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NRHEG

Star Eagle

SERVING THE NEW RICHLAND-HARTLAND-ELLENDALE-GENEVA AREA

No. 18 Vol. CXXXIX \$2Office in New Richland, Minnesota 56072Thursday, May 1, 2025

■ Inside

Spring!!

Memorial Day photos request

Every year the Star Eagle runs a special section honoring those who served in our annual Memorial Day edition of the paper. We are kindly requesting people call, email or write the Star Eagle to request who they would like to see pictured in this year's edition.

Photos from last year WILL NOT be used unless requested.

Email: steagle@hickorytech.net
Phone: 507-463-8112
Mail: Star Eagle, P.O. Box 248, New Richland, MN, 56072

Graduation Open house ads available

Celebrate this year's graduates in the paper with a photo and open house announcement. Cost is \$25 for one week or \$40 for two weeks.

Please email steagle@hickorytech.net or call 507-463-8112. The form can be found on the Star Eagle Website.

Straight Talk with Sheriff Jay Dulas at the Waseca Chamber of Commerce office Friday, May 2

Join Sheriff Dulas for Straight Talk from noon till 1 p.m. on Friday, May 2 at the Waseca Area Chamber office to ask questions or address concerns. There will be additional chances every first Friday of the month. Presented by the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism.

Ellendale Heritage Society to meet May 3

The Ellendale Heritage society will meet May 3 at 9 a.m. in the Community Building .

City Wide Garage Sale in Geneva Friday, May 2 and Saturday, May 3

There will be a City Wide Garage Sale in Geneva Friday, May 2 and Saturday, May 3. Visit the Geneva Facebook page for more information.

Hilltop Greenhouse, Geneva, open house 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 3

Hilltop Greenhouse, 83204 300th Street, Ellendale will be offering bars and treats during its open house, scheduled from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sat., May 3.

NRHEG Grand March 3:30 p.m. in the high school gym Sat., May 3

NRHEG grand march will be at 3:30 p.m. Saturday, May 3 in the high school gym. Participants are scheduled to stop by the New Richland Care Center between 2 and 2:30 prior to grand march. Afterwards, prom participants will travel to Stillwater for a meal and dance on a chartered boat followed by After Prom games and fun at Whirly-Ball in Bloomington.

Wingstock 2025 at the Geneva Bar and Grill Saturday, May 3

Backyard Wing Cook-Off and Wing Eating Contest, Wingstock 2025 is happening again at the Geneva Bar and Grill starting at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 3. Tickets \$15 presale, \$20 at the door, limited availability. Purchase tickets at Geneva Bar and Grill or through Smokin Barrel Barbecue.

A word from

The Word

Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!

Psalm 105:2



Sawyer Root, accompanied by his mother Alicia, was at the Kindergarten Card Party at the New Richland Public Library on Saturday, April 26, 2025.



Sisters Ada, Lyla and Mina Berg were with their mother Lindsey at the New Richland Library's Kindergarten Card Party on Saturday, April 26, 2025.

Local youth earn first library cards

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Kathy Kronebusch, branch supervisor for the New Richland Public Library, had a small crowd of energetic youngsters in the library the morning of Saturday, April 26. But any kids past the first grade were turned away at the door, seriously, because this was the Kindergarten Card Party. Kindergarteners were the guests of honor, here to receive their first library cards.

Kronebusch was monitoring the arrivals: "We had 20 people sign up in advance," she said of the event, "but they can just walk in if they

want." A star-filled background offered a spot where children could pose for a photo. If they wanted, they could hold an oversized, novelty library card while smiling for the camera. Nearby were cutie oranges and chocolate or powdered-sugar donuts for those kids who needed a snack. Kindergartener Sawyer Root stood looking down at the donuts for almost a minute before he decided on powdered sugar.

Said Kronebusch, "Kindergartners are just learning to read because it's the end of the school year. This is a reward to help them in their pursuits over the summer, to show what we

can provide for them at the library now that they have all this extra time on their hands. They come in here today and we fill out an application for them. We design their brand-new library card however they want. The kids who came today also get a free book bag."

A music video played on a screen at the back of the library, and before long a bubble machine began creating a festive mood. A rotating number of kids were on the dance floor. First there were four, then eight, then three—the bubbles kept them coming back. "We also have a scavenger hunt to help them ex-

plore." Kronebusch explained those who joined the hunt would be asked to find various types of reading, including books on fairies, or informative books on whales, horses, or other topics. To help the little ones keep track of their cards, they were handed a New Richland Library lanyard.

Kronebusch wanted everyone to know all young readers are invited to take part in the library's summer reading program. Anyone ages 3 to 18 can sign up and read to win prizes June 2 through July 31.

Local city-wide garage sales a hit

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

New Richland and Hartland both had city-wide garage sales on Saturday, April 26. The sun was shining with a little chill in the air and plenty of bargains to go around.

Randi Akemann, Jan Kalbow and Sharon Olson were wearing light jackets and enjoying the warmth at just about lunchtime in Hartland, "We're sharing our treasures with the visitors that come." They've been planning this since February. They got four friends to go in on the sale.

There were up to 24 separate places to view in the New Richland area and almost a dozen in Hartland.

Lynda Emstad of Hartland was set up inside her garage. "It was chilly today, so we kept the doors closed. I like doing this because I just like to have fun with everyone who stops by. We have three people in on this sale, but the others are inside." The heater kicked on as she spoke.

Down at the Channel Seed building in Hartland, six members of the Schlaak family were gathered together. That included a few children running around. They were proud to say last year they were the only ones taking part in the city-wide sale. "We had it last year, so this is our second and we had so much stuff it just made sense to combine all of it."



Members of the Schlaak Family held their garage sale at the Channel Seed building during the Hartland city-wide garage sale on Saturday, April 26, 2025.

Star Eagle photo by Ben Revermann

Youngsters Hadley and Alex were staffing a refreshments counter selling coffee and lemonade for 50 cents or cookies till they run out. They also sold rubber band bracelets and string

bracelets for 50 cents each. For those who missed this year's city-wide garage sale, look for it again next year on the last weekend in April.



From left: Joni Groth, Kellie Petranek, Marilyne Donahue and Brooke Krohn volunteered at the Community Lutheran Church's Meatball Dinner on Sunday, April, 27, 2025.



Jan Bartsch and Pastor Leandra Anderson sold 47 different quilts at the Community Lutheran Church Supper on Sunday, April 27, 2025.

Star Eagle photos by Ben Revermann

Quilting with a side of meatballs

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Community Lutheran Church of Geneva held a meatball dinner accompanied by a "beautiful quilt raffle" over the lunch hour on Sunday, April 27. More than 260 people attended, and almost \$3,000 was raised to support church endeavors. Not only was the parking lot of the church full, streetside parking for blocks in each direction was also hard to come by.

The raffle was a chance to win a quilt made by Joan Vandenhovel; it was donated in her memory by family. Proceeds from the meal and raffle are slated for the church's music and quilting funds. Jan Bartsch and Pastor Leandra Anderson were staffing the quilt sale upstairs. Said Bartsch, "We have 47 quilts for sale today. There are 12 of us church quilters who get together and work on them here to help raise money. Twice a year in May and October, we donate 60 or so quilts to

Lutheran World Relief, which works out to around 120 quilts per year." As she spoke, customers were walking up and down the church aisle perusing the offerings.

In the basement was the meatball dinner. On the menu were meatballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, coleslaw, buns and pie. Price of the meal was a free-will offering. Jonie Groth was scooping out mashed potatoes, Kellie Petranek was serving the meatballs, Marilyne Donahue was on corn duty and Brooke Krohn was in charge of the gravy. If they were tired, none of them showed it. Susan Stieglbauer said the potatoes were donated by Mrs. Gerry. The ladies of the church donated the desserts. The corn was donated by Melissa McCornack, who also helped assemble meatballs.

Patron Tim Gassmann brought five of his children. He commented, "The meatballs were fantastic. I love homemade meatballs, so do the kids."

School Board

NRHEG

NRHEG School establishing elementary life skills classroom

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

During their regular meeting the evening of April 22, NRHEG school board members heard from special education coordinator Lara Chicos about plans to create a "life skills" classroom at the elementary site. Life skills programming, she explained, is for students who, because of a disability, do not learn at the same pace as their classmates. Students typically served in the setting include those with Downs Syndrome, autism, or other cognitive or behavioral disabilities.

Chicos told board members the objective is to keep the students in "mainstream" participation as much as possible, so all life skills group members will take part in activities in typical classrooms when feasible. At this time, Chicos said, she expects eight students to be part of the life skills program at the elementary site.

Chicos also mentioned there are currently 50 students in grades kindergarten through five who are on "individualized education plans," or, in other words, are part of the special education program.

District superintendent Michael Meihak informed board members a solution has already been found to the question of how NRHEG can begin offering online schooling. Board members had been told at a previous meeting that, when students have chosen to disenroll from the NRHEG district, a strong percentage of them were transferring to online schools—that is, programs which make it possible for them to meet Minnesota's graduation requirements by logging into classes remotely and completing required work without leaving home.

Meihak shared that the Owatonna district already has an online school and would be open to an arrangement which keeps students on NRHEG's rosters while they participate in learning activities through Owatonna's program.

Meihak stated the per-student fee for the service is reasonable, constituting a "forty-percent savings over losing the student."

Board members heard from Jake Berg, representing the engineering and consulting firm SiteLogIQ. The company took a leadership role in assessing physical systems at the Ellendale and New Richland sites, then planning and coordinating the numerous construction projects which took place last summer.

Jake Berg (not to be confused with secondary principal Grant Berg) stated at the beginning of his presentation that he hopes the district and SiteLogIQ will have an ongoing partnership when it comes to "long-term facilities maintenance," a budget and planning element which the state requires school districts to report on yearly, projecting costs and projects out for the next 10 years.

Jake Berg was perhaps taken by surprise when school board chair Rick Schultz stated some dissatisfaction over a lack of closure regarding last summer's work. Schultz and board vice chair Loren Schoenrock both stated the absence of a final report constituted a "gap" in SiteLogIQ's service.

School continued on 2



FenceLines

by Mark Bernard

Onion sets are the bright spot

Seasonal temps with added precip this past week had the scurs tweaking with the Weather again. Does Mother Nature keep giving us pecks on the cheek or will she bother someone else for a while? Starting Thursday, partly sunny with a good chance of showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the mid-60's with lows in the low 40's. Sunny on Friday with a slight chance of forenoon showers. Highs in the low 60's with lows in the low 40's. Sunny on Saturday, with highs in the low 70's and lows in the low 50's. Sunday, mostly sunny with an increasing chance of a shower or thunderstorms by evening. Highs in the mid-70's with lows in the upper 50's. Cloudy on Monday with highs in the upper 70's and lows in the upper 50's. Tuesday, mostly cloudy with a fair chance of showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the low 80's with lows in the mid-50's. Mostly cloudy on Wednesday with a good chance of showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 70's with lows in the mid-50's. On May 5th, our sunrise slips before 6 a.m. CDT at 5:59. Our gain in daylight also slows to two minutes and thirty seconds per day. The normal high for May 5th is 64 and the normal low is 43. The scurs will relish the contents of another delicious May basket.

I actually remember delivering May baskets once upon a time or at least going along. It was back in the early 1960's and I was with my two older brothers. Am guessing my oldest brother was probably driving and my next oldest brother was actually the one delivering the basket. I was the little snot-nosed brother along for the ride to Tugood's, Nicolai's or the Spellhaug's. It didn't take long as they were just up the road a piece from our Pleasant Grove farm. I still remember one of my brothers yelling "May basket! May basket!"

The basket contents were likely flowers and small candy of some kind. May baskets were a way to send kind wishes after a long hard winter. It's a little-known fact that May 1st marks the midway point between the vernal equinox and the summer solstice. The May Basket tradition was popular from the late 19th century into the early 1960's. Sadly, it died out about the same time as wide white sidewalks, Hula Hoops and tail fins did. Correlation is not causation.

Not much in the way of planting progress since we last left you. Additional rain throughout last week, while not large amounts, really never allowed the soil to dry long enough to allow it. Monday night's rainfall amounts were more than forecast. Seasonal temperatures haven't helped matters. Some are glad they have planted some and no one can blame them. The corn and soybean seed examined a week after planting showed it to be very much alive and progressing normally. Odds of fieldwork occurring this week have diminished. Perhaps by the weekend if it doesn't rain on May 1st as is forecast. Average daily temperatures are supposed to rise according to the forecast, so that should start to bring back some optimism. It's too early to think about making wholesale maturity changes in either the corn or soybeans. Today's hybrids and varieties have been shown to excel even when planting on some

May morning rather than in April.

The garden at the ranch hasn't progressed very fast either. While you can see the rows of radishes and mesclun blend from the house, they really didn't grow that much in April. The onion sets I got from Mitch were probably the bright spot. I got those in quick before the heavy rain April 17th & 18th. Recently one could see the tops beginning to emerge from the soil in nice straight rows. We should have plenty for our own use and enough to share. The carrots are another story. Old seed, planted the same day, they have yet to give any indication that there are any signs of life. They can be a little pokey sometimes so I'm trying to be patient with them. Now it's a waiting game before planting anything else. In the meantime the first rhubarb pie of the season hit the table. It didn't quite make Easter, but the bright red stalks made a pie that was well worth the wait.

