

The Daily Journal

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BRINGING IT TO THE TABLE

Roundtable highlights need for local treatment and detox facilities

By Johanna Armstrong
 The Daily Journal

On Thursday, May 23 members of the community including law enforcement, first responders, health-care providers, concerned citizens, county employees and others came together at Fergus Falls City Hall to meet with representatives of Sen.

Amy Klobuchar's office to discuss the opioid epidemic and its impact on the area.

The discussion began with a welcome from Fergus Falls Mayor Ben Schierer, followed by some short remarks by Klobuchar's outreach director, Sarah Franz. "This is very

SEE OPIOID A3



Johanna Armstrong | The Daily Journal

TALKING ABOUT OPIOIDS: Sarah Franz from the office of Sen. Amy Klobuchar addresses the participants of the opioid epidemic roundtable at the Fergus Falls City Council Chambers Thursday.

Illinois woman dies in crash near FF

By Forum News Service

An Illinois woman has died from injuries suffered in a roll-over crash near Fergus Falls on Friday, May 24, according to a report from the Minnesota State Patrol.

The crash happened at about 11:40 a.m. on Interstate 94.

Shawn Ottum, 41, of Aurora, Colo., was driving a 2004 Chevrolet Avalanche east when he lost control of the SUV, went into the south ditch and rolled, the patrol said.

Ottum's passenger, a 34-year-old woman from Danville, Ill., was not wearing a seat belt and suffered fatal injuries, the patrol said. Her name has not yet been released.

Ottum was taken to Lake Region Hospital in Fergus Falls with injuries that were not life-threatening.

Jury finds Buchanan guilty on 2 counts

By Brian Hansel
 The Daily Journal

A jury of seven men and seven women returned a guilty verdict on both felony charges against Michael Dean Buchanan Thursday afternoon in Seventh District Court.

The Henning man was in court over the four-day trial on a third-degree charge of murder and a charge of great bodily harm. The murder maximum sentence for third-degree murder is 25 years or \$40,000 or both. The maximum charge for great bodily harm is up to 10 years of confinement, a fine of \$20,000 or both.



Buchanan

Third-degree murder is considered to be proximately causing the death of a human being without intent.

The victim of the crime was Jordan Bolgrea, a young friend who had stayed at the Buchanan residence.

A sentencing date has been set for July 11 at 2:15 p.m.

A request by the defense for a mistrial will be considered by Judge Sharon Grewell Benson at June 21 at 1:30 p.m.

Otter Tail County Attorney Michelle Eldien saw Thursday's double verdict as a vindication for all concerned in the case.

"We are very happy with the verdict," Eldien said. "It was a lot of work for the past year to get there."

According to court documents, at 12:29 p.m. on June 8, 2018, an Otter Tail County detective responded to a report of a body lying next to the railroad tracks

SEE BUCHANAN A3



Mathew Holding Eagle | The Daily Journal

GOODBYE YELLOW BRICK ROAD: During his graduation address Friday Superintendent Jerry Ness said the Class of 2019 is special to him because they've been in school his entire 13 years as superintendent for the Fergus Falls Public Schools, starting with them as kindergartners (above). Julia Swanson accepts her diploma during Friday's graduation for Fergus Falls in Kennedy Secondary School Gold Gym (below). For more photos, see Page A2.



Hinge artist brings unique style of poetry

By Johanna Armstrong
 The Daily Journal

Tina Gross is a librarian, a poet, an activist and a Master of Fine Arts candidate in creative writing at Minnesota State University Mankato. Now, she's also the newest Hinge Arts resident artist, looking to bring her unique style of poetry to Fergus Falls and create new poems with inspiration from the Regional Treatment Center, where her grandmother once worked.



Tina Gross

Gross is originally from Battle Lake and was living there when she first began writing creatively at 7 years old. She went to school in Pittsburgh to receive her degree in library science and currently lives in St. Cloud where she works at the St. Cloud State University library as a cataloging metadata librarian. Although she has a stable career,

SEE POETRY A3

NOTICES
 IN TODAY'S JOURNAL, PAGE 2
 • Mabel Lindquist

IN TUESDAY'S DAILY JOURNAL



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REMEMBRANCE: See photos from Memorial Day festivities.



