



Rock County STAR HERALD

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Thursday, January 6, 2022

County puts brakes on gravel pit expansion

Northern Con-Agg wants to dig pit in Luverne's drinking water supply management area

By Mavis Fodness

Rock County commissioners supported a closer look into Northern Con-Agg's mining request in Luverne Township — specifically its effects on local drinking water.

The Dec. 28 decision supported findings from an environmental assessment worksheet recently completed by the county's Land Management Office.

Eric Hartman, LMO director, said five comments were received during the 30-day comment period that ended Nov. 4.

Comments came from the city of Luverne, the state Department of Health, Southwest Regional Development Commission, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

"A number of concerns were raised from the comment period and were mainly focused on the position of negative impact to ground water from the removal of aggregate on the site," Hartman said.

"Much of the area is located near the drinking water supply area for the city of Luverne."

Northern Con-Agg proposed creating two mining tracts totaling 195 acres northeast of Luverne. The company currently owns and mines 86 acres near the proposed expansion site.

Mining at the expansion site would take place over a 20-year period. Three phases are planned with a portion of the mining area disturbed at one time. Depth of the mining would be 30 to 35 feet below the ground surface.

The proposed mining parcels are primarily agricultural land. A sizeable portion of the 195 acres is located within a flood plain with one acre located within a shoreline district.

Adjacent to the proposed expansion site are four drinking water wells for the city of Luverne. The closest well is 600 feet from

Con-Agg/continued on page 5



Mavis Fodness photo/0106 Day of Fun Addison Schelling (from left), Alex Gangestad, Kinley Kurtz and Stella Brecker practice jumps.

Luverne High School gymnastics team hosts 'Day of Fun' for young athletes

The Luverne High School gymnastics team hosted a "Day of Fun" for 50 young participants Dec. 29 in the school's small gyms.

The youngsters were divided into eight groups where they learned maneuvers from the team's gymnasts in the sport's four events — floor exercise, uneven bars, vault and beam — along with dance lessons.

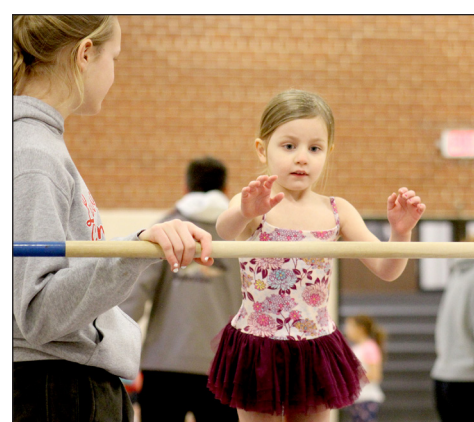
The first-time fundraiser event was overseen by team coaches Phoebe Flom, Kari Lais and Chris Nowatzki. The team returns to competition Thursday, Jan. 6, at home against Redwood Valley.

Above right, Addilyn Peterson (from left), Ophelia Visker and Avalon Dwyer test their strength to see how long each can hold on to the uneven bar.

At right, high school gymnast Kendra Thorson helps Arianna Churchill complete a back handspring.

Below left, Emmy Meinerts sizes up the uneven bar under the watchful eye of high school gymnast Ella Reisdorfer who encourages her to give it a try.

Below right, Eden Uithoven cautiously eyes the floor 4 feet below as high school gymnast Sarah deCesare guides her across the balance beam.



City salaries/continued on page 5

Luverne city levy increases 11.77 percent

Utility rates rise by 4.22 percent

By Lori Sorenson

The City of Luverne set its 2021 tax levy at \$2,530,180, which reflects an 11.77-percent increase over the current levy.

The levy includes \$2,280,100 for the General Fund and \$250,080 for principal and interest on existing debt.

The council approved the levy, budget and pay plan (see the related story) following the city's annual Truth in Taxation hearing Dec. 14.

As part of that hearing City Administrator John Call reviewed the 2022 budget and 2021 levy.

The governmental budget includes the general fund, airport, pool and capital projects.

Governmental expenditures in 2022 are expected to be \$8.5 million and revenues at \$8.2 million.

Governmental expenditures include:

- Public safety at \$1.5 million, about 18 percent of costs;
- Public works at nearly \$1 million, about 11 percent of costs;
- Parks and recreation at nearly \$700,000 at 8 percent.

Governmental revenues come in the form of:

- property taxes at roughly \$2.28 million, or 28 percent;
- Local Government Aid from the state at \$1.5 million, 18 percent of revenue; and
- the rest from enterprise funds, fees and other sources.

City levy, utilities/see page 5

County levy rises nearly 3 percent for 2022 taxes

By Mavis Fodness

Commissioners unanimously certified the 2022 levy at \$6.5 million during their Dec. 28 meeting. This represents a 2.97 percent increase over the current amount.

Commissioners reviewed the county's \$13.7 million budget planned for this year at their meeting.

The \$188,264 levy increase will pay for the county's portion of two additional peace officers and \$15,500 to be divided among the three ambulance service districts within the county.

County levy/continued on page 5

City approves salary increases

By Lori Sorenson

City of Luverne union employees are about to start the third year of a three-year contract, and at their Dec. 14 meeting, council members approved year-end finance resolutions that included wage adjustments for 2022.

The city's non-union, administrative and department heads will also receive 3.25-percent salary increases effective Jan. 1.

The following increases, include step and lane changes and account for additional duties where applicable.

City Administrator John Call's salary increases from \$136,011 to \$140,431.

City Clerk Jessica Mead from \$77,210 to \$80,850.

Accountant Candy Reese from \$82,410 to \$86,195.

EDA Director Holly Sammons from \$76,128 to \$79,727.

Building Official Chad McClure from \$81,307 to \$85,072.

Public Works Supervisor John Stoffel from \$91,104 to \$95,202.

Water/Wastewater Supervisor Al Lais from \$99,819 to \$104,187.

Pool Manager Sam Honerman from \$77,210 to \$80,850.

Assistant Pool Manager Michelle DeKam from \$54,350 to \$57,242.

Liquor Store Manager Kenny Rolling from \$75,026 to \$78,603.

City salaries/continued on page 5

County approves salary increases

By Mavis Fodness

Rock County Commissioners approved pay increases for elected employees at their last meeting of 2021 on Dec. 28. The increases took effect Jan. 1.

Sheriff Evan Verbrugge's pay increased 4.5 percent, from \$100,838 to \$105,375.

County attorney Jeff Haubrich's salary increased 2.74 percent from \$91,500 to \$94,000.

Salaries of commissioners Stan Williamson, Greg Burger, Jody Reisch, Gary Overgaard and Sherri Thompson increased from \$20,046 in 2021 to \$20,698 in 2022.

The board on Dec. 14 approved a 3.25-percent increase for all non-union employees along with a Teamsters contract

for the new Sergeant Union.

The 22-page agreement is for 2020, 2021 and 2022 with salary increases of 2 percent, 3.25 percent and 3.25 percent for each respective year.

The 2021 and 2022 salaries for the directors and assistant directors in each of the county departments, based on current contracts and/or approved cost of living increases include:

- County administrator/emergency management director Kyle Oldre, \$118,199 to \$121,745.
- Deputy administrator Susan Skattum, \$69,180 to \$71,427.
- Auditor/treasurer Ashley Kurtz,

County salaries/continued on page 5



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Meetings

Stateline Cemetery Association will have its annual meeting at 12:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 10, at Pizza Ranch in Rock Rapids.

Beaver Creek Township Board will meet at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 10, at the township hall in Beaver Creek.

Parkinson's Support Group will NOT MEET in January due to Covid risks. Call Diane Karlstad at 507-530-3307 with questions.

'Batting and Long-Arm Sewing'

The Blue Mound Quilters will offer a program, "A Guide to Batting and Long-Arm Sewing," at 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 8, at the Sewing Basket in Luverne. The program is open to the public. The Blue Mound Quilters will have their meeting before the program at 10 a.m. Bring a beverage and sack lunch. Call Jill Willers at 935-2560.

Online mental health classes

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will offer free online mental health classes for January and February. Among them are suicide prevention classes called QPR – Question, Persuade and Refer — plus a special one for ag communities.

The classes are designed for family members and caregivers, persons living with a mental illness, service providers and also for the general public. Go to namimn.org and click on "Classes."

Free food Jan. 20

New Life Celebration Church will offer free food at 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 20, at the Generations Building on East Lincoln Street in Luverne. Vehicles should enter the west parking lot from Lincoln Street and drive to the double glass doors on the west side of the building where volunteers will load groceries into cars. Walkers receive their pre-packaged groceries on the east side. Call 507-283-4366.

Community Ed

Call Cindy at Community Ed, 507-283-4724, to register for classes.

Community Ed website is http://www.isd2184.net/Communit_Ed/index.html

Join the **Adult Pickleball League** this winter. Fee is \$20.

Refresher 4-hour Defensive Driving Class will be Jan. 20 at 5:30 p.m.

Luverne School students, grades 8 and older may register now for the **Winter Session of Student Driver Education** that begins Jan. 31 from 4 to 6 p.m. The fee is \$355, which includes 30 hours of classroom and six hours of behind the wheel instruction. On Jan. 24, out-of-district students may register for open spots in the winter session.

First Aid/CPR/AED Certification Class is Feb. 3. Fee is \$58.

Students ages 3-12 years old will learn to play the orff instruments (smaller version of xylophone) at **Melodious Mallets**. Class begins Feb. 4 and culminates with the Luverne Street Music Spring Showcase in May. Fee is \$100 for 16 lessons.

Register by Feb. 9 for the **ACT Prep class** that begins Feb. 24 for juniors and seniors. Fee is \$125.

Softball Camp begins on Feb. 10 for six sessions for girls in grades K-8 who are interested in being catchers and pitchers to learn and practice their skills (experienced or inexperienced). Sign up by Feb. 1 at the lower fee of \$60.

Preschool Fun for children ages 0-5 years and parent Jan. 25 or Jan. 27. No fee, but registration needed to reserve morning or evening play time.

Goehle gym open Sundays

The Hugo Goehle gymnasium in Hills is open for public recreation from 1 to 3 p.m. Sundays now through March 27.

A.C.E. respite care available

A.C.E. of SW Minnesota (A.C.E.) offers respite care services in Rock County for those needing a break from caring for a loved one.

The respite program offers short-term (1-3 hours), temporary care for families and caregivers by providing a brief period of reprieve from the daily cares they provide to their loved one.

Volunteers provide non-professional supportive services to caregivers to give them time for themselves, relieve their stress and help them remain healthy. Respite care volunteers are also needed. Trained A.C.E. volunteers provide respite care to family caregivers of adults age 60 and older who are suffering from long-term health conditions.

Contact Linda Wenzel at 507-283-5064 or ace.rock@co.rock.mn.us.

Ficks are 'Outstanding Conservationists'

By Lori Sorenson

Tom and Jodi Fick, Luverne, were honored as Outstanding Conservationists of the Year at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Dec. 12-14 in Bloomington.

They were selected by the Rock Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for the award, which recognizes individuals and organizations for outstanding accomplishments in implementing conservation practices and improving Minnesota's natural resources.

"Tom was recognized for a variety of conservation practices," said Doug Bos of the Rock County Land Management Office in Luverne.

He said some of those practices include utilizing a "robust crop rotation" of alfalfa, oats, clover, corn and beans along with kernza perennial wheat.

"This has helped to build soil health and create a more resilient farming system than the traditional corn and soybean monoculture," Bos said.

To maintain and improve on this crop rotation, he said Fick has been transitioning from traditional tillage to minimum till and eventually no-till on the contour, along with utilizing a seven-species cover crop mix to keep the ground covered as long as possible.

"Tom serves as a mentor for farmers wanting to adopt soil health practices," Bos said.

For example, he hosted three cover crop field days on his farm, has done multiple podcasts and social media videos and posts for cover crops and soil health, and participates in the soil health event at the Rock County fair.

