

## What's inside

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File photos

The Rock County Fair opens Wednesday, July 26, and continues through Saturday, July 29. Midwest Rides Carnival supplies the rides and games for the four-day event. Rides open 5 p.m. at on July 26 and 27, and 3 p.m. July 28, and at noon on July 29.

# It's county fair time

## Ag Olympics joins Rock County Fair grandstand lineup

*Kiss the Pig contest to raise money for Carson's Cause during intermission*

**By Jason Berghorst**

"We try to make the fair a little new every year, while keeping the good stuff people enjoy the most."

That's how Lyle Rollag of the Rock County Agricultural Society describes the organization's goals when planning the annual Rock County Fair.

This year, Ag Olympics on Friday, July 28, joins the lineup of grandstand events, and Rollag expects it will fill seats in the bleachers.

"We wanted a family-type event similar to the donkey races, which we added last year and had good luck and a great crowd with," he said.

"We try our best to have events that are popular."

The five-event Ag Olympics will include bale roll and flip, backseat driver, calf shuffle, wheelbarrow obstacles and a water bucket relay.

Each team is comprised of four people, including at least one female, and each team member must compete in at least two of the five events. Competition is timed, and teams will be awarded



Celebrity Dairyland Donkey Races return to the 2023 Rock County Fair. The grandstand event takes place Wednesday, July 26. The first of the team heats begin at 7 p.m.

gold, silver and bronze ribbons.

Organizers are hoping for six to 10 teams to compete, and so far, they have commitment from eight teams, including the city, county, and school, plus the Star Herald, CHS, First Farmers and Merchants Bank and two 4-H

families.

"It should be a fun night," Rollag said.

"It's always more fun to watch people you know compete. That's what

**Fair time, continued on page 4C**

*A message from Rock County Agricultural Society president*

## Rock County Fair is July 26-29: Hope to see you there

**By Lee Sells, Rock County Agricultural Society president**

With the Rock County Fair fast approaching, the Rock County Agricultural Society has been working hard to prep the grounds and book the events.

Some of you may have seen the new tin siding on the commercial building or the new shingles on the fair office along Freeman Street. (I would like to thank the Rock the Edge Service Over Self group who completed the shingling task.)

New cement has been poured and many electrical updates have been complete.

Keeping our facilities upgraded and maintained is a yearly job — with these old buildings comes lots of maintenance.

**Message, continued on page 4C**



Rock County Agricultural Society President Lee Sells stands in front of the new photo opportunity boards designed by the Magnolia Juniors 4-H Club. The fair opens Wednesday, July 26.



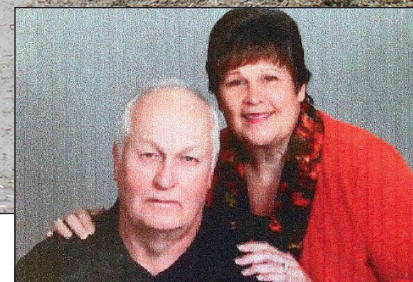
The Rock County Farm Family of the Year along with the county's Century Farms are honored at 6 p.m. Friday, July 28, in the Frank Boon Shelter.



Jake and Cheryl Moss



Justin and Daci Moss family including (from left) Brooklynn, Zachary, Justin, Tage, Daci and Makenna.



The Moss families are the 2023 Rock County Farm Family of the Year and includes three family partners in the dairy business.

Above are Neal and Char Moss.

## Moss families named 2023 Rock County Farm Family of Year

**By Mavis Fodness**  
A family of milk producers is this year's Rock County Farm Family of the Year. Moss Farms Inc. involves

the three families of Justin Moss and his dad, Jake, and his uncle, Neal. The Rock County Extension Committee selected the

Moss family as part of the U of M Extension Service's Farm Family Recognition Program. "They do a lot in the community that showcases their

dairy world," said Extension committee member Kurt Elbers.

