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Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board Meeting August 13

The SWCD will hold its monthly board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 13. The meetings will be held in the SWCD offices located at 300 North State Street - Door 4.

Vista Covenant 150-year anniversary August 15-16

Vista Covenant Church, located at 14679 275th Ave. New Richland, will celebrate 150 years in God's service on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 15 and 16. Games, treats and fellowship will begin at 3 on Saturday with a supper beginning at 5:30. R.S.V.P.s are requested to 507-465-8365 or on the Vista Covenant website. A 10 a.m. service on Sunday will feature the president of the Evangelical Covenant as officiant. Vista invites everyone to the celebrations, and especially encourages former parishioners to attend.

Waldorf Days city celebration August 21 to 23

The town of Waldorf will hold its annual city celebration from Aug. 21 to 23. A parade will begin at 3 p.m. on Saturday. The town's memorial park will be dedicated. Kids Zone, Live music including IV Play, classic car, truck and tractor show, and more. For more information and a schedule, visit <https://cityofwaldorf.com/waldorf-days-event/>

Burger and Sweet Corn Feed at Waldorf Community Center Friday, August 21

The Waldorf Fireman's Burger and Sweet Corn Feed is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Friday, August 21, 2026. This event is part of Waldorf Days and will take place at the community center.

Hartland University Bar's 4th Annual Bug Run August 22

The 4th Annual Hartland University Bug Run will have registration at noon, kickstands up at 1 p.m. Saturday, August 22. Six bars on the list with a \$10 entry fee. All proceeds go to A.B.A.T.E. Young Riders Program.

Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board Meeting September 10

The SWCD will hold its monthly board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 10. The meetings will be held in the SWCD offices located at 300 North State Street - Door 4.

Fourth Annual Ride to Remember at Hartland University Bar Saturday, Sept. 12

The 4th Annual Ride to Remember will depart the Hartland University Bar at noon on Saturday, Sept. 12. Those riding in side by sides will visit five different bars and at each bar receive a different playing card; best hand is the winner. There will also be a 50/50 raffle and silent auction. Proceeds go to Flags for Vets.

A word from

The Word



Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.

Galatians 6:6

Area communities observe National Night Out

The national Night to Unite was observed the evening of Aug. 4 in Ellendale, Geneva and New Richland. The night of community celebrations is meant to draw the community together while also creating a setting where community members can interact with the public safety personnel who work to protect their lives and property.

At every event, free food consisting of hot dogs or sandwiches, chips, and treats was offered. Along with that, the local fire department, emergency medical services, and law enforcement were present, inviting children to see inside police cars, fire trucks and the backs of ambulances, and offering activities which encouraged them to interact with safety workers.

Jay Dulas, Waseca County Sheriff, said, "We want kids to be comfortable around emergency personnel. That way if something bad happens, they know the policemen and firemen are the good guys." Dulas was present at the New Richland event; representatives from Freeborn and Steele County sheriffs' offices were present in their respective jurisdictions.

The Ellendale event rang with energetic music played by a giant bubble blower which invited children to run through a large mound of foamy white. Members of the emergency medical services offered treats displayed on one of the agency's gurneys. City council members served root beer floats, and children were offered the chance to stand on the platform of a lift at the end of a fire truck boom.

In Geneva, the event was located in the city park conveniently connected to the fire hall. Older community members took part in energetic conversation at tables spread around the area. A "pie in the face" free will activity invited folks to contribute toward this fall's fifth-grade trip to Eagle Bluff. Freshly popped popcorn was distributed freely. A bake sale raised money toward the community's 175th anniversary celebration to take place in 2030. Children were excited to see the Freeborn County Sheriff's Office drone operated by Deputy Brockwell, who showed them how it could be used in search and rescue events.

The New Richland event took place in City Park along Broadway Avenue. Children could play in a bounce house, have airbrushed temporary tattoos applied by city administrator Tyler Lendt, and pet "CareBear," a pony brought by the Waseca County Sheriff's Posse. Four Posse members circulated riding their horses. Children were given the chance to work side by side with a firefighter to douse a pretend fire in a 5-foot cutout of a house.

Organizers of all three events stated their satisfaction with robust attendance, perhaps fueled by a nearly perfect evening with comfortable temperatures and very little wind.



UNITED TOGETHER - Ellendale, Geneva and New Richland celebrated the National Night to Unite on Aug. 4 as a way to bring communities together and encourage children to interact with public safety personnel.
Star Eagle photos by Deb Bently



Hartland City and Fire Hall construction complete

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff Writer

During their Aug. 3 meeting, members of the Hartland city council learned Hartland voters will be able to cast their ballots for the Aug. 11 primary election from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the new fire hall. Council members encouraged all eligible Hartland residents to take part.

City council meetings now take place in the brand-new Hartland City and Fire Hall. There isn't much inside since they haven't fully moved in, however, the city clerk's office is up and running and the fire department should be fully moved in soon. One complaint about the new hall was how much echo there was during the meeting. The council was going to check online for ways to combat sound vibration. A stretch of curb opposite the new fire hall on Broadway Street will be painted red and marked "no parking," so the fire trucks can safely back out of the garage during fire calls. There were no billable fire calls for the month of July.

A private Hartland citizen has signed an agreement to clean up his yard and remove excess vehicles, but as of Aug. 1 the clutter was still there. The council decided to take steps to have it cleaned and will charge the owner through property taxes.

The new water meter reading system should be up and running in September, but in order to line the meters up with the online billing system, Andy Flatness will need to go door to door and find the serial numbers. He needs to verify the numbers of at least 11 meters.

The next Hartland city council meeting will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 8.

Town and Country Garden Club

Members share successes, challenges

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

Members of the New Richland Town and Country Garden Club took part in a mutual learning exercise the afternoon of Aug. 4, with members Julie Economy, Barb Finseth, Eleanor Schlaak and Sheryl Schanil inviting club members to visit their gardens and exchange information and insights about the various plants.

A garden stone among Finseth's flowers claimed "As the garden grows, so grows the gardener." The statement seemed like a possible theme for the day as club members offered identifications and shared their own experiences surrounding various plants and insects—both those a gardener wishes to encourage and those they hope to eliminate.

In addition to viewing one another's gar-



BLOOMING AND GROWING - New Richland Town and Country Garden Club members shared ideas and compliments as they viewed four members' gardens the afternoon of Tuesday, Aug. 4.
Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

dens, discussing the growing season and how it affected their success, and learning from one another's creative displays, the group enjoyed supper together at Schanil's home.

During conversation, group members

stated their appreciation for the chance to see and learn from one another's work, saying that being present in the gardens during the exchange allowed for much richer understanding.



Fence Lines

by Mark Bernard

This is my four-leaf clover

The scurs had the Weather Eye dialed back where they wanted it. Does Mother Nature tap the brakes or hit the gas again this week? Starting Thursday, mostly cloudy with a fair chance of rain. Highs in the mid-70's with lows in the low 60's. Partly sunny Friday with a good chance of rain. Highs in the low 70's with lows in the low 60's. Mostly cloudy Saturday with a good chance of forenoon rain. Highs in the low 70's with lows in the low 60's. Sunday, partly sunny with highs in the low 70's and lows in the upper 50's. Mostly sunny on Monday with highs in the low 70's and lows in the upper 50's. Tuesday, partly sunny with a good chance of rain developing. Highs in the low 80's with lows in the upper 50's. Partly sunny on Wednesday with probable rain. Highs in the upper 70's with lows in the mid-60's. On August 15th we'll slip just below 14 hours of daylight. The normal high for August 15th is 79 and the normal low is 59. The scurs will be getting their recreational firewood ready for the cooler evenings ahead.

Lots going on out here in the fields, although none of it is real serious. Much of the corn has dented or is starting to.

That means roughly a month until maturity. That doesn't necessarily mean we'll see a lot of corn being picked by then. Moisture at physiological maturity is roughly 32%. Most won't get serious about harvest until the moisture is 28% or less. Likewise with the soybeans. Right now most soybeans are in full blown R5 stage. Some of the earlier planted, early maturing soybean varieties may be crowding R6 stage. However, to reach full maturity (R8) it still takes roughly four weeks. Then it takes another 5 - 10 days for them to dry down to 15%. That's if the weather cooperates. Longer term forecasts seem to indicate seasonal temps and normal rainfall. Stay tuned.

Our timely, abundant rainfall has become the hallmark of this growing season. In mid-June, I was convinced we may have a drier summer on our hands. By late June and early July, I'd changed my mind. It made me wonder what kind of impact the change in weather would have on insect and disease pressure. As far as insects go, the increased moisture has played right into our hands. Soybean aphids have struggled to gain a foothold. Between the pathogenic fungi under the canopy and the recent uptick in beneficial insect activity, it hasn't been a good year to be a soybean aphid. Likewise with aphids in the corn. Last week, they had started to make things miserable when scouting corn.

Aphids were crawling all over my clothing when exiting the fields. Also present on my clothing were ladybeetle and lacewing larvae. By Monday, it was almost as if the aphids were nonexistent in the corn.

From a disease perspective, print media is often a day late and a dollar short. Southern rust was found July 30h in Waseca Co. Last year it was July 19th. Luckily most had delayed their fungicide application this time

around. It makes sense when protection only lasts two to three weeks tops. This is especially true with tar spot. Our conditions have been favorable for tar spot development, but here again, going back to the disease triangle, there needs to be a susceptible host, the pathogen must be present, and conditions must be favorable for the disease development. Since tar spot has been found here in south central MN in past years, it's been difficult to document much yield loss from it. Our inoculum has been building, but it has yet to reach the levels seen in my travels to places like IL and IN. Only southeastern MN may rival that.

At least we have flying biting insects. Mosquitoes were just starting to make me think perhaps they were starting to wane. The recent rains, still conditions and warm temps reminded me that probably isn't the case. The stable flies were still a force to be reckoned with as well. They seem to nail you when you least expect it. With the heat, I'd been wearing shorts a lot over the past week. There was one in the car last week that kept biting me as I was driving along between fields. There was some good news, however. It seemed everywhere I went out to look at crops, dragonflies suddenly appeared. They love to eat both flies and mosquitoes. They've got their work cut out for them.

While pulling weeds Sunday, I mused about my time spent playing with plants. My folks had a great influence of course. As kids, we helped in the garden and later in the fields tilling, planting and harvesting. Other people had a hand as well. I remember Evelyn and Lois Ronken babysat us when I was probably 7 or 8. They found ways to keep us occupied for hours. One of the activities was looking for four-leaf clover. Boring, right? You might be surprised.

We had lots of ladino clover in the lawn. It took us a while, but we found some, including a few that had five leaves and even one with six. What sticks in my mind was, once we'd collected the stems, they placed the clover between two sheets of waxed paper. They pressed the wax paper with the clothes iron, laminating and preserving our efforts for all to see. It must've brought us luck. It kept us from being spanked for getting into mischief.

