

Rock County STAR HERALD

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Thursday, September 30, 2021

Parents address board about masking

All are passionate about doing what's best for children; board is 'stuck' with navigating opinions

By Lori Sorenson

Luverne School Board members convened Thursday night in the performing arts center to accommodate more than 50 people for a listening session ahead of the regular agenda.

Several individuals shared prepared remarks about masking in school — both for it and against it — and a common theme emerged: We need to do what's best for the children.

While the passion was there, consensus was not.

Some think what's best for children is masking at school when Covid cases are on the rise, because face coverings prevent person-to-person transmission of the virus so that students can learn in person in school.

Others think what's best for children is freedom from masking, because they think masks can harbor bacteria and interfere with learning due to distraction and not being able to read facial expressions.

From the microphone

"I'm not trying to convince you to stop wearing a mask; I want you to have that choice," said Evan Meinerts, the first at the mic. "But I hope you can see that there are real, logical, evidence-based reasons to not wear a mask, and we want to choose."

He also questioned the effectiveness of masks and the quality of CDC research, because he said simulated lab tests don't replicate an actual school day.

"Not enough studies have been done on these real-world scenarios, so it is unethical to

Mask discussion/see page 5A



Rest in peace, Jimmy Jo

Monday morning's funeral procession for James "Jimmy Jo" Johannsen included a Luverne Fire Department escort and an American flag draped from the ladder truck over the Highway 75 and Main Street intersection. Johannsen joined the Luverne Fire Department in 1973, and from 1981 to 1997 he served as the fire chief. He died Wednesday, Sept. 22, at age 78. His full obituary appears on page 7A. Pictured above, the Luverne Fire Department ladder truck temporarily blocks the intersection at Main Street and Highway 75 for the line of vehicles traveling to the burial of Johannsen, who had requested the flag be part of his funeral procession. Below, Luverne firefighters Mark (left) and Jonathon Kurtz transport Johannsen's casket in the antique Luverne Fire Truck. Lori Sorenson photo/0930 johannsen flag



By Lori Sorenson

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

The levy includes \$2,280,100 for the General Fund, debt service, and \$250,080 for principal and

interest on existing debt.

Council members reviewed the city's five-year capital improvement plan at their July 30 meeting and the proposed 2022 budget at their Aug. 17 meeting.

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

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

Governmental expenditures include:

- Public safety at \$1.5 million, about 18 percent of costs;
- Public works at nearly \$1 million, about 11 percent of costs;

Parks and recreation at nearly \$700,000 at 8 percent

Governmental revenues come in the form of:

- property taxes at roughly \$2.28 million, or percent;
- local government aid from

Luverne levy/see page 2A

Luverne levy may increase 11.77 percent, impact to be mild



Crews with Musch Construction, Pipestone, work on Main Street Friday.

Curb, gutter work continues on Main

By Lori Sorenson

Workers with Musch Construction, Pipestone, are removing and replacing sections of sidewalk, curb and gutter on Main Street in Luverne between Highway 75 and Blue Mound Avenue.

The work so far is affecting the

blocks west of the Freeman Street intersection and didn't affect the parade route for Saturday's Tri-State Band Festival.

Rock County Highway Engineer Mark Sehr is supervising the

Curb and gutter/see page 2A

Everyone loves a parade

70th annual Tri-State Band Festival returns after pandemic

By Mavis Fodness

A year after the coronavirus pandemic caused the 2020 event to be canceled, Luverne's Tri-State Band Festival returned Saturday for the 70th time.

Crowds once again lined Main Street to watch 14 bands compete in the parade competition with nine bands staying for the field competition.

Luverne, as the host school, did not compete. Instead, both the middle and high school bands participated in the parade with the high school band closing out the field competition.

The Minnesota State University - Mankato Marching Mavericks were the guest band, performing on the field as field results were tabulated.

Class A parade results were as

Tri-State Band/see page 14A



Mavis Fodness photo/0930 TriState 2021 Rayann Remme smiles during Luverne High School marching band's field performance titled "Music for Life."



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Meetings

People First Group will meet 6 p.m. Monday, Oct. 4, at the Pizza Ranch in Luverne.

Parkinson's Support Group will meet at 2 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7, in Poplar Creek Estates on Oak Drive in Luverne. Masks must be worn.

Community Education offering

Luverne Community Education will offer the following classes and activities. Call 507-283-4724 or visit the website: comed.isd2184.net

Grade 5-6 Volleyball begins Sept. 30 and meets for 8 after school sessions. Fee is \$25.

Learn everything you need to know about having a pet at **Paw Patrol** class on Oct. 4 for students in grades K-5. Fee is \$10

Learn how to play **Pickleball** on Oct. 9. Fee is \$5.

Learn the ins and outs of using a library, checking out ebooks, and more at **Library 101** on Oct. 6. Fee is \$5.

Kids in the Kitchen (grades K-6) will make **Hal-loween Goodies** on Oct. 7. Fee is \$16.

Cheer Camp for grades K-5 meeting is on **Oct. 8**. Fee is \$12.

Intro to 3D Printing on Oct. 11 will show how it works and how it is a useful tool. Fee is \$8.

Register by Oct. 12 for **Cardinal League Com Ed Basketball** for grades 3-6. Fee is \$50. Participants (grades 4-6) that want to travel out of town in addition to the local Cardinal League, should register for the Harrisburg League at www.bsybl.com prior to Oct. 12. That will take care of Cardinal League registration, too.

Register now for the **Music Man Bus Trip to Chanhassen Dinner Theater** on Nov. 6. Cost is \$115.

Defensive Driving Classes allows adults 55 years of age and older to save on insurance premiums. After the beginning eight-hour class, every three years drivers take a four-hour refresher class. The Beginning classes will be Nov. 11 and 18 (four hours each evening). Refresher four-hour classes are Oct. 14 (Edgerton), Dec. 16.

'Paint the Prairie Purple'

The SW MN Dementia Awareness Network wants individuals to show support and bring awareness to dementia by "Painting the Prairie Purple" from Sept. 27 through Oct. 2. Participants are encouraged to decorate businesses and home exteriors in purple for the week. Pictures can be shared or questions asked to ace.rock@co.rock.mn.us. Pictures will be shared on the SW MN Dementia Awareness social media site.

Dementia Walk coming Oct. 2

Dementia Walk for a Cure will be Saturday, Oct. 2, at the Luverne City Park. Registration begins at 9 a.m. with the walk beginning at 10 a.m. Register at <http://walk-for-a-cure-swdan-2021.eventbrite.com>. The event is sponsored by the SW MN Dementia Awareness Network. All funds raised remain in southwest Minnesota to promote dementia education and increase awareness. In case of inclement weather, the event will take place at Grand Prairie Events in Luverne. More information contact Linda Wenzel, 507-283-5064.

Hospice volunteer training

Sanford Luverne Hospice is in need of men and women volunteers at The Cottage and for patient visiting. An application and orientation is required and will be offered in October. Contact Helen Saum at 507-283-1805 or email: helen.saum@sanfordhealth.org

Donate blood Oct. 5 in Jasper

The American Red Cross Bloodmobile will be in Jasper from 12:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 5, in the Evangelical Lutheran Church on Spicer Street. Make an appointment to give blood as soon as possible by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Donors can also save time with RapidPass® by completing pre-donation information online. Bring a blood donor card or driver's license at check-in.

Chuckwagon at Take 16 Oct. 5

The 70th annual Rock County DFL Chuckwagon Feed will be from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 5, at Take 16 Brewing Company in Luverne.

Twin homes to be built on West Brown Street

By Lori Sorenson

Clevering Construction will build a twin home at 101 West Brown on a lot the city had previously cleared of residential blight.

On the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Luverne Council approved a conditional use permit for the project, and construction will begin this fall.

The property previously faced east with a North Freeman driveway, but the twin homes will face north with a Brown Street driveway on the combined lots of 319 North Freeman and 101 West Brown.

Council member Caroline Thorson serves on the Planning and Zoning Commission and said the twin home will be good use of the property.

"It's a great project for infill, which is exactly what we were hoping for," Thorson said at the Aug. 24 meeting. "It sounds like there's a good plan in mind."

The house that previously occupied the lot was demolished in the spring of 2018 as part of the city's blight removal efforts.

The property had been vacated due to heating equipment failure, which in turn caused the frozen plumbing and subsequent water damage and mold throughout the structure.

The house was declared unfit for human occupancy, and repairing the house would have been cost-prohibitive.

The city paid \$15,000



The property previously faced east on North Freeman, but the twin homes will face north with a Brown Street driveway on the combined lots of 319 North Freeman and 101 West Brown.

to Danelle Hamilton for the property at 319 North Freeman, and the house was removed and lot cleared in April 2018.

Taxes previously paid on the property amounted to roughly \$1,065. The twin homes will have an estimated value of \$350,000 per side, greatly increasing the tax capacity of the lots from their previous state.

Each of the units will have two bedrooms, double garages and 1,550 square feet.

Mayor Pat Baustian said the property will be affordably priced and will

likely be sold and occupied quickly, given current housing demand.

According to the conditional use permit approved for the twin home, it must observe an eight-foot setback from the south property line and no less than a five-foot setback from recorded utility easements.

One of the twin homes may be completed this fall and the other next spring.

Mayor Pat Baustian said this project and others like it are a way for the city to make small upfront investments for beneficial future returns.

"Those are perfect examples of why we do what we do with blighted properties," Baustian said at the city's operating budget planning meeting Aug. 31.

"Those are great opportunities to add to our overall tax capacity and spread the taxes around."

He pointed to the duplexes on East Barck Street as an example.

"Of all those blighted properties, the initial tax capacity was \$140,000," Baustian said. "Last year, they went over \$2 million in tax capacity for those units there."

Curb and gutter improvements/continued from page 1A

county-state-aid project.

He said the work includes the replacement of all water shut-off curb boxes, which will result in minimal, if any, disruption to water service while the shut-off valves are replaced.

Sehr explained that the work will improve drainage in areas where water was prone to pooling in sunken concrete and also portions of sidewalk that are

cracked.

"There is some concrete that was in poor shape, and there are toe catchers in some of the sidewalks that we're replacing," Sehr said. Property owners will not be assessed for the improvements.

The new curbs and gutters are being done this fall to prepare for next summer's new Main Street surface.

Four inches of the street surface will be milled off and overlaid between Highway 75 and Blue Mound Avenue.

Sehr said he doesn't have a start date yet for next summer's work, but said he's working with the Luverne Chamber office to lessen impacts on community celebrations, such as the June 3-5 Buffalo Days and the mid-July Hot Dog

Night.

During the curb and gutter work there will be areas with restricted parking and at times limited access to the front doors of some businesses.

"Work should move relatively quickly on each block as it progresses," Sehr said.

The Rock County Highway Department can be reached at 507-283-5010.

County levy/continued from 1A

Rock County ambulances.

Commissioners will adopt the final levy in December. A Truth-in-Taxation meeting will be in December in the county courthouse commissioners room.

In other business Sept. 21, the commissioners:

- granted a \$10,000 request from the Luv1LuvAll coalition in support of a twice-a-month dental clinic in Luverne.
- finalized plans to make \$100,000 available

to each of the six small communities in Rock County to upgrade water and sanitary sewer infrastructures. Cities include Luverne, Hills, Beaver Creek, Hardwick, Kenneth, Magnolia and Steen. No match is necessary for the communities to access the American Rescue Plan funds allocated to the county by the federal government.

They also agreed to allocate \$100,000 to each of the rural water systems serving Rock County.

City levy/continued from 1A

the state at \$1.5 million, 18 percent of revenue; and the rest from enterprise funds, fees and other sources.

Levy increase not same as property tax increase

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

Luverne's overall tax rate. A \$150,000 home for example, saw an actual property tax increase of 1.3 percent in 2021, despite the levy increase of 7.9 percent.

By statute cities must set preliminary levy amounts in September and certify them in December. The December amount may be lower than the preliminary levy, but it may not be higher.

The city's annual Truth in Taxation hearing is set for Dec. 14.

SPRAYING NOTICE DENVER TOWNSHIP

Denver Township will be spraying ditches on or about October 15.

Anyone NOT wanting their ditch sprayed should call Kyle Hemme at 507-290-5053.

New Receiving Days

Due to the overwhelming amount of donations, Redeemed Remnant's new receiving days will be **Wednesday through Saturday ONLY starting Oct. 1 during normal business hours**. Please use the receiving door on the northeast corner of our building in the alley. Thank you for all of your donations and your cooperation.



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Hills adopts \$500 fine for nuisance junk

By Mavis Fodness

Residents in Hills face a \$500 fine if they are found in violation of the city's nuisance junk ordinance after Oct. 1.

Council members unanimously adopted the fine for the misdemeanor offense at their Sept. 14 meeting.

The fine is in response to the council's ongoing effort to clean up yards in the city limits.

Two months ago, notifications were sent to 300 Hills residents, property and business owners to clean up their properties or face potential fines.

Deadline for cleanup is Oct. 1.

Residents are also subject to any cleanup costs if the city is forced to rid the property of nuisance items.

Any unpaid fines or cleanup bills will be assessed to the owner's prop-

erty taxes. No maximum penalty was established.

City attorney Paul Vis sent the nuisance letters on Aug. 1. Since that time, the city has sponsored two cleanup days for residents to use. "We've given them plenty of opportunity," said council member Vickie Busswitz.

Council members have noticed renters are the primary violators of the city's ordinance adopted in 2013. However, no fine has been associated with the ordinance until the Sept. 14 meeting.

The nuisance ordinance asks all residents to "remove all unlicensed, uninsured, inoperable vehicles, yard debris, garbage, waste, etc." from the property.

Once the property is cleaned, if the nuisance reoccurs within 12 months, the fine will double to \$1,000.



Lori Sorenson photo/0930 Harvest 2021

Harvest 2021 so far so good

Lowell Fick runs the combine through his soybeans west of Luverne Thursday morning, Sept. 23, along the north side of County Road 5. Fick is among many Rock County farmers taking advantage of ideal harvest conditions to make quick work of soybean harvest this week. Soybean yields around the area have been varied but still good, averaging 45 to 60 bushels per acre, depending on where drought affected the growing season. Some fields near Steen and Hills yielded nearly 80 bushels per acre in some spots. Fields that experienced storm damage and drought will likely not do as well.

Generations raises funds, makes plans to move into new building

By Lori Sorenson

Mike and Wanda Jarchow sold Grand Prairie Events to Generations on July 1, but they're leasing it through December to honor bookings.