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POETRY: Artist specializes in found poetry

Continued from page A1

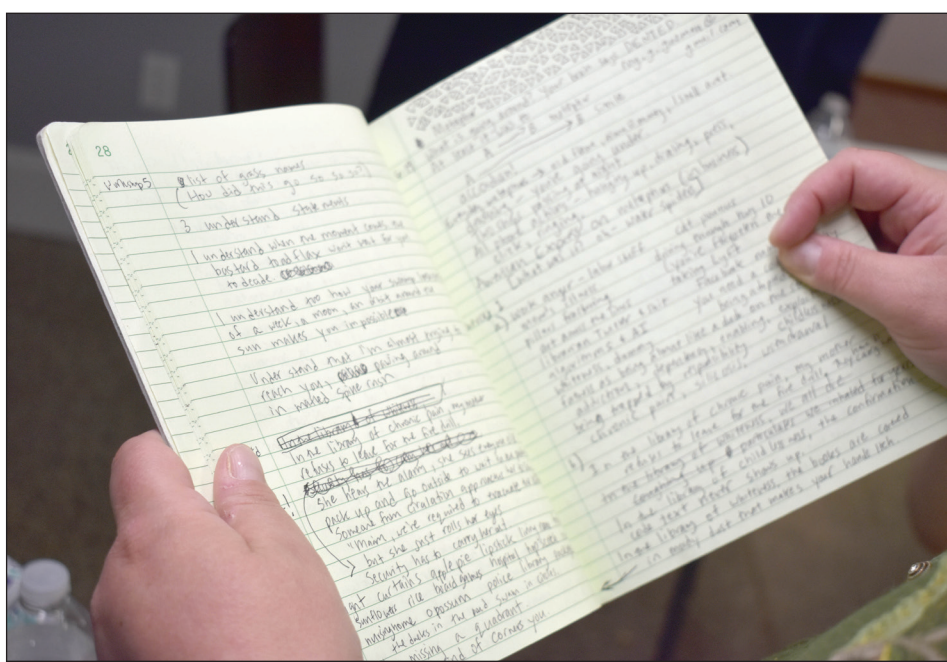
she's passionate about writing and would like to find time to write and hopefully publish a book of her poetry some day.

Gross specializes in a type of poetry called found poetry which she described as follows: "It's when you create poems out of text that you didn't produce, but that you find in some external source, and you manipulate, remix, edit them, arrange them in some way that makes it into a poem." For instance, she might use text from letters she's received, rearranging and manipulating the words and sentences in the letters to create a poem.

One type of found poem especially likes is one she whose rules she established herself and which she calls "browse title poems."

"I start with some kind of prompt phrase," she explains, "and then I do a search in the library database that I use as a cataloger... and I create a poem made out of titles of works in the database that begin with that phrase, and it sort of creates a kind of anaphora. An anaphora is a type of poem that every line begins with the same phrase, so it creates a kind of rhythmic thing."

In addition to requiring



JOHANNA ARMSTRONG | DAILY JOURNAL

CREATIVE PROCESS: Tina Gross always carries a notebook with her in which she writes ideas and drafts poems. She's done this ever since she was in primary school.

that every line of the poem be an existing title of a work in the catalog, Gross has a few other self-imposed rules for creating a browse title poem: "I can pick whatever titles I want, but I can't change the titles at all, they have to stay how they are. And, they have to be in alphabetical order but I can pick and choose the ones I want."

One browse title poem Gross has written is titled, "I Am Not Famous Any- more," and begins:

"I am not a credible source.

I am not a dog person.
I am not a duck.
I am not a duck hunter.
I am not a flying elephant fish.
I am not a fugitive from a Georgia chain gang.
I am not a homewrecker.
I am not a jellyfish.
I am not a mascot.
I am not a mistake, I am meant to be..."

Although Gross might create some browse-title poems as part of her residency with Hinge Arts, her focus will be on creating free-form excerpting and remixing found po-

etry. Some of the source material she'll be working with to create these poems will include letters her grandmother wrote while she worked at the Regional Treatment Center for decades as a foster grandmother, in addition to materials about the foster-grandparent program. She'll also be looking at using text found on walls around the Kirkbride, both graffiti and official text, as well as books at the library about the Kirkbride.