It will be lawnmowing time soon, so have to get that beast up and operational. Like many area lawns, there are only portions of it that need mowing so far. However, waiting until it's all ready to mow this spring could mean leaving wads and clumps in those heavy areas. Fortunately one of those areas is on the slope south of the house. It's mostly smooth brome, so it grows like a house afire early on. It also encompasses an area where low branches on the nannyberries like to snap me in the face. Thinking what I'll do is bring the lopper along and mow up to that area. When I run across branches that want to be persnickety, they'll get chopped off. Cleaning up the mess afterwards isn't a bowl of cherries or nannyberries, but as long as it makes mowing less worse, I'm down for it. It won't hurt the trees, and it'll make my mowing time more relaxing.

The bird migration at the ranch has been more sputtery than some years. There have been the white-throated sparrows and a few brown creepers, but other than that, pretty quiet. There have been some questions about putting out hummingbird and oriole feeders. For starters, there aren't many blooming plants in most areas, yet. And, quite honestly, when it's 37 degrees in the morning, it certainly doesn't feel like hummingbird or oriole weather. It doesn't hurt to put them out, realizing that it's perhaps one week of maintaining and keeping the feeders clean before they show up. As we get towards the weekend and the temperatures warm, I'll probably change my tune. The suet feeders are nearer to being empty. I usually replace a couple of them with the nectar and grape jelly feeder. Then it can be spring.

We got Poppy through the week of treating her ears. It got easier after the first several times. She actually settled down and didn't fight, allowing us to massage the medicine into her ear canal as instructed. She still shook her head afterwards, sending small droplets of medication flying. No harm, no foul. The main thing is it stopped the head shaking and digging in her ear with her hind foot. Now Poppy can get back to her regularly scheduled squirrel, bunny and kitty chasing.

See you next week...real good then.

Briefs

The Wild Robot Party at New Richland Public Library Monday, May 5

There will be a Wild Robot Party at the New Richland Public Library at 4 p.m. Monday, May 5. Build a friendly robot, learn survival skills, take the camouflage challenge, and more while celebrating the extraordinary story of Roz, a robot learning to live in the wilderness. Geared for ages 7-12.

The Secret Science of Bubbles at Waldorf Public Library Wednesday, May 7

Enjoy the Secret Science of Bubbles at the Waldorf Public Library at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 7. Why do bubbles pop? Is there a way to puncture a bubble and not have it pop? Why do bubbles float higher in cool weather? This free event is geared for ages 8-12.

The best day of your life



Whatever Flips Your Waffle

by Mark Domeier
Contributing Writer

I listened to an audiobook called "I See You Called in Dead" recently. It's about an obituary writer who gets drunk one night, writes his own obituary, and publishes it. The results of being "dead" shake up his life; it's a really good book!

In one scene, the main character is walking through a cemetery and stops at a random grave. He asks the deceased, "What was the best day of your life?"

That was one of those moments where I probably didn't get much out of the next few minutes of the audiobook as my mind raced to answer that question for myself.

There are the obvious answers: the day I got married, the days my kids were born, etc. And those days just multiply: important church events for the kids alongside their high school graduations. How about my own high school and college graduations? Or the first day I met Michelle?

The best day of your life can have a lot of definitions. Many people would answer with a big event like some I listed above. And I foresee more of those days coming: Jayna graduates from Winona State soon and hopefully finds a job and maybe, just maybe, might get engaged. Anton will graduate from MSU-Mankato in a couple of years and might follow that same path. And on and on.

But what about the little things that create great days? Both kids were home at Christmas, and we had a game night. All four of us had so much fun. We played a few games that involved competitiveness,

twists, and hilarity. At times, we were all laughing so hard we were crying. That was a best day.

Yes, I'm cheating. I have a lot of best days. And yes, I know that the word best means the very tip-top. But a lot of people cheat on this. How many best friends do you have? For many people, it's more than one, so I'm using that same rationale here.

The summer league game against JWP in Ellendale where Anton made some good defensive plays and then scored the game-winning run on a passed ball, his dad running down the baseline with him. That was a best day.

The JV basketball game where Jayna hit the game-winning shot on the road against TCU and then helped the defense make a stop to seal the victory. That was a best day.

The first time Michelle and I went to see our favorite humorist, David Sedaris, live in Minneapolis. It was everything we hoped and more, leading to a nearly-annual visit to watch him perform. That was a best day.

Putting up the big wooden playset in the backyard for the kids and then watching them play for hours. That was a best day.

Going with my dad last year to a series of appointments and tests at

the clinic in New Ulm to help him figure out some medical issues. That might not seem like a best day, but the quality time I spent with Dad is time I'll never count as wasted. That was a best day.

The day I got to see the original Star Wars movie re-released in theaters, one I had been too young to see in 1977 when it first came out. Seeing it on the big screen took my breath away. That was a best day.

Having both kids with me to see Avengers: Endgame, the finale of the Marvel Cinematic Universe's massive storyline and knowing they groaned and shook their heads when their dad shouted, "Yes!" at the point Captain America yelled, "Avengers Assemble!" but understood why he did that. That was a best day.

Walking into Hobbiton in New Zealand with Michelle and seeing one of my favorite books come to life, which still brings a tear to my eye, just thinking about it. It was a dream come true. That was a best day.

Scoring the game-winning run in summer baseball at the age of 13 when I hit a bases-clearing triple and scampered home on a throwing error. As I sped home, the catcher tried to catch the ball and swipe-tag me, but

he didn't have the ball. He did, however, catch me across the face and briefly knocked me out as I fell on the plate. That was a best day.

Every rare occasion that all my sisters and I are home together. Dad always makes sure we get a picture when that happens. Those are best days.

Every time I get to watch a student figure out a path to success in my classroom. Every time I watch youth or high school sporting events and see great effort and improvement, win or not. Every time I see a music or theater production put on by people who care. Those are best days.

Every time a former student says thank you. Those are best days.

When Michelle and I are able to retire and not have to worry about our morning routine to get ready for work, that will be a best day.

And that, ultimately, is the point. The character in the book wondered what the deceased person's best day was. That's a question without a definitive answer.

In reality, the next day I get to live and do wonderful things, be it read a book or announce a game or teach kids how to use the Oxford comma, will be a best day. Enjoy your best days!

Word of the Week: This week's word is *uniquity*, which means being the only one of its kind, as in, "His next best day had a taste of *uniquity* since he had never experienced it before." Impress your friends and confuse your enemies!

Prosecutor's perspective – April 2025

By Rachel Cornelius, Waseca County Attorney

To continue on last month's column about sentencing factors and considerations, it's important to know and understand what it means when the news reports what a maximum sentence is for a crime, such as "Defendant is facing up to 10 years in prison and a \$20,000 fine." All crimes have a maximum punishment; some also have a minimum punishment. However, what does it mean when you hear someone is facing 10 years in prison and then they receive no prison, and in some cases, no jail time? Often, prosecutors and judges get blamed. What people do not hear is the full reason: sentencing guidelines dictate sentences. While the "10 years" may be the maximum

sentence, if a defendant has no criminal history, depending on the type of crime, they may not see any jail time, much less any prison, as the sentencing guidelines would not even permit a prison sentence. There is a sentencing guidelines grid that dictates what a person will receive for the same crime and the same criminal history.

So then why do some people get different sentences for the same crime? There are many factors that go into a plea offer such as the extent of someone's involvement in the crime, what their criminal history is,



Cornelius

if they are amenable to probation, how serious a crime they committed, is there a victim and what does the victim want, is there some issue (chemical dependency/mental health) underlying the criminal behavior that we can attempt to treat to avoid further criminal behavior. Alternately, things like race, gender, employment, occupation and marital/family status cannot be considered. As I've stressed in past columns, we are ministers of justice, and that has many implications. We do not make plea agreements without due consideration to all factors in an individual case, while also protecting public safety and taking a victim's wishes into consideration.

There has been a lot about diversion in the news lately. It should be

noted that diversion is only used in limited circumstances here in Waseca. There is a time and a place for diversion. It is generally used for first-time offenders with low-level (misdemeanor) thefts, not \$20,000 in vehicle damage. Something like that would never be diverted in Waseca County, regardless of the political climate, or who the person is or worked for. Diversion agreements and plea agreements like that create circumstances where justice is served. It only acts as a message that you aren't actually protecting public safety and holding people accountable for their actions.

Nothing in this article is intended to provide legal advice; this writing does not constitute an attorney-client relationship.

School

from Page 1

Jake Berg responded he would work with superintendent Meihak to schedule a report to the board of the type they were requesting and to answer any questions.

Elementary principal Craig Kopeztki mentioned one of his current priorities is determining staff placements for the 2025-'26 school year. He mentioned special education teacher Zach Nelson had tendered his resignation and has accepted a

position with the Hayfield school district; other than that, no turnover has occurred so far.

Superintendent Meihak reported Sarah Wacholz has been selected to serve as next year's administrative assistant for district matters, taking the seat vacated as Sue Kulseth retires. Wacholz's training for the position begins May 5; Meihak said she will be present at the May 19 school board meeting.

Secondary principal Grant Berg mentioned numerous special programs and events underway at the New Richland site. Included was a May 6 "Activity Fair" organized by senior class members Harbor Crom-

well and Chloe Stork. The purpose of the fair, he explained, was to broaden students' understanding of the many options they have outside of the classroom to build community and spend time with their friends.

Berg explained the fair will be all morning May 6; students are scheduled to cycle through by grade level, being given time to talk with the var-

ious representatives.

Board members tabled a decision regarding which company to hire to fix the roof on the New Richland bus garage. The lowest bid by nearly half the amount came from a company which did not have insurance; by tabling the matter, board members hoped they were leaving time to allow a solution to be found.

Briefs

NRHEG Greenhouse Plant Sale May 9&10

The NRHEG agricultural education program will have its spring plant sale the afternoon of Friday, May 9 and the morning of Saturday, May 10. Available to purchase will be flowers in hanging pots, flowers for repotting, and a small assortment of vegetables. The greenhouse is located to the west of the NRHEG Secondary school in New Richland.

Waldorf Petal Pushers plant sale Waldorf Community Center Sat., May 10

The Waldorf Petal Pushers plant sale will be held from 8-11 a.m. Saturday, May 10 at the Waldorf Community Center. Available will be bedding plants, house plants, succulents, perennials and much more.

Restart the Beat AED medical class at United

Methodist Church in Ellendale Mon., May 12

There will be a Restart the Beat Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) class at the United Methodist Church in Ellendale from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Monday, May 12. Free donations accepted, light meal provided.

NRHEG Spring Band Concert 7 p.m. May 13

NRHEG fifth-grade, sixth-grade, junior high and high school bands will all perform during the spring band concert set for 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 13 in the high school gym.

NRHEG presents "The Wizard of Oz" May 17 and 18

The NRHEG all-school musical "The Wizard of Oz" will feature students in grades 5 to 12. Performances will be in the high school gym. Shows will begin at 3 and 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 17, and at 1 p.m. on Sunday, May 18.

NRHEG Star Eagle

SERVING THE NEW RICHLAND-HARTLAND-ELLENDALE-GENEVA AREA and the communities of Waseca, Otisco, Hope, Clarks Grove, Matawan, Freeborn and Waldorf

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ELLENDALE CITY COUNCIL

Residents request chicken ordinance changes

By KAY FATE
Steele County Times

For the first time in almost a year, there were no angry exchanges about antennas, codes or towers at the Ellendale City Council meeting.

That’s because for the first time in almost a year, rural Ellendale resident Daniel Pet-singer and investigative journalist Keith Haskell weren’t at the April 10 meeting.

Instead, the public comment period featured what has been a hot-button topic at other city councils – but was seen as a breath of fresh air by council members.

“I know we have an ordinance in place right now that says we cannot have chickens, but I’m asking the council if we could take a look at it,” said resident Glenn Hedberg.

“If we could have five hens, no roosters... maybe have some type of register, so we know who has chickens in town, so if somebody (complains), well, you know who has chickens and who don’t,” he said, before thanking the council and taking his seat.

“I’ll second what he said,” said Sue Asplund. She’s also a resident, and wife of council member Jon Asplund.

“Me, too,” another woman echoed, drawing laughs.

“I’m sure it’s something we can look at; I know it’s been brought up before,” said Mayor Scott Groth, as another man walked in.

“Is it public comment time?” he asked.

“Yep, we’re on chickens right now,” Groth responded.

“That’s all I wanted to know about,” the man said, and sat down. He, too, supported changing the ordinance to allow chickens.

He lived in Roseville, “and we could have up to 12. It was nice; you just had to let your neighbors know and sign off on it. It was super great.”

Jim Crosby didn’t have an opinion on chickens, but addressed the elephant in the room.

“I’m kind of disappointed our two buddies aren’t here tonight,” he said, clearly referring to Pet-singer and Haskell. “It’s not going to be as much fun.”

Crosby first addressed City Clerk Steve Engel, joking that he had checked the agenda three or four times “and I have not seen my name on this thing.”

Petsinger frequently questions why his ongoing issues with the city are not included in the agenda.

