



# STEELE COUNTY TV Time

Wednesday, February 24, 2021  
www.SteeleCountyTimes.com  
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

## DUST TO DUST

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Christians around the world marked the start of the Lenten season on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17. The Rev. James Starasinich of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Owatonna sprinkles ashes on the heads of parishioners symbolizing "from dust you came and from dust you will return" during Ash Wednesday services. St. Joseph's typically places ashes on the foreheads of parishioners, but chose to sprinkle the dust this year because of COVID-19 concerns. Lent is a 40-day season marked by repentance, fasting, reflection and ultimately the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. Easter will be celebrated April 4.

## Texas woes spike local natural gas rates

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

The impact of unusual winter storms slamming Texas is going to be felt locally through higher utility bills.

While area residents had reliable power to stay safe and warm during the recent stretch of unseasonably cold weather, natural gas prices dramatically

spiked the past week due to national demand issues, most notably originating out of Texas.

Roger Wareheim, general manager of Owatonna Public Utilities, called the occurrence "a very rare thing." As a result, he said residents could pay as much as eight times more than normal. However, Wareheim and his staff hope to develop a plan so that

the steep hike won't be passed onto consumers all at once.

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission called a special meeting on Tuesday to investigate the matter. Owatonna Public Utilities also met on Tuesday to determine how to proceed with the rates. OPU is solely responsible for setting local rates, according to Wareheim.

In Owatonna, natural gas prices usually peak at \$1 million for a single month during the winter months to service about 12,000 customers. OPU, Wareheim said, is facing a bill of \$12 million just for February. Last week, a couple of days reached \$2 million per day in natural gas costs.

"Nobody has ever seen this high of costs,"

Wareheim said. "Natural gases have never hit this price. Ever. The price got bid way up into crazy land."

The spike in costs caused OPU to issue a Peak Alert last week. The alert requested customers to reduce their natural gas consumption to control costs. Some of the suggestions

SEE TEXAS STORM, A5



Roger Wareheim

## District eyes return to school

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

After Gov. Tim Walz's press conference last week, Owatonna Superintendent Jeffery Elstad said he hopes to have secondary students back in school by March 8.

However, Elstad said returning to full-time, in-person learning is not a flip-of-the-switch decision. "There are a number of things that have to happen with that change in plans, so that is why we are not ready to set a date," Elstad said.

Following Walz's press conference, Elstad said that the OPS also sent out surveys to parents of secondary students to gather their feedback as they work toward a potential

SEE DISTRICT EYES, A3



Owatonna High School Senior Lane Versteeg speaks at Governor Tim Walz's Feb. 17 press conference in St. Paul.

## OHS senior ready for in-person school

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

Owatonna High School senior Lane Versteeg told Minnetonka last week that he is looking forward to ending the school year back in the classroom with his classmates.

Versteeg, who spoke at Gov. Tim Walz's press conference on Wednesday, Feb. 17, shared his experience as a student going through the pandemic. Walz had just announced plans to let middle and high school students return to the class-

room for in-person learning as early as this week.

The governor also said he expects all schools to offer some form of in-person learning by March 8.

"I had all but given up on my Senior year," Versteeg said. "I had accepted it as lost."

"With the Governor's new direction, I'm eager for the opportunity to share the walls of my high school with my classmates one last time," said Versteeg.

Versteeg, who was introduced by Minne-

SEE OHS SENIOR, A3

## Sheriff's sergeant named top cop

BY DEB FLEMMING  
NEWS EDITOR

The Exchange Club of Steele County named Sr. Sgt. Bill Youngquist of the Steele County Sheriff's Office as "Peace Officer of the Year" during its regular meeting on Friday.

Youngquist began his career in law enforcement in 1997 as a patrol officer with the sheriff's office. Today, he supervises the daily activities of the deputies in the department and performs all of the duties of a deputy.

"I didn't go into the military and wanted to serve in some way," said Youngquist.

During his 23 years with the department, the most significant change is in the

SEE SHERIFF'S SERGEANT, A5

**Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.**  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
johndoercpa.com

We understand small business because we are a small business

- 314 E. Main St. | Blooming Prairie 507-583-7528
- 685 W. Bridge St., Suite 6 | Owatonna 507-451-9136
- 133 N. Broadway | New Richland 507-465-8100

\$1.00 | Volume 129, No. 31



507-583-4431 | bptimes@frontiernet.net

### INSIDE

Opinions..... A2	Hometown Living..... A8	Farm Living..... B9
Coronavirus Coverage..... A3	Calendar..... A11	Owatonna Schools Page..... B11
Public Safety..... A4	Community..... A12	Public Notices..... B12
History..... A5	Faith..... A13	Classifieds..... B13
Senior Living..... A6, A7	Sports..... B2-B5	

### AREA DEATHS

Felix Wochnick, 96, Owatonna  
Mary Lerberg, 76, Ellendale  
Stephanie Miller, 38, BP  
Norman L. Rieck, 76, Owatonna

Serving  
Blooming Prairie  
and Steele County  
since 1893



## OUR VIEW

### Too many of our neighbors are hungry

Many Steele County residents benefit from programs designed to ease their hunger, including the federal program that buys food from farmers and distributes it through charitable organizations such as food banks.

Just last week, 1,200 families received a box of a pre-packaged box containing 22 pounds of food, including 5 pounds of meat, 5 pounds of dairy, 12 pounds of produce, and a gallon of milk.

Community Pathways partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the food giveaway. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough food for all who needed it. We aren't surprised.

According to data from Feeding America, one in 12 Minnesotans, including 1 in 8 Minnesota children, struggle from hunger. Fact is, many Minnesotans don't know where their next meal will come from.

The Wilder Foundation recently reported that since the beginning of COVID-19, many more Minnesotans face financial insecurity, bringing growing concerns about putting food on the table or making food budgets last throughout the month. For some, food insecurity is a new experience. For others, the pandemic has only added to the stress, uncertainty, and financial insecurity they were already facing.

Thank goodness for the individuals, churches and other charitable organizations that do what they can to ease their neighbors' hunger.

Organizers of last week's food distribution event encourage those who were unable to get a pre-packaged box of food to contact Community Pathways to register for its Marketplace program, which provides a 10-day supply of various foods, including: dairy, grains, vegetables, fruits, protein including frozen meat, personal care items, and many other choices.

And for those who want to help, we encourage them to consider a donation to Community Pathways, itself. Funds are needed to keep existing programs in place and expand services.

In early March, Community Pathways will kick off a \$2.6 million capital campaign, born out of a need to expand its facilities to meet the community's growing needs.

By doubling its existing space, from 6,000 square feet to 12,000 square feet, the organization will accept and store more food and clothing than it can manage at its current facility.

For more information on Community Pathways, its capital campaign or to register for the campaign's kick-off gala, visit [www.communitypathwayssc.org](http://www.communitypathwayssc.org).

## Letters to the Editor

We encourage readers to share their views on issues of community interest. Letters must be signed, no longer than 275 words and typewritten or clearly printed. Writers must include their address and a daytime phone number for verification. Phone numbers and street addresses will not be published; your name and city of residence will be published. Letters will be edited for clarity, grammar and length and may be published in print and electronic forms. Submit a letter by email to [scletters@gmail.com](mailto:scletters@gmail.com); or by mail to the Steele County Times, attn. Letters to the Editor, P.O.Box 247, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917.



**Hot Pursuit**  
RICK BUSSLER

Donnavon Eaker doesn't have time for negative people, even if they may consider themselves a friend.

As she fights the battle of her life with non-small cell lung cancer, Eaker, of Ellendale, is quickly finding out whom she wants to be around and whom she doesn't.

After her diagnosis came out late last year, a friend of Eaker's reached out to her and implied, "Well, you're dead."

It's not the right thing to leave Eaker or any cancer fighter thinking.

"You have no right to take away my hope," Eaker said in response to her friend. "I stay away from him. I will not be around negative people."

Eaker is determined to lick the cancer. And she appears to be well on her way to accomplishing that feat.

Other friends know she is a fighter.

"Donnavon is no stranger to the pain that a cancer diagnosis

## 'No right to take my hope away'

can bring to anyone, any age, anywhere," said Tamzen Johnson, a longtime friend who has been helping Eaker with rides to the Mayo Clinic. "She lost the love of her life to this dreaded disease after a courageous battle. Steve was a very strong man."

Those around Eaker, especially her children, know how she has a lot of fight in her, Johnson said.

Johnson sees how Eaker's greatest battle is keeping herself from being around negative people. "Her faith, her family and the friends in her community keep her focused and positive," Johnson said, adding Eaker is thankful for the many ways people have reached out with kindness.

During Eaker's most recent MRI and blood tests in early February, she came away hearing the best news ever: "The tumor is shrinking."

Cancer had been discovered in the brain, bones, liver, lymph nodes and a tumor in the lung.

She's even taking her doctors by surprise.

"They are just overwhelmed at how well I have responded to the treatments," said Eaker,

who has only had three treatments since the start of her journey in early December. "They told me, 'we are astounded. We can't believe how well your body has responded,'" she said.

As the doctors shared the good news with her, she kept waiting for the "buts" to come. However, there were no "buts" used by the doctors.



Donnavon Eaker

She travels to Mayo Clinic in Rochester every three weeks. "You don't have a wonderful experience going to Rochester, but it's better than a bad one," Eaker said.

Despite the good prognosis, things haven't exactly been a picnic in the park for Eaker. She is taking steroids, which help alleviate nausea but mess with her sleeping patterns. There are some nights where

she can only sleep for three hours, which, of course, lead her to be tired during parts of the day.

Eaker said she feels guilty about doing as well as she has been. She feels like one of the lucky ones.

"I believe my faith is stronger than my fear," she said. "We will all have our time, but God is not done with me yet."

She knows many people have been praying for her

"I am feeling very blessed," she said.

In between the cancer treatments, Eaker keeps busy with bookwork at the award-winning meat market that she and her late husband Steve built for almost 50 years. She admits some days she pushes too much and has to watch herself even closer.

"I just keep plugging away," Eaker said. "I am staying in my little bubble at home."

Eaker is adamant that cancer doesn't need to be a death sentence.

"I'm not ready to give it up," she says. "I will fight this."

Eaker's fight wages on even if it means going in hot pursuit of shedding negative people from her life.



## It happens at least once a day



**Reflections**  
HOWARD LESTRUD

"Hey Judy! Where are my glasses?"

That's a refrain that is echoed every day by me, Howard.

Eye glasses, meaning regular glasses, readers and other optical aids, like contact lenses, are my life line. Without them, my actual functioning is put in jeopardy.

"Hey Howard," Judy replies: "They're on the top of your head." She also says, "Howard, they are tucked into the front of your shirt."

I'm positive that many of us are depen-

dent on our eyewear and are disabled when we cannot find our seeing eyes.

Since being called "four eyes" in fourth grade when I got my first pair of eye glasses, the ones with the wrap around the ear bows, I have been vision dependent on eye glasses.

I vividly remember the hundreds of times of times I've lost my glasses and had to depend on my family to find the lost glasses.

I also remember going to the school bus and being yelled at by a classmate: "Howard, over here." As I turned around a snow ball caught me in the right eye and immediately broke my glasses. Now, I was really handicapped, with one lens broken, and pieces of glass in my eye.

My consoling mom helped remove the glass pieces from my eye. The next day, she took me to the eye doctor to get a new pair of glasses.

My vision has always been poor, and I monitored my gradual deterioration of sight.

In my early adult years when Judy and I lived in the Twin Cities, I doctored with an ophthalmologist named Dr. Sabina Zimering. She was a survivor of the Holocaust. She was the one who diagnosed my migraine headaches.

After going through many changes of prescriptions with Dr. Zimering, I graduated to contact lenses. Actually, my brother-in-law Darrell Hansen of Blooming Prairie recommended I try contact lenses.

I agreed to try contacts and immediately

fell in love with them. As I continued to approach old age, I found it necessary to buy "cheaters," or in other words, "readers."

After having one cataract removed, it was necessary for me to still wear one contact in my left eye. I was also given a prescription of prism glasses to help me with double vision.

Now, I think you can begin to SEE, that I am really dependent on optical wear.

I absolutely need my contact lens or distance glasses for every day life. I use my "readers" for reading the paper, or watching TV, and most importantly, for working on the computer.

"Judy, have you seen my glasses today?" I ask in a panic. "Howard, Howard, I get tired of you misplacing your

glasses every day," she responds.

Judy is always my savior in helping me locate my glasses. I have found them in my slippers, in my regular shoes and between the cushions on the couch.

My usual problem comes when I set my eyewear down in a place I normally don't put them. I then have to retrace my steps and hopefully locate them.

I'm often on the phone with a store where I left my glasses. "No, they're not here," the shopkeeper replies. The hunt returns to the house where I frantically resume the search.

There have been times when I have not located the glasses, putting them in a location outside the house. I then go to the store and buy a new pair of "readers."

I have often placed my glasses in a case in the frontal pouch of my sweat shirt. I also have tucked them deep into my sweat pants and when reaching into my front pockets, I say to Judy, "Guess what, I have my glasses in my pants pocket."

It's a good practice to have extra pairs of glasses, especially "readers" all over the house and in the car. Then, I am protected all of the time.

"Where did you leave them this time?" Judy asks as she can see I appear to be searching for my glasses once again. "There they are," I reply gleefully as I find my "readers" on top of the clothes dryer.

It's a daily routine for many of us to be hunting for our missing eye glasses. Get used to it.



Founded in 1893  
Bussler Publishing, Inc.  
[www.SteeleCountyTimes.com](http://www.SteeleCountyTimes.com)  
Email: [bptimes@frontiernet.net](mailto:bptimes@frontiernet.net)

USPS 058-340  
Published weekly on  
Wednesdays  
Postmaster: Send  
address changes to:

Steele County Times  
P.O. Box 247  
Blooming Prairie,  
MN 55917  
Phone: 507-583-4431

**ETHICS:** The Steele County Times editorial staff strives to present the news in a fair and accurate manner. Please bring any grievances against the Steele County Times to the attention of the Managing Editor.

Publisher .....Rick Bussler  
News Editor ..... Deb Flemming  
Office Manager ..... Sherrie Pechan  
Staff Writer .....Alex Nuehring  
Staff Writer ..... Mitchell Breuer  
Staff Writer ..... Chris Baldwin

**DEADLINES**  
News: Noon Fridays.  
Web: 11 p.m. (Daily)  
Advertising: 4 p.m.  
Thursdays.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**  
Steele, Dodge,  
Freeborn & Mower ..... \$49  
Elsewhere in State ..... \$52  
Out of state ..... \$56

A state and national award winning weekly



**MINNESOTA  
NEWSPAPER  
ASSOCIATION**

2021-16 awards  
2020-9 state awards  
2019-7 state awards  
2018-6 state and 4 national awards  
2017-2 state and 3 national awards  
2016-8 state and 6 national awards  
2015-7 state and 4 national awards  
2014-3 state and 3 national awards  
2013-7 state and 2 national awards  
2012-2 state awards  
2011-4 national awards

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



# COVID vaccine hits yet another delay

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

Dealing with the challenges of a pandemic has been tough enough for health officials. Now you can add an unusual winter storm that hit the southern part of the U.S. to that list.

Public Health Director Amy Caron reported Monday that the vaccine shipments have been delayed because of the weather in Texas and other southern states. And that is further delaying people locally getting their vaccinations.

"It has just added one more wrench into our plans," said Caron.

According to Caron, Steele County was expected to receive 300 doses this week, while

Dodge County was slated for 100 doses. Even with the 300 doses, it still will not cover the 700 doses needed to finish vaccinating childcare providers and school personnel, she said.

Caron expects it will be at least another two weeks before they can move to the 65 and older group for vaccinations. "It just depends on how many doses we get," she said.

So far, Steele County has given 1,302 first doses while Dodge County has vaccinated 1,012 people.

In all, 728,081 Minnesotans have received at least one dose and 286,543 had completed their two-dose series, according to state officials. The seven-day rolling average of doses

administered is now 29,705, a pace that has accelerated since Gov. Tim Walz took action to increase the rate of vaccinations across the state.

Last week, the state launched the Minnesota COVID-19 Vaccine Connector, an online tool to help residents connect to the network of where and when vaccine is offered.

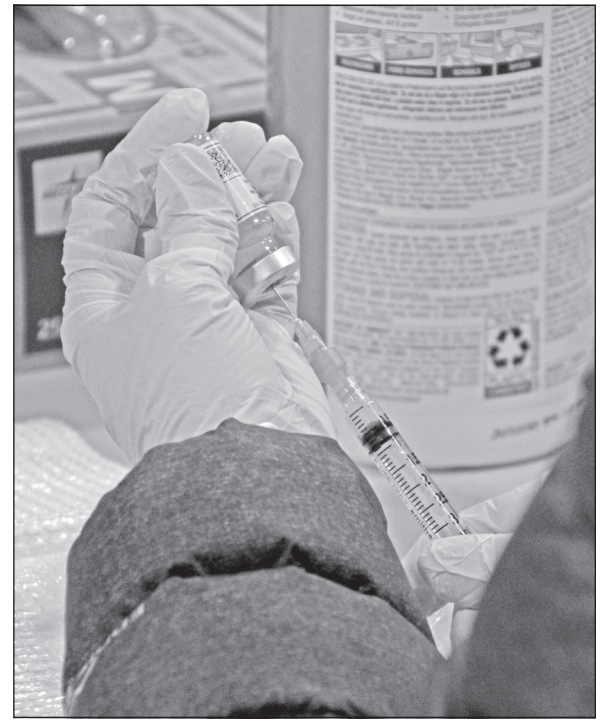
While the vaccine shortage lingers on, Caron is happy to report that the new cases are the lowest

in months. Within the past week, there were 24 new cases, bringing the county's total to 2,971 with 11 deaths.

Dodge County had 22 new cases and now sits at 1,511 and four deaths.

"It's all trending in the right direction," Caron said. "We hope we stay on that path and not have any spikes."

Another piece of good news is that no new strains of COVID-19 have shown up in either Steele or Dodge counties, Caron said.



FILE PHOTO

Steele County public health officials say it will be at least two weeks before they can start vaccinating the 65 and older group.

## COVID-19 VACCINE WATCH

Steele: 1,302  
Dodge: 1,012

Source: Steele County Public Health

# County gets more requests than funds available

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

Officials in Steele County will have their hands full in the next few weeks determining which businesses will get a small amount of COVID funding.

The county has received 165 applicants requesting \$5.3 million of relief, according to County Administrator Scott Golberg.

There is one slight problem, however, as Steele County has only \$715,000 to give out.

When the county announced the additional funding in January, it did not cap the amount businesses could request. Officials left the grant amount open-ended to see what kind of need existed in the county.

"Obviously, there seems to be a need,"

said Golberg. "There has been a lot of impact from the pandemic, both direct and indirect, across many different industries and sectors of business."

Golberg said a committee will begin the task of determining which businesses have the greatest needs and have experienced the most significant losses. He added the greatest priority will be given to

companies shut down by the governor's executive orders, followed by others affected directly or indirectly by COVID-19.

Golberg said the county intends to award grants in larger chunks to fewer businesses rather than giving everyone a little bit. "We want to make it impactful rather than spreading it thin," he said.

The \$715,000 was given to Steele County

by the Minnesota Legislature. This latest round is different than the first grant awarded last fall as part of the federal CARES act. Steele County received \$4.4 million during the initial grant, with \$641,000 going directly to businesses and nonprofits.

The latest grants should be awarded by March 15, Golberg said. The grants will be determined by a com-

mittee consisting of Golberg, Daniel McIntosh, county attorney, Cathy Piepho, county treasurer and Jim Abbe and Greg Krueger, county commissioners.

Golberg said he realizes some businesses will not receive money from this grant, but he said he expects more relief to come to counties and local governments from the third COVID relief package.

## Blooming Prairie High School ready for in-person learning

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
STAFF WRITER

An anticipated move from hybrid learning to in-person learning four days a week was the main talking point at the Blooming Prairie School Board's meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 16. Superintendent Chris Staloch said a lot of school districts are moving to in-person learning at secondary schools.

He said he'd already discussed the transition with the administration team and the high school staff.

"We're going to continue to plan and communicate with parents our timeline for what we hope for Blooming Prairie Public Schools moving forward. I think, as we move there, it will really look like four days a week where our stu-

dents are in-person with Wednesdays still being a distance-learning day," he said. "Soon, as early as this week, we're going to do our best to communicate with parents what we want to see and where we want to go."

However, having all students in the building on the same days has its drawbacks.

"The biggest concern all along is the contact tracing that we'll have to do and the potential quarantining that will happen with students. Right now, in our hybrid model, we don't have to do that," he said. "When you bring back everybody, we will not be able to provide the six feet of social distancing, we'll be probably more on three feet and then we will have to do some contact tracing."

On the bright side, Staloch reported that 70%

of the Blooming Prairie staff have received their first vaccine shot and 87% of the staff has either received their first shot or been offered it.

"By early March, we will have a great majority of our high school staff who have had both rounds of the vaccine," he said.

Regardless of how many staff receive their vaccines, students still have the right to continue distance-learning.

"We may have some that opt to go distance-learning because they don't want to be in a more crowded classroom," Staloch said.

While students have that choice, he said he believes students are better suited if they're learning in-person.

The next school board meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Monday, Mar. 15.

## Medford students to be back in classroom by March 22

BY CHRIS BALDWIN  
STAFF WRITER

All students in the Medford School District would be able to return to school for in-person learning four days a week beginning Monday, March 22. While elementary students in Medford have been in school throughout the year, grades 7 through 12 have been using a hybrid approach.

On Monday, the district released a plan to bring seventh through 12th graders back in phases beginning March 1. The last students to return to in-person learning would be ninth and 10th graders.

"We will be bringing more students back in the coming weeks on the heels of the governor's

recent changes to the Safe Learning Plan," Medford Superintendent Mark Ristau said. Fridays will continue to be distance-learning days.

Medford School currently has one adult COVID case in quarantine. According to Ristau, 98% of the district's staff will be eligible to get the vaccine and 10 staff members plan to do so.

"There's a lot of kids chomping at the bit to get back but there are some who have gotten used to learning online," Principal Kevin Babcock said. "My staff has done an extremely good job with distance learning and hybrid learning, which has made it easy for the kids to adapt."

"The staff and families have done

a good job and it has been a better year than some have anticipated," Babcock said before admitting that in-person learning will be a positive swing for the school. "Still, it's time to have the kids back."

Medford School will be holding Snow Week this year after having to forgo it last year due to COVID-19. "I think that's a testament to most of our staff and I'm very excited for it," Babcock said.

Snow Week will be held this week with Medford students participating in a myriad of COVID-safe activities. "Based on when the dodgeball signup went out, and the level of participation we had, I'd say it's pretty significant for some kids," Babcock said of Snow Week.

## OHS SENIOR: ready for in-person school FROM A1

sota's Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan, said there were times he believed that his entire senior year would be relegated to a strictly online format.

Versteeg said that he did not know that he would even be speaking at the press conference until the day before when Owatonna Public Schools Superintendent Jeffery Elstad asked him.

"When Mr. Elstad called me Tuesday night asking if I would be willing to do this, I was honored that he considered me for this opportunity," Versteeg said. "Of course, I was nervous to be representing high schoolers across the state of Min-

nesota, but I was more pleased to be able to share a little bit about what it has been like as a senior in this strange year."

Below are Versteeg's full comments from the press conference:

"As I ended my Junior year online, I couldn't help but be excited for the beginning of my Senior year. At the time, there wasn't a doubt in my mind that my classmates and I would be walking the halls of our high school together this fall. And although some exciting month of my Junior year had been interrupted, I was still hopeful for the experiences my next year of high school had

in store. Little did I know, however, just how serious this pandemic would be. As COVID become more and more real, my expected return to school grew further and further away.

By last year September, I had all but given up on my Senior year. I had accepted it as lost. And although I am grateful for the countless hours my teachers have put in to make distance or hybrid learning as good as possible, nothing can replace the memories made with friends during high school.

I was longing for just one more bus ride with my teammates. Just one more rush of antici-

ation before stepping on to a concert stage. And hoping not just for a Senior prom, but a first prom.

Now, as vaccines roll out and the end of this pandemic feels closer than ever before, I'm reminded of the excitement I was experiencing 12 months ago. With the Governor's new direction, I'm eager for the opportunity to share the walls of my high school with my classmates one last time. And although the end of my Senior year may not be as traditional as I had hoped, I know that my grade will get to experience it in the most important way possible. Together."

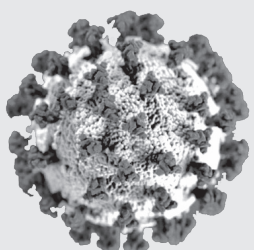
## DISTRICT EYES: return to school FROM A1

return. The school will then pair the input received with these surveys with the guidance that they have been given with the Department of Education and Department of Health and from there work on what they believe to be the best possible plan moving forward.

With all of that, Elstad said he hopes the district will have a more concrete idea of its plan to share

with the public by Thursday.

Owatonna is currently teaching high school students in the hybrid model, meaning they are now coming to school twice a week and doing distance learning three times a week. Elementary students are attending school on a full-time, in-person basis. And, some students and families have chosen to go distance learning full-time this school year.



World..... 111,000,000  
Deaths ..... 2,470,000  
Recovered..... 62,900,000  
U.S. .... 28,200,000  
Deaths ..... 499,000  
Recovered..... 16,630,000

## COVID-19 UPDATE

MN ..... 480,000  
Deaths ..... 6,501  
Recovered..... 447,420

Steele..... 2,971  
Deaths ..... 11  
Recovered..... 2,877

Dodge ..... 1,511  
Deaths ..... 4  
Recovered..... 1,455

Freeborn..... 2,757  
Deaths ..... 24  
Recovered.....  
Mower ..... 3,990  
Deaths ..... 31  
Recovered.....

AS OF FEB. 22, 2021



**BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT** THEFT: On Feb. 14, a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 300 block of Lemond Road SW at 5:11 a.m.

# Courts to partially open up with in-person trials

In-person criminal jury trials for all case types will resume in state district courts effective March 15 under a new statewide order issued by Minnesota Supreme Court Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea. "We are gradually increasing in-person activities in court facilities in a safe and responsible manner that will allow the courts to fulfill our constitutional obligation, while we continue to do all that we can to protect public health and safety," said Gildea. In-person criminal jury trials in all case types may commence March 15, as long as the court adheres to the Minnesota Judicial Branch COVID-19 Preparedness Plan and approved local jury trial plans. These plans, which are consistent

with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Minnesota Department of Health, address changes to facilities and protocols that must be followed to meet social distancing and public health and safety needs. All other proceedings, including civil jury trials, will be conducted remotely through April 30, unless the chief judge of the judicial district grants an exception. To help move civil disputes forward, the Minnesota Judicial Branch will soon launch a pilot project that will authorize approved courts to conduct civil jury trials via remote hearing technology, if the judge and all parties to the case agree. The pilot project is anticipated to begin in late March,

with additional courts being approved for remote civil jury trials in the months ahead. The new order extends provisions that were included in a November 20, 2020 order that limit in-person activities in court facilities. These include: **• Remote Hearings:** Hearings across all case types will be conducted remotely to the extent possible. Exceptions may be granted by the district chief judge for in-person proceedings under limited circumstances. **• Appellate Courts:** Proceedings in appeals pending before the Minnesota Court of Appeals and the Minnesota Supreme Court will continue as scheduled by those courts. **• Civil Commitment:** Proceedings that are before the Com-

mitment Appeal Panel shall continue as scheduled, and be conducted remotely to the extent possible. **• Case Filings:** Courts will continue to accept filings in all case types. **• Public Service Counters:** At least one public service counter in each county, and one in the appellate courts, will be accessible between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday, excluding court holidays. Counter service can be provided remotely, by appointment, or in person. **• Self-Help Services:** Self-help services will be conducted by appointment, remotely, or by telephone. District courts may be contacted directly by phone or email for more information on their operations.

## CRIME BRIEF

### Austin man accused of sexually assaulting child

A man faces sexual assault charges in connection with an incident with a child. Phillip Martinez, 39, of Austin has been charged with fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct in Steele County District Court.



**Phillip Martinez**

Owatonna Police took a report of a sexual assault involving a child on Feb. 14. The victim had stayed with a family in which Martinez had taken the child to Cabela's. After they went shopping together, Martinez allegedly sexually assaulted the child in the vehicle. After the initial incident, the victim received text messages from Martinez that were inappropriate, according to police. In an interview with police, Martinez admitted to touching the victim and trying to kiss her. He also told police that he knew the child's age and made a mistake trying to kiss her, police said.

