

# LAKES AREA REVIEW

Delivered by mail to more than 6,200 homes in the communities of New London, Spicer, Belgrade, Pennock, Sunburg, and Willmar

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## Around the Lakes

### Tuesday's Table

SPICER – This week will be presented by Open Door Christian Church and hosted at O'Neil's. We will be serving really fine food and conversation from 6 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 15. Everyone is welcome.

### Blood drive

SPICER – On Tuesday, Nov 5 from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. donate blood to the the American Red Cross at the American Legion in Spicer. Call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit: redcross-blood.org, and enter sponsor code: Spicer.

### Grief workshop

WILLMAR – The Church of St. Mary will be hosting a grief workshop from 8:30 a.m.-noon on Saturday, Oct. 19. Presenters include Linda Winter Hodgson, a speaker, and Della Conroy, an artist. Registrations are requested by calling Church of St. Mary at: (320) 235-0118.

### Community Ed offers Minnesta Driving Course at NL-S

NEW LONDON – 8 Hour Minnesota Safety Council Driving Course – Wednesday and Thursday, October 23 & 24 from 5:30-9:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required. You can register at: www.nslcommunityed.com or in person at the Community Ed Office during regular school hours. When registering please include your name, phone number, and birth date. Instructor: Marcia Kleven. Location: High School Math Room # 1006 (Enter at the District Office/Community Ed Doors).

### New London Food Co-op Intro Meeting

NEW LONDON – On Wednesday, October 23, 7-8 p.m. at Goat Ridge Brewing, join Co-op Board Chair Erik Hatlestad and others to learn a little bit about co-ops, the plan to bring a grocery store to New London and how you can get involved.

### Do you have news?

Do you have ideas or information about something that would make a good story or photograph for the paper? Call at (320) 354-2945 or email us at editorial@nslakesareareview.com.

## Inserts

### Teal's Market

Inserts may cover all or some of the total *Review* circulation as requested by the business placing the insert.

## NL-S tennis preps for State

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Photo by Brett Blocker

New London hunter Kyle Zimmerman, center, points out a path for flushing pheasants during a hunt near Spicer Wednesday morning.

## Amid statewide pheasant decline, bird bagging remains steady in Kandiyohi County

By Macklin Caruso  
Reporter

Minnesota's changing climate and diminishing conservation land have taken a statewide toll on this year's pheasant population. However, regardless of statewide trends, Kandiyohi County remains a stronghold for the birds – relatively speaking.

Pheasant numbers are down 17% across the state, averaging 45.2 birds per 100 miles according to the DNR's annual Roadside Survey.

The survey, which has been ongoing since 1955, takes a roadside count of pheasants

along different routes, totaling 100 miles of road per county. The Roadside Survey is not intended to reflect the literal statewide population of wildlife, but instead serves as a rough index.

Though the bird population in Kandiyohi County remains strong, averaging 69.3 birds per 100 miles, it saw a 21% decrease from last year's bird count. However, it is still significantly higher than the county's 10-year average of 53.3 birds per 100 miles.

The drop is not significant, according DNR Area Wildlife Supervisor Cory Netland, con-

sidering the county has seen a significant spike the past two years, breaking a decade-long slump in the bird population. "I was happy with numbers that came out this year," said Netland.

Last year the entire county was considered "fair" hunting, according to the DNR, meaning 25-49 pheasants per square mile. This year most of the county is still considered fair, with the exception of the county's northern rim, which has been downgraded to "poor," meaning 10-24 birds per square mile.

Other areas saw a much

more significant decrease than Kandiyohi County. Almost the entire southeastern region of the state was downgraded to "very poor" (less than 10 birds per square mile), while neighboring counties – Stearns, Swift, Chippewa and Renville – have all reported a significant decline in their pheasant population.

