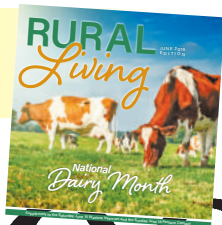


A polka playing farmer endures – that and so much more in the Rural Living section published in this weekend's Intercom.



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DAILY NEWS: WWW.WADENAPJ.COM



BAKING LEGENDS

After a lifetime of rolling in dough, Schmidt can retire

By Michael Johnson
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In baking, there are certain ingredients considered binding agents that act to hold together the other ingredients. Those substances draw other materials together to form one cohesive unit.

Mary and Dave Schmidt were those binding agents for many years at Abby's Bakery in Wadena. The two were once the owners of the Wadena Bakery on Jefferson Street S., baking in their own businesses for 22 years in Wadena. They were later approached to be the bakers that would start Abby's Bakery, a central baking system next to Mason Brothers that could distribute baked goods all over the Midwest.

"They took a chance on us," Mary said. "It's huge to think that Mason Brothers as a company was willing to take that on blind sided and just kind of roll with it," Mary said.

Dave retired in Dec. 2016 and has been putting in overtime in his fishing boat. On Thursday, June 6, Mary also retired to join him out on the water.

Abby's history

Mary, 66, said when she and Dave, 73, were approached about the bakery idea by the Harrisons, they had heard that if it didn't work out, the building that was built could become a truck garage building. Luckily that never

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Photos by Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal

Mary and Dave Schmidt share laughs in the packaging area at Abby's Bakery in Wadena.

Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal
Erin Pierce (left), Toby Pierce, Brittany Evans and Katie Uselman, the staff at Toby Pierce and Associates gathers Thursday, June 6 to celebrate the 60th year in business.



Toby Pierce and Associates celebrates 60 years in business

By Michael Johnson
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Mentored by local insurance agents in Wadena over 60 years ago, a young Toby Pierce took a chance at starting a business in Wadena, leaving behind his farming background.

Operating out of his home in 1959, he and his wife Jeanette started Pierce Insurance Agency, gradually moving from Second Street, then 10th Street and eventually to the current location at 16 Dayton Ave. SW in 1998. That

same year, one of his five children, Erin came on board as an insurance agent as well. She eventually bought the business in 2014 and this year, the business is excited to keep going after 60 years.

Growing up on a farm east of Wadena, Pierce knew that farming was not right for him.

"Cows want to be milked twice a day, every day," he said. It didn't seem like the right fit.

PIERCE: Page A6

Man found dead in Wadena County Fairgrounds ticket booth

By Michael Johnson
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A Wadena County Fair Board member stumbled upon a dead body inside the fair's ticket booth Thursday night in Wadena.

Fair board member Darin Lehmann said he was mowing grass near the grandstands when he passed by

the booth and could smell a strong odor at about 6 p.m., Thursday, June 6. He decided to investigate as the fair was hosting the first enduro race of the season Sunday. Lehmann said the door to the booth was locked but when he peeked into the window he discovered a man naked

BODY: Page A6



Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal

The ticket booth at the Wadena County Fairgrounds is surrounded in caution tape Friday evening. A dead man was found naked inside the booth Thursday night.

Ready for veggies

The WDC Produce Stand is open for business

By Michael Denny
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Planted between two greenhouses near WDC Middle/High school is the long awaited produce stand. June 4 is opening day for the season and greenhouse coordinator, Caroline Venis was busy tending to a line of customers eager to inspect tomatoes and cucumbers. Venis has been growing for years and the small stand provides produce to the community with some items sprouting sooner for here.

Venis opens the stand early in June and closes down in the last week of August. She explained that



Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal

Caroline Venis manages the greenhouses at WDC High School. Her produce stand opens in early June and sells a variety of vegetables.

she tries to avoid having the stand open during school hours. The produce stand is open every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to noon, with Venis openly displaying her freshly picked produce on the

stand counter. "I love my job, I have the best job in the world," said Venis as she ecstatically described her craft. The longtime gardener

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126th Wadena County Fair June 20-23, 2019

Thursday, June 20	Saturday, June 22	Sunday, June 23
7pm Mutton Bustin' (Grandstand)	6pm RRVF Truck & Tractor Pull (Grandstand)	1pm Demo Derby & Enduro Race (Grandstand)
8-12am The Music Doctor DJ/Karaoke (Beer Garden)	9pm-1am Midwest Mayhem (Bandshell)	
Friday, June 21		
7pm Central MN Bulls-N-Barrels (Grandstand)		
9pm-1am Dirt Road Dixie (Bandshell)		



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