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*Wanamingo
Messenger*

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8 Weeks in

By Cheri Roshon

By now, almost everyone in Wanamingo and surrounding areas know that Dan and Randi Romo are the new owners of "The Spot" on Main Street Wanamingo. By the time this article goes to print, many changes have begun to surface that are fun, thoughtful, and good for our economy. Meeting with Dan today, I felt his passion for bringing together so many original and inspiring ideas. There are so many changes coming, and heart felt and innovative ideas for community participation, that we decided to start

with a few of the changes already happening, and sneak peeks at upcoming changes for another article in a few months, to lay out more of the exciting happenings. I mean, we don't want to overwhelm you!

First and foremost...PIZZA! I am speaking from experience when I say that ever since Casey's arrived in town, people have been thinking about pizza. Well, Dan has knocked it out of the park with his homemade pizza pie, as they used to call it. Dan's recipe for homemade crusts and sauces are drool worthy!!! I had heard so many people



Dan and Randi Romo

talk about the pizza, I had to go try one for myself....and I was not disappointed!

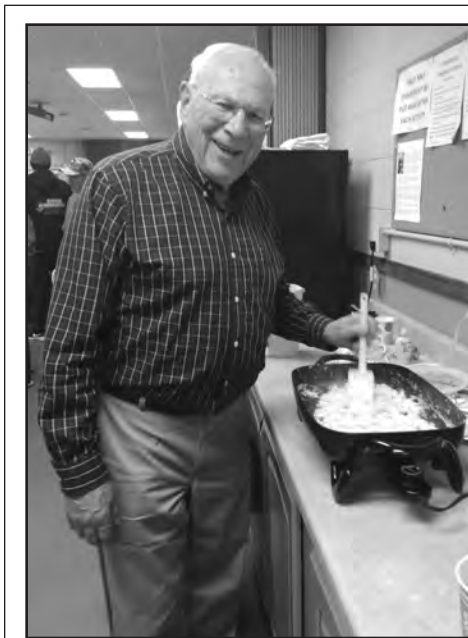
(continued on page 14)

Announcements

• **Three Rivers Community Action is currently accepting new Meals On Wheels clients in the communities of Zumbrota, Mazeppa, Goodhue, Pine Island, Kenyon and Wanamingo.** Receive a hot meal delivered to your home by a volunteer at lunch time up to 5 days per week. To qualify you must be 60 or older, live within city limits, have limited mobility and/or are unable to prepare nutritious meals. The suggested donation is \$4.50 per meal. For more information on how to sign up for meals or to be a volunteer driver, please contact Dana Bergner at 507-421-6067 or dbergner@threeriverscap.org

• **Wanamingo Veterans Honor Guard invite you to become a member.** Join us and help us make the Wanamingo Veterans Honor Guard an even bigger success. WVHG meets the third Tuesday of each month at the Wanamingo Community Center. The VFW will meet from 7-7:30p.m. The Honor Guard will meet from 7:30-8:30p.m. For more information contact Eric Dierks 507-321-1967, Gary Floan at 507-732-7740, or Larry Van De Walker at 507-421-4674.

• **Hiawathaland Transit:** Service hours are 7:30am-4:30pm Monday through Friday. Call dispatch at 866-623-7505 Monday through Friday 6am-9pm and Saturday 7:00am-5:00pm. Visit threeriverscap.org for more information.



Gary Bakko making scrambled eggs

Lions Serve It Up!

By Cheri Roshon

This month the Lions Club is offering to cook you up a scrumptious breakfast to help raise funds for their yearly activities, which you may have read about in last month's Messenger. The donations will go to The Parade of Green. These are several of the organizations they sponsor, and there will be more information at the event.

The breakfast will be held at the Wanamingo Community Center on Main Street, February 24th from 7 to 9 am. The menu will be pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, milk, juice and coffee for a free will donation, and it is all you can eat!

Bring the family and mingle with your neighbors, and you won't even have to do the dishes!


(continued on page 3)

Tis The Season of Love

By Cheri Roshon


February brings to mind thoughts of Love, Flowers, and Springtime! We have certainly been blessed with mild weather for most of our SE Mn area, so it feels a bit premature to know that soon it will be spring! What do you think of when you "Think Spring"? I start thinking about gardens, planting flowers that will showcase my home for my neighbors to see when they drive by, and Valentine's Day Delights. I have always been a mom who gives her daughters gifts for Valentine's Day, because to me, they are my greatest loves. I mean, who says a Valentine has to be someone you swoon over? Valentine's Day is for Love, and need I say more?


(continued on page 3)

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Faith



By Colin Rueter

How's your faith? It does not matter if you are an atheist, theist, new age mystic. Doesn't matter if you're religious, a church-going person, or a Christian; yes, there's a difference. You have placed faith in something or someone. You may say, "Well, I don't have faith, I have my self-reasoning and confidence in where I place my trust and hope." This would make for a longer conversation, but since this is an article, might I ask, "How can you trust your reasoning?" I would also say that the word confidence comes from the Latin words, *con fide...* 'with faith'. So, friends, we all have faith, the question is whether it is set upon solid ground or shifting sands.

First, let's define "faith." The Oxford dictionary defines faith as "complete trust or confidence in someone or something." I would add details needed for those who claim to be Christian that our faith is complete trust in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, for our salvation, adoption, and future hope. Simply put, the biblical definition of faith is "trusting in something you cannot explicitly prove" (Hebrews 11:1). This definition of faith contains two aspects: intellectual assent and trust. In-

tellectual assent is believing something to be true. Trust is relying on the fact that the something is true. A chair is often used to help illustrate this. Intellectual assent is recognizing that a chair is a chair and agreeing that it is designed to support a person who sits on it. Trust is sitting in the chair. Understanding these two aspects of faith is crucial. Many people believe certain facts and intellectually agree with biblical facts about Jesus Christ. But knowing those facts to be true is not what the Bible means by "faith." The biblical definition of faith requires intellectual assent to the facts and trust in the facts. Honestly, we can believe certain things to be true, yet they are not, no matter how hard we believe in them. Hence, the truth of those facts and acting on that truth is crucial. Simply believing the facts that Jesus is God incarnate who died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and was resurrected is not enough to be saved. We must personally and fully rely on the death of Christ as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. The faith God asks of us for salvation is belief in what the Bible says about who Jesus is and what He accomplished and fully trusting in Jesus for that salvation (Acts 16:31). Biblical faith is always accompanied by repentance, a turning away from your sin towards Jesus (Matthew 21:32; Mark 1:15). In addition, we are to believe what the Bible says, and we are to obey it. We are to agree with the truth of God's Word, all of it, and we are to seek transformation by it (Romans 12:2). Without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). Without faith, we cannot be saved (John 3:16). Without faith, life cannot be what God intends it to be, abundant and full of joy (John 10).

I will simply say here that if your faith is grounded in anything or any person other than Jesus Christ for your hope, happiness, significance, or security, you are in trouble deep, both today and into eternity. Placing your faith, complete trust, in Jesus is the only solid ground to be assured of your needed salvation, but also to navigate through life in this broken world and into heaven (Matthew 7:24-27).

So What?

Faith matters. The question is: Does it matter to you and where is it placed? We live in an age where faith has a place, for it does in the life of every human on earth. Yet, how you answer the question above indicates whether your faith is built on something solid or whether it teeters on the wavering sands of self, culture, or ever-changing worldly ideologies, which are as secure as Jell-o hammered to the wall.

Friends, place your faith in the one place where it will make a difference, Jesus Christ as He has been revealed in scripture, and you will have life. Do not adjust Jesus to fit your life, but transform your life to follow Jesus. Just as the first disciples dropped everything, counted the cost, and followed Him, so must you consider and decide. God has revealed enough about Himself through His creation (Romans 1:18-21), through His written Word, the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21), and through His Son (John 14:9), that we can enter into a meaningful and saving relationship with Him. Once you have placed your faith in Jesus, you are saved (John 10:7-16; Acts 4:12; Romans 10:5-13). Once saved, you live your life to the glory of the God who saved you (1 Cor. 10:31). This means attending and becoming a member of

a Bible preaching/believing church, setting your love upon God's people in word, deed, and prayer, and sharing the gospel (good news of Jesus) with others around you. Lastly, this means that you live your life, with all the trials, temptations, joys, and hope, looking to Jesus who is the author and perfecter of your faith (Hebrews 12:2). It is good to "examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves" (2 Corinthians 13:5). If you question whether you are a Christian, then self-examination is in order. Doubts about our salvation can be troubling, but false assurances are worse. You are not saved by church attendance, being baptized, being 'good', or 'being one with nature.' Thankfully, we have Scripture as our guide. There are specific things we can look for when determining the validity of our profession of faith: trust in Christ, obedience to His Word, love for God's people, and continued spiritual growth. We don't need to live in doubt about tomorrow. We can navigate our life with living hope (1 Peter 1:3-9), even as we endure wounds from those who might call themselves Christians, navigate rejection by family and friends when we proclaim that Jesus is the only way to be saved from God's wrath (John 14:6), and when your hopes for this life fall short. When you trust Jesus by faith and live to please and honor Him, you can know beyond a doubt that you are a Christian and that you have a glorious future in the life to come (John 14:15-17; Revelation 21:22-27, 22:1-5).

