



STEELE DUNTY

Times



1,000 POINT WOMAN B5 | RURAL SCHOOLS B1

www.steeledodgenews.com

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020

Blooming Prairie, Minnesota

UP IN SMOKE



STAFF PHOTO BY HOWARD LESTRUD

Heavy smoke envelops downtown Blooming Prairie Jan. 28 as The Bakery went up in flames. Seven area fire departments battled the blaze, which destroyed the nearly century and a half old building as well as Sportstitch located next door. Blooming Prairie Fire utilized its ladder truck to bring the fire under control and keep it from spreading throughout the downtown. No one was injured in the fire.

Early morning fire destroys The Bakery

BY HOWARD LESTRUD
STAFF WRITER

Firefighters from seven local fire departments fought an early morning fire at The Bakery in Blooming Prairie on Tuesday, Jan. 28.

Bakery owner Gregg Fristedt said he and two other bakery store employees were in the building when the fire broke out.

Fristedt said he had one of his employees call 911 to report the fire shortly after 6 a.m. Blooming Prairie Fire Chief Dean Naatz said the call came in at 6:11 a.m.

Tenants reportedly lived above The Bakery and had already gone to work prior to the fire being noticed.

There were no injuries in the fire.

It is speculated that the fire started in the northwest part of the basement of The Bakery, located in an old bank building. Fire Chief Naatz said the cause of the fire appeared to be electrical.

"It's beyond words," said Fristedt, as he watched firefighters from Blooming Prairie, Ellendale, Claremont, Geneva,

BAKERY FIRE COVERAGE INSIDE

- 2A: Editorial & Guest Column
- 4A: Total Community Effort
- 4A: Sportstitch Looks at Options
- 5A: Benefit Planned
- 5A: Reflections on Tragedy
- 4A, 5A & 10A: More Fire Photos

Hollandale, Hayfield and Owatonna fight heavy smoke caused by the fire.

Blooming Prairie Fire had 23 men on duty and the other departments totaled about 30 firefighters.

The Blooming Prairie Police Department, Blooming Prairie Ambulance Service and the Steele County Sheriff's Department were on the scene.

Blooming Prairie's ladder truck was positioned at the intersection of Main Street and NE 3rd Ave. to help control the flames and smoke. "It really

worked well for us," said Chief Naatz.

Naatz said the BP department alone used 220,000 gallons of water to fight the fire. Other departments also supplied water.

Chief Naatz said he had firefighters enter the building but called them back when it appeared that it was too dangerous to remain in the building.

Ceilings were torn out between the basement and main floor. The roof did collapse on the second floor.

SEE UP IN SMOKE, A4

Residents fuming over project in Medford

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

After a work session devoted to the discussion of the upcoming Main Street project, several Medford residents voiced concerns over potential aspects of the proposed project.

Many were upset over the possibility for increased street width, the addition of sidewalks, and the overall design of the project, a design that is not set in stone at this moment.

"I've sat through every meeting that you guys have had, and saw the county engineers say that they're just a checkbook for this project and that you guys are running the show," said John Anhorn, a business owner, school board member, and fire

SEE RESIDENTS FUMING OVER PROJECT, A6

New pathways to helping others



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Community Pathways of Steele County Co Executive Directors Nancy Ness, left, and Maureen Schlobohm stand inside the organization's building. Community Pathways is the result of a recent merger between the Steele county Food Shelf and the Steele County Clothesline.

Two groups merge to form Community Pathways

BY CHRIS BALDWIN
STAFF WRITER

For years the Steele County Food Shelf and the Steele County Clothesline have been serving folks from across the county. They have provided citizens who are in need with clothes, household items, food, and other resources.

While each organization operated on its own, they were always closely tied and even shared the same building. This year the duo decided to merge into Community Pathways of Steele County, a nonprofit organization that

will continue the great work that the Food Shelf and the Clothesline began.

"This discussion has been going on for a long time, we were thinking that it would be a good move for the people we serve and would make us more efficient," Co-Executive Director Nancy Ness said. "We knew that we needed to get serious about bringing these two services together."

Effective on Jan. 1, the two organizations merged into Community Pathways of Steele County, with the

SEE NEW PATHWAYS, A6

\$1.00 | Volume 128, No. 28



507-583-4431 | bptimes@frontiernet.net

INSIDE

Opinions.....	A2	Faith.....	A9	Sports.....	B5-6
Bakery Fire Coverage.....	A4-5	Hometown Living.....	B1	Public Notices.....	B8
History.....	A6	Community Calendar.....	B3	Classifieds.....	B9
4-H Awards.....	A7	Public Safety.....	B4		

AREA DEATHS

Daniel Mischke, 44, Owatonna

Serving
Blooming Prairie
and Steele County
since 1893