As such, little has changed since ownership changed hands, but plans are brewing behind the scenes to prepare the facility for Generations and its associated programs.

And funds are needed to see them through.

Generations President George Bonnema laid out the numbers last week ahead of the group's fundraising kickoff.

The Grand Prairie Events building cost \$975,000. Generations paid \$375,000 cash for it, so there's a \$600,000 balance left to pay.

And at 4.25-percent interest, Bonnema said the sooner donations come in, the better. "Four and quarter percent on \$600,000 is \$70 per day," he said. "Seventy dollars per day."

Generations has an account through the Luverne Area Community Foundation, which acts as an umbrella organization for many local nonprofits.

"The good news is we have close to \$200,000 in pledges and cash, so that gives the numbers more of a realistic look, as far as where we're going," Bonnema said.

"But the new kitchen will cost roughly \$200,000."

Some of the cash used in the purchase includes grants of \$150,000 from the city and \$150,000 from the county for the Generations building fund.

The city is paying it over three years, and the county is paying over five years.

Bonnema said the city and county support are votes of confidence for the project and the need that local government sees for Generations in the community.

Also, Generations owns the house next door on Lincoln Street that was to have been moved to make way for new construction.

"We have renters in the house that love living there," Bonnema said. "So that's another source of revenue for us."



Generations purchased the Grand Prairie Events building in July and is leasing it to Mike and Wanda Jarchow through the end of the year. This photograph has been altered to show the new name of the facility. Plans are in place to remodel the building for a new kitchen to accommodate senior meals and for an office for A.C.S. of Southwest Minnesota.

None of these resources will pay the bills, he said, which is why he hopes the community supports the Generations project.

How to help

Checks to support the building fund can be written out to LACF with Generations designated as the recipient. The address is P.O. Box 623, 102 E. Main St., Luverne, MN 56156

"We're both tax-deductible organizations," Bonnema said. "But checks written out to Generations are just going to be deposited in our account at LACF."

Another way for farmers to give this time of year is to donate

grain during harvest. As they approach their local elevator, they can specify that the first bushels be sold for Generations.

Bonnema said giving isn't complicated, and all donations are appreciated.

A.C.E. office

Meanwhile, he's working with a contractor to plan minor remodeling in order to accommodate A.C.E. of Southwest Minnesota, which has an office in the current Generations space on East Lincoln Street.

The programs and services of A.C.E. are about Advocating, Connecting, and Educating with resources that enable adults to live safely and independently as long as possible.

A.C.E. coordinator Linda Wenzel serves as the volunteer coordinator for the program once known as Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

"A lot of her programs are definitely beneficial to our members," Bonnema

said. "So that will take a little adaptation."

The A.C.E. office space, which is funded through the county, will be on the building's east side with its own entrance and parking available.

Kitchen

In addition, architect Jeff Nelson, Sioux Falls, is designing kitchen space for Generations, which houses the senior meal site for Lutheran Social Services.

The Grand Prairie Events kitchen was designed only for caterers who brought food in, so Generations will need a commercial stove, oven and hood, and large coolers and freezers.

"The coolers will be outside on the east side, with a door from the kitchen into the cooler and freezer," Bonnema said.

"When you consider during the month of May we did 2,894 meals, that's a lot of food."

Over 500 of those meals were price-wavered. So we have a mission. That's people that can't afford food and are getting

fed. Lutheran Social Services absorbs that. Who else is going to do that."

Meals go to Worthington, Adrian and Pipestone every day. Two days a week meals go to Hardwick, Hills, Beaver Creek and Jasper (each person gets a hot meal and two frozen meals if they chose to).

After that, he said it's meals on wheels in Luverne, and after that it's congregate meals.

"Scheduling is tight to get everything done exactly when it has to leave," Bonnema said.

"There's really no room for error. They're geniuses at it. They've got the system down pat, and every day it's something different they're cooking. It amazes me."

Generations will officially move from Lincoln Street to the Grand Prairie Events building once all the remodeling and construction is complete.

"We can't interrupt the meals," Bonnema said. "Too many people rely on them."



Drive-Up Flu Vaccine Clinic

A flu vaccine can prevent you from getting sick and protect the people around you.

The CDC recommends an annual flu vaccine for everyone 6 months and older, especially those at higher risk of complications including pregnant women, older adults and young children.

How it works:

- Wear a face mask.
- Dress yourself and family members in short-sleeved shirts.
- Have infants and toddlers dressed in a diaper or shorts.
- Stay in your vehicle. Our team will bring your paperwork and then administer the flu vaccine right through your open car window and/or door.

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For more information, call
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Ribbon win ends 'Mavis and Millie's Big Adventure'

Friday night I pinned a large, light blue-colored ribbon on my home office bulletin board. I had won the ribbon hours earlier at the WSCA Championship Show at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds for horsemanship, placing 10th.



RUMINATIONS

By Mavis Fodness, Reporter

friend who said she would hold my hand as I set my sights on actually riding in the coliseum rather than watching from the sidelines.

That moment came last Thursday and Friday during the 2021 event. I had spent countless hours preparing for the three Western classes I competed in with other qualifiers over the age of 50.

For nine months I focused on nothing else.

I took riding lessons, attended a dozen horse shows, worked with a trainer, purchased just the right clothes and, most of all, spent almost every day with Millie grooming, feeding and practicing.

Our goal, just like the ones I challenged my 4-H-aged children with, was to bring home one of those big rosette ribbons.

Last week I tried to savor the moments, showing in the coliseum for the first and more than likely the only time.

Those moments are all a blur.

If it wasn't for the pictures and video my daughter, Courtney, captured, I wouldn't remember any of it except for the disappointment that my first two performances, though high scoring, weren't enough to earn a ribbon.

Before my last class Friday afternoon, I resigned myself to thinking that I didn't need a ribbon to validate the reward of stepping outside my comfort zone and checking an item off my bucket list. I was proud of Millie, who was calm in the ring as well as in the stall. We were ready for the last class of our big adventure.

That last class, Western horsemanship, is not an event I particularly enjoy, and throughout the show season Millie and I haven't been all that successful in winning the event.

Fate, however, seemed to be on our side and led to putting an exclamation point on our adventure.

You see, I purchased a long-sleeved T-shirt as a souvenir the day before that last class. My color choices were black or light blue. I chose light blue — the same light blue color as that ribbon Millie and I won the following day.

Receiving the ribbon marked the end to what I dubbed the "Big Adventure" I embarked in earnest back in January.

The ribbon brings forth a lot of emotions and a lot of people I need to thank for pointing me in the right direction, offering that encouragement to keep going, and dragging that home arena for the millionth time (thanks, Honey).

The adventure has shown me that you're never too old to have dreams or to achieve them.

Preparation to ride in the biggest horse show of my life began decades earlier when, as an 11-year-old, I joined Rock County 4-H, where I learned how to care for and handle a horse of my own.

Millie, a sorrel quarter horse, began the adventure 12 years ago at my daughter-in-law's farm in Iowa where she was born.

Millie and I met last year when I borrowed her for the 2020 show season and completed a series of nine local shows affiliated with the Western Saddle Club Association.

At each one of these shows, riders who place first or second in specific classes qualify for the year-end WSCA show in St. Paul. Hundreds of youth and adults and their horses traditionally attend the annual show.

Millie and I qualified for the champ show in our first year together. Covid, however, canceled the 2020 show that occurs in the Lee and Rose Warner Coliseum, a large concrete structure I first experienced in 1982 as a 4-H'er selected for the Rock County horse judging team.

Over the years, I've been to the coliseum at least a dozen times, most frequently as a parent of 4-H'ers who qualified for the state horse show. The last few years I was "show mom" to a good

Depressed? Thinking life isn't worth living? Help is available; just ask

GUEST EDITORIAL

By Mark Jacobson, Winona Peer support specialist

Although the majority of people who have depression do not die by suicide, having major depression does increase suicide risk compared to people without depression. The risk of death by suicide may, in part, be related to the severity of the depression.

Recent data on depression that has followed people over long periods of time suggests that almost 2 percent of those people ever treated for depression in an outpatient setting will die by suicide.

Among those ever treated for depression in an inpatient hospital setting, the rate of death by suicide is twice as high. Those treated for depression as inpatients following suicide ideation or suicide attempts are about three times as likely to die by suicide as those who were only treated as outpatients, whereas about 7 percent of men with a life-

time history of depression will die by suicide. One percent of women with a lifetime history of depression will die by suicide.

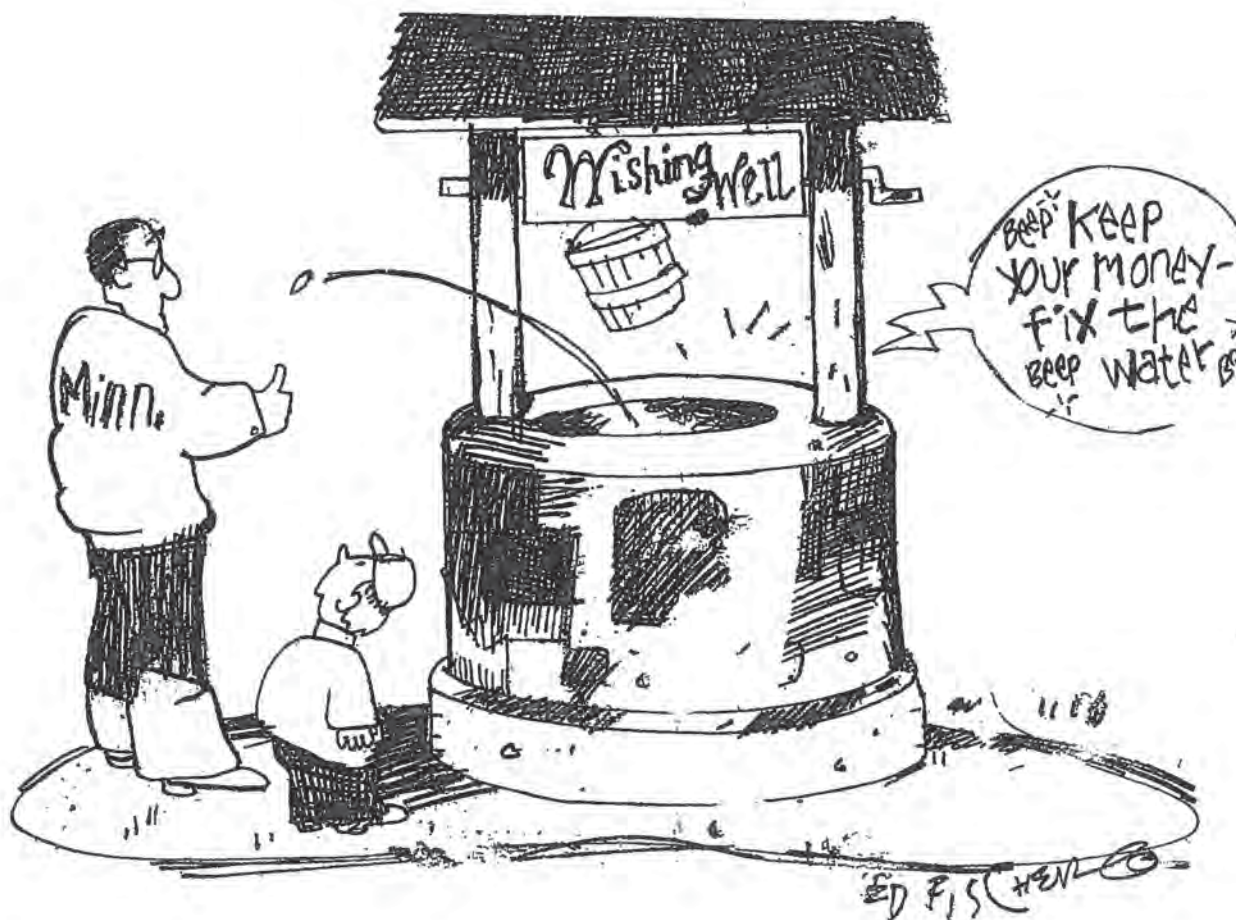
Another way of thinking about suicide risk and depression is to examine the lives of people who have died by suicide and see what proportion of them were depressed. From that perspective, it is estimated that about 60 percent of people who committed suicide have had a mood disorder (e.g., major depression, bipolar disorder, dysthymia).

If you, or someone you know is depressed and is seriously

considering suicide, stop and call 911 immediately. If you, or someone you know, is struggling with depression and is experiencing suicide ideation or thinking that there is no other way but to commit suicide, find the help you need.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is at 1-800-273-8255 and SAMHSA's National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

Both are staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with trained professionals who have the resources available to get you the help that you need.



Pick: Mob rule won — we hope

To the Editor:

Well, the mob won the battle with the school board. Some of your actions were uncalled for — example, sending not so nice texts to school board members. You seem to know more than the superintendent of schools, board members health officers, doctors, the science people and even the President. Your information must come from Facebook and Fox News.

A year from now we will know if the mob was right. I hope you and your kids got the shots. I hope your

VOICE OF OUR READERS

kid doesn't wind up in the hospital or worse yet, doesn't get out.

Who will you blame then?
Let's be safe and not sorry!

Leon Pick, Luverne

Smith: 'I am glad I did it'

To the Editor:

To some extent I get it. There was a time when I was Anti-vax also. I didn't want the government to tell me that I was required to get a handful of vaccines I knew nothing about.

But ultimately, I did it - and you know what? I am glad I did. Kindergarten was awesome!

Tom Smith,
Luverne

We welcome your letters

Deadline for all Letters to the Editor is 10 a.m. Mondays. Any submissions received after the deadline will be held for the following edition. Letters may be hand-delivered to the Star Herald office located on West Main Street in Luverne, mailed to P.O. Box 837, or emailed to editor@star-herald.com

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Tollefson Publishing Roger Tollefson, publisher

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

ON THE RECORD

Dispatch report

Sept. 17
 •A weather issue was reported for Rock County.

•Complainant on E. 1st Street, Hardwick, reported severe property damage.

•Complainant on Highway 75 and County Road 16, Luverne, reported a tree down over the roadway.

•A citywide power outage was reported in Luverne.

•Complainant on E. Veterans Drive reported a death notification.

•Complainant on Harrison Street requested extra patrol.

•Complainant on N. Kniss Avenue reported suspicious activity.

•Complainant eastbound on Interstate 90, mile marker 5, Beaver Creek, reported a driving complaint.

•Complainant reported being locked out of location.

Sept. 18
 •Complainant on N. Kniss Avenue reported an accident.

•Complainant on W. Luverne Street, Magnolia, requested RCSO assistance with locating a person.