Moss, continued on page 5C

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Submitted photos

The Erdmann family farm was designed as a Century Farm through the Minnesota State Fair and Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation in 2022. The farm used to be located at 632 161<sup>st</sup> Street (County Road 20) in Springwater Township. But time and Mother Nature forced the removal of the farmhouse and all the outbuildings, including the distinctive red brick barn and silo. The family decided to sell the five-acre farm site in 2020, while the Erdmann family continues to own and rent the 155 acres of the Century Farm's cropland to a neighbor.

## Erdmann Century Farm tells history of Springwater Township

By Mavis Fodness

Decades before the Erdmann family purchased 160 acres in Section 22 of Springwater Township in 1922, the farm site was already a witness to history.

Today, the Erdmann family has owned the property for 100 years and will be recognized as Century Farm owners at the Rock County Fair. The recognition takes place at 6 p.m. Friday, July 28.

The farm was the gathering site for the creation of Springwater Township in 1874.

"Springwater Township used to be called Albion Township for a very short time," Gary Erdmann

said. "Apparently they didn't like the name — our farm is where the vote took place to change the name."

The Erdmann farm used to have a distinctive barn and silo made of brown brick from Solid Concrete Silo Co.

"It was a big barn," recalled Erdmann. "There was a big board across the front with 'Stock Clover Farm' printed on it — that was its name prior to the foreclosure."

Fred and Ella Erdmann, Gary's grandparents, purchased the foreclosed 160 acres that included cropland and the farm site from an

Erdmann, continued on page 10C



Above: Fred and Ella Erdmann purchased the former "Stock Clover Farm" located in Springwater Township in 1922. At right: Second owners of the Erdmann Century Farm were Randall and Lucille Erdmann, who posed in the remodeled farmhouse in 1972.



Grandstand events include:

• **Wednesday, July 26**  
7 p.m.  
Celebrity Dairyland Donkey races

• **Thursday, July 27**  
6 p.m.  
Great Plains Tractor Pullers

• **Friday, July 28**  
7 p.m.  
Ag Olympics

• **Saturday, July 29**  
7 p.m.  
Enduro Race

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**Fair time/continued from page 1C**

works with the enduro races and the donkey races and hopefully will make the Ag Olympics fun, too.”

The event begins at 7 p.m. Friday, July 28. Cost of admission is \$5. The free concert will begin right after the Ag Olympics.

“We hope everyone comes out and has a good time,” Rollag said.

**Kiss the Pig to raise money for charity at intermission during Ag Olympics**

During an intermission during Ag Olympics at the grandstand, a Kiss the Pig contest will raise money for the local Carson’s Cause charity for brain health.

County Administrator Kyle Oldre, Luverne Mayor Pat Baustian and Luverne School Principal Ryan Johnson are so far on the list of candidates to kiss a pig.

The one with the most money raised for Carson’s Cause will have the honor of kissing a pig, and candidates will compete to make sure their opponents end up with more money (in order to avoid kissing the pig themselves).

**Ag Olympics joins many new entertainment offerings at the fair**

In recent years, the fair board has added many new entertainment options for fairgoers to enjoy, and this year’s fair will be no different.

“Each year we evaluate afterward to determine the good, bad and maybe what’s run its course when it comes to the entertainment,” Rol-



File photos  
The Rock County Pork Producers will again sell rib-ticklers at this year’s fair. **Below:** The rib cook-off is Friday, July 28.

lag said.

New events this year include racing pigs, a goats and ducks show, a comedy show, an Australian animal stage show, remote control car racing, axe throwing, a mechanical bull, a strong man show, and more.

The 2023 Rock County Fair dates are Wednesday through Saturday, July 26, 27, 28 and 29.

Follow rockcounty-fairMN on Facebook for the full fair schedules and for updates between now and next week.



Anyone can enter projects into Open Class offering at the Rock County Fair. Entry day for Open Class items is from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, July 26.

**Fair time/from page 1C**

In between building projects, society members have been busy planning events, booking new ones and inviting favorites back for this year’s four-day event.

As a result, there’s a little bit of everything for everyone.

We have a new petting zoo coming and they will offer horseback rides.

Everyone will be able to take their turn throwing an axe or riding the mechanical bull.

And the Aussie Kingdom will bring animals from Australia that you don’t want to miss.

Along with the new are the traditional fair activities.

