



Lerberg's Foods in Ellendale may be a small grocery store, but it has dramatically increased its offerings by adding a new refrigeration system. As store owner Ross Sletten stocks the coolers, he is happy to be offering customers a lot more variety. Sletten attributes the enhancement in part to COVID-19 as his store saw a significant increase in business over the past year. See Page 6A for more details about the recent improvement to Lerberg's.

STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

## 'I'm a slave no more,' says drug court grad

BY DEB FLEMMING  
NEWS EDITOR

Steve Keller knows his life today is very different from the one he led two years ago.

"I've gone from a drug-addicted person who was selling to support his habit to a person who is free from drug addiction," said Keller.

In July of 2019, Keller was arrested on two felony drug charges for possession and the



Steve-Waseca Drug Court graduate Steve Keller, 29, is a resident pastor at Redemption Church in Owatonna. SUBMITTED PHOTO

sale of methamphetamines. He was facing 65 months in prison on each count if convicted.

Last week, he graduated from the Steele-Waseca Drug Court.

"I am so grateful," he said during his Zoom graduation ceremony.

"I'm supposed to be in prison. Instead, I'm married with three kids and am a resident pastor at a church."

Since its inception in July 2014, the local drug court program has served 209 participants, with 102 of them either withdrawing or being terminated because of new criminal

behavior or rejection of services.

Keller is the 69th person to graduate from the Steele-Waseca Drug Court.

SEE 'I'M A SLAVE, A3

## BP Ed Foundation awarded \$24K grant

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

For more than 20 years, Sue Zwiener has been involved with the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation (BPEF). And when her company came forth with a major grant to help the group, she felt "pretty tickled."

New York Life recently awarded a \$24,000 Community Impact Grant to the

SEE BPEF FOUNDATION, A12

## Park visitors contribute \$1.9 M to local economy

BY CHRIS BALDWIN  
STAFF WRITER

Rice Lake State Park visitors pump about \$1.9 million into the local economy each year, according to an official of the

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

"An average of 66,883 people visit Rice Lake State Park each year," Cathy Fouchi, regional planner for southwestern Minnesota, told the

Steele County Board last week during its regular meeting.

But that isn't the only benefit of state lands to the area, according to Fouchi's report to the commissioners.

The DNR has six full-time and five part-time employees who work out of Steele County to manage about 2,500 acres of state land in Steele County.

"That equals about 91 percent of the

land base within the county," said Fouchi. "Those lands include one scientific and natural area, 11 wildlife management areas, three fishing piers,

SEE PARK VISITORS, A5

## Owatonna OKs plan for in-person learning

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

Owatonna secondary students will return to school for in-person learning four days a week beginning March 30.

The Owatonna School Board approved the plan Thursday (Feb. 25) with the conditions that all students wear masks in all buildings, maintain

3-feet social distancing when possible and, that classrooms be disinfected and sanitized after each class. Wednesdays will remain a distance learning day.

"This is required, and non-negotiable," said Superintendent Jeffery Elstad.

Elstad also said that if students choose not to follow these rules, they will be required to operate out of a dis-

tance-learning model.

The 3-feet social distance is a change from the 6-foot rule that has been in place during the hybrid model and comes from guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health. If Steele County were to drop below 10 cases per 10,000 people, the district could eliminate any social-distancing requirement.

On the flip side, if

5% of students and staff are absent due to influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, the school will consult with Steele County Public on a possible change to the learning model.

While students and staff are only required to remain 3-feet apart, the close contact rule will remain at 6-feet with those in that bubble required to quarantine unless they have re-

ceived their second dose of the vaccine 14 or more days prior. By March 30, when students return to in-person learning, 95% of Owatonna Public School staff who have chosen to be vaccinated will have received their second dose.

The change to the in-person learning model will come after the school's scheduled spring break, which runs from March 19-26.

## OPU will recoup costs over 12 months

The average residential customer of the Owatonna Public Utilities will see about \$30 added to their bills each month for the next year to cover February's higher than expected natural gas prices.

The Owatonna Public Utilities Commission approved the plan last week.

Freezing temperatures in the southern part of the country, most notably Texas, caused natural gas prices to hit all-time highs.

In Owatonna, natural gas prices usually peak at \$1 million for a single month during the winter months to service about 12,000 customers. Roger Wareheim, general manager of Owatonna Public Utilities Wareheim said, the utility's bill for February alone totaled about \$11 million.

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### AREA DEATHS

Gilma Jones, 94, Owatonna  
Theodore Stadler, 69, Medford

*Serving  
Blooming Prairie  
and Steele County  
since 1893*

## OUR VIEW

### Townships play vital role for many

Tuesday is an important day for area residents who live in one of Steele County's 13 townships. It's election day and the day townships throughout the state hold their annual meetings.

The annual meeting allows residents to voice their opinions on issues facing their township and to help shape how the township will be run in the coming year.

Townships are the oldest form of government in Minnesota, dating back to 1787 when Minnesota was established. And today, one-sixth of the state's population lives in a township.

While there are no hotly contested races in the local township elections, individuals elected to serve on township boards bear a tremendous responsibility.

The work done by township boards is essential and affects the lives of many.

Townships control just more than 40% of the roads in this state. Township boards also make decisions about bridges, tax levies, award contracts, authorize township expenditures, and adopt ordinances.

The upcoming township elections provide the perfect opportunity for all Minnesotans to celebrate the work done by township boards. Beyond the roads and bridges maintained by townships, those who serve on township boards exemplify the best in grassroots government.

For those who live in townships, please make the time to vote on Tuesday. And if you're so inclined, consider becoming more involved with your township board. Attending the annual meeting would be a great first step.

## GUEST COLUMN

### What does \$1.9 trillion equal?

BY DICK BAUMER

The COVID-19 virus presented us with many issues this past year and there have been many disputes in federal, state and local governments and the general public regarding how to deal with them. The House just passed a \$1.9 trillion stimulus bill, and I suspect many people look at the number with little regard.

Nearly everyone likes free money, but politicians seem to feel they just go to the money tree and extract whatever they need at the moment. The reality is that most people must pause and think about how many zeros are in a trillion and moreover what that really represents. I enjoy playing with numbers so here are some examples of what \$1.9 trillion represents. I rounded this number to 2 trillion to keep the math simple.

One trillion is written 1,000,000,000,000 (That's 12 zeros folks). You can easily spend \$50,000 on a new SUV or pickup so how many of those could you buy for \$2 trillion? 2 trillion divided by 50,000 equals 40,000 (40,000,000). That's a bunch of new vehicles and auto makers would be thrilled to build them for you!

How much does that much money weigh? In single bills, 1 trillion would weigh 1,102,311 tons! Double that for 2 trillion so the number rises to 2,204,622 tons. Transporting that load would require 88,184 trucks each carrying roughly 25 tons. An empty cargo ship weighs about 100,000 tons.

CNN recently reported that the interest on the national debt is \$4.8 trillion.

The annual cancer research budget for the

National Cancer Institute is about \$5 billion. Two trillion divided by 5 billion equals 400. We could therefore fund about 400 such programs with \$2 trillion.

Two trillion divided by 339 million (the U.S. population) equals \$5,899.70 for every man/woman/child.

If one considered a new home price of \$300,000 - \$1.9 trillion would buy 6,333,333 of new homes.

Minnesota population is 5,640,000 so \$1.9 trillion would buy a new home for every person in the state with enough left over to buy each family a cabin in the woods.

A flat stack of 1 trillion dollar bills would measure 67,866 miles high. Multiply that by two and that stack is now 125,732 miles high. The moon is roughly 250,000 miles away from earth so that stack would reach about half way to the moon.

How many times would 2 trillion wrap around the world? One trillion dollar bills lying end to end would measure 96,906,656 miles. Two trillion makes that number 193,813,312 miles. Now divide that number by 25,000 (circumference of the earth). Two trillion dollars would circle the earth roughly 7,752 times.

Two trillion dollars is a huge number regardless how you attempt to compare it with something you can relate to. If you dispute the numbers in this exercise, reach out to Google as they provided much of this data. The reality in government is that one trillion is the new billion and they are not bashful about it. Be prepared for the day of reckoning when the bill collector appears at our treasury.

**Dick Baumer lives in Owatonna.**

## Pressing to restore on-time mail delivery



Hot Pursuit  
RICK BUSSLER

I know we all have our horror stories about the U.S. Postal Service. I have shared mine a few times over the years.

And, unfortunately, our readers get to live their own nightmares far too often with the delivery of our newspaper.

My biggest gripe with the postal service is its mail delivery.

I'll use my parents as a classic example of what has become nothing short of aggravation on a regular basis. They are faithful readers of this newspaper. They live in central Minnesota so their paper has arrived as early as Thursday, the day after it is printed (can't arrive any sooner than that) to the following Wednesday and anywhere in between. The most

common seems to be the Monday or Tuesday after. Yep, it has taken as long as seven days for them to get the paper.

Many of our readers outside of the immediate area of Steele County have experienced similar battles in getting our newspaper. I've mentioned this before, but it bears repeating. Unless it's a holiday, we follow the same procedure every week and mail the paper on Wednesday afternoons. Just like clockwork.

Newspapers aren't the only things getting lost in the mail vacuum.

I had to chuckle in early December when my brother sent me a Christmas card from Wisconsin. I kept hearing about the card from my parents, but nothing showed up in my box.

My mother mentioned something about me not getting the card. So my brother put another one in the mail.

You wouldn't believe what happened. On Dec. 16, I received two cards - one postmarked Nov. 30 and the other stamped Dec. 11. Explain how that hap-

pens. I can't even begin to offer an explanation.

While I continue to feel the postal blues, I took a little comfort in learning last week that Sen. Amy Klobuchar and her colleagues are pressing Postmaster General Louis DeJoy on persistent mail delays and the need to restore on-time mail delivery.

It appears I'm not alone in my woes with the postal service.

Klobuchar said many Americans continue to face unacceptable problems in postal delivery performance.

"Our constituents have experienced missed paychecks and court notices, delayed critical prescriptions, an inability to reach small business customers and suppliers, lost rent payments and delayed credit card payments resulting in late fees, breakdowns in service to their communities, late personal mail such as holiday packages, and more," said Klobuchar.

The senators demanded that DeJoy not make additional chang-

es that will harm service for the American people. They also urged the postmaster to be fully transparent with the public about the Postal Service operations and the reasons they are still facing delays.

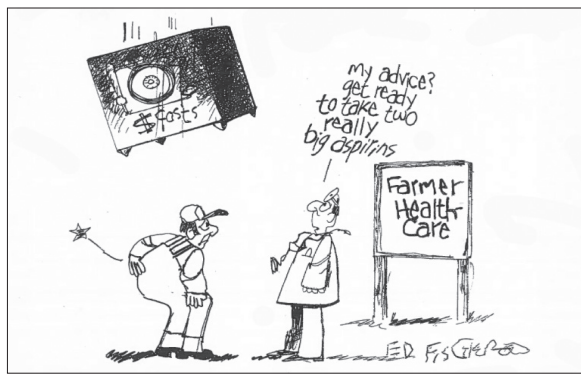
Recent reports have suggested DeJoy intends to implement a strategic plan that would further slow down the mail and unacceptably decrease service for millions of Americans who rely on the Postal Service.

I recently took advantage of a survey from the Postal Service inquiring about how it's doing. I shared my woes in the survey. However, not surprisingly, I haven't heard anything back from the survey.

Maybe a jolt from a group of influential senators will shake things up. But I'm not really counting on that to turn things around.

One thing is certain.

Something needs to happen so the Postal Service can get in hot pursuit of remaining a vibrant, sustainable institution for generations to come.



Reflections  
HOWARD LESTRUD

It's true! Contact lenses can disappear, too.

I have had the contact move above the cornea and try and try, and I have a heck of a time finding the hiding contact.

After addressing in last week's Reflections column about the issue of losing or misplacing my glasses, I decided to share some experiences others and myself have experienced with contact lenses.

I love contact lenses. They offer unbelievable freedom.

As I said in the last column, my brother-in-law, Darrell Hansen of Blooming Prairie, convinced me to switch to contact lenses. I must

## Contact lenses can disappear, too

admit that it was an adjustment from popping my glasses atop my nose to positioning them on my eyeball.

I now wear just one contact lens. I have had a cataract removed from my right eye. My ophthalmologist then placed an implant on that eye. The left eye still has the cataract, which is not yet "ripe," says my doctor.

The most difficult part of wearing contacts is to place them on the eye. I have not had a problem putting my finger on my eyeball, but sometimes, it just doesn't want to stay implanted.

It's a trick to placing the contacts on the eye. Make the lens look like a taco. If it doesn't resemble a taco, the contact likely will not feel right.

I've heard horror stories about contacts. My neighbor's daughter actually swallowed a lens after placing it in a cup, forgetting to bring her contact carrier to

her destination.

When I worked at a small weekly newspaper in North Branch, one of our typists could not find one of her contacts. After looking in many places, she finally realized she had put one contact atop the other.

Once had the misfortune of having my contact dislodge itself while I was out for a morning jog. I managed to catch it with my finger. What did I do next? You are right. I found moisture for it and popped it into my mouth.

After running a few blocks with the contact in my mouth, I stopped and decided to attempt placing the lens back into my eye. It succeeded.

With only one contact in my eyes, I have sometimes made the mistake of trying to remove a contact from my right eye. Finally realizing my mistake, I switched to working on my left eye.

On occasion, I have forgotten to remove my contacts at bedtime and when I awoke, I realize

that I can still see clearly. Oops! I forgot take the lenses out.

I wish I could have the LASIK surgery, but my longtime ophthalmologist Dr. Sabina Zimering, a survivor of the Holocaust, said my vision is too advanced to save it with LASIK. Son Troy and granddaughter Kaley have both had LASIK and love its benefits.

Wikipedia says contact lenses are ocular prosthetic devices used by over 150 million people worldwide, and they can be worn to correct vision or for cosmetic or therapeutic reasons.

The U.S. market for contact lenses is more than 2 billion. More women than men wear contact lenses.

In addition to providing better vision, contacts are preferred to wearing glasses when also wearing a mask.

If you don't wear glasses or contact lenses, you can consider yourself fortunate. Good vision is everything.

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Advertising: 4 p.m.  
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2015 - 8 state and 6 national awards  
2014 - 3 state and 4 national awards  
2013 - 7 state and 2 national awards  
2012 - 2 state awards  
2011 - 4 national awards  
(Awards presented by the Minnesota Newspaper Association and the National Newspaper Association)



# BP grad finds communication has changed since COVID-19

BY HOWARD LESTRUD  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

His local community weekly newspaper, the Steele County Times, called him a geek when he was a junior at Blooming Prairie High School.

Riley Millam, now 20 and a sophomore computer engineering major at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, still agrees with that description and doesn't seem to mind being labeled as a geek.

A 2019 graduate of Blooming Prairie, Millam's interest in computer science dates back to his days at BP high school where he developed computer applications and was active in robotics.

Millam recently agreed to visit about

computer science and give his take on how it has changed since the pandemic outbreak in early 2020. He is the son of Jamie and Michelle Millam of Blooming Prairie.

**How has communication changed since the pandemic outbreak?**

"I can only speak for my experiences, but I believe lots of people have had to adjust how they communicate to accommodate the situation we're in. So I'd say yes, communication has changed. Luckily, we live in an age of technology where our ability to communicate isn't entirely restricted because of the quarantine. That being said, I believe communication has changed to prioritize technology as



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Riley Millam is majoring in computer engineering at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. He is a sophomore. Riley graduated from Blooming Prairie High School in 2019.

our primary method of communicating information."

The media is using many different interviewing techniques, relying on technology. Can you explain what is being used: Zoom, Chat, FaceTime, etc.?

"With the shift to technological communication, many organizations have begun using video call applications. Video call applications like Zoom, WebEx, and FaceTime have now become primary ways for businesses to communicate with students, employees, volunteers, etc. as if they were there in person. These applications allow the members of

SEE BP GRAD FINDS, A9

## Vaccine finally available for seniors

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

After weeks of delays and limited supplies, the COVID-19 vaccination will finally be available for senior citizens in Steele County.

Public Health Director Amy Caron said about 200 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine will be available for people 65 and older beginning this week. Seniors are encouraged to go to the county's website at [co.steele.mn.us](http://co.steele.mn.us) and click on the public health link to sign up.

Caron said seniors who do not have a computer or may not be computer savvy should first ask a family member or friend to help them sign up on-line. As a last resort, people can call Public Health at 507-444-7650 to have a staff member help. But Caron warns that the department does not have proper staffing for everyone to call in.

The link will be updated on Fridays for vaccinations for the next week.

"This is really great news," said Caron. "I

didn't think we would be to this point as quick as we are."

The public health director said the county is still dealing with limited supplies. But Caron is hopeful things will start opening up even more in the coming weeks as a third vaccine from Johnson and Johnson was approved by the FDA late last week. She said it's still unknown when Steele County will receive the newest vaccine, which is different than the first

two as it requires only one dose.

"I would think we would start to work with bigger amounts of vaccine soon," Caron said.

As of Monday, Steele County has administered 1,602 doses of vaccine. Caron said about 400 additional doses will be given out in two different clinics this week.

Caron said her staff is extremely focused on vaccinations and wanting to get the vaccine out within 72 hours of receiving it. "It's my reason for

my existence right now," she said. "I hope we keep rolling along."

Meanwhile, the spread of COVID appears to have slowed down significantly as there were only 27 new cases over the past week. There have been 2,998 cases with 11 deaths since the pandemic began a year ago.

It's the same case for other neighboring counties. Dodge County had 10 new cases over the past week, bringing the county's total to 1,521. Freeborn County reported 48 new cases (2,805) and Mower County had 51 new cases (4,041).

### COVID-19 VACCINE WATCH

Steele: 1,602  
Dodge: 1,112

Source: Steele County Public Health

## District's food services adapt to COVID-forced changes

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

School lunches have changed dramatically over the past year.

With the U.S. Department of Agriculture's help, school meals have been free for students since last March. The program has been extended twice and provides for free lunches through the rest of this school year.

As a result, Owatonna Public Schools refunded any food balances fami-

lies had on file.

Free meals are something that Sarah Brooks, the director of nutrition services, said she hopes will continue beyond the pandemic.

Free meals can benefit students, whether they qualify for free or reduced lunches or not, said Brooks.

How meals are served has also changed.

For students operating under the in-person learning model, food is now served in the

classrooms and in the cafeteria to comply with social distancing requirements.

Students in the hybrid learning model receive two in-person meals and three to-go bundles to provide meals when they are not in school. Brooks also said that the school works to provide variety with these to-go bundles to ensure each student gets something that they will enjoy.

In cooperation with the Owatonna Bus

Company, the district has implemented a home-delivery option for families unable to pick up meals. Since starting this initiative in December, the school has delivered about 800 meals to families.

Still, the school has seen a decrease in the number of overall meals served. Lunch participation for elementary students dropped 20%, and middle and high school students' participation dropped more than 30%.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

An example of the hot-food option served to students attending Owatonna schools in-person during the 2020-2021 school year.

## State adds Hy-Vee to vaccine network

Gov. Tim Walz recently announced that Hy-Vee will be added to the expanding network of pharmacies vaccinating Minnesotans across

the state. Hy-Vee joins two other retail pharmacies in Minnesota - Walmart and Thrifty White - that are participating in the Federal Re-

tail Pharmacy Program that launched earlier this month. Hy-Vee will administer more than 10,000 doses of the vaccine this week to adults

65 years of age and older at more than 30 Hy-Vee sites in the state.

Appointments at Hy-Vee will be available in the coming days,

and the locations and contact information for scheduling appointments will be accessible on the Vaccine Locator map when the informa-

tion becomes available. The state will also notify seniors who are signed up for the Vaccine Connector about this new vaccine opportunity.

### I'M A SLAVE: FROM A

"Steven has found his passion - a role in the church - and a strong faith-based community to support his recovery efforts and dramatically change his pathway in life," said Nicole Grams, drug court coordinator.

And he did it in 18 months, the minimum amount of time required to complete the program. Keller will be on probation for five years. With no probation violations, his felony conviction will be dropped to a misdemeanor after five years.

"Not only did God save me from going to prison, but I won't have a felony on my record," said Keller.

In January 2020, while in the drug court program, Keller married his wife, Kall, who had two

children - Lincoln and Rylann Shea. The couple now has three children, with the birth of their daughter, Arabella, about a month ago.

"My life has definitely changed," said Keller, adding that "it's one thing to get off drugs and alcohol and find a life; it's another to get off drugs and alcohol and find Jesus."

Redemption Church in Owatonna brought him on staff as a resident pastor for one year. At the end of the year, he and the church will reassess and look at the next steps.

"I feel I have a calling in my life to serve the church," said Keller. During the graduation ceremony, Keller encouraged other participants to stick with the program. "My story is a

testament that you can do it," he said.

He also has some advice for young people: "Don't try anything. As soon as you start messing with chemicals, your life is going to change ... take it from someone who has gone through it."

According to Grams, drug courts throughout the country reduce the costs of repeatedly processing high-risk, high-need substance abusers through the courts, jails, and prisons while providing offenders a pathway to recovery.

Participants are required to abstain from substance use, be accountable for their behavior, and fulfill the legal responsibilities of the offenses they have committed.

There are currently 38 participants in the local drug court with three participants.

## Walz: State to vaccinate 70% of seniors by end of month

Gov. Tim Walz recently said that Minnesota will remain focused on vaccinating most of the state's seniors before expanding eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine.

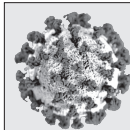
"We set out to protect the most vulnerable Minnesotans, and we are honoring that commitment. Older Minnesotans have borne the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic and we are focused on making sure they get vaccinated and keeping them safe," said Walz. "These vaccines work - we

can see that in the plummeting cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in long-term care facilities around our state. We will continue working with a robust network of providers to vaccinate all Minnesota seniors who need the most protection against COVID-19 right away."

Nearly 90% of COVID-19 deaths in Minnesota have come from those aged 65 and over. In January, following relaxed federal guidance, Walz directed healthcare providers to begin vaccinating

this group of Minnesotans, ensuring maximum impact for the small number of vaccines the state receives each week.

Once 70% of the state's seniors have received the vaccine, Minnesota will expand eligibility based on underlying health conditions and workplace exposure risk. Based on current projections, the next group of Minnesotans eligible for a vaccine will begin getting them in April, and every Minnesotan should be able to get a vaccine by this summer.



World..... 114,000,000  
Deaths..... 2,530,000  
Recovered..... 64,500,000

MN ..... 485,000  
Deaths ..... 6,554  
Recovered ..... 447,420

Steele..... 2,998  
Deaths ..... 11  
Recovered ..... 2,943

Dodge ..... 1,521  
Deaths ..... 4  
Recovered ..... 1,473

Freeborn..... 2,805  
Deaths ..... 23  
Recovered..... 4,041

Mower ..... 31  
Deaths ..... 31  
Recovered.....

AS OF MARCH 1, 2021

## COVID-19 UPDATE

# BLOTTER SPOTLIGHT

## COURT NEWS Steele County

The following cases were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 15 – 21 with Judge Karen R. Duncan presiding:

Jason A. Roe, 43, Albert Lea, previously appeared and was convicted of felony issue dishonored check. He was sentenced to \$3,634.71, 35 months in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state, no possession of firearms, 100 hours of community service and 5 years of supervised probation.

