



Rock County STAR HERALD

Rock County's oldest business, printing since 1873

Thursday, March 10, 2022

Luverne plans utilities for annexed lots, plans future development

By Lori Sorenson

City officials recently annexed 8.42 acres of Mound Township land into the city of Luverne for housing development, and plans are in motion to connect those four lots to city utilities.

Landowners Alan Schmuck and Patrick Widboom had requested the annexation of their

ground for residential development and will be responsible for a large share of the cost of the improvements.

It will cost an estimated \$289,000 to connect the four-lot subdivision with city water and sewer along the north side of the lots.

This will open up 400 acres to

the north for more land for gravity flow of sewer to the north of Luverne and creates a residential growth area for the city.

"With any future expansion, councils in the future will appreciate that this is teed up for them for growth," said Mayor Pat Baustian. "And it does open up expansion options."

The city has a utility easement agreement with Randy Mulder to allow for utilities to be installed across his property to a potential future 13-lot development to the north.

The existing site along the north side of 131st Street is farmland consisting of row crops. Currently there is no water or sani-

tary sewer service to the property.

A feasibility report shows that the city of Luverne is continuing to grow, and as new businesses choose the community, housing needs also increase. The new development is advised to keep up with demand.

Land annexation/see page 14

Loop work to wrap up this year

Final leg connects path from river to Hatting, South 75

By Lori Sorenson

Reker Construction, Adrian, will complete the final phases of the Luverne Loop trail after submitting the low bid for the construction work.

Phase 4 is almost a mile long and will connect the existing Loop trail from the Highway 75 Economy Lodge area along Hatting Street to the existing trail that dead-ends at the Rock River near the Luverne wastewater treatment plant area.

The most recent construction, Phase 3A, built the Loop from the existing Blue Mound Trail along berm of the Rock River near the city park and behind Redbird Field and southward.

This is the scenic, rural and wooded area along the river formerly owned by Warren Baker. It is enrolled in the permanent conservation easement RIM, Reinvest in Minnesota.

Phase 3B is .75 miles and will bring the trail at the north end of the community, around Sanford area and east to connect with the Blue Mound Trail.

The total cost of the project is \$806,864, which includes an alternate bid to use concrete instead of asphalt.

"It is the opinion of staff and engineers that the concrete section around the waste water treatment area, which is close to the river, would have a longer life expectancy and lower long-term maintenance costs compared to asphalt," said City Administrator John Call.

"John Stoffel was very adamant about that. ... It's just a better product for that area."

Call said there's also a creek crossing in this area, which is part of RIM — a permanent conservation easement through Reinvest in Minnesota.

Loop contract/see page 2



Winter Carnival returns!

At left, Zachary Jonas sports some oversized balloon head gear at the Winter Carnival.

Alenya Sayavong (left) and Macie Swenson stand by as Otto Lund (far left) plays the bucket toss game.



For the first time in three years, the Luverne Music Boosters hosted a "live and in-person" Winter Carnival Saturday in the Luverne High School classic gym. According to Music Boosters president Heather Johnson, crowds were steady Saturday night, despite poor weather. She said ticket sales were at \$6,500, which is similar to pre-pandemic receipts for the event. The carnival is a major fundraiser for the booster club. Two years ago there was no carnival due to the pandemic, and last year the event took to social media with an online auction.

At left, Katelyn Van Aartsen and her son, Jayce, search for treasures "Under the Sea" with students Cam Aukes (left) and Katherine Pizel. Below right, Mya Wermonger spins the wheel with student volunteers Caitlin Kindt (left) and Morgan Hadler. In lower left photo, Priscilla Muehr paints a butterfly face tattoo on Maddy Fick. Center, Hunter Cook models his freshly applied face paint mask.



Luverne approves 2022-23 calendar

By Mavis Fodness

Luverne School Board members approved the 2022-23 school year calendar during their re-scheduled meeting Monday night, Feb. 28.

The calendar (like the current school year) changes the number of days during key holiday breaks.

The 2022-23 school year begins Tuesday, Sept. 6, and ends Wednesday, May 24, 2023. Graduation is approved for Sunday, May 28, 2023.

A third day was added to the Thanksgiving break (Nov. 23-25) and the number of days off for winter break was reduced (Dec. 21-Jan. 3, 2023).

Presidents Day holiday will be two days (Feb. 17 and 20, 2023) and Easter break will be three

days (April 6, 7 and 10, 2023).

Board members discussed six calendar versions during two work sessions on Feb. 11 and prior to the Feb. 28 board meeting before accepting one option at the board meeting.

Luverne Education Association members indicated they preferred the 168 student days option and one in which the two semesters contained even days (84).

Staff also requested extra time during the school year to collaborate with colleagues. Four early outs were proposed for staff development.

"My thought would be to try two early outs

Luverne school calendar/see page 3

H-BC sets 2022-23 calendar

By Mavis Fodness

Hills-Beaver Creek School Board members approved the 2022-23 school calendar at their Feb. 28 meeting.

Classes will begin Tuesday, Sept. 6, for the 2022-23 school year and end Friday, May 26, 2023.

Graduation is scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday, May 26.

The newly approved calendar outlines 10 early dismissals and holiday breaks, similar to the current school year calendar.

In other business at the Feb. 28 meeting, the board approved spring coaching assignments of Dan Ellingson as golf coach with Caleb Ellingson as volunteer assistant coach, Rex Metzger as track head coach with Dalton Bass as assistant coach and Darin DeBoer as junior high coach.

The board also accepted the resignation of Jill Stiefvater as special education teacher effective at the end of the 2021-22 contract year.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Meetings

Luverne Lions Club will meet at 6 p.m. Monday, March 14, in the Pizza Ranch for supper with a guest speaker followed by a business meeting. All welcome.

Mobile dental clinics scheduled

Mobile dental clinics will be in Luverne Wednesday, April 6 and Thursday, April 7, at the Rock County Health and Human Services community room.

These clinics provide dental care for adults and children ages infant through 100. Call 612-746-1530 to schedule an appointment. All forms of insurance accepted. The clinics are organized by the #LuvLUvAll initiative, Rock County Oral Health Task Force.

Free food for seniors March 17

A.C.E. of SW MN will offer Nutrition Assistance Program for Seniors (NAPS) 60 and older from 2 to 3 p.m. Thursday, March 17, in a drive-through format in the parking lot at 319 E. Lincoln, Luverne. Household income guidelines have changed. Call 283-5064 for more information. Pre-registration is required.

Sanford accepting scholarships

Students in select Sanford Health Network locations are invited to apply for a health network scholarship. The \$2,000 scholarships are for students pursuing a post-secondary degree in a health care-related field. Each participating Sanford network facility will sponsor one student with a scholarship. Send all questions to educationalassistance@sanfordhealth.org.

New Life food giveaway at ATLAS

New Life Celebration Church's third Thursday monthly food giveaway is now at the ATLAS building at 101 W. Maple Street in Luverne. The next distribution is at 4:30 p.m. Thursday, March 17.

Enter from Maple Street and stay along the WEST side of the building. (Do not block the Redeemed Remnants parking lot.) Food will be loaded into vehicles which will then exit via the alley going WEST toward Estey Street. Call 507-283-4366.

'More than Sad' set for March 28

Cassie Linkenmeyer of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention will be in Luverne again from 7 to 8 p.m. Monday, March 28, at Luverne Community Education. Parents, educators and students will learn how to recognize signs of depression and other mental health problems, initiate conversations and get help. Register by calling 507-283-4742. Fee is \$5.

Free tax preparation at library

AARP volunteers offer free tax preparation for low-income individuals and seniors at the Rock County Library on Mondays through April 15. Call 507-449-5040 for appointments. Bring documents, including last year's tax return, and a form of identification to document social security number.

Community Ed

Call Cindy at Luverne Community Education, 507-283-4724, to register for classes. Community Ed's website is www.isd2184.net, select Luverne Community Education under schools.

Students in grades K-12 can sign up now for summer community ed **T-ball, baseball or softball** before March 28. Fees are lower in March and this ensures placement on a team.

Register preschoolers for **Spanish class** (ages 4 and 5 not yet in school) that begins on March 10. Research shows that learning a second language improves memory, concentration, listening skills and more. Fee is \$24.

Participants Grade 5 through adult, will **Make Your Own Drinking Cup** on March 12. Fee is \$15.

See examples of start to finish design and manufacture at **Intro to 3D Printing** March 14. Fee is \$8.

Learn the ins and outs of the Rock County Community Library at **Library 101** on Tuesday, March 15. Fee is \$5

Register for the **Refresher Defensive Driving** class to be held in Edgerton Public School on March 17 at 5:30 pm. Fee is \$28.

Children ages 2-5 with parent will enjoy **Open Gym** on March 18. No fee, but registration required.

Kindergarten Round-Up

Luverne Kindergarten Round-Up will be from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursday, March 24, at the Luverne Elementary School. Parents and children will participate in an informal "meet and greet" open house. A staggered schedule is as follows:

- 5:30 to 6 p.m. for last names beginning with A-G
- 6 to 6:30 for last names beginning with H-M
- 6:30 to 7 for N-Z

Children must be 5 years old before Sept. 1, 2022, to register for kindergarten. Call the elementary office at 283-4497 with questions.

Willers gets lifetime achievement award

By Mavis Fodness

Retired Luverne Community Education director Karen Willers is still reaping rewards from programs she set in motion more than three decades ago.

Colleagues honored Willers with the 2021 Minnesota Community Education Association lifetime achievement award during the organization's in-person Leadership Days Feb. 17-18 in St. Cloud.

The award wasn't given out in 2020, the year Willers retired after 41 years with the Luverne School District.

Willers became the local community education director in 1999 and has been instrumental in expanding the youth and adult enrichment classes to what they are now.

Willers told those attending the leadership conference she spent a lot of time writing grants and developing programming for the school district's early childhood family education, school readiness and early learning scholarship programs.

"Being a part of developing these programs not only made a better community to live in, but they made me a better person — certainly a better parent and grandparent. And I believe I'm a better community member because of these programs," she said.

She frequently worked with surrounding community education directors, and Anne Foley with District 518 in Worthington nominated



Photo courtesy of Lisa J. Nath

Karen Willers, former Community Education director, earned the Minnesota Community Education Association Lifetime Achievement Award for 2021.

Willers for the recognition.

"Karen has developed active and vibrant connections with a wide variety of stakeholders," Foley wrote.

"She has a fantastic and enviable reputation for getting things done that many people just think happen."

Lisa J. Nath succeeded Willers as the Luverne Community Education and ECFE director after working with her for several years.

"I have learned that no two days are the same in Community Education — it's challenging at times, but there are days that bring joy," Nath said.

"It's exciting to work with families and advocate for what services we can provide to them and their children. Every day I come to work I want to make a difference."

It's time to feed, prune indoor plants

My last "Know It and Grow It" column gave you some information about how our indoor plants respond to the photoperiod or lengthening days of early spring. After being nearly dormant for four months, they are eager to start active growth.



KNOW IT AND GROW IT

By George Bonnema

If you have a plant that is getting too tall, now is when to do a little pruning to get back to where that plant will look balanced and proportioned.

Often upright-growing plants have several stems in the container. The most effective way to prune them and still keep the plant looking good is to prune a couple of the tallest stems back to 8 inches above the soil. These stems will develop new growth but in the meanwhile, the remaining unpruned stems cover these "stumps" until they develop new leaves.

The process is repeated the next year and depending on the number of stems, probably the following year as well.

The neat part of this process is that usually each stem that is cut comes back as two stems in the place of the one you cut off, thereby giving the plant a much fuller look.

If the plant that is demanding more space than you want to give happens to be a vining plant, you need to take stem tip cuttings that are no more than 6 inches long. This is the most tender growth and will root much more quickly than older wood. Put the cuttings in a vase or jar with 3 inches of water and keep it in similar light to what it has been used to.