One of my favorite activities is seeing all the projects that have been worked on by the 4-H kids.

The exhibit hall typically finds dozens of static projects that the youth have spent hours assembling. The livestock shows take place daily, and when the animals are not in the show ring, one can view the care the animals receive and the preparations 4-H’ers do on a daily basis.

Being the fair board president sometimes makes for long days during the fair.

During that time I get to see many people come and go each day, many with smiles on their faces.

Kids, especially, when they get their faces painted or are handed a balloon animal.

Those smiles make those long hours at the fairgrounds well worth it.

If food is why you love to come to the fair, you are in for a treat this year.

We have brought more food vendors and will have a meal in the beer garden during three nights of the fair.

Friday will see the rib cook-off with a people’s choice award given out by those who buy tickets to taste-test the event.

Free entertainment has been added to the garden area with the stage the ag society purchased being put to good use.

I, for one, can’t wait for my first dish of ice cream and my first rib-tickler. (I know that I will be having more than one of each during the four-day fair.)

Best of all, the grandstand lineup is full once again.

The events start Wednesday, July 26, with the Celebrity Donkey Races, and the fair wraps up Saturday, July 29, with the ever-popular enduro race.

We’ve added a new event for Friday night, July 28.

The Ag Olympics has local teams of four vying for bragging rights in five “farm” events.

Thursday night, July 27, is the Great Plains Tractor Pull.

All of these events wouldn’t be possible without all of those who support the fair both with their volunteering and through their financial support.

The financial support makes it possible for us to bring in new attractions at minimal cost or free to fair-goers.

To stay up-to-date with possible changes or more information about special events, follow Rock County Fair on social media.

A complete list of activities is also available online or in the local newspaper, in print or online.

I hope to see you at the fair!

*Being the fair board president sometimes makes for long days during the fair. During that time I get to see many people come and go each day, many with smiles on their faces. Kids, especially, when they get their faces painted or are handed a balloon animal. Those smiles make those long hours at the fairgrounds well worth it.*

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**Moss families honored for dedication to dairy industry, farming /continued from page 2C**

He said any time the Rock County Dairy Producers' booth is present at activities or when milk and cheese is served at community meals at the Rock County Fair, the Moss family likely had a hand in getting the products there.

"They are a hard-working dairy family," Elbers said.

Justin represents the third generation of Moss dairymen.

His grandparents, Albert and Henrietta Moss, moved from Carmel, Iowa, to Section 21 in Mound Township in the 1950s.

"He wanted to farm, so he found cheaper land up here," Justin said. "Farm ground was expensive down there."

Albert, who previously operated a feed grinding business, included milk cows in the Minnesota farm operation along with raising pigs and chickens.

Over time, raising Holsteins and producing milk became the focus on the Moss farm, which has evolved over time.

Among Albert and Henrietta's six children, Jake and Neal chose to carry on the family dairy tradition. Albert died in 2005 at age 85.

Justin, the son of Jake and Cheryl, was inspired at an early age by his grandfather to carry on the family dairy.

"He made a living doing it," Justin said. "Farmed the same ground his whole life and we are still farming it."

After graduating from Ridgewater College in Willmar in 2001, Justin joined the family dairy.

Justin, Jake and Neal each have distinct duties within the farm operation.

Neal and his wife, Char, complete the farm's bookwork, and Neal handles corn and alfalfa on the farm's 700 acres of crop land.

Jake and his wife, Cheryl, are active on the American Dairy Association board as promoters of the industry. He is president of the Pipestone/



Milking in the double-twelve parallel parlor at the Moss dairy takes place three times a day in seven-hour shifts.

Rock Dairy Herd Improvement Association.

Jake also handles the feeding of the nearly 1,200 dairy cows, dry cows, calves and replacement heifers, which are grazed on 200 acres of pasture each summer.

Justin handles the care, milking and breeding of the dairy cows.

Up until 2008, the Mosses milked 150 cows in a tie-stall barn at Albert's farm on 161<sup>st</sup> Street.

