2002 as Document Number A298416; as modified of record by document recorded on May 11, 2016 as Document Number A000407508 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota.

ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Ohio Savings Bank by assignment recorded on April 17, 2002 as Document Number A298417 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota; thereafter assigned to Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. by assignment recorded on February 13, 2006 as Document Number A000339087 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 13, Block 3 in Dartt's Second Addition to the City of Owatonna including any land lying west of the west line of said Lot 13 and east of the east line of the above mentioned land conveyed to the City of Owatonna for a street. Together with the North 24.75 feet of Rice Lake Street that accrued thereto by reason of vacation thereof as contained in Book 125 of Deeds, Pages 483-484, Steele County, Minnesota.

STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 603 E BROADWAY, OWATONNA, MN 55060-2507

COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele County, Minnesota.

THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$64,057.55

TRANSACTION AGENT: None

NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Sterling State Bank, Corporation

RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.

TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-129-0313

TRANSACTION AGENT'S

MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: None

THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part.

PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:

DATE AND TIME OF SALE: March 31, 2020 at 10:00 AM.

PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, MN 55060.

to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of sale.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on September 30, 2020.

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

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None

Dated: January 29, 2020

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A. Mortgagee

TROTT LAW, P.C. By: /s/ N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq. Samuel R. Coleman, Esq. \*Michael van Muelken, Esq.\* Attorneys for Mortgagee 25 Dale Street North St. Paul, MN 55102 (651) 209-9760 (19-1083-FC01)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

1/22, 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, 2/19, 2/26

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Frontier offers Lifeline service which is a nontransferable government assistance program that provides a \$7.25 discount on the cost of monthly telephone service or \$9.25 on eligible broadband or bundled voice and broadband products (where available) and is limited to one discount per household. In addition to Basic Lifeline, individuals living on federally recognized Tribal Lands who meet the eligibility criteria may also qualify for additional monthly discounts through Enhanced Lifeline and up to \$100.00 toward installation fees through the Tribal Link-Up program. You may also qualify for an additional state discount where available.

If you have any questions regarding Frontier's rates or services, please call us at 1-800-FRONTIER for further information or visit us at [www.Frontier.com](http://www.Frontier.com).

2/4/20

CNS-3335343#

STEELE COUNTY TIMES

NOTICE

State of Minnesota County Steele District Court

Judicial District: Third Court File Number: 74-CV-19-2363 Case Type: Harassment

Notice of Issuance of Harassment Restraining Order by Publication

Heather Marie Turek and On Behalf of Minor Child(ren) Petitioner vs James Edwin Gordy Respondent

To Respondent: YOU ARE NOTIFIED that a Harassment Restraining Order has been issued on 12.23.2019. A hearing has not been scheduled. You may request a hearing on this matter by filing a *Request for Hearing* HAR301 with the Court within twenty (20) days of the date this Notice is published. You may get a copy of the HRO from the court administrator's office at the following address: Steele County Courthouse, 111 East Main Street in Owatonna, MN 55060.

Failure to appear at a scheduled hearing or to get a copy of the Harassment Restraining Order will not be a defense to prosecution for violation of the Court's order.

Date: January 31, 2020 /s/ Court Administrator/Deputy

2/5, 2/12

2/5, 2/12



STEELE COUNTY Times

GUEST COLUMN

The need to foster Minnesota's global economy

BY DOUG LOON

We live in a global economy. In every community throughout Minnesota there are businesses that supply the world with innovative and much-needed products and services. But that success depends on a business climate that values and supports this forward-thinking, so we are able to continue to compete on the world stage while providing a high quality of life for employees and employers in our communities.

This was abundantly clear on the Minnesota Chamber's recent Statewide Policy Tour. Throughout December, we made our semiannual tour, meeting with local chambers and business leaders who see every day the fruits of Minnesota's connections in the world economy.

