



Nicollet students perform
High school holds concert; so does grade school.
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Thursday, December 13, 2018
LNLedger.com
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Serra Muscatello • Lafayette Nicollet Ledger

This historical school stands near the intersection of Highway 22 and Highway 111 in New Sweden.

Friends of District 6 restore schoolhouse

By Serra Muscatello
Ledger staff writer

It only takes a spark to get a fire going. This “spark” is a local group of people who have set in motion a restoration project for the District 6 Schoolhouse in New Sweden Township. This project has now spanned several years of hard work and great dedication from its members.

The old schoolhouse is on Highway 22, about 1 mile east of the intersection with Highway 111. This white building is on a 1.1-acre site surrounded by fields of white snow in the wintertime or soybean and cornfields in the summer — a true rural historical schoolhouse.

The Friends of District 6 — Garfield Eckberg, Harold Rodning, Dean Pettis, Scott Hermanson — as well as others have all given of their time and efforts to preserve the school building. All the men either have ties to the District 6 schoolhouse or the New Sweden Township and Norseland area.

The school's history

The present-day school building, built in 1929, is the third building that has been on the site. District 6 became an official school in 1863 when the county system took it over, Eckberg

said. Before that, District 6 was operated by a Swedish parochial-type school system. All the children who attended the school were farm kids.

“This (schoolhouse) was like a community center for the farm community, and it was big deal,” Pettis said. “They looked after the building.”

School consolidations started in the 1940s and 1950s.

“The school board at that time didn’t know if school consolidation was good ... and they thought at first it was not necessary,” Eckberg said.

Classes were held at the District 6 School until 1958. The school eventually dissolved and split three ways into school systems in Gaylord, Nicollet and St. Peter.

In 1963, the schoolhouse site was sold to the New Sweden Township, which used the schoolhouse for its township board meetings and as a voting place for its annual elections. By the late 1990s, the building was starting to deteriorate, Eckberg said.

Rodning, who notes that his wife was a student at the District 6 School, picks up the story.

“I was on the town board at that time,” he said. “One fall a vote was held, and we polled the people if we should preserve the old building or abandon it.”

The township board voted to close the building and sell it. The building reverted to a nearby landowner.

Then in 2004 a class reunion was held for the District 6 Schoolhouse. The event was well attended by many former country schoolhouse students who had come back to the area to see the old school. Shortly after, a group of concerned and dedicated people organized together, Eckberg said.

“A few people spoke up and said we want to save it,” said Eckberg.

This group of local folks formed a nonprofit, The Friends of District 6. The landowner who owned the school eventually decided it over to the group.

“Actually, when she (the landowner) signed the deed, she was 100 years old,” said Rodning. “She died two months later.”

The repair work

Rodning said they’ve spent a lot of money fixing up the old schoolhouse. Their group has received many donations, of both financial and physical items for the school. Many financial contributions came in from former students at the school.

“One (former) student said the farm place she grew up on is gone now, the church she went to has

See **SCHOOLHOUSE**, page 5

Nicollet City Council holds meeting

By Karen Fluegge
Lafayette Nicollet Ledger

The Nicollet City Council held its Truth in Taxation meeting at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, December 4, 2018. No taxpayers attended other than the mayor, the council members, Darin Drill and Vanessa Drill. With no taxpayers attending or any discussion, the Truth in Taxation meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m. and the regular meeting of the council was called to order.

The city’s bills for November 15 through December 3, 2018 were reviewed and approved. The bills totaled \$36,262.70.

Reports

Vanessa Drill read a letter from Pam Meyer from the Region Nine Development Commission requesting either the mayor or council members to become involved in their organization. Froehlich encouraged the members to volunteer.

Tom Rieke attended the Nicollet Rural-City Fire Association Joint Powers Board Meeting on Nov. 26. Rieke reported that the Fire Department’s new van is here. The firefighters have begun to transfer equipment from their old van to their new van, and are currently having the graphics/lettering work done on the van.

Rieke also reported that the Fire

Department is working with the same company that they bought the new air packs from to purchase a washing machine for the firemen. The department’s cost will be \$4,027 plus freight. The department does have a washing machine; however, it doesn’t handle the heavy loads nearly as well as the new machine. And it is important to have a good washing machine for the protection of the firemen because of the possible cancer causing chemicals that might get on their gear.

As had been discussed at a previous meeting, the Fire Department needs to pay 5 percent for the air packs that were recently purchased and the rest is being paid from a grant.

The Department has taken on four new firemen. There is a cost of about \$2,000 each for their Turnout Gear. Jim Anderson added, “And, there is a lifespan on Turnout Gear so the department will probably also need to purchase new gear for some of the current firemen.”

Rieke continued, “The department is also looking at having an iPad in the new truck rather than a cell phone. It would show a better map.”

The 2020 budget meeting for the Fire Department is scheduled for Monday, Jan. 28 at 7 p.m.; and its annual meeting is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m.

Old Business

After a brief discussion on

Highway 14, council members determined that U.S. Highway 14 no longer needs to be on future agendas because The Minnesota Department of Transportation has released the property back to the city as of Nov. 30, from approximately Nicollet Mart to Blume Street.

New Business

Resolution 12-04-18, Adopting the Final 2019 Tax Levy for 2019 was approved. It consists of the following: General Fund \$1,249; Water Fund, \$25,000; Fire Capital Fund \$25,000; Debt Service \$387,457 for a total levy of \$438,706. The 2018 Levy was \$424,815; so for 2019, that will be an increase of \$13,891, or roughly 3.3 percent.

Resolution #12-04-18A, Adopting the Final 2019 Budget was also approved.

Meetings

The Public Improvement Hearing at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 11; and the next regular meeting of the Council is scheduled for Monday, Jan. 7, at 6 p.m.

The regular meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m. and continued with a closed meeting to conduct employee reviews. The result of the reviews was to give a 3 percent increase to the city’s three full-time employees: Darin Drill, Vanessa Drill and Josh Anderson.

O Christmas Tree



Lee Zorn • Lafayette Nicollet Ledger

This Christmas tree stands next to Norseland Lutheran Church, on Highway 22, east of Highway 111.

Trinity women celebrate Advent



Karen Fluegge • Lafayette Nicollet Ledger

Women from Trinity Lutheran Church celebrated Advent on Sunday.

By Karen Fluegge
Lafayette Nicollet Ledger

Women from Trinity Lutheran Church of Nicollet hosted Advent by Candlelight, an event to help women prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior. It was held Sunday evening, Dec. 9.

Guests were greeted with the church and fellowship hall decorated

with many Christmas trees and wreaths. Tables were decorated by volunteers and their friends and family joined them at the event. Many candles lit up the tables and the fellowship hall was lit with many strings of Christmas lights. It presented a very peaceful and relaxing setting for the almost 200 women who attended the event.

A variety of desserts were avail-

able for guests during the social hour. At 6 p.m. the program began. It was “An Evening with Isaiah” by Naomi Schmidt from the Women’s Ministry of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The program focused on the many beautiful Scripture verses from the Old Testament book of Isaiah that enrich our Christmas worship. The rich music based on those texts brought depth and joy to the celebration!