As always, if you have questions, need prayer, a word of encouragement, or a cup of coffee, please contact me via my personal email: niloc1214@gmail.com

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February 18: 9:00-9:40a.m. Sacred Space;
10:00a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at WLC;
9:00a.m. Sunday School
February 21: Soup Supper 6:00p.m.;
Lent Worship Service at WLC 7:00p.m.
February 25: 9:00-9:40a.m. Sacred Space; 10:00a.m.;
Worship at WLC; 9:00a.m. Sunday School
February 28: Soup Supper 6:00p.m.;
Lent Worship Service at TLC 7:00p.m.

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February 18: 9:00-9:40a.m. Sacred Space;
10:00a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at WLC;
9:00a.m. Sunday School
February 21: Soup Supper 6:00p.m.;
Lent Worship Service at WLC 7:00p.m.
February 25: 9:00-9:40a.m. Sacred Space; 10:00a.m.;
Worship at WLC; 9:00a.m. Sunday School
February 28: Soup Supper 6:00p.m.;
Lent Worship Service at TLC 7:00p.m.

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AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY

Greeting

John, to the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. — Revelation 1:4-5

John is writing a letter, so he begins here with a greeting. Though he is writing to seven churches in the Roman province of Asia (present-day Turkey), this letter is not limited to those seven churches. Written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God, this letter is meant for the entire church of Jesus Christ. The church is made aware of God's grace in Christ to strengthen its faith in times of challenge and hardship, including physical persecution that will come its way. God has provided Jesus as the Savior, "the ruler of the kings of the earth." Knowing this helps us to put all things into perspective as history unfolds. John greets his readers with grace and peace from the God who is, was, and always will be—in the name of Jesus, the Christ (Messiah). Jesus is the faithful witness to all that God provides for the church. Jesus alone is the "firstborn from the dead," and he is the exalted King over all kings (see also Colossians 1:15-20; Psalm 89:27), whether they be emperors, monarchs, presidents, prime ministers, CEOs, or chairs of the board. To Jesus, "who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood," belong all glory, power, and praise forever!

Lord and God, thank you for helping us know you as our Savior and King. May we rest in you alone and honor you each day. Amen.

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Wanamingo - Wednesday 7:00p.m.

Tis the Season of Love

(continued from page 1)

When most people think of Valentine's gifts, they dream of decadent chocolates, beautiful bouquets of roses, and mushy cards. I tend to think of gifts of Health and Beauty. For example, a gift of health may be a massage gift certificate for your special someone. Helping someone release the stress we all encounter, and feel relaxed is a pretty fine gift, if you ask

me. Or maybe a day at the salon, where you can not only get a new hair style, but also a facial, waxing, or special products to keep you looking your best! I even have it on good authority that if you purchase a facial at All The Buzz in February, you will receive a free brow waxing! After all, you may be going out for a fancy dinner at a local restaurant or bar on the 14th! Or maybe a treat from the local bakery, now open every Friday in Wanamingo, and also open for special orders and sweet treats the days before Valentine's day! And what about your puppy? Grooming services help him/her feel good, and all these special things can be found right here in Wanamingo!

I guess what I am trying to get across here is how important it is to shop locally. We are

a growing community, and have some pretty fine retailers right here, so why go anywhere else? We even have special occasion cards at the What Kins store, and cute trinkets and gifts there, for a more traditional gift. And the bouquets of flowers I have received from

here are the freshest I have ever seen. So, start thinking about what your Valentine's Day will look like, and check out the specials, and all the great things our retailers have to offer! Happy Spring to all!!!

Lions Serve It Up!

(continued from page 1)

The Lions club has only a few fundraisers each year, and they do a whole lot of activities for the local community, as well as national programs, so come on out and support them if you can. There will be take out available, if you wish to enjoy your meal in the comfort of your own home, or maybe surprise someone with a hot and hearty meal! It is never a bad idea to support your local community, and to be of service to others! We hope to see you there!

FYI..... the Lions will also be hosting another pancake breakfast in May, so be looking for more information in the April issue of the Messenger!



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KABA KASH NOTICE

The Kenyon Commercial Club is disbanding, thus **discontinuing the KABA KASH program.** Any outstanding KABA KASH will **ONLY** be redeemed for cash by bringing directly to Security State Bank of Kenyon. **DEADLINE** for cash refund of KABA KASH is **5/1/2024.**

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William Rick Ellis

William Rick Ellis, 80, of Wanamingo, passed away on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, at the Mayo Clinic Hospital, Methodist Campus in Rochester. He was born in Yauco, Puerto Rico on May 18, 1943, to William and Luz (Ramirez)



Ellis. He graduated from high school in Crescent City, FL in 1962. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and served in the 12th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division and was stationed in Vietnam from 1965-1967. There he received the Vietnamese Service Medal, the Vietnamese Campaign Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Rifle Badge M-14 Marksman commendation and the Good Conduct Medal. He then re-enlisted in the United States Army and served until 1976. He then re-enlisted in the United States Air Force National Guard, retiring in 1992. He then relocated to Wanamingo where he had many friends. He enjoyed old movies, researching the Doolittle Raid, playing flight simulator games, and spending time with his friends. He was a member of the VFW.

He is survived by one daughter, Julie (Kent) Breu and two grandchildren, Mitchell and Ainsley Breu. He was preceded in death by his parents.

A celebration of life will take place at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, February 16, 2024, at the New Life Church of Wanamingo. Arrangements made by the Mahn Family Funeral Home, Larson Chapel in Zumbrota.

Beverly Fay (Flom) Sviggum

Beverly Fay (Flom) Sviggum died at the age of 92 at Cannon Rivers Senior Living on January 25, 2024 where she had lived and had been lovingly cared for since July 2023. After her marriage in 1951, she and Peder lived on the farm in Sogn Valley where they raised their children. Bev was a farming partner, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, church and community member. Losing her husband Peder of 36 years in 1987 was difficult. Living as a widow for the next 37 years brought strength and perseverance to the matriarch of the Sviggum family.

She deeply loved her family, neighbors, and friends. According to her, there were none better. She did not drive for 25 years and she, as well as her family, were extremely grateful for her "village" who helped with rides, groceries, and visits.

Her favorite musical group was the Statler Brothers and, as they sang, she relished her "place here in this world" and gave "the very best she could". All one had to do was taste her lemon meringue pie or cookies to know her best was blue ribbon worthy, but her contributions went far beyond her baking skills.



Bev's life echoed the song, "thank you world for lettin' me contribute to the cause".

She was known throughout the community as Grandma Sviggum and continued to support K-W activities even after her children and grandchildren graduated. She loved attending games, concerts, and other K-W school functions. Her support of the school, Vang Lutheran Church, and community events was steadfast. For decades Bev was the lutefisk expert at Vang's annual event in October. She was a long-time leader in 4-H and enjoyed being part of her Extension group.

Bev would dash off if there was any opportunity to see friends, go to a ballgame, or get ice cream. She often said a clean house was a sign of a misspent life. The dishes could wait. She loved her books, one which emphasized taking the time to be with people and cherish relationships; she knew that was the most important gift she could offer.

While she is no longer with us, Beverly's legacy looms large in the many lives she touched, especially in her five children: Steve (Deb), Jim (Sandy), Dick (Ann), Beth (Steve), and Missy (Dan). Her 11 grandchildren were so fortunate to have such an involved, caring, and loving grandma: Hans (Rachel), Erik (Cortney), Marit (Eric), Peder, Siri, Connor (Rachel), Michael, Kasey, Colin, Will, and Riley. She was blessed to know and be loved by 15 great-grandchildren. She will be deeply missed by her family.

The future of not seeing Bev, giving her a hug, or having her say "Love you, bye", is a sad one, but her love will live on in our hearts.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said the purpose of life is to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well. Beverly made a difference.

Visitation was at Vang Lutheran Church on Friday, February 2nd, 2024 from 4PM to 8PM. Funeral services were held on Saturday, February 3, 2024 at 11AM at Vang Lutheran Church with a visitation one hour prior to the service. The Reverend Paul Graham will be officiated. Interment was in the Vang Lutheran Church Cemetery in Dennison. In memory of Beverly, the family requested that you send flowers to your loved ones

Richard C. Overholt

Richard Charles Overholt, 80, of Kenyon, died Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester.



He was born August 5, 1943 in Faribault, Minnesota the son of Leon and Ethel (Steinberg) Overholt. He grew up in Kenyon and graduated from Kenyon High School. He continued his education at Mankato State where he earned a bachelor's degree in art.

While in college, he married Pamela Jordan. The couple was blessed with two sons, Cjon and Dyronn and later divorced.

Richard's career in teaching was mainly spent in Davenport, Iowa where he taught Art. In 2000, he retired and moved back to

Kenyon.

Richard was involved with Boy Scouts in Davenport and loved socializing with everyone.

He is survived by sons, Cjon Overholt of Kenyon and Dyronn (Susan) Overholt of West Concord; grandchildren, Alexis (Jon) Aumann, Anabella Overholt, Derrikk Overholt, Lyranna Overholt, Alexandra Overholt, Serenity Overholt, Greyson Overholt and Chrysanthemum Overholt; sister-in-law, Pat Overholt of Chico, CA and other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Leon Ethel and brothers, James, Robert and Thomas.