“I’ve been on this planet a long time,” Crosby continued, “and I know some of you are thinking, ‘This guy doesn’t look a day over 40.’ But in those 40-plus years, I’ve had the opportunity to attend quite a few city

Ellendale continued on 12

A Legacy of Leadership: Penny Retires from SMIF

By ANN STALOCH

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) President and CEO Tim Penny was celebrated by more than 500 community members, colleagues, and admirers on Thursday evening at Mineral Springs Brewery in Owatonna. After 18 years at the helm of SMIF and a lifetime of public service, Penny announced his retirement, marking the end of an era for the foundation and the region he has championed for decades.

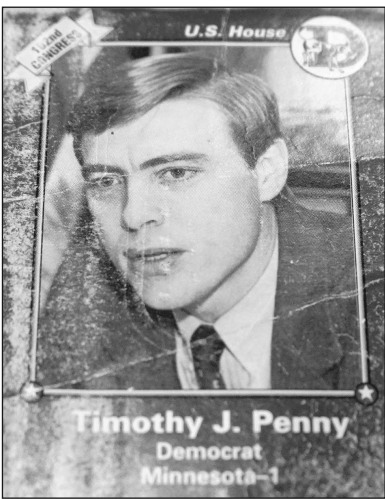
Guests gathered to toast his legacy with libations from MSB and fare from Hy-Vee and Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm, a local business widely recognized as a success story of SMIF support. Among those in attendance were family, friends, former colleagues, entrepreneurs, and many who had been directly impacted by Penny’s work. But the truth was, nearly everyone there would call themselves a fan of Tim.

Penny, who served as a U.S. Congressman from Minnesota’s 1st District from 1983 to 1995 before leading SMIF, is widely credited for strengthening economic opportunity and community vitality in the region. Under his leadership, SMIF invested over \$170 million into southern Minnesota, with initiatives spanning from early childhood development to rural entrepreneurship.

U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar, reflected on Penny’s career: “He was like a boy-wonder when he came into Congress, he was willing to be different. Tim Penny is the guardian angel of Southern Minnesota.”

Representative Brad Finstad also recognized Penny’s retirement on the floor of the House, honoring his dedication to local economies and the people he served: “His departure leaves behind enormous shoes to fill, but also a legacy of service that will long be remembered.”

Penny, always humble and known



102ND CONGRESS - A congressional baseball card from the early 90s portaying Tim Penny, representative of Minnesota’s First District.

for his deep emotional connection to the communities he served, struggled to hold back tears during his brief address to the crowd. “I don’t want to make this any longer than it needs to be, so... um, thank you,” he said through a cracked smile, earning a heartfelt ovation from the audience.

The evening also featured touching tributes from Penny’s children. His daughter Molly shared, “Throughout my life, I never tire of people coming up to me and telling me what an amazing, honest and good man my dad is. I know how lucky I am, and I’m grateful to have been able to share him with Southern Minnesota.”

His son Marcus added, “I know it’s hard for my dad to step down from this work. I think he would have stayed with SMIF forever if that were possible. His love for this region really got to shine. But that’s what makes this fund so special; his legacy in Southern Minnesota will continue forever.”

That fund is the Tim Penny Small Towns Fund, a giving option through



Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar embraces Tim Penny after delivering a speech during Penny’s retirement part.

Photo by Ann Staloch

“He was like a boy-wonder when he came into Congress; he was willing to be different. Tim Penny is the guardian angel of Southern Minnesota.”

— Senator Amy Klobuchar

SMIF, created in honor of Penny’s retirement; “giving to it is common cents.” The fund ensures ongoing support for initiatives that matter most to the rural communities Penny has devoted his life to, economic development, community vitality, and investing in the next generation.

Tim Penny’s retirement is not just the closing of a chapter, it is a call to continue the work he so passionately advanced. As Penny himself has often said, “Leadership isn’t about titles, it’s about making a difference.” And in southern Minnesota, his difference will be felt for generations.

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

County sells land, buys vehicles

By DEB BENTLY
Staff writer

During their April 15 meeting, Waseca County commissioners voted 4 to 1 to sell a county-owned 30-acre parcel of land located near Janesville for \$2,500. Sometimes referred to as “Smith’s Mill Park,” the property was given to the county via a quit claim deed in 1965. It has been ineligible for any form of development because it is “land-locked,” that is, completely surrounded by privately owned land, in addition to being bordered on two sides by county drainage ditches.

County facilities director Brian Tomford informed board members that, because of the landlocked status, the acreage could be sold only to one of the six adjoining property owners. Requests for offers had previously been sent out twice, first giving a price of \$54,000, later requesting bids. No responses had been received.

In reply to commissioner questions, Tomford noted the land consists of woods and some wetlands, and the proposed sale agreement includes a covenant the land is to remain in its current state.

When board chair Doug Christopherson stated his belief it would be better to retain the land under county ownership than to sell it for the low price of \$2,500 recently offered by land-owners Mike and John Schuch, board member De Malterer, who represents the district and has attended meetings where the matter has been discussed, said, “The township is anxious to see that property back in private hands.” She explained a public cartway controlled by the township occasionally causes members of the public to behave as if there is access to the parcel; when they use it, they inevitably trespass on private land.

Commissioners speculated the Schuchs have full access to the land in its current status, and would be taking on assessments for the two county ditches once they own the property.

“The greatest value they would get in paying for something they can already use for free,” speculated commissioner Brad Milbrath, “is trying to reduce the likelihood people will trespass on their privately owned property to gain access to the publicly owned piece.”

After lengthy discussion, a motion to accept the \$2,500 bid was passed.

Commissioners voted in support of purchasing three Ford Explorer vehicles from Deml Ford for a total price of \$137,000.

County Sheriff Jay Dulas explained the vehicles are to be rotated into the sheriff’s

County continued on 12

Street project to cost less than \$3 million

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

During the New Richland city council meeting the evening of April 14, Cory Bienfang, engineer from Bolton & Menk, informed those present that bids for the 2025 street improvement project were opened April 10; the low bid was approximately 15 percent below the engineer’s estimate. Based on the bid received, Bienfang stated the total project cost should be less than \$3 million. A hearing for the bid and project was set for 30 minutes prior to the next regular council meeting,

6 p.m. May 12.

Council members also set a hearing for a proposed new ordinance which would prohibit parking on the east side of South Ash Avenue for all except those living on the street, who would be eligible to apply for permits. That hearing was also set for the night of the next scheduled council meeting, at 7:05 p.m. on Monday, May 12.

Sarah Sundve presented the ambulance report: There were 17 runs in March and only five for April. Sundve informed council members city emergency services paramedic

NEW RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL

Laura Beckman was not paid the full amount for her time in a required training “refresher”: Council members approved an additional \$200 reimbursement. Sundve also reported an upcoming expense to replace the batteries in city-owned pagers; anticipated cost will be \$520 each. The New Richland Ambulance service will no longer use Expert Billing for bookkeeping services, but is changing to EMS Management & Consultants. The city fire department requested \$15,700 for helmets and turnout gear. The police department reported it received 148 calls during April, 367 so far for the year.

The New Richland Care Center is hiring a Director of Nursing and full- and part-time nurses and Certified Nurse Aides (CNAs) for evening and overnight shifts.

The wastewater management department head Shell Johnson reported the city received 1.75 inches of rain across March 30 and 31. The flow spiked at 1,000 gallons a minute. The pumps ran 25 hours straight. Johnson requested around \$4,500 for a replacement pump diaphragm. She also asked for \$3,000 to purchase a dehumidifier for use in the wastewater building.

The bathrooms at Legion Field have been painted. Community Cleanup day is Saturday, May 10.

Property owners Lynn and Lane Wacholz applied to have city limits altered to exclude their property. The two stated they receive no benefits from the city, and so should be assessed by the township instead.

Council members recognized two employee anniversaries: Heather Christensen has been with the city administration for one year; Cody Huiras with the maintenance department for two years.

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Compostings

by Al Batt

One creaking step

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

Want to hear my Batman impersonation?

Sure. Up, up and away! That's Superman. Thanks, man.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I noticed signs that had persisted long after the businesses had closed. I saw one proclaiming gas for \$1.63 per gallon. I stopped, but I couldn't tell if the gas pumps were working because they were long gone and they'd taken the gas station with them. It was a no-service station.

Signs for departed businesses haunt the roadsides. They act as aged decoys drawing in unsuspecting travelers in need of what the bygone commercial enterprises had offered.

We all receive different instructions. The man wore an analog watch on one wrist and a smart-watch on the other. He didn't want to be late for anything. He said his father wasn't good at remembering to flush. That was because he had grown up with an outhouse. Most outhouses are out of business. They survive in parks and out-of-the-way places. Port-a-potties abound at festivals and similar gatherings. The outhouses weren't likely to have left any signs behind when they vanished.

A friend called to tell me a mouse story. She found many pieces of paper rolled into little balls in a kitchen drawer. They were the wrappings from Hall's cough drops—menthol honey-lemon flavored. I recall a kid who tried to solve the puzzle posed as "How many licks does it take to get to the Tootsie Roll center of a Tootsie Pop?" Mr. Owl licked it twice before biting it and declaring the answer to be "Three" to one of the candy world's perplexing puzzles in the classic 1970 TV commercial. Tootsie Pop fans everywhere tried to provide a definitive answer. An honest Mr. Owl would have said, "Who (Hoo) knows?" The world may never know. Maybe the mouse in the kitchen drawer was trying to determine how many licks it takes to get to the center of a Hall's cough drop. One thing is certain: my friend won't be awakened at night by the sound of a coughing mouse.

I'VE LEARNED

A bookshelf is a books' shelf. They aren't making yardsticks any longer.

No carpenter ants ever become plumbers.

I want to write a mystery novel or do I?

Every household staircase of my youth had at least one creaking step.

6:30 is my favorite time of day, hands down.

Shifting my car into reverse takes me back.

Charles Lindbergh was born in Detroit because his mother's uncle was a doctor there. Six weeks later, he was back in Little Falls. He was a mail pilot who became the world's most famous person by flying a single-engine plane for 33 1/2 hours from New York City to Paris without an inflight movie in 1927.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

I love my furniture. My recliner and I go way back.

Did you know that nothing in the English language starts with the letter n and ends with the letter g?

Stephen King has a son named Joe. I'm not joking, but he is.

When my wife gets angry, I put a cape around her shoulders. That makes her super angry.

What do doctors do for people obsessed with yachts? Prescribe anti-buy-yachtics.

NATURE NOTES

American white pelicans flew over. The upper mandible on some had developed a flattened, semicircular, fibrous plate (horn, bump or sail) called a nuptial tubercle. Pelicans mature enough to reproduce develop a nuptial tubercle unique to the American white pelican, which falls off when mating season concludes. The size of the tubercle is variable. Its purpose is to make a pelican more attractive to mates. Upon molting into its eclipse plumage at the end of the breeding season, their crests turn gray and their eye color changes from dark to light. Both the males and the females develop tubercles.

I saw oak and ironwood trees clinging to their dead brown leaves over the winter. This retention of dead plant matter is called marcescence. New spring growth eventually dislodges these dead leaves. Scientists have named the process, but are unsure why it exists. They theorize that marcescent leaves provide a fresh layer of mulch around the tree and add nutrients for growth in the new year. Another thought is that these leaves help conserve soil moisture in the spring by adding shade to the forest floor. Another hypothesis holds that marcescence is a defense mechanism against browsers such as deer.

MEETING ADJOURNED

"Let us learn to live with kindness, to love everyone, even when they do not love us."—Pope Francis.

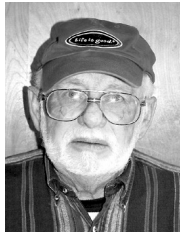
HERITAGE BITS



Compiled by BRENDA DOKKEN (5/1/25) Harold Benson Barber in Geneva gives boys victory haircut.

Harold Benson Barber in Geneva gives boys victory haircut. These Geneva boys are all out for a victory in 1942. They are Paul Nelson (in chain): left to right Ronald Christensen, Lynn Hanson and Guy Hanson. The boys, if you are interested, lift their hats and let you see the whole works for 5 cents. All the money collected will go into war paying stamps. Any additions or corrections please reach out to Barb Mrotz at 507-688-2257 or Brenda Dokken at 507- 402-0336. (5/1/25)

Have you noticed the new businesses?



FACT OR FICTION

...you decide

by Bob Hanson, Emeritus

"If you repeat what you have read here, it may be used against you."

name of Genie of the importance of the week of May 6-12-25. It is "Nurses week." The local Alumni and nurses Club Lutheran is being held Saturday, May 3, 2025 at first Lutheran church in Albert Lea, starting an 11 a.m. social hour with the Luncheon at 12 noon. (It is rumored the meal will be prepared by Joe Lafrance, a summer resident at Beaver Lake.)

Genie also asked me to let all you readers know of all the neat things for sale in the gift shop at the hospital in Albert Lea. (Genie volunteers 2-3 shifts there per month.)

Have you noticed the New business Establishments in your town? (Almost all of them have less than three full time employees.) I remember, as a chamber ambassador in Albert Lea, we welcomed a new busi-

ness in a house making and selling mashed potatoes. Now you can find products made by that business in every grocery store chain in the U.S.

I bet all of you readers have enjoyed a product by this company named "Mrs. Gerry's."

