



Wednesday, March 10, 2021
www.SteeleCountyTimes.com
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

Blooming Prairie High School students get off the bus and enter the school on Monday, Mar. 8. For seventh- through ninth-graders, Monday was their first day back learning in-person. Sophomores through seniors will resume in-person learning four days a week next Monday.

In-person learning resumes at BP High School

BY ALEX NUEHRING
STAFF WRITER

After nearly a full year of distance or hybrid learning, Monday marked the first day back at school for in-person learning for all Blooming Prairie seventh-grader, eighth-graders and freshmen. The students will be in school every day except Wednesday, which is designated as a distance-learning day.

Sophomores, juniors and seniors will resume in-person learning next Monday.

Seventh-graders Lyla and Lincoln Quail, eighth-grader Abby Jordison and junior James Wohlfert said they're excited to be back learning in-person because now they can see all their friends.

Likewise, health and physical education teacher David Lassahn said the staff is also excited to have students in the building more often.

"I think that almost everyone is looking forward to the return of all students in the building. We want the students back in the building. But we know we have to be able to do

it safely, and we feel like this is the right time to bring them all back in person. The administration has been great about supporting us during this time and keeping all students and staff safe," he said.

Business education teacher Chad Gimbel agreed that it's great the kids are coming back, especially for those kids who need help.

"I think having them all here will help us reach those kids, especially those kids who are struggling a little bit. I see it especially with the junior high kids; it's hard for them. That's a big independent step if they don't have somebody at home watching over them to make sure they're doing their work. Hopefully, this will help us get all kids back on track and be more successful in the classroom," he said.

One of the students who said he'd benefit academically is Wohlfert.

"I'm not really a student who can sit at home, be online and be focused, but being in the classroom helps me be focused. The teachers can get you back on track if you're off track," said

Wohlfert, adding that getting back on track and being focused in class may be difficult for students who weren't focused during distance learning.

Lyla Quail said it might take some time to get used to being back in-person.

being coming to school four days a week rather than having three days not in school each week.

While it may take the students some time to get used to, Gimbel said in-person learning is much more effective than distance or hybrid learning.

the interaction is going to be a whole lot better. I think we've done the best we could with the situation we've been given, but I think this is a good step too, getting us back to some normalcy," he said.

None of the students said they were con-

and practicing social distancing.

"These two things have been very effective so far this year, and we haven't had any Covid-19 outbreaks in our school. Our janitorial staff does an awesome job of keeping our buildings clean and safe for our students and staff as well," he said.

In addition to helping students academically while keeping them safe, Lassahn said the move to in-person learning also helps ease the burden on teachers.

"It will help lighten the load quite a bit. Instead of teaching the same class in multiple ways, we can go back to teaching the students all together in one place. We will still have a few distance learners and some distance learning stuff to plan. However, it won't be anything like before when half of the class was distance," he said.

"It also makes turning in assignments and the grading process a bit easier. It will be helpful to have more communication with students in person throughout the week."



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING
The most difficult time to maintain social distancing will be when students are in the hallways moving from one area of the school to another.

"There's fewer kids when we did distance learning, so it's kind of weird coming back, and then getting used to all in-person classes," she said.

Meanwhile, Jordison said that the hardest part of returning to in-person learning for her would

"We do the best we can when we're lecturing the kids, but when they're listening through a screen, they're not getting the full effect as they would if they were here. I think they won't be as afraid to ask questions, and I think

cerned about returning even though the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing.

Lassahn said he's also not concerned about having all the students in the building on the same days since students and staff will be wearing masks

New Hwy. 14 on target for fall opening

BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After years of discussion, planning, funding issues and delays, the construction of a new four-lane roadway from Owatonna to Rochester is finally nearing its final stages.

Officials with the Minnesota Department of Transportation last

week said that the final four-lane segment, from Owatonna to Dodge Center, is scheduled to open in November. MnDOT explained what construction has been done and what remains at a virtual project update last week.

Actual construction on the project began in the spring of 2020, with work continuing until winter weather halted the work. The new

roadway will connect to the current four-lane road just east of Owatonna, run south of Claremont and parallel to the Canadian Pacific railroad tracks, and connect to the existing four-lane at Highway 56 south in Dodge Center.

Under the new alignment Hwy. 14 will not cross the railroad tracks as it currently does near Havana.

Because the project involves constructing a new highway south of the current one, much of the work has not been visible to those traveling Highway 14.

During the summer of 2020, there was an emphasis on bridge construction with the Dodge County Road 1 crossing of the new Hwy. 14 completed. That bridge was opened to

traffic, allowing for the closing of other county roads for bridge construction.

Bridges were built for Steele County Road 16 and Dodge County Road 3, but additional work remains before those roads can be reopened. County Road 3 will be an interchange when the project is completed to connect the county road that

connects to Claremont. MnDOT officials said.

Last summer also saw about 4 lane miles of the new roadway paved. Since the new roadbed is over land that was worked for agriculture, the clay subsoil needs to be dried out. There was significant earth-moving work last summer to ensure a quality road, MnDOT

See HWY. 14 on A5 ►



Rev. Ed Mountain

Mountain was the oldest living priest

The longest living ordained priest in the Diocese of Winona has passed away.

Rev. Edward Mountain of Owatonna died peacefully Monday at Benedictine Living

Community in Owatonna. He was 96.

Mountain was ordained on June 1, 1947 in Mankato. Throughout his long career, he served at various parishes across southern Minnesota. He was

pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Owatonna. He also served at Christ the King in Medford and Corpus Christi in Deerfield.

He was a member of the Knights of Columbus for

78 years. Honoring his lifelong commitment to the Knights, the Owatonna Council will now be renamed, "Father Edward C. Mountain Council 945."

See MOUNTAIN on A14 ►



Don't forget to set your clocks ahead on Saturday night. Daylight Saving Time starts at 2 a.m. Sunday.

\$1.00 | Volume 129, No. 33



507-585-4431 | bptimes@frontier.net

INSIDE

Options.....	A2	Owatonna Schools Page.....	A8	Calendar.....	B3
Coronavirus Coverage.....	A5	Farm Living.....	A9	Sports.....	B4-B9
Public Safety.....	A4	Community.....	A12	Public Notices.....	B10
History.....	A5	Faith.....	A13	Classifieds.....	B11
Business.....	A6-A7	Hometown Living.....	B1		

AREA DEATHS

Joan Mae Johnson, 84,
Owatonna
Rev. Edward Mountain, 96,
Owatonna

Serving
Blooming Prairie
and Steele County
since 1893

OUR VIEW

Ombudsman's office offers needed services

When people find themselves in need of help, they are often unaware of existing resources that could afford them much-needed assistance.

That's why it's important to note the work of the Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care – a service provided by the Minnesota Board of Aging free-of-charge to Minnesotans statewide.

Mandated through the Older Americans Act and established 40 years ago in Minnesota, the state ombudsman's office advocates for adults needing or receiving long-term care. Today, that includes home care services, transitional caring in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes.

Emergencies often trigger the need for long-term care services. And navigating the maze within the health care system, let alone the insurance and government regulations, can be complicated.

The ombudsman's office exists to provide information, resolve complaints and, perhaps most important, to give seniors a voice when challenged by their families, health care and service providers and public agencies.

The goal of the office and the ombudsmen who work within it is to work with older adults to ensure their health, safety, well-being, and rights as long-term care consumers.

Imagine being placed in a long-term care facility and not wanting to be there. What if your family thought it best but did not have the legal right to insist that you stay?

The Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care would listen and intervene to ensure your rights weren't being violated. Their advocates would work tirelessly to ensure that your voice was heard.

They also work with Medicare beneficiaries who have concerns about getting into or being discharged from hospitals.

Ombudsmen investigate and resolve complaints about quality of care, quality of life, rights violations, access to services, termination of services, discharge or evictions, and public benefits programs.

They also work to improve health care and social services through changes in state and federal law and policy.

The work of the Ombudsman office was important before the pandemic. And as the pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions for seniors and their families, the ombudsmen's advocacy efforts became even more critical.

To reach an ombudsman, phone 800-657-3591.

Congrats, we have survived



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

One can just feel the energy and excitement as people cautiously come out of hiding after being locked down for the past year.

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on many folks' emotional well-being. And rightfully so.

I was fortunate to speak at the Exchange Club of Owatonna last Thursday at its weekly meeting. In case you're wondering, the Exchange Club inspires change through family, community and country.

As I shared with the Exchange members, I have a whole new ap-

preciation for animals at the zoo after this past year. They are caged up and with nowhere to go.

Sound familiar? That's been us for the past year. We have been caged up in our homes with nowhere to escape except maybe the doctor's office or grocery store.

We are social creatures. Most of us love human interaction and getting together with our friends and neighbors. COVID-19 stripped that away from us, among many other things.

The highlight of the Exchange meeting had nothing to do with anything I said. After being gone for a year, Rev. Russell Rudolf of Owatonna walked through the door for the first time to socially interact in person once again.

Like many other senior citizens, Rudolf had just received his COVID vaccination and felt safe to venture out for the meeting.

Rudolf received a well-deserved and rousing welcome back from the group.

Now retired, Rudolf served as a senior pastor at St. John Lutheran Church in Owatonna for nearly 30 years. He has been a member of the Exchange Club for more than 46 years.

"I didn't realize how much I missed you folks until I walked into yesterday's meeting," Rudolf said after the meeting.

Another member responded, "I have no words for how happy I was to see you come through the door. My wish and prayer are that life will continue to allow you to join us in person on a regular basis."

It was heartfelt to see that kind of bond between the Exchange members. It was even more heartwarming to see people being able to connect again. I'm sorry, but FaceTime and Zoom just don't cut it.

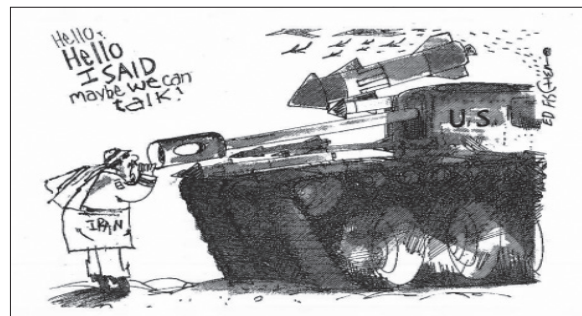
While many people have struggled to stay connected over the past year, I reminded members that the community newspaper, AKA: Steele County Times, is one of the greatest sources of staying connected, pandemic or no pandemic.

COVID has made us realize the importance of life's priorities. And staying connected with each other is one of those values.

We have been publishing a newspaper every week through the worst of the coronavirus crisis. We are attempting to capture the life of Steele Countians in each edition through this crazy time.

We have survived a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic that hadn't been seen for more than a century.

Isn't it time we go in hot pursuit of stamping out the COVID bug? A vaccination will put us well on the way to doing just that.



GUEST COLUMN

The season of Lent is like the blanket of March

BY REV. RUSSELL RUDOLF

"Everything in life has its own time. There is time to celebrate and there is time to mourn. This is the time for reflection and transformation. Let us look within and change into what we ought to be."

—Aaron Saul

Each year on March 8, a few folk celebrate the movement that has focused on women's rights.

It was the Socialist Party of America that organized the original Women's Day. It took place on Feb. 28, 1909 in New York. The idea came from the mind of Theresa Malkiel. In 1910 the International Socialist Women's Conference encouraged the development of an annual Women's Day celebration. In almost every country where women supported the idea, they were fighting for equal rights, the right to vote and the right to hold public office.

On March 8, 1917, female textile workers in Petrograd, Russia began to demonstrate. On that same date women in St. Petersburg went on strike. They demanded the end of World War I, an end to food

shortages and the end of czarism. It was called a day for "Bread and Peace." March 8 became a national holiday in Soviet Russia – women in Soviet Russia had won their battle for suffrage.

The United Nations began celebrating IWD in 1975. In 1977, this international body invited her members to designate March 8 as the UN Day for the rights of women and for the hope of world peace. For some it became a public holiday. Some countries totally ignored it. In a few places it was a day of protest while in other locales it was a day that celebrated achievements of women (women like Mary Katherine Goddard and Olive Ann Beech).

President Ronald Reagan in March of 1987 proclaimed March to be "Women's History Month." In his proclamation he wrote, "Women have fought for moral and social reform and have taken part in and led many great social and political movements of our land. Women have founded many of our philanthropic, cultural, educational, and

charitable institutions. Women have served our Nation with valor and distinction during wartime..."

On Feb. 28, 2018 President Trump released a proclamation designating March as Women's History Month. Please search for that document and read it Google – "President Donald J. Trump proclaims March 2018 as Women's History Month.")

The International Men's Day (IMD) is celebrated on Nov. 19.

Celebrate DST

Some have incorrectly stated that it was Benjamin Franklin who suggested the use of Daylight Saving Time. True, it was Franklin who had said, "Early to bed, and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." Back in the 1780s someone suggested in an anonymous (it could have been B. Franklin) letter that the public be awakened at sunrise by the ringing of church bells and the firing of cannons.

DST has been encouraged by many on the assumption that it would reduce energy costs.

Most research indicates that this assumption might be inaccurate or at least highly exaggerated.

In 1885, George Hudson (a New Zealand entomologist) proposed the idea of daylight savings time. His original proposal called for a two-hour shift.

In 1905, it was a golfer who promoted the idea of Daylight Savings Time in England. William Willett was frustrated by his knowledge that many Londoners were wasting summer days by sleeping late in the morning. An avid golfer he disliked having to have darkness shorten his rounds. His proposal became the first Daylight Savings Bill to be discussed by the House of Commons (February 12, 1908).

The first city in the world to enact DST was Port Arthur, Ontario, Canada on July 1, 1908. In the United States the first DST bill appeared in the House of Representatives in May 1909.

The first nationwide implementation was in 1916 in Germany, Austria and Hungary.

During the energy crisis of the 1970s many nations made the decision to use Daylight Saving Time.

A 1984 Fortune magazine article suggested that a seven-week extension of DST would increase golf industry revenues \$200 million to \$300 million (estimation provided by the National Golf Foundation).

Celebrate St. Patrick

Most of what we know about St. Patrick comes from what is believed to be an autobiography. He was born in Roman Britain (385). His father was a deacon in the church. His grandfather was a priest in the church. At the age of sixteen he was kidnapped. He became a slave in Ireland. For six years he worked as a shepherd.

After escaping and returning home, he became a priest. He returned to Ireland to work among the pagans seeking to convert them to Christianity. He spent the remainder of his life in Ireland. He died in 461 at the age of 76.

The first St. Patrick's Day parade in North America was

on March 17, 1762. Irish soldiers serving in the English or British military marched in New York City.

Supposedly, there are 34.7 million U.S. residents with Irish ancestry. This means that 34.7 is more than seven times the population of Ireland itself.

According to U.S. Census calculations, German is the largest most frequently reported ancestry in the United States Irish is the second most frequently reported ancestry. In the 2000 census, there were 46,500,000 Americans who claimed German ancestry and 33,000,000 Americans who claimed Irish ancestry. In that "USA Today story, on the front page – August 23, 2001 seven nationalities, there were too few Scandinavians to be listed. In the 2010 census Minnesotans listed their ancestry as being 37.9 % German, 32.1 % Scandinavian (including all the Nordic countries) and 11.7 Irish.

Rev. Russell Rudolf lives in Owatonna and is retired.

STEELE COUNTY Times

Founded in 1893
Bussler Publishing, Inc.
www.SteeleCountyTimes.com
Email: bptimes@frontier.net

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

Steele County Times
P.O. Box 247
Bloomington, MN 55907
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
2020 – 18 awards
2019 – 9 state awards
2018 – 7 state awards
2017 – 6 state and 4 national awards
2016 – 2 state and 3 national awards
2015 – 8 state and 6 national awards
2014 – 7 state and 4 national awards
2013 – 7 state and 2 national awards
2012 – 2 state awards
2011 – 8 state and 6 national awards
(Awards presented by the Minnesota Newspaper Association and the National Newspaper Association)

A LIFE SAVER

PPE proves to be lifeline for first responders

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As a police officer and as an ambulance crew first responder, Dan Peach says PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is his best friend.

Peach is in his fifth year working as an emergency medical technician and as a police officer with the Blooming Prairie Police Department.

"I wouldn't be without PPE," said Peach, adding there is always a chance when a first responder's safety is threatened.

PPE is also worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace inju-

ries and illness. These injuries and illnesses may result from contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical, or other workplace hazards.

Doctors and nurses have always relied on PPE to safeguard themselves and the patient.

The public didn't hear too much about PPE until the coronavirus struck, said Peach.

First responders are most concerned about blood pathogen issues and about the coronavirus.

Personal Protective Equipment carried by police, fire and ambulance crews includes medical gloves, N95 masks, surgical masks, two different kinds

of face shields, safety glasses and special clothing (gowns).

All personal protective equipment should be safely designed and constructed, and should be maintained in a clean and reliable fashion.

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, Federated Insurance of Owatonna manufactured hundreds of face shields and donated them to first responders in Steele County.

If the personal protective equipment does not fit properly, it can make the difference between being safely covered or dangerously exposed. When engineering, work practice, and administrative con-



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

First responder use many forms of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Here, Blooming Prairie Police Officer Brooke Baker and Officer Dan Peach illustrate some of the PPE available to them.

trols are not feasible or do not provide sufficient protection, employers must provide personal protective equipment to their workers and ensure its proper use.

Peach said first responders also make sure they have hand sanitizer and soaps at their disposal. It's important to wash your

hands often when on duty and not on duty, Peach said.

Police Chief Greg Skillestad applied for a grant to obtain more PPE. He applied for the grant through Steele County Emergency Management. Each police officer received 10, N95 masks, 80 in total.

Skillestad said his department has also received about two dozen cloth masks, made by local residents.

"It's so nice to have those people who know how to sew," said Skillestad.

"The PPE can make a difference in saving lives. We don't want to get sick."

Caron urges seniors to get vaccinated

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

While there had been a vaccine shortage for weeks, Steele County is now facing a different problem. The county can't find enough senior citizens to fill the clinics for COVID-19 shots.

Public Health Director Amy Caron said Monday that the county is trying to get the 65 and older population vaccinated before moving onto the next

populations. "I think the 65-plus group has been oversaturated with pharmacies and health care providers giving vaccines," she said.

Caron said she also suspects that many senior citizens traveled outside of Steele County to get their vaccinations, which she doesn't have any problem with. "Get your vaccine wherever you can get it," she said.

There will be another drive-thru clinic on Friday at Steele County

Public Works in Owatonna. Caron said seniors should sign up on Public Health's website. Seniors may call Public Health at 507-444-7650 if they don't have access to a computer.

With 300 vaccinations given last week, Steele County has now administered 1,902 COVID shots, according to Caron.

Steele County received 400 more doses of the vaccine to be given out this week. Caron said the county still has not yet

received any of the new Johnson and Johnson vaccines, which require only one shot instead of two like the other vaccines. She doesn't expect to see any Johnson and Johnson vaccines for another couple weeks.

Once the county finishes with senior citizens, officials will move on to the next tier, which includes food processing and manufacturing workers and those with severe underlying health conditions.

Caron said she is also concerned that the county is having trouble reaching minority populations. She said they have not seen many minorities in the drive-thru clinics.

"We need to do better in reaching out to them," said Caron.

Steele County saw a slight uptick in COVID cases over the past week with 52 new cases, bringing the county's total to 3,050. In Dodge County, there were 25 new cases with a total of 1,546 since the pandemic began a year ago.

COVID-19 VACCINE WATCH

Steele: 1,902
Dodge: 1,212

Source: Steele County Public Health

A YEAR LATER

Staff looks back to March of 2020

BY TIMES STAFF

This week a year ago, the World Health Organization characterized the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic. A few days later, on March 15 Minnesota detected the first cases caused by community spread. By March 17, 2020, all 50 states had reported a confirmed case of COVID-19. And on March 21, 2020, the state department of health announced the first confirmed Minnesota fatality caused by the virus.

Below Times staff members share a few memories from the early days of pandemic.

READERS KNEW

One thing I've learned in this business after all these years is that readers always have lots of wisdom. Such was the case in early March 2020.



Rick Bussler

I don't remember the specific day, but just days before the seriousness of the pandemic came to light and the state virtually shut down, a reader stopped in at the Times office to renew his subscription. As he left, he said something to the effect, "Well, I suppose you're going to have your hands full reporting on this pandemic."

Quite honestly, I hadn't given it a lot of thought until the encounter. At first, when he said it, I thought to myself, "Yeah, it's a big deal, but it will quickly fade away."

COVID-19 has turned out to be the story of a lifetime and most certainly the most important story I've encountered in my career.

How could that reader have known? Something tells me he had an inkling of what we were in for.

It has been quite a marathon reporting on a silent killer that crept into our lives and has shaken us to the inner core. I have been hit with many sleepless nights and days of wondering if this deadly virus will

sicken my family members or me. And then, on top of it, I have to worry about the survival of this newspaper, my very own livelihood.

If I've learned anything, I now know how powerful and destructive a pandemic can be to our society.

And, oh yes, one other important thing.

I also realize I shouldn't ever doubt the intelligence of our readers.

'UNDER SIEGE'

One of my strongest memories from March 2020 is the last high school athletic competition I was able to cover that season. It featured the Blooming Prairie boys basketball team competing in the section championship against Hayfield on Thursday, March 12.



Alex Nuehring

Nobody had to wear a mask to attend that game, but I do remember one of the videographers wearing a mask because he had recently received a kidney transplant. A photo of him donning a mask was the Times cover photo on March 18 under the headline "Under Siege," which was an accurate description because at that point, it was a national emergency, and we had no idea how to stop it.

While the Awesome Blossoms ended up winning the game and advancing to the state tournament, which was canceled, what I remember most from that game is the atmosphere of the crowd with seemingly half the of Blooming Prairie and Hayfield on either side of the Mayo Civic Center.

Fans of both teams were getting into the game, especially the 100-plus high school students who participated in all sorts of chants to encourage their team.

Another vivid memory of the early days of the pandemic is coming home from work. I would go into the garage, take off my work clothes and change into a clean robe. I then would put my work clothes in a big trash bag, take the bag of clothes inside the house and

dump them straight into the washer. Right after that, I'd head straight to the shower without interacting with any of my family members, to wash off any possible COVID-19 bacteria that I might have gotten on my body throughout the day.

I thought of taking off my work clothes and showering immediately was a bit excessive, but none of my family members, including myself, have contracted COVID-19 in the past year. The extra precaution paid off.

JUST A FEW DAYS

As I headed for Denver in early March, the first known U.S. death caused by this disease called coronavirus had been reported. I was driving and only stopped for gas—no need to take any chances of picking anything up along the way.

My trip was two-fold—to visit my sister and her husband who had been diagnosed with cancer two months earlier and to facilitate a weekend conference for teens the week-end before St. Patrick's Day.

I didn't have much time to watch the news or listen to radio updates once I arrived in Denver. I spent most of my time talking with them, preparing for the upcoming course, and planning my return the following week. We'd celebrate St. Patrick's Day together.

I remember the joking and laughing—both of them were doing much better than I had imagined. I left my casual clothes and an extra suitcase behind as I left for the course—not knowing I wouldn't be returning.

On the last day of the course, I awoke with a sore throat. In order to return to the course, I was asked to visit an Urgent Care to make sure it wasn't the virus. It wasn't. But in the few days since I'd left my sister's house, concerns about the virus had increased sharply.

There were more deaths in Seattle.

Things were shutting down. Minnesota had confirmed its first case caused by community spread, and as I learned the night before I was to return to my sister's, my extended visit was no longer an option. She and her family decided to self-quarantine.

Clearly, their choice made sense, with so much at stake for my brother-in-law. Little did I know how much was at stake for all of us.

As I left town, I stopped at a grocery store to pick up a few items for my sister. It was all planned, she'd open the garage door and I could put her purchases on their freezer. My suitcase would be in the garage too. She'd stay inside.

It turns out neither of us could quite abide by the inside-outside arrangement. She stood in the doorway. I stood outside the garage. It wasn't the strangest feeling—so close to one another, yet so far away.

Simultaneously, we both blew one another a kiss. With outstretched arms, I turned, got in the car and drove away.

It's been a year. We're all doing well, but I stopped trying to guess when we'll be able to see one another again in-person.

There are still too many uncertainties.

WE WERE CLUELESS

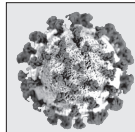
I was a senior in my final semester of college last March. And to be honest with you, COVID-19 was an afterthought because of how little everyone (including the campus officials) knew about it.



Mitchell Breuer

I began to hear rumblings that spring break scheduled to start on March 16 would be extended a week, but that was it. On what would be my last day on campus, Friday, March 13, I met with the university president to discuss the

See STAFF LOOKS BACK ON A14 ►



World.....117,000,000
Deaths.....2,600,000
Recovered.....66,100,000

U.S.29,100,000
Deaths.....525,000
Recovered.....16,630,000

MN491,000
Deaths.....6,624
Recovered.....447,420

Steele.....3,050
Deaths.....11
Recovered.....3,006

Dodge1,546
Deaths.....4
Recovered.....1,528

Freeborn.....2,877
Deaths.....24
Recovered.....4,134

Mower4,134
Deaths.....31
Recovered.....

AS OF MARCH 8, 2021

COVID-19 UPDATE

**BLOTTER
SPOTLIGHT**

Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 600 block of Glendale St. NW at 8:17 a.m. They took a subject into custody.

Domestic spurs 3 felonies for man

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

A domestic disturbance has resulted in three felony charges against an Owatonna man.

The Steele County Attorney's Office has charged Lesly Lamont Wadley, 44, with three counts of domestic assault, including two aggravated charges because of past domestic-related convictions. He is accused of assaulting a woman by strangulation.

A neighbor reported the incident in the 100 block of Pearl Street East to police around 2:38 a.m. on March 2. The neighbor told police that a man may

have pushed his girlfriend down the stairs and threatened her with a weapon, according to the criminal complaint.

Police waited outside the apartment to listen for activity coming from inside. It was initially quiet, but then the officer heard a woman yell and a man yell louder. Officers made contact with both subjects. The victim was crying around her neck. At times had a hard time catching her breath due to the crying.

Officers noted marks on the victim and a fresh bump on the right side of



Lesly Wadley

her forehead. She had multiple bruises down the left side of her body. The officer found dark marks on both sides of the victim's neck.

She also had a fat lip. During the encounter, the victim said Wadley threw her down the stairs. The complaint also outlined various other ways Wadley allegedly assaulted the victim, including choking her with his hands around her neck. While the choking happened, the victim said she was not able to breathe or talk.

