



STEELE COUNTY Times

**LANDMARK
COMES DOWN** B4-5

**CANDY MAKER
HONORED** B8



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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2020

Bloomington, Minnesota

STAY AT HOME

Governor
issues order
for 2 weeks

"In my opinion... we are not even close to the peak."

Amy Caron
Public Health Director

Caron:
Spread is
big concern

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Response to the coronavirus pandemic took a dramatic turn last week as Gov. Tim Walz issued an executive order directing Minnesotans to stay at home for the next two weeks.

The "Stay at Home" order took effect at 11:59 p.m. Friday and continues until 5 p.m. April 10. The current restaurant and bar closure will be extended to May 1 while the school closure will be extended to May 4.

Minnesotans may leave their residences only to perform any activities involving health and safety, outdoor, necessary supplies and services, essential travel and care of others.

Walz says his latest order will slow down infection and keep hospital beds and personal protective gear available for health care workers.

"We're in an unprecedented situation in our fight against COVID-19," said Walz. "The State of Minnesota and our private partners are doing everything we can to keep you safe, but we need your help. Minnesotans, stay home and let's make sure we keep our family, our friends and our neighbors safe."

SEE STAY AT HOME, A7



BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Though there have been no deaths related to COVID-19 in Steele or Dodge counties, Public Health Director Amy Caron is quite concerned about what's happening.

Of the 14 confirmed cases in both counties, 10 of them have been contracted by community spread, according to Caron. Dodge has seen eight cases while Steele reports six cases.

"It's strange how it's spreading and jumping around," Caron said Monday afternoon. "The community spread cases are where we have our cause for concern. It's a big concern."

Caron said even more so than a week ago, public health officials want people to stay at home in an effort to curb the spread of the virus.

The governor's Stay at Home order, which went into effect Friday at 11:59 p.m., is one drastic measure to keep things under control. "The hope is that it will slow down the COVID spread and that our healthcare system can keep up," Caron said. "We need to slow it down so we can save more people that are hospitalized," she added.

SEE CARON, A5

STAY AT HOME COMPLIANCE

What's Allowed

- Walking, running, hiking, biking
- Hunting and fishing
- Trips to get groceries or gas
- Picking up takeout, visiting the doctor
- Travel to care for others in need
- Commuting to an essential job
- Moving for safety or sanitary reasons

What's Open

- Hospitals and clinics
- Post offices and banks
- Child-care facilities
- Grocery, liquor and convenience stores
- Gas stations and hardware stores
- Farmers markets and pharmacies
- Funeral homes, Legislature

What's Closed

- Bars and nightclubs
- Movie theaters, bowling alleys
- Gyms and fitness studios
- Playgrounds, zoos, museums
- Concert halls and country clubs
- Salons, barbershops, tattoo parlors
- In-restaurant dining

COVID-19 brings ethanol demand to all-time low

**BY KAREN
M. JORGENSEN**
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The U.S. ethanol industry has faced a number of challenges over the past several years, and the Covid-19 pandemic is behind the latest one as demand for ethanol drops as Americans are driving less.

Experts estimate a 15 to 20% reduction in gasoline use over the next couple of months, according to a University of Illinois report, and that could mean that

demand for ethanol could drop by 120 to 170 million bushels in the next two months.

"It's affecting us, definitely," said Randy Doyle, CEO of Al-Corn Clean Fuel in Claremont. "It's not a secret, people are not driving."

Al-Corn recently completed a major expansion to its facility and while Doyle says the company is financially sound, it is keeping a close watch on the markets.

In a recent statement, Geoff Cooper, president and CEO of the Renewable

Fuels Association, said the pandemic, coupled with an oil price war, trade disputes and small refinery waivers have all been working against the industry.

The industry did get a bit of good news recently when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) decided not to challenge a ruling by a federal court that significantly curbs the agency's ability to exempt oil refineries from bio-fuel blending requirements.

The administration had indicated it would file an appeal to that ruling but

that led to pushback from farming groups and farm-state lawmakers.

A bipartisan group of 14 senators, including Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith of Minnesota, requested that President Trump support the RFS and not appeal the decision.

The RFS is a federal program that requires transportation fuel sold in the U.S. to contain a minimum volume of renewable fuels such as ethanol. Renewable fuel must be blended into transportation fuel in increasing amounts each

year up to 36 billion gallons by 2022.

Congress originally provided a temporary exemption for small refiners that could extend beyond 2010 based on a Department of Energy or EPA determination of disproportionate economic hardship on a case-by-case basis.

Between 2016 and 2018, the EPA granted 85 small-refinery exemptions. In a ruling in January 2020, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit Court in Denver ruled that the EPA did not have the authority

to issue the exemption extension to three companies that were not granted waivers originally.

Doyle said that Al-Corn officials will be continuing to watch the ethanol markets closely in coming weeks.

He added that area residents will not be seeing the familiar steam coming from the Al-Corn facility this week as it is time for a previously scheduled "spring turnaround."

Twice a year, he said, the plant shuts down for scheduled maintenance to clean the fermenting tanks.



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Staff members at Community Pathways of Steele County roll out a cart of food to an awaiting client at the food shelf in Owatonna. They are offering curbside delivery during the COVID-19 crisis.

Pathways to curbside delivery at food shelf

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A community organization that helps struggling families find pathways to assistance has been struggling itself through the coronavirus pandemic.

As soon as the crisis broke in mid March, Community Pathways, which serves Steele County, found itself facing a shortage of volunteers. The agency typically relies on older and retired volunteers to help operate the county's food shelf.

"We have 60 volunteers who are not able to help right now," said Nancy Ness, co-director of Community Pathways. "Their health and safety is first and foremost for us," she said. She noted they do not want to jeopardize the health of their volunteers during COVID-19.

Community Pathways is hoping to fill the void with college students and other volunteers who may be looking for something extra to do while being sheltered at home during

the crisis. "I have confidence that people will step up," said Maureen Schlobohm, co-director.

Both Ness and Schlobohm shared a story about how their limited staff thought they could conquer the food shelf on their own during the crisis. "The first day we said we could do it by ourselves, but by the end of the day we said we need our volunteers," Ness said.

Since the crisis began, Ness said Community

SEE PATHWAYS, A3

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AREA DEATHS

Ann Anderson, 83, Geneva
Dr. Timothy Nealy, 79, formerly of BP
Daryl Peterson, 62, Austin

*Serving
Bloomington
and Steele County
since 1893*

OUR VIEW

Radio ministry fills our hearts with love

Many of our churches throughout the nation are closed because of the threat of the coronavirus.

Without our church buildings being the site of regular Sunday church services, it is necessary to fill the void in many other ways.

Prayer is a No. 1 way we can keep our connection with our Lord. He will listen 24/7.

Another way is to connect to a radio or television ministry.

First Lutheran Church of Blooming Prairie is one of those churches in southern Minnesota that places heavy emphasis on its radio ministry via KOWZ Radio (100.9 FM). The radio ministry at First Lutheran has been especially valued during this time of discontent.

As many of us followed our First Lutheran church bulletins (thanks to the First Lutheran website), we had the feeling that we were sitting in our favorite church pew.

The leadership of First Lutheran led by Senior Pastor Heidi Heimgartner and Associate Pastor Mike Walerius led us through our normal form of worship.

Thanks to special music recorded by Amelia Harthan and Kari Bottin, church members and other listeners were treated to loving chords that sent chills down our spines in a good sense. Other First Lutheran vocalists also provided worship service music.

Pastor Heidi said she missed seeing familiar faces in the pews but she was comforted by the attachment many made to this radio ministry.

Both Pastor Heidi and Pastor Mike touched on the uncertainty created by the coronavirus. They emphasized that our faith will take us through these trying times.

Pastor Heidi shared her observations when taking a late afternoon walk with husband Paul through downtown Blooming Prairie. She said she observed quietness but a sense of togetherness by business people and by families now together in their home kitchens.

First Lutheran's radio ministry, sponsored by church members, keeps the pulse of our faith very much alive.

If you do not have a radio ministry to follow, find other ways to emphasize one's faith. It starts with our hearts.

Coach Gimbel is a very deserving choice

There's something that's special about a small town.

Just ask Chad Gimbel, Blooming Prairie's head football coach. Last weekend he was informed that he was chosen Coach of the Year by the Minnesota Football Coaches Association.

This honor covers all football classes in Minnesota.

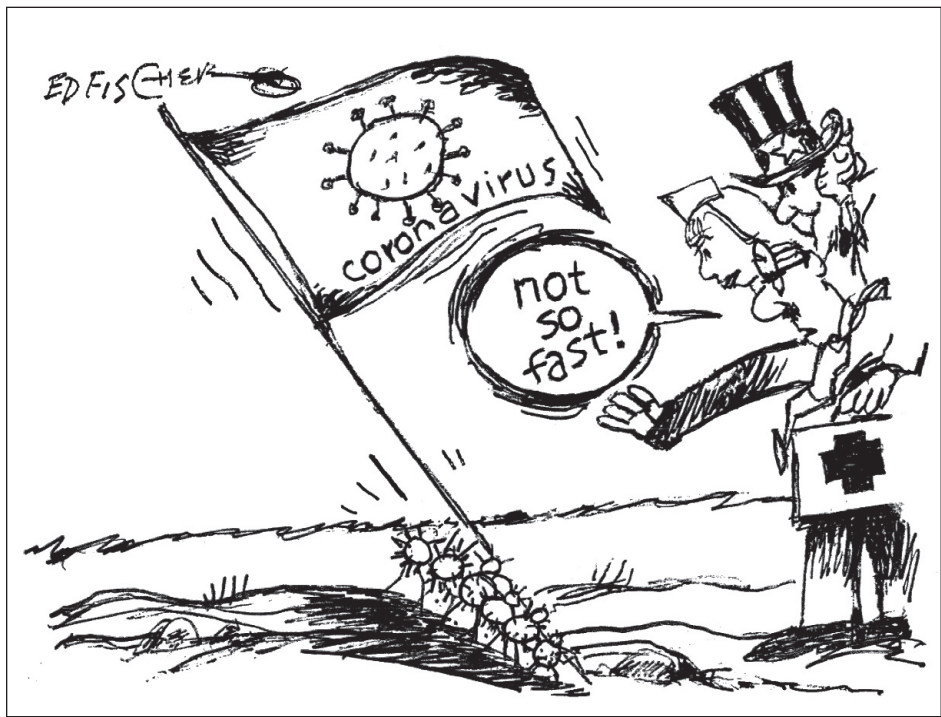
Gimbel is so deserving of this honor, holding down the head football coaching position for the past 23 years. The year 2019 was the crowning year as Gimbel's team won the Class A state championship, first time ever for Blooming Prairie.

In accepting the honor, Gimbel threw accolades to his players, coaches, fans and family. All of these awards and recognition belongs to the entire community, Gimbel said.

Gimbel is a pure example of a hard worker. His hard work paid off for him and for his coaches and players. Hard work does work miracles. Proof is in the success of the Awesome Blossoms football team.

Blooming Prairie's name has been linked to some bad news in the past, but Gimbel's football team clearly put Blooming Prairie's name in bright lights.

Congratulations Chad. You deserved this amazing honor.



YOUR VIEW

Column hits the nail squarely on the head

To-the-Editor:

In regards to your article in this week paper: RIGHT ON! You hit the nail squarely on the head!

Two Thumbs up! Awesome Job!!

I could go on, but you get the idea! I have thought and voiced these ideas myself. Thank you for having the courage to voice them publicly. I'm sure most of us baby boomers can relate. How many times in the last couple of months have you heard or said, "When I was a kid...?"

You may have "gone out on a limb" in saying

"Maybe this is God's way of shaking us all up and slowing us down." You can rest assured there are enough people out there that agree and will hold that limb up for you!

Time to slow life down a bit and get back to our families. I'm not against change, but it has come so fast and furious over the last 50 years we have not had enough time to really adjust to a different way of life.

I pray as we weather this crisis that people will have enough patience to let it run it's course, follow

orders, help others, pray. And realize the lives of the entire population of the world will never be the same or go "back to normal" again. We must adjust to a new normal!

Keep up the great work with Steele County Times! TV and Internet are good sources, but the written word is still the best, lasting, permanent news media!

God Bless and stay well!

Karen Knudson
Ibberson
Ellendale

Using facts, not fear

In our caring communities, people are always asking how they can help. There never seems to be a shortage of help.

As the coronavirus continues to unfold in ways we've never encountered before, the hardest part for many is being asked to stay put. Don't come out of your home. That's the message Gov. Tim Walz delivered to Minnesotans last week.

The order remains in effect until April 10, but I would not be surprised to see it extended beyond that.



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

weeks, the news media has been deemed as a critical service for Minnesota. Journalists join health care workers, law enforcement, educators and others in keeping Minnesota functioning at one of the worst times in history.

Our team of writers is committed to bringing you reliable information that will help you survive this crisis. We are utilizing multiple sources to get

you the best and most accurate information there is to know about COVID-19.

Besides the print newspaper which, in our case, comes out once a week, we also provide frequent updates on our website, steeledodge.com, and through an email notification system in which we alert readers about important news matters. If you are interested in getting email alerts, just send us your email address at bptimes@frontiernet.net. The alert will direct you to our website when there is important information to share.

Over the past week, I have spoken to clergy leaders who have emphasized that God is in control of this situation and we will get through this. As hard as it may be, just sit back and don't add fuel to the fire by going out of your homes unnecessarily.

It's time for me to go in hot pursuit of digging up the facts to help you through this crisis.

Stay home except for essential needs
March 27 - April 10

STAY HOME MN

STAY HOME STOP THE SPREAD SAVE LIVES

m MINNESOTA #StayHomeMN mn.gov/stayhomemn



Reflections
HOWARD LESTRUD

Prior to moving back to Blooming Prairie five years ago, I worked part time at a Barnes & Noble book store in the north metro area.

While shelving books, I became acquainted with Sylvia Browne, a self-proclaimed psychic. Her books were popular with all ages of readers.

Browne claimed to be a medium with psychic abilities. Her "End of Days" book written in 2008 is now No. 2 on Amazon's non-fiction chart thanks to Kim Kardashian who has promoted new interest in this book.

The doomsday book prophesied a severe pneumonia-like illness that would spread the globe in 2020.

Guess what! We are now in 2020 and the coronavirus COVID-19 has been crippling the world.

Browne wrote that a severe respiratory illness would spread throughout the globe in 2020.

Browne wrote: "In around 2020 a severe pneumonia-like illness will spread throughout the globe attacking the lungs and the bronchial tubes and all known treatments."

Browne continued: "Almost more baffling than the illness will be the fact that it will suddenly vanish as quickly as it arrived, attack again 10 years later and then vanish completely."

In Browne's book, she said known medications and antibiotics will be completely ineffective against the fungus like, extremely contagious disease.

Victims will be quarantined until it's discovered

Browne hasn't always been correct with predictions

that the bacteria can be destroyed through some combination of electrical currents and extreme heat.

Browne died in 2013 at age 77. She had predicted that she would die at the age of 88. She appeared on many popular talk shows and it was pointed out that many of her predictions were false.

There are many authors out there who have come up with theories that a rampant disease would some day destroy the world.

Over 50 years ago when I worked as a reporter for the Albert Lea Tribune, I covered a very devastating tornado that did considerable property damage and killed five people.

Many people became scared with word that another destructive tornado was going to strike Albert Lea and do considerable damage. Many people left town for

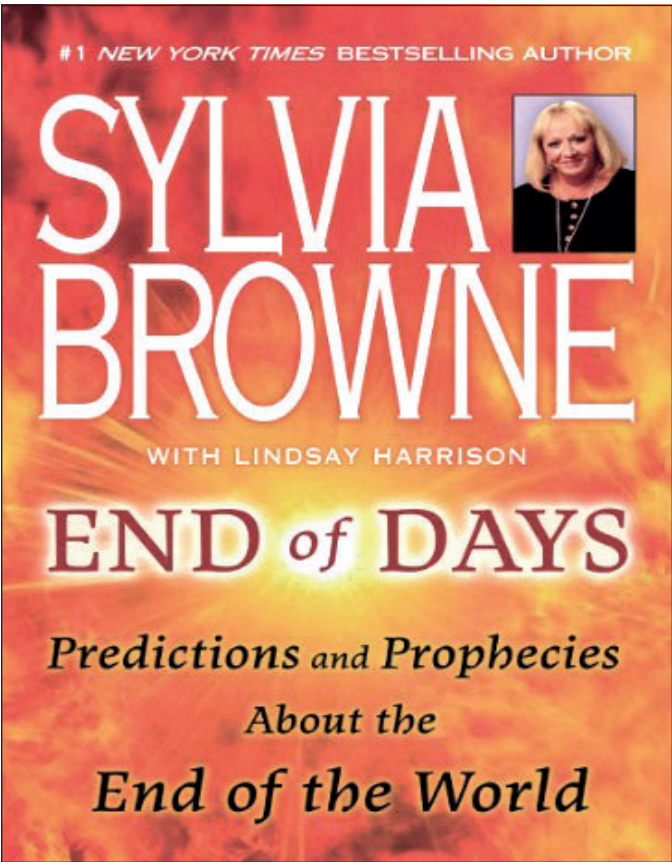
the date predicted by another psychic, Jean Dixon.

As a young journalist, I was intent on contacting this seer and asking her point-blank: "Did you predict another tornado would hit Albert Lea in 1967?"

The girl friend of a friend of mine worked as a telephone operator at this time in Albert Lea. She helped connect me with Jean Dixon's office. Guess what? Jean Dixon had never heard of Albert Lea, Minnesota.

This revelation cooled my interest but made for a good news story for a young writer and it also took some anxieties away from many people who thought another destructive tornado was on its way.

Believe what you like. Predictions are just wild guesses and in Sylvia Browne's case, her predictions, whether right or wrong, helped sell books.



Allina Health creates new Caring for Caregivers Fund

As Minnesotans face the challenges of COVID-19, the role of front-line caregivers has never been more crucial. To keep our health care workers in their roles doing what they do best, the Allina Health team is joining together to support the needs of caregivers at this important time by creating the Caring for Caregivers Fund.