Since the mid-2000s Minnesota has suffered a gradual loss of habitat, especially in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – a land conservation program administered by the Farm Service Agency, where, in exchange for a an-

nual rental payment, farmers cease agricultural production and instead plant species that will improve overall environmental health. This directly correlates in the statewide decrease in pheasants suffered since mid-2000s.

In contrast, Kandiyohi County provides ample pheasant habitat, with 11.7% of the entire county designated as conservation land. This totals 64,687 acres, and is managed by both state and federal agen-

### Pheasants

Continued on page 6

## Farmers contend with climate in 'worst season yet'

By Brett Blocker  
Editor

Five years ago this week, the sun beamed down as members of the Madsen family farm posed in their dusty cornfield for a post-harvest photo, clad in shorts and summer clothing.

Today, that field is a sea of mud, rutted so deep as to be navigable only by all-terrain vehicles and rear-wheel assisted tractors.

Needless to say, to call it a "tough year" for farmers would be a gross understatement.

In addition to foreign market competition, an ongoing trade war and changing consumer demands, the agriculture community is now forced to contend with another limiting factor – a changing climate.

A significant increase in the frequency of intense rains has left local farmers like Harlan Madsen weeks behind schedule this year and, in the midst of harvest season, with fields

of sucking mud and soaked corn product.

A third-generation farmer and Kandiyohi County Commissioner, Madsen has been farming full-time since 1974 on his family's 700-acre plot 5 miles northeast of Lake Lillian. There, he raises with his children and grandchildren dairy, corn, soybeans and alfalfa.

This year marks the fourth consecutive year of increased precipitation and is the wettest the farm has ever seen.

"This is the worst year ever for farming in terms of water; the only way we got this field chopped (for silage) is by pulling three-fourths loads with the quad tractor," Madsen said during an interview at the farm earlier this week, all the while attempting to negotiate his ATV between rows of deep, muddy trenches. "You couldn't go in here with the front-assisted tractor; it's simply too wet."

Under normal circumstances, his silage can be harvested



Photo by Brett Blocker

Third-generation farmer and Kandiyohi County Commissioner Harlan Madsen assesses rain-induced rut damage to his cornfield. Extreme weather conditions, he said, have set operations back several weeks and made it the worst season for farming in his 45-year career.

in a day and a half. This year took three times as long.

"Rain has hindered everything – spraying, planting – by

two to three weeks. It's hindered any kind of tillage. We can get some manure spread, but going through the field and

### Harlan Farm

Continued on page 2

## NL to save estimated \$157,777 from PFA loan

By Brett Blocker  
Editor

The City of New London is expected to enjoy a savings of roughly \$157,777 on its \$1.5 million construction project to replace and loop water mains along Cedar Street and 3rd Avenue.

On Tuesday of this week, the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (PFA) announced its latest grant round of \$9 million will go to four

Minnesota cities: St. Paul, Albertville, Battle Lake and New London.

The PFA receives funding from the State, and through this funding, provides low interest loans and some loan forgiveness for eligible cities.

In qualifying for this loan, New London will pay 1% interest on its 20-year loan of \$1,594,397 to fund the water main project.

Specifically, New London

qualified for funding from the PFA's Drinking Water Revolving Fund. According to City Administrator Trudie Guptill, the City of New London also has utilized PFA funding in its two previous construction projects which occurred in 2011 and 2016.

Through this latest 1% loan, she said, "we don't have to go through all the bond council expenses, so we'll save a boatload of money by using PFA.

We don't need to get rated again, and interest rates are generally lower [through PFA] than selling bonds."

That savings of \$157,777 only accounts for interest savings resulting from the 1% PFA loan, and does not include additional costs from bond rating and paying for financial advisor fees.

"We don't expend that additional interest or up-front financial burden," Guptill said.

"If we didn't make PFA, we would have had to bond for that additional money, and would have to levy the taxpayers to pay back a larger amount."

Construction on the water main project began in July, and will be substantially complete by November 1 of this year. Final overlays will be added next spring.

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