Mass of Christian Burial was held at 11:00 AM Saturday, February 10, 2024, at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Kenyon with visitation one hour prior. Burial was in the Kenyon Cemetery in Kenyon.

Gayle Georgeanne Claxton

Gayle Georgeanne Claxton, 76, of Kenyon, passed away on Friday, January 26, 2024 at Three Links Care Center.



She was born August 11, 1947 in Stillwater, Minnesota, the daughter of Hans and Fern (Elftman) Tollefson. When Gayle was eight years old the family moved to South St. Paul, and she later graduated from South St. Paul High School.

While in school she met David Claxton and they were later married on August 16, 1966, and they were able to have 57 years together. Gayle attended cosmetology school before working at St. Olaf College and later for Van Clemens as a stockbroker. David and Gayle later moved to the Northfield area and Gayle started Helping Hands, a handyman service.

Gayle always stayed in touch with her family, calling them on the phone to hear about their day and listen to them. You could find her going around looking at garage sales, out in her garden, crafting, or sitting down relaxing with a crossword puzzle. Gayle loved to travel with Dave and her children. She loved going to Washington and Oregon catching crab and having fresh crab meals.

She is survived by her husband David Claxton of Kenyon; children, Ryan Claxton of New York, Rachel (and Bill) Wesbur of Kenyon; sister, Carmen Tollefson of Kenyon.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Hans and Fern Tollefson; sister, Cheryl Willis.

Visitation was at Michaelson Funeral Home, Kenyon on Saturday, February 3rd, 2023, from 2PM to 5PM..



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School Bus Driver Appreciation Day 2024

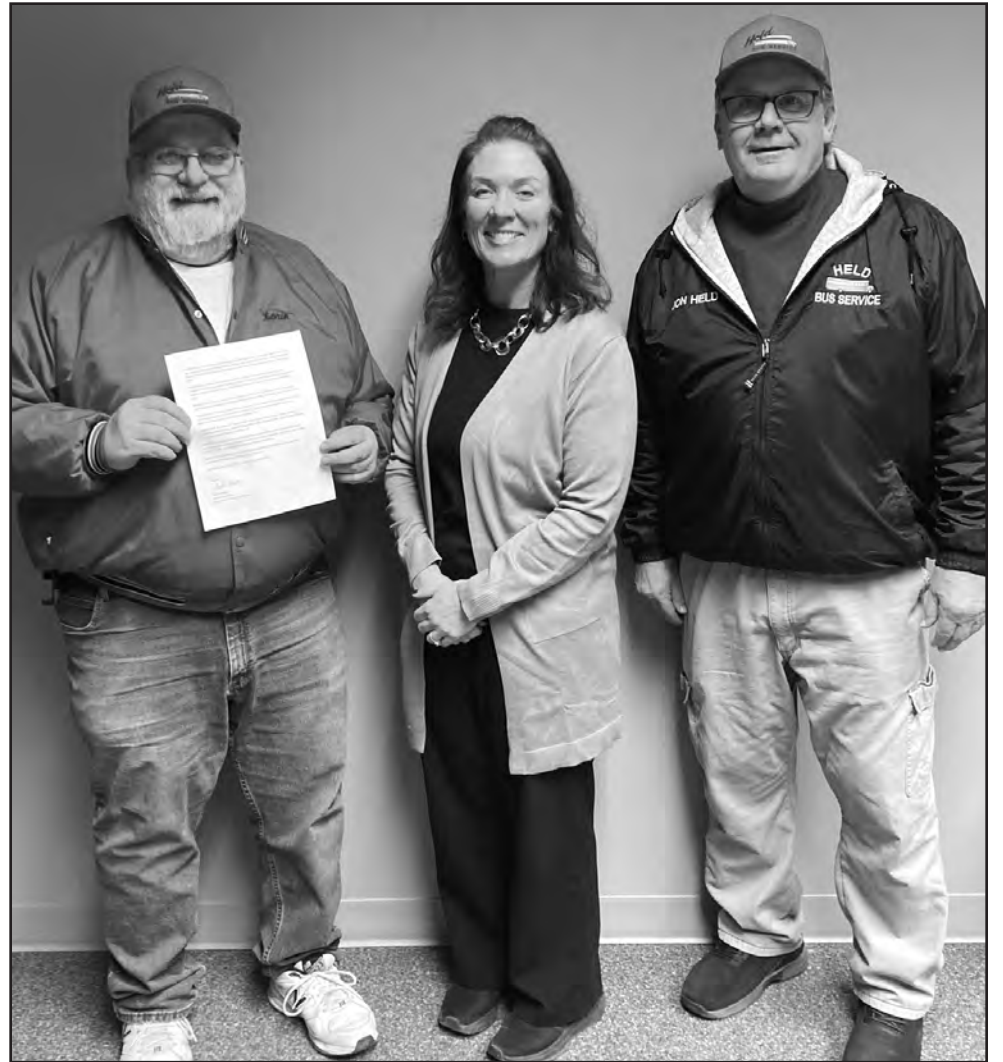
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On February 21, 2024, Held Bus Service,

Kenyon-Wanamingo Schools, and the entire state of Minnesota are celebrating School Bus Driver Appreciation Day to recognize these awesome professionals. You may recognize those that drive the big yellow school busses, but those that drive our transportation vans (Type III school bus) are also school bus drivers.

Kenyon-Wanamingo Schools, as well as the City of Wanamingo and the City of Kenyon, are approving proclamations in honor of our school bus drivers.

This event is coordinated with the Min-



Held Bus Service accepting School Bus Driver Appreciation Day proclamation from Kenyon-Wanamingo Superintendent Beth Giese. L to R: Lorin Pohlman, Supt Giese, Jon Held

nesota School Bus Operator's Association (MSBOA) and the Minnesota Association of Pupil Transportation (MAPT). Be sure to reach out to your favorite bus drivers, and thank them for their service.

School Bus Driver Spotlight

Vicki Erickson



Vicki Erickson has driven school bus for over 35 years, all within the same school district. She began driving in 1989 for Denny Bengston, who had the busses for the Wanamingo school district. Her father-in-law, a bus driver in Cannon Falls at the time, told her if she could drive a grain truck she could certainly maneuver a school bus. School busses at that time were not as convenient as now, having no power steering, no power brakes, manual transmission, and typically 48 or 54 passenger. She and her husband were also dairy farmers at that time, plus she worked at the school as maintenance/ custodial.

When the Kenyon and Wanamingo districts merged to become Kenyon-Wanamingo Schools, Howard Held purchased the Wanamingo busses from Bengston, so she then began driving for Held Bus Service. She has always loved working for Howard and Jon Held.

Vicki has driven a lot more than just routes over the years. She did a lot of sports trips, being able to see her own sons play football and baseball, plus wrestle. She also did a lot of field and class trips. She never minded the challenge of driving in the Twin Cities. Some of her early co-workers included Sigurd Ree, Roger Floan, Don Greseth, Bonnie Greseth, and Gary Peterson. She retired from the school in 2021.

Vicki is now driving many second- generation students. She enjoys it because of the kids, saying they become "your kids". Most kids are respectful, friendly, and helpful. A driver need not yell, just properly explain why they should or shouldn't do something. Snow doesn't bother her, but it can be hot in the driver seat on hot days.

She has not experienced many stop-arm violations, and noted that the roundabout in Wanamingo has made that intersection so much safer.

Thank you, Vicki, for your service in transporting the world's most precious cargo- our youth for all of these years.



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Letter from the Superintendent

Honoring Bus Appreciation Day and Safeguarding Our Students



By Beth Giese MA, Ed.S
Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools
District Superintendent

As we approach Bus Appreciation Day on February 21st, my heart is filled with appreciation for the bus drivers and transportation teams who ensure the safe journeys of our children. This sentiment runs deep within me, as my grandfather, Ralph Stussy, served as the Director of Transportation for Pine Island Schools for several decades, and my grandmother dedicated years as a bus driver. Holding a bus license myself, I am proud to continue this legacy, having jumped behind the wheel whenever the need has presented itself.

The significance of Bus Appreciation Day extends beyond a mere celebration; it is a reminder of the indispensable role school buses play in our communities. Serving as symbols of reliability and safety, these buses transport millions of students each day.

Bus Appreciation Day is not just a date on the calendar; it is an opportunity to express gratitude to the dedicated drivers who navigate our streets with the precious cargo of our children. It is a call to raise awareness about the importance of adhering to traffic rules, particularly when it comes to respecting the school bus stop arms.

The stop arm on a school bus is not just a mechanical extension; it is a crucial safety feature signaling when students are boarding or disembarking. The law clearly states that when the stop arm is extended, it is illegal to pass the bus from either direction. Yet, despite the clear signals and the potential consequences, instances of cars violating these warnings continue all over Goodhue County.

In Kenyon-Wanamingo, stop arm cameras have become a vital tool. These cameras serve as a watchful eye, identifying those who disregard the safety measures put in place for our children. Our transportation department has witnessed far too many instances of drivers ignoring the extended stop arm, putting young lives at risk.