"It's nice to get recognized," Fick said Monday. "I just keep doing the things out here that I'm doing because it seems to be help-



Tom and Jodi Fick were honored as Outstanding Conservationists of the Year at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Dec. 12-14.

"Learn what you can about it. Try what you can on your farm on a small scale. There are plenty of ways to make it work on your farm. You can come up with excuses all day long, but learn about it and try to take the next step."

— Tom Fick, Luverne

ing."

He said he recognizes the importance of sharing his story with the agriculture community, because many farmers have not yet tried and realized the benefits of regenerative farming.

"As we drive around the local area, it's still a little disheartening to see all the tillage being done. You wonder why they're doing that," Fick said.

"Even if they tried reduced tillage or cover crops in the past, they could try it again. The benefits of it take a long time, but once you see the benefits, you realize you can afford the input costs."

While local fields have a long way to go, he said he's encouraged by progress.

"I do see other areas where cover crops, strip-till and no-till practices are

being implemented for the first time," he said.

Fick is on the board of directors of the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition, whose mission is "producer driven education and outreach" to exchange information and promote soil health practices.

He's also a farmer mentor for the coalition in southwest Minnesota.

As a local and statewide voice, Fick said he keeps encouraging producers to start practices that improve soil health.

"Learn what you can about it. Try what you can on your farm on a small scale," he said. "There are plenty of ways to make it work on your farm. You can come up with excuses all day long, but learn about it and try to take the

next step."

Bos said Fick's dedication to the cause makes him the perfect candidate for Conservationist of the Year.

"We're really proud of Tom and what he has done for conservation in Rock County," Bos said.

"Tom provides a wonderful example for conservationists by truly being a steward of the land through his leadership, commitment to conservation practices and efforts to share his knowledge to improve soil health."

Each year the state's SWCDs recognize individuals who protect the land and water. The state Conservationist of the Year award is done with support from *The Farmer* magazine.

For more information on the program, contact Bos at the Rock SWCD, phone 507-283-8862.

Fick encourages local producers to contact him at 507-920-9474 or tfick@mnsoilhealth.org for information on how to get started in cover crops or other soil health practices.

He also encourages them to find the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition website and Facebook page to connect with peers statewide.

Accountant: H-BC finances are 'great'

By Mavis Fodness

Independent auditor Matt Taubert repeatedly used "great" as he presented the recent fiscal end audit to members of the Hills-Beaver Creek School Board.

Taubert is a certified public accountant with Meulebroeck, Taubert and Co. from Pipestone. The firm has audited the school district's financials since 2012, when the district recorded a general fund balance of negative \$247,000.

"You've worked your way up to a \$4,010,711 positive fund balance. That's great — I have no other way to say it," Taubert said. "In 10 years you've increased the fund balance by \$4.2 million. So that is great."

H-BC brought forward \$4 million into the new school year, according to the audit report ending June 31, 2021.

Taubert recalled the district's informal policy to maintain at least a 20 percent revenue over expenditures in the general fund each fiscal year. H-BC's three-year average is 63.5 percent.

"That's great. Obviously, your job is not to accumulate fund balances, but it is nice to have fund balances to weather potential storms in the funding side," Taubert said.

For the 2020-21 school year, revenue reached \$5.3 million or about \$446,000 more than projected.

Taubert attributed the increase in revenue to more federal aid sent to the district via coronavirus pandemic aid.

The district spent \$4.8 million during the 2020-21 school year, which included \$419,000 in building maintenance, with more than half spent on a roofing project at the elementary school.

Also, according to the audit, the food service fund achieved a positive fund balance of \$88,108 after receiving \$248,002 for 2020-21 and spending \$160,894.

A positive balance of \$33,457 was recorded in the community service fund with \$119,437 in revenue and \$85,980 in expenditures.

The district has \$2.9 million unassigned in its general fund balance.

Deficit projected for current school year

During Hills-Beaver Creek School District's Truth in Taxation public hearing Dec. 13, Superintendent Todd Holthaus said the decline in enrollment will lessen the per pupil aid garnered from the local 2022 levy by 2.61 percent or \$35,726.

The hearing, which no one from the public attended, followed the

district's favorable audit report.

"The district is sitting in a very good financial situation right now in regard to reserves," Holthaus said.

"Those dollars will be coming in handy as we move forward in regard to declining enrollment."

Board members anticipate ending the 2021-22 school year with a deficit of \$314,000 due to less revenue and more staff to meet student needs.

However, Holthaus said, no federal Covid aid is included in the existing budget.

H-BC voters recently approved renewing the district's excess levy for the next 10 years, which included annual adjustments for inflation.

Local property owners will contribute \$1.33 million to the district's planned \$4.8 million 2021-22 budget.

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County seeks comment on Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

Rock County has completed an updated draft of its Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP) and is now seeking public feedback on it.

Citizens can find a link to review the plan and offer feedback by visiting z.umn.edu/rock_hmp.

The review and comment period is open through Sunday, Jan. 16. After that, the county will submit the draft plan to the state of Minnesota and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for review.

The Rock County MHMP is a multi-jurisdictional plan that covers Rock County, including the cities of Beaver Creek, Hardwick, Hills, Jasper, Kenneth, Luverne, Magnolia and Steen.

The Rock County plan also incorporates the concerns and needs of townships, school districts and other stakeholders participating in the plan.

"Rock County is vulnerable to a variety of potential natural disasters, which threaten the loss of life and property in the county," said Rock County administrator and emergency management director Kyle Oldre.

"The plan addresses how to mitigate against hazards such as tornadoes, flooding, wildland fires, blizzards, straight-line winds, ice storms, and droughts which have the potential for inflicting vast economic loss and personal hardship."

Oldre has been working with U-Spatial at the University of Minnesota Duluth and representatives from county departments, city and township governments, school districts, and other key stakeholders.

"Together, the planning team worked to identify cost-effective and sustainable actions to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life or property from natural hazards," he said.

Some examples include:

- improving roads and culverts that are prone to repetitive flooding;
- constructing safe rooms at campgrounds, public parks, mobile home parks or schools to protect lives in the event of tornados or severe wind events;
- burying powerlines that may fail due to heavy snow, ice or wind storms;
- ensuring timely emergency communication to the public through warning sirens and mass notification systems, and
- conducting public awareness and education campaigns to help people be prepared to take safe action before, during, or following a hazard event.

"Hazard mitigation planning helps Rock County and other jurisdictions protect their residents," Oldre said.

"Working with local communities through the process helps identify vulnerabilities and develop strategies to reduce or eliminate the effects of a potential hazard."

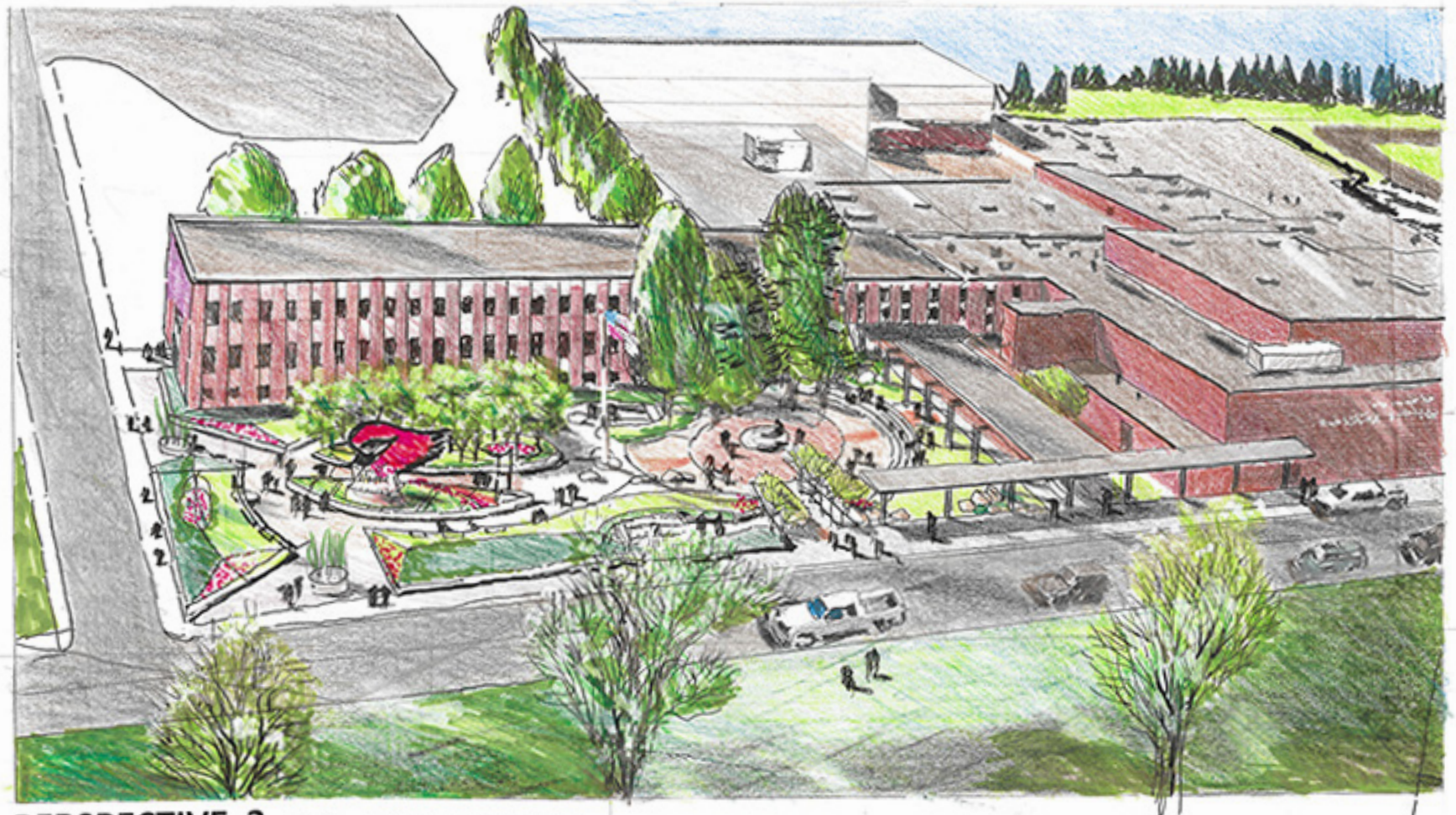
In addition, he said, increasing public awareness of local hazards and disaster preparedness helps to create a community that is resilient to disaster, and it breaks the cycle of response and recovery.

Updating the plan positions the county and its jurisdictions to apply for future Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant funding from FEMA for projects that will help to reduce or eliminate impacts of future natural disaster events.

"Community feedback is vital to the success of the plan," Oldre said.

Residents can review the draft and provide feedback either online or directly to Rock County Emergency Management.

Oldre can be reached at 507-283-5065 or kyle.oldre@co.rock.mn.us.



PERSPECTIVE 3 AERIAL, LOOKING NORTH/WEST

Alumni garden design on school's east side preserves iconic LHS steel canopy

By Mavis Fodness

The alumni garden proposed by the Luverne Education Legacy Fund received a boost recently when the KAHR Foundation agreed to fund the project on the east side of the Luverne Middle-High School.

School Board members reviewed plans and the initial \$1.4 million budget at their Dec. 23 meeting.

"There should be a lot of amenities, so it is a pretty neat project," said Superintendent Craig Oftedahl.

"We are hopeful that it (the garden) maybe done by the All-School Reunion (July 2022). I won't guarantee that, but that is the push."

Included in the design is stadium seating for 30-40 people complete with a podium and sound system.

Waterlines will support vegetation along the garden pathways, and heated sidewalks under the existing canopy will aid in snow removal.

Retired landscape designer Chuck Klinefelter of Brooklyn Center is overseeing the project with Warren



PERSPECTIVE 1 LOOKING EAST FROM ENTRANCE 1 RAMP

Herreid II of the KAHR Foundation, district leaders and LELF members.

