



Waterville

# Lake Region Life

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## Orphanage reunion

Adopted children & their families reunite, celebrate adoption

Lisa Ingebrand  
Life/Enterprise

She grew up in an orphanage in eastern India and witnessed the adoption of many of her childhood friends. Their final destinations were unknown to her, but her memories of them never faded.

Then, it was her turn. In 2012, Hardeep Kanne left Basundhara, an orphanage in Orissa, India. She was later adopted by Julie and Dave Kanne of Morris-town in August 2016. She was 16 when she joined the Kannes' other adopted daughters, Anamika and Ariana, who are also from India. Even more special, Anamika and Hardeep were from the same orphanage.

Hardeep was happy with her new family, but she always remained curious about what became of her childhood friends from the orphanage. So, she began looking for them, using Facebook, and in 2017, held a large reunion at the Kannes' home on Cedar Lake.

"I think we had like 80 people at the house," laughed Julie Kanne. "It was a lot of fun, but when we decided to do it again, we thought this (The Village in Waterville) would be a better site."

Last Friday, 17 adoptees and their families gathered for a week-

end-long Celebrate Adoption event in Waterville.

The Kannes surprised Hardeep by flying in one of her oldest childhood friends, Barsa, from her adoptive family's home in Milan, Italy.

"I couldn't believe it," Hardeep said. "It makes me so happy!"

Another special visitor was 11-year-old Moni, who was adopted at the age of three from Basundhara in 2010.

"I used to take care of her when she was little. She was premature--so little!" Hardeep gushed as she threw her arms around Moni, pulling her into a tight hug.

Moni doesn't remember her days in the orphanage, but her adoptive mom clearly remembers the day she went to the orphanage to get her little girl.

"I remember Hardeep. Moni didn't want to let go of her and cried, but Hardeep encouraged her to come to me," stated Moni's adoptive mom, Jennifer Brooks of Cleveland, Ohio.

Hardeep also remembers that day. "I didn't know if I was going to see her again, but look! Here she is! She came in 2017, too," she spouted, beaming a big smile to little Moni, who now considers her a big sister.

"I'm so glad Hardeep reached



Lisa Ingebrand Photos

Retired social worker Teri Bell, who helped facilitate hundreds of international adoptions, was greeted with hugs and happy tears at the Adoption Celebration in Waterville on Friday night, June 14. Pictured: Bell embraces adoptees, Mamata (left) and Moni, while event organizer Hardeep Kanne of Waterville watches with a smile.

out to me and we were able to get the girls in contact again. Now, the girls talk to each other at least once a day," Brooks stated.

According to Hardeep, some of her old friends were easy to find, some were a bit more difficult, and some she's still looking for.

"There are still some that I don't know where they are... Maybe they'll find our Facebook page," she said. "Maybe they'll be able to come next time."

Twenty-year-old Mamata and her adoptive parents flew in from Rochester, New York, for the event. Mamata was adopted from Basundhara in 2007.

It had been 12 years since Hardeep and Mamata had seen each other.

The pair spent time flipping through old photo albums, quickly spotting themselves in photos, and reminiscing about their years at the orphanage.

Another long awaited reunion occurred when retired Americans for International Aid and Adoption social worker Teri Bell walked in.

Adoptees immediately flocked to Teri with their arms wide open for hugs. For many, this was a second reunion, having already



Mamata and Terri Bell hold a photo album with old photos of themselves together, years ago at the Basundhara orphanage.

## Waterville Council approves permits

Jay Schneider  
Life/Enterprise

The Waterville City Council approved three resolutions granting permits to city residents during the June 4 meeting.

A conditional use permit was granted to Delbert and Gail Point to establish a retail and bike rental store on the property located at 120 Reed Street South and to allow for the construction of a portable building to be used in the retail operations.

A conditional use permit

was granted to Brenda and Donald Novack for the operation of a day care facility in a new detached structure located at 117 Lake Street West.

A variance was granted to Jacob and Melissa Caron to construct a garage to replace an existing storm damaged garage on 815 First Street North.

In other Waterville City Council business:

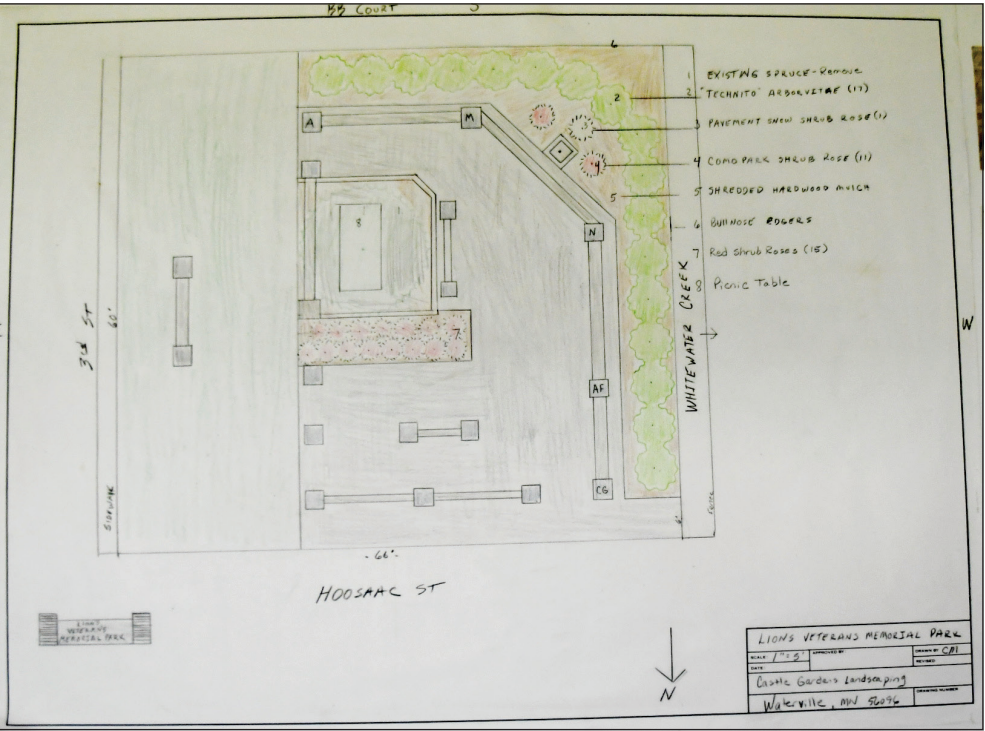
- The council approved the resignations of employee Donald Jensen and Zon-

ing Inspector Don Jacobson, which will be effective August 1, 2019.

- The council approved Lions Club Veterans Memorial Park project, which will be constructed on the north section of Lions Park.

- The council approved the donation of the property at 316 Paquin Street East. They also approved to not exceed \$9,000 on the demolition and removal of the building, which is uninhabitable.

- M & W Blacktopping Council to 8



Above is a drawing of the Waterville Veteran Memorial, which will be located north of Lions Park. Groundbreaking is planned for sometime this summer.

## Waterville Veteran Memorial is planned

Jay Schneider  
Life/Enterprise

A new Veterans Memorial is being planned for the City of Waterville.

Approximately a year ago this memorial was discussed during a Waterville Lions meeting. Shortly thereafter fundraising began.

The idea was started by Waterville residents Bob and Margie Jacobson.

The Jacobson's son Jon,

who was a veteran who served in Afghanistan and Desert Storm, passed away six years ago.

Other individuals who have been working on this project include John Scholjegerdes, Chrissy Christensen, and Troy Wetzel, Kim Brown and many other Lion members.

The couple felt this memorial is something the city and its veterans needed to recognize those who served our country.

"I am very proud of this for all veterans and of course

their families," Bob, who is a veteran who served in 1969 to 1972, said.

"We have had very good response. Everybody is excited about it."

The memorial will be constructed in the north portion of Lions Park along S. 3rd Street and Hoosac Street.

The 66-foot x 60-foot area will include a 16-inch deep wall, which will stand approximately 3 1/2 feet high.

On top of this wall, engraved wall pavers will be placed which will honor vet-

Vet Memorial to 8

## New LCHS board inherits property woes, plans for future

Wade Young  
Montgomery Messenger

An empty, mold-filled house, a genealogy center in need of technical updates, and an old school house with mold in the basement that is not climate controlled for the artwork inside are a few issues the new Le Sueur County Historical Society board told members at a special meeting on Wednesday, June 12.

New LCHS President and Chair Bill Stangler didn't mince words when he and other new board members gave updates on the conditions of LCHS properties.

"It's not pretty. I don't know what was being done

the last three or four years. It wasn't grant writing. It really hurts to see the mess we're in, but we'll get out of it," he stated.

Stangler assured the approximately 30 members in attendance that the board has been actively working to resolve some of the issues that have affected the beleaguered society since before their election June 3. Board members, Bonnie Reak, Dean Pettis, Stangler, Ruth Collins, Lois Mack, Bryce Stenzel, Richard Bennett, and George Luskey, were at the meeting. Board member Mike Frederick was absent.

"Each of them have been working hard this week al-

ready," Stangler commented.

Luskey updated the members on the removal of the artifacts from the Le Sueur Museum. The project has a July 1 deadline. The company, Agropur, that purchased the building last year intends to demolish it. According to Luskey, a lot of items have been boxed and moved, but more pieces of history remain.

"It seems like it's never-ending. There's a lot of really neat stuff from soup to nuts, A to Z," he stated.

Lois Mack reported on the examination of the buildings in Elysian, adding that there is work to be done.

LCHS board to 8



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