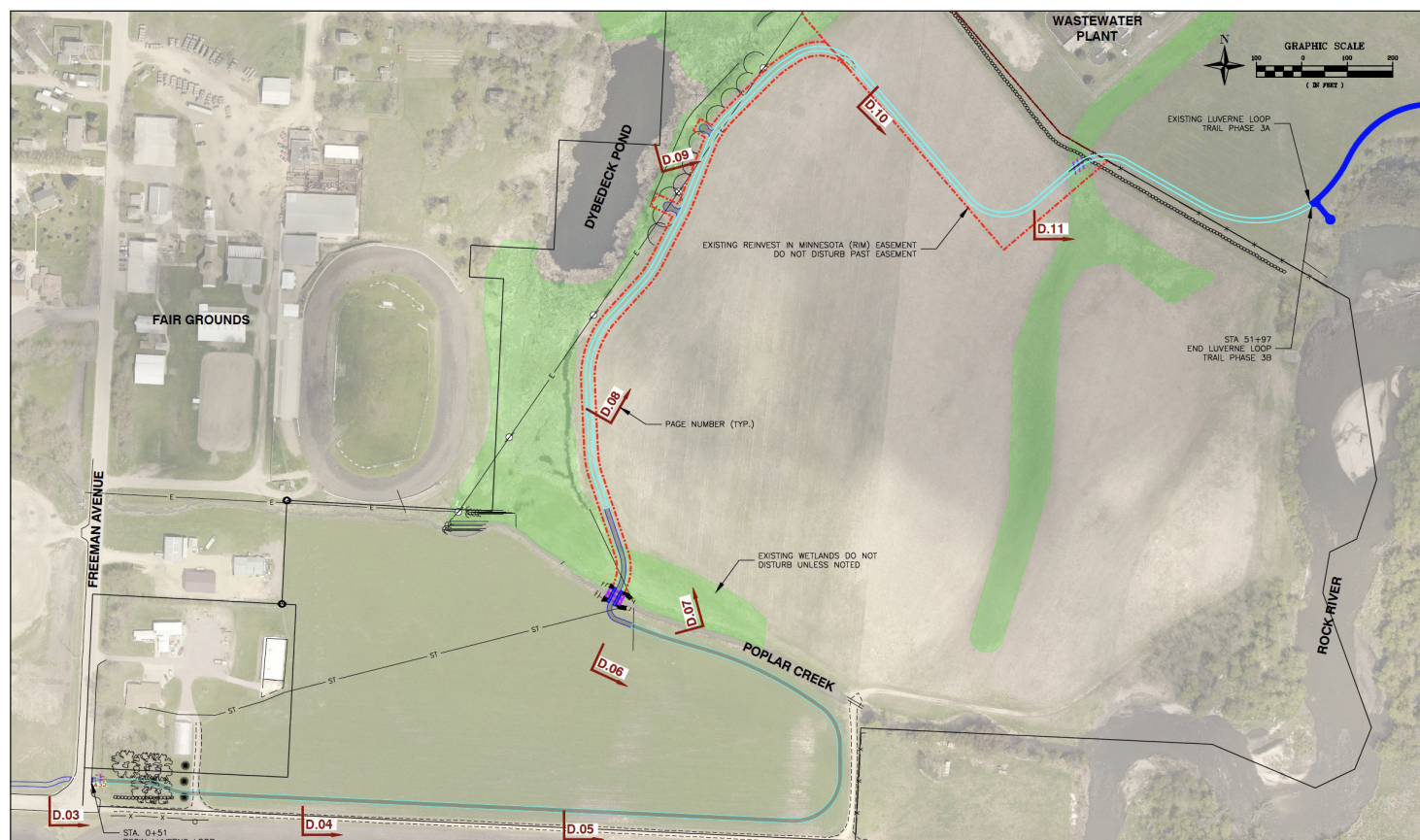
Philodendron, pothos, German, Swedish, and English ivy are all candidates for this type of propagation. If you use a clear glass container to root the cuttings, you can easily tell when to add water and you can also see when the roots develop.

To achieve a full-looking specimen plant, I will usually plant five or six cuttings together in the same pot. Again, start with a fairly small pot, probably 4 inches wide. As the vines begin to grow, you can shift up to a 6-inch pot.

If this propagation activity is too overwhelming for you, you can just toss the old plant and start with a new one.

Active growth means active appetite. When there is little new growth happening, the plant isn't going to need much fertilizer. That changes when active growth resumes in the spring, so now is the time to use a water-soluble plant food in the water once per month.

If a plant isn't getting adequate nutrition, it will often drop older leaves in an attempt to maintain the new growth ... it's called survival.



Phase 4 is almost a mile long and will connect the existing Loop trail from the Highway 75 Economy Lodge area along Hatting Street to the existing trail that dead-ends at the Rock River near the Luverne wastewater treatment plant area.

Final leg of Loop to be finished this year/continued from page 1

A \$130,000 culvert (previously bid) will be built for the creek.

"So, if you add that on to this, and you add the engineering, the total cost of the project is close to \$1.1 million, which is actually very close to the state's estimate," Call said.

The project has received an \$839,300 grant

from the state of Minnesota, and the city will match 30 percent of the project, \$359,700.

"That's a 70-30 match, so I think the council and our citizens can feel very good about that," Call said.

Mayor Pat Baustian said there's interest among residents and visitors alike in the Loop being complete.

"It will be great to get it done. What an attribute for our community," Baustian said.

"I was in Adrian where people were asking me when it will be done. There's interest in other communities in using the trail."

The Loop and the Blue Mound Trail to the

state park offers 13 contiguous miles, which is popular among users and prompted the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission to name the Loop a "Regional Trail of Significance."

That designation qualifies the local trail for more grant funds and other state support.

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RCO joins state lobby efforts for better pay

By Lori Sorenson

The Minnesota Organization for Habilitation and Rehabilitation (MOHR) organized a Virtual Disability Services Day at the Capitol on March 8.

The rally calls attention to a workforce crisis as the primary cause of the extended delays in access to employment and other day supports for people with disabilities.

Adria Benson, co-director of Rock County Opportunities in Luverne, participated online.

“Any help in that area from legislators, whether it be for wage increases or retention bonuses, would be greatly appreciated,” Benson said.

“The staff here work very hard to provide good, quality services to the individuals that we support.

According to MOHR, over 3,500 individuals with disabilities are on waiting lists to access needed employment and day enrichment supports, due to unprecedented levels of staff vacancies.

Benson said the crisis hasn't reached that level in Luverne, but hiring is always a challenge.

“RCO has been very fortunate in this aspect. At the beginning of the pandemic, we did have to shut down and lay off staff,” she said.

“It was a very slow reopening process, and we couldn't bring back more clients until we had more staff.”

She said there is no longer a local waiting list for services, and RCO is training another Direct Support Professional.

“That will give us the ability to allow any clients waiting for services to be able to attend our program,” Benson said.

“We recognize that this is not the case in many areas. It has not always been easy to find the right staff throughout all of this, but we have been lucky to receive good, quality applicants at times we needed to add another staff member.”

She said wages are always an issue in attracting qualified staff.

“At this time, we pay pretty competitively for this field, but this field is typically an underpaid one,” she said.

MOHR is proposing adjustments to Minnesota's Disability Waiver Rate System to use more current economic data to update the reimbursement rates that service providers use to pay their staff and provide services.

A second proposal is aimed at short-term steps to be taken immediately to stabilize the disability waiver services workforce.

Employee scholarship grants, child care relief and onetime retention payments for staff are part of this proposal.

A third proposal from MOHR asks for increased access to “Employment Exploration” services for people with disabilities who are interested in competitive, community-based work.

Its aim is to align wage data for staff to match similar service types.

More information can be found at mohrmn.org.



Photo courtesy of Travis Helgeson

Lori Sorenson photo/0310 elevator

Beaver Creek elevator coming down

Larson Crane Services, Worthington, began the arduous task of demolishing the grain elevator in Beaver Creek Tuesday morning. The 125-foot-tall wooden elevator hasn't stored grain for over a decade; it was being used only for its office and scale. New Vision put up three new bins — with a total grain storage capacity of 1.1 million bushels — 15 to 20 years ago. The old elevator will be replaced with a new office and scale in time for harvest this fall.

Mayors propose workforce legislation

By Lori Sorenson

Communities in southwest Minnesota are joining forces to address labor shortages in several affected occupations.

Mayors in the cities of Luverne, Pipestone, Worthington, Jackson, Marshall, Canby and Granite Falls have organized as Southwest Minnesota Council of Mayors to work on issues affecting all their communities.

The labor shortage is on top of their list, and they're proposing a pilot program that aims to attract and retain workers in southwest Minnesota through paid education in technical fields.

The targeted occupations include carpentry, mechatronics, automotive, plumbing, auto technology, agriculture diesel, electrical, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning.

Modeled after “Build South Dakota,” the program would provide up to \$8,000 of tuition payments per year for students who enroll in a two-year course of study at Minnesota West and commit to work in one of the targeted occupations in southwest Minnesota for at least three years.

The students' tuition is struc-

“We lose nothing if we do nothing, but we have everything to gain if we add to our workforce development and our trades. ... With our workforce, we've watched as South Dakota and Iowa are drawing our kids away from Minnesota. It was time to do something.”

*— Pat Baustian
Luverne mayor*

tured as a three-year forgivable loan; each year is forgiven as long as the student is living and working in southwest Minnesota.

The group of mayors is requesting \$600,000 per year in state funding for the five-year pilot program for a total request of \$3

million. These funds would be combined with locally leveraged funds of \$150,000 each year.

Baustian said the group is hoping that the state funding will be provided during this legislative session.

“We lose nothing if we do nothing, but we have everything to gain if we add to our workforce development and our trades,” Baustian said.

Rep. Rod Hamilton is jacketing the bill in the house, and Sen. Bill Weber is doing the same in the Senate.

The mayors received the draft bill today and will meet with their respective legislators Wednesday.

The mayors said they formed the group because together they represent about 44,000 people, which might help them when seeking legislative solutions.

“Especially as border communities, we share issues in common,” Baustian said. “And with our workforce, we've watched as South Dakota and Iowa are drawing our kids away from Minnesota. It was time to do something.”

They plan to continue to meet to address other issues that affect southwest Minnesota.

Luverne sets 2022-23 calendar/ continued from page 1

prior to Nov. 1 so that any staff development could be beneficial to the current school year and be relevant to student success for 2022-23,” said Superintendent Craig Oftedal.

Board members agreed to two early out sessions. Specific days are yet to be determined.

Retirements

At their Feb. 28 meeting, Luverne School Board members accepted the retirements of three longtime educators.

Theresa Graff, speech/language pathologist, retires effective June 1.

Jennifer Engesser, elementary teacher, retires effective June 30.

Elementary teacher Sandy Klosterbuer retires

effective at the end of the current school year.

In other business, board members:

- hired Anita Cole-Kraty as middle-high school para-professional effective Feb. 7, Danielle Kneip as middle school softball coach, and Katelyn Hart as assistant track coach.

- approved medical/maternity leave for Alicia Reker, elementary teacher, beginning April 11 for the remainder of the school year, and hired Rylie Hokeness as long-term substitute beginning April 11.

- approved JJ Olson as volunteer softball coach and transferred Phil Paquette as ninth-grade baseball coach to head baseball coach.

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Submit quotes by Monday, March 28, 2022 to Denver Township. Bids must come in written letter form. Bid Inquiries please contact Kyle Hemme 507-290-5053
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Welcome home, Esther

A newspaper without a proofreader is like a tightrope walker with no safety net

Our Esther Frakes arrived back in Luverne last week after galivanting through the southern United States with her friend Betty.



ON SECOND THOUGHT

By Lori Sorenson, editor

ease, much in the same way a tightrope walker feels about a safety net.

We don't plan to make mistakes, but they can and do happen, and Esther's there with her trusty red felt-tip pen to catch the error before it's published.

As Mavis put it, "Esther's like a warm blanket. It's comforting when she's there for us."

We are fortunate to have smart and capable people on the Star Herald office team to help us proofread the past couple of weeks in Esther's absence. They caught many errors we were grateful to correct before publishing.

Still, I couldn't shake the feeling that we were engaging in risky behavior.

So, dear readers, thank you for overlooking errors (recent or past) that may have found their way into our pages.

Despite modern technology and autocorrect, the paper is still only as good as the humans who operate it, and humans are only human.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: This is the most humbling job you'll ever find. An error in the Star Herald is printed and distributed in 3,000 paper copies and archived for decades of future reference. There are no do-overs for mistakes in newspapers.

... unless Esther finds them before they're printed.

Welcome back, Esther. Thanks for making the paper better in print and for making our office a better place in general.

It sounds like she had a grand time, and as such, probably didn't miss us at the paper.

We, however, missed her dearly.

Esther is our proofreader, which is a humble term for the person who makes the news department look better than we are.

She catches misspelled names, misplaced modifiers and mistaken assumptions resulting from poor math or inattention to details.

She counts survivors in obituaries. If someone is "lovingly remembered by eight children," eight names had better follow in the list.

If there's a discrepancy in Petersen, Peterson or Pedersen, she'll get to the bottom of the intended spelling and family relation.

Even though her name doesn't appear in the story byline, Esther owns a mistake (if one sneaks past her) as if it were her own. "I can't believe I missed that," she'll say about an error that was clearly the fault of my own.

And we are deeply grateful for her countless contributions to our weekly production.

As she combs through the news stories, sports briefs and submitted columns, she initials the files to signal they're ready for print.

There are few things more satisfying on press day than a folder of documents neatly labeled "(ef)" next to their file names.

When Esther's in house on press day, we feel more at

Our mental health system is in crisis

GUEST EDITORIAL

By Mark Jacobson, Winona Peer Support Specialist

The mental health system in the United States is currently in a state of crisis. Consider the following:

- In 2019, just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 19.86 percent of adults in the U.S. experienced a mental illness, equivalent to nearly 50 million Americans.

- Suicidal ideation continues to increase among adults in the United States, with 4.58 percent of adults reporting serious thoughts of suicide. This is an increase of 664,000 people in the past year.

- A growing percentage of youth in the United States live with major depression. More than 15 percent of youth (ages 12-17) experienced a major depressive episode in the past year, a 1.24-percent increase from the prior year.

- Over half of adults with a mental illness do not receive treatment, totaling over 27 million adults in the U.S. who are going untreated.

- Over 60 percent of youth with major depression do not receive any mental health treatment.

- Nationally, fewer than 1 in 3 youth with severe depression receive consistent mental health care.

- Both adults and youth in the

U.S. continue to lack adequate insurance coverage.

- Rates of substance abuse have been increasing for both adults and youth, even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These are just a few of the staggering statistics that indicate the mental health system in serious crisis.

People with mental health issues are being challenged every day as they attempt to navigate the current mental health system.

Many of them are suffering needlessly. Add to this the stigma and discrimination that society still places on people with mental health issues and you have a mental health system in serious crisis.

Over the past several decades there has been a lot of talk about

fixing the mental health system, but there hasn't been much in the way of action.

We need a mental health system that works for everyone.

I would like to hear your opinions and thoughts on the current mental health system and what we need to do to correct these issues.

I may be reached at gottahavehope38@gmail.com or by letter to 559 W. Broadway St; Winona, MN 55987.

Editor's note: There are local efforts afoot to address mental health needs in the community. #Luv1LuvAll has a Brain Health Committee working to improve services and access to services for local residents who need them. Follow them on Facebook, Luv1LuvAll.



Personal 'thumbs' range from cable TV rates to self-check-out counters

From time to time the Star Herald runs a "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down" editorial. Almost all of the "thumbs" are based on local issues or events. We try to run a balance of ups and downs, and I'm guessing the "thumbs up" outnumber the "thumbs down."