Wadley even told the victim at one point, "bitch I will kill you."

the complaint said. She related to police how scared she is of Wadley.

Court records show Wadley has an extensive record of domestic assault. In 2011, he was convicted of gross misdemeanor domestic assault and violation of an Order for Protection. He was convicted of terroristic threats and domestic assault in 2012. He also was convicted of felony violation of an Order for Protection in 2018 and sentenced to 26 months in prison in early 2019.

With the most recent case, Wadley faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

He remains locked up in the Steele County Detention Center.

CRIME BRIEF

K-9 finds hiding suspect

Owatonna's K-9 Vegas came to the rescue in finding a man hiding from police.

Benjamin Hunt has been charged with fifth-degree possession of a controlled substance and demonstrable bodily harm to a public safety dog.

Police had been looking for Hunt in connection with an outstanding arrest warrant out of Blue Earth County.

On Feb. 26, officers watched a home on 4th Avenue SE where Hunt was known to hang out. Near the home, police found an unoccupied car believed to be associated to Hunt and later saw a man run into the home being watched.



Benjamin Hunt

With that information, police got consent to search the home. The initial search did not turn up Hunt.

However, during a secondary search, a detective saw a large pile of clothes under a stairwell. He removed the clothes and found a hole had been kicked into the sheetrock.

Police gave several warnings before deploying K-9 Vegas. According to police, Hunt was found by the K-9 hiding behind the sheetrock in a void in the home.

During the apprehension, Hunt allegedly kicked at Vegas multiple times in the face and tried striking the dog with a metal pole, police said.

Police seek help with nameless face

Police are asking for the public's help in identifying a man believed to be involved in some thefts at a local convenience store. Owatonna Police want

to learn the identity of the man pictured in this story. He has been labeled as a person of interest in some recent theft cases at one of the Kwik Trip stores.

Anyone with information or who knows the identity should contact Detective Travis Ardolf at 507-774-7216.



COURT NEWS Steele County

The following case was heard in Steele County District Court the week of March 1 with Judge Joseph A. Buetel presiding: Brentan A. Peterson, 31, Rochester, previously appeared and was convicted of felony fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle and DWI. He was sentenced to \$200, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of firearms, and 237 days in county jail and 4 years of supervised probation. The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of March 1 with Judge Karen R. Duncan presiding: Jonelle S. Hill, 40, Mankato, previously appeared and was convicted of felony escape from custody. Hill was sentenced to \$125, 89 days in county jail, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of firearms, and 3 years of supervised probation.

Adam N. Miller, 38, Fairbault, previously appeared and was convicted of felony fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle. Miller was sentenced to \$125 and 17 months in St. Cloud State Prison. Travis T. Stigney, 34, Mankato, previously appeared and was convicted of felony violation of order for protection. The defendant was sentenced to \$125, 30 days in county jail, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, domestic abuse evaluation, no possession of firearms, chemical dependency evaluation, mental health evaluation and 3 years of supervised probation. Chaz A. Strobach, 21, St. Paul, previously appeared and was convicted of felony burglary. He was sentenced to \$817.24, 5 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 3 years of supervised probation. The following

misdeemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of March 1 — 7:

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Juan F. Alejo Ortiz, 23, Austin, revoked license, \$275; Frank J. Beckom-Black, 38, Brooklyn Park, speeding, \$135; Cheryl L. Bellikka, 62, Austin, hands free violation, \$125; Reah L. Boman, 31, Sention, MO, revoked license, \$275; Kevin O. Coats, 25, Calumet City, IL, speeding and suspended license, \$325; Sabrina M. Dostilio, 24, Owatonna, hands free violation and suspended license, \$325; TalRicca C. Enfield, 29, Owatonna, cancelled license, no insurance and prohibited passing, \$525; Shari L. Hughes, 54, Austin, expired tabs, \$105; Faisal A. Khalif, 24, Minneapolis, suspended license, \$275; Sabrina R. McQuinn, 29, Blooming Prairie, domestic assault and disorderly conduct, stay of adjudication, diversion program and 2 years of supervised probation; Joseph D. Meyer, 19, Owatonna, underage possession of alcohol, \$275; chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use and 1 year of supervised probation; Angel J. Mora, 19, Fairbault, speeding, \$115; Stephanie K. Parsons, 18, Grand Meadow, speeding, \$135; Jonathan P. Richards, 47, Monticello, expired tabs, \$105; Ernesto A. Salinas, 38, Austin, revoked license, license plate violation, registration violation, expired tabs and no insurance, \$1,105; Andrea V. Schmitt, 51, Austin, invalid license, \$175; Michael M. Silva, 41, Austin, suspended license, \$275; Carla C. Thomas, 44, Shakopee, revoked license, \$275.

**MN DEPT. OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**
Caressa D. Hubbell, 35, Irving, TX, operate vehicle in prohibited area, \$125.

**MN STATE PATROL
ROCHESTER**

Ahmad H. Abuhaddid, 23, Brooklyn Park, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$145 and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without adjudication; Eric G. Avila, 27, Medford, suspended license, \$275; Carter M. Bornholdt, 19, New Prague, speeding, \$135; Korlu Borsay, 25,

Plymouth, speeding, \$135; Cameron L. Cantwell, 19, Cincinnati, IA, registration violation, \$175; Alayn L. Cox, 26, Des Moines, IA, hands free violation, \$125; Danielle A. Daniels, 34, Cottonwood, AZ, child passenger restraint system violation, \$125; Joel L. David Brown, 20, Milwaukee, WI, speeding, \$135; Amos J. Francis, 27, Champlin, suspended license, \$275; Pastor Garcia, 45, Owatonna, speeding, \$125; Austin M. Harrison, 34, Waseca, speeding, \$215; Omar A. Hasan, 40, Fairbault, speeding, \$135; Dakota R. Haukaas, 20, Owatonna, permit violation, \$125; Jonathan A. Hausen, 20, Fairbault, speeding, \$125; Britney D. Hughes, 34, Fargo, ND, speeding, \$215; Jody A. Johns, 43, Byron, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Shanequa L. Johnson, 25, Chicago, IL, license violation, \$175; Dominique D. Kamara, 27, Fargo, ND, speeding, \$135; Cody A. Kohls, 30, Waterloo, IA, speeding, \$135; Mano M. Lara, 19, Morristown, suspended license and no insurance, \$475; Robert J. Leonard, 35, Austin, revoked license, \$275; Daniel A. Limon, 31, Medford, revoked license, stay of adjudication, \$80 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; William J. Lockman, 17, Lakeville, illegal u-turn, \$125; Brandon M. Lowe, 28, Buffalo, suspended license, \$275; Rigoberto A. Lozano Campos, 26, Conroe, TX, speeding and no license, \$235; Wilfredo Lutton, 37, Los Fresnos, TX, no license, \$175; Joseph J. Madrigal, 57, Albert Lea, failure to yield, \$275 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Kaylee A. Martin, 22, Britt, IA, speeding, \$215; Michael J. McNaughton IV, 25, Duluth, suspended license, \$275; Jimmy J. Mullis, 19, St. Augustine, FL, speeding, \$215; Josie S. Negrete, 22, Des Moines, IA, speeding and no license, \$315; Hunter S. Pender, 20, Claremont, revoked license, \$275; Timmie Reese, 53, Detroit, MI, no license and no insurance, \$375; Kevin M. Reineke, 31, Dundas, spdlng, \$215; Rondal D. Relfford, 59, Austin, revoked license and speeding, \$335; Yamil Ruiz Santiago, 38, Fairbault, DWI, \$375; chemical dependency evaluation and attend MADD impact panel; Laurie B. Smilan, 61, Lake

Worth, FL, speeding, \$135; Amy M. Smith, 48, Dayton, speeding, \$115; Hiser N. Tha, 16, St. Paul, seat belt, \$100; Anoop Thomas, 37, Inver Grove Heights, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$145 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; James M. Tollefson, 44, Cushing, WI, seat belt, \$100; Kelly A. Tyndale, 34, Owatonna, speeding, \$135; John Vang, 30, Circle Pines, speeding, \$115; Frank A. Vigil, 26, Fairbault, speeding and no insurance, \$335; Terry L. Wayman, 62, Hinckley, speeding, \$215; Titus J. Weedman, 40, Glenville, speeding, \$125; Guglund L. Whitlow, 58, Oak Creek, WI, speeding, \$115; Zachary T. Will, 28, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Lashica C. Williams, 29, Lincoln, NE, speeding, \$215; Forest A. Wright, 24, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Alex J. Wroblewski, 30, Ellendale, revoked license, \$275; Yee Yang, 26, Brooklyn Center, possession of paraphernalia, \$125; Rodio A. Zuniga Arambula, 31, Eagle Pass, TX, no license, \$175.

OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mukhtar H. Barajale, 41, Owatonna, improper change of course, \$125; Falconer R. Bellef, 25, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275; Kenneth L. Billings, 33, theft, \$75 and 30 days in county jail; Dennis G. Bisek, 23, Northfield, trespassing and tampering with motor vehicle, \$175 and 7 days in county jail; Jacqueline A. Bolster, 55, Claremont, registration violation, stay of adjudication, 10 hours of community service and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Aliza L. Bruley, 19, Fairbault, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; John R. Bulver, 34, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Felicia M. Burdiga, 24, Medford, no insurance, \$275; Jordan T. Cosgrove, 32, Owatonna, expired registration, \$105; Sandra M. Cruz Nunez, 35, Albert Lea, permit offense, \$175; Bryanna N. Dausey, 28, Fairbault, speeding, \$115; Lauren M. Dexter, 38, New Richmond, no insurance, \$275; Sara E. Egan, 33, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275; TalRicca C. Enfield, 29, Owatonna, cancelled license and no insurance, \$475; Michael A. Fatland, 51, Owatonna, theft, \$145; Michael J. Floyd, 53, open bottle,

\$175; Vincent R. Garr, 38, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Alejandro R. Garza, 21, Fort Worth, TX, speeding, \$215; Skylar A. Guggsberg, 27, Owatonna, domestic assault, \$125 and 8 days in county jail; maintain employment, obtain permission to leave the state, 144 hours of community service and 2 years of supervised probation; Nathaniel E. Hartung, 37, Owatonna, domestic assault, \$125 and 8 days in county jail; Natasha C. Herrin, 26, Owatonna, no insurance, \$335; Mikayla S. Hoyer, 18, Waseca, speeding, \$125; Keith T. Hodd, 31, White Bear Lake, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$145 and 1 year of unsupervised monitoring without adjudication; Shantonia D. Jackson, 32, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Shellya J. Jeanes, 57, Mesa, AZ, no insurance, \$275; Nikayla S. Jones, 31, Lakeville, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Michael S. Krohn, 37, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Michael S. Lehnertz, 35, Fairbault, revoked license, \$75 and 60 days in county jail; Frederick L. Lemkau, 37, Andover, theft, \$75 and 10 days in county jail; Steven R. Luebben, 22, Owatonna, DWI, \$400, 2 days in county jail, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, substance abuse subtle screening inventory and 1 year of supervised probation; Kayla S. Matton, 30, Orlando, FL, speeding and no insurance, \$335; Keith A. Maxon, 24, New Richland, possession of marijuana, stay of adjudication, \$100, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Clara R. Neumann, 18, Owatonna, social host violation, \$175; Carter E. Oltmans, 18, Owatonna, fender violation, \$175; Aleemesh R. Pelrine, 21, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275; Samuel J. Pletsch, 33, Blooming Prairie, speeding and revoked license, \$335; Rebecca A. Rand-Johnson, 37, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$105; Gavin S. Rein, 18, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Travis T. Ripka, 29, Owatonna, suspended

See **BLOTTER** on A11 ►

Blooming Prairie Upcoming Community Education Classes



DEFENSIVE DRIVING

4-Hour Refresher Course
Thursday, March 25, 6-10 p.m.
BP Community Center-
Community Room

\$24

Cash or Check
payable that night

Sign up can be done by emailing
msouthworth@blossoms.k12.mn.us
or calling 507-583-4426

Blooming Prairie Community Education
Michelle Southworth-Community Ed Coordinator

FEDERATED INSURANCE
It's Our Business to Protect Yours®

Visit
federatedinsurance.com
for COVID-19 resources.

A Social Security Perk for Older Parents



Dear Savvy Senior,
I've been told that my two children, ages 14 and 16, may be eligible for Social Security when I file for my retirement benefits. Is this true? What can you tell me?
Viagra Daddy

Dear Viagra,
It's true. If you're age 62 or older and are still raising young children, there's a Social Security benefit strategy that can put some extra money in your family coffers.

Here's how it works. When you file for Social Security retirement benefits, your minor children can get money on your work record equaling half of what you would receive at full retirement age, now gradually rising from 66 to 67. Even if you were to take a smaller benefit by claiming earlier, your kids will still get half of your full-retirement age amount.

To qualify, your daughter – whether she's biological, adopted or a stepdaughter – must be unmarried and under age 18. Kids that are over 18 but still in high school, can collect too until they graduate or turn 19, whichever comes first. (Other rules apply to kids that are disabled.)

But that's not all. Because one of your children is only 14, your wife (if you're married) can collect Social Security benefits on your work record too, and it doesn't matter if she's just 40 years old. The minimum age requirements to collect retirement benefits (62) or survivor benefits (60) does not apply when it comes to collecting benefits as the caregiver of a young child. The spouse's benefit, which is also worth up to half of your benefit, will stop when your daughter turns 16.

But note that there are limits to the amount of money that can be paid to a family. The Social Security "family maximum payment" is determined by a complex formula and can range from 150 to 180 percent of your full retirement benefit amount. If the total exceeds that, each person's benefit, except yours, is cut proportionately until it equals the maximum.

Here's an example of how that's figured. Let's say, for example, that your full retirement age benefit is \$2,400 per month. That

would make your family maximum benefit (according to the Social Security formula at SSA.gov/oact/cola/familymax.html) roughly \$4,200 per month.

Subtract your \$2,400 benefit from the \$4,200 family maximum benefit, which leaves \$1,800.

That's the monthly amount that can be split between your two children – \$900 each. If your wife wants in on it too, the individual checks are smaller, at \$600 a piece, but the family amount is the same.

You should also know that minor children can collect up to half of a disabled parent's Social Security disability benefit. And if the parent dies, they will get a survivor's benefit, which is up to 75 percent of the deceased parent's basic Social Security benefit.

To learn more, see the SSA publication (No. 05-10085) "Benefits for Children" at SSA.gov/pubs/EN-05-10085.pdf.

One Caveat
Social Security benefits for your kids may not be available before full retirement age if you are still working. In 2021, you will lose \$1 in benefits for every \$2 earned over \$18,960, except in the year you reach full retirement age. In that case, the earnings limit is \$50,520, with \$1 in benefits withheld for every \$3 earned over the limit.

If you lose your benefits, your dependents also lose theirs. You can recoup those payments later, but your kids can't.

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

STEELE COUNTY Times

Always local,
all the time.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

HOME OF THE SHINING KNIGHTS

Students of the Week

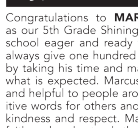
Lucas 6TH GRADE



LUCAS has done a great job in this transition year between elementary school and Junior High. He is very consistent in his work. When it comes to group work, Lucas is a great worker who contributes and encourages others. His writing and comments in class show thoughtfulness and push others to think deeply. Lucas consistently works to improve himself and brings his classmates with him. **Congratulations, Lucas on being a Shining Knight!**

Parents are Chris & Jennifer | Lucas was nominated by Mrs. Berkley

Marcus 5TH GRADE



Congratulations to MARCUS for being selected as our 5th Grade Shining Knight. Marcus comes to school eager and ready to learn everyday. He will always give one hundred percent effort on his work by taking his time and making sure he understands what is expected. Marcus truly chooses to be kind and helpful to people around him. He has only positive words for others and treats his classmates with kindness and respect. Marcus is proud to share his faith and understands that God wants him to use his gifts for good. **Marcus is an exemplary example of a Shining Knight.**

Parents are Brian & Sarah | Marcus was nominated by Mrs. Kasper



730 South Cedar Ave.
Owatonna, MN 56007
507.446-2300
stmarys-owatonna.org

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

History from the News Archives

New home for Gold Cross



Gold Cross Ambulance in Owatonna relocated to a new facility in March 1990. Members of the ambulance crew included, from left: Kevin Kozel, Rick Ellingson, Tom Travaglio, Corey Azure and John Richardson.

10 Years Ago

March 8, 2011

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

Blooming Prairie athletes of the week are: Whitney Burt. She finished her high school career by scoring 11 points against B.A. and leading the rebounders in the sub-section semi-final game: Michael Thomas. He scored 19 points against JWP in the sub-section quarter finals and he was the leading scorer for the Blossoms in the first half of the season.

Tarrie and Bruce Schmoll of Claremont were announced winners in America's Farmers Grow Communities SM program sponsored by the Monsanto Fund. The prize of \$2,500, which gives the farmer an opportunity to give this prize to their favorite non-profit organization. The Schools are the designated Claremont Fire Department to receive the award in Dodge County. The presentation of the award will take place March 9.

20 Years Ago

March 6, 2001

ELSIE SUNGER, EDITOR

Two Blooming Prairie 5th and 6th grade Triathlon Teams competed in the recent Zumbro Education District meet and placed in the top two for their age groups. The top team consisted of Lori Pirk, Marcus Zellmer, Marissa Kittleson, Kate Fogarty, Patrick Rumpza. The following team took second in their age group: Christine Nicholson, Elliot Herdine, Sarah Mans, Chelsie Hansen, Kristin Miller. The teams are coached by Christina Myers. They will advance to the regionals on March 30.

50 Years Ago

March 10, 1971

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

Allan Peterson, president of the First National Bank, Blooming Prairie, was elected to the board of directors of the Steele County Agricultural Society. He will also serve as Blooming Prairie's representative on the Steele County Free Fair board of directors. Peterson is a native of Blooming Prairie and has been active in community affairs and organizations throughout the years. He has worked at the Steele County Free Fair for many years as a youngster and his wide experience will be of value in the operation of the fair.

Mary Sue Pelinka, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Pelinka, has been chosen by the local American Legion

Auxiliary to represent Blooming Prairie at the annual Girl's State Convention in June. She will be one of 480 high school juniors at the week-long get-together to learn first-hand the workings of our government from national down to the local level.

75 Years Ago

March 7, 1946

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

A heavy fire loss was sustained on the S. A. Selstad farm two miles west of town on Tuesday morning. Lost were the barn, about 20 tons of baled hay and straw, a fine saddle horse, 12 Brood sows and around 100 small pigs.

Mrs. Helmer Jacobson, Blooming Prairie's first war bride and seven-month-old son arrived here on Monday from Hansworth Middle, England. Former PFC. Helmer Jacobson, a veteran of four years of service in the Quartermaster corp, was on hand to greet his wife and son in a very happy reunion.

Owatonna Photo News

31 Years Ago

March 8, 1990

TOM SHEA, PUBLISHER

Gold Cross Ambulance recently moved its office 114 E Pearl St. in downtown Owatonna. This central location allows Gold Cross to provide faster response time for service. The garage can hold up to 12 vehicles and currently houses three advanced life-support ambulances, two Wheelie Vans and one staff car. Crew quarters are located upstairs and new space will be added in the coming months. They also use the facility to store extra vehicles for Rochester and Mankato. Gold Cross employs five full time registered paramedics and one medical technician.

Wilson School's sixth Caught You Being Good Assembly was held on March 1. The following students have been awarded prizes for exceptional behavior during the month of February. They are: Kindergarten – Mike Pennell, Travis Ladwick, Jon Ebling, Ryan Warner, Ryan Draheim; 1st grade – Maria Wilkers, Randy Underland, Shelly Steinberg, Shawn Quaintance; 2nd grade – Amanda Willing, Mark McShane, Jessie Wanberg, Tonya Reese; 3rd grade – Garrett Padilla, Terri Nelson, Andrew Mueller, Luke Ebling; 4th grad – Erick Hoberg, Charlie Jarvi, Jacob Wagner, Dane Gilliland; 5th grade – Lisa Shay, Mike Arnold, Erica Ross, Krista Bird; 6th grade – Brooke Reese, Andy Hoffman, Briget Puttbrease.

New Hwy. 14 on target for fall opening

NEW HWY. 14 from A1 officials said. Fifty new drainage culverts crossing the new roadway will be constructed along with eight stormwater ponds.

A unique feature for Minnesota roadways was the construction of a dedicated deer crossing passage. The location known to be within the deer migratory pattern was identified with the help of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

MnDOT designed an enlarged drained structure for the location to accommodate the deer crossing and reduce the likelihood

of vehicle-deer crashes. Although such structures have been used in other states, it is the first one in Minnesota. It was realistic, MnDOT engineers said, because the new alignment is a new roadbed.

When work begins again this spring, bridges on Dodge County Road 3 and Steele County Road 16 will be completed and the interchange at Highway 56 and Dodge County Road 5 will be constructed. The remainder of the 12.5-mile route will also be paved.

Even though the new roadway will be open

for traffic, there will still be work that will need to be completed in the 2022 construction season.

Currently, Steele County Road 16 is closed north of SE 38th Street at the current Hwy. 14. Traffic is being detoured to Dodge County Road 1 and current Hwy. 14.

Dodge County Road 3 is closed at Front Street in Claremont and traffic detoured along the new 830th Street to Dodge County Road 1 and the current Hwy. 14.

These closures are expected to last through the spring.

STEELE-DODGE BUSINESS

New cookie business blossoms in Blooming Prairie

BY ALEX NUEHRING
STAFF WRITER

Amy Chladek loves baking all kinds of sweets.

For the past two years, she's donated three dozen cookies a month to support a local cause. The first year, her monthly supply of cookies went for \$110 in a silent auction; and the next year at the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group's live auction, it went for \$375.

"I really enjoyed baking (drop) cookies once we started doing them each month," Chladek said.

Given her passion for baking and the number of people who've asked to purchase the cookies, Chladek said she registered as a cottage food producer through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and recently applied for a conditional use permit from the City of Blooming Prairie. Once approved by the city council, Amy Chladek's cookie business, Chladek Cookies, can start taking orders. She's selling chocolate chip, triple choc-

olate, butterscotch, sugar, confetti sugar, oatmeal raisin and peanut butter cookies for \$13 per dozen. She also offers M&M, cookies and cream, pistachio almond and white chocolate macadamia nut cookies for \$14 per dozen and monster cookies for \$15 per dozen.

Chladek said she's had lots of interest in her cookies with most people wanting to order the monster cookies.

"There's been a lot of excitement about it. My friends and co-workers are excited to see me actually do it," she said.

She's also excited to do it, but with two kids, she usually does all her baking when her kids are sleeping.

"It's just my 'me time.' For me, it's a calming thing to do and fun to come up with different recipes and see what people think about them. It's always fun to hear what people say," she said.

While she enjoys baking, Chladek said that she's not leaving her day job. She'll still work at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester four days a week.



As a registered cottage food producer, Amy Chladek makes and sells drop cookies out of her home in Blooming Prairie. SUBMITTED PHOTO

"It's a very side job for me," she said. "I'm just getting started." For now, Chladek said the minimum order for each cookie type

is one dozen. Customers will come to her house to pick them up.

Customers ordering one to six dozen cookies are asked to order four

to five days in advance. Those wanting more than six dozen cookies are asked to order a week in advance.

Chladek said the best

way to place an order is by messaging her via the Chladek Cookies Facebook page, and she'll respond as soon as she can.

Area bank provides financial literacy resources

United Prairie Bank is making financial literacy education available to more than 2,280 students and residents in Steele and several other counties in southern Minnesota.

Students at 23 schools now have free access to Banzai, an award-winning online program and content library that allows users to practice real-world finance from the safety of their home or classroom using any internet-enabled device.

Through the Banzai online courses, students try to manage a budget, save for a goal and deal with unexpected financial pitfalls. Teachers can easily monitor and grade student progress remotely. Other resources, including articles, calculators, and personalized coach sessions, explain everything from the basics of filing your taxes to how health insurance works. These resources are available at unitedprairiebank.com or call 888-8-BANZAI.

"Thanks to United Prairie Bank, area students will now have access to a wide array of courses and resources designed to help prepare them for our increasingly complex world," says Morgan Vandagriff,

co-founder of Banzai. "We wouldn't be able to provide these tools without their support."

For two years, United Prairie Bank has worked with Banzai to build financial literacy in Minnesota by investing time, money, industry experience, and various bank resources.

Banzai resources are used by more than 72,000 teachers across the U.S. These educational tools align with Minnesota's state curriculum requirements, making the program a fun way for students to gain vital skills and an ideal way for anyone in the community to increase their financial literacy. After finishing the Banzai courses, users will know how to track where their money is and what it's for, recognize financial trade-offs, and plan for a financially sound future.

Teachers interested in using Banzai can visit unitedprairiebank.com or call 888-8-BANZAI. For more information about Banzai, visit teachbanzai.com.

United Prairie Bank has branches in Owatonna and Waseca, among many others throughout southern Minnesota.

BP rebate program offers opportunity to save energy, money

BY ALEX NUEHRING
STAFF WRITER

Metal Services recently received \$430 rebate from the Blooming Prairie Public Utilities for making several energy conservation investments at the company's Blooming Prairie facility over the past few years.

Since 2013, Metal Services has received rebates totaling more than \$11,000 for its energy efficiency efforts. In 2020, the firm completed a compressed air system leak audit which is estimated to save them more than \$1,600 annually. They also took advantage of Blooming Prairie Public Utilities' air conditioning system tune-up rebate to ensure efficient operation of their system during the summer months.

Blooming Prairie Public Utilities' (BPPU) rebate program is available to Blooming Prairie homeowners, as well.

The utility's General Manager Jerry Mausbach said the program reimburses customers who switch to more energy-efficient lightbulbs, heating and cooling systems, air compressor systems,



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Last year, Metal Services in Blooming Prairie completed a compressed air system leak audit which is estimated to save them more than \$1,600 annually. The firm also took advantage of Blooming Prairie Public Utilities' air conditioning system tune-up rebate to ensure efficient operation of their system during the summer months. Those projects resulted in a total rebate of \$430. Pictured from left to right: Operations Manager Jim Miller, Energy Services Representative Brian Hammarsten, and Blooming Prairie Public Utilities General Manager Jerry Mausbach.

windows, furnaces, dishwashers and refrigerators, dehumidifiers and humidifiers. "Basically, any kind of appliance that you can get that has an ENERGY STAR rating," he said.

After the new appliances are installed and the rebate application is filled out and submitted to BPPU, he said the rebate check usually gets to the homeowners

or business owners within a few weeks.

There are multiple benefits to choosing energy-efficient appliances, according to Mausbach.