## COURT NEWS Steele County

The following case was heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 8 with Judge Karen R. Duncan presiding: Darin L. Waldhauser, 47, Winona, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of cocaine or methamphetamine. He was sentenced to \$325, 120 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, psychological evaluation, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of firearms and 5 years of supervised probation. The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 8 – 14:

### BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mitchell K. Baran, 30, Minneapolis, speeding, \$125; Amanda M. Barrett, 37, Austin, hands free violation, no insurance and suspended license, \$525; Divad D. Bellikka, 19, Austin, speeding and invalid license, \$225; Darnell D. Carpenter, 28, Faribault, revoked license and prohibited passing, \$325; Logan C. Cox, 24, Austin, revoked license, expired tabs and no insurance, \$505; Joel P. Donaldson, 47, Riceville, IA, revoked license, \$275; Tristan D. Eppler, 22, suspended license and no insurance, \$475; Eric J. Fisher, 37, Blooming Prairie, assault, \$175, no contact with victim and 1 year of supervised probation; Ismael Garcia-Rojas, 67, Austin, invalid license and no insurance, \$375; Kiara D. Gills, 22, Austin, revoked license, \$275; Robert J. Hejhal, 56, West St. Paul, speeding, no insurance and revoked license, \$515; Bonnie M. Lavell, 39, Osage, IA, suspended license and stop sign, \$325; Kevin D. Lee, 28, Austin, revoked license, \$275; Jabier M. Martinez, 32, Austin, invalid license, \$175; Joseph D. Meyer, 19, Owatonna, expired tabs and no insurance, \$305; Jeremiah T. Morgan, 36, Hastings, revoked license, \$275; Alexis A. Murillo Mata, 24, Owatonna, suspended license and no insurance, \$475; Sara B. Robertson, 35, Blooming Prairie, speeding, \$125; David M. Schroeder, 28, Austin, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Jennifer M. Sjolín, 36, Nevis, expired tabs, \$105; Noah D. Skattebo, 42, Austin, revoked license, \$275; Janice E. Stafford, 56, Austin, invalid license and no insurance, \$375; Khanthee Xiong, 44, St.

### MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Tiffany A. Albright, 30, Cottage Grove, speeding, \$135; Shadije Aliu, 22, Ottumwa, IA, speeding, \$135; Thomas J. Allard, 42, Apple Valley, speeding, \$125; Kalen N. Ayers, 20, Ventura, IA, speeding, \$115; Lizbeth Borrego Carlos, 30, Medford, speeding, \$125; Diamond M. Brendle, 21, Austin, speeding, \$135; Edward E. Canfield, 21, Maple Grove, speeding and suspended license, \$335; Tierney A. Carter, 21, Owatonna, speeding, \$125; Angela N. Chable, 34, Rochester, speeding, \$125; Jorge I. Colon Bermudez, 49, Phoenix, AZ, speeding and seat belt, \$160; Jeron M. Davis, 26, Prior Lake, speeding and revoked license, \$415; Agatha D. Dennis, 27, Yeadon, PA, speeding and no insurance, \$415; Melissa J. Fazzone, 48, Sarasota, FL, speeding, \$125; Erin E. Fitzgerald, 20, Spring, TX, speeding, \$135; Luis E. Flores Gomez, 30, Des Moines, IA, no license, \$175; Demarco R. Flowers, 37, Minneapolis, speeding, \$115; William J. Forrest, 32, Faribault, revoked license, \$275; Hunter R. Fugate, 25, Northfield, cancelled license, stay of adjudication, \$80 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Jay A. Geisthardt, 35, Rochester, speeding, \$125; Kierra A. Gentry, 27, Harrison Township, MI, speeding, \$135; Corey J. Gilbertson, 21, Medford, revoked license and speeding, \$315; Jeerome A. Gitters Jr., 27, Chicago, IL, speeding, \$215; Vincent F. Guggisberg, 28, Owatonna, no license and no insurance, \$375; Nicole M. Hansen, 29, Alexandria, speeding, \$275; Jadelyn H. Hanson, 24, Crystal, speeding, \$125; Oscar S. Herrera, 44, Torrance, CA, no insurance, \$275; Jackie Jackson, 26, Chaska, speeding, \$115; Latrayvion W. Johnson, 30, Coon Rapids, revoked license, \$275; Jade E. Jones, 25, Columbus, MS, speeding, \$125; Akshay S. Kapade, 26, Forest City, IA, speeding, \$115; Colleen M. Knoxsah, 41, Hastings, no license, \$175; Win Ko, 42, St. Paul, school bus stop arm violation, \$81; Michael S. Krohn, 37, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Liliana Marin Salinas, 37, Claremont, speeding and no license, \$315; Martha Martinez de Zuniga, 43, Eagle Lake, speeding, \$215; Tyler J. McPherson, 24, Fort Dodge, IA, speeding, \$135; Lorenzo Mendoza-Barrios, 30, Albert Lea, revoked license and no license, \$375; Saleeban B.

Mohamed, 31, Faribault, speeding, \$125; Kanilia T. Moore, 23, Minneapolis, speeding, no insurance and no license, \$435; Dea J. Morey Foster, 27, Golden Valley, speeding and no license, \$475; Darren E. Morrison, 35, Austin, no license and no motorcycle endorsement, \$225; Elijah C. Muldrow, 26, Brooklyn Center, speeding, \$275; Maryan A. Musse, 24, Savage, speeding, \$115; Jabir H. Noor, 21, Faribault, speeding and revoked license, \$415; Agwa O. Obang, 21, Austin, speeding, \$215; Zachary C. Orth, 33, West Concord, cancelled license, stay of adjudication, \$75, comply with Ignition Interlock and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Daniel P. Parrott, 29, Waseca, speeding and no license, \$475; Feras B. Ramadan, 26, St. Paul, speeding, \$375; Kpormah T. Rennie, 42, Robbinsdale, speeding, \$125; Jenna N. Rieke, 21, Rochester, speeding, \$125; Keyasha R. Rogers, 24, Minneapolis, speeding, \$125; Katrina C. Ross, 30, St. Paul, revoked license, \$275; Clare M. Sharpe, 18, Plymouth, speeding, \$115; Katherine L. Sloat, 32, Leander, TX, speeding, \$215; Jeffrey A. Smith, 42, Minneapolis, revoked license, \$275; Carlos G. Soriano, 42, Burnsville, suspended license, \$275; Michael R. Vogel, 37, Bloomington, speeding, \$135; Shanique A. Williams, 23, New Brighton, revoked license, \$275; Jerry Zlaty, 24, Des Moines, IA, no license, \$175.

### OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Molly J. Anderson, 43, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275; Maritza Ares, 55, Owatonna, failure to stop for school bus, stay of adjudication, diversion program and 2 years of supervised probation; David Barajas, 28, Owatonna, revoked license and stop sign, \$325; Anthony J. Brown, 53, New Richland, possession of marijuana, \$125; Darel K. Brown, 27, Chicago, IL, invalid license, \$175; Keton C. Brown, 22, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Daniel Cuellar, 36, Owatonna, suspended license, no insurance and vehicle signals violation, \$515; Samuel L. Davidson, 54, Dodge Center, failure to obey traffic control device, \$125; Theodore A. Decker, 22, Waltham, assault, stay of adjudication, \$1,240, no alcohol or controlled substance use, cognitive skill training, chemical assessment, no contact with victim, diversion program and 18 months of supervised probation; Lauren M. Dexter, 38, New Richland, suspended

license, \$275; Jeremy S. Evenson, 38, Bricelyn, suspended license, \$275; Stetson P. Fox, 34, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Mitchell R. Geiger, 25, Owatonna, open bottle and no insurance, \$375; Vincent F. Guggisberg, 28, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Jose L. Gutierrez, 20, Owatonna, speeding, no insurance and revoked license, \$535; Brandon A. Hendrickson, 21, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Hannah R. Hesprich, 18, Owatonna, hands free violation and child passenger restraint system violation, \$175; Jody A. Johns, 43, Byron, revoked license, \$275; Justin R. Kremmin, 33, Owatonna, cancelled license, stay of adjudication, \$30, comply with Ignition Interlock, 8 hours of community service and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Joshua J. Larson, 35, Pine City, revoked license, \$275; Kevin A. LeClaire, 27, Anoka, revoked license, \$275; Gary L. Luedtke, 56, Morristown, DWI, \$306, 2 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, attend MADD impact panel and 2 years of supervised probation; Cesar R. Martinez, 27, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Luis Mercado, 30, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Bisharo A. Mohammed, 30, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Kanilia T. Moore, 23, Minneapolis, invalid license and no insurance, \$375; Jaimie K. Nin, 30, Owatonna, obstruct legal process, \$125, psychiatric evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Blake D. Oakland, 29, Medford, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Mason S. Oland, 20, Owatonna, open bottle, underage possession of alcohol, possession of marijuana and minor consumption, \$425; Ashley M. Padilla, 29, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Pedro L. Padilla, 47, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Arletha J. Powell, 29, Waseca, speeding and revoked license, \$315; Jose Prado Barajas, 33, Owatonna, theft, \$125; Reinaldo Quesada, 45, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Sherri M. Rainone, 58, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Elizabeth G. Ramirez, 48, Owatonna, speeding, \$215; Daniel S. Ringeisen, 31, Claremont, expired license and expired tabs, \$205; Luis M. Rocha, 36, revoked license, \$275; Andrew J. Roseland, 38, Owatonna, DWI, \$400, 2 days in

county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, 30 hours of community service and 1 year of supervised probation; Pal G. Ruach, 30, Anchorage, AK, invalid license, \$175; Michelle R. Rugger, 38, Waseca, speeding and no insurance, \$315; Derek M. Schroht, 21, Ellendale, speeding, \$135; Olivia P. Schute, 24, Owatonna, revoked license and speeding, \$315; Tyler S. Severson, 20, Owatonna, speeding, \$125; Leslie R. Shawback, 60, Blooming Prairie, cancelled license, stay of adjudication, \$50 and 2 years of supervised probation; Narkiesha I. Shepard, 29, Burnsville, theft, \$799.94, 30 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Susan M. Simon, 57, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Rika L. Skogen, 29, Faribault, no insurance, \$275; Wade M. Stanley, 48, Owatonna, cancelled license, \$250 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Ross E. Timlin, 36, Faribault, suspended license and no insurance, \$475; Jaikyra M. Tyson, 21, Albert Lea, speeding, \$115; Heather M. Walters, 45, Waseca, revoked license, \$275; Nicholas J. Ward, 27, Owatonna, violation of order for protection, \$375, 3 days in county jail, obtain and maintain employment, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of firearms, domestic abuse evaluation, 8 hours of community service and 1 year of supervised probation; William R. Wheeler, 33, New Richland, revoked license, \$275; Tesha M. Williams, 20, Owatonna, disorderly conduct, \$125 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Natalie A. Wilson, 37, Austin, revoked license, \$275.

### STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Jala M. Abdujalil, 27, St. Paul, speeding, \$275; Magdaline M. Abrams, 27, Waterville, speeding and suspended license, \$315; Dario L. Alers, 23, Albert Lea, possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, \$75, 3 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, obtain permission to leave the state, 80 hours of community service and 3 years of supervised probation; Lacey M. Alonzo, 20, Owatonna, speeding and no insurance, \$325; Madeline R. Atwell, 17, Rochester, speeding, \$115; Hunter R. Bach, 33, Pemberton, no insurance, \$275; April L. Bjerke, 30, Byron, speeding, \$115; Victoria R. Bremer, 22, Claremont, speeding, \$115; Rojelio B.

Brockberg, 28, Rochester, speeding, \$125; Angelique J. Brown, 33, Owatonna, cancelled license, \$275; Sierra J. Bryant, 29, San Diego, CA, speeding, \$135; Christopher D. Buckley, 24, Minneapolis, speeding and revoked license, \$475; Jerome C. Caldwell, 18, Medford, revoked license, \$275; Joe D. Carpenter, 21, Robbins, IL, speeding, \$135; Tierney A. Carter, 21, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275; Valentina A. Castanon Andrade, 25, Fort Campbell, KY, speeding and suspended license, \$325; Elizabeth M. Daly, 30, Berwyn, IL, speeding, \$125; Jacob J. Daniels, 20, Rochester, restraining order violation, \$125, 6 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, no possession of firearms, cognitive skill training, domestic abuse evaluation and 18 months of supervised probation; Jasemine M. David, 28, Faribault, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Holly K. Degen, 42, Owatonna, speeding, \$135;

## POLICE BLOTTER Steele County

### BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

**Feb. 12 DWI:** Officer made a DWI arrest in the 600 block of Highway Ave. S. at 12:42 a.m. **Feb. 16 Crash:** At 7:41 a.m., a motor vehicle accident resulting in property damage occurred in the 100 block of 2<sup>nd</sup> St. NE. **Feb. 18 Drugs:** Officer issued a citation for drug activity in the 600 block of 3<sup>rd</sup> St. NE in Blooming Prairie at 5:50 p.m.

### OWATONNA POLICE

**Feb. 12 Property:** At 12:01 p.m., stolen property was recovered from the 1700 block of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE. **Feb. 13 Drugs:** Police responded to drug activity in the 2200 block of 46<sup>th</sup> St. NW at 5:03 a.m. **Domestic:** Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 300 block of Pylor Place NW at 11:08 p.m. **Feb. 14 Theft:** At 5:11 a.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from the 300 block of Lemond Road SW. **Mental Health:** Officers responded to a mental health incident in the 700 block of Truman Ave. SE at 6:33 p.m.

SEE BLOTTER, A8

**FEDERATED INSURANCE**  
It's Our Business to Protect Yours

Visit [federatedinsurance.com](https://federatedinsurance.com) for COVID-19 resources.



## TEXAS STORM: spikes local natural gas prices FROM A1

included: turning down the thermostat by 2 degrees, taking shorter showers and avoiding baths, keeping shades closed at night and open during the day, and replacing furnace filters, so the furnace didn't have to work as hard.

By issuing a Peak Alert, Wareheim said OPU shaved off about 3% of its normal daily load, saving about \$200,000.

Wareheim said with the cold temperatures in Texas, the issue quickly facing the utility industry was that

"Natural gas prices have never hit this price. Ever."

**Roger Wareheim**  
OPU General Manager

the wellheads froze. "They couldn't get the gas out of the ground to keep up with the demand," Wareheim said.

By late last week, natural gas prices had already returned to more moderate levels. But, Wareheim said, the damage had already been done, leaving utility companies scrambling to

figure out how to pay for the spike.

"This needs to be passed on to the customers," Wareheim said, adding OPU isn't the only utility facing the sharp increase.

"We are sensitive to our customers' needs," he said, adding he hopes to spread the increases out over at least six months.



STAFF PHOTO BY DEB FLEMING

Sr. Sgt. Bill Youngquist of the sheriff's office has been named "Peace Officer of the Year" by the Exchange Club of Steele County.

## SHERIFF'S SERGEANT: named top cop FROM A1

training required, said Youngquist. And that's something he knows quite a bit about – he helped implement the department's field training program and is responsible for the department's training manual.

"When I started, it was all learn as it comes to you," said Youngquist, adding that in those early days, the training manual was 20 pages. Today, he said, it's 400 pages and it's part of his job to make sure the manual meets state standards and best practices.

Citing an uptick in calls that involve mental health issues and meth, Youngquist said, officers are trained not

to press a situation. "Usually, they are holding themselves hostage," said Youngquist, adding that deputies are trained annually on ways to de-escalate those situations.

"If it's predictable, it's preventable," said Youngquist.

Youngquist has been responsible for firearms instruction, a member of the department's SWAT team and the department's vehicle forfeitures.

As for enhancements, Youngquist puts having a computer in the squad car and having access to the internet at the top of his list.

When asked about the demonization of

police officers, Youngquist said: "We are working in small-town USA, not the metro area. Here, people wave at us. We are not in the cesspool."

"It's been a tough year for law enforcement," Exchange Club President Mike Brown said as he presented Youngquist with the club's honor. "It's important to recognize the work they (law enforcement) do day in and day out."

In accepting the award, Youngquist thanked his family. "My working nights, weekends and holidays, isn't their favorite part of my job," he said.

"They are the ones who make the ultimate sacrifice."

## How it would handle paper



FILE PHOTO

Les Oeltjenbruns, Steele County commissioner, demonstrated in February 1990 with a bale of hay how his farm shredder handles similar bundles of paper. Such units recycle paper into acceptable animal bedding, he said.

## History from the News Archives

### 10 Years Ago Feb. 22, 2011

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

Jenna Krell, BPHS sophomore and four-year veteran of the FFA, has been named the 2011-2012 regional reporter for the FFA. Krell will be the public relations person for the regional FFA. Also, she will be in charge of sending newsletters to the schools. "I am really excited, said Jenna. "It is a great opportunity for me. I love to write and have always wanted to be involved beyond my chapter." Jenna is currently the secretary for her local chapter.

Blooming Prairie couple and Prairie Manor residents, Henry and Doris Halstenson, were named the care center's Valentine's Day royalty last week. The Halstensons were married on June 13, 1948 at the Associated Church in Owatonna.

### 20 Years Ago Feb. 20, 2001

ELSIE SLINGER, EDITOR

Coach John Worke earned win number 100 as the Blossom girls' head coach. The girls picked up the win against the top team in the conference as well when they beat Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton on their court last Friday. Coach Worke, in his sixth year, has 100 wins and 41 losses, including the 8-13 record this season. Congratulations to Coach Worke and the team.

It was "I want to be a movie star" day at the Blooming Prairie Elementary School this past Friday. Many of the children dressed up as many famous people. Some of the top dressers were Chelsea Rowland, Breanna Koster, Josh Toquam, Zack Ribbe, Zack Herdina, Alex Johnson, Erin Johnson, Adam Harber, Julia Garza, Daryll Smith, Ryan McCabe, Becca Larkin and Mrs. Pfeiffer.

Army Private First-Class Larry D. Rowe, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Rowe, Blooming Prairie recently received the unique and cherished Combat Infantry Badge in Vietnam. Private Rowe received the award while assigned as a Rifleman with Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 20<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 11<sup>th</sup> Brigade, American Division near Duc Pho. He entered the Army in June 1970 and is a 1969 graduate of Blooming Prairie High School.

### 75 Years Ago Feb. 21, 1946

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

Owatonna, Albert Lea – It was wound in Owatonna, but it wound up in Albert Lea, where The Evening Tribune unwound the tale. Leroy Anderson, Owatonna restaurateur, helps to make both ends met by tying and winding pieces of string. He claimed his 20-pound ball, measuring 53 inches in circumference, would unwind to 17 miles. The Tribune figures if their mathematicians didn't ball up the knotty problem, Mr. Anderson really wasn't stringing them. He has 17,0454 miles of string, not quite two miles a year for the 10 years he's been hitting the ball.

Beverly Robinson of the Blooming Prairie 4-H Club who recently won championship in the Steele County 4-H rural youth speaking competition will take part in the district contest which will be broadcast over KATE. In addition to Steele County, Faribault, Freeborn, Waseca and Mower Counties will be represented. The subject of this year's radio speaking contest is "How can I better serve as a world citizen." Winners in the county competition were awarded \$5 and \$2.50, respectively. The district winners will receive a cash prize of \$20 and a paid trip to the Twin cities for competition in March.

### Owatonna Photo News

### 50 Years Ago Feb. 24, 1971

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

Mike Anderson, Blooming Prairie, is a cast member of the opera, "Carmen." On March 2. Mike is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey T. Anderson. He is in the chorus of soldiers, smugglers and townspeople. He is a junior at Mankato State majoring in music.

### 31 Years Ago Feb. 22, 1990

TOM SHEA, PUBLISHER

Paula O'Brien, representing the American Red Cross, presented Lola Nelson a certificate in recognition of the effective performance of cardiopulmonary resuscitation, which resulted in sustaining life on July 14, 1989. Nelson is credited with sustaining the life of a heart attack

victim using CPR until paramedics arrived. This recognition is presented only after review and certification by the American Red Cross.

Terry Warner, commander of VFW Post 3723, presented one full fellowship to Owatonna High School students for their participation in the Close-up Program in Washington D.C. The Close-up Program brings together students from around the country to study workings of the federal government. This is the 7<sup>th</sup> year OHS students have participated in in the program. Students who attended were Terry Simcox, Jon Bang, Medeline Leith, Andrea Tighe, Jolene Green and Amy Seidel.

## ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

HOME OF THE SHINING KNIGHTS

### Students of the Week

#### Lyndon 2ND GRADE



LYNDON is a Shining Knight through and through. His love for life is evident every day as he walks into the classroom ready to learn and with a smile beaming on his face. He is kind and very helpful to his classmates. His work ethic is very strong. He puts lots of effort into his work. He shares his vast knowledge of animals and nature with us. His positive attitude is a blessing and contagious. **Thanks for shining your light in 2nd grade Lyndon!**

Parents are Byron & Jacque | Declan was nominated by Mrs. Connor

#### Hazel 1ST GRADE



HAZEL is a wonderful example of what a Shining Knight looks like. Her contagious laughter and beautiful smile are like a ray of sunshine in our classroom. Hazel can often be found offering help to her classmates or her teacher. Hazel's attention to detail and work ethic shines through everything that she does in first grade. **Thank you, Hazel for letting the light of Christ shine through you.**

Parents are Zachary & Melissa | Josie was nominated by Mrs. Peterson



730 South Cedar Ave.  
Owatonna  
507-446-2300  
stmarys-owatonna.org

THIS FEATURE SPONSORED BY A PROUD ST. MARY'S ALUMNUS.

### SUBSCRIBING MADE EASY!

Carved in snow

**4 convenient ways to subscribe:**

- ▶ On-line at [SteeleCountyTimes.com](http://SteeleCountyTimes.com) (hit "subscribe" tab at the very top right side of the page)
- ▶ Call 507-583-4431
- ▶ Email [bptimes@frontiernet.net](mailto:bptimes@frontiernet.net)
- ▶ In-person at Blooming Prairie office





# Senior Focus

Health & Fitness  
Retirement  
Money/Investment  
Activities & Hobbies

## Mattison retires after 37 years

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

After 37 years of serving as an attorney in Owatonna, Eric Mattison has decided to retire.

Mattison, who also was the owner of Einhaus, Mattison, Carver & Haberman, P.A., said the decision came from a desire to spend more time with his family.

He, and his wife, Meredith, have been a part of the local firm since 1983 – starting and finishing their careers in Owatonna.

The job was offered shortly after they both graduated from William Mitchell College of Law. Mattison said that the opportunity was a great one for him, as the firm was already established and had been open since 1911.

“It was probably the best decision I made,” Mattison said. “It has been a fantastic place to practice law and raise



Eric Mattison

a family and be part of the community.”

Over the years, Mattison said the firm taught him many things and allowed him to grow as a person. The biggest life lesson that he will take away from the job though is the importance of communication.

“I think that has been one of the most important things I have observed because when we don’t, for whatever reasons, don’t communicate, that’s when issues arise. That is when

lawyers get involved,” Mattison said.

As he moves into retirement, Mattison said that communication will be one of the biggest things he misses about the job. He said that he would talk to 10-15 people about 10-15 different things during a typical workday and replacing those daily interactions will leave a hole in life. However, he said, he’s looking forward to all of the interactions he will have on his fishing boat with his newly found free time.

As for what happens at the firm, Mattison said that its future is in good hands and is well established with those that remain with at the firm.

“There’s a good group of attorneys here that are going to carry out the work,” Mattison said. “I might be missed by some a little bit, but I am replaceable.”

## West Hills offering limited programming

West Hills Social Commons is open. Hours are Monday, Wednesday and Fridays from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

West Hills is providing a limited amount of programs right now but as restrictions are lifted, it will add more programs to the schedule. Below you will find an example of what our weekly programming schedule looks like. To find which games will be played and when please go to the West Hills website at West

Hills Social Commons | Owatonna, MN or check out our most current newsletter.

The annual membership fee remains at \$40 for 2021 year; however, our 2020 members will receive a \$16 discount off their 2021 membership with a remaining balance amount of only \$24. Please note that the membership fees account for roughly 34% of the annual revenue budget for Social Commons and Adult Leisure Pursuits programming. Due to the

major budget impact the membership fee discounts will produce, any 2020 member wishing to forgo their discount and simply pay the full annual membership fee is welcome to do so.

All support is appreciated as West Hills strives toward continuing to offer programs and use of the facility to our community during these challenging times. If you are interested in

SEE WEST HILLS, A7

### WEST HILLS PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

**Monday**

9 a.m.- Peer Lead weight Training  
11 a.m.- Rotating Dice Game  
1:30 p.m.- Bunco

**Wednesday**

9 a.m.- Peer Lead weight Training  
11 a.m.- Library/puzzle Drop off or pickup  
1:30 p.m.-Rotating Dice Game

**Friday**

9 a.m.- Peer Lead Weight Training  
11 a.m.- Rotating Dice Game  
1:30 p.m.-Bingo

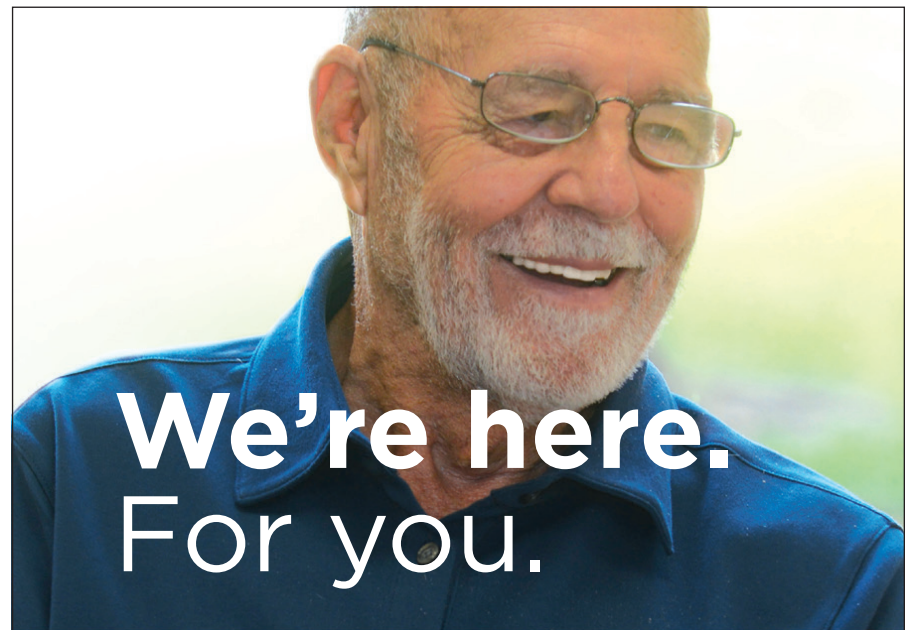
The Hormel Institute’s cancer research is for you, for Minnesota, and beyond.

Every **community**, every **cancer**, every **person** matters.

100% of every dollar donated goes directly to cancer research.

 THE HORMEL INSTITUTE  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

www.hi.umn.edu



We’re here. For you.

Choosing Benedictine provides you with personalized care for your loved ones. Our approach to wellness takes into account the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of each person we serve. **Call us today for more information. (507) 444-4200**



**Benedictine**

LIVING COMMUNITY | OWATONNA

2255 30th Street NW, 55060



*Prairie Manor*  
Care Center

We are a skilled nursing and assisted living facility that offers:

- home health care
- rehabilitative services
- outpatient & inpatient therapy

**CHECK US OUT FOR YOUR LIVING NEEDS!**

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



  
Owatonna  
GRANITE & MONUMENT

1180 Frontage Rd. E. Owatonna, MN  
507-455-9551 • [OwatonnaGranite.com](http://OwatonnaGranite.com)  
Making a difference in the lives that we touch  
Locally Owned by John & Barb Heerema





# Free File can make taxes easier for seniors and retirees

In times like these, every penny counts. This is especially true for taxpayers on a fixed income. Many of these are seniors and retirees who can file their taxes for free. Free File offers online tax preparation, direct deposit of refunds and electronic filing.

Here are some facts about Free File programs to help these taxpayers determine which one fits their needs.

- The IRS urges all taxpayers to file electronically and choose direct deposit to get their refund faster and avoid pandemic-related paper delays.

- IRS Free File is available on IRS.gov, and features brand-name tax software providers.

- Free File offers the Form 1040-SR option for seniors over the age of 65.

- Taxpayers can browse the offers or use the lookup tool to help them find the right product.

- Each Free File partner sets its own eligibility standards. These are generally based on income, age and state residency. All taxpayers whose adjusted gross income was \$72,000 or less will find at least one free product to use.

- Some Free File products are available in Spanish.

- MilTax online software is also available to certain veterans, regardless of income, and is offered through the Department of Defense.

- Free File supports all the major forms that can be filed electronically. This means that even if someone's tax return is a bit more complex, they can usually still find a free offer.

- Using Free File can help people find valuable credits and deductions including the recovery rebate credit. If someone is eligible for a recovery rebate credit – and either didn't receive Economic Impact Payments or received less than the full amounts – they must file a 2020 tax return to claim the credit even if they don't usually file. Taxpayers should review the recovery rebate credit FAQs for more information.

- Free File providers also offer state tax return preparation, some for free and some for a fee. Taxpayers can also use the lookup tool to find the right state product.

- Taxpayers can use their computer, smartphone or tablet to do their taxes. They just need to go to the Free File page of IRS.gov on their device. All Free File products can be used on mobile devices.

