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NRHEG Star Eagle

SERVING THE NEW RICHLAND-HARTLAND-ELLENDALE-GENEVA AREA

No. 2 Vol. CXXXIX \$2 Office in New Richland, Minnesota 56072 Thursday, August 21, 2025



Hartland University

Build your own Bouquet at New Richland Liquor Store Thursday, Aug. 21

A Build your own Bouquet event will take place from 6-8 p.m. at the New Richland Liquor Store on Thursday, Aug. 21. Join Andi and Haley for a delightful evening of flower arranging, unleash creativity and learn the art of bouquet-making from talented local floral experts, tickets are \$55.

Ice Cream Truck at Minnwest Bank in Waldorf on Aug. 22

An ice cream truck will be serving free treats at Minnwest Bank in Waldorf from noon till 3 p.m. Friday, Aug. 22. All ages welcome at 102 South Main Street, Waldorf.

Romp and Rhyme Story Times at New Richland Public Library Tuesday, Aug. 26

Romp and Rhyme Story Times at the New Richland Public Library at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 26. From puppets to pumping music, from bubble machines to banging bands, these are not your average story times. This is free and open to the public.

NRHEG Open House and Grill Out in New Richland on Wednesday, Aug. 27

There will be an open house and grill out at New Richland High School from 2 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 27. This will include a hot dog meal from 3 p.m. till gone. Come to the open house and meet teachers, find your locker, walk your schedule and fill out paperwork.

Build your own Bouquet at Geneva Bar and Grill Wednesday, Aug. 27

There will be a Build your own Bouquet at the Geneva Bar and Grill from 6-8 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 27. Join Andi and Haley for a delightful evening of flower arranging, unleash creativity and learn the art of bouquet-making from talented local floral experts, tickets are \$55.

Diamond Art Book Marks New Richland Public Library Wednesday, Sept. 3

Create Diamond Art Bookmarks at the New Richland Public Library at 10:15 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 3. Craft and Coffee, join us twice a month for Craft Wednesday.

Third annual Ride to Remember at Hartland University Bar Saturday, Sept. 6

The third annual Ride to Remember will depart from Hartland University Bar around noon on Saturday, Sept. 6. There will be a list of bars to collect cards from. Which bars visited is up to riders. Best hand announced 7 p.m. 50/50 raffle, silent auction and winning hand prizes. Proceeds donated to Flags for Vets.

A word from The Word

Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp.

Mark 9:23



MOVING ON - Attending a farewell get-together for outgoing City Administrator Anthony Martens on Friday, Aug. 15, 2025 at New Richland City Hall, were, from left: New Richland Chief of Police Tanyce Bruegger, Corbin Martens, Anthony Martens, Assistant City Administrator Heather Christensen, New Richland Postmaster Randy Lewer, City Maintenance Supervisor Eric Hendrickson, and Sawyer Hender.

New Richland will always be home Residents bid Anthony Martens farewell, Friday

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

After eight years serving the City of New Richland, Administrator Anthony Martens, 45, is departing for greener pastures. He began his new position as Blooming Prairie City Administrator on Tuesday.

Martens started his journey with New Richland in April of 2017 when he was hired as Chief of Police.

Five years later, to the month, he began serving as City Administrator.

Martens said working for the city wasn't about him, it was about the community.

"I wanted us to bring the city to the community. I always looked at this as an 'us.' Everyone here is a team. Every win has been about us, not me."

So far the city has received three applicants for administrator.

"The city is in good hands," Martens said. "This is one of the best staffs I've ever worked with. If I

could pick them all up and take them with me, I would.

"My family isn't going anywhere in the near future," Martens continued. "We'll still be around."

Martens said he's looking to grow as a person in his new role with Blooming Prairie. "[It's a] new opportunity for challenge, growth."

A resident of New Richland for more than twenty years, Martens earned his MPA degree in administration in 2016.

Martens came to know New Richland after working at the Creamery in Otisco and has lived in New Richland on and off since 2001 and permanently after purchasing their home in 2005. Martens married his wife Kelly (Nelson) in 2001 and the pair have two teenagers: Carter, 18; and Corbin, 16.

Carter is going to college at MSU

Martens continued on 2



SOARING HIGH - The replacement steeple and bell for the LeSueur River Lutheran Church were lifted atop the church's bell tower on the morning of Thursday, Aug. 14.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

Steeple soars skyward

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

Roughly 40 feet tall and weighing 30,000 pounds, the replacement steeple for LeSueur River Lutheran Church lifted off the pavement where it had been constructed and moved directly to the place it belonged, easily 80 feet above the ground atop the church's bell tower the morning of Thursday, Aug. 14.

The bell, which weighs 1,250 pounds, had arrived in its space only shortly before.

The lifting and placing were accomplished in less than two hours' time using a Grove GMK 5150 crane supplied by Meyerhofer Crane and Rigging Services out of

Grand Meadow, Minn. According to Jason Ree with Meyerhofer, the GMK 5150 has about 200 feet of boom and is capable of lifting 165 U.S. tons of weight. Purchase price for a similar vehicle, he suggests, would be about \$2 million.

The crane was operated by a crew of three, and also arrived in a caravan of three vehicles: the GMK 5150 driving independently and two semis. One semi carried pallet-sized metal plates which provided a secure base for stabilizing extensions on the crane. The other bore

Steeple continued on 10

County board looks at IT budget, bridge replacement

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

As the county continues to look at creating a preliminary 2026 budget by the state-set deadline in mid-September, county commissioners have heard from numerous department heads over the past few months.

Information Technology (IT) department leader Judy Hiller revealed she expects no increase in her budget, but listed some of the equipment, software and online services

her department is responsible for.

During the discussion, it was shared by Hiller and county administrator Michael Johnson that "phishing" and "ransomware attempts" are constant for all businesses and agencies with an online presence. Waseca County, Johnson said, is bombarded by "tens of thousands" of attempted attacks each day.

Hiller said there are two types of

County continued on 4



This bridge along County Road 6 northeast of New Richland was built in 1940. Stress tests showed it is no longer safe for vehicles over eight tons. Originally scheduled for replacement in 2027, it will now be replaced in the next few months.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

HARTLAND CITY COUNCIL

Hartland council copes with drainage, space shortages

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff Writer

Mayor Kelly Routh called the Hartland city council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Monday, August 4. During the public forum, city residents Alford Johnson and Darren Wiegand expressed concern over damage done in their basements when the 3.4 inches of rain caused backups through their drains in June. Because there had been no council meeting in July, the August meeting was their first opportunity to attend a meeting. Because his basement does not have drains at floor level, said Wiegand, "All of the water came up through my basement toilet."

One council member asked, "What part of the flooding in your basement was the city's fault?" They replied, "The pumps weren't working that day, or they weren't on. We don't know what the city did wrong."

Mayor Routh replied, "When we have 3.4 inches of rain in an hour, those pumps cannot keep up. All that water is flowing downhill and has to go somewhere. We have a third pump, but state law states it cannot kick in automatically. All that rain is not something we can predict." A compromise was reached when council members said they would look into whether Hartland can provide any financial relief for Johnson and Wiegand through insurance.

According to fire chief Gage Flatness, the fire department was not sent to any billable calls during the month of July. A recent review of fire department equipment reveals it is all working well. The Hartland fire department has already posted on its Facebook page that the annual pork chop feed has been canceled this year for lack of an available facility. Council members speculated that a local church might be willing to offer its resources; the possibility is being investigated.

City maintenance department leader Andy Flatness requested the purchase of a trailer, currently on sale for \$8,900, built to carry loads as heavy as 14,000 pounds. He stated the trailer would be particularly helpful since there have been difficulties with the city truck. The council is considering the purchase. The 2024 Consumer Confidence Water Report will be posted on the bulletin board in the community center by the end of August. The community center bathroom will now require a key for use. Flatness reported he will be cleaning the restroom and posting the days he is cleaning it.

A large table, a piano, and a few other items are standing in the space occupied by the Hartland post office. Teresa, the postmaster, told council members the furniture makes it very difficult to access the sink and kitchen area. Council members assured her once the new community center is up and running, they will move everything she requests.

Council members expressed pleasure that traffic on the Hartland Facebook page has been increasing. They stated their encouragement for ongoing growth both in the number of people visiting and the number of times individuals make use of the site.



Fence Lines

by Mark Bernard

Suddenly, thunder showers everywhere

The scurs and the Weather Eye called the warm temps and rainfall right over the last weekend. Does Mother Nature keep her foot on the gas, or does she tap the brakes this week? Starting Thursday, sunny with highs in the upper 70's and lows in the low 60's. Mostly sunny on Friday with a slight chance of a.m. rain. Highs in the upper 70's with lows in the mid-50's. Sunny on Saturday with highs in the low 70's and lows in the 50's. Sunday, sunny with highs in the upper 60's and lows in the upper 40's. Mostly sunny on Monday with highs in the upper 60's and lows in the upper 40's. Tuesday, partly sunny with highs in the mid-70's with lows in the upper 40's. Partly sunny on Wednesday with highs in the mid-70's with lows in the low 50's. On August 26 th , the sun will rise just after 6:30 a.m. CDT and we slip below 13 hours and 30 minutes of daylight. On the 27 th , the sun will set just before 8 p.m. The normal high for August 27 th is 78 and the normal low is 57. The scurs are awaiting the opening of the footlong stand on the east end of the Coliseum at the State Fair.

We were cruising along so nicely weather-wise through mid-month. Rains while not overly abundant were sufficient enough to get the crops to the finish line. With a little additional rainfall it would've been plenty to perform some primary fall tillage. Then the weekend rains showed up. Amounts varied from 5" to over 11" in areas. Worst of all, the forecasts were for the most part not on top of it. Both the private and NWS forecasters missed the mark badly. So what does all this water mean? It increases the likelihood that we'll see more diseases in the corn which could make the decision to apply a fungicide a more valuable one. Stalk rot and ear rot organisms may be more plentiful as well, many of which are unaffected by fungicide applications. Rootworm beetles may be negatively affected as they begin laying their eggs into wet soil. Locally their numbers reflect the impact of two wet springs in a row. This likely won't help their cause for next year. Being a corn rootworm isn't all it's cracked up to be.

On the soybean side, it may be a little more nebulous as things like SDS and other diseases have their start earlier in the growing season and aren't expressed until closer to harvest. The good news is most soybeans are done flowering already which should lessen the potential for white mold infection. More good news concerning soybean aphids. I know it's a popular belief that soybean aphids are washed off the leaves with heavy rain. Since they're normally on undersides of leaves and later in the season, deeper in the canopy, unless there is a lot of wind with the rain, causing whipping and abrasion helping to rub them off, they stay glued on pretty tight. A more likely explanation for their disappearance are the pathogenic fungi and beneficial insect predation since the last observation. There was plenty of evidence of the latter just prior to this latest

rainfall event and soybean aphid numbers weren't exactly astonishing to start with.

