

LAKES AREA REVIEW

NL team makes splash at Flugtag

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Delivered by mail to more than 6,200 homes in the communities of New London, Spicer, Belgrade, Pennock, Sunburg, and Willmar Vol. 132, No. 37 75¢

Around the Lakes

Seminar on Vitals App

NEW LONDON – On Tuesday, September 24, 6 p.m. at Vinje Church, Advocacy & Inclusion Matter (AIM) will offer a seminar on the Vitals App. Vitals App is designed to improve interactions between first responders and people with disabilities through smartphone technology. Registration is required. RSVP at: 320-231-1777 by September 23.

Cub Scouts registration and information

NEW LONDON – On Thursday, September 19 at 6 p.m. in Prairie Woods Elementary School cafeteria meet current scout leaders and register on-site. All new members will receive a t-shirt. Open to youth K-5. Call: 612-261-2300 or visit www.joincubs.org.

Climate Action Group meeting

WILLMAR – Willmar Area Climate Action Group will meet Monday, Sept. 16, at 6 p.m. at the Willmar Public Library. For more information, visit: facebook.com/WACAG

Coffee & dessert for Veterans

NEW LONDON – Lake Region Home Health invites New London and Spicer veterans to come for free dessert and coffee from 1-4 p.m., Thursday, September 19 at the Fireside room at the New London American Legion. For more information and to RSVP call: 354-5858.

Dethlefs 2 buck lunch

SPICER – On September 19 the Dethlefs Community Center will offer a \$2 lunch sponsored by Spicer Sunrise Lions. Dale Martell will be performing country, bluegrass and '50s and '60s show tunes. Call 320-796-5208 with questions.

Tuesday's Table

SPICER – Tuesday's Table is a weekly community meal focused on providing food and fellowship. This week Faith Lutheran will be serving really fine food and conversation from 6 - 6:30 p.m. on September 17. Everyone is welcome!

Inserts

Teal's Market
Inserts may cover all or some of the total Review circulation as requested by the business placing the insert.



Photo by Macklin Caruso

A local labrador shows off his retrieving skills during Saturday's dock jumping competition during the 37th annual Prairie Pothole Day in New London.

MWA dissolution jeopardizes future of Pothole Day

By Brett Blocker
Editor

The sounds of bleating duck calls, yipping retrievers and reports from black powder muzzle loaders echoed across northern New London last weekend as approximately 4,000 outdoor enthusiasts flocked to the 37th annual Prairie Pothole Day on the grounds of Stoney Ridge Farm.

Sponsored by the Minnesota Waterfowl Association (MWA), the day-long event

has long been a fundraising opportunity to fund conservation and environmental projects including wetland restoration, with a significant portion of proceeds going toward the Minnesota Waterfowl Association's state office.

However, following the MWA's announcement last Friday that it will dissolve at the end of the month, event organizers will need to explore organizational alternatives if they wish to continue operations into a 38th year.

Regarding the future of Prairie Pothole Day, MWA's Prairie Pothole Chapter President Leroy Dahlke said, "There are a lot of things we're now looking into," ranging from exploring the possibility of continuing as an independent organization or joining with another existing environmental organization.

In order to continue, he said, the event will need to resecure the 501c3 non-profit tax-exempt status it received by operating under MWA,

which would cover the liability insurance needed to function.

New volunteers also are necessary as the aging demographic of those currently involved continues to dwindle.

"We're going to try to maintain some organization, because we just got done with Pothole Day, and it was a good turnout. [...] But the single biggest thing is getting enough people to help volunteer because the older members can't carry the whole load anymore.

If we could get 15-20 people that would be able to put the time and energy into all these things that need to be done, that would be marvelous.

"But there is a risk that there won't be another Pothole Day if we can't resolve these issues."

Unfortunately, finding new blood may prove difficult. In fact, it's one of the primary reasons for MWA's dissolution

Prairie Pothole Day
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Negotiations collapse with state over health provider

By Macklin Caruso
Reporter

Negotiations between Kandiyohi County and the Department of Human Services (DHS) over the County's preferred health provider hang in limbo after the DHS's abrupt cancellation of 80 Minnesota counties health coverage requests.

The County and the DHS were scheduled to hold mediations later this month over the DHS's prior rejection of the County's proposal to have PrimeWest Health to act as the single plan for county residents on Medical Assistance (MA) and for seniors programs.

PrimeWest operates under a model known as County Based Purchasing (CBP), which is a health plan operated by a county or group of counties. PrimeWest currently consists 13 counties scattered across western Minnesota. Kandiyohi County, along with 10 other counties, sought to join PrimeWest this summer while the DHS was accepting proposals for preferred providers.

In so doing, the County listed PrimeWest as its only preferred provider for residents receiving MA. In order for a CBP to work effectively, they need a wide financial

base. Due to the lower number of people receiving MA in rural areas, providers like PrimeWest need to patch together recipients from numerous counties to reach a critical mass.

However, on July 25 DHS overruled the County by making PrimeWest one of two plans to serve MA participants and one of four plans to serve those on senior programs, which put the County's entire health plan in jeopardy. The DHS failed to offer an explanation for their reasoning.

The County, along with 23 other counties either served by or seeking to join PrimeWest, intended to seek legal mediation with the state through the law firm Lockridge Grindal Nauen PLLP later this month.

On Sept. 3, however, the DHS alerted counties across the state that it is cancelling all requests for proposals for health coverage.

This is a direct consequence of a lawsuit filed by South Country, a fellow CBP in southern Minnesota, who challenged the DHS in court over their rejection of counties seeking to join South Country.

The DHS lost the lawsuit, which they claim made their

Health provider
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Photo by Brett Blocker

Probing the depths with PWELC
Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center hosted its annual River Rally Day in New London's Neer Park Tuesday morning. Funded in part by the Kandiyohi County Aquatic Invasive Species Taskforce, the event aims to increase fourth graders' understanding of water ecology. Above: Ms. Ronneng helps her class net macro invertebrates, which are an indicator of water quality health due to their varying tolerances to pollution.



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