We're all aware of the importance of recycling and what we can recycle. (Paper, plastic, aluminum, glass, etc.) The big item that can't be recycled locally is Styrofoam. (like take-out products from fast food chains - coffee cups, hamburger containers, breakfast containers - major league sports stadiums containers, etc.) An article

appeared in the spring of 2025 Living Lutheran magazine about how university Lutheran church at Norman, Oklahoma is collecting and "selling" Styrofoam to a buyer. I refer you to: ulcsc.org/GREEN-Team.

Spring is here. "Hallelujah!" The spring birds are here (except hummingbirds). The grass is green. Tulips are budded out. Night crawlers are available to find and go fishing. The snow is all gone. Twins are trying to win basketball games. Genie and I have been to the tree mountains above Harrison, Arkansas for her annual one week ladies retreat.

In closing we say, "Thanks be to God."

Bob is a retired AAL (Aid Association for Lutherans) agent, currently working on his master's degree in Volunteering. His wife, Genie, is a retired RN, currently working on her doctor's degree in Volunteering. They have two children, Deb in North Carolina, and Dan in New York. Bob says if you enjoy his column, let him know. If you don't enjoy it, keep on reading, it can get worse. Words of wisdom: There is always room for God.

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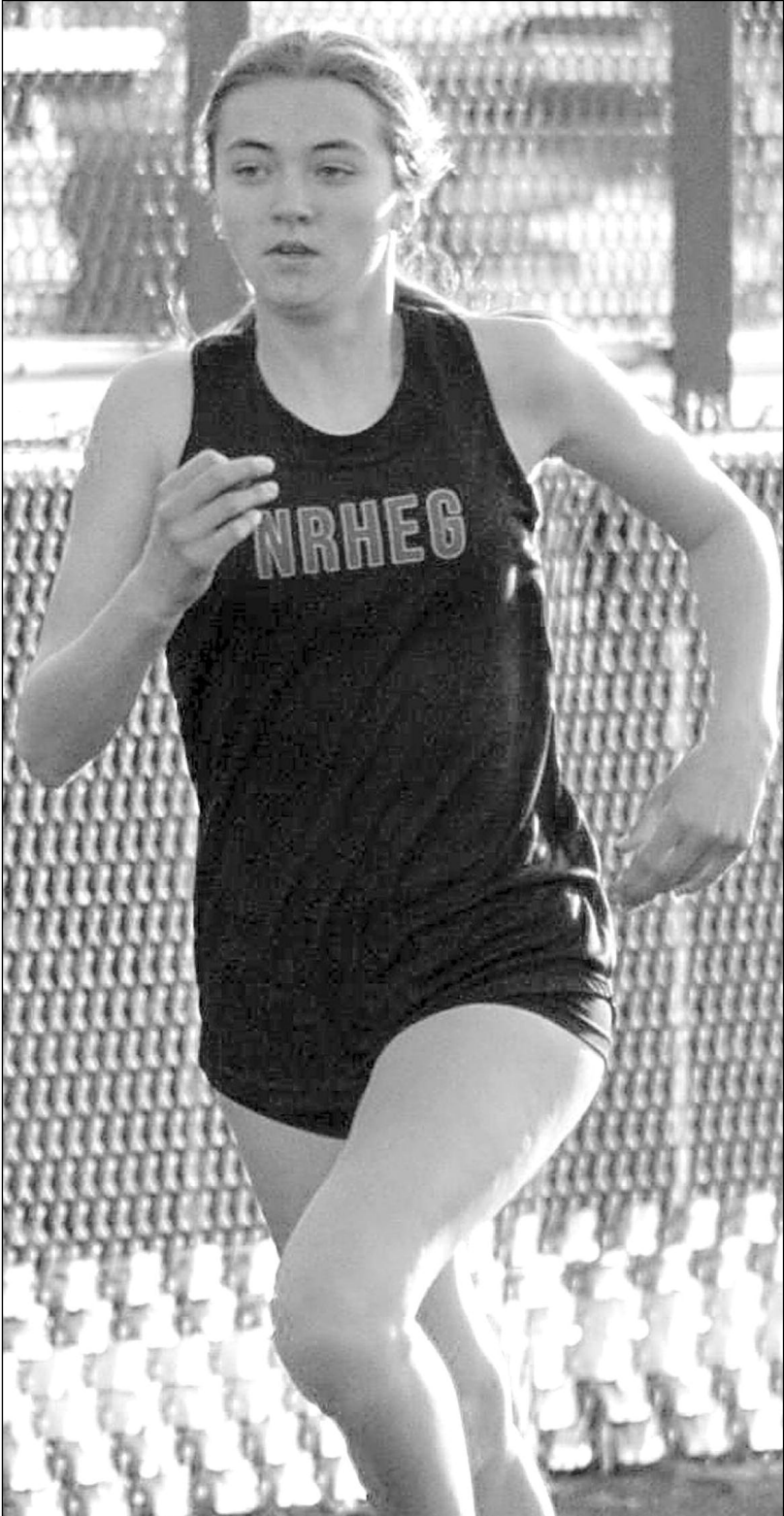
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RACE PACE — Competing at the Blooming Prairie Invitational for the NRHEG High School track and field teams last week are Lavon Jewison, left, and Peyton Frye.



Photos by Larry Nydegger

Schlaak, Ladlie, Jewison lead NRHEG tracksters

Panthers finish fifth, sixth at Blooming Prairie Invitational

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School track and field teams competed in the Blooming Prairie Invitational Tuesday, April 22.

The girls finished fifth out of eight teams. JWP won with 149 points, followed by St. Clair with 110, Mankato Loyola 107, Blooming Prairie 92.5, NRHEG 82.5, WEM 79, USC 46 and Medford 19.

“We set some season and personal bests tonight,” said NRHEG co-head coach Larry Nydegger.

Among the top performers for the girls were Gabby Schlaak, Anika Ladlie, Juliann Wobbrock and Kylie Olson.

“They continue to be top performers in their respective events,” said Nydegger.

Top-four finishes for the NRHEG girls: Wobbrock, second, 3200, 12:31.1; Schlaak, third, 100-meter hurdles, 17.38 and fourth, 300 hurdles, 52.72; Ladlie, third, high jump, 4-10; Olson, third, shot put, 31-11 and fourth, discus, 86-11; 4x200 relay, third, 1:57.02 (Clara Buendorf, Sierra Misgen, Chloe Riewer, Ladlie); Riewer, fourth, 100, 13.65 and fourth pole vault, 7-0; 4x800 relay, fourth, 23:08 (Sierra Fish, Misgen, Ella Jenö, Wobbrock; 4x400 relay, fourth (Misgen, Buendorf, Morgan Studier, Peyton Frye.

The NRHEG boys finished seventh, behind Loyola with 140, JWP 121.5, USC 109, WEM 89, St. Clair 85 and Blooming Prairie 72. Medford was eighth with 33 points.

“The guys had a tough go of it tonight with illness and injury keeping some of them from competing,” said Coach Nydegger. “There were some personal bests achieved that we can build upon. Lavon Jewison was impressive at the high jump again, tied for height but taking second based on number of misses.”

Jewison cleared 6 feet for second in the high jump.

Other top-four places: 4x200 relay, third, 1:45.86 (Gavin Lewison, Wyatt Tuttle, Charlie Fuller, Noah Weller); Brendan Schmidt, fourth, pole vault, 9-6; A.J. Deen, fourth, 100, 11.70; 4x100 relay, fourth, 48.58 (Harbor Cromell, Deen, Colton Conroy, Dom Porter).

The Panthers are in action twice this week, Tuesday at JWP and Thursday with the NRHEG Invitational at 4:30.

“There were some personal bests achieved that we can build upon.”
— NRHEG coach Larry Nydegger

Fielding woes cost softball Panthers

Nine errors lead to 4-inning loss

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School softball team had a tough time at Hayfield Thursday, falling 18-3 in four-plus innings.

The Panthers struggled mightily on defense, committing nine errors on the day.

“The girls had been playing great defense the past couple of games, so we’re hoping to get back to that,” said Panthers head coach Wendy Schultz.

On the positive side, Camryn VanMaldeghem and Chloe Stork both went 2-for-2 at the plate. VanMaldeghem three bases and scored two runs. Also hitting safely were Ezra Boerner and Kyera Eustice. Olivia Berg drove in a run and scored a run.

Brooklyn Sommer pitched for the Panthers, allowing seven earned runs on eight hits, with six walks and no strikeouts.

The Panthers struck out four times and did not draw a walk.

The Panthers’ lone lead was 1-1 after one inning. They added one run apiece in the second and third. The Vikings plated four first-inning runs, adding six in the second and eight in the third.

“Hopefully, we can bounce back,” said Coach Schultz.

The Panthers’ Monday game against JWP was rescheduled for May 7.

The Panthers are at home today to face Kenyon-Wanamingo at 4:30.



Stork



VanMaldeghem



LISTEN UP – NRHEG High School softball coach Wendy Schultz addresses her team in a between-inning huddle.

Star Eagle photo by Jim Lutgens

“The girls had been playing great defense the past couple of games, so we’re hoping to get back to that.”
— NRHEG coach Wendy Schultz

They play May 8 at 4:30 at Maple River.

Gopher Conference standings	
Randolph	5-0
Hayfield	3-0
United South Central	3-0
Kenyon-Wanamingo	3-1
Bethlehem Academy	3-2
Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton	1-1
NRHEG	1-3
Triton	1-3
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	0-3
Blooming Prairie	0-5



IN THERE – Camryn VanMaldeghem of the NRHEG High School softball team hugs the bag after sliding safely to third. The junior had two hits and two RBIs in last week’s 18-3 loss to Hayfield.

Star Eagle photo by Jim Lutgens

NRHEG baseball team breaks into win column

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School baseball team broke into the win column Friday, defeating visiting Tri-City United 4-2 at Reese Field in New Richland.

The Panthers’ game scheduled for Monday was postponed until Wednesday.

The Panthers, 1-6, host Kenyon-Wanamingo Thursday at 4:30 at Reese Field in New Richland.

Richland.

Gopher Conference standings	
Hayfield	4-0
Randolph	4-0
United South Central	3-0
Blooming Prairie	3-1
Triton	2-2
Kenyon-Wanamingo	1-1
Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton	1-2
New Richland-Hartland-Ell. Gen.	0-4
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown	0-4
Medford	0-4

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FARM & AGRICULTURE SPECIAL

Cropping season 2025: a perspective

‘Potential for a profitable cropping season remains less than optimal’

By MARK BERNARD
Staff Writer

The 2024 cropping season was one most farmers were thankful was over. The beating Mother Nature gave us with heavy rainfall made it one we would like to forget. However, hope springs eternal. We'll get out our lucky rabbit's foot to offer some insight for this cropping year.

We're coming off another one of the most bizarre winters ever. The La Niña finally materialized and despite being colder than the winter of '23 – '24, the snowfall accumulation was well below normal. Some welcome rain fell in November, allowing for decent fall tillage. More rain fell in December, with most picking up an inch or so as liquid precipitation before the soil froze. Total snowfall measured about 26.5" at the ranch and 23.7" in New Richland. Normal seasonal snowfall at the SROC is 52.3". The light snowfall total allowed the frost depth to reach 24" at the SROC in Waseca. After two winters with little snow removal required, we're getting out of practice. Oddly enough, few are complaining.

Ice out on St. Olaf and Beaver Lakes was March 15th. The soil was a tad slower to thaw with the SROC in Waseca reporting the frost out date on March 29th. 86° set a new record high at the SROC on March 29th. 8° above normal temps for the month allowed anhydrous to be applied and some small grain to be seeded before the rain and snow the last two days of March. After being fairly dry since December, March was the first month since November with above normal precipitation. Worries about dry soils quickly faded, so farmers could focus on worrying about something else.

April precip has been substantial, but not excessive to this point. Warmer weather and light precipitation the first half of April allowed some corn planting to begin from the 14th – 17th, not unlike 2024. Also, not unlike 2024, there were the odd soybean fields planted. Planting this year has taken a perhaps more measured approach. After farming for an insurance claim in '24, most want to do this once and do it right. There are some done planting, some who got a good start and others who haven't planted. At this point, everyone is still right or wrong.

If we continue to receive precipitation locally, it could push planting dates back, also not unlike last year. April temps have trended close to normal as of this writing. Much of the corn was planted last year by the final week of April and soybeans followed when conditions allowed until mid-May. Then it got ugly. Excessive rain did not make grain where the crop drowned out. Fields were riddled with drowned

out holes and crop missing. Crop insurance was suddenly your best friend. So far this year, we're holding our breath, hoping that doesn't happen again. April precip as of the 27th was 3.65" in New Richland and at the ranch and 3" at the SROC in Waseca. Normal for the month of April at the SROC is 3.3".

What do the growing season temperatures and precipitation outlooks look like? Released April 17th, NOAA's 30-day May outlook for our area shows an equal chance of above normal temperatures and even odds of above or below normal precipitation. Also released on April 17th, NOAA's 90-day outlook (April through June) is calling for even chances of above or below normal temps and for even chances of above or below normal precipitation. Our soil moisture is in similar shape to last year at this time. Tile lines are running, and the soil profile is full in many places. The much-ballyhooed drought dominating conversations here much of the winter is on hold for now. Transitioning into an ENSO-neutral period coming off a La Niña event, conditions may tend to be more normal, whatever that is anymore.