Raymond M. Scovill, 37, Claremont, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of marijuana. Scovill was sentenced to \$125 and 17 months in St. Cloud State Prison.

Peter A. Woollard, 42, Owatonna, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of controlled substance. The defendant was sentenced to \$325 and 39 months in St. Cloud State Prison.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Steele County District Court the week of Feb. 15 – 21:

## BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Joshua D. Bollinger, 42, St. Paul, revoked license, \$275; Madisona S. Brassear, 43, Bloomington, expired tabs, \$105; Lauren E. Fischer, 28, Waseca, speeding and expired tabs, \$155; Matthew D. Hanson-Johnson, 28, Rochester, careless driving, \$175; Sergei Iushkov, 28, Brooklyn, NY, speeding, \$215; Sabrina R. McCarr, 29, Bloomington, domestic assault and disorderly conduct, stay of adjudication, diversion program and 2 years of supervised probation; Erika L. Powell, 20, Bloomington, speeding, \$135; Nancy G. Sanchez-Romero, 30, Minneapolis, revoked license and hands free violation, \$325; Brianna Sanchez, 22, Austin, permit violation, \$125; Luke A. Volk, 39, Lakeville, speeding, \$135; Has S. Wah, 20, St. Paul, revoked license, \$275.

## MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Ariana J. Aaron, 25, New Brighton, speeding, \$115; Anna M. Aguilar, 39, Austin, child passenger restraint system violation and seat belt, \$150; Brayden R. Beede, 18, Medford, speeding, \$125; Andrew T. Blood, 52,

Liberty, MO, speeding, \$115; Corey R. Bryant, 26, St. Louis, MO, speeding, \$125; Luis E. Cantu de Leon, 20, Waseca, permit violation, \$125; Kyahneha Carr, 20, Chicago, IL, speeding, \$115; Mark J. Christian, 28, Cottage Grove, speeding, \$115; Rhavon J. Cleaves, 23, Bloomington, speeding, \$215; Cedric K. Coleman, 26, Mason City, IA, speeding and no license, \$215; Jaime R. De Leon, 35, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Victor N. Diaz Garcia, 24, Minneapolis, speeding and revoked license, \$475; Donovan T. Egleson, 23, St. Paul, no insurance, \$275; Michael J. Eppolito, 40, Riverside, CA, speeding, \$275; Jessica O. Friesen, 49, Mankato, speeding, \$125; Sumo R. Gbamonquille, 34, Des Moines, IA, speeding, \$125; Paige M. Gilligan, 35, Owatonna, speeding, \$125; Ochan N. Gon, 20, Fridley, suspended license, \$275; Scott L. Greenblatt, 22, Janesville, speeding and revoked license, \$415; Cynthia L. Harvell, 54, Brooklyn Park, speeding and careless driving, \$475; Maria A. Hernandez, 63, Luverne, child passenger system violation, \$125; Brandi S. Jefferson, 27, St. Paul, no license, \$175; Frank Juliane, 46, Lorain, OH, no license and registration violation, \$275; Brian R. Krebsbach, 25, Austin, speeding, \$135; Isai Leon, 22, Dallas, TX, speeding and no license, \$575; Matthew M. Lewis, 28, Minneapolis, speeding, \$125; Shaquille B. Lucky, 26, Mankato, speeding and suspended license, \$475; Segismundo Luna Andrade, 40, Los Angeles, CA, no insurance and allow illegal operation, \$375; Day Meh, 18, St. Paul, speeding, \$125; Stephen O. Merritt, 22, Minneapolis, permit violation, \$125; Lori A. Miller, 55, Rice Lake, WI, careless driving, \$175; John R. Mills, 43, Rochester, speeding, \$135; Khadar O. Mohamad, 25, Owatonna, speeding and revoked license, \$335; Gleny A. Navarrete Leon, 26, Westminster, CO, speeding, \$125; Beth A. Nowak, 25, Hammond, speeding, \$115; Mohamed A. Nur, 34, Bloomington, speeding, \$95; Shajee O. Ortega, 20, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Victoria L. Pacini, 22, Golden Valley, suspended license, \$275; Amanda N. Pena, 36, Owatonna, DWI, \$275 and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Makajia A. Phillips-Tucke, 22, Rochester, speeding, \$115; Glennel S. Powell, 34, Mankato,

speeding and revoked license, \$115; Cassie L. Raymond, 38, Owatonna, seat belt, \$100; Mindy A. Reedy, 35, Fountain City, WI, suspended license, \$275; Autumn L. Sablin, 25, Owatonna, speeding, \$215; Jared M. Santibanez, 23, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Esequiel Sepulveda, 54, Waseca, speeding, \$115; Jovan M. Shanks, 37, Crystal, revoked license, \$275; Rannette L. Shead, 35, Minneapolis, revoked license, \$275; Braeden A. Sinclair, 22, Conroe, TX, speeding, \$115; Quincy J. Smith, 45, Des Moines, IA, speeding and no license, \$315; Moo N. Soe, 32, Austin, speeding, \$125; Michelvasillos A. Stamatelatos, 25, Tucson, AZ, speeding, \$135; Magdalena Tellez Montalvo, 38, Minneapolis, no license, \$175; Anthony R. Trambles, 36, St. Paul, revoked license, \$275; Anthony A. Villareal, 37, Albert Lea, hands free violation, \$125; Falon M. Wanless, 24, Madison, AL, speeding, no registration and no license, \$325; Shawn M. Whiteaker, 21, Albert Lea, window tint violation, \$125.

## OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT

RaeAnn M. Brogren, 21, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Katon G. Brown, 22, Owatonna, suspended license, open bottle and no insurance, \$575; Laura J. Dominguez, 28, DWI, \$406 and 45 days in county jail; Patrick J. Donlon, 20, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Talinca C. Einfield, 29, Owatonna, failure to signal, no insurance and cancelled license, \$525; Terry J. Ford, 32, Faribault, revoked license, \$275; Samantha L. Fuller, 27, Owatonna, failure to stop for school bus, stay of adjudication, diversion program and 2 years of supervised probation; Jennifer Gable, 40, Faribault, no insurance, \$275; Yessenia A. Galvan, 31, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Jimmy L. Gaxiola, 21, Owatonna, revoked license, no insurance and expired tabs, \$505; Corey J. Gilbertson, 23, Medford, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Andrew W. Groeneweg, 27, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Vanessa M. Guerra, 19, Owatonna, failure to yield, \$125; Vincent F. Guggisberg, 28, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Larry D. Hansen, 76, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Tiffany A. Hernandez, 31, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Abdiaziz H. Jama, 25, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Vernon A. Johnson, 43, Owatonna, no insurance, \$275; Tristen J. Klemer, 24, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Jamie D. Lyons, 25, suspended license, \$275; Mark E. Maisio, 58, Owatonna, failure to yield, \$125; Jose B. Martinez, 29, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Michael E. Metts, 49, Bloomington, suspended license, \$275; Maycoli R. Mendoza-Casildo, 21, Belle Chasse, MI, invalid license and no insurance, \$375; Alexis A. Murillo Mata, 24, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Michael J. Nett, 45, Rochester, failure to yield, \$125; Ashley J. Ogile, 24, Sioux Falls, SD, no insurance, \$275; Dominic D. Pance, 21, Owatonna, expired tabs, \$105; Derick D. Ransome, 40, Madela, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Scott L. Rasmussen, 43, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Timothy A. Smith, 45, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Eloy Tarango, 42, Owatonna, assault, \$75, 1 year in county

jail, obtain and maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, no contact with victim, psychological evaluation, cognitive skill training, obtain permission to leave the state and 2 years of supervised probation; Braulio Vazquez Torres, 27, Owatonna, invalid license, \$175; Jesus Vazquez Zavala, 26, Medford, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Jerry L. Williams, 58, Mankato, restraining order violation, \$125, 65 days in county jail, maintain employment, no alcohol or controlled substance use, do not enter liquor establishments, obtain permission to leave the state and 1 year of supervised probation; Laura C. Wittwer, 41, Dodge Center, cancelled license, \$275.

## STEELE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Maha H. Abdulle, 46, Owatonna, speeding, \$215; Tanya P. Arnold, 28, Minneapolis, speeding, \$215; Hannah R. Bauer, 23, Brooklyn Park, speeding and insurance, \$315; Taylor R. Borgstahl, 21, Faribault, speeding, \$115; Michael P. Brath, 30, Medford, speeding and cancelled license, \$325; Melanie Y. Brooks, 45, West Des Moines, IA, no insurance, windshield violation and no plates, \$415; Hibran R. Calderon, 28, Waseca, speeding and invalid license, \$315; Felipe J. Carrizales, 26, Albert Lea, revoked license, \$275; Anthony D. Coleman, 27, Waseca, speeding and suspended license, \$355; Natechia E. Diaz, 43, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Lindsey M. Garcia, 25, Austin, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Dyson E. Gedicks, 18, Faribault, speeding, \$115; Jose L. Gutierrez, 20, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Colton M. Hafstad, 24, Owatonna, stop sign, \$125; Fernando E. Hil, 27, Sioux Falls, SD, revoked license, \$275; Manuel Hinojosa, 20, Owatonna, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Bertha M. Jackson, 34, Owatonna, suspended license, \$275; Dory N. Jirele, 26, Bloomington, speeding, \$115; Joshua T. Johnson, 30, Owatonna, failure to stop for traffic control signal, \$125; Justin L. Johnson, 31, Owatonna, revoked license, \$275; Taveria E. Johnson, 37, Waseca, invalid license, \$175; Trajantay D. Jones, 27, Owatonna, open bottle, \$175; Gonzalo A. Juarez, 48, Waseca, speeding, \$125; Collin S. Ketzeback, 24, Faribault, speeding, \$135; Ya Kuo, 23, South St. Paul, passing parked authorized vehicle, \$125; Joseph D. Langer, 17, Faribault, failure to yield, \$125; Angela N. Lara Mejia, 19, Waseca, invalid license, \$175; Jason R. Lindquist, 45, Owatonna, speeding, \$115; Jason J. Loera, 18, South St. Paul, speeding and invalid license, \$315; Kade H. Lubensky, 19, Austin, speeding, \$135; Emilio D. Mendoza Alvarez, 24, Owatonna, suspended license and no insurance, \$475; Caitlyn A. Norell, 19, Janesville, speeding, \$115; Jordan A. Peda, 21, Mankato, speeding, \$215; Jason M. Peterson, 47, Alden, revoked license and no insurance, \$475; Makajia A. Phillips-Tucke, 22, Rochester, speeding, \$115; Ethan O. Plata, 22, Kenyon, speeding, \$115; Ryan P. Schlaack, 27, Faribault, hands free violation, \$125; Dale K. Thorn, 55, Pine Island, speeding, \$215; Alexis S. Tientcheu, 38, Maple Grove, speeding, \$115; Braiden M. Timmerman, 20, Owatonna, DWI, \$475, attend MADD

## CRIME BRIEF

# Wanted man allegedly found with drugs



Alfredo Garza

A vehicle stopped for a moving violation provided police with a wanted man who was also allegedly in possession of drugs.

Alfredo Garza, 39, of Owatonna has been charged with felony fifth-degree possession of a controlled substance. The charge stems from a traffic stop by Owatonna Police on Feb. 23.

Police stopped a vehicle for a moving violation. While the officer spoke to the two occupants in the car, they gave

conflicting information. Officers identified the passenger as Garza, who had four outstanding arrest warrants. A search subsequent to arrest revealed two pipes and methamphetamine residue on Garza, while searching the vehicle, officers also found a backpack that contained additional paraphernalia and meth, police said.

Garza went to jail on the warrants as well as the new charge.

impact panel, substance abuse screening inventory and 1 year of supervised probation; Shawn J. Turner, 26, Stillwater, OK, speeding, \$135; Jamie L. Urdich, 44, Mankato, speeding, \$215; Araceli Vega, 37, Waseca, invalid license and no insurance, \$475; Larry A. Wirtz, 35, Hopkins, speeding and revoked license, \$415; Myron W. Wunderlich IV, 33, Owatonna, speeding and revoked license, \$315.

## POLICE BLOTTER Steele County

## BLOOMING PRAIRIE POLICE

**Feb. 25**  
**Arrest:** Police arrested a motorist during a traffic stop at Highway 218 and Dodge Mower Road in Udolpho Township at 7:31 p.m.

## OWATONNA POLICE

## Feb. 19

**Fraud:** Officer took a report of a fraud incident in the 200 block of Pearl St. E. at 9:05 a.m.

**Shoplifting:** At 11:55 p.m., a shoplifting incident occurred in the 1100 block of Frontage Rd. W.

## Feb. 20

**Fraud:** Police received a fraud report from the 700 block of Churchill Dr. SE at 5:22 p.m.

**DWI:** Police made DWI arrests at Cedar Ave. N. and Rose St. E. at 11:17 p.m. and at Hoffman Dr. NW and North St. W. at 11:52 p.m.

## Feb. 21

**Restraining Order:** Police arrested a subject for a restraining order violation in the 100 block of Bridge St. W. at 7:16 a.m.

**Disturbance:** Officers responded to a disturbance in the 500 block of Broadway St. E. at 8:47 a.m.

**Domestic:** Police responded to a domestic disturbance in the 500 block of Adams Ave. NW at 8:21 p.m. They took a subject into custody.

## ARRESTS Steele County

## OWATONNA POLICE

Steven Robert Luebben, 22, arrested at 11:51 p.m. Feb. 22, DWI, held for court.

Angela Marie Vela, 32, arrested at 8:45 p.m. Feb. 21, domestic assault, assault and disorderly conduct, held for court.

Charles Wayne Ellis, 41, arrested at 7:47 a.m. Feb. 21, violation of no contract order, held for court.

Eric Justin Huisenga, 35, arrested at 12:02 p.m. Feb. 22, probation

## DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The following case was heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Feb. 14 with Judge Jodi L. Williamson presiding:

Raymond M. Scovill, 37, Claremont, previously appeared and was convicted of felony possession of controlled substance. He was sentenced to \$205 and 45 months in St. Cloud State Prison.

The following misdemeanors and petty misdemeanors were heard in Dodge County District Court the week of Feb. 14 – 21:

## DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Kelly M. Cleveland, 48, Waseca, speeding, \$260; Michael G. Everson, 18, Prior Lake, speeding, \$220; Andrew M. Gustafson, 30, Rochester, revoked license, \$280; Logan J. Onken, 29, Dodge Center, revoked license, \$280; Makajia A. Phillips-Tucke, 22, Rochester, speeding, \$120; Victor E. Quintana, 22, Tucson, AZ, invalid license, \$180; Saide N. Rodriguez, 17, Owatonna, speeding, \$220; Daniel J. Ryan, 58, Mantoville, parking violation, \$32; April M. Schandorff, 26, Hayfield, speeding, \$140; Deborah J. Towey, 59, Hayfield, parking violation, \$32.

## KASSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Heather E. Fjerstad, 50, Fort Myers, FL, parking violation, \$32; Aaron J. Fohrman, 42, Rochester, suspended license, \$280; Nicole M. Goodwill, 37, Rochester, suspended license and hands free violation, \$320; David A. Gross, 56, Kasson, license not in possession, expired registration, failure to deliver certificate to transferee, no insurance and drive without ignition interlock, stay of adjudication, 180 and 6 months of unsupervised probation; Justin C. House, 24, Kasson, parking violation, \$32; Faruq A. Omar, 27, Rochester, revoked license and headlights violation, \$320; Jayde K. Zelinske,

SEE BLOTTER, A12

## Blooming Prairie Upcoming Community Education Classes

### DEFENSIVE DRIVING

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

# \$24

Cash or Check payable at night

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

Blooming Prairie Community Education  
Michelle Southworth-Community Ed Coordinator

# FEDERATED INSURANCE

It's Our Business to Protect Yours

Visit  
federatedinsurance.com  
for COVID-19 resources.



## How to choose a quality nursing home during a pandemic



**Dear Savvy Senior,**  
Can you give me some tips on how to pick a good nursing home in the COVID era? My mother had a stroke a while back and can't use her legs any longer. I've been taking care of her at home, but her health has declined to the point that I absolutely can't do it any longer.

**Need Help**

Dear Ned,  
COVID-19 has hit nursing homes hard over the past year, making it extremely difficult for people attempting to choose a nursing home during this time.

While many eldercare experts suggest avoiding nursing homes during the pandemic if at all possible, some families, like yours, find themselves in difficult situations needing long-term or rehabilitative care for their elder loved one now.

To help you find a good nursing home in the COVID era, and avoid a bad one, here are some steps to follow.

**Make a list:** There are several sources you can turn to for referrals to top nursing homes in your area including your mom's doctor or nearby hospital discharge planner; friends or neighbors who may have had a loved one in a nursing home; and online at Medicare's nursing home compare tool at [Medicare.gov/care-compare](https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare). This tool will not only help you locate nursing homes in your area, it also provides a 5-star rating system on recent health inspections, staffing, quality of care, and overall rating.

Also keep in mind that it's always best to choose a nursing home that's close to family members and friends who can check in often, because residents with frequent visitors usually get better care.

**Do some research:** To research the nursing homes on your list, put a call into your long-term care ombudsman. This is a government official who investigates nursing home complaints and advocates for residents and their families. This person can tell you which nursing homes have had complaints or problems in the past. To find your local ombudsman, call your area aging agency (800-677-1116) or visit [LTCOmbudsman.org](https://www.LTCOmbudsman.org).

You should also visit the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services website ([data.cms.gov](https://data.cms.gov)), which provides updated data on U.S. nursing home reported COVID-19 cases and deaths.

**Contact the nursing homes:** Once you've identified a few good nursing homes, call them to see if

they have any vacancies, what they charge, and if they accept Medicaid. Also, find out their staff-to-patient ratio and staff turnover rate; their COVID infection-control procedures; the percentage of residents and staff that have been vaccinated for COVID; and their facility visitation policy.

If visitor restrictions are in place, see if they offer smartphone, tablet or laptop technology assistance so you can have Facetime, Zoom or Skype video calls with your mom.

**Tour your top choices:** The best way to evaluate a nursing home is to visit it in person, but because of COVID, some facilities may offer limited or virtual tours only. To help you evaluate and rate a facility, Medicare offers a terrific checklist of questions that you can print at [Medicare.gov/NursingHomeCompare/Checklist.pdf](https://www.Medicare.gov/NursingHomeCompare/Checklist.pdf).

**Paying for Care**

With nursing home costs now averaging \$255 per day nationally for a semi-private room and nearly \$290 for a private room, paying for care is another area you may have questions about or need assistance with. Medicare only helps pay up to 100 days of rehabilitative nursing home care, which must occur after a hospital stay of at least three days.

Most nursing home residents pay for care from either personal savings, a long-term care insurance policy, or through Medicaid once their savings are depleted.

The National Clearinghouse for Long-Term Care Information website ([LongTermCare24.org](https://www.LongTermCare24.org)) is a good resource that can help you understand and research your financial options. You can also get help from your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), which provides free counseling on all Medicare and Medicaid issues. To find a local SHIP counselor visit [ShiptaCenter.org](https://www.ShiptaCenter.org) or call 877-839-2675.

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

**STEELE COUNTY Times**  
Always local,  
all the time.

## ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

HOME OF THE SHINING KNIGHTS

*Students of the Week*

*Chloe 8TH GRADE*



**CHLOE** has had such a great 8th grade year and is a shining knight in and out of the classroom living out our core values of Lead, Give, Pray, Learn, and Love. Chloe comes to school with a positive attitude and smile every morning. She works hard in class, putting in her best effort. She works well with her classmates and it's apparent that she keeps Jesus in her heart through her actions and words, always putting others first with kindness and generosity. She is involved in band and keeps things going as the girls' basketball manager. Chloe loves her family and talks about them often. Chloe, thank you for being a bright spot in our school every day you come to school. **Keep shining.**

Parents are Joel & Denise | Chloe was nominated by Mrs. Ginskey

*Abriana 7TH GRADE*

**ABRIANA** is new to SMS this year, and you would never know it. She came to school this year and she really hit the ground running! Abriana is so much fun to have in class, she always puts in 100% effort into everything she is working on. Our favorite project she turned in was a video teaching us about volcanoes, we laughed so hard watching Abriana bring out her creative side. Abriana is a true leader in the classroom, and anyone can see that she keeps Jesus in the center of her heart with how she treats her classmates, and how she interacts with younger students. **We are so excited to have Abriana,** and we can't wait to see what she accomplishes with us at SMS and beyond!

Parents are Lisa Kunkel & Matthew Harris | Abriana was nominated by Mrs. Halvorson & Mrs. Wagoner

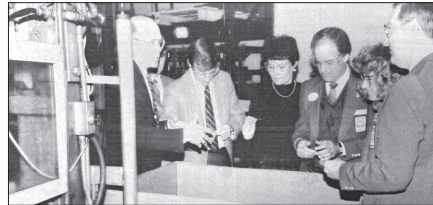


730 South Cedar Ave.  
Owatonna, MN 56001  
507.446.2300  
[stmarys-owatonna.org](https://www.stmarys-owatonna.org)

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

## History from the News Archives

### Paving the way for expansion



FILE PHOTO

Jerry Dawald, general manager of Truth Division-SPx Corporation, led the Chamber ambassadors on a tour of the Owatonna facilities plant and office expansion in February 1990. Truth manufactures window, patio door and sky light hardware for distribution nationally and internationally. With the 14,000 square foot expansion, Truth has 200,000 square feet in manufacturing and office space and employs 550 in Owatonna.

### 10 Years Ago

March 1, 2011

RICK L. BUSSLER, PUBLISHER

In an effort to honor Dale Hansen's memory, the Blooming Prairie Quarterback Club has created a scholarship in his name. Hansen, who died last year was a longtime assistant football coach for the Blossoms. His family gave money to the Quarterback Club at the time of his death. Hansen was very active in the lives of many kids at the school and the idea of a scholarship in his name made perfect sense. Fundraising started at the beginning of this year with a goal of giving 1-2 scholarships a year. BPHS senior, Seth Johnson won the Section 2A 130-pound wrestling title and now advances to the State tournament in St. Paul. His first match will be Friday morning against the No. 2 seed in his section and No. 3 in the state, Clinton VanHouven. Wishing good luck to Seth at the state tournament.

### 20 Years Ago

Feb. 27, 2001

ELSIE SUNJGER, EDITOR

Heather Nicole Bass, of Blooming Prairie, has been chosen by the Minnesota Women of today as an Outstanding Young Adult. She was one of five finalists chosen from 10 entries throughout the state. Heather is very strong academically, always finds time for others whether it be school, church, family or other organizations. She will be attending Viterbo University in LaCrosse, WI and major in elementary education. The award along with a scholarship will be presented at the Women of Today convention.

St. Isadore School announced 2nd quarter honor roll. A Honors to Patrick Trotman, Adam Wondra, Donald Deetz, Matthew Misen, Ben Anderson, Travis Borchert, Adam Kaplan, Alan Trotman, Jenny Wendt, Sarah Kubicek, Kristin Anderson, Megan Borchert, Luke Kaplan, Crimson Kasper, Tiffany Kasper and Karen Rysavy. B Honors - Alex Kasper, Sean Robbins and Garret Jones.