Allina Health operates Owatonna Hospital.

Anyone interested in supporting Allina Health employees is invited to make a donation to the fund, which will help cover mortgage or rent expenses, car payments, child care and utility expenses, and other financial hardships that may arise as team members give their full attention to caring for those who are seriously ill.

“While many people are staying home to help slow the spread of COVID-19, our employees are honoring their oath to care for the sick and showing up to work,” said Christine Moore, chief human resources officer for Allina Health. “We’ve seen the economic impact COVID-19 can have, so

we’ve established this fund to give our employees some peace of mind during this trying time and show them our appreciation.”

This new fund is the latest element of Allina Health’s Caring for Caregivers program. Other ways that Allina is caring for its employees are:

- COVID leave (two weeks’ pay, waived short-term disability waiting period) for any employee prohibited from working due to non-work related exposure (travel, family member who is ill, etc.);
- Two weeks’ pay for any staff sent home due to canceled elective procedures who are not floated to another part of Allina Health or reskilled;
- Bright Horizons back-up childcare opened to all employees and reimbursed; YMCA childcare also reimbursed; and
- Shipt grocery delivery benefit expanded to all employees.

The public also has been invited to show how they care for caregivers by sewing masks, making donations of needed personal protective equipment and writing notes of encouragement.

GUEST COLUMN

Community alive but quiet

BY BECKY NOBLE

Sadness, anger, loneliness, frustration, depression, thankfulness.

These are many of the emotions we have all faced during these weeks of uncertainty.

Many of us have dealt with layoffs, among friends, family, spouses. Many of us have dealt with our retirement funds that we have all worked so hard for heading up and down like a yo-yo.

Throughout the years of hard times this one, is the one, in which we hope we all live to see our children, grandchildren, family, friends and co-workers again.

So many people have already lost their lives to such a horrible virus. We need to continue to gather our prayers and send them on each and everyday.

We may not be able to pray in our churches, but always remember wherever you are the good Lord is listening. He will hear your prayers from your bedside, tables, or walks outside. He is there and waiting for your prayers.

Remember to thank Him for your families, friends, co-workers, warm homes, water, food and jobs to pay for these necessities. And

then be sure to thank him for all the medical personnel who are fighting this deadly disease and caring for our sick.

Pray for our ambulance, police, and firemen who also put their lives on the line to keep us safe. Pray for those who govern our towns, cities, states and world-wide that they make the best decisions for all the people of this world.

And finally, in the words of a child, pray that we are able to celebrate the 4th of July! It is so much fun!

Please do your best to stay safe, so that next year at this time we will be celebrating the wins of our softball, baseball, and track teams.

Our kids will be getting excited to play outside, plan for prom, and graduation. And, you as parents of seniors can rejoice for your teenager’s new life adventure.

We have a lot to be thankful for, and a lot to be hopeful for. I hope that during this time of being home you will feel thankful and hopeful for all that you have and all that is to come.

Becky Noble is the executive director of the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mental health professionals ready for crisis

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

The fear of the unknown has put a tight grip on the lives of many people as they try to navigate through a life that has never been known before.

As the coronavirus pandemic changes the way Americans go through daily life, area mental health professionals are concerned about how people are going to cope and get through this crisis.

Bobbi Mathern, clinic director of South Central Human Relations serving Steele, Dodge and Waseca counties, has not seen an increase in mental health cases yet, but she expects to see an increase in the anxiety levels of people in response to COVID-19.

“I think some people are really going to struggle,” Mathern said. “Isolation is going to be hard on a lot of people.”

Mathern anticipates finding a lot of people becoming more anxious as the pandemic lingers on. “They have the fear of the unknown or fear of getting the virus,” she said.

Mental health providers also plan to see a spike in depression as people become isolated and unable to communicate with one another face-to-face, Mathern said. “Their future plans have been disrupted,” she points out. “They are having grief over that,” she added.

During the COVID-19 crisis, South Central has seen a lot of people cancelling appointments, allowing the agency to have the capacity to take on new clients. However, the pandemic has forced South Central to take drastic measures in handling clients. The agency has temporarily suspended in-person appointments and switched to TeleHelp in which mental health care can be provided from a distance. “We are seeing people through video or on the telephone,” Mathern said. “It protects our staff and clients from spreading the coronavirus.”

Mental health professionals at South Central are “very willing to help people as they cope with what’s happening in the world right now,” Mathern said.

There are also steps people can take if they don’t feel the need to reach out to therapists. “The most important thing is self care,” Mathern said. “Getting plenty of rest and eating healthy.”

She suggests staying in a routine, sleeping normal at night and eating as you normally would without the crisis. “You need to have structure during the day,” Mathern said.

Another important step is to get regular exercise. She said going out for a walk is perfect to do in this situation. “You need to keep your body moving so you can keep physical and mental health intact,” Mathern said.

And perhaps most importantly, Mathern said to avoid drugs and excessive alcohol. “There is an increase in drinking as people are home all the time,” she noted.

Mathern also encourages people to step up their gratitude for things in life. “Being thankful for what you have and counting your blessings,” she said. She urges people to find at least one thing to be grateful for in their lives.

She also suggests people need to contribute to others, which can be difficult in a time like this where people are urged to stay at home. But, as she points out, contributing to others might be simply hunkering

down and staying put. “You are doing a big job staying home,” Mathern says. “By doing so, you are preventing the spread of the virus.”

Mathern said it’s also necessary for people to limit their social media consumption. “Turning off screens and radio is important,” she said.

She pointed out that people could also indulge in learning about the virus. “Don’t be obsessed with it,” Mathern stressed. “Don’t be listening or reading about it all day long.”

South Central has a team of 11 therapists ready to handle mental health cases. Mathern said the COVID-19 crisis is entirely new for everyone, including her team of therapists. The only thing that comes close to this, she said, is the 9/11 crisis. However, she finds no comparison between the two. While 9/11 was people doing bad things, this newest crisis is “a disease we don’t know how to stop,” she said.

What Mathern finds remarkable about the COVID-19 crisis is the sense of community. “Everyone is facing the same problem,” she said. “We all have a common goal.”

She is confident people will get through this crisis just fine. “People are resilient, people adapt and adjust,” Mathern said. “That’s really amazing for humans.”

COVID-19 CRISIS HELP

South Central Human Relations

Crisis Line: 1-844-274-7472
On Call 24/7

Distance learning to last until April 30

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Blooming Prairie School District 756 Superintendent Chris Staloch says he is “extremely proud of the work” staff has done to prepare for distance learning, which began Monday, March 30.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz and Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker announced last week that the distance learning will last until April 30.

“It is our hope to have students return to our buildings on Tuesday, May 5,” said Staloch.

Teaching staff will have access to the school buildings on a rotating schedule. Teachers will have the option to work from home and school, again based on a rotating schedule.

“We will continue to practice social distancing and will make sure that we limit the amount of staff in our buildings at one time,” remarked Staloch.

“It will be important that we work together as staff, students and parents to make distance learning in Blooming Prairie the best possible education under these circumstances,” said Staloch.

“Our staff is greatly missing our students and the life that they bring to our buildings,” Staloch continued.

BP High School Principal John Worke said teachers at the high school will use technology to communicate with students. All high school students will have an electronic device (iPad grades 7, 8 and 9) and laptops for grades 10, 11 and 12.

Class lessons and communication will be channeled through the above described school-issued devices, Worke said.

BP Elementary School first grade teacher Karlee Ruen works on her lesson plans for distance learning, which will continue in Blooming Prairie schools to at least April 30.

Teaching staff from pre-school through sixth grade will use a combination of packets and online activities during the period of distance learning, said BP Elementary School Principal Jacob Schwarz.

Packets were distributed to students Tuesday of last week. The packets could be curriculum aligned activities along with login items or directions of how to complete their grade appropriate activities, Schwarz explained.

“I think it is important to note that out of 516 students at the elementary, only five students were not able to be contacted for pickup of materials. “That is a real testament to the families of this community and the value they put on education,”

commented Schwarz.

How will elementary students learn in measures of distance?

The district has equipped families in need with a device in coordination with the high school to ensure all students have access to what they need in order to complete their school activities.

Flexibility, Schwarz said, is critical “and we are thankful our families have been supportive and flexible as we embark on this new educational journey.”

Schwarz says he believes the district is “poised and ready” for this challenge and staff is making sure its students are getting the best education they can be provided at this time.



SUBMITTED PHOTO



SUBMITTED PHOTO

PATHWAYS: to curbside delivery at food shelf FROM A1

Pathways has been “constantly fluid with the way we are doing things.” They have been forced to change up their delivery method. Instead of allowing clients to come into the food shelf to pick out their food, staff members are fulfilling orders and offering curbside deliveries.

“We are doing everything we can do to ensure that we can stay open,” Ness explained. “We will always have food, and I want to make sure we have the food people will need.”

The food shelf serves 750 households throughout Steele County each month. Many of them take advantage of the daily distributions. March 28 was the last Saturday Community Pathways will be open during the crisis. The food shelf will operate Monday and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., one hour less than normal, and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Community Pathways also handles about 120 home deliveries each month, according to Schlobohm.

bohm. “A lot of our clients are at risk and need to stay at home,” she said.

Over the past few weeks the food shelf has received many milk and produce donations from restaurants forced to close during the crisis. “We are going to be generous in giving it out because we don’t want it to get spoiled,” Ness said.

Because of the extra donations, the food shelf utilized refrigerator space at the Aurora Diner located nearby at the Steele County Fairgrounds. “Space is a constant issue for us even without this crisis,” Schlobohm said. “We need a place to put it.”

The other portion of Community Pathways, which offers clothing, has temporarily shut down during the crisis. No clothing donations are currently being accepted. Clothing will be given out only in emergency situations for the time being. Clothing has been offered since 1963, and Schlobohm believes this is the first time that service has been affected.

“It did not make sense to

keep this open,” Schlobohm said of the clothing. “We needed everyone on the food side.”

The recent merger of the Clothesline and Food Shelf to form Community Pathways has been a

blessing, especially in light of the current crisis, Ness and Schlobohm agree. “I’m so grateful to everyone that helped make the merger possible,” Ness said. “It was meant to be, and I wonder if it wasn’t meant to be because of what was coming (with the pandemic crisis),” she added.

If the COVID-19 stretches on for months, Ness worries that the food stock may dwindle. Community Pathways will then be

forced to purchase more food through its main provider, Channel One Food Bank. During the crisis, Channel One has switched to pre-packaged boxes, which makes it more expensive for the local agency. Ness pointed out that monetary donations are going to become top priority to maintain the level of service Community Pathways provides.

Ness said by getting more food donations locally, the less money they will have to spend through Channel One. Food donations can be dropped off at any time. She noted they are especially short on pastas right now.

“I’m really proud of our organization and being committed to do what we do,” Ness said. But, she admits, she is definitely looking to get back to normal like it was before the COVID-19 crisis.

Schlobohm added she misses the human interaction with their clients. “I really miss our clients,” she said. We barely get to talk to them.”



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Co-director Nancy Ness and Troy Bice unload food for a client last week. The food shelf has temporarily discontinued service on Saturdays, but remains open throughout the week.

SEEING THE GOOD

Editor’s Note: Beginning this week, the Times is running the first of stories related to “Seeing the Good” in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. We are looking for stories in which friends, neighbors or relatives are doing extraordinary acts of kindness through one of the worst periods in our country’s history. If you have any ideas of stories we can follow up on, please reach out to us at bptimes@frontiernet.net or call our office at 507-583-4431. We would love to keep this series going throughout the entire pandemic, but we need your help to call us with ideas.

Party goes on despite coronavirus

Social distancing makes for a memorable 14th birthday for Braaten

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

It was a special 14th birthday party for Cale Braaten of Blooming Prairie last Thursday. Cale’s friends and family came to a surprise birthday party, stood six feet apart on the street and sang Happy Birthday to prove that people can still interact, despite the threat of the coronavirus.

When asked what he thought of this impromptu birthday party, which featured more than 20 vehicles traversing to the Braaten estate, Cale smiled, “It’s pretty cool!”

Cale did not suspect any special surprise until he saw all of the cars pull up in front of his house, he said. The driveway was also painted with sidewalk chalk proclaiming Cale’s 14th birthday.

Other guests brought hand-crafted signs and waved them out the windows of their vehicles. Some guests also brought birthday gifts and placed them at the foot of Braaten’s driveway.

“This is why we live in a small town,” said Cale’s grandfather, Steve Braaten.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Becky Braaten and Dr. Chad Eischens measure out the social distance of six feet as they attended a special surprise birthday party last Thursday night for Becky’s grandson, Cale. He turned 14. More than 20 carloads of people paraded by Cale’s home to celebrate.

SEE PARTY GOES ON, A9

Sheriff joins restaurant challenge

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

It didn’t take long for Steele County Sheriff Lon Thiele to jump on board.

No sooner had Thiele seen a challenge from his counterparts in Olmsted County, he was ready to do the same in Steele County. “Way to go Olmsted County, we’re joining you,” Thiele quickly responded through a Facebook post.

Shortly after the pandemic broke out and Gov. Tim Walz ordered restaurants to shut down except for takeout or delivery, the Olmsted County Sheriff’s Office decided to rally around restaurants. “Our staff



COURTESY STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE

Steele County Sheriff Lon Thiele is doing his part in supporting the food industry during a Restaurant Rally Challenge in which he ordered a platter of subs from Subway in Owatonna.

SEE SHERIFF JOINS, A7

Christianson keeps sewing machine humming

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

It’s called stepping up to the plate to help others.

That’s what many Blooming Prairie area people are doing. They are helping their neighbors in many different ways. One of those neighbors is Prairie Manor Care Center in Blooming Prairie.

Joe Mason, administrator at Prairie Manor, said the center has received over 200 sanitary

masks from area volunteers. He said the masks are primarily used by Prairie Manor staff.

He thanked all the volunteers for their “wonderful concern” for staff and residents of Prairie Manor.

Linda Christianson, Blooming Prairie, is just one of many local seamstresses who have made homemade sanitary masks.

“I just wanted to help in some way,” Christianson said. She



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Blooming Prairie seamstress Linda Christianson has been busy making health masks for the Prairie Manor Care Center. Here, she produces another creation for the care center.

SEE CHRISTIANSON, A5

Respiratory space now available at Mayo

To best prepare for and prevent transmission of COVID-19 in our communities, Mayo Clinic Health System encourages all patients to call first before coming to any clinic or hospital. When you call first, you will be triaged to the right setting of care based on your symptoms and medical need. In the event of a medical emergency, patients should always call 911.

In order to reduce the risk of infection for all patients, there are now designated clinic areas for caring for patients with respiratory symptoms in several clinic locations across Southeast Minnesota including Albert Lea, Austin, Owatonna, Rochester and Red Wing.

The purpose of the respiratory clinic is to create a single point of entry and care for patients, in isolation from other patients to reduce the risk of exposure and potential infection (COVID-19, influenza or other conditions). Patients will remain in their vehicles until directed to enter through a designated door, and will be escorted directly to an exam room. This process will help protect both employees and patients and keep patients who need non-respiratory care, such as a sprained ankle or an immunization, in a separate physical environment.

Patients are encouraged to call their primary care clinic provider first or log into their Patient Online Services account and message their care team for direction on where to seek care.

To create a Patient Online Services account on mayoclinichealthsystem.com:

1. Go to Patient Online Services and select “Create your account.”
2. Complete the online form to begin an account creation. Patients will need their individual Mayo Clinic number, which

can be found on letters from providers, appointment reminder letters or billing statements. Or, call 1-877-858-0398 (toll-free) between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. (CDT) to get the number.

Curbside Pickup

To improve service for all patients and to adhere to social distancing requirements, several Mayo Clinic Pharmacies and Mayo Clinic Stores are now offering curbside service including locations in Albert Lea, Austin, Cannon Falls, Owatonna, Red Wing and Rochester. When you arrive at these buildings with a pharmacy request, you will receive direction from our staff to obtain your medication.

Here is how curbside pickup for prescriptions or medical supplies will work:

- When patients arrive at a Mayo Clinic Pharmacy location to pick up a prescription, they will pull up to the main clinic entrance and park their vehicle. Designated parking will be provided.
- Patients will call pharmacy staff to inform them that they have arrived. Phone numbers are provided at each site. Patients should be prepared to give the following information: patient name, date of birth, color and make of vehicle. If patients do not have a phone, they can come to the entrance door of the pharmacy. Patients can enter the building, but they should not enter the pharmacy.
- A staff member will provide further instructions regarding payment and deliver medications to patients’ vehicles when the orders are ready.

No walk-ins

Until further notice, all Same Day Clinics at Mayo Clinic Health System in Southeast Minnesota will have a “no walk-

SEE RESPIRATORY SPACE, A7

Things are not business as usual for BP Police

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Things are definitely not business as usual for the Blooming Prairie Police Department, says Chief Greg Skillestad.

“We are taking calls in a whole different manner,” related Skillestad.

As the coronavirus continues to spread throughout Minnesota, BPPD has adjusted its protocol for responding to non-emergency calls.

Skillestad unveiled new procedures in a general letter to the public.

“Our primary mission is to enforce the law and keep the peace,” said Skillestad.

“We are concerned for everyone’s safety and security,” emphasized Skillestad. He urged everyone to use common sense and to exercise their best judgment when responding and assisting with calls for service.

For non-emergency police related issues, a responding BP police officer will first call to determine if the report can be handled over the telephone. If a person-to-person meet-



BP Police Chief Greg Skillestad

ing is deemed necessary, an officer may ask the resident to step outside where it is easier to maintain a safe, social distance.

The department is currently closed to the public and is open only to police staff. If reports are not able to be made by phone, e-mail, or outside means,

made unless it involves a criminal act or a request is made by the BP ambulance personnel for additional emergency help.

Officers will respond to residential medicals but will stand by outside for safety and security measures.

Skillestad says his officers will enter all buildings or dwellings and residences to maintain peace and to help with life saving emergencies.