What sayeth the Drought Monitor? Most of South-Central MN was removed from the "Abnormally Dry" category as of the April 24th report. To our west and in the southern tier of counties, such was not the case. Much of Nebraska, Kansas and the Dakota's are all likely to remain under moderate drought for the foreseeable future. There are indications that the moderate drought will extend eastward, covering the western one-third of MN and continuing to affect the northern one-third of the state according to the Seasonal Drought Outlook perhaps by June or July. While much of Nebraska is irrigated, the potential to affect dryland areas always remains. The eastern corn belt remains relatively drought free, and while some areas are facing planting delays, the percentage is offset by well ahead of average progress in the western corn belt where it remains drier, particularly in IA, MO, KS, SD and MN.

Insect pest potential due to the open winter is mixed. Conditions for survival of corn rootworm eggs, particularly for western corn rootworm, may be somewhat diminished. The open winter and some of the below zero stretches in January and February likely didn't help their survival. Probably a bigger factor, however, was the waterlogged soil much of the early growing season last year when rootworm eggs were hatching. Waterlogged soils led to lower incidence of root feeding and adults when considering sticky trap data in our general area.

Soybean aphids appeared to be on the re-



Planting this year has taken a perhaps more measured approach. After farming for an insurance claim in '24, most want to do this once and do it right. There are some done planting, some who got a good start and others who haven't planted. At this point, everyone is still right or wrong.
Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

bound after several years of being no-shows. Their ability of winged adults to fly in from one area and infest another plus their enormous reproductive capacity maintains their status as a force to be reckoned with. There were plenty of soybean aphids moving from soybeans to buckthorn where they lay eggs on the bud bracts, so one should never count them out. Those thousands of Asian ladybeetles that overwintered in your house can't be wrong.

The migratory insects such as black cutworm are also on the radar. There significant captures the week of April 12th – 18th. There have been some significant captures already in area traps this April. Larvae may hatch the first week of May, leaf feeding may occur the second week, and they could cut corn plants by the end of May. They could continue cutting corn until mid-June. Many of the corn hybrids with above ground Bt provide control of black cutworm. Not all, however, and with increased interest in non-GMO corn due to cheaper seed and some instances higher yields than their GMO counterparts, cutworms could be a factor. Even soybean stands can be occasionally reduced enough to require control measures.

A large flight of armyworm moths was also

detected the week of April 19th – April 25th. Predicting damage from armyworm is more difficult to pinpoint with any degree of accuracy. The distribution of pheromone traps is lower and there are no thresholds established based on trap captures. However, based on past experience, it's a safe bet if a large influx of moths has been captured in the traps, someone, somewhere within a 10-mile radius may be affected. The ensuing armyworm invasion can go undetected before the damage suddenly reaches critical levels. Sometimes it's discovered too late.

Lastly, tar spot, the perennial social media and coffee shop darling, made a later season appearance in some area cornfields. It was more problematic as one went east where excessive moisture was a lesser factor and inoculum levels are higher. That and with operators suddenly farming the insurance claims with low corn prices, there was little incentive for fungicide treatment in the local area. It is still a potential problem for 2025 and will bear watching as the season unfolds. Although the causal organism needs to be present first, it also needs a favorable environment for disease development and a susceptible host. Plant Path 101.

With the ahead of schedule planting pace and continued global economic uncertainty, potential for a profitable cropping season remains less than optimal. Watching input costs and timely marketing moves are crucial. It may mean pulling the trigger when an opportunity arises and resisting the temptation to wait and hit the ball out of the park. For the time being, we're back to playing small ball. To some extent, the same applies to planting. With more moisture to deal with, it makes the days when fields are truly fit even more precious. Corn that was planted April 14th – 17th sprouted nicely after a week in the ground. Likewise with the early planted soybeans. Some who missed that early planting window may start to get antsy. Patience, grasshopper. There is plenty of time yet in May to plant corn and soybeans, although the definition of "fit conditions" tends to become vaguer as we inch towards June. Visions of tractors pulling planter tractors (while planting) back in the early 90's still dance in my head. In the meantime, may the force be with you.

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FARM & AGRICULTURE SPECIAL

Century farm award winners honored

St. Paul, Minn. — The Minnesota State Fair and the Minnesota Farm Bureau recognize 77 Minnesota farms as 2025 Century Farms. Qualifying farms have been in continuous family ownership for at least 100 years and are 50 acres or more. Century Farm families receive a commemorative sign, as well as a certificate signed by Minnesota State Fair and Minnesota Farm Bureau presidents and Governor Tim Walz. Since the program began in 1976, more than 11,000 Minnesota farms have been recognized as Century Farms.

Family farms are recognized as a Century Farm when three requirements are met. The farm must be: 1) at least 100 years old according to authentic land records; 2) in continuous family ownership for at least 100 years (continuous residence on the farm is not required); and 3) at least 50 acres and currently be involved in agricultural production.

2025 Century Farm families are listed by county, then by the farm's city or township, family or farm names and year of original purchase

Becker
Park Rapids - The Homestead of Ferdinand and Hensel, 1895

Benton
Foley - Carlson Family Farm, 1894

Blue Earth
Eagle Lake - Frank Family Farm, 1924
Good Thunder - Nathan Ulrich, 1866

Madelia - Gronewold Farming Est. 1925, 1925

Brown
New Ulm - Willard & Dorothy Waibel Family Farm, 1910
Carlton
Kettle River - Pasek Dairy, 1909

Carver
Waconia - EJ RIETZ FAMILY FARM, 1869
Watertown - Vanderlinde Farm, 1885
Watertown - Grandpa Schmidt's Farm, 1925

Clay
Hawley - JDD&K Farm, 1897
Hawley - Grefsrud Farm, 1923

Clearwater
Bagley - Titera/Skala (Jerry), 1925
Bagley - Titera/Skala (Mark), 1925
Clearbrook - The Thompson Farm, 1910
Clearbrook - Engebretson, 1910
Shevlin - Lone Pine Farm, 1912

Cottonwood
Lamberton - Marlene and Harvey Pedersen, 1924
Lamberton - Stavnes Farms, 1898
Sanborn - 343 Farms, Inc., 1906

Dodge
Hayfield - Ray Kylo Farm, 1882

Fillmore
Canton - Duxbury/Jones Farms, 1898
Harmony - Koliha Farms, 1923

Freeborn
Albert Lea - Nelson Family Farm, 1924
Ellendale - Langlie/Baarson, 1902
Hartland - Olson Farms, 1925

Goodhue
Welch - Carlson Family Farm, 1925
Zumbrota - Hoven Family Farms, 1925

Houston
Caledonia - Gavin Farms LLC, 1868

Jackson
Okabena - ATZ FARM, 1925

Kandiyohi
Paynesville - Manz-Herding Farm, 1895

Kittson
Kennedy - Ron Fossell Farm, 1925

Lac Qui Parle
Bellingham - Hiepler Farm, 1925
Dawson - Kleva, 1882
Madison - Bauler/Goerger, 1904
Marietta - Kriesse Family Farm, 1919

Le Sueur
Le Center - Jindra Family Farms, 1903
Le Sueur - Rolling Acres Farm, 1924

Le Sueur - Krenik Family Farm, 1925
Waterville - Triple T-MDC Farm, 1911

Marshall
Warren - D-J Nelson Farms Inc., 1881

Martin
Fairmont - McNeerney/Maday, 1894
Fairmont - Rodney and Debra Laue Farm, 1894
McLeod
Hutchinson - Howe Holsteins, 1919

Morrison
Pierz - Stangl Family Farm, 1906
Pierz - Tschida Family Farm, 1925

Mower
Grand Meadow - Calkins Farm, 1920

Norman
Ada - Klask Farm, 1925

Olmsted
Rochester - Luhmann Farms, 1925

Otter Tail (East)
Bluffton - Endres Farm, 1904

Pennington
Thief River Falls - Agassiz Acres, 1915

Pine
Hinckley - Sikkink Farms, 1925

Pope

Lowry - Karen R. Tauber Trust, 1892
Villard - Walker, 1925

Redwood
Clements - Rothmeier Family Farm, 1901

Renville
Hector - Thomas Koeberl Farm, 1923
Morton - Donald & Edna Wertish, 1918
Stewart - KurthHaven Farms, 1906

Rice
Montgomery - Pesta Family Farm, 1925

Rock
Hardwick - The Paulson Farm, 1906
Luverne - Kruse, 1918

Roseau
Greenbush - CMK FARMS INC., 1902
Strathcona - Bernat, 1918

Sibley
Arlington - Orlin Kurtzweg, 1887
Winthrop - Johnson Family Farms, 1925

Stearns
Belgrade - Braun Family Farm, 1887
Holdingford - Czeck, 1883
Melrose - Zierden Farm, 1896

Steele

Owatonna - Armstrong Farm, 1896
Owatonna - Partridge Farm, 1905

Swift
Benson - Lake Hassel Lee Farm, 1901
Murdock - Larson, 1886

Todd
Eagle Bend - Nelson Farm, 1919
Osakis - McKindley-Gray, 1917

Waseca
New Richland - Joecks Family Farm, 1925
Waldorf - Gerdt's Family Farm, 1924
Waseca - Eaton Farms, 1880

Information on all Century Farms will be available at the Minnesota Farm Bureau exhibit during the 2025 Minnesota State Fair. A Century Farm database is also available at fbmn.org.

About the Minnesota State Fair: The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. The State Fair is financially self-supporting and does not receive government appropriation. Follow along on Facebook, Instagram, Threads, X and TikTok @mnstatefair for year-round updates. The 2025 Minnesota State Fair is Aug. 21 through Labor Day, Sept. 1. Visit mnstatefair.org for more information

Sesquicentennial farm families announced

EAGAN, Minn. — The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is pleased to recognize 46 recipients of the Sesquicentennial Farm award for 2025.

Since the program began in 2008, 623 families have received the honor.

To qualify, a family farm must be in continuous family ownership for at least 150 years, be 50 acres or larger, and currently be involved in agricultural production.

Honorees will receive a commemorative certificate signed by Governor Tim Walz, Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen and MFBF President Dan Glessing, along with an outdoor sign signifying Sesquicentennial Farm recognition.

A display featuring all Sesquicentennial and Century farms will be available inside the Minnesota Farm Bureau building during the 2025 Minnesota State Fair.

Blue Earth
Good Thunder — Nathan Ulrich, 1866

Carver
Mayer — Becker Farms, 1875
Waconia — E.J. Rietz Family Farm, 1869

Chippewa
Montevideo — David & Dawn Sletten/O.A. Nygaard Trust, 1875

Dakota
Hastings — Maher Farms, 1875
Hastings — Mainz Farm, 1874

Faribault
Blue Earth — Franke Farms, 1870
Delavan — Roger & Diane Whitney, 1871
Minnesota Lake — Brandt Farm, 1870
Walters — Buendorf Family Farm, 1873

Fillmore
Spring Valley — Hockema Farm, 1867

Goodhue
Nerstrand — Kispert Farm, 1865
Zumbrota — Rostad Farms, 1873

Houston
Caledonia — Gavin Farms LLC, 1868

Isanti
Zimmerman — The Hiller Farm, 1868

Jackson
Heron Lake — Buckeye Farm, 1868

Kandiyohi
Paynesville — Christenson, 1873
Paynesville — Tom Doris Wendlandt, 1874
Sunburg — Paulson Farms, 1874

Le Sueur
Waterville — Timothy A. Stoering, 1874

Lincoln
Ivanhoe — Dianne & Larry Bunjer, 1873

Meeker
Darwin — Family of Robert and Orpha Smith Farm, 1866
Darwin — Pearson Farm, 1856
Hutchinson — Bruce & Joleen Runke, 1874
Litchfield — Dougherty Family Partnership, 1867
Litchfield — Milton & Joyce Housman Family, 1872

Mower
Brownsdale — Rockwell Family Farm, 1872
LeRoy — Speer Farm, 1875
Ostrander — Stephen D. Sorenson, 1875

Otter Tail
Fergus Falls — Sether Farm, 1868

Perham — Kristian and Sandra Jorgensen, 1874

Pope
Lowry — Kyle Chan, 1868
Lowry — Stivland Farm, 1875

Rice
Faribault — Misgen Family Farm, 1873
Kenyon — Alan J. & Andrew J. Meyer, 1874
Lonsdale — Clarence & Delores Salaba, 1875
Warsaw — James E. Draper, 1873

Rock
Beaver Creek, The Rollag Family Farm, 1874

Sibley
Le Sueur — Robyn (Reilly) Pfarr and David Pfarr, 1872

Stearns

St. Augusta — Klaverkamp Farm, 1875

Steele
Owatonna — Richard Thamert, 1875

Washington
Hastings — Ivan J. & Carol J. Bahe, 1866

Watsonwan
Madelia — Johnson-Hale Farm, 1875

Wright
Cokato — Gregory & Rebecca Howell, 1875
Waverly — Eugene Patrick and Rita Anne (Hertzog) Boehlke, 1875

Yellow Medicine
Cottonwood — John, Lois, Rodney, Jeffery & Timothy Kolhei, 1871



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FARM & AGRICULTURE SPECIAL

‘Richly blooming’

Rural Freeborn County’s Hilltop Greenhouse

By **DEB BENTLY**
Staff Writer

Gretchen Boldt starts putting seeds into soil in January, and keeps on planting well into June.