### 50 Years Ago

March 3, 1971

VICTOR, VERNON & VRYLE KREJCIC, PUBLISHERS

Prairie Manor Nursing Home facilities are for the old and young alike it was proven this past weekend. A baby girl was born at the Home on Sunday, Feb. 28 at 4:20 a.m. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Winziburg of rural Blooming Prairie. Due to the storm, which prevailed in the area last weekend, Mrs. Winziburg was unable to get to the hospital in Austin. She entered Prairie Manor at 2:00 a.m. Mother and baby are doing well and were transferred to St. Olaf Hospital Sunday afternoon.

### PARK VISITORS:

FROM A

a water access site, 20 miles of the Straight River water trail and two authorized state trails and of course Rice Lake State Park.

Fouchi also said the state works with private landowners and conservation and recreation groups to provide additional recreation on private lands. In Steele County, that includes 202 miles of grant-in-aid snowmobile trails and another 69 acres of walk-in access where landowners are paid to allow extra hunting on their property.

Other successes, cited by Fouchi, included: Cost-share funding provided by DNR

Forestry for two private woodland projects and technical assistance to five additional owners in 2020.

A \$50,000 grant to the City of Owatonna to fight the Emerald Ash Borer spread.

A grant to MN Pheasants, Inc. Steele County chapter for the restoration of 35 acres of prairie situated on wildlife management areas; and

The DNR's partnership with Trust for Public Land and Pheasants Forever to provide some additional outdoor recreation opportunities and some flood-reducing perennial vegetation.

The Junior High basketball teams at Blooming Prairie have completed a highly successful 1970-1971 schedule. Coaches Roger Sorenson and Donald Shelton reported this week. The eighth-grade team went undefeated for the season compiling a 10-0 record, while the seventh-grade squad suffered only one defeat for a 9-1 record. Congratulations go out to both teams.

### 75 Years Ago

February 28, 1946

FRANK KREJCIC, PUBLISHER

Gold wrist watch for only 35cents - yes that's right. A 35 cent "lost ad" in the Times was instrumental in the return of a fine, gold 17 jewel wrist watch to Mrs. Edwin Garness. Mrs. Garness lost the tiny watch when the wrist band broke. Mrs. J. J. Betlach found it and immediately after reading the ad, in last week's issue, brought it to the Times office. For her honesty, Mr. Garness rewarded her with a crisp new five-dollar bill. Both Mr. and Mrs. Garness are thoroughly convinced that the Times advertising pays big returns.

Establishing what is believed to be a state record and probably national in scope, Otto T. Lund Post No. 52 American Legion, Blooming Prairie has the distinction of taking as members seven Oswald brothers, Earl, Louis, Harrison, Harvey, Robert, Thomas and Otto, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Harrison Oswald. Naturally, the local Legion Post feels very proud getting seven sons of one family, who have served in military service of our country to affiliate with the organization.

### Owatonna Photo News

#### 31 Years Ago

March 3, 1990

TOM SHEA, PUBLISHER

The VFW Bantams have won the District A playoffs. They captured the title in the District playoffs in Fairmont over the weekend. The seeded teams in the journey were Albert Lea, Owatonna, Austin and New Ulm. The team consisted of Joel Kriesel, Aaron Miller, Andy Nyland, Chad Starman, Andy Lindell, Travis Zimmerman, Terry Gaultrapp, Jeff Halvorson, Daryl Kehler, Chad Kreutz, Erik Stordahl, Kory Borchert. The team is coached by John McEneaney, Brian Miller and D.J. Floersch. We want to thank the VFW for their support and sponsorship.

The Steele County Exchange Club presented the Steele County Sheriff's Mounted Posse its annual Officers of the Year Award. The Posse as a group was singled out this year, because of their many contributions to local law enforcement and volunteer hours. Accepting award from Exchange Club President Tim Arlt for the Posse were Sheriff Bill Hildebrandt, Todd Johnson, Ralph Behne and Dr. Richard Ogile, Posse captain.

"While there are a lot of successes, there are also opportunities and challenges," Fouchi said. Some of these challenges include flooding along portions of the Straight River, Oak Hill and Emerald Ash Borer presence within the county, and lake restoration projects hampered by water coming from uplands. The DNR has a Strategic Land Asset Management plan that it will continue to pursue in counties across Minnesota, including within Steele County. With plenty of successes and some opportunities on the horizon, the DNR will continue to preserve the county's natural resources, she said.

## What is a Wellhead Protection Plan?



**Steele Talkin'**  
STEPHANIE KIBLER

The City of Ellendale has been working with the Minnesota Department of Health for the past several years to create a Wellhead Protection Plan.

The purpose of the Wellhead Protection Program is to prevent contamination of public drinking water supplies by identifying water supply recharge areas and implementing management practices for potential pollution sources found within those areas.

The program has now expanded to Source Water Protection to include supplies which rely on surface water. Community water supplies (city, subdivision, trailer park, etc.) and water supplies for certain schools, factories, hospitals, etc., will be required to do comprehensive source water protection programs. All other public drinking water supplies will be

SEE WHAT IS A WELLHEAD, A7



STAFF PHOTO BY RICK BUSSLER

Lerberg's Foods owner Ross Sletten is offering more food products these days thanks to a new refrigeration system he recently installed in the century-old grocery store in Ellendale. The new coolers have given Lerberg's a significant amount of extra space to display more food items.

## Small town grocer offers more variety

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

For years Lerberg's Foods has been able to carry only one variety of yogurt; it now offers six varieties.

That's just one example of extra food products carried by Lerberg's Foods. The small town grocer in the heart of downtown Ellendale recently added a new refrigeration

system allowing for additional space to give customers more variety.

"We've increased our product by one-third," said Ross Sletten, store owner. "It dramatically gave us more space... a lot more variety. Before we only had so much space, and now we have the room to offer more."

The biggest advantage of the new

coolers is that products can be stacked on top of each other. In the past, Lerberg's couldn't stack anything because most of its meat and produce items were in an open refrigeration case. Now everything is enclosed behind glass doors.

The enhancement is the biggest improvement Sletten has made since taking over the store in 2007. He said the pre-

vious coolers were at least 50 years old.

Besides offering more variety, the new refrigeration system is "so much more energy efficient," he said, noting the coolers provide LED lighting to make things stand out much more.

Sletten said he'd been thinking about making the improvements for some

SEE SMALL TOWN, A7

## OHS junior picked for US Senate program

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

Owatonna High School junior Fardouza Farah has been selected as one of two Minnesota students to participate in the United States Senate Youth Program.

Farah also will receive a \$10,000 college scholarship. "It's an honor to be representing Minnesota at such a high level. I am so excited to learn and grow with other delegates," Farah said.

The purpose of the program is to give students a chance to learn more about the three branches of government, to learn the responsibilities of elected officials, and to emphasize the importance of the decisions made by these officials.

In total, there are only 104 students a year across

SEE OHS JUNIOR, A7



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Fardouza Farah, a junior at Owatonna High School, will serve as one of two Minnesota representatives in the United States Senate Youth Program.

## Identity theft haunts Owatonna woman

BY RICK BUSSLER  
PUBLISHER

The ramifications of identity theft have been haunting Gail Buckingham of Owatonna for the past several months. Twice within 45 days, Buckingham had to

switch out her American Express card. For three weeks during the holiday season, she could not use her credit cards. She thinks it was all part of a Facebook attack that led to her personal financial information being compromised.

For Buckingham, the trouble began in late November when she received an email notice with her password already revealed in the email message. She clicked off and deleted it. Somehow the sender got into all of her

accounts, forcing her to freeze all her financial and credit information. Buckingham's American Express card was used to make about \$160 in fraudulent charges in response to Facebook

SEE IDENTITY THEFT, A7

## IDENTITY THEFT PREVENTION TIPS

- Free credit reports at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)
- Free credit scores and reports at [www.creditkarma.com](http://www.creditkarma.com)
- Call Kurt Halverson at Hometown Credit Union at 507-455-6726

## American Indian Aid intended to help students

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

With the state's American Indian Education Aid program's help, Owatonna is continuing to make progress teaching its American Indian students.

The aid provides \$20,000 to help schools create a better experience for American Indian students. Owatonna

Public Schools qualified for this aid last year because the district had more than 20 American Indian students enrolled.

"I believe the aid gives us an opportunity to provide targeted interventions, as well as increase the resources we have to support our American Indian students," Michelle Krell, Owatonna's director of teaching and learning, said.

Currently, there are 22 American Indian students enrolled in Owatonna schools, said Krell, adding that the majority are in grades in K-5.

During a presentation on the topic during last week's school board meeting, Krell emphasized the goals of their education of American Indian students. A lot of the goals stemmed

from making sure that American Indian students feel included. This includes purchasing text that promotes "cultural responsiveness," having open communication with parents and families and, increasing the number of American Indian students involved in specialized classes, such as advanced placement classes and internships.

Krell said that all of the district's high school teaching staff is trained in Equity and Culturally Responsive Teaching (CLEAR) practices.

Another goal the district has set for itself is to make sure all eligible American Indian students graduate on time, which will be the case this year. However, this is not where the school's work ends, as they continue to work with the

students on a plan for after graduation.

As with all students, the emphasis on graduation is something Owatonna focuses heavily on by working on a plan with students throughout their secondary career to get them to that goal.

The district's efforts have received positive feedback from American Indian Parent Advisory Committee, said Krell.

## Lincoln Elementary's 'discovery' sees success



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A ball, created by a student of the discovery program, used two colors, symbolizing how people of different races can get along.

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
STAFF WRITER

Lincoln Elementary is celebrating the success of its Discovery initiative.

Over the past year, nine of the 12 students in Lincoln's special education department began to integrate into general education classrooms, a 30% increase from a year ago. The improvement stems from an initiative the school started four years ago called the discovery program.

The program teaches students various skills used in general education. As students begin to gain these skills, they start to expand their time in general education classrooms.

"We were noticing that many students came to us without these skills, and this was preventing them from accessing traditional classroom instruction," Lincoln Elementary Principal

Mary Hawkins said. "The number of students who demonstrate these needs has been increasing, and we knew that we needed a more intense and purposeful program to teach them the skills they need."

Discovery and other key Lincoln staff have also been trained in Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) to use researched-based strategies to help students in the program work through conflicts.

One of these key staff members is Hawkins, who recently praised the program at the Feb. 8 Owatonna school board meeting.

"These are our students, and we all want them to succeed," Hawkins said.

In her presentation to the school board, Hawkins shared a story of an interaction she had with one of the students in the program. She said the stu-

dent had previously been unwilling to interact with her, but on this particular day, he talked with her and showed her a clay ball he was working on. She said the ball used two colors, black and white, as a symbol to show how different races can get along.

The school also works to ensure these students are comfortable when they join general education classrooms by having Lincoln staff use similar language in their classrooms as these students are used to hearing inside the discovery program. Hawkins credited the entire Lincoln staff and their support of this program in making it the success that it has been.

Hawkins said parents of students in the program are happy their children can remain at a local elementary school and see progress with their development.



# Medford hires new director of operations

BY CHRIS BALDWIN  
STAFF WRITER

Medford's new Administrative Director of Operations Jed Peterson is on the job. The city's top administrative position was open for a little more than a month following Andy Welt's resignation in December.

Peterson brings 15 years of public works experience to the position.

"I worked for Medford for a year and a

half and then I moved to Faribault," said Peterson, adding that he's looking to bring what he learned working in Faribault to Medford.

"Since I had worked here before, I felt that there was a lot that I could help accomplish," Peterson said. "There are a few issues facing us. We have a wastewater treatment plant that's aging and we need to figure out what to do there. As Medford grows, we need to do

something about it."

"Like any city, we need to keep up with the times," Peterson said.

"I still have a lot to learn about Medford, but I'm definitely hitting the ground running," he said. "I'm really excited to be here. I like the small-town atmosphere and I think that's what drew me back here."

During last Monday night's regular city council meeting, the council added the

public works supervisor's duties to the administrator's duties. This takes advantage of the past public works experience Peterson brings to the city.

The meeting also yielded an update on the currently proposed purchase of the Piper House, a historic farmhouse situated on the southern edge of town. Brad Price previously reached out to the city looking to annex the property and rezone it

so that he could acquire the parcel.

Price's proposal specified that the historic landmark would be demolished to allow for the construction of storage units. The city directed Price to take up the issue with the planning and zoning board.

Due to the controversial nature of the request, Mayor Danny Thomas opted to have March's planning and zoning meeting held at city hall so that extra

members may attend.

"We'll let people from the historical society and Mr. Price come," Thomas said. "If anyone else wants to join, they'll have to let us know."

The meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 17, at the fire hall, Mayor Thomas and the council thought it best that the public be able to view the meeting via live stream on the city's website as well as through Owatonna Live.

## Township elections, meetings on Tuesday

BY DEB FLEMING  
NEWS EDITOR

Voters in Steele County's 13 townships will go to the polls Tuesday, March 9, to elect township officials.

Most townships have at least two positions on the ballot — the township treasurer and a supervisor position.

Write-in votes will determine the outcome of the supervisor position in Summit Township on Tuesday. Chairman Robert Harold is not seeking re-election and no one filed for his open seat.

Seeking election in Aurora Township are Kevin Loken for a 3-year term as supervisor and Barb Gallea for a 2-year term as treasurer.

Seeking election in Berlin Township are Charles Crabtree for a 3-year term as supervisor and Pat Motl for a 2-year term as treasurer.

In Blooming Prairie Township, Jerry Wendt is seeking a 3-year term as supervisor and Katie Zipse is running for a 2-year term as treasurer.

Seeking election in

Clinton Falls Township are Darren Hagen for a 3-year term as supervisor, Arch Mrkvicka for a 2-year term as supervisor, Cynthia Johnson for a 2-year term as treasurer and Susan Rypka for a 1-year term as clerk.

In Deerfield Township, Karl Buscho is running for a 3-year term as supervisor, Joel Dulas for a 1-year term as supervisor and Brian Kanne for a 2-year term as treasurer.

Seeking election in Havana Township are Larry Schubert for a 3-year term as supervisor, Alex Ebenhoeh for a 2-year term as supervisor, Steve Dornquist for a 2-year term as treasurer and Laurie Wolhart for a 2-year term as clerk.

In Lemond Town-

ship, Dale Johnson is running for the 3-year term as supervisor and Vicki Arthur is seeking the 2-year term as treasurer.

In Medford Township, Vern Wheeler is seeking the 3-year term as supervisor and Alison Jaster is running for a 2-year term as treasurer.

Seeking election in Meriden Township are Keith Dinse for a 3-year term as supervisor and David Mueller for a 2-year term as treasurer.

In Merton Township, Eugene Peterson is running for a 3-year term as supervisor and Janet Springer for a 2-year term as treasurer.

Seeking election in Owatonna Township are Jerry Katzung for a 3-year term as supervisor and Garret Miller

for a 2-year term as treasurer.

In Somerset Township, Jody Hocking is running for a 3-year term as supervisor and Becka Sletten is seeking a 2-year term as treasurer.

In addition to the 3-year supervisor position that has no one on the ballot in Summit Township, Wayne Dobberstein is seeking a 2-year term as treasurer.

Polis are required to be open from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at township halls across the state. Three townships in Steele County will open earlier than required. Polls will be open at 3 p.m.

Sletten also enjoys a familiar saying that old-timers have coined for years. "People always say, 'if Lerberg's don't have it, you don't need it,'" he said, adding, "It's always fun to have them say that."

Sletten said he worked with a retail counselor from Associated Wholesale Gro-

cers where he buys most of his products. Sletten credits AWG for going "to bat for me and getting me the best deal."

Despite the cost involved, Sletten said he

## SMALL TOWN: grocer offers more variety

FROM A6

time, but COVID-19 made him pull the trigger faster. His store saw a significant spike in business over the past year as many people stayed closer to home and shopped locally. "It was a shot in the arm for us," he said. "We benefited from it."

The grocer said it was important to make the improvement so that people don't have a reason to shop elsewhere. Sletten said more people are coming back to his store after shopping there for the first time during COVID-19.

Sletten also enjoys a familiar saying that old-timers have coined for years. "People always say, 'if Lerberg's don't have it, you don't need it,'" he said, adding, "It's always fun to have them say that."

Sletten said he worked with a retail counselor from Associated Wholesale Gro-

cers where he buys most of his products. Sletten credits AWG for going "to bat for me and getting me the best deal."

Despite the cost involved, Sletten said he

is happy he decided to make the change. "It wasn't cheap, but you have to spend money to make money," he said.

The improvement also allowed for Lerberg's to pick up some additional aisle space for selling other merchandise. And that becomes important because the store has no room to expand.

"We try to make our space the best use that we can," Sletten said. Lerberg's has been serving the Ellendale community since 1901, with the current store being in place since 1914. The store still features the original wood floors.

"We are trying to modernize as much as we can while giving it the old-fashioned feel people are used to having," said Sletten. He said he will never touch the wood floors or the moose that has been hanging on the wall since 1919.

Lerberg's next project is to replace all the lighting in the store with LED lights. Sletten said he hopes to have that done within the next month.

## 2021 TOWNSHIP ELECTIONS

Steele County Townships will also hold their annual meetings on Tuesday.

Aurora Twp. — 4 p.m.  
Berlin Twp. — 8:15 p.m.  
Blooming Prairie Twp. — 8:01 p.m.  
Clinton Falls Twp. — 8 p.m.  
Deerfield Twp. — 1:30 p.m.  
Havana Twp. — 3:30 p.m.  
Lemond Twp. — 4 p.m.

Medford Twp. — 8:05 p.m.  
Meriden Twp. — 4 p.m.  
Merton Twp. — 4:50 p.m.  
Owatonna Twp. — 3 p.m.  
Somerset Twp. — 3:30 p.m.  
Summit Twp. — 8:05 p.m.

## OHS JUNIOR: picked for US Senate program

FROM A6

the country who receive this opportunity.

Farah said this will provide a great learning opportunity for her, and the one thing she is looking forward to the most is having important political conversations with her fellow delegates.

For the first time in its 50-year history, the program will be done entirely online due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Farah's selection boosts the already

impressive resume she made for her high school resume.

At Owatonna, she has been involved in the student council, the speech team, and participates in mock trial. She also a member of the school's National Honor Society.

Outside of school, Farah is involved in many different projects.

She is a board member of the Central Asian English Project, where she helps

tutor girls in Kyrgyzstan. Farah also does additional tutoring with a non-profit that she helped co-found, FL Tutoring Services, providing free, virtual tutoring to low-income and underrepresented students.

Farah also is the chapter president of Minnesota Youth Against Sexual Violence, where she looks to provide resources to survivors and raise awareness of sexual violence.

## WHAT IS A WELLHEAD: Protection Plan?

FROM A6

required to do a streamlined version.

On Feb. 25, the city held a Public Hearing to review the Wellhead Protection Plan and to take questions from the community. The city is "blessed with a lot of protection" as a result of natural resources. With the bedrock and clay in the area we have low vulnerability to potential contamination.

The city has identified the following wellhead protection goals:

Goal 1: Maintain current level of water quality, which meets all state

and federal standards.

Goal 2: Maintain and improve the water supply system to ensure safe drinking water supplies to residents at sustainable costs.

Goal 3: Protect the aquifer from which the city draws its drinking water.

For history buffs, the first municipal water supply mentioned for the city of Ellendale was in 1922. Currently, the city has two wells, which were constructed and connected to the city's distribution system in 2018.

Bottom line, we are very fortunate to have a water supply with low vulnerability to outside contaminants. The Wellhead Protection Plan is available in the city office for residents to review.

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

## IDENTITY THEFT: haunts Owatonna woman

FROM A6

ads. "The charges were small enough to make it look like I was doing it," she said.

She thinks the culprit was an order she placed through Facebook for a Christmas gift from China. "You have to watch how you use your card on Facebook," Buckingham said. She said she is careful about electronically storing her card information. "I protect my card and the number," she said, adding people are simply so vulnerable and too trustworthy.

"It wakes you up," Buckingham said of the fraud scare. "Once your world is compromised, it's not a good feeling."

For the past five years, Kurt Halverson has specialized in financial education with Hometown Credit Union in Owatonna. He works with schools, non-profit organizations, and oth-

"It wakes you up. Once your world is compromised, it's not a good feeling."

**Gail Buckingham**  
Identity Theft Victim

ers in the four-county area of Steele, Dodge, Rice, and Waseca to teach them how to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft.

"Identity theft is a common issue," Halverson said. "It happens more often than we would like. It's considered easy money by criminals."

While all age groups are targeted, Halverson said age groups that are not comfortable with technology are more at risk than others.

Halverson's best advice is to monitor checking accounts regularly by scrutinizing every single transaction. He also suggests people

monitor their credit card statements as well as credit reports. A free website at [www.creditkarma.com](http://www.creditkarma.com) is available to assist people in getting access to their credit reports.

Consumers can also get one free copy of their credit report each year at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). This service was created as part of the Fair Credit Reporting Act, according to Halverson.

While identity thieves often take out credit in your name, Halverson said the most common types of identity theft are debit and credit card fraud. A card skimmer device

is often used at ATMs or gas pumps to steal credit card information. "When you slide your card, it records all the information from your card," he said. "A criminal comes back a day or two later, gets the information and sells the info or loads it onto cards," he said, adding they often go out and buy gift cards before turning around to sell the gift cards for cash.

Identity thieves, Halverson said, will often take out credit in your name. Criminals are also known to take out loans in other people's names.

Halverson suggests people talk with friends and other family members about identity theft. "We need to take away the taboo that has existed for so long that you don't talk about money," he said. "We need to get to the point of where we are comfortable to talk

about it," he added.

For Buckingham, she is protecting herself by enrolling in an identity theft protection program through her Discover card for \$15 each month. She also has taken steps to improve security on

her computers. "I feel very secure that I have a firewall on both of my computers," she said.

"I have taken extra, extra steps," Buckingham said. "I am regaining confidence that everything is okay."

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**STEELE COUNTY Times**

**BLOOMING PRAIRIE**

**MARCH 9**  
10:30 a.m. – Online  
Storytime, BP Library  
Facebook

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

**ELLEDALE/HOPE/GENEVA**

**MARCH 5**  
11 a.m. – SEMCAC,  
Community Building

**MARCH 8**  
11 a.m. – SEMCAC,  
Community Building  
8 p.m. – Berlin  
Township Meeting,  
Community Building

**MARCH 9**  
8:30 p.m. –

**MARCH 10**  
11 a.m. – SEMCAC,  
Community Building

**MARCH 11**  
8:30 p.m. –  
Ellendale City Council  
Meeting, Community  
Building

**OWATONNA/MEDFORD**

**MARCH 5**  
7 p.m. – Building  
New Pathways! Virtual  
Gala Event

**MARCH 8**  
4:30 p.m. – Owa-  
tonna Park Board  
Meeting, City Hall  
7 p.m. – Medford Park  
Board Meeting, City Hall

**MARCH 9**  
10:30 a.m. – Online  
Storytime, Owatonna  
Library Facebook

4 p.m. – Steele  
County Board Meeting,  
County Admin Building  
5:30 p.m. –  
Owatonna Human  
Rights Commission  
Meeting, City Hall  
5:30 p.m. –  
Owatonna Planning  
Commission Meeting,  
City Hall

**MARCH 11**  
5 p.m. – Airport  
Commission Meeting,  
Airport Lounge



FRONT/EAST ELEVATION

This is what Community Pathways facility at 155 Oakdale St. in Owatonna would look like if the organization can raise \$2.6 million. The group kicks off a capital campaign Friday night.