We're inching towards fall but there are still lingering signs that it's still summer. The sweet corn harvest has begun. While yield reports on yields are scarce yet, one has to believe that this could be a very special sweet corn crop based on the fresh market corn being consumed. Ear size has been huge and the corn itself of exceptional quality, that from the garden at the ranch being no exception. After thinking perhaps the orioles were gone, I filled their jelly feeder one more time. Sure enough, there have been a few younger birds appearing in the last few days. There are still fireflies at night and there are lots of tiger swallow butterflies floating around our yard. Hummingbirds are active daily, and the barn swallows follow the lawnmower or sheep flock dutifully in search of flying insects. One knows that autumn is coming, however. Stick your head out the door past 9 p.m. to hear the crickets, grasshoppers and katydids signal that the end of summer is near.

The 4-H sheep were washed expertly washed and dried by the family owners and ready for the trip to the State Fair. The rest of the flock has to stay home but they've had a good summer on pasture. There have been some oddities, however. I noticed that there was a large amount of smartweed, lady's thumb smartweed to be precise that had invaded areas of the pasture. My first inclination was to spray it but as time grew shorter I left it. It flowered and within a few weeks the sheep were eating the seeds. Makes sense. Smartweed is a buckwheat family plant, and the seeds are favorites of wildlife. Many ducks and geese can be found with a crop full of smartweed seed during hunting season. Another revelation was that some sheep love bananas. I'd fed them the peels before, and they were consumed readily. When I had some out of code bananas and tossed them over the fence at home, I was surprised to see several in the flock to eat them, whole. Not many bananas in their native Scotland pastures.

Poppy continues her entomological endeavors. I've gotten into the habit of watching Adam 12 at bedtime lately. I enjoy the nostalgia and particularly seeing all the old cars when they were new. One night there was a fly bothering me. Try as I might, I couldn't get the thing to leave me alone. I attempted to swat it on my arm, missing badly. Hearing the loud slap on my arm drew Poppy's attention and she came on a dead run into the bedroom. When I said "There's a bug in here!" she was immediately up on the bed in search of her prey. Within seconds, she wheeled around snapping her jaws and the fly was no more. I slept very well after that, knowing I wouldn't have to worry about it bothering me. Who needs deadly pesticides when you have a Corgi?

See you next week...real good then.

Assistant City Administrator Heather Christiansen said she's learned a lot during her year and a half working with Martens.

"He's a fun guy," Christiansen said. "A tech nerd. Very involved. Knowledgeable. As a boss, he's definitely good with a budget, finding grants, helping the city improve. He's a great team leader, encouraging everyone to be the best they can be."

In a 2022 interview with the Star Eagle, Martens praised the community as receptive and 'tight knit,' adding that residents tend to rally together for those in need and recognize each other when out and about. Martens wants people to know he and his family will continue to call New Richland home.

■ Martens from Page 1

pursuing a degree in Sports Management and Corbin is a Junior at NRHEG High School.

In his time with the city, Martens said the biggest achievement he's been privy to is restoring the city's bond rating which was lowered when he took over as administrator.

"Working together as a staff, we brought it back to a stable environment," Martens said.

"We've also migrated more to a user friendly atmosphere for everyone, staff and community. We've helped bring everything online."

So Long, Farewell, Auf Wiedersehen

This column marks the end of my 13th year in this space.

It also marks the end of tenure as a writer for this paper. That's right, this is my final column.

One of my favorite scenes in the novel "Tom Sawyer" is when he tricks the other boys into whitewashing the fence and even gets them to pay him for the privilege. At the end of that chapter, Mark Twain writes this: "...Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do, and Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do."

When I decided to hang up my keyboard, this quote came to mind as to why. Writing has become something I have to do every week. Once I get started, I always enjoy my time unspooling my topic, but I promised myself when I began this job that I would stop either when I ran out of things to say or when it stopped being fun.

I told Eli that I can still picture the day I sat in my car across from the Star-Eagle offices, cogitating on whether or not I should go in and talk to Jim about filling this space that had been so capably taken care of by Jody and Betty before me. I told him I thought I could come up with things to write about for at least a year.

I considered leaving this post a year ago, but I got a burst of energy in the summer and had all kinds of things on my list on which to pontificate. My list still has three things on it, but the drive just isn't there. We might never know what I would've written about eyesight, school pictures, or blue jeans.

Ooh, I just came up with another topic - why do we act strangely around famous people? Eh, still not enough to keep going, sorry.



Whatever Flips Your Waffle

by Mark Domeier
Contributing Writer

I realize that over the course of the past year, I've started to slide some items off my overflowing plate. A year ago, I put down my trumpet for the last time; my lungs just don't work the same since Covid. Earlier this year, I stepped down from the Quad Cities Baseball Association board after many years; it was time for others to steer youth baseball. And now my column. All of this is a bit freeing, I'll admit.

As I developed a writing style in this space, I found myself more and more writing this as a sort of memoir for my kids and any future generations. I spend plenty of time using past events in my life to connect to the present. I hope that someday they might sit down and read through all 671 columns and get to know me a bit more. (If you count the 36 columns I wrote for the Owatonna People's Press some time back, I guess that number increases to 707!)

If you've read this space from August 30, 2012, you've learned plenty of things. You've seen the size of my column grow from the 400 or so words Jim said he needed to usually 800-1,000 words. If you know me outside of this space, you're aware that I'm never at a loss for words, so that shouldn't surprise you.

When I started, Jayna was 10 and Anton was 7. I was getting ready to start my 17th year at NRHEG. Michelle was in her tenth

year at Precision Signs. Now Jayna is starting her first teaching job, Anton can see the end of college in sight, Michelle's time working in Austin is the same as our daughter's age, and I'm almost done with three decades of teaching.

Here's what you might have picked up over the years. I believe in what teachers do and will defend our profession to the very end. I despise standardized testing!

I love my family. I'm super proud of what my children have done. And Michelle has been the best thing in my life; she is my lobster!

I am passionate about sports. While the Twins and Vikings are always near the top of my list, I love youth sports even more. The privilege I have to officiate and announce at sporting events is my very favorite way to spend free time.

Give me a good book and I'll be happy. Suggest some good comic books to read and I'll be even happier!

I won't hesitate to tell you how I feel about topics that might be a bit controversial. I've written about gun control, religion, and politics in this space.

I've written things I regret. I've embarrassed myself. But I've always been honest with my readers, whether you agree with me or not. I've had some amazing discourses with people after some of my columns, even if we didn't agree on

matters. I've also gotten mail ripping me at times.

Through it all, I have enjoyed interacting with my readers. I appreciate all of you for taking time each week to read through my musings. You may have enjoyed some and not others, but that's all part of the title: I wrote about whatever flipped my waffle that week.

I'm thankful to Jim for giving me a shot at this and to Eli for continuing to support whatever I placed on the page. I guess I'll never reach the total number of writings of Mark Bernard and Al Batt and Bob Hanson, but I will keep reading and enjoying their columns.

Eli told me I was always welcome to return at any time. But I think that when one leaves a place they have been for a substantial amount of time, they should just do that and not look back.

In the book "The Cat Who Walks Through Walls," Robert A. Heinlein wrote, "...it hurts less to write than it does not to write." I guess I'll find out if that's true. Thank you for all your readership and support and even some disgust over the years. As George Costanza said in a memorable episode of Seinfeld, "That's it! I'm outta here!"

Word of the Week: This week's word is a callback to the word from my very first column, my favorite word of all time, defenestration, which means to throw someone or something out a window, as in, "The reader wanted to perform an act of defenestration when he found out his favorite column would no longer be written." Impress your friends and confuse your enemies!

From tie cutting to column writing

Longtime Star Eagle columnist Mark Domeier has written his final column.

Mark was my seventh- and eighth-grade English teacher at NRHEG and has been a columnist for the Star Eagle since I was a freshman in high school.

Most importantly, he is my friend.

As a columnist, Mark has routinely written about "big events," capturing and relaying important insights, observations and opinions. Oftentimes I've been grateful he was the one writing words I so often agreed with wholeheartedly.

I often tell the story of a time when I was being a particular pain in Mark's rear end one day during eighth grade. I kept making jokes about Justin Bieber, the pop star. I remember Mark looked annoyed, but he didn't scold me at all during



Just a Thought...

by Eli Lutgens

That stuck with me. As I grew older, when there were situations I felt the urge to do something foolish, if it hurt another person, I heard and still continue to hear Mark's "don't do it" in the back of my mind.

I've told this story to Mark, and of course, he doesn't recall it happening. It was just another day teaching. I think that's what makes teachers like Mark special. An everyday occurrence for them may be life changing for another.

More than the columns, more than insights, more than anything, I had never heard Mark be as stern before or since.

I'm going to miss Mark stopping in the office each month. Every time he came in, I would talk with him for as long as he would stay and visit. Sometimes only 10 minutes, but often for a half hour or longer. I respect Mark's thoughts and opinions. Conversations varied from life updates to local happenings and other big events. I have and will continue to be excited when I get the opportunity to share conversations with him.

I am not alone in saying this. Mark, thank you for more than a decade of contributions to the Star Eagle. You will always have a place in our hearts and in the history of New Richland, Hartland, Ellendale and Geneva.

So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen.

Blooming Prairie Cancer Auction set for Aug. 24

The Blooming Prairie Community is kicking it into full force to celebrate the 24 Annual 2-Day Live Auction and other events. It's a big month with family fun events going on leading up to the Live Auction. The Field of Flags located on Highway 218 in Blooming Prairie is going up again on Sunday, August 24 and will stay up for two weeks. Please contact any one of the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group Members, or visit our website at www.BPCancerGroup.org to purchase a flag in honor of or to memorialize a loved one. It is an incredible sight to see driving down 218, and brings yearly joy to those who participate. New this year is a Medallion & Rock hunt for the local community families. Starting on Sunday, August 24, kids will be encouraged to scour the city of Blooming Prairie to find colorfully painted rocks with Ribbon logos, and turn them in to The Grille or MBT Bank in Blooming for a small prize! Even more clues will be posted on Monday & Wednesday mornings on the BP Cancer Group's Facebook page & website for the Cancer Medallion hidden somewhere in town! The Grand Prize for finding the main Medallion is \$100 in BP

Chamber Bucks! The Big Weekend kicks off with Sportmen's Bingo on Thursday, September 4 under the Big Tent at The Pizza Cellar in Blooming Prairie. This event sells out quickly, and new this year is the first-come-first-served ticket concept. Tickets are sold at the door only, so get there early! Sporting equipment for hunters of all caliber are featured this year! The Annual Auction is shaping up to be an incredible two-day feat of community support, starting with Night One of the Auction on the 5th, followed by Night Two on the 6th. A getaway in sunny Florida, major sporting tickets, golf & casino stays, and so much more are just a small taste of the unique items up for grabs this year. Steve Prihoda's Family has once again donated for a major cash raffle. Tickets available now by contacting any Cancer Group Member, or both nights of the Auction. This event is headed by 18 dedicated community members of the Blooming Prairie Cancer Group, and supported by countless volunteers and supportive businesses. It is a one of a kind experience that brings so much meaning to the fight for Cancer Research.

NRHEG
Star Eagle

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

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Compostings

by Al Batt

The field of flicks

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I got a quote to have my roof repaired.

What was the quote?

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. It was too hot outside and too cold inside. I left the business I'd visited and noticed a pile of Amazon boxes at a nearby home of shoppers in their prime. I thought of a time before air conditioning, when Amazon was just a jungle. I grew up near the village of Bath, home of the Bath Store, before it became a ghost town. I recalled a conversation with another boy. He'd told me that his family called Bath "Poptown." I asked him why.