# How to Choose a Hospice Care Program

**Brought to you by:**  
**Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus**  
 220 3rd St. NW, Blooming Prairie  
**583-4434**

*Dear Savvy Senior, Where can I turn to find a good Medicare covered hospice provider? My husband's mother has a terminal condition and wants to die at home, if possible, so I'm helping out where I can.*  
**Sad Sandy**

Dear Sandy, Hospice is a wonderful option in the last months of life because it offers a variety of services, not only to those who are dying, but also to those left behind. Here's what you should know about hospice care, along with some tips to help you choose one.

### Understanding Hospice

Hospice care is a unique service that provides medical care, pain management, and emotional and spiritual support to people who are in the last stages of a terminal illness – it does not speed up or slow down the process of dying. Hospice's goal is to simply keep the patient as comfortable and pain-free as possible,

with loved ones nearby until death.

The various services provided by a hospice program comes from a team of professionals that works together to accommodate all the patients' end-of-life needs.

The team typically includes hospice doctors that will work with the primary physician and family members to draft up a care plan; nurses who dispense medication for pain control; home care aids that attend to personal needs like eating and bathing; social workers who help the patient and the family prepare for end of life; clergy members who provide spiritual counseling, if desired; and volunteers that fill a variety of niches, from sitting with the patient to helping clean and maintain their property.

Some hospices even offer massage or music therapy, and nearly all provide bereavement services for relatives and short-term inpatient respite care to give family caregivers a

break. Most hospice patients receive care in their own home. However, hospice will go wherever the patient is – hospital, nursing home or assisted living residence. Some even have their own facility to use as an option.

To receive hospice, your mother-in-law must get a referral from her physician stating that her life expectancy is six months or less.

It's also important to know that home-based hospice care does not mean that a hospice nurse or volunteer is in the home 24 hours a day. Services are based on need and/or what you request. Hospice care can also be stopped at any time if your mother-in-law's health improves or if she decides to re-enter cure-oriented treatments.

### How to Choose

The best time to prepare for hospice and consider your options is before it's necessary, so you're not making decisions during a stressful time. There are more than 4,300 hospice care agencies in the U.S., so depending on where you live, you may have several options from which to choose.

To locate a good hospice in your area, ask your mother-in-law's doctor or the discharge planner at your local hospital for a referral, or you can search

online at [Medicare.gov/care-compare](https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare), which provides lists and ratings of hospice providers in your area.

When choosing, look for an established hospice that has been operating for a few years and one that is certified by Medicare. To help you select one, the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization offers a worksheet of questions to ask [CaringInfo.org](https://www.caringinfo.org).

### Medicare Coverage

Medicare covers all aspects of hospice care and services for its beneficiaries. There is no deductible for hospice services although there may be a very small co-payment – such as \$5 for each prescription drug for pain and symptom control, or a 5 percent share for inpatient respite care. Medicaid also covers hospice in most states, as do most private health insurance plans.

For more information, see the "Medicare Hospice Benefits" online booklet at [Medicare.gov/pubs/pdf/02154-medicare-hospice-benefits.pdf](https://www.medicare.gov/pubs/pdf/02154-medicare-hospice-benefits.pdf).

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

## WEST HILLS: continues to offer limited programs FROM A6

signing up or have any questions please feel free to call or email Dani Bakken at 507-444-4280 or Danielle.bakken@ci.owatonna.mn.us.

### AARP TAX ASSISTANCE

AARP will not be holding in-person taxes this year. For more information on other ways AARP can help you with your taxes, please

visit [www.aarpfoundation.org/taxaide](https://www.aarpfoundation.org/taxaide) or by calling 507-218-2065.

### AARP SAFE DRIVING CLASS

AARP Safe Driving

Classes are cancelled through the end of August 2021. AARP classes can be taken online at <https://www.aarpdriversafety.org>. Use the code Driving-skills for a discount.

## WHERE FAMILY TAKES CARE OF FAMILY!

*Premium Care Facilities located in Owatonna*

*"My sister was a resident at Traditions... This was the best decision we could have made for her living arrangements. The staff there are incredible. The care, compassion, love and dignity they gave to her was amazing."*

**Kathy Kirkland**

*Both assisted living and memory care services available*

**Traditions I**  
195 24<sup>th</sup> PI NW  
507-455-0700

**Traditions II**  
150 24<sup>th</sup> St. NE  
507-451-0433

For 35 years now, we have had the honor of providing the answer to the needs of thousands of seniors along with their loving families and caregivers.

To those who have allowed us to provide for the happiness and well-being of a loved one, thank you for sharing confidence in our ability to live up to this incredible responsibility.

In gratitude  
**Darrel Farr & The Darrel Farr Family**

**CEDARS**  
SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY  
35 YEARS SERVING SENIORS

Assisted Living  
 Independent Living  
 Companion Memory Care  
 Memory Care

700 1<sup>st</sup> Dr. NW,  
 Austin, MN 55912  
 507-437-3246  
[www.cedarsofaustin.com](https://www.cedarsofaustin.com)

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

- Mahatma Gandhi

## GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

1850 Austin Road Ste 103 | Owatonna, MN 55060  
 Visit us Online at [www.unitedwaysteelecounty.org](https://www.unitedwaysteelecounty.org)

## Vibrant Living

*Downsize and simplify your life. Enjoy an exciting community.*

- Full kitchens
- 1-2 Bedrooms
- Garages available
- Many more amenities
- Cable television
- WiFi Internet
- Guest room available

for individuals 55 and older at a reasonable price.  
**Call Jon Arnett at 455-3735 for a tour**

235 22nd St. SE, Owatonna • [www.realifeowatonna.com](https://www.realifeowatonna.com)



**BLOTTER:** FROM A4

**Criminal Sexual Conduct:** Police arrested a subject for criminal sexual conduct in the 3900 block of Cabela Dr. NW at 7:18 p.m.  
**Feb. 15 Fraud:** Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 1200 block of Oak Ave. S. at 9:12 a.m.  
**Shoplifting:** At 3:54 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W.  
**Domestic:** Police arrested a subject for a domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Elm Ave. N. at 4:29 p.m.  
**Feb. 16 Fraud:** Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 1300 block of Hayes Ave. SE at 9:16 a.m.  
**Arrest:** Police assisted another agency with arresting a subject in the 1000 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 10:41 a.m.  
**Welfare:** Officer conducted a welfare check in the 200 block of North St. W. at 1:47 p.m.  
**Hit and Run:** At 4:33 p.m., a hit and run accident

occurred at Oak Ave. S. and Main St. W.  
**Child Protection:** Police received a child protection report from the 2200 block of 26<sup>th</sup> St. NW at 5:39 p.m.

**STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF**

**Feb. 15 Fraud:** Deputy took a report of a fraud incident in the 4600 block of 138<sup>th</sup> St. SE in Blooming Prairie Township at 9:39 a.m.  
**Crash:** Paramedics and deputies responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries at 86<sup>th</sup> St. NW and 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. NW in Medford Township at 1:05 p.m.  
**Feb. 17 Theft:** Deputies received a theft report from the 6000 block of County Road 45 N. in Medford at 12:50 a.m.  
**Theft:** At 8:54 a.m., identity theft was reported in the 6700 block of 168<sup>th</sup> St. SW in Berlin Township.  
**Warrant:** Deputy made a warrant arrest in the 200 block of 3<sup>rd</sup> St. SW in Medford at 10:12 a.m.

**ARRESTS**

Steele County

**OWATONNA POLICE**

John Robert Bulver, 34, arrested at 4 p.m. Feb. 16, felony probation violation, held for court.  
 Darian Margret Bohlman-Reyna, 27, arrested at 11:11 a.m. Feb. 17, felony probation violation, held for court.

**OWATONNA FIRE**

**Feb. 12 Carbon Monoxide:** At 6:29 p.m., a carbon monoxide incident occurred in the 400 block of Cedar Ave. S.  
**Feb. 14 Vehicle Fire:** Firefighters responded to a transport vehicle fire in the 200 block of 24<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW at 8:57 p.m.  
**Feb. 15 Dumpster Fire:** Fire personnel assisted with a dumpster fire in the 200 block of 22<sup>nd</sup> St. NW at 12:26 p.m.  
**Smoke:** Firefighters responded to an odor of smoke in the 800 block of

Barney St. SW at 10:08 p.m.  
**Gas Leak:** Gas leaks occurred in the 300 block of 22<sup>nd</sup> St. SE at 10:23 p.m., the 200 block of Southview St. SW at 10:33 p.m., the 400 block of Broadway St. E. at 11:35 p.m.  
**Feb. 16 Gas Leak:** Fire personnel responded to a gas leak in the 300 block of McIndoe St. SE at 10:56 p.m.  
**Feb. 17 Gas Leak:** Firefighters assisted with a gas leak in the 1200 block of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE at 3:08 p.m.  
**Crash:** At 3:51 p.m., a motor vehicle accident occurred at Vine St. and Linden Ave.

**COURT NEWS**  
Dodge County

*The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Feb. 7 – 14:*

**DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Tilahun C. Abella, 30, Rochester, speeding, \$220; Ashley K. Akemann, 36, Rochester, controlled substance crime, \$205, 47 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 2 years of supervised probation; Susana Anguiano-Franco, 41, Rochester, suspended license, \$280; Barbara J. Austinson, 59, Kasson, speeding, \$120; Heidi L. Blackburn, 46, Dodge Center, littering, \$180; Erin I. Brose, 42, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Hannah R. Bryon, 36, Waseca, cancelled license, \$280; Cesar A. Castro-Herrera, 44, Claremont, invalid license, \$180; Nicole M. Cummins, 29, West Concord, parking violation, \$32; Dean E. Hanson, 48, Faribault, revoked license, \$280; Shantel R. Hrtanek, 33, Dodge Center, careless driving and no insurance, \$380; Lawrence D. Johnson, 18, Rochester, speeding; Matthew J. Lyman, 47, Mantorville, revoked license, \$280; Orion Martinez-Avendano, 37, Claremont, speeding, \$220; Crystal G. Massey, 40, Dodge Center, speeding, \$380; Dawn M. McIntyre, 54, Rochester, parking violation, \$32; Awil A. Mohamed, 35, Rochester,

seat belt, \$105; Stanley A. Quarles, 50, Chandler, AZ, speeding, \$220; Connor E. Sparks, 32, Minneapolis, speeding, \$220; Michael A. Strom, 49, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Tyler M. Torgrimson, 33, Rochester, obstruct legal process, \$75, write letter of apology and 1 year of supervised probation.

**KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Adrien M. Alger, 19, Hastings, invalid license and possession of marijuana and paraphernalia, \$380; William V. Bohlen, 26, Rochester, hands free violation and speeding, \$270; Bradley A. Bollum, 55, Kasson, license not in possession, \$180; Jasmine A. Dortch, 30, Spring Valley, revoked license, \$280; James J. Douglas, 20, Pine Island, minor consumption, \$130; Scott M. Gunther, 41, Arlington, parking violation, \$32; Lawrence D. Johnson, 18, Rochester, invalid license; Trayantay D. Jones, 27, Owatonna, invalid license, no insurance and speeding, \$440; Sterling S. Larson, 84, Kasson, seat belt, \$105; Max R. Lehman, 20, Kasson, seat belt, \$105; Siobhan M. McKee, 28, Claremont, revoked license, \$280.

**Tax Guide 2021**

**Taxpayers should beware of ghost preparers**

As people begin to file their 2020 tax returns, taxpayers are reminded to avoid unethical ghost tax return preparers.

A ghost preparer is someone who doesn't sign tax returns they prepare. Unscrupulous ghost preparers often print the return and have the taxpayer to sign and mail it to the IRS. For e-filed returns, the ghost will prepare but refuse to digitally sign as the paid preparer.

By law, anyone who is paid to prepare or assists in preparing federal tax returns must have a valid Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN). Paid preparers must sign and include their PTIN on the return. Not signing a return is a red flag that the paid preparer may be looking to make a quick profit by promising a big refund or charging fees based on the size of the refund.

**Ghost tax return preparers may also:**

- Require payment in cash only and not provide a receipt.
- Invent income to qualify their clients for tax credits.
- Claim fake deductions to boost the size of the refund.

- Direct refunds into their bank account, not the taxpayer's account.

It's important for taxpayers to choose their tax return preparer wisely. The Choosing a Tax Professional page on IRS.gov has information about tax preparer credentials and qualifications. The IRS Directory of Federal Tax Return Preparers with Credentials and Select Qualifications can help identify many preparers by type of credential or qualification.

No matter who prepares their return, taxpayers should review it carefully and ask questions about anything that's not clear before signing. They should verify their routing and bank account number on the completed tax return for any direct deposit refund. Taxpayers should watch out for ghost preparers putting their bank account information on the returns.

Taxpayers can report preparer misconduct to using IRS Form 14157, Complaint: Tax Return Preparer PDF. If a taxpayer suspects a preparer filed or changed their tax return without their consent, they should file Form 14157-A, Tax Return Preparer Fraud or Misconduct Affidavit PDF.

Source: IRS

**Edward Jones**  
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

**What can investors learn from 2020?**

Now that we're a few weeks removed from 2020, it's a good time to reflect on such a momentous year. We can think about developments in the social and political spheres, but we also learned – or perhaps re-learned – some valuable lessons about investing.

Here are four of them:

- **A long-term perspective is essential**  
Volatility in the financial markets is nothing new, but, even so, 2020 was one for the books. Of course, the COVID-19 outbreak was the driving force behind most of the wild price swings. Soon after the pandemic's effects were first felt, the S&P 500, a common index of U.S. large-cap stocks, fell 34% but gained 67% by the end of the year. Consequently, investors who stuck with their investment portfolios and kept their eyes on their long-term goals, rather than on shocking headlines, ended up doing well. And while 2020 was obviously an unusual year, the long-term approach will always be valuable to investors.
- **Investment opportunities are always available**  
The pandemic drove down the prices of many stocks – but it didn't necessarily harm the long-term fundamentals of these companies. In other words, they may still have had strong management, still produced desirable products and services, and still had good prospects for growth. In short, they may still have been good investment opportunities – and when their prices were depressed, they may also have been "bargains" for smart investors. And this is the case with virtually any market downturn – some high-quality stocks will be available at favorable prices.
- **Diversification pays off**  
Bond prices often move in a different direction from stocks. So, during a period of volatility when stock prices are falling, such as we saw in the weeks after the pandemic hit in March, the presence of bonds in your portfolio can lessen the impact of the downturn and stabilize your overall returns. And this, in essence, is the value of maintaining a balanced and diversified portfolio. (Keep in mind, though, that diversification can't guarantee profits or prevent all losses.)
- **The market looks ahead**  
The pandemic-driven market plunge may have been stunning, but it made a kind of intrinsic sense – after all, the sudden arrival of a pandemic that threatened lives, closed businesses and cost millions of jobs doesn't sound like a positive event for the financial markets. But the strong rally that followed the initial drop and continued into 2021 has surprised many people. After all, the pandemic's effects were felt throughout the rest of 2020, and are still being felt now, so why did stock prices rise? The answer is pretty straightforward: The financial markets always look ahead, not behind. And for a variety of reasons – including widespread vaccinations, anticipated economic stimulus measures from Congress and the Biden administration, and the Federal Reserve's continued steps to keep interest rates low – the markets are anticipating much stronger economic growth, possibly starting in the second half of 2021.

All of us are probably glad to have 2020 behind us. Yet, the year taught us some investment lessons that we can put to work in 2021 – and beyond.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.*

Edward Jones,  
Member SIPC

To learn more, call today.



Jeffrey M. Hall  
Financial Advisor

143 W. Bridge St.  
Owatonna, MN 55060  
507-446-0150  
jeffrey.hall@edwardjones.com

edwardjones.com  
Member SIPC



**Ackerman Accounting & Tax Services**  
(formerly Wencil Accounting & Tax Service)  
**Lisa Ackerman**  
Tax Preparer/Accounting Services  
www.ackermanaccounting.com  
lisa@ackermanaccounting.com  
**507-451-3399**  
221 Mineral Springs Rd Ste A  
Owatonna

**Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.**  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
*We understand small business because we are a small business.*  
314 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie  
507-583-7528  
685 W. Bridge St., Suite 6, Owatonna  
507-451-9136  
133 N. Broadway, New Richland  
507-465-8100  
johndoercpa.com

**PREPARE YOUR TAXES WITH EASE!**  
OFFERING OVER 100 YEARS OF TAX EXPERIENCE!  
evanstaxservice.com  
Terry Evans & Associates  
121 W. Main St., Suite B • Owatonna • 507-451-8070

**Celebrating 50 years in the Tax Business!**  
BORCHARDT ACCOUNTING AND TAX SERVICE  
Roger L. Borchardt  
1345 Linn Ave.  
Owatonna • 507-451-7748

**CLA Create Opportunities**  
121 West Bridge Street  
Owatonna, MN 55060  
507-446-7100 | CLAAconnect.com/tax  
**WEALTH ADVISORY | OUTSOURCING  
AUDIT, TAX AND CONSULTING**  
Investment advisory services are offered through CliftonLarsonAllen Wealth Advisors, LLC, an SEC registered investment advisor. (C) CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

**STOCKWELL ACCOUNTING**  
802 N Elm Ave  
Owatonna, Minnesota  
**(507) 451-1873**



## No one hurt in car-train collision

BY DEB FLEMMING  
NEWS EDITOR

Streets along the Canadian Pacific railway in Owatonna – from North Cedar Avenue to East Rice Lake Street – were blocked for about three hours Wednesday afternoon after a car-train crash near the intersection of Vine Street and Larch Avenue.

No injuries were reported in the Feb. 17 crash.

According to the Owatonna Police Department, the Canadian Pacific train was travelling in a southeasterly direction when the train collided with a 2001 Chevrolet Tahoe driven by Grant Stowe, 18, of Owatonna. Stowe was traveling east on Vine Street when the collision occurred.

Stowe told responding officers that he stopped and didn't see the train, police said. Stowe was issued a ticket for a crossing violation, according to the police report.

The rear of Stowe's vehicle was damaged on driver's side, police said.

The crash occurred at 3:48 p.m. and the roads reopened about 6:30 p.m., police said.

## 2 vying for state award

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

Owatonna High School seniors, Lane Versteeg and Sydney Hunst have been nominated for the Triple 'A' Award.

The award, given out by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) recognizes senior students with a 3.0 GPA and who participates in athletic and fine art events.

"Being nominated for the Triple A award has been a great honor," Versteeg said. "It feels good to be recognized for my years of commitment to the arts, athletics, and academics."

Both Hunst and Versteeg have been very involved throughout the school year.

Hunst has been involved with the Owatonna's choir and orchestra, along with her athletic endeavors in soccer, hockey, and track and field.

"I'm proud of myself for this accomplishment because I have worked so hard to get to where I am today," Hunst said. "It feels good to

SEE 2 VYING, A14



Cars were lined up on both sides of the road to pick up food on Thursday, Feb. 18, through the Community Pathways Truck to Trunk food distribution event.

STAFF PHOTO BY DEB FLEMMING

## Need exceeds supply at food distribution event

BY DEB FLEMMING  
NEWS EDITOR

Volunteers braved the cold weather Thursday to distribute 1,200 boxes of food to area residents in need. And they did it faster than organizers had planned.

"We ran out of food a little before 1 p.m.," said Andi Arnold, outreach and grant director for Community Pathways. The event was scheduled to end at 3:30 p.m.

Running out of food is a first for the organization's Truck to Trunk event in Owatonna. In each of four previous distribution events, Arnold said Community Pathways handed out food to around 900 families.

Arnold said anyone who did not get a food box and is in need should call Community Pathways at 507-455-2991 or visit the organization's website at [www.communitypathwayssc.org](http://www.communitypathwayssc.org) to register and get food through Community Pathways' Marketplace.



STAFF PHOTO BY DEB FLEMMING

**Community Pathways Vice-President Joe Grant loads a pre-packaged box of food into the back of a vehicle. Distribution was limited to two households per vehicle. Grant was one of about 25 volunteers, including law enforcement personnel, to help distribute the food.**

Those who were able to pick up food on Thursday received a pre-packaged box containing 22 pounds of food, including 5 pounds of meat, 5 pounds of dairy, 12 pounds of produce, and a gallon of milk.

Rebecca Rand, the housing coordinator for the South Central Human Relations Center's supportive housing program, said her

clients were very grateful for the food boxes.

"They don't often get fresh produce," she said, adding that a box of food will feed one client for a month.

In her position, Rand said she works with single adults who are long-term homeless with severe mental illness, along with clients who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Community Pathways partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the food giveaway.

Through the USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box program, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service works with national, regional and local distributors, whose workforces have been significantly impacted by the closure of restaurants, hotels and other food service businesses because of COVID-19, to purchase up to \$6 billion in fresh produce, dairy and meat.

There were no income guidelines for the program, allowing Community Pathways to give out food to anyone in need during this difficult time.

To date, USDA contractors have delivered more than 138.6 million boxes of fresh produce, milk, dairy and cooked meats to disadvantaged Americans across the country.

## Building new pathways virtual event



Steele Talkin'  
ANDI ARNOLD

On the evening of March 5, starting at 7 p.m., we will have livestream music, an online auction and raffle drawings with proceeds benefiting the "Building New Pathways" capital campaign.

Visit our website: [www.communitypathwayssc.org](http://www.communitypathwayssc.org) – click on the Building New Pathways tab at the top, scroll down to the registration to see options of how to participate and support our goal.

Building New Pathways is the theme of our capital campaign, born out of a need to expand our facilities to meet the growing need of our community. When completed, we will double our space to offer more services, provide more selection and variety for our families, and be an improved resource for the community.

The new building along with updates to our current facility, will cost \$1.6 million to construct. Combining that with our annual operations costs, our capital campaigns needs to raise \$2.6 million. More space will allow us to expand our donations and store both food and clothing that we are unable to manage in our current facility. This would allow us to be a more efficient resource for all. This expansion will also include space for Let's Smile and Transitional Housing – two well-known Steele County nonprofits.

Steele County has done an incredible job of recognizing basic needs and supporting all three of these organizations over the years. We invite the community to once again partner with us as we expand to provide improved services, efficiencies, access, sustainability, and additional programming.

Join us virtually on March 5 at 7 p.m., pre-order a Gala-In-A-Box for \$100 to enhance the experience. Pick up \$10 raffle tickets for three chances to win one of the following: Power Block Home Gym, Traeger Grill or E-Bike. Raffle tickets can be purchased at Community Pathways, Mineral Springs Brewery, Kottke Jewelers, or Tri M graphic. The raffle drawing will be live during the event. There will also be opportunities to

SEE BUILDING, A14

## 3 area educators named finalists for top award

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

Three Steele County educators are finalists for Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

Kim Goblirsch and Sara Markham, both teachers at Medford Public Schools, and Jessica Wagner, teacher at Owatonna Public Schools, have been chosen among 75 finalists for the state competition.

An independent panel of leaders in the fields of education, business, government, nonprofit and philanthropy will narrow the list to a group of semifinalists in the next few weeks. In March, the panel will convene again and review additional materials from the semifinalists to choose a group of finalists. The

top teacher is usually named at a banquet in May, however it may be postponed because of COVID-19.

The Minnesota Teacher of the Year program, which is in its 57<sup>th</sup> year, is the oldest and most prestigious recognition in Minnesota to honor excellence in education.

Goblirsch, who teaches English language arts at Medford High School, said she is humbled by being chosen as a finalist. "I know this year has been challenging for many educators and there are so many teachers out there who deserve recognition for what they have done to make teaching the most effective during a pandemic," she said.



Kim Goblirsch

The greatest influence in her career, Goblirsch said, is knowing that she is part of something greater than herself. "I am providing a service to the community by helping students understand literature and how it shapes the world around them," she said.

She graduated from Medford High School in 2000 and returned to teach 12 years ago.



Sara Markham

Goblirsch has a bachelor's degree in English/speech communication and education as well as a master's degree in curriculum and instruction.

Though there are still two more rounds to go, Wagner said she is humbled and honored to be nominated at the current level. "I am amazed by the teachers that work in Owatonna



Jessica Wagner

and to be chosen to represent Owatonna and our profession is really special," she said.

Wagner said she was led to teaching by the comfort she found in her own classrooms as a student. "I strive to make my classroom feel like a safe space for my students," she said.

She teaches English, public speaking and journalism at Owatonna

High School. She is also the adviser of OHS Magnet, the school's newspaper. Wagner was also named Owatonna's Teacher of the Year last May.

Wagner has a bachelor's degree from Minnesota State University-Mankato in secondary education/English and communications and a master's degree in educational leadership from Southwest State University at Marshall.

Markham, who is a second grade teacher at Medford Elementary School, did not respond to our request for comments.

Four Minnesotans have become National Teacher of the Year, including Roger Tenney of Owatonna in 1966.



# BP seeks volunteers for 4th of July weekend

**BY ALEX NUEHRING**  
STAFF WRITER

The upcoming Fourth of July celebration, the addition of a permanent bathroom at the city park on Main Street and a possible sponsorship for future meetings were among the topics discussed at the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce meeting on Monday, Feb. 15. One of the first items discussed was the Fourth of July festivities, which is less than four months away.

Sarah Esplan, who heads the Fourth of July committee, couldn't attend the meeting, but she told Executive Director Emily Glaser that she and Jamie Klemmensen are working on drafting a list of volunteers for the Fourth of July celebration.

They are looking for 100 or more volunteers

from around the Blooming Prairie community.

If community members are interested in volunteering, they should contact either Esplan or Glaser whose email is glaseremily17@gmail.com.

Esplan and Klemmensen are also looking for a kids activity coordinator and a parade coordinator.

Glaser then reported that the ending balance for the gambling report summary for January 2021 is \$15,883.40.

"Between December and January, we're doing pretty good," she said.

Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce President Jim Fiebiger said the gambling funds are to be used for city beautification such as restrooms at the park.

The Chamber of commerce is looking at

adding permanent restrooms to Central Park so more restrooms are available for the public.

At the end of the meeting, the chamber moved onto announcements, which included Soap Box.

Glaser said Soap Box gives those who are in attendance the opportunity to give an update on their business.

The first update was an announcement that the second round of PPP loans are available for small businesses including sole proprietors. Farmers can use gross sales, while sole proprietors can use net income to get PPP loans. For more information, business owners should call Farmers & Merchants State Bank.

Rachel Blaedorn said that if the chamber continues to conduct their meetings via Zoom, the

chamber should look for a possible sponsor to help pay for the zoom subscription for the year.

To make it worthwhile for the sponsor, the sponsoring business would be announced in the Finally Friday newsletter and during the chamber meetings.

Glaser said the chamber will continue to conduct its meetings via Zoom because not everyone's schedule allows them to come to the meeting and with Zoom those who can't attend in person can view the meeting on their own time so they're informed as well.

The Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce's next meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17. It will be held in the city center building.

## Recipe Corner

### EASY WILD RICE SOUP

#### YOUR CHOICE OF:

- 1 pound bacon, fried crisp & diced OR 2 cups diced ham OR 2 cups cooked, diced chicken
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 pint half & half
- 2 4-oz cans of mushroom pieces with juice
- 2 cans cream of potato soup
- 4 cups cooked wild rice (1 cup uncooked)
- 1 8-oz jar Old English cheese OR 10-12 ounces Velveeta
- 2 cups water

Saute onion and your choice of bacon, ham or chicken in 3 T butter. Add remaining ingredients.

Heat on low to prevent scorching. Makes 12 large bowls of soup.

Sponsored by

STEELE COUNTY Times



# 'We loved how she could train us'

**BY ALEX NUEHRING**  
STAFF WRITER

Stephanie Miller was a wife, mother, social worker, supporter of law enforcement and for six years she was a metastatic breast cancer survivor.

Despite her diagnosis, she always tried to look on the positive side of things and was thankful for the many blessings in her life.

"There is a light at the end of the tunnel, and I am taking it one step at a time," she said.

Miller lost her battle with cancer last Tuesday, Feb. 16. She was 38.

The Blooming Prairie Cancer Group, of which Miller was a member, released the following statement: "The Blooming Prairie Cancer Group is saddened by the loss of community member, Stephanie Miller. One of the goals of the group is to lend support to those who are on the cancer journey. The group is grateful for its continued support from the community. That support and generosity can then be passed on to bless individuals and their families. Stephanie will be missed, and we will continue to keep her and her family in our thoughts and prayers."

A 2001 graduate of Blooming Prairie High School, Miller met her husband, Matt, while attending Winona State University.

After graduating from St. Catherine's University with her master's degree in clinical social work, Miller worked with the elderly



FILE PHOTO

Stephanie Miller pins a pink police badge on her husband Matt during surprise ceremonies at the Big Tent during the 2016 cancer auction sponsored by the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group. Stephanie pinned all BP officers with pink badges.

and at-risk youth before landing her dream job, working as a clinical social worker specializing in cognitive behavioral therapy at Mayo Clinic

Miller, whose husband, Matt, is a Blooming Prairie police officer, also made a big impact on the Blooming Prairie community.

Blooming Prairie Police Chief Greg Skillestad said she belonged to a "Back the Blue" social group and was a big advocate of law enforcement.

"She loved and supported all police and the whole law enforcement family," he said.

In fact, she used her training as a social worker in primary care at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester to develop a mental health training program for law enforcement.