They're working with Steve "Junior" Selseth of Oh'Landscapes LLC, Mayer, Minnesota, who

specializes in boulder retaining walls.

Work began in earnest this fall when a budget was set. Klinefelter cautioned that the preliminary architectural drawings will change.

"We are now refining them within the budget," he said Monday.

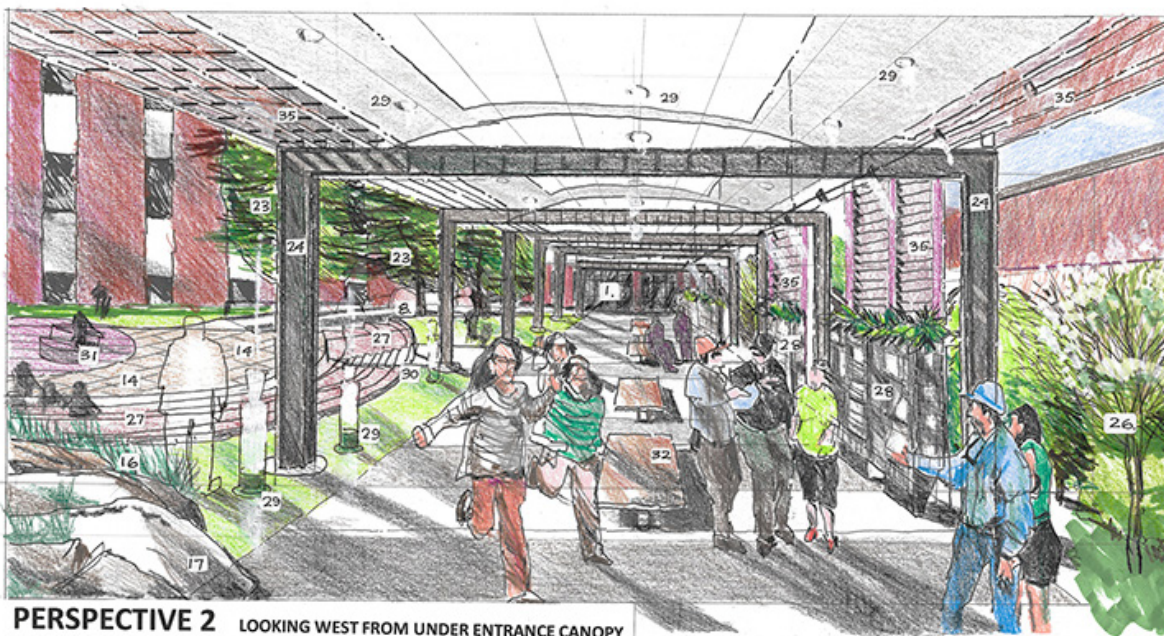
Klinefelter, who retired from full-time landscape design after 47 years, agreed to work on the alumni garden project due to its uniqueness.

"When I worked in the landscaping business, I liked to do projects that are challenging and out of the ordinary," he said.

Next month, Klinefelter said Oh'Landscapes will move Sioux quartzite boulders to a staging area west of the school campus as design plans are finalized.

The existing steel canopy will be incorporated into the garden design, which is expected to be finished this spring.

"We are looking to mid to late April for the official start," Klinefelter said.



PERSPECTIVE 2 LOOKING WEST FROM UNDER ENTRANCE CANOPY

School board approves driver's ed increase

By Mavis Fodness

The cost for eligible students to learn to drive through Luverne Community Education increases \$15 for the 2022 program year.

Classroom and behind-the-wheel instruction will now cost \$355 per student.

The increase takes effect with classroom sections next month and in June.

The approved increase by the Luverne School Board on Dec. 23 is the third consecutive year for an increase.

This year's increase covers a wage increase for behind-the-wheel instructors and increasing fuel costs. The increase is the first since 2016 for the behind-the-wheel instructors.

The per-hour rate for driving instructors increases \$3 (10 percent) to \$28, a more comparable rate with other school districts, according to information provided to board members by Community Education director Lisa Nath.

Luverne's approved \$28-per-hour rate now matches that of Hills-Beaver Creek and is \$1 higher than the rate paid in Edgerton and Adrian. Pipestone's rate is \$30 per hour.

Nath anticipates 90 students enrolling in the upcoming program session with an anticipated \$31,950 budget. The session would break even if 87 students complete the program.

Luverne School Board members unanimously approved the increase Dec. 23 in a 6-0 vote. Director Jodi

Bosch did not attend the meeting.

In other business, the school board:

- approved the hiring of Leah Radisewitz as basketball cheerleading coach beginning Dec. 13 and

custodians Britton Stratton also on Dec. 13 and Matthew Fleming on Dec. 20.

- granted the maternity request for elementary teacher Dana Wolf for 13 weeks beginning approximately Feb. 24.

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Thursday, January 6 6:00 pm
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Spider Man: No Way Home PG-13
Friday, January 7 7:00 pm
Saturday, January 8 7:00 pm
Sunday, January 9 2:00 pm
Tickets: \$5 for kids age 3 - 12th grade, \$7 for adults

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Welcome to town, dear little family. Thank you for subscribing to the paper

A young family stopped in the Star Herald office just after Christmas to inquire about a subscription to the newspaper.



ON SECOND THOUGHT

By Lori Sorenson, editor

professional journalism (facts versus coffee talk — or Facebook chatter).

I can name many lifelong Rock County residents who don't read the Star Herald. They're educated, involved, sincere and generous — but not very informed.

They appreciate the community they live in, but don't know much about it.

They still don't understand Hot Dog Night or Buffalo Chip Throwing Contests.

Or the appeal of 4,000 nutcrackers. (The collection each year brings thousands of people into town where they spend their money at local businesses.)

After numerous front-page Star Herald headlines about a looming construction project, these same well-meaning folks ask, "What are they building on the old Sharkee's lot?" (It's a years-in-the-making, multi-million dollar, three-story, 54-unit, green-built, market-rate apartment complex that will put a big dent in Luverne's housing shortage.)

Sigh.

It was a short visit the day our new residents stopped in the Star Herald office, but they made my day. I wanted to hug them ... For getting it. For getting a subscription. And for restoring my faith in humanity (and my hope for the future of small-town journalism).

Welcome to Rock County, dear little new family in town. We hope you like us, and we hope the Star Herald lives up to your expectations as the best way to connect with your new community.

The newsroom was busy sending pages to press, so I didn't greet them at the counter, as much as I would have liked to.

From across the room, I could hear our front office staff take down their address and subscription information while small talk unfolded.

"So, you're new to town?"

"Yes. We just moved here."

"Are your kids in school here?" The young ones had accompanied their parents on the errand and were milling around the front door.

"They'll start here after the Christmas break."

More small talk, more questions, and then the kicker:

"We wanted to get the paper right away to learn about the community."

They were strangers, but I felt like leaping over the counter to hug them.

We're aware we have loyal readers, and we're grateful for each and every subscription, online and in print.

But our fan list is getting shorter and Facebook is an easier (and cheaper) alternative source of information.

I'm on Facebook, and as a news person I use the platform to discover upcoming events, a new business, or other newsworthy tips to track down for a Star Herald story.

It's a great little tool, but it's a little thin on substance, considering I never see any of my Facebook "friends" at a public meeting where our elected officials make decisions about how to spend our hard-earned tax dollars.

Somehow, this little family understands the value of

Star Herald doles out thumbs — this time all up

STAR HERALD EDITORIAL

Maybe it's the promise of a new year, or maybe we really do live in a great community, but this round of Star Herald "thumbs" are all pointed up.

Thumbs up — to the city workers who combed the field east of Blue Mound Avenue to pick up all the recycling that blew out early Monday morning.

Thumbs up — to the city of Beaver Creek for approving new "Welcome to Beaver Creek" signs at the city's primary entrances. The warm sentiments encourage visitors to check out local amenities — like a free splash park — offered in the small community.

Thumbs up — to housing director Tammy Johnson and her team at the Blue Mound Tower for sweeping improvements to the 1971-built apartments. To say it's a transformation is an understatement, and the result is a home that residents — college students, senior citizens and others — can be proud of.

Thumbs up — to Rock County commissioners for approving a \$3,000 investment in a regional recreational trail study to connect what we enjoy locally with that of other communities.

Thumbs up — to the city of Luverne for clearing snow from The Loop after the Dec. 10 snowstorm. It allowed many people to enjoy the outdoors when unseasonably warm temperatures

returned to the area following the storm.

Thumbs up — to the Luverne School District for its recently completed \$31 million remodel and expansion. The updates were much needed and the new features — commons, media center and performing arts center — are reasons students, families, teachers and administration can be proud to be Cardinals.

Thumbs up — to the Minnesota Army National Guard (and private investors Warren Herreid II and Jeannine Rivet) for breaking ground on a 46,293 square-foot Readiness Center in Luverne to replace the 1921 armory. The project will benefit National Guardsmen and women and also the community.

Thumbs up — to historical-minded individuals and the Leicher family for bringing and sharing with the public an original Luverne Thirty automobile in The History Center showroom in Luverne. The rare collector car was built in Luverne and is now back in Luverne — home where it belongs.

Thumbs up — to local

leaders who worked tirelessly for years at the region's day care shortage crisis. The bold move to purchase the former Tri-State Insurance building for a day care center will likely be successful, with the promise of public subsidies going forward.

Until working families can afford to pay qualified child care professionals at the helm of such facilities, this is the investment communities must make to support growth. Which leads to our final ...

Thumbs up — to local leaders, developers and investors for putting the complicated pieces together for the Prairie Loft I and II apartments on South Highway 75. The 54 energy-efficient market-rate rental units will alleviate the tight housing market that tends to stifle growth.

Businesses can't grow in Rock County if there aren't workers, and workers can't live here if there's no child care or housing. With these two gems on the horizon — and all the recent "thumbs up," we look forward to good things ahead in 2022 and beyond.



Hudson: Wife loses job over not signing vaccine verification form

To the Editor:

My wife, Robin, was terminated from her position at Minnwest Bank here in Luverne on Thursday the 30th after ten years of loyal service. She was terminated because she refused to complete the vaccine verification form, as we researched and in our opinion the vaccines and even the testing are harmful. She chose to use her rights, not privileges guaranteed by the Organic Constitution, that everyone has a choice to take the shot or not to, it is everyone's right to make that choice. Not any government or

VOICE OF OUR READERS

corporation will dictate anything in regards to our health or well being.

They also terminated her one day before she qualified for her 401, and her bonuses. This was about as low as you can get for being a dedicated employee and I hope everyone gives thought as to how much Minnwest Bank thinks of you as a

customer. My wife stood her ground against what I would refer to as tyrants and I could not be more proud of her for what she has done and I have and will continue to support and stand beside her.

I wish that more people would begin to stand up and say no to all this bureaucratic BS. I want

to say that both Issac and Joyce from both banks here in Luverne supported fought for Robin trying to get the termination stopped but to no avail, so to both of them Robin and I would like to say thank you. People have to wake up, don't sit back and let these people tell you what you have to do, research, research, research before you lay down and surrender to everything they are telling you is so good for you. Please look up the Act of 1871.

**Randy Hudson
Luverne**

**This is
YOUR
page!**

Make
submissions
using the
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below.

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Unsigned letters will not be considered. The *Star Herald* will edit for grammar, spelling and clarity. Any letters containing offensive language, libelous or slanderous material, or misleading or false information will be rewritten before being published. The *Star Herald* will not publish letters written with the sole intent to advertise or serve as a thank-you. Letters with more than 300 words may be edited. The deadline for letters is Monday 10 a.m. They may be delivered or mailed to the editor, *Rock County Star Herald*, P.O. Box 837, 117 W. Main St., Luverne, Minn. 56156.

ON THE RECORD

Dispatch report

Dec. 24

•Complainant eastbound on Interstate 90, mile marker 14, Magnolia, reported debris on the road.