A few standout examples: SJE in Detroit Lakes is a leading manufacturer of liquid level controls for water and wastewater systems. It ranks No. 2 globally among the key players in float switch sensors.

Rihm Global Sales in South St. Paul is one of the oldest and largest Kenworth dealers in the United States. It boasts nearly 30 years of exporting products to more than 60 countries.

Trystar in Faribault is a premier manufacturer of power distribution equipment. Its current portfolio includes producing electric-generating systems and equipment for the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

These companies struggle with the same challenges that many Minnesota businesses do. Carrie Johnston, president and CEO of the Detroit Lakes Regional Chamber, is proud of SJE's success, and the success of other strong businesses in the region. But she notes that they struggle to attract workers into their area, in part due to housing and child care shortages. "Our businesses are looking to other means of training and keeping local kids here to serve our workforce into the future," she says.

And she's not alone. Nort Johnson leads the Faribault Area Chamber. "Keeping costs in check will help our area businesses continue to compete globally," he says. "Taxes and health care costs are ongoing challenges to making sure businesses can grow and create opportunities for long-term success in our community."

We should be proud of Minnesota's leadership in the global economy and take steps to foster its growth. I encourage you to get involved. Join with other businesses to invest in your community's future. Get to know your local chamber, if you don't already. And join all of us in a statewide effort to ensure that elected officials make decisions that support private-sector economic growth and investment that benefit the lives of all Minnesotans.

Doug Loon is president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce – [www.mnchamber.com](http://www.mnchamber.com).

Did the Vikings lose because of Minnesota's high taxes?

BY JOHN PHELAN

Well, that was brutal. The Vikings were well beaten by the 49ers on Saturday and the bottle of Miller High Life – the Champagne of Beers (™) – I keep in anticipation of a Vikings Super Bowl win remains on ice. I'm sure you'll all have explanations for the latest blow out. And, as a Brit, you'll know more about it than I will. But one you might not have considered is Minnesota's high taxes.

Hear me out.

In a recent paper titled 'Touchdowns, Sacks and Income Tax – How the Taxman decides who wins the Super Bowl' Economist Matthias Petutschnig from the Vienna University of Economics and Business looks at a 23-year period from 1994 to 2016. He finds "a significant negative relation between the amount of the net (after-tax) salary cap represented by the personal income tax rate of the teams' home states and the success of the teams."

For example, California had the highest average tax rate over this period – 11.28% – and its teams won 2.75 games per year less than teams located in Florida, Tennessee, Texas, or Washington, which had no personal income tax. With an average tax rate of 8.58%, Minnesota ranked 2nd. Teams that failed to make the playoffs in 2016 had an average tax rate of 5.93% – about 30% higher than the rate for playoff participants, 4.62%. Minnesota's average tax rate was a hefty 10.15%.

Why would this matter? To ensure competitiveness, the NFL's strict salary cap limits the amount each team can spend on player salaries. The figure was \$188 million for this season, which works out to an average of about \$3.5 million per player for a 53-man roster.

But the salary cap doesn't take state tax rates into account. A player negotiating with a team in a high-income tax state like Minnesota might ask for more money to offset what they will lose in high taxes, but that comes out of the \$188 million, reducing the amount available to attract other players: "This reduces the average talent level of the whole roster of a team in a high tax state and diminishes its chances of winning," Petutschnig says.