# Building New Pathways

Community Pathways kicks off capital campaign

**BY RICK BUSSLER**  
PUBLISHER

Community Pathways of Steele County is Building New Pathways to meet the growing needs of the community. On Friday, the charitable organization, which formerly had been the Steele County Food Shelf and Clothesline, will kick off a capital campaign in hopes of raising \$2.6 million. A virtual event will take place "so people can stay safe," said Andi Arnold, outreach and grant director at Community Pathways. The online event will begin at 7 p.m. and is available through the

group's website at CommunityPathwaysSC.org. Raffle tickets, a silent auction and music will highlight the kickoff. "We encourage people to donate and support Community Pathways," Arnold said. "We want a successful evening to kick it off." The proposal calls for expansion of the current facility located at 155 Oakdale St. in Owatonna and an additional structure with a central vestibule for entry into either side to be added. Nancy Ness, co-director of Community Pathways, said more space will allow the group to expand donations and to store food and clothing

that they are currently unable to manage in the existing facility. "It would allow us to be a more efficient resource for all," she said. The expansion would bring other nonprofits like Let's Snile Inc. and Traditional Housing under one roof with Community Pathways. "This expansion is the perfect solution to so many problems that have prevented these organizations from moving forward," said Ness. The new building will cost \$1.6 million to construct, according to Ness. The rest of the money raised would be used for operational costs, she said.



The overall goal of the campaign, Ness said, is to promote a stronger and healthier community for all. "We want to ensure that everyone in our community is able to receive the basic human needs we all take for granted," she said. Community Pathways formed in January 2020, bringing together the Clothesline, which originated in 1963 and the Food Shelf, which came together in 1970. Both organizations moved to the current location in 1990 to allow people to access both resources.

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"GET LUCKY ON MAIN"  
Ice Fishing Contest - Receive a fish with each drink purchase (Top 3 winners at each place receive a prize)

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Gun Raffles - \$20 ticket for a chance at 2 guns - Winners drawn at 7 PM  
Raffles run thru Cleveland Chamber Gambling License - Details and tickets available at J & H

**Sudoku Corner**

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

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

## Eagles offer \$3,000 in scholarships

The Owatonna Eagles will award three \$1,000 scholarships to traditional and non-traditional students in May 2021.

Funding for the Generous Award is from the Don Tuerk Endowment. Don Tuerk was an Owatonna native, long-time Eagles member, and Owatonna fireman. The scholarship will be targeted, but not limited, to students with goals of public service, two or four year degrees. The deadline to apply is March 31.

A link with more information and applications can be found at [www.eagles1971.com](http://www.eagles1971.com) or at the Eagles Club.

The Don Tuerk Scholarship has awarded more than \$10,000 to area students since 2018. In addition, the Eagles have donated more than \$100,000 to local sports teams and organizations the past three years.

As part of their "People Helping People" motto, the Eagles are offering free, first year memberships to all first responders, firemen, law enforcement, veterans, and military personnel.

**PANTHER OF THE WEEK**

New Richland • Hartland • Ellendale • Geneva

**ALIC WYRUM**

This week's Panther of the Week is ALIC WYRUM. He is the son of Jens and Jenny Wyrum and they reside outside Hartland. Alec is very respectful and shows his panther pride by following directions, respecting others, and helping out! Alec will double check to ensure he is getting his work done. Alec is a hard worker and even offers to help others with their work!

Alec loves getting to work on the farm with his parents. He also loves to hunt and fish. Alec is very caring and will check in if classmates are struggling or seems upset. He is a football fan and will often discuss how the Vikings are doing and his favorite players!

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## Livestock hall of fame nominations due May 1

Nominations for the Steele County Livestock Hall of Fame are due by May 1.

Nomination forms are available at the Steele County Fair office and also on-line at [SteeleCountyFreeFair@scff.org](http://SteeleCountyFreeFair@scff.org).

There are two types of awards. The first type is the Hall of Fame membership. Nominees may be an individual or husband/wife team that meet the following criteria: Nominees are judged on their impact or influence upon the livestock industry – county, state, and national, their leadership

in the livestock industry, and other relevant contributions with county being a priority.

The other type of award is the Hall of Fame Service award. These nominees are to be individuals that grew up or live in Steele County and went on to do outstanding work in the livestock industry outside of the county. State and national contributions are the priority for this award.

Inductees into the Livestock Hall of Fame will be recognized on Tuesday, Aug. 17 at 2 p.m. in the livestock show arena.

## Senior Volunteer of Year nominees sought

Nomination forms are now available for the 2021 Steele County Citizen Volunteer of the year. The award is sponsored by the Steele County Exchange Club in cooperation with the Steele County Free Fair.

A Steele County male and female senior citizen ages 70 and older will be selected and honored on Senior Day at the 2021 Steele County Free Fair. Nomination forms are available at West Hills Social Commons in Owatonna, the SCFF office, Steele County Free Fair website and from Bruce Kubicek at 451-6616. Deadline for nominations is May 1. Nominees must be 70 by June 1.

The recognition program at the SCFF will take place in Fair Square Park on Senior Day, Thursday, August 19th beginning at 11:30 a.m.



Recipe  
CornerBran  
Muffins

Mix in large bowl:

- 1 15-oz box Raisin Bran
- 3 cup sugar
- 5 cup flour
- 5 tablespoons soda
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 4 tablespoons cinnamon

Add:

- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup oil
- 1 quart buttermilk

Mix well, store in the refrigerator for up to six weeks. To bake, fill muffin cups 3/4 full. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes.

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## BP GRAD FINDS: communication has changed since COVID-19

FROM A3

organizations to talk to each other, similar to a phone call, while simultaneously being able to see each other. One of the biggest advantages for organizations is having members by the tens join a call so they can pass information among members as if they were all in one meeting room."

### Has COVID-19 pushed us to use more electronic options?

"Without a doubt. Organizations have already been using e-mail, phone calls, and texts, as a way to communicate information, and thankfully they still can. However, what organizations have lost is their way to communicate face-to-face, so organizations have had to depend on their current technology, and explore other options to relay information to

their members. Such as video call applications like Zoom, WebEx, and FaceTime."

### How has COVID-19 changed your life?

#### Your family's lives?

"The pandemic has changed lots of aspects of my life, and my family's - from little things such as shopping for groceries to large things like affecting all of our work schedules, and our education. My brother, sisters and I have all had to adapt to distance learning. Speaking for myself, I've had all the physics labs, class lectures, and my exams moved online. Beyond that, our daily lives have been drastically affected simply by limiting our opportunities, and social lives. It's safe to say the pandemic has changed the way my family and I live our lives."

### How have you reacted to distance learning? Is it a good option for high school and college students?

"I prefer distance learning. It provides a

lot of flexibility, and allows the ability to watch, rewind, and speed up lectures. On multiple occasions, I would miss something my professors would say, and as a result, I wouldn't be able to write down what they say in my notes.

On other occasions, I'd pause my lecture videos so I could properly process the topic they were introducing. Furthermore, the ability to fast-forward through parts of a lecture you're already familiar with really allowed me to save time. Although I am quite fond of distance learning, some aspects of a classroom can't be captured in an online lecture, and some of my friends from college who are under the same circumstances simply can't stand distance learning. I think there is a common agreement that it is necessary for social distancing; however, there is disagreement about whether it is preferable over the standard education experience."

### You were volunteering at the BP Elementary School. What were you doing?

"Since BP Elementary had to move to distance learning, the school began to offer a daycare service for the children of essential service providers, such as first responders, healthcare workers, transit workers, and other services where a parent may be unable to stay home. The daycare was responsible for a ton, such as feeding them, helping them with school work, entertaining them, etc. I volunteered at the elementary school but was only involved with playing games and hanging out with the kids for 2-3 hours, occasionally I'd help with homework too. Originally I was there Monday through Friday, but with my finals approaching I had to change my schedule to only Monday, Wednesday, and Friday each week. The whole thing was a blast, everyone I worked with was amazing, and they were great kids. I'm glad I could distract them from the pandemic even if it was just for a few hours a few times a week."

### Do you have any suggestions for young people in respect to distance learning?

"I think distance learning can be a great thing for students and it can really make the whole learning process easier for some people, but it can also make the whole process very difficult. I think it comes down to time management and student preference. I think managing your time properly can give you an advantage with distance learning, but even then, sometimes it boils down to what the student prefers when they are learning a new subject, distance learning isn't for everyone and everyone learns differently."

### What is next for Riley Millant? What is your personal life goals?

"I'm not entirely sure what's going to be next for me, but I plan on finishing college and seeing where that takes me. I'd like to focus on developing technology for educational purposes, technology that can help other students learn easier and make the process of absorbing new information easy, and make technology for teachers that makes things teaching students easier and quicker. To put it simply: I want to help others. Since technology is something I enjoy and I have gotten pretty familiar with, I think through technology is how I'm going to do it."

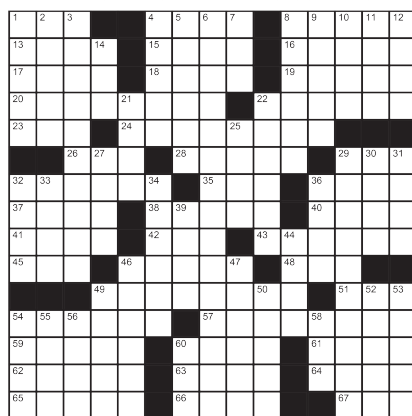
### Would you rather have in-person learning?

"Put simply: no. If I had to choose, I'd prefer distance learning as it allows for a flexible schedule and offers advantages that in-person learning doesn't. That being said, that's just how I feel, I don't mind in-person learning at all, but my recent experiences with distance learning have made things easier for my education than in-person learning has this year. So, this year, I prefer distance learning, but next year I may prefer in-person learning."

### Any other comments?

"I just hope everyone stays safe and is careful during these times. There is a lot going on and it is scary for everyone. I just hope everything works out alright. I wish everyone the best!"

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE OF THE WEEK



### ACROSS

- 1 School org.
- 4 Emit
- 8 Tenet
- 13 In case
- 15 Tennis ace --- Sampras
- 16 Fault
- 17 A law --- himself
- 18 Behavioral and learning problem
- 19 Refractor
- 20 Resident of Rabat, perhaps
- 22 Fragile
- 23 Sis sib.
- 24 Faith
- 26 E.g. United Way
- 28 Frightening
- 29 1/1000 inches
- 32 News exclusives
- 35 Alliance of some former Soviet countries
- 36 Buffalo Bill
- 37 Where we all started
- 38 Consequence of driving over a nail
- 40 Baking chamber
- 41 Copies
- 42 Female deer
- 43 Resident of Damascus, e.g.
- 45 For each

- 46 Boring
- 48 Lyric poem
- 49 Foliage
- 51 Navigational aid
- 54 Wanness
- 57 Gunglitz
- 59 Elite group
- 60 Turkish currency
- 61 Software test version
- 62 Below
- 63 Arthurian lady
- 64 Bohemian
- 65 Jottings
- 66 They hatch
- 67 Distress message

### DOWN

- 1 Exactly vertical
- 2 E.g. Pavarotti
- 3 Stargazer
- 4 Room
- 5 Foot controls
- 6 Type of war crime
- 7 Espouse
- 8 Arrange in battle formation
- 9 Utah senator --- Hatch
- 10 Dismal
- 11 Rolling stones lack it, but the Rolling Stones don't
- 12 Ground forces
- 14 Also
- 21 Trim
- 22 Groundbreakers
- 25 Earth goddess
- 27 Sailors
- 29 Cinema buffs
- 30 Notion
- 31 Coal Miner's Daughter, Loretta ---
- 32 Exchange
- 33 Manage
- 34 More morose
- 36 Volume of wood
- 39 Gaffer's shout
- 44 Up-and-down toy
- 46 Inviting smells
- 47 Low ---, baseballer who gave his name to a disease
- 49 Angry stare
- 50 Highways
- 52 Renaissance cherub
- 53 Remains
- 54 Annoying person
- 55 Periodic Table abbr.
- 56 Departed
- 58 Details not yet set (abbr.)
- 60 Sheltered side



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## Edward Jones®

### MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

#### How can women overcome obstacles to financial security?

On March 8, we observe International Women's Day, a celebration of the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. Of course, women still tend to encounter more obstacles than men in the pursuit of financial security. Let's consider a few of them.

To begin with, women are still more likely to leave the workforce, at least temporarily, to raise children, resulting in lower contributions to employer-sponsored retirement plans such as 401(k)s. And women are often the ones who become full-time caregivers of aging parents or other relatives. Caregiving duties can exact a big financial toll: The lost wages, pensions (including 401(k)s and similar plans) and Social Security benefits that a woman loses to become a full-time caregiver amount to more than \$300,000 over her lifetime, according to the National Academy of Sciences.

Women also may be more susceptible to financial downturns. Consider the COVID-19 pandemic: Just a few months ago, in December, women lost 156,000 jobs, while men gained 16,000, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which also reported that women accounted for 54% of the jobs lost from the pandemic in 2020.

And women are not unaware of their circumstances and outlook. Just 41% of women are confident about retirement, compared with 56% of men, according to a survey by Edward Jones and Age Wave.

But if you're a woman, you can take steps to help improve your financial outlook. Here are a few suggestions:

- Take full advantage of retirement plans. If you are still working and your employer offers a 401(k) or similar retirement plan, take full advantage of it. Put in as much as you can afford each year and increase your contributions when your salary goes up. Also, within your plan, you'll want to choose the mix of investments that can help provide the most growth potential, given your individual risk tolerance. Also, even if you contribute to a 401(k) or similar plan, you may also be eligible to fund an IRA, which gives you even more investment choices.

- Evaluate your Social Security options
- You can typically start taking Social Security benefits when you're 62, but your monthly checks will be much larger if you wait until your "full" retirement age, which will likely be between 66 and 67. You might also consider whether you'd be better off by taking spousal benefits, if you're married and your spouse earned more money than you. You're generally even eligible for spousal benefits if you are divorced, as long as you were married at least 10 years and you haven't remarried.

- Look for unexpected income opportunities
- Even after you've formally retired, you may still find ways to receive some earned income. Perhaps you can work part time or do some consulting. And if you're a caregiver, you might be able to receive some compensation for your work. Many local governments pay non-spouse caregivers who act as personal attendants, although the rules vary greatly by state and county.

These certainly aren't the only ways you can improve your financial status, but they may prove useful to you. In any case, be aware of the challenges facing you and do whatever you can to brighten your future.

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

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

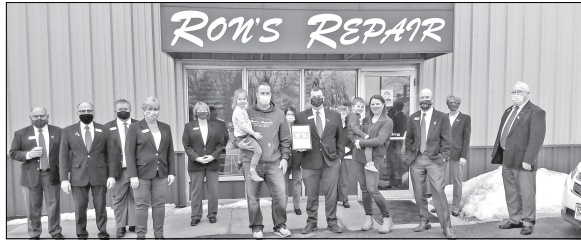
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## Chamber welcomes new members



**Ambassadors from the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism visit with Ron's Repair at 505 W. North St. in Owatonna, to welcome them as a new member. Mike Lawson is the owner. Ron's Repair is a full-service auto repair shop. They have years of experience working on both domestic and import vehicles of all makes and models and work with their customers to find cost-effective repair and maintenance alternatives. The ambassadors also made a trip to Precision Chiropractic at 1015 Frontage Rd. West in Owatonna to welcome them as a new member. Dr. Joshua Burnham is the owner. Dr. Burnham has a passion for helping you get your quality of life back through chiropractic care.**

## Region gets grant for CNA training

Gov. Tim Walz recently announced the 2021 Youth Skills Training grants — a total of 11 partnerships across the state were awarded to develop and implement paid-learning opportunities for students 16 years of age and older. First time applicant, Southeast Service Cooperative (SSC), was named one of these recipients for its innovative approach to a multi-school district health science course for 17 school districts, spanning 11 counties, in collaboration with 19 community, industry

and post-secondary partners for certified nurse assistant to address the workforce shortage in rural Minnesota. "In addition to a program deliberately designed to break the cycle of poverty and fuel the local economy, it also allows smaller communities to offer engaging educational experiences aligned to that youth's interests and passions," said Sarah Ness, program manager at Southeast Service Cooperative. By 2025, the health-care industry in this

region will have a growth rate of 9.2% and will experience a shortage of workers due to retirement of the current health-care workforce. When looking at current local job openings, in the Rochester area alone, there are over 400 available CNA positions posted on Indeed.com, LinkedIn.com, and HubSource.com. Participation in this regional CNA course will help students position themselves well for opportunities to continue their education to become a licensed

practical nurse and registered nurse. In the meantime, students can quickly find meaningful, paid work as a CNA (even during the training period) while still in high school. The grants are part of a Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry's Youth Skills Training (YST@DLI) program, which was signed into law in 2017 with bipartisan support to create and provide employment training for student learners ages 16 and older in high-growth, high-demand occupation.

## BOOK NOOK

### Still time to join



NANCY  
VAILLANCOURT

We are half way through our Warm Up With a Book Adult Winter Reading Program, but there is still plenty of time to join us! The program, formerly known as Hot Reads for Cold Nights, is a collaboration between the Owatonna Public Library and the Blooming Prairie Branch Library. (Okay, I'll be honest — Cassie at the Owatonna library has done all the work in setting it up. Thanks, Cassie!) You can choose to participate in one of two ways: sign up online at owatonna.beanstack.com or stop at the library to pick up a paper log. Either way allows you to keep track of how many minutes you read. For each hour that you read you will receive

an entry into our prize drawing. You can also earn extra entries by completing bonus activities that you will find on the signup sheet. The bonus activities have fun categories to challenge you to try new types of books like graphic novels, fantasy, and books that have been made into a movie or television show.

The reading program continues until March 31. When you finish reading 10 hours and complete the bonus activities that you want to do, bring your paper slip into the library. If you are participating online, we will count your entries. Everyone who completes the program by the end of March will be able to choose a free book at the library. We also will draw for three prizes, which will be gift certificates to local bookstores.

Oops — one last thing, you can also count minutes that you listen to books. Whether you read a book or listen to one, remember to Warm Up With a Book this winter.

## Brokeback director wins honor

The director of a movie based on the lifestyle of a Blooming Prairie man has been awarded a top honor in France. Three-time Oscar winner Ang Lee has been lauded with the Legion d'honneur, France's highest order of merit. Lee previously won an Oscar for best director of Brokeback Mountain. Brokeback Mountain premiered in 2005 after Bradley Trom, who grew up in rural

Blooming Prairie, shared his love story with another man. Trom, now 65 and a two-time cancer survivor, was a cancer patient at the Mayo Clinic when a Byron area writer offered to write about anything that he'd like to leave behind as a story. Previous filmmaker honorees for the Legion of Honor include Steven Spielberg, Martin Scorsese, Barbra Streisand, Clint Eastwood and Robert Redford.

## OBITUARIES

**Obituaries Sponsor:**  
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### Theodore Stadler, 69, Medford



Theodore  
Stadler

A funeral service will be held on Friday, March 5, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Meriden. The service will be officiated by Deacon Billie Jo Wicks. Interment will be held at the St. Paul's Lutheran Church Cemetery in Meriden. The visitation will be held at the Medford Funeral Home in Medford on Thursday from 5 to 7 p.m. and one hour before the time of services at the church on Friday.

Theodore Andrew, the son of Edward and Mary "Kate" (Schweisthal) Stadler, was born on Sept. 24, 1951 in Faribault. He attended Medford High

School and graduated with the class of 1969. After high school, Ted completed two years at a technical school in Wisconsin to receive his drafting degree. Shortly after graduation, Ted began working his 39-year career with the Wenger Corporation. He received the Spirit of Wenger Award in 2008. In Ted's younger years, he was a very active member of the Owatonna Elks BPOE #1395. Ted served as exalted ruler from 1986-1987. He also enjoyed spending time with his brothers and son attending various activities in Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, and the Turkey Federation.

On May 26, 1984 he was united in marriage with Dawn Dinse at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Meriden. Years later, Ted served as church council president and was instrumental in rebuilding the church after it was destroyed by fire.

Ted is survived by his wife Dawn Stadler of Medford; four children Jessie

(Troy) Noble, Jeremy Stadler, Dominique (Ben) Jewison, Chelsey Stadler; nine grandchildren and one great grandchild; by his five siblings Sandra (Dave) Penske, Anton "Tony" (Jan) Stadler, Mark (Mariene) Stadler, Ann Marie (Michael) Nelson, Sharon (Andrew Colwell) Langerfeld; many nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two brothers, Nicholas and Edward, and by a sister June Stadler. For more information or to leave a condolence message go to www.megercare.com.

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### Gilma Jones, 94, Owatonna



Gilma Jones

Gilma "Gilly" Jones, 94, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Feb.

10, 2021 at her home surrounded by her family. She was born on Oct. 20, 1926 in Steele County, the daughter of Earl and Laura (Wilkie) Southworth.

She graduated from Medford High School in 1944 as valedictorian of her class.

Gilma was united in marriage to Lyle Jones on Sept. 4, 1945. Lyle and Gilma owned and operated The Moland Store for several years. After closing the store, Gilma was a bank teller for many years.

She enjoyed sewing, especially quilts for her family, playing cards, and watching and going to her grandchildren and great grandchildren's events and activities.

Gilma is survived by her daughters, Jacqueline Moras, and Kathy (Tom) Clements of Owatonna, three grandchildren, Jim (Katie) Moras of Prior Lake, Jennifer Clements of Owatonna, and Brandi Clements of Owatonna, five great grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

Gilma is preceded in death by her husband Lyle, four brothers, a sister, and a nephew. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Memorials may be directed to Allina Hospice in Owatonna. For more information or to leave a condolence message go to www.megercare.com.

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## BIRTHDAYS

March 3  
Jake Peterson  
Justin Krell

March 4  
Gwen Klinger

March 5  
Ken Vermilyea  
Nora Anderson  
Sharon Glynn  
Nicole Richards

March 6  
Hannah Stoneburner  
CJ Coleman  
Sylvia Swenson

March 7  
Allyson Skillestad  
Marissa White  
Shirley Hinzmann

March 8  
Brook Krejci  
Noah Jonathan Nelson  
Cody Pashusta  
Jean Lee  
Clint Becker

March 9  
Jeremy Wangen  
Nicki Bishop  
Kylie Forystek  
Kim Eaker Lang  
Adrian Noble

## ANNIVERSARY

March 1: Jeremy & Brienne Wangen



This weekly feature sponsored by:  
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## Kangaroo Care is for children of God



**Rev.  
Amanda Floy**  
TRINITY LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
OWATONNA

One year ago I was spending my days in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at St. Mary's Hospital with my little boy who was born prematurely (13.5 weeks early).

On my favorite days they placed his tiny body directly on my chest in what is called Kangaroo Care (Skin-to-skin). I am pretty sure this is one of the most holy things I have ever experienced in my life. Kangaroo Care is known to help not only with bonding, but is also used as an out-of-the-box treatment to help babies in ways that medicine and therapy can't. Of course, they call it "Kangaroo Care" because of the way kan-

garoo mothers carry their kangaroo babies so close to their bodies for so long after they're born. NICU nurses and therapists have found that everything from sleep and weight gain to respiration and body temperature complications often can be helped by Kangaroo Care.