Poppy had to make another vet visit, this time to update her Bordetella shot in case we should need to board her sometime. Of course, since she was there I asked if they could give her a pedicure as her toenails were starting to get long again. The kind young lady said sure and in less than 5 minutes I was out the door. When I got Poppy home I couldn't believe the difference it made. When she walked across the laminate floor, it was like she was wearing tennis shoes. No clicking at all when she broke into her patented zoomies. Look out squirrels and turkeys! Poppy can run faster and jump higher! Well, as high as Corgis can jump anyway.

See you next week... real good then.



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

Thirsty butterflies decorate the driveway

After a recent rain, there was a puddle at the end of my driveway. Now that the water has drained and evaporated, a patch of mud remains.

I cannot be unhappy about it, because hundreds of butterflies are using it as a place to get water. In numbers I believe I have never seen before, they settle on the mud and stay there for extended periods, occasionally opening and closing their wings.

There are some bright yellow ones I have learned are clouded sulphurs. They are particularly easy to see on the wet-dark mud, looking like the first leaves of some late-sprouting exotic plant. Mixed in with them is a roughly equal number of painted lady butterflies. These are much more difficult to see. They are perhaps half again larger than the sulphurs, but their colors are plainer and darker—greys and oranges. When their wings are closed, the warm colors are hidden, leaving a mottled pattern that blends in remarkably well with the small pebbles in the gravel road. When that's the case, the most reliable way to spot them is to look for their shadows.

As I come and go in my car, I feel a bit guilty for disturbing them.

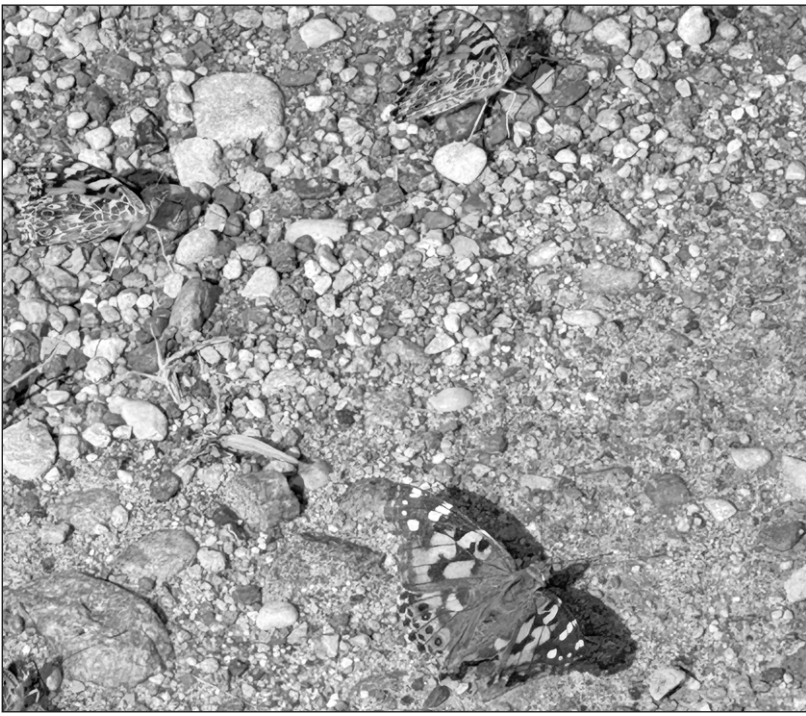
On the other hand, they rise in a cloud and surround the car, making me feel like the grand marshal in a parade—surrounded by colorful, fluttering confetti that, rather than falling from the sky, rises from below.

Along with the crowd of confetti at the mud puddle, there is also a rich scattering of butterflies along the length of the gravel road. At least for the time being, I have taken to driving as though a child might dash out of the nearby cornfield at any moment. At half or less of my usual speed, I watch for the triangle-shaped outlines or shadows and steer to the far side of the road. Most get out of my way promptly, but some are still holding to the road as they disappear under my hood: in their case, I hope I am going slowly enough that I will do them no harm when they launch upward.

To my gratification, the butterflies don't seem to remain disturbed for long, landing again as soon as the commotion is over.

Hoping to take advantage of that, I took my camera and walked slowly to the end of my driveway. The fountain of butterfly confetti was even more dramatic when it surrounded only me. As I found an opportune spot and stood still, they all settled down, taking no notice as long as I displayed only minimal movement. When I lifted my camera or turned myself to face a slightly different direction, the closest ones would fly up; those a bit further away stayed on the ground, but seemed to flutter nervously.

As I enjoyed the novelty of my circumstances and tried to capture a photo that would help others appreciate what it was like to be there, I couldn't help chuckling. Beneath me on the roadway was a sort of visual Morse Code. A painted lady invisible except for its shadow would open its wings, becoming a bright spot of color for a moment before it closed them again and disappeared from sight. Then a different, nearby set of colors would appear and be gone—the effect was compelling.



BLENDED BEAUTY - There are three painted lady butterflies in this picture, but only one is readily visible. The other two have their wings closed and are blending in with the sand and pebbles of a gravel road.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

It was punctuated by a much smaller butterfly in the same orange and black color scheme. Only an inch or so across with their wings wide open, these tiny drinkers looked like young children who had followed the grownups on an outing. Called pearl crescents, though, some research informs me they are actually fully mature at their diminutive size.

In the visual Morse Code performance I was watching, the pearl crescents stood out despite being so small because they opened their wings more often and left them that

way a bit longer than the painted ladies.

Speaking of research, it turns out butterflies drink through a "proboscis," a long, straw-like tube which coils up under their faces until they are ready either to harvest nectar from flowers or drink water. Reportedly, it is almost entirely males who drink water in the way called "puddling." They are also known to drink from drops of dew or, hmmm, puddles of animal urine.

Thanks to drinking...fluids...the males acquire minerals and substances not available from flower nectar. They then share these nutrients with the females during mating.

The facts and information are valuable, of course. I wish the butterflies well. Perhaps more importantly, I am grateful for their communal visit to my driveway. It is a remarkable privilege to be showered by a fountain of living confetti.

Considering the path to happiness, success

My friend Madi reports she had an excellent time on the trip we planned together that I could not attend due to my back injury. She visited four monasteries and, aside from the "freaky African and Indian Masks" at the cabin, everything was "fantastic." Madi also visited a museum of dinosaurs as she loves them. Another small adventure, she got pulled over for driving 55 in a 35 mph zone. The officer gave her a warning. When she told me she got pulled over, I asked her if it was for driving too slowly, as has happened to her before. As she told me about the trip, she mentioned more than once she was sad I could not attend.

Though I'm sorry to have missed the trip and to have disappointed Madi, staying home seems to have been the right decision for my body. More than one night this week, pain kept me awake until long after sunrise. I am managing as best as I can. I have appointments this week and next and again the following week. Everything takes so long.

I believe there are probably some great lessons I am learning along the way as a result of these pains. The Word tells us it brings us closer to God when we are in pain. Although this is true, I really, really don't want to hurt anymore.

This past week has been filled with organizing our Activities Posters and Calendars for the upcoming NRHEG school year, and Activities Posters for Waseca's. Many phone calls and instructions were given out.

I had dinner with my friends Paul and Heather Sunday evening. Heather commented that she would struggle not having someone to go to when there was a problem. I do enjoy being the person in charge. I commented that I simply fix the problem or hire someone to fix the problem. Growing up, I found it hard to work for someone else



Just a Thought...

by Eli Lutgens

unless I knew they were smarter or at least more knowledgeable about the job. My dad, after all, fired me numerous times. He now will be the first to tell you I am a better businessman than he is. As a young person, or any person for that matter, it is frustrating knowing or believing I know what is the right choice and not having the opportunity to implement it. In business with my parents, I just ignored them and did what I knew was right. They were my parents; I knew once it worked out, it would be fine. And if it didn't, it would also be fine, because they love me and treated me with love.

I try to take that mentality and apply it to life. I focus on kindness and helpfulness, and anticipate they will treat me the same way. Also, it just makes life better. I don't generally regret decisions, feel bad for being overly generous (although sometimes that happens, but that feeling fades), or second guess myself.

Sometimes I feel foolish looking back on choices made in romantic relationships.

My dad told me this week, when I asked him how he decided to marry my mother: "Love at first sight."

"And she knew it," was his response.

He tells me every time the conversation has come up, that even though the relationship ended, entering it was the best decision of his life, because it led to me and my siblings.

My former lady friend and I stopped seeing each other back in December. I don't know how other people decide

to end relationships, but I felt the focus in our interactions seemed to be about satisfying only one of us, leaving me feeling my needs were being overlooked. Does that make me selfish?

The simplest summary is that I was unhappy.

I didn't ask my dad what ultimately led to the divorce between him and my mother, but I have heard both sides of that story. Everyone was unhappy.

Oh, and for those who ask, Madi and I are simply friends. I know that the grandmothers who read my column like to discuss my welfare; thank you for taking an interest in my life.

I am not in a hurry to get married and have kids. It has been said picking a spouse is the most important decision a person will make. I have frequently told myself not to "settle" for someone who is simply convenient. Others echo that sentiment when the matter comes up.

If I had more exciting news to report in my life, I would, but aside from my life, my wandering thoughts are all I have to share with readers this week.

The game store goes well. All seems to be going well enough with the papers.

It has been a unique experience to buy my first newspaper using all of my money as a down payment, then start a second paper, the Pioneer, using all of the money I had saved for two years, and then a game store, once again using all the money I had saved over the course of two years.

Lutgens continued on 4

A few weeks ago, there was information in the NR Star/Eagle in the New Richland City Council article regarding the mural on the Post Office building that was misleading. The article stated that the mural was a City Mural and that \$5,000 had been spent on maintenance and that there was an additional \$10,000 set aside for additional expense. That is incorrect information.

The Mural located on the Post Office wall is a community mural,



which was funded by donations back in 2003. There is a Mural Fund account that is funds left from the initial donations as well as monies received from the sale of memorial bricks. Funds from that account are used for mural touch ups and landscaping updates, lights, etc. for the memorial park located there. No taxpayer money has been used on the upkeep of the mural or the memorial park.

The mural continues to deteriorate from peeling and has become an issue due to the condition of the wall. Because the wall needs extensive work, we will not be able to save the existing mural. We have already started the process of getting the costs for the necessary materials

needed to get the wall in a condition that a new mural can be put on and last for years to come. We have been fortunate to have the beauty of that mural there now, which highlights the life of our rural community, for 23 years.

Funding and donations will be sought after, and the goal is to have this all completed by mid-year 2027.

Thank you.
Gail Schmidt

NRHEG Star Eagle

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

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DEADLINES: STAR EAGLE: Noon Monday
GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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Compostings

by Al Batt

A day to make Goldilocks happy

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS’ CLUB MEETING

You bought a used electric car?

I did.

How do you like the car?

The vehicle is great, but coiling the 350 miles of extension cord is a pain.

DRIVING BY BRUCE’S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I was at an important (they are all important) meeting where the air conditioning was producing gale-force winds. I think sweet-sounding wind chimes should be installed on the towering wind turbines.

Fogust is what Bay Area locals call the foggy, cloudy, hazy conditions that occur each day in August. Weather folklore says the number of foggy mornings in a Midwestern August predicts the number of snowfalls the coming winter will have. The traditional method of counting the fogs was by dropping beans into a jar.