Today, the Moss family milks 600 cows three times a day with seven full-time employees in a free-stall barn and double-twelve parallel parlor southwest of the homestead on 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The cows produce an average of 85 to 90 pounds of milk a day. The Grade A quality milk is sold to Land O'Lakes Dairy in Sioux Falls where it is further processed into liquid carton and gallon jugs or made into cheese or butter.



Justin and his wife, Daci, have four children: Brooklynn, 20, Makenna, 18, Zachary, 14, and Tage, 11. All the children help with milking, chopping silage or working in the field when needed.

Much like Justin did as a boy, Zachary has taken an interest in possibly being a fourth-generation dairyman.

"Zach loves to help on the farm," Justin said.

The Moss family will be recognized locally at the Rock County Fair at 6 p.m. Friday, July 28.

All the U of M Extension Farm Families of the Year will be recognized at Farmfest, conducted near Redwood Falls Aug. 1-3.



*The Open Class items are housed in the Ida Reverts Memorial Floral Hall. The hall is open from Thursday, July 27 through Saturday, July 29, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.*

*The historical buildings are open Thursday, July 27, and Friday, July 28, from noon to 8 p.m. and Saturday, July 29, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.*

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The 4-H food stand is open all four days of the Rock County Fair:

•Wednesday  
July 26  
11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

•Thursday,  
July 27, and  
Friday, July 28  
7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

•Saturday  
July 29  
7 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

The 4-H exhibit hall is open:

•Wednesday,  
July 26  
1 p.m. to 9 p.m.

•Thursday, July 27,  
through  
Saturday, July 29  
11 a.m. to 9 p.m.



Mavis Fodness photo/0720 Fair Tab 2023 Burkman Sisters

Sisters Klarissa (left) and Krista Burkman are surrounded by a few of the quilts they have made over the years as exhibitors at the Rock County Fair including their first quilts that they are holding. They plan to exhibit quilts again next week for a chance to exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair this fall. Last year, they achieved purple ribbons at the state fair, the highest honor given in 4-H in the static project areas.

## Purple ribbon-winning sisters excel at quilt making in 4-H

By Mavis Fodness

Rock County 4-H'ers Krista and Klarissa Burkman accomplished a feat at the 2022 Minnesota State Fair not many static project entrants accomplish: They each were awarded purple ribbons.

Judged by peers, the Burkman's skills and knowledge in their needle arts projects were judged as excellent, needing no improvement and were outstanding in all aspects.

They will be entering quilts again at next week's Rock County Fair because the project still holds their interest.

Krista, 18, recently graduated from Brandon Valley High School. She's made seven quilts, since she entered the needle arts project as a 9-year-old.

"My favorite part of quilting is how creative I can be with what materials I use and the design I choose to make," she said.

"I also like seeing the final product when I'm done, and giving back to others."

Her 2022 purple ribbon-

winning quilt was used in a fundraising raffle for Sioux Falls Junior Darts, in which Krista is a member.

The quilt's colorful pattern featured three different sizes of stars.

"It was big enough to be used on a king-sized bed and it was by far the hardest quilt I have ever made," Krista said. "It took me two years working on it off and on to make."

The quilt raffle raised enough money for any member wanting to attend state or national tournaments to have the entry fees paid.

Krista credits the "Barbs" at the Sewing Basket in Luverne for teaching her quilting skills.

"As I call them, Old Barb (Barb Bork) and New Barb (Barb Sandbulte) during the sewing classes," she said. "While my mom (Kris Burkman) does not sew, she does help me with pinning and ironing so I can complete my quilts a little faster."

Her first quilts were made using her mom's Singer sew-



Krista Burkman's purple ribbon-winning quilt was donated to a fundraising raffle after the Minnesota State Fair.

Submitted photo

ing machine she used for home economic classes in high school. Now she uses a Designer Ruby Royal sewing machine. She hand-stitches the binding into the quilts, completing this task for the first time for her purple ribbon quilt.

She sometime uses machine quilting for more durable quilts.

"I did this because my science quilt was going to college with me and would be used and

**Sisters, continued on 10C**

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Mavis Fodness photo/0720 Fair Tab 2023 4-H Intern

Lindsey Vander Wal will be a familiar face at the Rock County Fair. As the 4-H program summer intern, Vander Wal will assist Extension staff with 4-H events at the July 26-29 event in Luverne.

