



# STEELE COUNTY Times



FAIR SEASON B1

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2019

Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

## Jury convicts man of attempted murder

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

A Steele County jury has found a man with a violent history who attacked and stabbed a woman with a knife guilty of attempted murder.

On Friday, the jury returned a guilty verdict against Ron Jaeger, 36, of Rochester in

Steele County District Court. He was convicted of second-degree attempted murder and first-degree assault, which are both felonies.

"It was a hard fought battle," said Steele County Attorney Daniel McIntosh shortly after the verdict was announced.

During the trial, Jaeger took the stand

in his own defense claiming he acted in self-defense when he stabbed his ex-girlfriend, Jessica Dominguez. He said she attacked him first and that he didn't intentionally harm her.

"She had eight stab wounds," McIntosh pointed out. "The way he described the interaction didn't make



Ron Jaeger

sense with the way she was injured."

McIntosh called 14 witnesses to the stand during the trial. "There was a lot of evidence for the jury to go through," he said. He noted for jurors, the question really came down to: Did the physical evidence support what the victim testified to?

Jaeger was on trial for a stabbing that took place on June 1, 2017 at the Skyline Gardens trailer park in Owatonna. Dominguez, 38, was stabbed eight times in the abdomen, back and face. Jaeger was reportedly high on methamphetamine at the time of the stabbing.

After taking her vehicle, Jaeger was

arrested a short time later in Dodge County with blood on him. He has been locked up in the Steele County Detention Center since that time.

Jaeger was initially found incompetent to stand trial but he was later ruled competent in July 2018. The

SEE ATTEMPTED MURDER, A8

"The program prepares children for the future."

Jacob Schwarz  
BP Elementary Principal



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Owatonna McKinley Elementary School teachers Amy Wencl and Paige Gilligan and Arkema engineers Scott Gedde and Jinbin Chen explain the inner workings of their science kit during a presentation day at the Arkema, Inc. chemical plant on Tuesday, Aug. 5.

## A smart investment

Arkema science program helps produce new engineers

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

It's called a smart investment.

Arkema Inc. of Blooming Prairie has been grooming future engineers since 1996 when the chemical plant made a commitment to provide area schools with the resources to educate their students further in the realm of science.

Six teachers from southeastern Minnesota participated in a three-day classroom setting at Arkema, located in the heart of Blooming Prairie.

During the three-day event, Arkema scientists provided hands-on mentoring to help elementary school teachers discover new ways to make science interesting for the students they'll be teaching this fall.

Learning kits valued at about \$500 each are given

to the teachers following completion of the three-day class.

New Blooming Prairie Elementary School

principal Jacob Schwarz was an onlooker during the presentation of student teams on Tuesday Aug. 6. "I'm totally impressed by

this program brought to us by Arkema," remarked Schwarz.

"The program prepares children for the future, thus I applaud Arkema for making a science classroom for three days for three schools each year.

"It's quality lessons and curriculum for our elementary students," said Schwarz.

Fifteen years ago Schwarz was a third grade teacher from Austin's Banfield Elementary School who participated in the science program.

The Arkema program brings life into the classroom. It recognizes providing a strong science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education program.

Teachers choose their areas of interest and work together with Arkema



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Third grade teacher Wendy Schultz, New Richland-Hartland-Elendale-Geneva discussed the environment kit her team chose during Science Teacher Days at Arkema in Blooming Prairie.

SEE INVESTMENT, A3

## Owatonna moves ahead to raise tobacco age

BY CHRIS BALDWIN  
STAFF WRITER

During the Owatonna City Council session on Wednesday, Aug. 7, the council reviewed the first hearing for an ordinance which would raise the legal minimum age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21.

With a 5 to 2 vote in favor of adopting the ordinance, the council will hold a second hearing on the matter during its session on Aug. 20. If the measure passes, the old ordinance will be repealed and the new ordinance will be added to the books.

The primary reason the city was considering the ordinance is due to the increasing prevalence of vaping within schools. "It was brought to my attention from my daughter, she is a middle school teacher, and she told me that vaping is a really serious problem," council member Kevin Raney, who was strongly in favor of passing the measure, explained.

"I also heard from Owatonna educators who said that they have a similar problem," Raney added. "I looked at other communities which were

SEE OWATONNA, A8

## 'The ship is going in the right direction'

Schwarz becomes captain of the ship at BP Elementary

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Jacob (Jake) Schwarz says he is "blessed" and "honored" to be the new principal at the Blooming Prairie Elementary School.

"I have some big shoes to fill," Schwarz said in making reference to succeeding Chris Staloch, previous BP Elementary principal who has now become the Blooming Prairie superintendent of schools.

Schwarz, the former principal of the Grand Meadow High School and Middle School, says he is very impressed with the quality of education that is present in the Blooming Prairie School District. "The ship is going in the right direction," Schwarz remarked.

"I can see why they added AWESOME to the Blossoms' nickname," Schwarz said in paying tribute to the Blooming Prairie students, staff,



JACOB SCHWARZ

parents and community. Schwarz had a notebook full of observations about the Blooming Prairie School District when he applied for the principal's job. His collection of data on the BP district came over the past four years as he and his family became part of the Blooming Prairie community.

Schwarz, wife Pam and their four children moved to an acreage in Bloom-

SEE RIGHT DIRECTION, A3

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### INSIDE

|                           |                           |                        |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Opinions.....A2           | Faith.....A9              | Good Neighbors.....B5  |
| Public Safety.....A4      | Hometown Living.....B3    | Sports.....B6          |
| History.....A5            | Steele Fair.....B1        | Public Notices.....B7  |
| Business Section.....A6&7 | Community Calendar.....B4 | Hometown Extra.....B10 |

### AREA DEATHS

Serving  
Blooming Prairie  
and Steele County  
since 1893



OUR VIEW

Grant will help youth tackle substance use issues

Over the course of history, schools, and other government agencies have tried different innovative ways to help prevent children from making destructive decisions.

Whether it was the famous “just say no” slogan or the old fashioned DARE programs, there have been a number of different programs and slogans that have been used, some that have worked and some that haven’t.

Last week, Gov. Tim Walz announced that Minnesota was awarded a grant that will help many students with making good decisions.

Minnesota was awarded a \$2.5 million grant to implement a groundbreaking, evidence-based social-emotional learning curriculum in middle schools across the state.

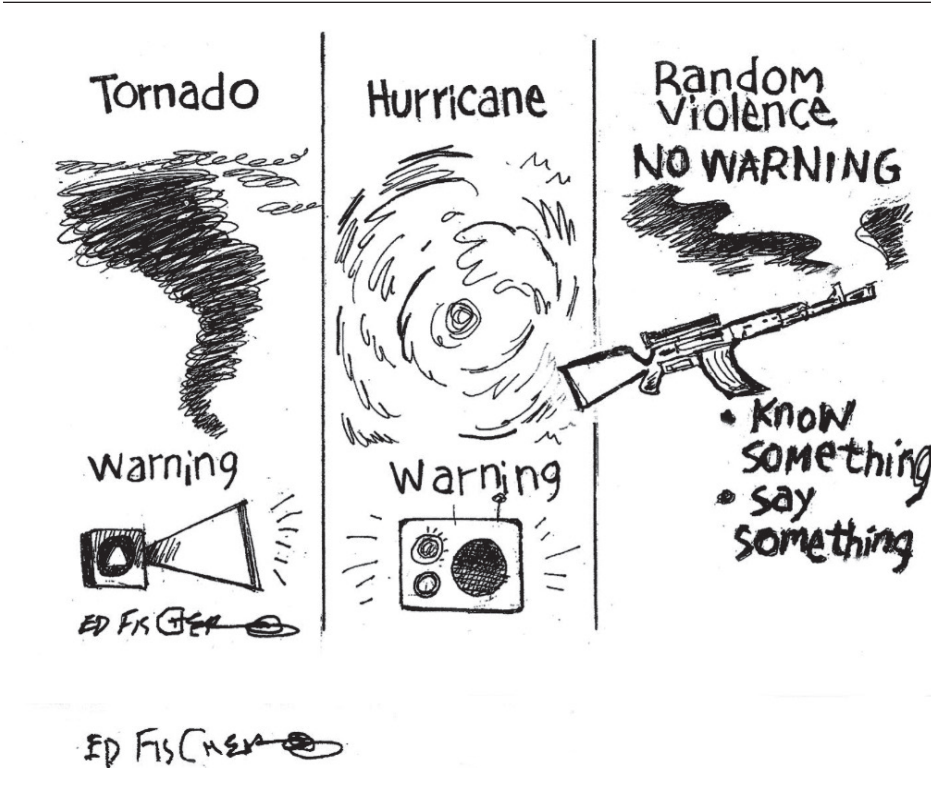
The LifeSkills curriculum is proven effective at helping reduce rates of anxiety, depression and physical aggression, and prevent substance abuse. Researchers at the University of Iowa and Cornell University found that high school seniors who participated in the LifeSkills Training program while in middle school were 20% less likely to smoke and 10 to 15% less likely to misuse alcohol or illicit drugs.

Walz explained that it’s time we invest in evidence-based policies to help young people when it comes to substance use.

“We see every day the impact of substance use on Minnesota and on our young. Too many deaths, too many damaged lives—we need to invest in evidence-based policies that have strong record of success,” said Walz. “This grant from Arnold Ventures will help provide schools with a powerful tool to promote prevention and positive, long-term health of our kids.”

Hopefully all of our area schools will have the chance to take part in the grant program, and to help our youth make positive decisions, and stay away from destructive decisions.

The State of Minnesota made a very wise decision of applying for the grant and should be humbled to receive it.



GUEST COLUMN

New laws will keep Minnesotans safe

BY GOV. TIM WALZ

Whether driving up to the cabin, carpooling kids to camp, or towing your boat to the lake, Minnesotans spend much of the summer on the road. From these busy final weeks of summer to the dead of winter, we must do everything we can to ensure our families arrive where they’re going safely. That is why I signed three bills into law this year that will help keep Minnesotans safe behind the wheel. They are effective as of Aug. 1, and here’s what you need to know.

Clocking many miles driving my daughter to soccer games, I know firsthand how frustrating it is to get stuck behind a car going slowly in the left lane. Not only is it annoying, it poses a safety hazard by disrupting the flow of traffic. Minnesota has long had a requirement that slower-moving motorists use the right lane and allow others to pass when practicable. But to ensure this is being followed, this law has been modernized to make clear that slow drivers must move over to the right lane, and could be subject to a fine if they create a traffic hazard. The law doesn’t give folks permission to speed, but will help mitigate traffic hazards and road rage.

We all know summer in Minnesota is also known as “construction season.” And that is not just a saying. In fact, there are more than 220 active work zones scheduled throughout our state this season. These work zones present different traffic patterns, changing speeds, and even road obstacles. Over the past three years, 31 Minnesotans have died and over 120 have been seriously injured in work zones. A new law effective August 1 allows police officers to issue a citation to drivers who violate instructions from work zone flaggers based on a report from that worker. It

will help reduce crashes in work zones, provide a safer workplace for construction workers, and ensure the people who build our roads and bridges get home safely to their families.

Finally, I am honored to have signed a law this year to help prevent distracted driving. One of the most emotional moments of my time as Governor so far was the signing ceremony for this bill. Surrounded by the families of Minnesotans who have lost their lives due to distracted drivers, it was a time to acknowledge how they have turned personal tragedy into advocacy. Distracted driving, on average, plays a role in one in five crashes in Minnesota. Too many of these crashes have resulted in deaths. That is why we worked with these brave families to pass a law that prohibits drivers from holding a phone while driving. The law allows cell phone use, but only in hands-free mode or using one-touch activation. While these families know there is no way to get back stolen graduation ceremonies, birthday parties, and wedding days, this law will help ensure more Minnesotans make it home to their loved ones.

There’s not much better than the open road during the summer—driving up 35W for a weekend on Lake Vermilion or down MN-60 to visit friends in Mankato. Kids laughing, windows down, and Tom Petty on the radio is the backdrop of some of my favorite memories. That’s the way it should be, and I am proud of these new laws to help keep Minnesotans safe on the road. Stay safe out there, and enjoy these final days of summer. See you at the Fair!

*Tim Walz is in his first term as governor of Minnesota. He is a former U.S. Congressman for the First District in Minnesota.*

It’s Blooming Prairie-strong

It’s just unbelievable!  
The above statement could be said over...over... and over.  
The statement summarizes feelings from many as to how benevolent the Blooming Prairie area is.



Reflections  
HOWARD LESTRUD

Weeks are winding down until we arrive at that weekend Paint Blooming Prairie Pink event, two auctions on back to back nights, Sept. 6 and 7.

Just last week, a group of 30 golfers participated in the Golfing for a Cure event at the Blooming Prairie Country Club. Nicki Bishop, one of the organizers of this fun outing, said \$1,600 was raised.

That fundraiser plus many more aimed at cancer research will hopefully send the BP Cancer Group to the Rochester Eagles Cancer Telethon next January with another bucket of funds. Last year, the BP Cancer Group donated \$110,000 to the Eagles Cancer Telethon.

There are many other causes that are presented to the Blooming Prairie locals and their friends and family. These causes, too, bring in lots of funds.

How can Blooming Prairie continue supporting all of these events? It’s because Blooming Prairie has people who take care of one another and will step up to help.

Small towns have some ingredients for success that other larger sized communities don’t have.

Identity is one of these ingredients. Because many of its residents are related to one another, Blooming Prairie has identity.

Faith is another ingredient. Blooming Prairie has a strong faith community and different faiths come together to make an even stronger entity.

Hard work makes Blooming Prairie strong. Its residents are not afraid to work hard and accomplish goals.

Family values are clearly those that are treasured by many. Families in small towns stay together by accepting tough challenges, by asking for help if it is needed and by helping others. Families in Blooming Prairie sit at the dinner table together.

This community has shown its ability to overcome some hard knocks.

Blooming Prairie also has an award-winning newspaper that is appreciated by many subscribers and newsstand customers.

Some other ingredients that make Blooming Prairie a strong community include a business-driven chamber of commerce, an innovative manufacturing structure and a strong school district.

Because all of these ingredients are necessary to be Blooming Prairie-strong, Blooming Prairie residents are not afraid to share their personal resources to help others.

When papers close, cost of government goes up

It’s with great sadness that I noticed yet another Minnesota newspaper has ceased publication within the past couple weeks. This is at least the second newspaper in the state to shut down this year.



Hot Pursuit  
RICK BUSSLER

The Aug. 1 edition of the Farmington-Rosemount Independent Town Pages was its last. The newspaper was operated by a larger media company, RiverTown Multimedia. Officials said declining advertising and subscriber support prompted the decision to cease publishing the newspaper.

According to published reports, the newspaper was losing money and that efforts to keep the publication afloat financially were unsuccessful.

What seems troubling to me is that this particular newspaper serviced an area with a population of around 60,000. The communities had their own newspapers up until 2013 when RiverTown merged them into one.

Upon announcing the closing, the publisher wrote, “The harsh reality is local businesses did not support the paper via advertising and the community did not value the content in sufficient enough quantity to ensure a going concern.”

This same scenario seems to be played out across Minnesota. A few months ago the newspaper in Warroad ceased publication.

I have shared the struggles we have been facing in recent months similar to those that the newspapers closing have been challenged with. The reality is that it’s up to local businesses and readers if they want the Steele County Times to continue or face the same fate as some of the other papers that have closed.

If we want to live in healthy communities, then we need to support the work of professional journalists. I’m sorry folks but you’re not going to get credible local news from Facebook and other social media. It is the work of journalists that keep our government officials in check, keep our com-

munities informed and share the milestones of friends and family members.

I came across some research that I think bears pointing out in this circumstance. Research in the last few years has uncovered that the decline of newspapers may also take a toll on cities’ and counties’ budgets. That’s the suggestion from the University of Illinois at Chicago and University of Notre Dame researchers, who are the first to look at the relationship between public finance and newspaper closures.

They found that municipal borrowing costs increased by as much as a tenth of a percent after a newspaper shuttered, even when accounting for declining economic conditions. For the local governments included in the study, that translated to millions more in additional costs between 1996 and 2015.

The reason for these changes, researchers say, is that the closure of a local newspaper creates a “local information vacuum” that is unlikely to be filled by the national or state news media, which needs to appeal to a much broader audience. Therefore, the study says, “potential lenders have greater difficulty evaluating the quality of public projects and the government officials in charge of these projects.”

Local newspapers play an important watchdog role for local governments that is not easily substitutable by other sources.

For the most part businesses through their advertising support dictate the future of local newspapers. Without the support, there will be no newspaper just as a few other communities have already found out this year. And I’m sure many others will find out sooner rather than later if something doesn’t change.

Isn’t it time to go in hot pursuit of rallying around your local community newspaper?

GUEST COLUMN

Lourey's departure is a serious loss for rural Minnesota

BY JOHANNA RUPPRECHT AND PAUL SOBOCINSKI

Land Stewardship Project believes that Tony Lourey’s departure as Commissioner of the

Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) represents a serious loss for rural people, farmers, and all of Minnesota. As a farmer himself, former Commissioner Lourey brought an essential

perspective and personal experience to his role in the administration of Governor Tim Walz.

In a time when out-of-control corporate power

SEE LOUREY’S DEPARTURE, A3



# Christmas in August

## First Lutheran Church of BP extends helping hand

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Christmas is a time of giving and receiving. It's only August but that giving and receiving spirit has been kindled by the women of First Lutheran Church of Blooming Prairie.

Some busy First Lutheran church women and some other volunteers met at the church on a recent Monday morning to wrap shoe boxes that would contain Christmas gifts for needy people.

Volunteers were mainly women of the church, however Amy Staloch brought her two children, Claire and Gabe as eager wrappers.

The wrapped gifts are donated to the Marie Sandvik Center of Minneapolis.

First Lutheran's church women have supported this project the last 20 years, says Judy Lee, current chair of the ambitious project.

The Marie Sandvik Center, Inc. is a Religious Society (Christian Church) in the state of Minnesota.

The Marie Sandvik Center exists to meet the spiritual and physical needs of anyone in the Twin Cities



Marilyn Heinz, left and Vivian Ulrich helped wrap gifts on a recent Monday morning to benefit the needy at the Marie Sandvik Center of Minneapolis.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

metro area. Persons who attend a chapel service are eligible to receive food, clothing, and hygiene items after the meeting.

The Sandvik Center mission is supported solely by private donations from individuals, and other churches or entities only, not the government. "This way, sharing God's mes-

sage of love and salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ can be our primary focus," said a Sandvik Center volunteer.