Traffic was light. I waved at the other driver. I grew up alongside a seldom-traveled gravel road. Much of the traffic was made up of the rural mail carrier, school bus and the creamery’s milk truck. I was going to join the school’s debate team, but I was talked out of it. I argued with the farm’s guinea hens instead. They were superb watchdogs. If anything or anybody showed up, the guineas sounded the alarm vigorously. The females made a “buck-wheat” call. A group of guinea fowl is a confusion.

RUTHLESS PUMPKIN SPICE HAS REPLACED IT

Spiced apple rings were red and served in our school cafeteria. Even though it provided minerals and nutrients to build the brain cells needed to show my work in math class, it was phased out in favor of fresh fruit. I’m a big fan of the spiced apple industry.

BOOKING IT

I volunteered at a Friends of the Library book sale. Great fun. Several people asked me what I was reading. I had put “The Correspondent” by Virginia Evans on a library hold in January. There were 324 people ahead of me. I got the book in July. I enjoyed the clever epistolary. Each letter was a piece of an intriguing jigsaw puzzle of a novel. It didn’t take me 6 months to read it. It was worth the wait.

I’VE LEARNED

“Companion” comes from the Latin “companionem,” with the roots “com,” meaning “with or together,” and “panis,” meaning “bread.” A companion is someone you’d break bread with.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found the most common jobs in this country are: 1. Retail salespersons. 2. Home health and personal care aides. 3. General and operations managers. 4. Fast food and counter workers. 5. Cashiers.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

A man buying underwear asked, “Are these boxers satin?” to which the clerk replied, “No, they’re brand new.”

My physics professor was face down on his desk crying before class. I put my hand on his shoulder and asked, “Hey, what’s the matter?” He looked up at me and said, “Anything that has mass and takes up space.”

NATURE NOTES

It was a day that would have made Goldilocks happy. It was just right. It was a rare morning—no wind, no rain and no vehicle noise. I heard the whoosh of bird wings beating the air. I looked up to see a flock of Franklin’s gulls headed south. The flock stretched far, with every gull appearing to be striving to pass the gull on each side. It was a V trying to become a straight line. Named for the Arctic explorer Sir John Franklin, the graceful flyers are notably smaller than ring-billed gulls and the nonbreeding adults sport patchy black to gray hoods, black legs and feet, and black bills with red tips. They forage in agricultural fields, pastures, landfills and on the surface of water. They follow tractors to feed on earthworms, grubs, beetles and grasshoppers dislodged by farm implements.

A red-winged blackbird male stopped at a feeder for a snack. His is a polygynous species, with males having many females as mates—up to 15. In some populations, 90% of territorial males have more than one female nesting. He isn’t a supreme ruler because up to half the nestlings in his territory might have been sired by another male.

White sweet clover and yellow sweet clover are similar in appearance, growing 3 to 6 feet high. They’re biennial herbaceous plants in the legume family. Yellow sweet clover has yellow flowers, is usually the shorter of the two, and blooms earlier than white sweet clover. White sweet clover (I’ll bet you’ve already guessed this) has white flowers. Sweet clovers are fragrant and reproduce by seed with plants producing thousands of seeds, which can remain viable for 40 years.

MEETING ADJOURNED

“Kind hearts are the gardens, Kind thoughts are the roots, Kind words are the flowers, Kind deeds are the fruits.” — Kirby Larson

Mary Wencil, Wayne Starman named 2026 Steele County Senior Citizens of the Year

The Steele County Free Fair and Steele County Exchange Club want to congratulate Mary Wencil and Wayne Starman for being selected as the 2026 Steele County Senior Citizens of the Year.

Mary Wencil

Mary is married to Mike Wencil and lives on their family farm, east of Medford, where they raised their seven children. Mary also has nine grandchildren. Mary is a member of Christ the King Catholic Church of Medford where she serves as a reader and communion minister. Mary also belongs to the Court St. Anne #1820 Catholic Daughters of Medford where she has held numerous positions and is currently the Financial Secretary.

Mary has been a member of the Exchange Club of Steele County since 1987. During that time Mary has served as an officer including President, and Treasurer on several committees. Mary served on committees such as Give a Kid a Flag to Wave at the Memorial Day Parade, the Straight River Day Parade in Medford, Peace Officer of the Year, One Nation Under God Breakfast, 300 Club raffle, Mother’s Day flower baskets and the VFW breakfast. Currently, Mary serves on the Division 4

committee for Exchange America 250. The Exchange Clubs for Division 4, including Medford, Moonlighters, Owatonna and Steele County Exchange Clubs, plan to erect a temporary honorary display in recognition of our Country’s 250th anniversary.

Mary serves on the Board of Directors for the Center For Family Unity whose mission is to educate and support families and communities in the prevention of child abuse. Mary helps with events such as Santa Bowl, Golf For Kids Sake, and meat raffles at the American Legion, Eagles and Elks clubs.

Wayne Starman

Wayne was raised on his family farm in Summit Township in Steele County. Wayne graduated from Dodge Center, MN in 1957, and in 1958 enlisted in the National Guard and served through 1964. Wayne married his high school sweetheart, Janet Janning, and has been married for 65 years, has five children, 13 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. Wayne is dedicated to his faith and parish, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, where he serves on both the Parish Council and Finance Council.

Wayne began his working career working for Duffy Hamren, Duffy’s Fairway grocery store in

1958. In 1980, after holding various positions within the business, Wayne purchased the store and it became Wayne’s Fairway. Wayne sold the store in 1990 to Coborn’s Inc. and in 1990 managed Cash Wise in Owatonna until he retired from management in 2005.

Wayne has served in many local organizations as both a member and a leader. Wayne has been actively involved within the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism since 1980, serving as Chairman of the Board, Ambassador and continues to be engaged as a member. Wayne is a member of the Am-Vets, Lions Club, American Legion, Elks Club and Knights of Columbus with more than 45 years of service in many of these organizations. Wayne also serves with Steele County Honor/Color Guard, providing military honors for veterans. Wayne also served on the Owatonna Civil Service Board for nine years.

Wayne has received several awards throughout his many years of service, including the Paul Harris/Vern White “Service Above Self” Award in 2022, Progressive Grocer’s Outstanding Independent Grocer of the Year, the Independent Operators Award, and the Coborn’s Incorporated Outstanding Employee of the



Mary Wencil



Wayne Starman

Year 1991.

Mary and Wayne will be recognized for their accomplishments on August 20th at Wenger Stage at the Steele County Free Fair at 11:15 a.m.

County increases fees for cannabis businesses

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

During their Aug. 4 meeting, members of the Waseca County Board of Commissioners approved a fee schedule for cannabis businesses in the county which will double registration costs from \$500 to \$1,000 between their first year of business and subsequent years. The new schedule also lists registration fees for a wider range of businesses.

Planning and zoning administrator Tina Wilson informed commissioners that, to date, she has worked with three businesses, all growers, who are located or will be locating within the unincorporated areas of the county. All three have not paid any registration fees because they were among the business types the county had not yet established a fee for.

Prior to the adoption of the new schedule, only retailers and “mezzobusinesses” would have paid a registration fee of \$500 in unincorporated areas of Waseca County; businesses in other categories, including microbusiness, cultivator, manufacturer, wholesaler, transporter, testing facility, delivery service, and medical cannabis combination business were listed as “no charge.”

As of Aug. 4, new registrations for all types of licenses must pay an initial fee of \$500 and then an annual renewal cost of \$1,000. Wilson told commissioners these

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

were the maximum amounts permitted under state law, and that many counties statewide were adopting them.

Board member Brian Harguth stated objections to the proposed new schedule, saying that the state office of cannabis management (OCM) “sat on its hands” and did not issue timely permission to the growers located within the county. “They won’t be getting any kind of harvest any more this year,” he stated.

Because of that, he said he could not vote for a schedule which would double their registration costs in year two.

Board chair De Malterer countered with the point that those currently growing within the county were not charged registration fees, but the county invested staff time not only from the planning and zoning department, but will have to provide required compliance checks and possibly increased enforcement.

After lengthy discussion, the new fee schedule was adopted with only Harguth voting against it; county administrator Michael

Johnson made the point that the entire fee schedule must be reviewed and approved at the start of 2027, and that if commissioners wished, there was nothing to keep them from reviewing and changing the fees at that time.

Board members heard from Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) president and CEO Benya Kraus

SMIF is a philanthropic organization with its main office in Owatonna that serves 20 counties in the southeast portion of the state. The organization is celebrating its fortieth year. Kraus stated it was founded in the 1980s, “during the heart of the farm crisis.”

After mentioning that SMIF has issued 51 low interest loans, given 243 grants, and “invested” a total of \$5.5 million in Waseca County through grants, loans and programming, Kraus asked commissioners to continue supporting the agency with county appropriations. The county currently contributes \$2,700 a year. Kraus stated that all 20 counties within its area of operation have elected to make contributions of this type.

Board members accepted the \$25,000 offer—the stated minimum bid—of Alton Township property owner Jeff Huelsnitz, who owns

property adjacent to a piece of land the county offered for sale. The 20-acre parcel had been donated to the county in the past with the stipulation that it be maintained in its natural wooded state, but it was not a candidate for development or improvement because it is “landlocked,” that is, property surrounding it is under private ownership and there is no public access route.

Under state law, the county could offer the land only to parties who own the contiguous parcels; in this case, four neighbors. Following procedures required by the state, the county had previously offered those property owners a chance to buy the land first at its assessed value, then at a reduced percentage of the assessed value, and now, for the third round, at a minimum bid selected by the commissioners: \$25,000.

The county also accepted a bid of about \$480,000 to replace two culverts located under Old Highway 14, one at the Steele County line and the other about 1 mile east of Crystal Valley. The winning contractor is Selly Excavating of LeCenter; as part of a statewide bridge maintenance program, the entire cost of the work will be funded by the state.



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OBITUARIES

Lloyd James Schumacher

Eleven-year resident of Staples. Lloyd James Schumacher passed away on Sunday, August 2 at 11:50 p.m. In 2015 Lloyd and his wife Gloria moved to Lakewood Pines in Staples to be closer to his daughter Donna (Schumacher) Shaw. Lloyd was an outgoing soul who always had a smile and a joke for anyone he came across. Lloyd was born on July 9, 1934 to Helmar and Mary Schumacher of New Richland, MN. He was baptized and confirmed at Trinity Lutheran Church in New Richland, and he graduated from New Richland Public School in 1952. He married Marlys Sophy at Trinity Lutheran Church in New Richland and moved to Albert Lea and had a daughter Donna. He was divorced in 1968. He met and married Gloria Shelson on February 26, 1977 at First Lutheran Church in Albert Lea. Lloyd worked at Wilsons Foods for 31 years, retiring in 1983, then sold Insurance for American Republic, AAA, Wick, and Osbeck Thesis. He was a member of the AFL-CIO for many years. He was a member of Oak View Golf Course of Freeborn County and got his hole in one at the Clarks Grove Golf Course. In his younger days he loved to ride



Lloyd Schumacher

motorcycles and toured many states to the West. He was proceeded in death by his wife, mother, father, brothers Mickel and Richard, sisters Evelyn and Shirley, and stepson Gerald Shelson. Lloyd is survived by daughter Donna (Dan) Shaw, brother Marlow and wife Carole, brother Paul and wife Nancy, grandson Adam (Jenny) Shaw, two great grandchildren Hazel and Ivy Shaw, many nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews. A visitation will be held on Wednesday, August 19, 2026 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Brenny Family Funeral Chapel in Staples, Minnesota.