## 4-H intern inspires youth to try something new, find passion

**By Mavis Fodness**

Lindsey Vander Wal is spending the summer as an intern with Rock County 4-H.

As a senior at South Dakota State University in Brookings, she is assisting the U of M Extension-Rock County with day camps, organization meetings and preparations for the Rock County Fair on July 26-29.

"I hope to inspire the 4-H'ers to try something new and find what their passion is," she said.

Vander Wal spent 11 years in South Dakota 4-H, participating in achievement days in Brookings since she was a clover bud.

"My favorite 4-H project was showing my beef heifers," she said.

Vander Wal explored the electrical projects and baked

*'I hope to inspire the 4-H'ers to try something new and find what their passion is.'*

- Lindsey Vander Wal

before graduating from Sioux Valley High School in Volga.

"I started building my Simmental herd when I was in eighth grade," she said. "I have 10 cow-calf pairs and growing."

Her parents, Dean and Polly Vander Wal, care for the animals as she finishes her degree in agricultural education, inspired by her desire to learn new skills, which the 4-H program helped fulfill.

"I chose an agricultural education degree because I love agriculture and inspiring the next generation of ag advocates," she said.

After college next spring, she hopes to instruct middle and high school students, the same age of the ambassadors she works with to organize summer

activities in Rock County.

Vander Wal will use many of those skills learned from the youth organization back home.

"4-H has taught me many leadership skills and public speaking skills," she said. "I wanted to learn more about Minnesota 4-H and try something new."



### The 4-H livestock show schedule:

• **Wednesday, July 26**  
5 p.m. Pets

• **Thursday, July 27**  
8 a.m. Swine  
10 a.m. Goats  
11 a.m. Dairy  
1 p.m. Sheep  
2:30 p.m. Poultry  
4 p.m. Rabbits

• **Friday, July 28**  
8 a.m. Beef  
8:30 a.m. Horses

• **Saturday, July 29**  
9 a.m. Ribbon Auction  
4 p.m. Premier Showman  
6 p.m. Parade of Champions

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Submitted photo

The sixth generation of the Sandager family now lives in the original homestead, settled in 1873. Brittany Sandager (far right, holding Kieran) and her husband, Dakota Steensma (left, holding Marley), currently reside in the Martin Township home. Pictured in the center are Brittany's parents, Gene and Shirley Sandager.

### Sandager Sesquicentennial Farm

## After 150 years, Hills farm still owned by descendants of original Rock County homesteaders

By Jason Berghorst

"It's my goal to prolong the life of that land during my reign as its caretaker. I want to pass it on in better shape than when I got it."

That's how Gene (Pucky) Sandager responded when asked about owning the land that has been in his family for six generations now.

The Sandager farm is being recognized as one of Rock County's first Sesquicentennial Farms ... meaning the farm has been owned by the same family for 150 years.

Pucky Sandager is the fifth generation of the family to own the original land homesteaded in 1873, the southeast quarter of Section 19 in Martin Township.

Simon Skovgaard came to America from Denmark in 1872 and was the first pioneer of the land that is west of where Hills is now.

He and his wife had one son, Carl, who married Ingebord Moen, the daughter of another homesteader.

Carl, also known as Charles, and Ingebord Skovgaard were the parents of seven children. Three of their daughters married three Sandager brothers.

*'My goal has been to make it better each year so we can give the next generation the same opportunity.'*

— Gene Sandager

The Sandagers were also Danish immigrants. They arrived in the Danish settlement of Tyler, Minnesota, in 1890.

Nels Sandager married Clara Skovgaard in 1915 and eventually purchased the original homestead in Martin Township, bringing the Sandager name onto the land in its third generation.

Nels and Clara were the parents of nine children, one of whom was Sheldon, who eventually farmed the land. Three of Sheldon's sons, Robert ("Charlie"), Gene ("Pucky") and Mike, farmed the land in its fifth generation.

Charlie split off to farm his own operation, and Pucky and Mike continued to farm together as Hills Brothers Farm.