As we celebrate Bus Appreciation Day, let us also use this occasion to renew our commitment to school bus safety. Whether you are a parent, a fellow driver, or a pedestrian, we all play a pivotal role in creating a secure environment for our children. Let us collectively pay attention to school bus stop arms, follow traffic rules, and promptly report any violations to the authorities.

A special thanks to the memories my grandparents gave me in the transportation world, Jon Held, at Held Transportation and all of

the transportation team that transport our amazing kids at Kenyon-Wanamingo Schools!

2024-25 Kenyon-Wanamingo Kindergarten

An informational meeting for parents of 2024-25 Kindergarten students will be held on Monday, March 11, 2024 at 6:00 pm at the Kenyon-Wanamingo Elementary School in Wanamingo. Free childcare for children aged 33 months and older will be provided. Information covered during the meeting will include Kindergarten Readiness, health and immunizations, transportation and curriculum. A tour of the elementary school will be offered.

The Kindergarten Roundup Mini-Session for 2024-25 Kindergarten students will be held on Friday, May 10, 2024. Students will attend a short classroom session with their teacher and classmates.

If you have a child who will be age 5 on or before September 1, 2024 and have not yet been contacted by the school district, please call the K-W Elementary School Office at 507-824-2211.

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Kenyon-Wanamingo Noble Knights of the Week



**KW Noble Knights of the Week
for January 19, 2024**

Front Row: Axton Porras, KG, Ms. Madison Andrist; Micah Salveson, KG, Mrs. Tanya Short; Eden Luedtke, KG, Mrs. Katie Valek; Braeden Steinberg, Gr. 1, Mrs. Katie Benbrook; Marissa Samlaska, Gr. 1, Mr. Tony Donkers. Back Row: Lola Hernandez-Washington, Gr. 2, Mrs. Deb Hinrichs; Hudson Prondzinski, Gr. 2, Mrs. Megan Jordan; HunterMae Wetzstein, Gr. 3, Ms. Val Ashland; Aubree Cagle, Gr. 3, Ms. Sandy Sahl; Bayleigh Bradford, Gr. 4, Ms. Chloe Gohman



**KW Noble Knights of the Week
for January 26, 2024**

Front Row: Brandon Swan, KG, Ms. Madi Andrist; Marley Lurken, KG, Mrs. Tanya Short; Ava Cline, KG, Mrs. Katie Valek; Toby Edwards, Gr. 1, Mrs. Katie Benbrooks; Drew Anfinson, Gr. 1, Mr. Tony Donkers. Back Row: Bexley Otto, Gr. 2, Mrs. Megan Jordan; Asher Porras, Gr. 3, Ms. Val Ashland; Maverick Moechnig, Gr. 3, Ms. Sandy Sahl; Nori Fleming, Gr. 4, Mrs. Chloe Gohman; Korbyn Meyers, Gr. 4, Ms. Rhonda Thesing



**KW Noble Knights of the Week
for February 2, 2024**

Front row: Violet Sjoblom, KG, Ms. Madi Andrist; Eden Lexvold, KG, Mrs. Tanya Short; Nicholas Hargarten, KG, Mrs. Katie Valek; Alex Varanelli, Gr. 1, Mrs. Katie Benbrooks; Martin Tangen, Gr. 1, Mr. Tony Donkers. Back Row: Korra Vodovnik, Gr. 2, Mrs. Deb Hinrichs; Roman Johnson, Gr. 2, Mrs. Megan Jordan; Adrian Moreno, Gr. 3, Ms. Val Ashland; Ezra Noerenberg, Gr. 3, Ms. Sandy Sahl; Elliott Wieme, Gr. 4, Mrs. Chloe Gohman; Henry Ellingsberg, Gr. 4, Ms. Rhonda Thesing



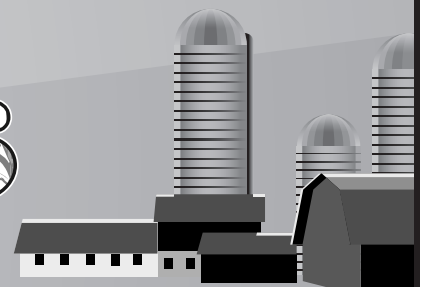
**KW Noble Knights of the Week
for February 9, 2024**

Front Row: Scarlett Baalson, KG, Ms. Madi Andrist; Reyna Dressel, KG, Mrs. Tanya Short; Caden Fortsch, KG, Mrs. Katie Valek; Tyler Greseth, Gr. 1, Mrs. Katie Benbrooks; Cecelia Jandro, Gr. 1, Mr. Tony Donkers. Back Row: Parker Sletten, Gr. 2, Mrs. Deb Hinrichs; Elijah Rodriguez, Gr. 2, Mrs. Megan Jordan; Lyra Blakstad, Gr. 3, Ms. Val Ashland; Tatum Brandon, Gr. 3, Ms. Sandy Sahl; Sawyer Hanson, Gr. 4, Mrs. Chloe Gohman; Zachariah Strusz, Gr. 4, Ms. Rhonda Thesing



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National FFA Week February 17-24, 2024



Baseball Team Heads to Florida

By Cheri Roshon

This year, from March 20th to the 24th, the Kenyon/Wanamingo baseball team will do something they have never done before!

They have been raising money to go to Cocoa Beach, Florida to scrimmage against several teams from the USA and Canada. Fourteen students and 3 coaches are heading south to sharpen their skills for the upcoming season. This promises to be a lot of fun as well.

About a year ago, Head Coach Kirby VanDeWalker and a group of parents began exploring the idea of going to a warmer climate

to experience scrimmaging other teams before the season opener. Some schools do this every two years. They spoke with teams from JWP, Hayfield and Stewartville about their experiences, and found a company called Cocoa Beach Space Coast that services trips like this for the kids. The company lines up the hotels, fields, umpires, and sets the schedule for the scrimmages to play.

Next on the to do list was to raise the money to support the students who chose to go, so they have spent the past year doing just that. Last summer, they sponsored a Youth Camp for the older players to teach younger kids how to hit and catch a ball, and the rules of the game. They hosted a 15u end of season tournament where the players would umpire, prep the fields and run concessions. They spent a few nights this winter running the concessions for winter events at the high school. Now they are ready to go and have the experience of a lifetime. Some of the kids will be driving with their parents, others will be flying down with the coaches. Kirby as

head coach, and Scott Van Epps and Dylan Craig as assistant coaches, will be running practices and managing scrimmages while in Florida. They want to say a big thank you to Tonya Craig for all help in organizing the fundraisers.

The team will practice at 8 am every morning, and scrimmage against 2 teams in the afternoon/evening. The teams they will scrimmage are 3 High School teams from De Mortange High School from Quebec, Island Trees High School from New York, and Ransom Everglades High School from Miami,

Florida. They will be working on sharpening their skills of pitching and hitting, and I am sure will have a little time to enjoy the warm weather as well!

The regular season starts with practice on March 11th and the opener game is on April 4th. These games are free to attend and open to the public, so come out and support our teams this year, and grab some concessions to munch on while you watch them play, and cheer loudly! Take me out to the ball game..... Hope to see you there!

Share Your Good News!
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Pasta Anyone?

By Cheri Roshon

Well, I hear it's that time of year when the Pasta Dinner rolls around. In fact, this year marks the 25th year of eating pasta to support the Kenyon Wanamingo Memorial Field Fundraiser. This fundraiser helps maintain the Varsity Baseball/Softball fields in Wanamingo. It will be held at the Wanamingo Community Center on Main Street from 5 to 7 pm on March 14th. Catered by our own Area 57 Cafe once again, the menu consists of a rigatoni pasta with red sauce and meat, Caesar salad, French bread, dessert, and a beverage of choice. The beverages include water, lemonade and coffee. This dinner is a free will donation, and you can choose to dine in, or take out. For the drive up, just pull up in front of the Community Center, tell them how many meals you need, and they will bring it out to your car. Doesn't get any easier than that!

Speaking with Head Coach Kirby VanDeWalker, I found out there is a lot to do to maintain the fields, and it takes a lot of money to do it right. This is one of the only fundraisers to keep it well groomed, and to pay for all the extras that keep the fields safe, and the equipment up to date. Our kids deserve to play on a well groomed field with safe equipment, and since the games are free to the public, supporting the teams in this way helps defray the costs. Of course, while you are at the games, be sure to stop by the concession stand for snacks to munch on while you cheer them on!

In any case, bring the family out for a nice dinner to support this worthy cause! Hope to see you there!

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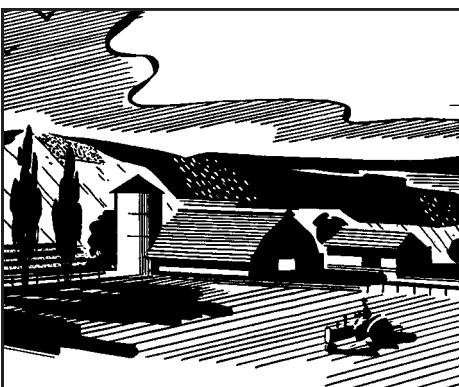
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The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has opened applications for grant funding to help increase the competitiveness of Minnesota-grown specialty crops in do-

mestic and foreign markets.