I found it especially interesting to learn that skin-to-skin has been known to re-synchronize an infant's heart. When the infants head is turned so that its ear is above the mother's heart. What can follow is a spectacular phenomenon. The less powerful vibrations of the child's heart begin to lock in step with

the more powerful rhythmic vibrations of the parent's heart. In essence, they start to move with synchronicity. There is actually a scientific name for this cooperative phenomenon. When two objects or people want to share the same frequency it is called entrainment.

This mimicking behavior is more than a little fascinating. Entrainment is a good metaphor for how we might think about our Christian lives.

What would it look like if our lives were to "vibrate" more resonantly with the heartbeat of Jesus? I wonder if the results would surprise us? I think they would.

We are living in a culture that is increasingly more and more individualistic. We hear a lot of rhetoric about "believing in yourself." Motivational speakers, self-help gurus, and mass marketing say, "You can do it!" "Just believe you can!" "You deserve it!" While it sounds good, it doesn't last. It doesn't take long to realize that we can't do "it" by ourselves. In other words, our heartbeat will never be strong enough if we are left to our own devices.

We need our hearts synched with the one who gives us life, the source of our faith, the source of love - Jesus Christ. When our sin-

ful selves are laid bare in the love of Christ - like a sick child, laid upon the breast of her mother - we might just find that we are transformed by forgiveness and changed into new life and deep, grateful love for the sake of the world. We might just find more synchronicity with Jesus' impulse to love and serve.

Kangaroo Care is for more than kangaroos and premature babies. It is for all of us children of God, who are held close by the one who sets the rhythm of our lives, and energizes our hearts to love, and care more deeply for God's world. Thanks be to God.

### AREA WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

**COMMUNITY**  
**LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
106 Third St. SE., Geneva  
Pastor Kristen Vienne  
507-256-4288  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sunday

**FIRST LUTHERAN - AFLC**  
503 Radel Ct., Ellendale  
507-684-2451  
Men's Bible Study:  
8 a.m. Saturday  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sunday  
(Kids church - 9 a.m. and  
Confirmation - 10:15 a.m.)  
Jesus and Me: 3:30-5 p.m.  
Tuesday & Thursday  
Call to Prayer: 7 p.m. Tuesday  
Bible Study:  
9:30 a.m. Wednesday  
Wednesday School:  
6:15-7 p.m. followed by  
Youth Group: 7-9 p.m.

**FIRST LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
434 First St. SW.,  
Blooming Prairie  
Senior Pastor:  
Rev. Heidi Heimpartner  
Associate Pastor:  
Rev. Mike Walerius  
507-583-6621  
firstlutheranpb.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 - LOMS**  
2500 7th Ave. NE., Owatonna  
Pastor Greg Schlicker  
507-451-4125  
goodshepherdowatonna.com  
Indoor Worship: Sundays 9  
a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Online Worship: Sundays 9  
a.m. or anytime on website

**MOLAND LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
7618 NE 84th Ave., Kenyon  
Pastor Nancy Edwardsen  
507-789-6961  
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 - LOMS**  
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-Freiborn  
Road, Austin  
Leandra Anderson, Pastor  
507-583-2038 or 507-437-3000  
www.rgllutheran.org  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.

**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN - LOMS**  
4532 SE 84th Ave., Claremont  
Pastor Alan Broadwell  
507-528-2404  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN - LOMS**  
28959 630th Ave., Sargeant  
Pastor Collin Duling  
507-251-5568  
Worship: 10:15 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9 a.m.

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

**ST. MICHAEL'S**  
**LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
30450 570th Ave., Waltham  
Pastor Dwight DoBell  
507-567-2474  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.  
**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN - LOMS**  
202 E. Park Ave., Hollandale  
Pastor Jesse Krusemark  
507-567-2272  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
2781 SW 92nd Ave., Meriden  
Pastor Rev. Dean Smith  
507-451-2165  
Sunday Worship Indoor: 10 a.m.

**TRINITY LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
609 Lincoln Ave., Owatonna  
507-451-4520  
tciowatonna.org  
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Buegler, Associate Pastor:  
Rev. Amanda Floy  
Deacon: Kris Oppgaard  
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161) on Tuesday 4:30-5:30 p.m.  
Wednesday 6 p.m.; Sunday 11  
a.m.) and at owatonalive.com.

**TRINITY LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
104 First St. SE., Hayfield  
Pastor Paul Hauschild  
507-477-2248

www.trinityhayfield.org  
Worship: 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

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

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

**ZION LUTHERAN - ELCA**  
7126 SW 98th St., Ellendale  
Pastor: Rev. Dean Smith  
Sunday Worship Indoor:  
8:30 a.m.

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

**CATHOLIC**  
**CHRIST THE KING**  
205 Second Ave. NW, Medford  
507-451-4845  
Father James Starasich  
Mass: 5:30 p.m. Sat.  
Mass: 9 a.m. Mon. & Fri.  
**CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS**  
307 SW First St.,  
New Richland  
Father Brian Mulligan  
507-234-6244  
Mass: 5 p.m. Saturday

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Litomysl Finance Council:  
2nd Thursday  
Litomysl Pastoral Council:  
2nd Thursday every other  
month

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

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**PARISH**  
810 S. Cedar Ave., Owatonna  
Father Swaminatha  
Pothendy, Parochial Vicar  
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www.sacredheartowatonna.org

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

**ST. COLUMBANUS**  
**CATHOLIC**  
114 E. Main St.,  
Blooming Prairie  
Father John Wilmut  
507-583-2784  
www.stcolumbanuschurch.com  
Mass: 10:30 a.m. Sunday  
Reconciliation: 9 a.m.  
First Friday & Saturday  
**ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC**  
**PARISH**  
512 S. Elm Ave., Owatonna  
Father James Starasich  
507-451-4845  
Saturday Mass: 4 p.m.  
Sunday Mass: 8 & 10 a.m.  
Reconciliation: 5-3:30 p.m. Sat.  
Daily Mass: 8 a.m. Tues.  
Wed. & Fri. (Communion  
Service 8 a.m. Thursday)  
Adoration Chapel available  
Mon. - Fri. 7 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
Key fob required after hours  
or weekends

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

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

**METHODIST**  
**BLOOMING GROVE**  
**UNITED METHODIST**  
4309 180th St., Medford  
(Seven miles west of  
Medford on CR 23)  
Pastors JJ & Stefanie Morgan  
507-535-8726  
Worship: 8:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.  
**ELLENDALE UNITED**  
**METHODIST**  
200 Sixth St. NW., Ellendale  
Pastor Randy Cirksema  
507-684-2731  
www.ellendaleumc.org  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.  
**OWATONNA UNITED**  
**METHODIST**  
815 E. University, Owatonna  
Rev. Lisa J. Vick, Pastor  
507-451-4734  
www.owatonnaumc.org  
Traditional Worship  
(Pathway):  
9 a.m. Sunday

**NON-DENOMINATIONAL**  
**CEDAR CREEK**  
30 E. Main St., Hayfield  
Pastor Aaron de Neul  
507-477-2255  
www.cedarcreekchurch.org  
Worship: 10 a.m. Sunday  
**DESTINY CHRISTIAN**  
2515 Harvest Lane NW,  
Owatonna  
Pastors Rich and Amy Pettet  
507-456-4775  
www.destinycc.org  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sunday  
6:30-7:30 p.m. 1st and 3rd  
Wednesday  
**ELEVATION NORTH**  
2002 Austin Road,  
Owatonna  
Pastor Doug Jones  
507-363-3099  
www.elevationnorth.  
blogspot.com  
Worship (English): 10 a.m. Sun.  
Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.  
Worship (Spanish): 2 p.m. Sun.  
Bible Study: 6:30 p.m.  
Wednesday  
Spanish Evangelism &  
Prayer: 7 p.m. Friday  
**NEW BEGINNINGS**  
332 14th St. NE., Owatonna  
Pastors Scott & Joan  
Peterson  
507-413-0209  
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.

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

**MORMON**  
**THE CHURCH OF JESUS**  
**CHRIST OF LATTER-**  
**DAY SAINTS**  
404 31st St. NW, Austin  
Bishop Rick Bremner  
507-433-9042  
Worship: 9 a.m. Sun.  
**PRESBYTERIAN**  
**ASSOCIATED CHURCH**  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
and United Church of Christ  
800 Havana Road,  
Owatonna 507-451-1548  
www.associatedchurch.org  
office@associatedchurch.org  
Sunday Worship: 9 a.m.  
Fellowship, Church School,  
and Adult Discussions  
follow  
Wednesday Activities: Sept  
- May (see website  
for schedule)  
**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN**  
109 E. Main St., Hayfield  
Pastor Kirk Johnston  
507-477-2631  
Worship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.

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

**SEVENTH-DAY**  
**ADVENTIST**  
**SEVENTH-DAY**  
**ADVENTIST**  
2375 Seventh Ave. NE,  
Owatonna  
Pastor Brian Beavers  
651-955-4032  
Worship: 11 a.m. Sat.  
Bible Stud: 9:30 a.m. Sat.

**UCC**  
**CONGREGATIONAL**  
**UNITED CHURCH OF**  
**CHRIST**  
211 Main St. S., Medford  
Rev. Richard Waters  
507-451-4566  
Worship: 10 a.m. Sun.

**ASSEMBLY OF GOD**  
**VIBRANT LIFE**  
**ASSEMBLY OF GOD**  
702 7th St. SE., Ellendale  
Interim Pastor Wendell  
Anderson  
507-684-3421  
www.vibrantlife.org  
Worship: 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday  
Kids Church: 9 a.m.

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

**FIRST BAPTIST**  
**(OWATONNA'S OLDEST**  
**CHURCH)**  
123 E. Main St., Owatonna  
Pastor Carla Nelson  
507-272-9934  
www.firstbaptistowatonna.  
com  
Fellowship: 9:30 a.m. Sun.  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sun.

**BETHEL BAPTIST**  
1811 Hemlock Ave.,  
Owatonna  
Pastor Michael Simmerman  
507-451-9548  
www.bethelowatonna.com  
Worship: 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday

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

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685 W. Bridge St.  
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New Richland  
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valleyviewofowatonna.com



Submitted photo  
New York Life agents Sue Zwienen and Rachel Blaedorn, front from left holding check, hand over a check of \$24,000 to representatives of the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation.

## BP ED FOUNDATION: awarded \$24K grant

FROM A1

foundation to enhance the educational opportunities for students within Blooming Prairie Public Schools.

"This is something that's near and dear to me," said Zwienen. "We are pretty excited about it."

The grant will support the STEAM program, which provides students with learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering, art and math.

Karen Fouarge, president of BPEF, said the group is grateful for New York Life's investment in the organization. "It will change many lives for the better," she said. "Without the support from New York Life, we wouldn't be able to provide this extraordinary education to all our students due to having to cancel our auction in 2020 because of COVID."

BPEF's annual auction has raised as much as \$80,000 a year over the 16 years of sponsoring auctions. The group had hoped to achieve the \$1 million mark at last year's auction. However, the auction was canceled when COVID-19 hit just weeks before the event, scheduled for late March.

"It was such a bummer last year," said Zwienen, who was a pilgrim of the auction when it began in the early 2000s. But, even without an auction last year, BPEF still managed to raise about \$50,000, according to Zwienen.

Zwienen, along with Rachel Blaedorn, both local agents of New York Life, said they are proud to work for a company that encourages its agents and employees to devote

their time, energy and talents to support the needs and priorities of their local community.

"We are pleased that our partnership will have a long-lasting impact on the Blooming Prairie Education Foundation and the population they serve," Zwienen said.

New York Life awards grants up to \$25,000 to local non-profit organizations. Since the program's inception in 2008, more than 600 grants totaling nearly \$8 million have been awarded to nonprofits across the country.

This isn't the first time Zwienen has pulled for Blooming Prairie through New York Life's community program. In 2011, she helped secure a \$15,000 grant for what is now the Blooming Prairie Youth Club.

## BLOTTER: FROM A4

34, Byron, license not in possession and failure to yield, \$220.

### MN STATE PATROL ROCHESTER

Miguel A. Almaraz, 36, Leroy, suspended license, \$280; Brent A. Badger, 59, Mantorville, illegal u-turn, \$130; Carter J. Behnken, 21, Waltham, speeding and suspended license, \$580; Desiree B. Boyesen, 22, Elgin, revoked license, \$280; Dashawn K. Brown, 32, Rochester, no insurance and expired registration, \$310; Tyra D. Gibbs, 29, Rochester, speeding and revoked license, \$420; Jonathan V. Graham, 34, Rochester, speeding and suspended license, \$320; Fernando E. Hi, 27, Sioux Falls, SD, speeding and revoked license, \$580; Jekila C. Higgs, 38, Owatonna, speeding and suspended

license, \$320; David A. Hofmaster, 40, Owatonna, speeding, \$120; Jeffery J. Jarrad, 50, Coruna, MI, speeding, \$120; Michael D. Madson, 27, Dodge Center, speeding, \$120; Tara M. Markus, 31, Rochester, speeding, \$130; Khadar O. Mohamud, 23, Owatonna, revoked license, \$280; Vincent Q. Moody, 30, Ocean Springs, MS, speeding and no license, \$320; Jordyn J. Prouty, 25, Kasson, failure to yield, \$130; Travis M. Rios, 29, Rochester, speeding and revoked license, \$340; Theresa M. Schoer, 28, Kasson, suspended license, \$280; Deante J. Stanifer, 26, Rochester, revoked license, \$280; Mohamud S. Tahill, 44, speeding, \$140; Scott R. Thorpe, 41, Hayfield, revoked license and no insurance, \$480; Arlen L. Unger, 78, Hayfield,

speeding, \$120; Jose G. Ventura, 71, Rochester, speeding, \$120; Michelle A. Wilson, 36, Dodge Center, speeding, \$120; Jayde K. Zelinske, 34, Byron, limited license violation, \$180.

### WEST CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Russell A. Amiot, 45, West Concord, tamper with motor vehicle and assault, \$350, write letter of apology and 1 year of unsupervised probation; Matthew L. Coughlin, 49, Dodge Center, revoked license, \$280; Uriah D. Flowers, 26, Zumbrota, suspended license, \$280; Benjamin E. Fossum, 33, West Concord, suspended license and no insurance, \$480; Janice M. Hawkins, 42, Shoreview, parking violation, \$32; Derak C. Knudson, 34, West Concord, parking violation, \$32.

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The Blooming Prairie Chamber of Commerce is planning for the 2021 Blooming Prairie Fourth of July parade. Last year's parade was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

'Everybody's looking forward to getting back to a little bit of normalcy.'

**Becky Noble**  
Former executive director

## BP Chamber of Commerce looking to resume annual events

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SCT STAFF WRITER

This past year was anything but normal, and the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce found that it was no exception, canceling Blooming Prairie's annual Fourth of July celebration and their annual wine tasting and Golf Fun Day fundraisers.

Without those fundraisers, the Chamber was in danger of closing. Still, Becky Noble, the organization's recently retired executive director, said the Chamber was able to stay afloat financially thanks to Linda Klemmensen, of Sportstitch.

Klemmensen made a donation to the Chamber from proceeds she made selling items in the park after the building that housed her business was closed because of a fire last year.



More than 100 volunteers are needed for this year's planned Blooming Prairie Fourth of July celebration. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Susan Esplan or the Chamber's Executive Director Emily Glaser at glaseremily17@gmail.com.

"The office wouldn't have been open without the items she sold," said Noble, adding that the last round of stimulus money also helped keep the non-profit group open.

Noble also said she is hopeful the Chamber will be able to hold its Fourth of July celebration and wine tasting and Golf Fun Day fundraisers this year.

"Everybody's looking forward to getting back to a little bit of normalcy," said Noble, adding that she's encouraging community members to wear a mask, social distance, and get the COVID-19 vaccination to help make the annual celebrations possible.

Noble said the Chamber is looking for someone to take over the parade and it's always looking for volunteers

SEE BP NOBLE, B3

## BP Chamber names Glaser its new Executive Director

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SCT STAFF WRITER

Emily Glaser was excited to learn she'd been hired as the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce's new Executive Director.

"I've only been in the community for about three years and I was really looking to be more involved in the

'I get to balance being a wife, mom, this job and the bakery, but I thrive in being busy.'

**Emily Glaser**  
New Chamber Executive Director

community and kind of put my thumbprint on different areas and see what we can do to make Blooming Prairie a des-

tination in southeast Minnesota," she said. That's her ultimate goal, but she's not going to make a lot of changes

overnight to make that happen.

"For a little while, I'm going to be more observing what the Chamber has been doing before I got this position. I think going in and making a whole bunch of changes is not a smart tactic. Change is hard for any person, any community and any business.

SEE GLASER, B3



Emily Glaser

**Sportstitch inc.**

A special thanks to Becky Noble for being a great asset to Blooming Prairie and promoting our businesses!

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## MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT

# Chamber helps promote all businesses

BY JIM FIEBIGER

The Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce was formed as a local area business networking association that was social in nature. The ultimate goal is to promote the Blooming Prairie community. Promoting all businesses, retail and manufacturing alike helps us to grow the local business climate in Blooming Prairie and the surrounding area.

The Chamber has monthly meetings, some are in the evening and some are at noon. We do this to accommodate more members. We understand that our member's time is important. The COVID-19 Pandemic has caused the Chamber's meetings to either be cancelled or be done via email and some are at noon. We are optimistic that we will return to our in-person meetings very soon.

The Chamber is the liaison between the City of Blooming Prairie, the Economic Development Authority (EDA), new businesses that are looking at Blooming Prairie, current local businesses and any new individuals that are looking to make Blooming Prairie their new hometown. The Chamber is the place to go for information regarding commercial property that is for sale or lease, homes that are for sale or rent, and for information on who can do what, such as construction or manufacturing and financing availability, such as the EDA.

The Chamber has information for many different business resources that are available, such as:

- EDA Revolving Loan Fund
  - Grant monies
  - Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) monies
  - Small Business Administration (SBA) assistance
  - Southeast Minnesota Development Corp. assistance
- The Chamber also has several events designed to promote Blooming Prairie, such as:

- The Fourth of July Celebration:
- This event brings in tens of thousands of people to Blooming Prairie. Many Blooming Prairie families use this celebration as their family reunion and many new families are able to see what Blooming Prairie has to offer. We have a clean, beautiful community that is friendly and focused on what is best for the whole community. Blooming Prairie is a great place to raise a family. We are proud of our town and we want to show it off.
- Holidazzle:
- This event is usually held on the first Friday in December.

ber. It is another event to showcase our wonderful community, with Santa at Farmers and Merchants State Bank, Just For Kix on Main Street, and nearly every business on Main Street promoting and celebrating their business and the kids have fun too.

The Chamber is not self-funded by dues it collects annually. To raise the funds needed to continue functioning, the Chamber has several fundraisers throughout the year, such as:

- **Golf Fun Day**- A Golf Tournament that promotes networking in fun and positive way
- **Wine Tasting**- This event is always enjoyed by many people.
- **Speakeasy**- An event that is extremely fun and allows those that participate a chance to view the "below street level" parts of Blooming Prairie. It also promotes our history of having once made national news as the home of a large still during the prohibition era.

The Chamber is very fortunate to have several local businesses that have been started and/or acquired by Young Entrepreneurs. These young entrepreneurs have the energy and ideas to promote their businesses and in doing so they promote the Chamber and our Community. These young members will create a more active Social Media presence. They have excellent ideas for bringing more value to the Chamber Members. This year we are planning to formalize many of the ideas that these younger members have for the Chamber going forward.

I appeal to all businesses, big and small, to join the Chamber. I've heard many times, "What does the Chamber do for me?" The answer is — it promotes Blooming Prairie, which brings people to our town and to your businesses. The more people we have in our community helps strengthen our commerce, our schools and our families.

Remember it isn't about just one business. It is about all of the businesses in Blooming Prairie. It is about Town recognition, clean streets, low crime, a great school system and a vibrant community. These things are good for all of us. That is what the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce is all about.

If you would like join us as a business owner or as an associate individual, please contact Emily Glaser at 507-583-4472.

*Jim Fiebigler serves as president of the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce. He is also president of Farmers and Merchants Bank in Blooming Prairie.*

## BLOOMING PRAIRIE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- Executive Director: Emily Glaser
- 138 U.S. Hwy. 218 S. (Located in the City Center)
- P.O. Box 908, Blooming Prairie, MN 55917
- 507-583-4472 Fax: 507-583-4520
- bpccofc@gmail.com

## Blooming Prairie Chamber Members

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Amy Snider  
Arkema, Inc.  
Austra Hanson  
Becky & Mark Noble  
Beede Apartments  
Betty & Ken Behnken  
Bishop Excavating, Inc.  
Blooming Prairie Backpack Program  
Bonnie & Greg Krueger  
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BP Ambulance Service  
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BP Country Club  
BP Cue Co. & Pizza Cellar  
BP Fire Dept.  
BP Public Utilities  
BP Servicemen's Club  
BP Vet Clinic  
Blooming Prairie Quarterback Club  
BP Youth Club  
Blooming Prairie Women of Today  
Brookside Campground  
Bunkie's Grille & Lanes  
B-Z Hardware  
Card & Keith Holman  
Casey's General Store  
Central Farm Service  
CJ Home Inspections  
Cindi & Darrell Hansen  
Compeer Financial  
Connections by Karen  
Connie & Paul Haberman  
Dairy Queen  
Darrick's Preferred Auto  
digiGLOW Marketing  
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Doreen & Tom Blome  
Eagle Prairie Insurance  
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Epic Contracting LLC  
Express Pressure Washers Inc.  
Extreme Custom Powder Coating, Inc.  
Farmers & Merchants State Bank  
First Lutheran Church

Floor Tech, Inc.  
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## Tentative 2021 Chamber Schedule

**MARCH**  
17 Chamber Meeting  
**APRIL**  
21 Chamber Meeting  
**MAY**  
15 City Wide Garage Sales  
19 Chamber Meeting  
**JUNE**  
16 Chamber Picnic- Brookside Campground  
**JULY**  
3-4 Old Fashioned Fourth of July  
14 Golf Fun Day

**AUGUST**  
17-22 Steele County Free Fair  
**SEPTEMBER**  
15 Chamber Meeting  
18 City Wide Garage Sales  
**OCTOBER**  
20 Chamber Meeting  
**NOVEMBER**  
4 Wine Tasting  
17 Chamber Meeting  
**DECEMBER**  
3 Holiday Dazzle  
15 Farmers & Merchants Business After Hours

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## BP CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: *Becky Noble* FROM B1

for other parts of the Fourth of July celebration.

Even though the Fourth of July celebration was canceled last year, the Chamber held its holiday celebration since it was mostly outside, and the city-wide garage sale.

The only thing different about the garage sale this past year was the sign-up site. Noble said community members usually sign up at US Bank, but since the bank lobby was closed, Prairie Home hosted the sign-up.

Despite the pandemic, Noble said, 23 families participated in the city-wide garage sale. Forty-five were needed for the Chamber to make money.

"We do it because we want people to come to town and not only go to the garage sales but take the time to shop in our stores, go into the neighborhoods and see what nice homes, clean streets and nice schools we have. We think we have a lot to offer, and we want them to see the whole community and see what we have to offer."