"Because you can get pop there," he said.

"Can't you get pop everywhere?" I asked.

"I don't know, we don't go everywhere."

THE FIELD OF FLICKS

I enjoy baseball and movies, and movies about baseball. "Bull Durham," "Major League," "Field of Dreams," "A League of Their Own," "It Happens Every Spring," and "Angels in the Outfield" are fine film fare.

I recall the last Twins game I attended. I sang, "I don't care if I never get back," in the key of off. It was the peanuts and Cracker Jack talking.

The last movie I saw in a theater was delightful, but the trailers of upcoming movies were so loud I couldn't hear others eating popcorn.

I'VE LEARNED

I bought a 24-pack of bottled water. Earlier, I'd purchased a bottle of water at an airport. The airport bottle cost more than the 24.

I got a shingles shot. I'm thinking of getting a vinyl siding shot.

A bug zapper is a fly-by-night operation.

My dog ate a small chair. The veterinarian has requested a stool sample.

In 1930, only 8% of American homes had an electric refrigerator.

A coming attraction shown in a theater is something that looks better than the movie you're about to watch.

The USDA found the average U.S. corn yield in 2024 was a record 179.3 bushels per acre. In 1975, the average U.S. corn yield was approximately 71-80 bushels per acre. According to the National Corn Growers Association, David Hula of Charles City, Virginia, set the record of 623.84 bushels per acre in 2023.

THE NEWS FROM

HARTLAND HAROLD

I looked at grainy photos of by-gone grocery stores offering food, produce, dry goods, men's wear and shoes. Sibilrud's (Kenneth) Jack Sprat Foods in Hartland. Phone Tilden 5-2077. Anderson's (Dorothy and Walter) Jack Sprat Foods in Freeborn. Phone 2555. This nursery rhyme inspired the store name, "Jack Sprat could eat no fat. His wife could eat no lean. And so betwixt the two of them, they licked the platter clean."

My wife and I dined at Casa Zadora, a retiring restaurant that began in Albert Lea in 1969 and got better all the time.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

I hate to brag, but I have the memory of one of those big gray animals.

The worst time to have a heart attack is during a game of charades.

Justice is a dish best served cold. Otherwise, it's just water.

NATURE NOTES

I heard a whistle, a plaintive "Ken-ne-dy." Here's a fun fact: only .003% of eastern wood-pee-wee males are named Kennedy. That's not true. The peewee produced this call: "pee-a-wee!"

I found wild turkey and blue jay feathers in the yard. Does that mean we'll be seeing naked turkeys and jays? Turkeys molt all of their feathers each year, and molting is most pronounced during the summer. Jakes molt first, followed by the hens that didn't nest or hatch a brood, and toms molt after their breeding activities wane. Successful hens with broods and hens that have re-nested molt last. Blue jays also molt in summer, and some jays drop all their head feathers simultaneously. That's why I see bald blue jays each year.

On a lovely day in August, what better thing to do than to consider winter? Winters can be treacherous, and it's the only season that happens twice a year. According to folklore, a narrow orange band on a woolly bear (woolly worm) caterpillar predicts a harsh winter, while a wide orange band means a mild winter. Folklore says the number of fogs in August will correspond to the number of snowfalls in the coming winter.

The Baltimore oriole migration peaks in August and September. It may seem that by Labor Day, they have all gone back to school, but there are always some that linger longer before heading to wintering grounds in Florida, the Caribbean, Central America and the northern tip of South America.

MEETING ADJOURNED

"Be kind, don't judge, and have respect for others. If we can all do this, the world would be a better place. The point is to teach this to the next generation."—Jasmine Guinness.



LOCAL LEADERS - Representative Brad Finstad stopped in Waseca this past week to meet with local leaders as part of his journey to visit every county in his district. Star Eagle photo by Eli Lutgens

Walking tour brings Finstad to Waseca

Representative Brad Finstad made a stop in Waseca this week as part of his ongoing journey to personally visit every county in his district. In a vibrant yet intimate gathering at the Waseca Art Center, leaders from the City, County, School District, Chamber of Commerce, Sheriff's Department, Economic Development Authority, local businesses, and civic organizations came together to hear his message and engage in thoughtful dialogue. Rep. Finstad opened his remarks

by highlighting that the United States has experienced three consecutive months of zero illegal border crossings. He also addressed the political polarization in the nation, stating, "The reality is, there are far more of us in the middle, trying to do the best we can for our constituents and our country."

When asked about the increasing influence of the executive branch, Rep. Finstad acknowledged longstanding concerns. "We've seen an imbalance for decades as executive

orders have become standard operating procedure for Presidents," he said. "If Congress agrees with an executive order, it should simply be passed into law. There's no reason for new Presidents to come in and reverse them; it gives the public whiplash."

The event allowed local leaders to connect directly with their Congressman, asking questions and sharing community priorities.

"It was wonderful to have so many impactful leaders gathered to

hear directly from Representative Finstad," said Mikhail Rostislavovich, President of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce. "We were honored to welcome him to the heart of his district, and to have this kind of meaningful exchange right here in Waseca."

Rep. Finstad's visit to Waseca is one of many stops on his ongoing tour to ensure his district has a voice in Washington.

Finstad answers local leaders

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher

Minnesota's First District Congressman Brad Finstad visited with local community leaders for approximately one hour Wednesday, Aug. 13, 2025, at the Waseca Art Center as part of a southern Minnesota walking tour. During the month of August, Finstad is making dozens of stops including nine in Rochester on Wednesday and four more on Thursday in Mankato, Waseca, and Steele County. Finstad introduced himself and talked about his family, seven children all under 22 years old. He said he is among the 80 percent of congress members who "fall between the Ilhan Ohmars and Marjorie Taylor Greenes of the world."

Finstad gave an update which included talk of the traditional August recess due to "miserable heat," which provides an opportunity for members of Congress to return home to their district to "hear what's going on."

Prior to recess, Congress passed a reconciliation bill which included public safety measures aimed at addressing "unmitigated disaster" at the southern border.

Finstad cited the absence of any illegal border crossings in the last three months as a victory. He said the next step is dealing with those illegal immigrants already in the United States who came here with ill intent, i.e. the cartel and other gangs. He said the efforts are aimed at making streets safer.

Finstad said he talked with the Rochester chief of police who agreed he never thought this would be a problem here.

"Right now, we [Waseca County] don't have any negative effects from illegal immigration," Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas told the Pioneer. "It's not affecting Waseca County at this time."

Finstad talked of the difficulty of legalized marijuana. He said he grew up with the DARE program and "just say no."

Finstad cited four recent deaths due to fentanyl-laced marijuana overdoses by teens in Rochester.

In June, the Star Tribune reported on five recent overdoses due to fentanyl, but did not state the cause was marijuana laced with fentanyl. The Rochester police reported the overdoses were due to narcotics laced with fentanyl, not marijuana.

Pioneer staff could not find any recent news articles from Minnesota referencing overdoses involving marijuana laced with fentanyl.

"I have no first-hand knowledge of pot being laced with fentanyl in Waseca County," Sheriff Dulas said, clarifying the county has experienced deaths due to fentanyl, but the substance was mixed with materials other than marijuana. Dulas also said he's never seen a death in the county related to marijuana laced with fentanyl.

Finstad said the most devastating tax increase in the country's history was avoided when the 2017 tax bill was made permanent.

Finstad said the reconciliation bill increases Medicaid spending by more than \$20 billion over the next ten years. He said the "Welfare to Work Program" initiative is now law, even though the Clinton administration's efforts to pass it in the 1990s were unsuccessful.

Finstad talked about the negative effects of the U.S. Ag trade deficit of \$50 billion. He said "Farmers want to get government out of the way."

"Farmers want to farm for the market," he added.

Finstad referred to President Donald Trump as the "ultimate disruptor and chief," then went on to say he brings people to the trade table, lead-

ing to short term uncertainty.

Following his introduction and legislative update, Finstad entertained questions for nearly 45 minutes.

Waseca School board member Charlie Priebe asked the first questions.

"Seeing the power of the president, with presidents taking more and more power, what can congress do to bring power back to the people?"

Priebe also asked how the Department of Education could be more efficient.

Finstad said the legislative branch of government is supposed to control spending. He gave an example of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and how an appropriations bill gives them a \$1 billion budget and doesn't give them guidelines for what to do with the money. Finstad said that isn't representative government.

Finstad said laws implemented at the local level lead to more diligence. He later spoke of the Department of Education saying he voted to abolish it, stating "Local school board members like Charlie Priebe know best how to educate their local youth."

"Give those dollars back to the local school board," he said. "A book load of mandates come from those in Washington who think they know better than Waseca."

He also referenced 40 un-funded mandates passed by Minnesota this year.

Waseca Mayor Randy Zimmerman asked how the United States Chamber of Commerce can help entice and solicit funds for local development.

"There used to be a day, where if you build it, they will come," Finstad answered. "If you added a factory with 400 jobs, can the region support that?"

Zimmerman hesitated and answered, "It depends."

Finstad talked about a shortage of workers, referencing 60,000 open healthcare positions in Minnesota along with 4,000 engineering openings.

"These are job openings that simple math doesn't fill," he said. "Common sense says that the jobs we've lost to China can't come back overnight."

Finstad talked about restoring vital needs to be produced in the United States including animal drugs and critical minerals, which the United States is nearly entirely dependent on China for.

Zimmerman asked how Waseca can be part of the solution.

Finstad said working together for new ideas and businesses.

Waseca County Commissioner Doug Christopherson asked about added administrative pressure because of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program changes.

"The fear is we're going to end up paying for staff to police these forms at the local level? Is there anything in place to help local staff?"

Minnesota is one of 10 states to implement social services at the county level and only one of two states which puts the burden (administrative costs) on the county.

"Minnesota screwed that up," Finstad stated. "Counties, should fight for the state to take those responsibilities."

"The state has to step up and say 'Counties we hear you hear loud and clear and will work together to fix it,'" Finstad said.

Conclusion

Before departing for visits in Steele County, Finstad posed for a picture. In the coming weeks Finstad said he expects to make dozens more visits across Minnesota's first district.

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Tree put back up after August storm

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Geneva city council meeting was called to order the evening of Tuesday, Aug. 12. It was reported that the city's sidewalk project should be completed the first week in September.

The maintenance department reported an unusual occurrence: A tree that was knocked down during a storm the week before was lifted back up during a storm a week later. Maintenance said they've never seen that before, but that the tree isn't stable and still has to go. Maintenance added the person who has been mowing city property has left the position, and stated hope a new staff member could be found soon. A city employee who has been working with the city's wastewater system for 14 years asked about a raise. The council response was that it will decide this matter in December.

Ulland Construction submitted a bid of \$40,000 to complete a repair project on Third Street Northeast; the council accepted the bid. With the construction going on along Main Street, the fire department needs to know when the cement will be poured in front of the fire station. Fire department members explained fire trucks will need to be moved outside the station if the sidewalk work would prevent an immediate response to a fire call. As of now there is no set date for pouring in front of the fire hall. Ashley Rixmann asked about putting a fence on her property along Third Street Southeast. The council said that was no problem, but that she is then responsible for maintaining both sides of the fence.