Sept. 19
 •Metro communications in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, requested RCSO assistance.

•Complainant on S. Kniss Avenue reported a verbal dispute at location.

Sept. 20
 •Complainant on 121st Street and 190th Avenue, Magnolia, reported a trespassing issue.

•Harassing communications were reported at location on N. Freeman Avenue.

•Suspicious activity was reported on W. Lincoln Street.

Sept. 21
 •Complainant on 31st Street, Hills, reported he found a trailer left on his property.

•Complainant on Luverne Street and N. East Park Street, reported a parking issue.

Sept. 22
 •Complainant reported a camera outage.

•Fire department out for training in Beaver Creek.

Sept. 23
 •Complainant westbound on Interstate 90, Adrian rest area, reported a transient.

•Complainant reported identity theft.

•Complainant on N. Freeman Avenue reported a small fire on stove burner.

•Deputy conducted extra patrol for public forum at Luverne High School.

•Complainant on W. Brown Street reported a missing person.

•Complainant on 160th Avenue, Luverne, reported an individual is threatening him.

In addition, officers responded to 1 motor vehicle accident, 1 deer accident, 2 escorts, 9 ambulance runs, 4 paper services, 2 animal complaints, 1 fingerprint request, 3 burn permits, 1 alarm, 1 gas drive-off, 5 purchase and carry permits, 4 stalled vehicles, 20 traffic stops, 16 abandoned 911 calls, 1 test, 1 welfare check, 2 reports of cattle out and 1 OPP.

Mask discussion/continued from page 1A

require people to comply when there are valid health concerns to doing so.”

Ashley Mundt said she was disappointed to learn the mask mandate was dropped due to lack of community support. “Since when is it up to the community to decide how the school will protect our children?” she said.

“We have an incident command team made up of competent staff and medical experts that we should be listening to. Instead, we are taking advice from those spreading misinformation from sites that promote conspiracy theories.”

And she urged empathy and understanding. “Remember that with freedom comes responsibility,” she said.

“Lack of compassion affects others around you. It affects kids and staff with medical conditions, it affects the medical profession. No one enjoys wearing a mask, but we teach our children to help protect each other.”

She said students wore masks last year and didn’t mind this year until parents got involved.

Brad Sieve warned in general of government overstepping power and said the “school board’s job is to make sure the views of all parents are represented, not just their personal beliefs.”

He said students should be allowed to choose whether or not to wear a mask and said teachers shouldn’t single out and shame students for their masking choice.

“We are here to stand up for our kids. We need a school board that is willing to do the same,” he said. “We need a school board that is willing to listen to all opinions, not just the ones they agree with.”

Sieve further said the board should make the decisions, not an appointed third party (the district’s incident command team).

Emily Rensink contradicted concerns about communicating through face coverings.

“My son is 4. He’s unilaterally deaf and has cochlear implants,” she said, stating that he employs speech therapy and sign language services through the

school. “In the last year and a half he and his staff have worn face coverings to stay safe, and his speech is almost perfect now, even though all his services have been during Covid.”

She said the only thing that hindered his progress was when he couldn’t have in-person lessons. “The only agenda the school board has is keeping every child safe and in school, and we’ve always trusted them to do what they think is best,” she said.

She said she appreciated the invitation for public input, but she said decisions should be up to the board.

“We’ve elected them to do what’s best for our children.”

Randy Saker said he’s concerned about student mental health.

“We have children coming home from school with reports of being bullied by other students,” he said. “Some comments from staff. They come from both sides of the topic. This does not create a stable environment for learning.”

Saker also said that if people in other areas of town — at business offices and stores — aren’t masking, students shouldn’t have to either.

He also asked for a community vote on the masking issue, “in order to arrive at a mutual resolution.”

Jason Mundt said parents’ behavior is making it difficult for teachers.

“Teachers and staff should not have to fight the students in the classroom because the students don’t want to wear it or because their parents said they don’t have to wear it.

“Again, it’s not up to the parents. The staff are the employees and this is their place of employment. Kids are here to learn and respect their teachers in the classroom.”

Steffanie St. Clair mentioned 53 percent of those eligible to receive Covid vaccinations in Rock County have done so.

“Anyone over 12 has had time to weigh the risks or benefits, but furthermore has a right to accept or reject medical advice based on their

personal scenarios,” she said.

“Covid, like any illness, will spread despite our efforts. How dare we place the burden of reducing transmission entirely on our children.”

She said that many people do risky things to prioritize convenience over health, such as eating unhealthy foods or riding in a car.

“Our conclusion is to reject the stress of worrying over every breath. I am more sad for people living in fear than I am for those who died,” St. Clair said. “Death is not new.”

“This is just a new way to die. ... So, we go maskless, not because we don’t care, but because we’ve done our own research beyond what we read on social media.”

Jacqueline Johnson is a speech language pathologist working in southwest Minnesota school districts.

“I wear a mask by choice in one, where the decision was data driven,” she said. “There was absolutely no fanfare to this announcement. The district’s enrollment is at an all-time high; in fact, and mask compliance for students is at 100 percent.”

“This speaks volumes to their desire to maintain in-person schooling, about the respect they convey to the administration and teachers and what priorities they have placed on promoting a safe environment for everyone in the building.”

From the board

Per the district’s policy, the board took no action following the remarks, which were presented courteously and respectfully with no crowd reaction.

The board conducted its

regular monthly meeting once the requested speakers were finished.

As a point of clarification, Board Vice Chair Tim Jarchow said the district had sent early communications about COVID-19 protocols, despite many families feeling as though decisions were made hastily for last week’s mask mandate.

He said the incident command team was developed at the start of the pandemic in order to monitor and respond to changes in Covid case rates.

The board, per policy, responds to recommendations from the team, which is comprised of parents, teachers, school administration, local doctors, emergency management officials and public health personnel.

“Every family at the start of the school year last year received communication about the incident command team and how it makes decisions,” Jarchow said.

Superintendent Craig Oftedal said the community debate is taking a toll on school leadership.

“We’re stuck,” Oftedal said. “There’s no right answer.”

No matter what they do, he said, it will be wrong in the eyes of roughly half the district residents.

But he said Luverne isn’t alone. “This is playing out districts all over,” Oftedal said. “Sixty-seven school board members so far have resigned in Minnesota.”

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PALACE THEATRE **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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Zion Lutheran Church's
Fall Festival
Soup and Sandwich
Supper

Hardwick Legion Hall
 Due to construction in the Church basement

SUNDAY OCTOBER 10
5 - 7 P.M.

Free will offering to benefit local and regional missions - focus on Rock County Food Shelf

serving homemade soups - cheesy baked potato • chili chicken wild rice ham sandwiches & pies, desserts

Support provided by Thrivent Financial Action Team

CELEBRATIONS

Card Shower

Bob and Shelly Reese are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. Greetings may be sent to them at 645 151st Street, Luverne, MN 56156.

MENU

Monday, Oct. 4: Orange chicken, brown rice, oriental vegetables, mandarin oranges.

Tuesday, Oct. 5: Beef goulash, peas, tropical fruit, garlic breadstick.

Wednesday, Oct. 6: Beef and bean burrito bake with lettuce, tomato and sour cream, pears, dessert.

Thursday, Oct. 7: Country fried steak with gravy, mashed potatoes with gravy, warm cinnamon apple slices, dessert.

Half-Price Day sponsored by American Reformed Church.

Friday, Oct. 8: Fish patty on a bun with tartar sauce, cheesy hashbrowns, green beans, peaches.

LSS Dining offers well-balanced and affordable meals.

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.

Community invited to levy info sessions

Residents in the Hills-Beaver Creek School District are invited to attend information sessions about the renewing the district's current operating levy.

The two in-person meetings will be:

•7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7 at the H-BC Elementary School in Beaver Creek.

•7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 12, at the H-BC High School in Hills.

More information about the operating levy referendum is available at the district website: www.hbc Patriots.com.



Luverne couple enjoys cross-county train ride

By Lori Sorenson

Pat Scheidt cast the winning bid on the Ellis and Eastern Train Ride package through Ellis and Eastern Railroad during the Sanford Luverne Hospice Charity Dinner and Auction on Aug. 26 in Luverne.

"I've been looking all these years at those tracks that go by my place," said Scheidt, who lives west of Luverne on County Road 4. "I've just always wanted to ride the train."

So, when the auction item came up for bid, Scheidt made sure to bid to the end, despite a few other bidders who were determined to get it.

Train Engineer Jason Lanpher picked up Scheidt and her friend, Tom Nelson, at Scheidt's acreage Tuesday morning and they chugged eastward at about 10 mph.

The tour took them through Luverne and Magnolia and ended in Adrian. They stopped in Magnolia at the cafe, and later returned to the depot in Luverne for a short tour of the renovations.

"Ellis and Eastern has indicated

'I've been looking all these years at those tracks that go by my place. I've just always wanted to ride the train.'

—Pat Scheidt, whose winning bid at the recent Sanford Luverne Hospice fundraiser earned her a ride Tuesday from Luverne to Adrian on an Ellis & Eastern train.

they want to become more a part of the community, so this is one way to do that," Scheidt said. "How neat is that?"



Lori Sorenson photos/0930 Train Ride Scheidt

Pat Scheidt (left) and Tom Nelson wave from the train engine owned by Ellis & Eastern Railway Tuesday morning as they made their way from Luverne to Adrian on the Buffalo Ridge Railroad. Scheidt purchased the ride at the recent Sanford Luverne Hospice fundraiser.

1923: School nurse hired for Luverne Schools

The following appeared in *The Rock County Herald* on Feb. 9, 1923.

Public Health Nurse For Luverne Schools

Board of Education Votes to Add Trained Nurse to Regular Staff of Luverne Public Schools

Action Hastened by Big Epidemic of Bad Colds

Mrs. Clara Herm Engaged to Fill Position and Will Enter Upon Duties Early Next Week

In order to further safeguard the health and physical welfare of pupils of the Luverne schools, the school board has completed arrangements for the addition of a health nurse to the school corps.

Mrs. Clara Herm, of Lake Mills, Ia., has been engaged to fill the position and is expected to arrive here next week from Tracy, this state, where she is at present engaged. Her office will be at



BITS BY BETTY

By Betty Mann, president Rock County Historical Society

the Central building.

One of the first duties of Mrs. Herm will be to make a physical examination of all the pupils of the schools in order to detect those who show symptoms of the grippe, influenza or severe colds. During the "cold" epidemic which has been sweeping over this city and vicinity the past few weeks, the number of absences at the high school

Bits/see page 7A

REMEMBER WHEN

10 years ago (2011)

•Sanford Hospital Luverne is addressing a scabies outbreak among its staff and patients.

According to the Center for Disease Control website, scabies is an infestation of the skin by the human itch mite (*Sarcoptes scabiei* var. *hominis*).

The microscopic scabies mite burrows into the upper layer of the skin where it lives and lays its eggs.

The most common symptoms of scabies are intense itching and a pimple-like skin rash. The scabies mite usually is spread by direct, prolonged, skin-to-skin contact with a person who has scabies.

Hospital CEO Tammy Loosbrock said the outbreak began in early September and was diagnosed last week. She said the hospital environment is currently free of scabies and the clinic was never affected.

25 years ago (1996)

•Getting through high school isn't as easy for some as it is for others. In fact, many students never get their high school diploma. This can lead to fewer job opportunities, lower pay and decreased self-esteem in general.

In an effort to help students earn their high school diplomas, Luverne High School has started an "alternative school" this year for students who need help.

This could mean teen parents, high school drop-outs or students who may have failed a class and need to catch up.

Luverne Curriculum Coordinator Sherry Feinstein is heading up the program. "We saw a need as far as students having difficulty in traditional school and we were sending them to Pipestone and Worthington Schools," Feinstein said.

So far, 30 students have enrolled in Alternative School classes.

50 years ago (1971)

•Months of planning literally went down the drain Saturday and the skies frowned upon the Luverne area cancelling the 21st annual Tri-State Band Festival.

It was the second cancellation of the event since its beginning. In 1968 the festival was cancelled because of the weather also.

75 years ago (1946)

•Rock county's newest restaurant, "The Steak House", opened at Magnolia last week, is receiving wide acclaim.

A. C. Dispanet, proprietor has spent almost a year in making preparations for the new business, and has now succeeded in obtaining all the necessary equipment to make it one of the outstanding eating places of its kind in the northwest.

100 years ago (1921)

•All automobile owners are invited to load their cars with friends and join in a motor trip to Rock Rapids this evening. It is planned to have the party leave Luverne at 6:30 o'clock sharp, and the motorists will be accompanied by the Luverne band.

The purpose of the trip is to bring to the attention of the people of Rock Rapids and the surrounding territory that next Tuesday is going to be play day in Luverne, and that the people from all over the Iowa state line will be as welcome to spend the day here as if they lived in Minnesota.

Incidentally, the Luverne band is going to render a number of selections after the Luverne party arrives at the Rapids.

The start will be made from the bank corners and the larger the turn-out is, the better pleased the pavement celebration committee will be.

OBITUARIES

Margaret Enger

Margaret Enger was born in Luverne, MN, in May of 1960. She was the third of four daughters born to Kermit Enger and Luella Funck Enger of Hardwick, MN. Margaret was baptized and confirmed at Blue Mound Lutheran Church.



Prior to Margaret's 4th birthday the family moved to a farm west of Hardwick where Margaret was the first (and only) family member to see a cow smile. On the farm, Margaret enjoyed having pets, which included dogs, cats, rabbits, and a chicken named Henrietta.

Margaret attended Hardwick Grade School and Luverne Junior-Senior High School. While in school, Margaret developed her musical gifts by taking piano and guitar lessons, playing percussion in the band, and singing in the choir.

Margaret attended the University of Wisconsin – LaCrosse and Augustana College in Sioux Falls, SD, before completing her studies and receiving a Bachelor's of Science of Business degree from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.

After graduating, Margaret worked for the University of Minnesota. She continued to pursue her love of music by taking private voice lessons, performing recitals, and singing at weddings.

Margaret moved to Chicago in 1989 where she spent thirty-two years in the healthcare field working for Total Renal Care and DaVita Kidney Care. Here she also became a faithful Jehovah's Witness and a beloved member of the community.

To the delight of her family and perhaps others, Margaret had a way with common idioms, transforming "hooks and crannies" to "crooks and nannies" and "wrapped around her little finger" to "twisting and turning her little finger". While others may have "skeletons in the closet",

Margaret had "ghosts".