"That's why we do garage sales and the Fourth of July. Once they visit here, they'll see what a beautiful community we have and hopefully, someday, they'll want to buy a house here, start a business and raise a family here," Noble said.

In other news, the new Blooming Prairie Chamber of Commerce

Executive Director Emily Glaser started in early February.

"All the applicants we had would be great in this position. It was a hard decision," Noble said.

While Glaser is the Chamber's future, Noble she'd like to thank the people who support

the Chamber and its members.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Chamber of Blooming Prairie can visit the Chamber office Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The office is located in the city center building.



Becky Noble



FILE PHOTOS

Everyone loves a parade -- whether you're in it or watching it.

## NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: *Emily Glaser* FROM B1

"After a while, when things have become COVID-19-permitting, more regular, I would like to have more community events to get the whole community together. Anyone who calls themselves a small, medium or large business, I think should be involved in the development and growth of this community. I'm still in the process of figuring out what that looks like. Any suggestions anyone has, I am all open ears," said Glaser.

Glaser said she hopes the community events show visitors all Blooming Prairie has to offer, including the school district.

"The school is the big one, but also the community of Main Street. For the time we've been here, there's

always been something going down on Main Street whether an event or something fun to do, such as the big Fourth of July spectacle weekend. I think once people get to know Blooming Prairie, they'll have a sense of community," she said.

A couple of those community get-togethers, the Fourth of July weekend and the Golf Fun Tournament are coming up soon, but Glaser isn't concerned about coming into this job at this point in their preparation.

"But that being said, I think there isn't a time for relaxation or trying to ease myself into the job. It's definitely hit the ground running," she said. "We didn't have the Fourth of July or the golf tournament last

year due to COVID-19, but with the CDC's recommendation, how COVID-19 cases are actually going down in Minnesota and the availability of vaccines, I personally think that we can have the Fourth of July parade and the Golf Fun Day with some adjustments made to make it a family, COVID-friendly event."

On top of organizing city celebrations and championing Blooming Prairie, Glaser also owns her own business, Just Because Bakery. As a cottage food producer, she bakes and sells cakes, cupcakes, custom cookies and scones out of her home.

"I still plan on doing that. Obviously, it's not in the forefront now. I get to balance being a wife, mom, this job and the bakery, but I thrive in being busy. Becky [Noble, the Chamber's former Executive Director] has told me that this is a very hands-on, multi-detailed position and I thrive in

that environment. It's something that I look forward to," she said.

Glaser's also looking forward to improving the communication with the Blooming Prairie area community about what the Chamber does and how it affects the community.

"There's going to be a pothole here or there, but we'll patch it up, do it again next year and see what works see what didn't and just always keep improving. I want to be able to communicate that with the community and have the ability for people to come in and have a conversation to talk it through," she said.

If community members want to discuss Chamber events, they can visit her office, located in the city center building, between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. If that time doesn't work for community members, she can be reached via email: glaseremily17@gmail.com

## Chamber Benefits:

- Information about businesses in response to requests
- Information about the community in response to requests
- Business listed on Facebook
- New residential packets
- Contacts with local businesses
- Opportunities to serve the community
- A voice with influence
- Encouragement for local spending through promotions and BP Bucks
- Fourth of July Celebration
- Golf Fun Day
- Citywide garage sales
- Community social events
- Organization and distribution of Christmas gifts for needy
- City Christmas decorations
- Local beautification projects
- A member of GROW MINNESOTA providing visits
- A base for networking through meetings and social events
- Coordination of efforts for networking for non-profits
- Community calendar in City Center
- Representation at state chamber meetings
- Representation at Southeast Minnesota meetings
- A resource center business information, customer inquiries, tourism, state government and agencies
- Programs with noteworthy and entertaining guests and valuable information
- Featured businesses inform of local business activity
- Business After Hours for members only
- A link to the Economic Development Authority
- Weekly emails with information of the events in the community
- State Chamber opportunities such as Chamber Day at the State Capitol
- Fun and fellowship with friends and neighbors

### MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR

## New director looks forward to improving community

BY EMILY GLASER

Hi, I'm Emily Glaser, the new executive director of the Blooming Prairie Chamber of Commerce. I have lived in Minnesota all my life and moved to Blooming Prairie with my husband, Ryan, in 2018.

I graduated from Winona State University with a degree in K-12 Music Education -- I'm licensed to teach general music, band and orchestra to grades K-12. I taught in the schools for three years, and then took a hiatus in 2019 and worked for a commercial real estate company in Rochester.

When COVID-19 hit many people lost their jobs, including myself. But life continued -- our daughter, Kymberly was born in May 2020. While staying at home, I struggled to keep myself busy, and wanted more purpose in my daily life. After pondering for two months, I decided to become a licensed cottage food producer and sell baked goods out of my home. Just Because Bakery was born and officially opened in November of 2020.

Scrolling on social media one evening, Ryan came across the job opening for the Chamber. We looked at the qualifications, and 90% I had experienced at my previous jobs. I applied, interviewed and here we are today.

The best way to reach me is to either call the Chamber 507-583-4472, send an email bpcoco@gmail.com, or better yet stop by and say hello! I'm in the office Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

I look forward to going out in the community and learning from the people and business owners how to best improve our Awesome Blossom-Blooming Prairie Community.

*Emily Glaser took over as executive director of the Blooming Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce last month. She replaces Becky Noble, who retired from the chamber after 20 years of service.*



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SPECIAL THANKS to Becky Noble for the many years of service to the Chamber

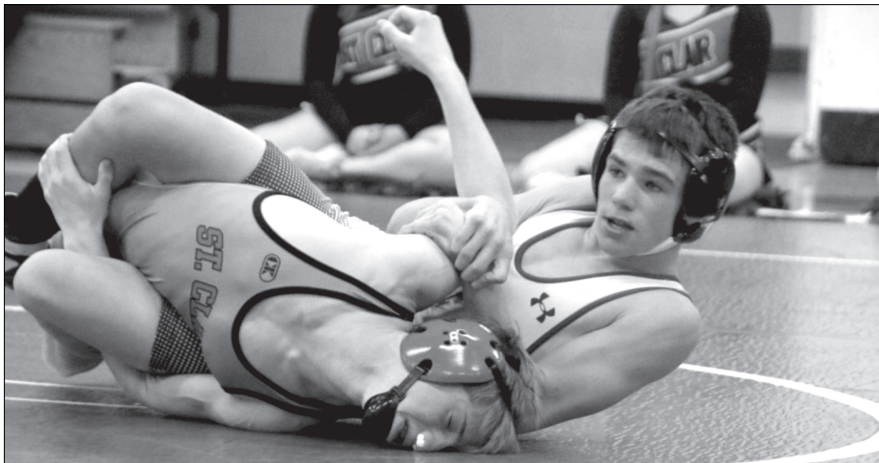


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STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Westfield's Bo Zwiener controls the right shoulder of St. Clair/Mankato Loyola's Eli Kruse while his legs are wrapped around his torso. Co-Head Coach David Lassahn said Zwiener's win by decision was especially impressive considering Kruse was a state participant last year.

## WRESTLING

### Westfield runs winning streak to six matches

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After not winning a single match throughout January, the Westfield wrestling team has turned its season around by winning seven of its first nine matches in February, including the past six after beating New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) 54-24 and St. Clair/Mankato Loyola 55-15 on Thursday, Feb. 25.

Against NRHEG, Co-Head Coach David Lassahn said the Razorbacks put together a dominant performance right from the start.

"This was our first time being at full strength on the year, and it really showed. We wrestled really well and got out to a fast start in this dual. We were able to pick up wins in the first eight weight classes and five of those victories being bonus points," he said.

Thanks to those eight wins and bonus points, Westfield led 42-0 after Cale Becker won by fall at 152 pounds.

NRHEG got on the board with back-to-back wins by fall by Thor Routh and George Roesler, but the Razorbacks responded when Tyler Archer won by fall at 182 pounds.

"Tyler Archer picked up a big section win against a returning state entrant and was very dominant in the match," Lassahn said. Dylan Ehmke scored the Razorbacks' second straight second-period win by fall, which increased Westfield's lead to 54-12.

NRHEG's Ben Hagen and Makota Misgen won the final two matches of the dual by fall to make the final score 54-24.

"Overall, I was proud of our efforts in this dual tonight," he said.

In the next match of the triangular, the Razorbacks faced the St. Clair/Mankato Loyola Cyclones.

This time, it was the Cyclones who got off to the fast start as they won the 106-pound match by fall but



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Tyler Archer goes almost parallel to the mat as he takes down St. Clair/Mankato Loyola's Jacob Schimek. Archer won by decision 3-0 and won his previous match against his NRHEG opponent by fall to go 2-0 on the night.

Westfield's Bo Zwiener got a last-second win by decision 4-3 to make the score 6-3.

"Bo Zwiener wrestled a hard fought match at 113, and was able to secure a big win

against a tough section opponent who was a state entrant last season," Lassahn said.

The Cyclones won the next match by forfeit to take a 12-3 lead.

At 126 pounds, Lane Lem-bike won by major decision 15-6, but St. Clair/Mankato Loyola won the following

SEE WESTFIELD, B8

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

### Blossoms keep rolling

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After three wins by seven points or less, the Blooming Prairie girls basketball team has handily beaten its past two opponents, including its 51-33 drubbing of United South Central on Friday, Feb. 26.

After trading baskets for the first few minutes of the game, the Blossoms used a small 5-0 run to give themselves an early 9-4 lead.

The Rebels sank a three-pointer to make it a one-possession game, but over the next six minutes Blooming Prairie went on a 12-2 run to make the score 21-9 with just under 7 minutes left in the first half.

After scoring just 13 points through the first 16 and a half minutes of the first half, the Rebels scored five points in the final minute and a half to trim their deficit to single digits, 26-18, at halftime.

The Blossoms started the second half on a high note when Bobbie Bruns' three-pointer was nothing but net to extend Blooming Prairie's lead to 11 points.

With that three-point-



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Senior Megan Oswald leads an Awesome Blossom fast break during the opening minutes of the second half.

er as the starting point, the Blossoms opened the second half on an 8-2 to take a commanding 34-20 lead.

A few minutes later, with the score at 40-25, United South Central scored back-to-back baskets to pull within 11 points with 10 minutes left in the game.

Still leading by 11 points, 44-33, with just over six minutes left in the game, the Blossoms' defense clamped down and didn't allow the Rebels to score another point.

SEE BPGIRLS, B8



STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX NUEHRING

Blooming Prairie senior Allison Krohnberg looks for an open teammate during the final minutes of the Awesome Blossoms' 51-33 win over the United South Central Rebels.

### Too much flower power to overcome

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After winning its first game in two weeks by 26 points, the Medford girls basketball team faced a much tougher test when it went on the road to play the then 9-1 Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossoms. The Blossoms showed why they've only lost once by beating the Tigers 58-41 on Tuesday, Feb. 23.

After a strong start, Blooming Prairie held a nine-point lead, 26-17, with about 40 seconds left in the first half.

The Tigers sank a three-pointer to get within six points, but in the final seconds the Blossoms' Megan Oswald fouled while shooting a three-point shot and she hit all three of her free throws to give herself a team-high 11 first-half points and give Blooming Prairie a 29-20 lead at halftime.

Medford got off to a fast start in the second half by scoring the first five points to trim its deficit to just four points, 29-25.

However, the Blossoms responded by going on a 14-2 to give themselves a commanding 43-27 lead with about 11 and a half minutes left in the game.

Blooming Prairie Head Coach John Bruns said the offensive play of Maggie Bruns, who finished with a career-high 15 points, was a big reason why Blooming Prairie went on that 14-2 run.

"Maggie Bruns took over and put in 12 second-half points, including two big three-pointers that got us back up to a double-digit lead," he said.

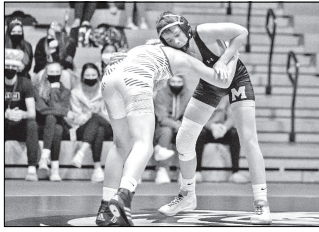
The Tigers scored six of the next eight points to get within 12 points, 45-33, with seven and a half minutes left.

About three minutes after that, Medford cut its deficit to 10 points, 49-39, but that's as close as the score would get as Blooming Prairie

SEE MEDGIRLSBASKET, B8



## WRESTLING



Medford freshman Evan Schweisthal grapples with his Maple River opponent Braxton Simon. Simon won by decision 6-5, but the Tigers won the dual 55-15.

## Tigers score two dominant wins

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After going back-and-forth between wins and losses for most of the season, the Medford wrestling team has now won three straight duals after beating the Maple River Eagles 55-15 on Thursday, Feb. 25, and the Waterville-Elysian-Morristown/Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (WEM/JWP) Grizzlies 75-6 on Saturday, Feb. 27.

Against Maple River, Tommy Elwood won by major decision 15-2 at 106 pounds and Jack Meyer followed with a win by fall to give the Tigers an early 10-0 lead.

However, the Grizzlies answered right back by winning the 120-pound match by decision 6-5 and winning the 126-pound match by fall to cut their deficit to just one point, 10-9.

Medford's Alex Helgeson, who is currently ranked second in the state at 120 pounds, wrestled up two classes and still came away with a win by decision 10-3.

Medford's Alex Helgeson, who is currently ranked second in the state at 120 pounds, wrestled up two classes and still came away with a win by decision 10-3.

At 145 pounds, Maple River won by fall to give the Tigers a 10-1 record, but that's as close the Eagles would get because Medford won the last seven matches of the dual.

Garron Hoffman and Dillon Bartosch got the Tigers' run started in style by winning back-to-back matches by first-period fall.

At 170 pounds, Tate Hermes won by decision 8-6 while Josiah Hedensten won

the next match when his opponent exceeded his allotted injury time to increase Medford's lead to 37-15.

Dylan Heiderscheidt won by first-period fall, Brennon Hoffman won by decision 2-1 and lastly Gavin Hermes needed just 15 seconds to win by fall.

With these three wins, the Tigers won the dual 55-15. That margin of victory is more than four times larger than the seven points they beat the Eagles by back in late January.

Medford didn't have much time to enjoy their second consecutive as they faced the WEM/JWP Grizzlies less than 48 hours later. Thankfully, the Tigers ended up not needing much rest as they easily beat the Grizzlies 75-6.

Besides WEM/JWP's one win by fall, Medford's Tommy Elwood, the third-ranked wrestler in the state at 106 pounds, had the closest match of the dual but he still won by decision 7-1.

Medford's Jack Meyer, Evan Schweisthal, Derek Bartosch, Kael Neumann, Dillon Bartosch, Garron Hoffman, Tate Hermes and Gavin Hermes all won by first-period fall.

Brennon Hoffman won by second-period fall and three Tigers won by forfeit. The 75-6 win, along with their previous win over Maple River, improves Medford's overall record to 11-7 and their section record improves to 8-1.

The Tigers' next and final meet of the regular season is a home triangular against Westfield and NRHEG at 5:30 p.m. on Friday.

## BOYS HOCKEY

## Owatonna bounces back with sweep

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

After two tough losses last week, the Owatonna boys hockey team bounced back with two commanding wins this week against Mankato East and Rochester Century.

The week started off in Mankato for a matchup against Mankato East.

The game started off close, with the score tied at two at one point, but a 4-0 run by Owatonna would be enough to give them the win, with final score being 6-3.

Leading the Huskies, in this matchup was senior Dom Valento, who had two goals in the game.

Saturday proved to be another high scoring matchup for Owatonna, as the team defeated Rochester Century, 8-3.

The game showed similarities to their matchup

with Mankato East, as it was another hot second period, led by junior Casey Pederson's two goals, that propelled the Huskies to the win.

Another player making noise during the game was senior Brody Homan, who ended the game with his first varsity goal.

Exiting the week, Owatonna improves its record to 8-3-1, and 8-1-1 in conference play, putting them third in the Big Nine conference, only behind Mankato East (9-3) and, Mankato West (10-1-2).

Moving into this week, the Huskies will be on the road again, traveling both Thursday and Saturday. The team will start the week with a 7:15 p.m. game at Northfield, who they narrowly defeated earlier in the season 4-3, before heading to Austin for a 2:30 p.m. game on Saturday.

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

## Tigers rally to beat the Panthers

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After a tough 17-point loss to Blooming Prairie, the Medford girls basketball team got back on track by beating New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Genova (NRHEG) Panthers 60-58 on Friday, Feb. 26.

The Panthers held a three-point lead, 29-26, at halftime.

NRHEG Head Coach Onika Peterson said the game came down to the wire and free throws ended up being the difference between winning and losing.

"What a battle tonight - I am so proud of this team for their effort, heart, and grit. We were right there but unfortunately fouls definitely played a huge part in the second half against us. We picked up 14 fouls to their six and they made 20 of their 26 free throws on the night," she said.

Despite the loss, she said the Panthers made a lot of progress tonight and she hopes they'll take that momentum with them into their next game.

NRHEG's next game is a road contest against United South Central at 7:15 p.m. on Friday. Its next home game is against Waseca at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday, March 11.

day, March 11.

Medford's next game is also a road contest, but against Waterville-Elysian-Morristown at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday. Its next home game is against Blooming Prairie at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, March 9.

NRHEG statistics: Sidney Schultz - 18 points, 7 rebounds, 1 steal and 3 assists, Erin Jacobson - 13 points, 5 rebounds and 3 steals, Rhys Martin - 7 points and 1 rebound, Kendall Johnson - 6 points, 7 rebounds and 1 steal, Sarah George - 5 points and 5 rebounds, Andrea Briggs - 4 points, 5 rebounds, 3 steals and 1 assist, Faith Nielsen - 3 points, 6 rebounds and 1 steal and Hallie Schultz - 2 points, 3 rebounds and 1 steal.



Medford junior Clara Kniefel has her shot blocked by NRHEG senior Kendall Johnson. Johnson scored six points and grabbed seven rebounds, but the Tigers won 60-58.



Medford senior Jenna Berg drives past NRHEG freshman Faith Nielsen during the second half of the Tigers' win over the Panthers.

## WRESTLING

## A pin fest for Huskies in another win

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

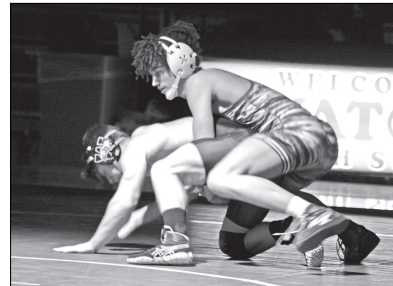
The Owatonna wrestling team cruised to its 17th win of the season, as they dominated a depleted Winona team, winning 72-7.

During the match, Owatonna won seven of the 14 scheduled matches by way of forfeit. However, Owatonna did not need to relay on this to win the match, as the Huskies won all but two matches that were not forfeited and won each by pinfall.

Owatonna's Owen Thorn, who wrestled at 138, and Yves Evilard at 145, both managed to gain quick victories, finishing their matches in the first period, in under two minutes. However, this quickest pin of the night came from Landen Johnson at 160, who after quickly slamming his opponent to the ground, was able to gain a pinfall victory in 28 seconds.

While the majority of the night went Owatonna's way, the final match of night went to Winona, but it was not without a valiant effort from the Huskies' Abe Stockwell.

Wrestling at 285, Stockwell found himself in a hole down by three points but was able to fight back and trim the margin to one in the final



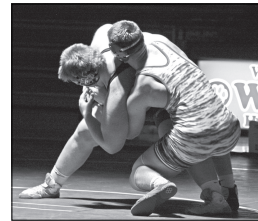
Landen Johnson wrestles his opponent to the ground during his match Thursday against Winona.

period of his match. Needing a takedown, Stockwell would attempt to take his opponent to the ground, but ultimately see his move countered, and lose two points in the process before the final buzzer sounded.

Still, Stockwell was treated with a loud applause for efforts from his teammates and the Owatonna fans in attendance.

Ultimately, this is where the Huskies week ended, as a Saturday triangular scheduled against Rochester, John Marshall and Faribault was postponed.

With only a few weeks remaining in the regular season, Owatonna's record currently stands at 17-5 and 7-1 in con-



Abe Stockwell attempts to bring his opponent to the ground during his match Thursday against Winona.

ference play, putting them in third in the Big Nine Conference behind Faribault and Northfield.

Owatonna will not host a home match this week, with its next contest coming on the road on Thursday, where they will take on Kasson-Man-

torville and Shakopee. The Huskies will wrestle in the first two matches of the triangular, with their first match going against KM and scheduled to begin at 5 p.m.



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## WRESTLING

## No tornado damage as Panthers beat Cyclones

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After winning four straight matches, the New Richland-Hartland-Elendale-Geneva (NRHEG) wrestling team had lost back-to-back matches entering its triangular against the Westfield Razorbacks and the St. Clair/Mankato Loyola Cyclones. Like NRHEG's previous six matches, the triangular was an up-and-down experience as the Panthers beat the Cyclones 54-27, but lost to the Razorbacks 52-24 on Thursday, Feb. 25.

Against St. Clair/Mankato Loyola, the Cyclones got off to a quick start and took an 18-0 lead after the first three matches. At 126 pounds, NRHEG freshman Annabelle Petsinger won by fall and the Panthers' next wrestler, Aidan Schlaak, won by forfeit to trim the Panthers' deficit to 18-12.

The Cyclones increased their lead to 21-12 by winning the next match by decision, but NRHEG won the 145-pound match by forfeit so the Panthers trailed by just three points, 21-18, halfway

through the dual.

NRHEG junior Clay Stenzel won his 145-pound match by fall to give the Panthers their first lead of the dual, 24-21.

After that, NRHEG won the next match by forfeit, but St. Clair/Mankato Loyola won the following match by fall to trim their deficit back to three points, 30-27.

The Panthers responded by winning the final four matches: Ralph Roesler won by fall and the final three won by forfeit to win the dual 54-27.

NRHEG faced a much tougher opponent when they went up against Westfield.

In fact, the Razorbacks won the first eight matches to take a commanding 42-0 lead. At 160 pounds, Thor Routh won by fall and George Roesler won the following match by fall to trim Westfield's lead to 42-12.

However, the Razorbacks won the next two matches to re-claim their 42-point lead, 54-12.

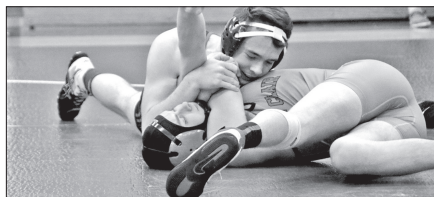
At 220 pounds, Ben Hagen won by fall and the Panthers' heavy-weight Makota Misgen also won by fall to make the final score 54-24.

The Panthers' win and



NRHEG sophomore Ethan Thompson seems to smile at the camera while he keeps his arms tight around his St. Clair/Mankato Loyola opponent's torso. Thompson ended up losing by decision, but the Panthers won the dual 54-27.

loss makes their overall record 7-11 and their section record is now 4-7. NRHEG's final regular season meet is a road dual against Medford at 7 p.m. on Friday.



NRHEG senior Thor Routh controls the upper body of St. Clair/Mankato Loyola's Jack Kinder. Stenzel won by fall to give the Panthers their first lead of the dual, 24-21.