Lee said 125 shoe boxes with lids were wrapped with Christmas paper and the contents placed within.

Lee says items include hats, mittens, socks, toiletries and gifts for children.

The filled shoe boxes contain items for boys, men, women, girls, teens and infants.

Funds for the First Lutheran project, which benefits the Sandvik Center, come from a Sunday coffee at First Lutheran Church and from a bake

SEE CHRISTMAS, A10

## THE SHIP IS GOING: in the right direction

ing Prairie from Austin in 2015. All four children have been students at the BP Elementary School.

Claire is the eldest of the children, entering sixth grade this fall. Triplets Andrew, Joseph and Elaine will become third graders this fall.

Pam Schwarz teaches fourth grade at the Neveln Elementary School in Austin. She and Jacob met while both were students at Winona State University.

Prior to accepting the Grand Meadow administrative positions in 2016, Schwarz served as an instructional teacher at Neveln. He worked with teachers, assisting them with their teaching methods. To this date, Schwarz continues the supervisory work.

Schwarz was in charge of 450 students in Grand Meadow's high school and middle school. He now will lead an elementary school enrollment of nearly 500 students. He officially took over his principal duties on July 1.

Proud to be a full-blooded German, Schwarz grew up on a farm near Preston. His family farmed "a couple thousand acres" and had beef cows.

Schwarz' older brother Jason continues to live on the home farm located between Preston and Fountain. His parents, Mike and Debbie, live near the home farm.

Jake attended Fillmore Central High School, graduating in 1998. Schwarz competed in football and track at Fillmore Central, then a part of the Southeast Conference. "I had some good memories in sports and this led me into coaching," Schwarz said.

He then furthered his education at Winona State University, majoring in elementary education and middle school social studies. He graduated Winona State with a BS Degree in 2002.

Following college, Schwarz student taught at Chatfield. He served as a long-term substitute at Chatfield in high school agriculture and special education. He was an assistant varsity track coach and coached ninth grade boys basketball at Chatfield.

His next step in education came when he accepted a third grade teaching job at Banfield Elementary School in Austin. He taught nine years at Banfield.



The Blooming Prairie Elementary School has become a new home for Jacob (Jake) Schwarz. He recently took over as principal of the school after serving three years as a principal at the Grand Meadow High School and Middle School.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Schwarz earned his MA Degree in 2008 from Southwest State University at Marshall. His specialist degree came from Minnesota State University in Mankato.

While in Austin, Schwarz coached eighth grade football and ninth grade boys basketball.

In 2013, Schwarz made a major life decision, stepping away from teaching by taking a two-year leave of absence and helping his family with the farm. His father retired from farming.

"I'm glad I made this decision but I missed education too much," Schwarz informed. He then dabbled in education again, this time supervising student teachers through a program at Winona State. "This re-ignited my passion for education," he related.

Schwarz' first principalship came in 2016 when he was hired in Grand Meadow as high school and middle school principal.

He spent three years at the Grand Meadow schools. "I really enjoyed my time at Grand Meadow and was fortunate to be given that opportunity," he said.

Schwarz said he tried to be the best teacher he could be and then followed that mission with a principal's job. "I worked with some outstanding principals over time," he commented.

His early goals as principal will be to "get to know" the students, faculty and staff, he said. He said

students like to be called by name and he plans to do that as principal.

Schwarz actually took time off from his administrative job in Grand Meadow to come to the Blooming Prairie Elementary School and read books to kids.

He picked up a copy of "One Smile" and said this is a book that emphasizes starting the day with a smile and hello. "All too often, we get wrapped up in huge projects," he said.

Schwarz is proud to be a part of the administrative team, which includes Superintendent Staloch, BPHS Principal John Worke and Associate Principal Ali Mach.

"It is a team game," Schwarz believes. He also tossed a compliment to the school board and said it is the administration and the board who puts kids first.

Schwarz said his children had a great start with schooling in Blooming Prairie. He says he believes Blooming Prairie students believe they can be what they want to be in life.

An open door policy will be embraced by Schwarz during his time as principal. He also said he plans to be visible. "I also believe in supporting my teaching staff and other staff. We are here for the kids and our impact on them can be powerful."

"I have some big shoes to fill."

Jacob Schwarz  
New BP Principal

## LOUREY'S DEPARTURE: Lourey's departure is a serious loss

FROM A2

is causing crisis for many people, including in the farm economy and through the impacts of the profit-driven, private health insurance system, leaders who are willing to stand with people and share our values are greatly needed.

We thank Tony Lourey for his leadership in protecting, expanding, and improving public healthcare during many years of service to the people of Minnesota, including his work as a state Senator and his role this year in the successful fight to preserve Minnesota's healthcare provider tax to fund critically needed public programs. We agree with his statement that the public healthcare programs and other services administered by DHS "demonstrate our collective compassion for one another." Our government institutions provide a way for people to do together what we can't do alone, to work to meet our needs together and invest in our shared future as Minnesotans.

The next Commissioner to lead DHS must have an unshakeable commitment

to valuing people's lives over corporate profits, and a willingness to work closely together with people's organizations toward the goal of healthcare for all. We appreciate that during his tenure, Commissioner Lourey and DHS staff met with us and partner organizations several times, valued our input, and engaged in meaningful dialogue on our healthcare system and how to move forward to improve Minnesotans' lives. The Land Stewardship Project looks forward to working with the Walz administration throughout the process of selecting a new DHS Commissioner who shares this approach and these values, and who will work with us to achieve a stronger and healthier Minnesota and combat the undue influence of corporate interests on healthcare policy in our state.

LSP organizers Johanna Rupprecht and Paul Sobocinski work on the organization's Affordable Healthcare for All initiative. Rupprecht grew up on her family's farm and lives in Winona, and Sobocinski farms near Wabasso.

## A SMART: investment

FROM A1

mentors to master science kit experiments.

Each participating teacher in the program selects a science kit that contains teaching aids and tools related to a specific topic. Each kit includes materials and instructions for classroom science demonstrations that engage students and bring concepts to life.

This year's schools include Blooming Prairie Elementary School, McKinley Elementary School in Owatonna and New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva.

During the three-day science retreat, Arkema scientists provided hands-on mentoring to help elementary school teachers discover new ways to make science interesting for student they will be teaching this fall.

research into electricity and magnetism. This team studied forms of energy.

Kittelson emphasized that these science kids will benefit students in ways other than science. Morse code was also studied by this team.

On the practical side, Blooming Prairie elementary teachers Harvey and Kitteson could incorporate electricity and magnetism into energy allowing students to practice spelling words.

Gilligan and Wencil were next and used a rubber band vehicle to show force and motion, ending with a vehicle having propellers. Ten cars were featured in their kit. The team said they are striving to have two connect sets.

The team of Schultz and Johns chose the environment because kids

"Sponsoring this program is our way of supporting the community."

Michael Green  
Arkema Plant Manager

This year's subjects were: energy and electromagnetism, next generation environments and next generation mixtures and solutions.

Following the program, Arkema provides a donation to each participating school for the science kits.

Teachers participating in the three-day program were Kayla Harvey and Matt Kittelson of the Blooming Prairie Elementary School; Paige Gilligan and Amy Wencil of the McKinley Elementary School in Owatonna and Wendy Schultz and Amy Johns of the NRHEG Elementary school in Ellendale.

Harvey and Kittelson chose the Foss Energy and Electromagnetism kit while Gilligan and Wencil picked the Foss Energy and Electromagnetism kit, and Schultz and Johns selected the Next Generation Environments kits.

Each summer, Arkema shares time, resources and expertise in order to spark students' curiosity and generate enthusiasm for the sciences. During the three-day science retreat, teachers were teamed with these Arkema engineers: Crystal Roach, Michael Green, Arkema plant manager, Ricky Soto, Shivam Yadav, Scott Gedde and Jinbin Chen.

On presentation day, fifth grade teacher Kayla Harvey and sixth grade teacher Matt Kittelson were first to share their

love living things, said Schultz.

Four investigations were detailed by Schultz and Johns. Investigation One centered around meal worms. Investigation Two pertained to the aquatic eco system. The team of Schultz and Johns work with the hatching of brine shrimp and herring in the third investigation. Investigation Four studies water tolerance of seeds. Peas, barley, corn and radish seeds.

Arkema's Green participated in his second science-teacher program.

The science-teacher program may point kids toward engineering or work as a chemist. "Sponsoring this program is our way of supporting the community," said Green.

Green says he is also hopeful that Blooming Prairie students may some day return to Blooming Prairie and possibly work at Arkema as an engineer or chemist. We are desperate for these types of people," said Green.

The corporate level of Arkema "really likes" the science-teacher program, said Green.

For Schultz, it was her third appearance at the Arkema science classroom experience. "These kits help us during our science curricular studies," she said.

Harvey and Kittelson will be invited to make a presentation to the Arkema Citizens Advisory Panel next spring.



BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

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

CRIME BRIEF

Catch me if you can

A Faribault man appears to be playing a dangerous game of “Catch Me if You Can” with police.

Benjamin Hunt, 29, has turned into Owatonna’s Most Wanted criminal. Hunt has several warrants out for his arrest, including new charges for the most recent incident.

On Aug. 6, police received a tip that Hunt was in a red Chevy Malibu near Walmart. Officers found the vehicle getting onto I-35 at Hoffman Drive. Because the vehicle was speeding, officers stopped it near the Clinton Falls exit.

In speaking with the driver and passenger, they both gave a false name for the driver. After viewing the wanted person’s license photo, officers reapproached the vehicle to arrest him. As they were ordering the driver out of the car, he sped off, striking one of the officers with the open door or door pillar. The officer suffered only minor injuries.

Police began pursuing the vehicle, but quickly ended it in consideration for the public’s safety.

Anyone with information on Hunt’s whereabouts is encouraged to contact police.



Benjamin Hunt

Driver in vehicular homicide case issued new citation

A man accused of causing the death of two people last fall has been issued a new citation for speeding.

Tanner Ronald Kruckeberg, 25, of Dodge Center was cited last month by Owatonna Police for allegedly operating his vehicle at 41 mph in a 30 mph zone. He faces a petty misdemeanor charge as a result of the citation in Steele County District Court.

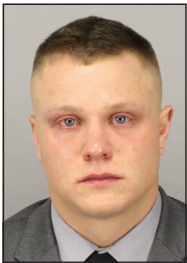
Kruckeberg faces felony criminal vehicular homicide in the Sept. 7 crash on U.S. Highway 14 outside of Claremont that killed Rachel Harberts, a teacher in Blooming Prairie, and her daughter, Emerson.

Authorities accuse Kruckeberg of viewing on-line banking on his cell phone while driving when he rearended the Harberts vehicle as it was stopped in the roadway waiting to make a left hand turn.

A plea hearing for the criminal homicide case is set for Sept. 5 in Dodge County District Court.

After he made his initial court appearance on the homicide charge, the judge released Kruckeberg on conditions that include no new traffic-related charges. It’s unclear what, if any, effect this new charge will have on the homicide case.

Court records show Kruckeberg has at least eight previous convictions for speeding going back to 2010.



Ronald Kruckeberg

Uniting neighbors

Community joins police during Night to Unite

BY CHRIS BALDWIN  
STAFF WRITER

When Officer Valerie Satre and Reserve Officer R.J. Kniefel pulled up to Associated Church’s Night to Unite block party, a crowd of kids and adults greeted them with smiles and questions. For the pair, it was a great way to reach out to the community.

“It’s always fun to see the kids and obviously the squad car is a big hit,” Officer Satre said. “Just getting out and being in the community is awesome, and for the kids it’s something that builds a relationship with them where they can actually come out and meet us face to face and we have stickers and bracelets and all kinds of stuff for them.”

Satre is assigned to the southside of town during her patrol hours, which means that this year all of the block parties she attended were in that region. This helps to familiarize officers to those within their patrol area.

“They get a chance to see us outside our normal working routine and get a chance to visit with us one on one,” Satre explained. “Hopefully if we do have to see them out and about on a call, they’ll remember that it’s not quite as scary when they get to come and see us in a setting like this.”

Although the adults enjoy getting to know their local law enforcement and emergency personnel, it’s the children who seem to be the most excited. “They always have a lot of questions,” Satre said. “Last year I had a bunch of kids come up and ask me ‘what’s on your belt?’ It’s something that they don’t see on a regular basis and it gives us a chance to interact with



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS BALDWIN

Reserve Officer R. J. Kniefel gives out bracelets to eager kids at Associated Church during last Tuesday’s Night to Unite in Owatonna.

those kids and gives them an opportunity to learn what this job is all about.”

“It’s always good to get out and meet different community members and different neighbors,” Satre said. Together with her partner, Satre planned to visit at least three different parties during the evening, explaining that the department tries to split the up rounds so that every one of the 30-plus parties gets to meet their local law enforcement and emergency personnel.

It was the first year that Associated Church held its own block party, complete with live music, games, a bounce house, root beer floats, and hotdogs. Stacy Burton, who headed the committee at Associated Church, explained that they were looking for a good way to come together and do community outreach.

“We were trying to think of an event that we could do to welcome the community inside our church, so we decided to do the Night to Unite,” Burton said. Associated Church invited its congregation, neighboring families, and members of a local mosque.

With so many people out and about and having fun, Burton and the members of Associated Church are hoping that this will become an annual tradition. “It’s our first year, we planned for a 150 people,” she said. “If it’s a success, which it looks like it is, we will for sure be doing it in the future.”

“I love how you cannot tell who is from where, it looks like we’re just all one big community,” Burton said of her favorite part of the night. “Which is the whole idea: to unite.”

She was more than happy to spend time with the

local officials who stopped by to meet and greet the community. “They were awesome, super nice and friendly,” Burton said. “It’s awesome for the little kids to be able to sit in a squad car and not be afraid of the police. They have to know that they’re the good people.”

This year officials from the local law enforcement were joined by firefighters, Gold Cross, CERT, and council members, all of whom were making the rounds to introduce themselves to members of the community. There was also a SWAT truck out on patrol.

The Night to Unite was a great way to come together in the summer heat and enjoy some food and refreshments while also getting to know your community and those who serve it a little better.

COURT NEWS

Steele County

The following case was heard in Steele County District Court the week of July 29 with Judge Karen R. Duncan presiding:

Nashid A. Abul-Zahir, 43, Austin, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of marijuana. The defendant was sentenced to \$131 and 21 months in St. Cloud State Prison.

William A. Bliss, 33, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony domestic assault. He was sentenced to \$131, 27 months in St. Cloud State Prison and no contact with victim or family.

Marcus A. Martin, 46, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony DWI and gross misdemeanor cancelled license. Martin was sentenced to \$131, 180 days in county jail, obtain permission to leave the state, maintain employment, cognitive skill training, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments and 5 years of supervised probation.

Matthew R. Nelson, 28, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony domestic assault by strangulation. Nelson was sentenced to \$581, 2 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance

use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, obtain permission to leave the state, 100 hours of community service and 3 years of supervised probation.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of July 29 – Aug. 4:

**BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Aaron L. Ackland, 39, Austin, suspended license, \$281; Amber L. Brandt, 35, Blooming Prairie, assault, \$81, diversion program and 1 year of supervised probation; Crystal S. Dahik, 24, Austin, revoked license and no insurance, \$481; Richard Gonzales, 54, Blooming Prairie, dog - failure to obtain license when required, \$101; Anthony M. Suazo, 23, Owatonna, domestic assault, \$381, 2 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, maintain employment, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 1 year of supervised probation.

**MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER**

Halimo M. Abdi, 35, Owatonna, speeding, \$131; Adan A. Adan, 26, Faribault, speeding, \$131; Joyce M. Andrews, 38, Columbia, MO, speeding, \$131; Jeff A. Borchard, 50, Rosemount, speeding, \$131; Tasha N. Breyer, 24, Faribault, speeding, \$131; Sebron A. Byrd, 30, Mount Vernon, AL, loaded firearm,

\$181; Ashlie M. Cecil, 31, Mankato, seat belt, \$106; Taylor D. Chesney, 19, Faribault, revoked license, \$281; Martin O. Corrales, 32, Burnsville, DWI, \$606, 2 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, no alcohol or controlled substance use, attend MADD impact panel and 2 years of supervised probation; Yesenia Dominguez, 27, New Brighton, speeding, \$131; Kayla M. Fitcher, 18, Owatonna, speeding, \$141; Barikpe Fomsi, 33, Ramsey, speeding, \$131; Collin M. Gustafson, 33, Isanti, seat belt, \$106; Eric M. Hancock, 42, Owatonna, suspended license, \$101; Johanna K. Holloway, 24, Rochester, speeding, \$100; Nathan L. Hughes, 37, Glenwood City, WI, following vehicle too closely, \$131; Jonathan D. Jenkins, 36, Hayfield, speeding, \$181; Haylee E. Kremmin, 25, Owatonna, no insurance, \$281; Tony M. Kruger, 55, Waseca, seat belt, \$106; Brianna K. Kuster, 39, Hayfield, speeding, \$121; Jacob R. Larson, 40, Medford, DWI, \$406, 2 days in county jail, substance abuse subtle screening inventory, no alcohol or controlled substance use and 1 year of supervised probation; Isis V. Mascote, 27, New Brighton, speeding, \$221; Joseph D. Motl, 38, Blooming Prairie, seat belt, \$106; Arieta Mustafa, 21, Sioux Falls, SD, speeding, \$131; Alysha A. Riel, 34, Savage, speeding, \$121; Prudencio Rodriguez, 74, San Diego, false log and log not current, \$431; Marci L. Ruff, 41, Lakeland, speeding, \$131; Cole M. Simpson, 23, Owatonna, speeding, \$131;

Tou Xiong, 37, Maplewood, speeding, \$221.

**OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Mohamed A. Abdi, 29, Faribault, permit violation, \$131; Haden S. Bauer-Rodriguez, 23, Riverside, MO, speeding, \$141; Douglas M. Blouin, 59, Ellendale, cancelled license and no insurance, \$481; Hailey S. Brett, 23, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$111; Santiago L. Cavazos, 21, Owatonna, engage in electronic communication relating or describing sexual conduct with child, stay of adjudication, \$500, 2 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, individual therapy, no contact with victim, no possession of pornography, submit to polygraph exams as directed, no social media or Internet until Internet safety plan is set up, complete psychoeducational anger management, comply with Internet monitoring software, obtain permission to leave the state, no contact with minors and 3 years of supervised probation; Kayla M. Fitcher, 18, Owatonna, speeding, \$121; Jacob J. Fuller, 44, Owatonna, stalking, \$381, 2 days in county jail, no possession of firearms, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 2 years of supervised probation; Heather M. Garcia, 44, Burnsville, speeding, \$131;

Mitchell R. Geiger, 24, Owatonna, seat belt, \$106; Kendra N. Grothem, 23, Owatonna, DWI, \$406, 1 day in county jail, substance abuse subtle screening inventory, attend MADD impact panel, no alcohol or controlled substance use and 1 year of supervised probation; Kim M. Harty, 56, Waseca, speeding, \$121; Jakota E. Hernandez, 18, Owatonna, failure to stop for school bus, stay of adjudication, \$75, 25 hours of community service and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Scott M. Hofius, 49, Blooming Prairie, seat belt, no insurance and revoked license, \$506; Sarah A. Jorgenson, 37, Owatonna, DWI, \$406, 2 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation, do not enter liquor establishments, no alcohol or controlled substance use and 1 year of supervised probation; Nicholas L. Karst, 38, Owatonna, revoked license, \$281; Verlaine L. Krueger, 67, New Richland, stop sign, \$131; Adreana M. Laabs, 25, Owatonna, revoked license, \$281; Brian C. Lewis, 49, Waseca, theft, stay of adjudication, \$81 and 6 months of unsupervised monitoring without conviction; Dennis K. Marshall, 32, Owatonna, seat belt, invalid license and no insurance, \$406, Juan M. Maya Ramirez, 19, Owatonna, expired tabs, possession of marijuana and paraphernalia, \$211; Irving Mixteco Vasquez, 37, Owatonna, suspended license, \$281; Jordan J. Muldoon, 30, Waseca, revoked license, \$281; Jesse J. Nappin, 39, Owatonna, revoked license, \$281;

Michelle L. Olson, 35, St. Paul, failure to stop for railroad crossing, \$181; Manharbhai L. Patel, 49, Owatonna, allow minor to serve/sell liquor in retail intoxicating liquor establishment, stay of adjudication, \$300 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Amanda Pichardo Garcia, 20, Owatonna, no insurance and permit violation, \$331; Allison A. Reineke, 23, Owatonna, headlights violation, \$121; Bobby J. Smitty, 26, Blooming Prairie, revoked license, \$281; Shane E. Spencer, 28, Owatonna, registration violation, \$181; Travis M. Swartz, 31, Owatonna, no insurance and revoked license, \$481; Antonio Taylor, 38, Owatonna, stalking, \$281, 38 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, chemical dependency evaluation, no possession of firearms, domestic abuse evaluation, psychological evaluation and 2 years of supervised probation; Taylor P. Vargas, 26, Church Point, LA, speeding, \$141; Rafael E. Villegas Curetty, 42, Owatonna, open bottle, \$181; Tyeisha D. Wadley, 27, Waseca, invalid license, \$181.

**STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Shane C. Adams, 26, Mankato, speeding, \$221; Brianna K. Bailey, 16, Owatonna, speeding, \$100; Keith W. Berrier, 40, Owatonna, registration violation, \$381 and 1 year

SEE BLOTTER, A5

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

- |                                                          |                                                       |                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Anthony Lucarelli – DWI – no bail                     | 8. Faisai Mahamed – criminal sexual conduct – no bail | 15. Guadalupe Martinez – no insurance - \$1,000 bail         |
| 2. Leah Ludwig – theft - \$2,000 bail                    | 9. Adrian Maloney – assault - \$1,000 bail            | 16. Joe Martinez – DWI - \$1,000 bail                        |
| 3. Robert Luna – DWI – no bail                           | 10. David Marmolejo – child neglect - \$3,000 bail    | 17. Victor Martinez – obstruct legal process - \$12,000 bail |
| 4. Robert Lyons – DWI – no bail                          | 11. Tanya Marovich – theft by check - \$1,000 bail    | 18. Paul Mason – traffic - \$100 bail                        |
| 5. Naykor Mabor – assault police officer - \$10,000 bail | 12. David Martinez – DWI - \$500 bail                 | 19. Lakia Massey – counterfeiting – no bail                  |
| 6. Jose Macias – revoked license – no bail               | 13. Evaristo Martinez – DWI - \$12,000 bail           | 20. Emmanuel Mata – burglary - \$10,000 bail                 |
| 7. Shane Mack – theft – no bail                          | 14. Felipe Martinez – DWI – no bail                   |                                                              |

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



# History from the News Archives

## 10 Years Ago Aug. 11, 2009

DAN EVANS, PUBLISHER

The First Lutheran Church's Reformation Band is disbanding after over a decade of leading worship. With careers and lives going in different directions, the band has had a challenge finding time to practice. Pastor Hegal and Pastor Tom Pietz of First Lutheran in Blooming Prairie started the reformation band about 15 years ago. The band is non-traditional Christian music. They lead the worship on Sundays.

The American Legion Auxiliary's Annual Flower Show was a big hit. It was held on Aug. 6 at the Servicemen's Club in Blooming Prairie. Gloria Trom was the People's Choice winner for her hibiscus; Karen Spiller was the grand champion for her dahlia and Martha Walters was there reserve champion with her gladiola.

Nathan Peterson of Blooming Prairie is building his own airplane in his shop just outside of town. Since Peterson was 10 years old, he has been fascinated with airplanes. He is a 1977 graduate of Blooming Prairie. He is a pilot for Pinnacle Airlines where he has been for more than 23 years.

## 20 Years Ago Aug. 10, 1999

ELSIE SLINGER, PUBLISHER

A local nine-man investor group has bought the controlling interests of Farmer's Co-op Elevator, allowing the 94-year-old business to stay open and to continue serving Blooming Prairie area farmers. The current board of directors accepted the Blooming Prairie Grain Inc.'s bid for \$240,000 Aug. 5. Rick Klemmensen is

the president of the association board. Jim O'Connor, a local grain farmer, is one of the nine members that bought in this time.

Only two families have owned the 100-year-old brick building that towers three stories high and dominates the block fronting Main Street and Highway 218 in Blooming Prairie. The two families are L.S. Ulland and Harold and Millie Hansen.

Mayor Ron Anderson signed a proclamation making Aug. 22-28 Block Party Week in Blooming Prairie. The week is being coordinated by Healthy Community/Healthy Youth of Blooming Prairie.

## 50 Years Ago Aug. 6, 1969

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCI, PUBLISHERS

The Blooming Prairie Fire Department held its annual picnic on July 31 in the Lions shelter at Community Park. A delicious picnic lunch was enjoyed by everyone in attendance. Honorary firemen in attendance at the outing were Mr. and Mrs. J.J. Betlach, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Betlach, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Hillson, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ellis, Art Olson and Holger Robertson.

The 1969 Steele County Free Fair in Owatonna will open the gates for the 51<sup>st</sup> annual edition Aug. 12 at 5 p.m. and will remain open until midnight on Aug. 17. Dr. Louis Allgeyer, president of the Fair Board, stated that an attendance of more than 200,000 is expected for the six-day run and if weather is good for the weekend, the total could exceed 225,000. Allgeyer said that a bigger and better fair for 1969 is not just idle talk.

Rev. and Mrs. Leander Brakke have arrived in Blooming Prairie and

are living at 210 First Street NW. Rev. Brakke will serve as visitation pastor of First Lutheran Church. He will be installed on Aug. 10.

## 75 Years Ago Aug. 10, 1944

FRANK KREJCI, PUBLISHER

A throng of more than 300 people enjoyed the interesting 11m, "Ducks Unlimited" Tuesday evening at the Blooming Prairie gun club lodge. Palmer Ulland was the projector operator, using his own machine to film the pictures.

Blooming Prairie stores and offices will close at noon on Thursday, Aug. 17 and will remain closed all afternoon to attend Steele County's 25<sup>th</sup> annual free fair. Let's all go to Minnesota's finest county fair!

Another Blooming Prairie young man has made the supreme sacrifice on the battlefields of France. Pfc. Marvin Clarence Garness, son of Christian Garness, gave his life for his country. One of those dreaded telegrams coming from the war department to fathers and mothers all over the U.S. was received last Friday by Christian Garness, farmer in Westfield Township. The telegram informed him that his son had been killed in action while fighting with American forces in France. He died on July 16, 1944.

Kenneth Benson, well-known farmer, had a painful accident Wednesday afternoon while operating a hay chopper on the Benson farm adjoining town on the south. Young Benson was making an adjustment on the equipment when he accidentally brushed a lever that threw the machine into gear with the result that part of his right thumb from the first joint was completely severed off.

## BLOTTER: FROM A4

of unsupervised probation; Rebecca J. Borneke, 59, Janesville, speeding, \$121; Jacob M. Christenson, 24, Owatonna, speeding, \$221; Nygaluak T. Deng, 35, Crystal, speeding, \$221; Donald K. Frankenberry, 48, Waseca, speeding, \$141; Christine L. Fritsch, 57, Terrell, TX, speeding, \$121; Kellie K.

Gartner-Nolta, 52, Austin, suspended license, \$281; Jennifer E. Hastings, 39, Rochester, speeding, \$141; Alex J. Huebl, 22, Waseca, speeding, \$141; Nicholas J. Huebl, 19, Waseca, speeding, \$281; Mason M. Inberg, 18, Waseca, speeding, \$141; Lastasha T. Johnson, 26, Indianapolis, IN,

speeding and no insurance, \$321; Justin T. Kimball, 29, St. Paul, speeding, stay of adjudication, \$75 and 6 months of unsupervised probation; Elizabeth N. Kong, 43, Mankato, speeding, \$121; Erica E. Laganiere, 18, Austin, speeding, \$121; McKenna M. Melby, 17, Ellendale, speeding, \$221; Kamp R. Meyer, 74, Rapid City, SD, speeding, \$221;

Abel Navejas III, 35, El Paso, TX, speeding, \$121; Anna T. Nguyen, 65, Mankato, speeding, \$121; Mya S. New, 23, Omaha, NE, speeding, \$131; Kristin F. Olson, 33, Medford, expired tabs and no insurance, \$311; Kyrj A. Preap, 19, Rochester, speeding, \$381; Armani J. Sago, 21, Ellendale, invalid license, \$181; Jack J. Schrot, 18, Faribault, speeding, \$121; Maxim J. Stanley, 20, Eagan, speeding, \$281; Jennifer E. Stiner, 25, Decatur, IL, speeding, \$121; Eronn D. Swain, 44, Waseca, speeding, \$121; Briana K. Valencia-Hodges, 23, Albert Lea, speeding and revoked license, stay of adjudication, \$75 and 6 months of supervised probation; Molly E. Vanbinsbergen, 45, Medford, speeding, \$121; Catalina D. Vazquez Zavala, 33, St. Louis Park, speeding, \$221.

## POLICE BLOTTER Steele County

### BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

#### Aug. 5

**Vandalism:** Property damage was reported in the 100 block of 2<sup>nd</sup> St. SE at 5:04 a.m.

#### Aug. 7

**Alarm:** Officers responded to an alarm in the 400 block of Highway Ave. S. at 12:35 a.m.

**Child Protection:** Police received a child protection report from the 300 block of Main St. W. at 8:57 a.m.

### OWATONNA POLICE

#### Aug. 2

**Theft:** Officer took a theft report in the 200 block of Fremont St. E. at 5:44 a.m.

**Shoplifting:** At 12:11 p.m., police arrested a subject for shoplifting in the 2100 block of Bridge St. W.

**Suspicion:** Officers responded to suspicious activity in the 200 block of Florence Ave. NW at 1:37 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

**Arrest:** Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop in the 100 block of Landmark Dr. NE at 10:06 p.m.

**DWI:** Officer made a DWI arrest at Cedar Ave. S. and McKinley St. SE at 11:45 p.m.

#### Aug. 3

**DWI:** Officer arrested a motorist for driving while intoxicated at Highway 14 E. and Highway 218 in Owatonna Township at 4:03 a.m.

SEE BLOTTER, A10

# Is Pet Insurance a Good Idea for Seniors on a Budget?



**THE SAVVY SENIOR**

**Brought to you by:**

**Prairie Manor Care Center & Heather Haus**



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

*Dear Savvy Senior,*  
*I own two dogs and a cat that I would do almost anything for, but expensive veterinary bills put a strain on my budget. Is pet insurance a good idea?*  
*Older Pet Owner*

Dear Pet Owner,  
If you're the kind of pet owner who would do anything for their furry family, including spending thousands of dollars on medical care, pet insurance definitely is an option to consider. Here's what you should know.

### RISING VET COSTS

The cost of owning a pet has gone up in recent years. New technologies now make it possible for pets to undergo sophisticated medical treatments for many life-threatening diseases, just like humans. But these treatments don't come cheap. That's why pet insurance has gotten more popular in recent years. More than 2 million pets are currently insured in the U.S. and Canada, according to the North American Pet Health Insurance Association.

### HOW PET PLANS WORKS

Pet insurance is actually very similar to human health insurance. Pet policies typically come with premiums, deductibles, co-payments and caps that limit how much will be paid out annually. But unlike people coverage, you usually have to pay the vet bills in full and wait for reimbursement from the insurer.

Pet policies vary greatly from basic plans that cover only accidents and illness, to comprehensive policies that provide complete nose-to-tail protection including annual checkups and vaccinations, spaying/neutering and death benefits. You should also be aware that pet policies typically don't cover pre-existing conditions, and premiums are generally lower when your pet is young and healthy.

Costs for pet insurance will also vary by insurer and policy, but premiums typically depend on factors like the cost of veterinary care where you live and the age and breed of the pet. The average annual premium for basic accident and illness coverage was \$516 per pet in 2017, while the average claim paid was \$278, according to the pet health insurance association.

### SHOPPING TIPS

Major pet policy providers include the ASPCA, Embrace, Healthy Paws, Nationwide, PetFirst, Petplan and Trupanion. To help you shop and compare coverage and costs from pet insurers, go to [PetInsuranceReview.com](http://PetInsuranceReview.com).

If you're still working, one way to pay lower premiums, and possibly get broader coverage, is to buy pet insurance through your employer, if available. Eleven percent of employers in the U.S. offer pet health insurance benefits, according to the Society for Human Resource Management, and these plans are usually discounted.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTION

Many animal advocates think most pet owners are better off forgoing pet insurance and instead putting the money you would have spent on premiums into a dedicated savings account to pay for vet care as needed. Depending on the policy, pet insurance can cost \$1,500 to \$6,000 over the life of an average pet, and most pet owners will never spend that much for treatment.

### WAYS TO SAVE

If you can't afford pet insurance or choose not to buy it, there are other ways you can save. For example, many local animal shelters offer free or low-cost spaying and neutering programs and vaccinations, and some shelters work with local vets who are willing to provide care at reduced prices for low-income and senior pet owners.

There are also a number of organizations that provide financial assistance to pet owners in need. To locate these programs, visit [HumaneSociety.org/PetFinancialAid](http://HumaneSociety.org/PetFinancialAid).

To save on pet medications, get a prescription from your vet (ask for generic is possible) so you can shop for the best price. Medicine purchased at the vet's office is usually more expensive than you can get from a regular pharmacy or online.

Most pharmacies fill prescriptions for pets inexpensively, and many pharmacies offer pet discount savings programs too. You can also save by shopping online at a verified pharmacy like [1800PetMeds.com](http://1800PetMeds.com), [DrsFoster-Smith.com](http://DrsFoster-Smith.com) and [PetCareRX.com](http://PetCareRX.com).

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

**Blooming  
Prairie Cancer  
Group**

**Cancer  
Corner**



## Golfing for a Cure helps BP Cancer



It was a fun day at a golf outing Wednesday, Aug. 7 at the Blooming Prairie Country Club. Golfers golfed to find a cure for cancer. Shown are Steve and Corky Drexler (both standing) and Don and Carol Bulson on the golf cart. (Photo submitted)

Thirty golfers participated in the annual Golfing for a Cure event sponsored by the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group. The golfing benefit for cancer was held at the Blooming Prairie Country Club. Shown in the back row, from left: Jason, Liz Heiber, Val Braaten, Colette Lea, Kim Symes, Julie Noble, Nicki Bishop and Rachel Hansen; front row: Alyssa Ressler, Amy Doerhoefer and Kelly Lamotte. (Photo submitted)

By **HOWARD LESTRUD**  
Staff Writer

The money is already coming in for the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group. Last Wednesday's Golfing for a Cure was a grand success, says Nicki Bishop, one of the event's organizers.

Thirty golfers participated in beautiful weather.

Monies raised totaled \$1,600. "We are so grateful to the generosity of our local businesses and residents," remarked Cheri Krejci, BP Cancer Group treasurer.

Planning continues in earnest for other BP Cancer Group activities scheduled in the next few weeks.

**Sept. 7, 2019**  
Barb Kraling is proud to announce that the 10th annual Cut for a Cure will be held in Central Park rather than at its previous location on Main Street and Highway 218. This fun event under the white tent is

scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. with crazy hair, face painting, chair massages, manicures, games and lots of fun stuff.

Registration also begins at the Cut for a Cure tent for the 5K Run/Walk at 9 a.m.

Kraling and her staff will offer hair cuts for \$5.

"We are trying to think of something new all the time," remarked an enthusiastic Barb Kraling. "We all have personal connections to someone who has been battling cancer and this is a way for us to help," she explained.

To make the event successful, it is important to involve lots of people, Kraling says. Her husband John and son Jonathan are helpers, as is Barb's sister, Mary Olson.

Last year's Cut for a Cure fundraiser brought in \$1,205.

"We all have a common goal and that is to prevent cancer," said Barb Kraling, expressing delight with the involvement of caring for people in her Cut for

Sponsored by

**Krejci**



STEELE-DODGE

BUSINESS



# Crystal Valley to relocate headquarters to Mankato

Crystal Valley, a leading farm supply and grain marketing cooperative in southern Minnesota and northern Iowa, has announced the relocation of its main office to Mankato.

The company will move into the building currently occupied by Eide Bailly located at 1911 Excel Dr. in the Eastwood Industrial Center. The move from Lake Crystal to Mankato will occur once Eide Bailly relocates to its new downtown Mankato office later this year.

Following two mergers in the early 2000s, Crystal Valley more than doubled their main office building in Lake Crystal with an expansion in 2009. Continued growth over the last 10 years, along with another merger, again resulted in a shortage of office space.

“A year and a half ago, we began exploring various office designs and construction costs for expanded facilities,” said Roger Kienholz, CEO of Crystal Valley. “When we found we could obtain

existing office space in Mankato to meet our current and future needs, with costs less than new construction, we moved on the opportunity,” he said.