•Complainant on E. Dodge Street and 140th Avenue, Luverne, reported a possible unsafe ATV riding.

•Complainant on County Road 6, Beaver Creek, requested a deer tag.

Dec. 25

•Complainant on Highway 75, Casey's, reported a vehicle for poor driving conduct.

•Complainant on Highway 75 and 131st Street, Luverne, reported a pedestrian at location.

•Complainant on Interstate 90, mile marker 18, Magnolia, requested a deputy for assistance.

•Complainant on 60th Avenue, Beaver Creek, reported a custody issue at location.

Dec. 26

•Complainant on S. Kniss Avenue reported a driving complaint.

•Structure fire was reported on 50th Avenue, Beaver Creek.

•Complainant on E. Minnesota Ave. Steen, requested deputy for property exchange.

•Complainant in 24-hour parking lot reported an aggressive driver.

•Complainant on S. Fairview Drive reported a vehicle racing up and down the road.

•Complainant on E. Warren Street reported a vehicle with loud exhaust.

Dec. 27

•Complainant on N. McKenzie Street reported harassing communication via note.

•Complainant on W. Fairview Drive reported vandalism.

Dec. 28

ams Avenue reported fraud.

•Deputy assisted state patrol with a warrant for arrest on Interstate 90, mile marker 12, Luverne.

•Complainant northbound on 90th Ave. from County Road 4, Luverne, reported a vehicle tried to run them off the road.

Dec. 28

•Complainant in Sioux Falls reported that someone is at her door and she doesn't want to answer.

•Complainant on N. Spring Street reported fraud.

•Complainant requested to speak to a deputy.

Dec. 29

•Suspicious activity was reported at location on N. Kniss Avenue.

•Complainant on 41st Street and 50th Avenue, Hills reported crossing arms are down and road is closed.

•Complainant requested to speak to a deputy about bad check.

•Complainant on E. Warren Street reported theft.

Dec. 30

•Complainant on W. Mead Court reported loud music.

Dec. 31

•Complainant on S. Donaldson requested to speak to a deputy about a housing issue.

In addition, officers responded to 5 motor vehicle accidents, 2 deer accidents, 5 vehicles in ditch, 15 ambulance runs, 6 paper services, 4 animal complaints, 1 fingerprint request, 1 alarm, 3 drug court tests, 2 purchase and carry permits, 15 traffic stops, 2 abandoned 911 calls, 3 tests, 2 welfare checks, 1 report of cattle out, 1 OFP and 1 follow-up.

Community Transit fares return to pre-pandemic rates

United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) Transportation announced last week that community transit fares are returning to pre-covid rates.

Director Nick Leske said that special funding for transit systems during the pandemic expired at the end of 2021, so a return to normal fare prices is necessary.

"All of our previous fare collection procedures and costs are back," he said.

That means all types of bus passes are back to their normal cost. "During the pandemic, we only sold monthly ride passes, and we sold them for a suggested fee of \$40."

The return of full fare rates means people can once again purchase passes based on their travel needs.

Those who travel within a single town can purchase a monthly ride pass for \$70. For people who need to travel between towns, a monthly pass is \$80.

The convenience of being able to purchase a variety of passes directly from bus drivers is also coming back.

"Our \$25 ride cards and tokens were not sold during the pandemic so we could reduce the number of hand-to-hand exchanges between passengers and drivers," Leske said, "but those options will be available on buses again for those who don't want to purchase a monthly pass."

Monthly ride passes will need to be purchased through a UCAP office, as was the case before the pandemic.

"We want to keep things as clean and simple for everyone on board the buses," Leske said.

The base fare is \$2 for an in-town, dial-a-ride bus when scheduled at least the day before.

When a ride is scheduled on the day of transportation, the base rate is \$2.50. The fare increases in \$1 increments based on distance traveled from point to point.

Complete details on fares are available at communitytransitswmn.org.

After more than a year of free or reduced rate transportation, Leske said it may be difficult for some people to begin budgeting for transportation again, but he said collecting fares is an important part of keeping buses on the road.

"In a normal year, our contract with the Minnesota Department of Transportation only covers part of our operations," he said. "Passenger fares help cover the rest. We couldn't exist long term without them."

United Community Action Partnership is a non-profit organization that strives to help low and moderate income families improve their lives and move out of poverty.



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Con-Agg expansion on hold for impact study/from page 1



Rock County Commissioners agreed with findings from an environmental assessment worksheet that warrant a more in-depth study on Northern Con-Agg proposed mineral extraction expansion in Luverne Township. The proposed area is within the Drinking Water System Management Area for the city of Luverne and is 600 feet away from one of four city wells in the area. Water from the Luverne municipal wells comprised 20 percent (70.5 million gallons) of the city's water needs in 2020. Half of the water came from the four wells located nearest the proposed gravel pit area.

the proposed site, and the entire proposed expansion is located within the city's drinking water supply management site. "If you strip all the aggregate out of here (at the proposed site), you're going to lose that time of travel between that water body and these wells — basically the filtering capacity," Hartman said.

The proposed site is also near a state wildlife management area and the Rock River, a critical habitat for the Topeka Shiner and Plains Topminnow.

The commissioners' action means the expansion project cannot proceed until the more in-depth environment impact study is completed.

The study would outline the specifics of any potential environmental effects if the expansion is allowed to proceed as proposed.

Hartman said the study's cost falls upon Northern Con-Agg, if it proceeds with the project. The company can also abandon and/or change plans for the proposed expansion.

County approves salary increases for 2022/from page 1

\$90,736 to \$97,427.

•Deputy auditor/treasurer Vanessa Letter, \$50,544 to \$52,187.

•Assistant county attorney David Owens, \$75,500 to \$78,000.

•Veterans service officer David Haugom (part time), \$28,915 to

\$29,858.

•Land Records director Rachel Jacobs, (first year), \$63,273.

•Sergeant Jeff Wieneke, \$91,374 to \$97,427.

•Library director Calla Jarvie, \$66,296 to \$71,177.

director Barb Verhey, \$63,960 to \$66,040.

•County public works director/engineer Mark Sehr, \$122,390 to \$126,062.

•Assistant county engineer Andy Haakenson, \$68,937 to \$74,027.

Office director Eric Hartman, \$98,134 to \$101,316.

•Assistant Land Management Office director Doug Bos, \$80,662 to \$83,283.

•Rural water systems manager Ryan Holtz, \$80,662 to \$83,283.

City approves salary increases/from page 1

Finance Director Barb Berghorst was at \$117,499 when she retired in July. She is now on a phased retirement contract at \$2,356 biweekly through Aug. 1.

Deputy Finance Clerk Robyn Wessels was at \$92,352 and this summer

was promoted to finance director. She now makes \$96,470.

Peggy Adams filled the position of deputy finance clerk, and her salary increased from \$67,413 to \$70,720.

Electric department salaries are paid from the

city's \$600,000 contract with Missouri River Energy Services.

Those workers — Brian Remme, Mike Gangestad, Dakota Olson, Mike Buss and Jeff Bechthold — are MRES employees, and their salary information is not public.

City levy to increase 11.77 percent/from page 1

Levy increase not the same as property tax increase

The council acknowledged that the city's levy has been steadily increasing in recent years, but the actual increase in taxes has remained relatively modest, thanks to Luverne's overall tax rate.

A \$150,000 home for example, will see a property tax increase of roughly 1 percent in 2022, despite the levy increase of 11.77 percent.

Utility rates to increase 4.22 percent

In other business at their Dec. 14 meeting,

council members approved license fee rates and charges for city services.

With the additional increases in utility charges on water, sewer, electric, etc., the average residential bill will increase 4.22 percent per month next year.

County levy to increase 2.97 percent/from page 1

In other business on Dec. 28, the commissioners:

•approved a tonnage fee increase at the county transfer station. Other per-item pricing stayed the same. Effective Jan. 1, municipal solid waste will increase from \$80 to \$90 per ton. Demolition solid

waste increases from \$20 to \$30 per ton, and tire disposal increases from \$350 to \$375 per ton.

•authorized cleaning air ducts at the courthouse and at the health and human services building. Costs are \$41,983 and \$20,580 respectively.

•agreed to cover the

\$3,413 shortfall in the small cities' law enforcement with the Rock County Sheriff's Office after the city of Kenneth declined to renew the five-year contract.

•declined to offer an electronics and tire amnesty collection, citing excessive cost and lack of vendors for the materials.

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Hills-Beaver Creek heads into 2022 mock trial season with excitement

Patriots open virtual competition Tuesday against Rochester Century in theft by swindle case

By Mavis Fodness

Students at Hills-Beaver Creek High School are excited for the 2022 mock trial season to start next week.

The 19 team members enter the new season with a 1-3 record, but they hope to improve on Zoom Tuesday for the first competition for 2022.

Adviser Megan Klumper, who begins her third year at the helm, noticed a difference developing within this year's team.

"I have been extremely proud of the work ethic of my team this year," she said. "People on the outside may not notice how much time and effort students put into preparing for our competitions."

Students focus on becoming defense and/or prosecuting lawyers, witnesses or court personnel. They began practicing in October when the case was released.

Traditionally the mock trials are in actual courtrooms throughout the state. However, the upcoming season remains virtual via Zoom.

"This is because the courthouses are still trying to make up for the Covid year setbacks," Klumper said.

On competition days, the H-BC team can choose to compete from home or in school. H-BC will compete together in a classroom, each student in front of his or her own computer.

"Being together in one location at least gives us a sense of being a team," Klumper said.

This year's case

This year's case, State of Minnesota vs. Taylor Blair, focuses on crowdfunding in a "theft by swindle" case.

Blair is the founder of Minnesota Nice Pet Rescue (MNPR) and raised funds through UfundUs, a fictional crowdfunding site. He paid for elaborate purchases through the fund



Mavis Fodness photo/0106 Mock Trial 2022 H-BC

The 2022 Hills-Beaver Creek High School mock trial team consists of 19 students including (front, from left) Emma Deelstra, Taylor Durst, Larissa Steinhoff, Lexi Drake, (second row) Kyler Hartz, Troy Durst, Britton McKenzie, Leif Tollefson, Anthony Kobernick-Pasch, (back) Bailey Spykerboer, Tyrae Goodface, Taylor Spykerboer, Taylor Gehrke, Madison Gaugler, Tahliya Kruger, Olivia Susie and Avril Susie. Not pictured are Liam Raymon and Joy Taubert.

set up to care for abused or neglected dogs. Blair said the new truck and swimming pool are used in the dogs' care. Blair, however, is accused of swindling funds from the public for his own use.

"The students appear to like this year's case," Klumper said. "They are more interested in figuring out and arguing who is the 'criminal.'"

This year's H-BC team

Making up H-BC's prosecution team this

year are freshman Bailey Spykerboer and sophomores Joy Taubert and Taylor Gehrke. Freshman Emma Deelstra is an alternate lawyer.

Witnesses for the prosecution include sophomores Larissa Steinhoff, Tahliya Kruger and Madison Gaugler. Steinhoff portrays River Charles, a forensic-financial crimes analyst. Kruger is Alex Knot, co-founder of MNPR, and Gaugler is Jay Buchanan, one of the MNPR donors.

Witness alternates are sophomores Avril Susie, Olivia Susie and Anthony Kobernick-Pasch.

The defense team lawyers are sophomore Taylor Spykerboer, juniors Leif Tollefson and Lexi Drake. Senior Troy Durst is an alternate lawyer.

Defense witnesses are sophomore Kyler Hartz and juniors Britton McKenzie and Tyrae Goodface. Hartz portrays forensic accountant Jordan Carpenter. McKenzie is the defendant Taylor Blair, and

Goodface is a volunteer at MNPR. Witness alternates are seniors Liam Raymon and Taylor Durst.

Time keepers are senior Troy Durst and sophomores Kyler Hartz and Kobernick-Pasch. The digital exhibits presenter is senior Liam Raymon.