Skillestad said that Miller taught crisis intervention and mental health crisis, conflict management and mediation to the Blooming Prairie Police Department (BPPD) and other law enforcement agencies.

"We loved how she

could train us," he said.

Additionally, when she was diagnosed, the BPPD began wearing pink badges throughout October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Skillestad said the police department will continue to wear the pink badges in honor of her and other breast cancer survivors and victims.

"She will be greatly missed," he said.

However, above working with law enforcement and her job as a social worker, came her role as a mother.

Miller enjoyed volunteering her time with school field trips, activities and coaching her daughter's fourth grade basketball team.

She and her husband also loved to visit in-laws who have a lake home on South Center Lake in Lindstrom, north of the Twin Cities. The family also has a cabin on Mille Lacs Lake.

She leaves behind her parents, her husband, her daughter, Claudia, her son, Landon, and a community that was better because she was in it.

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE OF THE WEEK

Crossword puzzle grid with numbered squares and blacked-out cells.

### ACROSS

- 1 Truckers' radio sets
- 4 Some coins (Abbr.)
- 7 Chew out
- 13 Difficult position
- 15 Singer Patti ---
- 16 Place in order
- 17 Enclosed territory
- 18 Approaches
- 19 Stop!
- 21 French part of U S?
- 22 Christian ---, couturier
- 24 Stock market measures
- 26 Advanced in years
- 28 Turn over
- 30 Deed
- 31 Medium for Old Masters
- 33 Lofty
- 35 Tales
- 39 Chirrup
- 40 Implant
- 42 High time
- 43 A lazy one just goes round and round
- 45 Verdi's Ethiopian princess
- 46 Dorothy's dog
- 47 Fleece
- 49 Statutes
- 51 Adage
- 52 Part of concluding

question in "To Tell the Truth"

- 55 Network junction
- 57 --- Cong
- 58 "Della and the Dealer" singer --- Axton
- 60 Adores
- 63 Energize
- 65 The world of scholars
- 67 Sinatra's record label
- 68 Arcadian
- 69 Concur
- 70 Perceive
- 71 Explosive used as a measure for others

### DOWN

- 1 Martial arts actor Jackie ---
- 2 Drill
- 3 Spans
- 4 Expurgator
- 5 Label
- 6 Mulligan, for example
- 7 Northern neighbor
- 8 Disney TV network
- 9 Unwilling
- 10 Shave
- 11 Tupelo "King"
- 12 Course launch pads?
- 14 Hindu dress
- 15 "Trinity" author --- Uris

- 20 Bumpkin
- 23 Repetitive practice
- 25 Very cold
- 26 Oh dear!
- 27 Place
- 29 Tibetan priest
- 32 Middle-age spread
- 34 Seduced by a swan
- 36 He started the Teddy Bear story
- 37 --- bene: pay attention
- 38 Coke
- 41 "Delta ---", Tanya Tucker hit
- 44 And not
- 48 Bidding
- 50 Comfort
- 52 Prongs
- 53 Facilitates
- 54 Top-of-the-line
- 56 Extinct Mauritian native
- 57 N Y C fashionista --- Wang
- 59 Checks
- 61 The "New World" symphony was written in this (Abbr.)
- 62 Religious faction
- 64 French wine
- 66 Signal

Completed crossword puzzle with words filled in.

2/25/2021

# Lerberg left an imprint on Ellendale

**BY RICK BUSSLER**  
PUBLISHER

For years she played a pivotal role in supplying Ellendale area residents with their basic needs and promoting the community.

Working side-by-side with her husband, Andy, Mary Lerberg managed many businesses on Ellendale's main street. It was Lerberg's Foods for many years, followed by Lerberg's Dry Goods and Gifts and then ending with Lerberg's Fitness Center.

In recent years, Mary Lerberg was forced to scale back her involvement as she battled Alzheimer's. Lerberg died on Feb. 13 at the age of 76.

Ross Sletten, who began working at Lerberg's Foods in 1976, said he will always re-



Mary Lerberg

member Lerberg for her customer service. "She was always positive and always wanted to take care of the customer to make sure they were happy," said Sletten, who eventually took over the store from the Lerbergs.

But Lerberg's passion for helping others extended far beyond the stores she worked at in town. She was involved in the commercial club, Lions Club and First Lutheran Church.

"She and Andy have done so much for the community over the years," Sletten said.

"There are a lot of things she was always there to help with. They were always such an excellent example to our community, how they worked together as a team."

Donnavon Eaker, owner of Steve's Meat Market, said Lerberg will always be remembered as a good retailer. "She was very good, very friendly and knew business," Eaker said.

Eaker said she has felt "so much empathy" for the family in recent years as Lerberg fought the disease. Eaker marvels at how Andy was there for his wife every single moment.

Lerberg became a big part of Ginger Thomp-

SEE LERBERG LEFT, A14

## FOR SALE



Jennifer Walsh

507-438-6676  
jenwalsh@kw.com  
jenwalsh.kw.com



Powered by KW Keller Williams Premier Realty



**BLOOMING PRAIRIE**

**MARCH 2**

10:30 a.m. – Online Storytime, BP Library Facebook

**MARCH 17**

5 p.m. – Chamber Meeting, Vandal's

**ELLENDALE/HOPE/GENEVA**

**FEB. 26**

11 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building

7 p.m. – Ellendale Fire Department Meeting, Community Building

**MARCH 1**

11 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building

**MARCH 3**  
11 a.m. – SEMCAC, Community Building

**OWATONNA/MEDFORD**

**FEB. 26**

9 a.m. – Peer Lead weight Training, West Hills Social Commons  
11 a.m. – Rotating Dice Game, West Hills Social Commons  
1:30 p.m. – Bingo, West Hills Social Commons

7 p.m. – Steele County Planning Commission Meeting, County Admin Building

**MARCH 2**

10 a.m. – Genealogy Club, History Center  
10:30 a.m. – Online Storytime, Owatonna Library Facebook

**MARCH 1**

9 a.m. – Peer Lead weight Training, West Hills Social Commons  
11 a.m. – Rotating Dice Game, West Hills Social Commons  
1:30 p.m. – Bunco, West Hills Social Commons

7 p.m. – AAUW via Zoom  
7 p.m. – Owatonna City Council Meeting, City Hall  
7 p.m. – Steele County Board of Adjustments Meeting, County Admin Building

**FREELANCE WRITER WANTED**

The STEELE COUNTY TIMES is seeking a freelance writer & photographer to cover Blooming Prairie & Ellendale area news. Perfect opportunity for a retiree who loves to write & attend community events.

If interested, please email Rick Bussler at [rbprick@frontier.com](mailto:rbprick@frontier.com).

**J & H LIQUOR'S**

340 E. Main St. | Blooming Prairie  
**507-583-7557**

Owners: Harvey & Nancy Farr

January & February Hours:

- Mon., Wed. & Fri.: 11:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.
- Tues. & Thurs.: 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.
- Sat: 9 a.m. - 10 p.m.
- Sun: Closed
- \* Last Call at 9:30 p.m.
- **BARBINGO**  
- Starts Again Jan. 25
- Mondays at 6:30 p.m.
- Must be 21 to play
- **TUNNEL OF LOVE**  
- Saturday, Feb. 6
- 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Valentine gifts featured at many local businesses
- **OFF-SALE SPECIALS**  
- Sample Seltzers & Wines
- "Sweetheart of a Wine Sale"
- Lottery Promo

**Sudoku Corner**

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

Sponsored by:

**VALLEYVIEW ASSISTED LIVING**  
1212 W Frontage Rd Owatonna, MN  
507-451-0722 • [valleyviewowatonna.com](http://valleyviewowatonna.com)

- Newly Remodeled
- County Assistance Accepted
- Pet Friendly



Make new friends.

**Answers**

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

**GUEST COLUMN**

**Volunteers United in the works**

BY ANNETTE DUNCAN

This past year has given us a lot to be thankful for. Wait, what? Yes, you heard, me right. With all the challenges we have been faced with, I am so thankful to be surrounded, even virtually, by thousands of caring people, every day, who genuinely care and want to help. These are my people, and so to each of you, I say, thank you!

We have had an outpouring of people reaching out to us looking for opportunities to volunteer. In the same turn, we have had numerous requests from our nonprofit community for such volunteers. Our solution: create a hub to match the two up! I am pleased to introduce Volunteers United to Steele County. There are a few phases before this will



SUBMITTED PHOTO

**United Way of Steele County is preparing to launch a volunteer hub to connect people wanting to volunteer and non-profits seeking volunteers.**

be a well-oiled machine, so we appreciate your patience as we work out the logistics. In the meantime, we could use your help with building our database of volunteers. We are asking each of you to not commit to a volunteer opportunity

today, but to sign up to be notified of volunteer opportunities in the future. Go to [www.unitedways-teelecounty.org](http://www.unitedways-teelecounty.org) and click "Help the Cause" to sign up today!

The next step in the process is to help nonprofits in Steele

County identify new and creative ways that volunteers can help them build their capacity to further serve their mission. I am scheduling appointments to start those conversations now, so if you know of a nonprofit in Steele County that would benefit from increased capacity please send them my way. My contact info is listed below.

We are excited to be able to help bridge the gap between those that want to serve and those that need the service. This is just one way we serve our communities every day. This is what it means to LIVE UNITED.

**Annette Duncan is president of United Way of Steele County. She can be reached at 507-455-1180 or via email by [president@unitedways-teelecounty.org](mailto:president@unitedways-teelecounty.org).**

**LTO announces cast for 'The Gin Game'**

Little Theatre of Owatonna has announced the cast for its spring production of *The Gin Game* by D.L. Coburn that premiered at American Theater Arts in Hollywood in September 1976, directed by Kip Niven. It was Coburn's first play, and the theater's first production. The play won the 1978 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

The *Gin Game* uses a card game as a metaphor for life. Weller Martin is playing solitaire on the porch of a seedy nursing home. Enter Fonsia Dorsey, a prim, self-righteous lady. They discover they both dislike the home and enjoy gin rummy, so they begin to play and to reveal intimate details of their lives. Fonsia wins every time, and their secrets

become weapons used against one another. Weller longs for a victory to counter a lifetime of defeats, but it doesn't happen. He leaves the stage a broken man, and Fonsia realizes her self-righteous rigidity has led to an embittered, lonely, old age.

Jeffrey Jackson is the director with Kathy Purdie as the technical director.

The cast includes Kristin Sellentine as Fonsia Dorsey and Bill Wood as Weller Martin. Performances will be at 7:30 p.m. April 23, 24, 30, and May 1 with matinee performances at 2 p.m. on April 25 and May 2.

Online tickets will be available at [www.LittleTheatreofOwatonna.org](http://www.LittleTheatreofOwatonna.org) for season members April 3 and the public on April 10. Our Remote Box Office at Tri M Graphics will be open April 3 for members and April 10 for the public. The LTO Box Office opens April 19. Adult ticket price is \$17; student ticket price is \$14. A at home streaming version will be available, please watch our website and social media for information.



**PANTHER OF THE WEEK**



ABRAM CHANCE

This week's panther of the week is ABRAM CHANCE. Abram lives in Hartland with his parents Wade and Deborah, and his older sister Scarlett. Abram is in Mrs. Lassahn's second grade class at NRHEG.

He has a very sweet heart and is extremely respectful to his teachers and classmates. Abram has a fun personality and loves to bring joy to others. He is a hard worker and always honest. Abram is kind to everyone and we can always count on him! He loves to help out wherever needed and is a great role model for others!

Abram enjoys drawing, doing gymnastics, and playing with his older sister. His favorite food is lasagna and he enjoys reading Junie B. Jones books. *Keep up the great work Abram!*



SPONSORED BY  
**STEVE'S SMOKEY ACRES**  
Ellendale  
507-684-2331

**ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST**

**Dr. Deborah Lien**  
DDS, MBS

*Building Healthy Smiles*

[www.drdeborahlienorthodontics.com](http://www.drdeborahlienorthodontics.com)  
**507-583-6613**  
**FREE CONSULTATION**

132 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave NE | Blooming Prairie

**SMIF paint the town grants available**

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), in partnership with regional hardware stores, will be accepting applications for free paint and coating products for community mural, community welcome sign or historic structure projects through its Paint the Town Grant program.

This grant opportunity is available to communities with a population under 10,000 throughout SMIF's 20-county region. A goal of this program is to encourage local volunteer involvement in the painting process. A total of up to 10 projects will be awarded paint products based on visual impact, public benefit, volunteer participation and community support.

Since 1997, SMIF has helped distributed more than 10,000 gallons of paint to 277 projects in the region through various programs. The Paint the Town Grant program was

**Prairie Sportsman**

Thurs. Evenings, 7:30  
Starting Jan. 28th!

- Live action outdoors
- Outdoor enthusiasts in their element!
- Interviews with natural resource researchers & managers
- Entertaining food, art or drink segment
- Aquatic Invasive Species prevention Minute
- The latest on habitat restoration

**KSMQ TV**  
The Better Choice



**OBITUARIES**

Obituaries Sponsor:

**LEGACY MONUMENT SALES**

Leon & Lori Bohiman 507-456-7864 or 507-456-3735  
landlbo@gmail.com

*Felix Wochnick,  
96, Owatonna*



**Felix Wochnick**  
passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2021.

He was born on May 24, 1924, in Brockway Township, Stearns County, Minnesota. His parents were Anton J. and Mary (Symanietz) Wochnick. He attended rural school in Stearns County. He was the oldest of four boys and learned to bake and cook at a young age. One of his specialties was bread pudding, which his family misses.

In his early years, he worked with crews harvesting grain from Oklahoma to the Canadian border in North Dakota. He also spent several years in dairy, having worked at Carlton College Dairy in Northfield. While working in Northfield, he met Bonnie at the Northfield Ballroom.

On Feb. 3, 1948, he married Bonnette (Bonnie) Broughten at Corpus Christie Church of Deerfield. They worked for various farmers and in 1950, moved to Faribault, where he was employed by McQuay's and Matejcek Implement (International Harvester dealer) In 1955, they moved to Owatonna where he worked for the Virtue & Pound (International Harvester Dealer), General Equipment Company, Truth Inc. and retired from The King Company in 1988.

Since the move to Owatonna, he has been a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church and is a life member of the Knights of Columbus.

Felix and Bonnie enjoyed spending time with their family, playing cards and Dixie Pollyanna, traveling to horse shows, toy shows, auctions, and taking road trips to various states. They loved getting out on the dance floor and kicking up their heels to a polka or waltzing around the dance floor.

Throughout the years, Felix crafted harnesses for miniature horse models, as well as designing and building miniature farm equipment. He would display these from time-to-time at Pioneer Power Days and at the Steele County Historical Extravaganza.

Felix is survived by his wife of 73 years, Bonnie. Daughter Shirley (Les) Abraham; granddaughters Melanie Abraham (Rodney Borchert) and Heidi (Eric) Berg; two great-grandsons James and Marshall Berg; sisters-in-law Chris (Marcel) Wochnick, Marian (Byron) Broughten, and LaDonna (Nejat) Turkbash and brother-in-law Burdette Broughten, as well as many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his three younger brothers, Daniel, Victor and Marcel Wochnick; sisters-in-law, Rita (Victor) Wochnick, Alice (Daniel) Wochnick, Joan (Burdette) Broughten;

brothers/sisters-in-law Bert and Ruth (Spitzack) Broughten, Ervin and Blanche (Broughten) Pitzner and Albert and Beatrice (Broughten) Nelson; and brothers-in-law Byron Broughten and Dr. Nejat Turkbash, as well as some nieces and nephews.

A private family service was held on Saturday, Feb. 20, 2021, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, with burial following at Owatonna Memorial Gardens.

A 'Thank You' from the family to Hospice and the staff at Traditions for making his last days comfortable, all of the thoughts and prayers from family and friends, the clergy and staff of Sacred Heart Church and the staff of Brick-Meger Funeral Home.

Memorials may be given to Hospice, Owatonna Knights of Columbus, Sacred Heart Church, or donor's choice.

**BRICK-MEGER & MEDFORD FUNERAL HOME**

*Mary Lerberg,  
76, Ellendale*



**Mary Lerberg**

On Feb. 13, 2021, Mary Ellen (Crabtree) Lerberg of Ellendale, passed away surrounded by family at Homestead Hospice House in Owatonna. She was 76 years old.

A memorial service for Mary was held on Saturday, Feb. 20, 2021 at First Lutheran Church, Ellendale with Pastor Arne Halbakken officiating. Due to COVID-19, masks are required and social distancing will be observed. Seating for the service was limited, but a livestream was available on her obituary page at [www.bonnerupfuneralservice.com](http://www.bonnerupfuneralservice.com).

Mary was born on Aug. 16, 1944 to Henry A. and Ella Mae (Knight) Crabtree. She grew up in rural Ellendale and graduated from Ellendale High School in 1962. While in school, Mary was active in many organizations, played in the band and was a major-ette. After graduation, she worked at Federated Insurance in Owatonna.

On Aug. 9, 1964 she married the love of her life, Andrew (Andy) Lerberg, at the United Methodist Church in Ellendale. Several years after Mary joined Andy in managing the Lerberg businesses, Mary became a familiar face on Ellendale's main street. Her artistic skills in decorating were on display at Lerberg's Dry Goods and Gifts until 2004 when she was instrumental in opening Lerberg's Fitness Center, from which she retired in 2017.

Her life centered on family, community and faith. She was known as a great cook and hosted many family holidays and gatherings. Mary could be found at any activity in which her daughters or grandchildren were participants.

The Panthers had no more dedicated fan and she traveled to Wisconsin to support grandsons there. Mary was a member of the Memories Car Club and enjoyed cruises with Andy and club member friends. She was a member of the Ellendale Lion's club and an active member at Ellendale's First Lutheran Church, where she was a choir member, ladies' aide, altar guild, Luther League Chaperone and involved with other activities.

She believed in the motto "Life is Better at the Lake" and enjoyed summers at the family cabin on Beaver Lake. Mary was captain of her pontoon, "Mary Ellen", and could be found on sunny days circling the lake and enjoying time with her children and grandchildren.

Mary is survived by her husband of 56 years, Andy; daughters, Angela (Troy) Entwisle and Wendy (John) Schultz; grandchildren, Jordan and Trevor Entwisle and Jade, Sidney and Jack Schultz; sisters, Gloria (Gene) Pogalz and Naomi Wangness; sister-in-law, Jo Lerberg and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by parents Henry and Ella Mae; sister, Sharon; brother, Lloyd; a niece and a great-niece.

Family would also like to give a special thanks to Chelsey Johnson for her excellent care.

In honor of Mary, tell your children, grandchildren and others that you love them today and hug them when it is safe. Life is so short!

*Stephanie Miller,  
38, BP*



**Stephanie Miller**

Stephanie J. Miller, age 38 of Blooming Prairie, passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2021, at Methodist Hospital after a six-year battle with metastatic breast cancer.

Stephanie Jean Thompson was born Oct. 24, 1982, to Marvin Jr. and Heidi (Hansen) Thompson in Owatonna. She graduated with the Class of 2001, from Blooming Prairie High School. Stephanie went on to attend Winona State University for her undergraduate degree and it was there she met the love of her life, Matthew Miller.

On Aug. 11, 2007, she married Matthew at the Bethel Church in Owatonna. Stephanie then attended St. Thomas University and St. Kates University for her Master's in Clinical Social Work. During her career she worked with the elderly, at-risk youth, and eventually obtained her ideal job as a clinical social worker specializing in cognitive behavioral therapy at Mayo Clinic. She also developed a mental health training program for law enforcement and trained multiple law enforcement agencies.

Her dreams came true with the start of her and Matthew's family and the birth of their daughter, Claudia, in 2010. Their life was further enriched by

the birth of their son, Landon, in 2012. She was a wonderful mom who cuddled, laughed, danced, played, loved, and dreamed. She volunteered her time with school field trips, activities, and coached her daughter's fourth grade basketball team. One of her favorite things to do was make hand-decorated cakes and desserts for family and friends.

If you had just met Stephanie, you would have never known she was battling cancer. Her positive attitude, strength, and courage were inspiring to everyone who knew her. She once said, "Cancer has given me more than it has taken." She was blessed by the love and support of so many; too many to count. She never hesitated to befriend and support other breast cancer "warriors" and help them in any way she could. Stephanie was a bright light, a kind heart, and had a beautiful smile that beamed with joy. Cancer may have taken her body, but it never touched her soul. The world is a little less bright without her in it. She will be greatly missed.

Survivors include her parents, Marvin Jr. and Heidi Thompson; husband, Matthew Miller; daughter, Claudia Miller (11); son, Landon Miller (8); brother, Derrick (Brittany) Thompson; sister, Amber (Adam) Johnson; many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her maternal grandparents, Harold and Mildred Hansen; paternal grandparents, Marvin, Sr. and Norma Thompson; uncles, Greg Hansen and Dale Hansen.

A funeral service was held on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021 at First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie. Due to COVID-19, the service was family only or by invitation. Services were live streamed through First Lutheran Church - Facebook page. Public interment was held following the service on Tuesday in Danish Baptist Cemetery in Blooming Prairie.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Miller Family. An account has been arranged at U.S. Bank, P.O. Box 337, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917.

Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home in Blooming Prairie is assisting the family with arrangements. Condolences may be expressed to the family online at [www.worlein.com](http://www.worlein.com).

*Norman L. Rieck, 76, Owatonna*



**Norman L. Rieck**

Norman L. Rieck of Owatonna passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by his family Feb. 18, 2021.

A funeral service was held Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021 at Brick Meger Funeral Home.

Norman was born Jan. 10, 1945 in Owatonna, the son of Erick A. and Edna A. (Schroeder) Rieck. He attended school in Ellendale and graduated from there in 1962. After high school, Norm hauled canned milk in the local area and later hauled bulk milk.

He was united in marriage to Leona Miller in 1968 at St. Joseph Church in Owatonna.

**BOOK NOOK**

**Internet service not always so hot**



**NANCY VAILLANCOURT**

Recently I was asked to provide input for a round-table discussion on broadband access to internet services. This article is based on that discussion and on how barriers to internet access affect Blooming Prairie.

Internet access has been a concern here for many years. As more businesses and governments require online access, this has made availability to the internet a necessity, not a luxury, whether it is to file for unemployment compensation, access tax forms, or to get in line for a Covid-19 vaccine. (Try <https://vaccineconnector.mn.gov>) The pandemic did not create these issues but made the situation more critical. Almost overnight, libraries that had provided access for all were no longer open for computer use.

One local family researched how much it would cost to get internet service to their farm. Their son needed it for online schooling and the mother was expected

to function as a teacher online. The price was more than they could afford.

Thankfully LSTA provided grant funds to SELCO, our regional library system, for hot spots in area libraries - one per library. The hot spot helped the teacher stay connected with her students. It took another teacher more than six weeks to get her internet service installed, prompting her to use our hot spot during that time. But the hot spots are temporary emergency fixes that will end when the grant no longer covers the monthly cost, an expense not covered by our budget. In addition, there is only one hot spot available to use for all the patrons who may need it.

Better broadband access would allow patrons to have online access at times and places convenient to them. Competition between providers could also lead to improved access and reliability of service. Blooming Prairie and the outlying area would best be served by subsidizing or providing incentives for internet companies to reach rural areas. They could then provide coverage so that the services would be affordable and accessible to all who need them. If you agree, let your state representatives know!

**D.O.T. Physicals**

Dr. Eischens is a Certified Medical Examiner and on the National Registry for DOT Health Cards



**Try Chiropractic! New patients welcome!**

Most insurances accepted. Auto, Work Comp, P.L., MA, Medicare, Federated, BCBS, Medica, Preferred One, Mayo, and many more!

"From Pain Relief to Wellness"

**PRAIRIE FAMILY & SPORTS CHIROPRACTIC, P.A.**

"Established to serve your health care needs"

Chad M. Eischens, D.C.  
344 East Main Street  
Blooming Prairie, MN • 583-2271  
1-866-5DR-CHAD



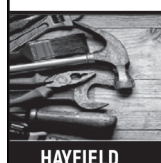
[www.drchad.org](http://www.drchad.org)

**BIRTHDAYS**

- Feb. 24  
Joe Wacek, Jr.  
Theresa Heimerman  
Nathan Lindeman
- Feb. 25  
Tess Koster  
Muriel Thompson, Sr.
- Feb. 26  
Kari Bottin  
Betty Behnken  
Per Kvalsten
- Feb. 27  
Julia Worke  
Doris Rasmussen  
Brad Hines  
Sophia Schiller  
Linda L. Christianson
- Feb. 28  
Amber Lonergan  
Douglas Novak  
Tim Trotman  
Mike Ingvalson
- Feb. 29  
Mary Wacek
- March 1  
Natalie Scheper  
Barry Olson  
Nikki Farr  
Taylor Hagen
- March 2  
Kim Symes  
Mark Anderson  
Keith Thomas  
Mason Simon

**ANNIVERSARIES**

- Feb. 17  
Mark & Diane Lembke
- Feb. 18  
Tom & Paula Ressler
- Feb. 22  
Marion & Joan Mast
- Feb. 25  
Cork & Steve Drexler
- March 1  
Jeremy & Brieanne Wangen



This weekly feature sponsored by:  
**Dornink & Sons Carpentry**  
Gene Dornink  
**507.206.8449**

**TRUST US TO HANDLE WITH CARE**



*Glen*



*Mike*



*Brett*

**Brick-Meger Funeral Home Medford Funeral Home**  
507.451.1457 | [megercares.com](http://megercares.com)

**PROUDLY SERVING STEELE COUNTY**



# Worship & Faith

STEELE COUNTY TIMES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021

A13

## Lift up those struggling in the cold



**Pastor Leandra Anderson**

RED OAK GROVE  
LUTHERAN  
AUSTIN

It has been cold. That statement is not a surprise to anyone that has been outside over the past few weeks.

Being raised in the southeast, this is the first time in my life that I have experienced cold lower than probably 20 degrees for days on end. The heaviest coat I owned was a peacoat that got me through

winters in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Pennsylvania (with layers underneath). When we knew we were moving to Minnesota there were three major additions to our wardrobes that were necessary: heavy coats, snow boots, and warm gloves. While shopping, we read reviews for my warmest coat and the coat's top review read something like "kept a southerner warm in Alaska." I figured that would be warm enough for me.

As the winter has progressed, we have found other things we need to keep warm when outside in a Minnesota winter. We have had to get shoes for our dogs, a bunch of chapstick, and some very moisturizing hand soap. To be honest, I don't mind the cold. This is most likely due to the fact that I have the

available tools to keep me warm even on the coldest of days; plus, I do not have spend too much time outside.

This past week as the temperatures dropped from here to Texas, my heart sunk. To come from a warmer climate to a cold one takes preparation and shopping and a warning. These are all things that we rely on to be ready for weather below the teens or even below zero.

The temperatures are warming up and I think we will all rejoice in seeing that. If you are anything like me, you might be waiting excitedly to see those summer days where it is hot and humid. Those spring and summer days where the world wakes back up are my favorite.

Lent is the perfect time for those of us who are Christians to know

the winter waiting and reflecting until Easter arrives in an array of triumphant sounds and colors. Right now, we find ourselves still in the midst of the Minnesota winter and only in the second week of lent.

Until we meet those brighter warmer days, we keep supporting those who are experiencing historic extreme cold through prayer and action. Our Texan siblings need our love right now, and no one quite knows the cold and what can help in dire winter situations like Minnesotans. There are a multitude of ways to help starting with prayer. I hope that this week those who are rebuilding in the midst of winter, those who have been left out in the cold, and those who need the warmth of others in some capacity are lifted up through you.

## OBITUARIES: FROM A12

Norm went to work for Owatonna Tool Company shortly after their marriage and continued to work there for 28 years retiring in 2006. In retirement, he drove truck for Soubas's Peat Farm. He was a lifelong member of Zion Lutheran Church.

His life interests include fishing, playing cards, cheering on the Vikings, watching NASCAR, hunting, and listening to music. His biggest joy was spending time with his beloved family.

Norman will be miss by his wife of 52 wonderful years Leona, his children Colleen Vasicek (Nick Spinler) of Owatonna, Kimberly (John) Pirkil of Hope, Curtis

(Amy) Rieck of Owatonna, Shelly Rieck of Buffalo Center, Iowa, Kevin (Carrie) Rieck of Claremont, Karla (Chuck) Larsen of Byron, Randy (Cassidy) Rieck of Hayfield, Kristin (Adam) Ulrich of Owatonna; 17 grandchildren and a sister Verna (Willis) Yule of Owatonna.

Norm was preceded in death by his parents, one sister Mercedes, one brother Emil and grandson Steven.

Memorials may be directed to Owatonna Hospice. For more information or to leave a condolence message go to [www.megercare.com](http://www.megercare.com).