Klienholz says Crystal Valley anticipates to continue growing in the future. “We believe the Mankato location will better serve us for the long term,” he said. “The current Eide Bailly building is an excellent facility in a prime location that meets our needs with nearly 25,000 square feet on a single level, fully accessible for our customers and employees,” he added.

Crystal Valley is currently working on the sale of its current building in Lake Crystal for utilization as a daycare and child learning center. This building would be of tremendous benefit to the Lake Crystal community and surrounding areas.

Crystal Valley currently employs 250 full-time employees across 14 locations, including a grain processing center in Steele County.

# Law firm adds new attorney

The law firm of Einhaus, Mattison, Carver & Haberman, P.A., and the members of the Steele County Bar Association welcome new attorney Anna Heisler.

Heisler began her duties after a private swearing in ceremony held in July at the Steele County Courthouse before the Honorable Joseph A. Bueltel.

She is a 2012 graduate of Owatonna High School, a 2015 graduate from University of Minnesota – Duluth, and a 2018 graduate of St. Thomas School of Law. Heisler returns to Owatonna to practice in civil and criminal litigation.

# She’s her own boss

Klemmensen stitches together 25 years of business in BP

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Linda Klemmensen, owner of the Sportstitch embroidery business in Blooming Prairie, loves the flexibility of being her own boss.

“I can lock the doors and go pick corn with Randy (her husband),” she remarked.

Klemmensen is also a member of the Blooming Prairie ambulance crew. If she goes on an ambulance call, she puts a closed sign on the door and will do the work later. “People are very patient with me,” she points out.

Sportstitch is celebrating its 25th anniversary from Aug. 7 with Business After Hours and until Aug. 23.

If there’s an Awesome Blossom shirt or hat around somewhere, it has definitely been designed by Klemmensen. She calls the local sports logo business, spirit wear.

She emphasizes that most of her products go out the back door, meaning that much of her handiwork is shipped out to customers around the world. “I couldn’t make it just on spirit wear,” she says.

“Our customers don’t care where it comes from, they mainly care about quality at a reasonable price in a reasonable amount of time,” Klemmensen affirmed.

There will be sales galore, 25% off sale items. Twenty-five birthday gifts will be given away. Customers are encouraged to sign up for a drawing. The drawings will be held on Monday, Aug. 26.

“I just can’t believe 25 years has gone by that fast,” says Klemmensen who minds the store mostly by herself. Holli Naatz has worked at Sportstitch for 20 years and is the street printing professional.

Klemmensen’s entire family has been involved in the business, her sons Brad and Ryan and daughter Rachel growing up with the business.



SUBMITTED PHOTO  
When school students visit Sportstitch on social school tours, Linda Klemmensen, owner, brings out her list of duties she assumes every day.

Her husband Randy and her mother Ardis Krejci have also been on the Sportstitch team. Krejci helps with trimming product, boxing it and folds shirts.

A sign at the front of the building proclaims Sportstitch as “Your one stop logo shop.” The business centers around embroidery, promotion products, creative names, screen printing and photo plates. Sportstitch also has tuxedo rental.

In order to have her flexibility, Klemmensen has to wear lots of hats. She’s in charge of ordering, receiving, invoicing, accounts receivable, graphic design, running the embroidering machine and running screen prints. She prides herself in being self-taught.

“I’m also in charge of sales, marketing and even janitorial work,” she laughs.

“It’s fun to reflect on how the business started,” Klemmensen mentions. She says her two older brothers, Bruce (Lynn) and Roger (Joan) convinced her to get into the logo business. “It was kind of mentioned as a joke,” she says.

Klemmensen’s two brothers and their wives and Randy and Linda started the business. Klemmensen later bought all of them out and is now the sole owner with her husband.

A nephew, Grant Krejci, suggested the name, Sportstitch when he was 14.

The business was started with a two-year embroidery machine. She is currently on her third embroidery machine, the current one being a four-head machine.

In the year 2000, Klemmensen added in-house screening equipment. The screening is done in the rear of the shop, which is located on Main Street’s south side.

Even though Klemmensen has not met many

All in a Days Work

ACCOUNTING/TAXES

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT

GRAPHIC DESIGN

HUMAN RESOURCES

INSPECTOR

FINANCE

MACHINE OPERATOR

MAINTENANCE

MARKETING

PUBLIC RELATIONS

PURCHASING

QUALITY CONTROL

RECEIVING

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

RISK MANAGEMENT

SALES

SHIPPING

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
Linda Klemmensen, owner of Sportstitch of Blooming Prairie, stands in front of many logos she has designed over the years. She is observing her 25th year in business with a celebration from Aug. 7-23.

of her customers, she feels she knows most of them because of the personal contact through phone calls and texting.

Klemmensen’s first big order was Treasure Island and it was garnered by a sales person named Bruce who works with Linda. Guess what? Treasure Island is no longer a Sportstitch customer because they bought their own embroidery equipment.

Klemmensen vividly remembers one of her first big jobs. She was challenged to make 144 white sweatshirts with black collars. “We had to sew on the collars, and I think we had ladies all over town sewing on the collars,” she chuckles. “That job made me very nervous,” she says truthfully.

She opens her doors to tours for the 10th grade in the spring and for the second grade, also in the spring. “We do a lot of fundraisers with groups;

we provide the product and they market it,” says Klemmensen.

The Junior Entrepreneur program is a special Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce project Klemmensen has led for more than 20 years.

The local chamber means a lot to Klemmensen. “It’s helped me meet a ton of people, and I can’t thank chamber director Becky (Noble) enough,” she says. She also served two years as chamber president.

Klemmensen has lived in this area her whole life. “The community has given me so much, I just hope to make it a better place for the next generation.”

What type of community is Blooming Prairie. Klemmensen answers that question very quickly by saying, “the best.” It’s a very clean, well-kept and friendly community, she believes. “Everyone is helping everyone else,” she

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| Thurs., August 15 | Chris Hawkey Concert                        | 8:00 pm |
| Fri., August 16   | Chris Kroeze Concert                        | 8:00 pm |
| Sat., August 17   | From NBC "THE VOICE"                        |         |
|                   | Bull Riding/Barrel Racing and Mutton Bustin | 7:30 pm |
| Sun., August 18   | Demolition Derby                            | 3:30 pm |

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STEELE-DODGE BUSINESS



# McNeilus program benefits workers, company

**BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN**  
COUNTY WRITER

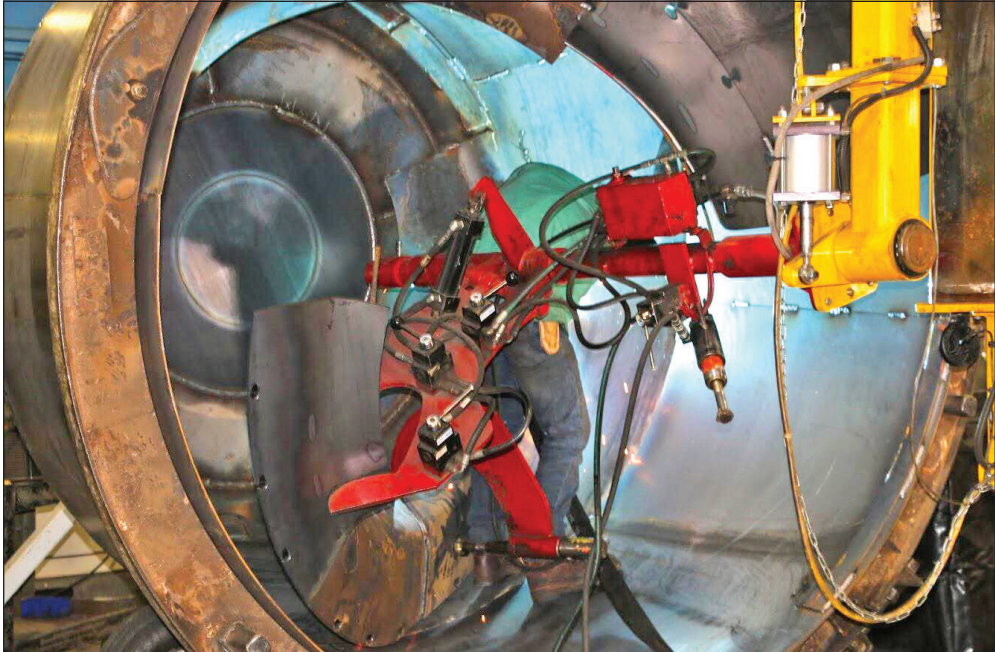
JoJo Wright had been working in the assembly area at McNeilus Truck and Manufacturing when he decided to give a new program that would train him as a welder a try.

He started the program early this year and after four weeks he was OSHA safety certified and had a certificate in welding. Today, he has advanced further and is now working as a supervisor on the line.

The program, said McNeilus' Chad Kleist, can "take people who have never welded before and after four weeks they can hit the line running."

The company started the program in October 2018 and by last week had graduated 55 new welders with another five individuals ready to start the program. The addition of welders is important to the company that employs 1,200 people in Dodge Center. About 900 of those employees work on the line and about 200 of those are welders. Others work in Customer Support Services and the company has its own research and development and engineering departments.

For the employee, company officials said, it is an opportunity to move into the middle class through



A welder at McNeilus Truck and Manufacturing works inside the drum of one of the concrete mixers manufactured at the plant. Upon completion of the four week program, participants have an OSHA safety certification and a welding certificate.

improved wages and the opportunity to advance.

Last week the company celebrated the accomplishments with a short program attended by officials from state agencies who helped get the program up and running, school districts, Riverland Community College and the company employees who have learned the new skills.

The program is a partnership between McNeilus, the State of Minnesota and Riverland Community College.

It is taught by instructors from Riverland and financially supported by a \$150,000 initial state grant with another \$150,000 grant approved.

"We're excited about this program," said McNeilus Truck President Brad Nelson. "This is business, education coming together to solve a problem. This is changing peoples' lives."

Program participants include both new employees looking for a skill and current McNeilus employees seeking to "upskill."

Even a current employee who took the class but decided to return to their previous job at the company still has gained skills and perspectives that makes him or her a better employee, officials said.

For Wright, the class has made a big difference. A Rochester resident, his enthusiasm for his job and the program was obvious during his comments to the assembled group last week.

He had been working at McNeilus before taking the



JoJo Wright explained how the McNeilus Truck and Manufacturing welding program gave him a new skill and added confidence.

class but had always believed that a career in welding was beyond his ability. The program changed that, he said, giving him the confidence he needed to advance in his career.

He recalled the old quote about giving a man a fish you feed him for a day but if you teach him to fish you feed him for a lifetime.

"That's what the program has meant to me," he said. "You invested in me as a person and I want to take it out to my community."

The program has helped the company, Kleist said, but it has not solved the problem. They still need more welders, he said, and could hire 20 or 30 immediately.

McNeilus Truck and Manufacturing manufactures concrete mixers and refuse hauler trucks. The company makes the boxes and drums for the vehicles and mounts them but does not make the chassis. Between 20-40 mixers can be completed in a week and 50-60 refuse haulers.

# Federated challenge raises \$3M for Big Brothers

Fifty-nine prominent businesses and more than 500 private citizens gathered at The Saint Paul RiverCentre in St. Paul, on Sunday, July 28 for the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Federated Challenge supporting Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Awe-inspiring generosity on the part of corporate sponsors and attendees generated more than \$3 million during this charitable event. One hundred percent of the money raised will be donated to the three Minnesota Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. These monies support one-to-one mentoring that change the lives of Littles for the better, forever, and

the Federated Challenge Scholarship Fund. The scholarship fund provides up to \$5,000 per year to qualified Littles and high school-aged Bigs enrolled in a non-four-year program at a trade or technical school or community college that focuses on career-ready skills training.

The 2019 Federated Challenge, emceed by Dave Lee from WCCO Radio, featured a Together We Shine-themed gala and auction. America's Got Talent winner Darci Lynne, a 14-year-old ventriloquist and singer from Oklahoma City, Okla., was the featured performer. The Minnesota United, along with its CEO Chris Wright, were honored during the

evening for their support and commitment to youth mentoring. On Monday, July 29, Federated Challenge attendees reconvened for a round of golf at Interlachen Country Club in Edina.

"The Federated Challenge continues to garner an exceptional amount of funds, which directly supports young people facing adversity," Federat-

ed Challenge Co-Chair Jeff Fetter said. "Numerous children have a brighter future thanks to the leadership and generosity of our corporate sponsors. We are proud to join these valued organizations in support of youth mentoring through Big Brothers Big Sisters."

The Federated Challenge was founded in 2004 as a two-day fund-raising



Federated Challenge Co-Chairs Jeff and Marty Fetter present Minnesota Big Brothers Big Sisters CEOs and the National BBBS Board Chairman with a check totaling \$3,035,000. From left to right: Marty Fetter, Michelle Redman, Jackie Scholl Johnson, Michael Goar, Ken Burdick, and Jeff Fetter.

event hosted by Federated Insurance, a commercial insurance company headquartered in Owatonna.

Now in its fifteenth year, this event has raised nearly \$38 million for youth mentoring programs.

# Rochester VA Grand Opening set

A grand opening for the Rochester VA Clinic is set for Thursday, Aug. 22 from 11-1 p.m.

The program begins at 11 a.m. followed by open house and tours.

All members of the

general public and veterans are welcome to attend.

The clinic is located at 3351 Commercial Dr., Suite 400, Rochester.

Light refreshments will also be served.

  
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# Marking 63 years



The Blooming Prairie High School Class of 1956 held its reunion on Aug. 3 at the Servicemen's Club in Blooming Prairie. Twenty-seven classmates reunited and shared stories as they celebrated 63 years of being graduated from BP. Those attending included: front row, from left: Karen Pirkel, Bev Bartl, Marlys Schmeling, Rebecca Anderson, Rosalie Dixon, Eileen Buchanan, Mary Kermes and Pat Swenson; middle row: Janice Schmidt, Dan Pirkel, Robert Deets, Edgar Adams, Jim Christian, Ron Kjos, Ron Janning, Phillip Ferguson, Phyllis Jacobson and Sonja Salveson; back row: Dick Jelinek, Don Nelson, Noel Severson, Richard Symes, Jim Lysne, Roger Kruger, Bruce Farrington and Jim Yanke.

## OWATONNA MOVES: ahead to raise tobacco age FROM A1

moving the age up due to vaping and I really thought that the City of Owatonna should be one of the communities to get on board with this.”

Council members Nate Dotson and Jeff Okerberg both voted against the measure, citing an ideological reasoning for their position. “My issue is probably just consistency,” Dotson said. “We consider you an adult at 18 but not on a few other things.”

“We think you have the maturity and wisdom to sign a contract, take out a loan, get married, or fight in a war, so we should believe that you have the maturity and wisdom to be able to choose whether you can use tobacco,” Dotson said.

Dotson explained that he is definitely not against curbing youth tobacco use, and that despite his vote in opposition of the ordinance, he hopes that

it will carry this positive side effect. “I think probably our best course of action is education,” Dotson said about eliminating youth tobacco use. “I don’t think fear tactics work.”

Raney said that he feels this measure would help get tobacco products out of the hands of young people. “By moving the age up to 21, that takes the high school students out from purchasing it for themselves and for younger people. There are junior high age kids that play on varsity teams with 18-year-olds.”

“We hope that we can make it more difficult for middle schoolers to get their hands on it,” Raney said, reasoning that kids at that age are too young to be using harmful substances and are not able to make good decisions about using such substances.

It is Raney’s belief that products such as vapers are being marketed to young people, due to their reliance on flavors such as bubblegum and watermelon. “Clearly these companies are going after

the young people,” he said. “I truly believe that by moving it up to 21 we’re assisting in helping young people stay healthy, and make healthy choices.”

While this is sound reasoning, Dotson still thinks that this measure might be taking away a legal adult’s personal freedom. “If you can be in the position to sacrifice yourself for your country, then you should be able to be in the position to decide whether or not to use harmful products,” he said. “If you change the age of adulthood across the board then I would consider it.”

During the meeting, concerned citizens voiced their opinion on the matter including local students in S.H.O.C., Dr. Brian Bunkers, County Attorney Dan McIntosh, and Mary Urch with Steele County Public Health.

In the end, the first hearing of the ordinance passed, which means that the council will likely pass the measure during its second hearing later this month.

## JURY CONVICTS: man of attempted murder FROM A1

start of his trial has been pushed back several times.

During his time of being locked up at the county jail, Jaeger has allegedly assaulted corrections officers. He has two pending assault charges for his jailhouse behavior. In one of the assaults, a corrections officer was punched and suffered a concussion. In another assault, Jaeger allegedly tossed urine at a corrections officer.

Because of Jaeger’s violent behavior at the jail, McIntosh requested in court last week that he be transferred out of the local jail to the Minnesota Department of Corrections in St. Cloud on Monday even though he hasn’t been sentenced yet. His sentencing is scheduled for Nov. 12 in

“It hasn’t gone very well at our jail,” McIntosh said in regards to the

transfer request. McIntosh said Jaeger is sick of the Steele jail while jail personnel have the same feelings about him. “It was better for everyone involved for him to get a change of scenery,” McIntosh added.

Jaeger’s sentencing is set for Nov. 12 in front of Judge Joseph Bueltel. McIntosh said he will ask the judge for 20 years, which is the maximum allowed by sentencing guidelines. He said the severity of the offense and Jaeger’s criminal history warrant the high sentence.

“He has quite a history of violence,” McIntosh said.