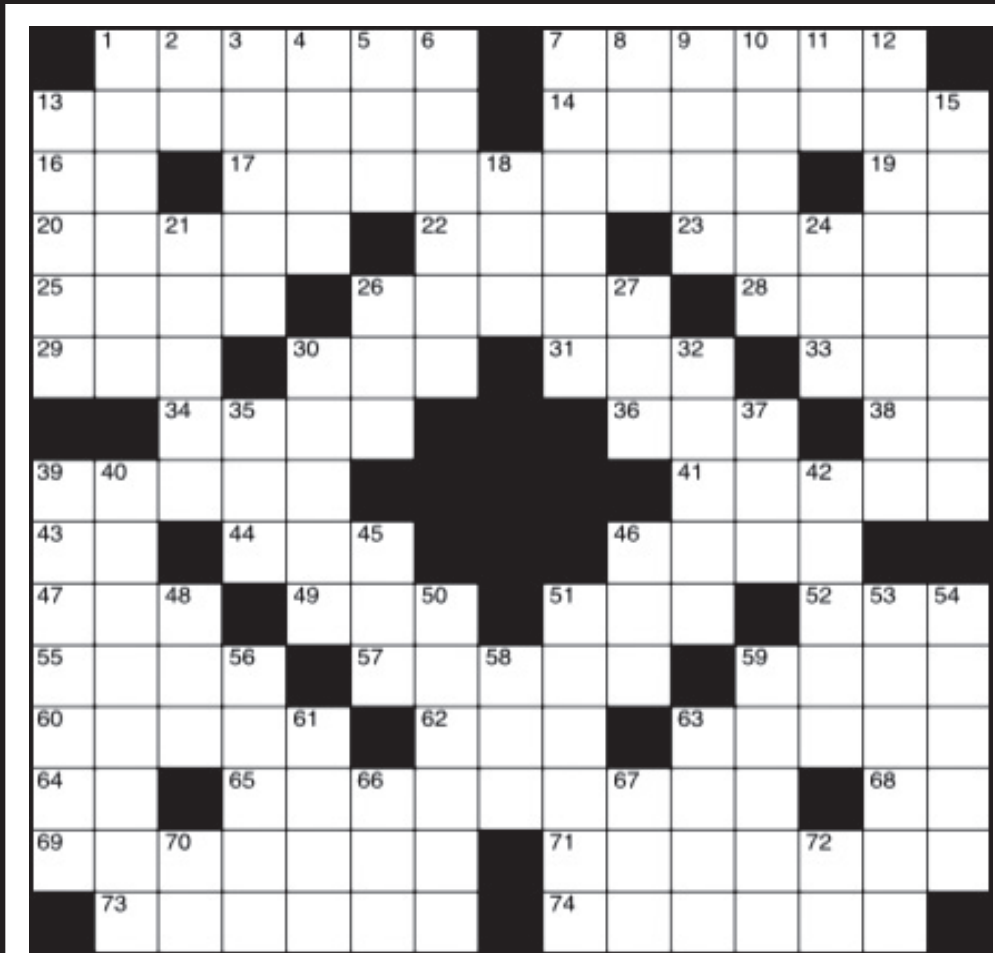
The difference can be substantial. In states with no income tax the \$188 million allowed in pay under the salary cap is all take home for the players. In Minnesota, \$19 million of it will be swallowed up by state income taxes leaving a pool of just \$169 million to offer as take-home pay: "A team that has more after-tax money to spend has a higher chance of acquiring the better players" says Petutschnig.

One way of testing these findings is to look at franchises which relocated to lower-tax states during this period. The Cleveland Browns, for example, moved from Ohio (tax rate: 7.4%) to Maryland (tax rate: 5.3%) in 1995, re-branding as the Baltimore Ravens. After the move, the Ravens posted a better record by more than 1 game per season, on average, and won the Super Bowl in 2001, a game the Browns had never even appeared in.

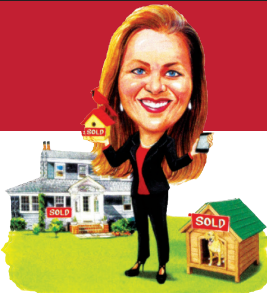
True, the Vikings lost to a team from high tax California this weekend. And, over the 1994-2016, period the most successful team was the New England Patriots from high tax Massachusetts. Research such as this does not say that a team from a high tax state cannot be successful, only that it needs to beat the odds to do so, which the Patriots have been able to do with coaches and players of the caliber of Bill Belichick and Tom Brady.