Alex Braham requested the city's cannabis ordinance and has been sent a copy. A data request made by Calvin Douglas regarding Geneva's water tower prompted a response by the city attorney.

Three Geneva residents' animals have been attacked by a neighbor's dog; one of those three dogs has been attacked three times. The neighbor in question said his dog is now kept tied up and that it won't happen again. The council said if it happens again there will be a penalty.

Two property owners along Second Avenue Northeast and First Avenue Southeast have been sent a complaint letter regarding unlicensed vehicles or unsightly debris on their property.

GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

During the public announcements, Daniel Petsinger stated he had an issue with not having been put on the agenda for Tuesday, Aug. 12. The council replied that he could speak during the public announcements portion of the meeting; the mayor then reminded him that he had been put on the agenda for both July and June and had not shown up to either of those meetings. Petsinger said that, although he had asked to be put on the agenda for those two months, he was not informed that his request had been granted, so he didn't attend. A frustrated Petsinger said that the contract he had from 2012, signed by Mayor Bailey, included an automatic renewal clause for July 15, 2022, and then for July of 2032, allowing him to keep antennas for his Radio Link Internet company on the city water tower.

He then asked, "Please acknowledge that my contract is valid until July 15, 2032, as the contract states, and retract the resolution that you have provided me through the public data requests and allow me to continue my services on the public water tower." The mayor then said, "Moving along..." To which Petsinger asked, "You're not going to answer anything?" Bailey replied, "This is public announcements; we're listening." Petsinger responded, "The lack of communication that I have had and lack of due process on this matter. I don't want to take this to court. I think we need to have a conversation about this." The mayor replied, "We're going to take this up with our lawyer after this meeting today."

Matthew L. Benda, of Peterson, Kolker, Haedt & Benda, Ltd. law firm of Albert Lea, and City Attorney to Geneva had this to say, "The City of Geneva has been fully cooperative with Radio Link Internet Provider in reviewing its placement of equipment on the city water tower. This topic has been on the agenda for public discussion at the last three City Council meetings. Mr. Petsinger appeared at the August meeting and was able to speak on this topic. As the attorney for the City of Geneva, I have been instructed to work with all parties to collaborate and find a resolution."

1. Cost for the work is about \$590,000. A state bridge replacement program will be covering about \$250,000 of the expense.

Bevcomm leader Bill Eckles shared an update with commissioners regarding work on the fiberoptic system being laid in the unincorporated areas of the southern part of the county. He said that all main cables have been laid, and teams are continuing with the process of running connections up to residences; of 684 eligible locations, he said 543 property owners have signed agreements for feeding lines across their property. It will be possible, he said, for some people on the system to begin receiving services this fall, after a needed "hub" is in place within the county. That hub is scheduled to be installed during September.

"You remember," he said during the meeting, "we do not 'require' anyone to purchase our services. If we lay the line and the resident does not want a connection, we simply coil and bury the cable."

Eckles said he invites people to contact Bevcomm, whose main office is in Blue Earth, with questions and concerns, including any dissatisfaction with the way their property was affected by the installation process.

County

from Page 1

protection—steps taken to prevent the attacks from gaining access, and preparations that would make any system penetrations less harmful, for example, having "backups of backups of backups," so that threats to hold pockets of information for ransom would be rendered harmless.

County engineer Jim Kollar requested commissioner approval of a contract which would expedite the replacement of a bridge along County Road 6 northeast of New Richland over the LeSueur River. The bridge was constructed in 1940, and was extended using timbers in the 1980s. Due to structural concerns, it has had an eight-ton-per-axle limit since early in the year, forcing area farmers to take detours with heavy vehicles. Kollar explained the bridge was originally scheduled for replacement during the 2027 construction season, but the level of deterioration justifies moving it forward on the schedule.

The contract, approved on Aug. 5, will have work beginning this September and completed by Nov.



REV READY - Left, Craig Lestrud stands next to his hog at the third annual Hartland University's Biker Bug Run on Saturday, Aug. 16. Right, Jesse Olmanson (left) and Chris Soday are ready to participate in the Biker Bug Run.

Star Eagle photos by Ben Revermann

Hartland University's Biker Bug Run rides smoothly

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

More than 60 participants made it possible for the third annual "Biker Bug Run" fundraiser at the Hartland University Bar to raise \$2,200 to be donated toward increased motorcycle safety in the state of Minnesota.

Rich Shultz was the winner of a drawing and will receive \$795.00. A check has been written for \$1,405 to A.B.A.T.E of MN, a nonprofit motorcycle rights organization whose acronym stands for American Bikers for Awareness, Training and Education. The money will be utilized to support the organization's Young Riders Program, promoting education and safety for future riders and

all road users. This year the training, scholarships and classes have positively affected 88 students.

Virgil Legried, Southeast District Director for ABATE told participants, "Gotta be safe out there, no way around it."

There was no specified order in which destinations were to be visited, but they included the Orange Door in Minnesota Lake, the Thunder Bar in Good Thunder, Classic's Pub in Waterville and the Toy Box Saloon in Kilkenny. Hartland University Bar was both the start and the finish for the run. Five bars total, registration at noon and kickstands up at 12:30 p.m. Participants were given a bullseye sticker to adhere to the front of their motorcycles when they left. At each destination, the



READY TO RIDE - Charlene Kuchenreuther sits on her bike, ready for the Biker Bug Run. Star Eagle photo by Ben Revermann

person with a bug closest to the center of their sticker would receive a prize.

The following are testimonials ABATE shared regarding the benefits of youth motorcycle safety training:

"I've purchased proper gloves, riding boots, a helmet, leathers. I could go on. If it isn't clear by now, riding to me isn't just a hobby."

"I am in high school right now and work at Pizza Ranch in the evenings, but I really don't make a lot of money there. I would like to surprise my dad by getting my license and being able to ride with him this

summer."

From Hartland University Bar: "Hartland University Bar staff and owners would like to express their appreciation to everyone who attended, assisted and hosted our Biker Bug Run yesterday. We acknowledge the diligent efforts of all the bartenders from each of our stops, who worked tirelessly to ensure prompt service. Their dedication did not go unnoticed, as we received numerous compliments regarding the stops we selected and the exceptional staff they employed."

Look for the Hartland University's Biker Bug Run next year.

Southeast RSDP seeks applicants for board and work group members

The Southeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership (Southeast RSDP) is seeking applicants for membership on community-led regional board and work groups.

Southeast RSDP is one of five regional partnerships that connect local communities with University of Minnesota resources to support sustainable development and resilience in Greater Minnesota. RSDP has four work groups: natural resources, local food systems, resilient communities and clean energy.

Southeast RSDP's board and work groups are composed of community volunteers from the region along with representatives from University of

Minnesota faculty and staff. Members work together to make recommendations about how to support community-driven projects that partner with the University of Minnesota. RSDP strives to reflect a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives among its board membership.

Successful candidates for the Southeast RSDP work groups will:

Be committed to building resilience in Southwest Minnesota communities -- economically, environmentally, and socially

Contribute diverse backgrounds, identities, experiences, and viewpoints

Operate with integrity in making decisions

Embrace complexity and innovation Southeast RSDP is currently seeking those with an interest in natural resources and sustainable agriculture and food systems. Among the knowledge areas we are especially interested in are farming and agriculture; water resource management; naturalists or wild areas/ecosystems; and climate and extreme weather readiness.

Across our 16-county region, we are specifically seeking applicants from the following counties: Faribault, Blue Earth, Waseca, Steele, Houston, Winona, Fillmore, Mower as well as the Prairie Island Indian Community. However, we will consider applications from all counties within our region.

During their terms, board and work group members participate in in-person or virtual meetings (10 for board members, four for work group members). Mileage compensation and honoraria for meeting attendance are available.

To apply for a board position, please see z.umn/rsdpboard.

To apply for a work group position, please see z.umn/rsdpworkgroups.

Applications are preferred by Monday, Sept 15 for a start date of October 1. For questions, or to learn more, please contact Andi Sutton, Southeast RSDP Executive Director, at sutton364@umn.edu or (857) 928-4196.



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APRON PROTECTOR - The Clarks Grove Historical Society presented Yvonne Cory and her demonstration "The Great Protector-The Apron" during their monthly meeting on Thursday, August 14, 2025.

Aprons across time at Clarks Grove meeting

By **BEN REVERMANN**
Staff writer

The Clarks Grove Historical Society held its monthly meeting the evening of Thursday, Aug. 14. Sandy Kvenvold provided root beer floats. The evening's presentation was from Yvonne Cory, of Easton, Minn., a self-professed "fourth generation apron fan." She began with a slightly altered version of the song "My Favorite Things" from The Sound of Music.

Grandmother Mary's apron was from the early 1900s. Mother Clara had the most influence on Yvonne in regards to aprons. Father Albert, farmer and grandfather to Yvonne, also had an apron for nails, and used twine string to tie it on.

Kvenvold had a tiny sewing machine on a table in front of her; she said it all began with one stitch on that mini sewing machine she used to make doll clothes. Cory began her presentation, "The apron, a symbol of generosity and hospitality. From generation to generation, many household chefs have tied on aprons all over our nation and still do to this day. They may have become somewhat of a relic, but they are still out there in food service, people tying on an apron." She had a sack apron, sewn in former years from the fabric bags flour was once delivered in. She called attention to the letters "NET" printed on the fabric: It was part of the phrase "NET WEIGHT," which would

have shown how much flour came in the large bags. She went on to share that flour companies eventually complied with customer requests that they print their labels using softer colors which would wash out more easily.

Cory revealed she once worked for a company where they needed corn shucked. She showed a plastic apron from there that protected the wearers' clothes. A more decorative piece was covered in cherries. Cory linked it to the "I Love Lucy" show and the polka dot look that Lucille Ball inspired. Cocktail aprons, "For those cocktail parties people used to like to go to." There was an apron for card night, spotted with numerous Ace of Spades cards, accompanied by a Budweiser apron for men. Cory mentioned she had shown her aprons on the very last episode of "On the Road with Jason Davis" in 2014 when he was still broadcasting on NBC.

Other items among her collection were a very delicate apron from the Civil War era, painted by hand; a 1945 Krene Plastic apron; a black apron for widows or women in mourning from the 50s; aprons displaying family crests; used (and clean) hankie aprons from the 1960s; an apron made from old Afghans that has been on tour in Australia; a rabbit bib from 1912; a blue flower-based bib, and many, many more.

Experiencing tornadoes in Albert Lea, Beaver Lake

Genie and I attended "Relay For Life" held at the fairgrounds in Albert Lea. As per other years of the celebration, it was a tribute to the survivors and victims of Cancer.

Genie is a survivor of right lung cancer surgery done robotically at Mercy Hospital in Mason City, Iowa the fall of 2022.

I was given the choice of observing. What would you have done?

In a previous column of 07-24-25, I promised to write about two tornadoes we experienced. (One is Albert Lea, the other at Beaver Lake during our 37 summers at Beaver Lake.)