"There's the financial incentive because you're improving your efficiency, and there's also benefits to the environment because there are less pollutants," Mausbach said. He encourages families throughout the Blooming Prairie area to look at the rebate program and see if it's a good fit for their needs.

If it is a good fit for their needs, he urges them to take advantage of it.

The rebate is available to homeowners and business owners through the state's

Conservation Improvement Program (CIP).

He said how much money the homeowners and business owners get back via the rebate depends on how many energy-efficient changes they make to their home or business.

"I'd have to know exactly what they're putting in [to know how much they'd get back], but you could easily shave 5 to 8% off your energy usage if you went from incandescent bulbs to LEDs," he said.

Mausbach said homeowners and business owners could also save energy and qualify for rebates by pressurizing their home or business to look for areas where heat can leak out. They can also conduct an infrared survey of their home or business to see if they have insulation issues and check their windows.

"One of the biggest places where people lose heat is through windows and doorways," he said. "The other big thing they can do is put in higher efficiency furnaces."

There is also a low-income program available through South East Minnesota Citizens Action Council (Semcac), the Community Action Partnership Agency for Blooming Prairie. "You can apply, and [if you're eligible] they will basically give you a grant to purchase a piece of [ENERGY STAR qualified] equipment," Mausbach said.

See REBATE on A7 ▶

ASE
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

misgen auto parts
Full-service & self-service automotive recycler
Late model cars & trucks

12880 SW 72nd Ave.,
Ellendale, MN 58026
800-558-4902
507-694-2110
www.misgen.com

misgen auto parts
since 1972

m2 misgen auto parts
classic parts

80658 120th St. | Glenville, MN 56036
507-448-7111 (by appointment)

COLES 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

Local grocery store and restaurant brings international ingredients to area residents

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Owatonna Grocery & Gourmet is one of the more unique stores in the community and offers residents a chance to try international ingredients.

The store, which first opened in January of last year, has an adjacent restaurant that is currently closed due to COVID-19, with plans to reopen when the time is right. "I just think it's too premature right now," Abdulkadir Abdulle, owner of the store, said. "When everyone gets the vaccine, we'll open it back up."

Although they still do personal take-out orders, right now the main draw is the grocery store which contains ingredients from the Middle East and Africa, among and other international locales. "It's all international food, you know food from Africa or the Middle East or Europe," Abdulle said.

Abdulle moved to the United States when he was 9 years old and previously worked as an EMT before working at Viracon and jumped at the chance to start his own business.

"I work seven days a week, so it isn't always easy," he said with a



Owatonna Grocery & Gourmet owner Abdulkadir Abdulle, center, stands in front of his grocery store with two regulars who lend a hand in the operations: Hanad Hayle, left, and Khadir Ismail, right.

smile. "But it's nice being your own boss." "I just felt that it was needed, you know, so I opened it," he said, adding that the grocery store and restaurant cater to the area's Somali residences with ingredients and food they remember from back home.

With the ability to bring ingredients that otherwise would prove challenging to find for residents, Abdulle said he is happy to share

some of his culture with others. "My favorite part is just helping people, and now they don't have to go to Minneapolis or Faribault to get what we sell," he said.

"Everything here is international, it's not something they can just go to Walmart and get," Abdulle said. "I offer something different you know, stuff like goat, or lamb, or camel meat."

To get such rare ingredients, Abdulle said he goes through

a company in St. Paul specializing in Middle Eastern and African food. "They actually get all their stuff from Australia, especially the meat," he said.

Abdulle said he owns the grocery store and restaurant with his family, including a wife and young daughter who are still in Somalia waiting to come over. "They're not here yet, but I'm hoping they can come over," he said. According to Abdulle, it's a

long process getting his family over here, one which was hampered by the previous administration's Muslim ban.

"It's nice that we have a very supportive community," Abdulle said of the strong base of customers the store has. Still, he's looking to build on that base by expanding to those who may want to try international cuisine. "Everybody comes here, it's not just Somali right now."

Some of the most popular items include international varieties of tea and rice. "What most people like is the Somali tea, the tea's pretty good," Abdulle said. The restaurant sells food as wide-ranging as Philly cheesesteaks, gyros, and traditional Somali dishes like sambusa, which is meat cooked inside triangular pastries.

"This is something you can't get at a fast-food place," Abdulle said. "McDonald's could open a restaurant on the corner, and everybody would wait in line. But when you're new and you have no history, it's hard; plus, with COVID, it's all about patience."

"We have something different, and if you want to try out something tasty and something new, come on through," he said.

The community itself has been receptive to his efforts and several of his regular customers and friends often come by to help out. "It's good to have this here," said Hanad Hayle, a regular who helps out.

For those looking to stop by and check out some of the food and ingredients, Owatonna Grocery & Gourmet is located on West Broadway in downtown Owatonna.

Coffee businesses look to thrive in crowded marketplace

BY MITCHELL BREUER
STAFF WRITER

The coffee business got a little more competitive in Owatonna the past year with the opening of a third Starbucks location and a drive-thru only Caribou Coffee.

In addition to chain operations, Central Park Coffee Co. is located in downtown Owatonna and is owned and operated by Owatonna native Char Esch.

Esch said she does not believe the chain operations impact the support she gets from local community members.

"I believe that our community wants to support locally owned businesses," said Esch, adding that the locally owned businesses and the individuals who own them support the community in return. She also said Central Park Coffee Co. offers an experience unlike the one you would get at her competitors.

"We are locally and woman owned, and we strive to make each



Central Park Coffee, one of many coffee shops in Owatonna, is located on North Cedar Avenue.

customer's experience pleasant and tailored to them," Esch said. "People who frequent our coffee shop are looking for different experiences, ranging from a group of people hanging out together, to someone looking for a cozy area to read or use the internet, to a business that needs a catered lunch for a meeting."

This allows Esch and her employees to develop a relationship with their customers,

said Esch, adding that she knows many of her patrons by name.

Beyond the coffee and friendly service, employee Chloe Beaty said customers are also drawn to the freshly made pastry selections and wide breakfast selection.

The most recent Starbucks to open in Owatonna is located inside of Hy-Vee and views itself as a convenience compared to other locations, said Lanie Schuster, one of

its supervisors.

"I think it is a good way for people to have a cup of coffee," Schuster said.

Caribou Manager Maggie Johnson said she thinks that the number of coffee shops does not affect business for anybody.

"I think we strive greatly with Owatonna, and I think that it is probably comparable to the other coffee shops," Johnson said. "I think it is a competitive market."

Ranslow Joins RE/MAX Venture

Matt Gillard, broker/owner of RE/MAX Venture, is pleased to announce Jason Ranslow as the newest agent to join the Owatonna office.

"I have had an interest in real estate for a long time — throughout my own experiences with buying and selling homes, and also remodeling," said Ranslow. "My 20 years of sales and customer service experience gives me a great foundation on which to build my real estate relationships. I offer professionalism, integrity and exceptional service to create the best possible experience for my clients."

Ranslow also said, "I appreciate the flexibility that a career in real estate provides, allowing me to balance my dedication and attention



Jason Ranslow

to clients with involvement in my children's activities."

He also said RE/MAX Venture has a great reputation of supporting community causes and he looks forward to joining them in their community involvement. "Jason is a very creative person and out-of-the-box thinker," said Gillard. "I know he will bring great new ideas and perspectives to our office. I am also very pleased that he shares our enthusiasm for 'giving back' in our community."

RE/MAX Venture is located at 116 N. Cedar Ave. in Owatonna and serves the surrounding areas, specializing in residential, small acreage, investment and commercial properties.

BP rebate program

◀ REBATE from A6

If Blooming Prairie residents have additional questions, they can reach the BPPU office at (507) 583-6683 from 7:30

a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. There is no deadline for submitting a rebate application.

BIGELOW HOMES
Tradition. Excellence.

Office: 507-529-1161
www.bigelowhomes.net

NFG
National Fleet Graphics

LOGO DESIGN • SIGNS • BANNERS
APPAREL • FLYERS • CUSTOM GRAPHICS

VEHICLE WRAPS

www.nationalfleetgraphics.com
507.374.7069 | 318 South Street • Dodge Center, MN 55927

On-site COMPUTERS Inc.
Sales • Service • Networking

- Network Design & Installation
- Business Continuity Planning
- Email & Spam Protection
- Hosted Solutions
- Cloud Services
- Virtualization

Get the most out of your business IT with tailor-made technology solutions from On-Site Computers.

www.onsitecomputers.com
Kasson Mini Mall 13 West Main St. Kasson, MN 56234



OWATONNA PROUD

A8 | WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 2021

OWATONNA SCHOOLS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

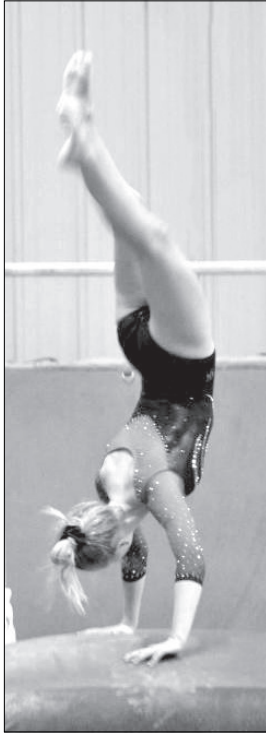


PHOTO BY OHS MAGNET
Huskies senior Lucy Macius flips through the gymnastics season by doing a mid vault.

Flipping through the season

BY PAYTON BEYER
OHS MAGNET WRITER

The OHS Gymnastics Team has started out with a very successful season. The team has a record of 5-0, capitalizing on their most recent match of the season to Northfield. Though the team endured a tough start, they have been coming through in every meet.

They were late to join the win category due to COVID-19 related issues. After the slow start they picked things up right away competing for the rest of the year two times a week. Head coach Evan Moe said, "We've been calling on our rookies and younger athletes to step up into varsity spots regularly as we have kids going down due to injury." With the season being shorter and more condensed, injuries can be a big issue.

Another challenge many sports have been facing this year is wearing a mask or remaining socially distanced, though the gymnastics team does not have to wear masks while practicing and competing. The main struggle for them is staying aware and keeping their distance during practice

es or any meet. They have definitely been more cautious than other sports teams hoping to keep the season going and not going back into the shutdown they had to start the season.

This year's seniors have been through it all, for the gymnastics seniors, Lindsay Bangs, and Lucy Macius, they have been a positive influence on the team. Moe said, "Their willingness to be leaders. They grew up with great student mentors and have stepped into that role now as senior captains and are showing the young kids how to navigate a season." This year's seniors have tried their best to be positive, leading others during the pandemic. Bangs said, "It has been a little different than most years but glad we are still able to have a season."

Bangs has high but reachable expectations for this year's team. Bangs said, "Our goal is to win Sections and go to State! Just trying to stay positive and take each day as it comes." The team has had a very strong start to the season and is pushing for big things in the future.

'Kids are just so much more fun than adults'

This is Jennifer Bricko's 19th year teaching, all with the Owatonna Public Schools as a Montessori teacher!

She has been married to her husband, Ben, for 18 years. They have three kids and live in the country outside of Faribault.

For fun, Bricko loves to read, collect antiques and do puzzles.

Fun facts: She also has a Spanish degree and she studied in Spain during college. She recently received

her STEM certificate from St. Kate's and really enjoys all things science. She was very grateful to receive a grant from Bosch to pay for most of her tuition. Bricko said that she loves working at Owatonna because she loves working with kids and "kids are just so much more fun than adults! Seeing the world through my students' eyes makes me appreciate the beauty and wonder of our world. I love how they are always curious."



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Jennifer Bricko is a Montessori EL teacher for first and second grades in the Owatonna Schools. She is shown with her three children.

Searching for nature



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Young scientists head outdoors to look for signs of animal habitats in the McKinley nature center.

Owatonna Students of the Week

Elementary



Liliannah Gollaher
Second Grade
Parents: Matthew and Samantha Gollaher
Liliannah always comes to class ready and eager to learn. Her great attitude, energy and imagination positively impacts our classroom environment. She continues to be willing to help her peers, as well as adults in the classroom, and she does so in a kind and polite way.



Logan Wilker
Fifth Grade
Parents: Kristina Flores and Jesse Wilker
Logan comes to school each day with a strong desire to learn. Math is a strong area of passion where each day he finds joy in the relationships between patterns, numbers, and their complex relationships. He is genuine, kind, intelligent, and ready to perform at his best every day.

High School



Keelee Rathbun
Sophomore
Parents: Perry & Monique Rathbun
Keelee works hard in school everyday and goes above & beyond what is expected of her. She is a leader at the ALC and is highly respected by students and staff. Her infectious smile brightens everyone's day and we are incredibly proud of her accomplishments! Way to go, Keelee!



Keaton Sevenack
Junior
Parents: Jeremy and Tammy Winch
Keaton has been achieving at a high level at OHS. He is always prepared for class by keeping up-to-date with online assignments. He has adapted well to the distance and hybrid learning structures and is a model of responsibility. We appreciate your approach to your classwork, Keaton!



Glen

Mike

Scott

PROUDLY SERVING STEELE COUNTY
Brick-Meger Funeral Home & Medford Funeral Home

megercare.com | 507.451.1457



On The Farm
CLAIRE LACANNE

This warm weather has me itching to get outside and tend to my yard and gardens. I have a rain garden, which I have augmented with several species of flowering plants for pollinator insects. I love seeing the bees, butterflies – and the occasional hummingbird – enjoy the bee balm (*Monarda* species), Cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), Blazing stars (*Liatris* species) and several other beautiful native flowers out there. Many of the native flowering plants in my yard have come from local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs).

The Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Rice and Steele County both put on annual native plant sales with several native plant species, including pollinator mixes, wildlife mixes, and rain garden mixes. The plant sales are open now for 2021.

The Rice County Soil and Water Conservation District's native plant flats contain 48 plants of 12 different species, and typically arrive in mid-June. They currently offer three different seedling kits – a pollinator booster kit, a butterfly kit, and a rain garden kit. Kits are \$80 a piece, plus tax. Visit the Rice County SWCD online store at www.riceswcdonlinestore.com to view the selection of native plants and place your order from home.

Plant sales in Steele and Rice counties



This is a flat of native plants from the Rice County Soil and Water Conservation District.

A paper order form may also be downloaded from the website and mailed or delivered to the office. If you would like to receive a paper copy through the mail, contact the Rice County SWCD office at 507-332-5408. The deadline for orders is April 30.

The Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District offers four different kits of plant seedlings. There is a pollinator kit, a monarch kit, and a songbird kit. Each plant kit consists of a flat of 36 seedlings and costs \$55, plus tax. They also offer seed mixes – a monarch seed mix, a pollinator seed mix, and a Savanna seed mix (which is great for part-sun woodland edges). The seed mixes each cover 100 square feet and cost \$20 a piece, plus tax. Visit www.steeleswcd.org/tree-program-1 to view the selection of plants in each kit and to access the order form. The order deadline is May 7 and plant pickup is usually in early June. If you have questions or if you'd prefer to order

over the phone, you can contact the Steele County SWCD office at 507-451-6730 ext. 3.

The Soil and Water Conservation Districts are a great place to source your plants. For ideas on other native plants to incorporate into your landscape, University of Minnesota Extension has several resources. The web page: z.umn.edu/FindNativePlants has several resources to get you started on selecting and growing native plants in your yard or garden. If you are looking specifically for information regarding pollinator-friendly gardening, check out this web page: z.umn.edu/PollinatorLandscapes. The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources also provides guidance on creating pollinator-friendly yards. They have several habitat guides and various resources on their web page: bwsr.state.mn.us/practices/pollinator/index.html.

Claire LaCanne
is the agricultural

extension educator for the University of Minnesota for Steele and Rice counties. Her column appears in this newspaper regularly.

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 BOB LOCK
OF KOHLER

Loken Excavation & Drainage

YOUR DRAINAGE PROJECT PARTNER

WE CAN HELP YOU WITH:
Aggregate Products • Waterway Cleaning
All Excavation Projects • Hauling & Septic

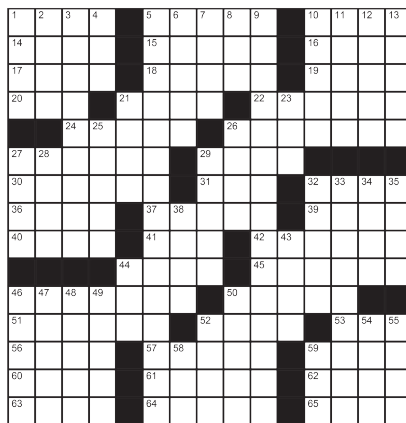
Call DALLAS for your DRAINAGE needs!

507-451-2873

LOKEN
Excavation & Drainage Inc.

3695 Hoffman Drive NW • Owatonna
loken@qwestoffice.net | Toll-free 855-298-2568

CROSSWORD PUZZLE OF THE WEEK



ACROSS

- 1 Scorch
- 5 Constructor
- 10 Antarctic sea
- 14 Trusted assistant
- 15 Handy
- 16 Very dark
- 17 Please answer
- 18 Civil wrongs
- 19 On-screen Bean
- 20 Tire inflation measure
- 21 Close
- 22 Ready to entertain
- 24 Brace
- 26 Circumspect
- 27 Closer
- 29 Prickly seed vessel
- 30 Musical collections
- 31 Type of lamp
- 32 Campus house, maybe
- 36 Troubles
- 37 Inordinate
- 39 Make over
- 40 Sediment
- 41 Short dog with a flat muzzle
- 42 Taken in
- 44 Surrender
- 45 Not alee

- 46 Close to the coast
- 50 Held fast
- 51 People found in the Horn of Africa
- 52 Puts on
- 53 Global currency body
- 56 Fine
- 57 Yellow-green color
- 59 Hard up
- 60 Sack
- 61 Enthuses wildly
- 62 Toothpaste container
- 63 Minnesota ---, pool player
- 64 Moves back and forth
- 65 Aide (Abbr.)

DOWN

- 1 Complain
- 2 Convicted spy Alger ---
- 3 Recommended
- 4 Agent
- 5 Convent heads
- 6 Entangled
- 7 "Slaughterhouse Five" author --- Vonnegut
- 8 Time in Boston
- 9 Ability
- 10 Vertical pipe
- 11 Upright
- 12 Edible ray
- 13 Ecclesiastical council
- 21 Appear
- 23 Average golf score
- 25 Tie up
- 26 Recognized leader
- 27 Pin down
- 28 Fashion magazine
- 29 Emblem
- 32 Scool
- 33 Spiritual
- 34 Yemeni port
- 35 Sweeney ---
- 38 Uncovered
- 43 Literary work
- 44 Mountain pass
- 46 Has gone
- 47 Cell maker
- 48 Well turned out
- 49 Ira ---, Iwo Jima flagraiser
- 50 Small flock
- 52 Prima donna
- 54 Rabbits
- 55 Abrade
- 58 Statute
- 59 Harper Valley org.

Deadline extended for water testing reimbursement

Minnesota producer farmers have until March 19 to apply for cost reimbursement associated with water testing for generic *E. coli*. Under a new Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) mini-grant program, farmers who paid for generic *E. coli* water testing between Sept. 30, 2017 and Dec. 31, 2020 may be eligible for up to \$400 to cover these expenses.

Farmers must have sold a minimum annual average of

\$5,000 in produce that is covered by the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule. Crops covered by the rule include any produce crop that is not listed on the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)'s list of Rarely Consumed Raw Crops.

Applications for the pilot mini-grant program are available on the MDA website and will be accepted through Friday, March 19, at 11:59 p.m. Additional information

about the eligibility criteria, including the list of Rarely Consumed Raw Crops, and application process can be found on the website.

A future, full-scale mini-grant program will provide financial support for water testing and on-farm food safety for expenses dating after September 30, 2020. This grant program will be offered in January 2022. More information will be available following the pilot program.

Hayfield woman inducted into state FFA Hall of Fame

The Minnesota FFA Alumni Association inducted Donna Moening, of Hayfield into the Minnesota FFA Hall of Fame Class of 2021. She was one of nine inductees to join the 213 members that have been inducted into the Minnesota FFA Hall of

Fame the past 17 years, including the 75 inaugural members in 2004.

The FFA Hall of Fame is a collaborative effort between the Minnesota FFA Association, Alumni and Foundation.

The 2021 Hall of Fame Inductees are typically recognized during the

Minnesota FFA State Convention. The scope of the virtual State Convention this year is still very fluid, and we do not yet know in what form Hall of Fame recognition will take place, but we will keep you informed as the planning progresses.

Turkey hunting licenses on sale now

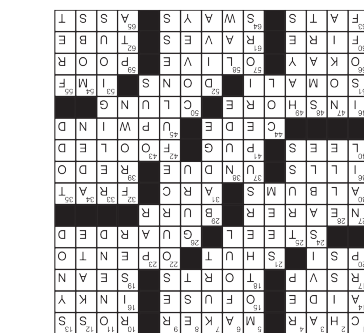
Turkey hunters can now buy their licenses for the spring 2021 season. Licenses may be purchased online, by telephone at 888-665-4236 or in person wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold. Hunters can hunt statewide and buy licenses for any time period (A-F) over the counter.

For research purposes, license agents will be asking hunters

which permit area they plan to hunt, so hunters should be prepared to provide this information when buying their license. The information helps the DNR manage the state's turkey population. Importantly, hunters who identify their permit area when buying their license are not restricted to hunting in only that area.

Season dates and

hunt rules can be found on the DNR's turkey hunting page. Permits to hunt the popular Carle Avery, Mille Lacs and White-water wildlife management areas in the A-C time periods were distributed already by lottery only for firearms hunters 18 and older. The lottery application deadline was Feb. 12 and results are available on the turkey hunting page.



FOR SALE

Jennifer Walsh
REAL ESTATE

Powered by **KW** PREMIER REALTY

Jennifer Walsh

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



As + Bs = Smart Panthers!

Great job!

Congratulations to the following students for achieving second quarter honor roll at NRHEG School:



A Honor Roll

Grade 6

Finnegan Baumann
Izley Boerner
Jada Braund
Clara Buendorf
Addison Buenger
Caleb Burgess
Savannah Farr
Brooks Gilliland
Keira Hutchens
Paige Johnson
Caralee Koopal
John Lynne
Ryan Schlaak

Grade 7

Holly Bartness
Meela Budach
Hudson Chrz
Kaitlyn Dobberstein
Kyera Eustice
Jozie Klimmek
Wyatt Larson
Gavin Lewison
Alexis Loken
Winter Pederson
Chloe Riewer
Adalyn Stadheim
Tatum Thibodeau
Abigail Viktora
Kayden Warke
Owen Wayne

Grade 8

Violet Aronson
Hannah Brunson
Alden Dobberstein
Eden Eads
Katelyn Grinnen
Benjamin Hagen
Jase Knudson
Brady Koopal
Bo McCamish
Sierra Misgen
Tayla Sandry
Logan Schiell
Aidan Schlaak
Talon Smith Vulcan
Anju Stafford

Grace Starman
Aspyn Stenzel
Rielly Weitzel
Olivia Wenci

Grade 9

Grace Borchert
Kia Buendorf
Payton Bunn
Julia Churchill
Keira Lenort
Addison Loken
Kiyah Mikesell
McKenzie Mueller
Madison Murray
Erin Peterson
Annabelle Petsinger
George Roesler
Tayler Schmidt
Hallie Schultz
Brenna Sommer
Isabel Stadheim
Gracie Williams

Grade 10

Faith Borchert
Alexus Chambers
Aidan Deyle
Anton Domeier
Raquel Fischer
Sarah George
Bailey Ihrke
Bree Ihrke
Erin Jacobson
Shelby Johnston
Olivia Kofstad
Conner Nelson
Sidney Schultz
Mayla Soulsak
Brooklyn Strand
Ethan Thompson
Eva Wayne
Neela Wenci
Ashley Wobschall

Grade 11

Alex Dobberstein
Severin Eads
Elsabet Gushwa
Cora Harpel
Jordan Horejsi
Rhys Horton

Matthew Mueller
Cameron Nicholson
Ethan Peters
Anna Peterson
Clay Stenzel
Sophie Stork
Journey Utpadel

Grade 12

Luisa Gaona Quezada
Brody Johnson
Kendall Johnson
Madison Knudson
Katie Lee
Dylan Loken
Cassidy Martin
Daniel Nydegger
Charles Pittman
Jonah Stafford
Nicklas Staloch
Carter Stencil
Lorelei Strom
Courtney Techau
Grace Tufte

B Honor Roll

Grade 6

Hazel Botten
Abigail Cosgrove
Alexander Deen
Orianna Degen
Shan Hansen
Bryanna Ingvaldson
Chase Johannsen
Shayna Kress
Tyler Kress
Anika Ladlie

Grade 7

Evan Berg
Madison Bogue
Kalia Calderon Medrano
Caden Christopher
Corbin DeLacruz
Hailey Deniz-Clark
Adrianna Gutierrez-Chesley
Kaleb Hughes
Olivia Johnson
Jacklynn Kress
Sawyer Mickelson

Hope Mikesell
Ezekiel Morrison
Deven Parpart
Gabrielle Schlaak
Trevor Selover
Emma Yokiel

Grade 8

Andrew Broitzman
Ava Cummins
Aaden Hanna
Cole Hutchens
Lia Johannsen
Jozlyn Johnson
Lainee Krohn
Lukas Loverink
Carter Martens
Megan Miller
Gracie Morgan
Jay Muilenburg
Mayson Patten
Carmine Raab
Cohen Riewer
Greyson Schaefer
Mallory Schlinger
Willia Seltun
Seth Staloch
Georgia Zimprich

Grade 9

Ned Bell
Anna Blatti
Gavin Briggs
Parker Bunn
Jackson Chrz
Peyton Curtis
Danny Deniz-Clark
Graden Karl
Levin Kitzler
Jordis Kruger-Diaz
Preslie Nielsen
Elijah Nussbaum
Evelyn Nydegger
Clay Routh
Reese Routh
William Tuttle
Malonna Wilson

Grade 10

Evan Beckmann
Avyana Boyd
Maverik Bueltel

Natalie Butler
Jaylee Christopher
Rozlynn Duncan
Wyatt Groskreutz
Treyvin Johannsen
Jackson Lageson
Taya Lembke
Makota Misgen
Malu Monreal
Vada Nelson
Valerie Nelson
Andrew Phillips
Sawyer Prigge
Cody Reistad
Josie Strom
Teagan Sutter
Will Utpadel
Grace Wilkenson
Katelyn Zimmerman

Grade 11

Jaxon Beck
Hunter Bogue
Bo Budach
Madison Johannsen
Dakota Ketterling-Korrmann
Austin King
Trevor Lenort
Lex Lewison
Porter Peterson
Kayedence Quillen
Ralph Roesler
Nathan Vanek

Grade 12

Gavin Anderson
Morgan Besser
Bridgette Blowers
Zachary Hagen
Branden Howieson
Sarah Johns
Ashton Johnson
Josh Martin
John Grayson McGinnis
Christopher O'Brien
Brianna Purdie
Coddie Roberts
Kordell Schlaak
Jenika Tonkin

This message sponsored by these Panther boosters:

LERBERG'S FOODS

SINCE 1901

Monday - Saturday
8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



507.684.2472
120 5th Ave.
Ellendale, MN

NEW RICHLAND
CARE CENTER



**Congrats
Students!**

507-465-3292
312 1st St NE • PO Box 477
New Richland

First Impressions by Kim



129 Broadway
New Richland

507.463.0800

RJ's 5TH AVE. BAR & GRILL

WEEKLY FOOD & DRINK SPECIALS

Congratulations!