Margaret's love of animals was lifelong. As an adult, she adopted two pairs of cats. First, she adopted litter mates Desta and Seshi when they were six weeks old. Following their deaths, she adopted adult cats Sydra and Izzie.

Margaret was a lover of nature. She travelled to Alaska and several national parks to enjoy their splendor and beauty.

She became an avid birder and a handy resource for others with questions related to birds. In recent years, Margaret would take two weeks of vacation in the spring to observe the warbler migration over Lake Michigan. Throughout the year, she could be found at Montrose Bird and Butterfly Sanctuary several times a week where she watched, fed, and befriended birds. She made trips to Wisconsin and Nebraska to learn more about cranes and observe the sandhill crane migration.

She was also fascinated by the night sky and shared this interest with her friends and family by sending links about upcoming celestial events. She travelled to Headlands International Dark Sky Park for the specific purpose of watching a meteor shower. This past year, she was learning to set up a telescope so she could better observe planets and stars.

Margaret's interest in nature was complemented by her interest in photography. She took photography classes and learned to develop film. As technology changed, she switched to the camera on her cell phone and captured many beautiful photos of the things that interested her in nature – birds, butterflies and other insects, snowflakes and raindrops, flowers and plants, fungi and tree bark, and sunrises and sunsets.

Margaret and her aunt Myr-

na gave their extended family a lasting legacy by spearheading a project to publish the Funck Family Favorites Cookbook – handling communications, collecting and editing recipes, and working with the publisher.

Margaret enjoyed having her friends over for home cooked meals. She was also a gracious host when her family members came to Chicago either individually or en masse.

Margaret had the misfortune of contending with chronic health conditions throughout most of her adult life. Although she could have become bitter or wallowed in self-pity, she showed great strength of character and graciousness by finding joy in the activities and interests that suited her and sharing these with others. Almost everyone who knew her would agree that her most distinguishing characteristics were her big smile and infectious laugh.

Margaret passed away Sept. 15, 2021, at the age of 61 succumbing to cancer. Her memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 2, via Zoom.

Margaret is survived by sisters Karoline Enger, San Bruno, CA; Lauri Enger, Edina, MN; sister Joy and brother-in-law John Lindgren, niece Krista and nephew Erik Lindgren, Bloomington, MN; aunts and uncles Myrna Spease, Hills, MN; Gordon & Mary Funck, Asheville, NC; Linda & Stan Halverson, Alexandria, MN, and numerous cousins and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

In lieu of flowers, memorials to the following organizations are suggested: Crohn's & Colitis Foundation, Montrose Bird and Butterfly Sanctuary, The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Chicago.

Arrangements were provided by Caring Cremations, Chicago, IL. (0930 V)

Todd Geertsema

Todd D. Geertsema, 57, Burtrum, passed away on Sept. 20, 2021, from Huntington's disease.



Todd is survived by his wife, Kimberly Geertsema, children Connor and Morgan Geertsema, and parents Tom and Margaret

Geertsema. There will be a celebration to honor his life on Saturday, Oct. 16, from 1 to 5 p.m. at Todd and Kim's home located at 4325 Acorn Road in Burtrum, MN 56318. (0930 F)

James Johannsen

James John "Jimmy Jo" Johannsen, 78, Luverne, died Wednesday, Sept. 22, 2021, at the Good Samaritan Society – Mary Jane Brown Home in Luverne.



A funeral service was Monday, Sept. 27, at Grace Lutheran Church in Luverne. Burial followed in Maplewood Cemetery in Luverne.

James "Jimmy Jo" Johannsen was born on May 2, 1943, to Clarence and Lillian (Remme) Johannsen in Luverne. He was baptized and received his confirmation at Zion Lutheran Church in Hardwick. Jim attended school in Hardwick through the eighth grade and then Luverne High School, graduating in 1961. He continued his education at Worthington Technical School in Worthington, where he played college football for a year until a knee injury forced him out of the game.

Jim bought his first truck in 1962 and started his own trucking business. In 1964 he was hired as a deputy with the local law enforcement, a position he held until 1977.

On Oct. 3, 1965, Jim was united in marriage to Bonita Smith at the First Presbyterian Church in Luverne. In 1998 he began delivering fire trucks full time for Luverne Truck. Bonnie preceded him in death on Jan. 9, 2003, following a battle with breast cancer. Jim continued to reside at their home on Elm Street. Jim suffered a stroke

in 2012 and was forced to retire. In 2017 he moved into the Good Samaritan Society – Mary Jane Brown Home in Luverne.

Jim joined the Luverne Fire Department in 1973, and from 1981 to 1997 he served as the fire chief. He was an active member of the Minnesota Fire Chief Association. In 1996 he was named the "Friend of Education."

Jim loved fishing, hunting, and trapping his entire life. He also liked to travel, drink coffee with the guys, brew his own beer and cook. He will be remembered for striking up a conversation with anyone who crossed his path.

Jim is survived by his two children, Mark (Karrie) Johannsen of Parker, Colorado, and Crystal (Cory) Tiesler of Luverne; four grandchildren, Tannin Johannsen, Bonita Tiesler, Taylor Johannsen and Madison Johannsen; siblings Daryle (Esther) Schuett of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and David (Dianne) Schuett of Des Moines, Iowa; and special friend Kathy Siebenahler of Luverne.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Bonnie Johannsen; his parents; and sisters Beverly Schmuck and Ivalene Schuett.

Arrangements were provided by Hartquist Funeral Home of Luverne, hartquistfuneral.com. (0930 F)

COLLEGE NEWS

Magnolia student selected for U of N- Lincoln builders' program

Sara Knips, a sophomore management major from Magnolia, is among 35 students selected for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Clifton Builders program.

The program aims to help Nebraska, the nation and the world identify the next generation of high-achieving leaders, entrepreneurs and business developers to create economic growth and prosperity.

Students are admitted to the program based on a combination of their Gallup Builder Profile 10 assessment results, application strength and interview performance.

"The program was created to find and develop entrepreneurs, startup types, rainmakers and extraordinarily talented salespeople and leaders - people who have a natural gift to create economic energy where none existed before," said CEO Jim Clifton.

Bits/continued from page 6A

daily averaged from 35 to 45 and at Central school this number is even greater. It is recognized that colds are contagious and spread rapidly, especially among school

children.

The contention has been made that the county nurse is to take care of all the schools in the county, and that therefore the services of a school

nurse would not be required. The county nurse, as she is often called, is not paid by the county, but receives her salary from the Red Cross funds. With her various

duties, she is unable to give the time and attention that are required to protect the health of as many pupils as are enrolled in the Luverne schools.

Kaitlyn Anderson awarded 2021 Jay York Scholarship

Kaitlyn Anderson, a 2021 Luverne High School graduate, was recently awarded a \$400 scholarship through the Jay A. York Scholarship program. Anderson is currently attending the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul pursuing a degree in Business Management.

The Jay A. York scholarship was established in recognition of the first Minnesotan to head the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Jay York was a prominent figure in rural electric cooperative issues for nearly 30 years.

Sioux Valley Energy, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative and one of 11 sponsoring cooperatives, is a member owned-utility, providing reliable electric service at cost-based rates to over 27,000 homes, farms, businesses and industries in a seven-county area of east-central South Dakota and southwest Minnesota.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Fodness earns 10th place at champ show

Mavis Fodness of Hardwick competed at the 2021 Western Saddle Club Association Championship Show Sept. 23-26 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds in St. Paul.

Fodness qualified for the champ show in western showmanship, western pleasure and western horsemanship. She and her horse, Millie, (pictured right) placed 10th in the senior 50+ horsemanship.

She is a member of the Rock River Wranglers Saddle Club and is a part of the Minnesota Prairie Saddle Club Association.

WSCA was organized in 1955 and consists of more than 230 saddle clubs and more than 12,000 individu-



al members.

The national championship show began in 1959 and now contains 72 pleasure and game classes. More than 4,000 youth through adult entries compete annually. All participants must place first or second at a qualifying show to compete at the champ show.

VISIT CAMPUS

- ▲ OCTOBER 15, 2021
Campus Visit Day
- ▲ NOVEMBER 5, 2021
Campus Visit Day
- ▲ DECEMBER 15, 2021
Career Exploration Event

THE SMART WAY UP

SOUTHEAST Technical College

605-367-6040 | admissions@southeasttech.edu
SOUTHEASTTECH.EDU/VISIT

70th ANNUAL ROCK COUNTY DFL

Chuckwagon Feed

Tuesday, October 5
Serving from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

★ serving BBQ pork ★

at Take 16 Brewing Co.

(Paid for by Rock County DFL. Alison Benjamin, Treasurer, Luverne)

NEW Price!

901 N McKenzie St., Luverne, MN
\$134,900

3 Beds • 2 Baths

This beautiful two story home offers a covered front porch, enclosed back porch, patio area, mature landscaping and a large corner lot. Recent updates include a new furnace, ac, water heater, updated plumbing and electric, completely remodeled both bathroom, remodeled kitchen and beautiful hardwood floors on the main level. This is one you don't want to miss out on.

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Cardinals claim Homecoming football victory

By Jason Berghorst

After a dominating first half, the Luverne Cardinals football team held on during the second half to secure a 31-20 Homecoming victory Friday night over New Ulm.

The win was Luverne's second in a row and evened the team's midseason record at 4-4.

The Cardinals started strong and enjoyed an 18-0 lead at halftime.

An early score in the third quarter expanded the home team's lead to 25-0 before New Ulm scored twenty unanswered points to close the game at 25-20 in the fourth quarter.

When Luverne quarterback Casey Sehr ran in a late touchdown with five seconds left in the game, the Cardinals secured the eleven-point victory.

"The team did a great



Luverne's Braydon Ripka recovers a fumble at the end of the first quarter during the Cardinals' Homecoming football win over New Ulm Friday night on Cardinal Field.

job of overcoming adversity when faced with injuries in the second half and when New Ulm made a run at the

end of the game to try to take the lead," said Luverne head coach Todd Oye. "The defense came up

with a big stop and the offense was able to seal the

LHS football/see page 10A

Cross country girls bring home team championships

By Sara Schmuck, For the Star Herald

The Luverne Cardinal Cross Country team traveled to Jackson Thursday and brought home two team championships, and a runner-up team finish.

"The kids raced with a lot of confidence and pride," coach Pete Janiszkeski said.

"They made some huge improvements and strides toward becoming the best team they can be. It is rewarding to watch their hunger for improving."

That drive paid off with a championship for both the varsity girls' and junior high girls' teams and a second place for the boys' varsity team.

Girls

The Cardinal girls had five of the top 10 varsity 5K runners, led by Tenley Nelson, who won first place with a time of 19:10.14.

Jenna Debates finished second with a time of 19:20.03.

Other varsity girls' times were:

Grace Ingebretson, 5th (21:23.96)

Kayla Bloemendaal, 7th (21:54.63)

Tiana Lais, 8th (22:24.62)

Brynn Boyenga, 22nd (25:33.31)

Cross country/see 11A



Samantha McGaffee photo/0930 football H-BC

Casey Kueter (42) with the Hills-Beaver Creek defense stops the Westbrook-Walnut Grove Chargers short of a first down. The Patriots held the home team to 55 rushing yards.

Patriots' streak continues

H-BC takes down W-WG Chargers 43-8

By Dan Ellingson For the Star Herald

The Hills-Beaver Creek Patriots took their undefeated football team on the road to Westbrook-Walnut Grove on Friday to take on the Chargers. The visitors came away with a 43-8 win, keeping their win streak intact.

Going back to the pandemic-shortened 2020 season, the Patriots have reeled off 11 wins in a row.

Although they put up 48 points on the host Chargers, H-BC head coach Rex Metzger noted that his team wasn't quite where they should have been.

"Offensively we just didn't get in a real good flow all night," he said.

Penalties thwarted a couple of first half drives, but the Patriots squad fought through and registered their fourth win of the season.

After a WWG three and out to open the game, the Patriots were able to put together a six play, 58-yard drive for a touchdown on their first possession.

The Pates overcame two penalties during that first drive and eventually managed to hit paydirt. Senior Cole Baker took the football in from 10 yards out for his first of four touchdowns on the night. He also ran in the 2-point conversion for an 8-0 lead in the first quarter.

H-BC football/continued on page 11A

Luverne volleyball finishes 2-2 in Jackson tourney, falls to Pipestone in 'Dig Pink' match

By Jaqueline Johnson

The Luverne Cardinals went 2-2 in Jackson on Sept. 18, beating Murray County Central and Worthington 2-0, and losing to Red Rock Central 1-2 and Heron Lake-Okabena-Fulda 0-2.

LHS dropped a 3-2 game to Pipestone Thursday at home in the annual Dig Pink match, a dual cancer fundraiser and their lone match of the Homecoming Week.

The Cardinals were scheduled to host Worthington Tuesday night, and they'll travel to St. James Thursday and Jackson next Tuesday.

Luverne 2, Murray County Central 0

The Cardinal Volleyball squad did not appear sleepy in their first match of the morning in Jackson Saturday against the MCC as Carly Olson passed the ball to setter Reghan Bork for an opening kill by outside hitter Elise Ferrell.

After two aces and another kill by Ferrell from a Bork set, the Cards were up 9-3. They extended their lead to 16-8 following a pass by Macy Stratton, a set by Trista Baustian and a



images by CD/0930 Volleyball LHS

Kamryn Van Batavia reaches to hit the ball over the net Sept. 23 in a tough match against Pipestone. LHS lost to the Arrows 3-2.

kill by Morgan Ahrendt.

With a kill by Christina Wagner and a shared block by Kamryn Van Batavia and Wagner, Luverne finished the set 25-13.

Although Set 2 was much closer, the Cardinals continued to show dominance at the net with Ferrell and middle hitter Anja Jarchow.

Emma Beyer set Van Batavia up for a tip kill to keep the Cardinals ahead 17-15.

With consecutive aces by Stratton, an overpass kill by Ahrendt and a tip by Ferrell, they finished the set at 25-19 for a 2-0 match win.

LHS volleyball/see 11A

H-BC volleyball team takes on Edgerton, St. Mary

By Joni Deelstra, For the Star Herald

The Hills-Beaver Creek volleyball team hosted two contests in the past week.

The Flying Dutchmen swept the Lady Pates Thursday Sept. 23, and Dell Rapids St. Mary downed H-BC in a non-conference match on Monday, Sept. 27.

H-BC was scheduled to play Murray County Central at home Tuesday, and the Patriots will participate in the Southwest Minnesota State University Tournament in Marshall on Oct. 1 and 2.