The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) funds projects focused on marketing and promotion, research and development, expanding availability and access, and addressing challenges confronting producers of specialty crops. The MDA anticipates awarding approximately \$1.25 million in this round of grants using a competitive review process, with a maximum award of \$125,000 and a minimum award of \$20,000.

Nonprofits, producer organizations, govern-

ment agencies, tribal organizations, universities, and other organizations involved in Minnesota agriculture are encouraged to apply for grant funding. Individual producers, for-profit businesses, and commercial entities are also eligible to apply as long as projects provide a sector-wide impact.

Grant funding for the SCBGP is provided annually by a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Block Grant under the legislative authority of the Farm Bill. USDA defines specialty crops as fruits and vegeta-

bles, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, floriculture, and processed products that have 50% or more specialty crop content by weight, exclusive of added water.

Applications for 2024 SCBGP funds must be submitted by 4 p.m. Central Time on Thursday, March 21, 2024. Full program details and application materials, as well as information on previously funded projects, can be found on the MDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program web page.



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Healthy Oils



By Noel Aldrich, PhD, CNS
Licensed Nutritionist

Last month, I presented the idea of some healthy sugar sources to replace the nutrient deficient white sugar. The next category to review is healthy oils. Oils and fats are an important nutrient for our bodies. The nerve tissue conducting information throughout our body is made up mostly of fats. Your heart prefers fatty acids as a fuel supply and a proper balance of fat reserves is necessary for the ability to produce healthy children. So quality oils and fats are needed for healthy nerve communication, a healthy heart, and healthy children.

The early 1900s saw a significant increase in the understanding of chemistry and how different chemicals interact. During this time, most of the vitamins were discovered and the structure and importance of each vitamin was learned. Fats and oils were also carefully analyzed, and we learned how these important molecules are used in the body.

Some of this chemistry worked on how to extract oils from seeds. All seeds have some oil in them because oil is important for starting new plant growth. Some of the primary types of oil in seeds are called Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids. Our body uses both of these types of fatty acids to manage important functions in the body.

Over the years, this extraction process has been perfected to maximize oil production and provide a product to the consumer. Businesses and health services have marketed these oils as healthy, plant based, unsaturated fats. The marketing has worked very well, but the health results have not been positive.

The current Omega 6 to Omega 3 intake ratio among average Americans is at least 12 to 1 with some sources stating the ratio is more like 20 to 1. A healthy balance should be about 2 to 1 of Omega 6 to Omega 3. This imbalance is due to the high consumption of corn oil, soybean oil, and vegetable oil, which are high Omega 6 sources. These oils are the primary oils used in fried foods at restaurants and homes because they are the least expensive oils on the market. When consumption of Omega 6 is high and the consumption of sugar is high, the end result is inflammation, excess weight, and diabetes.

The current intake needs a significant shift to more Omega 3 for improved health and well-being.

So, what are the healthy oil options? What changes can be made in the home to improve health? The first step is to remove corn oil, soybean oil, and vegetable oil from the cupboard and commit to using healthy fats for any heating on the stove or oven. These

healthy fats include coconut oil, ghee, butter, lard, and tallow. These were common fats used in the early 1900s before chemistry made the other oils available. These healthy fats do not change their chemistry when heated and do not produce chemicals that can promote inflammation. These saturated fats have been used for centuries to support generations of healthy populations.

Second, add healthy oils at the table for increased intake of healthy Omega-3. These oils include Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Flaxseed oil, Hemp seed oil, and Walnut oil. These oils should not be heated, but generously used at the table on your food. An increased intake of Omega-3 oils over your vegetables, salads and bread will help to decrease inflammation and improve the balance between Omega-6 and Omega-3. A favorite way to use these oils is to make your own vinaigrette dressing, mixing olive oil and vinegar together with some additional spices. Homemade vinaigrette has excellent flavor, and you can create a variety of dressings using apple cider vinegar, various balsamic vinegars, red wine vinegar, or lemon juice. A recommendation of at least 3 tablespoons each day of these healthy Omega 3 oils will help to reduce inflammation and improve health.

Make your health a priority in 2024. Change is required, but the outcome is worth the effort. Little changes can make a big difference over time. Changing your oil sources can be one of those little changes. If

you would like to pursue a healthy lifestyle and increase longevity, I can help you start a plan.

Contact me to discuss your health goals for 2024. I can help you reach those health goals with whole food plans customized to your specific needs. You can contact me at nutritionproportion@gmail.com, or check out my website at www.nutritionproportion.net Start this year with a new plan. Foundation to Thrive is a 16 week lifestyle transformation to help you reach your health goals in 2024.

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Down on the Farm/ Up at the Cabin

Tippie the Bathtub Cat

By Claudia Vanderborght

When Monica moved to SkyMar Ranch, she understood that farm pets would be helpful. Mocha, a lab/shepard mix, could hardly believe her good fortune being able to roam the farm without a leash or tether. Four kittens – each named by a different grandchild – were slowly given greater outdoor freedom as they grew.

It was very sad when the siblings, Shelley and Oliver, died from feline leukemia (passed on by their mother). Their funerals were well attended.

Cuddles and Tippie – also siblings – were healthy and happy, lively and curious. Mice were fun to chase. Goats would chase cats (not so fun). Chickens would peck at you if you got too close. Gopher holes could fascinate for hours. And in the house there was always a warm, sunny cushion to have a thorough wash and a comfy nap.

Before long, Tippie (named for her blond tippie toes and her blond tippie tail) demonstrated a complete understanding of her job. Headless mice began decorating the driveway. A well-placed gall bladder squished wetly under a bare human foot. Dried vomit marked Monica's favorite chair. But those especially active critters – the birds, chipmunks, once even a bunny – deserved special treatment.

Monica's shower curtain was always kept closed (due to the circa 1972 bathtub –

robin's egg blue). Tippie discovered that rodents could not escape the slippery tub walls; birds could not fly through the closed shower curtain. Tippie could play with her new friends for hours until their poor little hearts finally gave out.

Claudia's heart was subjected to Tippie's attacks once or twice. Tippie liked to hide in the tub and when Claudia walked by, Tippie would launch herself at the curtain scaring the bejesus out of Claudia. When Claudia explained her near heart attack to Monica, Monica just replied, "Oh yeah. She does that."

Good to know.

Now Monica is one tough cookie. She will scoot under a tractor in the mud to connect the PTO shaft. She will take apart the side panel of a full, gloppy manure spreader to reattach the drive belt. She will reach elbow-deep into a heifer's birth canal to help deliver a calf.



But she doesn't like snakes and she doesn't like rodents.

Monica got pretty used to the bathtub presents left by Tippie. She'd simply pluck the tail feathers or tiny rodent pieces from the tub before stepping in. Not a big deal. However one day, Mocha was sniffing and snuffling at the shower curtain. Expecting the usual, Monica casually slid back the curtain ...

Monica's ear-piercing shriek brought Claudia running to the bathroom, passing Mocha scampering the other way. What on earth????

There Monica stood at the bathtub, still clutching the shower curtain. Both ladies stared, dumbstruck, at the eight-inch long roof rat laying dead on the tub floor. Beady black eyes staring lifelessly.

For weeks, Monica carefully entered the bathroom and pulled the curtain back ever-so-slowly. Fortunately, Tippie returned to hunting more reasonably-sized prey.

2024 SKYWARN Training Schedule

(subject to change — please check www.Sogn.us prior to attending any session for last-minute class updates)

Month	Date	Day	Event	Time
MARCH	26	Tuesday	Online Webinar	begins at 6:30pm
<i>Pre-registration required. Sign-up on www.Sogn.us</i>				
APRIL	4	Thursday	Online Webinar	begins at 6:30pm
<i>Pre-registration required. Sign-up on www.Sogn.us</i>				
	13	Saturday	Cannon Falls (Christ UMC)	beginning at 9:00am
<i>(29470 Gaylord Ave. — church located just west of the Cannon Golf club)</i>				
FREE	17	Wednesday	Nerstrand (Fire Department)	beginning at 6:30pm
<i>(Located two blocks south of Hwy. 246 on Cherry Street)</i>				
	22	Monday	Zumbrota (Fire Department)	beginning at 6:30pm
<i>(Located at 1400 Jefferson Drive — northeast of Zumbrota Ford)</i>				

★ Class length 2½ hours | Seating may be limited at some venues | Everyone welcome | Certification cards issued at completion ★

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8 Weeks in

(continued from page 1)

Not only are all the vegetables hand sliced and fresh, but you will not find the meats he uses anywhere else around here. A certain insurance man in town told me he has had about 20 pizzas so far! Repeat customers are good!!!

The second big change is the new website that will be active on February 1st. You will find it at Thesportspubmn.com. It will have the menu, which changes every few months with specials, and all the pertinent info for the business, and there will be food challenges with prizes for the winners. Also, check back frequently for the calendar events for upcoming volleyball and other activities Dan and Randi have planned! More on that in the next article! Another addition will be the online retail store, with branded coozies, tee shirts, hoodies, hats and other interesting items.