507.684.9422
Ellendale

*Congrats
Honor Students*

**Agri Finance
Group**

a division of



101 Central Ave S, Geneva, MN
FDIC 507.256.7235



120 S Broadway, New Richland
507-463-2717
Hours: Mon.-Sat. 8 AM - 8 PM
Sun. - 9 AM - 5 PM

Congrats Honor Students!

View our weekly ad at:

www.newrichlandgrocery.com

Grocery selection including
fresh meat and produce

Recipe Corner

29-DAY SALAD

1 box Rotini pasta, cooked and cooled
1 jar black olives, sliced
1 jar green olives, sliced
1/2 pkg carrots, sliced or chopped
1/2 bunch broccoli, chopped
1 bottle Italian dressing

Cook the pasta according to directions on the package. Cool pasta and mix together with vegetables. Add dressing just prior to serving.

Sponsored by

STEELE COUNTY Times

Edward Jones

MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Resilience is key to meeting financial goals

You can demonstrate this resilience by answering these questions: What is your specific goal? What obstacle do you face in achieving this goal? How can you overcome this obstacle?

Here are some examples of how this resiliency process works:

• Goal: Building sufficient retirement funds

To build sufficient retirement income, you need to invest in the financial markets through your 401(k), IRA and other accounts. But how should you respond when these markets go through periods of volatility? Your best defense is to remain invested. If you were to jump out of the market every time it dropped, you'd probably miss out on the rebounds that followed. Also, over a period of decades, the effects of short-term market fluctuations tend to diminish, so while the results of any particular day or week may not look good on your investment statement, the importance of these results may diminish in 10 or 20 years.

• Goal: Maintaining steady cash flow

Keeping a steady cash flow is essential to meeting your daily and monthly expenses. So, it's obviously important that you maintain sufficient earned income. But what happens if you encounter a serious illness or injury that keeps you from work for an extended period? Depending on the length of time you're not working, you could feel a real financial pinch, so you may want to consider some type of disability insurance. Your employer may offer a short-term policy as an employee benefit, but it might not be sufficient, so you may need to look at private coverage.

• Goal: Keeping retirement accounts intact

Ideally, you'd like to leave your IRA, 401(k) and other accounts intact until you need to start tapping into them when you retire. But what if you face an unexpectedly large medical bill or you need to replace your furnace or get a new car? If you don't have the money readily available, you might be forced to dip into your IRA and 401(k), incurring taxes and potential penalties and leaving yourself fewer resources for retirement. You can help avoid this setback by creating an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account.

• Goal: Having confidence in your strategy

To achieve your important financial goals, you need a strategy – and you need to believe in it strongly enough to keep following it during all types of stress on the financial markets. It's not always easy to maintain this conviction – less than half of Americans are confident in their abilities to recover quickly from difficult financial situations, according to a new survey from Edward Jones. One way to help gain this confidence is by working with a financial advisor.

In fact, 36 percent of those surveyed began working with a financial advisor in 2020 for help navigating the past year. The importance of receiving good advice became apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought about a variety of financial worries, such as job loss, retirement considerations, caregiving for elderly parents or providing financial support to adult children.

You will face some challenges on your journey toward achieving your financial objectives. But by being resilient, you can stay on the right road.

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
jeffreyhall@edwardjones.com

edwardjones.com
Member SIPC
Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

PUBLIC SAFETY

BLOTTER from A4
license and no insurance, \$475; Heather N. Schmidt, 23, Waseca, traffic control signal, \$125; George W. Schuneman, 26, Waseca, theft, \$125; Brenda J. Shockey, 32, Eagle Lake, restraining order violation, stay of adjudication, \$175, 5 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Geni J. Smith, 57, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275; Manuel J. Stamm, 32, Owatonna, invalid license and no insurance, \$575; Edward W. Thorson, 27, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275; Jesus Vazquez Zavala, 28, Medford, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Michal R. Walker, 44, Owatonna, theft, \$275; Alexander T. Wilcox, 24, Owatonna, harassment, \$125, 30 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, no possession of firearms, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, domestic abuse evaluation, 224 hours of community service and 3 years of supervised probation; Dustin D. Zamora, 42, St. Cloud, theft, \$81 and 20 days in county jail.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Joshua E. Adams, 25, Rochester, speeding and revoked license, \$325; Henry W. Barber, 54, Dallas, TX, invalid license, \$175; Sara A. Bessett, 30, Eagan, aid and abet theft, \$702.81, 3 days in county jail and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Mikael R. Burch, 21, Rochester, speeding and improper information on license, \$155; Eugene L. Chapman, 48, Minneapolis, suspended license, \$275; Jerone X. Chadis, 19, Medford, no insurance, \$275; Elizabeth A. Davis, 22, Austin, speeding and open bottle, \$315; Kenneth L. Davis, 58, Woodbury, speeding and revoked license, \$335; Jose Esquivel Jr., 19, Owatonna, permit violation, \$125; Jay B. Fuentes, 24, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Valaira Y. Garza, 23, Waseca, speeding and no insurance, \$475; Isabella R. Gosch-Castell, 28, North Mankato, speeding, \$215; Cody J. Halvorson, 27, Waseca, speeding, \$175; Ronald J. Houdek, 58, Owatonna, trespassing, \$175; Jason C. Long, 39, Lake St. Croix Beach, revoked license, \$275; Jennifer Maharraj, 18, Mankato, speeding, \$115; Anis M. Mohamed, 22, Rochester, speeding, \$115; Brandon K. Montgomery, 28, Camdenton, MO, speeding, \$125; Denetria L. Nichols, 31, Rochester, speeding, \$135; Erika L. Powell, 20, Blooming Prairie, speeding and possession of paraphernalia, \$175; Kyle A. Schell, 35, New Prague, speeding, \$125; Kent D. Schmidt, 54, Claremont, DWI, \$575, chemical dependency evaluation, attend MAUD impact panel and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Dylan T. Schmit, 20, Medford, possession of

drugs, stay of adjudication, \$75, no alcohol or controlled substance use, chemical dependency evaluation and 2 years of supervised probation; Sabrina L. Shouse, 29, Owatonna, speeding, \$135; Denise D. Thompson, 38, Waseca, revoked license, \$275; Paige L. Thompson, 21, Frost, speeding, \$115; Denise Tonche, 37, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Robert L. White, 36, Waseca, revoked license, \$275; Bridgid A. Wood, 43, Owatonna, speeding, \$135.

POLICE BLOTTER

Steele County

BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

Feb. 27
Crash: Paramedics and officers responded to a motor vehicle accident with injuries in the 300 block of Highway Ave. S. at 1:30 p.m. They issued a citation to one of the drivers.
March 5
Fraud: Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 400 block of 3rd St. SE at 4:53 p.m.

OWATONNA POLICE

Feb. 26
Theft: Officer issued a theft citation in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 10:23 a.m.
Shoplifting: Shoplifting incidents occurred in the 2200 block of 46th St. NW, at 11:23 a.m. and the 400 block of Hoffman Dr. NW at 6:35 p.m.
Restraining Order: At 6:04 p.m., a restraining order violation occurred in the 200 block of Linden Ave. NE.

Criminal Sexual Conduct: Police began an investigation of criminal sexual conduct in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 7:50 p.m.
Domestic: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 100 block of Lewis Dr. NW at 11:35 p.m.

Feb. 27
DWI: Officer issued a DWI citation at Hoffman Dr. NW and North St. W. at 11:17 p.m.

DWI: Officer made a DWI arrest at Oak Ave. N. and Pearl St. W. at 6:20 a.m.

March 1
Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at Cedar Ave. S. and Highway 14 E. in Owatonna Township at 9:27 a.m.

Child Protection: Police received a child protection report from the 2700 block of 3rd Ave. NE at 11:03 a.m.

Shoplifting: At 1:27 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 400 block of Hoffman Dr. NW.

Suspicion: Police responded to suspicious activity in the 900 block of School St. W. at 11:54 p.m. They issued a citation.

March 5
Arrest: Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at 26th St. NE and Landmark Dr. NE at 6:25 a.m.

Warrant: Officer made a warrant arrest at Mound St. SW and Hilltop Ave. SW at 12:30 p.m.

Suspicion: Police responded to suspicious activity in the 100 block of Cedar Ave. N. at 2:25 p.m.

They arrested a subject.

March 4
Theft: Officer took a theft report in the 200 block of Hagen Place SW at 6:07 a.m.
Domestic: Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Linden Ave. NE at 1:55 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.
Shoplifting: At 10:01 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 100 block of 18th St. SE.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

Feb. 27
DWI: Deputy made a DWI arrest at Interstate 35 and 46th St. NW in Clinton Falls Township at 1:22 a.m.

Animal: At 6:42 p.m., deputies responded to an animal call in the 7300 block of 32nd Ave. NW in Medford Township.

Arrest: Deputies arrested a motorist during a traffic stop in the 2900 block of 52nd Ave. NW in Clinton Falls Township at 8:33 p.m.

Restraining Order: Deputies arrested a subject for a restraining order violation in the 2900 block of 32nd Ave. NW in Clinton Falls Township at 8:07 p.m.

Feb. 28
Domestic: Deputies responded to a domestic disturbance in the 500 block of Central Ave. W. in Medford at 9:30 a.m.

March 1
Theft: Deputy took a theft report in the 15400 block of 34th Ave. SE in Summit Township at 10:03 a.m.

Shoplifting: At 1:01 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 6700 block of Frontage Rd. W. in Medford.

Restraining Order: At 10 p.m., a restraining order violation occurred in the 4100 block of 66th St. NW in Medford Township.

March 2
Warrant: Deputy made a warrant arrest at the detention center at 5:35 a.m.

Fraud: Deputy took a report of a fraud incident in the 1600 block of 28th St. SW in Owatonna Township at 1:50 p.m.

March 3
Disturbance: Deputies responded to a disturbance in the 4100 block of 66th St. NW in Medford Township at 12:52 p.m. and the 4700 block of County Road 45 S. in Owatonna Township at 8:52 p.m.

Suspicion: Deputies responded to suspicious activity at 106th St. SE and County Road 45 S. in Summit Township at 1:11 p.m. and the 4100 block of 1st St. SW in Medford at 8:07 p.m.

Theft: Deputy took a theft report in the 5200 block of County Road 45 N. in Medford Township at 2:54 p.m.

DWI: Deputy made a DWI arrest on Interstate 35 in Somerset Township at 11:45 p.m.

March 4
Suspicion: Deputies responded to suspicious activity in the 13000 block of 29th Ave. SE in Summit Township at 0:59 a.m.

Harassment: At 12:39 p.m., a harassment incident occurred in the 9200 block of 37th Ave. SW in Somerset Township.

ARRESTS

Steele County

MN STATE PATROL

Gloria Ibarra, 40, arrested at 7:05 p.m. March 3, warrant arrest, \$30,000 bail.

OWATONNA POLICE
Edward William Thorson, 27, arrested at 3:01 p.m. March 3, DWNC violation, held for court.

STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF

Ricky Allen Severson, 69, arrested at 12:30 p.m. March 2, warrant arrest, \$3,000 bail.
Alicia Jo Heuer, 40, arrested at 3:50 p.m. March 2, felony drugs, held for court.

COURT NEWS

Dodge County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Feb. 21 – 28:

DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Brittany L. Ball, 35, West Concord, speeding, \$140; Erika E. Bergstad, 26, Hayfield, no insurance, \$280; Nathan D. Drahm, 27, Waseca, speeding, \$140; Kristyn S. Fredrickson, 40, Austin, suspended license and speeding, \$340; Alize L. Johnson, 22, Dodge Center, cancelled license and speeding, \$330; Erin M. Kubitz, 45, Brooklyn Park, failure to yield, \$130; Alyssa M. McCouy, 20, Rochester, parking violation, \$32; Brianna C. Millhouse, 21, West Concord, revoked license, \$280; Karen L. Niemeyer, 38, Kasson, suspended license and stop sign, \$330; Kyle K. Peterson, 35, Moose Lake, damage to property, \$575.24, 90 days in county jail; Carlos A. Rosa Martinez, 51, Rochester, revoked license and speeding, \$330; Timothy A. Smith, 45, Owatonna, revoked license and speeding, \$330; Scott E. Tinnell, 48, Dodge Center, parking violation, \$32; Michael A. Wilson, 28, Rochester, speeding, \$120.

KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Damon A. Constans Jr., 19, Rochester, invalid license and failure to yield, \$230; Matthew H. Daroscher, 35, Sartell, revoked license, \$280; Courtney D. Hagen, 27, Mantorville, hands free violation, \$130; Traugott D. Jones, 27, Owatonna, invalid license, \$180; Burton A. Nelson, 26, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Ihan A. Noor, 21, Rochester, speeding, \$140; Hunter A. Skjele, 22, Kasson, hands free violation, \$130; Joshua N. Temple, 38, Owatonna, hands free violation, \$130.

MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Mohamed B. Abshir, 23, Memphis, TN, speeding, \$380; Jordyn L. Bauer, 18, Kasson, speeding, \$130; Jamell A. Campbell, 26, Bunkie, LA, speeding, \$380; Marcel N. Coker, 43, Winona, revoked license, \$280; Sabrina J. Dostal, 22, Rochester, speeding, \$140; Justin L. Gomez, 32, Onamia, speeding, \$280; Mitchell A. Heide, 23, Fountain, speeding, \$120; Richard J. Kasel, 55, West Concord, speeding, \$130; Michael D. Madson, 27, Dodge Center, speeding, \$120; Randy Marin, 28, Kasson, speeding and permit violation, \$180; Rosana Mejia, 37, Medford, speeding, \$120; Brandon P. Ormsby, 28, Rochester, speeding, \$120; Reber R. Smith, 19, Rochester, speeding and no insurance, \$340; Connor B. Stringer, 21, Dodge Center, speeding, \$120; Travis M. Swartz, 33, Claremont, speeding and revoked license, \$330; Tyler M. Wright, 18, Chatfield, speeding, \$280.

WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Rudolph V. Bailey, 31, West Concord, revoked license, \$280; Katie A. Carrasco Garcia, 31, West Concord, invalid license, \$180; Timothy P. Heyer, 24, Sergeant, speeding, \$140; Cole M. Horsman, 26, Byron, parking violation, \$32.

ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST

Dr. Deborah Lien
DDS, MBS

Building Healthy Smiles

drdeborahlienorthodontics.com

507-583-6613

FREE CONSULTATION

132 2nd Ave NE | Blooming Prairie

3 United Way board members retire

United Way of Steele County Board Members David Albrecht, Shane Sattler and Karen Legault recently completed their terms.

Albrecht served as the board chair. Under his leadership, United Way transitioned from a strategic planning directive to a strategic impact action plan, said Annette Duncan, United Way president.

Duncan also said that Albrecht had a vision for our organization that we would become the incubator for innovation, positioning us to address, quickly, the unmet needs in our community.

Albrecht served 10 years on the board.



David Albrecht



Shane Sattler



Karen Legault

Shane Sattler, the outgoing board secretary, served eight years on the board. Sattler taught the organization to question everything and helped the board remember its purpose and the importance of transparency, Duncan said.

His passion for people and doing what is right

inspired us all to do the same and his humor and wit helped us to keep perspective during challenging times, said Duncan.

Karen Legault served on the marketing and fundraising committee. During her 2-year tenure, Legault helped lead a successful

campaign, despite the limitations brought on by the pandemic, said Duncan, adding that Legault's creativity and out-of-the-box thinking led to marketing strategies that were engaging and inclusive, and helped the agency reach more people than ever before.

Trinity teams up with LSS for counseling

Trinity Lutheran Church has partnered with Lutheran Social Service (LSS) to offer counseling and mental health services at the Owatonna church. This new partnership has been created to provide care for the growing need for quality mental health care in Owatonna.

Lutheran Social Service provides licensed professionals who offer

comprehensive, compassionate, confidential, and convenient mental health services to a wide range of individuals and populations.

While counseling is currently being offered online, once the COVID pandemic recedes, in-person counseling will be made available at the church building.

Services through this partnership are

available to anyone in the community. LSS accepts all major insurance and care on a sliding-scale is available for those who qualify.

"Trinity is a community of people always seeking to care for and serve our community. Currently, we see an urgent need to raise awareness of provide services and to encourage individuals to

pursue treatment," said Rev. Amanda Floy, associate pastor at Trinity. "Our hope is to provide opportunities for care, help and healing to any who are in need."

For more information, or to make an appointment to meet with the counselor, go to www.lssowatonna.org/triviscounseling or call the church office at 507-451-4520.

BOOK NOOK

Still adapting, a year later



NANCY VAILLANCOURT

It has been one year since we have been able to have in-person programs at the Blooming Prairie Branch Library due to the pandemic. When it began, I spent a few weeks working from home, planning exciting events for story times and the Summer Reading Program. If anyone had told me at that time, that one year later we would still be unable to meet in person, I would not have believed them!

But here we are. We have adapted by presenting story times on Facebook Live. An unexpected effect has been that more people watch story times than in the past since they

can watch online at their convenience. So even in challenging circumstances there are bright spots.

Please join us on Thursday, March 18 at 6:30 p.m. (or any time after that) for our Virtual Family Fun Night "Blowin' in the Wind." We will share stories about windy days, kites, and yes, even Mr. Dylan's famous song. There will be Take & Make bags available in the entryway of the library. These will include crafts for children to make their own windy day activities.

Finally, as we prepare for summer activities this year, we are in need of some craft items. If you have paper towel rolls, toilet paper rolls, pony beads, or other miscellaneous craft items, please consider dropping them off at the library. We are planning to provide weekly Take & Make bags this summer and will need many items to fill the bags with child friendly crafts. Thank you!

OBITUARIES

Obituaries Sponsor:
LEGACY MONUMENT SALES
Leon & Lori Bohlin 507-456-7864 or 507-456-3735
landbo@gmail.com

Joan Mae Johnson, 84, Owatonna



Joan Mae Johnson

Joan Mae Johnson, 84, of Owatonna, died Friday, March 5, 2021 at St. Mary's Hospital, Rochester.

She was born July 19, 1936 in Owatonna, the daughter of Arthur and Clara (Marti) Cigrang. Joan graduated from Medford High School and began working at E.F. Johnson. In June of 1955, she married Vernon Horak. She farmed with her husband, worked at the Steele Center Store and delivered mail.

Vernon preceded Joan in death in 1973. On Aug. 31, 1974, Joan married Lowell Johnson at St. John Lutheran Church in Owatonna. The couple farmed together, and Joan started working at OTC in 1981, retiring in 2004.

Joan was a member of St. John Lutheran Church and the MCM Card Club. She enjoyed living in the country, mowing lawn, gardening and going to auctions. Joan loved time with her family and friends and always had a joke to share.

She is survived by her daughter, Kim (and

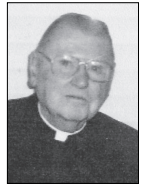
Darrel) Dinse of Ellendale; grandson, Ryan (and Gina) Horak of Kenyon; great grandchildren, Wyatt Horak, Arya Horak; special friend, Frank Manderfeld and nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husbands, Vernon Horak and Lowell Johnson; sons, Michael Horak and Melvin Horak; great grandson, Kayden Horak; sister, Dorothy Johnson. Visitation will be at Michaelson Funeral Home on Friday, March 12 from 4 to 8 p.m. and at St. John Lutheran Church on Saturday, March 13 from 10 to 11 a.m. Funeral services will be held Saturday, March 13, 2021 at 11 a.m. at St. John Lutheran Church with Pastor Dave Klawiter officiating. Interment will be in the Aurora Lutheran Cemetery in Havana Township.

Michaelson Funeral

Homes of Owatonna is handling the arrangements.

Rev. Edward Mountain, 96, Owatonna



Rev. Edward Mountain

Father Edward Mountain, 96, of Owatonna, died peacefully on Monday, March 8, 2021 at the Benedictine

Living Community in Owatonna.

Edward Cyril Mountain was born on April 1, 1924 in Lyra Township, Blue Earth County, the son of Edward F. and Ada M. (Bowe) Mountain. He attended school in Good Thunder and graduated from high school in 1940. He then studied the classics at St. Mary's University in Winona. He received his philosophy and theology degrees from the St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity-University of St. Thomas. Father Mountain was ordained by Bishop Leo Binz on June 1, 1947 at St. John the Baptist Church in Mankato. It was there that he celebrated his first Solemn Mass on the following day.

Father Mountain's appointments included: St. Peter and Paul Church in Blue Earth; superintendent and athletic director at St. Augustine Church and School in Austin; instructor at Cathedral High School and associate pastor at St. Thomas Pro-Cathedral in Winona; pastor of parishes in Fountain and Wykoff; chaplain at St. Mary's Hospital, Rochester; pastor of St. Mary's Church and superintendent of St. Mary's School in Ellsworth; pastor of St. Joseph Church in Lakefield; pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Owatonna; pastor of Christ the King in Medford and Corpus Christi in Deerfield.

He resided in Owatonna since his retirement in 1989 and was the longest living ordained priest in the Diocese of Winona. He

was a member of the Knights of Columbus for 78 years. Honoring his lifelong commitment to the Knights,

the Owatonna Council will now be renamed 'Fr. Edward C. Mountain Council 945.'

Thomas Kempis, who fell asleep in the Lord in 1471, left us a masterpiece of writing entitled, 'The Imitation of Christ' reminding us that we must all strive to imitate 'Our Lord.' The main aspect of the life of Father Mountain was his desire to imitate Christ in His love for His Mother Mary.

At his ordination in 1947, his holy cards had the prayer, 'Mary, Queen of Heaven pray for us.' And, on his tombstone the date of his birth, death, date of ordination and the prayer, 'Mary, Queen of Heaven pray for us.'

Father was preceded in death by his parents, a brother Father Harold Mountain, a sister Florence Mountain Wagner, two brothers-in-law and two nephews.

There are no immediate survivors. Father Mountain left his house to Sacred Heart Parish with the request that the income from it should be used to help some deserving students attending St. Mary's School. Father and his brother, Father Harold Mountain, established a scholarship to the University of Notre Dame, in memory of their parents, for a student from the Diocese of Winona. Being born in 1924, the year of the most famous college backfield, 'The Renowned Four Horsemen of Notre Dame,' father has been a loyal follower of 'The Fighting Irish.' Every year as long as he was able meant not just a trip to South Bend but to many games on the road such as Ireland, Florida, California and Hawaii.

Please pray for Father's soul that Jesus and Mary will help him to be a winner in the final great game of life.

Mass of Christian Burial will be Friday, March 12, 2021 at 11 a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church,

Owatonna with the Most Rev. Bishop John Quinn and Father James Berning presiding. A Knights of Columbus Rosary Service will start 9:30 a.m. followed by a visitation that will start at 9:45 a.m. also at the church. Burial will be at Sacred Heart Cemetery. Owatonna, a few feet from the altar and crucifixion scene, which Father provided for the cemetery.

Memorials of Mass offerings and the promise of prayers are appreciated as well as donations to Sacred Heart Music Ministry. Eternal rest, grant unto him O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him. To leave a condolence message go to www.megercare.com.

BRICK-MEGER & MEDFORD
FUNERAL HOME

Prairie Family & Sports CHIROPRACTIC

We've Got Your Back!!

Chiropractic Care, Massage Therapy, D.O.T. Physicals, Drug/Alcohol Screenings, CBD Oils, Nutritional Supplements, Back Supports/Pillows, Biofreeze, Hot/Cold Packs, Custom Orthotics, and More.

www.drchad.org
583-2271 • 866-5DR-CHAD
344 E. Main St.
Blooming Prairie, MN

BIRTHDAYS

March 10
Elizabeth Salinas
Brenda Yentsch
Ryan Glynn
Jean Farr
Aspen Clayton
Olivia Anderson

March 11
Harlan Hansen
Neila Nelson
Marion Mast

March 12
Rauna Bishop
Denise Thompson
Charlotte Trom

March 14
Elliot Swenson
John Abbe

March 15
Denny Zwiener
Carol Frissted
Tony Motl
Adam Iversen
Kelly Njos
Kevin Christy

March 16
Caleb Kubista
Cork Drexler
Ryan Heimerman
Aaron Krejci

ANNIVERSARIES

March 4
Richard & Imogene Symes

March 16
Mr. & Mrs. Laverne Johnson

Congratulations!

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

TRUST US TO HANDLE WITH CARE



Alan



Mike



Scott

Brick-Meger Funeral Home • Medford Funeral Home
507.451.1457 | megercare.com

PROUDLY SERVING STEELE COUNTY

Far louder than a trumpet



Rev. Heidi Heimgartner
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
BLOOMING PRAIRIE

For Jewish people, almsgiving—the act of charitable giving to those less fortunate, is so commingled with the life of faith that the same word, *tzedakah*, came to be used to describe righteousness and the act of giving. Quite literally speaking, to give alms, and to

be righteous, were one and the same.

These days, First Lutheran's Sermon on the Mount. We've been calling our Bible Study and Wednesday evening radio devotion "The Best Sermon I've Ever Heard." Not simply words of praise for a great orator, we pastors do hope all believers hear that sermon; that is, internalize the teachings of Jesus.

In Matthew 6 verse 3, Jesus teaches, *But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

Not if, but *when*. Jesus says that those who follow his teachings and ways will also be givers. Not for public notoriety.

Not with the hope that a few gifts will come back around. Jesus followers are expected to give reflexively, regularly, and—extensively. Jesus goes on with specifics. *So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others.*

Early on the pandemic, I was humbled by the questions we started receiving about how to help our community. Concerns for the unem-

ploied and furloughed, the food-insecure and those under-resourced for the crisis. Countless people weren't worried about their own needs, but suspected their neighbors needed help. Hearts were moved. And, quietly, generously, people gave, and gave, and gave. Eleven and half months on, they still are giving.