Before the Panthers match against the St. Clair/Mankato Loyola Cyclones, Head Coach Shawn Larson commended his three seniors, Max Seltun, far left, Conner Oakland, middle, and Thor Routh, for their leadership and work ethic throughout their years in the NRHEG wrestling program.

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

## Owatonna falls at home



Huskies junior Holly Buytaert defends a Mankato West player during Friday's game at Owatonna.

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

The Owatonna girls basketball team suffered its second loss to a Mankato team in seven days Friday in Owatonna, as Mankato West defeated the Huskies 41-55 in Owatonna's lone game of the week.

While it might have been a double-digit loss for Owatonna, it does not exactly tell the story of the night.

For the most part, Owatonna held its own against West. In a highly competitive first half, the teams swapped the lead multiple times with neither gaining an advantage. The Huskies were only down by five going into halftime.

This sort of back-and-forth action was seen in the second half as well, as in the closing minutes of the contest, both teams were able to go on runs, only for the other to respond with a run of their own.

The game proved to be one where one team was going to need to slip for the other to capitalize and unfortunately for Owatonna, it was then that would suffer the setback. This turning point occurred at the beginning of the second half, where the Huskies could not get a basket, allowing West to build its lead to 12.

As the half continued, the Huskies managed to get back into a rhythm and equal out the scoring, but they were never able to get the run they needed. The closest Owatonna would get was when they chopped the lead down five with just over five minutes left in the game before its momentum stalled out.

Senior Sarah Kingland and junior Lexi Mendenhall led the team in scoring on the night, with each putting up 14 points.

With the loss, Owatonna falls to 4-8 and 3-7 in conference play, putting



Senior Sarah Kingland attempts to make a defense stop during Friday's game against Mankato West.

them eighth in the Big Nine conference standings.

This week, Owatonna will be back on the road, as the team travels for a game against Rochester John Marshall on Friday. When the two met earlier in the season it proved to be a tough matchup for the Huskies, who lost the game 52-67. The game could also prove to be a good measuring mark

of how much the team has grown this season, as the previous matchup was only their third of the season. Tip-off for the contest will be at 7:30 p.m.

The Huskies will return home on Monday, March 11 when they host Red Wing in their second to last matchup of the regular season. That game will also begin at 7:30 p.m.

## BOYS BASKETBALL

## Huskies drop game to conference leader

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

The Owatonna boys basketball team saw its three-game winning streak continue and end during this past week's games.

The team extended the winning streak to four on Tuesday, Feb. 23 as they defeated Northfield, 80-61.

It was in the second half when the Huskies really took control of the game, going on an 11-point unanswered run to begin the period, forcing Northfield into a hole they would not get out of for the rest of the night.

One of the main contributors during this run was junior Brayden Williams, who ended the game leading the team in scoring with 27 points.

The win streak came to end on Friday though, as Owatonna was defeated by Mankato West, 59-73.

Heading into the matchup, it was obvious that it was going to be a tough one for the Huskies, as Mankato West had not only defeated them earlier in the season but is in the middle on an impressive run of their own, holding a conference best record of 10-1.

One of the bright spots of the game came from junior Evan Dushek who, coming off a 20-point game Tuesday, led the team in scoring with 18 points during Friday's matchup.

The loss puts Owatonna in third in the Big Nine Conference with a record of 9-3, 8-2 in conference play.

The Huskies will return to Owatonna on Friday night, hosting Rochester John Marshall for a 7:30 p.m. matchup.

Owatonna will look for a repeat performance of their earlier performance against JM, who they held to only 22 points in a win for the Huskies earlier in the season.



## BOYS BASKETBALL

# Blossoms end difficult stretch win pair of wins

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

The Blooming Prairie boys basketball team ended its four-game losing streak by beating Medford 52-43 on Tuesday, Feb. 23. Three days later, the Blossoms got a rematch against the United South Central, who they lost to 59-46 in their season opener, and they made the most of their second chance by coming from behind to beat the Rebels 54-52 on Friday, Feb. 26.

"He's a good player so I wasn't sure how our team would respond, but we jumped up on the scoreboard right out of the gate and played well at both ends," said Blooming Prairie Head Coach Nate Piller. "We got off to an early lead and played with confidence. It was good to see. I feel happy for the team."

Blossoms senior Luke Larkoski sank three first-half three-pointers and the Blossoms led 23-17 at halftime.

Medford has its full compliment of players after AJ Vandereide missed the Tigers' first game against the Blossoms.

the good version of us tonight where we stay out of foul trouble, limit turnovers and make some shots," Piller said. "I thought our guys took things we've been looking at in film and practice and applied it well in the game."

Drew Kittelson led the Blossoms with 13 points while Alex Miller chipped in 11 points, including three second-half three-pointers.

He noted that the role players played well too. "Role players played nice roles for us and for the most part, we played within our skill sets," he said.

Thanks to playing within their skill sets

and contributions from starters and role players, the Blossoms won 52-43.

BP scoring: Drew Kittelson - 13 points, Alex Miller - 11 points, Luke Larkoski - 9 points, Mitchell Fiebigler - 9 points, Colin Jordison - 4 points, Cole Christianson - 4 points and Jacob Naatz - 2 points.

Three days later, the Blossoms had the opportunity to earn their second consecutive win when they went on the road to face the United South Central Rebels.

After leading for most game against Medford, this game was much tougher for

the Blossoms but due to some poor shooting, they trailed 30-27 at halftime.

The Rebels extended their lead to 12 points with about seven minutes left in the game, but that's when Blooming Prairie made its late charge and overcame bad shooting percentages to eke out a 54-52 win.

"[It] was a really nice win for us against a strong opponent," Piller said. "I'm very proud of the effort maintained by our guys. Things haven't come easy for us this year and they continue to reveal their character as the season progresses."

The two-point win over United South Central improves Blooming Prairie's overall record to 4-7 and their Gopher Conference record is now 4-6.

The Blossoms' next game is a road contest against Hayfield (10-3) at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday. Their next home game is the following Thursday, March 11, when they host Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (4-8) at 7:15 p.m.

BP scoring: Drew Kittelson - 13 points, Alex Miller - 12 points, Mitchell Fiebigler - 11 points, Colin Jordison - 10 points, Luke Larkoski - 6 points and Chris Naatz - 2 points.

## GIRLS HOCKEY

## POWER PLAY



Teammates congratulate junior Olivia Herzog after she scored her third goal of the night during Thursday's matchup against Mankato East.

### Herzog's hat trick leads Owatonna past Mankato East

BY MITCHELL BREUER  
SPORTS WRITER

Thursday night's return to Owatonna proved to be all about junior Olivia Herzog, who led the Huskies to a 6-1 win over Mankato East.

After quiet first period, the Huskies, down by one, needed a spark to get going and Herzog provided just that.

Just over four minutes into the second, Herzog took advantage of a power play to give the Huskies their opening goal of the night and proved to be just getting started, as four minutes later she gave her team the lead.

She was not done yet though. Even as Mankato East got back to full strength, they still could not stop Herzog, as she scored her third goal in a six-minute period to get herself a hat trick and secured a lead that Owatonna held on to for the rest of the night.

Herzog's three goals were also the start of six-

point unanswered run by the Huskies, who also saw goals from freshman Samantha Bogen, sophomore Ezra Olen, and senior Anna Herzog.

Offensive dominance proved to be a theme for Owatonna all night, as they outshot Mankato East 30-14. Even in the first period, where Owatonna did not put up any points, the Huskies still put up nine shots to East's three. It felt and proved to be true, that if the Huskies were going to continue getting shot opportunities, they were eventually going to capitalize, just as they have most of the season.

This was also the case earlier in the week for the Huskies, in their matchup on Tuesday Feb. 23, against Rochester Century, where Owatonna won 8-0. This game also featured a high scoring second period for Owatonna, where they scored six goals, with the Olivia and Anna Herzog leading the team with two each.



Junior goalie Ava Wolfe readies herself for an oncoming offensive attack from Mankato East during Thursday's game at Owatonna.

The end of the week brings to end an impressive month of February for Owatonna, who not only won all seven games they played, but also won by four or more goals in each contest.

However, their biggest match of the season so far lies ahead this week, with a home game Thursday

against Big Nine conference leader, Northfield, who remains undefeated on the season at 11-0.

Northfield is also responsible for Owatonna's only loss of the season, as they beat the Huskies 2-3 on Jan. 28.

Puck-drop for this crucial contest for both team will be at 7 p.m.

## SCOREBOOK

## Big Nine Standings Boys Hockey

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Mankato West   | 9-1-2 |
| Mankato East   | 9-2   |
| Northfield     | 8-3   |
| Owatonna       | 7-5-1 |
| Rochester Mayo | 6-3   |

## Owatonna Boys Hockey Results

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| Feb. 25 - vs. Mankato East - 6-3      |
| Feb. 27 - vs. Rochester Century - 8-3 |
| March 2 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Albert Lea    |
| March 4 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Northfield    |
| March 6 - 2:30 p.m. vs. Austin        |
| March 8 - 7 p.m. vs. Rochester Mayo   |

## Big Nine Standings Girls Hockey

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Northfield   | 11-0  |
| Owatonna     | 11-1  |
| Albert Lea   | 8-3   |
| Mankato East | 7-4-1 |
| Austin       | 5-6-1 |

## Owatonna Girls Hockey

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| Feb. 23 - vs. Rochester Century - 8-0 |
| Feb. 25 - vs. Mankato East - 6-1      |
| March 1 - 7 p.m. vs. Austin           |
| March 2 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Winona        |
| March 4 - 7 p.m. vs. Northfield       |
| March 8 - 7 p.m. vs. Austin           |

## Big Nine Standings Boys Basketball

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Mankato West      | 11-1 |
| Austin            | 10-2 |
| Owatonna          | 9-3  |
| Mankato East      | 10-3 |
| Rochester Century | 7-4  |

## Owatonna Boys Basketball

|                                        |
|----------------------------------------|
| Feb. 23 - vs. Northfield - 50-61       |
| Feb. 26 - vs. Mankato West - 59-73     |
| March 2 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Winona       |
| March 5 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Rochester JM |
| March 8 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Northfield   |
| March 11 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Red Wing      |

## Big Nine Standings Girls Basketball

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Rochester Mayo | 11-0 |
| Mankato West   | 11-1 |
| Mankato East   | 10-3 |
| Austin         | 7-3  |
| Red Wing       | 6-3  |
| Owatonna       | 4-8  |

## Owatonna Girls Basketball

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| Feb. 26 - vs. Mankato West - 41-55   |
| March 2 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Winona       |
| March 5 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Rochester JM |
| March 8 - 7:30 p.m. - vs. Northfield |
| March 11 - 7:30 p.m. vs. Red Wing    |

## Gopher Standings Boys Basketball

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| Maple River          | 12-1 |
| Hayfield             | 10-5 |
| United South Central | 4-5  |
| Blooming Prairie     | 4-7  |
| NRHEG                | 4-9  |
| WEM                  | 3-7  |
| Medford              | 2-10 |

## Blooming Prairie Boys Basketball

|                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|
| Feb. 23 - vs. Medford - 52-43              |
| Feb. 26 - vs. United South Central - 54-52 |
| March 2 - 7:15 p.m. vs. NRHEG              |
| March 5 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Hayfield           |
| March 8 - 7:15 p.m. vs. WEM                |

## NRHEG Boys Basketball

|                                                |
|------------------------------------------------|
| Feb. 23 - vs. BA - 65-76                       |
| Feb. 26 - vs. Medford - 78-53                  |
| March 2 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. Blooming Prairie     |
| March 5 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. United South Central |
| March 8 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Hayfield               |

## Medford Boys Basketball

|                                        |
|----------------------------------------|
| Feb. 23 - vs. Blooming Prairie - 43-52 |
| Feb. 26 - vs. NRHEG - 53-78            |
| March 2 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. Hayfield     |
| March 4 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. WEM          |
| March 8 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Maple River    |

## Gopher Standings Girls Basketball

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Blooming Prairie | 11-1 |
| WEM              | 10-2 |
| Hayfield         | 10-3 |
| Medford          | 6-3  |
| Maple River      | 5-7  |
| NRHEG            | 4-9  |

## Blooming Prairie Girls Basketball

|                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|
| Feb. 23 - vs. Medford - 58-41              |
| Feb. 26 - vs. United South Central - 51-33 |
| March 1 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. JWP              |
| March 2 - 7:15 p.m. - vs. NRHEG            |
| March 5 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Hayfield           |

## NRHEG Girls Basketball

|                                              |
|----------------------------------------------|
| Feb. 23 - vs. BA - 44-59                     |
| Feb. 26 - vs. Medford - 58-60                |
| March 2 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Blooming Prairie     |
| March 5 - 7:15 p.m. vs. United South Central |
| March 8 - 7:15 p.m. vs. Hayfield             |

## BOYS BASKETBALL

## Panthers can't ground Cardinals, but tame Tigers

BY ALEX NUEHRING  
SPORTS WRITER

After three consecutive losses, the New Richland-Hartland-Elendale-Geneva boys basketball team was looking to end its losing

skid when it faced the Faribault Bethlehem Academy (FBA) Cardinals and although the Panthers didn't get the win on Tuesday, Feb. 23, losing 76-65, they did end their skid when they beat the Medford Tigers 78-53

on Friday, Feb. 26.

Against FBA, Head Coach Isaiah Lundberg was hoping the Panthers would be more successful playing at home after three straight road losses.

Unfortunately, he re-

ported that NRHEG did not have a good first half.

"We had numerous good shots on offense that didn't fall," he said. "Credit to BA, they came out and played well in

SEE NRHEG, B9

## BPGIRLS

Blooming Prairie scored seven more points, mostly via the free throw line, and ended up winning 51-33.

The Blossoms were once again led by Megan Oswald who scored 20 points and recorded six steals and Bobbie Bruns who scored 18 points, dished out eight assists and also recorded six steals.

This win improves Blooming Prairie's overall record to 11-1 and its Gopher Conference record is now 9-0.

The Blossoms' next game is a home contest against Hayfield (10-3) at 7:15 p.m. on Friday.

On Monday, March 8, Blooming Prairie hosts Waterville-Elysian-Morristown (10-2) with the



After the Awesome Blossoms' win last Friday, Blooming Prairie celebrated its five seniors, from left to right: Maggie Bruns, Maren Forystek, Ashleigh Alwes, Allison Krohnberg and Megan Oswald. In addition to a heartfelt video of their basketball journey, each senior received their own Blooming Prairie basketball sweater.

first place in the Gopher Conference on the line. The Blossoms upset the W-E-M Buccaneers, who were then ranked fourth in the state, 43-42 on Feb. 12. BP stats: Megan Oswald — 20

points and 6 steals, Bobbie Bruns — 18 points, 8 assists and 6 steals, Maggie Bruns — 7 points, Maren Forystek — 2 points, Allison Krohnberg — 2 points and Emily Miller — 2 points.



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## MEDGIRLSBASKET

pulled away in the final two minutes to win 58-41.

Oswald led the Awesome Blossoms with 17 points and 13 rebounds. Bruns said Bobbie Bruns also had an excellent game, finishing with 14 points and seven assists.

The win improves Blooming Prairie's overall record to 10-1 and their Gopher Conference is a perfect 8-0.

The loss makes Medford's overall record 5-3 and their Gopher Conference record is now 4-2.

The Awesome Blossoms' next game is a

home contest against Hayfield (10-3) at 7:15 p.m. on Friday.

The Tigers' next game is a road contest against Waterville-Elysian-Morristown (10-2) at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday. Their next home game is against this same Blooming Prairie team at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, March 9. BP stats: Megan

Oswald — 17 points and 13 rebounds, Maggie Bruns — 15 points, Bobbie Bruns — 14 points and 7 assists, Emily Miller — 5 points, Allison Krohnberg — 4 points and Anna Pauly — 3 points and 8 rebounds.

## WESTFIELD

match by decision to increase their lead to 15-7.

After that, it was all Westfield as the Razorbacks won the final nine matches. Sam Skillestad won by decision 8-2, Tyler Archer won by decision 3-0, Dylan Ehmke won by fall and the remaining six matches were won by forfeit.

Westfield ended up winning the dual 55-15.

After beating the Cyclones by just 10 points a week earlier, Lassahn was proud to see the Razorbacks perform better against them this time.

"We were able to secure our second win against St. Clair/Mankato Loyola on the year, and this one was a bit

more dominant than the first. We picked up some big wins in this dual and really wrestled well," he said.

With this win and the previous five, he believes Westfield is in good shape for the upcoming section tournament.

"Things are really starting to click as we head toward the end of the season, and we're looking forward to section competition in a few weeks here," Lassahn said.

These two wins increase Westfield's overall record to 7-12 and its section record to 5-6.

The Razorbacks' final regular season meet is a home triangular at Blooming Prairie High School against Waterville-Elysian-Morristown/Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton and Stewartville at 5 p.m. on Thursday.

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

**D**ear Motor Medics, It has been a crazy winter. We saw snow deeper than I have ever seen in my thirty years of living here and colder temps than we have ever seen for this long. My car and many friends' cars would not start after sitting at work all day. Once we got out of work, we had to plow through snow bumper deep to get home. I made it about four miles and my car started to overheat. The temp was about 5 degrees. I had let my car run for about five minutes before I left work, but I had no heat all the way to it overheating. I sat along the side of the road for about ten minutes for it to cool then the car ran fine and had great heat and the coolant is full. What could be wrong?

**D**ear Motor Medics, I have been having issues with my car battery. I have a 2010 Buick Lucerne with a V6 engine and every few days the battery will die. This usually occurs after the car sits overnight or more than one day. If I leave the door open or radio on for more than ten minutes, it will also go dead. I have been jump starting it using other cars to get going then I go into my shop and they tell me it is a little low, but it is still a good battery even though its seven years old. I am thinking about buying one of these little jump starters to carry in the glove box, so I don't keep getting stuck. Which one is best to buy?

**D**ale in Idaho Falls Idaho.

Dear Dale, It sounds like it's something wrong with the battery and here's why. If you can leave a door open for a short while and the battery goes dead, it is a sure sign that the battery has no reserve capacity left. Reserve capacity is a measure of how long a battery can maintain a state of discharge before going dead. Yours is too short. A shop may have checked it, but you may want a second opinion. Being 7 years old is also a sign of a bad battery as they don't tend to last much more than that but purchasing a jump starter is still a good safety item. Take care, the Motor Medics

Take care, the Motor Medics

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## PUBLIC RECORD

STEELE COUNTY BIRTHS  
FEBRUARY 2020

Hailey Ray Becchetti, Parents: Amber Ward and Theodore Becchetti, Feb. 1.  
Carolina Silva, Parents: Claudia and Teodoro, Feb. 4.  
Elias James Leavstrom, Parents: Carissa and Seth, Feb. 4.  
Jax Regan Cunningham, Parents: Laura and Colby, Feb. 5.  
Quinnlee Rose Laue, Parents: Hope Rosenquist and Justin Laue, Feb. 5.  
Stella Ann Wagner, Parents: Sarah and Thomas, Feb. 6.  
Archer Gordon Anderson, Parents: Chelsey and Ryan, Feb. 9.  
Riggs Dalton Warrus, Parents: Stephanie and Dalton, Feb. 12.  
Nabila V. Dirige, Parents: Samda Igal and Ali Dirige, Feb. 12.  
Divina Lilly Yang, Parents:

Janey and Keng, Feb. 12.  
William Monroe Branstad, Parents: Claire and David, Feb. 12.  
Marcus Alvin Weisbrod, Parents: Shannon and Jonathan, Feb. 17.  
Berkley Mae Herdina, Parents: Maren and Elliott, Feb. 17.  
Oakley Jace Warka, Parents: Shayna and Jordan, Feb. 18.  
Abeer Abdrizak Ali, Parents: Ifrah Abdrahman and Abdrizak Ahmed, Feb. 21.  
Emma Layne Remund, Parents: Trisha and Nicholas, Feb. 21.  
Valentina Olivo, Parents: Karen and Elud, Feb. 21.  
Mudrin Douglas Alimi, Parents: Olivia Hughes and Armand Alimi, Feb. 22.  
Arya Mae Horak, Parents: Gina Felstead and Ryan Horak, Feb. 22.  
Ganden Hill Kimmensen, Parents: Miranda and

Bradley, Feb. 23.  
Kadley Marie Ulrich, Parents: Christine and Cody, Feb. 24.  
Case Joseph Ethen, Parents: Taylor and Joseph, Feb. 24.  
Ahlam Hanad Abdi, Parents: Leyla Abdulle and Hanad Hayle, Feb. 25.  
Thomas Matthew Nielsen, Parents: Rachel and Matthew, Feb. 25.  
Abdihakim Abdullahi Habib, Parents: Fartun Abdulkadir and Abdullahi Abdulle, Feb. 26.  
Blair Elizabeth Cole, Parents: Page and Lucas, Feb. 26.  
Eleanor Millie-Marie Matejek, Parents: Cassandra Wilson and Nicholas Matejek, Feb. 27.  
Maddison Elizabeth Peralta-Ramirez, Parents: Yahaira Ramirez Rios and Mario Peralta-Rosas, Feb. 27.  
Blanca Barbara Harmon, Parents: Annette Gonzalez and James

Harmon, Feb. 29.  
**STEELE COUNTY DEATHS  
FEBRUARY 2020**  
Marion Kathleen Houglum, 92, Medford, Feb. 1.  
Daniel Allen Mischke, 44, Owatonna, Feb. 1.  
Benee Ann Everett, 67, Owatonna, Feb. 6.  
Margaret Elaine Grisim, 85, Blooming Prairie, Feb. 7.  
Mary Jane Sweere, 76, Owatonna, Feb. 7.  
Stephen Lyle Crippen, 80, Owatonna, Feb. 8.  
Betty Bickell Kules, 91, Owatonna, Feb. 9.  
Viola Elaine Christianson, 86, Blooming Prairie, Feb. 10.  
Virginia Ann Jones, 93, Medford, Feb. 11.  
Ruth Ann Dempsey, 83, Owatonna, Feb. 11.  
Marvin Duane Maas, 81, Owatonna, Feb. 11.  
June Marcella Nelson, 96, Owatonna, Feb. 14.  
Mary Ann Sistiak, 69, Owatonna, Feb. 16.  
Audrey Mae Long, 91,

Medford, Feb. 16.  
Joseph Carmel Jackson, 33, Owatonna, Feb. 17.  
Gerald Christopher Thissen, 57, Hutchinson, Feb. 18.  
Judith Engle Korte, 80, Owatonna, Feb. 19.  
Barbara Louise Lageson, 91, Ellendale, Feb. 20.  
Elaina Ann Gomez, 50, Owatonna, Feb. 20.  
Nancy Carol Murphy, 82, Owatonna, Feb. 22.  
Christopher Gary Utost, 49, Owatonna, Feb. 23.  
Herbert L. Sorenson, 91, Owatonna, Feb. 24.  
Roger Dean Hagen, 84, Owatonna, Feb. 25.  
Ronald William Hanusa, 72, Hayfield, Feb. 25.  
Elvina Leone Anderson, 98, Blooming Prairie, Feb. 26.  
Kenneth Dwane Long, 94, Medford, Feb. 27.  
Carol Lee Lining, 35, Owatonna, Feb. 27.  
Robert Francis Larson, 79, Owatonna, Feb. 29.  
Marcella Mae Tuttle, 90, Owatonna, Feb. 29.  
David George Miller, 49, Owatonna, Feb. 29.