Adviser Klumper stresses thinking critically about the case and what happens in the courtroom are skills the students are beginning to master as they prepare to face opposing teams.

"The students appear to like this year's case. They are more interested in figuring out and arguing who is the 'criminal.'"

— H-BC mock trial adviser Megan Klumper

"They can use that information to organize a strategy against the other side — think 'on their feet' because they can only speculate how the other teams will approach the argument," she said. "Honestly, it is exciting to experience."

Last year the case focused on whether or not an engaged couple should get their money back from a vendor because Covid restrictions forced changing how the couple wanted to celebrate.

"I thought this case was relevant, but the students were just sick of hearing about Covid in their real lives. Hearing it over and over with the case was just too much," Klumper said.

The 2022 mock trial season begins next week in a five-round format that ends Feb. 19. The state tournament is scheduled for early March.

H-BC's competition schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, Jan. 11, prosecution takes on Rochester Century.
- Wednesday, Jan. 19, defense takes on St. Peter White.

Round three takes

Mock trial, go to page 7

MENU

Monday, Jan. 10: Tater tot casserole, French cut green beans, warm peaches, cookie, dinner roll.

Half-Price Day sponsored by Pat and Katie Baustian.

Tuesday, Jan. 11: Chicken wild rice soup, broccoli, pineapple, cookie.

Wednesday, Jan. 12: Meatballs, mashed potatoes, carrots, bread, dessert.

Thursday, Jan. 13: Roasted turkey with gravy, mashed potatoes, peas, sage dressing, dessert.

Half-Price Day sponsored by Grace Lutheran Church.

Friday, Jan. 14: Barbecued pork on a bun, baked beans, spiced pears, dessert.

LSS Dining offers well-balanced and affordable meals in a community atmosphere.

Call Lynette Hoiland at 283-9846 to arrange to pick up a dinner or for home-delivered meals.

Gift certificates are available at the meal site or online at www.lssmn.org/nutrition.

REMEMBER WHEN

10 years ago (2012)

•Child Guide director Lisa Dinger's job is to connect children who face problems to organizations or people with solutions.

Some kids have small problems, like not having a box of crayons or gym shoes when they are needed. Other kids have big problems, like spending the weekend hungry.

Dinger's job for 10 years has been to manage the network of problems and solutions for Luverne students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

The Child Guide program began as a program to help at-risk students, but it has become used by nearly all students.

25 years ago (1997)

•A local car dealership may be a bit more cautious with its test drive policy after a 1995 Mercury Sable was stolen off the lot last weekend.

Dick Herman, owner of Herman Motor Company, Luverne, said a man took the car for a drive Saturday morning, and returned it to the lot saying he was interested in buying the car for his daughter, but he wanted to come back and show it to her.

The next day, the car was missing. Herman said he's quite sure the man had a set of keys made while he was test driving the car and came back later and stole it. "I told my son (Joel) to check the two places in town that make duplicate keys and ask them if a man of that description had a set of Ford keys made that particularly time Saturday," Herman said. "As it turns out, the hardware store said they did." ...

Luverne Police Chief Keith Aanenson said law enforcement authorities across the nation have been notified of the theft.

50 years ago (1972)

•Cory Daniel Mensen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mike Mensen, Route 1, Luverne, became the first baby of the new year at Luverne's Community Hospital on Jan. 3 at 7:41 a.m. The six pound nine ounce baby boy and

his parents will be the recipients of a host of prizes offered by 18 Luverne merchants who co-sponsor the First Baby of the Year Contest along with the Star-Herald.

75 years ago (1947)

•Luverne's retail stores will close at 9 p.m. on Saturdays during the months of January, February and March, it was agreed Monday night at a meeting of store representatives.

About 20 retailers were represented at a meeting called by Luverne Civic and Commerce officials to decide upon an earlier Saturday night closing hour during the next three months. Several of the members favored a six o'clock closing on Saturdays, the same as on other days, but after some discussion, it was agreed to close at nine o'clock, which is the closing hour in neighboring cities. Those favoring the nine o'clock closing pointed out that Luverne would thus be accommodating the people of its trade territory the same as other communities were accommodating their respective trade areas.

100 years ago (1922)

•A very substantial increase in business, considering existing conditions, was made in 1921 by the Rose Dell Mutual Fire Insurance company, according to reports made at the annual meeting of the policyholders Tuesday. At the close of business on Dec. 31, 1920, the amount of insurance carried by the company aggregated \$5,973,658. The number of new policies issued during the year was 326, carrying insurance aggregating \$1,237,692, and the policies that expired numbered 363, and the insurance value \$1,180,400.

The losses sustained by the company during the past year were unusually heavy, aggregating \$8,994.26, of which \$4,814.59 was caused by fire, and \$4,179.69 by lightning. Of the total \$2,167.11 was on buildings, \$2,764.05 on household goods, grain, feed and implements, and \$4,063.10 on live stock.

1905: Weather breaks for splendid July 4

The following appeared in The Rock County Herald on July 7, 1905.

Was a Grand Success Such Was Luverne's Celebration of the Glorious Fourth 6000 People Were in Attendance

Notwithstanding Preceding Unfavorable Weather Conditions, Luverne Observes Our Nation's Birthday With a Notable Successful Celebration—Occasion Graced by Presence of Governor John A. Johnson Who Delivers Inspiring Address—Splendid Program Carried Out to the Satisfaction of All

Despite a week of almost continuous rain which fell with unknown persistency up to the very dawn of the Fourth, Luverne celebrated our Nation's birthday, carried out the elaborate plans that had been arranged and made the day one long



BITS BY BETTY

By Betty Mann, president Rock County Historical Society

to be remembered by the thousands of people whose faith in Luverne's ability to provide entertainment notwithstanding unfavorable conditions led them to become our guests on this glorious occasion.

Happy Change in Gloomy Prospect

The closing preliminary arrangements for the celebration were made by those in charge with a marked depression of spirit. The heavy rains which had fallen practically every day of the preceding week and during the early part of Monday night seriously threatened the success of celebration and aroused grave doubts that any part of the splendid program

prepared could be given. But the breeze which sprang up from the northwest Monday afternoon cleared the skies late in the night and Tuesday morning gave assurance that the rain was over and that the celebration could go forward.

Changes in Plans Required

But the change in the weather had been too long deferred to make it possible to carry out the program without changes in the original plans. Monday morning it became apparent that under the most favorable weather conditions that could afterwards prevail it would be impossible to hold the patriotic exercises, the picnic dinner and the

vaudeville show in the park, as the heavy rains had so swollen the river that the park was almost inundated. The river continued to rise rapidly and by night Monday it was found necessary to also abandon the Driving park for the purposes of the ball game as the river overflowed the roads making it impossible to reach the grounds. Accordingly a pavilion with seats under the trees was erected at the Central school grounds for the patriotic exercises and the vaudeville show, arrangements were made for those who wished to have their picnic dinners on the school and court house grounds, and a ball ground was laid out in a grass plot in the Parriott addition.

Donations to the Rock County Historical Society can be sent to the Rock County Historical Society, 312 E. Main Street, Luverne, MN 56156.

Mann welcomes correspondence sent to manmade@iw.net.

OBITUARY

Randall Morgan

Randall Charles Morgan passed away on December 20, 2021, while under hospice care in his home in San Clemente, California, at the age of 72 after enduring three years of treatment for metastatic pancreatic cancer.



Randall was born in the Luverne Community Hospital to Bernard and Lorraine Morgan of rural Kanaranzi on Christmas Day in 1948.

He graduated from Ellsworth Public High School in 1966 and went on to achieve a degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Minnesota. He worked in industry and went on to get his MBA while working for Chrysler Motors in Detroit. In the later years of his career he went on to get his Master of Education and taught high school AP calculus and physics.

Randall married Nancy Smith in 1983. Nancy spent her career as a flight

attendant, which allowed the two of them to travel the world. They made their retirement home in San Clemente, California, from where they continued their worldly adventures.

Randall is survived by his wife, Nancy, and his

six siblings: Patricia (Ken Block) of Wapakoneta, Ohio; James (Dorothy) of Brookings, South Dakota; Larry (Mary Ann) of Maplewood, Minnesota; Richard (Carol) of Luverne; Robert (Kathy) of Lino Lakes, Minnesota; and Michael of Shoreview, Minnesota, as well as many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Always a scientist, Randall donated his body to the UCLA Medical School in Los Angeles, California.

A celebration of life will be held per his wishes in Minnesota "when there is warmer weather."

(0106 V)

FFA NEWS

FFA awards jackets to six H-BC students

Six Hills-Beaver Creek High School FFA'ers recently earned scholarships for new blue FFA jackets.

Emma Deelstra, Grace Fagerness, Jamesyn Klosterbuer, Anthony Kobernick-Pasch, Michael Martinyuk and Jack Moser are the local chapter's newest Blue Jacket Bright Future program recipients.

"The program provides FFA jackets to Minnesota youth who are starting their FFA careers," said chapter

adviser Cloey Anderson.

This is the eighth year for the program through the Minnesota FFA Foundation.

Seven additional H-BC FFA members earned the personalized blue jackets through working concessions during the school's home volleyball and basketball games.

These students include Amber Wiersema, Sawyer Bosch, Beau Baker, Cameron Allen, Bailey Spykerboer, Taylor Spykerboer and Blake Leenderts.



Talented and dedicated local quilters honored

Leola Sweeny (left) and Arlene Bendix were recently awarded the Blue Mound Quilter Award. They were recognized for their quilting talents, dedication to the art of quilting, and willingness to help their fellow quilters. Both women were involved in last year's Hospice Quilt Art project, and their quilts will be featured Saturday, June 4, at the Blue Mound Quilters' Quilt show at the Hinkly House during Buffalo Days. Quilt show chairperson is Deb Van Heerde, 507-283-2279, and Blue Mound Quilters president for 2022 is Jill Willers, 507-283-2560.

BUSINESS NEWS

Staci Bogue-Buchholz joins Gevo

Gevo, Inc., which operates the Agri-Energy LLC plant in Luverne, announced Dec. 22 that Staci-Bogue Buchholz joined Gevo as "site and process optimization leader" at the Luverne facility.

In a recent press release, Dr. Paul Bloom, chief carbon officer and chief innovation officer, said Bogue-Buchholz brings more than 20 years of experience to the job.

"Her expertise will help provide a path forward for Gevo's operations in Luverne and Silsbee (Texas)," Bloom indicated.

He mentioned her global



experience in fermentation and process development, renewable chemical operations and environment management.

"It's exciting to work alongside the talented minds at Gevo," Bogue-Buchholz stated.

"I look forward to assisting with the scale-up aspects of new programs, in addition to providing strategic and technical support to the carbon and innovation team."

Bogue-Buchholz and her family make their home in Luverne.

H-BC/continued from page 6

place Feb. 1-3 and round four Feb. 8-10. Opponents will be determined based on the results of the first two rounds.

There are 14 teams with H-BC in Region 4-6. Other area

teams include Luverne, Murray County Central, Lakeview, Fairmont and Springfield.

Round five on Feb. 19 involves the top six teams in each region. Sixteen teams compete at the state tournament.

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DEATH NOTICE

Thomas Feit

Thomas Raymond Feit, 70, Rushmore, died Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021, at Sanford Hospice Sunset Cottage in Worthington.

Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 6, at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Worthington. A memorial service will be at 10 a.m. Friday, Jan. 7, with visitation one hour prior to the service, at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Worthington. Private family burial of cremains will be at a later date.