James Hendrickson

James Melvin Hendrickson, 87, passed away on Sunday, August 9, 2026, at his home in Hartland. A memorial service will be held on Friday, August 14, 2026, at 11:00 A.M. at the Hartland Evangelical Lutheran Church. Visitation shall be held from 5-7 P.M. at Bayview Freeborn Funeral Home on Thursday, August 13, 2026, and for an hour prior to the service.

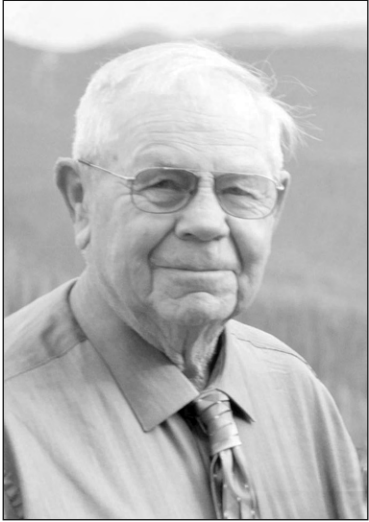
Burial shall be held at Hartland Cemetery. Pastor Robert Lawson shall be officiating.

James "Jim" Hendrickson was born on October 26, 1938, in Albert Lea, Minnesota to Helmer and Nora (Grasdalen) Hendrickson. He grew up in the Hartland area, attending school there until graduating from the New Richland High School. He eventually joined the National Guard, before returning home to work as a farmer, then as a mechanic for Seneca Foods. He was often "Jimmy rigging" his tools, usually in very creative ways, so during his retirement party his coworkers gifted him with some uniquely adjusted tools to remember them by.

When Jim wasn't farming, fixing equipment, or working for the canning company, he could often be found behind the counter at the Village Inn Café, known to many as "Mel's Diner." Together, James and Judy owned and operated the café for nearly 30 years, making it a familiar gathering place in the community.

Jim loved to keep busy and had many hobbies and interests with which to occupy his time.

He loved helping others and was a member of the Hartland Evangelical Lutheran Church council, as well as their cemetery board, and the Farmers Union Action Committee. He enjoyed making maple syrup, fishing, watching the grandkids play



James Hendrickson

sports, and watching Twins and Vikings games.

Jim is survived by his wife of 61 years Judy, children Dennis (Becky) Hendrickson of Hayfield, MN, Paul (Maria) Hendrickson of West Salem, WI, Ronda (Chad) Staloch of Hartland, MN; grandchildren Brooke (Mike) VanBuskirk, Cody (Katelyn) Hendrickson, Caitlyn Hendrickson (Matthew Schoonover), Aaron (Emily) Hendrickson, Benjamin (Bailey) Hendrickson, Cole (Lexi) Staloch, Nicklas (Cambria) Staloch, Seth Staloch (Rowan Flo); great-grandchildren Hayden VanBuskirk, Logan VanBuskirk, Blakelee VanBuskirk, Addilyn Hendrickson, Cooper Hendrickson, Ada Hendrickson, Theodore Hendrickson, Myra Hendrickson, Crew Staloch, and 2 more on the way. Jim is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews.

Jim is preceded in death by his parents Helmer and Nora Hendrickson; brothers Harland and Rodney Hendrickson; mother and father-in-law Herman and Helen Christopherson; and brother-in-law Robert Christopherson.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the Hartland Evangelical Lutheran Church and St. Croix Hospice.

Dale Loken

Dale Robert Loken, age 86, passed away on Saturday, July 4, 2026 at Prairie Meadows Senior Living in Kasson, MN.

Dale was born on June 2, 1940 to Ole and Nina (Moe) Loken in Waseca County. Dale started his education with a one room schoolhouse in rural Lemond township on County Road 7, then transferred to New Richland High School to graduate in 1958. He did not stop with his education there. Dale went on to take many classes in business and agricultural finance.

In 1962, Dale was introduced to the love of his life, Colleen Dassenko, at his cousin's wedding. Dale and Colleen had a wonderful courtship, which involved his future in-laws serving him a piece of blackberry pie at their first-time meeting, which had a black bug in it. Of course, it was the only slice that did! That did not slow down the two lovebirds; they were married on August 12, 1962 and settled in Lemond Township to begin their own legacy of farming and start a family.

Dale was very proud of his ability to read the crop markets and purchase

equipment with minimal overhead. Dale would often share stories on how the local banks would be impressed when he would present cash flow data sheets to purchase land, or larger implements in the early years. Dale and Colleen were a team with farming and with all projects. Dale treated farming as a business before it was considered one. He was one of the first farmers in the area to incorporate technology with record keeping and an automatic fuel refill management system. He worked on his first-generation computer for many hours, self-teaching formulas to use in the "Quattro" spreadsheet program.

Dale worked for 33 years at Owatonna Tool Company, which is now Bosch of Owatonna. Due to restructuring of the OTC, he was given the opportunity to retire in 1992, which allowed him to become a full-time farmer for the first time in his life. Dale served on the Lemond township board, Planning and Zoning, Hometown Credit Union board, and several other community boards over the years.

Dale sold his livestock when Colleen retired from the Hometown

Credit Union in January 2004. This allowed them the freedom to start traveling south for the winters. They wintered in Arizona and Texas with their 5th wheel camper. (Colleen traded for a larger travel trailer every few years.) In 2009, they bought a home in Alamo, Texas, which they enjoyed yearly from November to April. But, unfortunately, due to Colleen's decline in health in 2018, they could no longer make the trek.

Dale and Colleen were avid travelers. They traveled to Germany, Alaska and Caribbean cruises, took bus trips all over the US, and not to mention all the trips with the pop-up pull behind camper with their young family with them in the red truck with toppler. In their later years, they were able to take a trip to Maldova to be near Colleen's father's birthplace.

In 2014, they moved to Owatonna from the farm. They lived there happily until Colleen's illness took her away too early from Dale in October 2020. They lived a love story of 58 years.

Dale was involved with male singing groups, Men of A Chord in Texas and notably, Just Friends, here in New



Dale Loken

Richland. This group of retired and nearly retired Friends went around to many local venues to sing.

As dementia was starting to take its hold on Dale's memories, these men were Dale's lifeline to normality. A Special Thank You goes out to all the men from Just Friends for keeping Dale active with their group and including him with their outings.

Martijntje "Mary Kay" Malakowsky

Martijntje E. "Mary Kay" Malakowsky, 79, of Hartland, passed away peacefully on August 8, 2026, at her home with her family by her side.

A funeral service will be held at 2:00PM on Sunday, August 16, 2026, at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church in New Richland, with a visitation beginning at 12:00PM. Burial will be held at Freeborn Cemetery.

Born on March 4, 1947, in Breda, Netherlands, Mary Kay was a daughter of the late Aernout and Adriana (Hoogenwext) Hoogeraad. At the age of 12, she immigrated to the United States with her family, celebrating her birthday aboard the ship as they arrived through Ellis Island.

A proud graduate of Minnesota

Lake High School, Mary Kay married Ralph Malakowsky on December 21, 1963. Together, they dedicated more than 40 years to dairy farming on their family homestead, where Mary Kay took immense pride in her work and family.

Mary Kay was a devoted member of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, where she taught Sunday School and shared her faith with the community. Her commitment to service extended beyond the church; she was a passionate advocate for M.A.D.D for over 30 years, earning recognition as "State Speaker of the Year." Additionally, her leadership roles included guiding the local Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts and serving as a Key Leader for 4H, with her club being honored as "Club of the Year."

In her personal life, Mary Kay enjoyed a variety of hobbies, including cross-stitching, cooking, baking, pho-

tography, and tending to her beloved flower gardens. She remained proud of her Dutch heritage and cherished returning to the Netherlands with her children for visits.

Mary Kay's greatest joy came from her family. As a devoted grandmother, she participated actively in her grandchildren's lives, nurturing their interests and supporting their activities.

Those left to cherish Mary Kay's memory include her children, Nancy (Steve) Grosland, Forrest (Sharon) Malakowsky, David (Amanda) Malakowsky, Matt (Charlene) Malakowsky, and Ashley (Sean) Casey; 14 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; brothers, Johannes (Chris) Hoogeraad, Karel (Mary) Hoogeraad, Theodoor (Delphine) Hoogeraad; a sister, Carolina (Keith) Stern; and her loving and faithful dog, Callie.

In addition to her parents, Aernout and Adriana Hoogeraad, Mary Kay



Martijntje Malakowsky

was preceded in death by her husband of 54 years, Ralph Malakowsky, daughter, Michelle Malakowsky; grandson, Derek Malakowsky, and brothers, Gerrit and Adrianus Hoogeraad.

Donald Olson

Age 95 of Prior Lake, passed August 5, 2026.

Don was preceded in death by his parents (Arvil and Inga Olson of Heartland, MN), one sister (Deloris Berger of Las Vegas), and one brother (Jerry Olson of Rochester, MN).

Survived by wife, Ruby (Kelm) Olson of Prior Lake, MN;

5 children - Elizabeth (Beth) [Bob] Crawford, David A. [Joanne] Olson, Margaret (Meg) [Randy] Ruckdashel, Kathleen (Kathy) [Walter] Aldrich, and Jane Olson;

12 grandchildren [Robert [Brandy] Crawford, Joseph [Monica] Crawford, Michelle Olson, Michael Olson, Melissa Olson, Brandon [Janina] Ruckdashel, Steven [Kerry] Ruckdashel, Rebecca [Dale] Ruckdashel, Grant Aldrich, Cole [Britt] Aldrich, Amanda [Joe] Heitzman, Sandra (Sandy) [Jonathan] Benz; and 21 great grandchildren.

Don was born August 22, 1930 in Albert Lea, MN.

He graduated from New Richland High School in 1948 where he sang tenor in the school choir and played some sports, especially basketball.

Don served in the MN National Guard and US Air Force from 1947 to 1952.

Don and Ruby married on December 26th, 1952 (73 years ago) and started their family.

He opened a TV repair shop, but that only lasted a couple of years. He had a few other jobs that had them moving numerous times. He taught at the votech in Wilmar which then led to his career at Control Data. During those years, Don sang in the church choir, bowled on a few leagues, taught bowling to youngsters, and was proud of the fact that he played doubles tennis into his 80s.