Edgerton 3, H-BC 0

The Patriots have developed a pattern of starting their games out slow, and that pattern continued against the Flying Dutchmen on Sept. 23 in Edgerton.

Edgerton started out



Samantha McGaffee photo/0930 volleyball H-BC

H-BC's Larissa Steinhoff (9) spikes the ball between Edgerton Flying Dutchmen defenders Sept. 23 at home in Hills. The Lady Pates lost the match 3-0.

with a 10-2 lead. Taylor Durst had six serves in a row to bring the score to 22-16. The Patriots edged closer before falling in Set 1 by a score of 25-22.

Set 2 was a hard-fought battle between the two teams. The score was tied several times throughout the set, but serving errors and lack of blocking would

deny the Patriots the win by a final score of 25-23.

Tara Paulsen had four serves in a row, closing the

H-BC volleyball/see 10A

Tennis goes 2-2 on road, falls to River Valley

The Luverne girls' tennis team played two matches last week and came away with a 1-1 record.

On Tuesday, Sept. 21, the Cardinals traveled to St. James and lost by a 6-1 score.

Thursday, LHS traveled to Redwood Falls and left town with a 7-0 victory.

Luverne traveled to Worthington on Monday to complete a match with River Valley that had been postponed earlier in the year due to lightning.

LHS dropped that match 2-5.

The Cardinals will return to action on Monday, Oct 4, with a home match in the first round of section play.

Luverne 1 St. James 6

LHS was able to win only one match against St. James on Tuesday, Sept. 21.

The No. 1 doubles team of Olivia Weneke and Kristine Rud defeated Allison Bluedorn and Keyana Haler 2-6, 6-2, 6-2.

Hope Thorson and Katharine Kelm lost a close match 6-3, 4-6, 10-8 to Mykena Hanson and Alexis Brekken at No. 2 doubles, and Tori Hemme and Priscilla Muehr lost to Mariah Mireles and Mika Wessels at No. 3 doubles by a 6-1, 6-4 score.

In singles play, Mia Wenzel lost to No. 7 state-ranked Jaelyn Haler 6-4,

LHS tennis/see page 10A

LHS football team claims Homecoming win over New Ulm Friday/continued from page 9A

victory with a touchdown drive to end the game," Oye said.

Luverne had an impressive offensive showing with 443 total yards of offense.

Sehr, who was crowned Luverne Homecoming king earlier in the week, completed 15 of 27 passes for 337 total passing yards.

Junior Gannon Ahrendt led Luverne receivers with 191 yards off of seven receptions, averaging 27.3 yards and scoring two touchdowns.

The Cardinals totaled 106 rushing yards with senior Ashton Sandbulte leading the ground effort with 54 yards on 15 carries.

Luverne's defense started the scoring with 6:40 remaining in the first quarter when Eli Radtke intercepted a New Ulm pass and ran 26 yards for the first Cardinals touchdown.

Radtke totaled 79 yards off of three receptions in the game.

The two-point conversion attempt was not successful, and Luverne had the early 6-0 lead.

The Cardinals' second score came with 47 seconds left in the first quarter when Ahrendt took in a 25-yard pass from Sehr. The conversion pass from Sehr to Ahrendt was no good.

When Braydon Ripka recovered a fumble two plays later, the score was set at 12-0 at the end of the first quarter.

In the second quarter, Luverne added to its lead with a thrilling 63-yard touchdown pass from Sehr to sophomore Conner Connell. The extra point attempt by sophomore Patrick Kroski was



Junior Gannon Ahrendt takes in a 25-yard pass from quarterback Casey Sehr in the second quarter. Ahrendt led Luverne receivers with 191 yards off of seven receptions, averaging 27.3 yards and scoring two touchdowns.

not successful.

When neither team scored for the remainder of the second quarter, the Cardinals entered the half-time break with the 18-0 lead.

Luverne started the third quarter with the ball. Sehr connected with Radtke on a 44-yard pass on the first play of the quarter.

Three plays later, Ahrendt hauled in a 28-yard touchdown

from Sehr with 10:21 remaining in the third quarter. This time the PAT kick from Kroski was good and Luverne owned a commanding 25-0 lead.

The victory would not come that easy for the home team on Homecoming, however.

New Ulm scored two rushing touchdowns and added a two-point conversion later in the third quarter to make it 25-14 at the start of

the final quarter.

When the Eagles scored a three-yard touchdown and missed the attempted conversion with 11:22 remaining in the game, the score stood at 25-20.

Things got even more interesting on the first play of the next possession, when New Ulm recovered a Cardinals fumble to take the ball back and have a chance to take the lead.

Luverne's defense held, however, and the Eagles were unable to sustain any drives in the fourth quarter.

When the Cardinals took possession with about five minutes remaining, they chipped away and gained three consecutive first downs to effectively run the clock down.

With 17 seconds left on the clock, Luverne took a timeout facing a fourth and five situation. Sehr then ran 33 yards for a touchdown and the score was 31-20 with five seconds remaining.

When New Ulm did not gain any yards off a 16-yard Riley Sneller punt and then threw one incomplete pass, the clock ran out and the Cardinals earned the win.

Defensively, Luverne was led by Sandbulte and Jamie McCarthy with six tackles each.

The Cardinals travel to Worthington Friday to face the 0-4 Trojans. Worthington's losses have been to Jordan, Pipestone Area, St. Peter and Marshall.

Team Statistics:

Luverne: 106 rushing yards, 337 passing yards, 443 total yards, 14 first downs, 5 penalties for 40 yards, 1 turnover.

New Ulm: 248 rushing yards, 21 passing yards, 269 total yards, 12 first downs, 4 penalties for 25 yards, 4 turnovers.

Individual statistics:

Rushing: Ashton Sandbulte 15-54, Casey Sehr 1-33, Braydon Ripka 9-19

Receiving: Gannon Ahrendt 7-191, Eli Radtke 3-79, Conner Connell 3-73

Defense: Ashton Sandbulte 6 tackles, Jamie McCarthy 6 tackles, Braydon Ripka 5.5 tackles, Nathaniel Cole-Kraty 5 tackles

H-BC volleyball/continued from 9A

lead by Edgerton to 14-9 in Set 3.

Kills by sophomores Lanae Elbers and Larissa Steinhoff kept the score close, but again the Dutchmen took the third set 25-20.

Attacks: Lanae Elbers 7 kills, Kenadie Fick 5 kills
Serves: Taylor Durst 15/15 with 1 ace serve, Tara Paulsen 14/15, Sam Moser 8/9

Set Assists: Tess VanMaanen 13 Digs: Kenadie Fick 12, Sam Moser 7, Danette Leenderts 7
Blocks: Sam Moser 4 assists, Leeanna Gaugler 4 assists

Dell Rapids 3, H-BC 0

The Patriots went down in three in a nonconference game against Dell Rapids St. Mary Monday night. Despite losing in three, a combined team effort kept the match close.

Dell Rapids kept the lead in the first set. Taylor Durst's consistent serving, and hard hitting from Lanae Elbers in the front row, had the Patriots within two 17-15. Dell Rapids slowly widened the gap and won 25-19.

A kill by Durst tied the score 4-4 in Set 2, but Dell Rapids would hold onto the lead after that. A kill by Elbers brought the Patriots within two, 10-8. Kenadie Fick served three in a row to come within four at 19-15. A kill by Leeanna Gaugler made it 22-18. Danette Leenderts added an ace serve to come with three, 22-19, but Dell Rapids ended the set 25-20.

An ace serve by Fick and a block by Durst gave the Patriots the lead at 5-1 starting the third set.

Dell Rapids answered back and the score was tied several times at 11-11, 14-14, 15-15, 16-16, and 21-21. A kill by Fick and an error on the Dell Rapids side gave HBC the lead at 24-22.

Dell Rapids was able to tie it again 24-24. A hit out of bounds by the Patriots and a final kill by Dell Rapids would finish the set 26-24.

Serves: Kenadie Fick 14/14 with 3 ace serves
Blocks: Taylor Durst 4 solo, Sam Moser 4 assists, Leeanna Gaugler 4 assists
Set Assists: Tess VanMaanen 11
Attacks: Lanae Elbers 7 kills, Kenadie Fick 4 kills

LHS tennis is 2-2 on road, falls to River Valley/from 9A

6-2.

At No. 2 singles, Jacey Smith lost 6-1, 6-2 to Sailor Mohlenbrock. Sarah Stegenega lost to Eva Romsdahl 6-3, 6-1 at No. 3 singles and Rylee Anderson, who was playing her first-ever varsity match lost to Maya Kulseth by 6-3, 7-5 scores at No. 4 singles.

"St. James always has a tough team," said LHS coach Jon Beers.

"I thought the first two doubles teams played great, and I was really happy with Mia and Rylee in their singles matches."

LHS 7, Redwood Valley 0

Luverne was able to win all seven matches against Redwood Valley. "We had some girls that were missing on Thursday, but had some girls step into those spots and play great," said Beers.

In singles play, Wenzel defeated Brooke Zollner 6-0, 6-1. Jacey Smith beat Lily Deblieck by 6-2, 6-3 scores at No. 2 singles.

Sarah Stegenega won in straight sets 6-1, 6-0 over Julia

Lang at No. 3 singles, and Rayann Remme defeated Mckenna Flinn by 6-2, 1-6, 6-3 scores at No. 4 singles.

The No. 1 doubles team of Wieneke and Rud won over Mila Jenniges and Ella Stonebreg by 6-1, 6-3 scores, Thorson and Kelm beat Avery Wilson and Anneliese Hammer in No. 2 doubles 6-1, 4-6, 10-4.

Muehr and Rylee Anderson teamed up for the first time at No. 3 doubles to defeat Ava Shaw-Kirkhoff and Grace Blare 6-1, 6-0.

"Rayann was playing her first varsity match and really did outstanding. She won the first set, but then was beaten in the second set," said Beers.

"It would have been really easy to give up at that point, but she played a great third set to get the win."

River Valley 5, LHS 2

In a match that was postponed Aug. 30 due to lightning, River Valley defeated

Luverne 5-2 in Worthington on Monday.

In singles play, Mia Wenzel lost to Brooklyn Moldan 6-2, 7-6(4) at No. 1 singles.

At No. 2 singles, Olivia Wieneke was defeated 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 by Kaydince Thomas.

Jacey Smith lost at No. 3 singles to Taylor Berkner by retirement in the third set after splitting the first two sets. At No. 4 singles Roselynn Hartshorn lost 5-7, 6-2, 6-4 to Courtlyn Runk.

In doubles play, LHS was able to win two of the three matches. At No. 2 doubles, Sarah Stegenega and Katharine Kelm defeated Alexis Garza 6-2, 5-7, 6-2.

Tori Hemme and Priscilla Muehr won at No. 3 doubles over Sydne Wahl and Erika Wells by scores of 2-6, 6-2, 7-5.

The No. 1 doubles team of Hope Thorson and Kristin Rud were defeated by Erica Lozano and Maya Nelson 6-7, 6-0, 6-2.

DATES AND TIMES
Friday, Oct. 8 • 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 15 • Noon-4:30 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 22 • 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 29 • 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

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CARDS OF THANKS

To the community—Our sincere gratitude for the support we received through prayers, gifts of food, cards, generous memorials, and all the many other expressions of thoughtful kindness during our time of grief, as we mourn the loss of Bill Beimers, husband, father and grandfather. We are so thankful for the special care he received from the medical staff at Sanford Luverne hospital and during his short stay in the Minnesota Veterans Home. The kindness and support we received from the Hartquist Funeral Home will always be remembered, as will the thorough attention to the family's feelings and needs during visitation, funeral preparation, and the service. The love and care shown by the community and beyond will never be forgotten. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Esther Beimers and
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A job description and an application form for this position are available at www.co.rock.mn.us; or by emailing susan.skattum@co.rock.mn.us. For additional questions, please contact the Rock County Administrator's office 507-283-5065.
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Tri-State/ continued from page 1A

follows:

- Garretson, first.
- Adrian-Ellsworth, second.
- Class AA parade results:
 - Sioux Falls Christian, first.
 - West Central, second.
- Class AA field performance results:
 - West Lyon, first.
 - Lennox, second
- West Lyon High School swept the outstanding woodwinds, percussion, auxiliary and drum major awards.
- Class AAA parade results:
 - Tea Area, first.
 - Brookings, second.
- Class AAA field performance results:
 - Brookings, first.
 - O'Gorman, second.
- Outstanding woodwinds was awarded to O'Gorman, who also received the outstanding auxiliary award. Brookings



Luverne band members maneuver into position for their next song during Saturday's field exhibition at the Tri-State Band Festival.

Mavis Fodness photos/0930 TriState 2021

received the outstanding percussion and outstanding drum major awards.

Class AAAA results:

- Worthington, first, parade.

- Brandon Valley, first, field.

Brandon Valley received the outstanding woodwinds, percussion, auxiliary and drum major awards.

Additional awards were also given to:

- Brookings, K.M. Getman award.
- Sioux Falls Christian, parade sweepstakes.
- Brandon Valley, field sweepstakes.
- Sioux Falls Christian, People's Choice, parade.
- West Lyon, People's Choice, field.

"We were blessed by a beautiful day and the opportunity to witness some amazing bands," said Jane

Outdoors/ continued from page 11A

If this dollar-motivated timber harvest moves forward, we could lose millions of future funding dollars for these important and critical resource lands. Minnesotans cannot allow this to happen.

It appears that when the voices of those educated in the management of forest resources continued to be ignored by the department, they are now going to take those concerns to the legislature to see if that can be a successful venue to stop the effort from moving forward.

I pretty much don't like politics. The old saying that "if nobody's happy with the outcome, then it was probably a pretty good outcome" does not work for me.

This is an issue that needs our attention and, like 100 other issues, it needs your input. Get informed about what is coming for our forested public lands and say something to the representative in your area.

Resource removal activities on public lands – and this can include timber harvest or cattle grazing – needs our close attention.

Both of these activities and many others can have positive habitat improvement results when done properly and with the proper intent. Proper intent does not include quotas for timber harvest in a money and politics fashion.

DNR leadership, please listen to your inner circle of biology and science professionals and your constituents, the common public lands user, and stop this timber harvest action under its current direction before it starts.

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.



In honor of the 70th annual Tri-State Band Festival Saturday, the Minnesota State University, Mankato Marching Mavericks rallied excitement with college cheers to wrap up the morning parade competition. The band also performed on the LHS football field to end the afternoon field competition.

Lanphere with the Tri-State Band Festival Committee.

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A California law called Prop. 12 could affect swine production in Rock County.

See page 2B



There's Palmer amaranth in my field. Now what?