Jaeger was convicted of felony domestic assault in Olmsted County in 2009, terroristic threats in 2014 and second-degree felony assault with a dangerous weapon in 2006.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

AUG 14: RYAN WEBER, EFREN HERNANDEZ SR., NAOMI SMITH, LARRY CHRISTIANSON, JOEL KUBISTA, ISABEL DICKEL, GREG THOMAS AND BRIAN BOWMAN

AUG 15: ELENA SALINAS, GARRET MOTL AND DAHLIA NELSON

AUG 16: EDDIE HABERMAN, SHIRLEY JOHNSON AND MARISSA BLOCK

AUG 17: RON NELSON, NANCY FARR, MELODY BENSON, PAYTON SIMON, GREG JOHNSON AND HEUAH GARCIA AND BARB PETERSON

AUG 18: LONI CHRISTIANSON, DIANE VORLICEK, ZACKARY HEIN, BARB BLOME, ALLAN SEVERSON, CAMERON RASK, BEKAH DENNIS, DENISE KRELL, GABRIEL HEIN, MEGAN FREDRICKSON AND KRISTEN EHLERS

AUG 19: NICK NELSON, DONNA GULLICKSON, JAMESON SMITH, CHERI KREJCI, PARKER GREENE, ADRIANNA BERMEA HJELMAN, JASPER DOOCY AND NOEL TOCKO

AUG 20: BRANDON DOYLE AND CAROL JENSEN

ANNIVERSARIES

AUG 15: ROGER & LEANN HANSON AND COREY & NIKKI BORG

AUG 16: DARRELL & NAOMI ERICKSON

AUG 17: KEN & BETTY BEHNKEN AND GENE & SYLVIA MYRE

AUG 18: JUSTIN & KELLY PETERSON

AUG 20: DENISE & CHRIS THOMPSON

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## BOOK NOOK

# Summer fun isn't over yet at the library

With the Steele County Free Fair happening this week and the Pine Springs Pool closed, summer is definitely winding down. But the fun hasn't ended at the Blooming Prairie Branch Library. We are continuing our Monday movies at 1 p.m. and our Summer Storytimes at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday mornings. We also have Teen Time at 1 p.m. on the last two Wednesdays of August. The final one, on Aug. 28, will be our pizza party for those who have read 500 pages or more this summer.

Don't forget that our final Book Fair of the summer will be on Thursday, Aug. 22 from 1 to 6 p.m. If you have read at least 20 minutes per day for at least 10 days, come in and choose your own free book. We are also planning some Star Wars fun that day.

Finally, we have one last program that did not make it onto our official summer flyer. You will not want to miss this one - Greg the Great will present Mystifying Magic for us. Greg, who you may also know as our Blooming Prairie police chief, has some new tricks. The magic begins at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 27! Please mark your calendars and tell your friends. It is always a fun and funny show. See you at the library!

NANCY  
VAILLANCOURT

Recipe  
Corner

Corn Tortillas with  
rajas and queso

Makes 8 tacos

Rajas

4 fresh poblano chiles  
Olive oil, for brushing  
2 large yellow onions,  
peeled and cut into  
12- inch slices  
Kosher or sea salt and  
freshly ground black

pepper, to taste  
2 cups shredded  
Monterey Jack cheese  
(for topping)

Soft Corn Tortillas

1 cup instant corn  
masa flour  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
2/3 cup warm water

Prepare a hot fire in your grill.  
Brush the poblanos with oil and grill, turning often, until the skins blister and burn. Transfer to a plastic bag and let them steam. Brush the onions with oil and grill marks on both sides. Remove the stems, skin and seeds from the poblanos, and then slice into strips. Cut the onion slices in half and break apart. Combine the poblanos and onions and season to taste. Keep warm until serving.  
To make the tortillas, place the masa flour and salt in a bowl. Stir in the water to make soft dough, adding water if necessary. Divide the dough into 8 portions, forming each into a ball. Cover with a damp cloth to keep the dough moist. Place each ball of dough between two unopened plastic sandwich bags, then press to a 5- to 6-inch round in a tortilla press. Preheat an ungreased skillet over medium-high heat. Cook each tortilla for 1 minute on each side until golden in spots. Cover with a damp tea towel until ready to serve.  
Divide the rajas evenly between the 8 tortillas and sprinkle 1/4 cup of cheese on each taco.

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PASTOR'S COLUMN

Just be nice!



**Pastor Matt Fennell**  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
BLOOMING PRAIRIE

One of the truly phenomenal aspects of Scripture is that it does not merely constrain itself to preparing us for the next world, rather it is intensely practical so that while preparing for life after death we can also make the most of this life by following its teachings.

Take for an example the simple command to the Church of Ephesus found in Ephesians 4:32. It states, “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

One ponders if we as residents here sought to implement only this one verse of Holy Text how great a

difference we would make to our community. To practice the art of simple kindness. To treat each other as we would desire to be treated. To put it simply, “Just be Nice!”

How would this one instruction alter our attitudes and experiences this week? Now add to this proposition the aspect of being tenderhearted. To be compassionately sensitive to each other. Taking into consideration the difficulties and struggles the other might be facing. Giving, if you will, the other the benefit of the doubt. Walking, as it were, a mile in their shoes before acting or responding. Lastly is the most gracious ingredient of all;

the most difficult but most God like action a human can do. It is to offer to one another forgiveness. We each must confess to having our off days. You know those times we reacted in a way we wish we hadn’t or said something we would give anything to take back. We all have actions we regret. If so then what if we offered our family friends, and neighbors that forgiveness we all wish would be extended to ourselves.

What if we, regardless of our doctrinal views, denominations, political ideology simply lived out this verse this week. I’m not saying that those things are unimportant

or in any way should be abandoned, but what if while holding whatever position we hold we did so while being kind, sensitive, and forgiving? What if we tried this experiment for a week? What if we stretched it out to a month, a year? What if it actually became a habit of behavior?

I know to some this may seem idealistic, simplistic, perhaps even naive; but ask yourself what type of people do you interact with through out your day? Wouldn’t it be more pleasant to meet someone seeking to live out this simple truth even if imperfectly. Maybe the change can start with you.

AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**LUTHERAN**  
  
**AURORA LUTHERAN**  
6329 SE 28th St., Owatonna  
Pastor Stephanie Wood  
507-676-5696  
Worship: Sunday at 9 a.m.  
Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.  
  
**COMMUNITY LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
106 Third St. SE., Geneva  
Pastor Kristen Venne  
507-256-4288  
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.  
  
**FIRST LUTHERAN – AFLC**  
503 Radel Ct., Ellendale  
Pastor Richard Sliper  
507-684-2451  
Saturday: 8 a.m. Men’s Bible Study  
Sunday: 9 a.m. Worship;  
10:15 a.m. Sunday School/  
Confirmation  
Tues.: 7 p.m. Call to Prayer,  
open to all churches  
Wed.: 9:30 a.m. BibleStudy;  
3:30 – 5 p.m. Jesus and Me; 6 p.m.  
Call to Prayer; 6:30 p.m.  
Youth Group  
  
**FIRST LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
434 First St. SW.,  
Blooming Prairie  
Senior Pastor:  
Rev. Heidi Heimgartner  
Associate Pastor:  
Rev. Mike Walerius  
507-583-6621  
firstlutheranbp.com  
Worship Service- 9 a.m.  
Sunday School- 10 a.m.  
  
**FIRST LUTHERAN – LCMC**  
8953 SW 37th Ave., Hope  
Pastor Sandy Miller  
507-451-3854  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School, Adult Ed:  
10:15 a.m. Sun.  
  
**Good Shepherd Lutheran – LCMS**  
2500 7th Ave. NE., Owatonna  
Pastor Greg Schlicker  
Pastor Mark Neumann  
507-451-4125  
goodshepherdowatonna.com  
Worship: 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.  
  
**MOLAND LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
7618 NE 84th Ave., Kenyon  
Pastor Nancy Edwardson  
507-789-6661  
Worship: 10:45 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.  
  
**PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
9651 SW 75th St., Ellendale  
507-465-8366  
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9 a.m. Sun.  
  
**REDEEMER LUTHERAN – LCMS**  
1054 Truman Ave., Owatonna  
Pastor Kirk Griebel  
507-451-2720  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.  
Education Hour: 10:15 a.m. Sun.

**RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
30456 Mower-Freeborn Road,  
Austin  
Pastor Lindsay Brennan  
507-583-2038 or 507-437-3000  
www.roglutheran.org  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School  
(Sept. – May): 10:15 a.m.  
  
**ST. JOHN’S LUTHERAN – LCMS**  
4532 SE 84th Ave., Claremont  
Pastor Alan Broadwell  
507-528-2404  
Worship: 6 p.m. Saturday;  
10:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.  
  
**ST. JOHN’S LUTHERAN – LCMS**  
28959 630th Ave., Sergeant  
Pastor Collin Duling  
507-251-5568  
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9 a.m.  
  
**ST. JOHN LUTHERAN-ELCA**  
1301 Lincoln Ave. Owatonna  
Pastors Dave Klawiter and Jacie  
Richmond  
507-451-7293  
stjohnowatonna.org  
Worship: 5 p.m. Thursday &  
Saturday; 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday  
Summer Services: 8 a.m. & 9:30  
a.m. Sunday  
  
**ST. MICHAEL’S LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
30450 570th Ave., Waltham  
Pastor Dwight DoBell  
507-567-2474  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.  
  
**ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN – LCMS**  
202 E. Park Ave., Hollandale  
Pastor Jesse Krusemark  
507-567-2272  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.  
  
**ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden  
Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith  
507-451-2165  
Worship: 9:30 a.m..  
  
**TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna  
507-451-4520  
tlcowatonna.org  
Senior Pastor: Rev. Todd Buegler  
Associate Pastor:  
Rev. Amanda Floy  
Deacon: Kris Oppegard  
Worship: 5 p.m. Saturday; 8:15  
a.m., 9:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.  
Sunday  
Sunday School: 8:15 a.m.  
& 9:30 a.m.  
  
**TRINITY LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
104 First St. SE., Hayfield  
Pastor Paul Hauschild  
507-477-2248  
www.trinityhayfield.org  
Worship: 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

**TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS**  
108 Third Ave. SW., Medford  
Pastor Mark Biebighauser  
507-451-0447  
8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Worship Service  
9:15 a.m. Sunday School and  
Adult Bible Study  
  
**TRINITY LUTHERAN – LCMS**  
57043 300th St., Waltham  
Pastor Jesse Krusemark  
507-567-2272  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.  
  
**ZION LUTHERAN – ELCA**  
7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale  
Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith  
Worship: 8:00 a.m.  
  
**CATHOLIC**  
  
**CHRIST THE KING**  
205 Second Ave. NW, Medford  
507-451-6353  
Father James Starasinich  
Deacon Patrick Fagan  
Mass: 5:30 p.m. Sat.  
Mass: 9 a.m. Mon. & Fri.  
  
**CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS**  
307 SW First St., New Richland  
Father Raul Silva  
Fr. Adam McMillan,  
Parochial Vicar  
507-465-8217  
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday  
  
**HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL**  
9946 SE 24th Ave. Owatonna  
Father John Sauer, Pastor  
507-451-1588  
www.litomysl.webs.com  
Sunday Mass: 9:30 a.m.c with  
Children’s Church  
Reconciliation:  
8:45 a.m. - 1st & 3rd Sundays  
Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.:  
Faith Formation for  
K thru Confirmation  
Second Sunday of month:  
Family Faith Formation  
Litomysl Finance Council:  
2nd Thursday  
Litomysl Pastoral Council:  
2nd Thursday every other month  
  
**SACRED HEART CATHOLIC**  
150 NE Second St., Hayfield  
Father Thomas Niehaus  
507-477-2256  
Mass: 8 a.m. Sun.  
& 8:30 a.m. Thursday  
Reconciliation: 7:30 a.m. Sun.  
  
**SACRED HEART PARISH**  
810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna  
Father John Sauer  
Fr. Jose Morales, Parochial Vicar  
507-451-1588  
www.sacredheartowatonna.org  
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday;  
8:30 a.m. & 10 a.m. Sun.  
Spanish Mass: 11:45 a.m. Sun.  
Daily Mass: 7:15 a.m.  
Reconciliation: 4 p.m. Sat.  
Adoration:  
8 a.m. – 10 p.m. Thurs.

**ST. COLUMBANUS CATHOLIC**  
114 E. Main St., Blooming Prairie  
Father Thomas Niehaus  
507-583-2784  
www.stcolumbanuschurch.com  
Mass: 10 a.m. Sun.  
& 8:30 a.m. Friday  
Reconciliation: 9 a.m.  
First Friday & Saturday  
  
**ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH**  
512 S. Elm Ave., Owatonna  
Father James Starasinick  
Deacon Patrick Fagan  
507-451-4845  
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.  
Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m.  
Reconciliation: 3-3:30 p.m. Sat.  
Daily Mass:  
8 a.m. Tues., Wed. & Fri.  
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**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.

**NON-DENOMINATIONAL**  
  
**BRIDGES OF HOPE COMMUNITY**  
130 W. Bridge St., Owatonna  
Pastor Keith Haskell  
507-215-2249  
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.  
Biblestudy: 9 a.m. Sun.  
Reformers Unanimous Meetings:  
7 p.m. Friday  
  
**CEDAR CREEK**  
30 E. Main St., Hayfield  
Pastor Aaron de Neui  
507-477-2255  
www.cedarcreekchurch.org  
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.  
  
**DESTINY CHRISTIAN**  
2515 Harvest Lane NW  
Owatonna  
Pastors Joe & Vicki Braucht  
www.destinycc.org  
Worship: 6 p.m. Sat.  
  
**ELEVATION NORTH**  
2002 Austin Road, Owatonna  
Pastor Doug Jones  
507-363-3099  
www.elevationnorth.blogspot.com  
Worship (English): 10 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.  
Worship (Spanish): 2 p.m. Sun.  
Bible Study: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday  
Spanish Evangelism & Prayer:  
7 p.m. Friday  
  
**NEW BEGINNINGS**  
332 14th St. NE., Owatonna  
Pastors Scott & Joan Peterson  
507-413-0209  
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.  
  
**SIMPLE CHURCH**  
4515 NW 22nd Ave., Owatonna  
(Country Goods building across  
the freeway from Cabela’s)  
Pastor Todd Lundgren  
507-451-5661  
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.  
Bible Study: 7 p.m. Wednesday

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

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

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

**SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST**  
  
**SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST**  
2373 Seventh Ave. NE, Owatonna  
Pastor Brian Beavers  
507-340-7143  
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sat.  
Bible Study: 11 a.m. Sat.

**UCC**  
  
**CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
211 Main St. S., Medford  
Rev. Richard Waters  
507-451-4596  
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.

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

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

**FIRST BAPTIST (Owatonna’s oldest church)**  
123 E. Main St., Owatonna  
Pastor Cindy 507-451-2803  
www.firstbaptistowatonna.com  
Fellowship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.

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



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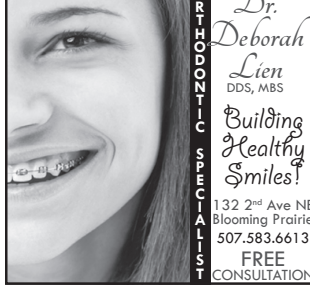
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STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

The wrappers of First Lutheran Church joined hands on a recent Monday to wrap Christmas gifts that will be sent to the Marie Sandvik Center in Minneapolis. Gifts are given to the needy. Helpers pictured from left to right are: Judy Lee, Joanne Sorenson, Jan Nirk, Bernice Stender, Barb Blome, Marilyn Meschke, Bev Hoveland, Donna Maixner, Dawn Gross, Judy Lestrud, Joyce Johns, Connie Hagerman, Claire Staloch, Jennifer Milton, Marilyn Heinz, Diane Boullion, Kaye Toquam, Gabe Staloch, Joan Mast, Amy Staloch, Dona Gullickson, Vikki Wacek, Judy Bishop, Vivian Ulrich and Judy Brudwick. Front: Mary Delzer.

CHRISTMAS: in August FROM A3

sale sponsored by church women. An action grant from Thrivent Financial was also received. Donations are always welcome, Lee says.

Most of the items are donated but new items were purchased on a shopping spree led by Joan Mast and Vikki Wacek, Lee related.

First Lutheran Church members Vivian and Harold Ulrich will again transport the gifts to the Marie Sandvik Center at 1112 East Franklin Ave. in Minneapolis.

The Marie Sandvik Center was started in 1940 by Marie Sandvik, a determined Norwegian immigrant. Sandvik rented a bankrupt bar on Washington Avenue, cleaned it and erected a sign proclaiming “Minneapolis Revival Mission.”

The mission was then moved to Nicollet Island and continued to minister to the “skid row” population. Doris Nye of Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls, joined Sandvik in 1944 and served as director of the mission until her death in April of 2005.

Marie Sandvik died in 1992 and her work was carried on by Doris Nye until her death, and the work now continues under the leadership of director, Laurie Hink, assistant director, Laurie Whitmore and a dedicated staff of paid workers and volunteers.

The Marie Sandvik Center added a women’s shelter, built a gymnasium, remodeled a new chapel and classrooms to accommodate their rising numbers.

BLOTTER: FROM AS

**Domestic:** Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Rice St. E. at 11:30 a.m.

**Animal Bite:** At 12:07 p.m., an animal bite occurred in the 600 block of Walnut Ave. S.

**Theft:** Police arrested a juvenile for a theft in the 200 block of McKinley St. SW at 1:06 p.m.

**Theft:** Police received a theft report from the 100 block of Bridge St. W. at 9:10 p.m.

**Domestic:** Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 500 block of Vine St. E. at 10:08 p.m. They took a subject into custody.

**Assault:** Officers responded to an assault on 12<sup>th</sup> Place NW at 11:37 p.m.

**Aug. 5**

**Welfare:** Police arrested a subject during a welfare check in the 200 block of Vine St. E. at 5:36 a.m.

**Hit and Run:** At 9:35 a.m., a hit and run accident occurred in the 200 block of Florence Ave. NW.

**Theft:** At 12:34 p.m., a motor vehicle was reported stolen from Heritage Dr. NW.

**Domestic:** Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 100 block of 12<sup>th</sup> Place NW at 2:04 p.m. They took a subject into custody.

**Disturbance:** Police responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Prospect St. E. at 5:25 p.m.

**Aug. 6**

**Theft:** Officer took a theft report in the 300 block of Park Dr. NW at 2:04 a.m.

**Domestic:** Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1600 block of Rosewood Dr. NW at 3:16 a.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

**Harassment:** At 9:17 a.m., a harassment incident occurred in the 2100 block of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NVV.

**Hit and Run:** A hit and run accident occurred in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 4:06 p.m.

**Child Protection:** Police received a child protection report from the 200 block of McKinley St. SE at 5:06 p.m.

**Assault:** Officers responded to an assault in the 500 block of Dunnell Dr. NW at 7:40 p.m.

**Vandalism:** Property damage was reported in the 300 block of Allan Ave. SW at 8:44 p.m.

**Aug. 7**

**Theft:** Officer took a theft report in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 9:23 a.m.

**Warrants:** Police made warrant arrests in the 1400 block of Nottingham Dr. SE at 10 a.m. and at Cedar Ave. S. and Rice St. E. at 8:13 p.m.