And YES! In town delivery is coming on February 1st too! This is more than just a delivery service, according to Dan and Randi. It will open up local jobs for delivery services like Door Dash and Uber, as well as The Spot's own delivery service with a golf cart and an electric bike! I think that would have been the perfect job for Bobby Carlson, rest his soul!

Other news...off sale liquor is now available, and you get the "Romo Guarantee" that the beer prices will be cheaper than anywhere else around, as well as the yummy weekly specials. There will be an interactive website for voicing your opinions and asking questions, as Dan and Randi intend to make this an evolving business catered to what their patrons want. Limited time menu items will be fun to taste test, and let them know your opinions, to possibly get them on the regular menu. There will be a Wall of Heroes, paying tribute to our local heroes from the VFW, Fire Department, Police Officers and the Honor Guard. If you have any old photos relating to the Wall of Heroes, and want Dan to display them, bring them in! A collection of pictures of Wanamingo in the good ol' days will be on display throughout the bar, so come in and see if you can recognize anyone from the past. Upcoming will be a Wall of Fame, and a Wall of Shame! Stay tuned for more on that!

In the meantime, stop in and try the new appetizer menu, and the old favorites, along with a beverage of choice. There are more changes coming, so stay tuned to the Facebook page and the new website as it becomes available! Keep up the great job, Dan and Randi! See you next time!

E-mail your engagement, marriage or birth announcement to the Wanamingo Messenger
hometownmessenger@gmail.com

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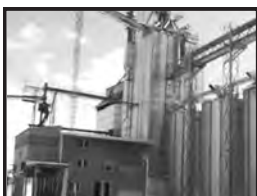
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**City of Wanamingo
Regular EDA Meeting
Monday January 8, 2024
6:00 P.M.
Wanamingo City Council Chambers
401 Main Street
Wanamingo MN**

PRESENT: Annette Fritz, Brian Gudknecht, Rebecca Haugen, Ryan Holmes, Jim Kittelson, Laurie Musselman, and Josh Schaefer

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Michael Boulton
Brian Gudknecht called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance followed.

EDA Director Boulton administered the oath of office to Brian Gudknecht, Jim Kittelson, and Josh Schaefer for new four-year terms.

ADOPT AGENDA: Schaefer motioned, seconded by Fritz to adopt. Approved 7-0-0.

CONSENT AGENDA: Kittelson motioned, seconded by Musselman to approve. Approved 7-0-0.

PRESENTERS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 24-01 - Election of 2024 EDA Board Officers of President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Kittelson moved to approve, seconded by Haugen. Passed 7-0-0.

Resolution 24-02 = Approving re-appointment of Jim Kittelson, Brian Gudknecht, and Josh Schaefer to the EDA Board: Haugen moved to approve, seconded by Musselman. Boulton explained that the four-year terms of Kittelson, Gudknecht, and Schaefer had expired at the end of 2023. Holmes recommended each of their re-appointments to the

EDA Board. Passed 7-0-0

Resolution 24-03 = Setting EDA Meeting Schedule for 2024: Fritz moved to approve, seconded by Kittelson. Boulton stated that the meeting dates are holding places and that meetings would only occur if an agenda packet was delivered by the Friday before the Monday meeting. Boulton stated that the EDA By-Laws requires the EDA to hold quarterly meetings, at minimum. Passed 7-0-0.

Resolution 24-04 – Approving Preliminary Development Agreement with the City of Wanamingo and First Link LLC (Dollar General): Kittelson moved to approve, seconded by Schaefer. Fritz asked if the costs were going to be filled in for the preliminary development agreement at a later date. Boulton explained that this is a preliminary development agreement. This preliminary development agreement lays the framework for a future development agreement. The development agreement will be finalized in May/June. This will occur when Dollar General formally purchases the land and the City has formalized bids for completing the improvements. Fritz asked how many water/sewer connections would be installed and where. Boulton stated that water and service connections would be stubbed to the property line. Boulton stated that it has not been determined the number of connections that will be included. Kittelson stated that the water and service lines were installed behind the back of the curb so that when utilized the street does not need to be dug up. Gudknecht voiced concerns with timing of bidding for work. Gudknecht stated that

waiting to bid until May/June may be too late for some contractors. Gudknecht stated that the City and City Engineer should be spreading the word regarding the work so that contractors keep the project and their radar. Gudknecht's concerns are that contractor schedules may be filled up before bids are let. Theobald had shared with Boulton that there is limited bid work on the horizon for contractors. Theobald believes that contractors will be needing to bid work in spring to fill their 2024 schedules. Passed 7-0-0.

Administrator Boulton presented the 2023 Wanamingo Outstanding Indebtedness Report. The Wanamingo EDA paid \$27,000 in principal in 2023 and owes \$298,000 at the beginning of 2024. The City paid \$609,000 in principal in 2023 and owes \$5,066,000 at the beginning of 2024. Boulton stated that the current debt service is manageable with the interest rates associated with the existing bonds. Boulton stated that the City has roughly \$130,000 of debt service capacity available for 2024 with additional capacity available in 2025 (\$90,000), 2027 (\$93,000), and 2028 (\$53,000). The plan would be to issue new debt in the coming years to pay for infrastructure and equipment needs. Boulton stated that the City paid \$636,000 in principle and roughly \$123,420.95 in interest in 2023.

The report will be submitted to Goodhue County next week, according to the MN State Statutes.

OLD BUSINESS:

There being no further business Schaefer made a motion seconded by Fritz to adjourn the EDA meeting at 6:15PM. Approved 7-0-0
Brian Gudknecht, President

**Michael Boulton, Director
CITY OF WANAMINGO
City Council Regular Meeting
Monday, January 8, 2024 7:00 P.M.
Wanamingo City Council Chambers –
401 Main Street
Wanamingo, MN**

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Holmes.
PRESENT: Council: Ryan Holmes, Stuart Ohr, Eric Dierks, and Rebecca Haugen
City Administrator: Michael Boulton
Deputy Clerk: Karen Masters

ABSENT: Council: Jeremiah Flotterud

ALSO PRESENT: Brad Kennedy, Beth Haas – Zumbrota News-Record, and Andrew Deziel – Kenyon Leader.

ADOPT AGENDA: Ohr motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Haugen. Passed 5-0-0.

CONSENT AGENDA: Dierks motioned, seconded by Haugen. Passed 4-0-0.

PRESENTERS:

- A) Brad Kennedy reported on:
- 1) Sanded the intersections and inclines on a couple of light snow falls
 - 2) Rented a lift to trim trees. Were able to make lift work to trim a couple of limbs off cottonwood in Riverside Park. However, the lift did not work to trim additional tree trimming along the South side of 440th Street. May have to rent a larger and more expensive lift to complete this task in the future.
 - 3) Rebuilt walking bridge between the ball field parking lot and Hill Circle. The braces were significantly enhanced and decking replaced all with new treated lumber.

(continued on page 16)



NATIONAL FFA WEEK February 17-24, 2024



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Wanamingo City Council Meeting

(continued from page 15)

4) Holiday banners were taken down on Main Street. Will not be installing the newer City of Wanamingo banners due to the plastic material used to make them does not bend or stretch well in cold weather. Staff will wait for warmer weather in March or April to put the new logo banners back up.

5) Starting to work on trimming trees along the Nature Trail path. Once trimmed the branches will be mulched along the trail.

6) Working on cleaning out the shop and livery barn. Have taken a couple of loads of scrap metal to recycle.

7) Identified a list of ten locations where there are double electric/utility poles. Xcel Energy has placed a few new poles around Wanamingo over the past five years. Xcel removed most of the old poles except for those where other utilities have their equipment. The City requested that this equipment be moved to the new poles so that Xcel Energy can remove the old poles. The City contacted Midco and Frontier to remove their equipment from these pole locations.

Administrator Boulton provided a memo regarding the need for traffic control in the form of additional stop signs in Prairie Ridge Estates. The City Council/Staff have discussed replacement of several stop signs within Prairie Ridge Estates development over the past few years. The development had only four homes constructed in spring 2018 and now has 39 constructed as of January 2024. The list of proposed new stop signs include:

9th Street/Tall Grass Lane (East Entrance) - Install stop sign and remove yield sign on Tall Grass Lane

9th Street/Tall Grass Lane (West Entrance) - Install stop sign and remove yield sign on Tall Grass Lane

Tall Grass Court/Tall Grass Lane - Install stop sign leaving Tall Grass Court

7th Avenue/Prairie Ridge Lane - Install stop sign on 7th Avenue

9th Street/Prairie Ridge Lane - Install Stop sign on Prairie Ridge Lane

There was discussion for signs at other locations around town. However, these locations do not require additional signage currently. The City staff recommends that the City Council hold a public hearing for new stop signs. Wanamingo has authority to place signs per M.S. 160.02, 169.04 and 169.06 subd. 3. The Wanamingo City Code (74.04) says that the Council must approve, through resolution, any new placements of stop or yield signs. The Council should instruct the City Administrator to post a notice in the official newspaper and place the notice on the City website and Facebook pages. The Council could then hold a public hearing at the February 12th City Council meeting to hear comments from the public. Once comments are considered, the Council could consider approval of a resolution for all, some, or none of the recommended additions of signs. Kennedy stated that the entrance to Prairie Ridge Estates at 9th Street and Prairie Ridge Lane is the worst location now that there are thirty-nine homes. Kennedy stated that the increased traffic can lead to confusion on who has the right-of-way. Kennedy stated that the posts were already in place and just needed the signs installed. Dierks stated that he was

in support of a public hearing to see what residents think of the plan. Holmes stated that he has concerns with traffic control at the proposed locations, with 9th Street and Prairie Ridge Lane the highest priority. Boulton stated that he would proceed with publishing the public hearing notice in the newspaper and Facebook page for a hearing and resolution consideration at the February 12th City Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION:

24-001 = Approving 2024 Appointments & Legals: Dierks moved to approve, Seconded by Ohr. Boulton explained that 4M was added to the Financial Consultants. Passed 4-0-0.