Minnesota lags national averages on worker productivity, capital per worker, venture capital per worker, and new and young businesses as a share of all businesses and, in our forthcoming report *The State of Minnesota's Economy: 2019*, we make the case that Minnesota's high taxes bear a large share of the blame and contribute to below average economic performance. This research shows that they might also account for our poor performance on the football field.

John Phelan is an economist with the Center of the American Experiment.



- CLUES ACROSS
1. S.W. gully
7. Japanese polytheism
13. N.H. Academy and town
14. Most aired
16. Prosecuting officer
17. Badger State
19. Atomic 424
20. Moose genus
22. Possessed
23. Make a smooth transition
25. Thug (slang)
26. Locations or places
28. Rivulet
29. The self
30. Not good
31. Obstruct
33. Decalitre
34. Space for sitting
36. Taxi
38. 7th tone
39. Ethiopian lake
41. Tears down
43. Gold
44. Angle (abbr.)
46. Semitic fertility god
47. Beak
49. Digital audiotape
51. Small child
52. 4th caliph of Islam
55. 4840 square yards
57. Devious trick (Yiddish)
59. Overgarments
60. Large creature
62. Ingest
63. Nuisances
64. - \_\_\_, denotes past
65. Wine waiter
68. I, Portuguese
69. Compunction
71. Overshadow
73. Emphasize
74. An unsuccessful ending
- CLUES DOWN
1. Something comparable
2. Rural delivery
3. uLaugh-Innco-host Dan
4. Sheep genus
5. Affirmative
6. Vanilla's flower family
7. In a way, made smoother
8. Belong to he
9. Greek rainbow goddess
10. S.F. football team player
11. Atomic 452
12. Kiss
13. Proverb
15. Lattice support
18. Cereal grass
21. Rome, GA river
24. Disease of cattle
26. Seated
27. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
30. Blatted
32. Murdered in his bathtub
35. Finish
37. Sheep sound
39. Scarlett songbird
40. Kills oneself
42. Broad, flat pieces of stone
45. Auto fuel
46. Derek \_\_\_, X Harvard Pres.
48. Woman's undergarment
50. Topics of discourse
51. Belonging to the peerage
53. Most recent
54. Point of debate
56. Ostend artist James Sydney
58. Phonograph inventor's initials
59. Eagle's nest
61. Ripped a fabric
63. Lucre
66. Manuscripts (abbr.)
67. Frozen water
70. 41st state
72. Keystone state



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**HAYFIELD-** For Rent - Great Western Apartments. Large 1 bedroom apartment (available NOW) and 2 bedroom apartment (available now), includes all utilities, laundry onsite. Must have proof of employment, Call (507) 796-0152 or (701) 330-9788. (6-8 chg)  
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decks. \$645 & \$755 p/mo + elec. Garages also avail to rent. 507-438-7935 or 507-451-8524 or www.lifestyleinc.net tdd 507-451-0704 EHO (6-9 chg)  
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Modern Country Acreage, on black top road, 1/2 mile north of Dodge Center. \$1100.00 a month, plus deposit/references. Call 507-374-2204 or 507-951-1085 (tfn chg) Claremont Manor **RENT BASED ON INCOME!** 2 bd apt in Claremont for Feb! Month to month leases and deposit pay plans. 507-398-6027 or 507-451-8524 www.lifestyleinc.net tdd 507-451-0704 Equal Housing Opportunity (7-8 chg) Prairie Villa I Apartments **RENT BASED ON INCOME!** 1 bd smoke free apt for 62+ or disabled persons in Blooming Prairie. ALL utilities included. 507-438-7935 or 507-451-8524 www.lifestyleinc.net tdd 507-451-0704 Equal Housing Opportunity \$17.40 a week start 1/30 and 2/6 (7-8chg)