BPPD will continue to follow the practice of wearing a mask and rubber gloves when responding to a medical emergency. Coveralls may also be used by officers, Skillestad said. Other First Responders will respond accordingly, he added.

All approved safety equipment is provided in each of the squad cars, said Skillestad.

“We want to keep the public and our officers safe,” Skillestad said in emphasizing the use of medical protection.

Asked how the city is responding to the coronavirus pandemic, Skillestad said “it has been quiet” in the community.

Providing a link to community resources



COVID-19 EXTRA
ANDREA MARSHALL

With so much that is happening with the COVID-19 Pandemic right now, it can be overwhelming to know what to do and where to get the right information. Steele County Public Health recognizes the incredible needs of our community right now and wants to help link people to the great resources here in Steele County and Minnesota.

We have gathered a list of reliable and up-to-date resources to help! We’ve categorized them into areas of need such as COVID-19 information, health care concerns, financial issues, local services, food access, education, work and business needs, city and community government services. Many of your questions can be answered by phone as well as accessing on-line services and information.

When someone “Goo-gles” a topic, they are likely to get thousands of hits and knowing which of those links are the best resources can be confusing. We’ve taken some of that guesswork out of needing to search for relevant information and answers to your questions. We tried to keep as close to home as possible using local websites, businesses, and service agencies whenever possible.

It was difficult to draw the line for this resource sheet because there are so many

great programs and agencies that are working to keep things running as smoothly as possible and ease people’s most pressing anxiety about basic needs during such uncertain times. So the list does not include all the services available, but it gives a person a good starting point for the immediate help they need.

The Steele County COVID Resources List can currently be found on the Steele County Public Health Website. This will allow you to easily access online resources through directly linking you to the site that provides the appropriate guidance a person may be looking for. A QR code has been added so anyone can scan it and download it to their personal device. This allows easy access as well as makes it an easy document to share. The QR code will be placed in public locations such as gas stations and grocery stores so people can easily scan it while checking out at various essential service locations.

We thank all the people in our community who are taking care of each other. That is the best way to get through any crisis...by coming together! We are not alone on this journey and as uncertain as things get there is always someone to reach out to for help. That is the message we want to send to anyone with anxiety, questions or services needed!

For a complete listing of community resources, please turn to page A6 as we have compiled this as a resource for Steele County residents.

Andrea Marshall is a health educator with Steele County Public Health in Owatonna.

CARON: Spread is big concern FROM A1

In Steele County, ages of the confirmed cases range from 20s to 70s, Caron said. One person is currently hospitalized in Steele County, though not requiring intensive care. In Dodge County, the age range drops considerably from under 1 year old to 50s. No one has been hospitalized in the Dodge County cases. There have been two cases involving health care workers in Dodge County.

The ages involved in Dodge County come as a total surprise to Caron. “The 20 some year olds and children are really

surprising to me,” she said. “It just tells me this virus must be able to mutate quite quickly.”

So far as of Monday when this edition went to press, there have been 576 cases with 10 deaths in Minnesota. Mower County has 11 cases while Freeborn County has escaped so far without any COVID-19 cases.

Caron acknowledges that this crisis is far from over. “In my opinion, we are not even close to the peak,” she warned. She said all indications point to southeastern Minnesota not peaking until some

time in May. “We are in it for the long haul.”

She said it will not surprise her if the Stay at Home order is extended beyond April 10. “The governor is making some very educated decisions,” Caron said.

Social distancing, Caron says, is still the greatest deterrent to keeping the coronavirus away. “Six foot is a big thing,” she said. “We have to think of vulnerable populations that might not get through this,” she added.

COVID-19 attacks the respiratory system, according to Caron. She said common symptoms include coughs, fevers, muscle aches, sore throats and headaches. If anyone experiences those symptoms, they are encouraged to stay at home for at least seven days.

Locally, Owatonna Hospital and Clinics are in good shape in regards to equipment, Caron noted.

Allina Hospital, which operates the Owatonna hospital, has been receiving many donations. Caron said Public Health is working to distribute some of the equipment to other healthcare and long-term facilities in the county.

The greatest need is for N95 masks, but Caron said homemade masks are also being utilized. “When we run out, something is better than nothing,” she said.

Donations can be dropped off at Owatonna Hospital.

THE LATEST

Coronavirus Pandemic

- 576 cases in Minnesota
- Steele- 6, Dodge- 8, Mower- 11, Freeborn-0
- 10 deaths
- Governor issues “Stay at Home” order until April 10 at 5 p.m.
- Restaurant and bar closure extends to May 1
- School closure extends to May 4

CHRISTIANSON: keeps sewing FROM A4

contacted Prairie Manor to see if staff was interested and they answered in the affirmative.

Christianson’s first installment totaled 26. She ran out of elastic and fabric. She contacted First Lutheran Church quilters and was able to get some fabric from them. She hoped to take a second installment of about 15 to Prairie Manor.

When she’s not sewing, Christianson is putting away laundry, doing book

work and working on planning for the annual strawberry festival held in June at Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church.

Christianson is very well known in the Blooming Prairie area for her sewing expertise. Blooming Prairie is a community that has a lot of seamstresses like her.

Bev Hoveland is a First Lutheran Church quilter and made sanitary masks for herself and husband

Dick. She said she will make more if friends make such a request. She used flannel on the inside because it is soft to the face, Bev remarked.

In addition to making the masks for Prairie Manor, Christianson made two for herself and for husband Nolan.

Prairie Manor staff expressed appreciation for the gesture shown the care center by local seamstresses.

Stay home except for essential needs

March 27 - April 10

STAY HOME

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SAVE LIVES

mn.gov/stayhomemn
#StayHomeMN

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8AM – 9AM

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9AM – 7PM (CLOSE)

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We ask that all customers please respect the time reserved for those that are at higher risk.

We appreciate your cooperation and thank you for your confidence in FAREWAY.

3/25

COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Information provided by Steele County Public Health

CLIP & SAVE



MN STATE UPDATES: <https://mn.gov/governor/news/>
<https://mn.gov/governor/covid-19/faq.jsp>



STEELE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH: 507-444-7650
http://www.co.steele.mn.us/divisions/community_services/public_health/index.php
ALLINA HEALTH: <https://www.allinahealth.org/coronavirus>
MAYO CLINIC OWATONNA <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/category/covid-19>
For COVID Questions call MDH Hotline. For medical need contact provider @ 451-1120
COVID-19 QUESTIONS CALL MDH COVID-19 HOTLINE: 651-201-3920 or 1-800-657-3902 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. for questions about COVID-19
MINNESOTA HEALTH INFORMATION: <https://www.health.state.mn.us>
NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION: <https://www.cdc.gov>
MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES: **SCHRC** 507-451-2630 <https://schrc.com>
FERNBROOK FAMILY CENTER: 507-446-0431 <http://fernbrook.org/>
PHARMACIES See Page 3 **DENTAL** Emergency care only. Do not go to ER/urgent care.



STEELE COUNTY COMMUNITY PATHWAYS (FOOD SHELF) 507-455-2991

- Community Pathways is open for curbside pickup or delivery for those unable to come to the facility on Oakdale
- 155 Oakdale St. Owatonna MN
- Hours Monday and Wednesday 9-4:30
- Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9-3:30

GROCERY DELIVERY <https://owatonna.org/owatonna-area-business-updates>
Contact your preferred grocer for delivery details and shopping hours
RESTAURANTS <https://visitowatonna.org/updated-dining-options-covid-19>



WHERE TO GET FOOD/LUNCHES FOR CHILDREN:
OWATONNA: 507-444-8616 <https://www.owatonna.k12.mn.us>
3 local churches- Trinity Lutheran Church, St. John's Lutheran Church, and Our Savior's Lutheran Church will be providing lunches for students. **NO SIGN UP NECESSARY**

- Monday March 23-Friday, March 27th 11:30am -12:30pm
- Wilson-Curbside pickup by the front entrance
- McKinley- Curbside pickup by the front entrance
- Owatonna Middle School- Curbside pickup Door #13 (6th grade)

MEDFORD: 507-451-5250 <https://www.medford.k12.mn.us>
Pick Up Sites Tuesday March 24th - Future 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

- Lazy U Trailer Court Entrance Area (by the pop and candy machines) -- 4100 NW 66th St.
- Trinity Church Parking Area --102 3rd Ave.
- Catholic Church (Christ the King) -- 205 2nd Ave.
- Medford City Hall Parking Lot -- 408 2nd Ave.

NRHEG: 507-465-3206 <https://www.nrheg.k12.mn.us>
Meal survey on website under coronavirus Pick up is from 11-12 at 4 sites

- New Richland Secondary Building (West door #6)
- Ellendale Elementary Building (East door #3)
- Hartland (school bus near Farmers State Bank)
- Geneva (school bus near City Park)

BLOOMING PRAIRIE: 507-583-4426 <https://www.blossoms.k12.mn.us>
Meals will be distributed daily between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. If you have signed up for a meal, we will prepare **UNLESS YOU CANCEL** before 8am. Pickup in loop in front of high school. Pull up south of main doors. Meals brought to vehicle.
ST MARY'S 446-2300 <https://stmarys-owatonna.org>



OWATONNA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 507-451-7970
<https://owatonna.org/covid-19-resources>
WHICH BUSINESSES ARE OPEN, REDUCED HOURS, CLOSED? 507-451-7970
<https://owatonna.org/owatonna-area-business-updates>
SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE LOANS
<https://mn.gov/deed/business/financing-business/deed-programs/peacetime/unemployment> <https://www.uimn.org/>



City of Blooming Prairie City 507- 583-7573 <https://www.bloomingprairie.com>
City of Medford 507- 455-2866 <https://www.medfordminnesota.com>
City of Ellendale 507-684-2681 <https://www.ellendalemn.com/covid-19>
City of Owatonna 507-774-7341 <https://www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/694/COVID-19-Information>
UNITED WAY uwadmin@unitedwaysteelecounty.org



STEELE COUNTY 507-444-7400
<https://www.co.steele.mn.us/divisions/administration/alert/index.php>
OWATONNA PEOPLES PRESS 451-2840 <https://www.southernminn.com/covid-19>
STEELE COUNTY TIMES bptimes@frontiernet.net

LAW ENFORCEMENT SHERIFF <https://www.ci.owatonna.mn.us/694/COVID-19-Information>
STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF 507-444-3800 (Non-Emergency)
OWATONNA FIRE DEPARTMENT 444- 2454 (Non-Emergency)
STEELE COUNTY ATTORNEY 507-444-7780
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT 507-444-2454 (Non- Emergency)
https://www.co.steele.mn.us/divisions/attorney_office.php
RICE STEELE 911 For immediate Assistance Call 911. To be notified of Emergencies within Steele County sign up for Everbridge Emergency notification system...
<https://member.everbridge.net/453003085612579/login>



MN PRAIRIE: 451-5600 www.mnpairie.org Look Under "Latest News"
SEMCAC 507-451-7134 <https://www.semcac.org/covid19updates>
OWATONNA PUBLIC UTILITIES 451-2480 ean@semcac.org
Building is EMPLOYEES ONLY. Pay bills online OR drop box at OPU, Cashwise, or Hy-Vee.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html>



MEALS ON WHEELS: <https://www.unitedwaysteelecounty.org/covid-19>
COMMUNITY PATHWAYS: <https://www.unitedwaysteelecounty.org/covid-19>
ALLINA HEALTH MASKS: <https://www.unitedwaysteelecounty.org/covid-19>
RACHEL'S LIGHT <https://www.unitedwaysteelecounty.org/covid-19>
TRINITY LUTHERAN <https://www.tlcowatonna.org/mealsofhope> All are welcome...
When: Every Sunday Time: 5:00 - 6:15pm Where: Trinity Fellowship Hall
If you would like transportation to and from Meals of Hope or have questions about attending, please contact the church office, 507.451.4520.
BETHEL CHURCH 507.451.8548 | **Community Supper:** Each Wednesday (for the foreseeable future) we will continue to run our Community Supper and provide free meals for anyone in the community. Our format has changed with the recent restrictions on gatherings so that you may simply pick up your boxed meal at **DOOR 6** and then take it home with you from there. Community Supper runs from 5-6pm.
TAXI: Taxi First Choice 444-0020
Tonna Taxi Service: 451-4215
SMART BUS: 855-762-7821

AREA PHARMACIES

Location	Address	Phone #	Hours of Operation	Pick-up Process
Cash Wise	495 West North Street	507-451-7886	M-F 9am-8pm Sat. 9am-4pm Sun. 10am-4pm	-Mail out at no charge -Pick up in person <i>(If not feeling well have someone pick up for you)</i>
Hy-Vee	1620 South Cedar Av	507-451-0179	7am-8am Daily <i>(Reserved for people over 60, expectant mothers and people at a higher risk)</i> M-F 7am-7pm Sat. 7am-4pm Sun. 7am-2pm	-Drive thru services -Pick-up in person
Walgreens	125 18th Street SE	507-451-8326	M-F 9am-8pm Sat. 9am-6pm Sun. 10am-6pm	-Drive thru services -Mail out -Pick up in person
Target	301 Park Drive	507-451-1771	M-F 9am-7pm Sat. 9am-5pm Sun. 11am-5pm	-Mail out -Pick up in person
Sterling Drug	410 Hoffman Drive NW	507-451-0240	M-F 8:30am-7pm Sat. 9am-3pm Sun. Closed all day	-Delivery -Mail out -Curb side pick-up -Closed door pharmacy right now <i>(not open to public)</i>
Walmart	1130 Frontage Road W	507-451-3323	M, W-F 9am-8pm Tues 6am-8pm Sat. 9am-7pm Sun. 10am-6pm	-Pick up in person -Mail out-need to be 65 or older -Curb side-will bring out to car-need to be 65 or older
Owatonna Pharmacy	2250 Northwest 26th St.	507-977-2020	M-F 9am-5:30pm Sat. Closed Sun. Closed	-Pick up in person -Mail out -Delivery <i>(pay taxi fee for this option)</i>
Blooming Prairie Pharmacy	405 E Main Street Blooming Prairie	507-583-2211	M-F 8:30am-5:00pm	Pick up in person

Sponsored by these local businesses.



STEELE COUNTY Times



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Certified Public Accountant Tamzen R. Johnson

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STEELE COUNTY Times



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ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST DDS, MBS

Building Healthy Smiles!

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Ag & Truck Tire

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Emergency or on the farm repair
507-455-0388
(After hours 507-455-0483)



Sorenson's Appliances & TV

GE, Frigidaire, Direct Tv, Danby, Crosley, Braun, Jenn-Air, KitchenAid, Maytag, Panasonic, RCA, Samsung, Toshiba, Whirlpool

Geneva, Mn
507-256-7258



misgen auto parts

507-684-2100
12880 SW 72nd Ave, Ellendale

How to Get Help from Social Security During the Coronavirus Pandemic



THE SAVVY SENIOR

Brought to you by:

Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus

220 3rd St. NW,
Bloomington
583-4434

Dear Savvy Senior,
I've heard that the Social Security Administration has closed all their offices because of the coronavirus pandemic. How are they accommodating people while they're closed down?
Recently Retired

Dear Recently,
Yes, that's correct. The Social Security Administration has closed its 1,200 field offices throughout the country to protect benefit recipients and workers from the coronavirus pandemic. Their offices have been closed since March 17. How long they will be closed is unclear. It will depend on the course of the pandemic. In the meantime, services will continue to be available online at the *SocialSecurity.gov* website, and over the phone. You can also rest assured that monthly payments to the more than 69 million Social Security beneficiaries will not be affected in any way. Here's a rundown of how you can get help and get answers to your Social Security questions, while their offices are shut down.

ONLINE HELP

For any Social Security business you need to conduct, go to *SSA.gov/online* services. There you can view your latest statement and earnings history, apply for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits online, check the status of an application or appeal, request a replacement Social Security card (in most areas), print a benefit verification letter, and much more – from anywhere and from any of your devices. Their website also has a wealth of information to answer most of your Social Security questions without having to speak with a representative. For answers to your Social Security questions see their frequently asked questions page at *SSA.gov/ask*.

PHONE ASSISTANCE

If you can't conduct your Social Security business online, check the SSA online field office locator (see *SSA.gov/locator*) for specific information about how to directly contact your local office. Your local office will be able to provide critical services to help you apply for benefits, answer your questions, and provide other services over the phone. Or, you can also call the Social Security national toll-free number at 800-772-1213 (TTY 800-325-0778). This number has many automated service options you can use without waiting to speak with a telephone representative. If you already have an in-office appointment scheduled, Social Security will call you to handle your appointment over the phone instead. The call may come from a private number and not from a federal line.

BEWARE OF SCAMS

Be aware that Social Security telephone impersonation scams are growing. These scammers may falsely tell you that there is a problem with your account, that your Social Security number has been suspended because of suspected illegal activity, that you're owed a cost-of-living benefit increase, or that your monthly benefits will stop because of the coronavirus pandemic. The caller may also threaten your benefits, suggest you'll face legal action if you don't provide information, or pressure you to send money via wire transfers, cash or gift cards. They may even "spoof" your caller ID to make it look like Social Security is actually calling. If you receive one of these calls, hang up. Social Security rarely contacts anyone by phone unless you have ongoing business with them, and they never threaten you or ask for any form of payment. For more information on how to get help with Social Security during the coronavirus shutdown, visit *SSA.gov/coronavirus*.

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

RESPIRATORY SPACE: now available at Mayo

in appointment" policy for everyone's safety. This applies to patients with and without COVID-19 symptoms. All patients are asked to "call first" before visiting a Mayo Clinic Health System location or, in the event of an emergency, immediately call 9-1-1 or visit their nearest Emergency Department. When patients with COVID-19 symptoms "call first," they will be connected with Mayo Clinic's nurse triage line for COVID-19 and given directions on next steps, such as reporting to one

of the drive-through testing sites offered by Mayo Clinic Health System. Mayo Clinic Health System wishes to thank patients for reserving Emergency Department visits for life-threatening health situations or emergencies – such as motor vehicle accidents, chest pain or shortness of breath. Keeping the Emergency Departments from becoming overly crowded will help us prevent delays for patients with life-threatening health situations and reduce the possibility of infection.