Givers give because someone first gave to them.

Givers give because Jesus has inspired the gift. And though you will never hear a trumpet announcement from the pulpit or the rooftop of the church, I believe these actions are seen by our father in heaven.

How about you? Are you a giver?

If so, how has this practice nourished your own faith?

And if not, what keeps you from unclenching your hand? Even a small gift—time, talent, or source—when added among others, can have a huge effect.

You can trust God to make the best of any gift you offer. In fact, God is the only one who can make the best of the gifts you offer.

In time, giving becomes a natural expression of your love of God and care for others.

You will start to see all of life as a gift-given and received, shared and multiplied.

This 40-day season we call Lent is the perfect time to give, and your church community likely has undertaken a special project benefiting others. I know ours has.

The Christian's giving heart praises God *louder, for louder, than any trumpet ever could.*

Pastor Heidi Heimgartner serves as Senior Pastor of First Lutheran Church in Blooming Prairie. You can read more about First Lutheran's Lenten mission project, find new recipes for soup suppers, and take part in devotions safely at home this year. All the details are waiting for you at firstlutheranbp.com/lent-2021.

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

LUTHERAN AURORA LUTHERAN

6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna
Interim Pastor:
Rev. Dale Swendsen
507-451-2819
office@
auroralutheranchurch.org
Worship: Sunday 9 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN — ELCA

106 Third St. SE., Geneva
Pastor Kristen Vienne
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.,
Bloomington
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 Edwardsen
507-789-6861
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-Freeman
Road, Austin
Leandra Anderson, Pastor
507-583-2038 or 507-437-3000
www.raglutheran.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., Sargeant
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 Klaviter and
Jacie Richmond
507-451-7293
stjohnowatonna.org
Worship: 9 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
Vicar Jackie Short
507-567-2474
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9 a.m.

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 2nd Ave., Meriden
Interim Deacon Billie Jo Wicks
507-451-2165
Sunday worship: 10 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN — ELCA

609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
507-451-4520
tciowatonna.org
Senior Pastor: Rev. Todd
Buegler, Associate Pastor:
Rev. Amanda Floyd

Deacon: Kris Oppgaard
and tciowatonna.org/
workshop
Watch the video of our full
service on Spectrum (channel
181) and jaguar TV (channel
163) Wednesday-6 p.m.; Sunday-11
a.m.) and at owatonalive.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
Interim Deacon Billie Jo Wicks
Sunday worship: 8:30 a.m.

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN — ELCA

1808 St. Paul Road, Owatonna
Senior Pastor:
John Weisenburger
Associate Pastor: Lisa Carlson
507-451-4853
oursaviorsowatonna.com
Worship: 8:15 a.m.—Traditional,
9 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 Starasich
Messe: 5:30 p.m. Sat.
Mass: 9 a.m. Mon. & Fri.

CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS

307 SW First St.,
New Richmond
Father Brian Mulligan
507-234-6244
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LUTONIA

9846 SE 24th Ave., Owatonna
Father John Wilmut
507-583-2784
www.lutoniatowatonna.com
Sunday Mass at 8:15 a.m.
Lutoniatownia.org

TRINITY LUTHERAN — ELCA

609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna
507-451-4520
tciowatonna.org
Senior Pastor: Rev. Todd
Buegler, Associate Pastor:
Rev. Amanda Floyd

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC

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

SACRED HEART PARISH

810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna
Father Swaminatha
Potnendy, 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.,
Bloomington
Father John Wilmut
507-451-4845
www.stcolumbanuschurch.com
Mass: 10:30 a.m. Sunday
Reconciliation: 9 a.m.
First Friday: 5 Saturday

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH

512 S. Elm Ave., Owatonna
Father James Starasich
507-451-4845
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m.
Reconciliation: 5-3:30 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.—6:30 p.m.
Key tag 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 Elazar Talamantes
507-363-2240
Worship: 10 a.m. Sunday;
6:30 p.m. Wednesday

METHODIST

BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST

4309 180th St., Medford
(Seven miles west of
Medford on CR 23)
Pastors JJ & Stefanie Morgan
507-535-8726
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST

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

OWATONNA UNITED METHODIST

815 E. University, Owatonna
Rev. Lisa J. Vick, Pastor
507-451-4734
www.owatonnaumc.org
Traditional Worship
(Pathways):
9 a.m. Sunday

CLAREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CENTER

Service Center:
507-528-2233
After Hours Towing:
507-456-4158
111 Front Street
P.O. Box 262
Claremont, MN

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

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

VALLEYVIEW OF OWATONNA

Johnson, Dierhoefer
& Miner P.A.
914 E. Main St.
Bloomington
507-583-7528
685 W. Bridge St.
Owatonna
507-451-9136
133 N. Broadway
New Richmond
507-451-6722

VALLEYVIEW OF OWATONNA

1213 W. Frontage Rd. Owatonna, MN
507-451-6722
valleyviewofowatonna.com

VALLEYVIEW OF OWATONNA

1213 W. Frontage Rd. Owatonna, MN
507-451-6722
valleyviewofowatonna.com

VALLEYVIEW OF OWATONNA

1213 W. Frontage Rd. Owatonna, MN
507-451-6722
valleyviewofowatonna.com

VALLEYVIEW OF OWATONNA

1213 W. Frontage Rd. Owatonna, MN
507-451-6722
valleyviewofowatonna.com

VALLEYVIEW OF OWATONNA

1213 W. Frontage Rd. Owatonna, MN
507-451-6722
valleyviewofowatonna.com

**Monuments
LEGACY MONUMENT SALES**
Leon's Cell 507-456-7864
Lori's Cell 507-456-3735
landlife@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

**CLAREMONT
PRESBYTERIAN CENTER**
Service Center:
507-528-2233
After Hours Towing:
507-456-4158
111 Front Street
P.O. Box 262
Claremont, MN

**CLAREMONT
PRESBYTERIAN CENTER**
Service Center:
507-528-2233
After Hours Towing:
507-456-4158
111 Front Street
P.O. Box 262
Claremont, MN

**CLAREMONT
PRESBYTERIAN CENTER**
Service Center:
507-528-2233
After Hours Towing:
507-456-4158
111 Front Street
P.O. Box 262
Claremont, MN

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

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

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

**REAL LIFE
COOPERATIVE**
Vibrant Living For
Individuals 55 & Older
at a Reasonable Price
Call Jon Amett @
455-3735 for a tour
238 22nd St. SE - Owatonna

VALLEYVIEW OF OWATONNA
1213 W. Frontage Rd. Owatonna, MN
507-451-6722
valleyviewofowatonna.com

Mayo observes colorectal cancer month



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

Mayo Clinic Health System in Owatonna recently lit the entrance of its building to remind people that cancer screenings, lifestyle changes and added awareness can reduce the risk for colorectal cancer, the third-most diagnosed cancer in the U.S.

Staff looks back to March of 2020

◀ **STAFF LOOKS BACK** from A3 college paper that I was in charge of. I asked him straight up what was going on and did the students have any reason to worry.

He told me we had nothing to worry about. He and his assistant laughed at the spring break rumor. I will never forget him telling me that there were no plans of a shutdown anytime soon.

A week later, I learned that we would not be returning to campus, and essentially everything was canceled for the remainder of the school year or moved online.

Based on what I'd heard, I figured I had nothing to worry about and proceeded with plans that included a surprise birthday party for me on Saturday, March 14. My birthday was not until later in the month, but my girlfriend figured we should probably plan ahead in case we can't go out on my actual birthday (spoiler alert: we would

from A3

not be able to go out on my actual birthday).

The party included bar hopping, and to be fair, it seemed like a normal night. We went to Rochester, where it was business as usual, except for the extra hand sanitizer. The bars and restaurants were packed. I remember my friends and I joking that this might be the last time we go out for a while. It turned out to be anything but a joke.

Looking back, the craziest thing is how much we did not know. All of the stuff that we did, that we would never do now. But at the time, we were clueless.

I end this with a plea. A year later, we are not clueless. We know what is going on, and while we may be still struggling to figure out how to live a "normal" life in a COVID world, we know what we can do to be safe. Wear a mask, follow the guidelines, and let's get through this.

Mountain was the oldest living priest

◀ **MOUNTAIN** from A1 Mountain resided in Owatonna since his retirement in 1989. He left his house to Sacred Heart with the re-

quest that the income from it should be used to help some deserving student attending St. Mary's School in Owatonna.

Mountain has no immediate survivors. Services are pending at Sacred Heart Church in Owatonna. Brick Meger

Funeral Home is handling the arrangements. A complete obituary will be published in next week's edition.

OPEN HOUSE

OWATONNA GRANITE & MONUMENT

OVER 100 MEMORIALS ON DISPLAY!

REGISTER AT OWATONNA GRANITE & MONUMENT FOR A \$200 VISA GIFT CARD

JOIN US FOR OUR OPEN HOUSE MARCH 11-20, 2021

Open Monday-Friday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Saturday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

OWATONNA GRANITE & MONUMENT
1180 East Frontage Road, Owatonna, MN 55060-6284

507-455-9551
owatonnagranite@gmail.com

John and Barb Heerema

EDWARDS

DONALD J. JAN. 15, 1934 - OCT. 14, 2018

MAY R. JAMES

JOSHUA M. JUNE 3, 1980 - AUG. 21, 2018

JOHN L. SMITH JAN. 1, 1935 - JAN. 1, 2018

MARY L. SMITH AUG. 21, 1935 - AUG. 21, 2018

COUPON

COMPLIMENTARY UPGRADE TO GRANITE FOUNDATION OR 10% OFF LAWN LEVEL MARKER

OWATONNA GRANITE & MONUMENT OFFER GOOD DURING OPEN HOUSE SALE ONLY FROM March 11-20, 2021

HERE'S MY CARD

ACCOUNTING Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A. 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	AUTOMOBILE Mike's REPAIR 507-455-0388 Fax: 507-455-0486 870 32nd Ave. NW Owatonna, MN 55060 Mike Hartle Owner All tire sizes, sales and service for age and truck! After Hours: 507-455-0483	CONSTRUCTION Contact us for all of your roofing needs PIEPHO ROOFING, INC. Unparalleled Service James Piepho 507-451-1686 5098 SW 18th Street, Owatonna, MN 55060 www.piephoroofing.com Lic. #00027000
COLLISION THE ONLY AREA SHOP certified to work on the 2015 Ford Aluminum F150 CSI! Collision Specialists Inc 507.437.2837 www.csiustinnm.com	CONSTRUCTION J.A. Gwilt Siders, Inc. Siding, Windows, Gutters, Roofing & Decks Call 507-456-1504 for your FREE estimates! Serving Steele County for 20 years. Known for our exceptional quality of material and labor.	CONSTRUCTION Johnson Construction & Tree Service Tree & Stump Removal • Trimming & Topping • Tree Moving Lot Clearing • Backhoe/Skidloader • Hauling General Construction 24 Hr. Emergency Services • Year Round Work • Licensed & Insured KYLE JOHNSON • 507-583-7592 AUSTIN & BLOOMING PRAIRIE
EXCAVATING SEPTIC SYSTEMS • Design • Installation • Compliance Inspections State License # 1344 Serving the Area Over 12 Years BISHOP BE EXCAVATING, INC. • EXCAVATION • BASEMENTS • DEMOLITION • DRAIN WORK Commercial & Residential Sitework 507-583-2999 Aggregates • Hauling • Washed Sand • Black Dirt • Fill • Gravel	GARBAGE SERVICE SKJEVELAND ENTERPRISES Sanitation & Recycling Services COUNT ON US! Sanitation & Recycling since 2007 Pride in service since 2007 RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL • Sanitation & Recycling Services • Roll-Offs & Dumpsters • Rubbish & Garbage Removal Contact Skjeveland Enterprises today! 507-528-9900	GRANITE & MONUMENT Owatonna GRANITE & MONUMENT "Creating Your STORY in STONE" 1180 Frontage Rd E • Owatonna 507-455-9551 www.owatonnagranite.com John and Barb Heerema
ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST Dr. Deborah J. Lien, DDS, MBS ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST Building Healthy Smiles! 507-583-6613 dlienhorthodontics.com	PETS Bennett's PET HAVEN CEMETERY, INC. "Professional Cremation and Burial Services for your loving pet" Larry & Donna Bennett 4151 N. City Rd. 45 Owatonna, MN 55060 (507) 451-2203 Shorty & Sue Schrodt 857 Mosher Ave. Owatonna, MN 55060 (507) 455-3204 Cell: 507-456-3562	PREPLANNING A Simple, Thoughtful Act of Caring PREARRANGEMENT AND PREFUNERAL 507.583.7561 www.worlein.com Worlein Blooming Prairie Funeral Home 416 Highway Ave S • Blooming Prairie MN

Owatonna's secondary staff prepares for students return

BY MITCHELL BREUER
STAFF WRITER

Secondary teachers in Owatonna Public Schools are preparing for the return to four-day in-person learning.

Language arts teacher Lauren Gendron said the process makes it feel like the first day of school again. The change coming on March 30 will be the biggest she has had to

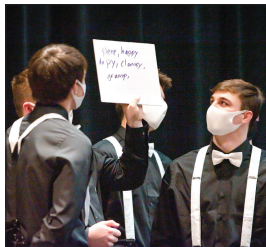
deal with this school year. Gendron said this is because the way everyone teaches has changed dramatically since the last time most secondary students were learning in-person

at the same time. "It's more of a mental preparation," Gendron said. "Yes, there is planning and rearranging our schedules to fit so students can all be at the same place in

the curriculum, but we haven't had all students in the school since last year." To assist with the transition, the district designated two days -- Thursday, March 19

and Monday, March 29 -- as teacher workdays. These days were chosen because they fall immediately before and after the school's scheduled spring break. See OWATONNA'S on B3 ►

Medford Snow Week



(TOP) Snow falls on Snow Week Queen Lily Roehrick during the coronation ceremony. Front row, from left, are Jenna Berg, Emily Chadwick, Roehrick and Miya Weber. Back row, from left, are Gunner White, AJ Vanderlaide, Brayden Beede, Josiah Hedensten. (MIDDLE) Lily Roehrick and AJ Vanderlaide reign over the Snow Week festivities. (RIGHT) Gunner White, Gavin Hermes, AJ Vanderlaide and Josiah Hedensten have a little fun during the coronation ceremony.



Pandemic brings alcohol abuse



Steele Talkin
ANDREA MARSHALL

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have all likely seen jokes and memes related to increases in alcohol consumption. References to imbibing in a "Quarantini" and jokes about frequent day drinking have been common across a variety of social media platforms.

All joking aside, just how much drinking have you noticed yourself and your loved one's partaking in? Alcohol abuse has increased during the pandemic as more people use alcohol as a coping strategy for underlying mental health issues, loneliness, isolation, stress, and boredom.

Because alcohol abuse is normalized in our society it is often difficult to know when someone has crossed the line between "normal" consumption and abuse. Consider taking an online self-check if you are concerned that it may be developing into more of a problem. It can be even more difficult to know when to seek help. Consider some of the following signs to help identify a problem. These signs can range from mild to severe. Problem drinking can lead to more severe forms of alcohol abuse and addiction.

- **Increased tolerance:** Does it take more alcohol to get the same effect?
- **Trouble stopping:** Do you have a hard time cutting off your drinking once you start?
- **Unhealthy focus:** Do you spend time thinking about drinking?
- **Cut down:** Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?
- **Annoyed:** Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
- **Guilt:** Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?
- **Morning maintenance:** Do you drink when you wake up?
- **Harm to relationships:** Do you get into more arguments with loved ones when you drink?
- **Decreased productivity:** Have you neglected other things because drinking has taken its place? Have you missed work because of drinking?
- **Physical symptoms:** Has a withdrawal from alcohol caused you to become shaky, nauseous, and sweaty?
- **Dangerous behavior:** Are you more promiscuous when you drink, or have you driven a car after drinking?

Alcohol abuse can take such a heavy toll on relationships, physical and mental health and wellbeing, family life and children, work/school, and have severe legal and financial consequences if you cause accidents or ex- See PANDEMIC on B3 ►

Medford Mayor expects city to be fined by state

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

Medford Mayor Danny Thomas spent his first 60 days in office trying to right the ship while facing a barrage of issues. Some of those issues, Thomas attributes to past mistakes or policies, while others, he said, are issues that face every municipality. "The public has pushed me to a point where I need to let them know what's going on," Thomas said. "I need to let everyone know that this is where we stand right now in Medford. See MEDFORD on B2 ►

Touchdown for the Hardecopfs with a new baby

BY RICK BUSSLER
PUBLISHER

Andrew Hardecopf is used to coaching football players on how to score touchdowns, but he and his wife, Sam, recently scored a touchdown of their own.



Andrew and Sam Hardecopf welcome a new addition to their family, a baby girl born on Jan. 23. Harper Jo is settling in with her new parents at their Blooming Prairie home.

The Hardecopfs welcomed a baby girl, Harper Jo, to their family on Jan. 23. Harper is believed to be the first baby born in 2021 within the Blooming Prairie School District. She was born at

2:35 p.m. at Owatonna hospital. Harper weighed in at 7 pounds, 10 ounces and was 20 1/2 inches tall.

"She is a happy baby," said her proud father. "Harper is a rock star. She has been sleeping about six hours consistently. She is not real fussy unless she is hungry."

Harper doesn't have to stray very far from home. Her mother stays at home with her and provides daycare for four other area children. "It's pretty nice she will be able to take care of her and others," Andrew said, adding by doing so, it saves them some money.

Andrew said he is excited about starting a family. "Parenthood is awesome," he said. "It has changed our lives, but we had prepared

for those changes," he added. He said there is nothing more fulfilling than waking up in the morning and seeing the baby sleeping and to be able to provide for her. When he comes home at night, he likes how his day gets better because he gets to see his daughter and hold her.

For Andrew, the greatest challenge will be time management as he keeps a hectic professional schedule. In addition to coaching football, Andrew also coaches golf and basketball. He has been a math teacher for the past seven years at Blooming Prairie Elementary School where he specializes in students who struggle with math.

"Finding time to be at home with family

and make I meaningful time will be a challenge," said Andrew, who took off a couple weeks when Harper was born before getting back to the daily grind.

The Hardecopfs found that expecting a child during COVID-19 altered their plans in many ways. The pandemic changed some of the baby showers prior to Harper's birth. Some of them were even transformed into drive-by showers. Andrew wasn't able to attend his family's shower because he was quarantined at the time.

Sam discovered that COVID meant more video appointments with her doctor during the pregnancy and less time at the clinic and hospital. They also had to limit the amount of See TOUCHDOWN on B3 ►

Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
johnndoerpcpa.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

'My favorite was a little town: Blooming Prairie'



Reflections
HOWARD LESTRUD

The coronavirus pandemic has left an indelible mark on all of us.

Baker Bill Hanisch of the Hanisch Bakery and Coffee Shop in Red Wing "pulled out all the stops for high school seniors graduating during the pandemic," wrote Guideposts writer Mari Pack in the February issue.

Guideposts is a spiritual non-profit organization that encourages wellness through inspirational content creation.

Founded in 1945 by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, Raymond Thornburg, and Peale's wife, Ruth Stafford Peale, with just one inaugural magazine, Guideposts has since grown to publish annual devotionals, books about faith, Christian fiction novels, five spiritual magazines, prayer content, as well as a content rich website for daily inspiration.

Guideposts has outreach programs to encourage wellness and help lift the spirits of those in need - including military personnel, military families, support groups, hospitalized children, etc.

Kathy Samuelson kindly sent me a link to the article in the February issue, pointing out that Blooming Prairie was mentioned toward the end of the article.

Local realtor Jennifer Walsh was impressed by a Facebook Live video she saw about baker Hanisch and his idea of creating small graduating cakes for members of the Class of 2020.

Walsh provided cakes made by Hanisch for all 50 Awesome Blossom graduates of 2020. I wanted to make sure these kids had as memorable a graduation as mine was in 1998," Hanisch said.

When COVID-19 shut down schools in the area last March, seniors missed major milestones, such as prom, graduation and sports.

Hanisch consulted with his wife Robyn because she is the bakery's cake decorator. She endorsed the idea.

The Guideposts article reads: "With Robyn on board, Bill took to Facebook on Sunday,



Bill Hanisch of the Hanisch Bakery and Coffee Shop of Red Wing came up with the idea to give all Red Wing seniors their own special cake on graduation day. Jennifer Walsh of Keller Williams Real Estate in Blooming Prairie liked the idea and ordered 50 cakes for Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossom graduates of 2020.

April 26, outlining his sweet plan to celebrate the 200 seniors of Red Wing High School."

This is when Walsh resolved to bring cakes to Blooming Prairie. Guideposts continues: "Like most restaurants, Hanisch Bakery was struggling during the pandemic, barely making ends meet. The coffee shop had to close, and just a fraction of the original 42 employees were working."

"The local CBS news channel picked up Bill's Facebook post on May 5, broadcasting his idea across the Twin Cities."

"That's when it took off," he says. Requests started coming in by the dozens, then hun-

dreds, like a cake rising out of control, bursting from the pan. Could Bill and his employees possibly cover all the requests in time for graduation?"

Walsh first contacted renowned local baker Gregg Fristedt of Blooming Prairie. His bakery burned in a Jan. 28, 2020 fire. Fristedt said he did not have the equipment to honor Walsh's request.

She then contacted Hanisch and gave him the OK to create two-layer cakes measuring seven inches in diameter.

The cakes read: "Congratulations BPHS, 2020." Walsh told The

Times that she could have spent dollars on promotional advertising but said this gesture was much "cooler" and represented more fun.

"I love cakes and even ordered an extra one for me," she laughs.

"I feel bad for the kids because they won't have a traditional celebration with a cake and I thought, let's have fun with it," Walsh remarked.

Local photographer Tammy Wolf set up a photo booth to capture the moment of the seniors receiving their cakes.

Mari Pack's article concludes: "Bill received videos from parents of high

school seniors receiving the cakes, but nothing beat watching the reveal in person. "My favorite was a little town, Blooming Prairie, an hour and 15 minutes away," he says. "Kids got to graduate in their family vehicles in a parade through the whole town. With fire trucks and everything!"

"A Blooming Prairie alum who'd initially contacted Hanisch Bakery set up a photo booth in her yard for students to take pictures with their cakes. A few times, I thought the cakes were going to slide right off their boards," Hanisch says, chuckling.

"With the mad rush of graduation season finally over, Hanisch looked over the numbers to survey the damage. How much had it cost to deliver all those smiles? After adding up all the donations, he realized he'd broken exactly even at \$15 a cake."

"Bill and his band of merry Red Wing bakers never set out to earn a million dollars in cake sales. They'd just wanted to give some high school seniors a graduation to remember. That it kept Hanisch Bakery and its staff afloat through such hard times? The Bunman grins and says, 'That's the icing on the cake.'"

Look what's taking place with BP Chamber



Chamber Buzz
EMILY GLASER

The first week of March all the executive directors of the Chamber of Commerce are invited to the capitol for "Chamber Day at the Capitol." However, due to COVID-19, the day turned into "Chamber Week at the Capitol."

From March 1-4, we visited virtually via Zoom with keynote speakers and representatives. If you are interested in watching a recording of these sessions, please visit www.bloomingprairiechamber.com/monthly-newsletters - March 5th Finally Friday!

There are several meetings happening in the next couple of weeks:

- Thursday, March 11 at 5 p.m. - Executive Board Meeting - all members are welcome to attend. Zoom will not be available.
- Wednesday, March 17 at 5 p.m. - March Chamber Meeting - If you are unable to attend, Zoom is available. Please RSVP or request the Zoom log-in information by Monday, March 15 to me at bpccofc@gmail.com.

Looking for more daily announcements? I am on the radio every morning on KRFO-Owatonna's Greatest Hits on 1380AM tune in around 8:15 a.m.

Emily Glaser is the executive director of the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce.

Medford Mayor expects city to be fined

◀ MEDFORD from B1 and we're going forward."

According to Thomas, he and his team will be tackling every challenge one at a time. One of the most pressing issues facing the city when he came into office was replacing former Administrator Andy Welti, who resigned on Dec. 22.

"We replaced him on Jan. 30," Thomas said. There have also been a few other staffing changes, including the public works supervisor who resigned his position to stay on as a regular public works employee.

In November, the employees of the City of Medford decided to join the Local 49 Union. Four full-time city employees joined the union, and talks are still early. "It is in discussion, and it is in mediation," Thomas said. "That's where it's at; nothing has been decided."

Thomas said the staff was being poorly utilized before his administration. "The employees were told not to communicate with each other," he said. "That has now changed, and I can tell you that the employees are running this city and they need to communicate with each other to the full extent."

"I believe the staff was undertrained in many areas and uncertified in many areas," Thomas said. "We need to build a team together, and that's my goal with the staff. We need to bring them all on board as a team. We are going to work on getting employees certified."

Thomas partly attributes the two state violations that occurred under the previous administration to the staffing issues. "There are two state violations, one for April of 2020 and one for 2019," he said. "In April 2020, they had a check valve go bad, and 40,000 gallons of biosolids went into the river. That's a lot."

The first violation in April 2019 was due to insufficient hydrogen levels in the water.

The primary cause of the biosolids spill is the city being bereft of a grinder. "We had learned that at some point in time, the grinder unit had been taken out of the plant; that's about a \$100,000 piece of equipment," Thomas said. "It grinds up all the material that goes through the plant, so that material got into the check valves. The check valves failed, and down the river it goes."

There was also a spill that was unreported to the state on Dec. 28, 2020. "I think this goes back to people not knowing they had to report it or to report and not being qualified to know the terms," Thomas said.

Luckily that spill went on top of the ground and was caught in time. "We then got a letter from the state stating that concerning the two previous violations in both April 2019 and April 2020 from the water to the wastewater, the city had not given any answer back to the state on why they happened," Thomas said. "They said that they had not received a plan."

"We proceeded to put in a plan for the state and we do believe that we're going to get fined," Thomas said of the two previous water violations. "These potential fines coming from the state are real and people need to realize that we're in the process right now."

Thomas is looking to improve the plant as it stands now before deciding on the city's future water and wastewater plan. "The wastewater plant has had no preventative maintenance done on it for years, including cleaning the buildings and the tanks inside and out. It's a maintenance nightmare," he said. "It needs to be thoroughly gone through top to bottom,



Medford Mayor Danny Thomas says he expects the city to be fined by the state for two wastewater treatment plant violations that occurred under the previous administration.

which is what we're in the process of doing now."

The city is also in the process of mending strained relationships. "We're trying to build relationships again with the City of Owatonna," Thomas said.