So, with "thumbs" in mind, I thought I would share a few thumbs of my own that are life- and product-related and not necessarily local.

First, "thumbs down" to the high cost of cable TV from our local providers (whoops, that was local) all the while television programming



FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH

By Rick Peterson, general manager

has never been worse. To be fair, local internet speed and availability is better than most.

For example, I moved here from Redwood Falls, Redwood County, years ago. There are 87 counties in Minnesota, and Redwood County

ranks 85th in internet availability and speed. "Thumbs down" to Redwood County.

Back to television, as I search for another more cost-friendly alternative to cable, I never knew there were so many options to cable—YouTube

TV, Netflix, Hulu, Apple TV, fubo, sling, AT&T TV and more.

So you would think this many options would garner a "thumbs up," but I'm so darn confused now I give this a "thumbs down."

OK, it's time to turn those "thumbs down" down side up.

"Thumbs up" to Dawn dish soap for Dawn foaming hand soap.

"Thumbs up" to self-check-out counters.

Major League Baseball lockout deserves a different digit up than the thumb.

For the first time I bought a vest

this winter. I liked the first one so much I bought two more and I have to give them all a "thumbs up."

Mary bought herself a pair of jeans with a button fly and flared bottoms ("bell bottoms"). I have no doubt she would give them two "thumbs up."

Finally, "thumbs up" to the high school winter sports seasons for the Cardinals and Patriots.

Sure, there were some disappointments as well as successes, but there is nothing like taking in a high school sporting event. So, here's your "thumbs up."

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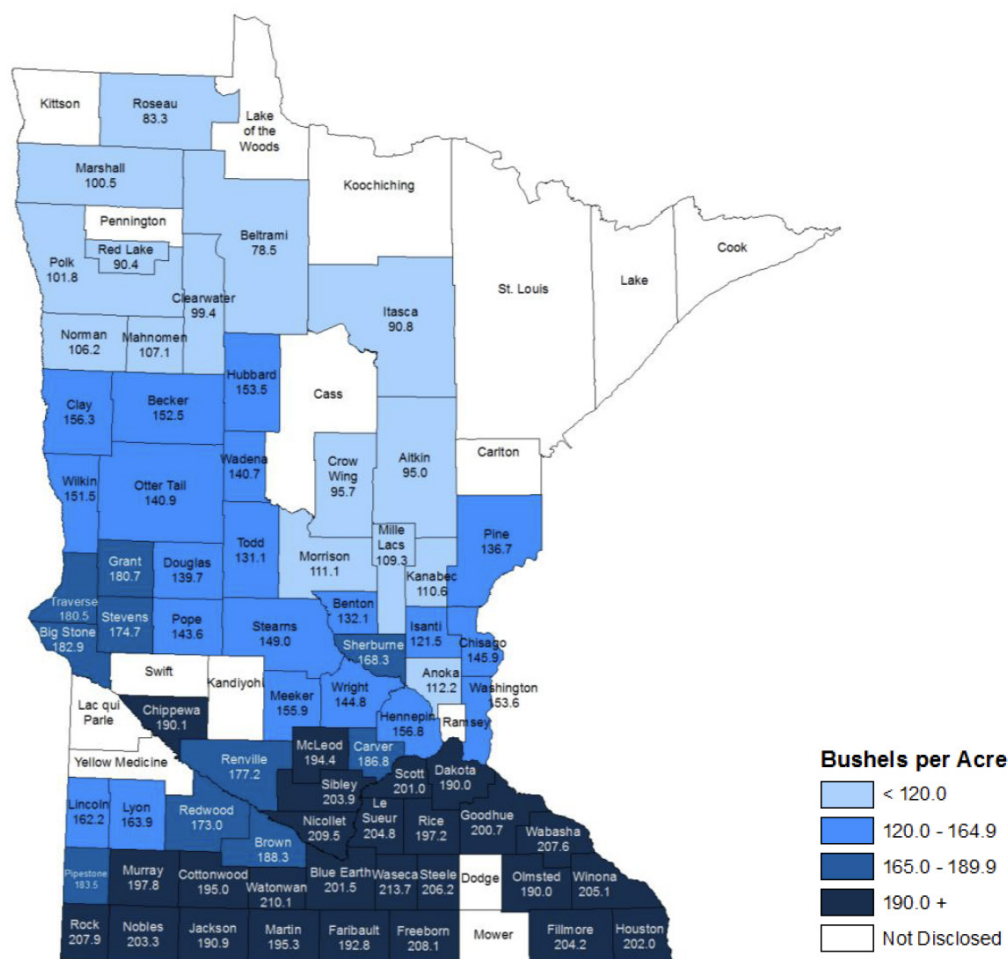
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The *Star Herald* encourages letters to the editor expressing the opinions of readers and intends to print all letters. Letters not meeting the guidelines will not be printed. The *Star Herald* will verify the authenticity of all letters. Letters must have the name of the writer, a signature and address.

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.

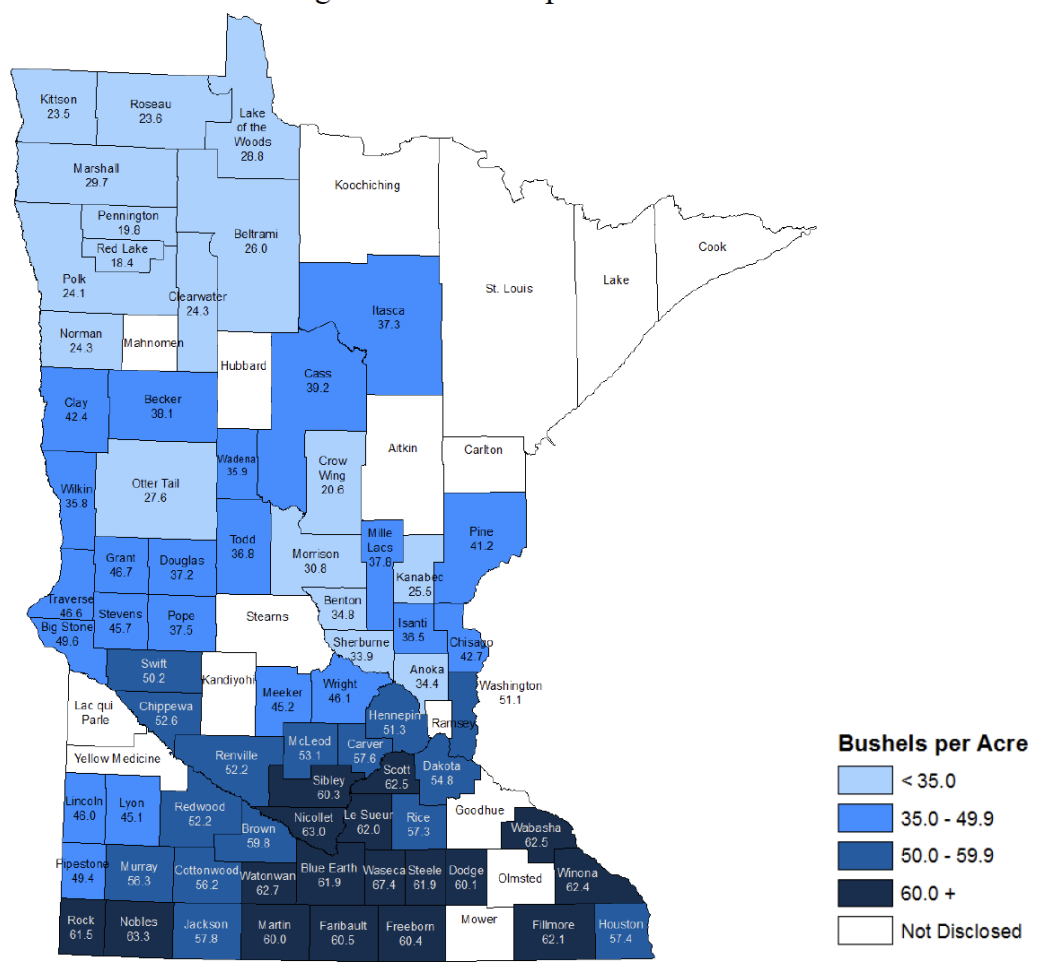
Corn for Grain Yield – Minnesota: 2021

State Average: 178.0 Bushels per Acre



Soybean Yield – Minnesota: 2021

State Average: 47.0 Bushels per Acre



Rock County has some of the best yields in Minnesota

By Mavis Fodness

Rock County raised some of the best-yielding crops in the state in 2021, according to the recently released crop estimates by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Services. Rock County landed in the Top 5 counties for corn yield, among the 17 counties who topped more than 60 bushels per acre for soybeans and was one of 19 counties that produced

more than 20 tons of corn silage per acre in 2021. Rock County farmers harvested 207.9 bushels per acre last year, the fifth best in the state and up from 195.3 bushels per acre in 2020. Waseca County led corn yields in the state with 213.7 bushels per acre. Nineteen counties surpassed 200 bushels per acre. The state average for

2021 was 178 bushels per acre. In corn production, Renville County led the state in corn harvested for grain with 43.4 million bushels. There were eight counties that surpassed more than 35 million bushels produced in 2021. Rock County producers harvested 26.5 million bushels last year from the 127,600 acres planted for corn production.

In soybeans, local farmers averaged 61.5 bushels per acre from 105,100 acres reserved for soybean production. The yield average in Rock County was up from 58.3 in 2020 and was among 17 counties in the state that surpassed 60 bushels per acre in 2021. Waseca County led the state in soybean yield with an average of 67.4 bushels per acre.

In total soybean production, Nobles County topped the state by harvesting 10.8 million bushels in 2021. Rock County farmers harvested 6.4 million bushels last year from 105,100 harvested acres, up from 5.8 million in 2020. Rock County also harvested silage from corn (24 tons per acre) and was among 19 counties in the state that yielded more

than 20 tons per acre last year. Houston County led the state in silage production with 28 tons per acre harvested. The state average in 2021 was 19 tons per acre. In total silage production, Otter Tail County led all Minnesota counties with 414,000 tons. Rock County produced 232,000 tons from 9,660 acres planted for silage production in 2021.

ON THE RECORD

Dispatch report

- Feb. 25**
 - Complainant on E. Lincoln Street reported theft by check.
 - Complainant on E. Church Avenue, Steen, reported threats.
- Feb. 26**
 - Complainant on S. Kniss Avenue reported a possible gas leak.
 - A warrant was issued.
 - Complainant on N. Prospect Street, Hardwick, reported suspicious activity.
- Feb. 28**
 - Assistance with contact information to another department was provided.
 - Complainant on S. Kniss Avenue and W. Fletcher Street reported railroad light malfunction.
 - Complainant west-bound on Interstate 90, mile marker 12, Luverne, reported speeding and reckless driving.
 - Complainant on S. Church Avenue requested to speak with a deputy.
- March 1**
 - Complainant reported

- law enforcement issues.
- Complainant on North Drive, Sioux Falls, reported a subject with Rock County warrant.
- Complainant on 11th Street, Ellsworth, reported subject is harassing mother.
- March 2**
 - Complainant on S. Cedar Street reported two cars driving through pasture.
 - A civil issue was reported on S. Church Avenue.
 - Complainant on Holly Boulevard, Brandon, Sioux Dakota, requested Rock County's sheriff's assistance.
 - Complainant on E. Veterans Drive reported a confused elderly person.
- March 3**
 - Complainant on E. Main Street reported a hazmat spill.
 - Complainant reported an abandoned vehicle on 91st Street, east of County Road 9.
 - Complainant requested to speak to an investigator.
 - Complainant on S. Kniss Avenue reported a weapons issue at location.

- Complainant on S. Kniss Avenue requested personal property retrieval.
 - Complainant on Highway 75 reported a piece of wood on shoulder of road.
 - Complainant on 171st Street reported suspicious vehicle at location.
 - Immigration in Dallas, Texas, requested Rock County assistance.
 - Complainant east-bound on Interstate 90, reported an erratic driver that exited at Luverne.
 - Extra patrol on S. Kniss Avenue was requested for overnight.
- In addition, officers responded to 1 motor vehicle accident, 1 deer accident, 1 escort, 9 ambulance runs, 5 paper services, 1 animal complaint, 1 fingerprint request, 15 burn permits, 1 vehicle impound, 1 background check, 1 gas drive-off, 5 drug court tests, 5 purchase and carry permits, 2 stalled vehicles, 30 traffic stops, 2 abandoned 911 calls, 2 tests, 1 welfare check and 1 report of cattle out.

USDA extends deadline for Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program

Hog producers who sold hogs through a spot market sale during the COVID-19 pandemic now have until April 15, 2022, to submit their applications for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program (SMHPP). SMHPP. The program is part of USDA's Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative, originally had a deadline to submit applications by Feb. 25, 2022. SMHPP assists hog producers who sold hogs through a spot market sale from April 16, 2020, through Sept. 1, 2020, the period during which these producers faced the greatest reduction in market prices due to the pandemic. USDA is offering SMHPP in response to a reduction in packer production and supply chain issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in fewer negotiated hogs being procured and subsequent lower market prices. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) began accepting applications for SMHPP on Dec. 15, 2021. "In response to stakeholder feedback and our analysis of the program to date, we will be making adjustments to clarify the definition of a spot market sale and to hog eligibility, while including documentation requirements to prevent erroneous

payments," said FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux. "We'll be announcing those updates soon and want to assure hog producers that there will be ample time to submit their applications for assistance." **Applying for assistance** Eligible hog producers can apply for SMHPP by completing the FSA-940, Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program application. Visit farmers.gov/smhpp to learn more. Applications can be submitted to the FSA office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means. To find their local FSA office, producers can visit farmers.gov/service-locator. Hog producers can also call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance. Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. Because of the pandemic, some USDA Service Centers are open to limited visitors. Contact your Service Center to set up an in-person or phone appointment. Additionally, more information related to USDA's response and relief for producers can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

NOTICE

STUDENTS OF LUVERNE HIGH SCHOOL TAKE NOTICE

The Scholarship Committee of the A.R. Wood Educational Trust is currently accepting applications for initial or renewal scholarships from seniors and previous graduates of Luverne High School.