10 Years Ago April 6, 2010

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

The American Legion Club has closed its doors after decades in the same place. Members of Andrew Borgen Post 75 decided to put the building up for sale at their meeting March 11 and closed the club on March 17. The post was formed in 1919 after WWI and has occupied the New Richland building since 1968. Even though the club will be closed, member plan to keep their American Legion charter and continue their Honor Guard. The Honor Guard performs at the funerals of legion members. Legion officials say closing the club was not an easy decision, but the club has been "going backwards for a long time." There are about 120 members of Post 75. The club wants to sell the building and hopes to continue meeting there.

2,000 eggs! That is how many eggs the Blooming Prairie Women of Today filled with goodies for the children of the community. The Easter Egg Hunt on April will be on April 11 at the City Park. They also have ordered a beautiful morning and hope for a great turnout. The eggs were filled with candies and some with notes of a bigger prize (20 large gift baskets for those lucky winners). The hunt is chaired by Mandy Munson. She stated they had many donations from local businesses and from businesses in Austin, Owatonna and local members.

Fourteen wrestlers earned letters for the Blossoms wrestling team and other individual awards were handed out at the season-ending awards program on March 28. Aaron Niles finished his stellar season by winning the MVP honor, with a record of 20-8 record. Adam Driessen earned Most Improved Wrestler and led the team in several other categories. Other matmen who finished with winning records were Seth Johnson, 19-8, Josh Gwilt, 13-10 before suffering from a recurring shoulder injury. Driessen and Niles were named to the Gopher All Conference team. Other awards were given to various wrestlers, Tom Shawback, Tyler Cozine, Riley Young, Blake Arett and Jarrod Grunklee. Adam Wanous and Kyle Williamson were recognized for their junior varsity accomplishments.

20 Years Ago April 4, 2000

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

With spring sports just beginning, the activity now in full swing is speech, and the local high school just brought home another first place trophy at the sub-section contest last week. A tip of the hat this week to the speech team in general, and another tip to the 22 local students who will

advance to the section contest at St. Peter this week. When 28 of the 35 entries manage to make it to the final round, it is easy to see that there is a great deal of talent and some very good direction in this activity. The amount of time speakers put in on their activity rivals any of the other teams at the high school.

It seems like just yesterday that after a lot of work renovating to start his practice, Dr. Chad Eichens opened the doors to Prairie Family & Sports Chiropractic P.A. He and his family and staff will be celebrating and invite patients and community members to a champagne breakfast at their office on April 10. Chad and wife Julie came to Blooming Prairie from Apple Valley to start their business. Over the years a few changes have been made, new d'cor and updated x-ray machine. The business serves approximately 175-200 patients a week and recently saw its 200th new patient. Besides having a busy practice, Chad has been an active volunteer in the community, active in Jaycees and the Chamber. He and Julie have two children, Katelyn and Kevin.

Nine BP elementary choir students were chosen to represent their school at the South Eastern Minnesota "Festival for Young Musicians" in Preston, MN on April 7, 200. The students chosen from the 5th and 6th grade choir are: Holly Carlson, Carly Coddington, Ashley Masching, Kristin Miller, Brandy Munson, Cassie Paulson, Ashley Schmeling, Jamie Skala and Tiffany Wurst. They will have a full afternoon of rehearsals with Dr. Dennis Darling from Luther College and present a festival concert on Friday evening.

50 Years Ago April 1, 1970

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

Gerry Greenwood is the new patrolman on the Blooming Prairie Police Force. He began his duties here last week. Patrolman Greenwood is 27 years old and comes from Owatonna, where he was employed by Art Bracy Ford, Inc. and served as a special deputy for the Steele County Sheriff's Department. He attended school at Spring Valley. Mr. Greenwood has completed first aid training and advanced first aid training. Miss Mary J. Burke, Blooming Prairie, was recently presented her stewardess wings with Northwest Orient Airlines after completing five weeks of specialized training in Minneapolis. Mary is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Burke, Blooming Prairie. Miss Burke is a graduate of the Blooming Prairie High School and Rochester School of Practical Nursing. In her new career with Northwest, she will be assigned to the home base in Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Mrs. E. H. Wanous has been appointed as head nurse and acting administrator of Prairie Manor Nursing Home, Donald Morrison, president, announced this week. Mrs. Wanous will serve as head nurse and acting administrator until such time as the operation warrants hiring a full-time administrator. Work is progressing very well on the nursing home facilities and the board of directors are now formulating plans for an "open house" prior to receiving patients.

75 Years Ago April 5 1945

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

Mrs. Thomas Underwood, Owatonna received a telegram Tuesday from the War Department informing her that her husband Pfc. Thomas Underwood, member of the 22nd Rainbow Division, is missing in action somewhere in Germany. Underwood is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Underwood, Blooming Prairie. His wife and son, Michael, make their home in Owatonna.

The premature summer that prevailed last week was short, but sweet. Tuesday and Wednesday this part of the state received is heaviest snowfall of the season – over 12 inches of heavy, wet sticky snow – which old-timers inform us was one of the heaviest April snowstorms they can recall. Motor travel was at a standstill Tuesday. Bus schedules were cancelled. Cars were stalled on main highways, secondary roads and practically every street in Blooming Prairie. Cream trucks did not venture out, consequently there were more teams and bobsleds and tractor drawn trailers in Blooming Prairie with milk and cream cargos than can be recalled in the memory of the town's oldest dwellers. Rural letter carriers were unable to negotiate very little of their routes. The paved road to Owatonna was blocked most of Tuesday with the high winds causing snow to drift nearly as fast as it was plowed. Many of the secondary roads remain unpassable and plows are unable to make much progress in opening them.

Pfc. Harvey O. Lynse write from Pacific.
Dear Sir:
A few days ago I received the first copy of the Times during the two years I have been in the Marine Corps. I wanted my dad, Oscar Lynse, to order it for me, but was informed it took too long to receive it that way. Now Dad sends me his copy when he is done with it.
The Times is a great moral booster to me. Just don't quit printing is all I ask.
Thanks again for printing a moral boosting paper. Keep up the good work. Good Luck

Sincerely, Pfc. Harvey O. Lynse

STAY AT HOME: Governor issues order for 2 weeks

FROM A1

Steele County Sheriff Lon Thiele said he received quite a few phone calls after the governor's announcement inquiring about the order.

"The Stay at Home order is not a curfew, it's an honor system," Thiele said. "We're not going to be out randomly stopping people."

While Thiele reminds people they are on the honor system, he still encourages everybody to stay home if possible. "If you have to travel for necessary needs, do so and get back as safely as possible," Thiele said.

Thiele acknowledges the shelter order is a touchy situation for some people, but he reminds people it's for the good of the community.

Since the pandemic hit a few weeks ago, Thiele has noticed "a lot less

"The Stay at Home order is not a curfew, it's an honor system. We're not going to be out randomly stopping people."

Sheriff Lon Thiele Steele County

traffic" around the area. "It's almost to a ghost town eeriness," he said. He noted deputies are out even more now because of the crisis.

"We're not being careless in our patrols," Thiele said. "We've heightened our security senses."

Dodge County Sheriff Scott Rose said his office supports the governor's order through education and encouragement efforts. "DCSO wants to encourage citizens to use their best sense of judgment in determining

whether they must travel," Rose said. "Staying at home and isolated away from other people is in the best interest of everyone's health and safety, including our citizens and their families, and our law enforcement family."

Like Steele County, deputies in Dodge County will not be actively looking for violator of the governor's executive order on the roadways, Rose said. He noted his deputies will continue to enforce traffic and other violations, but they will not be pulling

over citizens in relation to the executive order.

Rose said other states are requesting drivers receive employer-issued permissions to travel for their work, but at this time, this paperwork is not being requested or checked by local law enforcement in Minnesota.

"Based on the data we are seeing from the Minnesota Department of Health, it appears Minnesotans, and Dodge County residents, are implementing social distancing guidelines and—for the most part—staying home," he said.

SHERIFF JOINS: restaurant challenge

FROM A4

will be encouraged to order their lunches from a selected local restaurant every Tuesday and Thursday during the restaurant closure," Olmsted County Sheriff's Office posted on Facebook.

The Olmsted sheriff went on to issue a Restaurant Rally Challenge to any department or business that still has employees working on-site to order

takeout or delivery from their local restaurants. It doesn't matter where you are in the U.S., the sheriff posted. "Join us in support of local restaurants everywhere."

Within hours, Thiele jumped on board. "Times are tough right now for everyone," Thiele acknowledged. "In an effort to support businesses in the food industry that are

taking a financial hit in our communities, the Steele County Sheriff's Office decided to rally around our restaurants," he said.

The idea quickly gained support on the sheriff's Facebook page as people shared the post. "Great plan," one person wrote. "I don't go out to eat very often at all. I'll definitely be ordering delivery or curbside from my local places."

It seemed only right for him to support a struggling industry, Thiele said. "A lot of businesses have shown support to us so let's help them out in a time of need," the sheriff said. "We want to help out where others have helped us."

Thiele encourages everyone to do their part in supporting local restaurants through this pandemic crisis.

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.

Be on guard against scammers during coronavirus

Minnesotans are being warned to be extra vigilant as scam callers are likely to ramp up their activity over the next few weeks to take advantage of increasing amounts of people being at home due to the current Coronavirus outbreak.

CPR Call Blocker, makers of the best-selling call blocking device, is predicting that scammers and fraudsters will be ready to strike and take advantage of the situation as more states go into lockdown, forcing people to stay at home, and is warning people in Minnesota to be on their guard for a rise in bogus calls.

In a bid to beat the scammers who are likely to take advantage of this extraordinary situation, CPR Call Blocker has compiled the top five active scams that people in Minnesota should watch out for over the next few weeks as the Coronavirus situation unfolds:

- **Fake test kits scam** – Someone may call claiming to offer free Coronavirus testing kits and will ask you for your personal information and health insurance details. A common version of this scam targets diabetic individuals that are higher risk, where a scam caller will offer both a free Coronavirus test kit and a free diabetic monitor.
- **FDIC scam** – Scam-callers posing as employees from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation will ask you for sensitive information, such as your social security number and bank account

information, over the phone as a precondition to receive federal money. Remember the FDIC would never make unsolicited phone calls asking for personal information and money, and especially would not put pressure on you or threaten you.

- **Charity scam** – You may get a call from someone claiming to be from a charitable organisation which is collecting donations for individuals, groups or areas affected by Coronavirus. The caller will ask you to send cash donations in the mail, by wire transfer or by gift card.
- **Healthcare provider scam** – Scam-callers pretending to work for a healthcare provider will tell you that a relative or friend has been treated for Coronavirus, and then demand immediate payment for treatment before threatening legal action if you don't pay. Healthcare providers would not contact you this way.
- **Student loan scams** – You receive a call to tell you that new measures due to the Coronavirus outbreak will have an effect on your student loan, and that you need to ring a different phone number to find out how the new measures will impact your future payment obligations. If you ring this number, a scammer may ask you for personal information like your social security number and credit card details.

While the list is not

exhaustive, CPR Call Blocker hopes to make people in Minnesota aware that scammers are becoming more inventive and if something sounds too good to be true or out of the ordinary, then it could well be a scam.

Chelsea Davies from CPR Call Blocker said, “As more and more restrictions are put into place in the U.S., we predict that scammers are going to take advantage of more people being at home and, with many of those people also being distracted or stressed about the Coronavirus situation, this could be a recipe for disaster. When we're feeling vulnerable or distracted, it can be too easy to say “yes” to something without checking first whether it's genuine.

“We're warning people in Minnesota to bear this in mind and we would always strongly recommend never giving your bank details or paying for something over the phone that you're unsure of. Especially if the call you receive is the first time you have heard of any payment that needs to be made.”

If you want to stop receiving scam and nuisance calls, follow CPR Call Blocker's quick three-step guide to stopping unwanted calls:

- Register with the National Do Not Call Registry – visit DoNotCall.gov.
- Don't consent to being contacted – get your phone number taken off directories and look out for tick

boxed on all marketing correspondence to see if ticking or unticking them will prevent your details being passed on to third parties.

- Consider getting a call blocker.

If you think you may be receiving scam calls, here are a few ways to protect yourself:

- **Don't reveal personal details.** Never give out personal or financial information such as your bank account details or PIN – even if the caller claims to be from your bank.
- **Hang up.** If you feel harassed or intimidated, end the call. You have the right not to feel pressurised.
- **Ring the organization.** If you're unsure whether the caller is genuine, you can always ring the company they claim to be from. Make sure you find the number yourself and don't use one provided by the caller.
- **Don't be rushed.** Scammers will try to rush you into providing personal details. They may say they have a time-limited offer or claim your bank account is at risk if you don't give them the information they need right away.

Davies said, “If you suspect you may have compromised your bank account, contact your bank or card provider as soon as possible. It is also advisable to check your bank and card statements regularly for unauthorized charges as a matter of course.”

CRIME BRIEF

Wanted man tries deception with police

A man with an outstanding warrant thought he would play a little deception with police, but it didn't work.

Police spotted Jose Garcia in the parking lot at the Owatonna Public Library recently. As an officer confronted him, he offered a false name despite his real name being tattooed on



Jose Garcia

his forearm.

After Garcia's arrest, officers found hypodermic needles, methamphetamine and other drug paraphernalia, police said.

Garcia, 21, has been charged with fifth-degree possession of a controlled substance and offering a false name to police.

Crash kills Owatonna man in Dodge County

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A Sunday morning crash in Dodge County has taken the life of a Steele County man.

The crash happened around 11:20 a.m. on Highway 57 at Dodge County Road 16 north of Mantorville. The State Patrol has identified the victim as Mark Douglas Johnson, 58, of Owatonna.

Johnson was driving a 2014 Honda Accord that was traveling eastbound on County Road 16. Johnson's vehicle collided with a Chevrolet Avalanche traveling northbound on Highway 57 in Mantorville Township. The

patrol reported the road conditions at the time of the crash were wet.

The Chevy was driven by Bradley Herman Schmidt, 54, of Hayfield. There were two other passengers in the vehicle with Schmidt: Mary Kay Schmidt, 58, and Danielle Kaye Schmidt, 20. All were transported to St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester with non-life threatening injuries.

According to the patrol, all people involved in the crash were wearing their seat belts and no alcohol was involved.

The Dodge County Sheriff's Office and Kasson Police assisted the State Patrol at the scene.

COURT NEWS

Steele County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of March 16 – 22:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Justin T. Cunningham, 42, Minneapolis, seat belt, \$100; Haylee E. Kremmin, 26, Owatonna, revoked license, no insurance and speeding, \$515; D'Andre P. Wilson, 21, St. Paul, speeding and no insurance, \$315.

MN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

James F. Pelinka, 61, Owatonna, burning prohibited materials, \$275.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Joseph T. Ahearn, 19, North Mankato, speeding, \$375; Angel A. Alvarez Santiago, 21, Austin, speeding, \$115; Addison D. Bahr, 20, Cannon Falls, speeding, \$135; Emma K. Bailey, 24, Minneapolis, speeding, \$215; Jackson A. Bauer, 24, Rogers, hands free violation, \$125; Allysha R. Bowers, 30, Owatonna, speeding, \$135; Nyanhial J. Dat, 36, Omaha, NE, speeding, \$115; Steven A. Dausey, 56, Owatonna, limited license violation, \$175; Kasey G. George, 26, Fort Pierce, FL, speeding, \$115; Corey M. Hanks, 23, Meriden, speeding, \$115; Terry L. Johnson, 55, Ellendale, red light violation, \$125; Kevin D. Kruger, 51, Owatonna, seat belt, \$100; Kelton A. Lynch, 23, Janesville, speeding, \$115; Mohammed H. Mohammed, 28, St. Paul, speeding, \$100; Alexi

Navas, 26, Columbia Heights, no license, \$175; Nicholas C. Nelson, 39, Claremont, speeding, \$115; Jennifer A. Nikolopoulos, 44, Parker, CO, speeding, \$135; Carlos R. Nunez Marquez, 32, Faribault, speeding, \$115; Rebecca J. Pfenning, 18, Ellendale, tail lights violation, \$115; Josiah S. Ranslow, 20, Faribault, expired registration, \$105; Eli A. Spurgeon, 16, Hope, speeding, \$115; Mark M. Toure, 34, Brooklyn Park, speeding, \$125; Glenn A. Weidendorf, 31, Eden Prairie, following vehicle too closely, \$121.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Camryn N. Bartz, 18, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Bailey A. Batt, 23, New Ulm, hands free violation, \$125; Lilly A. Bolton, 20, Minneapolis, possession of paraphernalia, \$125; Tyler P. Bremer, 20, Owatonna, hands free violation, \$125; Lana L. Calhoun, 44, Owatonna, theft, \$171.90; Erica A. Cowell, 36, Owatonna, following vehicle too closely, \$125; Odilia Garza, 40, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Elizabeth J. Kasper, 34, Owatonna, hands free violation, \$125; Alexander R. Kennedy, 17, Owatonna, stop sign, \$125; Rachel L. Miller Krejci, 38, Owatonna, speeding, \$125; Roy Padilla, 57, Owatonna, enter road from non-roadway, \$125; Jose B. Prado, 32, Owatonna, stop sign and invalid license, \$225; Dawson D. Ringhofer, 19, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175; Jamison T. Stoen, 40, Owatonna, speeding, \$125; Joseph W. Stransky, 19, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175;

Grant R. Whissemore, 74, Waseca, failure to yield, \$125; Kinzie K. Williams, 19, Owatonna, minor consumption, \$175.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Cameron F. Deml, 20, Owatonna, speeding, \$135; Tai'ricca C. Einfeldt, 28, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Oscar F. Hernandez Garca, 25, Dodge Center, no license in possession, \$95; Myra J. Jansky, 22, La Crosse, WI, speeding, \$115; Jamel J. Johnson, 30, Waseca, speeding, \$115; Mark J. Knutson, 48, Kenyon, improper signal, \$125; Benjamin R. Peters, 25, Eustis, FL, speeding, \$115; Gerson A. Raymundo Santos, 23, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175.

POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

Blooming Prairie Police

March 20 Crash: Paramedics and police responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries at Highway 218 and Highway 30 W. at 2:27 a.m.

March 24 Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 200 block of Highway Ave. S. at 2:08 p.m.

OWATONNA POLICE

March 20 Shoplifting: Officer issued a shoplifting citation in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W. at 4:46 p.m.

Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 2600 block of Rosewood Lane NW at 6:04 p.m.

Theft: At 6:54 p.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 300 block of Cedardale Dr. SE.

March 23 Thefts: Police took theft reports in the 2200 block of 46th St. NW at 8 a.m. and the 100 block of Riverside Ave. NW at 12:41 p.m.

Suspicion: Officer assisted with suspicious activity in the 200 block of 15th St. NE at 6 p.m.

March 24 Fraud: Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 2600 block of 18th St. NW at 2:12 p.m.

Theft: Police received a theft report from the 400 block of North St. W. at 5:39 p.m.

Shoplifting: At 8:14 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.

March 25 Fight: Police responded to a fight in the 800 block of Oak Ave. S. at 6:32 p.m.

March 26 Domestic: Police arrested a subject following a domestic disturbance at Kelly St. NW and Riverside Ave. NW at 11:30 a.m.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

March 20 Domestic: Deputies responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1800 block of 44th Ave. SE in Havana Township at 12:37 a.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

March 21 Burglary: Deputies began a burglary investigation in the 6200 block of County Road 45 N. in Medford Township at 6:12 p.m.

March 24 Theft: At 9:22 a.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 200 block of 1st St. SE in Medford.

March 26

Disturbance: At 4:06 p.m., a disturbance occurred in the 500 block of 3rd St. NE in Medford.

ARRESTS

Steele County

OWATONNA POLICE

Viance Marin Nin, 18, arrested at 11:46 a.m. March 26, domestic assault, held for court.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

David Devon Bryant, 38, arrested at 2:36 p.m. March 20, probation violation warrant arrest, body only.

COURT NEWS

Dodge County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of March 15 – 22:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Roland D. James, 60, Owatonna, speeding, \$130; Kevin L. Kelley, 63, Rose Creek, school bus violation, stay of adjudication, \$280 and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Jordan D. Mahoney, 25, Stewartville, speeding, \$220; Joshua D. Maynard, 20, Oronoco, minor consumption, \$180; Steven C. McCamy, 64, Waltham, passing violation, \$130; Cole A. McGowan-Burke, 20, Kasson, minor consumption, \$180; Samantha J. Newman, 19, West Concord, speeding, \$140; Jason K. Shadow, 20, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Levi G. Weiser, 20, Elk River, minor consumption, \$180.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mark A. Burton, 58, Albert Lea, hands free

violation, \$130; Zacire D. Kleckley, 20, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Sage M. Severt-Friesz, 19, Rochester, parking violation, \$32; Melissa A. Swarts, 43, Kasson, hands free violation, \$130.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Nathanael R. Consoli, 21, West Chicago, IL, speeding, \$130; Benjamin L. Finley, 36, Kasson, DWI, \$980, 3 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, Ignition Interlock program, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation and 3 years of supervised probation; Michael J. Litzau, 35, Rochester, speeding, \$220; Anton S. Nelson, 18, Montgomery, speeding, \$120; Timothy R. Weller, 26, Hutchinson, speeding, \$130.

WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Cole M. Horsman, 25, Byron, registration violation and parking violation, \$130.

OWATONNA FIRE

March 20 Medical: Fire rescue assisted with a medical emergency in the 200 block of 22nd St. NW at 6:01 p.m.

March 25 Storage Fire: Firefighters responded to an outside storage fire in the 800 block of Rice Lake St. E. at 6:57 p.m.

Crash: Fire rescue responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries at Hoffman Dr. and Interstate 35 at 7:36 p.m.

March 26 Search: Fire rescue searched for a person in water along U.S. Highway 14 at 11:50 a.m.

WARRANTS: The following individuals have active warrants in Steele County. The Sheriff provides this information as a public service		
1. Edward Singletary – collision - \$300 bail	8. Ricky Steele – fugitive from justice – no bail	15. Corey Tollefson – violation of order for protection – no bail
2. Phillip Smith – warrant – no bail	9. Luke Stringfellow – theft - \$5,000 bail	16. Julio Touchet Campos – criminal sexual conduct - \$250,000 bail
3. Wesley Smith – revoked license – no bail	10. Carl Swanson – registration violation - \$50,000 bail	17. Gustavo Trevino – DWI, revoked license - \$750 bail
4. Alan Sobey – disorderly conduct - \$500 bail	11. Brandon Tate – domestic assault - \$2,000 bail	18. Kile Trevithick – DWI - \$1,000 bail
5. Michael Sorenson – DWI – no bail	12. Matthew Tetchau – warrant – no bail	19. Tony Tristano – violation of order for protection – no bail
6. Edward Soto – revoked license – no bail	13. James Thomas – theft – no bail	20. Arnut Tungsununt – drugs - \$10,000 bail
7. Tony Staten – DANCO violation - \$20,000 bail	14. Larry Thompson – obstruction - \$3,000 bail	

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

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Dr. Timothy Eugene Nealy,
79, formerly of BP



Dr. Timothy Eugene Nealy

Dr. Timothy Eugene Nealy passed away peacefully on Sunday morning, March 22, 2020 at Mercy Hospital in Coon Rapids. He was fortunate to be surrounded by his wife, sister, and children in the hours leading to his death.

Dr. Nealy is survived by his loving wife Mary (Gens) Nealy of Brooklyn Park; six children; Richard Nealy of Richfield, Mike Nealy and his wife Brenda of Phoenix, Ariz., Stephanie Nealy of St Paul, Sarah Nealy of Cannon City, Minn., Paul Nealy and his wife Stacy of Fridley, and Peter Nealy and his wife Dr. Rebecca Schlafer, of Minnetonka; a brother, David Nealy and his wife Toni of Indianapolis, a sister, Peggy Tashima of Blooming Prairie, and nine grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, a brother Mark, a brother-in-law George (Peggy) Tashima, and an infant daughter, Jennifer.

Born in Adrian, Minn. on March 26, 1940 to Dr. Donald and Ellen Nealy, Dr. Nealy graduated from Adrian Catholic School in 1958 and went on to the University of Minnesota for his undergraduate studies and Medical School. He played alto saxophone in the University of Minnesota Marching Band, highlighted by a trip to the Rose Bowl in 1961. He completed his residency at St Luke's hospital in Duluth.

Throughout his career, Dr. Nealy practiced family medicine all over southern Minnesota. After completion of his residency, he settled in Blooming Prairie with his first wife Mary Kae (Warner) and their three children Rick, Mike, and Stephanie. After a brief time practicing in Faribault, he later settled in New Ulm with wife Mary (Gens) and their three children Sarah, Paul, and Peter.

He moved with his family to Adrian in 1986 to take over his father's medical practice. In later years he would go on to practice medicine in Ivanhoe, Fladreau, S.D., Minneota, and Benson, before retiring in Brooklyn Park near his extended family. He was particularly compassionate about care for the poor as well as protecting the rights of the elderly and the unborn.

Dr. Tim was an avid golfer and a die-hard fan and season ticket holder for the University Minnesota Gopher football and basketball programs. He enjoyed vacations at Breezy Point resort each summer and fall. He was involved in the communities and churches wherever he lived, having volunteered as a scout leader, religion teacher, and, along with his wife, organized various community groups and events such as the Adrian St Patrick's Day parade, Catholic Youth Organization, and Santa Anonymous programs. He had a key role in the fundraising and construction of the Adrian Country Club in the years leading up to its opening in 1994.

A celebration of Tim's life will be held at a later date due to the current limitations on gatherings from the COVID-19 crisis. Memorials can be made to one of Tim's favorite charities: Shriner's Hospital for Children or Catholic Charities.





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Ann Anderson, 83, Geneva



Ann Anderson

Ann Eleanor Anderson, 83, of rural Geneva peacefully left this world while surrounded by her husband and children, on Wednesday, March 11, 2020.

Ann was born on Oct. 29, 1936, to parents Anhart and Ina (Hjelman) Hansen, in Blooming Prairie. She graduated from Blooming Prairie High School in 1955 and went on to study Hairdressing at Austin Area Vocational School, graduating with a certificate of Hairdressing and Beauty Culture in 1956. She worked as a beautician for five years in Rochester and West Concord.

On Sept. 4, 1959, Ann married Dale L. Anderson in Rochester. Shortly after they relocated to Geneva Township where they spent many years farming and raising a family. Together they raised five children.

She was happiest when she was surrounded by family. She never stopped moving. She kept busy with all the jobs needed to take care of her family. She loved spending time outdoors, reading and baking for her family and friends when they visited. Ann made every holiday memorable and special. She always cared more about her guests than herself—that was just Ann.

Neighbors, family, and friends looked forward to the cookies, bars, homemade jams and pickles. Ann's garden brought so much joy to her and she always shared her bounty—no one could leave her house without her offering something from her garden. Over the years she contributed many hours to her church--Community Lutheran in Geneva. She served in women's groups and taught her children the importance of service through volunteering with Luther League. Most recently, she volunteered with the quilting group. Ann's faith was important to her and the way she moved through the world proved it. Ann was beyond selfless. She loved and cared for everyone she met. Ann was simply the best wife, mother, and grandmother.

Ann is survived by her husband, Dale; children, Sue Anderson of Rochester, Nancy (Mike) DeBeau of Blooming Prairie, Scott Anderson of Minneapolis, Doug Anderson of Blooming Prairie, Sara (Jason) Lanick of Minneapolis; grandchildren Austin, Meadow, and Anderson; four brothers, six sisters, and many in-laws, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

She was preceded in death by her parents, brothers Axel and Dean Hansen, sister Jeanette Underwood.

Memorial service will be announced at a later date.

Daryl Peterson, 62, Austin



Daryl Peterson

Daryl Craig Peterson, age 62 of Austin, passed away Sunday, March 29, 2020, at his in Austin.

Daryl was born to Marion and Gladys (Seavey) Peterson on Feb. 5, 1958, at St. Olaf Hospital in Austin. He was baptized and confirmed at Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church in rural Austin.

Daryl continued to live on the Peterson family farm his entire life. In August of 1975, Daryl was involved in a car accident, leaving him a quadriplegic, and still graduated with his class from Blooming Prairie High School in 1976. Daryl began farming and never let being confined to the wheelchair stop him.

On June 29, 1991, he was united in marriage to Rae Ann Miner at the Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church. Their marriage was blessed with three children. Daryl fought to live and experienced many of the kids' accomplishments, including watching them graduate.

Daryl was a longtime and faithful member of the Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church. He also served on the Udolpho Township Board. Daryl's lifelong passion was farming and conservation. He enjoyed collecting toy tractors, especially Farmall and Ford tractors. His family brought him much joy in life, and he loved spending time with them. He made an impact on the lives of those who knew him. Daryl will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Survivors include his wife, Rae Ann Peterson of Austin; two daughters, Sally Peterson (Brian Hughes) of Austin, Amy Peterson (Noah Aakre) of Austin; son, Clint Peterson of Austin; sisters Kay (Dale Nelson) Miller, Kathleen (Norman) Bussian, Bonnie (Calvin) Ripple; brothers Marvin Peterson, Galen (Dorothy) Peterson, Roger (Dawn) Peterson; and nieces and nephews.

Pallbearers: Sally Peterson Brian Hughes, Amy Peterson, Noah Aakre, Clint Peterson, Roger Peterson, Galen Peterson and Marvin Peterson. Honorary Pallbearers: Justin Krell, Lee Peterson, Doug Bruggeman, Brad Hines, Dean Williamson and Jon Penkava.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Marion and Gladys Peterson, nephew, Jeffery Ripple, brother-in-law Jim Miller, and sister-in-law Tracy Miner.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. A private family interment was held in Red Oak Grove Cemetery, rural Austin. In lieu of flowers, the family would request that donations to local organizations be made in his name.

Worlein Funeral Home of Austin is assisting the family with arrangements. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.worlein.com.

BOOK NOOK

Library services
can still be
utilized during
COVID-19



NANCY VAILLANCOURT

While the Blooming Prairie Branch Library remains closed and unable to provide any physical items to patrons, there are still ways to find reading materials, music, and movies through your library account. Many online providers have expanded their services to include more people who are following the Governor's order to Stay at Home. Here are some changes that may help you at this time:

Hoopla is an online database that offers books (including comics and graphic novels), audiobooks, movies, and music. The normal limit of items is 5 per library card. Hoopla is now offering over 1,100 more items to patrons on their Bonus Borrowers Collection. Even better news? For the items in the Bonus Borrowers Collection

you are not limited to 5 per card from now until April 30! To find Hoopla go to www.owatonna.info. I think you will be impressed with the variety of resources there for young children, teens, and adults. For Hoopla you will need a library card that doesn't have a large overdue fee.

What if you have been meaning to get a library card for years? Or your current card has expired? By calling the library at 507-583-7750 and leaving a message with your telephone number, you will be called back. You could also email us at bpbl@selco.info. In these unusual times we will help you get connected.

If that doesn't work for you, our main eBook distributor Overdrive is offering Instant Digital Cards. Based on your cell phone number and your physical address, you can receive a digital card that will allow you to use Overdrive books and audiobooks. The card will only be valid for a month or two. By then hopefully you can come to the library and pick up a physical card.

Although the library is closed, we are still answering phone messages and emails. Stay at home and stay healthy!

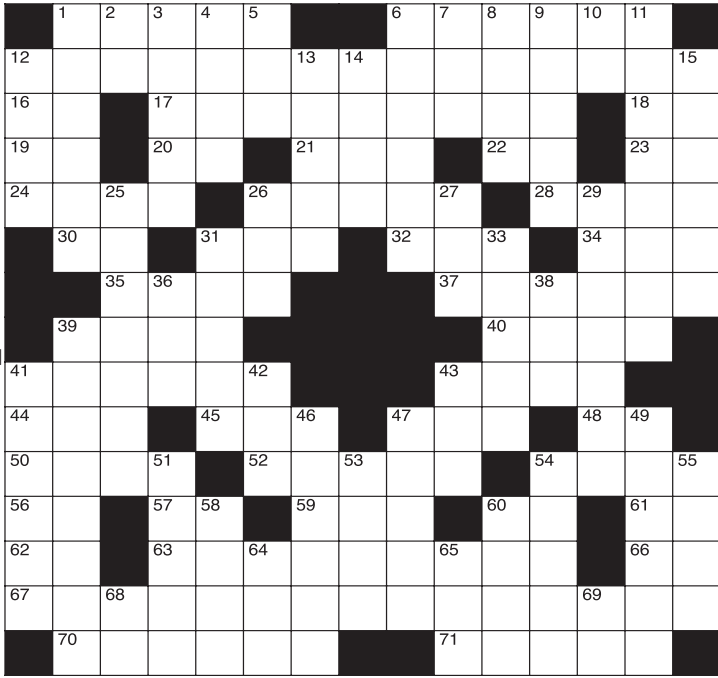
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WEEKLY CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- Put within
- Learned person
- Resistance
- Female title
- Logical basis for a belief
- Of I
- Indicates position
- Article
- Insignificant organizational member
- __ route
- Expression of disapproval
- Microelectromechanical systems
- Ponds
- Satisfy
- Dad
- Spanish soldier "El __"
- Pouch-like structure
- Obscure unit of measurement
- Okinawa prefecture capital
- Platforms
- Jazz singer Irene
- Benefits
- Hellenistic governors
- Brownish-green fruit
- Needed to see
- Political action committee
- Fast plane
- Bahrain dinar
- Urgent request
- Raccoon genus



54. Millisecond
56. Atlanta rapper
57. Rural delivery
59. Intrauterine device
60. The Wolverine State
61. Free agent
62. For instance
63. Reduces
66. Lincoln's state
67. Quit

70. Midsections
71. Bullfighting maneuvers

CLUES DOWN

- The arch of the foot
- Canadian peninsula
- Koran chapters
- Abba __, Israeli politician
- Youngster
- Burns

- Comedienne Gasteyer
- Valley
- Belongs to sun god
- Nickel
- Great in salads
- Leader
- Forced through a sieve
- Entryway
- Support pillars
- Aquatic mammal
- __ Farrow, actress
- Unhappy
- Holds molecules
- Thrifty
- French dynasty
- Scottish port
- Irish militant organization
- Dawn
- Musical group of seven
- Used to fry things
- Carrot's companion
- Rough stone landmarks
- Fourth son of Jacob and Leah
- Goes against
- Passion
- Hard white animal fat
- Soybean pastes
- Beckon
- Mountain and morning are two
- Self-referential
- Data executive
- Retirement plan
- Star Trek character Laren
- You and I



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Worship & Faith

Let go and let God



Pastor Paul Hauschild

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
HAYFIELD

When I was 16 years old, my friend, Brett, and I decided to climb up to a cave in the middle of a steep ridge. Legend said the outlaw Jesse James once hid there from the sheriff's posse.

Slowly and carefully we climbed up that ridge. There was no carving of Jesse James' initials in the cave, but rather cigarette butts and a crushed beer can. Time to go... but how? Climbing down looked too dangerous, so we started to climb to the top. Brett, who

was much stronger than I, reached the top quickly.

I really struggled! My hands were so sweaty I could hardly grab the edges of the rock. My feet kept slipping as I tried to find any place to anchor them. And then disabling FEAR set in. I realized with horror what a stupid situation I got myself into. I envisioned falling to my death.

Brett yelled down, "Come on Paul, you can make it!"

"Oh no I can't!" I screamed.

He lay down on his stomach and reached down with his hand and told me to let go with one hand and grab his so he could pull me up. I refused. Fear!

Brett reached down even farther and yelled: "If you don't let go with one hand and reach up there's no way I can help you! Dang it, Paul, let go!"

I took a deep breath and let go with one hand and I could feel my friend's strong arm pull me up to the top to safety. When I caught my breath, I looked

at him in all seriousness and said: "Brett, you're like God to me right now!"