"We want to get an option to meter water on the west side of the freeway so that if we have any development to come along there, we'd have a meter in place that we could get the water from."

"I want this to be a positive thing, but these are muck ups, they're all muck ups, and they're stuff that we have to deal with as a city, and I'm going to bite them off one bite at a time," Thomas said. "It's a mountain right now for Medford."

Thomas said his team is helping to clean the buildings and the tanks inside and out. "Each one of the council members has done their own thing: Chad Langeslag is doing a great

job with all of these wastewater issues, and Grace Bartlett has helped out with the Medford Muni and the EDA with the Outlet Center," he said.

City employees are all starting to jump on the bandwagon. "I think Danny has big plans for the city and he's going to utilize the strengths that every one of us employees has, and the city is going to benefit out of that," Medford City Clerk Elizabeth Jackson said. "If you hire someone for a job because they're qualified to do it, then you need to let them do it and bring their skills to the table."

"I do think that the public feels that it is way more informed of what's going on and as we get settled and everything starts to get into a rhythm and a routine, I think you're going to see the citizens get a lot happier," Jackson said. "I think we're moving in the right direction."

New Richland • Hartland • Ellendale • Geneva

PANTHER OF THE WEEK

This week's Panther of the Week is LAUREN JOHNSON. Lauren lives on Beaver Lake just outside of Ellendale with her parents Mark and Ellen, and her two younger siblings Kaila and Brooks.

Lauren is in Mrs. Lassah's second grade class at NRHFG. She is always looking out for others and has a very kind heart. Lauren can brighten anyone's day! She is very responsible and works extremely hard in school. Lauren is a wonderful friend to all and always has a positive attitude and a smile on her face.

She loves animals and enjoys playing outside with her siblings and pets. Her favorite food is pizza and she loves to read "Puppy Place" books. Keep up the great work Lauren, we are proud of you!

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

BLOOMING PRAIRIE

MARCH 16
10:30 a.m. — Online
Storytime, BP Library
Facebook

MARCH 17
5 p.m. — Chamber
Meeting, Vandal's

ELLEDALE/HOPE/GENEVA

MARCH 12
11 a.m. — SEMCAC,
Community Building

MARCH 15
11 a.m. — SEMCAC,
Community Building

MARCH 16
8:30 p.m. —
Ellendale Fire Building
Committee Meeting,
Community Building

MARCH 17
11 a.m. — SEMCAC,
Community Building

OWATONNA/MEDFORD

MARCH 15
7 p.m. — Medford
Planning & Zoning
Meetings, City Hall

MARCH 16
10:30 a.m. — Online
Storytime, Owatonna
Library Facebook

MARCH 17
4 p.m. — Owatonna
EDA Meeting, City Hall

4:30 p.m. — Library
Board Meeting, Library
7 p.m. — Owatonna
City Council Meeting,
City Hall

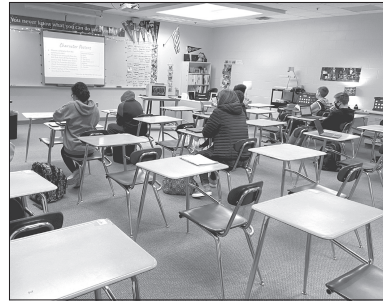
Owatonna's staff readies for return

◀ OWATONNA'S from B1
Gendron said this is nice for teachers, as all of their classes will suddenly be a lot bigger teaching two groups (in-person learners and distance learners) as opposed to three, which had been the case in the hybrid learning model.

As a teacher, Gendron said you have to prepare for curveballs and that this past year has been full of them, making it ever so important for educators to be flexible with everything that has come their way.

While Gendron said the process has been tiresome, she said there is a sense of excitement for the upcoming change. She said she is excited to hear the buzz in the hallway, which has been absent for the past year.

"There is worry about student and staff safety with the limited social distancing spaces we have in our classrooms, but I know that we all will do our best to finish the year strong," Gendron said. When students return for



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A look at what Lauren Gendron's classroom currently looks like at Owatonna Senior High School.

in-person learning on March 30, they will be required to wear masks in all buildings and maintain 3-feet of social distance

when possible. Classrooms will be disinfected and sanitized after each class. Wednesdays will remain a distance learning day.

Owatonna Arts Center features art work from schools

In celebration of National Youth Art Month the Owatonna Arts Center will feature art work from K-12 Owatonna Public Schools.

The exhibition will run through April 25. The student exhibition has been extended through April, so that family, friends and the public can take in the show. The students and faculty have been very creative in these very difficult times. Covid has not stopped creativity and the desire to express oneself visually. The show is a testament to the adaptability of students and faculty. Y

Masks and social distancing required.

OHS grad wins Iowa media award

Lydia Revier, of Owatonna, was one of 37 Wartburg College students and recent graduates to win an award at the annual Iowa College Media Association (ICMA) virtual award ceremony.

Revier earned second and third place in Best News Programming in television.

Wartburg student media took home a total of 64 awards.

ICMA is made up of 12 Iowa colleges. The annual conference is held in conjunction with the Iowa Newspaper Association's conference.

Wartburg, a four-year liberal arts college internationally recognized for community engagement, enrolls 1,564 students. Wartburg is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and named after the castle in Germany where Martin Luther took refuge disguised as a knight during the stormy days of the Reformation while translating the Bible from Greek into German.

COLLEGE NEWS

Area students named to academic honors lists

MINNESOTA STATE MANKATO

Four Blooming Prairie graduates have been named to the Honor List for the fall semester at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Rianna Bishop, Gabriel Hagen, McKenna Hein and Ayren Ingvalson were among 2,731 students who earned a 3.5 to 3.99 average to qualify for the Honor List.

To qualify for academic honors, undergraduate students must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours for the semester.

COLLEGE OF SAINT BENEDICT

Kylie Forystek of Blooming Prairie and Riley Schmidt of Owatonna were named to the dean's list for the fall semester at the College of Saint Benedict.

Forystek is a senior elementary education major and Schmidt is a senior majoring in integrative science.

To be included in the dean's list, students must have a grade point average of at least 3.80 and have completed 12 credits for which honor

points (A, B, C, etc.) are awarded.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Four Blooming Prairie graduates have been named to the 2020 fall semester Dean's List at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

Qualifying for the Dean's List were William Cardenas, Bryan Fristedt, Kaci Gwilt and Jesse Schewe.

To qualify for the Dean's List, a student must complete 12 or more letter-graded credits while attaining a 3.66 grade point average.

RIVERLAND

Riverland Community College recently announced its fall president's and dean's lists.

Blooming Prairie graduates Katie Kruckeberg, Jarrett Larson, Reese Millam, Gustaf Ogren, Grace Robins and Isabelle Sunde each qualified for the school's president's list. To be eligible for the president's list students must have completed 12 credits per semester with letter grades and have earned

a grade-point average of 4.00 on a 4.00 scale.

Earning a spot on the dean's list were Ashleigh Alves, Morgan Anderson, Stephanie Gutierrez, Hope Johnson, Larissa Judy, Mike Meyer and Marquette Millam, all of Blooming Prairie. To be eligible for the dean's list students must have completed 12 credits per semester with letter grades and have earned a grade-point average of 3.25 to 3.99 on a 4.00 scale.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Carter Millam of Blooming Prairie was named to the University of North Dakota's fall semester Dean's List and President's Roll of Honor.

The Dean's List includes students whose grade point average are in the top 15% of the enrollment in each of the University's degree granting colleges and schools.

To qualify for the UND President's Roll of Honor, a student must have an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.80 or higher. The student must also have earned a minimum of 30 semester hours and have completed a minimum of 12 hours at the close of the semester, eight of which must be for traditional letter grades.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

India Elizabeth Enter of Medford has been named to the Deans' List at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year.

Enter, a junior majoring in music, was named to the Dean's List for the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.

CONCORDIA COLLEGE

Marie Otterson, of Owatonna was named to fall semester's Dean's Honor List at Concordia College, Moorhead.

To qualify for this designation, students must carry a minimum of 12 semester credits and have a grade point average of at least a 3.7 on a 4.0 scale.

UW-LA CROSSE

Madison Arndt of Waltham was named to the Dean's List at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse for the fall semester of the 2020-21 academic year.

Qualification for the Dean's List is limited to students who have attained outstanding academic achievement. To be eligible, students must have earned not less than a 3.5 semester grade point average and carried a minimum of 12 credits.

Pandemic brings alcohol abuse

◀ PANDEMIC from B1
experience a DUI. Alcohol use affects more than the person drinking. It causes problems for all of us as a society and contributes to a larger percentage of domestic abuse, unemployment, crime, accidents, increased use of the healthcare system,

many other issues. If you or a loved one needs help, there are resources available, and while this article focuses on alcohol, the word alcohol could just as easily be substituted for any substance or harmful behavior.

A starting point may be reaching out to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357). They offer free, confidential 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service in multiple languages.

Asking for help can be difficult but there are helpful options to reduce or stop drinking and work towards a healthier and happier life, no matter how severe it may seem.

Andrea Marshall is an educator with Steele County Public Health. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.

Sudoku Corner

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

Sponsored by:

VALLEYVIEW ASSISTED LIVING
1212 W Frontage Rd Owatonna, MN
507-451-0722 • valleyviewofowatonna.com



Make new friends.

Answers

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

J & H LIQUORS

340 E Main Street • Blooming Prairie
507-583-7557
Owners: Harvey & Nancy Farr

Bar & Off Sale Hours

Monday-Wednesday-Friday 11:30 AM to Close
Tuesday-Thursday 10 AM to Close
Saturday 9 AM to Close
Sunday CLOSED
Bar: Last call 10:30 PM - Close 11 PM
Off-Sale: Close at 10 PM

**BAR BINGO Mondays at 6:30 PM - Must be 21 to play

MARCH 20:

"GET LUCKY ON MAIN"

Ice Fishing Contest - Receive a fish

with each drink purchase

(Top 3 winners at each place receive a prize)

J & H and Cue Company

5 PM to Close

J & H Only

Meat Raffles

Gun Raffles - \$20 ticket for a chance at 2 guns - Winners drawn at 7 PM

Raffles run thru General Chamber Gambling License - Details and tickets available at J & H

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

WRESTLING

Huskies capture 3-way tie for conference title

BY MITCHELL BREUER
SPORTS WRITER

After scoring a win on March 2 against Faribault, the Owatonna wrestling team is Big Nine conference champions for the 28th time in the team's

history.

The match proved to be a close one, with the Huskies winning 46-20. The heavier weights proved to be Owatonna's strong suit again, as the Huskies won every match between 145 and 285.

However, the biggest contributors to Owatonna's win came at 120 and 126, with the Huskies' Cael Robb and Jake Gronli scoring the team's lone pins of the match. The team will share the title of conference

champs with Faribault and Northfield, with each of the three teams ending the regular season with conference records of 8-1.

Out of the three teams, Owatonna will enter with the worst overall record (18-6) of

the three teams. Faribault, who had only lost once entering Tuesday, will exit the regular season still with the best overall record in the conference at 19-2.

Northfield, who lost to Faribault, but defeated Owatonna during the season, ends the year with a record 21-3. The three-way tie for the conference title is the first since 1987, and ironically enough, happened to feature both Owatonna and Faribault, who tied with Albert Lea that year.

An AWESOME Blossom career

Oswald keeps re-writing the record books

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

Is there anything on the basketball court that Blossom senior Megan Oswald can't do?

Not only is she in the top five all-time for career assists and career points, but this past month, she broke two school records, career rebounds and career steals.

After last Friday's game, Oswald has recorded at least 976 rebounds and 309 steals and counting.

Coach John Bruns said rebounds and steals are hard statistics to keep track of during the flow of a game, so they didn't know for sure that Oswald had broken either record until the day after each record-breaking game.

In fact, the four-year varsity starter found out she broke each record when she saw her coach's posts on Twitter.

"I was pretty excited to see that I got them. I feel like my hard work is paying off," she said.

Oswald believes her hard work and constant effort is what makes her such a great rebounder.

"Sometimes I'm a little bit shorter than people, but I feel like if you work hard, you can get them," she said.

Bruns added that her determination and unwavering resolve to never quit on a ball has also helped her become an elite rebounder.

"There's some rebounds where there might be two or three other girls there and some kids might say, 'I'm not going to get that one,' and head back the other way, but she never really gives up on a play. Sometimes it's just taking a couple extra running steps after it and all of the sudden she comes out with it," he said. "She's also got really, really strong hands and if she gets her hand on the ball, it's usually going to end up that she's going to have it."



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Due to her scoring and rebounding ability, Oswald is often double-teamed, but she has become a very good passer and currently is in top five all-time for Blossom Prairie career assists, which is especially impressive because she's a forward and not a guard.

"It means a lot, but I feel like it's not defining."

Megan Oswald
Blossom Record Breaker



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Blossom Prairie all-time career leader in rebounds and steals, Megan Oswald, leads the Awesome Blossoms' fast-break offense after collecting a steal.

When it comes to her career steals record, Oswald said what has helped her a lot is her speed and seeing her opponents' eyes and where they're going to throw the ball. Bruns agreed. "She's been a great anticipator since third and fourth grade. We saw it then, she just had a knack for knowing where the next pass was going to go, and she's been doing this since then. That anticipation is huge," he said. He noted that another reason she See AWESOME on B4 ►

BOYS HOCKEY

Same opponent, different results

BY MITCHELL BREUER
SPORTS WRITER

This week saw the Owatonna boys hockey team take on Northfield in two separate matchups with each game seeing different results.

In the first matchup of the week on Thursday, Owatonna had the opportunity to score, outshooting Northfield 30-18, but the Huskies could not take advantage, losing 2-3.

Scoring the only goals for the team was junior Tanner Stendel.

In its second meeting of the week Saturday, Owatonna found its scoring struggles go away by scoring five

unanswered goals. Northfield finally hit the net in the third period, but that would be the team's only goal of the contest.

Leading the way through the scoring barrage was senior Zach Kubicek, who had two goals in the game.

As the regular season nears a close, Owatonna currently sits at 10-2-1 in conference play, putting them in third in the Big Nine standings behind Mankato East (12-2) and Mankato West (11-2).

The Huskies will be back at home Wednesday as they host Red Wing. Puck-drop will be at 7 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL



PHOTO COURTESY SKYE DEVISE

Medford senior Catrina Herr goes up for jumpshot over Hayfield's Aine Stasko during the Tigers' 62-49 win over the then 10-3 Hayfield Vikings.

Back-to-back wins for Tigers

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

After a narrow 60-58 win over NRHEG last Friday, the Medford girls basketball team made it back-to-back wins by beating the Hayfield Vikings 62-49 on Tuesday, March 2.

The Tigers led 32-25 at halftime. In the second half, the Tigers outscored the Vikings by six, 30-24, en route to winning 62-49.

Some keys to Medford's win were forcing 27 Hayfield turnovers and grabbing 22 offensive rebounds.

Two days later, the Tigers had a shot to

make it three wins in a row, but they ran into a buzzsaw as they had to go on the road to face one of the top two teams in the Gopher Conference, the then 11-2 Waterville-Elysian-Morris-town Buccaneers. The Bucs showed why their record is so strong by beating the Tigers 70-34 on Thursday, March 4.

With last week's win and loss included, the Tigers' overall record is now 7-4 and their Gopher Conference record is 6-3.

Medford's next and final regular season game is a home contest against Bethlehem Academy at 7:15 p.m. on Friday.



Dr. Deborah J. Lien
DDS, MBS
ORTHODONTIC SPECIALIST

583.6613
132 2nd Ave NE
Bloomington

www.drdeborahlienorthodontics.com

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Still on fire, Blossoms extend streak to 9

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

Following its 20-point win over NRHEG, the Blooming Prairie girls basketball team faced an even tougher test when

they hosted the 10-4 Hayfield Vikings, but once again the Blossoms' defense helped them beat a Gopher Conference opponent, this time 59-45 on Friday, March 5. The Blossoms were

firing on all cylinders right out of the gate and pushed their lead to 13-1 in the opening minutes of the game. However, Blooming Prairie Head Coach John Bruns reported

that the first half wasn't all sounds and sailing far, the Blossoms as both struggled with foul trouble.

"Hayfield had two starters, Ward and Stasko, commit three

fouls each," he said. "In addition, Blooming Prairie's leading scorer and rebounder, Megan Oswald, only played about seven minutes in the first half as she sat with two fouls. In her place, Anna Pauly came up big with some huge rebounds and several blocks in the first half," he said.

The Blossoms led 26-19 at halftime. After limiting the Vikings to just 19 points in the first half, Bruns noted that Blooming Prairie's defense continued to make a big impact in the second half.

"BP's defense was the key throughout the game in contesting shots and containing penetration. I feel like we got outbounded by Hayfield as they came up with quite a few offensive rebounds, but we were able to limit the damage on those extra possessions by continuing to defend and battle for the defensive stop," he said. "[We] withstood several Hayfield runs to earn a big conference win."

On the other end of the court, Blooming

Prairie's offense was led by Bobbie Bruns.

"Offensively, Bobbie Bruns led the way with 18 points and six assists while handling the waves of pressure put on by Hayfield," Bruns said.

Two more Blooming Prairie players reached double digits in points: Megan Oswald added 14 points, 12 in the second half, and Allison Krohnberg posted a career-high 13 points.

The win extended BP's winning streak to nine games. With this win, the Blossoms' overall record improves to 14-1 and their Gopher Conference record improves to 11-0.

Blooming Prairie's next and final game of the regular season is a road contest against Maple River at 7:15 p.m. on Friday, March 12.

BP statistics: Bobbie Bruns – 18 points, 6 assists and 6 steals, Megan Oswald – 14 points and 8 rebounds, Allison Krohnberg – 13 points, Anna Pauly – 7 points and 8 rebounds, Maren Forystek – 5 points and Emily Miller – 2 points.



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Blooming Prairie senior Maren Forystek looks for an open teammate as she cuts to the basket during the second half of the Awesome Blossoms' 59-45 win over Hayfield last Friday.

Strong defense keeps BP on a roll

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

After a relatively easy 67-35 win over Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (J-W-P) March 1, the Blooming Prairie girls basketball team faced two tougher tests later in the week as they went on the road to face the New Richland-Hartland-Elendale-Geneva (NRHEG) Panthers on March 2.

Despite facing some tougher competition, the Blossoms extended their winning streak to eight games by beating the Panthers 59-39. The Blossoms' momentum from their 32-point win over J-W-P seemed to carry over to their game against the Panthers as they got off to a great start.

"NRHEG is always a tough place to play, but we were able to get off to a great start in the first half to take a big 33-11 lead into halftime," said Blooming Prairie Head Coach John Bruns.

NRHEG Head Coach Onika Peterson explained that one of the main reasons the Panthers' defense

struggled in the first half is because they had a difficult time stopping Blooming Prairie's post players.

"We struggled defensively trying to contain Oswald and Pauly on the inside," she said. On the other end of the court, Bruns was very happy with the Blossoms' defense.

"We played outstanding defense in that stretch and didn't allow a made three-pointer to a very good shooting NRHEG team in the first half," he said.

Peterson agreed that Blooming Prairie's defense really affected the Panthers' ability to get their offense going.

"Blooming Prairie's defense is tough – they extended their guards so far out, pushing our three-point shooters off the line. When we would try to get it to the high post or inside they would have their bigs underneath to protect the basket and clamp down on the high post," she explained.

In addition to their strong defense, Bruns was also pleased with Blooming Prairie's of-

fense in the first half.

"We had a balanced attack in the first half, which featured seven different girls scoring," he said.

He noted that Megan Oswald led the Blossoms with 13 first-half points. Bruns said, "NRHEG really focused their efforts on Bobbie Bruns and Megan Oswald, our two leading scorers, but we had some kids really step up tonight."

Specifically, he mentioned Anna Pauly who achieved three career-highs with 10 points, eight rebounds and five blocks and Emily Miller who scored a career-high 10 points.

With the help of those role players stepping up, Blooming Prairie won 59-39.

"This was a great win for us," he said. Meanwhile, Peterson said the Panthers will try to learn from this game and get back on track when they face their next opponent.

"Overall, not the outcome we wanted, but we will have to bounce back and prepare for [Waseca on Thursday, March 11]," she said.

With this loss, the Panthers' overall record falls to 4-10 and their Gopher Conference record dropped to 2-9.

With this win, the Blossoms improved their overall record to 13-1 and their Gopher Conference record to 10-0.

BP statistics: Megan Oswald – 19 points, 10 rebounds and 5 steals, Anna Pauly – 10 points, 8 rebounds and 5 blocks, Emily Miller – 10 points, Bobbie Bruns – 9 points, 6 assists and 6 steals, Allison Krohnberg – 6 points, Maren Forystek – 3 points and Ashleigh Alwes – 2 points.

NRHEG statistics: Faith Nielsen – 14 points, 4 rebounds and 1 assist, Erin Jacobson – 12 points, 2 rebounds and 2 steals, Kendall Johnson – 8 points, 9 rebounds 1 steal and 1 assist, Rhys Martin – 3 points and 4 rebounds, Sidney Schultz – 2 points, 6 rebounds, 2 steals and 2 assists, Hallie Schultz – 6 rebounds, Andy Briggs – 3 rebounds, Cassidy Martin – 3 rebounds and Sarah George – 1 rebound.



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Blooming Prairie's Emily Miller passes the ball to an open teammate. Miller scored two points, but made her biggest impact on defense as she helped hold Hayfield's talented freshman Kristen Watson to just four points. Watson averages nearly 16 points per game.

WANTED: Players, volunteers for alternative baseball

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

As he got older, Taylor Duncan noticed there were fewer opportunities for people, like himself, who have autism or other dis-

abilities and for some people, mostly those who reside in suburban and rural areas, there are no services to continue their path toward independence.

"We need to do better at having enough

services to ensure that people with disabilities have the encouragement to be successful in society. Some need more help beyond high school," he said.

Now, through alternative baseball, he's working to combat that problem.

Duncan, the commissioner/executive director of Alternative Baseball Organization, said alternative baseball provides the ultimate baseball experience for people with autism and other disabilities.

"It's about providing a service for others, like myself, to give them an opportunity to compete and continue to learn," he said.

There are currently 82 alternative baseball teams in 33 states, and now he's looking for a volunteer coach/manager, players and volunteers to start another team to serve those in Steele County and the surrounding area.

He said coaches with

baseball experience and/or experience with people who have autism or other disabilities is a huge plus.

"As soon as we find a manager and the governor lifts his orders, we can start a team in Steele County," he said. "Players and volunteers who sign up in the meantime will join the Rochester team."

In order to participate, Duncan said players must be 15 years old or older and they must be able to play independently in the field.

By participating in alternative baseball, he says teens and adults with disabilities will develop their social skills, teamwork, team chemistry skills, personal and team leadership skills and learn how to handle the good days and the bad days.

He noted that all those skills are needed to be successful in life beyond the baseball diamond.

"They've got to learn

how to work together in order to be successful in the job sector," Duncan said. "We're teachable just like everybody else is, we just want the same opportunities to be successful."

He mentioned that their alternative baseball team also helps instill confidence in players, builds their confidence, provides them a community of people with similar disabilities and gives them a place to belong.

"This organization gives others on the spectrum/special needs the opportunity to be accepted for who they are and to be encouraged to be the best they can be," he said.

In addition to encouraging and helping people with autism and other disabilities, Duncan said another reason he's starting up more teams throughout the United States is so people on the autism spectrum or those who have special needs

don't have to travel far in order to continue to develop their social and physical skills and move toward independence.

"There needs to be things in towns big and small. They need to have something in their own area to participate in," he said.

He also wants alternative baseball to continue expanding so they can help even more teenagers and adults.

"We've barely scratched the surface," Duncan said. "Eventually, we want to serve the entire country."

Anyone interested in playing alternative baseball or being a coach or volunteer should visit www.alternativebaseball.org and click on the play or volunteer tab and fill out the form.

He said it typically takes six months to fill a full team so he's hoping the Steele County team can start in mid-summer, but COVID-19 will largely dictate that.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Alternative baseball gives more people with autism and other special needs the opportunity to grow their social and physical skills for success in life on and off the baseball diamond.

Fresh beginnings build confidence for senior

BY MITCHELL BREUER
SPORTS WRITER

One of the most exciting moments for a high school student can prove to be being a part of a team.

Owatonna senior Emmanuel Ojulu is experiencing that feeling with the school's boys basketball team, which he only joined this year.

While he may not be a starter or getting starter minutes, it has still been a fun opportunity for Ojulu, who said he is thankful just to be accepted onto the team.

"They put a lot of faith in me, just to be able to bring me out here and to express myself, have fun," Ojulu said. "I got to give a lot of thanks to them, because I wouldn't be here without them. It's my first year, so I'm very happy I made the team."

The support he has received from the team is something Ojulu believes should be embedded into every high school team across the country, saying that not only has he had fun, but it has made him a better athlete.

"For example, me, it'd be my first year. I feel like I've really gotten better over the past few weeks, and overall, this season I've gotten better," Ojulu said. "I mean, I haven't played basketball since like eighth grade, and I didn't really take seriously that you need grit, but this year they pushed me well. They've integrated me into the program really be good."

One person that has seen Ojulu's improvement firsthand is the team's head coach, Joshua Williams, who said that he wishes that he would have had the opportunity to work with Ojulu during his entire high school career.

"He's putting in a ton of time this year and done a lot of great things," Williams said. "It would've been great to have him all four years, but just even to have him for this year alone, he's been a great addition to our team. He works hard every day, brings a genuine smile and fun to the team and it's been great having him."

Ojulu's improvement was on full display during the Huskies' win against Winona earlier this season. With the team up big, the game changed course when senior chants from the stands for Ojulu began to emerge.

Williams obliged to the crowd's request, and with minutes remaining, Ojulu was subbed in. After that, the crowd continued to make noise for Ojulu, hoping he would get a chance to shoot the ball.

When that chance finally came, Ojulu took full advantage, scoring a three-pointer to the loudest applause of the night.

"Oh, that crowd feeling was really good," Ojulu said. "If you watch the video, it kind of brought the celebration out of me, and it just came out of nowhere. I don't celebrate like that, but the crowd being all loud and my team is cheering me up, it made me feel really good."

A moment like that would give anyone confidence, but for Ojulu that confidence has been building all season, saying that as the season nears its close, that the motivation he's gained in himself is one of his biggest takeaways from the experience.

"My main takeaway is to stay true to yourself, stay working hard, put in a lot of work actually, and have faith in yourself, believe in yourself," Ojulu said.



Huskies senior Emmanuel Ojulu watches on during Owatonna's game against Rochester John Marshall Friday. He may not be a starter, but he expresses his thanks for being accepted to the team for the first time.