Boldt, who with her husband Glenn operates Hilltop Greenhouse southeast of Geneva in Freeborn County, oversees the growth of nearly every conceivable type of domestic plant that can be grown in Minnesota.

Hilltop has nine greenhouses on 14 acres near the couple’s home in one location, and 20 acres of vegetable garden in a location nearby. Boldt tells of many systems and choices which have helped the business grow from much humbler beginnings back in 1988, but perhaps the most important single priority, she suggests, is “customer satisfaction.”

“It would be really nice to have a crystal ball,” she comments. “Each year as we start getting ready, so many of our choices would be simpler if we knew what the spring was going to be like.”

When and how quickly the temperatures tend toward cool or warm, whether moisture levels are more wet or dry, all those factors, she explains, have an effect on what customers want for their flowerbeds, planters and especially their gardens. Without the crystal ball, she says lightly, the best they can do is plan for as many contingencies as space allows, and then hope for the best.

Walking through the color and variety of the company’s spacious greenhouse on a warming spring day, Boldt admits, is an uplifting experience. She holds no animosity toward visitors whose only real objective seems to be strolling through the aisles and enjoying the company of the plants.

“Right now, they’re shopping for ideas,” she comments. “That’s a good way to start.”

Dozens of richly blooming planters hang at shoulder height. Hundreds of colorful flowers in smaller pots wait their turn. Boldt is

“It’s rewarding to know what you’re doing makes a difference..”
— Gretchen Boldt

personally acquainted with nearly all of them, having been part of the small team who took on the job of filling the pots, placing the seeds, and nurturing the seedlings.

Boldt explains that, while most greenhouse operators save time by purchasing seedlings already sprouted in small plugs, Hilltop uses seeds.

“With the plugs,” she explains, “you can mostly only get the popular varieties of plant, the ones ‘everybody’ grows.”

“If you want some of the newer, or more exotic varieties, you have to plant them yourself.”

Pointing to a row of thriving hip-high planters where no two are alike, she mentions she has planted them all. “It’s mostly inspiration,” she comments of the selections. “I look at all the options, and I take the ones I think will go well together.”

In addition to the many hanging plants for sale in the greenhouse, the company puts together the hanging flower baskets displayed in the city of Austin—about 270—and in Albert Lea—another 60. Customers also regularly bring containers from their homes to be custom planted, and request planters to be placed in cemeteries beginning about Memorial Day.

The main sales greenhouse at Hilltop opens in mid-April and stays open through October. Hours of operation are from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday; 9 to 4 on Saturdays; and 10 to 4 on Sundays. Sales of flowers and bedding plants are nearly finished by mid-June. By then, the Boldts have placed thousands of young plants in their vegetable garden on a separate property.

There, a distinctly different phase of their business is underway. “Our vegetable club has 150

members,” reveals Boldt. Members of the vegetable club pay a yearly fee. Then, once a week for 16 weeks, they receive a box full of seasonal fresh vegetables, beginning at the end of June and continuing through October.

Many club members are in Austin and Albert Lea, so the Boldts deliver boxes to specified pickup locations in those towns; others come directly to the greenhouse.

“We use sustainable techniques in our gardens,” Boldt mentions.

“We want to give our customers food grown in a way we would want it ourselves.”

Ground coverings prevent weed growth and reduce the need for manual weeding, she mentions. Persistent rotation—including keeping a portion of their fields in cover crops—helps keep parasites from establishing a foothold.

“It’s a lot of work, and there can be frustration,” Boldt says of the business’s many facets and the absence of a crystal ball.

“And it has its unique rewards.”

Hilltop’s location miles from any town is an obstacle the business has worked to overcome. “No one happens upon us by happy accident,” says Boldt lightheartedly. “You find us because you’re looking for us.”

Knowing this, Boldt says, “We cherish our regular customers. We work very hard to give them what they want, things that will bring them pleasure, so they continue to come back.”

“We wouldn’t be here without them.”

Boldt tells the story of a catastrophic 2010 tornado which destroyed the family home, a classic dairy barn that once stood on the property, and—of course—the original greenhouses built beginning in the



Gretchen and Glenn Boldt have operated Hilltop Greenhouse southeast of Ellendale since 1988. One of Gretchen’s annual projects is devising original sets of plantings which provide variety and bloom all summer.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bentley

1980s by Glenn, Gretchen, and their daughters Julie, Angela, and Laurie.

As family members were performing the heartbreaking task of cleaning up broken and shattered plants and products, Gretchen remembers a group of customers arriving and expressing their empathy.

“They bought some of those broken plants right off our wagon,” she recalls with a smile.

Fortunately, she and Glenn were able to rebuild. They made a point of connecting with a specialist who helped them design replacement greenhouses with specific wind-defense features.

“The climate is changing,” observes Gretchen. “We have to be ready to adapt.”

Not only do satisfied customers return, she continues, they bring others with them.

“Word of mouth is the most valuable advertising there is,” she comments. “So we do what we can to encourage our customers to talk about us.”

The business keeps a website and a Facebook page; both are used to notify the public of special sales and upcoming activities.

One spring event invites customers



to bring their planters and do what Gretchen does—let inspiration guide them as they select the combination of flowers, vines and grasses they will enjoy.

An open house on May 3 offers cookies and treats, as well as the chance for a congenial stroll through leafy pathways—regardless of the weather. At times like those, Gretchen says her biggest delight is to hear from customers both about how they can’t wait to take her handiwork home, or about how much

they enjoyed items purchased for the previous season, and hope to enjoy the same quality again.

Another joy for her is talking about gardening. She thinks of numerous conversations where she has planted seeds of knowledge by sharing her own experiences and lessons learned.

“That’s a time when all the work pays off,” she said. “It’s rewarding to know what you’re doing makes a difference.”

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Many things that need tinkering with

My first cabin visit of the year is getting later and later. I had been planning to open the cabin in April, but my “old, retired guy” schedule has not allowed me that luxury. I only have one appointment scheduled for next week and then I will be off to the woods for a few days. Hopefully, I won’t find any trees down across the driveway this time.

When I go to the cabin, I seem to be more active, probably because there are many things that need tinkering with. Once I make that first visit, it is hard to leave for home. Once there, I realize what I have been missing for the past few months.

I don’t have to be anywhere for the fishing opener, so I can fish at my leisure with no pressure. There are times when I am at the cabin and I spend more time planning my next fishing experience than I actually do fishing. An old friend of mine once said, “A vacation is 70% planning and 30% doing.” He was proven right many times over. You would plan all winter for that week or two of vacation and it is usually over before you realize it.

I have mentioned before how I have always loved camping. I don’t know if I could or would want to tent



Woods and Water

by Dick Herfindahl
Outdoors Writer

anyone. I would like to cross that off my bucket list this summer. I believe that my mind feels younger than my body, and when I do some of the things that were once considered fun, my body reminds me of what a dumb idea it was.

My grandson, Trevor, has taken me early season crappie fishing a few times, but the last couple of years he has had bigger fish to fry (pun intended). I’d guess that when I am not at the cabin, I should try to do a little shore fishing around this area. I grew up fishing around here and there is no reason that I shouldn’t go back to my roots and enjoy some fishing. Our area lakes have many species of fish to offer. Fountain Lake has a nice variety of fish and Albert Lea Lake is a good walleye lake at certain times of

the year. Pickeral has a good perch population, and I am sure that the northerns that were stocked a couple of years ago will soon be eating size.

Until next time: In looking back on my days as a young aspiring outdoorsman. I think of all the hours that I spent fishing on the shores of Fountain Lake. One spring, I made a homemade minnow trap to catch minnows off the bridge over Goose Creek. My neighbor at the time paid me .25 cents a dozen for minnows, which I thought was a great deal. I did this for a couple of years before he moved and my interest in catching minnows went with him. I also caught some tiny crappies and bluegills in my trap, which was exciting to me. I never kept them, but released them, hoping that some day they

would grow and be big enough for table fare. We never filleted our fish back then; we would scale them, cut the head off, gut and gill them and fry them up, skin and all. My sister Judy’s father-in-law, Bernie loved eating sunfish that way, it was like a delicacy to him. When my sister Judy and her husband, Mike had a camper at Best Point on Tetonka Lake, they fished quite a bit. Mike really knew how to catch sunfish and bluegills, so he would filet some and clean some the “old fashioned” way for his dad. That way everyone was happy.

I enjoyed having my camper at Best Point, but when my son, Brian, came up with the idea of buying some land “up north” I jumped at the chance. It is something that I have never regretted. My dad once told me: “if you find something that you really want to do, do it.” I have passed up some good opportunities in my lifetime because I was afraid to take a chance. Thanks, Dad!

Please show your support for our troops who are now deployed. These service men and women are making that sacrifice, so that we may have the many freedoms that we enjoy today.

Pancake Breakfast



NRHEG Elementary physical education teachers Becky Schoenrock (left) and Wendy Schultz greeted diners at the Lions Club breakfast fundraiser and answered any questions they had regarding the plans. Installation of accessible play equipment is scheduled to begin in June shortly after the school year ends. Volunteers are being recruited to help with some of the tasks.

Star Eagle photos by Deb Bently



Among those helping at the Lions Club fundraiser held the morning of Sunday, April 27, were (from left) Gary Lust, Robert Fisk, Don Loken, Dean Buendorf and Doug Christopherson. Also helping were NRHEG students from various school groups. The event, held at the New Richland City Hall community room, was attended by about 300 people. Money raised went toward the interactive playground scheduled to be installed this summer at the elementary school playground in Ellendale.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor
Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship
Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Supper; 6 p.m. Bible Study

ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Osisko, Minnesota
Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor
Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Pastor Mary Iverson
Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee
Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting
Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting (first Wednesday)

LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Pastor Dan Kordahl
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting

VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Pastor Dan Kordahl
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship

VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Brian Schani Pastor
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School
Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m.; 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games; 6 p.m. until dark

CROSS OF GLORY LUTHERAN
Hartland, Minnesota
Rev. Marcia Pedersen
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

Tuesday - Council meeting (First Tuesday)

WEST FREEBORN LUTHERAN
Hartland, Minnesota
Rev. Marcia Pedersen
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship
Tuesday - Council meeting (First Tuesday of the month)
Quilting meets 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, see newsletter for dates.

HARTLAND EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
Hartland, Minnesota
Pastor Phillip K. Lepak
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship

MANCHESTER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
Manchester, Minnesota
Pastor Phillip K. Lepak
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Father Glenn Frerichs
Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass
Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m.

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN
Geneva, Minnesota
Pastor Leandra Anderson
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship (times vary for holidays)
Monday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting

SIMPLY CHURCH
105 Second Street North East
Geneva, Minnesota
Todd Lundgren, Pastor
Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Worship

VIBRANT LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH
Ellendale, Minnesota
Pastor David Modder
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 10 a.m. Kids

church
Check the website for additional updates
www.vibrantlifecg.com

FIRST LUTHERAN, AFLC METHODIST
Ellendale, Minnesota
Pastor Kyle Smith
Sunday - 9 a.m. Men's Bible Study
Monday - 7 p.m. Call to prayer
Wednesday - 9:30 a.m. Bible Study; 6 p.m. Confirmation; 7-9 p.m. Youth Group (No confirmation during summer)

ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST
Ellendale, Minnesota
Randy Cirksema, Pastor
Sunday - Summer Service time is 9:30 a.m. Worship; 9:15 a.m. Sunday school. (No summer Sunday school)
Worship is at 10:30 a.m. beginning after Sept. 3. Sunday School from Oct through May from 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.
Food shelf is open every Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

CENTRAL FREEBORN LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor Matt Griggs
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship
FM Transmitter is used for those wanting to listen through their car radios at FM 90.7

EAST FREEBORN LUTHERAN
Pastor Matt Griggs
Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship
FM Transmitter is used for those wanting to listen through their car radios at FM 89.3

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
LCMS
Hollands, Minnesota
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH

Rev. Neal Ooms
101 East Park Avenue
Hollands, Minnesota
Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Worship; 10:45 a.m. Sunday School

ZION LUTHERAN, ELCA
Rural Ellendale
Deacon Billie Jo Wicks
Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN, ELCA
Meriden, Minnesota
Deacon Billie Jo Wicks
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship

PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN
Lemond Township
Pastor Dave Klawiter
Sunday - 10:15 a.m. Worship

FIRST LUTHERAN, LCMC
Hope, Minnesota
Pastor Sandy Miller
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 10:15 a.m. Youth/Adult Study

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Clarks Grove, Minnesota
Pastor James Cameron
Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School; 10:30 a.m. Worship

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL
Father Peter Schuster
Sunday - 8 a.m. Sacrament of Reconciliation; 8:30 a.m. Mass with Children's Church; Preschool Sunday School during Mass
Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. - Faith Formation classes for grades K-Confirmation
www.litomysl.webs.com
www.stsidioreeschool.webs.com

FIRST LUTHERAN
Missouri Synod
Waldorf, Minnesota
Rev. Larry Sipe, pastor
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Study

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN

Minnesota Lake, Minnesota
Rev. Larry Sipe, pastor
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

ST. PAUL UNITED OF CHRIST
Minnesota Lake, Minnesota
Interim Pastor
Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School; 10:30 a.m. Worship

PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Minnesota Lake, Minnesota
Interim Pastor
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Freedom Township
Rev. Larry Sipe
Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship

ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Pastor Ava Adams-Morris
Waldorf, Minnesota
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC
Waldorf, Minnesota
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship

TRINITY LUTHERAN
Wilton Township
Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor
Sunday - 10:45 a.m. Worship

THE CHURCH OF JESUS' CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Brad Donner, Branch President
Waseca, Minnesota
www.lds.org
Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School
Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18

NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE STAR EAGLE.