Today we are facing a daunting fear with an unknown end. But we have the courage of God! We have the PROMISE of God in Christ... that even though we feel like we're hanging by a thread... God is holding us. And while he is holding us, God is molding us. But we need to let go of our need to control and define our situation and reach up in faith. God will sustain us.

My friend lifted me up because that's what friends do. Jesus is your friend. Hold on to him.

And hold on to others who want to help you. Don't isolate emotionally. Reach out to them with your concerns and worries and let them uphold you. That's how God works... through each of us. 'Let go and let God' is a great concept for us today. And so is 'Reach out and let others help.' Hold on to hope! We'll get through this.

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

METHODIST

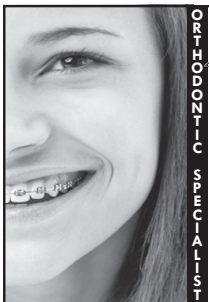
BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST
43089 180th St., Medford
(Seven miles west of Medford on CR 23)
Pastors JJ & Stefanie Morgan
507-835-8726
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

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



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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 Rich and Amy Pettet
507-456-4775
www.destinycc.org
Worship: 9 a.m. Sunday
6:30-7:30 p.m. 1st and 3rd
Wednesday

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

www.elevationnorth.blogspot.com
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

ASSOCIATED CHURCH
Presbyterian Church (USA) and
United Church of Christ
800 Havana Road, Owatonna
507-451-1546
www.associatedchurch.org
office@associatedchurch.org
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.
(Fellowship, Church School, and Adult Discussions follow)
Wednesday Activities: Sept – May (see website for schedule)

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

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

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

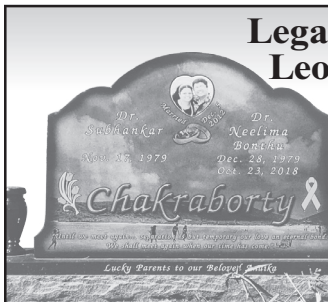
FIRST BAPTIST
104 First Ave. NE, Blooming Prairie
Pastor Matt Fennell
507-583-2673
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.
& 6:30 p.m. Wednesday
Sunday School: 9 a.m.
Bible Study: 11:30 a.m. Sun.

FIRST BAPTIST (Owatonna's oldest church)
123 E. Main St., Owatonna
Pastor Carla Nelson
507-272-9834
www.firstbaptistowatonna.com
Fellowship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.

BETHEL BAPTIST
1611 Hemlock Ave. Owatonna
Pastor Michael Simmerman
507-451-8548
www.bethelowatonna.com
Worship: 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sunday

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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Gimbel named Minnesota Football Coach of the Year

With “Stay at Home” order in place, coach accepts congrats from garage

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

It's a moment that Blooming Prairie High School's head football coach, Chad Gimbel, will remember forever. It was a rainy Saturday evening and Coach Gimbel had settled into his favorite easy chair for the evening. Gimbel found himself in the same situation as other Minnesotans. He was ordered by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz to "shelter in place" as a means of fighting the coronavirus. Wife Tara, knowing a celebration surprise was about to take place in front of the Gimbels' house, tried to convince



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Blooming Prairie High School head football coach Chad Gimbel was told last Saturday night that he had been selected Minnesota football coach of the year. A parade of cars went past the Gimbel house on Saturday, March 28, making noises of celebration.

husband Chad to look out the front window and see a roaring stream of water going down the street. That prompt did not raise him from his chair. Stepson Seth then asked Chad to help him move his college dormitory refrigerator to his room. That request got Coach Gimbel up from his chair. He then heard a chorus of car horns and noticed something unusual taking place on the street going by his house on the southern part of town in Blooming Prairie. Gimbel was then told by Tara that these people parading by his home were extending congratulations to CHAD GIMBEL for being chosen by the Minnesota Football Coaches Association as Minnesota's Football Coach of the Year. She had known about the honor for two months and kept the news from him. Gimbel, in his 23rd year as head football coach of the Awesome Blossoms, led his team to an undefeated 13-0 record and to a state championship. He was a BP assistant football coach previously. Coach Gimbel joins some select company as Coach of the Year: Gary Sloan of Grand Meadow in 2015; Jeff Williams of Owatonna in 2013 and Brent Schroeder (2012) and Carl Fruechte (2008) of Caledonia. This honor superseded a previous honor Gimbel received for being selected Section 1 Coach of the Year. This latest honor was for



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Blooming Prairie head football coach Chad Gimbel is surrounded by family in proudly holding the Class A state football championship trophy. He is shown with wife Tara and family, Seth, Eliot and Owen.

all of the marbles and saluted Gimbel for guiding his 2019 Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossoms to a Class A state championship. He was to receive this award at a Minnesota Football Coaches Association annual banquet on this Saturday night (March 28). After realizing what was happening, Coach Gimbel retired to the garage, opened the door and found himself the attraction for the moment. More than 40 vehicles passed by the Gimbel home over a five-minute time span. Kathy Paukner, a loyal fan and mother of three Oswald (Mitchell, Rachael and Megan) athletes, organized the street parade to pay tribute to Gimbel's accomplishments. "This is an award for everyone, not just me," remarked a humble Coach Gimbel when reached on the phone moments after witnessing a parade like none other. Gimbel saluted the players, his fellow coaches, parents, the community of

Blooming Prairie and his family. "We worked together to reach a common goal, a state championship," said Gimbel. "Everything had to be aligned just right," Gimbel reflected. Gimbel further stated that part of the goal was to make the kids better citizens on and off the field. "We've seen the kids grow as individuals. We worked very well together," he said. Coach Gimbel especially praised his wife Tara, who he said had the hardest job of all, taking care of the family at home. Tara said it was almost a blessing that the recognition banquet was not held. "Chad can get very emotional; a parent sent me a note and said she didn't think he would have gotten through a recognition banquet. Coach Gimbel's focus on football actually begins in June, Tara says. "He has a real passion for the game," she said. During time away from school, Gimbel watched three webinars on football, Tara revealed.



SUBMITTED PHOTO
It was a noisy neighborhood for the Gimbels last Saturday night. Most Blooming Prairie residents were honoring Gov. Tim Walz's "Shelter in Place" but some managed to sneak away and throw a parade for Minnesota Football Coach of the Year Chad Gimbel.

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Agency seeks input on proposed feedlot

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A federal agency is seeking the public's input on a proposed feedlot south of Blooming Prairie. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency of Fillmore County is in the process of completing an Environmental Assessment for the construction and operation of a 3,300-head hog finishing confinement barn located

at 28723 525th Ave., Austin. The location is about eight miles south of Blooming Prairie near Lansing in Mower County. Adam Gritz of FSA declined to identify the owner of the project. Gritz said his agency is accepting comments on the potential effects of the proposed project on protected resources and the human environment through April 16. Information regarding this project

can be reviewed in person at the Fillmore County FSA Office in Preston. Comments should be submitted to the Farm Loan Manager at 413 Farmers St. NW #B, Preston, MN 55965 or by email at mnp Preston-fsa@one.usda.gov. "We will respond to comments," Gritz said, adding a decision on the project will be made after the public comment period closes. The proposed barn would finish 3,300 hogs for

market at a time. That total amounts to 990 animal units, or just under the 1,000-animal unit level that would trigger an environmental assessment worksheet from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. If the project included 1,000 or more animal units, an EAW would require an inventory of greenhouse gases estimated for the project. However, this will not happen with this particular proposal.

If the project receives USDA approval, it would still require a conditional use permit from the Mower County Board of Commissioners. Gritz said if the project gets approval at both levels, construction would likely start this summer. FSA, Gritz said, is not involved in every hog feedlot operation. He noted this project falls under FSA jurisdiction because the owner is seeking financing

through FSA. "All of our applications require an environmental review," he said. Gritz said FSA provides loans for farm operations throughout the nation. Financing can be utilized for crops, buying animals or building animal facilities, according to Gritz. Typically, applicants reach out to FSA when they are unable to obtain financing through other community credit venues.

KWIK SPIRITS



Kwik Trip has added a sixth store in Owatonna along with liquor, which is something only offered at two other locations in Minnesota. Store leader Teresa Johnson and Chris Moe are looking forward to customers coming into Kwik Spirits, which offers a full array of beer, wine and spirits.

Kwik Trip ventures into liquor business

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

For years Kwik Trip has been known for convenience of food items and gasoline. But now the Wisconsin-based store is throwing another item on the convenient list for customers—liquor. When Owatonna's sixth Kwik Trip store opened last month near the downtown area, a separate entrance was added to a full liquor store called Kwik Spirits. While Kwik Trip operates more than 180 stores in Minnesota alone, the latest Owatonna store is one of only three in the state offering liquor. The other two are in Byron and Rush City. "It's the convenience of it all," says Teresa Johnson, manager of Owatonna's new Kwik Trip. "It's a one stop shop. You can get gas, food and liquor."

Kwik Spirits offers a full line of beer, wine and liquor. There is also a "Beer Cave" within the liquor store showcasing many varieties of beer. In Owatonna, Kwik Spirits will be going head-to-head with other large liquor distributors like Cashwise and Hy-Vee. Johnson says the prices at Kwik Spirits are pretty comparable to other stores. The liquor business has been a little slow taking off, but Johnson expects that will change in the coming months. "Once it starts to warm up, it's going to get busy," she said, adding it may take a while to build the liquor clientele. Johnson said Kwik Trip is finding its liquor operations to be "very profitable." She expects it will only be a matter of time before Kwik Trip adds



more liquor stores around the state. Kwik Trip purchased Sterling Drug at 410 Hoffman Dr. and converted it into a convenience store with an attached liquor store. Sterling Drug has leased some space back to continue the pharmacy. "We're drawing a lot of their guests into our convenience side," Johnson pointed out. In addition to liquor, the new Kwik Trip, which is surrounded by residential and apartment complexes, offers take home meals, the first of its kind at any of the Owatonna Kwik Trip locations. Some of them included BBQ ribs, spaghetti and

meatballs, meat loaf and chicken Alfredo. Johnson said she has tried them all and has found "they are all really good." Unlike the other Owatonna locations, which operate 24 hours a day, the new store has reduced hours from 5 a.m. to 12 a.m. Johnson, who has been with Kwik Trip for seven years, was promoted to store leader last October. She will be solely in charge of the new store. She is proud of the great team of workers she has put in place. "Once the liquor store takes off, it's only going to get better," Johnson said.

Demolitions set for Hwy. 14 expansion

Construction crews are expected to begin demolition of buildings and removal April 6 as part of the expansion of Hwy. 14 between Dodge Center and Owatonna. The work will briefly delay the planned detours for motorists in Dodge County, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The project team has reprioritized the removal and disposal buildings and debris at 12 property sites on the new route, which will then keep Dodge County Road 1 and 630th Street open longer. The roads had originally been scheduled to close April 8, but are expected to close later in April or early May, so crews can begin to build a bridge on Dodge County 1 for an overpass of new Hwy 14 and build a new 630th Street. MnDOT road work has been identified as a critical service in Governor Walz's Stay at Home executive order and will continue. The agency is working to be flexible with scheduling during this period of lower traffic volumes to keep projects moving forward in a timely manner. Following guidance from state health officials and

to prevent further spread of COVID-19, crews will maintain social distancing practices while working. When detours begin, motorists on Dodge County Road 1 and 630th Street will find detours south of Claremont and should follow signs to access their destinations. Grading work west of Claremont is also expected to begin. The project will expand 12.5 miles of Hwy. 14 from two lanes to four lanes between Dodge Center and Owatonna to complete a continuous four-lane road between Mankato and Rochester. The project is intended to improve the capacity, safety, travel times and access between Rochester and Owatonna, as well as the I-35 corridor. The expansion area is a new route for Hwy. 14, which will stay south of the railroad tracks on the west side of the project, travel south of Claremont and connect where the four-lane highway is west of Dodge Center. Shafer Contracting of Shafer, Minn., is the prime contractor for the \$107,997,119 construction project. Construction will be scheduled to be completed by 2022. Traffic on the new Hwy. 14 route is expected in 2021.

Spring and mental health: Not what you think



Steele Talkin'
DAVE MOLL

Typically, spring is a time of renewal, hope, and anticipation of good things to come. It can have a positive effect on mental health. Unfortunately, for some, particularly those with clinical depression, it could have the opposite effect. Depressed individuals may not get that same boost in mood. In fact, the change in season may make things worse. When a person has clinical depression, they may notice that others are feeling happier, but they are not. The thought, "What is wrong with me that I cannot feel good like others" can be very discouraging. Thinking that you cannot enjoy what others are experiencing can give a sense of deprivation. Guilt may be an issue. "I should be able to be happy." What seems

to be obviously a good thing may not be that way at all. There could be a sense of disconnect that can result in an alienation from others, leading to isolation. People with depression are often thinking of the negatives and cannot connect with others around the positives. At least when something negative is going on, people can commiserate. For example, everyone can relate to depressing aspects of winter. Depression can be a confusing condition. Regardless of the circumstances, it alters how we view ourselves, others, and the world around us. It can occur when we may least expect it. This can be confusing yet it should not deter one from getting or continuing treatment. When treated successfully, enjoyment in life returns in all the seasons of the year. David Moll is a licensed psychologist at South Central Human Relations Center in Owatonna. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring various organizations throughout Steele County.

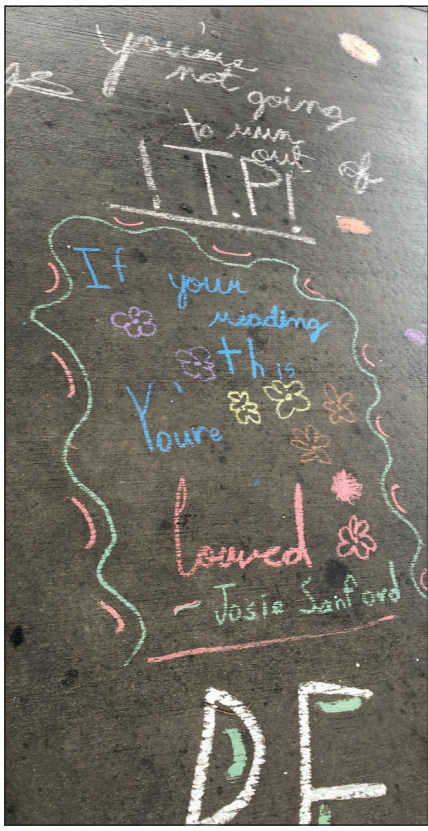
Medford joins chorus of cities proclaiming COVID-19 emergency



"If you're reading this, you're cured!" Chalk drawings done by Medford resident Josie Sanford and her family adorn the ground of a pavilion in Straight River Park. The drawings helped to spread joy during this emergency while also inspiring local children to make their own chalk drawings.

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

At its regularly monthly meeting last week, the City of Medford officially declared a local emergency due to the emergent spread of the coronavirus. The proclamation gives the city the flexibility it may need in order to react to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus. The proclamation will also allow the city to be eligible to receive funds that may become available to reimburse cities and communities for expenses incurred as a result of the outbreak. Although the city is covered under Steele County's recent emergency declaration, the Emergency Management Director encourage each city to pass a proclamation and resolution to ensure that they will be fully covered. Currently, the Medford City Hall is closed to the public, with residents encouraged to contact city employees via phone. The city has



SEE MEDFORD JOINS CHORUS, B3

Is this a noxious weed, invasive species, or just a plant where you don't want it?



On The Farm
CLAIRE LACANNE

Do you know what a weed is? Simply speaking, we can define it as a plant where you don't want it. This category could thus include almost anything. Dandelions in your lawn, wild cucumber in your ditch, or corn plants in your soybean field. None of those plants are regulated weeds in Minnesota, however. There are numerous technical terms that we use when talking about regulated species. Therefore, it can be difficult to keep track of which plant species are invasive, which are considered noxious weeds, and which plants are just pesky.

Invasive species are species that are not native to Minnesota *and* cause economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health. There's an important distinction here: just being non-native to Minnesota does not make a species invasive. The species has to have attributes that make it harmful. Additionally, if something is native to Minnesota, it can't be considered invasive. Wild cucumber, for example, winds itself around trees, but it is native to Minnesota, therefore is not an invasive species, though it can be aggressive.

Minnesota has a State Prohibited Noxious Weeds law administered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). "Prohibited noxious weeds are...plants that the commissioner designates as having the potential or

are known to be detrimental to human or animal health, the environment, public roads, crops, livestock or other property. " In total there are 4 categories of Minnesota State Prohibited Noxious Weeds:

Eradicate List – Plants not known to be present in Minnesota or not widely distributed. All above and below ground parts of the plant must be destroyed. There is no allowable transportation, propagation or sale of these plants. There are 16 plants currently on this list, including Palmer amaranth.

Control List – Plants established in the state. Species must be controlled to prevent spread, maturation and dispersal of propagating parts. There is no allowable transportation, propagation or sale of these plants. There are 12 plants currently on this list, including wild parsnip.

Restricted List – Plants that are widely distributed in Minnesota and are detrimental to human or animal health, the environment, public roads, crops, livestock or other property, but whose only feasible means of control is to prevent their spread by prohibiting the importation, sale, and transportation of their propagating parts. This list currently encompasses 16 plants, including buckthorn.

Specialty Regulated Plants – Plants that may be native species or have demonstrated economic value, but also have the potential to cause harm in non-controlled environments. Plants designated as specially regulated have been determined to pose ecological, economical, or human or animal health concerns. There are 4 plants on this list, including poison ivy.

SEE NOXIOUS WEED, B3

SWCD, partners expand soil-health research

\$50K in grants to aid farmer-led study on applying nitrogen to fields



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Mower SWCD's certified soil scientist Steve Lawler, left, works with a crew last summer to drill one of 60 wells at the SAA site to sample groundwater for nitrate levels.

Innovative, farmer-led research on the economic and environmental effects of applying nitrogen to cropland will continue this year thanks to \$50,000 in new grants.