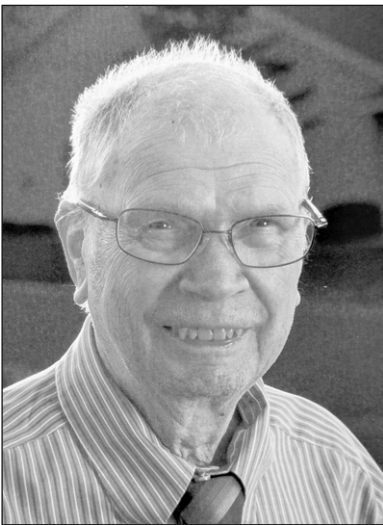
In retirement, Don and Ruby sold their Bloomington home to their daughter Kathy. They then spent seven

years living and traveling in Arizona and then Texas, as well as visiting family around the country. They began square dancing and Don matched his ties to Ruby's skirts. They spent summers camp-hosting in MN to be close to family.

Don suffered a bout of Valley-Fever which ended their traveling. A new era of his life was ushered in. He became an avid fan of his grandchildren and later great-grandchildren's sporting events. He took over the cooking and began trying new recipes. If you knew Don, you KNOW none of those recipes included chicken or onions! His early love of computers never left him. He was constantly learning new things, and began a passion for genealogy.

Don wasn't big on words, but showed his love for his family by taking pride in all of their accomplishments. Oh, and did he ever mention that they were married for 73 years?!

We will celebrate Don's life on Friday Aug 14, 2026 at Washburn-



Donald Olson

McReavy Dawn Valley Chapel and Memorial Park, 9940 Bush Lake Rd, Bloomington, MN 55438.

Visitation at 10:00 am, Memorial Service at 11:00 am, Reception/Lunch at 12:00 pm. Burial to follow.

■ Lutgens

from Page 2

Back to my friend Heather. She also said she couldn't take the stress associated with being "the person at the top."

I like it. It is, believe it or not, less

stressful knowing my life's decisions are in my own hands. The success of the newspapers and game store is not solely in my hands, but I am the one who makes the decisions that give them the opportunity to thrive. And I trust myself to make the right choices. More importantly, I trusted and concitue to trust that readers and advertisers want a local newspaper. For the game store, that sense of community

is equally strong. I didn't take over the store to make money; I did it so the community of people formed around it would continue to have a place. I think small town folks understand that concept really well. I remain incredibly grateful to call here home.

I got the best of Dad this week at cribbage, winning 17 games to his 12. We traded a pair of skunks throughout our week of battles. Numerous games

came down to the final point. More than one skunk or possible skunk was decided by a single decision by either player. Great fun was had by all.

This week's cribbage tally's updated from last week total:

Dad 496 wins, 75 skunks
Eli 447 wins, 46 skunks, 1 double skunk
2026 totals, Eli 110 wins, 7 skunks, Dad 83 wins, 14 skunks



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Six candidates running for four open school board seats

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

The terms of four out of seven NRHEG school board members expire at the end of 2026. Incumbents Amy Ihrke and Pat Theuer have indicated an interest in remaining on the board for the four-year term which runs from 2027 to 2031. Incumbents Rick Schultz and Aaron Phillips have not filed for reelection.

The school board held a brief meeting on Aug. 7 to follow through on the steps needed to ensure the six candidates who filed for the four seats appear on the November



ballots in all three counties the school district extends across: Freeborn, Steele, and Waseca.

During the filing period which ended in July, six candidates indicated their interest in running for the four seats: Nick Budach, Troy Buendorf, Amy Ihrke, John Misgen, Justin Schlaak, and Pat Theuer.

On the ballot, voters will be instructed to vote for up to four of the candidates; the option of a write-in is also available.

Steele County Free Fair awards

Congratulations go out to four families who will be receiving the Century Farms Award this year at the Steele County Free Fair. The Duane and DeNell Schroeder family of Owatonna Township, Terry and Tammy Ebeling family of Owatonna Township, Leo Spindler family of Somerset Township and Robyn Bueckler family of Lemond Township. The Century Farm is sponsored jointly by the Minnesota Farm Bureau Agriculture Heritage Program and the Minne-

sota State Fair. This is a very important milestone, and these families are justifiably proud of their 100-year commitment to agriculture and community. We are honored to play a small part in recognizing their hard work and dedication.

The families will be recognized as a Century Farm of Steele County at the Steele County Free Fair on August 18th at 2 p.m. during the Livestock Hall of Fame program.

“A Timeless Tradition the 2026 Edition”

A timeless tradition, the 2026 edition

The Steele County Free Fair is bringing even more great fun and entertainment August 18th - 23rd, 2026 in Owatonna, MN. The Steele County Free Fair, one of Minnesota's Biggest County Fairs, has over 5,000 free exhibits – including 200 animals – to delight fairgoers, including the FFA Children's Barnyard, the Great Outdoors Center, and the Thorni Ridge Exotic Petting Zoo, sponsored by Community Bank Owatonna and R&K Electric, along with 4-H, FFA and Open Class livestock. Free entertainment abounds on several outdoor stages as well as in Ye Olde Beer Garden. In addition, more than 300 indoor commercial exhibits and over 200 outdoor vendors – including more than 100 food stands – and up to 40 thrilling carnival rides on the GoldStar Amusements midway will be available daily.

Livestock and Equine Halls of Fame and Century Farm Recognition

The Equine Hall of Fame program, sponsored by Farmer's Feed and Pet Supply, will be at 1 p.m. Tuesday, August 18, in the cattle show arena. Honored and inducted into the Equine Hall of Fame this year will be Roger and Erin Pittman and family.

The Central Farm Service Livestock

Hall of Fame Program will be on Tuesday, August 18th at 2:30 p.m. recognizing Marianne McRostie, Mina Holmes, Tim Larson and Pete Anderson. Marianne and Mina will be receiving their awards posthumously.

Four families will be receiving the Century Farms Award this year at the Steele County Free Fair. The Duane and DeNell Schroeder family of Meriden Township, Terry and Tammy Ebeling family of Owatonna Township, Leo Spindler family of Somerset Township and Walter and Erma Bueckler family of Lemond Township. The Century Farm is sponsored jointly by the Minnesota Farm Bureau Agriculture Heritage Program and the Minnesota State Fair. This is a very important milestone, and these families are justifiably proud of their 100-year commitment to agriculture and community. Achieving a 150-year milestone is WMS Legacy Acres. We are proud to recognize them as a Sesqui-centennial Farm. We are honored to play a small part in recognizing their hard work and dedication. The families will be recognized as a Century Farm of Steele County at the Steele County Free Fair on August 18th at 2:30 p.m. during the Livestock Hall of Fame program.

Opening Ceremony

The Steele County Free Fair is proud to honor our veterans at the flag-raising ceremony at 5 p.m. Tuesday, August 18, in Fair Square Park, as we officially kick off the 2026 Steele County Free Fair. Special thanks to Owatonna Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3723, American Legion Post 77, Am Vets Post 23, Blooming Prairie VFW Post 878 and American Legion Post 52 and Ellendale VFW Post 8941 and American Legion Post 296 for their participation in this important event. Singing of our National Anthem will be led by Peter Borgman. The VFW conducts an essay competition for all area schools. The theme for the VFW Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen essay competitions for this past year was “How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?” Emma Hess and Lincoln Resler are winners of the competition and will be presenting their essays at the opening ceremony.

Discover Steele County's Past

Wander over to the Village of Yesteryear and relive Steele County's history in the village buildings. While in the village, take in the Gandy Company “Old Iron Show,” featuring a large display of antique tractors and small engines. Then, take a seat at the

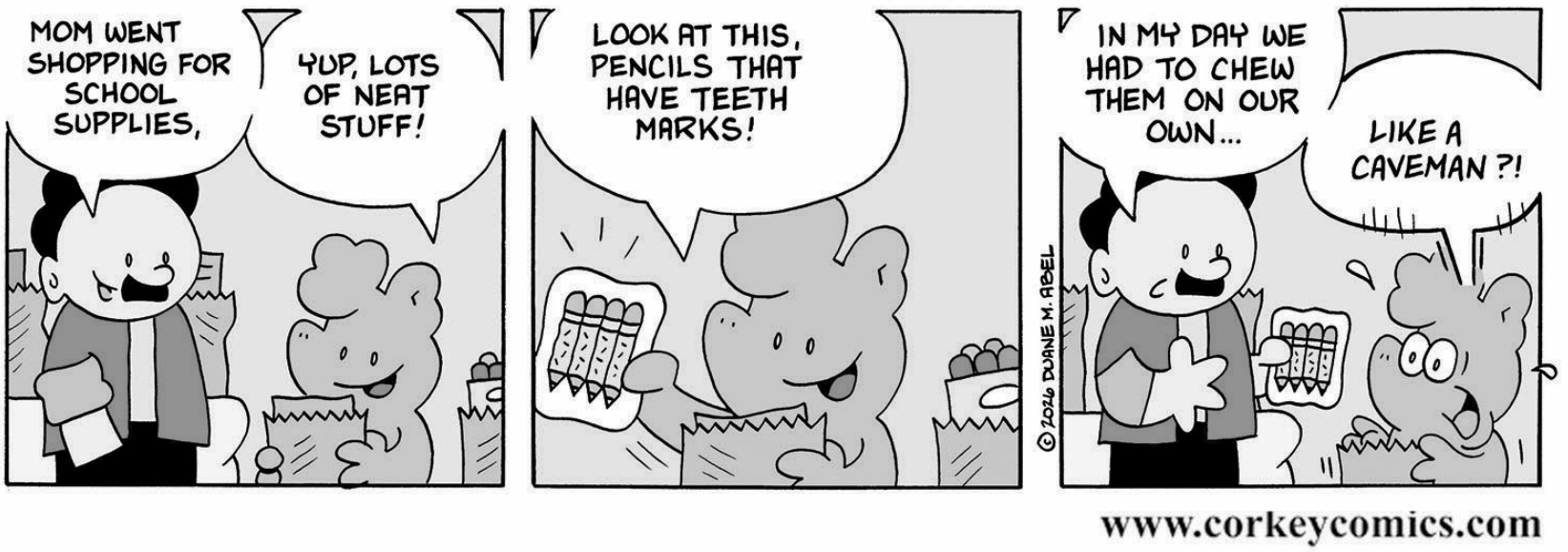
Village of Yesteryear outdoor stage to enjoy daily entertainment. The Village of Yesteryear Stage will feature the music of Curt Copeland Tuesday evening. Wednesday at 12 p.m. fairgoers can enjoy Senior Moments – Bruce Bernhart & Tim O'Connor, at 3 p.m. the Page Family Singers, and at 6 p.m. Alan O'Malley-Laursen. Thursday's entertainment kicks off at 12 p.m. with Paul Proft playing some great harmonica music, followed by The Dan Stursa Band at 3 p.m. and Todd Utpadel at 6 p.m. On Friday at 12 p.m. Todd Utpadel is back. Pollinator/Butterfly craft activity, at 3 p.m. Curt Copeland and at 6 p.m. Senior Moments – Bruce Bernhart & Tim O'Connor and Curt Copeland. Saturday in the Village will feature Tim Penny at 12 p.m. Paul Proft at 3 p.m. and Dunnell Lenort rounding out the day at 6 p.m. Wrapping up this year's entertainment on the Village of Yesteryear Stage will be Kiwanis at 12 p.m. on Sunday followed by Alan O'Malley-Laursen at 3 p.m.