24-002 = Setting 2024 City Council Meeting Schedule: Haugen moved to approve, Seconded by Dierks. Passed 4-0-0.

24-003 = Authorizing Temporary Liquor License for the Fire Relief Association snowmobile run: Ohr moved to approve, Seconded by Haugen. Passed 4-0-0.

24-004 = Approving 2024 Updated Wanamingo Emergency Management Plan: Haugen moved to approve, Seconded by Ohr. Boulton stated that he and Gregg Erickson, the Wanamingo Civil Defense Director, had reviewed and made the necessary changes. The changes were mainly in the contacts and contact information. Passed 4-0-0.

24-005 = Authorizing a Temporary Gambling Permit for the Wanamingo Fire Relief Association: Ohr moved to approve, Seconded by Dierks. Passed 4-0-0.

24-006 = Approving Financial Authorization: Dierks moved to approve, seconded by Ohr. Passed 4-0-0.

24-007 = Accepting Wanamingo Fire Relief Association Charitable Gambling Donations and Designating Funds: Ohr moved to approve, seconded by Haugen. Passed 4-0-0.

24-008 = Approving a One-Time Contribution to the Wanamingo Fire Relief Association Retirement Fund from the General Fund: Dierks moved to approve, Seconded by Haugen. Passed 4-0-0.

Administrator Boulton provided a memo regarding the Personnel Committee's recommended changes to the Personnel Policy. The Minnesota Legislature passed a law in 2023 that requires employers set up specific requirements for Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST). The requirements go into effect January 1, 2024. The City needs to make changes to the Wanamingo Personnel Policy to conform to the new requirements. The City has waited to see how other Cities are handling the new requirements in order to model Wanamingo's Personnel Policy changes. There are now a few samples for Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) policies to look at. We have reviewed area Cities Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) policies, including the City of Pine Island's as samples.

The City of Wanamingo has two options; either get rid of the current sick time and go to Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) or keep the sick time and add an Earned Sick & Safe Time (ESST). There is concern that the employees could lose the accrued sick time. So, to comply with the new law, it is recommended to create two sick time tiers. First it is recommended to create an Earned Sick &

Safe Time with the minimums set by State law of 80 hours for full-time employees and 1 hour for every 30 hours worked for part-time employees. The 80 hours for full-time employees and accumulated part-time hours need to be used in the year earned. Secondly, it is recommended to modify the sick time section by reducing the 4 hours per pay period down to 2 hours per pay period earned. It is recommended to keep the maximum accrued hours to 1,040 hours of sick time. The City sick time will go from having 104 hours accrued in one year (4 hours times 26 pay periods) to 52 hours accrued in one year (2 hours times 26 pay periods). However, there will now be an additional 80 hours of Earned Sick & Safe Time, totaling 132 hours earned in a year. The difference is that only 52 hours are eligible to be banked for future years.

Once approved, City staff will work with payroll software company to switch the sick time accrual from 4 hours each pay period to 2 hours. City staff will also work to set up an Earned Sick & Safe Time for employees. Full-time employees will automatically bank 80 hours at the beginning of the year. Part-time employees earn 1 hour of accrued Earned Sick & Safe Time for every 30 hours worked, banking up to 48 hours. Full-time employees Earned Sick & Safe Time will be reset to 80 hours each year.

24-009 = Approving a Proposed Update to the Wanamingo Personnel Policy: Haugen moved to approve, seconded by Dierks. Passed 4-0-0.

24-010 = Approving a Professional Service Agreement with WHKS on Engineering

for the 2024 Roadway and Utility Improvements Project: Dierks moved to approve, Seconded by Haugen. Passed 4-0-0.

24-011 = Approving Preliminary Development Agreement with Wanamingo Economic Development Authority for the City of Wanamingo and First Link LLC (Dollar General): Haugen moved to approve, Seconded by Ohr. Boulton stated that the wetland delineation process and land purchase by Dollar General will hold up the eventual Development Agreement and bidding for the Roadway and Utility Improvements Project. Ohr asked why either could not be done sooner. Boulton stated that the wetland delineation can only occur in spring. Boulton stated that it was in Dollar General's plan not to execute the purchase agreement on the land until April May. Passed 4-0-0.

24-012 = Approving the Appointment of Election Judges for the 2024 Presidential Nomination Primary Election: Haugen moved to approve, Seconded by Dierks. Holmes thanked all election judges that signed up to assist in the election process within the City of Wanamingo. Passed 4-0-0.

24-013 = Accepting Wanamingo Lions Stainless-Steel Countertop Donation for the Wanamingo Community Center: Haugen moved to approve, Seconded by Ohr. Passed 4-0-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

Public Hearing - Mayor Holmes opened Ordinance #204 - Renewing Northern State Power Company (Xcel Energy) Electric Franchise Agreement Hearing at 7:32PM.

(continued on page 17)



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Wanamingo City Council Meeting

(continued from page 16)

Administrator Boulton explained that the current 20-year Franchise agreement with Xcel Energy is expiring and needs to be renewed. Boulton stated that the current franchise agreement is coming to an end. Boulton stated that there was language requiring Xcel Energy to move their lines, at their costs, when City infrastructure needs to be installed or moved. No Additional Public Comments Offered. Mayor Holmes closed the public hearing at 7:37PM.

ORDINANCE #204 – Renewing Northern State Power Company (Xcel Energy) Electric Franchise Agreement – 2nd Reading – Ohr moved to approve, seconded by Dierks. Passed 4-0-0.

Public Hearing - Mayor Holmes opened Ordinance #205 - 2024 Fee Schedule Hearing at 7:37PM. Administrator Boulton went over the proposed changes from 2023 Fee Schedule for the proposed 2024 fee schedule including increasing the water meter cost from \$340 to \$360, increasing the water debt service/ base fee from \$25/month to \$26/month, increasing the sewer debt service/base fee from \$22.00/month to \$28.00/month, increasing bulk water from \$7.00/1,000 gallons to \$15.00/1,000 gallons, increasing the monthly garbage fee from \$16.25/month to \$16.50/month, and increasing the monthly recycling fee from \$6.65/month to \$6.85/month. The increase to the water meter fee helps to cover increases to the actual costs of the water meters and readers. Boulton stated that the proposed monthly water base rate/debt service fee increase of \$1.00/month to water for each hook-up would bring in roughly \$7,000/year

more for water in 2024. Boulton stated that the proposed monthly sewer base rate/debt service fee increase of \$6.00/month to each hook-up would bring in roughly \$43,000 in new revenue in 2024. The bulk water proposed increase reflects the staff time to set up a meter on a hydrant for the bulk user. The garbage and recycling monthly increase reflect the yearly contract increases with Waste Management. Throughout the year, including the budgeting process, the Council has discussed and has recommended the above changes. The City Auditors recommend that the Council review sewer/water rates and make small adjustments regularly to capture revenue as opposed to large jumps. The wastewater treatment plant will need upgrades in the near future which could cost millions of dollars. No Additional Public Comments Offered. Mayor Holmes closed the public hearing at 7:41PM.

Ordinance #205 - 2024 Fee Schedule - 2nd Reading - Ohr moved to approve, seconded by Haugen. Passed 4-0-0.

Administrator Boulton presented the 2023 Wanamingo Outstanding Indebtedness Report. The Wanamingo EDA paid \$27,000 in principle in 2023 and owes \$298,000 at the beginning of 2024. The City paid \$609,000 in principal in 2023 and owes \$5,066,000 at the beginning of 2024. Boulton stated that the current debt service is manageable with the interest rates associated with the existing bonds. Boulton stated that the City has roughly \$130,000 of debt service capacity available for 2024 with additional capacity available in 2025 (\$90,000), 2027 (\$93,000), and 2028 (\$53,000). The plan would be to issue new debt in the coming years to pay for infrastructure and equipment needs. Boulton stated that the City paid \$636,000 in principle and roughly \$123,420.95 in interest in 2023. The report will be submitted to Goodhue County next week, according to the MN State Statutes.