Albert Lea:
Genie and I had just sat down for the evening meal looking out a big window by our kitchen table living in Chapeau Heights rural Albert Lea. As Genie was about to give grace, I look out and see a "Big" Oak tree horizontally sail by the window. To the basement on the Double!!

We stayed in the basement for what seemed like a long, long time!!

Finally, we walked up the basement steps expecting to see a lot of damage to the house. There wasn't



FACT OR FICTION

...you decide

by Bob Hanson, Emeritus

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

any damage to be seen!! Hooray!!

We proceeded to look out the kitchen table window. Oh my goodness the big oak tree just missed the house as it laid horizontally on the ground with a smaller Walnut tree alongside it. The oak tree was pulled out of the ground leaving a big hole. A small berry bush was left standing by the hole with berries undamaged!!

Genie and I walked around our house looking for damage, we did see a crack in the foundation at the ground level - nothing else. (The neighbors lost part of their garage plus minor damage to their house.)

The farmer neighbors lost the roof of their machine shed. (A camper trailer inside the shed was left un-

damaged!!)

Beaver Lake:

Genie and I were just finishing the evening meal at a restaurant on old Highway 65 in Owatonna when the manager came to us and said "You're not leaving here until I tell you it's okay to leave. A tornado is south of here headed in the direction and if needed we're all going into our safest place-" The coolers."

After what seemed like a long time he shared what he knew. "The tornado has gone by with the worst being in the Beaver Lake Ellendale area. I know you live at Beaver Lake, please be careful driving home. I'll pray that no people lost their life."

Genie and I left afraid as to what

we might see on the way to our cabin and would the cabin be okay.

We saw trees down, building damage, even part of a house blocking the road by the old Berlin Creamery. I usually walked around Beaver Lake in the morning and that next morning I did.

I saw minor damage with the most unusual thing being pictures of children I found. I gave them to the School Secretary and she promised to give the pictures to the farm family of the kids pictures.

This was the tornado that damaged a lot of rural places. (Thompson and Johnson plus farm building in the area south and north of Beaver Lake.)

Quote of the day:

I have selective hearing. I am sorry but you have not been selected today.

Question of the day:

Do you know who won the basket of goodies at the Farmers Market in Albert Lea on July 23, 2025? Ask Mark Thompson of rural Albert Lea- he knows her first name is Dawn!!

2025 Steele County Senior Citizens of the Year

The Steele County Free Fair and Steele County Exchange Club want to congratulate Bruce and Rose Ann Kubicek for being selected as the 2025 Steele County Senior Citizens of the year!

Bruce and Rose Ann Kubicek of Owatonna are the proud parents of six children, Ron, Scott, Tim, Shelly, Dean and Josh. They have twenty-five grandchildren and three great grandchildren with another on the way. They spent most of their lives as hog, corn and soybean farmers near Hope. In 2020 they moved to Owatonna, and their youngest son, Josh, and his wife, Tianna, and their three daughters moved onto their farm site. During the years from 2000 to 2014, Bruce served as the Steele County Commissioner in District 1.

For the 57 years that Bruce and Rose Ann have been married, they have been members of Holy Trinity Catholic Church of Litomysl where they have been very active. Presently, Rose Ann belongs to the Litomysl Council of Catholic Women where she is a Lector. Bruce is a Lector and a Eucharistic Minister. They are on the Synod Committee and they volunteer in many other ways. For many years now, being the overall chair people of the Litomysl Summer Festival in July, they spend countless hours preparing for the big day. Rose Ann collects and organizes over 4,000 prizes for the Root Beer Barrel Game alone, and she is in charge of all the advertising. Rose Ann is also on the Winona/Rochester Diocesan Council of Catholic Women's Executive Board as a past president. Bruce is in charge of the Ham and Turkey Bingos held every year at Holy Trinity.

Bruce and Rose Ann are active members of the Saint Serra Club of the Owatonna Area. They take part in

the Holy Hours to pray for priests and religious leaders and for an increase in these vocations. They arrange for the meal for each monthly meeting and they help with many of the Club's events. As past co-presidents they are trustees and Rose Ann is the vocations VP.

As a Knights of Columbus member, Bruce helps the Owatonna Council #945 with their Tootsie Roll Drive and the Smokin' in Steele event. Rose Ann has been and is currently the regent for the Catholic Daughters of America Court Owatonna #1180. She helps out with offering Mother's Day and Father's Day Spiritual Bouquet cards for a donation to help support the homeless shelters in Steele County, giving several thousand dollars to them each year. She helps out at Court Owatonna's Annual Bazaar in November, which is one of their biggest fundraisers. The Catholic Daughters Court Owatonna makes many donations throughout the year, including a Basket for many Benefits.

Bruce is a member of the Blooming Prairie American Legion Post #52 and he is a past Commander and currently their chaplain. He proudly helps with being on their Honor Guard for Veterans' funerals, as well as other events such as the opening ceremony of the Steele County Fair. Rose Ann is a member of their American Legion Auxiliary and she helps with events as well as being their Legislative and Veterans Affairs Chairperson.

As a past Board member of the Exchange Center for Family Unity, Bruce was instrumental in helping the Center purchase its permanent home for its office on Hartle Ave. in Owatonna.

When Bruce is able, he helps at the Food Shelf at Community Pathways.



Bruce Kubicek has been the emcee of the Outstanding Seniors presentatio at the Steele County Free Fair.

He raises a large garden and shares much produce with others, including the Food Shelf. His gladiolas adorn the altar at Holy Trinity Church many weeks.

Bruce is also a Director for the Steele County Exchange Club as he is a Past President. For the Steele County Fair Bruce and Rose Ann help with the parking of cars, which the Steele County Exchange Club is in charge of.

Rose Ann is in charge of the Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life Fair Booth in the Four Seasons Building for the Steele County Fair every year. She arranges for all the

Photo by Owatonna's People Press volunteers to man the booth and she prepares and sets the booth up.

For over forty years now, Rose Ann has given out several "Twelve Days of Christmas" gifts each year to those who have had a challenging year or who were appreciated for what they did. She hopes they have brought some extra joy to the recipients.

Together in their Senior years at the ages of 79 and almost 80, Bruce and Rose Ann enjoy being able to help wherever and whenever they are able. They try to do what God asks of them each day!

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ANNUAL SUPPER & AUCTION

Friday, August 22

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\$200 Ellendale Bucks DRAWINGS!

2 - \$50 4 - \$25

ELLENDALE FIRE HALL

Cost: Free Will Donation

All Proceeds go to the Ellendale Firemen's Relief Association

Military Stand Down



VETERAN AID - Daren Ryg, Harlee Vokon, Taylor Spooner, Alan Whiteaker, Heidi Wingler, Bruce Camerer and Jeff Dahlen helped during the Military Stand Down at the armory in Albert Lea on Saturday, August 16. Stand Downs are informative events where veterans can receive aid, therapy, counseling and much more. They saw over 55 veterans and their families. Star Eagle photo by Ben Revermann

Waldorf Veterans Park plans continue to advance

By **BEN REVERMANN**
Staff writer

The Waldorf City Council meeting was called to order on Monday, Aug. 11. The Waldorf Community Park committee has a new chair, Missy Sorbo. Mayor Rob Wilkening reported the city has collected around \$35,000 in grants toward the project, and there is hope the DNR will match that amount from its parks and recreation fund. He commented that any suggestions for fundraisers are welcome.

First Lutheran Church informed the community of its plans for a "Faith Night" event on Wednesday, Aug. 20.

Scheduled for the afternoon of Friday, Aug. 22 is a community event which will feature a car and truck show, a burger and sweet corn feed with raffle fundraiser, and "water wars." From noon until 3, an ice cream truck will be distributing free

WALDORF CITY COUNCIL

treats in front of and thanks to Minn-west Bank.

Wilkening told council members the city pays \$375 each time the community is sprayed to reduce the mosquito population. He suggested buying the equipment, so Waldorf can spray whenever needed. Residents have complained the company that was hired didn't do very well because mosquitoes have been bad this summer. Since there is only one spray left this year, it was agreed to wait until next year to possibly purchase equipment. Discussion revealed the spray equipment is of a size that can fit in the back of a pickup truck; no license is needed to operate it.

Using Menard's rebates, a new battery powered leaf blower is going

to be purchased.

The Waldorf Fire Department donated \$2,000 toward the Veterans Memorial Park from the gambling fund; council member Charlie Barnes wanted to say thank you. The city received a \$10,000 grant, the funds of which will be used toward a \$5,500 eagle statue dedicated to first responders to go in the Veterans Park; the remaining \$4,500 will cover the cost of some benches to be installed in the park; the benches have already been delivered. Barnes suggested that the city should make arrangements to provide "a nice steak dinner" for four volunteers who have been working on the park gazebo. Wilkening offered to take them out himself, saying he would be happy to do so.

Regarding the city water system, a total of \$2,790.93 was not collected; three water users have been sent a shut-off notice.

What it takes to be a city clerk

By **RACHEL LOVERINK**
Staff Writer

As Geneva's first line of defense, City Clerk Jannell Tufté is no stranger to fielding calls from residents and local businesses. Drips, dribbles or droves — it really depends on the day.

And, that's just fine. It's nothing Tufté can't handle.

Sure, there's the occasional fast driver, dog on the loose or loud music complaint. Despite all that though, Tufté feels lucky to live in a community with such a low crime rate.

"I am fortunate to work with a council that I can call and depend on for certain things," Tufté said.

One thing's for sure: Tufté doesn't want to take all the credit for a job well done. It's a team effort from A to Z, especially when it comes to working through ordinances. Those pesky ordinances provide conformity after all.

"One item in particular is we have been focusing on nuisance properties and enforcing clean-up of yards/junk vehicles etc., which adds value to everyone's property," she said. "Some of those who we have enforced action on have even thanked us for pushing them to clean up."

In order to achieve this positive reinforcement, the city of Geneva's paperwork and processes had to undergo a digital revamp. Of which, she was very much a part of the process.

"There is so much good that comes out of this job and it is very rewarding," she said. "Having lived in Geneva for over 50 years, meeting my husband here, raising my own family here and gaining so many lifelong friends -- it's obvious there is more good than bad."

Now seven years into her clerk duties, she is often asked how she manages to get everything done. Her response?

"Wide shoulders." And, boy, are they wide.

"Other duties as a city clerk are filing reports with the county, working closely with the fire chief, maintenance, city attorney and engineer, working with the treasurer during audit time, preparing monthly minutes, agenda, bills payable, sending out utility statements to residents and businesses, monitoring payments for utilities, working through the mail/bills, banking, preparing for and participating in the elections, finding people to serve as election judges, maintaining the ordinance/resolution book, issuing building permits, amongst other projects," she said.

One duty not included in that list involves setting up utilities for new residents. And surprisingly, this particular duty needs completion more often than you'd think.

"While there are still several families that have been here for generations, we are seeing many new families moving into Geneva," she said. "With our reasonable costs for utilities, stores and restaurants, fun events and activities, parks, ball field, and the cost of homes being less than our surrounding cities, we are an attraction."

Now, don't let a few empty buildings downtown fool you, she says. There are always people interested in bringing a new idea to Geneva, and once the new sidewalk project is completed this year, that might entice just the right business owner to take that next leap.