- To be eligible for consideration candidates must:
1. Be graduates of Luverne High School
 2. Rank in the upper fifteenth percent (15%) of his/her graduating class; and
 3. Have maintained a 3.0 GPA or better grade point average.

Requests for applications should be directed to:

First Bank & Trust
Wealth Management Services
Attn: Kerri Brand
P.O. Box 1347
Sioux Falls, SD 57101-1347

All requests for applications must be received by First Bank & Trust no later than May 1, 2022. All completed applications must be postmarked and submitted to First Bank & Trust by June 1, 2022.

In accordance with the A.R. Wood Educational Trust, decisions regarding recipients, amounts, and number of awards will be made at the sole discretion of the Scholarship Committee.

PALACE THEATRE

UPCOMING EVENTS

Uncharted

Friday, March 11
Saturday, March 12
Sunday, March 13

Tickets: \$5 for kids age 3 – 12th grade, \$7 for adults

PG-13

The Crown Jewels: A Tribute to Queen

Saturday
March 19

Tickets on sale Now!

Tickets:
\$15 for students
\$20 for adults

★ **Special Event** ★

The Crown Jewels: A Tribute to Queen

Saturday
March 19

7:30 pm

104 E. Main St. • Luverne, MN 56156 • 507.283.4339

WWW.PALACETHEATRE.US

On behalf of the Luverne Music Boosters, we would like to extend a sincere "Thank You" to the area businesses who helped make the 40th Annual Luverne Music Boosters Winter Carnival a HUGE success. The support received from the community was amazing! Cash donations and/or merchandise were generously given by over 125 area businesses.

Without their support and kindness, the Carnival couldn't happen. Thank you!

Thank you to all who helped organize the Winter Carnival this year. There were many sub committee's and leaders who have put in several hours of planning and organizing and for that we are grateful! Special thanks to Luverne Family Dental for use of their basement to store our booths and to Adrian Plumbing & Electrical for the use of their trailer.

Thank you to our booth and cake judges. Special thanks to the Luverne School Custodial Staff for so graciously helping us with our many tasks of set-up and tear-down. Thank you to all the parents who volunteered to work a shift (or two) during the Carnival and to the students who decorated and ran the booths. We have the best music students around!

A very gracious thank you to everyone in the community who supported our Winter Carnival by either purchasing raffle tickets, or by attending and participating in this event. It is wonderful to see so many people attend this evening of family entertainment! Finally, we would like to thank Mrs. Graber and Mr. Jarvie for their invaluable support, for teaching our children a love of music and so much more! We are proud to be a part of a giving community that continues to care about the music programs at our school.

Thanks to All!

Luverne Music Boosters Winter Carnival Committee



Mavis Fodness photos/0303 LHS Mock Trial Final 2022

Members of the 2022 Luverne High School mock trial team included (front row, left) Roselynn Hartshorn, Cassi Chesley, Chance Tunnissen, Griffen Jarchow, Ross Bergman, Brynn Boyenga, (back) Xavier McKenzie, Adam Ask, Leif Ingebretsen, Keaton Ahrendt, Eli McLendon, Jadyn Hart, Zander Carbonneau, Parker Carbonneau, Luke Thorson and Ella Lanoue.

LHS mock trial team's state appearance streak stops at seven

By Mavis Fodness

The Luverne mock trial team completed a practice dual Feb. 28 in front of friends and family in the middle-high school media center.

No scores were kept during the two-hour contest between the prosecution and defense teams. The event comes after the team missed qualifying for the state contest last weekend.

"It was a close contest — it could have gone either way," said attorney coach Jeff Haubrich. "It was hard to accept the results and be knocked out

of the state competition, effectively ending the streak."

Luverne lost to Winona Cotter on Feb. 17 in the last round of the 2022 season to determine who would represent Region 4 at the state tournament. While Luverne's prosecution was awarded more points based on their performance, it was the judges' 2-1 vote who gave Winona Cotter the win and the trip to the state tournament.

Luverne has qualified for the state tournament every year since 2014.

The in-person performance in

front of friends and family Feb. 28 allowed students to remember and for some students to experience how much more fun mock trial is when performed in-person, instead of virtually as all of the 2022 season was conducted.

Next year the participants look to begin the winning streak again.

"We couldn't be more proud," said senior Luke Thorson. "Half of our lawyers competed for the very first time

Mock trial, continued on page 7



Senior Chance Tunnissen delivers the prosecution team's closing statement Feb. 28 during the Luverne High School mock trial team's demonstration of this year's case, State of Minnesota versus Blair Taylor, at a friends and family event in the middle-high school media center. Below: Defense team members (from left) are Brynn Boyenga, Griffen Jarchow and Ross Bergman.



Bailliff Eli McLendon swears in defense witness Ella Lanoue at the Feb. 28 friends and family event for the mock trial team.

GENERATIONS MENU

Monday, March 14: Chicken chow mein with brown rice, Oriental vegetables, mandarin oranges, pudding with whipped topping.

Activities: A.C.E. of SW MN-Rock Co.: 8:30 a.m. Quilters.

Tuesday, March 15: Spaghetti with meat sauce, green beans, pineapple, Texas toast, cookie.

Activities: 12:30 p.m. Bingo; 12:30 p.m. Pinochle.

Wednesday, March 16: Creamy chicken, mashed potatoes, peas and carrots, biscuit, warm fruit crisp.

Half-Price Day sponsored by Security Savings Bank.

Thursday, March 17—Happy St. Patrick's Day: Pork loin, candied yams, broccoli, bread, dessert.

Activities: 1 p.m. Lutheran Social Services frozen meal distribution.

Friday, March 18: Meat loaf, butternut squash, stewed tomatoes, bread, cake.

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.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Gordon Mulder serves as Lions district governor

Luverne's Gordon Mulder is serving a term as Lions 5M3 district governor, which started on July 1, 2021, and continues until June 30, 2022.

The district includes the 13 southwest Minnesota counties with 35 clubs and 1,036 members. As governor, Mulder is expected to visit each club, bringing the Lions International President's message of "Service from the heart. Kindness matters."

Mulder said his own personal motto for this Lions' year is "Rock your world with service and kindness." He said, "The backdrop on my pin is a picture of the Blue Mounds quarry."

Mulder said the Lions have a district-wide project of tying fleece blankets, which will be donated to the Sanford castle this spring.

One of the main projects

of the Lions Club is fulfilling the challenge of Hellen Keller to be "Knights of the blind," so that is the reason for the "leader dog" project.

"Also, since diabetes is the leading cause of onset blindness, there is much money given to UMN toward the treatment and cure of diabetes," Mulder said.

"We also help send local kids with Type 1 diabetes to summer camp."

The main projects of Lions include leader dog, diabetes, eye problems, cornea replacement, hearing issues, children's camps, childhood cancer treatment and the Lions Club International Foundation, which provides care after natural disasters worldwide.

At the district convention last weekend, Don Kuehl from Jackson was chosen to be the district governor for next year.

BUSINESS NEWS

Buffalo Ridge Insurance named to President's Club

For the 14th consecutive year, Buffalo Ridge Insurance achieved the prestigious status in the Midwest Family Mutual Insurance Company's President's Club.

The achievement recognizes outstanding continued service to custom-

ers and community and superior performance.

Buffalo Ridge Insurance employees include Marilyn Bloemendaal, Cory Bloemendaal, Steve Smedsrud, Pam Haakenson, Lori Gruis, Dawn Trendt, Ashley Monier and Sadie Steen.

REMEMBER WHEN

10 years ago (2012)

•Geronimo Wind representatives told Rock County Commissioners Tuesday that May 1 is the targeted start date for pouring concrete pads for the 119 wind towers north and west of Luverne.

Pad construction will continue through June. Beginning in August, the towers will be set up at a rate of 10 per week. ...

Geronimo will remove the meteorological towers when they are no longer needed.

25 years ago (1997)

•Before they've even broken ground, planners of the Mary Jane Brown Congregate Living Apartments have found ways to improve the project, creating a challenge for fund-raisers.

New plans will include a recreation room and library for an extra \$25,000. Transportation is a current amenity offered to tenants of the facility, but the 1980 bus/van currently used by MJB will soon need to be replaced. Another \$25,000 is needed to cover costs for the \$45,000 vehicle.

For these reasons, MJB is hoisting its goal from \$100,000

to the new goal of \$150,000 needed for equity to secure a loan.

50 years ago (1972)

•A proposal to call for bids to furnish a site and operate a county sanitary landfill for refuse disposal was adopted by the Rock County Board of Commissioners Monday.

The decision was made after about four hours of their monthly meeting was spent discussing various aspects of the Pollution Control Agency's requirement that counties comply with PCA refuse disposal regulations by July 1, 1972.

Interest has been shown by private individuals in providing both the site and the maintenance of it, and this interest prompted the board to call for bids which will be opened on March. 22.

75 years ago (1947)

•A crowd estimated at over 2,000 persons attended the Luverne Civic and Commerce Association's "Good Neighbor Party" here Monday night.

According to the lunch committee, about 4,000 dough-

nuts and nearly 100 gallons of coffee were served at the huge gathering, which filled the armory almost to overflowing.

Curly Boyd and his Dakota Cowboys presented a stage show of about 1½ hours duration, after which free lunch was served. An evening of dancing, featuring both old and new time music, concluded the evening's free entertainment.

100 years ago (1922)

•After an absence of several months from Luverne theatres, Madge Kennedy will make her appearance again at the Palace theatre tomorrow night in the Goldwyn feature, "The Highest Bidder."

Based on a story by Maximilian Foster, "The Highest Bidder" deals with the complications which ensue when marriage a la mode and marriage of a tender sort come into conflict. Miss Kennedy plays the part of a girl who has bound herself to "marry for money," as the saying goes. Fortunately, or unfortunately, she meets Henry Lester, a millionaire, who has long been convinced that women are only after his wealth, and not his heart.

OBITUARIES

Jacob Schelhaas

Jacob M. Schelhaas, 87, Jasper, formerly of Woodstock, died Wednesday, March 3, 2022, at the Sanford Luverne Hospice Cottage in Luverne.

A memorial gathering of family and friends will be from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 26, followed by a Celebration of Life service at 4 p.m., all at the Woodstock Community Church in Woodstock.

Jacob Schelhaas was born Oct. 28, 1934, to John and Lena (Van Roekel) Schelhaas in Murray County. Jake learned how to work hard at a very young age and after completing his education through the eighth grade, he began working. He had a love for animals and treated the livestock he was entrusted to care for with great pride.

In 1955 Jake enlisted in the Army and served for three years. After being honorably discharged, he met Gladys Wassenaar one Sunday night at the Steen Reformed Church. They were married at that same church on Sept. 30, 1960, and lived in Woodstock.

Jake was a faithful member of the American Reformed Church in Woodstock until he and Gladys retired and moved to Jasper. They became members of the Jasper Methodist Church at



that time. They lived together until Jake entered Hospice.

Jake wore many titles through the years but the one he was most proud of was grandpa. He wore his Luverne Cardinal apparel with great pride.

Jacob is survived by his wife, Gladys; three children: son Brian (Barb) Schelhaas – Alec (Ashley Caldwell); son Lowell (Hope) Schelhaas – Nicole and Jenna; and daughter Lynette (Rick) Ossefoort – Chessa (Orrie) Frahm and Adam (Racheal) Ossefoort; sister-in-law Betty (Jerry) Ackermann, Bonnie (Dave) Shelton, Nelva (Ron) Behr; brother-in-law Gary Posthuma; sister-in-law Beverly Wassenaar; nieces, nephews, and other family and friends.

Jake was preceded in death by his parents; parents-in-law William and Grace Wassenaar; daughter-in-law LeAnn; siblings and spouses, Carolyn and Henry DeGroot, Laura and Gerrit Posthuma, Nelvin and Geneva Schelhaas, Janice Posthuma, and an infant brother; brother-in-law Gerrit Wassenaar; and sister-in-law Bev Wassenaar.

Arrangements were provided by Hartquist Funeral Home of Luverne, hartquist-funeral.com.

(0310 F)

Audrey Opitz

Audrey Opitz, 91, Luverne, died Friday, March 4, 2022, at Sanford Hospice Cottage in Luverne.

Audrey Hills was born on March 2, 1931, to Ora and Hazel (Doschadis) Hills in Beardsley. As a child, Audrey babysat for neighborhood children. She later worked as a waitress in Beardsley and at Rogers Dairy in Watertown, South Dakota.

Audrey married Elwood Opitz on July 26, 1949, at St. Peter Catholic Church in Sisseton, South Dakota. In 1951 the couple moved to Luverne. Audrey worked at Ben's Bakery in Luverne and at the high school as a cook. She was also a housekeeper/cook at St. Catherine parsonage and spent many years caring for her children and grandchildren.

Audrey was a member of St. Catherine Catholic Church in Luverne, the Parish Prayer Chain and the WCCW. She was a member of Al-Anon and a charter member of Luverne Al-Anon. She enjoyed embroidery, rosary, baking and coffee with close friends.