LOOKING BACK

25 years back

- The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School bands competed in the World Of Music Festival at St. Louis, Missouri, last weekend. They returned home Monday morning carrying four of the five trophies they won in competition. The fifth, the first place trophy won by the jazz band, will be shipped later according to Band instructor David Haugh. These senior members posed happily with their trophies Tuesday. They are from the left: front, seated Jan Vanderploeg; standing, Missie Wayne, holding the marching band trophy; Nick Kaplan, Lisa Hunnicutt, Ryan Paulson, holding the Concert Band trophy; Allison Groh, standing behind the Sweepstakes trophy, Mariah Ruth, Amy Kubista, holding the Colorguard Trophy and Adrian Barnett. The Sweepstakes trophy was presented to the local bands when, after totaling points earned in competition, it was discovered they had topped all the other bands entered.

- Recently, Supt. Richard Lorenz received the 2000 administrators of Excellence award for the south central Minnesota Association of School Administrators Region II. Lorenz was nominated by 51 school administrators in the region which extends from Jordan on the north to the Iowa border and from Sherburne on the west to Interstate 35. Lorenz came to New Richland-Hartland as superintendent July 1, 1986 from Welcome. He has been a member of the MASA for 16 years.



- Richard Chicos, chairman of the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva School board presented Glen Herbst with a high school diploma Monday night before the board meeting. Herbst was one of the many young men, who left high school before graduation to fight for their country during World War II. He was inducted into the U. S. Army April 22, 1942, fought in North Africa and the European Theatre before being discharged on December 3, 1945.

- The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva boys golf team defeated Glenville - Emmons by 30 strokes, Monday April 10, at River-view Golf Course. “This was a great outing for the first meet of the year in harsh conditions,” said Coach Xan Johnson. An overcast sky, a cool breeze and occasional flurries were not conducive to the best golf. Medalist for the meet was Panther Tyler Moe, a sophomore, who shot 39. Nate Wayne, Andrew Routh and Rusty Routh, each shot 41. Leading NRHEG was Travis Broskof with a 49. Other Panther golfers and their score were: Dusty Wayne 51, Derek Chicos 52, Chris Mathies 53, Billy Root 57 and Josh Bruzke 61.

50 Years back

- Tim Donovan of Hartland was recently elected president of the Student Senate of 1975-76 at the University of Minnesota Technical College-Crookston.



- The Kindergarten classes in New Richland had a special treat last week when six year old Paul Krohn played a selection of songs on his accordion. Having taken lessons for over a year, Paul pleased his peers, especially when he played old sing-along favorites like “Jingle Bells” and “Old McDonald.” The first graders joined in on the fun in the afternoon making an audience of well over 70 people enjoying the talents of this budding musician. Paul is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Krohn.

- Members of the New Richland-Hartland High school Girls Track Team are pictured before practice last week. They are from the left: Marlene Tappe, co-caption; Jodi Bergner, co-caption; Jennifer Johnson, Judy Bartness, Colleen Byron, Kay Smith; Middle: Kris Oehler, Beth Flor, Stacie Jessen, Karin Edwards, Stephenie Neumann, Mary Schultz, Jayne Parriott, Rita Smith, Back: Dawn Lundholm, Brenda Ganiere, Sue Bolduan, Coach Marcia Caneff, Kathy Oehler, Geri Jongbloedt, Peggy Peterson, Sarah Yerhot, Doreen Grotson, Jill Bergner, Darla Kath, Cathay Crowe, Jan Yerhot and Carrie Severson. Missing when the photo was taken were Pam Quiram, Joyce Peterson, Lynn Wallin and Shannon Neumann.

75 years back

- Glen “Cotton” Tews, son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Will Heckes, has resigned his position at the LeSueur high school, effective with the end of his term and will go to Stillwater for the fall opening where he has taken the position of head football coach.

- Mr. and Mrs. Lester Schlaak of Wilton are the happy parents of their first child, a son, born to them at the Waseca Memorial hospital Friday, May 19. The new arrival weighed 7 lbs. and 2 ounces and has been named David Lester. The baby is the first grandchild for the Ben Schlaaks and is the first grandson for the maternal grandparents.

- Miss Mildred Bartsch, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Aurthur Bartsch of Claremont, became the bride of Robert H. Johnson, son of Mrs. Lillie Johnson of New Richland last week in a double ring service at St. Johns Lutheran church at Claremont. Edwin Alpous was the organist, playing “Let us ever walk with Jesus,” at the processional. The Bride's gown was of nylon, trimmed with lace. It had an off-the-shoulder neckline and a long train edged with lace. Braided pearls held her finger-tip veil in place. She wore a heart shaped bracelet, a gift from the groom. The bridal Bouquet was of white roses and snapdragons.

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Ellendale 2024 Drinking Water Report

Making Safe Drinking Water

Your drinking water comes from a groundwater source: two wells ranging from 369 to 398 feet deep, that draw water from the Galena Group aquifer.

Ellendale works hard to provide you with safe and reliable drinking water that meets federal and state water quality requirements. The purpose of this report is to provide you with information on your drinking water and how to protect our precious water resources.

Contact Steve Engel, City Clerk/Treasurer, at (507) 684-2681 or office@ellendalemn.com if you have questions about Ellendale’s drinking water. You can also ask for information about how you can take part in decisions that may affect water quality.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets safe drinking water standards. These standards limit the amounts of specific contaminants allowed in drinking water. This ensures that tap water is safe to drink for most people. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulates the amount of certain contaminants in bottled water. Bottled water must provide the same public health protection as public tap water.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Ellendale Monitoring Results

This report contains our monitoring results from January 1 to December 31, 2024.

We work with the Minnesota Department of Health to test drinking water for more than 100 contaminants. It is not unusual to detect contaminants in small amounts. No water supply is ever completely free of contaminants. Drinking water standards protect Minnesotans from substances that may be harmful to their health.

Learn more by visiting the Minnesota Department of Health’s webpage [Basics of Monitoring and testing of Drinking Water in Minnesota](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/sampling.html) (https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/sampling.html).

How to Read the Water Quality Data Tables

The tables below show the contaminants we found last year or the most recent time we sampled for that contaminant. They also show the levels of those contaminants and the Environmental Protection Agency’s limits. Substances that we tested for but did not find are not included in the tables.

We sample for some contaminants less than once a year because their levels in water are not expected to change from year to year. If we found any of these contaminants the last time we sampled for them, we included them in the tables below with the detection date.

We may have done additional monitoring for contaminants that are not included in the Safe Drinking Water Act. To request a copy of these results, call the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-4700 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Some contaminants are monitored regularly throughout the year, and rolling (or moving) annual averages are used to manage compliance. Because of this averaging, there are times where the Range of Detected Test Results for the calendar year is lower than the Highest Average or Highest Single Test Result, because it occurred in the previous calendar year.

Definitions

- **AL (Action Level):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- **EPA:** Environmental Protection Agency
- **MCL (Maximum contaminant level):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- **MCLG (Maximum contaminant level goal):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
- **MRDL (Maximum residual disinfectant level):** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
- **MRDLG (Maximum residual disinfectant level goal):** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
- **N/A (Not applicable):** Does not apply.
- **pCi/l (picocuries per liter):** A measure of radioactivity.
- **ppt (parts per trillion):** One part per trillion is like one drop in one trillion drops of water, or about one drop in an Olympic sized swimming pool. ppt is the same as nanograms per liter (ng/l).
- **ppb (parts per billion):** One part per billion in water is like one drop in one billion drops of water, or about one drop in a swimming pool. ppb is the same as micrograms per liter (µg/l).
- **ppm (parts per million):** One part per million is like one drop in one million drops of water, or about one cup in a swimming pool. ppm is the same as milligrams per liter (mg/l).
- **PWSID:** Public water system identification.

Monitoring Results – Regulated Substances

LEAD AND COPPER – Tested at customer taps.							
Contaminant (Date, if sampled in previous year)	EPA’s Ideal Goal (MCLG)	EPA’s Action Level	90% of Results Were Less Than	Number of Homes with High Levels	Range of Detected Test Results	Violation	Typical Sources
Lead (10/13/23)	0 ppb	90% of homes less than 15 ppb	1.3 ppb	0 out of 10	0 - 1.4 ppb	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing.
Copper (10/13/23)	0 ppm	90% of homes less than 1.3 ppm	0.9 ppm	0 out of 10	0.02 - 1.21 ppm	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing.

INORGANIC & ORGANIC CONTAMINANTS – Tested in drinking water.						
Contaminant (Date, if sampled in previous year)	EPA’s Ideal Goal (MCLG)	EPA’s Limit (MCL)	Highest Average or Highest Single Test Result	Range of Detected Test Results	Violation	Typical Sources
Nitrate	10 ppm	10 ppm	0.69 ppm	N/A	NO	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.
Barium (09/11/23)	2 ppm	2 ppm	0.24 ppm	N/A	NO	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposit.
Gross Alpha	0 pCi/l	15 pCi/l	8.4 pCi/l	N/A	NO	Erosion of natural deposits.
Combined Radium	0 pCi/l	5 pCi/l	3 pCi/l	N/A	NO	Erosion of natural deposits.

CONTAMINANTS RELATED TO DISINFECTION – Tested in drinking water.						
Substance (Date, if sampled in previous year)	EPA’s Ideal Goal (MCLG or MRDLG)	EPA’s Limit (MCL or MRDL)	Highest Average or Highest Single Test Result	Range of Detected Test Results	Violation	Typical Sources
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)	N/A	80 ppb	6.1 ppb	N/A	NO	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Total Haloacetic Acids (HAA)	N/A	60 ppb	3.9 ppb	N/A	NO	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Total Chlorine	4.0 ppm	4.0 ppm	0.37 ppm	0.06 - 0.16 ppm	NO	Water additive used to control microbes.

Total HAA refers to HAA5

OTHER SUBSTANCES – Tested in drinking water.						
Substance (Date, if sampled in previous year)	EPA’s Ideal Goal (MCLG)	EPA’s Limit (MCL)	Highest Average or Highest Single Test Result	Range of Detected Test Results	Violation	Typical Sources
Fluoride	4.0 ppm	4.0 ppm	0.48 ppm	0.27 - 0.98 ppm	NO	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive to promote strong teeth.

Potential Health Effects and Corrective Actions (If Applicable)

Fluoride: If your drinking water fluoride levels are below the optimal concentration range of 0.5 to 0.9 ppm, please talk with your dentist about how you can protect your teeth and your family’s teeth from tooth decay and cavities. For more information, visit: MDH Drinking Water Fluoridation (https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/com/fluoride.html).

Monitoring Results – Unregulated Substances/Emerging Contaminants

In addition to testing drinking water for contaminants regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act, we sometimes also monitor for contaminants that are not regulated. Unregulated contaminants do not have legal limits for drinking water. MDH, EPA, and other health agencies may have developed comparison values for some of these compounds. Some of these comparison values are based solely on potential health impacts and do not consider our ability to measure contaminants at very low concentrations nor the cost and technology of prevention and/or treatment. These values may be set at levels that are costly, challenging, or impractical for a water system to meet (for example, large-scale treatment technology may not exist for a given contaminant). Sample data are listed along with comparison values in the table below; it is important to note that these comparison values are not enforceable.

Detection alone of a regulated or unregulated contaminant should not cause concern. The significance of a detection should be determined considering current health effects information. We are often still learning about the health effects, so this information can change over time.

A person drinking water with a contaminant at or below the comparison value would be at little to no risk for harmful health effects. If the level of a contaminant is above the comparison value, people of a certain age or with special health conditions-like a fetus, infants, children, elderly, and people with impaired immunity—may need to take extra precautions. We are notifying you of the unregulated/emerging contaminants we have detected as a public education opportunity.

Unregulated contaminant monitoring helps EPA to determine where certain contaminants occur and whether the Agency should consider regulating those contaminants in the future.

- More information is available on MDH’s A-Z List of Contaminants in Water (https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/contaminants/index.html)
- Fourth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 4) (https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/com/ucmr4.html)
- Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr/fifth-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule)
- EPA has developed a UCMR5 Program Overview Factsheet (https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-02/ucmr5-factsheet.pdf) describing UCMR 5 contaminants and standards.

In the past year, your drinking water may have tested for additional unregulated contaminants as part of the Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr/fifth-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule) and results are still being processed. The Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 5 (UCMR 5) Data finder allows people to easily search for, summarize, and download the available UCMR 5 analytical results (https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr/fifth-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule-data-finder).

UNREGULATED/EMERGING CONTAMINANTS – Tested in drinking water.			
Contaminant	Comparison Value	Highest Average Result or Highest Single Test Result	Range of Detected Test Results
Sodium* (2023)	20 ppm	16.8 ppm	N/A
Sulfate (2023)	500 ppm	6.92 ppm	N/A

*Note that home water softening can increase the level of sodium in your water.