**BRICK-MEGER & MEDFORD**  
FUNERAL HOME

## AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**LUTHERAN AURORA LUTHERAN**  
6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna  
Interim Pastor:  
Rev. Dale Svendsen  
507-451-2819  
office@auroralutheranchurch.org  
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: 8:30 a.m. Sunday

**FIRST LUTHERAN - AFLC**  
503 Radel Ct., Ellendale  
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 - LCMC**  
2500 7th Ave. NE., Owatonna  
Pastor Greg Schlicker  
507-451-4125  
goodshepherdowatonna.com  
Indoor Worship: Sundays 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Online Worship: Sundays 9 a.m. or anytime on website

**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 - LCMC**  
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-Freborn  
Road, Austin  
Leandra Anderson, Pastor  
507-583-2038 or 507-437-3000  
www.roglutheran.org  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.

**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN - LCMC**  
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 - LCMC**  
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 - LCMC**  
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  
Sunday Worship Indoor: 10 a.m.

**TRINITY LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna  
507-451-4520  
tlcowatonna.org  
Senior Pastor: Rev. Todd  
Buegler; Associate Pastor:  
Rev. Amanda Floy  
Deacon: Kris Oppgaard  
Sundays 9:30 a.m. - online at  
[facebook.com/tlcowatonna](https://www.facebook.com/tlcowatonna)  
and [tlcowatonna.org/worshiplive](https://www.tlcowatonna.org/worshiplive)  
Watch the video of our full  
service on Spectrum (channel  
181) and Jaguar TV (channel  
900) (Tuesday-4:30 p.m.;  
Wednesday-6 p.m.; Sunday-11  
a.m.) and at [owatonnaonline.com](https://www.owatonnaonline.com).

**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 - LCMC**  
108 Third Ave. SW., Medford  
Pastor Mark Biebighauser  
507-451-0447  
Worship: 8 a.m. & 10 a.m.  
Education Hour: 9 a.m.

**TRINITY LUTHERAN - LCMC**  
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  
Sunday Worship Indoor:  
8:30 a.m.

**OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
1909 St. Paul Road, Owatonna  
Senior Pastor:  
John Weisenburger  
Associate Pastor: Lisa Carlson  
507-451-4853  
oursaviorsowatonna.com  
Worship: 8:15 a.m.- Traditional,  
9:30 a.m.- Sunday School/  
Adult Education  
10:45 a.m.- Contemporary

**CATHOLIC CHRIST THE KING**  
205 Second Ave. NW, Medford  
507-451-4845  
Father James Starasinich  
Mass: 5:30 p.m. Sat.  
Mass: 9 a.m. Mon. & Fri.

**CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS**  
307 SW First St.,  
New Richland  
Father Brian Mulligan  
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 8:15 a.m.  
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 Swaminatha  
Pothreddy Parochial Vicar  
507-451-1588  
www.sacredheartowatonna.org

Masses: Saturday 5 p.m.  
Sunday 8 a.m., 10 a.m.,  
and Noon (Spanish)  
Daily Mass 7:15 a.m.  
Tuesday through Friday  
Reconciliation 4 p.m. Saturday  
Adoration - Thursdays 8  
a.m.-7 p.m.

**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 Starasinich  
507-451-4845  
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.  
Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m.  
Reconciliation: 3-3:30 p.m. Sat.  
Daily Mass: 8 a.m. Tues.,  
Wed. & Fri. (Communion  
Service 8 a.m. Thursday)  
Adoration Chapel available  
Mon. - Fri. 7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Key fob required after hours  
or weekends

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

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

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

**ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST**  
200 Sixth St. NW, Ellendale  
Pastor Randy Cirksena  
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. Lisa J. Vick Pastor  
507-451-4734  
www.owatonnaumc.org  
Traditional Worship  
(Pathways):  
9 a.m. Sunday

**NON-DENOMINATIONAL 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.

**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  
Interim Pastor Wendell  
Anderson  
507-684-3421  
www.vibrantlifeag.com  
Worship: 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday  
Kids Church: 9 a.m.

**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.

**Monuments LEGACY MONUMENT SALES**  
Leon's Cell 507-456-7864  
Lori's Cell 507-456-3735  
landlbo@gmail.com  
Call for a catalog to view in the comfort  
of your home. We are here to help you  
create your monument by email or phone.  
  
LEON & LORI BOHLMAN

**LERBERG'S FITNESS CENTER & CAR WASH**  
118 5th Ave.  
Ellendale  
507-684-2471

Dr. Deborah  
Lien  
DDS, MBS  
Building  
& Healthy  
Smiles!  
132 2nd Ave NE  
Blooming Prairie  
507.583.6613  
FREE  
CONSULTATION

**CLAREMONT SERVICE CENTER**  
Service Center:  
507-528-2233  
After Hours Towing:  
507-456-4158  
111 Front Street  
P.O. Box 282  
Claremont, MN

**Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.**  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
314 E. Main St.  
Blooming Prairie  
507-583-7528  
685 W. Bridge St.  
Owatonna  
507-451-9136  
133 N. Broadway  
New Richland  
507-465-3810

**Vandal's FAMILY MARKET**  
Locally Owned & Operated  
237 Hwy. Ave. S.  
Blooming Prairie  
507-583-6671

**Owatonna GRANITE & MONUMENT**  
"Creating Your Story in Stone"  
1180 Frontage Rd E • Owatonna  
507-455-9551  
www.owatonnagranite.com

**FLOOR TECH**  
322 East Main St.  
Blooming Prairie  
507-583-2276

**FARMERS INSURANCE**  
Mike Bishman  
121 W. Broadway St.  
Owatonna  
507-451-0193

**REALIFE COOPERATIVE**  
Vibrant Living For  
Individuals 55 & Older  
at a Reasonable Price  
Call Jon Arnett @  
455-3735 for a tour  
236 22nd St. SE • Owatonna

**VALLEYVIEW OF OWATONNA**  
Make new friends.  
1212 W Frontage Rd Owatonna, MN  
507-451-0722  
valleyviewofowatonna.com



## 2 VYING: for state award FROM A9

get recognition for it.”  
Versteeg has also been quite involved with the school as he also in choir program, and has competed with the soccer, football, and basketball teams.  
“The activities I’ve been a part of during my high school career have all been things I truly enjoy doing,” Versteeg said. “This nomination is an incredible honor, but the diversity of experiences I’ve had during high school is arguably just as important.”  
“This year has presented challenge after challenge. Pushing through challenges and being nominated for Triple ‘A’ means so much to



Sydney Hunst

me,” Hunst said. “When everything else has been a bit messy, it feels really good to accomplish something like this.”  
With everything that has been going on, Versteeg said that it has made him appreciate the ability to participate in various activities, even if they may take place in a different format.  
The winners of the



Lane Versteeg

award will be announced during the boys basketball tournament in March.  
Looking ahead at the future, Hunst will continue her athletic career at the College of St. Benedict where she will play hockey and study either integrated science or biology.  
Versteeg is currently undecided on his future plans.

## BUILDING: new pathways virtual event FROM A9

bid on several amazing auction baskets.  
Please consider making a donation to “Building New Pathways” to ensure that everyone in our community is able to

receive the basic human needs. Together we can promote a stronger and healthier community for all.

*Andi Arnold is the outreach and grant*

*director for Community Pathways of Steele County. Steele Talkin’ is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.*

## LERBERG LEFT: FROM A10

son’s life. Thompson worked closely with Lerberg for many years, starting with the gift shop. “She was very efficient and organized,” Thompson said.  
Thompson and Lerberg often traveled out of town to buyer’s shows to purchase items for the store. “It was a fun job because she made it fun,” Thompson said. “We just had a great time together,” she added.

But it wasn’t all work for the two. They also socialized together outside of work.  
Through their relationship, Thompson also saw another side to the Lerbergs. Thompson recalled how Mary and Andy helped some stranded motorists outside of Ellendale by driving them up to the Twin Cities.  
“They would bend over backward to help

anyone,” said Thompson. “They were very strong in helping other people.”  
As for Lerberg’s health setback that came about 10 years ago, Thompson said, “It just broke our hearts to see her good through this.”  
All those who knew Lerberg agree that her death will create some big shoes to fill in the community.  
Services were held Saturday for Lerberg. A full obituary can be found on A12.

## SMIF PAINT: FROM A11

officially launched in 2015 with regional Ace Hardware and Arrow Hardware and Paint stores.  
Participating stores in the Steele County area are Arrow Hardware &

Paint in Owatonna, and Faribault Ace Hardware. While some participating stores are located outside of SMIF’s region, only communities with populations under 10,000 in SMIF’s

20-county region are eligible to apply.  
Applications are due to SMIF by March 31. For more information or to apply visit our website at [www.smifoundation.org](http://www.smifoundation.org) or contact Jennifer Heien at 507-214-7040; [jenniferh@smifoundation.org](mailto:jenniferh@smifoundation.org).

**Are you ready to make a difference?**  
**Come join our team.**  
**(507) 446-3133**  
\$2,000 stay bonus for full-time CNA, LPN, or RN positions

**QUALITY PORK PROCESSORS**  
*A Great Place to Work*

**Looking for full time work? Benefits? Paid Holidays? 401K?**

**Starting at \$17**  
1st and 2nd processing positions available now!

Apply online [www.qppinc.net](http://www.qppinc.net)

# HERE'S MY CARD

<p><b>ACCOUNTING</b></p> <p><b>Johnson, Doerhoefer &amp; Miner P.A.</b> CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS ACCOUNTING AND TAX SERVICES FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND INDIVIDUALS 314 East Main St., Blooming Prairie   507-583-7528   Fax: 507-583-2389</p>	<p><b>AUTOMOBILE</b></p> <p><b>Mike's REPAIR</b> 507-455-0388 Fax: 507-455-0486</p> <p>870 32nd Ave. NW Owatonna, MN 55060 Mike Hartle Owner All tire sizes, sales and service for ag and truck! After Hours: 507-455-0483</p>	<p><b>CLEANING</b></p> <p><b>BIZZY BEE CLEANING LLC</b> MONICA VARELA 507-977-5582 <a href="mailto:bizzybeecleaning2018@yahoo.com">bizzybeecleaning2018@yahoo.com</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RESIDENTIAL</li> <li>WEEKLY</li> <li>ONE TIME</li> <li>COMMERCIAL</li> <li>BI-WEEKLY</li> <li>SEASONAL</li> <li>GET-READY'S</li> <li>MONTHLY</li> <li>SPECIAL</li> <li>OCCASION</li> </ul> <p>10% OFF FIRST VISIT YOU SIT AND RELAX!! LET ME CLEAN!</p>
<p><b>COLLISION</b></p> <p>THE ONLY AREA SHOP certified to work on the 2015 Ford Aluminum F150</p> <p>CSI: Collision Specialists Inc www.csiaustinmn.com 507.437.2837</p>	<p><b>CONSTRUCTION</b></p> <p><b>J.A. Gwilt Siders, Inc.</b> Siding, Windows, Gutters, Roofing &amp; Decks Call 507-456-1504 for your FREE estimates! Serving Steele County for 20 years. Known for our exceptional quality of material and labor.</p>	<p><b>CONSTRUCTION</b></p> <p><b>Johnson Construction &amp; Tree Service</b> Tree &amp; Stump Removal • Trimming &amp; Topping • Tree Moving Lot Clearing • Backhoe/Skidloader • Hauling General Construction 24 Hr. Emergency Services • Year Round Work • Licensed &amp; Insured KYLE JOHNSON • 507-583-7592 AUSTIN &amp; BLOOMING PRAIRIE</p>
<p><b>EXCAVATING</b></p> <p><b>SEPTIC SYSTEMS</b> • Design • Installation • Compliance Inspections State License # 1844 Serving the Area Over 12 Years</p> <p><b>BISHOP BE EXCAVATING, INC.</b> • EXCAVATION • BASEMENTS • DEMOLITION • DOZER WORK Commercial &amp; Residential Sitework 507 583-2999 Aggregates • Hauling • Washed Sand • Black Dirt • Fill • Gravel</p>	<p><b>GARBAGE SERVICE</b></p> <p><b>SKJEVELAND ENTERPRISES</b> Sanitation &amp; Recycling Services YOU CAN COUNT ON US! Pride in service since 2007 RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sanitation &amp; Recycling Services</li> <li>Roll-Offs &amp; Dumpsters</li> <li>Rubbish &amp; Garbage Removal</li> </ul> <p>Contact Skjeveland Enterprises today! 507-528-9900</p>	<p><b>GRANITE &amp; MONUMENT</b></p> <p><b>Owatonna GRANITE &amp; MONUMENT</b> "Creating Your STORY in STONE" 1180 Frontage Rd E • Owatonna 507-455-9551 <a href="http://www.owatonnagranite.com">www.owatonnagranite.com</a> John and Barb Heerema</p>
<p><b>ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Deborah J. Lien, DDS, MBS</b> 132 2ND AVE. NE BLOOMING PRAIRIE ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST FREE CONSULTATIONS</p> <p>Building Healthy Smiles! <a href="http://drdeborahlienorthodontics.com">drdeborahlienorthodontics.com</a> 507/583.6613</p>	<p><b>PETS</b></p> <p><b>Bennett's PET HAVEN CEMETERY, INC.</b> "Professional Cremation and Burial Services for your loving pet" Larry &amp; Donna Bennett 4151 N. City Rd. 45 Owatonna, MN 55060 (507) 451-2203</p> <p>Shorty &amp; Sue Schroht 857 Mosher Ave. Owatonna, MN 55060 (507) 455-3204</p>	<p><b>PREPLANNING</b></p> <p><b>A Simple, Thoughtful Act of Caring</b> PREARRANGEMENT AND PREFUNDING</p> <p>Mary Kittelson NAPFA Certified Financial Planner Licensed Agent • Purple Cross Plans</p> <p>507.583.7561 <a href="http://www.worlein.com">www.worlein.com</a> Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home 418 Highway Ave S • Blooming Prairie MN</p>





# FFA Section

STEELE COUNTY TIMES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021 | B1

## Medford FFA inspires its members

*'Baby Animal Day is always fun...'*

BY CHRIS BALDWIN  
STAFF WRITER

**M**adison Jaster has been involved in FFA since seventh grade. She has made it to regionals four times and just took home first-place honors in beef and second in poultry for regionals in February.

Her family runs a beef farm and last summer, Jaster decided to raise chickens as an enterprise. "I raised 200 broiler meat chickens as an entrepreneurship," she said. "I've always really enjoyed raising chickens so I decided instead of getting a summer job, I would do that."

Jaster's father encouraged her to join Medford's FFA chapter and since then she has not looked back. "I would say go for something new," she said when asked what advice she has for other young people looking to get involved.

"FFA is about getting you out of your comfort zone and trying new opportunities," Jaster said. "Without FFA, I don't think I would have chosen the college path that I have." Jaster is currently taking post-secondary classes at Riverland.

"Before, I was leaning towards agricultural business," Jaster said. "I've been babysitting my whole high school life and after participating in activities with children for FFA, I realized ag education was right for me." Jaster also credits her adviser Tim Larson with inspiring her to make that choice.

A leader in her current chapter, Jaster said she wants to become an adviser after completing her education. "I think as a person FFA has shaped me to come out of my shell. In elementary, I was the girl who was super shy, but now I'm comfortable doing interviews for regionals or state. Before you probably couldn't find me."

While Medford FFA remains steady with events like their annual fruit fundraiser and virtual interviews, COVID has affected some of the activities this year. "Typically, we get together every other week as officers and as a chapter, we get



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Madison Jaster is vice-president of the Medford FFA. The chapter was founded in 1954 and currently has 35 members.

together every other month," Jaster said. "But we've only been able to do two officer meetings and one chapter meeting."

For many FFA members, including Jaster, it's those activities that mean the most. "It's really fun," she said. "One of the activities I really enjoyed is our fruit sale, and I always strove to raise the most money." Thanks to the community, Medford

FFA was still able to hold its annual fruit sale this year.

"Baby animal day is always fun and FFA week. We sometimes wait to celebrate FFA week as a chapter until May so that we can get outside and do something fun," Jaster said. "My favorite part of being involved in FFA is turning ordinary moments into unforgettable memories. We're like a family; we're a

close-knit group." Currently, Medford FFA has two State Degree candidates with

officers Madison Jaster and Mikayla Janke, has 14 Proficiency Awards advancing to state,

and their Forestry and Wildlife Team are both advancing to State Contests.

### More FFA stories on Pages 6B and 7B

#### MEDFORD FFA

**Instructors:** Tim Larson and Lisa Hoefs  
**President:** Mikayla Janke  
**Vice President:** Madison Jaster  
**Secretary:** Lynn Larson  
**Treasurer:** Alex Oatway  
**Reporter:** Mason Nagel  
**Sentinel:** Angela Lippert  
**Total Membership:** 35  
**Existence:** Founded in 1954



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Medford FFA students take part in virtual interviews. Due to COVID-19, the interview process for state and regionals occurred entirely online.

*This isn't just a jacket. This jacket has helped me reach my fullest potential. It is rich in traditions!*

**Saluting all FFA members on their accomplishments!**

They deserve the recognition because they are our future!  
Proudly serving Minnesota District 27  
**Senator Gene Dornink**  
Hayfield

Authorized and paid for by Gene Dornink.

**AGRICULTURAL • COMMERCIAL  
RESIDENTIAL • INDUSTRIAL**

3127 S County Road 45 • Owatonna MN 55060  
**507-446-8415** fax 507-455-1305  
Ryan Spindler - Owner - 507-456-1613  
ryan@fourseasonselectric.com



## Blossom girls extend winning streak to four

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

The Blooming Prairie girls basketball team isn't winning by as much as they did at the beginning of the season, but they are winning and that's all that matters.

This past week, they beat the Kenyon-Wanamingo Knights 38-35

on Tuesday, Feb. 16, and then they beat the Faribault Bethlehem Academy Cardinals 45-38 on Friday, Feb. 19.

Against Kenyon-Wanamingo, the Blossoms scored the first three points of the game, but the Knights responded with a 7-0 run.

But, less than two minutes later, Blooming Prairie tied the game 7-7.

A few minutes later, with Kenyon-Wanamingo leading 14-13, Maren Forystek's three-point shot was nothing but net to give the Awesome Blossoms a 16-14 lead with five minutes left in the first half.

The final five minutes went back-and-forth, and Blooming Prairie led 19-16 at halftime.

The second half was just as competitive as the first half. The Blossoms started the second half on a 6-3 run, but the Knights made back-to-back three-point plays to tie the score 25-25 with 10 minutes left in the game.

A few minutes later, with Blooming Prairie trailing by one, Allison Krohnberg sank a

three-point shot and jump-started a 7-1 Blossoms run to give them a 33-28 lead with four minutes left in the game.

However, just a minute later, the Knights cut their deficit to two, 35-33.

Blooming Prairie responded by scoring the next three points to give the Blossoms a 38-33 lead with a minute left in the game.

Kenyon-Wanamingo scored two more points to give themselves a shot, but its desperation heave in the final seconds was corralled by the Blossoms to preserve their 38-35 win.

Blossoms Head Coach John Brunns was proud that his team was able to pull out a win despite a tough shooting night.

"KW did a good job defensively and made things difficult for us. We won the game, but definitely didn't play to our potential," he said. "We will regroup and talk about some things and come back a better team from this game."

**BP individual stats:** Megan Oswald – 20 points, Bobbie Brunns – 9 points, Allison Krohnberg – 8 points, Maren Forystek – 3 points, Maggie Brunns – 2 points, Anna Pauly – 2 points and Emily Miller – 1 point.

– 4 points, Anna Pauly – 3 points and Bobbie Brunns – 2 points.

### ANOTHER TEST

A few days later, Blooming Prairie got another tough test when they went on the road to play the Faribault Bethlehem Academy (FBA) Cardinals.

Brunns said the two teams battled back-and-forth throughout the first half and the score was tied 20-20 at halftime.

"BP was able to come out with a nice run in the first six minutes of the second half to take control of the game and withstood several FBA runs to secure the win," he said.

The Blossoms won 45-38 to improve their overall record to 9-1 and their Gopher Conference record to 7-0.

Blooming Prairie's next game is a home contest against United South Central at 7:15 p.m. on Friday.

**BP individual stats:** Megan Oswald – 20 points, Bobbie Brunns – 9 points, Allison Krohnberg – 8 points, Maren Forystek – 3 points, Maggie Brunns – 2 points, Anna Pauly – 2 points and Emily Miller – 1 point.



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Blooming Prairie's Bobbie Brunns rises up for a left-handed jump shot during the final minutes of the Awesome Blossoms' 38-35 win on Tuesday, Feb. 16.

## Huskie boys squeeze past Mankato East

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

The Owatonna boys basketball was able to sneak away with another win this week, this time edging out Mankato East, 57-55.

The game came down to the closing second, with senior Lincoln Maher making a shot with eight seconds remaining in the game to give the Huskies the lead and the eventual win.

Junior Brayden Williams led the team in points during the contest with 27.

The win was the team's second of the week, with the first

coming against Albert Lea on Feb. 16.

In that contest, the Huskies cruised to victory, winning 85-37, the second most points Owatonna has put up this season. Williams again led the team in points, this time with 22.

With the wins, Owatonna improves to 9-2 on the season and currently sits second in the Big 9 standings, only behind Mankato West, whose record is 9-1. The Huskies will have a chance to take that top spot in this upcoming week, as they travel to play Mankato West on Friday. Tip-off will be at 7:30 p.m.

## Dominance continues for girls hockey

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

The Owatonna girls hockey team remained high scoring and dominant this week, as they defeated both Albert Lea and Rochester Mayo, scoring more than five goals in each game.

The week started off with a Feb. 16 matchup against Albert Lea. Albert Lea would score first, but from there it was all Owatonna, who took the lead with two goals in the first period, and then secured it with three goals in the third.

Leading the way for the team in that contest was sophomore Ezra Oien, who had two goals and one assist. Also playing a

key role in the game was sophomore, Sarah Sntiker, who did not have a goal in the contest but provided the Huskies with two assists, the most of anyone on the team.

Owatonna capped off its week with trip to Rochester Mayo, where they captured its fifth straight win, with a score of 6-1.

After the week's games, Owatonna sits second in the conference standings with a record of 9-1, only behind Northfield, who remains undefeated at 9-0.

The team will be back in action this Thursday at home, as they host Mankato East, who they defeated 5-3 earlier this season. Puck drop will be at 7 p.m.

## The eye of the Tiger set on St. Mary's

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

Coming from a small town in Medford, Tigers basketball star Kael Hermanstorfer knew he wanted to continue his basketball and academic career at a university in a bigger town and he had multiple options in the University of Minnesota-Duluth, St. Scholastica, which is also in Duluth, and North Central University in downtown

Minneapolis.

However, he also didn't want to go to a town too big.

Similar to Goldilocks, he's found the town and university that's just right for him in St. Mary's University (SMU) in Winona.

Winona, a town with a population of about 28,000, satisfies his desire to go to a town bigger than Medford, while the fact that SMU is isolated from downtown Winona and has only approximately 1,200 un-

dergraduate students on campus meets his wish of going to a town that's not too big.

"The balance of big and small is a pretty good fit for me," Hermanstorfer said. "Choosing St. Mary's was a pretty easy decision." His decision was even easier when he visited SMU's campus and got to watch one of the Cardinals practices. He said it sealed his decision of where he wanted to be.

"They were doing a lot of the stuff I did in AAU and based on my skillset, I thought I would fit in well with the team and do well there," he said.

The fact that St. Mary's mens basketball team was practicing similar drills as his AAU was not a coincidence.

This past summer, Hermanstorfer's AAU coach was St. Mary's Assistant Coach Kyle Brown.

"It helped me get closer to SMU and develop relationships with the coaching staff," he said.

While playing AAU basketball, Brown gave him an honest assessment of his game.

"He liked my defense, my work ethic and my ability to go with the flow of my team and not try to do too much. He also told me what he

wanted to see me work on: ball handling, being able to finish at the rim a little bit better and better decision-making," he said.

Since then, Hermanstorfer has focused on improving those aspects of his game that he was encouraged to work on.

"I think I've improved a lot. The big thing that I worked on was my ball handling so I could get to the rim and draw more fouls. I also worked my shooting and making it more consistent so I can shoot at a higher percentage," he said.

In addition to being the right school to further his basketball skills, he thought it was the best fit for him going forward in his education.

Hermanstorfer plans to major in physical therapy, and he says SMU has a really good physical therapy program.

However, before he enters SMU's physical therapy program, he wants to leave his Medford team in good shape.

"I want to get a winning culture started at Medford so when we graduate, they can continue that culture," he said. "For this year, we just want to get more wins and get a few playoff wins along the way."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

With his parents by his side, Medford's Kael Hermanstorfer is all smiles after signing his National Letter of Intent to play college basketball at St. Mary's University of in Winona.

"I want to get a winning culture started at Medford so when we graduate, they can continue that culture."

**Kael Hermanstorfer**  
Medford Athlete



*Dr. Deborah J. Lien*  
DDS, MBS  
**ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST**

**583.6613**

132 2nd Ave NE  
Blooming Prairie

www.drdeborahlienorthodontics.com

FREE CONSULTATIONS



# Westfield turns up the heat with two wins

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After a tough start to the season, the Westfield wrestling team is finally firing on all cylinders.

They've won four out of the last five duals, including wins over Waterville-Elyasian-Morristown/Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (WEM/JWP) 63-12 and St. Clair/Mankato Loyola 33-23 on Thursday, Feb. 18.

Against WEM/JWP, Co-Head Coach David Lassahn said it was the Razorbacks' most dominant win of the season.

"We won every match that was wrestled, and scored a fall in each of those matches," he said.

In fact, the Razorbacks won each of the first 12 matches, seven by fall, four by forfeit and one by decision, to take an insurmountable 63-0 lead heading into the last two matches of the dual. And the reason Westfield lost those last two matches was due to forfeit so they could have won by even more points if they had someone to wrestle at 220 and 285 pounds.

"I was really impressed with the way we wrestled in this dual. We're starting to see everyone come together as a team and understand the importance of scoring and saving bonus points," Lassahn said.

The next dual for the Razorbacks is against St. Clair/Mankato Loyola was much tougher. In fact, Westfield trailed 14-0 after losing the first three matches.

At 126 pounds, Lane Lembke got the Razorbacks on the board when he won his match by fall, but St. Clair/Mankato Loyola responded by winning the next match by fall to re-claim its 14-point lead.

Westfield's Keegan Bronson nearly cut his team's deficit in half by winning his match by fall in just one minute and 24 seconds.



PHOTO COURTESY MARY NELSON

Westfield's Dylan Ehmke won his 220-pound match by major decision 17-3 during the Razorbacks' recent dual against Lewiston-Altura/Rushford-Peterson.

After a double forfeit at 145 pounds, Sam Skillestad won by forfeit to make the score 20-18 in favor of St. Clair/Mankato Loyola.

At 160 pounds, St. Clair/Mankato Loyola won by decision 13-8 to slightly increase its lead to 23-18.

However, after that, it was all Westfield. Ty Bronson won by forfeit, Tyler Archer won by fall and Dylan Ehmke won by fall to give the Razorbacks a 33-23 lead.

The last two matches were double forfeited so Westfield won the dual by that same 10-point margin.

Lassahn said the dual was a bit closer than they would have liked, but they came out with a hard-fought win.

"They wrestled us tough in most of the matches tonight, and

we had enough guys step up to secure the win," he said.

He noted that the key to the Razorbacks win was securing bonus points in their wins and saving bonus points in their losses.

"I was proud of the way we battled in this dual tonight. We had some guys really step up and show some toughness," Lassahn said.

Six Westfield wrestlers won both of their matches: Lane Lembke, Keegan Bronson, Sam Skillestad, Ty Bronson, Tyler Archer and Dylan Ehmke.

The Razorbacks' next meet is a road dual against NRHEG at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 25. Their next home meet is next week when they host Maple River at Blooming Prairie High School at 7 p.m. on Monday, March 1.

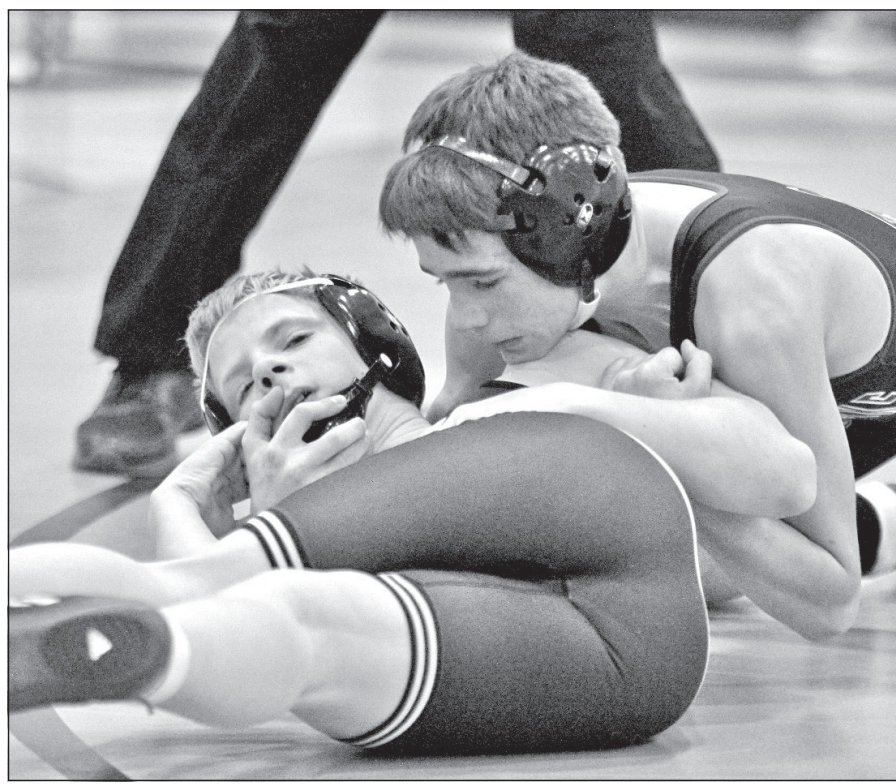


PHOTO COURTESY MARY NELSON

Bo Zweiner defeated Triton's Hunter Garness by technical fall 18-1 on Monday, Feb. 8. Zweiner has won his last four matches.