Enforcement Process – Mead Johnson - Reckitt – 30 day written letter toward meeting goal of waste pH – Holmes stated that the City had received a letter from Mead Johnson – Reckitt outlining work that had been done, to date, since April 2023 to present including conducting plant inspection, wastewater mapping validation and chemical consumption, installed 24-hour pH sampler, onsite tracking of pH levels and reporting to City, using contractor to clean out solids in

sewer pipelines in June and October 2023, and modification of sedimentation process. Mead Johnson – Reckitt is continuing pH monitoring, cleaning of the pipes, and pH adjustment of the hydration wastewater discharge. In the long term they are designing a pH monitor and treatment station. They are also working toward design and installation of a new lift station with pH treatment. Boulton stated that the Wanamingo staff are still monitoring the wastewater discharge from Reckitt-Mead Johnson. The results are improving but have regularly shown extremely low and at times high pH levels along with the presence of high levels of QAC (Quaternary Ammonium Compounds) have been sent to Reckitt-Mead Johnson. The pH levels should be within 5.0 and 9.5. City Staff have been working with Reckitt-Mead Johnson toward a solution to bring the pH levels within the limits. The City appreciates the open dialogue and work, to date, from Reckitt- Mead Johnson. During April-November the Wanamingo wastewater treatment plant operations have failed several months of State treatment discharge limits. City staff have attempted several potential trouble shooting options. A comprehensive list of staff actions was provided in December 2023 to the Council. After numerous corrective action steps, the South side digester of the facility coming from the community wastewater discharge is running excellent. However, the Reckitt-Mead Johnson diverted wastewater discharge to the North side digester continues to show operational problems seemingly due to consistent low pH levels. There are signs of microbiological life which may help take off operations in the coming month in the north side digester. The City has kept the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency informed during this process. The City is required to be within the discharge limits or show significant steps toward getting back under the discharge limits. The formal notice step to Reckitt-Mead Johnson outlining timeline to correct the pH violations has helped the MPCA. A site visit is planned later in the winter or spring. Boulton noted that the plan does not meet the 90-day enforcement letter. Holmes stated that Reckitt – Mead Johnson will need to continually monitor the pH levels to adjust when discharging into the sewer

plant. Kennedy stated that if the Council agrees to the timeframe laid out by Reckitt – Mead Johnson that they need to be held accountable. Boulton stated the Enforcement Process would be left on the monthly agenda until August 2024, or when the action items are completed. Holmes asked if pH levels and QAC levels were better in the past month. Kennedy stated that both had improved but they need to continue to stay improved to help with the operations of the wastewater treatment facility. Ohr asked what the Council could/should do if the pH levels on Mead Johnson – Reckitt wastewater are significantly out of the 5.0 and 9.5 levels. Boulton stated that the Council could act in the form of fines and if significant, could shut down wastewater discharge until corrected. Ohr asked if Mead Johnson – Reckitt will be sent an invoice for the operation damage caused at the wastewater treatment facility since April 2023. Boulton stated that that there was no intention to invoice or send fines to Mead Johnson – Reckitt at this time. Kennedy stated that it was difficult to say the Mead Johnson – Reckitt was the only source of wastewater operation issues during this time period. The City has only been monitoring pH levels (since April 2023) and QAC levels (since August 2023). Kennedy stated that the City only has data and authority to fine off pH levels. Haugen moved to approve Mead Johnson – Reckitt corrective action plan and for the City staff to continue to monitor pH and QAC levels, seconded by Ohr. Passed 4-0-0.

Boulton stated that the annual City Council/Staff Appreciation Dinner would be held on Saturday February 3rd. The event will be held at Area 57 Café with social hour starting at 6:00PM and dinner at 7:00PM. Boulton stated that formal invites would be sent out later in the week.

*Fire Department/Township/City Annual Meeting is on 2/5/2024 at 6:30pm

*Next City Council meeting on 2/12/2024 at 7:00pm.

Adjourn: At 7:56PM a motion to adjourn was made by Ohr and seconded by Haugen. Passed 4-0-0.

Signed: Ryan Holmes, Mayor

Attest: Michael Boulton, City Administrator

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Commissioners Corner

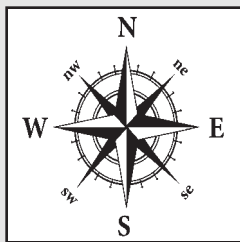
Hello everyone, sorry I missed a few months of commissioners corner. I do enjoy tearing January off of the calendar, I can't believe it is February already. As we move forward with 2024 we start looking at our construction season and with several projects on the list we ask for your patients and understanding as we work to improve our county roads and bridges. I want to put out a thank you to all of our Township supervisors and township officers, I want to remind all of our township residents that March 12th is Township day in Minnesota. All of our townships will hold their annual meetings with some townships also holding election of officers. Please find your meeting time and consider attending. Goodhue county did have to close the demolition landfill last year and now we have a county ordinance that allows for a transfer station. We are looking at all options moving forward as to the handling of this by-pass materials. This is already my 4th year as your county commissioner and I am serving as the board Chair this year. As always please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you. Todd Greseth



Todd Greseth
Goodhue County
Commissioner
District 3

Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes Power Outages and Why



By Terry Campbell

This column is written by Messenger editor and Minnesota native Terry Campbell. Terry now splits his time between Minnesota when it's warm here and Tennessee when it's cold here.

Power outages can be frequent in Western Tennessee. Virtually everyone has a generator. I had a generator at the construction site because I built for the first year without service to the address. I just always keep it fueled up and plenty of gas in reserve. Windstorms or tornadoes seem to happen about 12 months out of the year down here.

We have had a number of close calls with windstorms but they always just missed us. One night about five years ago, we had just arrived at our cabin in Big Sandy to do some maintenance. I hadn't even got the tools out of the truck when the rain struck. It usually rains with a vengeance, and wind. We retreated to the house and shortly after the

power went out. When the storm passed, we headed back home, only to find a big tree over the road, blocking our path.

In 2020 we went to Nashville on March 2nd to see Collective Soul at the Ryman. After the concert we discussed stopping at one of the restaurants on Broadway for dessert but decided to head home. On the drive home I could see an angry lightning storm behind us. When we turned on the news at home, we saw that a tornado had struck about two blocks from the concert venue we attended.

Three years ago, while we still lived on the Cumberland River and had just started building our new house on the Tennessee River, a big storm came through. The tornado passed within a mile of our home under construction, jumped the river and tore up a path heading east, destroying homes within a couple miles of where we lived twenty miles away. We were in Minnesota at the time and were quite surprised at the devastation when we returned. I recall driving down Cypress Road and observing the trees flattened out across the landscape, thinking I was going to be cleaning up debris instead of building a house.

Last winter we were in the yard putting chairs away because wind gusts were forecast within the hour. We stood and watched

as one tree toppled over in the woods across the road. Then we heard a crash about a quarter mile down the road. We could see the power line on the ground and knew what the outcome would be. I pulled the generator up from the garage and plugged it in and fired it up.

So, this December when I arrived, I had to reset all the digital clocks in the house. It is just a fact of life. I had only been home one day, when the following evening the lights flickered and went off. After lighting a couple candles, I decided to go to bed rather than start the generator. I woke up a couple hours later and the power was back on. The next day I was talking to my neighbor Harry, who lives about a mile down the road. Since there was no wind that night, we supposed it was one of the local boys with too much beer and too little common sense behind the wheel of his pickup who had run into a power pole

somewhere.

A couple days later I was walking my dog and I stopped to visit with my neighbor, the mayor. Before he retired, he was the mayor in Pulaski, Tennessee, so everyone calls him the mayor. He asked me if I saw what caused the electrical outage. He had the pictures on his phone. He was coming home that Friday evening and a guy had just hit a power pole in the ditch. It sheared off the pole and he continued down the ditch a hundred yards before crashing into a house and the vehicle was lodged in the living room. All that was visible was the rear end of the car framed by the red bricks of the house. Was a Friday night so I guess one could expect it. The funny part of all these intoxicated mishaps is that after living in Stewart County for five years I learned it was a dry county.

A Minnesotan: -10 Degrees or Colder



By RosaLin Alcoser

zero days. Or at least we are when we go outdoors.

The first of the super cold days we had this January were the wind chill and the temperature dropped well below zero. I like many donned my parka and made my way into what should have been the warmth of the office.

My desk is currently right next to the window which is less than ideal in the winter. However, it is also right under a heating vent. So naturally I was expecting to spend the bitterly cold day nice and warm under that vent.

Instead it was spent freezing as the heat in my section of the building was not operating at full capacity. Which made our little corner of the office really, really cold.

I spent half the morning half nestled in my parka to keep from shivering while I worked until I finally couldn't take it anymore and temporarily took over a coworker's desk, who was away for the rest of the day.

The next day Mathanice informed us that not only was our heating vent out but there is also a leak in the window letting in a draft. So those of us who are right next to the window had been sitting in 9 degrees F while inside of the building.

Thankfully now the window has been patched and the vent has been fixed. All in time for things to be a little bit warmer for at least a couple of days.

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As Minnesotans we are prepared for the cold and those harsh bitter sub zero days. To the point where for some seeing who can go the longest without switching to jeans and a coat is a thing of pride. We all know at least one of those people who is fine in shorts and a sweatshirt until it is nearly -10 degrees F outside and wonder how in the world they do that while the rest of us are pulling out our heaviest winter parkas.

Whether you are taking pride in not wearing a parka or are safely bundled up in one we are all prepared to face those sub



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