"We are fortunate in Geneva to have thriving businesses still," she said. "We feel this [sidewalk project] will add appeal to those considering opening a business in Geneva."

Of course, only time will tell what may pop up downtown. Tufté will certainly tell you too that this restoration project wasn't all her doing; this



Jannell Tufté

project came to fruition due to the involvement of City Engineer Cory Beinfang, "one of the most valuable additions to the city."

"Cory was a huge part of our just recently receiving an \$875,000 grant and leading us to an expert for bonding for the downtown sidewalk project, which will help alleviate the pressure of funding the project and pushing the cost to the downtown businesses or homeowners and city," she said. "Cory has worked closely with Freeborn County Engineer Phil Wacholz, who has also provided valuable resources to the project."

It's Beinfang's expertise, knowledge and guidance with the city's assets, equipment, water, sewer systems, streets and so much more that made this project possible. She may have wide shoulders, but she's not superwoman.

"I applied for the City Clerk/Treasurer (combined job at the time) after the passing of Nancy Cornelius, who had been city clerk/treasurer for almost 40 years," she said. "I had been on the council for 23 years at the time and had taken on some of the tasks to assist Nancy. While Nancy had her own system and she perfected it well, there were already beginning to be some technology changes happening at the city level such as state reporting, payroll requirements, filing documents electronically, grant requests and entering our city utilities into an electronic software, amongst so much more."

So, after a few years of treading water, she brought a sidekick, Jady Mattson, onto the scene. As city treasurer, Mattson helps even out the tasks of clerk/treasurer, and, according to Tufté, she does "an excellent job."

"This split allows each of us to stay on top of our own projects, but we work together to make sure the Ts are crossed," she said. "With Jady being a CPA, we were lucky to have her come on board to help work through some details for payroll, accounting, budgeting, tracking funds, etc."

Neither of these ladies shy away from a challenge. And Geneva residents aren't complaining; it's this meticulous number crunching that paved the way for no increase in city utilities or tax levies this fiscal year.

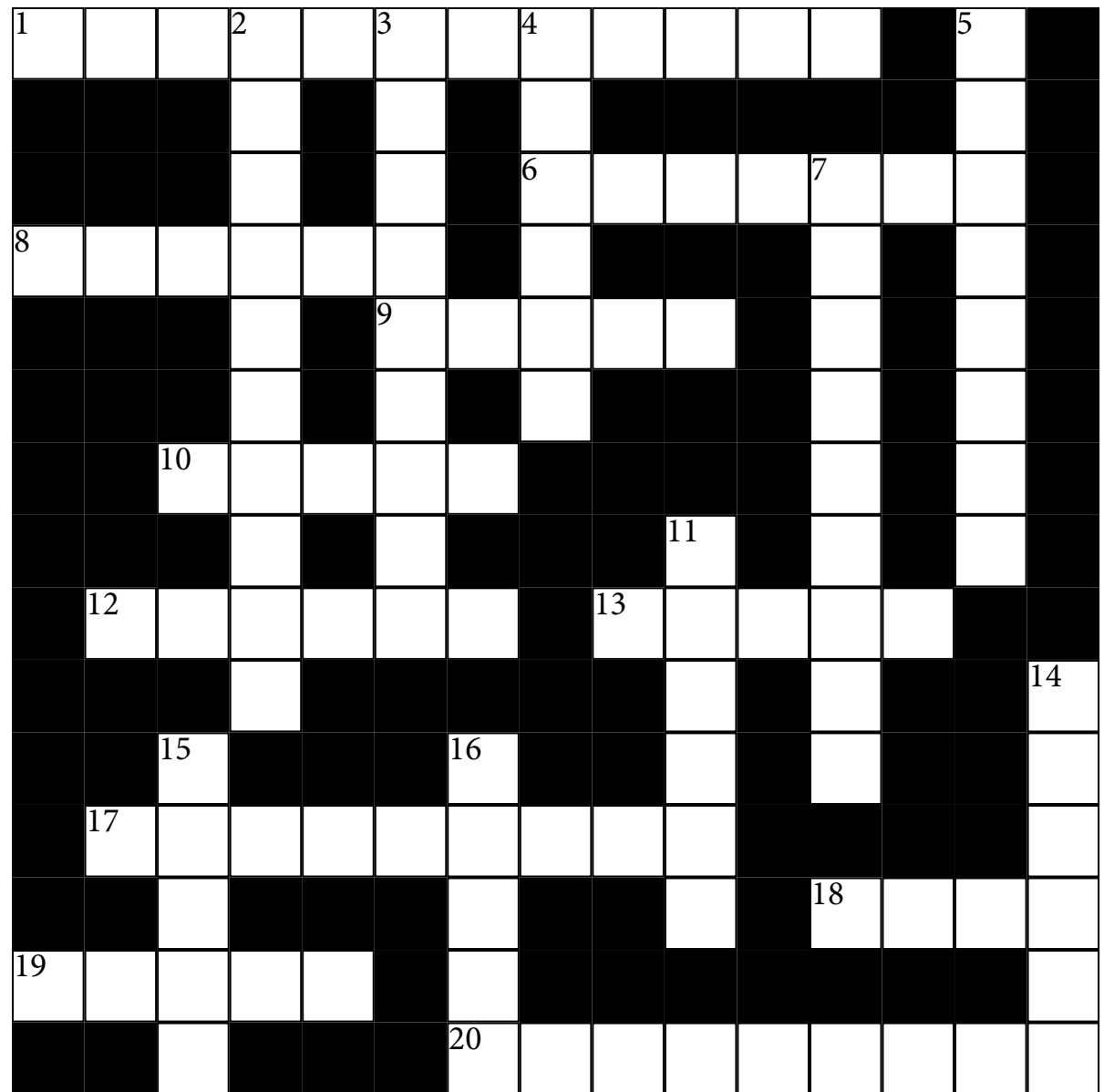
"Jady is a huge asset to Geneva and we are lucky to have such a perfectionist," she said.

Tufté isn't done giving credit where credit is due either.

"Our mayor and council members each bring their own valuable attributes to our town as well," she said. "They each have a job to help assist with parks, streets, sewer, water and everything in be-

Tufté continued on 7

CROSSWORD LOGICAL FALLACIES



ACROSS

- 1 Using ambiguous language
- 6 Statement assumed to be true
- 8 Formal argument
- 9 Statement of belief
- 10 Study of valid reasoning
- 12 Sample leading to skewed conclusion
- 13 Argument with true premises
- 17 Popularity equals truth
- 18 Prejudice or inclination
- 19 Generalization from little evidence
- 20 Reasoning from general to specific

DOWN

- 2 Lacking reason
- 3 Based on facts
- 4 To emotion, not reason
- 5 Art of persuasion
- 7 Lack of proof is proof
- 11 Clear and convincing
- 14 Basis for a belief
- 15 Cause where none exists
- 16 Argument with sound structure

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Happy Anniversary



Sharon and Norman Eckart will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on August 21. The pair is always traveling and having fun, and their kids, grandkids and great-grandkids congratulate them.

Sheriff's Posse Wagon Train taking registrations for Sept. 5 to 7

The Waseca County Sheriff's Posse will be hosting the Minnesota State Mounted Posse Association (MSMPA) forty-second annual Wagon Train for Youth from Friday, Sept. 5, to Sunday, Sept. 7. Most of the money raised by the event will benefit Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota. \$1,000 will be donated to the Donald D. Eustice memorial scholarship fund. The local fund provides a scholarship for a person attending training to become a law enforcement officer, and also helps support training for members of the Minnesota state-wide posse.

The event has set a goal of raising at least \$25,000.

Participation in the wagon train is open to the public; anyone with a vehicle drawn by horse or mule can register. Mounted riders may also sign up. Early registration closes Aug. 15.

Participants will camp at the Waseca County fairgrounds and visit various sites around Waseca County across the scheduled Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Among the destinations are Farmamerica

and Courthouse Park. The group is also planning to travel past Hartley School, Colony Court and Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center, as well as take a Sunday drive around Clear Lake. Typical drive lengths will be 16 miles or less. Events will continue rain or shine; no registration fees will be refunded.

Breakfast will be provided Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings; lunch will be served during daily drives, and an evening meal will be provided at the fairgrounds on Friday and Saturday, followed by entertainment.

Donations will be accepted along the route, or checks can be made out to the Waseca County Mounted Sheriff's Posse and sent to 228 Ninth Avenue Southeast, Waseca. Payments are also accepted via Venmo to @Waseca_County_Sheriffs_Posse.

Updates, registration forms and additional information are available at the Waseca County Mounted Sheriff's Posse Facebook page.

Tufte

from Page 6

tween. The requirements in making decisions on behalf of everyone in Geneva is not an easy task and sometimes it is felt we didn't make the right decision. However, this council never makes a decision without investigating it, looking at all angles, getting advice from our attorney/engineer and seeking input from its residents."

Whenever she and the council are smack-dab in the middle of one of these dicey situations, she is really glad to have the assistance of Geneva's City Attorney Matt Benda. Benda has been a "significant" help to maintaining Geneva's well-being and in such a short period of time too.

"Matt has assisted with the new cannabis laws," she said. "He oversees and guides us through our ordinances, assists with general council questions and participates in town hall events and council meetings."

According to Tufte, the team wouldn't be complete without Fire Chief Curt Boswell and Jim Beenken as their city maintenance worker.

"Curt can be found in a fire truck, an ambulance, making popcorn at the fire department

"There is so much good that comes out of this job and it is very rewarding."

— Janell Tufte

annual bingo or climbing a ladder to put up flags for holidays around town," she said. "He has been very resourceful to the city clerk and city treasurer in our attempts to be awarded grants for a new fire truck and other equipment."

She added, "Jim has picked up on the job as maintenance after filling the shoes of our past maintenance person, Steve Nielsen, of almost 40 years. We are fortunate to have Steve in our back pocket still to troubleshoot some things. Jim maintains and monitors our water and sewer systems, takes care of snowplowing and mowing, assists when a water main break occurs or when other equipment needs maintaining. He also works with our engineer and other consultants on our systems and water tower."

Indeed, wide shoulders do help out quite a bit. However, it takes a village to achieve success for Geneva, plain and simple.

Sheriff's 50th celebrated with gaffs and laughs

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

A small celebration took place at the Waseca Pizza Ranch on Thursday, Aug. 7 to mark the approach of birthday number 50 for Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas. Surrounded by friends, Dulas had been festooned with a button declaring "My Big Day," and had been coerced into wearing candle-themed headgear.

Although his birthday was still a week away at the time, on Wednesday, Aug. 13, his friends hoped celebrating early would increase their chances of surprising him. Given that most of the attendees at the party had turned 50 decades before the sheriff, they decided they would tease him a bit, and eat some pizza while they were at it. Someone remembered hearing at one point that Dulas had said he liked dinosaur plates, so that's what was used. There was fresh baked blueberry and lemon cake for dessert. There were cards and gifts, but Dulas headed up to the buffet first. On his way back he said, "I'll always remember what I got here for my fiftieth birthday: I got pizza, French fries, salad and mashed potatoes. How could I ever forget that?"

There to celebrate with him were his wife Robin, Mikhail Rostislavovich, and bridge players MaryAnn Madel, Cookie Rausch, Wilda Smith, Jacque Storby, and Phoebe Praxl.