Hidalgo, Feb. 13.  
Isaac Zen Baumgartner and Paige Margaret Carlson, Feb. 19.  
Nicholas Joseph Schmidt and Kristytina Anne Burt, Feb. 20.  
Colin Licht and Emma Bethany April Payne, Feb. 20.  
Brandon Mark Gedick and Kristin Melaine Smith, Feb. 21.  
James Lee Boehnke and Ashley Lynn Schmeling, Feb. 22.  
Richard Alvin Williamson and Kara Kristine Martin, Feb. 29.  
Gary George Joachim and Sherry Louise Hill, Feb. 29.

STEELE COUNTY DIVORCES  
FEBRUARY 2020

Kelly Matthew Roehrick and Shan Marie Roehrick, Feb. 5.  
Katie Lynn Guerrero and Raulito Guerrero Jr., Feb. 5.  
Maria Ebong Elmhurst and Bryce James Elmhurst, Feb. 6.  
Matthew Adam Cisneros and Angela Marie Cisneros, Feb. 6.  
Carl Robert Houdek and Helen M. Houdek, Feb. 11.  
Tara Lee Lackore and Thomas Charles Lackore, Feb. 18.  
Shelly Lynn Wilkins and James Anthony Wilkins, Feb. 19.

STEELE COUNTY MARRIAGES  
FEBRUARY 2020

Narciso Tello Amador and Maria Victoria Agapito Rosas, Feb. 6.  
Richard Leo Cole and Suzanne Marie Cole, Feb. 7.  
Emmanuel Quintero Espino and Joanna

## Tax Guide 2021

Things to know when choosing between  
standard and itemized deductions

Deductions reduce the amount of taxable income when filing a federal income tax return. In other words, they can reduce the amount of tax someone owes.

Most taxpayers have a choice of either taking the standard deduction or itemizing their deductions. The standard deduction may be quicker and easier, but, itemizing deductions may lower taxes more, in some situations. It's important for all taxpayers to look into which deduction method best fits them.

## New this year

Following tax law changes, cash donations of up to \$300 made by December 31, 2020 are deductible without having to itemize when people file a 2020 tax return.

Here are some details about the two methods to help people decide deduction to take:

## Standard deduction

The standard deduction is an amount that reduces taxable income. The amount adjusts every year and can vary by filing status. The standard deduction amount depends on the taxpayer's filing status, whether they are 65 or older or blind, and whether another taxpayer can claim them as a dependent. Taxpayers who are age 65 or older on the last day of the year and don't itemize deductions are entitled to a higher standard deduction.

Taxpayers benefit from the standard deduction

if their standard deduction is more than the total of their allowable itemized deductions. They can use the Interactive Tax Assistant, How Much Is My Standard Deduction? to determine the amount their standard deduction and if they should itemize their deductions.

## Itemized deductions

Taxpayers may itemize deductions because that amount is higher than their standard deduction, which will result in less tax owed or a larger refund. In some cases, they not allowed to use the standard deduction.

Tax software can guide taxpayers through the process of itemizing their deductions. Taxpayers who itemize file Schedule A (Form 1040 or 1040-SR), Itemized Deductions or Form 1040-SR, U.S. Tax Return for Seniors.

A taxpayer may benefit by itemizing deductions if any of following apply to their tax situation, they:

- Had large uninsured medical and dental expenses
- Paid interest and taxes on their home
- Had large uninsured casualty or theft losses
- Made large contributions to qualified charities

Individual itemized deductions may be limited. Schedule A, (Form 1040 or 1040-SR), Itemized Deductions can help determine what limitations may apply.

Source: IRS



(formerly Wencil Accounting &amp; Tax Service)

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## NRHEG FROM B7

the first half. [They] got up early, got some easy baskets and did a great job of pushing the ball up the floor for layups after our misses. When they did miss shots, they offensive rebounds and capitalized on those as well."

"Thanks to their opportunistic offense, the Cardinals led 52-21 at halftime.

"Thankfully, Lundberg said the Panthers played much better in the second half.

"The second half our energy and effort was 100 times better and came out with a sense of urgency that we didn't show in the first half," he said.

He noted that NRHEG got within 13 points with over three minutes left in the game, but couldn't get much closer, losing 76-65.

"I was proud that we continued to fight and never quit. In the end we just couldn't overcome our off night shooting. We shot 26/86 on the night for around 30%, and we were 6/28 from three-point range on the night. [It's] tough to overcome that shooting, but I give credit to my guys for continuing to shoot and being aggressive on both ends in the second half," Lundberg said.

NRHEG scoring: Daxter Lee – 18 points, Porter Peterson – 15 points, Jack Olson – 12 points, Kordell Schlaak – 10 points, Ashton Johnson – 9 points and Benjamin Schoenrock – 2 points.

After having one good half and one bad half against FBA, Lundberg said the Panthers played great from start to finish against Medford.

"Both halves we played well on both ends of the floor. I liked our energy at the start of the game and throughout the game the effort was top notch," he said. "I've been telling the boys if they ever put two halves together in a game and come out and play as hard as you can, good

things will happen and tonight it did."

"Those good things started happening right away. On Medford's first possession of the game, he said it took them almost two minutes before the Tigers got a shot off."

"I thought that set the tone for us right then," he said.

In addition their defense, Lundberg mentioned that the Panthers' offense also played well in the first half.

"I liked how we handled their zone in the first half. [We] attacked it well, got some good looks and made them," he said.

Individually, he noted that Junior Jack Olson played great offensively in the first half.

"Thanks to their offense and defense playing so well, the Panthers led 34-21 at halftime.

Medford came out and scored the first four points of the second half, but then he reported that NRHEG started hitting shots even though the Tigers switched to man defense.

"As the half continued, we built up a lead by playing good defense and getting out for some transition points," he said.

On top of the transition points, he said freshman guard Daxter Lee had a great second half.

"[He] couldn't miss a shot for a stretch and really took over on the offensive end, scoring 20 points in the half," he said.

In total, he reported that the Panthers shot 59% from the field and only committed seven turnovers en route to beating the Tigers 79-53.

The win along with their earlier loss means the Panthers' overall record is now 4-9 and their Gopher Conference record is now 4-6.

NRHEG's next game is a home contest against United South Central (4-5) at 7:15 p.m. on Friday.

## FREELANCE WRITER WANTED

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

If interested, please email  
Rick Bussler at bprick@frontier.com.

**BLOOMING PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP  
ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION NOTICE**

Bloomington Township will hold its annual election and meeting on **March 9th 2021**. The polls will be open from 4 p.m. until 8 p.m., with the meeting to follow.

Masks will be required when inside the town hall for voting and for the meeting.

If you are unable to attend but would like the annual documents, please request those documents from Missy Anderson any time after March 5th.

**ON THE BALLOT ARE**

Doug Krell – 3 year term supervisor  
Katie Zippe – 2 year term treasurer

Thank you. Bloomington Township Board  
Missy Anderson, Clerk

2/24/21

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

JOINT DITCH #6 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
STEELE/RICE COUNTY

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Joint Ditch #6 Board of Commissioners of Steele/Rice County will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday the 15th day of March 2021 at the Steele County Administration Center, 630 Florence Ave., Owatonna, MN.

The Board will be meeting to discuss repairs needed and consider the request of a feasibility study.

All persons interested or affected by Joint Ditch #6 are invited to attend this public meeting virtually by following this link: <https://tinyurl.com/UD6-20210111>

Dated this 28th day of February, 2021.

Laura Ihke Steele County Auditor Paula O'Connell Chief Financial Officer  
Rice County

2/23

**NOTICE****NOTICE OF  
MORTGAGE  
FORECLOSURE SALE****THE RIGHT TO  
VERIFY THE  
DEBT AND IDENTIFICATION  
OF THE ORIGINAL  
CREDITOR WITHIN THE  
TIME PROVIDED BY  
LAW IS NOT AFFECTED  
BY THIS ACTION.**

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

DATE OF MORTGAGE: April 12, 2002

ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$75,000.00

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE

DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$72,652.44

TRANSACTION AGENT: None

NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Sterling State Bank, Corporation

RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.

TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17-129-0313  
TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: None

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

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

DATE AND TIME OF SALE: April 06, 2021 at 10:00 AM.

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

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

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on October 6, 2021.

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

USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

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

Dated: February 03, 2021

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.  
Mortgagee

TROTT LAW, P.C.

By: /s/

"N. Kibongni Fondungal-lah, Esq."  
Samuel R. Coleman, Esq.  
Attorneys for Mortgagee  
25 Dale Street North  
St. Paul, MN 55102  
(651) 209-9760  
(19-1083-FC03)

**THIS IS A  
COMMUNICATION  
FROM A DEBT  
COLLECTOR.**

2/10/21

**NOTICE**

OFFICE OF THE  
MINNESOTA  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
CERTIFICATE OF  
ASSUMED NAME  
Minnesota Statutes,  
Chapter 333

The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.

ASSUMED NAME: **Prairie Manor Care Center**

PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 220 3RD ST. NW, BLOOMING PRAIRIE MN 55917 USA

NAMEHOLDERS:  
Name: **Prairie Manor Inc.**

Address: 220 3RD ST. NW, BLOOMING PRAIRIE MN 55917 USA

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY: **Joe Mason**

ADDRESS: 220 3RD ST. NW, BLOOMING PRAIRIE MN 55917 USA

EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL NOTICES: **jason@praiiemanorinc.com**

Work Item  
1218683300027  
Original File Number  
1218683300027  
STATE OF MINNESOTA  
OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY OF STATE

02/18/2021

/s/ Steve Simon  
Secretary of State

2/24/21

**NOTICE**

Proposed  
City of Bloomington  
City Council Meeting  
Agenda  
March 8, 2021  
7:00 P.M.

**Call to Order****Pledge of Allegiance**

Public Hearing – Conditional Use Permit – Home Business – 163 7th St NW

**Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes of February 8, 2021 – Regular City Council Meeting
3. Approval of Minutes of February 8, 2021 – Public Hearing – Annexation
4. Approval of Special Use Permit – Victory Field – Education Foundation – June 19, 2021
5. Approval of Fire Relief Benefit Increase
6. Approval of Hiring for PT Seasonal Street Maintenance Worker

**Financial Report****Committee/Commission Reports**

1. B.P. Public Utilities
2. B.P. Economic Development Authority
3. B.P. Planning & Zoning
4. B.P. Fire Commission
5. B.P. Police Commission
6. B.P. Ambulance Commission

**Business**

1. Approval of Conditional Use Permit – Home Business – 163 7th St NW
2. Approval of Bloomington Prairie Ambulance Commission Annual Report
3. Approval of 2021 Street Seal Coating
4. Ordinance #31: Emergency Services Amendment

**City Administrator's Report**

1. Steele County Park Grant
2. Board of Equalization Reminder – April 12, 2021 at 8:30 pm
3. Fire Truck Completed & Received
4. 2020 Audit – March 29 – April 2

**City Attorney's Report****Council Members' Reports****Adjourn**

This Agenda is Subject to Change

**NOTICE**

STEELE COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S SYNOPSIS FOR 2/9/2021

Complete minutes can be viewed on the Steele County Website:

Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1. Glynn/Gnemi to approve the agenda with the addition of the SEMCAC presentation.
2. Krueger/Gnemi to approve the following Consent Agenda items. Ayes all.
  - A. Approve the minutes of January 26, 2021.
  - B. Approve the Listing of Bills.
  - C. Approve the Personnel Report.
  - D. Approve the revised Depository Resolution

tion updating persons authorized on account to include Madison Hadoff.

E. Approve the revised Electronically Transfer Funds Resolution updating authorizations to include Madison Hadoff.

F. Authorize IT Director to switch Four Seasons from existing Internet contract to dark fiber for \$325 per month and to switch the secondary Internet connection at the Detention Center to dark fiber for \$325 per month.

G. Approve renewal of the Equitable Sharing Agreement and authorize the Chairman's signature.

H. Approve Resolution accepting Master Gardener Donation of \$100.00 from Laverne Klecker.

I. Approve Contract Award for Pavement Reclamation Projects on CSAH's 7, 29 & 43 SAP's 74-607-024, 074-629-004 & 074-643-008 to Crane Creek Asphalt in the amount of \$1,457,731.77.

3. Abbe/Krueger approving renewal of CUP #216 allowing mining of sand and gravel, Wondra Pit in Section 8-105-19 of Bloomington Prairie Township with 13 conditions per the Planning Commission and to approve the Findings of Fact. Ayes all.

4. Krueger/Gnemi approving the renewal of CUP #218 allowing the mining of sand and gravel, Wondra Pit in Section 20-105-19 of Bloomington Prairie Township with 14 conditions per the Planning Commission and to approve the Findings of Fact. Ayes all.

5. Gnemi/Abbe approving the renewal of CUP #285 allowing the mining, processing and stockpiling of sand and gravel, Wondra Pit in Section 17-105-19 of Bloomington Prairie Township with 18 conditions per the Planning Commission and to approve the Findings of Fact. Ayes all.

6. Glynn/Gnemi to deny leave of absence request for educational purposes. Ayes all.

7. Glynn/Gnemi approving a one-year contract with Granicus for there GovD Communications Cloud (formerly Gov-Delivery) at a cost of \$6,000 for 12 months of service plus a one-time onboarding fee of \$2,900. Ayes all.

8. Executive Director Doug Grout and Jeff Wyant of Semcac Community Action Agency gave an update on their operations.

**LISTING OF BILLS**

02/09/2021  
Advanced Correctional Healthcare Inc \$ 7,541.03  
ANIM COMMUNICATIONS INC.....2,529.60  
Applied Concepts Inc.....2,966.00  
Association of Mn Counties.....2,298.00  
Bolton & Menk Inc.....11,218.00  
Central Farm Services .....5,007.27  
City of Owatonna .....94,179.26  
Dodge County Public Health .....5,500.00  
ESRI Inc .....38,500.00

Kiesler's Police Supply Inc .....5,003.62  
Loken Excavating & Drainage .....2,733.90  
Mike's Repair .....2,300.50  
RDO Equipment Co, Inc. ....2,807.60  
Rice County Solid Waste Dept .....2,310.00  
Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc .....4,423.05  
Steele County Highway Dept .....4,044.42  
Summit Food Services LLC .....15,567.99  
90 Payments less than \$2,000 .....24,317.73  
Final Total: \$233,244.97  
9. Gnemi/Abbe to adjourn at 5:55 p.m. Ayes all.

3/3

**NOTICE**

BLOOMING PRAIRIE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
MONDAY,  
MARCH 15, 2021  
HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA  
CENTER

**PROPOSED  
TENTATIVE AGENDA**

6:00 a.m. Thursday,  
March 11, 2021  
\*Regular School Board  
Work Session - High  
School Media Center

7:00 p.m. Monday,  
March 15, 2021  
\*Open Public Forum High  
School Media Center

7:15 p.m. Monday,  
March 15, 2021  
\*Regular School Board  
Meeting - High School  
Media Center

Any person may raise a question to the School Board. The Board will not act on any item presented to them, which is not on the agenda, until the following Board meeting. Also, the Board would like persons to limit themselves to five minutes, with a maximum of 15 minutes per topic. These limitations are needed for us to run a timely and orderly Board meeting. Persons are requested to identify themselves prior to speaking.

**I. CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRPERSON****II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE****III. ROLL CALL - CLERK****IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA****V. PRINCIPAL REPORTS****VI. ITEMS ON WHICH BOARD ACTION IS REQUESTED****A. Consent Agenda****B. Minutes Bills****C. Treasurer's Report****D. Resignation****E. Donations****F. Employment****G. Volunteer Coaches****H. Timeline for Food Service Bids****I. Resolution Relating to the Termination and Nonrenewal of Teaching Contracts****VII. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ONLY****A. Class Sizes/Sections****B. Learning Models****C. Strategic Planning****D. Committee Reports****E. Enrollment Data****F. Dates to Note****VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD MEMBER ITEMS****IX. ADJOURNMENT**

\*Agenda may be subject to changes

3/3

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**FOR SALE**

FOR SALE: Barbie collectible Christmas doll, Angel of Joy 1998. Perfect condition \$50. In Owatonna Call: 507-451-9391.

**HUGE 25% OFF EVERYTHING IN THE STORE SALE:** March 5th 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 6th 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. **PLUS 50% OFF ALL LP RECORDS & CDS!** New collections include: snow bunnies, lib-

erty falls, model cars, die cast cars, Mickey Mouse plus lots more at Dana's Consignment Store, 32 E. Main Street, Dodge Center (right next to Harold's Club) Lots of FREE items!

**FOR RENT**

**DODGE CENTER APARTMENT FOR RENT.** Two bedrooms includes heat, water, trash, on-site laundry and off-street parking. Available March 1, 2021.

\$650/month. Call Aaron at 507-398-6899

**APARTMENT FOR RENT** in Kasson. 3 bdrm, 1 bath, appliances included, 10'x12' deck, 1st floor, off street parking. No smoking, no pets. \$700/mo. 507-951-3401

**WANTED**

**WANTED:** Female service cat or kitty for companionship. Would

prefer a kitten up to six-months of age. Must be an indoor kitten. Prefer free kitten, but willing to pay. Call 507-603-1195.

**COINS**

**NEED CASH?** I give free appraisals of your old coins from 1964 and older. I am also looking to buy older coins such as silver dollars, halves, quarters, dimes and Indianhead cents. Please call Ron from Hayfield

at 507-477-2427 or 507-259-6460.

**HELP WANTED**

**ROCHESTER TOOL & CUTTER GRINDING:** Immediate opening. Looking for full-time (4 10-hour days) or part-time employee (20-30 hours) to sharpen machine shop tooling. Mechanical knowledge preferred, but will train. Students - adults. For more information call Jack at shop. 507-634-7184.

**TRUCK DRIVER / FARMWORKER:** Mobil Brothers Farm is looking for seasonal position, drive semi-truck or tractor for Spring. Operating 12 hours/day, weather permitting. Class A driver license recommended. 507-438-3510

**STUDENT EMPLOYMENT**

**CALEB'S PET SITTING,** Cats and Dogs, please call me at 507-634-7907.

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**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT**  
• Provide friendly and efficient customer service in person, on the phone, and electronically.  
• Support production, sales and office management team.

**REQUIREMENTS**  
• Must be Office Suite (Word & Excel) and Google proficient.  
• Knowledge of Adobe Suite desirable.  
• Friendly and reliable.

Email resume and references to: dci@kmtel.com

INDEPENDENT

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or call collect 24 hours

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# OWATONNA PROUD

B12 | WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

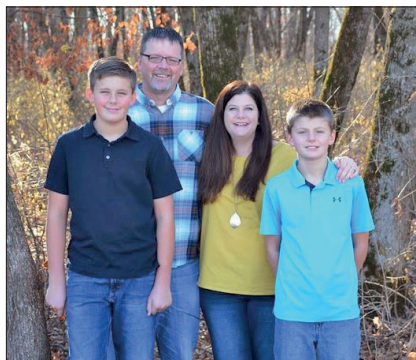
OWATONNA SCHOOLS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

## Husband-wife team committed to Owatonna Schools

Erin Halverson, assistant principal at Owatonna Middle School, has spent 22 #OwatonnaProud years in the District. She taught social studies at Owatonna High School for 17 years before becoming an assistant

principal at OMS five years ago. Her husband, Mike, has worked for the District for 24 years as director of technology and innovation. They have two sons who are students in Owatonna Public Schools.

Erin enjoys spending time with her family at the lake, reading, traveling, and going to all of her boys' events. What she loves most about her job are the middle school kids and the amazing staff at OMS.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Erin and Mike Halverson have 46 combined years of experience with Owatonna Schools. They are shown with their two sons, who are students in Owatonna.

## Thumbs up to a canoe challenge



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A member of the sixth grade Gopher Team gives a thumbs up to a recent classroom project. The students completed a unit on Fur Trade (1650-1850) in social studies with a canoe challenge that took them through the engineering process.

## Owatonna Students of the Week



### Elementary

**Addyson Elmhurst**  
Fourth Grade

Parents: Zachary and Ellyse Elmhurst

Addy is a true example of the Washington Way. She is always ready to learn and looks for ways to stretch herself as a learner. She is very willing to share her thinking with others and yet respects her classmates' thoughts as well. Addy has a kind heart and compassion for others. We are proud and lucky to have Addy as part of the 4A family



### Middle School

**Joey Poole**  
Seventh Grade

Parents: Jacquelyn and Thomas Poole

Joey Poole stands out as one of the hardest working students at OMS! Joey is always on time, ready to learn, respectful, positive and gives his best effort. Joey rarely stops smiling, loves to be physically active, and is an active participant in his STRIDE classroom and school community. Joey is a leader in being kind. He is a true, quality friend with gratitude, generosity, and grace for all. Keep up the great work, Joey!



### High School

**Nataly Hurtada Tiza**  
Senior

Parents: Earl and Sarita Ennis

Nataly is a generous, kind and caring person who works hard on her assignments. She shows leadership by helping out her fellow peers when they ask her questions. While in the Youth Service Leadership class, Nataly helped our community by making a blanket to donate, volunteering with the salvation army for bell-ringing, being a penpal to an elderly person, and much more. Congratulations on being student of the week!

## Meagher provides quality teaching and learning

At the Feb. 22 school board meeting, Superintendent Jeff Elstad recognized Dr. Tom Meagher, STEM coordinator, for his commitment to high-quality teaching and learning.

Dr. Meagher has had an impact on thousands of students! We are #OwatonnaProud that he is a part of our school community.

Each month at its regular meeting, the School Board of Owatonna Public Schools recognizes individual students and/or staff members who exemplify the district's mission of inspiring excellence - every learner, every day.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dr. Tom Meagher is committed to high quality learning at Owatonna Public Schools. He is the district's STEM coordinator.

## Huskies girls basketball heating up

BY CONNOR BUDACH  
OHS MAGNET WRITER

The Owatonna Girls Basketball Team started off rocky at 4-6 and 2-4 in its league with a recent victory versus the Albert Lea Tigers. Rochester Mayo is currently leading the league at 6-0. The Huskies are looking to turn things around in the near future.

The young Huskies team have been riddled with injuries over the season. Head coach Lindsey Hugstad-Vaa

said, "We lost one of our starters in the first game and we are evaluating another starter's injury to see how bad it is. So we will have to find that out." The Huskies bench will have to step up in a tremendous way in order to fill the roles of junior starter Ari Shornock who was a game one starter for the Huskies as she is only able to play roughly half the game. Luckily, junior Holly Buytaert is able to play again full time after being injured in the beginning of the season.



OHS MAGNET

Sarah Kingland is at the free throw line.

COVID-19 restraints have been set into place for the basketball season with players having to wear masks not only on the bench, but also in the game playing. With the mask rule being in effect for the Huskies it has made some complications with how much the starters can play before they need a break on the bench from not being able to take in enough oxygen through the mask.

Senior captain Maggie Newhouse says,

"Playing in masks makes our team have to rotate lineups faster. It also makes it harder to communicate through the masks." The Huskies have started to turn things around in big ways as they have won their last two games.

Newhouse also said, "We are starting to shoot very well from inside the arc and from the free throw line. We have had excellent defensive plays as well as grabbing many offensive rebounds."

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