Audrey is survived by seven children, Connie (Marty) Manley of Mankato, Vickie Kramer of Worthington, Cindy (Marlo) Van Dorsten of Walnut Grove, Carrie (Mike) Zebedee of Fairmont,



Mary (Jason Sandmann) Opitz of Mankato, Mark (Annie) Opitz of Luverne and Laura (Doug) Loosbrock of Lismore; 14 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; siblings Arlene Deutsch, Mary Ewert, Virginia Hennessey, Patricia (John) Stoick, Linda Sibson, Carol (Dean) Palmer, Larry Hills, Bonnie (Jerry) Hendricks; brother-in-law Dale Sykora; and sister-in-law Jennie Hills.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Elwood, on Dec. 5, 2010; great-grandson Hayden Benson; siblings Donald (Sally) Hills, Dorothy (Robert) O'Leary, Robert Hills, Joyce (Ronald) Bogenreif, John (Doralie) Hills, Kathleen Sykora, Kenneth (Bitsy) Hills; and brothers-in-law Willie Deutch, Willie Ewert and Jim Hennessey.

Mass of Christian burial was Wednesday, March 9, at St. Catherine Catholic Church in Luverne. Burial was in the St. Catherine Catholic Cemetery in Luverne.

Donations are preferred to Luverne Hospice or St. Catherine Catholic Church in Luverne. Condolences may be sent to the family of Audrey Opitz at 180 W. 4th Street, Lismore, MN 56155.

Arrangements were provided by Dingmann Funeral Home of Luverne, dingmannandsons.com.

(0310 F)



Luverne middle schoolers compete in winter olympics

Luverne Middle School students spent last week participating in the Winter Olympics 2022, which included the scooter luge, scooter curling, bean bags and figure skating. Individual and grade medals were given out to the sixth-through eighth-grade students. The seventh grade class earned the most medals with five. **Above:** Seventh-grader AJ Foote participates in interpretive ice skating for audience members. **Left:** Sixth-grader Rylin Goembel (far right) celebrates his gold medal win in figure skating. AJ Foote (center) earned silver and Hannah Wieneke earned the bronze.

1902: Luverne wins inter-scholastic athletic meet

The following appeared in *The Rock County Herald* on May 23, 1902.

Luverne Was Victorious At the Inter-Scholastic Athletic Meet The Luverne High School Team Captured Everything Worth Having and for the First Time Wrestled the Championship from Marshall—Special Credit for the Victory Due to Hyke and Hulett—Royal Reception for the Victors.

Luverne's High school team returned from the 4th annual field meet of the Inter-Scholastic Athletic League of Southwestern Minnesota "covered all over with glory." They won first place in the meet and captured the championship, which, for the first time in the history of the association was taken from Marshall. The record was 38 points for Luverne, 25 of which were won by Ray Hyke a 13 by Dwight Hulett, against 20 for Marshall, 20 for Redwood Falls, 18 for Tracy, 10 for Pipestone and 1 for Sleepy Eye. Among the trophies of their victory was the banner offered by Prof. Rae, of the Marshall business college. The notable features of this



BITS BY BETTY

By Betty Mann, president Rock County Historical Society

year's meet were the splendid achievements of Ray Hyke and Dwight Hulett shown in the subjoined record. Lynn Gillham officiated as judge. The events and the results were as follows:

50 yd dash, Hyke, Luverne, 1st. 5 4-5 sec.

12 lb. shot put, King, Redwood, 1st; Morton, Pipestone, 3rd. 37 feet.

100 yd. dash, Hyke, Luverne, 1st. time 10 2-5.

Half mile run, Hulett, Luverne, 1st. time 2:12.

Running broad jump, Hyke, Luverne, 1st. 19 feet, 9 inches.

220 yd. dash, Young Pipestone, 1st. 2 54-5 sec.

Pole vault, Knox and King, Redwood, tie, 1st. German, Pipestone, 2nd. 9 feet.

Half mile walk. Persons, Marshall, 1st. 3:42.

Hammer throw, Butson, Marshall, 1st. 107 feet, 3 inches.

Running high jump,

Hyke, Luverne, 1st. 5 feet 4 inches.

440 yd. dash, Hulett, Luverne, 1st. Young, Pipestone, 2nd. 59 2-5 sec.

Hop, skip and jump, Hyke, Luverne, 1st. 40 feet 9 inches.

The boys left Marshall at 3:34 Saturday afternoon by way of the Great Northern, and arrived at Luverne on the Burlington freight about 8 o'clock in the evening. They went directly to the high school building where they were met by members of the class and were honored with a royal reception. Refreshments were served under the direction of the girls of the High school class, and a very fine musical program was presented in the main hall on the second floor. There was, of course, great rejoicing among the members of the class, and the victors who had so successfully represented Luverne received in

full measure the honors to which they were so justly entitled. The boys are certainly deserving of great credit for their splendid victory, and all our people will unite with the numbers of their class in giving them unstinted praise for Luverne's share in the honors of their success.

Our boys were very handsomely entertained by the citizens of Marshall, and are enthusiastic in their praise of the Marshall High School class for their hospitality. A grand reception was given for them at the High school auditorium Friday evening, and a class play in three acts was presented. Other entertainments and social events served to make their stay in Marshall a very pleasant one.

The old officers of the association were re-elected, and Marshall was selected as the place of the next meet.

Further particulars are given by our High School reporters in their school notes.

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.

Mock trial/continued from page 6

this year. We beat St. Peter, the No. 1 seed (in Round 4), and we did it with a relatively young team."

Adviser Jason Berghorst said the team's upper classmen (not himself) lead the mock trial practices and work together to form the most effective six-person defense and prosecution teams. They learn the pro-

cedures that mimic those used in the courtroom from each other.

"These seniors started as time keepers and bailiffs for a year or two before stepping up as attorneys and witnesses," Berghorst said. "They handled the breaking of the trend well."

Luverne finished the 2022 season with a win-loss

record of 4-1.

The seniors Luke Thorson, Griffen Jarchow and Chance Tunnessen leave the team in the hands of current juniors Ross Bergman, Ella Lanoue, Jady Hart, Parker Carbonneau, sophomores Brynn Boyenga, Roselynn Hartshorn, Cassi Chesley, freshmen Adam Ask, Eli McLendon,

Leif Ingebretsen, Xavier McKenzie, Keaton Ahrendt and eighth-grader Zander Carbonneau.

This year's trial was a "theft by swindle" case, state of Minnesota versus Taylor Blair. The Minnesota Bar Association, who organizes the mock trial competitions, will release the 2023 case in October.



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Cardinal girls fall in sub-section championship game against Fairmont

By Jason Berghorst
For the Star Herald

The Luverne High School girls' basketball team saw its record-breaking season come to an end Friday night in Worthington.

The No. 2-seeded Fairmont Cardinals defeated the No. 1-seeded Luverne Cardinals 53-42 in the Section 3AA-South sub-section championship game.

Luverne, which ended the season 23-5, set a new school record for number of wins in girls' basketball with 23. The team also was undefeated in the section during the regular season.

Fairmont jumped out to a quick lead at the start of the game, building a 7-0 lead in less than the first three minutes of play before Luverne's Kira John scored the Cardinals' first two points.

The Fairmont lead grew to as much as 26-6 with about six minutes left in the first half before Luverne began to catch its breath and turn things around.

"Fairmont came out and punched us in the mouth," said LHS head coach TJ Newgard.

"We played shell-shocked for a majority of the first half but showed some life before halftime."

Fairmont took a 31-15 lead into the locker room at the half.

"In the second half we started to execute our game plan a little better, and we were able to get the easy looks we thought we could get," Newgard said.

Luverne continued to chip away at the Fairmont lead until LHS got to within six at 46-40 with about four minutes left in the game.

"The girls showed a lot of grit and fight climbing back from a 20-point deficit to give ourselves a chance," the LHS coach said.

"Getting it to a two-possession game with the ball, I thought we had a chance, but we were unable to convert."

Fairmont went on to score seven additional points while Luverne added just two in the final four minutes.

While LHS outscored FHS 27-22 in the second half, it wasn't enough to overcome the large deficit from the first half.

"We had far too many costly turnovers, missed box outs, missed free throws and missed layups to win at this point in the season," Newgard said. "We have to come



Images by CD for the Star Herald

Elizabeth Wagner goes for the basket against Fairmont Friday night for the Section 3AA sub-section championship in Worthington. No. 1-seeded Luverne saw their record-breaking season end against No. 2-seeded Fairmont.

ready to play and avoid getting into such a big hole."

He gave his girls credit for their efforts.

"Basketball is the hardest sport to win a section title in; you have to win a 16-team tournament," Newgard said.

"I'm proud of everything this group was able to accomplish this season, and I refuse to let one performance define them as a team. It's hard to win games. It is really hard."

Elizabeth Wagner led the offense for Luverne with 21 points and 14 rebounds. Christina Wagner tallied 11 points.

It was also the final game as Cardinals for seniors Brooklynn Ver Steeg and Madee Schmuck.

"Brooklynn and Madee were the epitome of what a team needs in its seniors," Newgard said. "They are both selfless and just great kids. We will sure miss having them around next year, but I am thankful for everything they have given to the program."



Luverne senior Brooklynn Ver Steeg aims for the basket Friday night against the Fairmont Cardinals. Luverne lost to the Cardinals 53-42.

Box Score:
C. Wagner 3 1 2-4 11, Beyer 0 0 2-4 2,
Ver Steeg 1 0 0-2 2, Sehr 0 0 2-2 2, E.
Wagner 8 0 5-10 21, John 2 0 0-0 4

Team Stats:

Luverne: 15 of 37 (41 percent), 11 of 20
free throws (55 percent), 26 rebounds,
17 turnovers
Fairmont: 17 of 37 (46 percent), 14 of 23
free throws (61 percent), 27 rebounds,
12 turnovers

Patriot girls' season comes to an end

By Dalton Bass
for the Star Herald

The Lady Pates fought hard all the way to the finish, but their first half deficit was too much to overcome Tuesday night, March 1, in Worthington where they lost to Southwest Christian 75-43.

The E-gals built an early double-digit lead, but the Patriots were able to keep it within striking distance for most of the first half.

With about four minutes remaining in the first half, things got away from the Patriots as they found themselves trailing 43-18 headed into the break.

The second half went better for the Patriots, but their season came to an end with a 75-43 defeat.

Senior Kenadie Fick had 13 points and six steals for the Patriots while MacKenzie Voss added 10 points and seven rebounds. Sam Moser also contributed for the Lady Pates with six points while Layla Deelstra had five steals.

The Patriots end the season with a 13-13 overall record and a second-place finish in the Red Rock Conference.

Box score:
Fick 2 2 3-4 13, Rauk 1 0 0-0 2, L Deelstra 1 0 1-4 3, Voss 4 0 2-2 10, Bork 0 0 0-0 0, Steinhoff 0 0 0-1 0, Anderson 0 0 0-0 0, O Deelstra 1 0 1-2 3, Elbers 2 0 0-0 4, Moser 3 0 0-0 6, Spykerboer 0 0 0-0 0, Harris 1 0 0-0 0, E Deelstra 0 0 0-0 0

Team stats:
H-BC: 17 of 52 (33 percent), 7 for 13 free throws (54 percent), 30 rebounds, 27 turnovers
SWC: 28 of 58 (48 percent), 10 for 16 free throws (63 percent), 33 rebounds, 20 turnovers

Ripka competes at state wrestling meet

By Canaan Petersen
For the Star Herald

Braydon Ripka earned a trip to the state wrestling tournament Friday, March 4, at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul by placing second in the Section wrestling tournament.

For his first match at state, Ripka drew the Section 6A senior from West Central - Ashby, Ruebens Swanson, with a 44-9 record, and it proved to be a tough first match.

In the first period, Ripka worked for his takedown but was blocked every time by Swanson. In the final seconds of the period, Swanson came in for a takedown and went up 2-0.

In the second period, Ripka chose the down position and quickly escaped to his feet, bringing the score to 2-1. Halfway through the period, Swanson picked Ripka's heel and secured another two points take down, bringing the score to 4-1.

In the third period, Swanson chose the neutral position with both wrestlers on their feet. Neither wrestler was able to score after many setups and attempts. The match ended in Swanson's favor 4-1.

"Braydon wrestled well the whole match, but he couldn't quite produce the points he needed," head coach Jordan Kopp said.

Ripka's future in the tournament now rested in Swanson's hands as he needed to win one more match in order for Ripka to wrestle again.

Swanson got pinned the next match to the eventual runner-up in the weight



In this file photo from the team section tournament earlier this year, Luverne's Braydon Ripka pins his Wabasso opponent. Ripka went on to place second in the individual champions and earn a trip to the state wrestling tournament.

class. Ripka's season was over.

Ripka ends his career as a Cardinal wrestler in sixth place for all-time wins (113).

"I'm happy to have made it to the state tournament because that was

my goal, but it would have been nice to wrestle more than one match," Ripka said.

"I had a great career as a Luverne wrestler, and I'm proud of what I accomplished."

Patriot boys fall short against TMB

By Dalton Bass
For the Star Herald

The Patriots' season came to an end after a well-fought battle with Tracy-Milroy-Balaton Saturday afternoon in Worthington.

The No. 6-seed Patriots took a lead right from the beginning, thanks to a three-pointer by senior Liam Raymon on the first possession.

Seniors Ty Bundesen and Cole Baker each added a three of their own as the Patriots opened up a 14-4 lead.

They maintained the lead all the way through to the end of the first half, going into the locker room with a 32-30 advantage.

The Panthers, however, opened the second half on a 9-0 run and never looked back from there.

The Patriots were never fully able to pull themselves back within reach as they fell 83-67 as time expired.

Baker led the way for the Patriots with 23 points and 10 rebounds in his final game of an impressive career. Senior Drew Leenderts added 12 points by knocking down four three-pointers. Bundesen, Raymon, and Oliver Deelstra each added nine points.

The Patriots ended the season with an 11-13 overall record and a fourth-place finish in the Red Rock Conference.