Gross' residency runs from May 20 to June 1.

OPIOID: "I think our yards have become our detoxes, and our jails..."

Continued from page A1

helpful for our office, to hear from different communities about your approach to substance abuse, opioids, meth and alcohol," Franz said. "Each community, as we drive around the state, has a different approach and it's great to see where communities could use help, where they're thriving, what ideas are applicable to other communities and what we can take back to Washington."

Franz's comments were followed by a video from Klobuchar outlining why addiction issues are important to her, what bills she's put forth to combat the opioid epidemic and her interest in hearing the community's thoughts on what's going well and what could be improved. "Four out of five new heroin users report misusing prescription opioids before going to heroin," Klobuchar explained. "The very pills that are supposed to ease a person's pain can end up taking their life."

Numbers from the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Normative Evaluation System (DAANES), which collects information from treatment facilities around Otter Tail County, shows that heroin as the primary substance of abuse among patients has increased from 4.5% in 2016 to 8.8% in 2018.

However, Deb Sjostrom, director of Human Services for Otter Tail County, says the county's biggest concern is meth: Meth as the primary substance of abuse has increased from 28% in 2016 to 36.8% in 2018. That's higher than the percentage of patients reporting alcohol as their primary substance of abuse, 35.6%, and which has been seeing a downward trend over the last few years (44.2% in 2016 and 37.5% in 2017).

"Meth is king," agrees detective Sgt. Andy Miller of the Fergus Falls Police Department. Bill Adams from the county sheriff's office says, that while they might be seeing more cases of opiate use, "We're seeing meth every

night." Otter Tail County is 12th in the state for positive meth tests so far in 2019 and Adams believes that's probably going to go up.

The greatest consensus among everyone present at the roundtable was that Otter Tail County needs detox centers and local treatment centers. The state of Minnesota only has 17 or 18 detox centers total, as Miller says, "I think our yards have become our detoxes, and our jails; I don't think that's right."

Using jail as a detox center was a serious concern for one resident present at the roundtable. Her son, who is part of the suboxone treatment program at Lake Region Healthcare, loses access to his suboxone in jail. As a result, any addict on the road to recovery that gets sent to jail loses all access to their addiction-management medications and medical support systems for the duration of their incarceration and are subsequently returned to the community back at square one. "The jail is bound by laws and regulations about what medications can be given and when," explained Adams, though he could not go into more detail about suboxone specifically.

Furthermore, once an ad-

dict is out of jail, in addition to not having access to treatment centers since there aren't any locally, law enforcement is too understaffed and overburdened to provide adequate supervision for addicts Detective Lucas Delaney, narcotics officer for the Fergus Falls Police Department, explained, "You hope once a criminal conviction occurs, you're expecting or hoping for supervision, and this is not the fault of the Department of Corrections, but there is just not enough people to adequately supervise everyone once a conviction occurs. I talked to an agent with the DOC recently who has several hundred clients that they're supervising."

There also isn't a system to help addicts before law enforcement gets involved. When someone gets picked up multiple times for drug overdoses by an ambulance, there's no system in place for first responders to flag them as needing support or assistance for drug treatment or addiction services. "If it's the second or third time we pick somebody up for [an overdose], we're often filling out a vulnerable adult concept for those folks, but that's pretty much the only reporting system we have in place," said Cameron Dean, clinical manager for Ringdahl EMS,

the ambulance service provider for western Otter Tail County.

Local treatment centers wouldn't only be helping addicts recover, they'd also be helping repair broken families, bringing parents and children back together.

"Over 80% of families that utilize our services at the Parenting Time Center, the reason why is either neglect or there was drug use in the home," said Emilyn Haugen, director of Someplace Safe Parenting Time Centers.

Data from DAANES also shows increased involvement of child protection services in substance abuse cases, from 12.6% involvement in 2016 to 14.4% in 2018.

Representatives from Lakeland Mental Health Center, county law enforcement and county human services all expressed concerns about the opioid epidemic's effect on children and families.

The epidemic is a complicated problem, a maze of issues and concerns that are interconnected, with no single solution. However, it was made clear that rural Minnesota has a lot of work to do to address that long list of problems, as safety nets meant to catch addicts before problems go too far aren't available or are nonexistent.

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