BIRTHDAY CHEER - A small party of guests surprised Sheriff Jay Dulas during a private 50th birthday party at Pizza Ranch on Thursday, Aug. 7, 2025.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bentley

He took a few bites and picked up the first of many cards. While he opened it, he asked the ladies, "Do you remember what you were eating on your fiftieth birthday?" He received a unified "No" from all of them at once. These were joke cards, so Dulas read them out loud, "On your 50th birthday, someone of the opposite sex will chase after you." The punchline, "To tell you the lights of your car are on in the parking lot." Everyone around him was also eating, but the laughs kept flowing.

The next card read, "Why did the 50-year-

old cross the road?" the punchline, "Because the elderly get disoriented sometimes."

The next card, "Have you heard any bad talk about getting older?" the punchline, "No? That's because your hearing is the first to go."

Before he took a second turn at the buffet, Dulas said, "It's hard to believe I'm 50. I remember turning 40, and even 30; and I keep thinking of how cheap stamps used to be. One perk of getting this old is I get a lot fewer haircuts now."

Sheriff asking for additional dispatch position

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas spent 30 minutes or more of the Aug. 5 county board of commissioners work session explaining and defending his proposal to make changes in the staffing system of the county dispatch center.

Dulas pointed out the center is always staffed by at least one dispatcher, and thanks to scheduling which includes four mostly overlapping 10-hour shifts in each 24-hour period, is staffed by two most of the time. Currently, the equivalent of seven full-time dispatchers is regarded as "full" staffing, with four scheduled to work on any given day.

Dispatchers are supervised by a sheriff's department sergeant, someone whose training has centered around interacting with the public for the sake of supporting public safety, and so has less expertise in the operation of necessary communication systems and equipment than an experienced dispatcher.

All 9-1-1 calls made from within

the county are routed through the center, which is located in the county law enforcement building next to the courthouse. Based on the nature of the emergency, dispatchers decide what response personnel should be sent to the scene. They have constant access to police officers in Janesville, New Richland and Waseca; sheriff's deputies; and all fire departments and emergency medical services.

Both Dulas and commissioner Brad Milbrath, a former county sheriff, attested to the many demands which might fall on a dispatcher during an emergency, including reassuring the caller, selecting and dispatching the needed agencies, acquiring and sharing additional information about the scene as it becomes available, and being in place to take calls regarding unrelated emergencies happening elsewhere.

The dispatch center also receives the feeds from security cameras located within the jail, and at six entry points associated with the building. These must be monitored consistently, and people requesting entry

must be "buzzed in."

Dispatchers are called upon to assist with paperwork and other administrative tasks, including entering warrants and running criminal histories.

Because the county jailers are all males, female dispatchers are also called upon to help "process" female inmates—including "pat-down" searches, clothing changes, and monitoring the collection of samples for urinalysis tests.

What Dulas told commissioners he would like to see is the incorporation of a "lead" position within the department. Among the expectations he included in his description were being well trained in some of the communication systems and equipment dispatchers make use of, being the individual authorized to access higher-level recordkeeping systems, "troubleshooting," and taking a lead role during emergencies or exceptional situations.

Dulas acknowledged the addition of the role would increase staffing costs for the dispatch center, both be-

cause the extra training and time commitments for the new position would command a higher salary, and because the promotion might leave either a full- or part-time dispatch position open.

Although commissioners appeared to be open to the change, Dulas had not finalized any plans to a point where he could supply definitive numbers. Part of the reason for starting the discussion at this time is that the county is currently in the process of preparing its preliminary 2026 budget, which, by state statute, must arrive at a preliminary figure for property tax levies by mid-September.

At this time, county administrator Michael Johnson told commissioners, he anticipates about a two-percent increase over the amount levied from taxpayers in 2025; Johnson's estimate includes the possibility of a five-percent increase in the sheriff's department budget.

Waseca County Farm Bureau Farm and Home Safety Day set for Sept. 9

We are hosting our 27th annual Waseca County Farm Bureau Farm and Home Safety Day at our new location at the Waseca County Fair Grounds this year on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. We are looking forward to seeing 222 students and their teachers there. The schools in attendance will be Janesville Public, Trinity Lutheran of Janesville, Waterville Elysian Morristown, Waseca Public and Waseca Team Academy.

You can almost feel fall in the air already, soon the colors will be changing, too. Our farmers will soon be harvesting their crops so they can feed the world. Remember to thank a farmer for their labors and help support their work.

Farmers are always trying to be safe on the roads, so we need to be slowing down as well so everyone is safe. As a farmwife, I pray that each year we have no accidents and that our weather is good to harvest.

This is an important program for our community showing how to be safe in your home and on farms. We have quite a few farm volunteers and businesses that help to support this program. I want to thank Subway of Waseca, Culligan Waseca, Waseca Fair Board, Compeer Financial, FM Bank Waseca, Janesville State Bank, Keen Bank, MinnWest Bank, Waseca Area Foundation and our local FFA students

from Waseca High School. I am grateful for everyone's willingness to help and make this a success!

- Our 6 Safety Stations are:
- 1) Animal Safety-Crystal @ Summers Ridge Veterinary, Janesville
 - 2) Tractor/P/TO Safety-Jared Prestegard, Kibble Equipment, Owatonna
 - 3) ATV/Snowmobile/Boat Safety-Jay Dulas, Waseca Sheriff's Office
 - 4) Electrical Safety-Syd & Dan, Steele/Waseca Cooperative Electric, Owatonna
 - 5) Chemical Safety-Reece Boucher, Crystal Valley Cooperative, Janesville
 - 6) Lawn Mower/Chainsaw Safety, Jacob Katzung & Matt Levisay,

Northland Farm Systems, Owatonna

Come out to see our highlight of the day, our mock farm accident at 11:30 am which involves our Waseca Sheriff's Office, Janesville Fire & Rescue, North Waseca Ambulance and their helicopter with one of our local students. The accident will involve a tractor/pto accident. Remember to always check your surroundings when out and about and in our homes so you can avoid accidents.

Our event runs from 9 am to 2:30 pm. We hope to see you out there to learn about our safety program!



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Woods and Water

by Dick Herfindahl
Outdoors Writer

Clear lakes and the smell of outdoors

I am sure it is getting old when I talk about visiting the cabin, but it is one thing that I always look forward to.

In the past few weeks, I have been able to enjoy the fruits of our local sweet corn growers. To me, nothing says summer like home grown sweet corn. Whenever I am enjoying a bit of this delicious morsel, I can hear my mother saying, "You need to eat more than just corn," as if she was sitting right across the table from me. It is kind of funny that certain things bring back things that you were told long ago to remind you of the past.

I long to be sitting on a lake anticipating the next bite. To me, fishing is one of the most relaxing things a person can do. I plan to visit a lake that I have not been to before and it will be without electronics, just me and the fish. This will only happen if I get up enough energy to take the boat out by myself.

I enjoy sitting on a lake alone, just myself and nature, looking at the natural beauty of the woods, water and the natural beauty of the surroundings. The smell of the out-

doors takes on new meaning when you breathe in the crisp morning air of the day.

I will take the small boat with no frills, just some bait, my tackle and good weather. This is how I started fishing years ago. I have always believed that simple is better.

Catching fish is just an added bonus; it gives me a sense of fulfillment when I catch a fish and release it back into the lake. It seems like the thrill of the hunt is always more meaningful than the outcome. I may keep one or two for the frying pan because fresh out of the lake and into the pan is always the tastiest. Of course, that means you actually have to catch the fish.

Until next time: The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Spring 2025 waterfowl population count found that Minnesota's blue-winged teal population is 60% below last year. Blue-winged teal prefer small, temporary wetlands for nesting and brood rearing. Over the last few years, dry conditions have led to fewer of these wetlands in Minnesota, likely spurring the teal to settle outside the state and reducing the estimated number of birds present in the state this past



CRYSTAL CLEAR - Here are two pictures of a little lake that sits back in the Chippewa National Forest. It is one lake that we often visit when we are at the cabin. The picture shows just how clear the lakes are in this area and there are no cabins on the lake.

spring. At an estimated 64,000 in spring 2025, this is the lowest blue-winged teal population since the survey started in 1968.

We know habitat is the most important factor driving waterfowl populations. To that end, the DNR developed the 2025-2030 Duck Action Plan to guide agency efforts

to manage waterfowl habitat. It can be found on the DNR website.

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

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
Pastor Mary Iverson
Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee
Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting
Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting (first Wednesday)

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

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

VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Brian Schanil Pastor
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School
Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Role 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 - 10:30 a.m. Worship
Tuesday - Council meeting

(First Tuesday) * * *

WEST FREEBORN LUTHERAN
Hartland, Minnesota
Rev. Marcia Pedersen
Sunday - 9 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 - 9 a.m. Worship
Sunday School - 10 a.m.
Adult Bible Study 10 a.m.

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

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

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

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

VIBRANT LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH
Ellendale, Minnesota
Pastor David Modder
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 10 a.m. Kids church
Check the website for additional

updates
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FIRST LUTHERAN, AFLC
Ellendale, Minnesota
Pastor Kyle Smith
Saturday - 8 a.m. Men's Bible Study
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship
Monday - 7 p.m. Call to prayer
Wednesday - 9:30 a.m. Bible Study; 6 p.m. Confirmation; 7-9 p.m. Youth Group (No confirmation during summer)

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

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

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

FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH
Hollandale, Minnesota
Rev. Neal Ooms
Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; 9:20 a.m. Worship and kids church (now an eagle brook viewing church)

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMS
Hollandale, Minnesota

Pastor Jesse Krusemark
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH
Rev. Neal Ooms
101 East Park Avenue
Hollandale, Minnesota
Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Worship; 10:45 a.m. Sunday School

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

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

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

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

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

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL
Father Peter Schuster
Sunday - 8 a.m. Sacrament of Reconciliation; 8:30 a.m. Mass with Children's Church; 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
Missouri Synod
Waldorf, Minnesota
Rev. Larry Sipe, pastor
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship; 9:10

a.m. Sunday School and Bible Study

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE TO THE STAR EAGLE.

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LOOKING BACK

25 years ago



- Julie Tesch, daughter of Martin and Jan Tesch of rural Waldorf, filled the position of Lisa Hinz on June 1, as Waseca County Extension Educator for 4-H Youth Development. For the past seven years Julie has lived in the twin Cities, where she attended the University of Minnesota and was employed with the Extension Service for two years. She was satisfied with her work and the people she worked with, but is very happy to be back in the area where she grew up.

- Joseph Johnson, a member of the Vista Busy Bees earned blue ribbons on each of the four Suffolk sheep he showed in 4-H competition at the Waseca County Fair. Apparently this animal did not care much for the photograph!