See page 6B



Sen. Weber weighs in on issues facing local farmers.

See page 10B



Help is available for farmers affected by drought.

See page 11B

State tour highlights agriculture's role in protecting **clean water**



Doug Bos of the Rock County Soil and Water Conservation District addresses a group of state Clean Water Tour participants at the Rock County Rural Water plant. He points to a row of trees on the horizon that show where the Rock River is. (Mavis Fodness photo)

Rock County ag producers are increasingly called upon to protect soil and water in the communities where they operate

By Lori Sorenson

Despite living in the land of 10,000 lakes, Minnesotans aren't guaranteed quality water, especially safe drinking water.

This is especially true in southwest Minnesota where shallow wells and aquifers that feed water supplies are increasingly contaminated by practices that increase nitrogen levels.

A busload of state and local leaders with Minnesota's Clean Water Council took a field trip earlier this month through southwest Minnesota to tour projects funded by the state's Clean Water Legacy Act.

"We've been working with farmers since 2014 and big credit goes to them for making changes in their nitrogen application. Some of these practices help, but what we know from experience is that perennial grasses make the difference."

— Doug Bos, Rock County Land Management

One of the stops on the tour was the Rock County Rural Water main plant southeast of Luverne and the wellhead area surrounding it.

Doug Bos of the Rock County Land Management Office addressed the group on that part of the tour. "We struggle to

find good clean water," Bos said. "We have big demand for what we're able to produce."

Rock County's Rural Water Wellhead is considered a "nitrate hot spot"

Wellhead protection/see page 14B

'Kanaranzi Greens' working to promote farm-to-table eating

Farmers Market seller Ainsworth strives to sell fresh, safe food to the public

By Mavis Fodness

First-year Luverne Farmers Market seller Andrew Ainsworth admits 2021 is a learning year for his new business called Kanaranzi Greens.

Despite starting a garden plot from scratch and learning

how to properly manage growing crops, Ainsworth is planning to sell his homegrown leafy green and root vegetables to the public again next year. "I feel it's been a huge success,"

Kanaranzi Greens/see 3B

This year was the first growing season for Andrew Ainsworth and his Kanaranzi Greens at the Luverne Farmers Market. He focuses on growing leafy greens and root vegetables in his garden located in Kanaranzi Township. He's pictured here with some fresh green beans. His business started as a way to provide fresh food for his family of five and expanded to sell his produce at the Luverne Farmers Market. (Mavis Fodness photo)



California's Proposition 12 (Prop 12) ballot initiative creates implications for how Minnesota farmers can raise pigs

By Kevin Barnhard
Vice president, Rock
County Pork Producers

The United States is one of the leading producers of pork in the world, and Minnesota is the No. 2 pork-producing state in the country.

Pig farmers and the businesses and industries that support the raising and harvesting of pigs are critical to delivering safe, nutritious pork to customers in Minnesota, across the country, and around the globe.

Minnesota is home to more than 3,000 family pig farms that sell nearly 17 million pigs each year. That's a lot of pork that leaves Minnesota.

Unfortunately, vague questions put on ballots in other states are creating implications for how Minnesota farmers can raise pigs.

California's Proposition 12 (Prop 12) ballot initiative is an important issue that will have a large impact on Minnesota farmers if and when it is enacted.

Prop 12 was brought forward and promoted by animal activist organizations in California.

The proposed rule language includes certain restrictions and specifications related to how pigs, specifically mother pigs called sows, can be housed and the number of square feet required for each animal.

It stipulates that any fresh pork products sold into the California market must meet those guidelines.

Pig farmers have many concerns about the rules that were originally intended to protect animal welfare. There are many unintended consequences to raising pigs ac-



"Pig farmers have concerns about the rules that were originally intended to protect animal welfare. ... including increased animal well-being challenges, worker safety concerns and a larger impact on the environment due to additional space, water, electricity and heating needs."

cording to Prop 12 guidelines including increased animal well-being challenges, worker safety concerns and a larger impact on the environment due to additional space, water, electricity and heating needs.

The additional space requirement actually contradicts the progress and understanding farmers have developed on how to best manage animals to promote health and well-being while reducing injury to both animals and workers.

Pigs are social animals and will form and maintain their hierarchy within their group or herd. This can cause



California's Proposition 12 (Prop 12) ballot initiative is an important issue that will have a large impact on Minnesota farmers if and when it is enacted. The proposed rule language includes certain restrictions and specifications related to how pigs, specifically mother pigs called sows, can be housed and the number of square feet required for each animal.

aggressive fighting between animals as they establish dominance.

The proposed rule would also limit how much time a sow can be separated in an individual pen for breeding, medical care or recovery, further limiting critical tools farmers have to care for their animals.

Worker safety is a top priority for pig farmers, and Prop 12 brings the potential for more worker injuries. Sows can range from 300-500 pounds and can be aggressive when establishing their pecking order; working in those conditions requires much

care and training to keep the animals and people safe.

Prop 12 stipulates that each sow needs 24 square feet of space, compared to the common practice of 18-20 square feet.

This means more air space and floor space will be required in the barn beyond what the sow needs to be comfortable and safe.

This means wasted energy, water and space, making the farm less environmentally efficient.

Prop 12 is set to go into effect Jan. 1, 2022; however, the official language hasn't been announced, leaving farmers

in Minnesota and other states with much uncertainty about what will be required of them to be compliant with Prop 12.

Ultimately, this impacts the California consumer. As a state, California represents 15 percent of all pork consumption in the U.S. Many Californians have ethnic traditions where pork is a staple of their diet.

Prop 12 will certainly raise the cost of pork products for California consumers. Furthermore, it will disproportionately impact those who struggle with food insecurity or access to lean, healthy proteins.

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Countryside Ag

Kanaranzi Greens gardener working to promote farm-to-table eating/continued from page 1B

he said. “If it weren’t for the Farmers Market this year, it wouldn’t have gone as well as it has.”

Through tips, trial and error, and some hard work, Ainsworth began to see his business flourish each week.

His best compliment was when lines formed at his market table in Luverne Thursday afternoons.

“That alone I feel like I’m succeeding,” he said.

Ainsworth focuses on growing leafy greens including kale, spinach, beet greens, romaine lettuce, Swiss chard and arugula.

The root vegetables include turnips, eggplant, broccoli, cauliflower, parsnips, carrots, radishes and kohlrabi. He also sells fresh herbs.

Ainsworth’s charge into the Farmers Market began several years ago when he and his wife, Jennifer, began to examine the food they were supplying to their three young boys.

They also felt a disconnect in teaching their sons where food comes from.

Ainsworth started out small — raising and butchering broilers near the family’s suburban home in Lincoln, Nebraska.

As family members placed their first batch of home-grown chickens in the freezer, news about a recall due to possible metal in the meat made the work raising and processing their own food worthwhile.

He shared the recall with Jennifer. “Isn’t it nice we don’t have to worry about this?” he asked.

The couple continues to raise broilers now on their Rock County acreage, selling what the family doesn’t need for themselves.

They keep the poultry in mobile coops, which Ainsworth moves daily to a different grass area for them to feed.

“Our animals truly only have one bad day and that is their last day,” he said.

Laying hens are allowed to roam the acreage after egg laying is finished by late morning. He also offers the eggs for sale at the Farmers Market.

The star of his business, however, is the garden.

Kanaranzi Greens takes its name from Kanaranzi Township.

The Ainsworths moved to Rock County

Kanaranzi Greens/see continued on 5B



Laying hens gather outside the coop at Kanaranzi Greens (above). Along with fresh greens and root vegetables, Kanaranzi Greens also offers fresh eggs (below, left). Fresh Swiss chard waits to be harvested (below, right).



Mavis Fodness photo/Ag Mag Kanaranzi Greens

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Ask a Trooper: Farm equipment may travel over center with proper flashing hazard lights, all must share the road

By Sgt. Troy Christianson
Minnesota State Patrol

Question: I followed a tractor that had triple wheels on each side and took up half the lane of oncoming traffic.

Following vehicles could not pass and oncoming traffic had to take the shoulder.

Answer: Farm equipment may be driven or towed to the left of the center of a roadway only if it is escorted at the front by a vehicle displaying hazard warning lights visible in normal sunlight.

The equipment also must not extend into the left half of the roadway more than is necessary.

Some of those combine headers are quite big. So if someone is not being escorted, they would be required to remove the header and tow it on the highway.

Motorists traveling on Minnesota highways this fall need to be aware of large farm equipment transporting crops to markets, grain elevators and processing plants.

Farm equipment is large and heavy, making it hard for operators to accelerate, slow down and stop.

The machines also make wide turns and sometimes cross over the center line.

In addition, farm vehicles can create large blind



Farm equipment is large and heavy, making it hard for operators to accelerate, slow down and stop. Machinery also makes wide turns and sometimes crosses over the center line. In addition, farm vehicles can create large blind spots, making it difficult for operators to see approaching vehicles.

Farm equipment may be driven or towed to the left of the center of a roadway only if it is escorted at the front by a vehicle displaying hazard warning lights visible in normal sunlight. The equipment also must not extend into the left half of the roadway more than is necessary. ...Motorists should always slow down and use caution when approaching farm equipment.

spots, making it difficult for operators to see approaching vehicles.

All of these factors can cause serious crashes.

The biggest factors contributing to farm equipment/vehicle crashes are inattention and speed.

Motorists should always slow down and use caution when approaching farm equipment.

Motorists should:

- watch for debris dropped by trucks hauling crops.

It is safer to brake or drive through debris than to veer into oncoming cars or off the road.

- wait for a safe place to pass.

- wear seat belts.
- drive with headlights on at all times.

Farm equipment operators should:

- use lights and flashers to make equipment more visible.

- use slow-moving vehicle emblems on equipment traveling less than 30 mph.

- consider using a follow vehicle when moving equipment, especially at night.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you sim-

ply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota toward zero deaths.

For questions concerning traffic-related laws or issues in Minnesota, contact Sgt. Troy Christianson — Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848, troy.christianson@state.mn.us



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Mavis Fodness photo/Ag Mag Kanaranzi Greens

Andrew Ainsworth waters his growing plants at Kanaranzi Greens — something he said he needed to do frequently this year due to drought conditions.

Kanaranzi Greens gardener working to promote local farm-to-table eating/continued from page 3B

in July 2020 to an acreage formerly owned by Jennifer's grandparents, Mable and Knute Gyberg.

Ainsworth started fresh greens and root vegetables from organic seeds in the basement of the family home before transferring the seedlings to his 40- by-60-foot fenced-in garden.

For the market, the produce is triple-washed and bagged either as a single ingredient or as a bag of green salad or spice brassica mix.

Ainsworth feeds his family of five from the same garden.

"We want to make sure we are providing good produce for our customers as well as our family," he said.



Kanaranzi Greens/see 16B

Cherry tomatoes ripen on the vine at left. At right, a space in the basement of the Andrew and Jennifer Ainsworth home is devoted to starting seeds.

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September Weed of the Month: Palmer amaranth is in my field. Now what?'

**By Anthony Cortilet,
Minnesota Department
of Agriculture**

Palmer amaranth is a national example of how damaging invasive species can be. Estimates of heavy yield losses in row crops have been staggering in states that have widespread Palmer populations.

These yield losses have led to fear and anxiety in agricultural communities that have not experienced infestations.

This increased awareness of a potential problem creates a situation where farmers are actively on the lookout for any suspect plants in their fields, enabling them to be proactive in the identification and elimination of this weed on their land.

In 2016, after years of reports that Palmer amaranth was moving into the Upper Midwest from its native origin of northwestern Mexico and the southeastern United States, infestations were confirmed in southwestern Minnesota.

Over 30 landowners were impacted by contaminated seed sown for their newly contracted Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) responded to the situation quickly and began assisting farmers with eradication.

Since then, Palmer has been found in 11 counties within the state and that number is expected to increase.

The MDA's experience working with farmers impacted by this troublesome species over the past five years has shown the critical role they provide by scouting, monitoring, and treating new and current Palmer amaranth infestations. In fact, almost all of Minnesota's confirmed Palmer reports were initiated by a farmer or their crop consultant.

Minnesota's success with Palmer eradication resulted from cooperation with farmers. Not a single farmer wanted this weed on their property, and every farmer emphasized weed control in their production operations.

Palmer amaranth's arrival in Minnesota has undoubtedly changed weed management strategies for many farmers. They proved they are up to the task.

Palmer amaranth poses several key problems for modern agricultural producers.

- It is a fast-growing annual plant that produces a lot of seed.
 - Plants can reach heights of 10 feet, enabling them to shade and outcompete crops.
 - The stalks of mature Palmer amaranth plants are thick and can clog combines. Depending on the infestation size, harvest can be severely impeded.
 - Palmer amaranth and related pigweeds developed resistance to a number of important herbicide classes utilized in modern agronomic weed management.
- When all of these issues are combined, it's not



Palmer amaranth poses several key problems for modern agricultural producers. •It is a fast-growing annual plant that produces a lot of seed. •Plants can reach heights of 10 feet, enabling them to shade and outcompete crops. •The stalks of mature Palmer amaranth plants are thick and can clog combines. Depending on the infestation size, harvest can be severely impeded. •Palmer amaranth and related pigweeds developed resistance to a number of important herbicide classes utilized in modern agronomic weed management.

The point here is to become aware of the source of any products, seed, manure or the machinery that is being used in your operations and on your land. Preventing Palmer from establishing is the easiest and most cost-effective management option. If Palmer is confirmed on your property, the MDA, in cooperation with U of M Extension, can work with you to develop a management plan moving forward. The sooner a management plan is established and implemented, the better the outcome. Farmers who have been impacted by this pest experienced the benefit of immediate action and contingency planning.

difficult to see the negative impact this weed could have on production fields in Minnesota if not managed correctly.

Despite the threats Palmer amaranth poses to farmers, there is hope for the future. Minnesota has been aggressively dealing with Palmer amaranth since it first appeared in the state in 2016. Our experiences thus far have shown that with persistent management this troublesome plant can be controlled. To date, only one site out of over 40 required multiple years of treatments.

What can a farmer or a landowner do to keep Palmer amaranth from becoming a major crop pest?

- Learn how to identify Palmer amaranth. Early detection is key. It can be challenging to tell Palmer apart from other pigweeds, but it is possible to become familiar with the different species.
- Visit the MDA's Palmer webpage or the U of M's webpage and Minnesota Crop Newsletter to learn about the species. Being able to identify Palmer early on will make management moving forward much easier.
- Scout fields regularly throughout the growing season. As Palmer grows, it becomes much easier to identify. If you think Palmer is present, contact

the MDA through the newly improved Arrest the Pest reporting tool.