Box score:
Baker 4 4 3-3 23, Deelstra 2 0 5-8 9, Raymon 2 1 2-2 9, Harnack 0 0 0-0 0, Page 0 0 0-0 0, Leenderts 0 4 0-0 12, Bundesen 3 1 0-1 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 1 0 0-0 2, Scholten 0 0 0-0 0, Harris 1 0 1-2 3, Wiersema 0 0 0-0 0

Team stats:
H-BC: 23 of 53 (43 percent), 11 for 16 free throws (69 percent), 28 rebounds, 16 turnovers
TMB: 30 of 70 (43 percent), 16 for 20 free throws (80 percent), 41 rebounds, 9 turnovers

Luverne boys nearly upset Fairmont

By Jason Berghorst
For the Star Herald

It was a tale of two halves for the Luverne Cardinal boys' basketball team during the opening round of the Section 3AA-South tournament.

The No. 6-seeded Luverne team traveled to No. 3-seeded Fairmont Saturday afternoon.

After falling behind 28-16 in the first half, LHS more than doubled its offensive output in the second half, outpacing Fairmont 33-23.

It wasn't quite enough, however, as the Luverne Cardinals fell by two to the Fairmont Cardinals, 51-49.

"I was really proud of how we battled back after getting down," said LHS head coach John Sichmeller. "We didn't play bad to start. We just missed a bunch of shots that we normally make."

After halftime, Luverne was down by as much as 34-18 five minutes into the second half before LHS went on a 16-0 scoring run to tie the game 34-34.

"The kids stuck with it and didn't get down on themselves and made a great game of it," Sichmeller said.

The two Cardinal teams traded baskets and the lead for the remainder of the game.

With eight seconds left, Fairmont led 50-49 and Luverne had the ball. An offensive foul by Luverne gave the ball back to Fairmont.

LHS had to foul four times in order to get Fairmont to the free throw line.

'The kids stuck with it and didn't get down on themselves and made a great game of it.'

— LHS Coach
John Sichmeller

After the FHS player made one of two free throws, the Cardinals threw up a last-second, full-court shot that missed, and Fairmont won the game 51-49.

Gannon Ahrendt was the leading scorer in the game with 33 points, including four three-pointers. Eli Radtke added seven points for Luverne.

The Cardinals ended their season with a 10-14 record.

Saturday's game was the final game for nine LHS seniors.

"They were a fun group of kids to coach, and it was fun to see how they improved throughout the year," Sichmeller said.

"We didn't start the year off too hot, but we played some good basketball at the end."

Box score:
Cole-Kraty 1 0 0-0 2, Schoeneman 0 1 0-0 3, Sehr 0 0 0-0 0, Radtke 3 0 1-4 7, DeBeer 0 0 0-0 0, Ahrendt 9 4 3-3 33, Overgaard 1 0 2-2 4

Team stats:
Luverne: 19 of 53 (36 percent), 6 of 9 free throws (67 percent), 29 rebounds, 11 turnovers
Fairmont: 20 of 46 (43 percent), 7 of 11 free throws (64 percent), 33 rebounds, 15 turnovers

The ban on lead shot is coming, like it or not



THE OUTDOORS

By Scott Rall
Outdoors columnist

The number of outdoor issues in the Minnesota news these days is mind-boggling. They won't often show up where you might be reading, but there are game- and fish-related bills all over the place this legislative session. Some of these are going to be hitting a little closer to home than normal for the average outdoor person.

The one I think will get the biggest fight is whether the state should go to all non-toxic shot for hunting. Non-toxic shot shells have been required for decades when waterfowl hunting. It did not take science long to prove that lead shot deposited in the bottoms of lakes and wetlands was being consumed by waterfowl and other shorebirds, resulting in their death.

Non-toxic alternatives several decades ago were not up to the task of making clean kills. Most hunters actually hated the alternatives to lead shot. Many still do today.

The new battle cry is that somehow lead shot is doing damage to other wildlife that is not related to wetland-type habitats. I have not seen any science to prove that pheasants, for example, are ingesting lead shot and dying when out foraging for food.

Recent studies do claim to prove that almost all of the bald eagles and golden eagles tested have some level of lead toxicity in their blood streams. It might not be at high enough levels to kill them but can cause difficulty in flight and reproduction efficiency.

Most of the raptors that die of lead poisoning do so from eating the dead carcasses of hunter-killed deer that were taken with a lead bullet. I do believe this happens, but I researched bald eagle populations, and they have rebounded from 416 nesting pairs five decades ago to over 415,000 nesting pairs today. The eagles don't seem to be doing too badly according to those numbers.

Non-toxic shot is a lot better today than it was when first introduced, and a load of Federal Prairie Storm steel shot is as deadly as any lead shot shells I have ever used.

The issue with a regulation change to all non-toxic shot on public land is the fact that many

hunters have more than a few seasons of lead shell utilization on the shelf in the garage. What are they going to do with all of those boxes when they can no longer be used on public lands, which, by the way, is where a larger percentage of Minnesota hunters recreate? Many other states already require the non-toxic alternatives, and Minnesota is lagging in their conversion to non-toxic shot shells.

The commissioner of the Minnesota DNR used some form of executive order to require non-toxic shot when hunting on scientific and natural areas managed by the state. Depending on where you live, these can be few and far between.

Non-toxic shot can be in the form of steel pellets for bird hunting or copper bullets for deer hunting. These can be used successfully, but if you try to buy a box of them today, you will go away empty-handed nine out of 10 attempts. How do you change the rules to non-toxic shot when there is none available for purchase?

I think it is only a matter of time before all public lands in all states will require non-toxic shot and bullets. I think the proper way to handle this would be to change the rules with an effective date about three years down the road. This would allow ammo manufacturers to catch up to demand and allow hunters to use up the supplies they have on their garage shelves.

Lead is bad and everybody knows it. Those who will fight this change will fight a long-term losing battle. Do not think for a minute that it will go down in history as a little skirmish. This

non-toxic battle will be hard-fought by both sides and could last more than a few years.

There is some talk about a buy-back system that allows hunters to trade in their lead for a non-toxic alternative. Who is going to pay for this? I have no desire for the Game and Fish fund to pay for it. Those dollars manage fish and wildlife habitat. Those who want lead shot gone the most will need to find a funding source not already being paid for by hunters and fishers.

If you are lucky enough to have private land to hunt on, then your lead shot could likely be used up there until it is gone. But what if the new rule restricts lead shot on any land located in the state regardless if it's public or private? This stirs up yet another wasp's nest.

I think the state needs a plan to transition from lead to non-toxic shot and bullets. The transition needs to happen over a period of years. If the state is going to dictate the type of shells and bullets used, the new ammunition needs to be available to those who want to buy it. This is a necessary step, but it needs the proper timing to make the transition as painless as is possible.

I am anticipating a high number of emails from the lead shot lovers over the next few weeks. You can reach me at scottarall@gmail.com

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.

Income tax filing season kicks off, deadline April 18

Minnesota taxpayers have until Monday, April 18, 2022, to file and pay their state and federal income taxes.

The department offers tips for filing your income tax:

•**See if you qualify for free tax preparation.** If your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) is \$73,000 or less, you may qualify to file electronically for free. Visit our website (listed at end of this article) to see if you qualify.

You may also qualify for free tax preparation for your returns. There are free tax preparation sites available across Minnesota through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and AARP Tax-Aide programs.

Some sites offer in-person options while others offer virtual services. Visit our website to find free tax

preparation sites near you.

•**File electronically and choose direct deposit.** Electronically filing your return and choosing direct deposit for your refund is the most secure and convenient way to file your taxes and get your refund.

Learn more about your electronic filing options and the benefits of choosing direct deposit.

•**Save your receipts and other tax-related documents.** If you claimed certain deductions or credits, be sure to include all required documentation when filing and save copies in case you need to reference them in the future.

•**Check for accuracy.** Enter your name and any dependent's names exactly as they appear on Social Security cards, Individual Tax-

payer Identification Number (ITIN) cards or letters. Double-check bank routing and account numbers used on tax forms for direct deposit.

Incorrect information on tax forms can result in refund delays.

•**Military members can electronically submit Form M99, Credit for Military Service in a Combat Zone.** Created based on feedback from military service members, the electronic submission of this form is an easy way for service members to claim this credit.

•**File your return by the April 18 due date, even if you owe more than you can pay.** Pay as much as you can by the due date and contact us as soon as

possible to set up a payment agreement for the remaining balance.

You can include your banking information on your electronically filed return to make the payment or pay electronically with our e-Services Payment System. You can specify when the payment will be taken from your checking or savings account in advance or on the due date.

After you file:

•**Track your refund.** You can track where your refund is in the process by using our Where's My Refund? You will be able to track which of the four stages your refund is in and whether you need to take any action to allow us to complete the processing of your refund.

Turkey hunting licenses went on sale March 1

As of Tuesday, March 1, turkey hunters can now buy their licenses for the spring 2022 season.

Licenses can be purchased online at mndnr.gov/licenses/online-sales, by phone at 888-665-4236 or in person wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold.

To help understand hunter distribution, license agents will be asking hunt-

ers which permit area they plan to hunt.

The information is useful to the DNR in managing the state's turkey population. Hunters who identify their permit area are not restricted to hunting in only that area.

Season dates and hunt rules can be found on the DNR's turkey hunting page, mndnr.gov/hunting/turkey.

EVERYONE WELCOME TO ATTEND!

Rock County Republican Party

2022 COUNTY CONVENTION

Friday, March 11, 2022
7:00 p.m.

Registration will begin at 6:30 p.m.
Generations Building
(formerly Grand Prairie Events)
105 South Estey, Luverne, MN

Hear from candidates for state, district and national offices
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This ad is paid for by Rock County Republican Party
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Be Part of the Parade!

St. Patrick's Day Parade
Thursday - March 17- 4:30 pm
Main Street - Downtown Luverne

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No pre-registration required!
Meet in the parking lot of LIVING ROCK CHURCH between 4 & 4:30 pm.

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Parade will end at the Palace Theatre!
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709 North Kniss Avenue, Luverne MN 56156.

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- Qualifications: Applicant must hold a current Minnesota Elementary Teachers license or have the ability to acquire.
- Description: This position will be a classroom teacher at the elementary level. The position may be assigned to any openings at Luverne Elementary School and is not specific to a grade level at this point.
- Application Deadline: Position open until filled
- Start Date: Fall 2022

District application can be found at the following link: https://www.isd2184.net/about_ips/open_employment
Send letter of application, resume, letters of reference, transcripts, and completed district application to Craig Oftedahl, Supt. of Schools (c.oftedahl@isd2184.net),
709 N. Kniss, Luverne, MN 56156.

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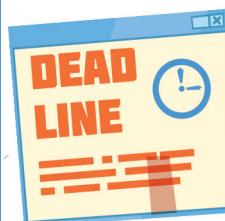
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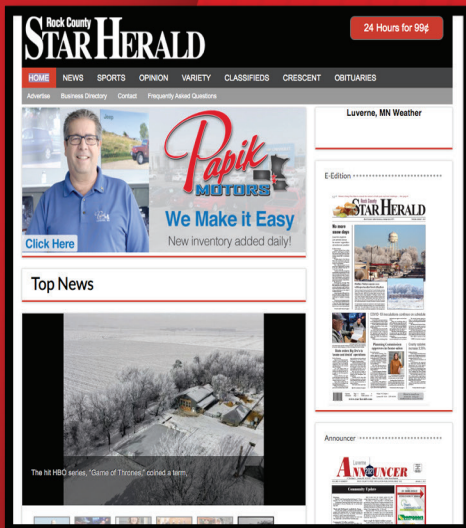
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Rock County **STAR HERALD**

City plans utilities for annexed land for future housing development to north/continued from page 1

At their Tuesday, March 8, meeting, council members set a \$200,000 assessment for landowners in the development to help cover the cost of bringing utilities to the four-lot subdivision.

The assessment will be paid over a 10-year period at an interest rate of 4 percent.