Arrangements are provided by Dingmann Funeral Home of Worthington, dingmannandsons.com. (0106 DN)

SENIOR ATHLETES of the Week

Colin Schoeneman

Sport: Basketball
Parents: Cory Schoeneman and Sarah Schoeneman
What I like most about Basketball: Being a part of the this team.
Other extracurricular activities/hobbies: Golf
Future Plans: College



Billi Connell

Sport: Hockey
Parents: Chris Connell and Jenny Connell
What I like most about Hockey: The competitiveness of hockey.
Other extracurricular activities/hobbies: Softball, being with friends
Future Plans: Attend the University of Minnesota and play on the Gopher softball team



Brooklynn Ver Steeg

Sport: Basketball
Parents: Nate and Tonya Ver Steeg
What I like most about Basketball: Being able to play with my friends and make everlasting memories.
Other extracurricular activities: Student Council Vice President, peer tutoring, National Honor Society, choir, CTV
Future Plans: Major in physical education and hopefully continue basketball career in college.



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Cardinal girls' hockey team wins Holiday Classic in Blaine

**By Matt Lais
For the Star Herald**

The Luverne Cardinals girls' hockey team picked up three wins and a championship in the Herb Brooks Classic Hockey Tournament at the Schwan's Super Rink in Blaine Dec. 27-29.

The Cardinals played in the Silver Division of the tournament, beating University School of Milwaukee 8-0, Moose Lake Area 6-3 and Marshall 5-1.

The Cardinals improved to 14-1 on the season, bringing the first-place hardware back to Luverne.

The Luverne girls were scheduled to play Fairmont on the road Tuesday before coming back to the Blue Mound Ice Arena Friday to take on Breckenridge-Wahpeton. They'll meet Albert Lea in the Blue Mound Ice Arena Tuesday, Jan. 11.

Luverne 8, University School of Milwaukee 0

Luverne opened the Herb Brooks Classic Tournament in Blaine with an impressive win.

The Cardinals got on the board just over four minutes into the game when senior Reghan Bork got a feed from Kamryn Van Batavia to take the early lead.

Just two minutes later it was Van Batavia lighting the lamp with the assist going to Payton Behr. Luverne had a 16-7 shots on goal advantage in the first period, and Luverne goalie Cheyenne Schutz had seven saves.

The second period only saw one goal, Van Batavia's second of the game, with the assist going to Macie Edstrom at the 7:44 mark. Schutz made all six saves she faced.

Luverne put up another 11 shots in the second and brought a 3-0 lead into the second intermission.

In the third period the Cardinals put up five goals.

Van Batavia got it going at 3:21 of the third and Bork scored her second of the game just three minutes later. Behr also got her second of the game just a minute later.

Van Batavia scored her fourth and fifth goals of the game to close out the final period and give the Cardinals a commanding 8-0 win.

Third period shots on goal were 16-3 in favor of Cardinals. Total shots on goal for the game were 43-16 Luverne.

Schutz finished with 16 saves for the Cardinals and registered her sixth shutout of the year.

Luverne 6, Moose Lake Area 3

The Cardinals met the Moose Lake Area Rebels in the semifinals of the Herb Brooks Classic at the Blaine Super Rink.

Minnesota's state leading scorer Kamryn Van Batavia gave the Cardinals a 1-0 lead six minutes into the first with an assist from Reghan Bork.



File photo

Minnesota's state leading scorer, Kamryn Van Batavia, led the way for the Cardinals over the holiday break when the Luverne girls won first place in the Holiday Classic Hockey Tournament in Blaine Dec. 27-29

Van Batavia also gave the Cardinals a two-goal advantage midway through the period, Payton Behr assisted on Van Batavia's second of the game.

Luverne took a 2-0 lead into the first intermission. Schutz had 11 saves in the first to keep the Rebels off the scoreboard. Luverne had eight shots on goal in the first period.

The second period saw plenty of action from both teams.

Sandra Ribich put the Rebels on the board just 42 seconds into the second period, cutting the lead to one. Two minutes later Luverne's Mallory Nelson beat Moose Lake Area goalie Mallory Hartl to put the Cardinals up 3-1.

Forty-five seconds later Moose Lake's Raechel Painovich responded to again cut the lead to one.

Luverne answered back with a couple more goals. It was Van Batavia at 5:27 and Ella Apel at the 12:35 mark of the second to take a 5-2 lead into the locker room.

Shots on goal were 15-12 in favor of the Rebels.

The final stanza started with the Rebels cutting the lead to two with Gracie Hartl getting her first of the game. Van Batavia scored an empty net goal with just 11 seconds left in the game to give the Cardinals the 6-3 victory.

Schutz finished with an impressive 32 saves in the game. Total shots were knotted at 32 for the game between the Rebels and Cardinals.

Luverne 5, Marshall 1

Luverne faced familiar competition in the championship round of the Herb Brooks Classic Silver Division.

Luverne took on conference foe and Section 3 rival Marshall at the TRIA Rink.

The first period saw plenty of shots from both teams but remained scoreless. Luverne held an 11-10 shot advantage in the first.

In the second period Luverne got a couple of goals from junior standout Kamryn Van Batavia to take a two-goal lead into the second intermission.

Van Batavia scored at the 4:42 and the 14:46 marks of the period with assists going to Mallory Von Tersch, Ella Apel and Reghan Bork.

Marshall outshot Luverne 13-11 in the second. Schutz saved all 11 shots she faced in the second.

In the final period Van Batavia gave the Cardinals a 3-0 lead just 53 seconds in.

Marshall's Reghan Loft put the Tigers on the board at 7:37 of Period 3, but that's all Marshall would get past Schutz.

Van Batavia and Mallory Nelson picked up Luverne's fourth and fifth goals respectively to give the Cardinals a 5-1 win and the Silver Division Championship of the Herb Brooks Classic.

Schutz finished with 30 saves in the contest.

Final shots on goal for the game were 34-31 in favor of the Cardinals.

Patriot boys win at SMSU over holiday

H-BC basketball team back in action on Friday

**By Dalton Bass
For the Star Herald**

The H-BC boys' basketball team traveled to Marshall to take on the Canby Lancers on Thursday Dec. 30.

The H-BC Patriots were able to take control in the second half to cruise to an 83-68 victory.

In what was a back and forth affair in the first period, senior Cole Baker (25 points, six rebounds, and five assists) and the Patriots outscored the Lancers 47-34 after intermission.

Oliver Deelstra (12 points, six rebounds, and six assists), playing in his first game following an elbow injury suffered during football, helped the offensive explosion for the Patriots. They scored a season-high 83 points after averaging just 46.6 points per game

coming into the contest.

Drew Leenderts (six rebounds) rounded out the trio of double digit scorers for the Patriots with 12 points.

Seniors Ty Bundesen and Andrew Harris, both with nine points and four rebounds, and Max Scholten with five points were also contributors for the Pates.

H-BC will look to carry momentum on offense into conference play as they host the Adrian-Ellsworth Dragons Friday night in Hills.

Box scores

Baker 4 3 8-12 25, Raymon 1 0 3-4 5, Harnack 0 0 0-0 0, Page 0 0 0-2 0, Leenderts 2 2 2-3 12, Bundesen 3 0 3-4 9, Gehrke 0 0 0-0 0, Metzger 0 0 0-0 0, Taubert 0 0 0-0 0, Tatge 0 0 0-0 0, Durst 2 0 0-0 4, Scholten 2 0 1-2 5, Harris 4 0 1-1 9, Wiersema 1 0 0-0 2

Team statistics

HBC: 29 of 59 (49 percent); 19 for 30 free throws (63 percent); 34 rebounds; 216 turnovers.

Canby: 15 of 48 (32 percent); 14 for 21 free throws (67 percent); 38 rebounds; 22 turnovers.

Cardinal boys visit Rochester for Kiwanis Hockey Festival

**By Matt Lais
For the Star Herald**

The Cardinals boys' hockey team traveled to Rochester Dec. 28-30 for the Kiwanis Hockey Festival where Luverne tested its hockey skills against some high caliber Minnesota talent.

The Cardinals played well but were unable to return home with a victory after falling to Rochester Lourdes 2-1, Albert Lea 3-2, and Bloomington Kennedy 7-2.

Luverne, whose record moves to 5-5 on the year, was scheduled to host Fairmont on Tuesday and will be off until Jan. 13 when Redwood Valley comes to Luverne.

Rochester Lourdes 2, Luverne 1

The Cardinals opened up their holiday tournament in Rochester taking on the host Rochester Lourdes hockey team. The Cardinals and Rochester traded shots and opportunities the first period but remained scoreless at the end of the period.

In the second period

Luverne and Rochester Lourdes traded goals.

Luverne's Brock Behrend put the Cardinals on the board with assists going to Zach Kruse and Patrick Kroski. Rochester Lourdes received a goal from Jack Roe in the second, ending the period with the score at 1-1.

The final period saw only one goal, and it was Rochester Lourdes' Jack Roe again scoring the game winner to give his hometown team the 2-1 victory over Luverne in the opening game of the Kiwanis Hockey Festival.

Luverne goalie Tyler Arends had 28 saves for the Cardinals in the loss.

Albert Lea 3, Luverne 2

The Cardinals lost an overtime heartbreaker in the second game of the Kiwanis Hockey Festival in Rochester.

The first period would see 18 shots on goal, but both goalies kept it a scoreless game after one

Hockey, go to page 12

Minnesota DNR enforces 'our' rules in protecting environment from pollution

I was sitting in my garage over the New Year's weekend having a few adult beverages with my neighbor when an all too familiar topic was raised. He expressed his angst about the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources — that they are just too powerful.

I then prodded for some additional details. I asked him to give me an example of what he thought was too powerful. He came up with a very vague example of how hard it was to get a permit from the department to do anything.

I quizzed again and finally he came clean that he had heard at coffee about a guy that wanted to straighten a natural watercourse in order to improve the agricultural drainage in one of his farm fields.

He himself had never had a negative interaction with the department, but he was just voicing a negative view about the DNR permitting process. He did not even know the name of the person



THE OUTDOORS

**By Scott Rall
Outdoors columnist**

who was trying to get the permit.

Straightening a natural water course is illegal in all but the rarest cases, as Minnesota statute prevents it.

What follows is my interpretation of what most of those perceived negative interactions with the department stem from.

I have always admired the Minnesota DNR over most other state agencies. In my dealing with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, they use voluntary compliance. There was a person pumping his hog lagoon directly into a natural waterway. They told him to

stop. He later buried a tile under ground and continued to pollute the waterway.

After seven or eight years he completed his goal and never paid a penalty or fine. Voluntary compliance is their way to go. What about the resulting pollution?

The DNR has regulations and rules that they actually follow and enforce. When someone wants to act in violation of these rules, they engage individuals, businesses and corporations to adhere to the rules to protect the resources of the state. We, by the

way, are "the state."

The one fact that really seems to evade most people's understanding of the Minnesota DNR is that all of the rules and regulations they enforce are not their rules. They are rules that have been put in statute by the legislature in Minnesota. If you don't like a rule or regulation, beating up the DNR is the wrong approach. Politicians in the state are the ones responsible if there is a rule you don't like.

For example, Minnesota statute dictates how deep a drainage ditch can be dug. When a cleanout is performed, you cannot dig that man-made ditch deeper than it was before. You can only clean it out to the depth determined prior.

Everyone blames the DNR for this issue when all the DNR is doing is upholding the current laws in the state that they themselves did not write or vote into statute.

Wetland drainage laws are another area where the DNR takes a lot of heat, and in those instances, they again are only enforcing the statutes currently in state law. The "just look the other way" method leaves them in dereliction of their responsibilities as protectors of the state's resources.

If you get caught with 20 walleyes over the limit, you should get a ticket and in my opinion a much bigger fine than currently allowed by Minnesota law. Who would or could disagree with that statement?

An ATV user who destroys state trails or causes destruction to wetlands by destroying habitat should be penalized according to state statute.

Minnesota's natural resources management should be guided primarily by wildlife professionals and the scientists and biologists that back them up.

Rall, continued on page 12

St. Catherine Catholic Church
203 E. Brown St., Luverne
St. Catherine Ph. 283-8502; www.stscl.org
Monsignor Gerald Kosse, Pastor

Sundays 8:30 a.m. Mass. Public Mass will be celebrated at FULL capacity in the church. Masses: 9 a.m. Wednesdays, 10 a.m. Friday at the nursing homes – check the bulletin. All Sunday masses will be live streamed on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pg/stcluverne/videos/>. Visit www.stscl.org for more information.