This year has marked senior Emmanuel Ojulu's first year playing basketball since he was in eighth grade.

"Stay true to yourself, stay working hard, put in a lot of work actually and have faith in yourself."

Emmanuel Ojulu
Huskies Senior

SCOREBOOK

Big Nine Standings Boys Hockey

Mankato East	12-2
Mankato West	11-2-2
Owatonna	10-2-1
Rochester Mayo	9-3-1
Northfield 9-5	

Owatonna Boys Hockey Results

March 4 - vs. Northfield - 2-3
March 6 - vs. Northfield - 5-1
March 8 - 7 p.m. vs. Rochester Mayo
March 10 - 7 p.m. vs. Red Wing
March 11 - 7:15 p.m. at Rochester JM

Big Nine Standings Girls Hockey

Northfield	13-0
Owatonna	13-2
Mankato East	10-4-1
Albert Lea	9-5
Austin	6-8-1

Owatonna Girls Hockey

March 2 - vs. Winona - 13-0
March 4 - vs. Northfield - 1-4
March 8 - 7 p.m. at Austin
March 10 - 7:15 p.m. at Albert Lea
March 11 - 7:15 p.m. at New Prague

Big Nine Standings Boys Basketball

Austin	13-2
Mankato East	12-3
Mankato West	12-3
Owatonna	11-4
Rochester Century	11-5

Owatonna Boys Basketball

March 2 - vs. Winona - 67-88
March 5 - vs. Rochester JM - 73-53
March 8 - 7:30 p.m. - at Northfield
March 11 - 7:30 p.m. at Red Wing
March 13 - 2:30 p.m. vs. Mankato East

Big Nine Standings Girls Basketball

Rochester Mayo	12-1
Mankato West	12-2
Mankato East	12-3
Northfield	8-4
Austin	7-3
Owatonna	6-8

Owatonna Girls Basketball

March 2 - vs. Winona - 57-50
March 5 - vs. Rochester JM - 52-35
March 8 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Northfield
March 11 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Red Wing
March 13 - 7:30 p.m. at Mankato East

Gopher Standings Boys Basketball

Maple River	13-1
Hayfield	12-3
United South Central	5-6
WEM	5-8
Blooming Prairie	6-8
NRHEG	5-10
Medford	2-12

Blooming Prairie Boys Basketball

March 2 - vs. NRHEG - 63-50
March 5 - vs. Hayfield - 39-78
March 8 - 7:15 p.m. at WEM
March 11 - 7:15 p.m. vs. JWP
March 12 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Maple River

NRHEG Boys Basketball

March 2 - vs. Blooming Prairie - 60-63
March 5 - vs. JWP - 70-28
March 8 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Hayfield
March 9 - 8 p.m. vs. Mankato Loyola
March 12 - 7:15 p.m. vs. WEM

Medford Boys Basketball

March 2 - vs. Hayfield - 54-80
March 4 - vs. WEM - 39-60
March 8 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Maple River
March 12 - 7:15 p.m. at SA

Gopher Standings Girls Basketball

Blooming Prairie	14-1
WEM	12-3
Medford	7-4
Hayfield	10-5
Maple River	6-8
NRHEG	5-10

Blooming Prairie Girls Basketball

March 1 - vs. JWP - 67-35
March 2 - vs. NRHEG - 59-39
March 5 - vs. Hayfield 59-45
March 8 - 7:15 p.m. vs. WEM
March 9 - 7:15 p.m. at Medford
March 12 - 7:15 p.m. at Maple River

NRHEG Girls Basketball

March 2 - vs. Blooming Prairie - 39-59
March 5 - vs. United South Central - 67-41
March 8 - 7:15 p.m. at Hayfield
March 11 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Waseca
March 12 - 7:15 p.m. vs. WEM

GIRLS HOCKEY

Highs, lows in same week for Huskies

BY MITCHELL BREUER
SPORTS WRITER

It is not often you see a team score its most dominant win of the season and most devastating loss in the same week, but that was the case for the Owatonna girls hockey team.

The team started off its week on Tuesday in Winona, where they put on a scoring clinic, putting a season-high 13 goals while completely shutting out the winless Winhawks.

Four Huskies had two or more goals, while three had four assists.

Adding to the scoring absurdities, freshman Samantha Bogen had herself a night, with a hat trick and then some, as she had a season-high five goals in the game.

In total, the Huskies took 57 shots on goal during the game to Winona's six.

Coming off a performance like this, Owatonna did not have much time to celebrate, as a matchup against Big Nine leader, Northfield, awaited them on Thursday. The Huskies, who had previously lost to Northfield earlier in the season,

saw a big opportunity ahead of them, as a win would put them in a tie for first in the standings.

But Northfield came out strong defeating the Huskies 4-1.

The game started with both teams scoring goals in the first, with freshman Lillian Hunst, scoring for the Huskies. However, the Owatonna team that had proven to be a high-scoring force all season could not find the net on Thursday. The Huskies had their opportunities, putting up 19 shots on goal to Northfield's 23, but they could not get anything going.

Owatonna's one-point outing marked the only time all season that team failed to score multiple points in a game.

Despite the loss, Owatonna remains in second place in the Big Nine with a record of 13-2.

The Huskies will finish the regular season on the road with the team's next game on Wednesday at 7:15 p.m. match against Albert Lea. This game will be their second meeting of the season. Owatonna took the first matchup in February 5-1.

Owatonna will end the week and the regular season Friday in New Prague. Puck-drop for that game will be at 7:15 p.m.



Sophomore Lillian Hunst skates down the ice during Owatonna's game against Northfield Thursday night. Hunst was responsible for the only goal in the outing for the Huskies.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Blossoms extend winning streak to 4

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

The Blooming Prairie boys basketball team appears to be peaking at the right time as they made it four wins in a row by beating the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) Panthers 63-60 on March 2.

After winning a nail-bitter 67-66, over Hope Academy the night before their game against NRHEG, Blooming Prairie Head Coach Nate Pillier wasn't sure if the Blossoms would have the stamina for another challenging game against the Panthers.

However, the Blossoms didn't show any lethargy out of the gate as they jumped out to an early 9-3 lead after a three-pointer by Luke Larkoski.

After trading buckets for the next four



Blossoms senior Alex Miller brings the ball up the court during the first half of the Blossoms' 63-60 win over NRHEG.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

minutes, Blooming held a 17-9 lead with just over nine minutes left in the first half,

but that's when the Panthers rallied, going on a 9-1 run to tie the game at 18.

NRHEG Head Coach Isaiah Lundberg said the Panthers played well in stretches but couldn't make it last.

"Offensively, we did pick it up a bit as the half went on and did some good things, but just never got into a good flow, I thought, on that end," he said.

Pillier explained that the Panthers presented a difficult challenge for the Blossoms' guards.

"We had to really defend hard as they have quick guards who can score a bunch of points. Colin Jordison pulled a tough assignment chasing Dexter Lee around the court," he said.

After NRHEG tied the game at 18,

Blooming Prairie got a three-pointer from Alex Pillier to re-claim the lead, but the Panthers scored back-to-back baskets by Porter Peterson to take their first lead of the game, 22-21.

"Defensively, we had some good minutes in stretches but credit to them for moving the ball, getting open looks and making them," Lundberg said.

Speaking of making open looks, the Blossoms sank two consecutive three-pointers, one by Alex Miller and the other by Drew Kittelson, to give Blooming Prairie a 27-22 lead with a little less than four minutes left in the first half.

After Kittelson's three, Lundberg called a timeout and his

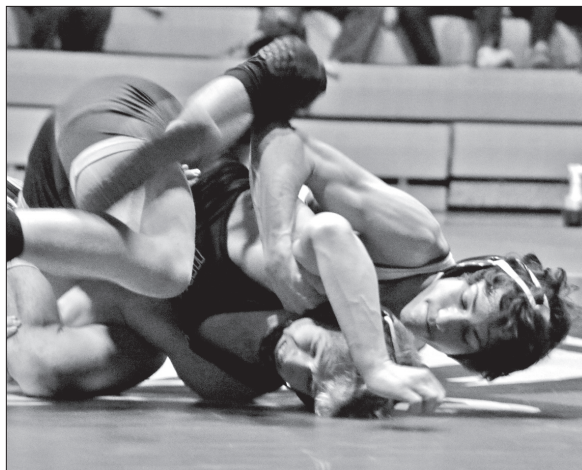
See BLOSSOMS on B9 ►



Blossoms Junior Colin Jordison drives around NRHEG freshman Dexter Lee.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

WRESTLING



Westfield senior Lane Lembke tries to gain control of the upper body of Medford senior Derek Bartosch. Lembke won by decision and his win trimmed the Razorbacks' deficit to 12-9.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Tigers keep rolling with 2 dual wins

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

Entering its triangular against Westfield and New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG), the Medford wrestling team had won five out of its last six duals and now after beating Westfield 54-18 and NRHEG 60-18 on Friday, Mar. 5, its won seven of its last eight duals.

The first dual of the triangular featured Medford and Westfield. Tommy Elwood got the Tigers on the board first by beating the

See TIGERS on B9 ►



Medford senior Josiah Hedensten tries to control the right leg of Westfield's Tyler Archer during their 195-pound match. Hedensten won by decision to increase the Tigers' lead to 39-18.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Improvement nets wins for Huskies

BY MITCHELL BREUER
SPORTS WRITER

In continued sign of improvement, the Owatonna girls basketball team accomplished its first weekly sweep of the season, as the team defeated both Winona and Rochester John Marshall during the week.

The week started off as the Huskies preformed a season sweep of Winona, scoring 57-50 win. Junior Lexi Mendenhall led the way for the team with 21 points.

Entering Friday,

the story was different for the Huskies as they went on the road to face off against a Rochester John Marshall team that

defeated them earlier in the season 52-67. The night ended with vengeance for the Huskies, who scored a dominant 52-35 win. Senior Sarah Kingland led the way for the team, scoring a game-high 20 points.

With the wins, the Huskies improve to 6-8 on the season.

This coming week will mark the end of Owatonna's regular season with three games scheduled. The Huskies will return home for Thursday, as the square off against Red Wing, hoping for a better result than the last time the met when the Wingers dominated and won 38-63. Tip-off will be at 7:30 p.m.

BOYS BASKETBALL



Medford junior guard Henry Grayson leads the Tigers' fastbreak during the final minutes of their game against the WEM Buccaneers.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Tigers can't keep up with WEM

BY ALEX NUEHRING
SPORTS WRITER

After a disappointing 80-54 loss to the then 10-3 Hayfield Vikings last Tuesday, the Medford boys basketball team was looking to bounce back when it hosted the Waterville-Elysian-Morristown (WEM) Buccaneers, but in the second half the Buccaneers pulled away and ended up winning 60-39 on Thursday, March 4.

After each team scored a basket, Medford forward AJ Vandereide added a dunk to his highlight reel and gave the Tigers a 4-2 lead.

Then, WEM got a basket to tie the game, but soon after that Kael Hermanstorfer's three-pointer was nothing but not and Medford led 7-4 with 11 minutes left in the first half.

The Buccaneers responded with back-to-back baskets, but Hermanstorfer made two free throws and that up with a dunk of his own to give the Tigers an 11-8 lead.

With just over five minutes left in the first half, Medford senior forward sank a three-pointer to give the Tigers their largest lead of the game, 14-10.

The Buccaneers then went on a 5-0 run to take a 15-14 lead, but the Tigers' Connor Jones hit a three-pointer to give Medford a two-point lead with three and a half minutes left in the first half.

Unfortunately for the Tigers, WEM went on a 5-2 run over the course of those final three and a half minutes and the Bucs

took a 20-19 lead into halftime.

WEM got off to a strong start in the second half by going on a 9-2 run to increase its lead to 29-21.

However, Medford responded when junior Henry Grayson made a basket while getting fouled and made the free throw for an old-fashioned three-point play.

After the Buccaneers scored a basket, Grayson got fouled while making a basket again and once again he sank the free throw to cut the Tigers' deficit to 31-27.

Following WEM making one of two free throws, Hermanstorfer scored on a layup to get Medford within three points, 32-29.

However, after that basket, the Buccaneers' offense really took off. They went on a 16-4 run, with all four of Medford's points scored by Hermanstorfer, to take a 48-33 lead with just under six minutes left in the game.

An AJ Vandereide dunk got the Tigers within 12 points, 50-38, with three minutes left in the game, but the Buccaneers responded with a 7-0 run to seal their win.

Medford ended up losing 60-39.

With this loss included, the Tigers' overall record falls to 2-12 and their Gopher Conference record is now 2-9.

Medford's next and final regular season game is a road contest against 3-10 Bethlehem Academy at 7:15 p.m. on Friday. The Tigers beat the Cardinals at home by three points earlier this season.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Huskies snap losing streak

BY MITCHELL BREUER
SPORTS WRITER

The Owatonna boys basketball team's return home Friday proved to be a good one, as the team came away with a dominant win over Rochester John Marshall.

Owatonna entered the night, needing a good showing, after losing its previous two games to Mankato West and Winona, and it appeared that a matchup against JM would prove that, as the Huskies dominated their earlier matchup, 58-22.

However, this game proved to be a closer affair, as early on the two traded the lead, with the Rockets launching ahead early on. However, at the end of the half it was the Huskies standing tall with an eight-point lead.

The second half started off with lead remaining around eight in the opening minutes.

However, as the half carried on, it became all about the Huskies, who eventually went on a 11-2 run to establish a big lead that they held on to for the remainder of the game.

By the time the final buzzer sounded, Owatonna had built its lead up to 20, with the final score being 73-53.

It was a night that proved to be about the guards, as senior Payton Beyer and junior Brayden Williams led the team in scoring with 23 and 19 point, respectively.

The win improves the Huskies record to 11-4, placing them fourth in the Big Nine standings, two games behind the current leader, Austin.

This week, the Huskies will end their regular season with a pair of rematches.

First, the team will travel to Red Wing for a Thursday night match-up beginning at 7:30 p.m. The Huskies proved to



Junior Evan Dushek guards a drive by Rochester John Marshall Friday night.

STAFF PHOTO BY MITCHELL BREUER

be successful earlier in the season against the Wingers, winning 61-55. Owatonna will wrap up the regular season with its first Saturday

game since January by hosting Mankato East. Like Red Wing, Owatonna owns a win over Mankato East earlier this season, however

the game proved to be the closest of the season for the Huskies, barely scrapping by with 57-55 win. With the opportunity for both teams to

either rise or fall in the Big Nine standings, this game could be considered a must win for both. Tip-off will be at 2:30 p.m.

Oswald keeps rewriting the Blossom record books

▲ AWESOME from B4 is so good at swiping the ball is because she's played a lot of Blooming Prairie High School and AAU basketball games and that has helped develop her basketball instincts.

"She definitely had that back in third and fourth grade and has

just improved it every year," he said. Bruns knows that because he was her coach in third through sixth grade and then again in eighth grade when Oswald joined the varsity team.

Including Oswald, four of the Blossoms' five seniors have been

on varsity since eighth grade, while the fifth senior, Ashleigh Alwes, along with junior Bobbie Bruns have been on varsity for the past four years.

Oswald believes that her strong chemistry with those five teammates has helped them play well together as

a team and helped her achieve these records. "I can't really do it without my teammates, so that means we've been working really well together," she said.

Bruns agreed that Oswald's teammates deserve credit for helping her achieve these records.

"It's a team effort getting those steals. We talk about it all the time about getting deflections and there's a lot of times where her steals are tipped by a teammate and she ends up getting the ball. Then, she's also tipping balls and other people are getting steals and as a team we get a lot of steals that way," he said. "It's a full-team concept so it's a cool record for not just Megan, but the whole team because it all goes hand-in-hand."

Oswald explained that her teammates have also played a big role in her attaining the school rebounding record.

"There's lots of times where someone else will box out and

then suddenly it just opens up and I'm able to go [get the ball] or a guard is able to go. A lot of times I'll box someone out and then someone else might go so it's a big team effort on rebounds. We talk about five girls going in all the time," she said.

With the help from her teammates, she now holds two school records, but she's not done yet.

"It means a lot, but I feel like it's not defining. It feels good to get it, but I feel like there's other stuff I can still look forward to getting," she said.

Oswald is looking forward to reaching 1,000 career rebounds and leading the Blossoms to a successful run in the section playoffs.

Averaging nearly 13 rebounds per game and with at least 976 rebounds already under her belt and three more regular season games as well as playoff games, she'll most likely achieve her 1,000-rebound goal.



Johnson, Doerhoefer & Miner P.A.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

"We understand small business because we are a small business"

314 E Main St • Blooming Prairie • 583-7528
685 W Bridge St, Suite 6 • Owatonna • 451-9136
133 N Broadway • New Richland • 465-3810

johndoerpcpa.com

SUBSCRIBING MADE EASY!

4 convenient ways to subscribe:

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

STEELE COUNTY Times

ASK THE MOTOR MEDICS
By Shannon Nordstrom and Russ Evans

Dear Motor Medics,
I have a car that needs a timing belt, and it is going to cost over \$1000.00 to change. That sounds crazy to me. I have had belts changed before on my cars and they have never been more than \$50.00 but none of my cars have had timing belts. It is a 2005 Lexus so I know it might run a little more than some of the other domestic cars I have had but come on, it is just way over the top and I think I may be getting taken. Can I just let it go?

Ben in Portland Maine

Dear Ben,
Welcome cars with timing belts. When we give purchase advice, we will tell buyers to take the cost of regular timing belt service into account when they purchase a car. It is a Must-do item that if let go will eventually break and in the case of an interference engine "which most are" will destroy the engine or severely damage it at the very least and that can cost thousands to repair. The timing belt takes the place of the timing chain and it times the movement of the valves and pistons so that the valves are closed when the pistons get to the top. If the valves are open, then they will collide, and parts will break. Timing belts are typically in the range of \$400.00 to well over \$1000.00 to do the job on some cars.

Take care, the Motor Medics

Dear Motor Medics,
I was filling up my washer bottle in the dark so that I could keep my windows clean and wanted to use the kind that cleans bugs off and de-ices, you know the kind that's orange. Well, it is also the color of engine antifreeze so if you haven't got it yet I poured engine antifreeze into my windshield washer bottle. Antifreeze really makes a mess on the windshield and I cannot see a thing. How do I get it out? The bottle is buried deep in the fender.

Mark in Bennington Vermont

Dear Mark,
You are not the first or the last one to do this. We take this question several times a year and it can be fixed. You need to get all the coolant out of the bottle and clean the glass well to get rid of the streaks the coolant leaves. If you have not run the pump then get a suction gun from a parts store and remove all the coolant you can then flush with water, suck out the water with the suction gun and repeat until free of antifreeze then add new washer fluid. If you have run the pump, you will need to do the previous steps then run the pump to clear the lines of antifreeze. You can also have your local mechanic do this for you. Mixing fluids is never good but mixed-up washer fluid is easier to fix than other fluids.

Take care, the Motor Medics

Schaeffer's
SPECIALIZED LUBRICANTS

Bruce Freerksen
[507]273-9110
bruce@schaefferlube.com
West Concord, MN

L&D Recycling, Inc.
Scrap Iron & Metals

WE BUY ALL METALS!
[507]927-2400
LDR Recycling.com
65570 STATE HWY 56, West Concord, MN

Kappy's COLLISION CENTER
Owensboro Collision Specialist

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

SEE KAPPY
Charlie & Al Kaplan
507-451-6989

ALL Insurance
AUTO • HOME • LIFE • BUSINESS INSURANCE

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

Hoff's Auto Repair

704 7th St Circle Se • 634-4633

Boe Auto Center

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

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 Medics @ online at underthehoodshow.com

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

Blossoms extend winning streak to 4

◀ **BLOSSOMS** from B7 coaching during the timeout seemed to work as the Panthers ended the first half on an 8-3 run, with Blossoms Prairie's three points coming on a three-point shot by Colin Jordison. The score was tied 30 at halftime.

The second half also went back-and-forth with neither team leading by more than two points until the Blossoms got back-to-back baskets to take a 42-38 lead with a little less than 11 minutes left in the game.

However, the Panthers answered with two back-to-back baskets to tie the game right back up at 42.

A few minutes later, NRHEG junior Jack Olson scored back-to-back baskets to give the Panthers a four-point lead.

"We six minutes left in the game we had a 50-46 lead and

were starting to put some stops together on defense and score on the offensive end, but we had a loose ball that we didn't get. Blossoms got it [and its possession] ended in an and-one, which they made, and now the score was 50-49. Including that basket, they went on a 13-3 run to stretch the lead to 59-53," Lundberg said.

During that run, Blossoms Prairie got most of its points from Drew Kittelson and Mitchell Fiebigler.

Piller said it's no coincidence that it was those two who came up with baskets when the Blossoms needed an answer.

"Drew Kittelson and Mitchell Fiebigler are workhorses for us and put their bodies to the test each outing," he said.

The Panthers kept it close, but back-to-back baskets by Fiebigler

gave Blossoms Prairie a 62-56 lead.

After a free throw by Miller, the Blossoms led 63-58 with six and a half seconds left in the game, but the Panthers didn't give up. Instead, Dexter Lee got a quick layup to make it a one-possession game with just under two seconds left in the game.

All Blossoms Prairie had to do was inbound the ball and if they were fouled, make at least one free throw to seal the win, but their inbound pass was out of the reach of Kittelson and went out of bounds without being touched. That meant the Panthers got one more offensive possession to try to make a three-point shot and send the game into overtime.

NRHEG inbounded the ball to the young-center member of their team, Lee, but his

three-point shot came up short and Blossoms Prairie won the game 63-60.

Coach Piller was impressed with how the Blossoms played from start to finish. "I thought the boys showed good focus throughout the game," he said. "It's a real nice win for us within the always tough Gopher Conference."

BP scoring: Drew Kittelson – 21 points, Mitchell Fiebigler – 12 points, Colin Jordison – 10 points, Alex Miller – 8 points, Luke Larkoski – 5 points, Alex Piller – 3 points, Chris Naatz – 2 points and Jacob Naatz – 2 points.

NRHEG scoring: Ashton Johnson – 15 points, Dexter Lee – 14 points, Porter Peterson – 12 points, Jack Olson – 10 points, Benjamin Schoenrock – 5 points and Jaxon Beck – 4 points.



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUHRING

After securing the takedown, Westfield's Sam Skillestad uses his right hand to try to take control of the right leg of Medford's George McCarthy. In the third period, Skillestad trailed 7-4, but he got three takedowns in the final minute to win the match 10-9. Despite his come from behind win, the Razorbaks lost the dual 54-18.

Tigers keep rolling with 2 dual wins

◀ **TIGERS** from B7 Razorbaks' Hunter Simonson by fall.

Westfield eighth-grader Bo Zwiener tied the match up at 6-6 by beating Evan Schweithal by fall. At 120 pounds, Medford's Jack Meyer won by fall against Westfield's Kevin Hodge.

However, once again, the Razorbaks answered right back as senior Lane Lembke won by decision and sophomore Cade Christianson won the next match by fall to give Westfield a 15-12 lead.

At 138 pounds, the Tigers won by forfeit to reclaim their three-point lead.

Right after that, came arguably the best match of the dual when Westfield's Sam Skillestad faced Medford's George McCarthy. In the final minute of the third period, Skillestad trailed 7-4, but he got two takedowns, gave up two escapes and got the last takedown he needed to win in the last 15 seconds of the third period to come away with a win by decision 10-9 and tie the match at 18-18.

However, after that, it was all Medford as they won the final seven matches.

First, Carron Hoffman won by fall. Then, the Tigers won the next two matches by forfeit to take a 36-18 lead.

At 182 pounds, Medford's Josiah Hedensten faced one of Westfield's best wrestlers, Tyler Archer. Despite the stiff competition, Hedensten came away with the win by decision to increase the Tigers' lead to 39-18. Then, another one of the Razorbaks' best wrestler, Dylan Ehmke, got the opportunity to get Westfield back on track, but it was Medford's Dylan Heiderscheidt who won by decision to make the score 42-18.

Lastly, the Tigers' 220-pounder Brennan Hoffman and heavy-weight Gavin Hermes both won by fall to give Medford a 54-18 win.

After beating Westfield, the Tigers didn't have much time to recuperate as they faced the NRHEG Panthers in the next dual of the evening.

Tommy Elwood gave Medford a quick 6-0 lead by defeating NRHEG's Seth Staloch by fall within the first minute of the first period.

The Tigers' next two wrestlers both won by decision. Evan Schweithal beat Parker Bunn by a 9-4 decision and then, in the closest match of the dual, Jack Meyer got the win over Annabelle Petsinger by 3-2 decision.

Leading 12-0 after the first three matches, Medford kept its pedal to the metal and won the next five matches: Derek Bartosch won by fall in the first period, Alex Helgeson won by forfeit, Kael Neumann won by fall in the second period, Charley Elwood won by fall in the first period and Garron Hoffman won by fall in the third period to give the Tigers an insurmountable 42-0 lead.

At 160 pounds, NRHEG got on the board when Thor Routh defeated Dillon Bartosch by fall in the second period.

However, Medford answered right back when Tate Hermes beat George Roesler by fall in the third period and Josiah Hedensten followed with a win by forfeit.

At 195 pounds, NRHEG's Ralph Roesler got a fall in the final seconds of the first period to make the score 54-12.

Just like Roesler, the Tigers' 220-pounder Brennan Hoffman won by fall at the end of the first period.

While the match didn't go like NRHEG hoped it would, the Panthers' heavyweight Markota Misgen ended it on a high note for NRHEG by beating Medford's Gavin Hermes by fall in the second period.

For NRHEG, it was too little, too late as they dug themselves a hole they couldn't get out of. Medford won the dual 60-18.

With these two wins, the Tigers' overall record improves to 14-7 and their section record is now 11-1.

With their loss to Medford, Westfield's overall record drops to 11-15 and their section record becomes 7-7.

Touchdown for Hardecops

◀ **TOUCHDOWN** from B1 people around her prior to the birth.

Andrew and Sam also chose to not go out as much into the public during her pregnancy.

"We chose to stay at home more out of precaution," Andrew said, adding they didn't want to be exposed to anything unnecessarily. The couple has been married since June 2018. Andrew and Sam met while teaching at the elementary school. In recent years, Sam taught at St. Mary's

School in Owatonna.

Sam grew up in Blossoms Prairie where she graduated in 2011. Andrew graduated from Grand Meadow in 2009. They both have elementary education degrees from Winona State University.

Asked about future additions to the family, Andrew said, "We go back and forth between two and three. If we get another girl, we will try for a boy. If we end up with three girls, I think I will just bow out."

Tax Guide 2021

Missing or incorrect tax documents?

Taxpayers should double-check to make sure they have all their documents before filing a tax return.