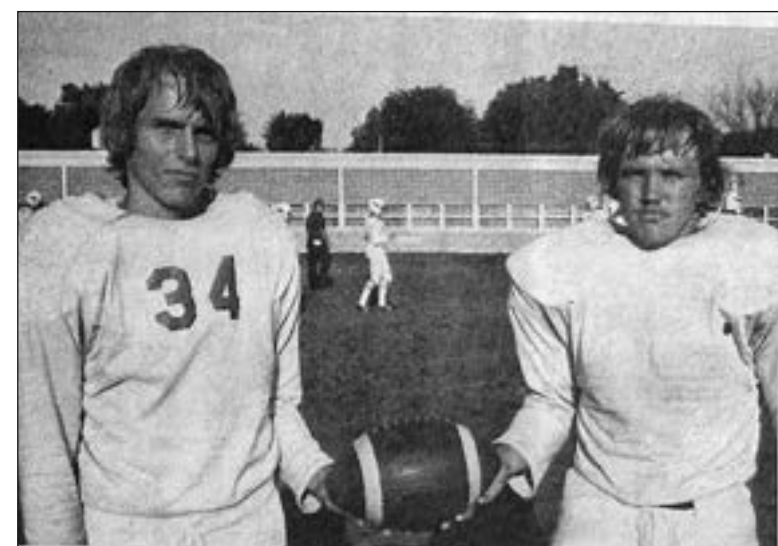


50 years ago



- Community Development in New Richland continues to progress with completion dates nearing for some building projects. The pictures above (going clockwise, at top left.) show the New Richland City Nursing home nearing its October 1st completion date; the apartment complex being built by Jim Weydert, shows the exterior work almost complete as it nears its September 1st occupancy date; in house in the lower left photo is being built by Merlin Krueger, and is a good example of the many fine new homes being built in the city; and the Vinylex Corporation, on the south edge of the city, is nearing its completion date and begin to start New Richlands newest industry.

- On August 17th, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Tesch presented their daughter, Julie Lynn, for baptism at the 8:15 a.m. service at First Lutheran Church. Pastor Gerald Pundt officiated. Julie's sponsors were Mrs. Kathy Pryzbilla of St. Cloud and Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Kipp of Mankato.



- Jeff Getskow and Scott Smith were selected last week by their teammates to be co-captains for this year's New Richland-Hartland football squad. Getskow, senior quarterback, and Scott Smith, senior halfback, hope to improve on last year's 7-3 second place finish.

75 years ago

- Mrs. C. A. Newgard and Mrs. Hans Sunde drove to Glenville Sunday and were guests at the Paul Loken home. At Sunday morning Church services Mr. and Mrs. Loken had their four months old adopted son, Steven Keith baptized. The Lokens have a daughter, Paulette, seven years of age.

- Theodore Schroeder has purchased the residence on south Broadway which formerly belonged to the O. P. Olson estate. Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Abraham and daughters Sandra who occupy the downstairs rooms will continue to make their home there.

- Mr. and Mrs. Robert Haugan of St. Paul are parents of their first child, a son Eric Albert born Sunday morning. He weighed 8 lbs. And 14 ozs.



NATIONAL CHAMP - Sam Ingram grew up in Austin, Minnesota, and has frequently been ranked among the nation's top water skiers in the slalom event. He first learned to ski while spending summers at his family's cabin on Beaver Lake. In the center photo, Ingram is skiing around the outside of a floating buoy, one of the requirements of the slalom. At right, Ingram's fellow skier Pete Plunkett often practices with him. Star Eagle photos by Deb Bentley

Ingram's water skiing career began on Beaver Lake

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

Sam Ingram has won two national championships with the U.S. Waterski Association: the first in 2007, and then again in 2018. On August 7 this year he competed in the men's 60 to 65 year old division, winning third place. Over the past few decades, he has consistently been ranked among the nation's top skiers in the slalom event, and even top 10 worldwide.

And to think it all started on Beaver Lake. Ingram grew up in Austin, the youngest of six children of Don and Verone Ingram. His father was a vocational school director and his mother was a homemaker. When he was about 4 years old, his parents purchased a cabin on Beaver Lake which fulfilled a number of purposes. He says his parents moved the family to Beaver Lake during the summer breaks from school to provide the benefits of lake life in a rural surrounding.

It also placed water sports, especially fishing and skiing, in a central position in his life. "There were a lot of kids here then," he remembers. "We would always be out on the lake and up to something."

Though today's expensive boats and high-powered motors make it difficult to picture, he says the youth of various ages back then would go out together unsupervised. When it came to skiing, "It was all about how big a spray you could make, or how high a jump you could get when you went across the wake."

He also remembers some shenanigans: "We were always trying to swing someone through the lily pads."

Ingram graduated high school in 1979, then headed off to the University of Utah where he majored in mechanical engineering. With his degree earned, he was hired by the Hercules Powder Company in Utah and transferred to Maryland, where he used his skills toward enhancing the performance of rockets and missiles.

He also became a family man; he and his then wife raised a son, Seth, and a daughter, Grace. Their home was located on a lake, so water sports were a big part of their life. The family joined a ski club and helped put together water ski shows which included pyramids, "swivel" skiing, jumps, and the like. Ingram mentions his specialty was barefoot

skiing. "It was very much a part of our life as a family," Ingram says, and comments it has been part of his children's lives, with Seth even qualifying and skiing in a national slalom tournament in the Boys division. Grace, Ingram says, consistently enjoys recreational skiing.

A fellow ski club member eventually suggested Ingram should consider entering competitions. He joined the club member at local and regional events, doing very well in the "slalom." Ski competitions typically feature trick skiing, jumps, and slalom—and Ingram specialized in slalom.

In the event, skiers are pulled behind a boat going at a designated speed in a straight line. The skier must swing out to round six buoys located about 38 feet to the left and right of the boat's path at center, three on each side. After each pass through the course, the ski rope is shortened to the next "loop": This changes the dynamics of the next run, so that rounding outside the buoys requires higher speeds, increased agility, and greater physical exertion.

The competitors' scores are the number of

buoys they rounded successfully at what length of rope. To be complete, a round must include starting at center, going outside the six buoys, then returning to the center line.

Ingram won the national slalom championship in his age category in 2007. He was one of 109 people in his class, and defines himself as "some obscure guy from the northeastern U.S." The win, he remembers, was "unexpected, exhilarating and confusing." He remembers being in something of a daze as fellow amateurs and even professionals approached and congratulated him.

His winning score, which he says would still have been a winning score in that class at nationals in 2025, was 4 at the "39 off loop". In other words, he had successfully traveled consecutively outside four of the six buoys on a 36 foot long rope—remembering that the buoys are 38 feet out from the center line.

He goes on to explain that, although he competed at local and regional events over the next 10 years, his focus was chiefly on being with his family, so he did not travel to national level competitions until starting up in 2016. In 2018, he again took the cham-

pionship in his class. Over the years, his successes at regional contests have "seeded" him well for nationals, but he has only occasionally attended. He says he has been "on the podium," that is, among the top five, about eight times and has taken second place three times.

He describes the event as being very high pressure. At most, competitors are allowed only one practice run on the course. During competition, there is only one try, which continues with subsequent passes until the skier rounds fewer than all six buoys.

"I love the excitement and the challenge," says Ingram of his lifelong pastime. "For me, I mostly feel like I'm competing against myself, trying to make small improvements in technique." He also mentions that water-skiing is, by nature, a social sport, since it takes a number of people working together to get a skier in the water.

Even with the competition season winding down this year, he keeps practicing in the water out in front of the cabin on Beaver Lake which his family still owns. "It's fun to go out and test ourselves," he comments.



GARDEN VISITS - Members of the New Richland Town and Country Garden Club participated in their almost-yearly tour of each other's gardens on Thursday, Aug. 14. Members see it as a chance to share knowledge and learn from each other, as well as enjoy some fellowship of like minds. Pictured here are club members and guests (from left) Stacy Bethke, Barb Finseth, Eleanor Schlaak, Diane Smith, Valerie Bartelt, Joann Paulson, Brenda Berg, Jodi Johnson, Joan Proehl, Julie Economy, Chris Possin and Kris Pfeffer. Star Eagle photo by Deb Bentley

New Richland garden club shares expertise

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

The 22 or so members of the New Richland Town and Country Garden Club have been sharing collaborative efforts during the summer, especially when it comes to caring for the decorative garden along Highway 30 near the high school. Members have met regularly to pull weeds and deadhead flowers. Individuals and small groups from the membership have been taking care of the planters on the sidewalk along Broadway.

The group recently put together a less work-centered outing, spending

the morning of Aug. 14 touring the gardens of six members who volunteered to be on the list of sites. About 15 members caravanned to each other's homes and took a break from their visits to enjoy a leisurely lunch together at The Willows.

"It's fun," declares club member Kris Pfeffer. "We get to socialize, we get to learn about new plants, and we can share what's worked for us when we've had some sort of a problem."

"It's a chance to learn from one another." Pfeffer mentions that no group members regard themselves as experts, but everyone enjoys the chance

to get new ideas. "It's also fascinating to see the different ways people can make use of the space available to them—whether that means they can have a big garden, a small one, or even grow things mostly in planters."

The gardens visited belonged to Barb Finseth, Diane Smith, Stacy Bethke, Joan Proehl, Eleanor Schlaak and Chris Possin.

Club president Brenda Berg says she especially enjoys being introduced to various plants and flowers she has never encountered before. She says gardeners tend to be patient people who enjoy being outdoors and are curious about the things that

work together to help a garden thrive.

"We have some lively conversations," she mentions, joking it was a persistent difficulty to keep the tour moving, since everyone had so many ideas and questions to share.

Berg invites anyone interested to attend club meetings.

"The next one will be Monday, Sept. 8," she shares. The Sept. 8, Oct. 6 and Nov. 3 meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the basement of Trinity Lutheran Church at 204 First Street Northwest.

■ Steeple

from Page 1

two specially shaped counterweights to be attached near the base of the crane's extendable boom. All of the plates and weights could be moved only with a forklift.

The vast majority of the crane's time on site was spent setting up for the lifts, or waiting while workers took care of transitional tasks.

According to Ree, the crane came from Rochester, where it had been used to remove storm-damaged trees from on top of structures and from

confined spaces. When it finished the morning's work, it went on to Austin, where it is being used to facilitate a roof replacement.

About 50 spectators, a few comfortably seated in lawn chairs, gathered along the roadway both east and west of the church to observe the process.

Carpenters and a welder from Rocon Construction of Owatonna, the company which built the bell tower and steeple, mingled themselves throughout the process, including making preparations before the crane arrived, helping with various elements of the lifting, and then stabilizing the steeple once it was in place.

Because the reconstructed steeple was required to comply with current building codes, it had metal structures inside. Rocon workers set to work welding the newly arrived metal beams to those installed in the bell tower within a few moments of being sure everything was straight. Rocon staff had been moving up and down using aerial construction lifts since about 7 a.m., ensuring things were ready.

Church member and the congregation's coordinator for the project is Jim Kortz. He and his wife, Judy, a fellow church leader, were at the church bright and early on Thursday. "The morning of the steeple raising, I had been on every floor of the

church, from the basement to the bell tower. I was thinking about how long it took to get to this point. Then after the crane arrived, within two hours the bell was lifted into the tower and the steeple was in place.

"Even though there is finishing work to get done, the project feels complete. When we drove away from church that morning, we had to stop along the road and look at the steeple from a distance. It was so neat to see the landmark up there along the skyline. I think about how it feels to some of the lifelong members of 90 years or more to see the steeple back in place; it may have been an emotional day for some."

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