Luverne Christian Reformed Church
605 N. Estey St., Luverne
Office Ph. 283-8482; Prayer Line Ph. 449-5982
www.luverneccrc.com – office@luverneccrc.com

Sundays 9:30 a.m. Worship service. 6:30 p.m. Evening worship service. We are streaming Sunday services live on YouTube at 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Send him a friend request if you're not connected. You may also visit our website for delayed broadcasts. Also our services are on local cable TV at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and at 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays. In all circumstances, may we joyfully declare: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." Psalm 124:8.

First Baptist Church
103 N. Jackson St., P.O. Box 975, Luverne
Ph. 283-4091; email: fbcluv@iw.net – www.fbcluverne.org
Walt Moser, Pastor

Sundays, 10:30 a.m. In-person worship service. Service is also on Facebook Live at 10:30 a.m.

Grace Lutheran Church
500 N. Kniss Ave., Luverne
Ph. 507-283-4431; www.graceluverne.org –
graceluverne@iw.net
Ann Zastrow, Pastor

Thursday, Jan. 6: 8:30 a.m. Missions in Action. Sunday, Jan. 9: 9 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion and two-year-old Milestone. 10 a.m. Coffee fellowship. No Sunday school. 5 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion. 6:30 p.m. Worship practice. 6:30 p.m. Transitional Task Force meeting. Tuesday, Jan. 11: 9 a.m. Staff meeting. 6:45 p.m. Ministry meetings. 8 p.m. PPC meeting. Wednesday, Jan. 12: 7 a.m. Men's Bible study. 3:15 p.m. Faithweavers. 5 p.m. Youth supper. 6:15 p.m. 6th and 7th grade Confirmation. 7:15 p.m. 8th grade Confirmation. 8:15 p.m. 9th grade Confirmation. Thursday, Jan. 13: 8:30 a.m. Missions in Action. Online, TV and Radio Worship options are available. Online: Sundays 9 a.m. on the church website www.graceluverne.org, click Worship tab or go directly to our Facebook page at Grace Lutheran ELCA, Luverne. TV: Vast Channel 3 will air our worship service Mondays at 4:30 p.m. and Fridays at 10 a.m. Radio: KQAD-AM Radio will air our worship service on Sundays at 8:15 a.m.

Bethany Lutheran Church
720 N. Kniss Ave., Luverne
Ph. 507-283-4571 or 605-215-9834

Sundays, 10:15 a.m. Worship service; worship online as well (at els.org). Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. Zoom Bible study. See our Facebook page, Bethany Lutheran Church (Luverne) for other classes and events.

American Reformed Church
304 N. Fairview Dr., Luverne
Ph. 283-8600; email: office@arcluverne.org

Thursday, Jan. 6: 9 a.m. Cookie Crew. 5:30 p.m. Tumbling Tykes. Friday, Jan. 7: 6:30 a.m. Community Men's Bible study. Sunday, Jan. 9: 9:30 a.m. Worship Service. 10:45 a.m. Congregation meeting. p.m. 12 p.m. Youth room reserved. Tuesday, Jan. 11: 12 p.m. Staff meeting. 7 p.m. Youth room reserved. 7 p.m. Consistory meeting. Wednesday, Jan. 12: 5:30 p.m. Midweek Meal. 6:30 p.m. Pioneer Club. 6:30 p.m. Jr. and Sr. High youth groups. Thursday, Jan. 13: 5:30 p.m. Tumbling Tikes. Services are also broadcast on Vast Channel 3 on Mondays at 6 p.m. and Wednesdays at 4 p.m. DVD's available upon request. To stay up to date on announcements, follow us on Facebook and Instagram @arcluverne.

Rock River Community Church (formerly First Assembly of God)
1075 110th Ave., 2 miles west of Luverne on County Rd. 4
Ph. 612-800-1255; email info@rockrivercommunity.church
Bob Junak, Pastor; Annette Junak, Assistant Pastor
Sundays, 9 a.m. Sunday school; 10 a.m. Worship service. Children's church for ages 3-6th grade and nursery for ages 0-3 provided during our services. Wednesdays, 7 p.m. Worship service. All services are in-person and all are welcome.

United Methodist Church
109 N. Freeman Ave., Luverne
Ph. 283-4529

Saturday, Jan. 8: AA meeting. Sunday, Jan. 9: 9 a.m. Adult Sunday school. 9:15 a.m. Coffee. 10:30 a.m. Worship service with Holy Communion. 4:30 p.m. Genesis/Revelation Bible study. Prayer Warriors following service. Live streamed on Facebook and radio. Monday, Jan. 10: 6 p.m. Worship and music meeting. Tuesday, Jan. 11: LLP Mankato. 1:30 p.m. Sewing Ministry. Wednesday, Jan. 12: 6:15 p.m. FUEL. 6:30 p.m. Confirmation. 8 p.m. AA meeting. Pizza Ranch Take Out Fundraiser Night.

First Presbyterian Church
302 Central Lane, Luverne
Ph. 283-4787; email: Firstpc@iw.net – www.fpcluverne.com
Jason Cunningham, Pastor

Thursday, Jan. 6: PW Executive. Sunday, Jan. 9: 9:30 a.m. Worship service.

10:30 a.m. Sunday school. Wednesday, Jan. 12: 5:30 p.m. Bells. 6:15 p.m. Choir. 7:15 p.m. Committee meetings. In-person Worship service and live on Facebook. Our Facebook page can be found under First Presbyterian Church of Luverne. We are also on the local Luverne cable station at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and 10 a.m. on Thursdays.

St. John Lutheran Church
803 N. Cedar St., Luverne
Ph. 283-2316; email: stjoh@iw.net
www.stjohnlutheranluverne.org
Rev. Dr. Phil Booe, Pastor

Saturday, Jan. 8: 5:30 p.m. Worship with Communion. Sunday, Jan. 9: 9 a.m. Worship with Communion. 10:15 a.m. Bible Class; Sunday School. 11:20 a.m. Junior Choir. 2 p.m. Sunday Fun Day. Monday, Jan. 10: 1 p.m. Quilters meet. 6 p.m. Take down decorations. 7:30 p.m. Men's Club. Tuesday, Jan. 11: 7 p.m. Guild. Wednesday, Jan. 12: 6:30 p.m. Kids for Christ; Confirmation. 7 p.m. Senior Choir. 7:30 p.m. High School Youth Group. Services will be available on the Vast Channel 3 Sunday and online at the city website, cityofluverne.org.

Living Rock Church
500 E. Main St., Luverne
Ph. 449-0057; www.livingrockswmn.org
Billy Skaggs, Pastor

New Life Celebration Church
101 W. Maple, Luverne
Ph. (605) 368-1924; email: newlifecel@iw.net
Food mission every third Thursday.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
305 E. 2nd St., P.O. Box 36, Hardwick
Ph. (507) 669-2855; zionoffice@alliancecom.net
Jesse Baker, Pastor

Sunday, Jan. 9: 9 a.m. Worship service. 10:15 a.m. Sunday School. 10:30 a.m. Bible study. Worship service on Luverne cable at 3:30 p.m. every Thursday and Friday.

First Lutheran Church
300 Maple St., Valley Springs, S.D.
Ph. (605) 757-6662
Mark Eliason, Pastor

Sunday, Jan. 9: 9 a.m. Worship service. 10 a.m. Sunday school. Masks are strongly recommended, but not required, even if fully vaccinated. Worship will be streamed live on Facebook Video worship via YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHdQwVxFcU4>

Palisade Lutheran Church
211 121st St., Garretson, S.D.
Ph. (507) 597-6257 – firstpalisade@alliancecom.net
Mark Eliason, Pastor

Sunday, Jan. 9: 9:30 a.m. Sunday school. 10:30 a.m. Worship service. Thursday, Jan. 13: 1:30 p.m. Palisade WELCA meeting. Masks are strongly recommended, but not required, even if fully vaccinated. Worship will be streamed live on Facebook. Video worship via YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHdQwVxFcU4>

First Presbyterian Church
201 S. 3rd St., P.O. Box 73, Beaver Creek
Ph. 507-935-5025
email: lori.firstpres@gmail.com

Sundays, 9:30 a.m. Worship Service. Second Tuesday of each month, 7 p.m. Session meeting.

Magnolia United Methodist Church
501 E. Luverne St., Magnolia
Ph. 605-215-3429
email: magnoliannumc@gmail.com
Nancy Manning, Pastor

Sunday, 9 a.m., in-person with livestream available on the church's Facebook site.

Steen Reformed Church
112 W. Church Ave., Steen
Ph. 855-2336
Jeremy Wiersema, Pastor

Sunday, 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Worship service in-person with livestream available on Facebook and YouTube. Radio worship on KQAD Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
112 N. Main St., Hills
Ph. 962-3270

Sunday, Jan. 9: 9 a.m. Worship at Tuff Chapel. 10 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion. 9 a.m. Sunday School. 7-8:30 p.m. Youth group meets. Worship will be streamed live to Facebook at Bethlehem of Hills. You can find more info on our website blchills.org. Tuesday, Jan. 11: 2 p.m. Tuff Home Bible study. 3:30 p.m. Tuff Village Bible study. Wednesday, Jan. 12: 9 a.m. Quilting. 6 p.m. Confirmation. 7 p.m. Social/dessert time. 7:15 p.m. Wednesday night worship service.

Hills United Reformed Church
410 S. Central Ave., Hills
Office Ph. 962-3254
hillsurc@alliancecom.net
Alan Camarigg, Pastor

Epiphany

The season of Epiphany begins on January 6 as the Christmas season comes to a close. This special celebration of the incarnation recalls many events in Jesus' life: his birth, his baptism, and even his first miracle at a wedding feast in Cana, when he turned water into wine.

Epiphany first draws our attention to the visit of the Magi, or wise men. The tale is familiar. It is a story of distant astrologers from the East who followed a special star to find the Christ. We remember their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and we can imagine them laying each one at Jesus' feet.

The Magi's visit came to an end when an angel told them to avoid going back through Jerusalem. So, they high-tailed it back east, avoiding Herod to protect Jesus.

Too often when we hear this story, the focus is on what the Magi knew or did, rather than what God is revealing to us. Is the moral that we should be like the Magi, seeking out Jesus at all costs, worshiping him with all that we have, and protecting his name from the Herods of this world? Maybe not.

The problem is that Epiphany is not a story about the Magi after all. Over time we have added so much to their myths that the Bible does not reveal.

For instance, we don't know that there were three of them. Despite the song "We Three Kings," we are fairly certain they were not kings. And no matter how your nativity is arranged, the Magi didn't visit Jesus in the manger. The Bible tells us they visited the holy family in Bethlehem in

BUILT ON A ROCK

By Rev. Dr. Phil Booe, St. John Lutheran Church, Luverne

a house they were living in nearly two years later.

We have added so much detail to this story because we try to make it a story about the wise men, when it is actually a story about how Jesus is God come down to Earth.

What is amazing about the visit of the Magi is not that they were so wise, but that they were Gentiles.

They were led by God to a Jewish Messiah to demonstrate that Jesus was not the savior of a select few, but of the whole world. It was not their wisdom that brought them to the Christ, it was God.

This is a lesson for us. Even the wisest Magi of old needed God's help to give them direction. This direction came to them in the form of God's appearance in the world and through his holy word.

The Epiphany we celebrate today is that God appeared to us as a child, grew in stature and wisdom in the man Jesus, and then died and rose again so that we might be forgiven and have everlasting life.

We know this because of the faithful witness of the prophets and apostles and because God still appears to us today in his Holy Scriptures, where he continues to guide us and give us direction. Through the Bible, we have access to wisdom and knowledge of which even the Magi would be envious.