**Fraud:** Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 100 block of Wilson Dr. NW at 10:10 a.m.

**Shoplifting:** At 10:32 a.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 3900 block of Cabela Dr. NW.

**Welfare:** Officer conducted a welfare check at Academy St. E. and Grove Ave. at 1:15 p.m.

**Suspicion:** Police responded to suspicious activity in the 1200 block of Frontage Rd. W. at 6:41 p.m. They arrested a subject at the scene.

**Aug. 8**

**Vandalism:** Property damage was reported in the 600 block of Bridge St. W. at 7:39 a.m. and the 400 block of 14<sup>th</sup> St. NE at 5:14 p.m.

**Burglary:** Police began a burglary investigation in the 1800 block of Cedar Ave. S. at 8:34 a.m.

**Trespassing:** At 9:05 a.m., officer issued a trespassing citation in the 100 block of Prospect St. E.

**Restraining Order:** Police responded to a restraining order violation in the 400 block of Rose St. E. at 4:41 p.m.

**Fight:** Officers responded to a fight in the 300 block of Grove Ave. N. at 7:27 p.m. They issued a citation at the scene.

**Fraud:** Deputy took a report of a fraud incident in the 5000 block of County Road 45 S. in Somerset Township at 7:11 p.m.

**Arrest:** Deputies arrested a motorist during a traffic stop in the 4400 block of Kenyon Road in Merton Township at 10:50 p.m.

COURT NEWS  
Dodge County

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of July 28 – Aug. 4:

ARRESTS  
Steele County

**OWATONNA POLICE**

James Christopher Schmidt, 24, arrested at 8:29 p.m. Aug. 7, felony drugs and warrants arrest, held for court.

Shannon Kathleen Boykin, 49, arrested Aug. 7, drugs, held for court.

**STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF**

Adam John Techau, 35, arrested at 2:06 p.m. Aug. 6, probation violation warrant arrest, body only.

Esperanza Marie Pena, 23, arrested at 3:30 p.m. Aug. 6, probation violation warrant arrest, body only.

Jeffrey Scott Evans, 57, arrested at 3:51 p.m. Aug. 6, warrant arrest, body only.

Richard Allan Miller, 42, arrested at 9:31 a.m. Aug. 7, probation violation, held for court.

**DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Julia K. Cupples, 69, Dodge Center, no insurance and speeding, \$320; Aaron J. Dick, 25, Millville, speeding, \$140; Hassan A. Egal, 64, Owatonna, speeding, \$220; Octavio Garcia, 26, Dodge Center, disorderly conduct, damage to property and DWI, stay of adjudication, \$805, 9 days in county jail, chemical dependency evaluation and 1 year of supervised probation; Terry E. Hilleshiem, 56, Rochester, speeding, \$120; Robert G. Laack, 34, Rochester, speeding, \$120; Kevin C. Mickow, 31, Kasson, stop sign, \$130; Jessica R. Northway, 35, West Concord, no insurance, \$280; Tyler B. Stroud, 31, West Concord, motorcycle instruction permit violation, \$130; Josh F. Willette, 19, Claremont, registration violation, \$180.

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Colton Ivers, a 2019 graduate of Blooming Prairie High School, won Grand Champion honors at the Mower County Fair last week, showing a Gelbvieh/Angus cross.

STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

## BP grad snares grand champion at Mower Fair

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

There's no better way to enjoy the summer before heading to college at Kansas State University in the fall.

That way is to continue his love for 4-H.

Colton Ivers, 19, showed a Gelbvieh/Angus heifer at the Mower County Fair in Austin last week and

garnered Grand Champion honors in a class called AOB (All Other Breeds).

Ivers is an Awesome Blossom, graduating from Blooming Prairie High School in 2019.

Since he was competing in Mower County, Ivers linked up with the LeRoy Wide Awake 4-H Club.

Hot and sunny weather greeted Mower County Free Fair exhibitors and

visitors during the week, Aug. 6-12.

It was a fun time but a busy time for the many 4-Hers who competed in showing livestock and also in creating craft projects.

Colby Campion, 7, and her two brothers showed Nigerian dwarf goats at the fair. They are from Chatfield. The goats are named Izzy and Wren.

Colby earned a participant ribbon (Clover Bud) while brother Grady, 10, picked up a blue ribbon with a fifth place finish in his class. Cael also scored a blue ribbon. All are members of the Red Rock Rangers 4-H Club.

Colby also showed ducks and sheep. Grady picked up a grand champion award, showing ducks. Cael won reserve champion honors with his ducks.

The Campions' parents are Bill and Renee. Bill is a sixth generation farmer. The Campions also have cattle, chickens and horses on the 180-acre farm. "It's quite a place for the kids," remarked Bill.

In other 4-H activity, sisters Sarah and Hannah Hecimovich of the Rock Solid 4-H Club were smiling widely after enjoying success in showing their projects at the Mower County Fair.

Sarah, 17, won grand champion honors with her horse related project. Hannah, 15, received Reserve Champion honors with her entomology project.

The sisters also showed their Quarter Horse named Ben and took Grand Champion honors.

Sarah and Hannah are third generation 4-Hers. Their mother, Julie, was active in 4-H leadership as a 4-Her.

Both Sarah and Hannah plan on participating in a benefit horse ride called Ride for Chris. Chris Fisher died at age 14, collapsing on a football field.

"It's a very exciting time for kids and for their parents," commented a proud mother of the two Rock Solid 4-Hers.



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

The Campion kids showed their dwarf goats at the Mower County Fair last week. Smiling widely are Grady, 10; Colby, 7 and Cael, 12. The three siblings are members of the Red Rock Rangers 4-H Club.

## Fair honors volunteers for service

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

Two nights prior to the Steele County Fair getting underway, the fair board took a break from preparations to recognize volunteers who make the fair a sweet success every year.

The fair board held an appreciation dinner for 300 people, including superintendents, volunteers and friends of the fair in the Beer Garden Sunday night. As part of the appreciation, the fair honored 17 volunteers with special awards for their involvement in the fair.

A stand ovation was given to Dick Reinhardt, who has logged 59 years with the fair.

Tim Arlt, who serves as a treasurer for the fair, was recognized for 40 years of service to the fair.

Receiving recognition for 35 years of service was Stephanie Kolbe, who is the superintendent for wood carving.

Mark Ditlevson was honored for 30 years of service as the director of the Beer Garden.

There were several who have hit the 20-year mark with the fair. They include Denise Lage, office staff; Doug Hughes, aerial photography; Pat King, grains and grasses; Deb Mather, hobbies and data entry and Leo Seykora, organic crops.

Others receiving recognition for their service include: 15 years- Roger Noble, director; 10 years- Brent Svenby, director and Brad Svenby, insurance; 5 years- Karen VonRuden, dairy cattle; Naomi Jirele, fine arts; Cary Larson, goats; Dillon Noble, organic crops and Glen Meger, director.



Tim Arlt

SEE FAIR HONORS VOLUNTEERS, B2

## In the heat of things

Fair—need I say more! We are right in the heat of things. What a wonderful time of year! This is one of the BIGGEST highlights in a 4-Hers career. So why is the county fair such a grand event to all these 4-Hers? Well folks, it's not the cotton candy, the mini doughnuts or the latest on a stick. This is their time to show what they have accomplished, learned, created or raised for the year. That is why I just love the county fair!

Let me tell you about my latest county fair endeavor. I was standing in the 4-H Exhibit Building watching a 4-H'er share his knowledge about his fishing project. He sat at the judging table for about five minutes visiting with the judge and when the judging was finished the boy got up and the judge handed him a red ribbon. Now a red ribbon is not the best ribbon you can get, in the ranks of ribbon you have purple, blue and then red. So, I found it very interesting that this young man came right over to me and said very excited "Tracy, I got a red ribbon. I can't wait to start my project for next year I'm going to do..." I'm always amazed that just from that five minute conversation with a caring, knowledge adult, that 4-H'er will be able to turn this year's red ribbon into a blue or even a purple next year. That is why I love the fair!



Steele Talkin'  
TRACY IGNASZEWSKI

SEE IN THE HEAT OF THINGS, B3

## New city clerk settles back home in Ellendale

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

When Tiffany Krueger moved to Iowa with her family several years ago, she was set to stay there for good.

But then some life-altering changes took place with one of their best friend's businesses back in Minnesota and they decided to move back. Her husband, Justin, joined Geneva Lumber in January 2018 shortly after one of the owners suddenly died.

"I didn't think we would move back," Krueger said. "I never pictured it."

In July, Krueger took over the full time position of clerk/treasurer with the City of Ellendale. It's a reunion of sorts for Krueger, who graduated from NRHEG in 1998.

In her new role, Krueger will be in charge of about 26 city employees with most of them working in the municipal bar. That may change in the near future as the city is currently trying to get out of the liquor business by selling the bar.

As Krueger settles into her new job, she has some visions of what she would like to see happen with Ellendale. "I want to capitalize on how much traffic Casey's is bringing in off the interstate," she said. She noted the city is working with an economic development authority to attract new businesses to the area.

But she isn't focused only on new business. She would also like to help existing businesses

"I don't know if you call me red neck or what, but I like the country folk."

Tiffany Krueger  
New Ellendale Clerk

in the community grow. Krueger plans to find grants to help businesses develop or grow. "We need to look at different ways to expand," she says.

Ellendale may be small with a population of about 800 people, but Krueger is quick to point out, "it has quite a bit of potential." She acknowledges that many rural communities are quite frankly dying. "We need to find a way to pump some life back into them," she said.

One area that Krueger would like to focus on is finding services for the community's senior population. She noted there are no easy forms of transportation within the community to help the elderly. She hopes Steele County Board will work harder to help communities like Ellendale with finding better forms of transportation.

"Getting services for our senior citizens to keep them active," Krueger said as one of her main goals.

Krueger enjoys her new role with Ellendale because of the variety of work she gets to do. "The city clerk wears more hats, we don't just do one thing all day long," she said. "You never know what your day is going to be."

She wants the citizens to know that she has their best interest

in mind. "I like knowing that I can help the community and try to find ways to save the taxpayer money," Krueger said. She added she always wants citizens to know exactly what their taxes are being used for.

Krueger said she likes the life style of living in a rural community. "I don't know if you call me red neck or what, but I like the country folk. They're just simpler," she said, adding she misses the close proximity to Super Target, though.

She brings a business administration degree from Southwest State in Marshall. She also has prior experience working in several small towns in neighboring Freeborn County, including Hayward, Hartland and Freeborn. At one time, she worked at all three cities at the same time. "It became too much," she quickly added.

In her spare time, Krueger enjoys motor sports, 4-wheeling and fishing.

She has been forced to get around with a prostatic leg. About four years ago she shattered her ankle while sliding into home base during a slow-pitch softball league in Owatonna.

"I want the best for the community," Krueger says. "It's a great community to raise a family in."



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Tiffany Krueger is settling in as the new clerk for the City of Ellendale. Taking the position with Ellendale is a reunion of sorts for her as she was born and raised in the area and moved back to the area recently.



# Local Eagle Scout travels the world for Scout Jamboree

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
STAFF WRITER

Blooming Prairie Eagle Scout D.J. Stender is a world traveler.

Stender, 17, will enter his senior year at Blooming Prairie High School in September and as he begins his final year of high school, Stender has a boat load of experiences to share.

D.J., which stands for Dondi Jr., became a world traveler July 21-Aug. 2 as he attended the 24th World Scout Jamboree in West Virginia and met Boy Scouts and their leaders from all around the world.

The World Scout Jamboree is an educational event that brings together the world's young people to promote peace and mutual understanding and to develop leadership and life skills. It is a team effort by Scouts from Canada, Mexico, and the Boy Scouts of America.

During this 10-day world adventure, Stender was one of 46,000 Boy Scouts from 152 countries. With staff, that number goes to 56,000.

Situated in the wilds of West Virginia, The Summit Bechtel Reserve is a training, Scouting, and adventure center for the millions of youth and adults involved in the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and anyone who loves the outdoors.

Stender said for the 10 days, the Summit Bechtel Reserve became the largest city in West Virginia.

"He will have memories for a lifetime," remarks Stender's mother, Karla. He brought back many of those memories in Scout patches, neckerchiefs and t-shirts.

Stender collected over 100 Boy Scout patches, six t-shirts, a jacket and five neckerchiefs.

A somewhat shy appearing young teen, Stender quickly proved at the World Scout Jamboree that he was far from being shy.

Rather than participating in river rafting and rock climbing, Stender chose to mingle with the Scouts from all over the world. He said waiting lines to participate in these activities was as long as four hours.

What a better way to make friends than to exchange patches, neckerchiefs and t-shirts, he thought.

By making new friends, Stender shared his love for the Boy Scouts, telling others that he had been a scout for 12 years, joining the Cub Scouts when he was 5. He earned his Eagle Scout distinction by completing a cement patio project at Blooming Prairie High School.

Stender is a member of Hayfield Boy Scout Troop 50, Gamehaven Council. He joined members of Troop 301 of Minneapolis at the World Scout Jamboree.

"I walked around and met people and also looked at the many exhibits on the grounds," Stender said.

He brought 50 patches from Minnesota and also traded other United States Boy Scout patches he acquired.

The World Scout Jamboree is held every four years at locations around the world. Last year's location was Japan. This year's West Virginia location marked only the second



D.J. Stender proudly displays some world-wide Boy Scout patches he obtained by trading for them at the World Scout Jamboree July 21-Aug. 2.

time the United States has hosted the jamboree.

The first U.S. World Scout Jamboree, the 12th, was held in 1967 in Idaho. Stender was fortunate enough to meet a Boy Scout leader from Ohio who had a patch from the 1967 jamboree. "He said I could have the patch if I could name the 16th president of the U.S. D.J. earned the patch by answering "Abraham Lincoln.

The next World Scout Jamboree will be in 2023 at a South Korea location. Stender says he would like to attend as an adult leader.

Upon returning from West Virginia, Stender displayed the patches and other items in the community building of the Brookside Campground where he has worked this

summer. His parents own the campground and are entering their fifth year as campground owners.

All patches are very colorful and come in different sizes. One of his favorite neckerchiefs comes from Ecuador. Stender's sister Kari is a missionary serving Hearts Home in Ecuador.

Other favorite patches came from Vietnam, Chile, Korea, Japan, Austria, Libya, Thailand, Ecuador, Peru, Taiwan, Brazil, Sweden, Finland and Parkistan.

Another favorite neckerchief he obtained comes from South Africa. It contained a unique clasp, made of the fur from the national animal of South Africa, the Spring bok, a cousin of the antelope.

Stender said he loved learning about the lives of those Scouts from around the world. Most spoke English, an international language, he said.

In addition to collecting patches, neckerchiefs and t-shirts, Stender also became a fan of Novus, a process where participants wore a color-changing wrist band to share information. By touching another wrist band from a world scout, he obtained over 400 contacts.

"I learned a lot about what life is like for others in their daily lives," Stender shared.

He even attended a Taiwan dinner and participated in Culture Day by enjoying baked beans, hot dogs and SPAM. Stender

contacted the Hormel Co. and received 60 pounds of SPAM for the Culture Day dinner. "Everyone liked the SPAM," he said.

Stender also sampled other international foods, vegemite from Australia. "I didn't like it," he said truthfully.

He is quick to admit that his World Scout Jamboree experience was more than he expected.

Another jamboree highlight he will not forget was the entertainment featured at an opening, mid-jamboree and at the closing. The opening was a drone sky viewing show put on by Recycled Percussion of New Hampshire. Stender's parents had the opportunity to see the show on LiveStream.

The second show was put on by Disney on Broadway. The finale was a fireworks and laser show presented by Pentatonic of Arlington, Texas.

These shows were presented at an outdoor stadium set on a hillside.

On another night, Stender had the opportunity to hear a message from British adventurer Bear Gryllo. His show was entitled "Man vs. Wild."

West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice also attended the jamboree one day.

Stender attended a non-denominational church service. "Reverence is one of the points of Scout Law," he said.

As he gets ready for his senior year, Stender will also be thinking about college. He hopes to major in forensic science at the University of Wisconsin-Platville.

## FAIR HONORS: volunteers for service

"Whenever we go around the country and state, the first thing we talk about is our volunteers," fair manager Scott Kozelka told the group. Steele County, he said, has a great group of directors, office staff and superintendents. "This is what makes our fair happen... thanks to you all."

New superintendents for this year's fair include: Patty and Steve Jessop, information station; Tyler

Cochran, stage assistance; Samantha Evans, youth art; Marc Wiese, evaluations; Karla Ihrke, culinary arts; Megan Hedberg Polzin, draft horse; Jayme Underwood, sheep; Jamie Gray, FFA; Jan and James O'Neil, rocks and minerals; Ted Mittelstadt, Izaak Walton rep; Kevin Christey, camping; Charlie Kaplan, auto museum; Greg Karsten, saloon and MacKenzie Noble, beer garden.

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## FFA officers hold retreat



This year's Blooming Prairie Future Farmers of America (FFA) officer team had its retreat July 16-17. They spent the night at the Great Wolf Lodge, swimming in the waterpark, laughing and discussing this year's chapter plans. The officer team also embarked on an escape room at the Mall of America. The first group got out with 20 something minutes to spare and the second group, sadly didn't make it in time but it was still fun. The officers include, from left: Erin O'Brien, Lexi Steckelburg, Haven Carlson, Madelaine Stoen, Cortney Espe, Ethan Grant, Kaiden Finley and Cole Christianson.

## Winter season most severe in nearly a decade, costs top \$133M for MnDOT

It probably comes as little surprise that this past winter was the most severe in a decade for road maintenance across Minnesota.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation spent nearly \$133 million dollars to clear roads during the 2018-19 winter season, and crews faced some of the most severe weather in the state in a decade, according to a new MnDOT winter maintenance report released today.

"The Winter Maintenance Report helps tell the story very clearly: with the fifth-largest roadway system in the country and more extreme weather conditions than most states, it costs a lot of money to maintain transportation infrastructure and keep people moving in Minnesota," said Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher. "I'm so proud of the employees of MnDOT, who worked long hours through challenging conditions to keep our roads safe."

The annual report breaks down fiscal year costs, winter severity, snow totals and other factors. Statistics are separated by each of MnDOT's eight transportation districts to show the variety of impact across the state.

The statewide snowfall average was 97.2 inches, the result of 31 snow events during the 2018-19 winter season. Those storms created a statewide Winter Severity Index score of 154, nearly 40 points higher than during 2017-18 and the most severe since MnDOT began tracking a severity level this way. The Winter Severity Index compares nine factors that affect snow and ice removal, including temperature, hours of snowfall, blowing snow and precipitation type.