## Owatonna wrestlers win three, lose one

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

The Owatonna wrestling returned home on Thursday and provided the fans with two wins on the night.

In the first match of the night, the Huskies squared up against the Zumbrota-Mazeppa Cougars, who came out strong, winning the first two matches of the night to give them an early nine-point lead. Owatonna battled back with a wins by Cael

Robb at 120, and Kanin Hable, who captured the first pin of the night for the Huskies at 126.

Zumbrota again took the lead in the contest with a 6-2 win at 132, but this would be the last time they had it, as Owatonna went on a run in the middle-weight classes and won six of the nine remaining matches.

These wins included a well-wrestled performance by Owen Thorn, who won his match 7-0 at 138, and, yet another

pin by Landen Johnson at 160.

Zumbrota took the final three matches at 195, 220 (an Owatonna forfeit), and 285, however the contest belonged to Owatonna, who won in the overall team score 35-25.

Owatonna closed out the night defeating Albert Lea, 43-30, with Jacob Reinardy, Landen Johnson, Caleb Talamantes, Drew Kretlow, and Abe Stockwell all scoring pins, and Cael Robb scoring a tech fall victory.

However, the true oddity of the contest came at 170 where Owatonna's Kaden Nelson won by disqualification after his match was stopped in the second period because of his opponent biting him.

On Saturday, the team traveled to New Prague for another triangular, hoping to come with two more wins to end the week, and ended up with mixed results.

To start the day, Owatonna fell to New Prague, 36-22, but managed to bounce back in its second match of the day, defeating Scott West, 30-21.

After all the results, Owatonna's record now stands at 15-5 and 6-1 in Big Nine competition, which has them sitting in third in the standings.

The Huskies will be back at home on Thursday as they will host Winona and Pine Island. The first match will begin at 5 p.m.

After that, the team will be back on the road to end its week in Rochester, as they will compete in a conference matchup against Rochester John Marshall and Faribault, with action set to begin at 11 a.m. The match against Faribault will be particularly important, as that team currently leads the way in the Big Nine, with 9-0 record in conference competition and a 16-1 record overall.

## Tigers prevail over Panthers in dual

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

Since the end of January, the Medford wrestling team has been winning two duals then losing two duals and so on.

Well, this past week, that pattern stayed true; the Tigers lost to Tri-City United 58-12 for its second consecutive loss, but then they beat Le Sueur-Henderson 57-6 before besting New Richland-Hartland-Elendale-Geneva (NRHEG) 57-18 on Thursday, Feb. 18.

The Tigers got off to a fast start, winning three out of the first four matches by forfeit and winning the other match by fall to take an early 24-0 lead.

At 132 pounds, Medford's Derek Bartosch won by fall to extend the Tigers' lead to 30-0, but NRHEG responded by winning the next match by fall to make the score 30-6.

However, starting at 152 pounds, Medford won the next three matches. Garron Hoffman won by fall, Tate Hermes won by forfeit and Josiah Hedensten won by fall to extend the Tigers' lead to 48-6.

At 182 pounds, NRHEG's Ralph Roesler stopped the Panthers' bleeding by winning a hard-fought match by fall to make the score 48-12. NRHEG's Max Seltun then won by forfeit to trim the Panthers' deficit to 30 points, 48-18.

That's as close as the Panthers would get because Medford's Brennon Hoffman won the 220-pound match by forfeit and then the Tigers' heavyweight Gavin Hermes won the closest match of the evening, a 12-5 win by decision over NRHEG's Makota Misgen.

With that win by decision, Medford won the dual 57-18.

The Tigers' overall record is now 8-6 and their section record is 6-1.

Meanwhile, the Panthers' overall record is now 6-9 and their section record is 3-6.

Medford's next meet is a home dual against Maple River at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 25.

NRHEG's next meet is a home triangular. Their first match against Westfield starts at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 25.



STAFF PHOTO BY MITCHELL BREUER

Huskies wrestler Jacob Reinardy looks for a pin during Thursday's wrestling match against Zumbrota Mazeppa. Owatonna earned the victory over Zumbrota 35-25.



# Last second win highlights week for Huskie girls

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

It was week where the Owatonna girls basketball team saw a much needed high and an unfortunate low, as they split its two games.

The week started off on an exciting note, as a back and forth affair between the Huskies and Albert Lea came down to the wire. With the game tied at 52, Owatonna grabbed a rebound six seconds left and got the ball down court to junior Holly Buytaer, who drilled the final shot of the game to give Owa-

tonna their fourth win of the season, 54-52.

Senior Sarah Kingland led the team in the game putting up a team-high 11 points.

The team looked to carry that momentum into game Friday, as they hosted Mankato East.

Neither team could get much going, as the night started off only nine points scored in the opening seven minutes, with East holding a one-point advantage. One

SEE LAST SECOND, B8



STAFF PHOTO BY MITCHELL BREUER

Owatonna's Sarah Kingland looks for an offensive opportunity against Mankato East. The Huskies will be back home Friday when they host Mankato West.

## NRHEG girls rise and fall

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

Following a tough loss to Hayfield, the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) girls basketball team bounced back when they played and beat the Blue Earth Area Buccaneers 57-45 on Tuesday, Feb. 16. Unfortunately, they couldn't make it back-to-back wins because they lost to the Maple River Eagles 49-36 on Friday, Feb. 19.

Against Blue Earth Area, the Panthers had a strong offensive first half and took a 12-point lead, 36-24, into halftime.

NRHEG Head Coach Onika Peterson was pleased to see the Panthers' offense play so well.

"The girls had some great offensive moments tonight, moving the ball and attacking the basket. We were able to run the floor a couple times too, which was nice to see," she said.

In the second half, NRHEG relied on its defense to hold onto the lead.

"Defensively, we moved and communicated better tonight than we did last Friday," she said.

Thanks in part to the Panthers' defense, the Buccaneers scored just 21 points in the second half.

On the other end of the court, NRHEG's



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

NRHEG guard Sidney Schultz gets around Blooming Prairie guard Bobbie Bruns during the second half of the Panthers recent game against the Blossoms.

offense also scored 21 points in the second half so the Panthers won by the same margin they took into halftime, 12. The final score was 57-45.

"[It was a] great team win. We continue to make progress every game," Peterson said.

**NRHEG individual stats:** Faith Nielsen – 11 points, 4 rebounds and 1 steal, Sidney Schultz – 10 points, 2 rebounds, 2 steals and 1 assist, Kendall Johnson – 8 points, 8 rebounds and 2 steals, Erin Jacobson – 8 points, 6 rebounds and

1 assist, Sophie Stork – 7 points, 5 rebounds, 4 steals and 1 assist, Rhys Martin – 6 points and 5 rebounds, Hallie Schultz – 3 points, 4 rebounds and 1 steal, Sarah George – 2 points and 2 rebounds and Andy Briggs – 2 points and 1 rebound.

**Fall to Maple River**  
Against Maple River, the Panthers faced a much tougher defense and scored just 16 points in the first half compared to 36 first-half points just three days earlier.

NRHEG's defense kept them in the game.

The Eagles scored just 22 points in the first half, so they led 22-16 at halftime.

Both offenses played better in the second half, but Maple River outscored NRHEG by seven points and ended up winning 49-36.

Peterson explained that the main reason the Panthers lost was because of their low shooting percentage.

"We played hard but had a rough night shooting. Erin Jacobson and Andy Briggs both added a spark to

SEE LAST SECOND, B8

## Losing skid keeps sliding for Blossom boys

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

The Blooming Prairie boys basketball team came close to ending its losing skid against the Kenyon-Wanamingo (K-W) Knights, but came up a few points short, losing 56-49 on Thursday, Feb. 18.

Thankfully, the Blossoms got another chance to get back on track just a couple days later, but the Faribault Bethlehem Academy (FBA) Cardinals' offense was too strong to overcome and they lost 70-49 on Saturday, Feb. 20.

Blooming Prairie Head Coach Nate Piller said the Blossoms game against the Knights was a close game throughout and came down to the wire.

"[We] played a very competitive game that saw several lead changes until K-W was able to ice it from the line," he said.

Despite the 56-49 loss, he was very pleased with how his team played.

"We played our best basketball of the season. I loved our effort. Attitudes and approach to the game was much better," he said.

Piller added that the Blossoms are getting in sync with each other and have found their team identity.

"Overall, we were playing how we want to play the game. If we

continue to do that, we will improve and winning should follow," he said.

Blooming Prairie faced another tough test when they went on the road to compete against FBA.

Unfortunately, the Cardinals were even better thanks to the return of Brady Strotman to their lineup.

"That really put them over the top as FBA steadily built their lead throughout the game," Piller said.

He mentioned that the Cardinals steadily built their lead by playing well offensively and defensively.

"Good shooting made them very difficult to defend while their defense slowed down our top scorers," he said.

He also said three Blossoms got into foul trouble in the first half and it continued in the second half. Add in too many Blooming Prairie turnovers and he said it was a recipe for an unfortunate outcome.

The 70-49 loss drops Blooming Prairie's overall record to 2-7 and their Gopher Conference record is now 2-6.

The Awesome Blossoms' next game is a road contest against United South Central at 7:15 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 26. Their next home game is against NRHEG at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2.

**ASK THE MOTOR MEDICS**  
By Shannon Nordstrom and Russ Evans

Dear Motor Medics, I am moving to Colorado Springs this month from Sunny Texas where the weather will be much colder. Today we are in the coldest snap I have ever seen with a high of just 5 degrees which is super cold for us. We do not talk about winter tires or wiper blades or anything of the like here so that is my question. Do I need to get winter wipers and tires if I am going to live in a winter climate?

*Martin in Temple Texas.*

Dear Martin, That is a perfect question Martin. Here is the thing with "winter" items like tires and wiper blades. At first glance they can look identical, but they are not. Winter tires, even though they may have similar tread are much different by design. Have you ever picked up a garden hose or extension cord that is very cold and felt that it was extremely hard to bend? That is the same way that an all-season tire or wiper blade reacts in very cold weather. The chemical compound in the tires and wiper blades are designed for warm weather and although very strong, they are not the best choice for winter and cold. The tires and blades need to bend easily to conform to the road and glass to get the best traction and to keep in contact with the glass and road and a winter compound tire and wiper blade is the best choice for driver safety.

*Take care, The Motor Medics*

Dear Motor Medics, I found a great deal on a car that is in Phoenix Arizona. I was looking for this older model of Tahoe for an awfully long time with no rust and this is where I found it. It is a 2004 Tahoe with 70k miles, 4x4 and 5.3 engine. I live up here in Minnesota and being that this truck was in Arizona its entire life I wonder what it will need to make it up here in the North. Do you typically have to do anything to prepare a southern vehicle for winter use?

*Tom in Maple Grove Minnesota.*

Dear Tom, Cars should work anywhere you use them when properly cared for. With that said we can tell you that on average, a large amount of vehicle maintenance goes unperformed. As drivers, a lot of us just drive our vehicles until something goes wrong and make repairs to cover that one problem when it occurs. Therefore, if you have a car that has been driven mostly in the warm southern climate it could have some worn spark plugs, carbon build-up, dirty injectors or other items that would not be an issue in warm weather but could contribute to warm weather starting issues. You will want to have your local mechanic check the vehicle over and give you advice on general state of tune times needed and be sure to check all of the fluids and belts and hoses to get ready for the cold.

*Take care, the Motor Medics*

2/25

SINCE 1939  
**Schaeffer's**  
SPECIALIZED LUBRICANTS

Bruce Freerksen  
(507)273-9110  
brucewithschaefferoil@gmail.com  
West Concord, MN

**Kappy's**  
COLLISION CENTER  
OWATONNA'S COLLISION SPECIALIST

Now using PPG Waterborne Paint  
**STAY HAPPY**  
www.kappysauto.com  
kappysauto@gmail.com

**SEE KAPPY**  
Charlie & Al Kaplan  
507-451-8989

**Hoff's**  
Auto Repair

704 7th St Circle Se • 634-4633

LET THESE SPONSORS KNOW YOU APPRECIATE THESE COLUMNS!

FOR ENTERTAINMENT ONLY. ALWAYS CONSULT YOUR LOCAL SHOP AND FOLLOW ALL SAFETY PROCEDURES BEFORE REPAIRS.

Come visit the Motor Medic@online at [underthehoodshow.com](http://underthehoodshow.com)

**LAD**  
Recycling, Inc. LAD Recycling, Inc.  
Scrap Iron & Metals

**WE BUY ALL METALS!**  
507-527-2408 • LDRecycling.com  
55976 STATE HWY 56, West Concord, MN

**ALL Insurance**  
BROKERS

AUTO • HOME • LIFE • BUSINESS INSURANCE

**Jacob Simons**  
President  
507.361.7556  
jacob@allinsb.com  
2518 Superior Dr NW Suite 101A  
Rochester, MN 55901

**Boe Auto Center**

115 Highway 56 N. West Concord  
**507-527-2241**  
www.boeautocenter.com

**ASE** **HONEST-1**  
AUTO CARE

**Honest-1 Auto Care**

1125 S Oak Ave  
Owatonna, MN 55060-3701  
507-451-5990  
www.Honest1Owatonna.com

Mon-Fri 7AM-6PM  
Sat 8AM-3PM





PHOTO COURTESY SKYE DEVOE

Medford senior AJ Vandereide gets around his Cannon Falls defender while keeping the ball away from the help defender during the opening minutes of the second half.

# Eagles, Bombers soar past Tigers

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After a pair of losses by 20+ points, the Medford boys basketball team was hoping to turn things around Maple River, but then the 8-1 Eagles had a stifling defense that limited the Tigers to just 23 points. Maple River's offense wasn't too bad either, scoring 62 points to win 62-23 on Tuesday, Feb. 16. A few days later, Medford hosted the Cannon Falls Bombers and played much better at home, but it still wasn't

enough the Bombers prevailed 63-52 on Friday, Feb. 19. With these two losses, the Tigers' overall record falls to 2-8, their Gopher Conference record is now 2-5. Medford's next game is a road contest against NRHEG (3-8) at 7:15 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 26. After another road game, this time against Hayfield (9-3), on Tuesday, March 2, the Tigers return home and host the Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Buccaneers (3-5) at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday, March 4.



PHOTO COURTESY SKYE DEVOE

Medford forward Jeff Westergaard leads the Tigers' Fastbreak offense. Despite his best efforts, the Cannon Falls Bombers won 63-52 on Friday, Feb. 19.

# Boys hockey gets rocked in non-conference play

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

It proved to be a tough week for the Owatonna boys hockey team, which lost both of its games this week. The Huskies opened with a tough game at home against Gentry Academy as they lost in a lopsided 8-1 contest. The first period proved to be a sign of things to come, as Gentry put up three goals and dominated offensive possession. Gentry continued with its dominance in the second period, where they put up three more goals to extend its lead to six, with two of those goals coming within 30 seconds of each other. Owatonna finally got on the board, as junior Casey Pederson managed to score his first goal of the season. This proved to be one of the only positives of the night for the Huskies, as this was their only goal of the game while Gentry would score two more times to make the final score 8-1. Gentry's dominance was very obvious when looking at the stat sheet, as they had 39 shots on goal to Owatonna's eight. Things would only get worse on Saturday,



STAFF PHOTO BY MITCHELL BREUER

Senior Casey Johnson collects his thoughts during a game against Gentry Academy where he scored the only goal for Owatonna.

as Owatonna traveled to Minnetonka. Again, things got out of hand quickly for the Huskies, as Minnetonka grabbed a two-point lead in the first period and never looked back, extending its lead with another goal in the second and two in the third to win the game in a 5-0 blowout. The Huskies offense was again shut down, shooting only seven times throughout the game to Minnetonka's 46. The losses drop Owatonna's overall record to 6-3-1; however, with neither of their games against Big Nine oppo-

nents, they still remain at 6-1-1 in conference play, putting them fourth in the standings behind Mankato West, Mankato East, and Northfield. Owatonna will look to bounce back this week as they return to conference play Thursday, but they will face tough challenger in Mankato East. East, who sits second in the Big Nine with an overall record of 9-2, proved to have the Huskies number earlier this season when they defeated them 5-2. The game will be held in Mankato with puck drop at 7:30 p.m.



STAFF PHOTO BY MITCHELL BREUER

Junior Ashton Hoffman skates down the ice during Thursday's game against Gentry Academy. It proved to be a tough week for the Huskies as they dropped two contests to Gentry and Minnetonka.

## SCOREBOOK

**Big Nine Standings Boys Hockey**

Mankato East	9-1-1
Mankato West	9-2
Northfield	7-3-1
Owatonna	6-3-1
Rochester Mayo	8-3

**Owatonna Boys Hockey Results**

Feb. 18 - vs. Gentry Academy	- 1-8
Feb. 20 - vs. Minnetonka	- 0-5
Feb. 25 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Mankato East	
Feb. 27 - 7 p.m. vs. Rochester Century	
March 2 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Albert Lea	
March 4 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Northfield	

**Big Nine Standings Girls Hockey**

Northfield	9-0
Owatonna	9-1
Albert Lea	6-3
Mankato East	6-3
Austin	5-4

**Owatonna Girls Hockey**

Feb. 16 - vs. Albert Lea	- 5-1
Feb. 20 - vs. Rochester Mayo	- 6-1
Feb. 23 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Rochester Century	
Feb. 25 - 7 p.m. vs. Mankato East	
March 1 - 7 p.m. vs. Austin	
March 2 - 7 p.m. vs. Winona	

**Big Nine Standings Boys Basketball**

Mankato West	9-1
Owatonna	9-2
Austin	8-2
Mankato East	8-3
Rochester Century	8-3

**Owatonna Boys Basketball**

Feb. 16 - vs. Albert Lea	- 85-37
Feb. 18 - vs. Mankato East	- 57-55
Feb. 23 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Northfield	
Feb. 26 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Mankato West	
March 2 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Winona	
March 5 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Rochester JM	

**Big Nine Standings Girls Basketball**

Rochester Mayo	11-0
Mankato West	9-1
Mankato East	8-3
Austin	7-3
Northfield	5-4
Owatonna	4-7

**Owatonna Girls Basketball**

Feb. 16 - vs. Albert Lea	- 54-52
Feb. 19 - vs. Mankato East	- 46-66
Feb. 23 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Northfield	
Feb. 26 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Mankato West	
March 2 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Winona	
March 5 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Rochester JM	

**Gopher Standings Boys Basketball**

Maple River	10-1
Hayfield	9-3
United South Central	3-4
WEM	3-5
NRHEG	3-8
Medford	2-7
Blooming Prairie	2-7

**Blooming Prairie Boys Basketball**

Feb. 18 - vs. Kenyon-Wanamingo	- 49-56
Feb. 19 - vs. BA	- 49-70
Feb. 23 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Medford	
Feb. 26 - 7:15 p.m. vs. United South Central	
March 2 - 7:15 p.m. vs. NRHEG	

**NRHEG Boys Basketball**

Feb. 15 - vs. St. James	- 60-67
Feb. 19 - vs. Maple River	- 31-72
Feb. 23 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. BA	
Feb. 26 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. Medford	
March 2 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. Blooming Prairie	

**Medford Boys Basketball**

Feb. 11 - vs. Mankato Logola	- 52-75
Feb. 23 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. Blooming Prairie	
Feb. 26 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. NRHEG	
March 2 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. Hayfield	
March 4 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. WEM	

**Gopher Standings Girls Basketball**

Blooming Prairie	9-1
Hayfield	8-2
WEM	8-3
Medford	5-2
Maple River	5-5
NRHEG	4-7

**Blooming Prairie Girls Basketball**

Feb. 16 - vs. Kenyon-Wanamingo	- 38-35
Feb. 19 - vs. BA	- 45-38
Feb. 23 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. Medford	
Feb. 26 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. United South Central	
March 1 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. JWP	
March 2 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. NRHEG	

**NRHEG Girls Basketball**

Feb. 16 - vs. Blue Earth	- 57-45
Feb. 18 - vs. Maple River	- 36-49
Feb. 23 - 7:15 p.m. vs. BA	
Feb. 26 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Medford	
March 2 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Blooming Prairie	
March 5 - 7:15 p.m. vs. United South Central	

## BLOSSOMS OF THE MONTH

### Jenna Johnson • 10th Grade



The senior high student of the month is **JENNA JOHNSON**, who is a sophomore. Her favorite class is Spanish. "It is fun and interesting to learn a different culture," she said. "Jenna is hard working, respectful and a bright student," said one of her teachers. "She is a joy to have in class." Other teachers commented about Jenna: "Jenna is a student who works easily with her peers, loves a good laugh and is very personable. She is a joy to have in class with her easy going personality and her consistent work ethic." "Jenna is a great student to have in class because she is dedicated to her learning, but at the same time has a positive, friendly attitude towards all of her classmates." Her special interests are softball and baking. Jenna's siblings are Morgan, 23 and Hope, 19. She also has a pet dog, Tubby.



### Ty Forystek • 9th Grade

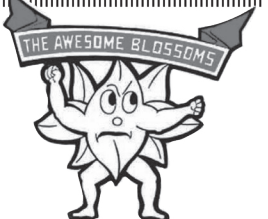


The junior high student of the month is **TY FORYSTEK**, who is in ninth grade. His favorite class is math. He said math is his best subject. Some comments shared by Ty's teachers include: "In class, he does a great job getting his work done and in time." "He is a respectful young man that is always prepared for class and eager to learn and do his best. He is a joy to have in my classroom." "Ty is a very capable student and athlete. He works hard in class and really wants to get the material. He is able to work and collaborate with many different students, and his quiet dry humor makes him easy to spend time with." "Ty is a great student. His work is exemplary and is always completed on time. He is polite and comes to class ready to work every day." Ty's special interests are sports, including basketball, track and cross country. His siblings are Kylie, 21 and Maren, 18.



**FLOOR TECH**  
CALL TIM WACEK  
FOR A FLOORING  
CONSULTATION.  
BLOOMING PRAIRIE  
**583-2276**

**Blossoms of the Month**  
is sponsored by this  
community booster!







## Melby learns leadership from FFA

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

It is no secret that FFA provides a lot of opportunities for its members, this something that Evan Melby has taken advantage of.

Currently Melby is the treasurer of the Owatonna chapter, a position that he said believes is important to the group.

“Being treasurer gives me the responsibility to keep accurate accounts of our finances, treasurers of FFA are often referred to as our first president George Washington and how he kept an accurate account of his finances for his farm,” Melby said.

This is not the only thing that’s kept Melby busy with FFA over the past year.

Melby has participated in five career development events over the last year, which adviser Liz Tinaglia said is a lot for a student to do.

The purpose of these



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Evan Melby, left, and Josef Ross paint in the FFA Barnyard on the Steele County fairgrounds.

events is to challenge critical thinking, decision making, and team working skills.

“Those (career events) mean a lot to me,” Melby said. “My way of doing that is to try to relate the others by getting a feel of what they do. Leadership

skills is one of the most important things you will need in life, and FFA does extremely well in helping students improve on their leadership. I am using my leadership skills to apply to become a region officer.”

Melby said the

leadership skills he has learned from these events, and from FFA in general, is the biggest thing he will take away from his time in the organization.

In addition to applying for regional officer, Melby also is working hard so that he can

### OWATONNA FFA

**Instructors:** Liz Tinaglia and Jamie Gray  
**President:** Ashlie Tesch  
**Vice President:** Bailey Keck  
**Secretary:** Jace Katzung  
**Treasurer:** Evan Melby  
**Reporter:** Autumn Clausen  
**Sentinel:** Ethan Cowell  
**Total Membership:** 300+  
**Existence:** Founded in 1934

### PLANS FOR THE WEEK

- Because of Covid-19, the Owatonna FFA chapter has adjusted its plans for National FFA Week. Included in this year’s activities are:
- A coloring contest for elementary students - we will award prizes will be awarded at each grade level.
- No Free Breakfast - instead we are delivering bagels and cream cheese to all staff at Owatonna High School on Friday, Feb. 26.
- The local chapter will be giving away blue ink pens to its local agriculture supporters.

apply for a FFA state degree next year.

The state degree is the one of the highest degrees a member can earn and, it is awarded to students who put in an exceptional amount of time into the FFA program.

“A state degree would mean a lot to me

and I would be forever gracious and proud to earn or even get the chance to earn that,” Melby said.

While his experience in the club has been a busy one, Melby said he has loved every minute of it and would not change anything about his time with the club.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Medford FFA held its annual fruit sale fundraiser this year. Medford FFA students gather around boxes for the fundraiser.

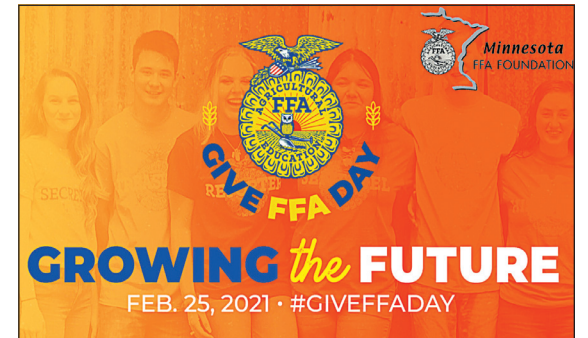
## Minnesota FFA Foundation celebrates National FFA Week

The Minnesota FFA Foundation recognizes National FFA Week as an opportunity for supporters of agricultural education and the FFA to give back and invest in the strength of these programs. Some of these opportunities area as follows.

Give FFA Day is a one-day giving campaign promoting Minnesota FFA during National FFA Week and is happening on February 25. Donations will be accepted through the Minnesota FFA Website at [www.mnffaoundation.org](http://www.mnffaoundation.org).

All donors who give \$25 or more during Give FFA Day will receive a Forever Blue Lapel Pin, and donors who give \$100 or more will receive a Minnesota FFA Foundation duffel bag.

All proceeds from Give FFA Day will go directly back to Minnesota’s 11,000 FFA Members. Your contribution will go toward sponsoring a jacket



for the **Blue Jacket** — **Bright Futures** program where your donation will directly sponsor a Blue Jacket for a Minnesota FFA member.

Other opportunities to donate to the Minnesota FFA Foundation during National FFA Week include:

- Legacy Club — Donate \$1,000 over one to four years. Donors to the Legacy Club will receive a Minnesota FFA Foundation commissioned giclee print by Bonnie Mohr. Donations will go to strengthen new and existing FFA chapters across Minnesota.
- General Donations

— Donations to the general fund provide valuable support to scholarships, youth leadership, teacher preparation and State FFA Convention.

The Minnesota FFA Foundation partners with individuals and businesses to provide resources that promote and enhance premier leadership, personal growth and career success for Minnesota youth in Agricultural Education. For more information about the Minnesota FFA Foundation, contact Executive Director Val Aarsvold at 507-534-0188 or visit [www.mnffaoundation.org](http://www.mnffaoundation.org).



### MISSION

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.

### VISION

Students whose lives are impacted by FFA and agricultural education will achieve academic and personal growth, strengthen American agriculture and provide leadership to build healthy local communities, a strong nation, and a sustainable world.

**LERBERG'S FOODS**  
SINCE 1901

**507-684-2472**  
[lerbergsfoods.com](http://lerbergsfoods.com)  
120 5th Ave . Ellendale

**J & J Cabinet Works INC.**

801 N. Cedar Avenue, Owatonna, MN 55060  
**507.446.0260**  
[joe@jandjcabernetworks.com](mailto:joe@jandjcabernetworks.com)

**Krause Feeds & Supplies**

**We have it all!**

Diesel now available  
9352 SW 37th Ave - Hope, MN  
507-451-3043

**SWCE Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

2411 West Bridge Street, Owatonna MN 55060  
507.451.7340 • 800.526.3514  
[swce@swce.coop](mailto:swce@swce.coop) • [www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop)

Benefitting Future Generations

**LOCAL TRUSTED. SERVING YOU.**

**EXPRESS PRESSURE WASHERS, INC.**

526 3RD ST. NE  
BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MN 55917  
507-583-2703  
[www.expresspressurewashers.com](http://www.expresspressurewashers.com)

On-site Service and Sales Available

Alkota Pressure Washers, IPC Eagle Sweepers & Scrubbers, Val6 Heaters & C Aire Compressors

**EXP**  
[www.expresspressurewashers.com](http://www.expresspressurewashers.com)

**CFS CENTRAL FARM SERVICE**  
[cfscoop.com](http://cfscoop.com)

We support FFA because it makes a **positive difference** in Agriculture & in the lives of Students!