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City of Luverne summary 2022 budget information

2022 MINNESOTA CITY SUMMARY BUDGET STATEMENT

The purpose of this Report is to provide summary 2022 budget information concerning the City of Luverne to interested citizens. The budget is published in accordance with Minn. Stat. 471.6965. This budget is a summary document only; the complete ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

	2021 Budget	2022 Budget
Revenues		
Property Taxes	2,295,920	2,527,380
Tax Increments	71,700	76,700
All Other Taxes (franchise, hotel/motel taxes, etc.)	588,000	623,700
Special Assessments	-	-
Licenses And Permits	67,954	82,600
Federal Grants	-	-
State General Purpose Aid (LGA, Market Value credits)	1,516,952	1,532,676
State Categorical Aid (State Fire Aid)	85,919	87,097
Grants from County and Other Local Governments	-	-
Charges For Services	712,980	696,602
Fines and Forfeits	13,000	13,000
Interest On Investments	39,520	77,600
Miscellaneous Revenues	137,165	136,165
TOTAL REVENUES	5,529,110	5,853,520
Proceeds From Bond Sales	-	-
Transfers From Other Funds (incl. Enterprise Funds)	2,026,000	2,593,011
Total Revenues and Other Financing Sources	7,555,110	8,446,531
Current Expenditures (Exclude Capital Outlay)		
General Government (board, administration, etc.)	832,286	898,790
Public Safety	1,396,375	1,538,010
Public Works (Streets and Airport)	1,110,120	1,096,820
Sanitation	-	-
Health	-	-
Culture and Recreation	1,379,800	1,420,600
Conservation of Natural Resources	155,525	190,525
Economic Development	-	-
Miscellaneous Current Expenditures	160,940	130,940
Total Current Expenditures	5,035,046	5,275,685
Debt Service - Principal	217,966	216,600
Interest and Fiscal Charges	18,486	16,751
Streets & Highways Construction	-	68,559
Capital Outlay	425,500	1,882,000
Transfers To Other Funds (incl. Enterprise Funds)	1,301,000	1,108,011
Total Expenditures and Other Financing Uses	6,997,998	8,567,606
Fund Balance		
General Fund - Beginning Balance (January 1)	2,829,124	2,829,124
General Fund - Ending Balance - (December 31)	2,829,124	2,804,124
Increase (Decrease) in Fund Balance	-	(25,000)
Other Items		
Total property Tax Levy - All Funds	2,298,720	2,263,720
Net Unrealized Gain or (Loss) from Investments for 2022	-	-

(01-06)

ISD #2184 School Board meets Nov. 23

MINUTES OF REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2184, ROCK COUNTY, LUVERNE, MINNESOTA

A regular meeting of the Board of Education, ISD #2184, was held in the District Office on November 23, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

The following members were present: Katie Baustian, Jodi Bosch, Eric Hartman, Tim Jarchow, Jeff Stratton and David Wrigg. Absent: Reva Sehr. Also present: Craig Oftedahl, Jason Phelps, Ryan Johnson, Tyler Reisch, Cory Schmuck, Becky Rahm, Griffen Jarchow, Sara Hanson, Syndal Pick, several cheerleaders, and Mavis Fodness - Rock County Star Herald.

Chairperson Eric Hartman opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Motion made by Baustian, second by Stratton, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

Syndal Pick, representing the Cheerleaders, presented information and a request to the School Board to implement Basketball Cheerleading.

Chairperson Eric Hartman presented a summary of Superintendent Oftedahl's Performance Appraisal. Cory Schmuck, Buildings and Grounds Director, gave an updated report to the School Board on staffing, parking lots, roofing, and other areas of the building and grounds.

Administrative reports were given. Motion made by Bosch, second by Jarchow, to approve the October 28, 2021, school board minutes as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

Business Manager Tyler Reisch reviewed the School District bills with the Board in the amount of \$426,833.40; payroll in the amount of \$983,302.91; and, Student Activity bills in the amount of \$1,897.37. Motion made by Baustian, second by Bosch, to approve payment of the bills as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Baustian, second by Stratton, to receive the Student Activity Report showing the balances as of October 31, 2021. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Bosch, second by Stratton, to approve the District Revenues and Expenditure Report that Tyler gave earlier with the school district bills. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Wrigg, second by Jarchow, to accept the following:
RESOLUTION OF GOVERNING BOARD SUPPORTING FORM A APPLICATION TO MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE FOUNDATION

WHEREAS, the Minnesota State High School League Foundation was formed to provide support for Minnesota's high school youth to participate in athletics and fine arts;

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of ISD #2184 - Luverne Public Schools, recognizes the value of student participation in extracurricular activities; and

WHEREAS, the MSHSL Foundation is offering grants and funding to assist schools in recognizing, promoting and funding extracurricular participation by high school students in athletic and fine arts programs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Governing Board of ISD #2184 - Luverne Public Schools supports the school's application to the Minnesota State High School League Foundation for a Form A grant to offset student activity fees Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Baustian, second by Stratton, to approve revised Policy 902 - Usage of School District Facilities and Equipment. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Stratton, second by Jarchow, to approve the following revised policies:
Policy 102 - Equal Educational Opportunity
Policy 406 - Public and Private Personnel Data
Policy 413 - Harassment and Violence
Policy 501 - School Weapons Policy
Policy 515 - Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records
Policy 524 - Internet/Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy
Policy 534 - School Meals Policy

It was noted that the changes were driven by Minnesota Statute and also judicial recommendations. All changes were made as directed by the Minnesota School Boards Association. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Baustian, second by Bosch, to approve the hiring of Savannah Siebenahler as M/HS Paraprofessional effective November 29, 2021. Motion unanimously carried. Motion made by Bosch, second by Stratton, to approve the transfer of Danielle Ganun from M/HS Paraprofessional to Preschool Paraprofessional. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Baustian, second by Bosch, to approve Kaden Ericson as volunteer Boys Hockey coach. Motion unanimously carried. Motion made by Jarchow, second by Stratton, to approve Cody Gehrke as volunteer Gymnastics coach. Motion unanimously carried. Motion made by Baustian, second by Jarchow, to approve Joel Evans as volunteer Wrestling coach. Motion unanimously carried. Motion made by Bosch, second by Wrigg, to approve Lance Ripka as volunteer Wrestling coach. Motion unanimously carried. Motion made by Wrigg, second by Bosch, to approve Matt Fodness as volunteer Wrestling coach. Motion unanimously carried. Motion made by Stratton, second by Jarchow, to approve Jeremy Hough as volunteer Wrestling coach. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Wrigg, second by Baustian, to approve the hiring of Tara Sudenga as MS Girls Basketball coach. Motion unanimously carried. Motion made by Bosch, second by Stratton, to approve the hiring of Mike Gonnerman as MS Boys Basketball coach. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion made by Baustian, second by Jarchow, to accept the retirement of Brenda Fodness, M/HS Cook, effective November 30, 2021. Motion unanimously carried.

Committee reports were given. Member Baustian and Superintendent Oftedahl attended the Luverne Community Economic Development Commission meeting.

The upcoming meeting dates were reviewed. Motion made by Jarchow, second by Stratton, to adjourn the meeting. Motion unanimously carried.

Dated: November 23, 2021

Reva Sehr, Clerk
(01-06)

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CARDS OF THANKS

The family of Ginny Wessels would like to thank you for the visits, food, cards, donations, flowers, and kind expressions of sympathy following her sad passing. Your support at this difficult time was very much appreciated and of great comfort to the family.
Thank you
(12.31-1.6)

EMPLOYMENT

Ellsworth Public School is accepting applications for a Paraprofessional. Applications can be found on the school website: <https://www.ellsworth.mntm.org/district/district-vacancies.cfm> or by calling the school at 507-967-2242. (12.24-1.13)

Oasis Care Home in Luverne is hiring for a part time Home Health Aide. Pay is \$15/hour. Call for more details. 507-449-6156. (12.31-1.20)

EMPLOYMENT

HELP WANTED: Looking for a fun and rewarding job? Palisades State Park and Big Sioux Recreation Area are accepting applications for summer seasonal positions and Internships. There are several positions available, salaries range from \$12.50-\$18.36/hr, and 40 hour work week. We also have a variety of part-time positions available. For job information and application please visit <https://bhr.sd.gov/job-seekers/seasonal/>. Applicants must be age 17 by date of hire. Interviews will begin in March, so get your application in quickly as possible. For questions, email palisadespark@state.sd.us or call 605-594-3824. EOE (12.23-1.8)

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- Medical documentation
- Oversee management of student health plans
- Staff wellness program
- Help coordinate and cover health needs during school transportation

An LPN or RN license required. Previous work experience in health care preferred.

Application form available at www.isd2184.net. Submit letter of application and application form to Craig Oftedahl, Superintendent, 709 North Kniss Avenue, Luverne MN 56156. Open until filled. EOE

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Rail/continued from page 8

Elected officials should tread carefully when they try to divert or change statute from the primary mission of protecting natural resources to providing monetary gain to any Minnesota citizen, no matter who they are.

For the most part, not every single case, the heat the department takes is not of their own making but is as a result of enforcing rules dictated to them by a

higher authority.

I can't speak for every person who works for the DNR, but I can say that — like any profession — the majority of rank and file are great people, with a few rare bad apples.

The issues natural resources managers face today are greater than ever. Developers, wind generation, mining, water related drainage, moose collapse, aquatic invasive species,

wolf population management, yearly flooding, pesty beavers ... and the list goes on and on.

The next time you hear someone talking negatively about the state's resource managers, do what I did. Ask for a specific example.

If you get one, please inform that person in a respectful manner that in most cases the DNR is just doing what they are told to do by those who wrote the law and voted it into statute. I have never seen an example where attacking the messenger has ever really worked out right.

Scott Rall, Worthington, is a habitat conservationist, avid hunting and fishing enthusiast and is president of Nobles County Pheasants Forever. He can be reached at scottarall@gmail.com, or on Twitter @habitat champion.

Hockey/continued from page 8

period of play.

Albert Lea had the edge in shots on goal 10-8 with Arends saving all 10 shots he faced for Luverne.

Luverne sophomore Elliot Domagala put the Cardinals on the board at 6:58 into the second period, giving the Cardinals a 1-0 lead.

Albert Lea's Elijah Farris responded 32 seconds later, beating Arends to knot the game at 1.

It was Albert Lea again with just over 2 minutes left in the second period to give the Tigers the 2-1 lead going into the second intermission.

Shots on goal favored Albert Lea 16-7 for the period.

The final period saw only one goal, but it was a big one. Luverne senior Zach Kruse tied the game at 2 at 12:06 of the third.

The period ended 2-2 and sent Luverne and Albert Lea into overtime play.

Albert Lea's Spencer VanBeek scored at the 3:06 mark of the extra period to give the Tigers the win.

Shots on goal for the game ended in Albert Lea's favor 41-30.

Arends made 38 saves to keep his team in the game.

Bloomington Kennedy 7, Luverne 2

In the final game of the Kiwanis Hockey Classic in Rochester, the Cardinals took on Bloomington Kennedy.

Bloomington Kennedy got the first two goals of the game from Luke Dosan and Logan Dosan to take the 2-0 lead midway through the first.

Luverne answer back with 27 seconds remaining when Brock Behrend beat Bloomington Kennedy's

goalie Luke Skophammer with assists going to Patrick Kroski and Owen Sudenga to cut the lead to 2-1 Bloomington Kennedy.

Shots on goal for the period were 18-6 in favor of Luverne.

In the second period Luverne dominated the shots on goal 21-6, but Bloomington Kennedy got three second-period goals to take a 5-1 lead into the second intermission.

In the final period Luverne got a power play goal from Blaik Bork with assists going to Behrend and Henry Hartquist to cut the lead to 5-2.

Bloomington Kennedy responded with two goals in the final three minutes to win the game 7-2.

Total shots on goal were 50-15 in favor of the Cardinals. Arends made eight saves for the Cardinals.

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