Wenger Fair Square Stage

The Wenger Stage in Fair Square Park is a great place to enjoy music played by many local musicians. A place to grab a picnic table and enjoy

Fair continued on 6

ZED by Duane M. Abel



President's welcome letter

On behalf of the Steele County Free Fair Board of Directors, manager Scott Kozelka and staff, welcome to “A Timeless Tradition the 2026 Edition”!

For many of us who have been around the fair for many years, we take very seriously our responsibility to put on the kind of fair that Steele County and our many guests beyond the county have come to expect. This year is no exception. Several new entertainers are featured on the Wenger Stage, two new acts in the north end, new musical entertainers in the grandstand as well as bands in the beer garden. Five new food vendors will join the fair with 15 new foods for the first time.

We never want to forget all of the favorites that you look forward to: Goldstar Amusements, commercial and 4-H exhibits along with livestock shows that many of us grew up with. These all create memories that last a lifetime and keep us coming back to the fair.

When the board, staff and vol-

unteers can look over the crowds and see the joy the Steele County Free Fair brings to our guests, it makes the volunteer time spent well worth all of the work. We feel incredibly blessed with the support we have from over 200 sponsors. Without your generosity we would not be able to bring free entertainment in addition to free admission to the fair. We are constantly asked, “How do you do this?” The sponsorships and community support make it possible!

I look forward to seeing you August 18-23.

Dan Deml, President

Steele County Free Fair launches mobile app

Owatonna, Minnesota — The Steele County Free Fair is making it easier than ever for fairgoers to plan their visit and experience Minnesota's Biggest County Fair with the launch of its new mobile app, SCFF on a Stick.

Designed to serve as a digital companion for the fair, SCFF on a Stick gives visitors convenient access to important fair information right from their mobile devices. Fairgoers can use the app before arriving to plan their day and throughout their visit to stay connected with everything

happening across the fairgrounds.

“SCFF on a Stick is another way we're working to make the fair experience easier and more enjoyable for our guests,” said Steele County Free Fair management. “There is so much happening throughout the fair each day, and this app gives fairgoers a convenient way to keep that information right in their pocket.”

The app features access to daily schedules and entertainment information, fairgrounds maps with live directions from where you are to the location of

your choice, food and vendor information and offerings, Grandstand events, attractions and other helpful resources. Fairgoers can quickly find what they're looking for and discover activities they may not have known were happening.

The launch also provides the Steele County Free Fair with another way to communicate timely information with guests during the fair, helping visitors stay informed while making the most of their time on the grounds.

Fairgoers are encouraged to

download SCFF on a Stick before arriving at the fair and use it to start planning their visit. SCFF on a Stick can be found on Google Play and the Apple App Store.

The Steele County Free Fair continues its tradition of providing free gate admission while offering entertainment, agriculture, food, shopping, exhibits, competitions, Grandstand events and family activities throughout the fairgrounds in Owatonna.

For additional fair information, visit the Steele County Free Fair website: www.scff.org.



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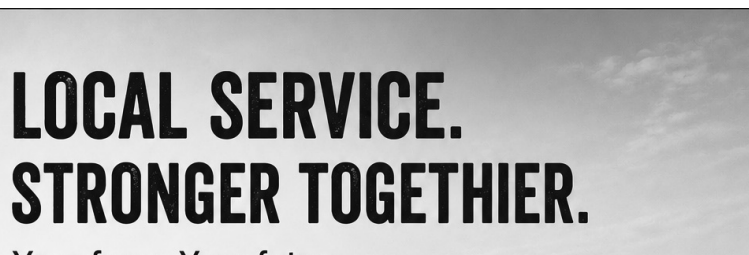
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Glow Ride and Rock-n-Roll the Lakes bring a weekend of cycling fun to Albert Lea

Albert Lea, Minnesota - Cyclists of all ages and experience levels are invited to light up the night and hit the open road during a full weekend of biking in Albert Lea. The festivities begin with the Glow Ride on Friday, August 14, followed by the 2026 Rock-n-Roll the Lakes bike tour on Saturday, August 15.

Presented in partnership with BikeMN, the Albert Lea Area Cyclists, and the Albert Lea Convention & Visitors Bureau, the two events offer opportunities for both casual riders and experienced cyclists to explore Albert Lea and its surrounding scenery.

Event Highlights include:
Friday, August 14
Glow Ride

The weekend begins with a free community Glow Ride at 9 p.m. in the North Broadway Parking Lot. Participants are encouraged to decorate their bicycles, wear neon clothing, bring glow sticks, and use wheel lights or anything else that shines brightly as the group cruises around Fountain Lake after dark.

Helmets and bicycle lights are required for all participants. Riders under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

Saturday, August 15
Rock-n-Roll the Lakes

The cycling excitement continues Saturday with the 2026 Rock-n-Roll the Lakes bike tour, beginning and ending at Central Park, located at 315 Marion Ross Street in Albert Lea.

Participants can choose from 10-, 30-, or 50-mile route options, offering something for

recreational riders and seasoned cyclists alike. Check-in opens at 8 a.m. and closes at 10 a.m.

This year's event will feature a 1990s grunge theme, and riders are encouraged to embrace the spirit of the decade while enjoying the trails, roads, and lakeside scenery surrounding Albert Lea.

The 2026 Rock-N-Roll the Lakes bike tour is made possible through the generous support of Cargill, Innovance, Plymouth Shoe Store, and Walmart. Their partnership helps support a safe, welcoming, and memorable cycling experience for riders throughout the region.

Registration and additional information are available through BikeMN at www.bikemn.org/all-events/rock-n-roll-the-lakes/.

Together, the Glow Ride and Rock-n-Roll the Lakes provide a fun and active way for residents and visitors to experience Albert Lea by bicycle. Whether joining the nighttime ride around Fountain Lake or challenging yourself on one of Saturday's routes, the weekend offers an opportunity to get moving, connect with fellow riders, and enjoy the community's beautiful outdoor spaces.

The Albert Lea Convention & Visitors Bureau encourages cyclists, families, and spectators to take part in this exciting weekend of recreation, music-inspired fun, and community connection.

For additional updates, follow the Albert Lea Convention & Visitors Bureau, BikeMN, and the Albert Lea Area Cyclists on social media.

■ Fair

from Page 5

all that great fair food with family and friends. All entertainment throughout the week is sponsored by Hometown Credit Union.

Tuesday – VFW opening ceremony at 5 p.m., followed by the Owatonna Community Band, sponsored by Ecumen Brooks & Countryside. LP and the 45's will complete the day with some music from the fifties and sixties and are sponsored by Central Park Framing and Finds and Northland Farm Systems.

Wednesday – We start off the day at 11:30 a.m. with Eclipse, sponsored by the Comfort Inn and followed by The Mark Cameron Band at 1:15 p.m. also sponsored by the Comfort Inn. At 3 p.m. a panel of judges will be tasting selected foods to determine who has the best new food at the Steele County Free Fair. Whiskey Grace will follow The Best of the Fair Food Competition at 4:30 p.m. and at 7 p.m. the band Six to Midnight will round out the day sponsored by KOWZ/KRUE/The Fan and Northland Farm Systems.

Thursday – The Steele County Exchange Club, in conjunction with the Steele County Free Fair, will recognize the Senior Citizens of the year for Steele County at 11:15 a.m. The Dan Stursa Band, sponsored by Amy Swain Hearing Centers, will take the stage at 11:30 a.m. The ipolka Band will follow at 1:45 p.m. sponsored by A Family First Insurance Agency and Birchwood Cottages. Tralo is sponsoring Just Friends, a local gospel group at 3:45 p.m. and at 5 p.m. Soulfire. To complete a full day at the fair, the Whitesidewalls will take the stage at 7:30 p.m. They are sponsored by Tralo, Steve James Excavating and Manke's Outdoor Equipment.

Friday – The Angel Val Band, from Waseca, MN, will lead off the day at 11:30 a.m. followed by Sarah Holdyn at 2 p.m. sponsored by Wencil Plumbing. Chad Johnson returns at 4:30 p.m. and Little Chicago at 7 p.m. sponsored by Tony's Flooring and Edward Jones.

Saturday – Orchid Jane is at 11:30 a.m. sponsored by Mohs Contracting, Mohs Home, Comfort Inn and Ameriprise Financial. Branded at 2 p.m. and JoJo Green at 4:30 p.m. will complete the afternoon entertainment; sponsored by Ameriprise Financial. After a several years absence, The Jimmy's are returning to the Wenger Stage at 7 p.m.! The sponsors for the evening are Representative Tom Sexton, Owatonna Flooring, Torey's Restaurant, Active PT & Sports and Ameriprise Financial.

Sunday – The 11 a.m. contemporary church service will be led by Josh Geary from Radiant Church with music by True North from Trinity Lutheran Church. Music for the afternoon begins at 12:15 p.m. with The Singing Cowgirl sponsored by Costco. Jeremy Poland & Lance Dale will complete the musical entertainment for this year's fair at 4 p.m. with the United Way presentation at 6:30 p.m. and the Football/Cheerleader rally at 7 p.m.

All times are available on our website scff.org, mobile app SCFF On a Stick, printed calendars and brochures.

Shows Around the Fairgrounds
There are few places you can go for free entertainment, but the Steele County Free Fair has it all right here in Owatonna August 18th -23rd. All shows are daily.

Ninja Experience – This action-packed comedic show brings ninjas to you with flips, board breaking, ninja parquor course and so much more. Sponsored by Deml Heating & Air Conditioning and Fireplace Connection.

Tumbleweed Crossing – Award winning Wild West comedy stunt show featuring gun fights, laughs and an authentic frontier town. Sponsored by Hy-Vee, and Culligan/Ultrasure.

All-Star Stunt Dogs – Sponsored by Cargill, Farmers Feed & Pet Supply, Fleet Farm, and Westrum's Quality Food.

Jurassic Kingdom – Sponsored by ReMax Venture and State Farm.

Robinson Wood Carving – Sponsored by Alexander Lumber.

"Squeals On Wheels" Pig Races – Sponsored by Townsquare Media/KRFO/KAT Country.

Southwest Dairy Farmers Mobile Classroom – Sponsored by Steele County ADA, Compeer Financial, and Commerce Bank.

John Cassidy – will deliver fast paced family comedy magic, wild balloons, audience interaction and unforgettable fair entertainment in the Federated Pavilion. Federated Insurance and HomeTown Credit Union sponsors Cassidy.

Thomi Ridge Exotics Petting Zoo – Sponsored by Community Bank Owatonna and R & K Electric.

Gandy's Old Iron Show - Antique machinery by the Village of Yesteryear. FFA Children's Barnyard - 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.

House Auto Group Auto Museum -

featuring Tri-5's with a twist; 1955 – 1957 Chevy and Ford automobiles. Sponsored by House Auto Group, MN. The Muckle Museum - exhibit featuring animals—barnyard and exotic—throughout the years.