**Trusted Service. Cooperative Value.**





## Four Awesome Blossoms earn FFA State Degree

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
STAFF WRITER

Despite COVID-19 and all the obstacles of this past year, four seniors of the Blooming Prairie High School FFA Club — Cole Christianson, Boone Carlson, Erin O'Brien and Ethan Grant — will receive their State FFA Degree this year.

FFA Club Adviser Bill Rinckenberger said having that many members receive their state degree is very rare.

"That's the most we've had in my time as the FFA Club adviser," he said.

He's been leading the FFA Club since 2003, so it's the most FFA members who have received their state degree in the same year in almost 20 years.

Rinckenberger said he encourages members to wait until their senior year to apply for the state degree. "It's a nice way to end your FFA career by getting your state degree," he said.

To earn their state degree, each member had to receive their chapter degree, be an active FFA member for at least two years, complete the equivalent of at least two years of agricultural education in high school, have

earned and invested at least \$2,000 gross income in a supervised agriculture experience and participate in at least 25 hours of community service within at least two different community service activities.

Christianson, Carlson, O'Brien and Grant will receive their State FFA Degree at this year's State FFA Convention, which he said looks like will be pushed back from April to June.

In addition to their four state degree recipients, the Blooming Prairie FFA Club is also celebrating National FFA Week, but at a different time than most high schools.

Rinckenberger said the Awesome Blossoms will celebrate National FFA Week by holding pedal tractor races during lunch periods on Monday and Thursday, one day for each hybrid group. Meanwhile, on Tuesday and Friday, the FFA Club will hold milk chugging contests during each of the three lunch periods. The FFA Club will also have special dress up themes each day.

He also said that celebrating National FFA Week is important because it brings public awareness.



Cole Christianson

Boone Carlson

Erin O'Brien

Ethan Grant

"It brings to the national attention all the good it [FFA] does for the agriculture youth," he said. "It also helps students learn where their food comes from."

Rinckenberger said National FFA Week also emphasizes the importance of agriculture to the country and local community.

"A lot of kids are now two to three generations removed from growing up on an actual living farm, so it teaches them the importance of it. Frankly, without agriculture, you'd be starving and naked," he said. "Being a rural community, we totally rely on agriculture for daily survival. Agriculture is the life-line of our community."

Even though the Blooming Prairie FFA hasn't been able to

do most of its annual club activities due to COVID-19, Rinckenberger said, members raised \$1,000 for the Ronald McDonald House in Rochester right before Christmas in lieu of its usual toy drive.

Another difference this year is all the club's contests are held online at Judgingcard.com.

"We've had to do some modifications for each contest, but with the supervision of the adviser, each member will compete in the contest virtually," Rinckenberger said.

He said that members of the Blooming Prairie FFA has participated in two contests so far. In fact, the small animals team has already advanced to the state convention.

In order to advance

to the state convention, he said the team had to showcase their

knowledge of veterinarian terminology, such as the physiology, muscular, skeleton and digestive systems of dogs, cats, birds, fishes and reptiles.

He also said that two Blooming Prairie FFA members will compete individually in the horse competition, which is being held this week, and the Awesome Blossoms' general livestock team and dairy judging team will also compete in the section contests for the chance to advance to the state convention.

### BLOOMING PRAIRIE FFA

**Instructor:** Bill Rinckenberger  
**President:** Cole Christianson  
**Vice President:** Erin O'Brien  
**Secretary:** Haven Carlson  
**Treasurer:** Lexi Steckelberg  
**Student Adviser:** Ethan Grant  
**Reporter:** Madelaine Stoen  
**Historian:** Claire Rennie and Madison Thurnau  
**Officer At Large:** Lexi Ripka and Cyprus Schleicher  
**Sentinel:** Boone Carlson  
**Total membership:** 40 current members  
**Existence:** Founded in 1958  
**Current Members:** Cody Braaton, Carsten Ingvalson, Wyatt Magnuson, Miley Ripka, Carter Bishop, Colton Braaton, Jack Bruns, Scott Johnson, Garrett Motl, Sean O'Brien, Caitlyn Stangle, Grady Steckelberg, Will Sunde, Bo Zweiner, Brandon Ripka, Jaylee Schleicher, Haven Carlson, Levi DenHerder, Ethan Marzolf, Clare Rennie, Cyprus Schleicher, Lexi Steckelberg, Madelaine Stoen, Paul Sunde, Madison Thurnau, Colin Jordison, Alexis Ripka, Graci Svoboda, Maggie Bruns, Boone Carlson, Cole Christianson, Ethan Grant, Allison Krohnberg, Tim Loverink, Chris Naatz, Erin O'Brien, Megan Oswald, Greta Sunde and Kaiden Finley.

## 'You can make FFA whatever you want'

BY DEB FLEMMING  
NEWS EDITOR

Jonah Stafford joined FFA two years ago to become involved in his community and compete in its contest.

A senior at New Richland-Hartland-Elendale-Geneva (NRHEG), Stafford said he'd encourage anyone looking for a fun activity to join the NRHEG FFA chapter.

"You can make FFA whatever you want," Stafford said. "There are so many things you can do with it."

As for the competing, Stafford said he and his Small Animal and Veterinary Science team members qualified for this spring's state competition.

"This is my second time doing the Small Animal Career Development Event and qual-

ifying for state, but the competition didn't happen last year because of COVID," said Stafford, who added that there is now a digital structure in place so he's confident the event won't be canceled again.

Stafford also serves as his chapter's reporter and is involved with the school newspaper. And while he hasn't picked a

college, he plans to major in communications.

"It's a fun way to get in touch with other students," Stafford said. "I really get to hear what students are thinking and I get to give back to the community."

As the state competition draws closer, Stafford said he and his teammates will resume preparation. He said

the group studied once a week for a couple of months over Google Meet for regionals. Other teammates who qualified for the small animal state competition are Cheyann Torres, Jordan Horejsi, Neela Wencil and Olivia Wencil. Junior varsity participants included Grace Borchert and Molly Johnson.

**Focus:** The primary purpose of the FFA is to develop leadership

**Instructors:** Dan Sorum  
**President:** Sophie Stork  
**Vice President:** Aubrey Fischer  
**Secretary:** Tyler Malakowsky  
**Treasurer:** Brady Schlaak  
**Reporter:** Jonah Stafford  
**Historian:** Jordan Horejsi  
**Sentinel:** Dacoda Malakowsky  
**Total Membership:** 26  
**Existence:** 1930 (one of the original chapters in Minnesota)  
**Current members:** Abby Urschitz, Alexis Chambers, Asa Johnson, Aubrey Fischer, Brady Schlaak, Cheyann Torres, Dacoda Malakowsky, Grace Borchert, Jacob Karl, Jerzy Knudson, Jonah Stafford, Jordan Horejsi, Katy Zimmerman, Kiyah Mikesell, Molly Johnson, Natalie Johnson, Neela Wencil, Olivia Wencil, Rylee Gruenhagen, Sophie Stork, Tiara Malakowsky, Tyler Malakowsky, Olivia Kofstad, Ethan Strenge, Olivia Johnson and Violet Kuiper

**Northland Farm Systems**  
CONSTRUCTION, TURF, & AG EQUIPMENT  
2250 AUSTIN ROAD  
OWATONNA, MN  
507-451-3131  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
northlandfarmsystems.com

**STEELE COUNTY Times**  
Always local,  
all the time.

**COLE'S ELECTRIC, INC.**  
Residential • Farm • Industrial • Commercial  
Whether you own a home or a business, expert wiring is crucial to your safety and comfort. When you need the best in wiring, call on the qualified, licensed electricians at Cole's Electric, Inc.  
**800-801-1387 • 507-451-1387**  
7596 NW 40th St. Owatonna • www.ColesElectric.com

Farming is your livelihood, and it's our business to protect that.

No one knows farming and ranching like Farm Bureau. For more than 80 years, we've been a trusted insurance leader providing comprehensive coverage for your farm/ranch, your machinery, your livestock - and so much more.

Schedule an on-site SuperCheck<sup>®</sup> and find out why we're the #1 ag insurer.



**Darrell B. Ingvaldson, LUTCF**  
100 S Mill Street  
Brownsdale, MN  
Office | 507.567.2296  
Mobile | 507.219.1756  
darrellingvaldson.fbfsagents.com



**FARM BUREAU FINANCIAL SERVICES**  
It's your future. Let's protect it.<sup>®</sup>

No. 1 ag insurer across our 8-state territory; 2019 SNA P&C Group - Farm Bureau Property & Casualty Insurance Company and Western Agricultural Insurance Company direct written premium. Securities & services offered through FBL Marketing Services, LLC - 5400 University Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50266, 877/860-2904. Member SFC Farm Bureau Property & Casualty Insurance Company. \* Western Agricultural Insurance Company. \*\* Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company \*\*West Des Moines, IA. \*Affiliates. \*\*Company providers of Farm Bureau Financial Services. PR-AG-A (9-20)

**FARMERS INSURANCE**  
Michael Bishman  
121 W Broadway St  
Owatonna, MN 55060  
Phone: (507) 451-0193 - (800) 856-9864

**OWATONNA VETERINARY HOSPITAL**  
Large Enough to Serve You  
Small Enough to Care  
**Dr. Tami Bauer**  
**Dr. James Gute**  
**Dr. Nathan Howlett**  
Address: 1930 S Cedar Ave - Owatonna, MN  
Phone: 507-451-8153  
Support the FFA!

**Steele County American Dairy Association**  
Breakfast on the Farm  
June 12, 2021

**KIBBLE EQUIPMENT**  
Your Farm. Your Future. Our Focus.  
[www.KibbleEq.com](http://www.KibbleEq.com)  
Owatonna | 507-451-4054  
**JOHN DEERE**  
PROUD FFA SUPPORTER



# No rust here, Tigers win easily in first game back

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After not playing since early February due to one postponement and two cancellations, the Medford girls basketball team showed no signs of rust as they went on the road and handily beat United South Central 51-25 on Friday, Feb. 19.

With this win, the Tigers' overall record

improves to 5-2 and their Gopher Conference record goes up to 4-1.

Medford has only lost one game at home all season and their next two games are at home. First, they host New Richland-Ellendale-Hartland-Geneva (4-7) at 7:15 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 26. Then, they host Hayfield (8-3) at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2.

## NRHEG GIRLS: rise and fall

FROM B4

the game tonight, but overall tonight wasn't our night," she said.

With this loss, the Panthers' overall record drops to 4-7 and their Gopher Conference record is now 2-6.

**NRHEG individual stats:** Erin Jacobson – 12 points, 11 rebounds and 1 steal, Andy Briggs – 7 points, 7 rebounds and 3 steals, Faith Nielsen – 5 points and 6 rebounds, Rhys Martin – 4 points and 8 rebounds, Kendall

Johnson – 2 points, 8 rebounds and 1 steal, Hallie Schultz – 2 points and 7 rebounds, Sidney Schultz – 2 points, 2 rebounds and 2 steals and Sarah George – 2 points and 1 rebound.

The Panthers' next game is a road contest against Medford at

7:15 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 26. Their next home game is against Blooming Prairie at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2.



STAFF PHOTO BY MITCHELL BREUER

Huskies junior Aubrey Simons attempts to make a defensive stop against Mankato East, which dominated Friday's game by smoking Owatonna 66-46.



STAFF PHOTO BY MITCHELL BREUER

Senior Sarah Kingland looks for an offensive opportunity against Mankato East.

## LAST SECOND: win highlights week for Huskie girls

FROM B4

thing that was not lacking during this time though was aggressiveness, as there were nine fouls committed.

East ultimately ended the first half with the advantage, leading 29-20 going into halftime.

The aggressiveness continued in the second half, this time with a combined 10 fouls being committed in the opening eight minutes

of the half. As time continued, East began to establish dominance over Owatonna, dominating on both sides of the court and extending its lead into double digits.

This proved to be too much for Owatonna to overcome, with East piling it on and winning 66-46.

One thing that remained consistent from the win to the loss for

the Huskies was their scoring leader, Sarah Kingland, who put up 17 points. She was followed by junior Lexi Mendenhall, who also had a decent night scoring, putting up 15 for the team.

Heading out of the week, Owatonna's record now stands at 4-7, putting them eighth in the Big Nine Conference and seven games behind

conference leader, Rochester Mayo, who remains undefeated at 11-0.

The Huskies will be back at home on Friday as they host Mankato West for a 7:30 p.m. matchup. This will be the second meeting between these two teams this season, with Owatonna hoping for better results this time around, after losing its first matchup, 52-63.

STEELE COUNTY **Times**

Always local, all the time.

## CONGRATULATIONS Blossom Letterwinners

These students are being recognized for their high scholastic achievements at Blooming Prairie High School as Academic Letterwinners for 2020-21:



### Seniors

Ashleigh Alwes  
Maggie Bruns  
Maren Forystek  
Charlie Heimerman  
Dylan Johnson  
Shyane Jorgenson  
Allison Krohnberg  
Emily Kubicek  
Luke Larkoski  
Reese Millam  
Megan Oswald  
Joseph Pirkel  
Jessica Ressler  
Rachael Riley  
Halle Strunk  
Gretchen Sunde  
Rachel Thompson  
Micalyn Trihus

Wyatt Voss  
Isabella White  
Taylor Wurst

### Juniors

Bobbie Bruns  
Josie Hoffman  
Larisa Judy  
David Kartes  
Parker Kubicek  
Ashal Lighthizer  
Marquette Millam  
Emily Miller  
Xavier Rennie  
Lauren Schammel  
Bradley Simon  
Isabelle Sunde  
Carson Wacek  
Melanie Winzenburg

### Sophomores

Olivia Anderson  
Haven Carlson  
Abigail Hefling  
Jenna Johnson  
Ava Krejci  
Sierra Larson  
Madison Lea  
Chloe McCarthy  
Samuel Pirkel  
Anna Reese  
Clare Rennie  
Joie Ruhter  
Susan Smith  
Madelaine Stoen  
Anika Sunde

### Freshmen

Addison Doocy  
Annaka Forsberg  
Tyler Forystek  
Claire Foster  
Anna Haberman  
Luke Heimgartner  
Derek Kubicek  
Macy Lembke  
Grant Magnuson  
Jamie Reinke  
Benjamin Riley  
Molly Robins  
Lily Schammel  
Jaylee Schleicher  
Hailey Schumacher  
Mason Simon  
Aidan Slowinski  
Ava Smith

Kolby Vigeland  
Rachel Winzenburg

### Eighth Grade

Catelyn Bartlett  
Isabel Dickel  
Mia Johnson  
Abby Jordison  
Brady Kittelson  
Madilynn Madsen  
Ella Smith  
Bo Zwiener

### Seventh Grade

Tyler Anderson  
Allison Blume  
Allison Bruggeman  
Natalee DeVries

Regan Donnelly  
Noah Graves  
Madelyn Harvey  
Samantha Hefling  
Jonathan Heimgartner  
Brady Johnson  
Drew Reinke  
Cannon Wacek  
Chloe Weber

### Academic Lettering Requirements

Based on cumulative GPA at the end of each semester.  
Seniors 3.636 \* Juniors 3.745  
Sophomores 3.818  
Freshmen 3.818  
Eighth Grade 3.818  
Seventh Grade 3.818

This message sponsored by these Blossom supporters:



WAY TO GO BLOSSOMS!

Blooming Prairie Schools



Locally Owned & Operated

507-583-6671

237 Hwy Ave S

Local Delivery Available



507-583-2712

Hwy 218 South, Blooming Prairie, MN

www.minersoutdoor.com

Hours:  
Monday-Friday: 8:00am-5:30pm  
Saturday: 8:00am-Noon



Outdoor Power Equipment, Golf Cart: Sales Service, Parts & Accessories

**FLOOR TECH**

Your source for all your flooring needs

A+ work!

Tim Wacek • 583-2276 • 322 E. Main, Blooming Prairie  
Derek Reichl • 552-1637 • 2201 E. Main St., Albert Lea

**Koster's**

**CAR KORNER**

Rod & Tess Koster, Owners

507-583-2018

Hwy. 218 • Blooming Prairie

www.kostercarkorner.com

ALL VEHICLES UNDER BOOK

**CONGRATULATIONS BLOSSOMS**

**R&R Insurance**

has you covered!

Blooming Prairie | 507-583-7971





**On The Farm**  
CLAIRE LACANNE

As you are hunkered down inside during this cold weather, consider joining Extension for some crops programming. We have several options for getting crops-related information in the coming days. Tune in on the radio or join a Zoom webinar.

First, University of Minnesota Extension, KDHL Radio, and KRFO Radio are hosting the annual Rice and Steele County Crops Day program on the radio this year! Crop producers and ag stakeholders in Steele and Rice counties should tune in to frequency 920 AM to hear from Ag broadcaster Jerry Groskreutz, Extension Educator, Claire LaCanne, and several Extension crops specialists. Listen in on KDHL's AM Minnesota on Tuesday, Feb. 23, Thursday, Feb. 25, and Friday, Feb. 26 from 9:30 to 10 a.m.

Following each radio program, you can access the recordings on KDHL Radio's website at: kdhlradio.com. If you listen in, fill out the event survey to be entered in a prize drawing. The drawing winner will receive a University of Minnesota hat and a gift card to Cash Wise Foods. The survey will be posted on KDHL's website: kdhlradio.com and Rice County Extension's website: extension.umn.edu/local/rice.

You also have the opportunity to join in on one of the two webinars about becoming Ag Water Quality Certified through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, hosted by the Cannon River Ag Collaborative. The Cannon River Ag Collaborative is a partnership of several organizations including University of Minnesota Extension, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Rice County Soil and Water Conservation District, Steele County Soil and

Water Conservation District, Compeer Financial, The Cannon River Watershed Partnership, and several other partners.

This webinar will cover how to get certified, as well as the unique benefits and opportunities with the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification program. Hear from local water quality certified crop farmers and Minnesota Department of Agriculture program staff. We are hosting two of these free webinars and pre-registration is required to get the webinar link. Join Tuesday, Feb. 23 at 12 to 1 p.m., register at: z.umn.edu/WaterQualityTues or Thursday, Feb. 25 at 6:30-7:30 p.m., register at: z.umn.edu/WaterQualityThurs.

Additionally, a webinar will be hosted by University of Minnesota Extension, for corn and soybean growers on Tuesday, March 2, 8:45-11:30 a.m. The topics are tailored to Rice and Dakota counties, but residents in sur-

rounding counties are welcome to join. Topics will include University-researched crop marketing strategies, insect management information, weed and disease management strategies, and nutrient management updates.

There is no fee to attend this event, but pre-registration is required to receive the webinar link. Register at: z.umn.edu/DakotaRiceCrops. The session will be recorded and shared with registrants following the event. We'd like to thank the Dakota and Rice County Corn Growers for their support of this event.

If you'd like more information about any of these events, or if you'd like help registering, please contact me at 507-330-0447 or lacanne@umn.edu.

*Claire LaCanne is the agricultural extension educator for Steele and Rice counties. Her column appears in this newspaper regularly.*

# Help available for crops education

## Crops Days on the radio this year

University of Minnesota Extension, KDHL Radio, and KRFO Radio are hosting the annual Rice and Steele County Crops Day program on the radio this year. Crop producers and ag stakeholders in Rice and Steele Counties are invited to tune in to frequency 920 AM to hear from Jerry Groskreutz, ag broad-

caster, Claire LaCanne, Extension educator and several Extension crops specialists.

Listen in on KDHL's AM Minnesota on Thursday, Feb. 25, and Friday, Feb. 26 from 9:30-10:00 am.

Thursday's program will feature crop diseases, focusing on corn tar spot. Dean Malvick, Extension

plant pathologist, will talk about this disease that was recently found in Minnesota in 2019. Locally, tar spot of corn was also confirmed in several fields in 2020.

Friday's program focuses on insect pest updates. Bob Koch, Extension entomologist, will focus on soybean aphids and pesticide resistance, and will touch on some

other insect pests as well. Researchers at the University, including Bob and his students, are finding that soybean aphids have been gaining resistance to certain insecticides in recent years.

Following each radio program, you can access the recordings on KDHL Radio's website at: kdhlradio.com.

## Mower SWCD supervisor to serve on state board

A Mower County farmer and conservation board supervisor now represents southeast Minnesota on a state organization's board.

Randy Smith, chair of the Mower Soil & Water Conservation District's Board of Supervisors who farms near Adams, has started serving as a board member for the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD). He has served since 2016 in his elected role on the Austin-based Mower SWCD's board.

Smith said he's excited to work with other supervisors on the MASWCD board and bring his extensive farming background



Randy Smith

that includes working with SWCD staff on projects known as "two-stage ditches" that benefit agriculture and the environment. He also prioritizes animal agriculture in his SWCD work.

As MASWCD's Southeast Area 7 director, Smith represents 11 SWCDs in southeastern Minnesota. Active in his local conservation

district, he will continue to serve as a supervisor and chair of the Mower SWCD board.

MASWCD is a not-for-profit association that represents Minnesota's 88 SWCDs and the 440 men and women who serve on their elected governing boards. SWCDs are local government units that started forming in the 1930s when Congress responded to the large amounts of topsoil being lost to wind and water erosion.

SWCDs exist across the entire state and involve landowners as well as local and state officials in resource management protection. MASWCD is involved in helping to set policy for various

conservation programs, including the state Erosion Control Cost-Share Program; Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program; Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act; and the Clean Water, Land & Legacy Amendment.

In both rural and urban settings, SWCDs work with landowners and other units of government to carry out a program from the conservation, use and development of soil, water and related resources. One vital niche that SWCDs fill involves providing soil-and-water conservation services to owners of private lands. Privately owned lands make up 78 percent of the land surface in Minnesota.

**160 ACRES, 4.12 ACRE BUILDING SITE & 156.23 ACRES OF VERY GOOD FARM LAND**

AUCTION

HOUGHTON'S AUCTION SERVICE RED WING, MINNESOTA

Wednesday, March 10, 2021 6:00 PM

PROPERTY LOCATION: 12927 585th St. Claremont, MN. From Claremont take Dodge Co #1 north 3 1/2 miles, turn right (east) on Dodge Co #20 (585th St) go 3/4 mile, farm is on the south side of road. AUCTION LOCATION: American Legion: 401 West Highway St. Dodge Center, MN.

**160 ACRES SELLING IN 2 PARCELS**  
4.12 ACRE BUILDING SITE & 155 ACRES OF VERY GOOD CROP LAND, AVERAGE CPI 90.5  
LOCATED: SECTION 4, CLAREMONT TOWNSHIP, DODGE COUNTY

PARCEL # 1: 4.12 Acre building site, older 1 1/2 story home, with newer additions, 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, main floor laundry, 40' x 90' machine shed, 14' side walls, w/12' x 90' lean to, 44' x 98' steel frame shed, 12' side walls, shop area w/20' x 40' attached building, 8 1/2' x 16' well house, grain bin

PARCEL # 2: 156.23 Acres, 150 Acres tillable, very good crop land. Productivity Index weighted average is 90.5 for the entire 156.23 acres. Soils include: Marquis, Klinger, Readlyn, Maxfield. Feild access off Co # 20 aswell as township road 130th Ave. Parcel has some tile. Sells 156.23 x \$

Property ID #09.004.0700 - Land has been surveyed - 2021 proposed Real Estate Taxes \$ 4,510. Ag homestead (for the entire 160 acres)

**OPEN HOUSE**  
Sunday, February 28, Noon - 2:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, March 3, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

A GREAT OPERTUNITY TO ADD QUALITY CROP LAND TO YOUR FARMING OPERATION

DONALD & JENNIFER PETERSBURG IRREVOCABLE TRUST

TERMS: Down Payment; The successful bidder will be required to present a \$7,500 earnest monies check for parcel #1; and \$25,000 earnest monies check for parcel #2, which is non refundable if buyer fails to close.

Closing: Closing will be April 16th 2021 at which time the buyer will receive marketable title and take possession. All real estate is selling in AS-IS condition with any and all faults, no warranties or guarantees expressed or implied. Absolutely no contingencies what so ever. Buyers are responsible for conducting their own inspection & due diligence, and have their financing in order prior to the auction. Houghton's Auction Service represents the seller.

www.houghtonauctions.com

Houghton's

AUCTION SERVICE

RED WING, MN 651-764-4285

Todd Houghton, MN Lic. #25-47, WI Lic. #181  
Red Wing, MN - 651-764-4285

Jensen

256-4712

Heating, A/C, & Plumbing

Geneva  
Registered Showroom

- Quality plumbing & heating products for your remodeling or new home construction.
- Serving our area for over 40 years.
- We'll treat your home as if it were our own.

THE BOLD LOOK OF KOHLER

Loken Excavation & Drainage

YOUR DRAINAGE PROJECT PARTNER

WE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

Aggregate Products • Waterway Cleaning  
All Excavation Projects • Hauling & Septic

Call DALLAS for your DRAINAGE needs!

507-451-2873

LOKEN

Excavation & Drainage Inc.

3695 Hoffman Drive NW • Owatonna  
loken@qwestoffice.net | Toll-free 855-298-2568

Times

To Join, Call (507) 583-4431

Out-of-Town

A

Business Directory

ELLIS BODY SHOP

1231 BRADY BLVD. NW • OWATONNA, MN

JACK & TRACY ELLIS

Family Owned Since 1978

507-451-0845

(800) 310-0845

FAX (507) 451-0540

FARMERS

INSURANCE

Michael Bishman

121 West Broadway St.  
Owatonna, MN 55060

Phone: (507) 451-0193 • Fax: (507) 451-6640

Sorenson's

APPLIANCE & TV

101 North Central Ave • Geneva, MN

Open Monday & Thursday till 8 p.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday till 5 p.m.

Saturday till 3 p.m.

507-256-7258

www.sorensappliance.com

Times

Visit all of these advertisers from their ads on our website: [www.steeledodgenews.com](http://www.steeledodgenews.com)

1180 Frontage Rd. E,  
Owatonna, MN

507-455-9551

OwatonnaGranite.com

Blooming Prairie Public Utilities

(507) 583-6683

Blooming Prairie, MN

You Know You Should, PREPLANNING

Why Not Today?

Personalized Pre-arrangement  
Secure & Flexible Prefunding

Purple Cross Plans

SECURE FLEXIBLE PEACE OF MIND

Call Mary Kittelson

NFPA Certified Preplanning Consultant

433-5000

Worlein

FUNERAL HOME  
1801 4th Street NW  
Austin, MN  
[www.worlein.com](http://www.worlein.com)

NFDA NATIONAL FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION  
Pursuit of Excellence AWARD RECIPIENT 2018



# A heartfelt thanks!



For 20 years, Becky Noble has been a huge supporter of the Blooming Prairie community through her role as executive director of the Chamber. We want to wish her well as she steps back and moves toward retirement.

## Here's what Chamber leaders have said of Becky's contributions:

*"Becky has been a faithful promoter of Blooming Prairie businesses, the school, non-profit organizations and individuals for many, many years. Becky LOVES Blooming Prairie and it shows whenever you talk with her. She will be missed as the director of our Chamber group."*

Linda Klemmensen  
Former President

*"Becky's can do positive attitude of promoting Blooming Prairie and the Chamber of Commerce will be missed. Becky can be very proud what she has done for Blooming Prairie and the Chamber of Commerce over the years."*

Darrell Hansen  
Former President

*"It will be very difficult to replace Becky as she has done a remarkable job."*

Jim Fiebiger  
Current President

**Thanks for putting forth your best effort in promoting Blooming Prairie!**

This message sponsored by these community boosters:

Sponsored by these local businesses.

**Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.**  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
314 E. Main St.  
Blooming Prairie  
**507-583-7528**  
685 W. Bridge St.  
Owatonna  
**507-451-9136**  
133 N. Broadway  
New Richland  
**507-465-3810**

**Hope CREAMERY**  
TRY HOPE BUTTER FOR YOUR BAKING!  
**507-684-2019**  
LOCALLY PRODUCED

**SALINAS AUTO REPAIR INC.**  
656 3rd St. NE • Blooming Prairie, MN  
Robert Salinas  
Family-Owned  
**507-583-6620**

**FLOOR TECH**  
322 East Main St.  
Blooming Prairie  
**507-583-2276**

Your ad could be here!

STEELE COUNTY **Times**

**Vandal's FAMILY MARKET**  
237 Hwy Ave. S • Blooming Prairie **583-6671**

**WEAR YOUR MASK**  
SO OUR BUSINESS STAYS OPEN  
STAY SAFE MN

**Minimizer**  
www.minimizer.com  
**800-248-3855**  
Blooming Prairie

**CASH WISE**  
Employee Owned  
www.cashwise.com  
**LARGE SELECTIONS LOW PRICES**  
495 West N. ST.  
Owatonna  
**507-451-7220**  
"like" us on facebook

**Dr. Deborah Lien**  
ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST DDS, MBS  
Building Healthy Smiles!  
132 2nd Ave NE • Blooming Prairie  
**507.583.6613 \* FREE CONSULTATION**

**Mike's REPAIR**  
Ag & Truck Tire  
870 32 Ave. NW, Owatonna  
Emergency or on the farm repair  
**507-455-0388**  
(After hours 507-455-0483)

**Sorenson's Appliances & TV**  
GE, Frigidaire, Direct TV, Danby, Crosley, Broan, 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





# OWATONNA PROUD

OWATONNA SCHOOLS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021 | B11



## Discovering hoar frost

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Mrs. Gytri's elementary school class discovered the hoar frost that collected on the twine of their sun catchers. This led to a discussion about fog, water vapor, condensation and states of matter.