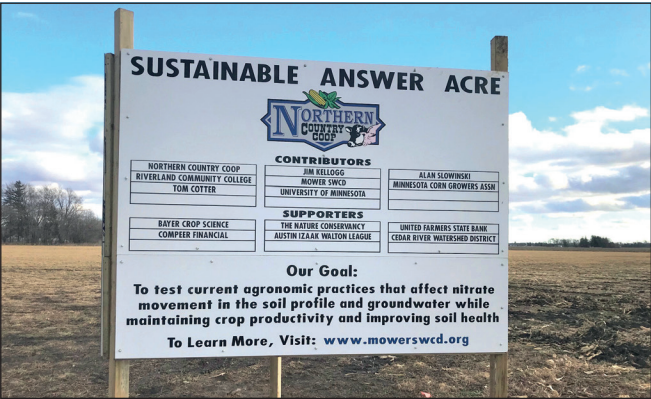
Minnesota Corn Growers and The Nature Conservancy have approved grants to support the Sustainable Answer Acre (SAA) research project initiated by Mower County farmers last year on cropland in Lansing Township.

Mower Soil & Water Conservation District is coordinating the project with Northern Country Coop, a farmer-owned, local cooperative that has six of its 12 sites in Mower County and about 1,500 members, including nine who serve on its board of directors that supports the research.

"We're trying to come up with solutions for our growers that are sustainable and economical," said Jeff Irvin, regional manager for Northern Country, which is based in Stacyville, Iowa.

The SAA site includes eight acres along Mower County Road 2 on an overall 80-acre parcel owned and rented out by Northern Country, which operates a grain elevator across the road in the Village of Lansing. Corn was grown on the eight acres in 2019, and soybeans are planned for this year at the site, which drains to the Cedar River.

Under SAA, the team aims to test current agronomic practices that affect nitrate movement in the soil profile and groundwater while maintaining crop productivity and improving



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A sign posted late last year at the Sustainable Answer Acre site along Mower County Road 2 highlights the project and its contributors and supporters.

soil health by disturbing the soil less and growing cover crops, said Steve Lawler, a certified soil scientist for Mower SWCD.

"Our hope is to gain a better understanding on farming practices that benefit both the environmental and the economics of a farm operation," Lawler said.

Nitrogen is the nutrient that's most often deficient for crop production in Minnesota, and its use can result in substantial economic return for farmers, according to the University of Minnesota Extension.

When nitrogen inputs – such as fertilizer spraying or applying manure – to the soil are more than a crop needs, excessive amounts of nitrate might get in the ground or surface water.

By managing nitrogen effectively, growers can produce crops in a more profitable and environmentally friendly way.

For the second-straight year, Minnesota Corn Growers is providing a

\$30,000 grant through its Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council to the SAA project. The Growers' \$30,000 grant in 2019 helped launch the research, which included Mower SWCD drilling 60 wells (each 10 to 12 feet deep).

The Nature Conservancy, a global, environmental nonprofit that has an office in Minneapolis, is giving \$20,000 for use over the next one to two years for the SAA research.

Area farmers led the launch of the SAA project, including Mower County farmers Tom Cotter and Jim Kellogg, who also is a board member for Mower SWCD and Northern Country. Alan Slowinski, who farms the SAA site, also is a contributor to the project.

Riverland Community College, another contributor, has used the SAA site as a "teaching laboratory" for the college's agricultural sciences courses, including "Introduction to Soil Science." Local

high school ag classes also might use the site.

In the coming weeks, the SAA team led by Lawler will collect the first of seven samples from the site's wells for nitrate testing. Summer soil sampling will include physical and biological testing.

University of Minnesota's Office for Soil Health will provide students and faculty this summer to support the SAA research by doing biological testing and studying surface-water infiltration. University of Minnesota also will assist Mower SWCD with two other soil-health research projects this year.

SAA is one of three soil-health research projects planned for 2020 by Mower SWCD staff, with all three involving students and faculty from the University of Minnesota. Lawler is overseeing the research and soil sampling with all the soil-health projects.

One of those projects is the third and final year of research funded by a \$98,000 grant from The Hormel Foundation to study the effects of cover crops on dozens of plots representing different types of Mower County farmland. Researchers are quantifying typical soil properties in ag before land-use changes to measure varied conditions.

The work has involved partnering with Riverland for use of its soils lab in Austin.

All these efforts are part of a soil-health initia-

SEE SWCD, PARTNERS, B3

Sudoku Corner

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

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

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1/2 C Miracle Whip
3 C shredded cheddar cheese
1/4 tsp garlic powder

Cook noodles. Blend next six ingredients. In 9 x 13 pan, layer four noodles, half of chicken mixture and half of cheese. Repeat layers. Bake at 350-degrees for 40 minutes or until heated through. This can be made ahead. Refrigerate until ready to bake. Turkey can be used instead of chicken.

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Tamora Klemmensen
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Historical Society seeks nominations for 2020 Preservation Awards

The Steele County Historical Society (SCHS) is seeking nominations for its 2020 Preservation Awards.

Each year Steele County buildings or properties may be recognized for their outstanding preservation, and/or restoration efforts. Honorees in the past have included Torey's Restaurant, Jelts Hall @ Pillsbury, Kottke Jewelers, KIK Graphics, Lerberg's Store, Owatonna Public Utilities, the First Baptist Church, the Zamboni Building, the Alexander home, and many others.

For a property to be considered, it should accurately reflect the architecture of the time it was built, be as close in its original detail as possible, and be in above average condition. Historical significance of the property and provenance are also desirable when choosing a nominee. Nominations may include homes, businesses, farmsteads, or other rural properties.

"Anyone is invited to

nominate properties for 2020's nominees. The Steele County Historical Society's mission is to preserve and share history today for tomorrow, so recognizing others who have joined in that mission is an important aspect of Steele County," says Ryan Gillespie, SCHS Board president.

All nominations must be received at the SCHS office by May 1 so that the selection process can begin. Awards will be announced in May during National Preservation Month. To nominate a property, please submit a letter explaining why you have chosen this property, some background information, the property's historic significance, a photograph, and a contact to call. Nominated properties will be visited by a selection committee.

For more information please call 507-451-1420. To submit a nomination, e-mail a message or mail a suggestion to SCHS, 1700 Austin Road, Owatonna, MN 55060.

LTO cancels upcoming play

Due to the ongoing situation with the COVID-19 virus and the recommendations from the CDC, the Minnesota Department of Health, and the Stay Home Executive Order, the Little Theatre of Owatonna has come to the decision to cancel this season's production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" with lyrics by Tim Rice and music by Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Little Theatre of Owatonna is committed to helping keep our patrons, volunteers, cast, and crew safe. "We are truly saddened that we are unable to complete our 2019-2020 season with audiences at this time," said Victoria Bartkowiak, executive

secretary of LTO. "We hope to bring this production to the community in a future season."

She went on to say that LTO thanks its audience members, patrons, cast and crew who were able to be a part of our productions in this past year and look forward to creating live theatre again in the future.

LTO is committed to our mission to provide the community of Owatonna and surrounding areas the opportunity to participate in quality live theatre as an audience member, actor or production crew. As a non-profit dependent on our volunteers as well as ticket sales to remain open, LTO did not come to this decision lightly.

Autism Awareness Events planned in Austin

April is Autism Awareness month.

Autism is a neurological condition affecting one's processing of information: particularly social, communication and sensory information. Approximately 1 in 54 people are diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum. In Austin, over 150 youth and nearly as many adults are autistic. Since 2010, the Hormel Historic Home has committed efforts to raising awareness for autism and providing outreach opportunities for improved understanding, education, advocacy and opportunities for our local autism population.

The Hormel Historic Home invites you to join its events this month with just a point and a click to learn, have fun, donate or just be positively inspired and distracted!

Many thanks to all for your continued support!

(Note: Events have been modified to adhere to current CDC public health safety recommendations due to the Covid-19 pandemic.)

MONDAY, APRIL 6

Online Parent Caregiver Event 4-5 p.m. FREE

"Healthy Relationships for All Abilities"

Katie Thune (MA Ed, Educator, speaker, author) from Mad Hatter Wellness will discuss with parents and caregivers tips, tools and resources to support friendships, relationships

and sexual health for all abilities.

RSVP to receive the ZOOM meeting link by calling or emailing the Hormel Historic Home at 507-433-4243 or autism@hormelhistorichome.org.

MONDAY, APRIL 13-SUNDAY, APRIL 19

Stepping Out "Safely" for Autism Fundraising Event

This 9-year tradition, which raises funds to support the summer camps for youth on the autism spectrum, is going virtual. Participants can't walk together as a group, but they can get together online to celebrate how the community has embraced autism awareness and those who live with the diagnosis. The home will feature live Facebook presentations at 11:30 a.m. daily during this week. Recorded presentations will also be available for viewing. Participants can join on the Hormel Historic Home Facebook page or website to learn, donate, and send in photos or videos of their own personal walks, rides, skates, etc. - wherever those take place. All funds raised stay local and benefit families served by the Hormel Historic Home summer camps, educational and respite events.

To make a donation or purchase a t-shirt visit www.hormelhistorichome.org.

AAUW Owatonna offers camp scholarships

The Owatonna branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW Owatonna) is offering two camp scholarships of up to \$350 to provide an enrichment experience for girls in the areas of science or math.

Applicants must be residents of the Owatonna school district and currently in the sixth, seventh or eighth grade. A scholarship recipient and her parents may choose from a number of pre-approved residential or day camps that provide enrichment experiences in a variety of math and science areas. Choice of program is not limited to the pre-approved camps, but any program must be approved by AAUW Owatonna. Parents will be responsible for transportation to and from the camp.

This scholarship program was developed in response to research that found girls' math confidence and achievement drops in the middle school years. It is the hope of AAUW Owatonna that we can encourage girls in these areas by providing them fun and interactive ways to explore science and math with their peers.

Applications must be submitted by April 24 and are available from Melynda Schultz at 507-451-3281, from the area schools serving the appropriate grade levels, or on-line at <http://owatonna-mn.aauw.net/> under the scholarship tab.

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Funds for these camp scholarships are raised each fall through the Taste of Steele County.

St. John Church cancels activities

All church activities at St. John Lutheran Church of Claremont have been cancelled for the time being.

St. John church Elders have suspended all church activities and church services through at least April 10 to comply with state guidelines known as Shelter in Place due to the coronavirus outbreak.

If anyone is in need of pastoral care, please call Pastor Broadwell at 507-528-2643.

Steele Landfill off limits to public

The Steele County Landfill is closed to public self-hauling customers as of March 24 and closed to all customers on Saturdays until further notice.

For public self-haulers: To deter the spread of COVID-19 by practicing social distancing, the Landfill is asking that you consider hiring a commercial hauler for waste pick-up and clean-out needs during this closure period, if you have urgent waste removal needs.

ALS Benefit for Green postponed again

Due to the circumstances with the coronavirus outbreak, the ALS benefit for Cindy Green has been postponed indefinitely.

Green, of Ellendale, is fighting Lou Gehrig's disease. A benefit had been planned for her in March, but was rescheduled to mid-April. Benefit organizer Allie Larson said the benefit will be postponed once again with plans to do something at a later time.

Monetary donations for Green may be sent to Cindy Green Benefit Account, Commerce Bank, P.O. Box 149, Geneva, MN 56035.

SWCD, PARTNERS: expand soil-health research

FROM B2

tive started 2015 by Mower SWCD when it hired Lawler, who has more than 30 years of applied soil science in the field. In a previous role, Lawler produced a soil survey of Mower County in the 1980s.

Interest in cover crops and other soil-health practices have increased in Minnesota but many local farmers want more data and science before changing practices.

One soil-health practice is cover cropping, which involves planting a second, unharvested crop in coordination with regular cash crops, such as corn and soybeans. Other soil-health practices include only tilling strips on a field before planting - a type of minimum tillage - and no tilling to reduce erosion.

For more information on the Sustainable Answer Acre research, go online to: www.mowerswcd.org.

NOXIOUS WEED: invasive species, or just a plant

FROM B2

There are also weeds which can be designated by individual county boards to be prohibited within the county's jurisdiction. You can find a list of county noxious weeds on the MDA's website.

Knowing the definitions of these categories can help provide a framework for understanding state and county weed regulations.

Claire LaCanne is the agricultural Extension educator for Steele and Rice counties through the University of Minnesota. She writes for this newspaper regularly. She may be reached at lacanne@umn.edu or 507-444-7691.

MEDFORD: joins chorus of cities

FROM B1

also opted to modify the Municipal Liquor Store hours due to the shelter in place order.

"Until further notice, the city hall entrance door will be locked and we will continue to try and maintain regular services and accommodations for the general public during this COVID virus outbreak," Medford Mayor Lois Nelson said.

Despite the specter of doom and gloom across the county and across the country, Medford and other communities have continued to inject some positivity into the situation.

"We do have to maintain a sense of humor about all of this too because it's anticipation of something that we've never experienced," Nelson opined during the meeting.

According to Nelson, last Thursday teachers and administrators were escorted around town by the Sheriff's Office and the Fire Department complete with signs and horns. "In Straight River Park, Josie Sanford and family left chalk drawings in a small pavilion making anyone smile," she noted.

The chalk drawings that the Sanford family left serve as a way of encouraging chalk art messages by school children on their own driveways and help to spread positivity during this time of emergency.

AUSTIN 7-DAY FORECAST

THU

FRI

SAT

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

80

78

81

81

82

79

76

62

63

62

63

62

63

WEEKEND

Weather

Forecasts

7am & 6pm

KSMQ TV

The Better Choice

J & H LIQUOR

WINTER EVENTS

BAR BINGO: Monday @ 6:30 p.m.

BLOOMIN' GRAPEVINE WINE CLUB: Tues. 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. FEB 11, MARCH 10, APRIL 7 MAY 5: "GALA" BENEFITS THE BP YOUTH CLUB

EUCHRE: JAN 25, FEB. 22 AND MARCH 28 1 p.m. - 2 Person team sign up at the Bar

Mark Your Calendar

April: Customer Appreciation Day "34 Years of Business

July 3: Street Dance - Red Dirt Road - 8 p.m. to Midnight - \$5 coverage charge. 21 and over. ID required.

July 4: Open - 9 am to close (Bar & Off Sale)

July 18: B.O.B. Ride - Toys for Toys. Registration: 9 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. @ J & H. Fee: 10 per rider. Ride: Leaves @ 10:30a.m. MEAL: 5 p.m. @J&H. (2019 Donation was \$17,500)

All event details available at J&H Liquor 340 E. Main St. •Bloomington

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The old First National Bank building, which also became the home of The Bakery, stands tall before it was taken down by demolition experts last week.



A night deposit from the old First National Bank of Blooming Prairie was uncovered by KJ Construction Company during demolition work last week.



Kent Johnson attempts to loosen a pillar on the front side of The Bakery. Two granite pillars were saved in perfect condition.



Two granite pillars on the front side of The Bakery building were salvaged in excellent condition.

GONE BUT NO



At times, it looked like demolition on Blooming Prairie's Main Street was an act of double vision. Here, two

Bakery owner sells lot, to w

STORY AND PHOTOS BY HOWARD

It is a sad commentary but it is true. The Bakery of Blooming Prairie is no more.

Even with just a skeleton of the old First National Bank building still standing, memories lingered of this iconic bank building turned into a bakery that served Blooming Prairie area residents for 23 years. Now, The Bakery building is gone.

The Bakery and adjoining Sportstitch were destroyed in a raging fire early the morning of Jan. 28.

Bakery owner Gregg Fristedt was seen with son Brian picking up some memorabilia from the Bakery. The memories came in the form of bricks, which had been knocked down just hours before by demolition experts led by Keith Johnson Construction.

Johnson said many passers by have been picking up bricks as mementos.

Many locals watched the demise of these two Blooming Prairie business locations. Keeping a close eye on the project from beginning to end was Howard Hill.

Hill has his trusty little digital camera recording another historic event in Blooming Prairie's history.

Hill lives in an apartment across the street from The Bakery. He has lived in Blooming Prairie since 1971. He worked 35 years for the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Some other historic parts of the old bank building will also be kept as historic reminders. Johnson saved the front part of the bank building including two perfectly shaped pillars made of granite.

A night deposit box was also found amidst the rubble. Steel steps were also found by Johnson and his demolition crew.

Actual demolition was begun by Keith Johnson Construction on Wednesday, March 18 and continued mostly during daylight hours every day after.

Johnson said he had a deadline of April 3 to have the demolition project finished. "I definitely will make that deadline," said Johnson.

Johnson said some of his crew have been with him for more than 20 years. Brothers Kent and Kyle were also on site at various times, working on demolition. Other Johnson family members were also part of the crew.

Sportstitch was the first to go. Johnson's excava-

tor then cleaned out the basement, making way for hundreds of loads of pit run gravel.

In addition to saving the two pillars at the front of The Bakery building, Johnson saved some wooden beams from the basement.

The actual demolition of The Bakery building began late Tuesday night, March 24. The day previous, a buddy of Johnson's, Richard Borglum of Kasota brought in his large excavator. Borglum and Johnson double-teamed an effort to take down the building. Johnson also brought in his crane with a wrecking ball.

The two pillars were first removed and then Borglum and Johnson began attacking the building itself.

Former bakery owner Fristedt said watching the demolition was emotionally



Representatives of Asbestrol, Inc. of Austin were in Blooming Prairie late. This building was built in 1875.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

1875 – Charles Whitton and Peter Haley opened the town's first banking house as First National Bank, 345 Main West.

1877-1903 – J.C. Brainerd & Co. operated the bank until 1903 when it merged with First State Bank, then two months later, converted into First National Bank.

1901 – Burglars dynamited a strong box and escaped with \$3,500. The robbers reported-

ly drove off in a horse drawn vehicle. One suspect was captured. Two others were never found.

1916 – Blooming Prairie Times wrote: The modern, artistic and convenient bank building of the First National Bank marks the progress and business expansion of the village.

1933 – First National Bank, under the leadership of C.A. Peterson weathered the Great

Depression – not one cent was ever lost to any customer since the bank began in 1875.

1964 – First National Bank began modernization and improvement program. Auto Bank was added.