Taxpayers who haven't received a W-2 or Form 1099 should contact the employer, payer or issuing agency and request the missing documents. This also applies for those who received an incorrect W-2 or Form 1099.

If they can't get the forms, they must still file their tax return on time. To avoid filing an incomplete or amended return, they may need to use Form 4852, Substitute for Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement or Form 1099-R, Distributions From Pensions, Annuities, Retirement or Profit-Sharing Plans, IRAs, Insurance Contracts, Etc.

If a taxpayer doesn't receive the missing or corrected form in time to file their tax return, they can estimate the wages or payments made

to them, as well as any taxes withheld. Then use Form 4852 to report this information on their federal tax return.

If they receive the missing or corrected Form W-2 or Form 1099-R after filing their return and the information differs from their previous estimate, they must file Form 1040-X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return.

Most taxpayers should have received income documents near the end of January, including:

- Forms W-2, Wage and Tax Statement
- Form 1099-MISC, Miscellaneous Income
- Form 1099-INT, Interest Income
- Form 1099-NEC, Non-employee Compensation
- Form 1099-G, Certain Government Payments; like unemployment compensation or state tax refund

Source: IRS



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

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



121 West Bridge Street
Owatonna, MN 55060

507-446-7100 | CLAconnect.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



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

johndoerpcpa.com

**Celebrating 50 years
in the Tax Business!**

BORCHARDT ACCOUNTING AND TAX SERVICE

Roger L. Borchardt

1345 Linn Ave.
Owatonna • 507-451-7748

**STOCKWELL
ACCOUNTING**

802 N Elm Ave
Owatonna, Minnesota

(507) 451-1873

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 and 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 thereon 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.

2/10/21

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
BLOOMING PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA
January 19, 2021

World's Best Workforce Presentation was given at 4:45 p.m. in the High School Media Center.

A regular school board meeting of the School Board of Independent School District #756, Blooming Prairie, Minnesota, was held in the High School Media Center on January 19, 2021 at 5:15 p.m. (Open Forum at 5:00 p.m.).

OPEN FORUM - NO COMMENTS

I. CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRPERSON

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL - CLERK Rodney Krell, Kelly Braaten, Pam Hameister, Dean Meshke, Jenny Thurnau, Melissa Stoen

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools, Elementary School Principal, Associate Principal, Members of the Press

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jon Sundee

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Kelly Braaten to approve the agenda with additional information provided re-

garding the January payroll amount and transfer of funds on January 20, 2021. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

V. PRINCIPAL REPORTS Reports given by Mr. Schwarz and Ms. Mach.

VI. ITEMS ON WHICH BOARD ACTION IS REQUESTED

A. Installation of New School Board Members Installation of newly elected board members Melissa Stoen and Jenny Thurnau with the "Acceptance and Oath of Office" being recited.

B. Designation/Rotation of School Board Officers. Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Dean Meshke to approve the designation of school board officers as follows: Chair-Rodney Krell; Vice Chair-Jenny Thurnau; Clerk-Pam Hameister; and Treasurer-Jon Sundee. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

C. School Board Committee Assignments Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Pam Hameister to approve committee assignments. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

D. Minutes, Bills, Treasurer's Report, Donations Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Jenny Thurnau to approve the school board minutes, bills, treasurer's report, and donations as presented. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

E. Employment Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Pam Hameister to approve Valerie Bueckler as a long-term sub from approximately February 10, 2021 through April 6, 2021. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Pam Hameister to approve Leah Haugland as a long-term sub from approximately March 3, 2021 through May 14, 2021. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Pam Hameister and seconded by Dean Meshke to approve Brian Nelson as a jr. high boys basketball coach. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Pam

Hameister to approve Isaac Iile as a jr. high boys basketball. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

F. Volunteer Coaches None at this time.

G. Designation of Local Depositories, Staff, Newspaper, and School Attorney Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Jenny Thurnau to approve designated financial institutions as official depositories. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Pam Hameister and seconded by Dean Meshke to approve Christopher Staloch, Nancy Clark, and Karl Forystek to make electronic or paper transactions from any institutions for the district. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Melissa Stoen to approve "The Steele County Times" as the official paper of record. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Dean Meshke to approve Hoveston, Johnson, Beckman & Hovey, PLLP, Austin, MN as the district's designated attorney. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

H. Promulgation of Seniority Lists for the Teaching Staff Motion by Pam Hameister and seconded by Jenny Thurnau to approve promulgation of the teaching staff seniority lists. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

I. World's Best Workforce Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Melissa Stoen to approve the World's Best Workforce Report. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

J. ZED Resolution Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Kelly Braaten to approve an amended resolution ratifying concurrence with a proposed project through the issuance of certificates of participation, series 2021A for ZED. Roll Call Vote. Motion carried. (Aye 6-Krell, Braaten, Hameister, Meshke, Thurnau, Stoen/Nay 0)

K. Staff Prep Time Motion by Kelly Braaten and seconded by Pam Hameister to address

the additional 30 minutes of prep. time per day to plan for distance learning when providing learning to some students and teaching some students in person at the February 16, 2021 regular meeting. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

L. FCRA Motion by Jenny Thurnau and seconded by Pam Hameister to approve an optional extension deadline for leaves granted by Families First Coronavirus Recovery Act. Roll Call Vote. Motion carried. (6 Aye-Krell, Braaten, Hameister, Meshke, Thurnau, Stoen/0 Nay)

VII. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ONLY:

A. Strategic Planning COVID has been requiring a large amount of time; however, goals made up last year will be reviewed.

B. Committee Reports Committee report updates were given for the Building and Grounds/Facilities, Education Foundation, and Technology.

C. Enrollment Data Enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year as of January 13, 2021 is approximately 425 at the elementary school (grades K-6) and 374 at the high school (grades 7-12) (363 attending BPHS and the equivalency of 11 full-time attending PSEO). The PSEO numbers consists of approximately 10 full-time and 2 part-time students.

D. Dates to Note The Board noted dates of importance.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

1. An additional round of federal stimulus money is in process.
2. COVID testing for staff starts tomorrow. Recognition to Nurse Amanda Rennie for all of her hard work during this time.
3. COVID vaccinations will begin soon.
4. We are working with the state on handicap issues on the baseball and softball fields.
5. Thanks to the administrative team for their excellent communication.
6. Condolences to Todd Nelson's family.

Motion by Pam Hameister and seconded by Jenny Thurnau to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 p.m. Motion carried. (6 Aye/0 Nay)

Tentatively, the next Regular School Board Work Session will be held on Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 6:00 a.m. in the High School Media Center.

Tentatively, the next Regular School Board Meeting will be Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at 5:15 p.m. in the High School Media Center (Open Forum begins at 5:00 p.m.).

A complete copy of the official minutes may be found in their entirety in the official minute book located in the superintendent's office at the high school; however, they will not be available until approved by the School Board.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pam Hameister
Clerk of the School Board
Independent School District #756
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

A regular school board work session was held at 6:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 14, 2021 in the High School Media Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rodney Krell, Kelly Braaten, Pam Hameister, Dean Meshke, Jenny Thurnau, Jon Sundee, Melissa Stoen

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools

DISCUSSION ITEMS: General review and discussion was held on agenda items for the January 19, 2021 regular school board meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pam Hameister
Clerk of the School Board
Independent School District #756
Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

General Notice to Control
or Eradicate Noxious Weeds

Notice is hereby given this 4th day of March 2021, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 18.75-18.91, that all persons in Steele County, Minnesota, shall control or eradicate all noxious weeds on the land they own, occupy, or are required to maintain. Control or eradication may be accomplished by any lawful method, but the methods may need to be repeated in order to prevent the spread of viable noxious weed seeds and other propagating parts to other lands. Failure to comply with the general notice may mean that an individual notice will be issued. An individual notice may be appealed within two working days of receipt to the appeal committee in the county where the land is located. Failure to comply with an individual notice will mean that the inspector (local or county) having jurisdiction may either hire the work done or seek a misdemeanor charge against the person(s) who failed to comply. If the work is contracted for hire by the inspector, the cost can be placed as a tax upon the land and collected as other real estate taxes are collected. By state law the local weed inspectors are designated as township supervisors, city mayors or their appointed assistants. The appeal committee shall consist of a county commissioner and a township official or, if in a city, municipal official of the corresponding district/township/city. The committee shall meet on a as needed basis at the Steele County Planning & Zoning Office.

Statewide Noxious Weeds

For a current listing of the Minnesota Noxious Weeds go to: <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants-insects/minnesota-noxious-weed-list>

Steele County Noxious Weeds

Steele County has added the following to the control list in Steele County:

- Velvetleaf
- Common Cocklebur**
- Eastern Black Nightshade**
- Wild Proso Millet

**Native plants with enforcement approved by MDA

For questions contact:

Dan Kuhns
Steele County Agricultural Inspector
630 Florence Ave, Owatonna, MN 55060
507-456-6593 (mobile) • 507-444-7488 (office)
dan.kuhns@co.steele.mn.us

3/10



GKN Armstrong Wheels, Inc. is seeking career minded individuals! Our fast-paced heavy manufacturing of steel wheels for off-highway applications is BOOMING! Opportunities within our Armstrong & Estherville, Iowa locations

- EHS Manager
- Design Engineer
- Drafter
- Supervisor

Please send cover letter, salary expectations and resume to: WS-ARM-DG-Recruiting@gknwheels.com. com GKN will only contact individuals who meet qualifications and appear to be a fit for one of the positions.

• Hiring Night Shift Production at \$18/hour

GKN Armstrong Wheels is an EEO employer; women, veterans, and minorities are encouraged to apply.



Prepare for power outages with a Generac home standby generator

REQUEST A FREE QUOTE!
855-984-8982

FREE 7-Year Extended Warranty* A \$695 Value!

Offer valid February 15 - June 6, 2021

Special Financing Available Subject to Credit Approval

*To qualify, consumers must request a quote, purchase, install and activate the generator with a participating dealer. Call for a full list of terms and conditions.

DEALS ON WHEELS

Sell your car, bike, RV, trailer, and anything on wheels today!!

Over 25,000 in households

CLASSIFIEDS

Serving Steele, Mower, Freeborn, Dodge, and Olmsted Counties

BARGAIN FINDER

Sell your items for \$50 or less. Run it for four weeks. ONLY \$5!

www.steeledodgeadnews.com

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; 10¢ 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 SALE

FOR SALE: Barbie collectible Christmas doll, Angel of Joy 1998. Perfect condition \$50. In Owatonna, MN. 507-451-9391. 2/24/21

NOW OPEN! Dano's Conignment Store, 32 E. Main Street, Dodge Center. Open Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Great gift ideas throughout the whole store. Along with vinyl, CDs, DVDs, video games, books, toys, clothes, shoes and more! Plus we carry Scruffs Home Beauty & Bath candles and more. New

Specials every week. (Right next to Harold's Club.) 3/4/21

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. 2/18/21

APARTMENT FOR RENT in Kasson. 3 bdrm, 1 bath, appliances included, 10'x12' deck, 1st floor, off street parking. No smoking, no pets. \$700/mo. 507-951-3401. 2/25/21

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. 2/25/21

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. 2/25/21

HELP WANTED

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. Mechanical knowledge preferred, but will train. Students - adults. For more information call Jack at shop. 507-634-7184. 2/25/21

Truck Driver / Farm Worker: Molitor Brothers Farm is looking for seasonal position, drive semi-truck or tractor for Spring. Operating 12 hours/day, weather permitting. Class A driver license recommended. 507-436-3510. 3/4/21

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

CALEB'S PET SITTING, Cats and Dogs, please call me at 507-634-7907. 2/26/21

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

INDEPENDENT

HELP WANTED CARPENTERS**FULL-TIME HELP**

\$1,000 Hiring Bonus!

Experience is great, but we will train!

We offer: Health Insurance, 401k, PTO & Holiday Pay. We also have great starting wages!



For more information please call: (507) 775-7648 • (507) 951-3409
Email: jill@bigelowconstruction.com

CAREER OPPORTUNITY**Resident Assistant**

- FT & PT 2 p.m. - 10 p.m.
- FT & PT 10 p.m. - 6 a.m.

Dining Assistant

- PT 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Activities Assistant

- Part-Time

JAYBIRD SENIOR LIVING
Prairie Meadows SENIOR LIVING
Apply on Indeed or 800 5th Ave. NW, Kasson, MN - EOE
Professionally Managed by Jaybird Senior Living, formerly Senior Housing Management.

NRHEG HELP WANTED**SCHOOL NURSE**

Long Term Substitute Licensed School Nurse

NRHEG SECONDARY SCHOOL

March 1, 2021 through June 4, 2021

Call David Bunn at 507-465-3205.

Description & application available on our website nrheg.k12.mn.us/pages/NRHEG

**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

INDEPENDENT

www.DodgeCountyIndependent.com

Serving all of Dodge County & Byron area

PLAZA 76
301 S. Mantorville Ave.
Kasson, MN 55944

KEEP YOUR FAMILY INFORMED

507-634-7503
email: dci@kmtel.com

One of southeast Minnesota's largest weeklies
Over 12,000 copies mailed weekly to Dodge County, Byron & Rural areas.

"HONEST CIRCULATION AT A FAIR PRICE"

GOT NEWS? // EDITORDCI@KMTL.COM

Kasson-Mantorville Elementary School is seeking a

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

Please complete an application at

www.komets.k12.mn.us.

Include a resume, letter of application, transcripts and 3 reference letters.

TRITON PUBLIC SCHOOLS will be hiring a

SPECIAL EDUCATION GRADES K-5**& EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER**

All postings and applications for

Triton Public Schools can be found at:

www.triton.k12.mn.us

under the District Office menu.

EOE 3/11

NATALIE WEBB FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER
• 2021 EMPLOYMENT •

The CITY OF DODGE CENTER will be accepting applications for aquatic center employment until **Friday, March 26, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.** The following positions are being offered:

- Assistant Managers,
- Lifeguards & Water Safety Instructors
- Food Court Staff, Crossing Guards and Bathhouse/Front Desk Attendants (Rotation).

Applicants must be available to work days, nights, and weekends. Copies of all Life-guard, WSI and CPR certifications must accompany the application. Competitive wages! Reimbursement for training!

Applications are available at Dodge Center City Hall or on the City's website at www.ci.dodgecenter.mn.us

HELP WANTED CITY OF MANTORVILLE

The City of Mantorville is accepting applications for the position of:

CITY CLERK-TREASURER.

This is a full time exempt, benefit eligible position. This position is responsible to carry out the statutory functions of the City Clerk Treasurer and the administration of City services. The job requires considerable judgment, attention to detail and is typically performed under minimal supervision.

Minimum requirements include a high school diploma or equivalent, and three to five years of experience in accounting, finance, human resources or a related field. Must have the ability to be bonded and obtain Notary Public status.

Applications will be accepted until filled with priority given to those received by **March 16, 2021.**

For a complete job description and more information go to www.mantorville.com or contact City Hall with any questions, 655-6170.

We are the ones... that make a difference.

NOW HIRING:

Resident Assistant

Housekeeper

To learn more and apply, visit benedictinerochester.org/jobs

Benedictine

LIVING COMMUNITY | 6700

EOE/APP

3/13

TRITON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

will be hiring **TWO SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS**

All postings and applications for Triton Public Schools can be found at:

www.triton.k12.mn.us

under the District Office menu.

EOE 3/11

TRITON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

will be hiring a **HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER**

All postings and applications for Triton Public Schools can be found at:

www.triton.k12.mn.us

under the District Office menu.

EOE 3/11

McDonald's of Byron

Now accepting applications for **DAY SHIFT** with **NO** nights or weekends

Hours are **EXTREMELY FLEXIBLE.**

Excellent benefits, fun & friendly atmosphere & tuition benefits up to \$22,000!

Immediate interviews on **Tuesdays from 2-5pm.**

Apply **TODAY** or visit **www.McCourtesy.com**

3/4/21

STATE OF MINNESOTA — DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Behavior Modification Assistant

\$19.42 - \$25.59/ Hourly

Blooming Prairie/Hayfield, MN

Join our team as a State of Minnesota employee!

Minnesota State Operated Community Services (MSOCS) has part-time openings for Behavior Modification Assistants to work at a residential group home caring for individuals with developmental disabilities and challenging behaviors. These positions work either the day-evening shift or night shift and most are eligible for full insurance benefits. Join our team as a State of Minnesota employee!

Minimum Qualifications
• Knowledge of behavior modification principles and intervention techniques needed to write and implement behavioral support plans, as well as manage aggressive or violent behavior.
• Current and valid driver's license.

Why Work For Us
GREAT BENEFITS PACKAGE! The State of Minnesota offers a comprehensive benefits package including low cost medical and dental insurance, employer paid life insurance, short and long term disability, pre-tax flexible spending accounts, retirement plan, tax-deferred compensation, generous vacation and sick leave, and 11 paid holidays each year.

Apply online www.mn.gov/careers. Search for posting# 38831. HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE APPLICATION & WEBSITE? Contact the helpdesk at 651-229-3637 or careers@state.mn.us

You can also visit <http://www.mn.gov/mnbs/careers/applicant-help>

Equal Opportunity and Veteran Friendly Employer



Grow your own birdseed



Mastering Gardening
LORRIE RUGG

As the temperatures start to warm all gardeners start thinking about getting those hands dirty. You may have started some seeds by winter sowing or making lists of things you want to grow and seeds you have to get your hands on. Most gardeners are nature lovers and therefore love their feathered friends. In your selection of plants to grow, have you ever considered growing your own birdseed?

Sunflowers are probably the first thing that comes to mind in that category. Easy to grow and are very showy in the garden. You can leave them to stand tall in your garden at the end of the season or harvest them and put them in your feeders. Cardinals love sunflower seeds, along with bluejays, woodpeckers, chickadees, and nut-hatches.

Native plants such as coneflowers, sedum, coreopsis, black and brown-eyed susans are great seed producers for the birds. The important thing to remember about these perennial plants is that you have to leave them to stand tall in your fall garden and don't cut the plants back. They provide winter shelter for birds and insects as well as the seed heads for winter food.

More to plant are asters, goldenrod, allium, bee balm and lemon verbena. Again, these

are perennial plants so let them provide shelter as well as food for your feathered friends.

Some annual plants also provide great seeds for the birds. Zinnias, moss roses, cosmos, and marigolds are great examples to plant in your yard and containers. But don't forget about the perennial grasses, which have become very popular in the last few years. I love the winter interest they provide in the garden, but they also help our feathered friends. Switchgrass, seed oats, millet, and feather reed grass are great examples to keep in mind when choosing your plants.

I know some gardeners love to clean off their beds in the fall, but there are good reasons not to do that. Leaving the seed heads for the birds and providing winter shelter is one of them. But also the hollow stems on some of the flower varieties provide a place for some beneficial insects to lay their eggs for the winter. Even removing them too early in the spring sometimes does not allow the eggs to hatch. One trick that I have learned over the years is if I have to cut things back in the spring I leave the stems gathered together in a pile in my yard before taking them to the compost site. I try and do my part for the environment.

I thought I would share some thoughts about plant selection for our feathered friends. The growing season will soon be upon us, the anticipation of what the year will bring is always exciting for me. Happy growing everyone.

Lorrie Rugg is the coordinator of the Steele County Master Gardener program. She lives in Owatonna.

PUBLIC RECORD

STEELE COUNTY BIRTHS MARCH 2020

Lydia Kay Deml, Parents: Jessica and Dustin, March 2.
Parker Elizabeth Carey, Parents: Amy and Jeremy, March 2.
Orew Thomas Oeltjenbruns, Parents: Hillary and Matthew, March 3.
Peggy Peder Madison, Parents: Sarah Baldt, March 4.
Madeline Jo Ernste, Parents: Lyndie and Joseph, March 5.
Elsie Ann Vollbrecht, Parents: Jill and Brent, March 6.
Matthew Elliot Jen, Parents: Maria and Ethan, March 11.
Adelaide Frances Marie Hanson, Parents: Mary and Jackson, March 12.
Jocile Rae Wolfe, Parents: Taylor and Justin, March 16.
Gloriana Roselynn Schaeper, Parents: Sarah Jo and Chad, March 18.
Layla Ruby Hoffman, Parents: Kelli and David, March 18.
James Lonnie Pratt, Parents: Nicole and Jacob, March 18.
Lilly Marie Wobschall, Parents: Jessica and

Tanner, March 19.
Andrew Glenn Gawarski, Parents: Shelby and Adam, March 20.
Lorenzo Luciano Cortez, Parent: Chloe Kleinschrodt, March 20.
Scarlett Mae Alsleben, Parents: Holly and Peter, March 20.
Regina Roney Johannes, Parents: Jessica and Jerome, March 21.
Connor Taylor Holland, Parents: Paige and Taylor, March 23.
Landyn Paul Mason, Parents: Samantha Kohner and Paul Mason, March 24.
Ryker Kaah Seykora, Parents: Genea and Matthew, March 24.
Tayven Lee Welland, Parents: Tana and Tyler, March 25.
Zygra Kristina Ann Weise, Parents: Kylee and Oddy, March 27.
Braxton Cooper Hager, Parents: Danielle and Cooper, March 27.
Penelope Daelah Flores, Parents: Margaret and Brandon, March 30.

STEELE COUNTY DEATHS MARCH 2020

Andrew Patrick Underdahl, 62, Medford,

March 3.
Scott Peters, 57, Owatonna, March 4.
Delores Ann Hill, 95, Owatonna, March 5.
Betty Ann Blankers, 84, Owatonna, March 7.
Jean Evelyn Olson, 84, Owatonna, March 9.
Sandra Joann Peterson, 58, Blooming Prairie, March 13.
Brian Lee Amundsen, 54, Owatonna, March 13.
Richard James Dusbabek, 84, Faribault, March 14.
Doris Elaine Christensen, 74, Owatonna, March 16.
David Eugene Quam, 71, Owatonna, March 18.
Phyllis Elaine Koehler, 75, Faribault, March 21.
Timothy John Grubish, 58, Owatonna, March 24.
Nicklaus Lewis Arthur Larson, 58, Owatonna, March 26.
Enzenauer, 72, Owatonna, March 26.
Lana Marie Young, 60, Owatonna, March 28.
Etta Elizabeth Baker, 87, Owatonna, March 30.
Betty J. Hanson, 76, Owatonna, March 31.

STEELE COUNTY MARRIAGES

MARCH 2020

Jami Leann Simonson and Brian Andrew Tix, March 13.
Anthony James Kartes IV and Lynsey Raye Reuter, March 16.
Leason Hedson and Loleen Luhda, March 20.
Taylor Scott James and Chloe Marie Tauscher, March 20.
Jaysen Lyle Teichroew and Spring Marie Oeltjenbruns, March 21.
Schotney James Sanders and Nola Jane Dybvik, March 24.
Andrea Ruth Kuntze and Kyle Blann, March 27.

STEELE COUNTY DIVORCES

MARCH 2020

Rosie Denise Mueller and Benjamin Andrew Mueller, March 13.
Ashley N. Sands and Joshua James Sands, March 16.
Bertha Rodriguez-Felix and Ricardo Felix, March 18.
Gregory Edward Rostvit and Shalish T. Rostvit, March 19.
Stephanie J. Heilman and Darin Paul Heilman, March 27.

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

The Exchange Club of Owatonna recognizes hard-working high school students who attain high levels of scholastic achievement, community involvement, and leadership or who have faced adversity in their lives and have overcome it through using their personal skills.

The Exchange Club of Owatonna congratulates **Frija, Emma, Sara, and Abigail** for their achievements!

Frija Reinert
is the daughter of Lori Krouze. She has been on the OHS Dance Team since 8th grade. She has been involved in Link Crew, Homecoming and Prom committees, Big Brother/Big Sister and she joined the Spanish class on a trip to Costa Rica. She is also in the SHOC and National Honor Society this year. She works part-time at The Blast during the summers. She is undecided where she wants to go to college but has decided her major as data science.

Emma Dahnert
is the daughter of Brad and Katie Dahnert. She is active in sports and music. She participated in track and soccer throughout high school and was team captain. She also played basketball in 8th and 10th grade. She is the Symphony Orchestra and was selected as a Big 9 Select Choir participant. She is also involved in the community with Feed My Starving Children, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Teens Encounter Christ (TEC). She works part-time at The Scream Ice Cream shop during the summers. She is committed to play D2 soccer at SMSU intends to major in K-6 Elementary Education.

Sara Sangare
is the daughter of Ousmane and Kadja Sangare. Sara was involved in HOSA (Health Occupation Students of America) and served the role of President for 2 years. She is involved in BBBS, Link Crew, Student Council, National Honor Society and SHOC. She currently works at Birchwood Cottages as an Engagement Aide. Sara was born in Ivory Coast and speaks French, Mandinka and English. She moved here her sophomore year from Colorado where she had lived for 8 years. She plans on attending Wartburg College and plans to major in Biology with a minor in Leadership.

Abigail Schwartz
is the daughter of Bridget and Les Schwartz. She has been involved in Link Crew. She has volunteered at the Food Shelf and Vacation Bible School as a leader. She works at the Owatonna Bus Company as a Social Needs Aid and she works as a Teller at Premier Bank. She is currently studying Finance at Riverland and then plans to transfer to Mankato State.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BP'S NEWEST BUNDLE OF JOY IN 2021!

Harper Hardecopf is Blooming Prairie's newest baby of 2021.
She was born Jan. 23, 2021.
Welcoming her are parents Sam and Andrew Hardecopf.

Harper Jo Hardecopf
Born Jan. 23, 2021 at 2:35 p.m.
Owatonna hospital
7 pounds 10 oz., 20 ¼ inches

As the first baby of the new year, Harper and her parents will receive these wonderful gifts from Blooming Prairie area businesses:

Dairy Queen
317 Hwy. 218 S.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-2296

Gift certificate for free ice cream cake

The Cutting Edge
128 3rd St. SW
Blooming Prairie
507-583-2304

Gift certificate for baby's first haircut

Farmers & Merchants Bank
245 E. Main St.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-6688

\$25 Savings Account in baby's name

Steele County Times
411 E. Main St.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-4431

Free one-year subscription

Dr. Deborah Lien
132 2nd Ave. NE
Blooming Prairie
507-583-6613

Free dental kit for newborn-toddler

Sportstitch
630 4th Ave. SW
Blooming Prairie
507-583-7001

Free personalized baby blanket

Confections by Karen
118 2nd St. NW
Blooming Prairie
507-340-0171

Buy 1 dozen, get ½ dozen free

U.S. Bank
236 E. Main St.
Blooming Prairie
507-583-6627

\$20 in BP Bucks

Congratulations to the Hardecopfs on their newest addition!