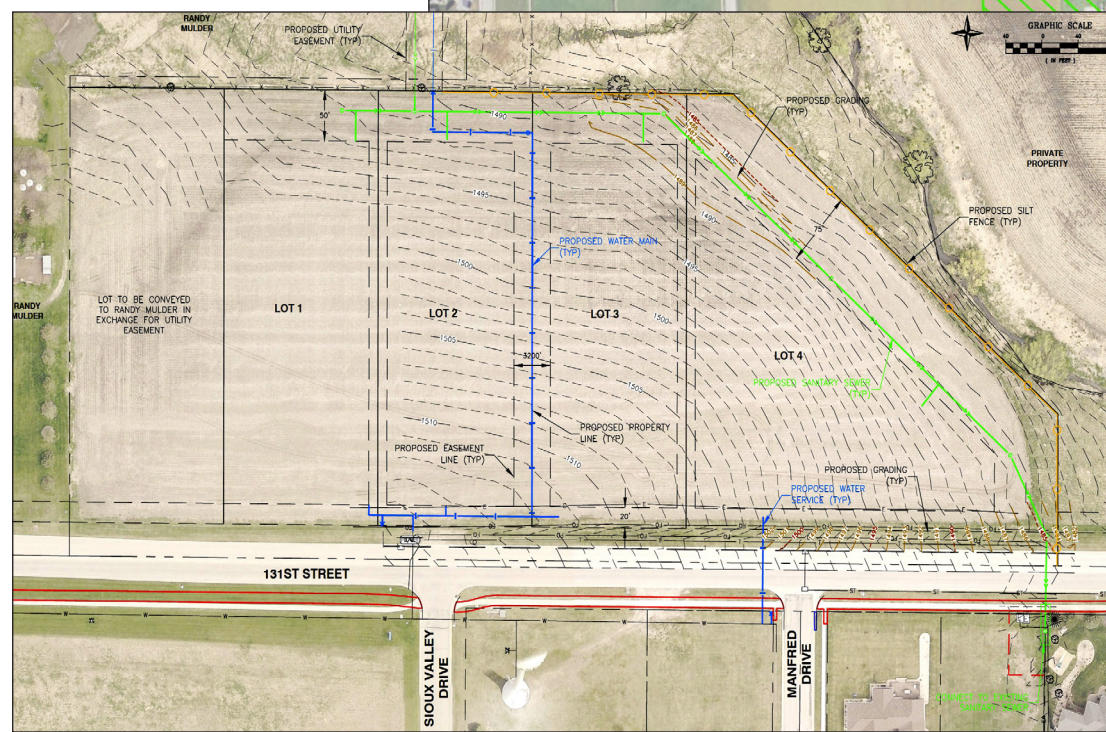
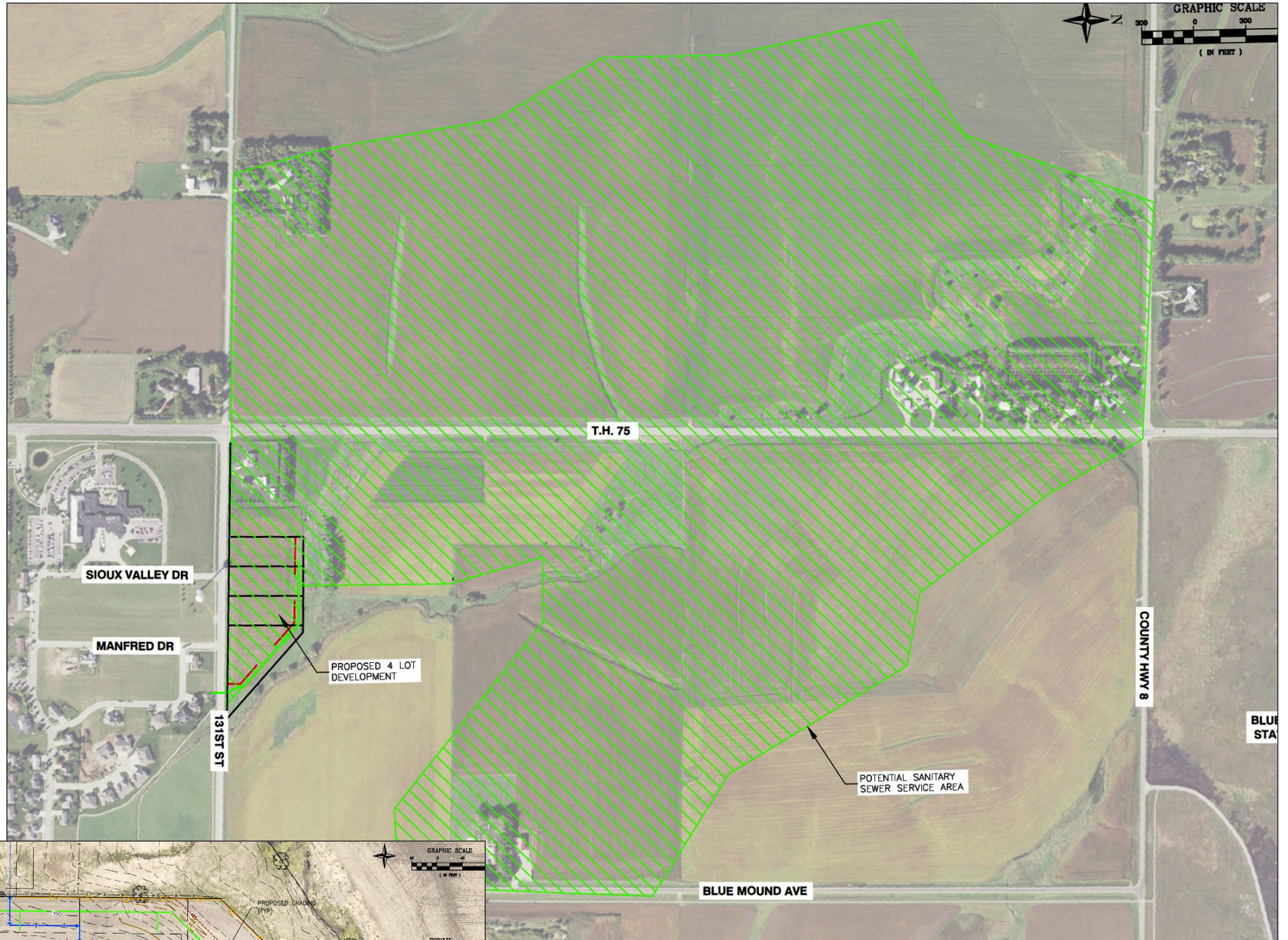
Also on Tuesday, the council set a hearing on the proposed assessment for 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 12, in Luverne City Hall council chambers.

Mound Township officials approved the petition Jan. 24, with signatures by Mound Township chair Keith Schmuck and clerk David DeBoer.

As part of the agreement, the city of Luverne will make a one-time payment to Mound Township of \$2,000 for lost future tax revenue.

The city has advertised for bids for a contractor to complete the water and sewer improvements north of 131st Street.

The bid opening date is set for 1 p.m. Wednesday, March 23, and the work is to be completed during the 2022 construction season.



The city of Luverne has a utility easement agreement with Randy Mulder (the lot on the far left) to allow for utilities to be installed across his property to a potential future 13-lot development to the north. The existing site along the north side of 131st Street is farmland consisting of row crops. Currently there is no water or sanitary sewer service to the property.



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Roll cards, roll!

Luverne High School girls' hockey team rolls through section championship on way to state competition in St. Paul

'Team first' mentality is secret to successful season for girls' hockey

By Star Herald staff

The recently completed 2021-22 girls' hockey season marked the third time in a row a Luverne High School team qualified for the Section 1A state girls' hockey tournament.

The third time proved to be the Cardinals' best.

They finished the season with a remarkable 23-5 record.

Coach Tony Sandbulte remarked during playoffs that his team built their own successful momentum one game at a time.

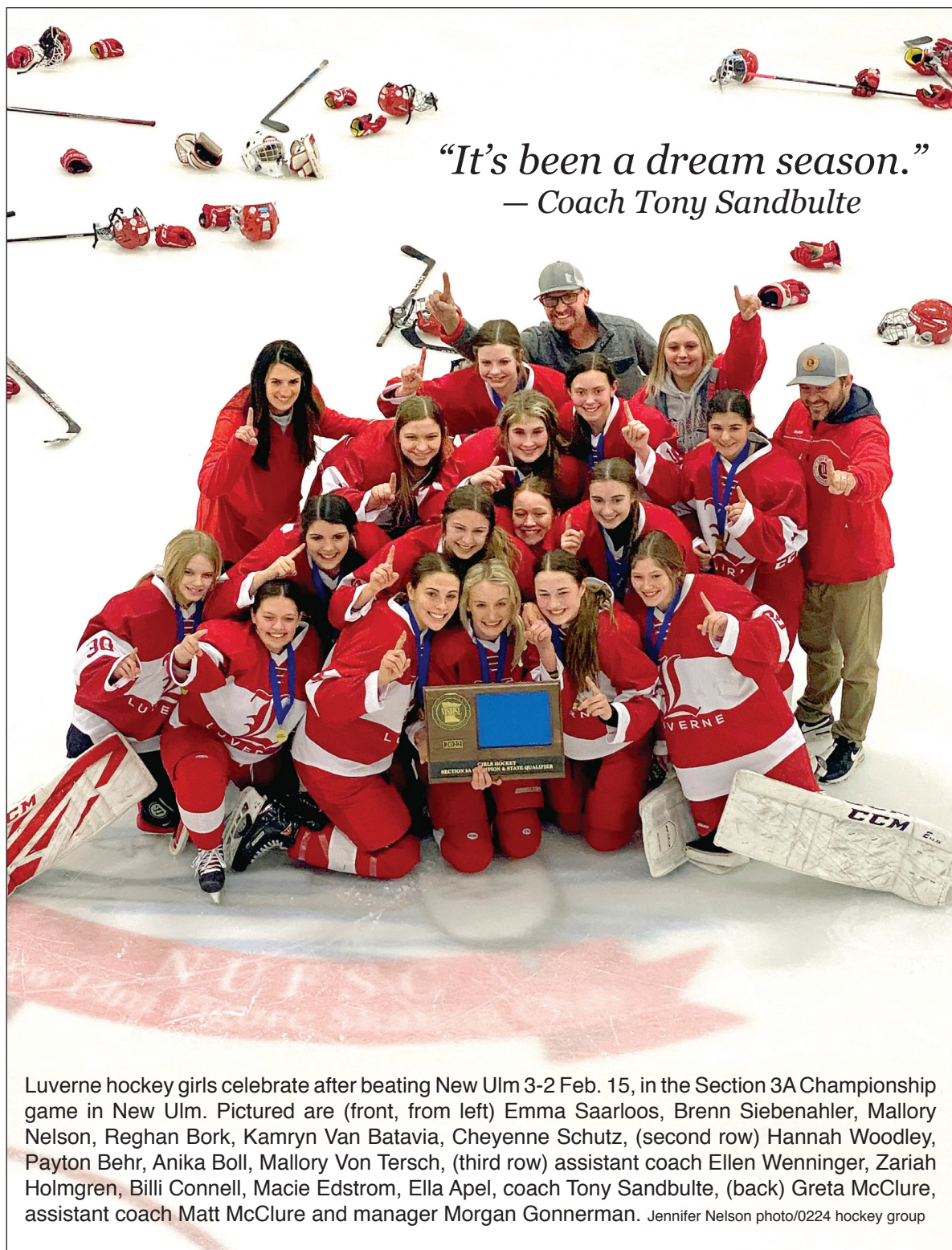
"It's been a dream season. The girls set goals and worked hard to achieve those goals together," Sandbulte told the Star Herald in February.

"Winning a section championship only made it more special."

The Cardinals, the No. 2 seed in the section tournament, won in double overtime against section rival and No. 1 seed New Ulm.

Both teams were listed in the Top 20 teams in Minnesota, and Luverne won the section with a final score of 3-2.

That feat alone was a



Luverne hockey girls celebrate after beating New Ulm 3-2 Feb. 15, in the Section 3A Championship game in New Ulm. Pictured are (front, from left) Emma Saarloos, Brenn Siebenahler, Mallory Nelson, Reghan Bork, Kamryn Van Batavia, Cheyenne Schutz, (second row) Hannah Woodley, Payton Behr, Anika Boll, Mallory Von Tersch, (third row) assistant coach Ellen Wenninger, Zariah Holmgren, Billi Connell, Macie Edstrom, Ella Apel, coach Tony Sandbulte, (back) Greta McClure, assistant coach Matt McClure and manager Morgan Gonnerman. Jennifer Nelson photo/0224 hockey group

satisfying accomplishment for the team and for fans.

The Feb. 15 game in New Ulm was the third meeting

between the Cardinals and the Eagles this season.

In the previous two contests, the Eagles outscored the

Cardinals a combined 13 to 3. A Cardinals win seemed unlikely.

"It was truly a gritty win

"We always want to be at our best at the right time. When the girls enjoy coming to practice and have fun playing hockey, it usually shows in the final outcome."

— Head coach Tony Sandbulte

by our girls," Sandbulte said. "A lot of people had written us off, but everyone in the locker room believed."

Luverne's only other loss in the regular season was against Dodge County, 2-6, at home on Jan. 22.

Taking a 23-3 record into the state tournament was a monumental achievement by the Luverne hockey program.

'Success builds success'

For the first time, both the girls' and boys' hockey teams received a Top 5 seeding from the Minnesota State Hockey Tournament.

Luverne had previously random-drawn (non-seated) statuses that determined the state tour-

Road to state/see page 7

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Photo courtesy of Jim Juhl / Myhré Studio

LHS team members include (front, from left) Emma Saarloos, Brenn Siebenahler, Kamryn Van Batavia, Reghan Bork, Mallory Nelson, Billi Connell, Cheyenne Schutz, (back row) Macie Edstrom, assistant coach Matt McClure, Payton Behr, Greta McClure, Zariah Holmgren, Hannah Woodley, assistant coach Ellen Wenninger, Anika Boll, Mallory Von Tersch, Ella Apel, coach Tony Sandbulte and manager Morgan Gonnerman.

**Congratulations Luverne Cardinals on
 an outstanding season!**



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Jennifer Nelson photo/0310 hockey tab

Good luck at state hockey playoffs, girls. We support you

Luverne High School athletic director Todd Oye addresses the student body Tuesday, Feb. 22, during a pep rally to send off the girls' hockey team ahead of their state appearance that week. Oye congratulated the team members on their victory and snapping Luverne's nine-game losing streak to New Ulm in section finals. The hockey players are pictured with gift bags prepared by the 12U girls' hockey team players ahead of their trip to St. Paul.

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From the sidelines

Star Herald hockey stringer Matt Lais reflects on role as the 'Voice of the Cardinals' writing about games for the paper during the successful 2021-22 girls' high school hockey season

As the Star Herald continues to search for a full-time sportswriter and photographer, talented local contributing writers and photographers have stepped in to cover high school competitions.

Lifelong Luverne resident and former hockey player Matt Lais agreed to tackle girls' and boys' hockey coverage for the 2021-22 season.

He shares his thoughts here about what that work has been like as the Luverne girls' hockey season stretched into playoffs and eventually to state competition.

You agreed to the job for certain reasons; has it been what you expected or hoped for?

It has been a really fun experience and definitely a lot more work than I envisioned, having weeks of three games each for the boys' and girls' teams.

It takes a lot of time watching game tape, going to the games when I can, just to put a report together for each game.

Add that time to balancing my own work and kids' schedules and it was definitely a challenge.



Matt Lais, pictured with his daughter, Addisyn, has balanced writing Luverne hockey stories for the Star Herald with his work life, family life and hockey children.

"It was very satisfying. I got to see a different approach to sports that I had never seen. When I graduated high school, I thought being a sports reporter in a big city following professional teams from day to day would be so cool. Even though I chose a different career, I feel like I crossed something off my bucket list by getting the chance to do this."