1967 – Allan C. Peterson buys controlling interest from Raymond A. Peterson and Norman R. Peterson.



First National Bank was the first banking in its building was constructed in 1875 and during its existence. It became the home

T FORGOTTEN



Excavators attack the walls of the old First National Bank Building, most recently the home of The Bakery.



Two contractors, Keith Johnson, left, and Richard Borglum, right, discuss their strategy of demolishing two old business buildings in downtown Blooming Prairie.



More fill was brought to the site of The Bakery. Keith Johnson, owner of KJ Construction Co., said 150 loads of dirt were brought to the site of The Bakery and Sportstitch.

ork at Federated Insurance

LESTRUD (EXCEPT WHERE NOTED)

tough on him. “I’m glad it’s down; it had to come to that,” Fristedt said in explaining that the burned out building could not remain.

Fristedt confirmed that he has sold the property, which previously held The Bakery. He did not reveal who was going to own the property.

Fristedt will soon be starting a new job in the commissary of Federated Insurance in Owatonna.

Many rumors were flying around as to who would inhabit the large lots. One rumor said that the lower level would be retail and an upper level would contain senior housing.

Keith Johnson jokingly said he thought about buying the property and putting up a COVID-19 clinic.

“I’m glad it’s down; it had to come to that.”

Gregg Fristedt
Bakery Owner

A rumor also circulating down Main Street said the successful bidding price for the demolition was \$220,000. Rumor or fact?

“It will really look different,” Johnson predicted. When the building was down, Johnson was pleased how smoothly the demolition progressed.

Watching Johnson’s crew work on demolition of the Sportstitch and bakery buildings, an onlooker who has done business with Johnson in the past, commented: “Keith makes things happen in a short amount of time.”

The last piece of a wall of The Bakery went down

at 3:03 p.m. on Wednesday, March 25.

On Thursday, March 26, a licensed asbestos abatement company, Asbestrol, Inc. of Austin, was on site removing asbestos. Special procedures had to be followed in the removal of the asbestos. Belly dump trucks were lined with plastic to carry material that might have contained asbestos.

Brian Landherr of Asbestrol, Inc. was dressed in a hazardous material (HAZ MAT) suit and got behind the controls of Johnson’s John Deere excavator. “He wasn’t quite as fast as the previous operator,” laughed Johnson. He was referring to himself.

The Minnesota Department of Health indicated it would do an audit on this project. All Asbestrol-generated paper work would be studied by Department of Health inspectors, said Landherr.

All debris removed from the Sportstitch and The Bakery sites was trucked to the SKB Landfill in Lansing Township near Austin.

With a wide smile, Keith Johnson of KJ Construction said he was pleased with the way the demolition project went on Main Street in Blooming Prairie. He said there were no surprises. Johnson had the contact bid on the demolition of Sportstitch and The Bakery. He said more than 200 loads of pit run were brought to the site. He said about 130 loads of scrap debris were taken to a landfill.



last week, searching for asbestos in the walls of The Bakery building.



Howard Hill spent lots of hours watching the demolition of The Bakery and Sportstitch. He chronicled the project with his trusty digital camera.



After filling in the site of The Bakery, Keith Johnson of KJ Construction said the work is finished except for a layer of black dirt to be placed over the sand fill. The project began on March 18 and was to be completed by April 3.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

g facility to come to Blooming Prairie. was remodeled extensively many times e of Gregg Fristedt’s The Bakery in 1996.

FOR BAKERY BUILDING

1969 – Women employees were given new uniforms.

1979 – First National Bank reported loans and deposits of \$14,846,000.

1981 – Allen Peterson retires as president.

1985 – Bank sells insurance agency to Keith Holman.

1988 – First National Bank was closed by FDIC and sold to a group of investors who opened the new

bank as First American Bank. The name was later changed to First Prairie Bank of Blooming Prairie.

1992 – First Prairie Bank of Blooming Prairie merged with American Bank Mankato.

1994 – Merged into and operated as part of First Bank National Association.

1995 – First Bank bought Metropolitan Savings and Loan and moved to 236 E. Main St.

1996 – Bank building opened as The Bakery by Gregg Fristedt.

1997 – US Bank acquired First Bank and is located at 236 E. Main St.

Jan. 28, 2020 – Building burns.

March 18-April 3, 2020 – Building is demolished and lot is shaped by KJ Construction Co. of Blooming Prairie.

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 9, 2003
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$131,000.00
MORTGAGOR(S): Mark A. Hill and Cynthia S. Hill, husband and wife
MORTGAGEE: Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc. n/k/a Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. successor by merger to Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc.
DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on April 14, 2003 as Document Number A309434 in the Office of the County Recorder of Steele County, Minnesota.
ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: None.
LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 1, V.I.P. Addition, Owatonna, Minnesota, Steele County, Minnesota.
STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 310 16TH STREET NE, OWATONNA, MN 55060-1706
COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Steele County, Minnesota.
THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$87,437.63
TRANSACTION AGENT: None
NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc. n/k/a Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. successor by merger to Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc.
RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-223-0101
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: May 19, 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 November 19, 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: Mark A. Hill and Cynthia S. Hill
Dated: March 17, 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
(20-0329-FC01)
THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.
3/25, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29

NOTICE
Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State
Certificate of Assumed Name
Minnesota Statutes Chapter 333

The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.
ASSUMED NAME: Hands of Mine Studio
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 1453 38th St SW, Owatonna MN 55060 USA
NAMEHOLDER(S): Name: Abigail Flannery Hansen
Address: 1453 38th St SW, Owatonna MN 55806
If you submit an attachment, it will be incorporated into this document. If the attachment conflicts with the information specifically set forth in this document, this document supersedes the data referenced in the attachment.
By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.
SIGNED BY: Abigail Flannery Hansen
MAILING ADDRESS: None Provided
EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL NOTICES: studio@handsofmine.com
Work Item 1139844400027
Original File Number 1139844400027
State of Minnesota
Office of the Secretary of State
Filed 02/04/2020 1:59PM
/s/ Steve Simon
Secretary of State
3/2, 4/1pd

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.
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.
NOTICE OF POSTPONEMENT OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the mortgage foreclosure sale referred to in the foregoing Notice of Mortgage Foreclosure Sale has been postponed to:
DATE AND TIME OF SALE: May 26, 2020 at 10:00 AM
PLACE OF SALE: Steele County Sheriff's Office, Law Enforcement Center, 204 Pearl Street East, Owatonna, MN 55060.
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 November 30, 2020.
Dated: March 25, 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.
25 Dale Street North
St. Paul, MN 55102
(651) 209-9760
(19-1083-FC01)



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By Channon Nordstrom and Russ Wilson



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON INTENT TO INCLUDE PROPERTY IN AN ORDERLY ANNEXATION AGREEMENT

To: The Public

The Blooming Prairie City Council will conduct a Public Hearing on Monday, April 13, 2020, at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers at the City Center located at 138 Highway Ave. South for the expressed purpose of considering the possible annexation of 6.23 acres on the East edge of the City of Blooming Prairie.

Said property is located in Dodge County, Minnesota, as Dodge County Tax Parcel ID 18.030.1600 pursuant to a proposed Orderly Annexation Agreement entered into by the City of Blooming Prairie and Westfield Township.

The PUBLIC is encouraged to attend.

3/25, 4/1



TURN OFF the television...

TURN ON THEIR MINDS!

Encourage your children to make reading the newspaper a part of their everyday routine for lifelong learning.

STEELE COUNTY TIMES
Always local, all the time.

Notice for Gravel Bids

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Blooming Prairie Township, Steele County, Minnesota, will meet at the Blooming Prairie Town Hall on April 21, 2020 at 7:00 PM to receive bids for the purchase of hauling 5,000 yards (more or less) of class 5 ¾ crushed gravel delivered anywhere in Blooming Prairie Township.

Bids must include proof of liability, workers compensation, equipment, price per yard and location of gravel. Gravel needs to be applied to specified roads by the deadline of July 1st guaranteed at the time of bidding.

The Board reserves the right to reject any and all bids

Jerry Wencl, Chairman | Missy Anderson, Clerk
Blooming Prairie Township

3/25, 4/1

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bptimes@frontiernet.net

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Dodge County Advantage

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PLATBOOKS 7 old Dodge County plat atlas books (1905-1960). Also, other southern Minnesota atlas books available. \$50-\$250 OBO. Call 507.450.5395 3/19-14-pd

DODGE CENTER APARTMENT FOR RENT. Two bedrooms includes heat, water, trash, on-site laundry and off-street parking. Available immediately. \$615/month. Call Aaron at 507.398.6899. 4/2T4

CLAREMONT RENTALS 2 bd apts open for May. Rent \$565 p/mo + elec. 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 4/2T4

KASSON RENTALS 1 & 2 bd smoke free apts open May! Rent based on income. Month to month leases & deposit payment plans. 507-398-6027 or 507-451-8524 www.lifestyleinc.net tdd 507-451-0704 Equal Housing Opportunity

FOR SALE

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We're looking for an enthusiast and driven person to build relationships and help other businesses grow through advertising sales and marketing opportunities. The right candidate will help our community newspaper, which includes a weekly newspaper, shopper, website and social media, grow our digital and newspaper platforms. We offer a variety of special section opportunities as well as a competitive commission plus base salary. Send your resume and letter of interest to Publisher Keith Hansen at keithhdc@kmtel.com.

DODGE COUNTY

INDEPENDENT

HELP WANTED

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Uncertain about the times?
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CHS

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Tommy (St. Charles) 507-251-8373
Jon (Ostrander & Grand Meadow) 507-259-3032

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► Cook

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► Dining Assistant

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Apply at: 800 5th Ave. NW, Kasson, MN - EOE

Employment Opportunity

We want to grow with you!

We're looking for an enthusiast and driven person to build relationships and help other businesses grow through advertising sales and marketing opportunities. The right candidate will help our community-owned newspaper group, which includes two weekly newspapers, a shopper, website and social media, grow our digital and newspaper platforms. We offer a variety of special section opportunities as well as high commission for sales and base salary. We have a flexible work environment. Send resume and letter of interest to Publisher Rick Bussler at brprick@frontier.com.

STEELE COUNTY Times

MINNESOTA ESSENTIAL NEED ACTIVITIES

Minnesotans may leave their homes only to perform any of the following activities:

• Health and safety activities, such as obtaining emergency services or medical supplies.

• Outdoor activities, such as walking, hiking, running, biking, hunting, or fishing.

• Obtain necessary supplies and services, such as getting groceries, gasoline, or carry-out.

• Essential and interstate travel, such as returning to a home from outside this state.

• Care of others, such as caring for a family member, friend, or pet in another household.

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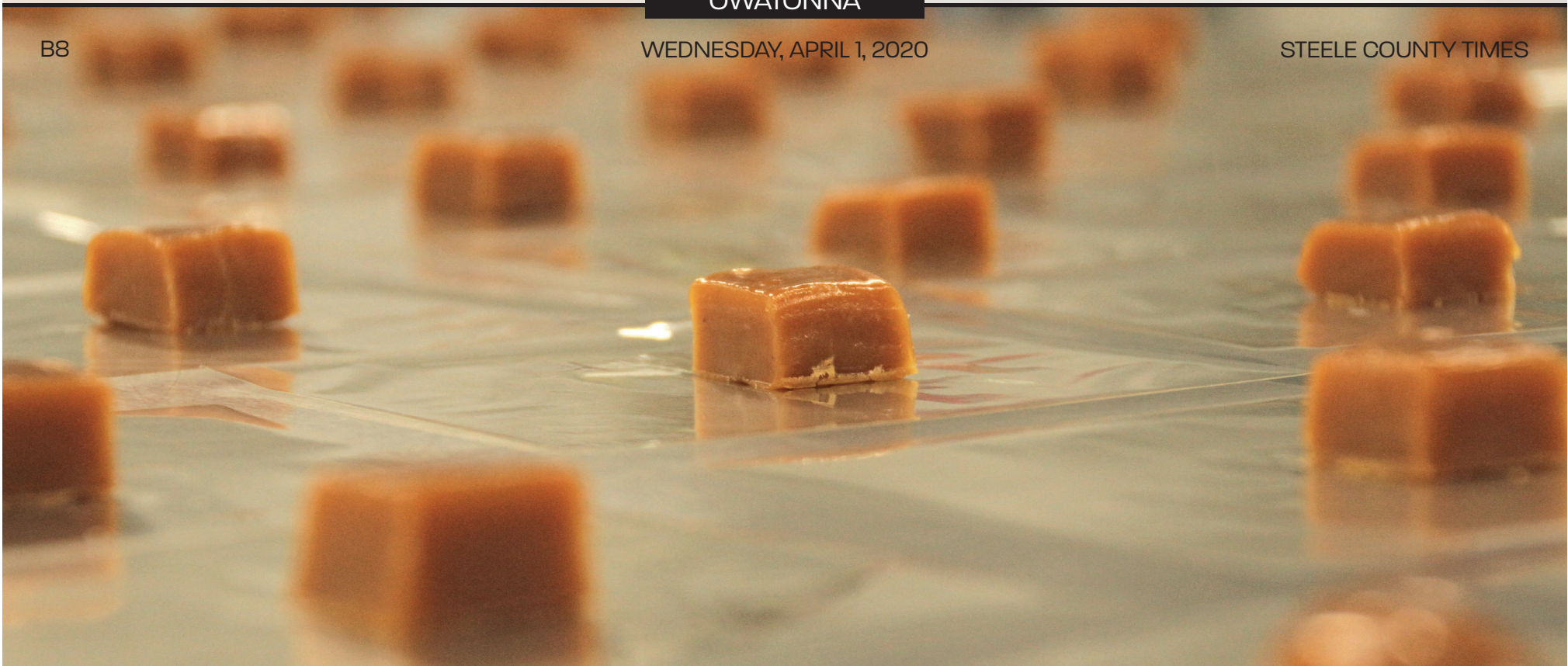
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The right blend for Curly Girlz

Candy maker whips up statewide honor

STORY AND PHOTOS BY RICK BUSSLER



Curly Girlz Candy founder and CEO Paula Trenda helps wrap 3,000 caramels to fulfill an order Friday at her candy store in downtown Owatonna. Trenda has been named the U.S. Small Business Person of the Year for Minnesota and will compete in the national competition later this fall.

Sugar-free candy isn't the only goodie being whipped up at a small candy store in downtown Owatonna. Paula Trenda has uncovered the right ingredients at her Curly Girlz Candy store to put her in the running for a prestigious national honor. Just last month she was selected as U.S. Small Business Person of the Year for Minnesota, a title that puts her in great company with 50 other finalists from all over the country. "I was very, very surprised," Trenda said after mixing up a batch of candy at her store on West Main Street. And, she added, "Very honored that the judges felt our business was that strong." She will compete for the national title later this year in Washington, D.C. It has been postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic. Trenda's path to this latest recognition came at the hands of a nomination by Marcia Haley, the SBA lending director for Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation in Owatonna. Haley has been working with Curly Girlz for several years. "They have made extra strides on their business,"

said Haley. "It's impressive how they have improved in so many ways." Since 2017 when Curly Girlz moved from Medford to Owatonna, Haley has noticed that the candy maker has "really blossomed." Haley calls Trenda's past two years "just amazing" with what she has accomplished. "She has a drive for this business," Haley points out. "She wanted to succeed and has done everything in her power to make it a success. She deserves all the honors." Trenda has worked in the business world for larger companies over the years. But, she admits, "I never felt I belonged in bigger companies." She says it was a matter of "growing and figuring out my passion." With a passion to cook and bake, Trenda's path to candy making began in junior high when she began experimenting with holiday candy making with an elderly neighbor. As she became busy with other activities, the candy making fell by the wayside during the rest of high school and college. Through many business travels, she rediscovered the art of candy making, and in particular artisan

"I was very, very surprised... very honored that the judges felt our business was that strong."

Paula Trenda
Curly Girlz Founder

chocolates from Europe. After getting married in 2003, she enrolled in the online Ecolechocolate School in British Columbia, Canada for six months. Friends and family members were always willing to be guinea pigs for her delicious classroom projects, truffles and caramels. She made treats for gifts and soon people were asking to make chocolates for them.

"Famous last words," Trenda relates from those who were on the receiving end of her goodies. "You should sell this and now I'm here selling this." In the fall of 2011, an on-line storefront was created to sell candies and chocolates for the holidays. In August 2014, Trenda took a big leap when she quit her full-time job as administrator at Sacred Heart Church and opened her

first retail space in Medford. About three years later she moved to Owatonna where she found larger production facilities and a small retail location. "It was a good choice to leave Sacred Heart and do this," Trenda says, adding with a chuckle, "I get to call the shots completely now." Last summer Curly Girlz transitioned to selling only sugar-free candies online. A small selection of sugared candies can be ordered through the retail store seasonally. In regards to the sugar-free emphasis, Trenda said, "I developed it for diabetics. I have some family members who are diabetics, and I wanted to do something for their stomachs." She went on to say, "It's a healthier alternative for families. This is a great option without all the sugar and won't make (kids) crazy." Trenda said the sugar-free candies have been a "a labor of love for six months playing with the right ingredients." She expects the company's growth to come from the sugar-free candies. In the coming years, Trenda wants to get her products into more specialty stores as well as high-end gro-

cers. She anticipates her sales to grow to more than \$2 million within a couple of years. Currently, the bulk of business for Curly Girlz comes through on-line sales. They are busy shipping out candies all over the place. Trenda has six employees to help her with the candy making. She attributes part of her success to customer service. "We are always willing to go to the next step to help customers," Even Trenda said. Curly Girlz, she said, also offers great hospitality. "We know what our customers want." Curly Girlz is normally open Monday-Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. However, with the statewide mandate to stay at home due to the coronavirus, the store will be closed until April 13. Despite the closure, Curly Girlz will be creating "gorgeous, fresh sugared" truffles, sea salt caramels, salted nut rolls and Easter eggs. They will be available by calling the store at 507-451-3396. The store will deliver to Owatonna free on April 2 and 3 as well as April 6 and 9. Curbside service is also available from March 30-April 10.