"Snowfall amounts don't tell the whole story about the challenges MnDOT crews face during winter," said Jed Falgren, acting state maintenance engineer. "Every area of the state experienced more hours of

snowfall compared to the previous winter. Road and air temperature averages were down and hours of freezing rain were up – those elements have a huge impact on how quickly we can clear roads."

Falgren said snowplow drivers worked more than 198,000 hours of overtime during the 2018-19 winter and exceeded the bare lane target goals for all road classifications within 36 hours after a snow event.

MnDOT used less road salt and sand during the 2018-19 season compared to the previous winter, applying more liquid chemicals, such as potassium acetate, BEET HEET, Apex-C and RG8. The chemicals proved to enhance the performance of road salt during extreme conditions, which led to routes being cleared faster and with less material. The MnDOT 2018-19 Winter Maintenance At a glance report is available at [mndot.gov/maintenance/pdf/2019-winter-maintenance-report.pdf](https://mndot.gov/maintenance/pdf/2019-winter-maintenance-report.pdf).

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# 35 years of woodcarvings

**BY KAREN M. JORGENSEN**  
COUNTY WRITER

One group of exhibitors at the Steele County Free Fair is not interested in winning ribbons. They are the woodcarvers who bring their works to the fair simply to display them to the public.

The Woodcarving Department first appeared at the fair 35 years ago, and Stephanie Kolbe, the department superintendent, has been involved the entire time.

Kolbe is both a woodcarver and a painter, she said, and over the years she has come to specialize in very detailed carvings of game birds and songbirds.

The first couple years, she said, the display was in a building near the livestock barns. With no glass cases to protect the carvings they were totally in the open, she said, meaning someone had to physically be at the site every hour the building was open. That proved to be impractical and the display was moved and now has a permanent home in the Fine Arts Building.

Woodcarving knows no ages, she said, with this year's display showing works from carvers in



STAFF PHOTO BY KAREN JORGENSEN  
**Carvings come in all styles, from these painted ones to those left in their natural wood colors.**

their early teens to those in their 80s. It also knows no gender, she said, as there are both men and women displaying their carvings.

Early on, she said, participants decided they did not want the Woodcarving Department to be competitive but rather simply a venue to display their creations. Some carvers, who prefer the more competitive aspects of the fair, do enter their works in the Hobby Department.

Participants can show as many carvings as possible in any of the many varieties of style. Some, she said, are finished projects, while others will be shown in various stages of completion.

Kolbe, who is also a painter, said she first became involved with woodcarving in the early 80s when she took a class through community education taught by Harry Arndt.

At first, she said, she concentrated on game birds such as ducks. In addition to ducks, she said, she also did carved dolls. The first carved doll she made she gave to her mom as a Christmas present. The present to her dad that year was a carved wood duck.

Later, while attending a Minnesota Wildlife Artists show in Minneapolis, she saw how many people were gravitating to carvings of



STAFF PHOTO BY KAREN JORGENSEN  
**Woodcarving Superintendent Stephanie Kolbe stands by a display of her game birds, songbirds and dolls.**

songbirds and decided to give it a try.

Today, she concentrates on songbirds and still does dolls.

There are actually several different types of carvings on display, all using a variety of saws, knives, chisels and techniques.

Kolbe, for example, needs to be very detailed when creating her song-

birds. Each feather, she said, is individually burned into the wood. Since the legs of the songbirds are too thin to be carved, Kolbe said, they are fashioned out of thin wires. For the game birds, since they are carved as if in the water, no legs are needed and they can have a flat bottom.

For the other woodcarvers, she said, some do

caricatures, some do reliefs, some use lots of detail while others keep their carvings to the basics. Some paint their works and some do not.

On display this year are a variety of carved Santas, gnomes, people, birds, animals and spoons.

The display is located along one wall in the Fine Arts Building and will be open daily during the fair.

## 4-H to offer Wild Goose Chase at the fair

It's going to be a real wild goose chase at this year's Steele County Free Fair.

On Friday, Steele County 4-H is hosting a "Goose Chase" family scavenger hunt. This is a new event to the fair.

The scavenger hunt will begin at 10 a.m., but fairgoers can join in at any time prior to 5 p.m. Tracy Ignaszewski, 4-H program coordinator, urges fairgoers to join in with this crazy family adventure while touring the fairgrounds.

Anyone interested in taking part is asked to come to the 4-H Exhibit Building to register and receive a private game code. Once the Goose Chase app is downloaded, the private code can be entered and participants will create their name.

To complete a mission, fairgoers will select

it from the list and follow the instructions to receive the allotted points. Sometimes they will be asked to submit a photo or video, while other times they'll be checking in at a specific location or solving a puzzle or riddle. Missions change from game to game, but the fun and excitement will always be there.

The ability to see everything as it happens is one of the best parts of Goose Chase, Ignaszewski said. Whenever someone completes a mission, it's added to the activity feed and the rankings are automatically updated.

"If you're as competitive as we are, you'll realize how awesome this is," Ignaszewski said. "At any given moment, you know exactly how you're doing and what needs to be done to win."

## Reptiles coming to the fair



**Steely's Insights**  
WAYNE STEELE

The Rad Zoo will be at the Steele County Free Fair on Kid's Day, Friday Aug. 16 at 11:15 a.m., in front of the United Prairie Stage.

The Rad Zoo is a premier destination to see reptiles of the amphibian world including snakes, turtles, lizards, crocodilians and many more. A good place to come and overcome any fears you may have with the reptile world.

Entry Forms are now available for the Amateur Talent Show held at the Steele County Free Fair on

Sunday, Aug. 18 at 1 p.m. Entry Forms are available on the fair website; scff.org and at the fair office.

Entrants must be from Steele County. There are three divisions of competition: pre-teen (12 and under), teen (13-18) and open (any age).

Winners in each division will receive \$75 cash and a chance to compete at the Minnesota State Fair. The second place winner will receive \$25 cash and be eligible, if the first place winner is unable to attend, to perform at the Minnesota State Fair.

This year's talent show will be held at the Elmer Reseland stage in KRFO Town Square.

*Wayne Steele is the entertainment and publicity director for the Steele County Free Fair in Owatonna. He also serves as vice president on the fair board.*

## Aurora diner serving fair meals since 1965

Since 1965, the Aurora Diner, operated by Aurora Lutheran Church in Owatonna, has been serving home cooking to Steele County Free Fair patrons.

It all began when the Steele County Fair Board approached the congregation and asked if they would be open to having a diner near the livestock barns. The area was where there were many open class livestock exhibitors and 4-H exhibitors.

Volunteers from the church were up to the challenge and in a few short weeks the diner building was constructed. Additions have been added in 1972, 1984 and 1988.

There have been some changes to the operations in the years since 1965. Originally the food was prepared in members homes and at the church.

Food regulations have changed, however, and now all the food is prepared right at the diner.

Aurora Lutheran is a small congregation and in recent years volunteers from other churches have helped during the run of the fair. Volunteer congregations receive a donation for their efforts.

Monies raised from diner operations have helped the church with many projects including missions, updating the church with siding and roofing the steeple, a new addition to the church, carpeting and remodeling the kitchen and also supporting another church when their building was destroyed by a fire.

The Aurora Diner opens every morning of the fair at 6 a.m. and serves meals throughout the day.

## Owatonna Foundation scholarships awarded

The Owatonna Foundation awards Traditional and Nontraditional Scholarships. During fall semester, five individuals will use Traditional Scholarship funds to assist with their education costs. These individuals graduated with the 2019 high school class.

The Nontraditional Scholarships are awarded to individuals who are returning to college or continuing their education after high school graduation and two individuals received Nontraditional Scholarships. Recipients

attend technical programs at technical or community colleges.

**Traditional Scholarship Recipients**

- Christian Hart, Riverland Community College, Associate in Arts, \$1,500, parents Corey and Kris Hart
- Khalid Mohamed, South Central College, Marketing Management, \$1,500, parents Suieqo Ali and Hussein Mohammed
- Vance Matejcek, Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Electrical Line Worker Technology, \$1,500, parents

Cindi Matejcek and Todd Matejcek

- Genevieve Phillips, Minnesota School of Beauty, Cosmetology, \$2,000, parents Mark and Rebecca Krug and David Phillips
- Nicholas Staska, Northwest Technical College, Electrical Construction and Maintenance, \$2,500, parents Jodi and Brad Staska

**Nontraditional Scholarship Recipients**

- Madison Prokopec, Riverland Community College, Radiology, \$1,500, parents Holly and Brad Prokopec
- Benjamin Staska, River-

land Community College, Fire Science Technology, \$3,000, parents Bradley and Jodi Staska

For the 2019-2020 school year, \$30,000 is available for scholarships. Nontraditional scholarship applications are due Oct. 25 and June 25, 2020. Traditional scholarships are due April 10. Applications are available at the Foundation's office at 108 West Park Square, Owatonna; <http://www.owatonnafoundation.org>, Grants/Scholarships, and Apply for a Scholarship, or from Jill Holmes at 507-455-3059.

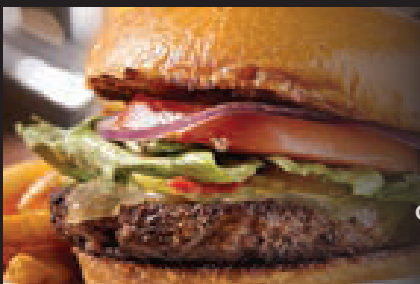
## IN THE HEAT: of things FROM B1

It's not too late to have an experience at the Fair this year! I am inviting each and every one of you to visit the Steele County Free Fair, you better hurry because it will be over Sunday. You still have time to participate in the Wild Goose Chase, which is new this year. "Goose Chase" is a family friendly scavenger hunt at the Steele County Fair. This Goose Chase will take place Friday, Aug. 16 at the fair. You can start your scavenger hunt mission as early as 10 a.m. or any time after that. Maybe you only have the afternoon to play, that's great, but you better hurry the game closes at 5 p.m. So, come join this crazy family adventure as you tour the fairgrounds! So, if you're looking to join the game,

head on over to the 4-H Exhibit Building to register your family and receive your Private Game Code.

While you are there, stroll through the 4-H Exhibit Building to see all the 4-Hers hard work. Take in some of the youth activities that happen daily in the 4-H building with many hands-on activities and crafts. Maybe it is that livestock show that you have wanted to watch. Whatever it is, enjoy and think about all the knowledge these fine youth have gained through their experiences.

*Tracy Ignaszewski is the 4-H program coordinator for Steele County. Steele Talkin' is a regular column featuring authors representing various organizations throughout Steele County.*



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Here are the results from the Chateau Raceway at Lansing for the week of Aug. 9:

**A Feature 1 (12 Laps):** 1. 29-Scott Johnson-Owatonna, [1]; 2 5-Logan Brown-Clear Lake IA, [8]; 3. 15-Nathan Kilwine-Glenville, [10]; 4 17-Antony Kramer-Owatonna, [4]; 5. 14-Micheal Bryant-Mason City IA, [6]; 6. 71-Matt Prehn-Mason City IA, [2]; 7. 43J-John Dulmage-Ramsey, [5]; 8. 97-Davis Royle-Northfield, [11]; 9. 1R-Bobby Ruehlow-Mason City IA, [3]; 10. 22-Nick Hauge-Mason City IA, [9]; 11. 43W-William Dulmage-Ramsey, [7]; 12. (DNF) 61-Anthony Black-Elk River, [12]

**Heat 1 (6 Laps):** 1. 5-Logan Brown, [1]; 2. 14-Micheal Bryant, [2]; 3. 1R-Bobby Ruehlow, [6]; 4. 43W-William Dulmage, [4]; 5. (DNF) 15-Nathan Kilwine, [5]; (DQ) 61-Anthony Black, [3]

**Heat 2 (6 Laps):** 1. 17-Antony Kramer, [4]; 2. 71-Matt Prehn, [2]; 3. 29-Scott Johnson, [5]; 4. 43J-John Dulmage, [3]; 5. 22-Nick Hauge, [1]; 6. (DNF) 97-Davis Royle, [6]

**WISSOTA Midwest Modifieds**

**A Feature 1 (20 Laps):** 1. G12-Ryan Goergen-Stacyville IA, [16]; 2. 83-Kylie Kath-Claremont, [6]; 3 97X-Don Schaefer-Eyota, [2]; 4. 98D-Christopher Deno-Kasson, [5]; 5. 4-Brayten Cisneros-Blooming Prairie, [7]; 6. 97-Cory Asmusen-Waseca, [4]; 7. 79H-Luke Hainka-Wannamingo, [9]; 8. 23B-Britt Olson Jr-Waseca, [18]; 9. 79-Jeremy Misgen-New Richland, [15]; 10. 44Z-Anton Nelson-Hayfield, [14]; 11. 86-Noel Hoppe-Waseca, [13]; 12. 37-Michael Wytaske-Harland, [1]; 13. 33-Darryl Hainka-Wannamingo, [17]; 14. 17-Harland Morehart-Rochester, [10]; 15. (DNF) 2165-Tommy Myer-Blooming Prairie, [11]; 16. (DNF) 77T-Casey Trom-Austin, [8]; 17. (DNF) 53-Tianna Mithun-New Richland, [3]; 18. (DNF) 14-Cole Kroneman-Zumbrota, [12]

**Heat 1 (8 Laps):** 1. 98D-Christopher Deno, [1]; 2. 83-Kylie Kath, [4]; 3. 77T-Casey Trom, [3]; 4. 97-Cory Asmusen, [6]; 5. 79H-Luke Hainka, [8]; 6. 2165-Tommy Myer, [9]; 7. 86-Noel Hoppe, [7]; 8. (DNF) G12-Ryan Goergen, [5]; (DNS) 33-Darryl Hainka, [11]

**Heat 2 (8 Laps):** 1. 53-Tianna Mithun, [1]; 2. 97X-Don Schaefer, [5]; 3. 37-Michael Wytaske, [8]; 4. 4-Brayten Cisneros, [7]; 5. 17-Harland Morehart, [3]; 6. 14-Cole Kroneman, [2]; 7. 44Z-Anton Nelson, [9]; 8. 79-Jeremy Misgen, [6]; (DNS) 23B-Britt Olson Jr, [18]

**Power 96 WISSOTA Pure Stock**

**A Feature 1 (15 Laps):** 1. 26-Brady Krohnberg-Walters, [1]; 2. 1-Troy Maas-Faribault, [2]; 3. 31-Jack Maas-Faribault, [6]; 4. 17-Michael Wick-Faribault, [4]; 5. 96-Kyndra Neis-Chatfield, [3]; 6. 33-Jim Briggs-Waseca, [5]; 7. 3G-Josh Sousa-Alden, [8]; (DQ) 117-Jack Paulson-Faribault, [7]

**Heat 1 (6 Laps):** 1. 26-Brady Krohnberg, [2]; 2. 1-Troy Maas, [6]; 3. 96-Kyndra Neis, [1]; 4. 33-Jim Briggs, [3]; 5. 17-Michael Wick, [8]; 6. 31-Jack Maas, [7]; 7. 117-Jack Paulson, [5]; 8. 3G-Josh Sousa, [4]

**Y Waste WISSOTA Hornets**

**A Feature 1 (15 Laps):** 1. 9-Nate Coopman-Mankato, [2]; 2. 14-Justin Schellitzche-Cologne, [7]; 3. 2-Aaron Reimers-Prior Lake, [8]; 4. 02-Bryce Lisowski-Faribault, [4]; 5. 19-Jerry Coopman-Mankato, [5]; 6. 16M-Matt Wieman-Owatonna, [13]; 7. 08-Levi Selly-St Peter, [14]; 8. 79T-TJ Pearson-Burnsville, [10]; 9. 21-Brandon Downs-Austin, [1]; 10. 20-Joe Frahm-Stewartville, [12]; 11. 5-Nick Sillman-Minnesota Lake, [9]; 12. 89-Timothy Gores-Garden City, [11]; 13. 28-Patrick Andrus-Austin, [16]; 14. 13-Katelyn Wilson-North Mankato, [18]; 15. 6-TJ Barnett-Owatonna, [17]; 16. (DNF) 1KV-Kristin Voss-Belle Plaine, [19]; 17. (DNF) 193-Daniel Knish-Kilkenny, [6]; 18. (DNF) 88-Matt Tighe-Austin, [3]; 19. (DNF) 4-Talon Freerksen-Kasson, [15]

**Heat 1 (5 Laps):** 1. 19-Jerry Coopman, [3]; 2. 2-Aaron Reimers, [7]; 3. 21-Brandon Downs, [2]; 4. 79T-Taylor Pearson, [4]; 5. 16M-Matt Wieman, [6]; 6. 28-Patrick Andrus, [1]; 7. 13-Katelyn Wilson, [5]

**Heat 2 (5 Laps):** 1. 9-Nate Coopman, [1]; 2. 14-Justin

Schellitzche, [5]; 3. 193-Daniel Knish, [6]; 4. 89-Timothy Gores, [3]; 5. 08-Levi Selly, [4]; 6. (DNF) 1KV-Kristin Voss, [2]

**Heat 3 (5 Laps):** 1. 88-Matt Tighe, [4]; 2. 02-Bryce Lisowski, [6]; 3. 5-Nick Sillman, [5]; 4. 20-Joe Frahm, [3]; 5. 4-Talon Freerksen, [2]; 6. 6-Timothy Barnett, [1]

**Adams Graphix WISSOTA Street Stocks**

**A Feature 1 (18 Laps):** 1. 15-Zach Elward-Hayfield, [2]; 2. 34JR-Braden Brauer-Eyota, [3]; 3. 01-Kory Adams-Stacyville IA, [5]; 4. 32-Jason Newkirk-Austin, [9]; 5. 21-Jesse Stahl-Austin, [1]; 6. 101-Bernie Adams-Stacyville IA, [7]; 7. 43-Tony Shaner-Owatonna, [18]; 8. 46-Stacy Krohnberg-Walters, [11]; 9. 99-Greg Lammers-Owatonna, [15]; 10. 2-Fred Prudoehl-Winona, [6]; 11. 47-Brent Holland-Glenville, [10]; 12. 31-Raey Hastings IV-Austin, [4]; 13. 39J-Dan Klingfus-Austin, [8]; 14. 42-Cody Hyatt-Waseca, [12]; 15. 16-Jacob Bennett-Austin, [14]; 16. 14-Russell Kostreba-Zimmerman, [16]; 17. (DNF) 32K-Caylee Kjos-Winona, [17]; 18. (DNF) 4-Chris Hotovec-Dodge Center, [13]