## Wagner named finalist for Minn. teacher of year

One of Owatonna's teachers has been chosen as a finalist for Minnesota Teacher of the Year. Jessica Wagner will compete for the state honor coming up later this spring. She was the 2020 Teacher of the Year for Owatonna.

Wagner started teaching at Owatonna High School in 2002. She has taught grades 9-12 journalism, public speaking and elective literature classes. She coached the Speech team for 10 years. She is also the adviser of the OHS Magnet, the high school's student newspaper.

The state honor is offered through Education Minnesota.

Best wishes to her as she continues in the process for the top recognition.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jessica Wagner, Owatonna's Teacher of the Year for 2020, has been named a finalist for Minnesota Teacher of the Year. She received the local honor last May and now competes for the state honor along with 74 other candidates. Shown with Wagner are Superintendent Jeff Elstad, left, and Matt McCartney, another Owatonna teacher.

## Owatonna junior selected as U.S. Senate delegate



Fardouza Farah

Owatonna High School student Fardouza Farah has been selected as one of only two students to represent Minnesota as a delegate to the United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) to be held online this year, March 14-17, 2021. Fardouza will also receive a \$10,000 college scholarship to continue her educational development.

Fardouza is a junior at Owatonna High School who is actively involved in Student Council, National Honor Society, Speech, Mock Trial as well as other statewide advocacy groups and organizations.

The USSYP was founded in 1962 through Senate Resolution and each year two of the highest-achieving students from each state, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education system overseas are selected through an extremely competitive merit-based selection process held at the state departments of education nationwide.

More information about the program can be found on the USSYP website: [www.ussenatoyouth.org](http://www.ussenatoyouth.org).

## Owatonna Students of the Week

### Elementary



**Kelbie Johnson**  
Fifth Grade  
Parents' Name: Jeremiah & Crystal Johnson

Kelbie Johnson is a great classmate and a hard worker. She lights up the classroom with her smile and makes sure all her classmates feel valued. We are so lucky to have her as part of our classroom! Keep shining, Kelbie!

### High School



**Erika Vortherms**  
Junior  
Parents' names: Jeffrey and Stacy Vortherms

Erika is a hard-working student who receives stellar grades while working and practicing for her upcoming softball season. Erika is kind, dedicated, and willing to push through adversity to be the best student and person she can be. Thank you, Erika, for all the positive energy and smiles you bring everyday!

## Strong schools = strong communities

School board members honored for their commitment to education



Deborah Bandel



Eric Schuster



Jolayne Mohs



Lori Weisenburger



Mark Sebring



Nikki Gieseke



Tim Jensen

The Minnesota School Boards Association has set Feb. 22-26 as Minnesota School Board Recognition Week to build awareness and understanding of the vital function elected school board members play in our society. Owatonna Public Schools is joining other

public school districts from across the state to celebrate School Board Recognition Week to honor local board members for their commitment to Owatonna and its students.

Minnesota school board members are chosen by their communities through election or

appointment to manage local schools. These volunteer leaders are responsible for overseeing budgets, formulating school district policy, approving curriculum, maintaining school facilities, and adhering to state and federal education law. Legal concerns and the complex-

ities of school finance, including budgeting and taxation, require them to spend many hours in board training programs and personal study to enhance their understanding of these issues.

Our deepest appreciation is extended to the dedicated men

and women who make it possible for local citizens to participate in education in our community. We salute the public servants of the ISD 761 (Owatonna Public Schools) School Board whose commitment and civic responsibility make local control of public

schools in our community possible: Mark Sebring, Lori Weisenburger, Jolayne Mohs, Eric Schuster, Deborah Bandel, Nikki Gieseke, and Tim Jensen.

Please join us by saying thank you to our school board members during Minnesota School Board Recognition Week.

TRUST US TO HANDLE WITH CARE



Glen



Mike



Brett

**PROUDLY SERVING STEELE COUNTY**  
Brick-Meger Funeral Home & Medford Funeral Home

[megercares.com](http://megercares.com) | 507.451.1457



**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: **Prairie Manor Care Center**

PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: **220 3RD ST. NW, BLOOMING PRAIRIE MN 55917 USA**

NAMEHOLDERS: Name: **Prairie Manor Inc.**

Address: **220 3RD ST. NW, BLOOMING PRAIRIE MN 55917 USA**

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: **Joe Mason**

ADDRESS: **220 3RD ST. NW, BLOOMING PRAIRIE MN 55917 USA**

EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL NOTICES: **jmason@prairiemanorinc.com**

Work Item  
1218683300027  
Original File Number  
1218683300027  
STATE OF MINNESOTA OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FILED  
02/18/2021

/s/ Steve Simon  
Secretary of State

2/24T2

**NOTICE**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA COUNTY OF STEELE**

**THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT PROBATE DIVISION**  
Court File No. 74-PR-21-87

**NOTICE OF INFORMAL PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

Estate of **Lorraine Esther Dostal a/k/a Lorraine E. Dostal a/k/a Lorraine Dostal,**

**Decedent**

Notice is given that an application for informal probate of the Decedent's will dated January 23, 2015 and codicil( ) to the will, dated N/A, and separate writing( ) under Minnesota Statutes section 524.2-513 ("Will"), has been filed with the Registrar. The application has been granted.

Notice is also given that the Registrar has informally appointed Karen Cutting whose address is 801 Frontier Rd SE, Byron, MN 55920 as personal representative of the Estate of the Decedent. Any heir, devisee or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as personal representative or may object to the appointment of the personal representative. Unless objections are filed with the Court (pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-607) and the Court otherwise orders, the personal representative has full power to administer the Estate, including, after 30 days from the date of issuance of letters, the power to sell, encumber, lease or distribute real estate.

Any objections to the probate of the Will or appointment of the Personal Representative must be filed with this Court and will be heard by the Court after the filing of an appropriate petition and proper notice of hearing.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

A charitable beneficiary may request notice of the probate proceedings be given to the Attorney General pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 501B.41, subdivision 5.

Dated: January 29, 2021

/s/ Deanna Verdick  
Deputy Probate Registrar

Robin Hoesley  
Court Administrator

Frank D. Peterson  
Peterson Law Office  
634 2nd Street  
PO Box B  
Kenyon, MN 55946  
(507) 789-6141  
Attorney License Number 8587X  
Email: fdpetersonlaw@gmail.com

2/10T2

**NOTICE**

**NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE**

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

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

DATE OF MORTGAGE: April 12, 2002

ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$75,000.00

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

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

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

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 13, Block 3 in Dart'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: \$72,652.44

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: April 06, 2021 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 October 6, 2021.

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: February 03, 2021

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.  
Mortgagee

TROTT LAW, P.C.

By: /s/ \*N. Kibongni Fondungalah, Esq.\*  
Samuel R. Coleman, Esq.  
Attorneys for Mortgagee  
25 Dale Street North  
St. Paul, MN 55102  
(651) 209-9760  
(19-1083-FC03)

**THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.**

2/10T6

**PUBLIC RECORD**

**STEELE COUNTY BIRTHS JANUARY 2020**

Harriet Audrey Schewe, Parents: Brandy and Joshua, Jan. 1.  
Amari Royce Shaw, Parent: Jasmine Salinas, Jan. 2.  
Gabriel Eduardo Gonzalez, Parents: Maricruz Soto Vidal and Oscar Gonzalez, Jan. 2.  
Shaylee Kay Wilson, Parents: Ashlee Otterness and Jeremy Wilson, Jan. 7.  
Naomi Joy Parks, Parents: Sarah and Seth, Jan. 8.  
Kendra Bella Gomez, Parents: Flor and Oscar, Jan. 9.  
Brevik James Prigge, Parents: Lauren and Branden, Jan. 9.  
Dante Zavala, Parents: Marvella and Jesus, Jan. 9.  
Jovanny Misael Barajas, Parents: Diana and Jesus, Jan. 9.  
Andrew Thomas Dressel, Parents: Brandie and Thomas, Jan. 10.  
Everett Keith Purdie, Parents: Jessica and Shane, Jan. 12.  
Blake Bradley Waterston, Parents: Courtney and Zachery, Jan. 13.  
Muhamed Abdi Muktar, Parents: Besharo Awale and Abdi Abdi, Jan. 13.  
Kai Alexander Silva, Parents: Madalyn and Andy, Jan. 15.  
Madeline Ryan McKnight, Parents: Stephanie Ihus and Ryan McKnight, Jan. 15.  
Liam Michael Wagner, Parents: Megan and Peter, Jan. 16.  
Austin Thomas Kidwiler Moritz, Parents: Alyssa and Matthew, Jan. 17.  
Zuhaila Mohamed Abdulkadir, Parents: Shugri Malak and Mohamed Sheikh Hassan, Jan. 17.  
Jack Nicholas Wright, Parents: Andrea and Richard, Jan. 17.  
Emma Rose Wright, Parents: Andrea and Richard, Jan. 17.  
Rhett Rayfield Anderson, Parents: Kara and Jacob, Jan. 23.  
Zaylah Elizabeth Perez, Parents: Gloria Alvarado and Ezequiel Perez, Jan. 23.  
Carter David Robbins, Parents: Kristin and Sean, Jan. 23.  
Aida Abigail Pina, Parents: Maria and Hector, Jan. 23.  
Harmony Diane Newman, Parents: Morgan Forbis and Zakeria Newman, Jan. 24.  
Joaquin David Overland, Parents: Aurora Martinez-Ortiz and Cristian Overland, Jan. 25.  
Kinsley Marie Harren, Parents: Amanda and

Andrew, Jan. 25.  
Joshua Matthew Schmidt, Parents: Traci and Matthew, Jan. 25.  
Xavier Khalell Scurlock, Parents: Ronnie and Brian, Jan. 25.  
Gianna Marie Rodriguez, Parents: Anna and Remigio, Jan. 27.  
Alexander Zen Baumgartner, Parents: Paige Carlson and Isaac Baumgartner, Jan. 28.  
Ray Archie Heers, Parents: Laurel and Matthew, Jan. 28.  
Everson Steven Hedberg, Parents: Cindal Breckenridge and Taylor Hedberg, Jan. 28.  
Delliah Jo Miranda, Parents: Bailey and Sammy, Jan. 29.

**STEELE COUNTY DEATHS JANUARY 2020**

Duane A. Howieson, 55, Ellendale, Jan. 1.  
Elizabeth Ann Pfeifer, 83, Owatonna, Jan. 2.  
Eileen Jean Heslep, 88, Owatonna, Jan. 4.  
Adrienne Marcella Rothgarn, 93, Owatonna, Jan. 4.  
Sheila Mae Wencl, 73, Owatonna, Jan. 5.  
Florence Huber, 90, Owatonna, Jan. 6.  
Zackary Scott Ruzska, 31, Owatonna, Jan. 6.  
Gwendolyn Carvel Christensen, 92, Blooming Prairie, Jan. 7.  
Mark James Ecklund, 65, Owatonna, Jan. 8.  
Clarice J. Pence, 92, Owatonna, Jan. 9.  
Betty Jane Jackson, 83, Owatonna, Jan. 10.  
Pamela Jean Black, 68, Owatonna, Jan. 10.  
William Robert Rohwer, 89, Owatonna, Jan. 12.  
Lester Hobart Salisbury, 87, Owatonna, Jan. 12.  
Emmet Edward Gallagher, 94, Owatonna, Jan. 13.  
Martin John Luebben, 76, Owatonna, Jan. 13.  
Tara Jo Ambroz, 47, Fountain, Jan. 16.  
Dean Helmer Christianson, 80, Owatonna, Jan. 16.  
Maria M. De La Rosa, 89, Owatonna, Jan. 20.  
Frank John Schiller, 92, Owatonna, Jan. 21.  
Ervin Christian Hollund, 78, Faribault, Jan. 23.  
Terrance Ray Sharp, 66, Owatonna, Jan. 26.  
Timothy John Preuss, 65, Owatonna, Jan. 28.  
Ralph Eugene Broman, 83, Owatonna, Jan. 29.  
Marsha Jane Hartle, 88, Owatonna, Jan. 30.  
Gerald Sherwin Andersen, 83, Owatonna, Jan. 31.

SEE PUBLIC RECORD, B14

**BLOOMING PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION NOTICE**

**Blooming Prairie Township** will hold its annual election and meeting on **March 9th 2021**. The polls will be open from 4 p.m. until 8 p.m., with the meeting to follow. Masks will be required when inside the town hall for voting and for the meeting. If you are unable to attend but would like the annual documents, please request those documents from Missy Anderson any time after March 5th.

**ON THE BALLOT ARE**

Doug Krell – 3 year term supervisor  
Katie Zipze – 2 year term treasurer

Thank you. Blooming Prairie Township Board  
Missy Anderson, Clerk

2/24T2

**NOTICE TO HAVANA TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS**

Our **ANNUAL MEETING** and **TOWNSHIP ELECTIONS** will take place on **Tuesday, March 9, 2021**. The annual meeting will begin at 3:30 p.m. and voting for open positions will be from 5:00-8:00 p.m. at the township hall located at 4398 Havana Road, Owatonna.

David Joachim | Township Chairman  
Laurie Wolhart | Township Clerk

2/17T2

**ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICESHIPS AVAILABLE**

The South Central Minnesota Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee for the Electrical Industry is currently accepting applications for their apprenticeship program. The recruitment, selection, employment and training of apprentices during their apprenticeship shall be without discrimination because of race, color, religion, national and ethnic origin or sex. The applicant must meet the minimum age requirement. The JATC does not, and will not, discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability, because of the disability of such individual.

I.B.E.W. Local 343 and Minneapolis Chapter of N.E.C.A. sponsor the SC MN JATC program. It consists of 180 hours, minimum per year, of related classroom instruction for 5 years; in Rochester and Mankato; plus 8,000 hours of on-the-job training.

OFFERS DUE MARCH 18  
**82,000± SF INDUSTRIAL MFG FACILITY WITH 14,000± SF WAREHOUSE**

- 2 drive-in & 5 dock doors
- 4 bays
- Ceiling heights: 12.5' - 22.75'
- Proximity to U.S. Hwy 14
- Potential for future expansion
- Only 13 miles to I-35

1340 S. STATE ST., WASECA, MN

**Hilco** Real Estate Sales  
855.755.2300  
HilcoRealEstate.com

*Design Homes, Inc.*  
Custom Homes Since 1966

**Our Classic 1248 sq. ft., 3-Bedroom, Ranch Starts At Around \$99,000!**

Price locked for the entire build

- ✓ Historically Low Interest Rates!
- ✓ Debt Free Family Owned Company Since 1966
- ✓ Only 5% Down
- ✓ Homes in Inventory Ready Now!
- ✓ Bring Us Your Plans & Ideas Today!
- ✓ Kohler and Pella Standard in all Homes

507-451-2888 • 800-627-9443  
Medford, MN • DesignHomes.com

**833-314-1217**

**BOGO 40% OFF**

**Renewal by Andersen**  
WINDOW REPLACEMENT an Andersen Company  
The Better Way to a Better Window

**ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICESHIPS AVAILABLE**

I.B.E.W. Local 343 and Minneapolis Chapter of N.E.C.A. sponsor the SC MN JATC program. It consists of 180 hours, minimum per year, of related classroom instruction for 5 years; in Rochester and Mankato; plus 8,000 hours of on-the-job training.



**DEALS ON WHEELS**

Sell your car, bike, RV, trailer, and anything on wheels today!!

Over 25,000 in households

# CLASSIFIEDS

**BARGAIN FINDER**

Sell your items for \$50 or less. Run it for four weeks. ONLY \$5!

www.steeledodgenews.com

Serving Steele, Mower, Freeborn, Dodge, and Olmsted Counties

**TO PLACE AN AD**

Steele County Times  
507-583-4431  
bptimes@frontiernet.net  
411 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

**3-WEEK SPECIAL: \$32**

**BUY TWO WEEKS, GET THE THIRD FREE**  
UP TO 20 WORDS; 10c FOR EACH WORD AFTER

**TO PLACE AN AD**

Dodge County Independent  
Dodge County Advantage  
507-634-7503 • dci@kmtel.com  
121 W. Main St., Kasson, MN 55944

**FOR RENT**

**DODGE CENTER APARTMENT FOR RENT.** Two bedrooms includes heat, water, trash, on-site laundry and off-street parking. Available March 1, 2021. \$650/month. Call Aaron at 507-398-6899 2/18T3pd

**APARTMENT FOR RENT** in Kasson. 3 bdrm, 1 bath, appliances included, 10'x12' deck, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, 2/25pd

off street parking. No smoking, no pets. \$700/mo. 507-951-3401 2/25TFN

**WANTED**

**WANTED:** Female service cat or kitty for previous cat owner looking for companionship. Would prefer a kitten up to six-months of age. Must be an indoor kitten. Prefer free kitten, but willing to pay. Call 507-603-1195. 2/25pd

**FOR SALE**

**FOR SALE:** Barbie collectible Christmas doll, Angel of Joy 1998. Perfect condition \$50. In Owatonna Call: 507-451-9391. 2/24T4pd

**COINS**

**NEED CASH?** I give free appraisals of your older coins from 1964

and older. I am also looking to buy older coins such as silver dollars, halves, quarters, dimes and Indianhead cents. Please call Ron from Hayfield at 507-477-2427 or 507-259-6460. 1/14T6pd

**HELP WANTED**

**CAREGIVER WANTED** for disabled female. Every other weekend day or every other Saturday

overnight. 9 to 12-hour shifts. Will train. \$13.25 per hour; \$14.25 after short online course. NW Rochester. 507-289-2756. 2/11T3pd

**ROCHESTER TOOL & CUTTER GRINDING:** Immediate opening. Looking for full-time (4 10-hour days) or part-time employee (20-30 hours) to sharpen machine shop tooling. Me-

chanical knowledge preferred, but will train. Students – adults. For more information call Jack at shop. 507-634-7184. 2/25T3

**STUDENT EMPLOYMENT**

**CALEB'S PET SITTING,** Cats and Dogs, please call me at 507-634-7907. 33Tfc

**PART-TIME HELP WANTED**

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT**  
• Provide friendly and efficient customer service in person, on the phone, and electronically.  
• Support production, sales and office management team.  
  
**REQUIREMENTS**  
• Must be Office Suite (Word & Excel) and Google proficient.  
• Knowledge of Adobe Suite desirable.  
• Friendly and reliable.

Email resume and references to: dci@kmtel.com



**HELP WANTED**

The **STRAIGHT RIVER** northbound and southbound rest areas near **OWATONNA** need several **senior workers for PT custodial work.** If you are **55 or older** please call **Green View** AT **651-639-1913.** 2/10T3

**HELP WANTED**

**PART-TIME LEGAL SECRETARY/ASSISTANT**

Legal experience preferred. Knowledge of Word preferred. Digital transcribing, receptionist, and general office duties. Hourly pay based on experience. **REPLY TO:**

P.O. Box 273  
Owatonna, MN 55060

**KONICA MINOLTA**

# FOR SALE

**Lightly used**

The Konica Minolta C558 Copier will copy, print, scan and fax all in one. It boasts a 10.1 inch easy to use control panel for your convenience. Use the Konica C558 MFC to print at exceptionally fast speeds of 55 pages per minute in both black and white and color. Print straight from your mobile device when using the Konica Bizhub C558 Multifuncion.

**\$4,995 OBO**

Call 507-634-7503 or view at DCI office  
121 Main Street West | Kasson, MN

DODGE COUNTY  
**INDEPENDENT**

## VICTIM SERVICES

A service of DFO  
Community Corrections  
**Sexual Assault Program & Victim Witness Assistance Program**  
Advocacy, information and assistance for victim/survivors of sexual assault and other crimes. Community and professional education and consultation. All services free and confidential.  
Located in Courthouse, Mantorville  
Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**635-6266**  
or call collect 24 hours  
**289-0636**

**GOT NEWS?**  
editordci@kmtel.com

You should choose an independent title specialist who can represent and protect your interest. It's your choice, so choose wisely. Ask for Atypical Title, Inc. to be your closing agent.

505 Frontage Road NE, Byron 507-775-2480  
16 Mantorville Ave. N, Kasson 507-634-4454  
email: atitle@kmtel.com

**KASSON-MANTORVILLE COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

has an immediate opening for a **Project Kids Paraprofessional.**

Please complete an application online at [www.komets.k12.mn.us](http://www.komets.k12.mn.us) and include a resume and letter of application. 2/25

**HELP WANTED**

**FULL TIME OFFICE ASSISTANT**

Candidate will be responsible for various office duties including phones, customer service, word processing and scheduling.

Email resume to: rudynray@charter.net 2/25T3

**KASSON-MANTORVILLE COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

is seeking an **Early Childhood Family Education Parent Educator part-time.**

Please complete an application online at [www.komets.k12.mn.us](http://www.komets.k12.mn.us) and include a resume, letter of application and 3 reference letters. 2/25

**CAREER OPPORTUNITY**

**Resident Assistant**

- FT 6 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- FT & PT 2 p.m. - 10 p.m.
- FT & PT 10 p.m. - 6 a.m..

**Registered Nurse**

- Part-Time

**Activities Assistant**

- Part-Time

Apply on Indeed or **800 5th Ave. NW, Kasson, MN - EOE**  
Professionally Managed by Jaybird Senior Living, formerly Senior Housing Management.

# WE'RE MOVING

Beginning March 1, you'll find us at our new location  
**301 S MANTORVILLE AVE • PLAZA 57 • SUITE 200**

DODGE COUNTY  
**INDEPENDENT**

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Over **35,000** people in Steele County, Olmsted County, and Steele County Residents read the **ADVANTAGE** weekly in: Byron, Casson, Center, Dodge, Hayfield, Kasson, Mower, Olmsted, and Steele County.

**AL EAT LOCAL. IT'S ALL ENJOY LOCAL.**

Support your local businesses who support the area where you live, work and play.

**ARKEMA**  
INNOVATIVE CHEMISTRY

located at 157 Hwy Ave N, Blooming Prairie MN

# NOW HIRING!

## Process Operator Position

View job & apply online at [Jobs at Arkema](http://Jobs at Arkema)  
<https://jobs.arkema.com>

**mcan**  
Minnesota Classified Advertising Network

**HEALTH**

**GASTRIC BYPASS SURGERY FOR WEIGHT LOSS?**  
If you or a loved one had this surgery and suffered serious injury or death? You may be entitled to compensation. Attorney Charles Johnson 800/535-5727

**SEED/FEED/GRAINS**

**PROTECT YOUR YIELD**  
from soybean white mold and SDS. Ask your seed dealer for Heads Up® Seed Treatment. Cost-effective. Proven results. HeadsUpST.com/plant21 or 866/368-9306

**HUNTING**

**GUARANTEED BUFFALO HUNTS**  
in the northern Black Hills of South Dakota. Buffalo hunts: cows \$1850, bulls starting at \$3000. 605/391-4646 nvrbuffalo@gmail.com

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**FREON WANTED:**  
We pay \$\$\$ for cylinders and cans. R12 R500 R11 R113 R114. Convenient. Certified Professionals. Call 312/291-9169 or visit: RefrigerantFinders.com

**TIMESHARE CANCELLATION EXPERTS**  
Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt & fees cancelled in 2019. Get free informational package & learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 833/619-1117

**AT&T WIRELESS**  
Two great new offers! Ask how to get the new iPhone 11 or Next Generation Samsung Galaxy S10e on us with AT&T's Buy one, Give One offer. While supplies last! Call 855/332-0464

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**DONATE YOUR CAR**  
truck or boat to Heritage For The Blind. Free 3-day vacation, tax deductible, free towing, all paperwork taken care of 844/220-9501

**DISH NETWORK \$64.99**  
for 190 Channels! Blazing fast internet, \$19.99/mo. (where available.) Switch & get a FREE \$100 Visa gift card. FREE voice remote. FREE HD DVR. FREE streaming on ALL devices. Call today! 855/562-4309

**4G LTE HOME INTERNET**  
Now available! Get GotW3 with lightning fast speeds, plus take your service with you when you travel! As low as \$109.99/mo! 844/960-4698

**Advertise here statewide in 230+ newspapers for only \$279 per week! Call 800-279-2979**



# Winter sowing tips and tricks



**Mastering Gardening**  
LORRIE RUGG

When I first heard those words, I didn't quite know what they meant. Yes, I am a sewer and it is winter, so what is the big deal? I started with some research and boy did I learn a lot. It is a way for you to start seeds outdoors in the winter. Why should you do it? It takes no space inside, no light set-up, the plants don't need to be hardened off and Mother Nature does the work!

You turn clean gallon milk jugs into mini-greenhouses. Other supplies you need are a ruler, sharp knife, magic marker labels, duct tape, and some potting soil and seeds. Things you probably already have at home.

Take your milk jug (the see-through kind) and cut the jug in half - but be sure to leave a 1-inch hinge under the handle. You won't need the cap. Add 2-inches of soil in the jug. Plant your seeds as directed on the package, water them well. Make it so wet it looks like mud. Don't drain it yet. Duct tape the two halves together and write what kind of seeds are in the jug. Take it outside and with your sharp knife, poke holes in the bottom for drainage.

The best place for your mini-greenhouse is

anywhere in your yard, but avoid the southwest corner of your yard. That is too much sun and will bake your plants! Under a bush, or picnic table, or beside your garage are great places.

February is time to sow perennials that need cold stratification, Mid-Late March, sow hardier annuals, and Late March to Early April sow, tender annuals, vegetables, and herbs.

Examples of perennial seeds that work well are coneflower, black-eyed Susans, balloon flower, foxglove, delphinium, Shasta daisies, Liatris, blanket flower, and many more.

Annual seeds that work well are morning glory, snapdragon, marigold, cosmos, zinnias, or any annual flower that reseeds itself in your garden.

In the spring you will see your seeds sprouting. Make sure your seeds are getting enough water and ventilation. Poke a few more holes in some of the tape to allow for more air circulation. Once it warms up enough remove the lids and either transplant the seedlings into larger pots or directly plant them in your garden.

There are a lot of great articles written about winter sowing if you need more information, but I just thought I would introduce you to a fun way to get gardening in the winter! Good luck and have fun.

*Lorrie Rugg of Owatonna is the coordinator of the Steele County Master Gardener program. Her column appears in this newspaper monthly.*



During a cold and sloppy Wednesday afternoon, Spectrum employee, Josh Dale, is on the streets doing electrical work for his company.

STAFF PHOTO BY MITCHELL BREUER

## AAUW to feature author

Members of the American Association of University Women invite interested guests and potential members to attend their meeting on March 2 at 7p.m., via Zoom.

Non-members

interested in attending, please contact AAUW at [aauwawatonna@gmail.com](mailto:aauwawatonna@gmail.com).

The speaker for the evening is author Virginia M. Wright-Peterson, a member of the writing faculty at the

University of Minnesota-Rochester. She will discuss her new book, *A Woman's War, Too: Women at Work during World War II* and will reframe the understanding of the war through the specific

and powerful stories of individual women. Women in Minnesota-like women across the country- made bold, unconventional, and important contributions to the effort. It was their war, too.

## PUBLIC RECORD: FROM B12

### STEELE COUNTY MARRIAGES JANUARY 2020

Larry Dean Haberman and Jamie Marie Schnobrich, Jan. 3. Steven John Keller and Kali Alexis Shae, Jan. 4. Brandon James Sandberg and Ana Laura

Vargas, Jan. 6. Brynda Irene Janis and Jessica Lee Martinez, Jan. 6. Bartolo Sosa Castillo and Lorena Gonzalez Navarro, Jan. 13. Nicholas James Cline and Madeline Theresa Anderson, Jan. 13. Chelsea Marie Stoltz

and Tanner John Nelson, Jan. 16. Brenden Anthony Hein and Hannah Marie Maslinski, Jan. 16. James Richard Wagoner and Anna Marie Heisler, Jan. 18. Jennifer Diane Anderson and Caleb Thomas Robertson, Jan. 24.

Peter Russell Caudillo and Lina Garza, Jan. 30.

### STEELE COUNTY DIVORCES JANUARY 2020

Rebecca Molitor and Shane Molitor, Jan. 8. James David Fosness and Leah Jolene Fosness, Jan. 23.



# Minnesota School Bus Driver Appreciation Week

February 24

*A special thanks to all our drivers, aides, office staff, mechanics and shop personnel*

*It takes more than a driver, it takes an entire team to keep 'Moving Kids Forward'*

*Thank you to everyone*

**Owatonna Bus Company**

**Medford Bus Company**

**Blooming Prairie Bus Company**