Some People Are More Vulnerable to Contaminants in Drinking Water

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. The developing fetus and therefore pregnant women may also be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water. These people or their caregivers should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Learn More about Your Drinking Water

Drinking Water Sources

Groundwater supplies 75 percent of Minnesota’s drinking water, and found in aquifers beneath the surface of the land. Surface water supplies 25 percent of Minnesota’s drinking water, and is the water in lakes, rivers, and streams above the surface of the land.

Contaminants can get in drinking water sources from the natural environment and from people’s daily activities. There are five main types of contaminants in drinking water sources.

- **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses, bacteria, and parasites. Sources include sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, pets, and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants** include salts and metals from natural sources (e.g. rock and soil), oil and gas production, mining and farming operations, urban stormwater runoff, and wastewater discharges.
- **Pesticides and herbicides** are chemicals used to reduce or kill unwanted plants and pests. Sources include agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and commercial and residential properties.
- **Organic chemical contaminants** include synthetic and volatile organic compounds. Sources include industrial processes and petroleum production, gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

- **Radioactive contaminants** such as radium, thorium, and uranium isotopes come from natural sources (e.g. radon gas from soils and rock), mining operations, and oil and gas production.

The Minnesota Department of Health provides information about your drinking water source(s) in a source water assessment, including:

- How Ellendale is protecting your drinking water source(s);
- Nearby threats to your drinking water sources;
- How easily water and pollution can move from the surface of the land into drinking water sources, based on natural geology and the way wells are constructed.

Find your source water assessment at [Source Water Assessments](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/swp/swa) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/swp/swa>) or call 651-201-4700 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Lead in Drinking Water

Lead can cause serious health problems, babies, children under six years, and pregnant women are at the highest risk. You may be in contact with lead through paint, water, dust, soil, food, hobbies, or your job. There is no safe level of lead.

Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Our water system is responsible for proving high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes from service lines but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk.

Read below to learn how you can protect yourself from lead in drinking water.

1. **Let the water run** before drinking tap water flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap. If you have a lead service line, you may need to let the water run longer. A service line is the underground pipe that brings water from the main water pipe under the street to your home.
 - Activities such as taking a shower, doing laundry or dishes help keep water moving in your home system but are not a replacement for running the tap before you drink if it has not been used for a long period of time.
 - The only way to know if lead has been reduced by letting it run is to check with a test. If letting the water run does not reduce lead, consider other options to reduce your exposure.
2. **Know your service line materials** by contacting your public water system, or you can search for your address online at the [Minnesota Lead Inventory Tracking Tool](https://maps.umn.edu/LSL/) (<https://maps.umn.edu/LSL/>).
 - [Protect Your Tap: A quick check for lead](https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/protect-your-tap-quick-check-lead) (<https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/protect-your-tap-quick-check-lead>) is EPA's step by step guide to learn how to find lead pipes in your home.
3. **Use cold water** for drinking, making food, and making baby formula. Hot water releases more lead from pipes than cold water.
4. **Test your water.** In most cases, letting the water run and using cold water for drinking and cooking should keep lead levels low in your drinking water. If you are still concerned about lead, arrange with a laboratory to test your tap water. Testing your water is important if young children or pregnant women drink your tap water.
 - Contact a Minnesota Department of Health accredited laboratory to purchase a sample container and instructions on how to submit a sample: [Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program](https://eldo.web.health.state.mn.us/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam) (<https://eldo.web.health.state.mn.us/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam>) The Minnesota Department of Health can help you understand your test results.
5. **Treat your water** if a test shows your water has high levels of lead after you let the water run. You can use a filter certified with ANSI/NSF standards 53 and 42 for lead reduction.
 - Read about water treatment units: [Point-of-Use Water Treatment Units for Lead Reduction](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/poulead.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/poulead.html>)

Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and other steps you can take to minimize exposure are available at:

- Visit EPA [Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead) (<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>)
 - Visit the Minnesota department of Health [Lead in Drinking Water](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/contaminants/lead.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/contaminants/lead.html>)
 - To learn about how to reduce your contact with lead from sources other than your drinking water, visit [Lead Poisoning Prevention: Common Sources](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/lead/fs/common.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/lead/fs/common.html>)
6. **Be Aware:** Head Start Programs, Child Care Centers, Public and Charter Schools all have requirements to test for lead in drinking water. These programs can learn more about requirements and resources for testing and remediation at MDH Drinking Water in Schools and Child Cares (<https://www.web.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/schools/index.html>)

Service Line Material Inventory

Ellendale has completed and submitted our service line materials inventory to the Minnesota Department of Health. The service line inventory is publicly available, and you can check the materials for your service line by visiting the [Lead Inventory Tracking Tool \(LITT\)](https://maps.umn.edu/LSL/) (<https://maps.umn.edu/LSL/>). You may also contact us at <Insert Contact Information>. To complete the service line inventory, our system <insert a general description of how the system determined the status of service lines>. As of 10/11/2024, our inventory contains 1 lead, 3 galvanized requiring replacement, 176 unknown material, and 201 non-lead service lines.

Service Line Replacement

<Insert information about your water system's lead service line replacement program, if applicable, or other opportunities to replace lead service lines.>

[The paragraph below must be customized based on ownership of the service line and the timing of this notification. Consider including information on who may own the lead service line, such as: Our records indicate that the customer owns the portion of the lead service line from the curb stop to the water meter.]

As a result of recent state and federal funding opportunities, the replacement of the portion of the lead service line owned by the property owner may be completed at no cost to the owner. All funding will pass through Ellendale and certain state and federal construction requirement must be met to be eligible for these funds so if you are interested in having your lead service line replaced, please contact <insert contact information – phone, email, etc>.

Ownership of a service line is often split between the customer and water system. Ellendale is required to replace the system owned portion of the lead service line when a property owner notifies us that they are replacing their portion beginning October 16, 2024. If the property owner replaces their portion of the service line without coordinating with Ellendale, the property owner will be responsible for all costs related to the replacement of the privately owned portion of the service line.

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Otisco Township
NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Otisco Township will receive quotes for the following:

- 1) Class 5 Gravel and Hauling- Price per ton delivered, spread and leveled any place in the Township.
- 2) Mow Township Ditches: Must use own tractor.
- 3) Mow Township Grass/Yard: Must have own mower.

Submit quotes to Township in person on Monday, May 12, 2025 at 7p.m. meeting. All quotes must include certificate of insurance for ALL the above. If you are unable to attend the meeting, send your quote and your certificate of insurance to:

Otisco Township Clerk
Jenae Peterson
13858 295th Ave
Waseca, MN 56093
Quotes MUST reach clerk by meeting date.

Otisco Township Supervisors
Otisco Township Clerk

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NOTICE

Summit Township Board Meeting
Tuesday, May 6
7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall

Andy Jewison
Summit Township Clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE

The normal monthly meeting of the City Council meeting for the month of May will be held on May 12th, 2025 at 7:00 pm. This is later than normal to allow for the assessment hearing for the 2025 Street Improvement Project.

A public hearing will be held on May 12th, 2025 at 7:05 pm on Ordinance 25-01: An Ordinance Amending Section 610 - Parking and Snow Removal - South Ash Parking Restrictions.
A public hearing will be held on May 12th, 2025 at 7:10 pm on a Petition to Detach a Parcel from City Limits
A public hearing will be held on May 12th, 2025 at 7:15 pm on a Petition to Separate a Parcel

The public hearings will be held at City Hall located at 203 Broadway Ave N, New Richland, MN. Persons wishing to appear and present comment may do so at that time, or comments may be mailed to City Administrator Anthony Martens at PO Box 57, New Richland, MN 56072 or submitted via email at amartens@newrichlandmn.gov.

Published in the Star Eagle on May 1, 2025

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■ Ellendale
from Page 3

council meetings or township council meetings where Joan and I actually live.”

That, too, was a jab at Petsinger, who technically is not an Ellendale resident, but does own property in the city.

“I’ve never, until Ellendale, witnessed the crap that you guys have to go through pretty much every meeting,” Crosby said. “I know why they do it: Because they know they can get away with it. You guys have to sit there and take it.

“They can come here and put on their little dog and pony show,” he said, “and everyone’s got to listen. I couldn’t do it; I commend you guys. I’d be in jail if I had to sit up there and listen to that. So I’m going to do something a little different this evening.

“I’m going to say thank you, on behalf of my wife Joan and myself. I would like to thank everyone in this room, and probably every citizen – actual citizen – of Ellendale, for who you are and for what you do for the city of Ellendale,” Crosby said.

“You get all the crap, and you don’t get enough of a clap. We appreciate you,” he said, before the room broke into applause.

“Thank you,” Groth said. “It’s good to hear once in a while.”

Ordinance changes were discussed later in the meeting, including one that has been a point of contention between Petsinger and

the city.

At the March 13 public hearing and city council meeting, Petsinger disputed the accuracy and legality of a proposed ordinance change about broadcasting stations or towers. He has a vested interest in the tower regulations: He has equipment on the city’s water tower for his business as an internet provider. The proposed ordinance change would mean his equipment would have to be removed.

Though a vote on the issue wasn’t on the April agenda, Engel assured council members they were within their rights to prohibit or allow conditional use of towers and antennae.

He also addressed the matter of having a public comment period during city council meetings, despite the civil exchanges earlier that night. While many governmental bodies allow public comment, it is not a requirement in Minnesota.

“It was recommended by our League (of Minnesota Cities) attorney to take that out of there,” Engel said.

“I’d like to see us change that ordinance to make it optional,” he said, “then it can be controlled by the council.”

If a resident has a topic to address, it can be added to the agenda to be addressed as a matter of business or discussion.

“It gives you a little more leeway,” Engel said. “You can still do it; you just don’t have to do it all the time.”

A workshop to discuss the issues was set for 6:30 p.m. April 24.

■ County
from Page 3

department fleet of 17 patrol cars, with the retired vehicles being offered for sale to the public via the department web page; he cautioned, however, they are not likely to appear there until sometime this fall, when the new vehicles have arrived and the needed equipment has been transferred and installed.

It is because of the need to transfer equipment that the department consistently purchases the same vehicle model, he explained.

Dulas also reported dash cameras and body cameras which were ordered recently have not yet all been delivered. Staff training on the use of body cameras is scheduled for May 6.

Board members heard a 45-mi-

nute summary of the South Country Health Alliance 2024 annual report. Executive director Leota Lind and chief financial officer Scott Shulman reported the agency received a “clean, unmodified audit opinion.”

South Country describes itself on its website as “a county-based purchasing health plan serving seven Minnesota counties—Brown, Dodge, Goodhue, Sibley, Steele, Wabasha and Waseca—in a joint effort to support accessible, quality health care through partnerships with community services and local health care providers for Minnesota health care program enrollees.”

Among other information, the two presenters reported the agency is seeing increased costs because of mental health needs, chemical dependency needs, and rapidly expanding use of GLP-1 weight loss medication prescriptions.

APRIL STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

27 KYLIE Olson

27

4 VOLLEYBALL
4 BASKETBALL
3 TRACK
1 SOFTBALL
4 KNOWLEDGE BOWL
2 FCA
2 STUGO
2 STUDENT AMBASSADORS
1 YEARBOOK

STUDENT ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Sophia Williams

Sport/Activities: Band, Choir, Knowledge Bowl, One Act, Dance

Grade: Sophomore

What do you list most about participating in the activities that you are involved in? I love performing, but I enjoy the process of preparation and improvement equally. Whether it's after a concert, play, or dance competition, nothing beats the gratification of hard work paying off.

What motivates you to do your best? Two of my main motivators are my enjoyment of the activities I'm involved in and the fulfillment of challenging myself. I'm very competitive when it comes to my activities, and a lot of the time, I am my own biggest rival. The desire to outdo myself is the source of the bulk of my drive.

Who is your role model and why? Jesus is my role model because He is the source of all love, joy, and good. I wouldn't be able to make music, act, dance, or do anything else without Him.

What advice would you give to other students especially students in elementary and middle school? I would encourage younger students to do the activities that make them feel the most like themselves and to focus on not only their success, but the satisfaction of improving.

What makes you a good teammate for the sport/activity that you are involved in? My love and passion for these activities are what make me a good teammate. I practice, show up, and work hard because I thoroughly enjoy doing so. Having fun while doing seemingly mundane tasks goes a long way in any setting.

STUDENT ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Kylie Olson

Sport/Activities: Volleyball, Basketball, Track, Softball, Student Council, Knowledge Bowl, Student Ambassadors, FCA, Panther Press

Grade: Sophomore

What do you list most about participating in the activities that you are involved in? I love to stay active, work with teammates, helping people outside my school, and learning new things.

What motivates you to do your best? Not only working and challenging myself, but working hard for my teammates and my family. I want to make it far, which also makes me work harder.

Who is your role model and why? My role models are my parents. They try to make it to every event of my, like from sporting events, to collage vists, and a lot of the little events. They push me to do my best, they drove me everywhere, even if it was a long distance. They put all there time and effort into me, which makes them amazing. I would have never made it this far without them.

What advice would you give to other students especially students in elementary and middle school? Work hard, don't give up, stay involved, don't let a single person doubt you, and follow your dreams.

What makes you a good teammate for the sport/activity that you are involved in? I am positive to my teammates, I like learning from new perspective, and push people to do their best.

STUDENT ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

27 SOPHIA Williams

6 BAND
4 CHOIR
1 ONE ACT
4 KNOWLEDGE BOWL
12 DANCE

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

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