Open Class entries - located under the grandstand, in the Fine Arts Building, on the 2nd Floor of the Four Seasons Centre and throughout the barns.

Safety Zone has emergency equipment on display and a medical station.

Owatonna FIRST Robotics STEM Day Tuesday, Aug. 18, 11 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. in the Grandstand.

Central Farm Service Pedal Pull - Friday, Aug. 21, 4 p.m. by Leisure Lane.

Dist. II Holstein Dairy Show Saturday, Aug. 22, 6 p.m. in the Cattle Show Arena.

All times are available on our website scff.org, mobile app SCFF On a Stick, printed calendars and brochures.

The Great Outdoors Center (GOC) We have seen some dramatic changes in the Great Outdoors Center over the past 2 years; there are more changes that are happening again this year! Our great team of people working in the GOC and maintenance crew have totally remodeled the west wall!

Along with seeing the changes the team has made, you will want to stay and enjoy presentations by National Eagle Center on Wednesday afternoon at 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Thursday afternoon Oxbow Park- Zollner Zoo will be doing presentations at 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Friday Paul Bunyan is there from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. and the National Loon Center will be presenting at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m., 5 p.m. Saturday Paul Bunyan is back from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. and the University of MN Raptor Center is presenting at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Also on Saturday, Sustainable Safari is presenting different animals from local animals to animals from Africa at 3 p.m., 4:15 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 6:45 p.m. and 8 p.m. Sunday, Sustainable Safari will be back with shows at 12 p.m., 1:15 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 3:45 p.m., 5 p.m. and 6:15 p.m.

Loken Excavating & Drainage, Jensen Insurance Agency, and Steele County Times sponsor the GOC Building. Shows in the Great Outdoors Center are sponsored by Thrivent Financial, and the GOC pond is sponsored by Home Improvement Professionals.

All times are available on our website scff.org, mobile app SCFF On a Stick, printed calendars and brochures.

Ride Specials

GoldStar Amusements Midway will feature daily ride specials again in 2026! We'll start with Power 96 Radio Night "Two Ticket Tuesday" on August 18, when all rides are only 2 tickets each from 5-11 p.m. Wednesday is Horizon Eyecare Professionals Kid's Day and features a \$25.00 ride pass for unlimited midway rides from noon to 5 p.m. Gold Star Amusements will honor Senior Citizens (62+) with a super-special from noon to 5 p.m. on Senior Day, Thursday, August 20, when seniors can enjoy Carousel & Ferris Wheel rides for JUST ONE COUPON! Thursday is also Culver's Moonlight Madness! Bring your Moonlight Madness coupon (available at Culver's Owatonna location) and enjoy unlimited midway rides from 5-11 p.m. for only \$27.00; \$30.00 without Culver's coupon. Friday is North Risk Partners Family Fun Day and features unlimited rides from noon to 5 p.m. for just \$25.00! Saturday is Profinium Inc. Ride Day, where a \$30.00 wristband entitles the wearer to unlimited midway rides from noon to 9 p.m.

The Gold Star Amusement Mega-Ride ticket is \$60.00 and is on sale now until 5 p.m. August 18, 2026, the opening day of the fair, at Hy-Vee in Owatonna only. The Mega-Ride ticket can be purchased at the customer service counter from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. daily; 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Tuesday, August 18th. The Mega-Ride ticket is redeemed for a complimentary wristband which entitles the wearer to unlimited midway rides all week. If a rider prefers a lanyard, they may be purchased for \$5.00 when redeeming the ticket at the midway office. The Mega-Ride ticket can be redeemed at the midway entrance starting at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, August 18, 2026, and may be redeemed at a midway ticket office during midway hours throughout the fair.

Senior Day and Old Time Music
On Senior Day, Thursday, August 20th, all seniors, ages 62+, coming to the fair BEFORE NOON, may park for FREE in the general parking lot on the 18th Street ball diamonds. Shuttle service will be available from the parking lot to the west side of the fairgrounds. The Steele County Senior Citizens of the Year, Mary Wencil and Wayne Starman, will be recognized at 11:15 a.m. on the Wenger Fair Square Stage. Gold Star Amusements will also honor Senior Citizens (62+) with a super-special

from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. when seniors can enjoy Carousel & Ferris Wheel rides for JUST ONE COUPON! There will also be senior citizen discounts available from many of our vendors between noon and 5 p.m. Please look for the Senior Spotlight Special signs. Sponsors for Senior Day are A Family First Insurance Agency, Better Life, Brick Meger Funeral Home, Ecumen Brooks and CountrySide, Mayo Health System of Owatonna, Michaelson Funeral Home, North Risk Partners, Benedictine Living Community, Birchwood Cottages, Bridgewater of Owatonna and Amy Swain Hearing Centers.

Fairgoers who enjoy listening to some great polka music will want to be in Fair Square Park on Thursday, August 14, Senior Day, for a day full of toe-tapping music. The day kicks off with the recognition of the Senior Citizens of the Year on the Wenger Fair Square Stage at 11:15 a.m. and Dan Stursa Band, sponsored by Amy Swain Hearing Centers, will play at 11:30 a.m. The toe-tapping will continue with the iPolka Band, sponsored by A Family First Insurance Agency and Birchwood Cottages, at 1:45 p.m. on the Wenger Fair Square Stage and Just Friends, sponsored by Tralo, at 3:45 p.m. The Dan Stursa Band can be seen on the Village of Yesteryear Stage at 4:00 p.m.

Ye Olde Beer Garden
Great musical entertainment from popular bands will be featured daily on the Coors Lite Stage in the Beer Garden. The schedule: Tuesday night at 8:30 p.m. is Travis Thamert sponsored Christian Brothers Cabinets, Life Fitness and Ludewig Financial. Wednesday at 8:30 p.m. is Good for Gary sponsored by C-4 Complete Custom Cabinets and Senator John Jasinski. Thursday at 12:30 p.m. is Jindo Music Bingo and at 8:30 Snell Motors sponsors Old Country Boys. Friday is Swerve at 3:00 p.m. sponsored by Wenger Corporation and at 8:30 p.m. Self Titled sponsored by Premier Bank and Kappy's Collision Center. Saturday afternoon: Led Penny at 3:00 p.m. and at 8:30 is p.m. Rough House Rox sponsored by Thiele Trucking and Ballstadt Enterprises. Sunday: Jindo Music Bingo at 1:30 p.m. and Bryce Leppert at 3:30 p.m. sponsored by Ritchie Brothers.

Steele Saloon
The beautiful Steele Saloon is the place to get out of the sun and enjoy a cool refreshing beverage from a cold beer to a mixed drink. New this year is Ladies Night beginning at 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 19. Ladies Night is sponsored by Souba Greenhouse. On Saturday, enjoy the Bloody Mary Bar from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and enter the Corn Hole Tournament which begins at 10:00 a.m. Sunday, the Bloody Mary Bar opens from 11:00 a.m. until sold out. Throughout the fair, electronic horse racing and pull tabs will be available in the Steele Saloon.

Grandstand Shows
The Steele County Free Fair continues to bring the best entertainment you will find at a county fair and this year is no exception! There is no admission charge for the FFA Alumni Antique Tractor Pull at 5 p.m. Tuesday. This ever-popular event is sponsored by Mike's Repair, AgroLiquid, Mustang Seeds-Ron Janning, and Kibble Equipment.

The Steele County Free Fair and co-sponsor Kinship Radio are proud to welcome Jeremy Camp with special guests Jon Reddick and Thunderstorm Artis to the Daikin Grandstand Stage on Wednesday evening, August 19th at 6:00 p.m. The show is sponsored by Owatonna Motor Company, SpareTime Entertainment, Baker Tech Services, Courtyard by Marriott, Resler Electric, Northland Farm Systems, Owatonna Granite and Monument, Stockwell Accounting, Home 2 Suites by Hilton, Bethel Church, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, and Stoyk's Plumbing.

Returning to the Daikin Grandstand Stage at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, August 20th is Hairball with special guest Rival 5. Sponsors for Hairball and Rival 5 are Mohs Homes, Mohs Contracting, CarTime, Baymont by Wyndham Owatonna, Tom Thumb Donuts,

Bosch, Godfather's Pizza, Dwell Realty Group, Comfort Inn, SpareTime Entertainment, and Sleep City.

Country music star Randy Houser with special guest Cori Kennedy takes the Daikin Grandstand Stage on Friday, August 21, at 7:00 p.m., sponsored by Wencil Construction, SpareTime Entertainment, Let's Ride, Owatonna Motor Company, Northland Farm Systems, Fastenal, James Bros. Construction, Bulldog Coatings, Berkshire Hathaway Advantage Real Estate, Country Inn and Suites, Hodgman Drainage and Cole's Electric.

Returning on Saturday, August 22, for another exciting show is Professional Bulls N Barrels with Mutton Bustin.' The show begins at 7:30 p.m. and is sponsored by Casa Morena Cantina, Kibble Equipment, Wolff & Sons, and Owatonna People's Press.

The Demolition Derby will be in front of the grandstand at 2 p.m. Sunday, August 23, sponsored by Misgen Auto Parts, Inc., Kappy's Collision Center, Kibble Equipment, Four Seasons Electric, Northland Farm Systems, Thiele Trucking, and NAPA Auto Parts of Owatonna.

Tickets for all grandstand shows are on sale now and can be purchased at scff.org or at the ticket kiosk in the Steele County Free Fair office, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Grandstand VIP Area
The VIP area, sponsored by Fareway Meat and Grocery, in the Daikin Grandstand has a great view of everything happening in the Daikin Grandstand, including a video screen to enhance unobstructed viewing from the front row pit area and easy access to the VIP tent and beer sale alley. Grandstand VIPs will enjoy infield parking right behind the Daikin Stage; a hospitality tent serving light hors d'oeuvres prior to the event; two complimentary beverage tickets; and the dedicated bartenders in the Tin Roof Tavern waiting to serve you with a smile!

All times are available on our website scff.org, mobile app SCFF On a Stick, printed calendars and brochures.

VIP Packages are available online at scff.org or in the Steele County Free Fair office, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Handicap Scooters and Wheelchairs
The handicap scooter rentals are available at Miner's Outdoor Equipment by Machinery Hill starting at 10:00 a.m. Please visit minersoutdoor.com or call 507-583-2712 to reserve. Scooters need to be returned by 10:00 p.m. daily.

Sunday Church Services
A traditional worship service will be held on Sunday, August 23, in the Village of Yesteryear at 9:30 a.m. Reverend Barb Streed will preach at this service.

A contemporary worship service will be held at 11 a.m. in Fair Square Park on Sunday morning, August 23. Leading the service will be Josh Geary of Radiant Church. Music will be provided by True North from Trinity Lutheran Church.

Child Identification Tags
Parents, daycare providers and others with young children can pick up a free child identification tag at the Sheriff's Office in the Muckle Building near Fair Square Park. In the event a child gets separated from you at the Fair, the ID tags are invaluable in helping law enforcement and SCFF personnel in reuniting the child with their caring adult.

Additional Fair Notes
*Admission to the Steele County Free Fair is FREE and has been since 1927!