- Connect with your local U of M Extension Crop Specialist or your crop consultant to develop a preemptive weed management plan to minimize the likelihood of Palmer amaranth establishment in your fields.

The MDA, University of Minnesota Extension, farmers, and landowners showed that it is possible to manage Palmer infestations so that crop production is not severely impacted.

But to be successful, Minnesota farmers need to remain extra vigilant and react quickly to any emerging Palmer threats on their lands.

The MDA identified several pathways where Palmer amaranth could potentially enter the state. Any agricultural product that is contaminated with Palmer amaranth seed can be an infestation source.

Through MDA's efforts, Palmer amaranth was documented in planting seed, screenings from seed and grain, livestock feed and manure.

Livestock bedding, hay, mulch and other materials that are shipped into Minnesota from states where Palmer is a common weed could also be an infestation source.

Other probable pathways to consider are any machinery or vehicles that are used on production fields.

Custom combines and other machines that have been utilized in other states should be cleaned before they are used on your fields.

The point here is to become aware of the source of any products, seed, manure or the machinery that is being used in your operations and on your land.

Preventing Palmer from establishing is the easiest and most cost-effective management option.

If Palmer is confirmed on your property, the MDA, in cooperation with U of M Extension, can work with you to develop a management plan moving forward.

The sooner a management plan is established and implemented, the better the outcome. Farmers who have been impacted by this pest experienced the benefit of immediate action and contingency planning.

Whether you are a commercial or organic producer, there are weed management strategies that can be applied to prevent Palmer amaranth establishment.

These strategies will not only help with Palmer amaranth, but other species like waterhemp, velvetleaf, Kochia, and giant ragweed.

With increasing herbicide resistance for a variety of weed species, implementing a successful weed management plan is imperative to achieving your harvest goals.

If small weed problems escalate quickly, they turn into large expensive weed problems. The sooner you deal with serious weeds like Palmer amaranth, the better your long-term cropping strategy will be.



Gevo Inc., which operates a plant in Luverne (pictured here), is working with the federal agencies on the “challenge” to reduce the cost, improve sustainability and expand production and use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). SAF reduces greenhouse gas by 50 percent compared with conventional fuel.

Gevo Inc. works with federal agencies to reduce aviation carbon footprint by 50 percent by 2050

The U.S. departments of energy, transportation and agriculture recently developed a memorandum of understanding on the “Sustainable Aviation Fuel Grand Challenge.”

Gevo Inc., which operates a plant in Luverne, is working with the federal agencies on the “challenge” to reduce the cost, improve sustainability and expand production and use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF).

SAF reduces greenhouse gas by 50 percent compared with conventional fuel, and the challenge is to supply enough SAF to meet 100 percent of aviation fuel demand by 2050.

The memorandum states, in part, that “... SAF will play a critical role in a broader set of actions by the U.S. government and the private sector to reduce the aviation sector’s emissions in a manner consistent with the goal of net-zero emissions for our economy, and to put the aviation sector on a pathway to full decarbonization by 2050.”

As a near-term goal, government and aviation stakeholders pledged to achieve 3 billion gallons of SAF production and reduce aviation-related emissions by 20 percent by 2030.

“This is an exciting time for our industry,” said Gevo CEO Patrick Gruber. “We are ready to take on

“By rewarding farmers to improve their agricultural practices, by capturing carbon, by reducing run-off, and by producing large amounts of protein, Gevo can address several problems at once. Gevo believes it is possible to make this world a better place, with better nutrition, while eliminating fossil-based greenhouse gases.”

the Grand Challenge and are already approaching a potential combined off-take of 250 million gallons per year of advanced hydrocarbon products, which include SAF.”

He said Gevo currently has off-take agreements with Delta Airlines, Trafigura, Haltermann Carless, Air Total, and SAS, as well as the proposed collaboration with Chevron.

The sustainable aviation fuel challenge aims to reduce environmental impact while also supporting energy independence.

It also creates jobs in agriculture, forestry, infrastructure and in research and development and support for the transition of the energy industry to a low carbon future.

sions across the lifecycle of the fuel.”

For agriculture-based feedstocks, Gevo encourages sustainable farming and regenerative agriculture, and the USDA has pledged to support sustainable aviation in policy development.

“We can expand our ability to power the nation’s aviation sector with fuel grown right here at home by hard-working Americans, while creating economic opportunity for American farmers, business owners and rural communities,” said USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack.

“Participating in SAF supply chains is also a big win for the aviation business, consumers and the planet.”

In addition to utilizing sustainable field corn as a feedstock for producing SAF and renewable gasoline, Gevo is also working on technology to utilize cellulosic feedstock, such as wood residues.

“By rewarding farmers to improve their agricultural practices, by capturing carbon, by reducing run-off, and by producing large amounts of protein, Gevo can address several problems at once,” the company stated in a news release.

“Gevo believes it is possible to make this world a better place, with better nutrition, while eliminating fossil-based greenhouse gases.”



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September is Life Insurance Awareness Month

Protect your farm land for future generations with life insurance

**By Barbara Anderson
Cattnach Insurance**

If you ask your friends and neighbors what their number one priority is in life, you will often hear that what they hold dear is their family.

If you have children, you spend your days and often sleepless nights worrying about their future.

You help with homework and run them to practices and appointments.

You want the best for them and work tirelessly to achieve that goal.

If your family wakes up one morning and you are no longer there to provide for them both physically and financially, what will happen to them?

Maybe they dream of taking over the farm one day or attending college to get a degree and start a career of their own. How will this be financed?

September is Life Insurance Awareness Month, and the conversation about financial security is at the forefront. Most people tell me they probably need more life insurance; however, they aren't sure how much they need.

Many find it difficult and time-consuming to apply for a policy. Gone are the days of filling out a mountain of paperwork, followed by submitting provider records, exams and waiting weeks into months for a decision. In some cases, you can apply for a policy from your phone or computer and have it issued in less than 10 minutes!



Life insurance does not replace our loved one, but it helps ease the financial burden and allows life to continue for those left behind.

Remember these important points when considering purchasing life insurance:

- The cost of life insurance increases with age and you will never be younger than you are today.
- Low monthly payment options are available.
- Replace income upon the death of breadwinner.
- Ensure children can go to college or take over the family farm.
- Provide security for the family.
- Pay off debt.

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- The cost of life insurance increases with age and you will never be younger than you are today.
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- Replace income upon the death of the breadwinner.
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- Provide security for the family.
- Pay off debt.

End of life is one of the most difficult topics to discuss, so we

tend to put it off for another time.

I am saddened by the memory of missed opportunities – clients and friends that knew they needed life insurance but put it off until they had more time, lost weight or just didn't want to talk about it. I think about the friends and family who were diagnosed with cancer, discovered heart problems or who were tragically killed in car accidents.

Life insurance does not replace our loved one, but it helps ease the financial burden and allows life to continue for those left behind.

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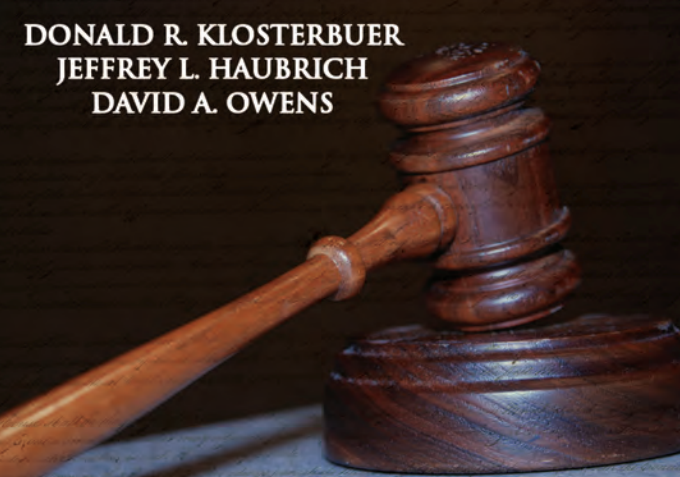
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Covering the unexpected

The amount of liability coverage you carry should be high enough to protect your assets in the event of an accident

**By Shirley Top,
Kozlowski Insurance**

Million-dollar verdicts are no longer a rare occurrence.

In the event you are underinsured, everything you have worked so hard to obtain can be taken away.

It is common for clients to purchase \$1,000,000 up to \$5,000,000 umbrellas. Limits up to \$10 million are available.

The amount of liability coverage you carry should be high enough to protect your assets in the event of an accident.

An umbrella liability policy provides an extra layer of liability coverage in addition to your underlying farm, home, auto, trucks, motorcycle, motor home, ATV/UTV, snowmobiles, golf cart, jet skis, boat, workers compensation and rental properties coverage.

In the event that an accident on your property, auto, recreational vehicle or farm accident is your fault, what are you responsible to pay?

You are responsible to pay for the repair of the damages to the other person's vehicle, other property damage, signs, buildings, guardrails, bridges, rental car for the other party, medical expenses, rehabilitation, pain and suffering, emotional or physical scarring, loss of wages due to death, loss of wages due to permanent or partial disability,



funeral expenses, home and auto modification to make home and autos handicapped-accessible, and loss of companionship of a deceased spouse.

If an accident is your fault, what do you stand to lose?

You stand to lose the value of your home, autos, trucks, watercraft, recreational vehicles, seasonal home, lake home, rental property, checking account, savings account, certificates of deposits, life insurance cash value, mutual funds, stocks, bonds, value of 401(k) or retirement accounts, value of farmland, farm buildings, farm equipment and future earnings.

What is the value of your total assets listed here?

The value of your total assets listed above minus current auto liability coverage equals total uninsured assets. The value of your total assets listed above minus current farm liability coverage equals total uninsured assets.

If if an accident involving your property, auto, RV or farm accident is your fault, what are you responsible to pay?

You are responsible to pay for the repair of the damages to the other person's vehicle, other property damage, signs, buildings, guardrails, bridges, rental car for the other party, medical expenses, rehabilitation, pain and suffering, emotional or physical scarring, loss of wages due to death, loss of wages due to disability, funeral expenses, home and auto modifications for handicap accessibility and loss of companionship of a deceased spouse.

If this is a negative number, in the event of a lawsuit you need to decide which of the assets you will liquidate to settle a lawsuit.

If you are underinsured in an auto, recreational or watercraft vehicle accident, the injured party will collect on their underinsured motorist.

The company paying the underinsured motorist coverage will seek reimbursement from you.

Consider an umbrella if you have

assets you need to protect, operate machinery on public roads, own livestock, have a dog or a swimming pool, own watercraft or recreational vehicles, a rental or vacation property, have teenage drivers, travel extensively, or participate in volunteer activities.

In the event you are underinsured, everything you have worked so hard to obtain can be taken away.

Give me a call. Kozlowski Insurance Agency, Shirley Top 507-283-3704.

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Sen. Weber comments on ag issues facing Minnesota farmers

By Sen. Bill Weber, Luverne, Minnesota Senate District 22

It has been a strange year both from a COVID standpoint as well as weather within agriculture.

We went from unusually wet conditions to drier times.

While we were fortunate in most of Rock County in getting enough rain for a good crop, the recent storms, with strong winds, flattened a great deal of corn.

I have had requests coming in from people as to what type of programs might be available to help.

I visited with Ag Commissioner Thom Petersen, and there are few programs that are available.

His suggestion is to keep in touch with the FSA and crop insurance people.

The wind damage is greatly dependent on variety, corn on corn planting and other issues.

While there will no doubt be some loss, it is always questionable as to whether the loss will qualify for crop insurance payments which are dependent on the level of insurance one has taken out.

Much of the focus on disaster situations is on the drought condi-



There is work behind the scenes happening for a small disaster bill focusing on cattle herds, lack of feed, etc.

We are, however, a ways away from anything being available.

Some items were accomplished in the past legislative session for agriculture.

tions in much of Minnesota.

My colleagues are saying they are hearing of no ears actually in much of the non-irrigated corn in west central, central and northwestern Minnesota.

Silage chopping is to produce filler product only.

There is work behind the scenes happening for a potential small disaster bill focusing on cattle herds, lack of feed, etc.

We are, however, a ways away from anything being available.

Some items which were accomplished in the past legislative session for agriculture are as follow:

- Definition of family expanded to

extend homestead credit on farm property. Previously it was lineal descendants only that would qualify, but now aunts, uncles, cousins can receive homestead credit as well. This is available for the 2022 tax year.

- Additional money will be available for the installation of blender pumps to allow stations currently unable to offer higher ethanol blends to do so. Much remains to fully accomplish this.

- Provided additional money for farmer mental health and extended the farmer mediation program until 2027.

- Provided a small grant program for expansion of meat, dairy, egg or poultry processing facilities.

The small processing plants became an important element when COVID shut our larger processors down for a period of time.

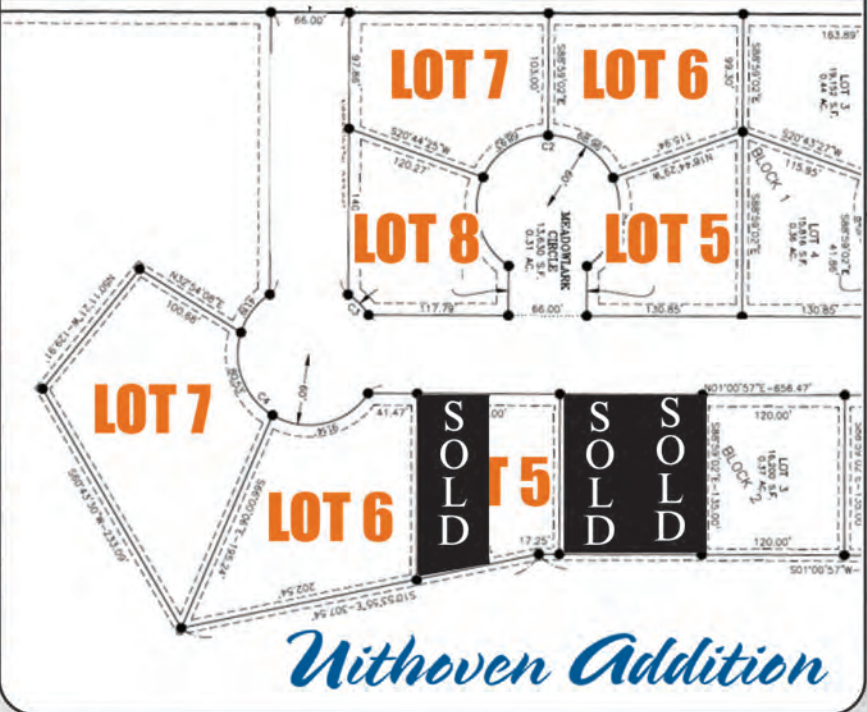
Finally, next year will bring about redistricting of our legislative districts.