When that partnership ended, Pucky retired and moved to a nearby farm while retaining ownership of the original homestead land.

Pucky's nephew, Lucas Sandager, and his wife, Ann, are currently renting and farming the original land and are the sixth generation of the family to do so.

Pucky and his wife, Shirley, are the parents of three adult daughters. Brittny is a lawyer in Worthington and lives in rural Hills, Tarah is an extension educator in Buffalo, and Kelly is studying nursing in Sioux Falls.

Brittany and her husband, Dakota Steensma, are the sixth generation of the family to live in the home that was built by Simon Skovgaard in 1882 after living in a sod house for the first nine years.

"They had to wait for trains to make it to Hills to get lumber to build a frame house," Pucky Sandager said.

"When you learn the history, you realize the tremendous sacrifice our early pioneers made in order for us to have what we have now, six generations later," Sandager said.

"It's been passed down for 150 years and I've been involved for over

50 of those years," he said.

Pucky and Shirley plan to celebrate the farm's sesquicentennial as well as their 50th wedding anniversary with a large gathering in the summer of 2024.

"My goal has been to make it better each year so we can give the next generation the same opportunity."

Pucky said its not getting easier for young farmers to carry on family farms.

"It's a huge challenge to get young people into ag," he said. "There are a lot of outsiders who come in to buy the land and, in my opinion, use the tenants to build their wealth."

"I could have rented to 100 different people, but I wanted to rent to someone who will take care of the land. The goal of farming is to care for the land and produce food for the world."

For now, the Sandager family continues to do just that – produce food while caring for the same land for 150 years.

"The first pioneers grew crops to feed just their families. Now we have a much bigger job to do," Pucky said.

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# Over a 150-year period, farm's history involves evolution of travel routes

## Chesley Sesquicentennial Farm

By Jason Berghorst

One of Rock County's oldest pioneer farms is being recognized for 150 years of continuous ownership by the same family.

Jason and Angela Chesley are the sixth generation to operate their Sesquicentennial farm in Section 23 of Beaver Creek Township.

The farm was originally homesteaded by Willard Walkup and his son Charles, who came with a group of pioneers from Wisconsin in 1872.

Willard claimed the northwest quarter of Section 26. Charles, being only 20 in 1872, had to wait one year to homestead his own claim just across the road to the north, the southwest quarter of Section 23.

The family has farmed both pieces of land ever since.

Charles and his wife, Vangie, had one daughter, Ella Mae. The original homestead came into the Chesley name when Ella Mae married Roy Chesley, a pioneer farmer from Springwater Township.

Roy and Ella Mae's son, Cecil, became the fourth generation to farm the homesteads located just east of the town of Beaver Creek in the 1930s.

Cecil and his wife, Caroline, were the parents of four children. Their son Leroy became the fifth generation farmer when he returned home from military service in 1964 to take over the farm homesteaded by Willard Walkup.

Cecil and Caroline continued living on the north farm. They passed away weeks apart in 1991.

Leroy and his wife, Mary, have five children, Stephan, Nathan, Jason, Jennifer and Jessica.

Leroy continued to farm the land with help from Jason, who had earned a degree in auto mechanics from Southeast Technical Institute and was working full time in town at Papik Motors until Leroy died unexpectedly in 2007 at the age of 66.

At that time, Jason quit his job in town and began farming full time.

"I had to jump right in," Jason said. "I didn't have time to really think about it."

Jason and Angela, who had just been married a few months before, were now the sixth generation to farm the Walkup-Chesley land full time.

"My dad died one day and I was farming the next," Chesley said.

Chesley reflects on both the past and the future of his sesquicentennial farm.

The farm, located between Interstate 90 and County Road 4, has always been near routes that moved people and goods.

First the stagecoach routes, then the railroad, then old U.S. Highway 16 and finally



Jason Berghorst photo/0720 Fair Tab 2023 Chesley

Jason and Angela Chesley's 150-year-old farm in Beaver Creek Township is still an active cattle operation.

the interstate highway have passed near the original homestead.

"There have been a lot of changes in six generations," Chesley said.