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

**CALEB'S PET SITTING,** Cats and Dogs, please call me at 507-634-7907. 33tfc  
**SAMANTHA UPHAM'S BABYSITTING/NANNY** services I'm a 15-year-old honors student entering my sophomore year at Kasson High School. I have babysitting experience and have been through a class specific for caring for young children. I am best suited to care for toddlers through young teens. Available 7 days a week and can be very flexible with times. I will ensure a summer full of fun! (references upon request) 507-358-3415 27tfn  
**PIERSON LAWN AND SNOW.** Now giving bids for snow removal for this winter. I plow for residential and commercial properties. If interested, please call 507-696-3849 and leave a voice message for your free estimate.  
**I JUST WANTED TO LET PEOPLE OUT** there know that I would like to start a small snow removal business in the Blooming Prairie Area! I live in Blooming Prairie and if you are interested or need somebody to shovel your driveway and sidewalk(s) I would be happy to help, if interested my number is 507-774-9366.

BARGAIN FINDERS

**3 TABLE LAMPS** (2 are very old pair), Floor Lamp, End Table. All are good condition. Asking \$50.00 for all OBO Please call 507-450-5395 (wk 6-9 pd) Dainese black leather motorcycle jacket. Size large. Excellent condition. \$50. 507-775-2418. Leave a message. (7-10 PD) Wooden rocking chair. Good shape. \$15. 507-775-2418. (7-10 PD)

HELP WANTED

Sales person with ability to work with area business in developing a marketing/advertising plan that will build the client's business. Experience preferred, but not necessary. Will train. Base-plus commission. Apply by sending your résumé and three references to: keithhdc@kmtel.com. No phone calls please.

PROPERTY CARETAKER NEEDED

Cedardale Apartments in Owatonna are looking for an on-site caretaker team. Great people skills, attention to detail, some maintenance & cleaning skills required! Must live on-site. Wages based on qualifications! Employment application required and found on www.lifestyleinc.net or by calling 507-451-8524, tdd 507-451-0704 EOE (2/13, 2/20, 3/4 CHG)

FOR SALE

**KASSON AREA-OAK** firewood for sale-split and dried. If interested, please call 507-951-1041 (6-8 pd) Large assortment 16+ salt and pepper shakers, \$20 for all. Call Agnes Christensen at 507-256-4181. (2/13, 2/20, 2/27 PD)



**ADVANCE NOTICE**  
**SPRING CONSIGNMENT AUCTION**  
**Fri. March 20, 2020 — 9:00 am**  
**Located: Hamilton Auction Co. off Interstate 90 at Dexter, MN exit #193 then 1/4 mile East on Hwy 16**  
  
Consign your farm machinery including tractors, tillage equipment, sprayers, construction equip., trucks & trailers, pickups & cars & misc. items by the 28th of Feb. to have items advertised. — **NO TIRES** — Titled items must have a current certificate of title or registration when brought in to sell. No small items.  
  
**To consign call: 507 584 0133 office**  
**HAMILTON AUCTION COMPANY**  
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**Dexter, MN 55926**

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KMTelcom, an Independent Communications Company located in Kasson, MN is seeking a full-time, experienced locating technician. The position will be primarily responsible for underground cable locating in our company's service area. The position may also have some responsibilities installing and repairing Telephone, Broadband and Video services. Minimum qualifications include prior locating experience and the ability to read and interpret maps. We offer competitive wages and an excellent benefit program.  
  
Please submit your resume to hr@kmtel.com or to KMTelcom: Attn: Human Resources 18 2nd Ave NW, Kasson, MN 55944.  
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**2020 EMPLOYMENT**  
The City of Dodge Center will be accepting applications for aquatic center employment until Friday, March 27, 2020 at 5 p.m. The following positions are being offered:  
• Assistant Managers  
• Food Court Staff  
• Lifeguards & Water Safety Instructors  
• Crossing Guards  
• Bathroom Attendants  
  
Applicants must be available to work days, nights, and weekends. Copies of all Lifeguard, WSI and CPR certifications must accompany the application. Competitive  
Wages! Reimbursement for training! Applications are available at Dodge Center City Hall or on the City's website at https://www.ci.dodgecenter.mn.us/195/Employment

