

# VOICES

## Looking Back

Excerpts from the Balaton Press Tribune  
Compiled by Pam Johnson



1970 – An American Legion soybean harvest crew took time out for lunch during its recent workday in the Legion's field. Pictured (left to right) are Leonard Lamb, Newton Dayland, Russell Lamb, Louie Miller, Ken Stafne, Martin Sawatzky and Carl Riidsager.

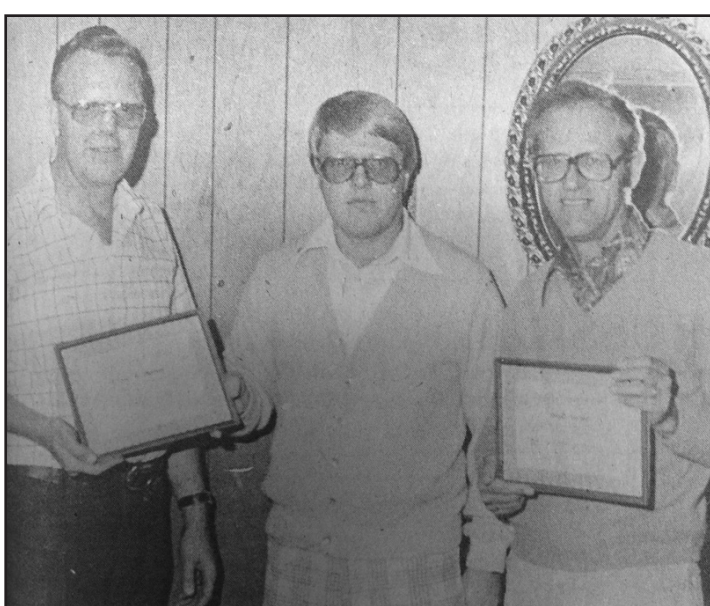
### October 8, 1970 (50 years ago)

Dennis Swan, Murray County farmer, was honored by the Balaton Chamber of Commerce Monday night when it announced that he was selected for inclusion in the 1970 edition of OUTSTANDING YOUNG MEN OF AMERICA.

The Balaton Warriors were defeated 36-30 last Friday night by Wood Lake. Gerald Johnson had a new high for the year with 35 defensive points. This is four games in a row that Gerald had led in defensive points. There is now a four-way tie for first place in the conference; Balaton, Lake Benton, Wood Lake and Hendricks.

### October 9, 1980 (40 years ago)

"The Bean Harvest Looks Good" – That's what Wes Westphal said on Monday as he was harvesting his bean field on Highway 14, three miles west of Balaton. "Better than last year," Wes said. The weatherman has been cooperating with farmers to get the harvest in before cold weather sets in.



1980 - The Balaton Chamber of Commerce presented its annual Good Citizens Awards this year to Einer Mattson, left, and Ron Borchert, right. In the center is Ron Waibel, Chamber president. Einer is captain of the ambulance first aid crew; Ron retired this year as head football coach.

Colonial Manor News by Elaine Knochenmus reports of their annual drive to Camden State Park on Monday. It was such a beautiful day for us to get outside to see the colors of fall. About 25 residents went along. Volunteer drivers were Ruth Swan, Gladys Erickson, Laurice Klukas, Rhoda Knudson, Eleanor Myhre, Bethlyn Nixon, Orla Swan and Dale Olson.

### October 11, 1990 (30 years ago)

The Ruthton City Council and the Farmer's Cooperative of Balaton initiated a "gentlemen's agreement" concerning property on Hwy 23 in Ruthton and the Coop's plans for a gas station/convenience store to be started there.

Ron and Connie Schwartau took an interesting trip. Their primary target was Finland. However, they spent a few days first visiting Sweden, staying with their exchange students. Then in Finland, they saw more exchange students and as a little side trip they took a cruise to Leningrad, USSR.

### October 11, 2000 (20 years ago)

Monday night, the Balaton City Council passed a resolution to appoint Heath L. Smith for the part-time police officer position in Balaton.