He said he's fortunate that his grandmother and aunts have done a lot of work to research and preserve the family history.

"Some people just don't have or understand the history of their own farms and how much things have changed."

"The day before my grandpa died, I rode with him to town, and we talked during the trip about all the old farms that are gone now," Chesley said.

"Every quarter section used to have a farm on it," he said. "There are still a lot of old driveways you can see but many of the farms are gone."

As for the future, Chesley isn't sure what's next for the Chesley farm. It's too early to tell if he and Angela's daughters, Katelyn and Raeanna, may be involved with the farm in the next generation.

"Farming is becoming more about technology and marketing and managing the operation overall now, so you never know," Chesley said.



Submitted photo

The Chesley family is the sixth generation to call the homestead in Beaver Creek Township home. Pictured from left are Raeanna, Angela, Jason and Katelyn Chelsey.

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**Erdmann/continued from page 3C**

insurance company. They lived there for 42 years.

Gary said income tax records from 1917 showed Fred Erdmann raised and sold mules and horses. He purchased his first tractor in 1929 with the animals still used to work the farm.

"A picture dated 1954 shows him (Fred) spreading manure with his last team of horses," Gary said.

Growing up on the farm in the 1950s and 1960s, Gary recalled his family raising swine and milking shorthorns.

At the time, Fred Erdmann offered his grandson some sage advice. "Someday, if you're worthy, you'll own this."

However, Gary never chose a career in farming nor moved back home after graduating from Jasper High School in 1964. He made a career in the ag industry operating the cooperative creamery in Russell for 43 years.

Now retired, he makes his home in rural Balaton with his wife, Elizabeth. The couple has seven children.

Gary, an only child, became owner of the Erdmann farm in 2005.

His father, Randall, and his aunt, Merlin "Babe" Eide, inherited the farm in 1972 and split the section in half.

Randall farmed and remodeled the existing home on the property. In 1976 he began renting the cropland to a neighbor while continuing to live in the farmhouse.

Today, Erdmann



Submitted photos  
Fred Erdmann, who sold mules and horses from the Erdmann Century Farm, plows with a team of six mules. The first tractor (pictured below) was purchased in 1929.

*'A picture dated 1954 shows him (Fred) spreading manure with his last team of horses.'*

— Gary Erdmann



The first tractor purchased for the Erdmann Century Farm was a 10-20 International and was bought in 1929 by Fred Erdmann. In later years, son Randall Erdmann posed with the same little tractor his father purchased.

continues to rent the farmland to neighbors. Since 2007, renters occupied the farm site until 2020, when Gary sold the five acres.

Mother Nature began taking a toll on the brick barn and silo, damaging the struc-

tures beyond repair in the mid-2010s.

There are no buildings on the farm site today.

The Erdmann farm is one of 89 farms and/or farmland (the only farm from Rock County) recognized this year

for 100 or more years of continuous family ownership.

The Century Farm program is organized through the Minnesota State Fair and the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation.

**Sisters/from page 6C**

washed quite frequently," Krista said before choosing to donate the quilt for the darts league fundraiser.

Younger sister, Klarissa, a freshman at BVHS, grew to enjoy quilting through her sister and her grandmother.

"It was always fun to watch her (grandmother) and my sister order patterns on the Internet," she said. "When she would get them in the mail and think, 'Wow, this looks cool' or some fun things that would come with the pattern."

It's the final outcome that Klarissa enjoys the most about quilting.

"Sometimes during the process of putting the quilt together, I think, 'I might not like this but I also might like this' and then after it is quilted and we put the binding on, I love the way they turn out."

Both sisters also know the frustrations of quilting.

"Patterns are sometimes hard to understand or confusing," Klarissa said.

Klarissa is currently designing a quilt with a rose along with a table runner for her needle arts entries at the Rock County Fair.

Krista is completing a pinwheel quilt.

"This is something new for me because I have never made a pinwheel quilt before," she said. "It will not be as big or difficult as the star quilt I made last year, but the binding on this quilt will be sewn on."

The static projects are displayed in the 4-H exhibit hall attached to the 4-H food stand.

The hall is open from 1 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, July 26, and from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, July 27-29.

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