Our rural districts will get larger, and unfortunately there will be fewer people in the legislature who truly know or understand agriculture.

As your state senator, rest assured that I will not let them go uneducated.

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Programs are available for Minnesota farmers facing drought

By Rep. Joe Schomacker, Luverne, Minnesota House District 22A

The year 2021 will go down as one of the most interesting years for agriculture, and not necessarily in a great way. From COVID-19 to the unpredictable weather, it has been a time of instability.

According to a recent Drought Monitor update, 63 percent of the state's croplands are in "very poor to poor condition."

And if you drive around southwestern Minnesota, you can see it, as far too many fields filled with corn and soybeans turned brown when they should still have been green.

Because of this, I would like to make sure area farmers know that federal and state resources are available for those in the fields now and unimpressed with what they find.

For example, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture has a "Drought Response and Resources" page visible when you visit its website (mda.state.mn.us).

Here you will find details on Minnesota's current assistance programs, including zero-interest loans that are available to farmers whose operations are suffering due to extreme drought conditions.

For more information about the Disaster Recovery Loan Program, please visit www.mda.state.mn.us/disasterloan.

There's also federal USDA assistance available. If you are a producer who has experienced feed losses and livestock deaths due to national disasters, you should consider pursuing the USDA's



Disaster Assistance for Drought Recovery. The Livestock Forage Disaster Program is in place to assist livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses due to the drought this year.

I've worked with a number of area farmers this year to help get them connected to grazing on public land and have seen how bad it's gotten.

Federally, USDA Disaster Assistance for Drought Recovery is available for producers who experience livestock deaths and feed losses due to natural disasters.

In addition, livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses due to drought in 2021 may be eligible for assistance through the Livestock Forage Disaster Program. To learn more about these federal programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/index.

I'd also like to highlight a new state grant program that would assist milk, egg, poultry and meat proces-

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Because of this, I would like to make sure area farmers know that federal and state resources are available for those in the fields now and unimpressed with what they find.

sors to begin operations on a new business, or modernize and expand their current facilities.

According to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, it anticipates awarding up to \$750,000 through its Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation Meat, Poultry, Egg, and Milk Processing Grant program, using a competitive review process.

The maximum equipment award is \$150,000, and the minimum award is \$1,000.

The department notes that the intent of the program is to increase sales of Minnesota-raised livestock products by investing in equipment and physical improvements that support processing, capacity, market diversification, and market access for meat, poultry, eggs, and milk.

Stipulations from the MDA state applicants must:

- be engaged with livestock slaughter or processing, including meat, poultry, eggs, and milk.

- be an individual (including farmers), business, agricultural cooperative, or a local unit of government (including Tribal governments).

- currently reside in Minnesota or be authorized to conduct business in Minnesota.

The department adds that grantees are responsible for at least 50 percent of the total cost for the first \$25,000 and 75 percent of the total cost for every dollar after as a cash match.

Applications will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 28. Proposals must be submitted through the AGRI Meat, Poultry, Egg and Milk Processing Grant webpage:

<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/agri-mpem-processing>

As always, if you have any legislative-related questions, do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached by email at:

rep.joe.schomacker@house.mn or by phone at 651-296-5505.

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STAR HERALD

Klobuchar introduces bill to expand farmers' access to precision ag equipment, climate-friendly technology

Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Deb Fischer (R-NE), members of the Senate Agriculture committee, introduced bipartisan legislation to create a program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide loan financing to farmers and ranchers interested in purchasing precision agriculture equipment.

Precision agriculture encompasses a wide range of new technologies in farming and ranching that can allow producers to reduce their environmental footprint, lower costs, and improve productivity.

"America's economic well-being depends on the health of our farmlands. This will support farmers by helping them invest in precision agriculture tools like soil mapping and aerial imagery technologies that reduce costs and help protect our environment, said Sen. Klobuchar.

"I'm proud to lead this bipartisan bill with Sen. Fischer, and I will continue pushing for policies to strengthen rural communities nationwide."

"Farmers and ranchers take care of our land and resources, and precision agriculture equipment can help them expand on this good work," said Sen. Fischer.

"Upfront costs, however, mean many operations struggle to access these cutting-edge and climate-friendly technologies. Our bipartisan legislation will allow more producers to invest in the equipment they need to make their operations more efficient, environmentally friendly and productive."

The World Economic Forum estimates that if just a quarter of the world's farms adopted precision agricultural practices, farm yields globally could increase by 15 percent. Greenhouse gas emissions and water use would decrease by 10 percent and 20 percent, respectively.

The Precision Agriculture Loan (PAL) Act would establish the Precision Agriculture Loan program within USDA's Farm Service Agency. The program would offer low-cost and long-term loans to agriculture producers who want to adopt precision agriculture technologies but can't afford to through traditional financing.

It would be the first federal loan program



Lori Sorenson file photo/0923 harvest 2020

The program, established through the Precision Agriculture Loan Act would offer low-cost and long-term loans to agriculture producers who want to adopt precision agriculture technologies but can't afford to through traditional financing.

dedicated entirely to precision agriculture. Instead of paying upwards of 5 percent in interest, producers would be eligible for interest rates lower than 2 percent through the new program with loan terms from 3 to 12 years in length. These loans would cover any precision agriculture technology that improves efficiency or reduces inputs.

"Precision ag tools are an important sustainability piece in helping farmers care for their crops, while using less water, fertilizer and pesticides, but the cost can be a major hurdle," said Kevin Paap, president of the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation.

"Minnesota Farm Bureau applauds Senator Klobuchar for her leadership in ensuring Minnesota farmers and ranchers have the assistance they need to access these important tools."

"The Association of Equipment Manufacturers applauds senators Deb Fischer and Amy Klobuchar for their steadfast leadership on behalf of

rural America and for introducing the Precision Agriculture Loan Program Act of 2021. This important legislation recognizes the critical role that precision agriculture technology, such as machine section control, auto guidance, variable rate technology, telematics, and precision irrigation, plays in promoting climate-smart agriculture. AEM's own research shows that increased adoption of precision agriculture technology in the crop farming industry can have a significant environmental and economic impact for farmers in maximizing productivity, crop yields, fertilizer use, herbicide use, fossil fuel use, and water use, as well as reducing carbon emissions," said Dennis Slater, president of the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

"The Precision Agriculture Loan Program Act of 2021 will give U.S. farmers a whole new set of tools to help achieve climate goals while continuing to feed and fuel the world."

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Deadline extended for pandemic assistance to livestock producers

Farm Service Agency reminds producers of upcoming pandemic program deadlines

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is providing additional time for livestock and poultry producers to apply for the Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program (PLIP).

Producers who suffered losses during the pandemic due to insufficient access to processing may now apply for assistance for those losses and the cost of depopulation and disposal of the animals through Oct. 12, 2021, rather than the original deadline of Sept. 17, 2021. PLIP is part of USDA's Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative.

"Livestock and poultry producers were among the hardest hit by the pandemic," said Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Zach Ducheneaux.

"We want to ensure that all eligible producers have the opportunity to apply for this critical assistance. The October 12 deadline also aligns with the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 deadline."

PLIP provides payments to producers for losses of livestock or poultry depopulated from March 1, 2020, through Dec. 26, 2020, due to insufficient processing access as a result of the pandemic. Payments are based on 80 percent of the fair market value of the livestock and poultry and for the cost of depopulation and disposal of the animal. Eligible livestock and poultry include swine, chickens and turkeys.

PLIP program details

PLIP payments are calculated by multiplying the number of head of eligible livestock or poultry by the payment rate per head, and then subtracting the amount of any



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PLIP is part of USDA's Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative.

payments the eligible livestock or poultry owner has received for disposal of the livestock or poultry under the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) or a state program.

The payments will also be reduced by any Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 1 and 2) payments paid on the same inventory of swine that were depopulated.

Eligible livestock and poultry producers can apply for PLIP through the Oct. 12, 2021, deadline by completing the FSA-620 Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program application and submitting it to any FSA county office. Additional documentation may be required.

Visit farmers.gov/plip for more information on how to apply.

Additional assistance

Other programs within the Pandemic Assistance for Producer initiative with upcoming deadlines include:

- Oct. 12 - Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2, which provides critical support to agricultural producers impacted by COVID-19 market disruptions.

- Oct. 15 - Pandemic Assistance for Timber Harvesters and Haulers, which provides financial relief to timber harvesting and timber hauling businesses that experienced losses in 2020 due to COVID-19.

To learn more about USDA's commitment to deliver financial assistance to farmers, ranchers and agricultural producers and businesses who have been impacted by COVID-19 market disruptions, visit farmers.gov/

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Wellhead protection practices incentivized by state Clean Water grants/continued from page 1B



The Minnesota Department of Health mapped the 4,500-acre drinking water supply management area, which borders the Rock River and includes a 2,706-acre highly vulnerable wellhead protection area.

The wellhead area has provided water to rural areas since 1979 and is among limited groundwater resources in Rock County. It serves 25 percent of Rock County's population on 755 farms and five towns. Rock County Rural Water has 10 wells pumping 1.2 million gallons per day; however, three of its highest-producing wells have considerably high nitrates — up to 30 ppm (10 ppm are considered safe).

in the state in terms of contaminating local water supplies.

Bos said his office and state agencies are making some gains, thanks to grants. "Basically we received grants from MDA and BWSR to encourage producers to use Best Management Practices to reduce nitrate problems in the well head areas," he said.

Also, multiple grants were awarded to develop cost-share incentives to encourage producers to modify nitrogen applications and plant perennial crops.

Minnesota's Clean Water Council visited southwest Minnesota earlier this month to hear about local work being done to address drinking water, water treatment, wildlife protection and other programs that revolve around the science of water, including aquifers, groundwater and wellhead protection.

Bos said in areas where these are implemented, the nitrogen levels have improved. But in areas where row crops are encroaching, those wells are showing higher nitrate levels.

"We've been working with farmers since 2014, and big credit goes to them for making changes in their nitrogen application," Bos said.

"Some of these practices help, but what we know from experience is that perennial grasses make the difference."

He said corn and soybean production is the "bread and butter" of most farm production in Rock County, so grant funding has provided incentives that influence

decisions.

"It encourages farmers to make changes that are better for our water quality," Bos said.

The Minnesota Department of Health mapped the 4,500-acre drinking water supply management area. It borders the Rock River and includes a 2,706-acre highly vulnerable wellhead protection area.

Forty-two people own land within the highly vulnerable wellhead protection area, and 10 easements totaling 667 acres have been enrolled, thanks to nearly \$2.5 million in state funds.

The three of the most recent and pending easements are made possible by a combined total of \$4.4 million in state and federal funds.

"Our goal is (to enroll) enough area in permanent grass to provide clean water," Bos said.

The wellhead area has provided water to rural areas since 1979 and is among limited groundwater resources in Rock County.

It serves 25 percent of Rock County's population on 755 farms and five towns.

Wellhead protection/continued on page 16B

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Maivis Fodness photo/0930 wellhead protection

A busload of state and local leaders with Minnesota's Clean Water Council took a field trip earlier this month through southwest Minnesota to tour projects funded by the state's Clean Water Legacy Act. One of the stops was the Rock County Rural Water main plant southeast of Luverne and the wellhead area surrounding it.

Wellhead protection practices/continued from page 14B

Rock County Rural Water has 10 wells pumping 1.2 million gallons per day; however, three of its highest-producing wells have considerably high nitrates — up to 30 ppm (10 ppm are considered safe).

As such, these wells blend water with low nitrate wells and receive some water from the Lewis and Clark Regional Water System. Rock County's wells

are more vulnerable to nitrate contamination than other areas because they're shallow (30 to 60 feet deep) and located in course-textured soils.

These soils are a big reason why some areas of the wellhead are so easily contaminated. Corn utilizes only about 60 percent of applied nitrogen, and course-textured soils don't "hang on" to residual nitrogen.

At the Sept. 13 tour in Rock County, state and county officials discussed the need for continued grant support for wellhead protection.

The goal is to increase cover crops and timed nitrogen applications, plant permanent cover such as alfalfa, grass, kernza wheat and pasture and enroll sensitive areas into CREP or RIM easements.

"We are an environmentally responsible farm, raising chickens and fresh produce. We make every decision with our plant and environment at the forefront of our minds while working with our local community to provide fresh, nutritional food."

Kanaranzi Greens/from 5B

Sons — Harrison, 8, and twins, Samuel and Eli, 7 — are encouraged to eat directly from the garden because of the safe growing practices Ainsworth keeps as a focus.

"We are not certified organic," he said. "We are very conscious of the environmental impacts."

When necessary, he'll turn to plant-based products for weed treatment or to get rid of pests that may damage the growing greens and vegetables.

Because soil health is important, Ainsworth often uses a broadfork to turn over the garden soil instead of deep tilling with the gas-powered tiller. The soil rests before planting to promote health bacteria and worm growth in the soil.

The process is in line with the focus included on the Kanaranzi Greens' social media page: "We are an environmentally responsible farm, raising chickens and fresh produce. We make every decision with our plant and environment at the forefront of our minds while working with our local community to provide fresh, nutritional food."

Next year, Ainsworth plans to expand his garden plots to be more effective and meet consumer demand, but not too large to be unmanageable by one person, he said.

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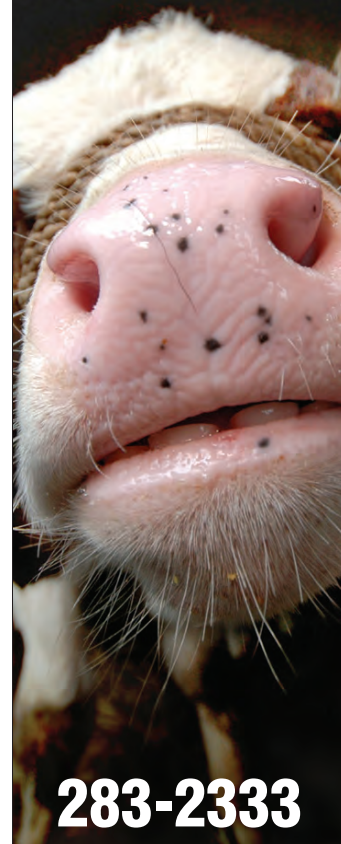
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