**Heat 1 (8 Laps):** 1. 15-Zach Elward, [6]; 2. 01-Kory Adams, [8]; 3. 34JR-Braden Brauer, [5]; 4. 101-Ken Adams, [4]; 5. 32-Jason Newkirk, [9]; 6. 46-Stacy Krohnberg, [7]; 7. 4-Chris Hotovec, [1]; 8. 99-Greg Lammers, [2]; 9. (DNF) 43-Anthony Shaner, [3]

**Heat 2 (8 Laps):** 1. 21-Jesse Stahl, [1]; 2. 31-Raey Hastings IV, [2]; 3. 2-Fred Prudoehl, [4]; 4. 39J-Dan Klingfus, [3]; 5. 47-Brent Holland, [5]; 6. 42-Cody Hyatt, [7]; 7. 16-Jacob Bennett, [6]; 8. 14-Russell Kostreba, [8]; 9. 32K-Caylee Kjos, [9]

**Action Builders USRA B-Mods**

**A Feature 1 (20 Laps):** 1. 83X-Kadden Kath-Owatonna, [3]; 2. 99-Noah Grinstead-Austin, [4]; 3. 7C-Cole Christensen-Sioux Falls SD, [5]; 4. 72-Alex Schubbe-North Mankato, [2]; 5. 56H-Brandon Hare-Elma IA, [8]; 6. 83K-Kobie Kath-Owatonna, [1]; 7. 33S-Dustin Steinbrink-Austin, [14]; 8. 73-Kenny Boge-Orchard IA, [9]; 9. 02K-Hunter Kennedy-ST Ansgar IA, [6]; 10. 44-Matthew Brooks-Austin, [7]; 11. 54-Jett Sorensen-Rochester, [10]; 12. 1Z-Zach Davis-Congdala, [11]; 13. 81K-Caleb Korpi-Claremont, [12]; 14. 93-Matt Ryan-New Market, [16]; 15. (DNF) 21-Taylor Ovrebo-Weils, [13]; 16. (DNF) 5-Jesse Baer-Minnesota Lake, [15]

**Heat 1 (8 Laps):** 1. 72-Alex Schubbe, [1]; 2. 73-Kenny Boge, [3]; 3. 83X-Kadden Kath, [4]; 4. 54-Jett Sorensen, [6]; 5. 7C-Cole Christensen, [5]; 6. 1Z-Zach Davis, [2]; 7. 21-Taylor Ovrebo, [7]

**Heat 2 (8 Laps):** 1. 56H-Brandon Hare, [2]; 2. 99-Noah Grinstead, [1]; 3. 02K-Hunter Kennedy, [4]; 4. 83K-Kobie Kath, [4]; 5. 44-Matthew Brooks, [8]; 6. 81K-Caleb Korpi, [5]; 7. 33S-Dustin Steinbrink, [7]; 8. (DNF) 5-Jesse Baer, [6]; (DNS) 93-Matt Ryan, [16]

**French's Repair USRA Modifieds**

**A Feature 1 (25 Laps):** 1. 71-Jason Cummins-New Richland, [3]; 2. 19-Dustin Sorensen-Rochester, [7]; 3. 50-Brandon Davis-Hayfield, [5]; 4. 99-Josh Angst-Winona, [6]; 5. 96H-Joe Horgdahl-Kasson, [1]; 6. 111JR-Keith Tourville-Janesville, [10]; 7. 782-Miah Christensen-Sioux Falls SD, [4]; 8. 77-Jacob Stark-Austin, [8]; 9. 40-David Schuster-Waterville, [2]; 10. 23-Darwin Karau-Kasson, [14]; 11. 72-Doug Hillson-Bloomington Prairie, [12]; 12. 96-Greg Jensen-Albert Lea, [11]; 13. 15-Joey Miller-Lakeville, [9]; 14. (DNF) 65D-Dustin Brown-Thornion IA, [13]

**Heat 1 (8 Laps):** 1. 96H-Joe Horgdahl, [3]; 2. 50-Brandon Davis, [6]; 3. 71-Jason Cummins, [7]; 4. 111JR-Keith Tourville, [4]; 5. 15-Joey Miller, [2]; 6. 96-Greg Jensen, [5]; 7. 72-Doug Hillson, [1]

**Heat 2 (8 Laps):** 1. 99-Josh Angst, [5]; 2. 19-Dustin Sorensen, [6]; 3. 782-Miah Christensen, [3]; 4. 40-David Schuster, [7]; 5. 77-Jacob Stark, [1]; 6. (DNF) 65D-Dustin Brown, [2]; 7. (DNF) 23-Darwin Karau, [4]

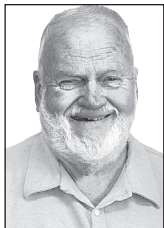
BY MATTHEW GRAGE  
RACING CORRESPONDENT

Chateau Speedway, like every other WISSOTA track, hosts one night of racing to determine qualifiers for the WISSOTA 100 Race of Champions.

The WISSOTA 100 this year is being held at the I-94 Speedway in Fergus Falls Sept. 10-14. Chateau runs four WISSOTA Sanctioned classes and two of them, the Street Stocks and Midwest Modifieds, are among the six classes that will be running a special Race of Champions event at the 100 this year, so those two classes had extra meaning for their Features on Friday night. Adams Graphix of Stacyville, Iowa was the track's featured sponsor for the night on Pack The Stands Night.

The AFCO Challenge Series Qualifier for the Adams Graphix WISSOTA Street Stocks was the first of the two to run. Zach Elward of Hayfield, who has been dominating the class this year at Chateau, started on the outside of the front row and raced to his eighth feature win of the season at the track. The first half of the race though was no easy run for him as he had constant pressure from Braden Brauer of Eyota and Kory Adams of Stacyville, Iowa. The three ran laps three wide and both Brauer and Adams had shots at the lead with Brauer leading several times down the back straightaway but never at the start finish line. As the second half of the race wound down, Elward stretched out his lead a bit as he backed up his heat win with a feature win for a sweep for the fourth time this year. Elward will be the track's representative in the AFCO Race of Champions with the win.

In the AFCO Challenge Series Qualifier for The WISSOTA Midwest Modified Class, Ryan Goergen of Stacyville, Iowa put on one



Outside  
the Lines

LEMAR NELSON

As we approach the middle of the “dog days” month, it hardly seems possible that training for fall sports begins in just two weeks. Where has the summer gone? I hope everyone has participated in all of the summer activities on the schedule, as those times will soon be just memories.

The 12 days of the state fair, including Labor Day, will again cap off a busy summer in Minnesota and draw its millions of patrons, but this week in our part of the state we will be participating in our own record-breaking activity. The Steele County Fair, weather permitting, will pull in over 300,00 eager and enthusiastic visitors for a week of busy and enjoyable hours of entertainment.

Our Steele County fair continues to be the largest county fair in the entire state, and it leads the second place Olmsted County attraction by



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The winner of the KEVKO Outlaw Mini Mod Feature division was Scott Johnson of Owatonna. He earned the victory during the weekly races at Lansing.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Kadden Kath of Owatonna came away with the victory in the Action Builders USRA B Mod category Friday night at the Chateau Speedway in Lansing.

of the best shows of the season. Starting outside row number eight, in the 16th starting spot in the 18 car field, he worked the entire track, top, middle and bottom from back to front as he scored his second feature win of the season. Kylie Kath of Claremont took second ahead of Don Schaefer of Eyota, Christopher Deno of Kasson and Brayten Cisneros of Blooming Prairie. The Classes two heat wins went to Deno and Tianna Mithun of New Richland.

The Y Waste WISSOTA Hornets ran a caution free main event with Nate Coopman of Mankato scoring his second feature win of the year as well as a sweep for the night after also claiming a heat win.

Power 96 WISSOTA Pure Stocks rolled off a caution free main event as well as Brady Krohnberg of Walters scored his fourth sweep of the season after also taking the classes lone heat.

The French's Repair USRA A Mods made it three classes on the night who ran caution-free main events as they rolled through their 25-lap feature in just over seven minutes. Joe Horgdahl of Kasson led the first lap off the front row, but Jason Cummins changed things on lap three as he worked from row two to the front and set sail. Before getting

to the front however he had quite the battle with Horgdahl and Brandon Davis of Medford. The three were in a tight pack until Jason cleared them and drove off to his third feature win of the season.

Kadden Kath of Owatonna notched his fifth feature win of the year in the Action Builders USRA B Mod Class. Kath came out of row two and after following his brother Kobie on the first lap went to the front on lap two.

The KEVKO Outlaw Mini Mods put on another great show in their main event. The scorebook will show that Scott Johnson of Owatonna led flag to flag for the win but that doesn't begin to tell the story. Johnson raced side by side with Anthony Kramer of Owatonna for several laps during the first half of the race and after a couple of cautions bunched the field it was current point leader Logan Brown of Clear Lake, Iowa, who came out of row four to put the heat on. Brown actually nosed ahead a couple times on the track but again never at the start finish line. Coming to the white flag the two came up on a slower car and they split the car with Brown going to the bottom and Johnson to the top. Scott Johnson held the lead all the way to the

checkers but it was a good thing the electronic scoring loop was there to make the call at the checkers. To the naked eye it could have been called a dead heat but by .057 seconds, Johnson was scored the winner. It was not only Johnson's first feature win of the year at Chateau, but it was also his first win of any kind this season at the track.

The 63rd anniversary season at Lansing continues next Friday Night with two special events. First off Chateau Speedway will be hosting the Mastell Brothers Non Wing Sprint Car Series Drivers. The group has been averaging close to 20 cars per show this summer so expectations are high for a good field of cars for the event. Added to that the rained out Fireworks show from the Fourth of July Weekend Races. The track had a guaranteed back up day from the fireworks company, and Chateau had laid in the Sprint Car night as the back up date in case of inclement weather in July. The plan is for the Fireworks to be exploded after the final feature of the night. Special event pricing for the Sprint Car show is \$12 instead of the usual \$10 for adult grandstand admission. First green flag of the night is scheduled for 7:15 p.m.

## A very fair occasion

several thousand patrons. Our county's top rank has held steady now for many years, and each year new creations are added to keep us on top.

One of the significant things about the Steele County Fair is the tremendous amount of participation by the area 4H's. Judging contests range from rabbits to cattle and from homemaking to flower arrangements. Countless exhibits populate the Four Seasons building, and the 4Her's here are joined by adult presenters with everything from homemade salsa to sewing machines.

Other attractions are big draws at the county fair. The grandstand shows (like the demolition derby) are always a big draw, and the side attractions like talent shows exciting exhibitions like cannon shots and music group performances entertain crowds throughout the days,

And of course, we can't forget the midway. Steele County has always taken pride in the quality and cleanliness of the midway offerings, and this is the place where old friends meet and greet and romances frequently are formed. The games of chance never fail to draw

willing and often unsuspecting participants into their lairs, and sometimes players actually win prizes.

But probably more so than at the state fair, the county fair usually draws friends and neighbors together, often for the first time all summer, where they spend minutes and sometimes hours catching each other up on all the news and gossip. It is a respite from all the labors of the past months, and it is welcomed by all.

That is a lot of print focused on one subject, but the county fair has always been a most enjoyable experience for me. Whether it be the Grant County Fair in my home county in South Dakota while growing up, or the Steele County Fair that I have attended and enjoyed for the past 60 years, the county fair has always been a memorable attraction not to be missed. I hope readers have the same feelings.

### REUNION NOW A MEMORY

My family is back from the family reunion in Oregon, and I have received a fairly meticulous summary of the celebration from my daughter. For those of you who have never visited

the Columbia River Gorge country of Oregon, it is a very scenic area. My sister, who hosted the reunion, lives in The Dalles, which is located in the shadow of Mt. Hood.

While at the reunion those in attendance visited three different waterfalls, hiked on Mt. Hood, and took a cruise on the Columbia River. That was in addition to a lot of visiting with old and some new-found relatives. Although I was unable to attend, my daughter painted a colorful picture of the occasion for me.

Two years from now, the family will meet again this time back in South Dakota at a cousin's place, and I am very hopeful that I will be able to attend that one. That would please me greatly.

Let's close with one more attempt at some humor. A man went to church several times during the week in an effort to see the preacher but the preacher was never there. Finally, he ran into the church janitor and inquired, "Your preacher isn't here much, is he?"

The janitor replied, "No sir! And he's not much when he is here."

Enjoy the fair and we'll talk again.



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## CRACKING A HOME RUN!

*Avid Twins fanatic collects memorabilia*

STORY AND PHOTOS  
BY HOWARD LESTRUD

The bases are loaded, and Randy Lea is coming up to bat. “There it goes, a home run.”

These are sounds that appeal to Randy Lea, a Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossom who loves baseball and has put together quite a collection of Minnesota Twins and other Major League Baseball artifacts.

The 66-year-old baseball fanatic is always scouring flea markets, antique stores, garage sales or auctions for items to add to his collection.

“I bet I have not paid over \$1,000 for these items,” says Lea in explaining that his man cave has been built to suit his likings.

He’s always looking for that item, especially one with a Minnesota Twins connection.

Lea is different from some other serious sports collectors who dole out lots of cash to obtain an item that they would treasure. “This is my collection, one that gives me lots of enjoyment,” Lea said.

As one scans Lea’s living quarters, it is clear that it’s not just Twins items that stir his fancy. Look at one of his living room walls and you will find lots of artwork created by his six grandchildren.

“My grandchildren are more important than any Twins collection,” remarks a proud grandpa. In addition to begging his grandkids for more art for his wall, Lea also is thankful when the grandkids give him a baseball piece for his collection.

“Beckett (son of Collette and Tony Lea) just gave me a Max Kepler baseball card and said I had to have it,” said Lea.

It almost seems like one is walking the fields at Metropolitan Stadium, the Metrodome and Target Field when viewing remnants from Twins history. “I’m still looking for a Twins 1991 world championship pennant,” said Lea.

There’s lots of evidence pointing to the Twins’ World Championships won in 1987 and 1991.

“Who’s your favorite Twins player?” Lea is asked. It doesn’t take him long to answer, “Tony Oliva.” Tony played 11 seasons for the Twins and won Rookie of the Year honors and earned a batting title in his first year in Major League Baseball.

“It’s not about him, it’s about the twins,” Lea says in calling Oliva a great am-



Look around and find lots of Minnesota Twins memorabilia secured by Randy Lea of Blooming Prairie. He is a devoted fan, collector and grandfather.

bassador for the Twins.

Lea has gotten to know Tony-0 and other former Twins players by following the Twins at Spring Training in Fort Myers, Fla.

Lea has met Joe Mauer and says he is “so down to earth” as are Torii Hunter and Kent Hrbek.

Who’s your favorite former Twins manager? That’s another baseball question that Lea quickly answers. “It’s Ron Gardenhire,” he says, pointing out that Gardenhire is “very good” with young kids and never turns down an autograph request. Gardenhire is currently managing the Detroit Tigers.

Lea says he is impressed thus far with new Twins manager Rocco Baldelli.

Lea began collecting baseball cards in 1971. He said most of his collection is sealed away in a safety deposit box. His collection then began to grow as he wanted to add items to go with his cards.

He married Nancy in 1973 and the couple had two children, Tony of Blooming Prairie and Jamie of New Prague. Randy has six grandchildren: Rachel, 11, of New Prague; Beckett, 9, of Blooming Prairie; Jacob, 9, of New Prague; Brock, 8, of Plainview; Avery, 6, of Plainview and Sailor, 3, of Blooming Prairie.

Lea has always loved baseball. He played baseball, football and basketball at Blooming Prairie High School. He was a pitcher and a catcher in high school. “Teacher/coach George Tashima talked me into being a catcher,” Lea says.

“I would pitch the first game and catch the second of a doubleheader,” he said.



Randy Lea shows off his favorite Wheaties cereal boxes, one saluting the 1987 Minnesota Twins and the other paying tribute to Kirby Puckett.

“This is my collection, one that gives me lots of enjoyment.”

**Randy Lea**

Avid Twins Collector

He was a switch hitter when batting.

Lea and his son both excelled in sports, Randy earning basketball’s Most Valuable Player in 1971 and Tony earning those honors in 1998. Randy was a center on the basketball team. Tony was a shooting guard.

Randy also played baseball for Austin State Junior College’s Blue Devils.

Randy says he still has his Rawlings baseball glove bought for him by his father. “I’ve had it restrung nine times,” he reveals. He purchased it at Ille Hardware. The glove carries the signature of former Major Leaguer Cesar Cedeño.

His first exposure to professional baseball came by golfing in celebrity golf tournaments and also by attending Spring Training.

“I’ve played golf with Tony-0, with Joe Mauer’s grandpa (Jake) and with Tommy Watkins, current first base coach for the Twins,” said Lea, adding he is especially proud of a Watkins jersey he has hanging in his man cave.

Lea attended his first spring training at Hammond Stadium in Fort Myers in 2002. He especially looks forward to Minnesota Day, a special day devoted to the Twins fandom from Minnesota. Blooming Prairie business owners Rod and Tess Koster always make it a priority to participate in Minnesota Day.

Mauer Chevrolet circulates the park on this special day and gives out souvenirs including magnets, coolies, t-shirts and calendars. Tony-0 rides around in a golf cart and signs autographs. “I still can’t believe he is not in the Hall of Fame,” Lea says.

Looking over the many Twins items, one can also find some autographed baseballs inked by Pete Rose, Carlton Fisk, Fred Lynn and Nolan Ryan.

Lea has some unique items, some of the most unique being baseball pens made out of broken Twins baseball bats. The pens made by the late Charles Jarvis are shaped like baseball bats. He has pens from the bats of Joe Mauer, Nick Punto, Jason Kubel and Denard Span.

Lea is a collector at heart, collecting old coins, old tools and old toys in addition to baseball items.

Randy encourages youngsters to collect sports items. “Collecting is something for the kids to think about other than school; it’s good for their minds,” he said.

When not following baseball, Lea worked at Center Valley, CFW, the Bixby Feed Mill and Associated Groceries.

The Minnesota Twins mean a lot to Lea but so do his grandchildren who continue to add color to a living room wall. He’s not the only Twins fan in his family. “My mom (Doris) is a bigger Twins fan than me,” he confides.



This Minnesota Twins Louisville Slugger bat is a favorite of Randy Lea.



This display belongs to Randy Lea, a self proclaimed Twin hobbyist. He is also an Awesome Blossom.