— Matt Lais
Star Herald sports stringer for Luverne hockey

What surprised you?

What have you learned?

What surprised me the most is deadlines, how they creep up on you. At the beginning of the week you look at the upcoming week and feel comfortable about it, but

then by Sunday you're like, "I need to get these to Lori."

What was the most challenging thing about it?

The biggest challenge was balancing how much time to put into

each report, considering the 50-plus games played by the girls and boys, and typically a game takes three hours.

Add the three hours of view-


From the sidelines/see page 14




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Community sends off Cardinal girls' hockey team with escorted chartered bus



Jennifer Nelson photo/0310 hockey tab

Mavis Fodness photo/0310 hockey tab

Good luck, Cards! Safe travels

The Luverne High School girls' hockey team leaves town Tuesday, Feb. 22, on a chartered bus escorted by Luverne fire trucks, one of them driven by Luverne fire chief David Van Batavia, father of Luverne standout hockey player, Kamryn Van Batavia. The escorted departure followed a schoolwide pep rally in the district's performing arts center where varsity players were introduced one at a time and received parting gifts.

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Go Big Red!

Pictured at right, members of the Luverne High School pep band, under the direction of James Jarvie, keep the Cardinal fans inspired in the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul during the state hockey playoffs. Below, red and white apparel dots the seating section where Luverne Cardinal fans cheer for their home team.



Star Herald photos by Canaan Petersen, imagesbycd//0310 hockey tab crowds and band




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Congratulations Cardinals!



FROM THE CHRIS+DOC SHOW



Star Herald photos by Canaan Petersen, imagesbycd//0310 hockey tab

Luverne Cardinals take to the ice at the start of the Minnesota State High School Girls' Hockey Playoffs on Feb.23 in the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. From left are Zariah Holmgren, Kamryn Van Batavia, Billi Connell, Macie Edstrom, Hannah Woodley, Cheyenne Schutz, Brenn Siebenahler and Emma Saarloos.

Cardinal girls' hockey season 'Road to State'/continued from page 1

nament's opening matchups.

The Cardinals first made it to the state tournament six years ago.

"I've chatted with some girls from our first team making the tournament in 2016," Sandbulte said.

"And I told them, 'See what you started?' Success builds success."

He said that success starts and ends with the team.

"We always focus on having a team-first mentality. When everyone is working for the greater good of the team, good things tend to happen."

And that, he said, takes focus and hard work between competitions.

"We always want to be at our best at the right time," Sandbulte said

"When the girls enjoy coming to practice and have fun playing hockey, it usually shows in the final outcome."

Leaders on the ice

Individually several Cardinals achieved significant milestones this season.

At the section championship, senior goalie Cheyenne Schutz

had the best game of her career with 49 saves.

She ended the season with a 21-5 record with a 91-percent save percentage.

According to the Minnesota Girls' Hockey Hub, Schutz is tied for sixth in the state for her winning record and is 52nd in the

Road to state/see page 8

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Cardinal girls' hockey season 'Road to State'/ continued from p. 7

state for her save percentage.

Team captain Reghan Bork scored her 100th goal of her high school career.

The senior forward was also state-ranked for her play this season.

Bork is second in assists (47), 12th in goals (39) and tied for fifth in points (86), according to the Minnesota Girls' Hockey Hub.

Leading the state in goals and points is junior and assistant team captain Kamryn Van Batavia, who has committed to play D1 college hockey at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

She scored her 200th career goal on Jan. 9, marking a rare milestone, and she led the state in scoring this season.

Van Batavia had 83 goals this season and 127 points (a combination of goals and assists). She ranked third behind Bork in assists (44).

She told the Star Herald, "It has been really exciting, and I really enjoyed seeing all the support from my coaches, teammates, family and fans.

"When I think about our success this year, I relate it to a practice goal we have set for our team: 'Practice at a high tempo, play at an even higher tempo.' We go hard at practice and stay humble, and it's starting to pay off."

The future of Luverne girls' hockey is looking bright.



"When I think about our success this year, I relate it to a practice goal we have set for our team: 'Practice at a high tempo, play at an even higher tempo.' We go hard at practice and stay humble, and it's starting to pay off."

— Kamryn Van Batavia, Luverne High School junior

Luverne junior standout Kamryn Van Batavia looks for a pass opportunity during the Cardinals' game with South St. Paul during the first round of playoffs in the Xcel Energy Center Thursday, Feb. 24. Van Batavia is the state's leading scorer with 83 goals this season. That's head and shoulders above the rest of the state with the second-leading scorer at 54. She's third in the state for the number of assists — 44 this season, right behind teammate Reghan Bork, who is second in the state for assists at 47. Van Batavia leads the state in points at 127, which is a total of goals and assists. Canaan Petersenimagesbycd//0310 hockey tab

Freshman Peyton Behr is tied for eighth in the state in assists (40) and tied for 17th in points (62).

In wrapping up his thoughts on

the recently completed season, Coach Sandbulte reflected on an important element that led to the team's success.

"The team would just like to thank the community for all the support throughout the season," he said. "We'll try it again next year."




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Go Cards!



Luverne Middle School students (at right) joined the cheering section Feb. 23-24 in St. Paul to support the Cardinal girls' hockey team in state playoffs. They are (from left) Landyn Lais, Brody Goembel, Blake Sauer, Treven Bell (middle back), Maddux Domagala (lower front), Josh Hansen and Brady Palaschak-Smeins

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Senior Cardinal Brenn Siebenahler reflects on season, shares advice

The Star Herald reached out to all the seniors on the Luverne girls' hockey team about their reflections on their high school hockey careers and the success of their team.

Here's what senior player Brenn Siebenahler shared in response to questions:

What's been the most remarkable thing about your successful season and your trip to the state playoffs?

The most remarkable thing about our season was definitely beating New Ulm, since the Luverne girls' hockey team has only ever won against them three times in the history of the team.

What do you attribute your success to and the success of the team?

I had a lot of faith in our team, and I was always trying to pump our girls up as much as I could before every game.

As an outgoing senior player, what advice would you have to your younger teammates coming up through the ranks?

Soak it all up! All the years on the team goes so fast!

Once it's over you will miss it a lot more than you think you would. Always try to have fun.



Luverne senior goalie Cheyenne Schutz makes one of her 38 saves in the Cardinals' game with South St. Paul during the first round of playoffs in the Xcel Energy Center Feb. 23. Shots on goal for the third period were 13-4 in favor of the Packers. Total shots on goal for the game were 41-21 in favor of South St. Paul.

Star Herald photos by Canaan Petersen, imagesbycd/0310 hockey tab



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Senior Cardinal Reghan Bork reflects on season, shares advice

The Star Herald reached out to all the seniors on the Luverne girls' hockey team about their reflections on their high school hockey careers and the success of their team.

Here's what senior player Reghan Bork shared in response to questions:

What's been the most remarkable thing about your successful season and your trip to the state playoffs?

The most remarkable thing about our successful season truly was beating New Ulm at New Ulm to win the section championship.

We had lost to them two times prior in the season and to come off of those two losses and pull through with a win was truly something special.

Going back to the state tournament for the third year in a row was a dream come true and something that'll stick with me forever.

What do you attribute your success to and the success of the team?

I attribute my success in hockey to the 13 years I've dedicated myself to the sport. I've done multiple camps and tournaments, been part of many teams, and have shot lots of pucks.

Success only happens when you put the time in, and our team definitely puts in time and hard work in during the off season and



Star Herald photos by Canaan Petersen, imagesbycd//0310 hockey tab

Luverne senior forward Reghan Bork looks for a path to the net during the Cardinals' game with South St. Paul during the first round of playoffs in the Xcel Energy Center Thursday, Feb. 24.

in season. My team and I are also very successful due to our strong coaching staff and their passion for the sport.

As an outgoing senior player, what advice would you have to your younger

teammates coming up through the ranks?

Being the captain of such a passionate and successful team is truly something special.

My advice to any younger player is to be a leader no matter what your age is, give 110 percent every day, and have

fun.

The last and most important piece of advice I would give is skate every game like it's your last because your last comes so quick.

Take pride in wearing the Luverne jersey. It's truly an honor.



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Congratulations Cardinals

on your dedication, hard work and years of practice!



LHS team members include (front, from left) Emma Saarloos, Brenn Siebenahler, Mallory Nelson, Reghan Bork, Kamryn Van Batavia, Cheyenne Schutz, (second row) Hannah Woodley, Payton Behr, Anika Boll, Mallory Von Tersch, (third row) assistant coach Ellen Wenninger, Zariah Holmgren, Billi Connell, Macie Edstrom, Ella Apel, coach Tony Sandbulte, (back) Greta McClure, assistant coach Matt McClure and manager Morgan Gonnerman.



10U team members include (front) Hazel Mollberg, (second row, from left) Addisyn Lais, Kendyl Behr, Mallorie Edstrom, Harper Renken, (back) Willow Domagala, Ayla Nelson, Summer Mollberg, Samantha VanMaanen and Destiny Kubesh. Not pictured: Coach Makayla Sterrett and assistant coaches Amanda VanMaanen, John Mollberg and Nick Domagala.



12U team members include (front, from left) Ellie Van Batavia, Kloe Brockberg, Brynlee Lass, Tenlee Pick, (back) assistant coach Mark Steensma, Trinley Vanderburg, Izzy Steensma, Rylee Kurtz, Tenley Behr, Marlee Nelson, Kassidy Saarloos and coach Dave Van Batavia.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the **Luverne Hockey Association** in the beginning, today and in the future.

Thank you also to coaches, parents, kids and the community for your encouragement. Without you this wouldn't be possible!



Score!!!

Luverne girls' hockey players celebrate after scoring their only goal in the game against South St. Paul during the first round of playoffs in the Xcel Energy Center Wednesday, Feb. 23. The Cardinals lost to the Packers 3-1. Total shots on goal for the game were 41-21 in favor of South St. Paul. Luverne senior goalie Cheyenne Schutz made 38 saves in the loss.

The Cardinals went on to face the River Lakes Stars in the consolation bracket Feb. 24 when the Luverne team lost 4-2. Total shots for the game were 38-36 in favor of the Stars.



Star Herald photos by Canaan Petersen, imagesbycd//0310 hockey tab team celebrates

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From the sidelines — sports stringer reflects on covering hockey/from p. 4

ing or attendance time, plus a report, I would have five (hours) wrapped up into these stories, and most weeks you had anywhere from three to six games.

I would get to as many games as my life would allow, and I watched a lot on-line, thanks to streaming services that are in almost every hockey rink in our area.

The Star Herald staff heard from readers that they appreciated your hockey coverage; did you get reader feedback?

I did get some good feedback from people, and that made the work worthwhile. A few of my favorites were from Tami Bergman, Coach Sandbulte, and Susie Van Batavia.

Anyone who knows Susie knows she has been around hockey for as long as I can remember, and for her to send a nice thank-you card



Matt Lais

"I have played and coached all these years and thought I had seen almost everything hockey had to offer, but after all those years, I'm sitting here writing stories for the high school teams. It's pretty cool when I think of the last 30-plus years of my life to have known so many die-hard hockey people who were instrumental in building the hockey program that we have today in Luverne."

meant a lot.

Despite the late-night writing and deadlines, did you discover any rewards? What was satisfying about the work?

It was very satisfying. I got to see a different approach to sports that I had never seen. When I graduated high school, I thought being a sports reporter in a big city following professional teams from day to day would be so cool.

Even though I chose a

different career, I feel like I crossed something off my bucket list by getting the chance to do this.

Do you have additional thoughts or observations about sports writing for the Cardinal hockey season?

I truly bleed Luverne hockey. All in all, this was a fun experience.

I have been around Luverne hockey almost my whole life.

I think back to how I

started hockey and it was the Connell family that got me started.

Growing up with Tim and Connie as neighbors, I was always playing street hockey with their boys, Pat and Pete, along with John Paquette, Ben Nelson and others.

After playing hockey for so many years, I was able to get into coaching in 1999. I was lucky enough to be a part of coaching for the Luverne boys' first section championship.

I have also coached my 14-year-old son most of his life growing up and have been very lucky to have coached a lot of the kids on the boys' high school roster.

I have spent a lot of years on the bench with lifelong friends, such as Nick Domagala and Tony Sandbulte.

I think of my time with hockey as a "Circle of Life," from how it started to how it finished.

I have played and coached all these years and thought I had seen almost everything hockey had to offer, but after all those years, I'm sitting here writing stories for the high school teams.

It's pretty cool when I think of the last 30-plus years of my life to have known so many die-hard hockey people who were instrumental in building the hockey program that we have today in Luverne.

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Senior Leadership

Pictured below, Luverne senior Billi Connell battles for control of the puck during the Cardinals' game with South St. Paul during the first round of playoffs in the Xcel Energy Center Wednesday, Feb. 23.



Star Herald photos by Canaan Petersen, imagesbycd//0310 hockey tab

Luverne senior Payton Behr takes a shot that sets up her teammate Kamryn Van Batavia to score in the first round of state playoffs in the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul Feb. 23. It would be Luverne's only goal in a hard-fought 3-1 loss to the South St. Paul Packers.



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Congratulations Cardinals!



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Team members pictured are (front, from left) Emma Saarloos, Brenn Siebenahler, Mallory Nelson, Reghan Bork, Kamryn Van Batavia, Cheyenne Schutz, (second row) Hannah Woodley, Payton Behr, Anika Boll, Mallory Von Tersch, (third row) assistant coach Ellen Wenninger, Zariah Holmgren, Billi Connell, Macie Edstrom, Ella Apel, coach Tony Sandbulte, (back) Greta McClure, assistant coach Matt McClure and manager Morgan Gonnerman.

We're proud to support Luverne High School activities and to be a part of this winning community!



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