**Do you enjoy meeting new people?**  
**Semcac's Rolling Hills Transit is looking for Bus Drivers (Full and Part Time) for our Stewartville area.**  
  
• **CDL License with passenger endorsement required, or we will help train for it.**  
• **Must pass the mandatory Pre-employment Drug Screen prior to employment.**  
• **Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, DOT regulations, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals.**  
• **Represents Semcac Transportation and Semcac agency to promote excellent public relations and customer service.**  
• **Assures highest possible safety standards are followed while transporting passengers**  
**Must be a team player and have a positive attitude.**  
  
More information & application available at **www.semcac.org** or contact Barb Thompson at barb.thompson@semcac.org or 507-864-8202. Applications must be postmarked by Feb 15, 2020. E.O.E.

**Semcac**  
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Do you like meeting new people? **Semcac's Rolling Hills Transit**, is looking for Substitute bus drivers for our growing service areas.  
  
• CDL License with passenger endorsement required, or we will help train for it.  
• Must pass the mandatory Pre-employment Drug Screen prior to employment.  
• Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, DOT regulations, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals.  
• Represents Semcac Transportation and Semcac agency to promote excellent public relations and customer service.  
• Assures highest possible safety standards are followed while transporting passengers  
• Must be a team player and have a positive attitude  
  
More information & application available at **www.semcac.org** or contact Barb Thompson at barb.thompson@semcac.org or 507-864-8202.  
  
Applications must be postmarked by February 1, 2020. E.O.E.

**CRAFT SHOW**  
  
**Feb. 15** — Trinity Lutheran Church in Owatonna Craft and Vendor Show from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Over 40 vendors.**  
  
**Feb. 22** — Craft and Vendor Show at Starfire Event Center - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Over 45 vendors and food and drink specials.**



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STEELE COUNTY

Times



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CRAFT SHOW

Feb. 15

Trinity Lutheran Church in Owatonna Craft and Vendor Show from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Over 40 vendors.

Feb. 22

Craft and Vendor Show at Starfire Event Center - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Over 45 vendors and food and drink specials.

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This week's Panther of the Week is **ALICE LEWER.**

She is the daughter of Trevor and Jordie Lewer and they live near New Richland. Alice is in Mrs. Jensen's kindergarten class.

Alice is very kind and helpful to all her classmates and always gives her best effort. Alice always follows the golden rule and doesn't want anyone to feel left out. She likes to make crafts and paint. At school, she loves to learn the new alphafriend each week.

Keep up the great work Alice!



**Week 1 Winner:**  
**Mike and Becky Wheeler**  
Mantorville



**Week 2 Winner:**  
**Dave Paulson**  
Blooming Prairie



**Week 3 Winner**  
**Dorothy Jackel**  
Claremont



**Week 4 Winner**  
**Verna Magnuson**  
(for Nathan Magnuson)  
Blooming Prairie



**Week 5 Winner**  
**Shelly and Mark Meyer**  
Owatonna

**Week 6 Winner**

**Week 7 Winner**

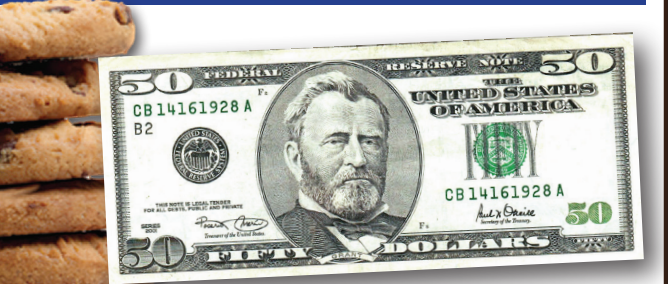
**Week 8 Winner**

**Week 9 Winner**

**Week 10 Winner**

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STEELE COUNTY

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