*Parking on the grounds is \$5.00 per entry per day.

*If you need medical assistance while attending the fair, the medical station is in the Steele County Community Center, located near the north Elm Street entrance to the fairgrounds. The Community Center also welcomes mothers and babies to take care of their needs.

*There are ATM machines located throughout the fairgrounds.

*Smoking is allowed in designated areas only. Vaping and cannabis use are prohibited on the grounds.

‘Ask a Trooper’: Stopping for school buses

Question: I saw your last article was about stopping. With school just around the corner, can you talk about stopping for the school bus?

Answer: I certainly can and, with last year's law change, it's a good reminder. Previously, the law required drivers to stop for a bus's red flashing lights and extended stop arm. Alarmingly, this could create a situation where some drivers might pass the bus when the lights were flashing but the stop arm wasn't extended. The updated law closes the loophole and improves the safety of children across Minnesota. There's no more trying to beat the stop arm at the last minute when students are getting on and off the bus.

Motorists

Red flashing lights on buses indicate students are either entering or exiting the bus. Motorists must stop at least 20 feet from a school bus that is displaying flashing red lights, regardless of whether the stop arm has been extended. This applies when approaching from behind the bus and from the opposite direction on undivided roads.

Motorists are not required to stop for a bus if the bus is on the opposite side of a separated roadway (median, etc.) — but they should remain alert for children.

Motorists should slow down, pay attention and anticipate school children and

buses, especially in neighborhoods and school zones.

The best way to be aware of your surroundings at all times is to put the distractions away.

Students

When waiting for the bus, be patient, stand back from the road and no running or rowdy behavior.

When on the bus, stay seated, listen to the driver and use quiet voices.

When getting off the bus, look to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder.

Wait for the bus driver to signal that it's safe to cross.

When crossing the street to get on the bus or to go home, make eye contact with motorists before proceeding.

Consequences

Drivers who violate the law face a \$500 fine.

Drivers can face criminal charges for passing a school bus on the right, passing when a child is outside the bus, or injuring or killing a child.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson — Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us)

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Night to Unite August 4



Organizers in Ellendale, Geneva and New Richland put together a wide variety of events the evening of Tuesday, Aug. 4.
Star Eagle photos by Deb Bently and Ben Revermann



Woods and Water

by Dick Herfindahl
Outdoors Writer

Remembering the good old days

The DNR has issued a concerning report about how the warmer temperatures in the northern part of the country have resulted in numerous fish kills in Minnesota. This is alarming to me because of the devastation it has caused for our environment.

I once had a boss when I was working at the Albert Lea Tribune who would show up whenever there was a mistake in the paper. He would start every conversation with the same question, "Who do we have to blame for this?" This was while he was pointing at the mistake in the paper. That statement was used by us workers whenever we found a mistake before it went to press. I am sure the boss would not have seen the humor in it.

While reminiscing about years gone by, I wondered about how it is that both of my sons are now in their 50's and where the time went.

Their whole childhood revolved around my love of fishing and camping. They both have a strong connection to the outdoors. It's not necessarily about fishing, but more about appreciating the outdoors and enjoying spending time there.

In looking back at some of our vacations, I recall the time when we were fishing on Sand Lake, in June. Brad was pretty young, so we brought a

blanket along and laid it on the floor of the boat. He had some Hot Wheel cars and a coloring book and crayons to keep him occupied. His mom, brother Brian, and I were fishing while he occupied himself playing.

As we were trolling the shoreline catching walleyes, some dark clouds started to appear above the tall pines in the west. Storms could appear without notice on this lake because the storms usually appeared in the sky from the west. It was hard to see the storms coming because the pines were so high that they blocked the sky until the last moment.

As we trolled along the shore, I always kept my eyes focused on the marks on the shore. There was a cabin on the west side of the lake south of the resort. I used that cabin and lined it up with a point that jutted out north of the resort. That was how we fished with no locator. I studied the lake map and learned the lake depth with the anchor rope. In early June the walleye were in 14-15 foot on that sandy bottomed lake. We always caught walleye and northern. This was what is called "fishing old school." That is what we did in those days, using landmarks to mark fishing spots.

As we trolled along with the imminent storm approaching, a bolt of light-



FISHING FUN - Shown here is a picture of Sioux City Resort on Sand Lake. The resort has since been sold off in sections for private cabins. Another picture is of Dick and his fishing mentor, his mother.

ning hit a tree on the shore. It shocked all of us and my wife started reeling a walleye at about the same time that I put the motor in gear. I turned the throttle wide open and headed for the resort while Jean's walleye was water skiing

behind the boat.

Please take the time to remember our troops that are serving now and those that have served before them. They are the reason that we have all of the Freedoms that we enjoy today.

LOOKING BACK

25 years ago



- "KJ" Styles was opened by Kerri Johnson on West Division in New Richland on July 17. With 13 years of hair care experience, Kerri offers cuts and styles for the whole family, in addition to several specialty services. Robert "Swan" Tollefson of rural Ellendale is in the chair getting a razor cut in the newly decorated and painted salon.

- Waseca County had the state's highest recycling rate last year. Residents recycled 85.5 percent of all its waste products. It has held the top spots for years, in large part because of the massive amounts of recycled paper coming in from the Brown Printing plant in Waseca.

-Melissa Wayne of Ellendale has accepted membership in The National Society of Collegiate Scholars and will be honored during a campus ceremony this fall at the University of Minnesota in the Twin Cities.

50 years ago

- The New Richland-Hartland High School band took first place in the AAA class in the parade at Festag Day at Minnesota Lake, recently. Nordaas American Homes presented the band with a red, white and blue trophy and a \$50 check for their efforts.

- Members of the committees for the Vista communities celebration for the 120th anniversary of the setting of the community by Swedish immigrants report that all plans have been completed for a most enjoyable day of observance, Sunday, August 15 at the grove on the Gordon Peterson farm just west of the two Vista churches.



- Gloria Griffin, DFL-endorsed candidate for the U.S. Congress from the 2nd district, led her campaign caravan into New Richland, Tuesday. She is pictured here with Joan Grove, Minnesota Secretary of State, center, as they visited with Norman Johnson at Skogmos. The caravan was on a door-to-door campaign throughout the area.

- Debra Jean Shurson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Shurson of New Richland, will receive her master of science degree in guidance and counseling during the August 14 commencement ceremonies at the University of Nebraska in Omaha.

75 years ago

- Helmer Jacobson placed third and Oscar (Buddy) Berg sixth in the plowing contest at Faribault held in conjunction with the Conservation Day demonstrations Thursday at the Faribault State School farm. Robert Benjamin and Lloyd Cover placed first and second, but their addresses are not listed.

- Donald Brecke, formerly employed as accountant at Western Mineral Products Company, Minneapolis, has resigned his position there and is enrolled at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. Donald will leave for college on Friday.

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 - 5:15 p.m. Supper; 6 p.m. Bible Study

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

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Interim Pastor
Trish Reedstrom
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)

LESEUR 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 Schanil 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 - 9:00 a.m. Worship
Tuesday - Council meeting (First Tuesday)

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

HARTLAND EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
Hartland, Minnesota
Pastor Phillip K. Lepak
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship
Monday - 10:30 a.m. Worship
Monday - Council meeting (First Monday of the month)
Friday - Quilting meets 9:00 a.m. twice a month, see newsletter for dates.

MANCHESTER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
Manchester, Minnesota
Pastor Phillip K. Lepak
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship
Monday - 10:30 a.m. Worship
Monday - Council meeting (First Monday of the month)
Friday - Quilting meets 9:00 a.m. twice a month, see newsletter for dates.

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.vibrantlifeag.com

FIRST LUTHERAN LCMC
Ellendale, Minnesota
Lay Pastor Ross Sletten
Saturday - 8am Men's Bible Study
Sunday - 9am Worship
Monday - 7pm Call to prayer
Wednesday - 9:30am Bible Study; 6pm Confirmation

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
Hollendale, Minnesota
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH
101 East Park Avenue
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Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Coffee Fellowship; 9:20 a.m. Worship/Kids Church
Familyoffaithhollendalemn.org
fitchollendale@gmail.com

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 Gena Parker
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; Pre-school Sunday School during Mass
Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. - Faith Formation classes for grades K-Confirmation
www.litomysl.webs.com
www.stsidoreschool.webs.com

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

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2025 ANNUAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Name of TIF Authority: New Richland
Name of Municipality: New Richland

The following information represents the annual disclosure of tax increment districts for the year ending

NRHEG Star Eagle
(Name of the Newspaper)

on 8/6/26
(Date of Publication)

	Name of TIF District
	TIF 1-1
Current net tax capacity	\$ 36,534
Original net tax capacity	\$ 535
Captured net tax capacity	\$ 35,999
Principal and interest payments due in 2026	\$ 0
Tax increment received in 2025	\$ 55,417
Tax increment expended in 2025	\$ 150
Month and year of first tax increment receipt (MM / YYYY)	6 / 2007
Date of required decertification (MM / DD / YYYY)	12/31/2032

Additional information regarding each district may be obtained from:

Tyler Lendt
Name of TIF Representative

203 N Boradway, New Richland, MN 56072
Address (Street, City, Zip)

(507) 465-3514
Phone



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ALMIGHTY YAHUAH'S SUKKOT Festival (tabernacles) is being locally hosted 9-26 to 10-3 for Yahuah loving people. Pesak (Passover) will be hosted April 21-27, 2027 218/533-6029

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Friday, August 21st

4:00-7:00 pm:
Classic Car, Truck and Tractor Show featuring the Batmobile, Kiddy Car Show, Kiddy Electric Car Drag Races, and much more—including... a chance to win up to \$200,000!
5:30-8:30 pm:
Firemen Burger and Sweet Corn Feed at the Community Center
8:00 pm: Live Music at Papa Olies! Featuring AZBY Band

Saturday, August 22nd

9:00 am-5:00 pm:
Vendor Show, Ice Cream, and Silent Auction (Community Center)
9:00 am:
Volleyball Tournament at Papa Olies
10:00 am: Fireman's Water Wars
11:00 am-9:00 pm or later:
Come hungry for the Waldorf Food Trucks!
11:00 am:
Kid's Zone Opens-Spray Tattoos, Inflatables, Gravity Box Basketball, and MyGlobalDJ with Games and Prizes!

1:00 pm: Dedication of the First Responder's Memorial Park
1:30 pm:
Quilts of Valor, Honoring our Veterans
2:30 pm:
Kiddie Parade (Line up at 2:15 pm)
3:00 pm:
The Grand Parade
4:00 pm: LIVE MUSIC with Los T band (In the gazebo)
8:00 pm: LIVE MUSIC with IV Play band (Main St. lot by community center) - Clear bags only, no drugs, no alcohol, no weapons - \$10 cover charge

Sunday, August 23rd

10:00 am:
Outdoor Worship Service
Bring your lawn chair!

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
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Thursday, Aug. 20 • 7:30 PM
Hairball
Friday, Aug. 21 • 7:00 PM
Randy Houser with special guest Cori Kennedy
Saturday, Aug. 22 • 7:30 PM
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