The public comment on the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad's proposed \$1.2 billion expansion impact will be accepted by a federal jury through Jan. 5, 2001. The improvements would allow the D M & E line to haul high-grade coal from the Powder Basin area to west Central Wyoming. The existing D M & E line, which passes through Balaton and Tracy in Lyon County, extends from Wall, SD to Winona, MN.

### October 13, 2010 (10 years ago)

June, July and August have seen the best growing conditions for soybeans, corn and small grain possible. Bountiful rains and warm growing conditions, even at night, have enabled the soybeans and corn to mature at a rate far ahead of normal. Then the rains began in September, leaving many fields with standing water, and visions of last year's difficult harvest conditions haunted many area farmers.

Chamber Chatter by Geneva Swan notes Balaton celebrated fall in a grand way. The Methodist women started early, serving coffee and rolls, and having a bake sale. The Women of Today held a chili and pie contest. The Chamber of Commerce sponsored a Tour of Homes. The Balaton Area Historical Society had a display at the Community Center including a variety of items from area residents.

## God bless the farmer



### Senior Moments

Nancy Iversen

Minnesota families that have owned their farms for at least 100 years; and have at least 50 acres in size and are currently involved in farming. Century Farm families receive a commemorative sign, as well as a certificate signed by the president of the State Fair, president of the Minnesota Farm Bureau and the Governor of Minnesota.

I'd like to name a few of the Century Farms recognized in the Balaton area as of 2018. I don't believe we have any in the past two years. We take our hats off to these families and honor them once again. This information was compiled from the Balaton Centennial book and Mary Ellen Mattson.

#### Recognized Century Farms

- Rick and Marla Anderson 1889-1999
- Dan and Beverly Anderson 1888-1988
- Lawrence Fedde 1878-1978
- Ken and Nancy Greenfield 1902-2002
- Rodney and Kelly Johnson 1888-1988
- Clifford Johnson 1912-2012
- Curtis and Lora Johnson 1886-1986
- Floyd Larson 1912-2012
- Clifford Lind 1890-1990,
- Marvin and Mary Mattson 1906-2006
- Lennen and Doris Nelson 1884-1984
- Marion (Miller) Tate 1908-2008
- Eldon Mitzner 1912-2012
- Irving Munson and sisters 1884-1984
- Schentzel Family 1902-2002
- Ron and Connie Schwartau 1903-2003
- Seth and Ashley Swan 1915-2015
- Todd and Kelley Swan 1903-2003

Fred Tutt farm 1900-2000  
Lowell and Peggy Wichmann 1890-1990  
Lynn and Kim Wichmann 1910-2010

I hope I haven't missed any families. If I have, please let me know and I will add the name in. This is quite a list. A lot of families from Sweden, Germany and Norway. Most of these farms are still being lived on and farmed by the families with a strong possibility of making it to 150 years or a Sesquicentennial farm site.

I grew up on a farm just outside of Tracy on "old number 7" that goes to Walnut Grove. My Dad was a hired man for Lloyd Guimond. We lived on the farm and my Dad drew \$100 a month for wages. That did include electricity, and we could raise our own meat. Dad worked for Guimond for 25 years, until Lloyd passed away in 1964.

My Dad loved to farm. The work was hard but so rewarding. Lloyd Guimond treated our family well and he was considered part of the family and would share meals with us on different occasions. We all had to work on the farm doing chores, driving tractor, walking bean fields, picking rock and baling hay. We weren't able to be in sports, although my older brother did play football as a senior in high school. Times were hard but we were together as a family and did things together as a family. The farm equipment was a lot smaller, so it took longer for the field work to get done. I know Daddy would be really shocked to see the equipment that is in the field nowadays.

I think the saying at the top of the next column says it all, no matter what road we've traveled in our lifetime, no matter what profession we've chosen, it all comes down to



the fact that the farmer has fed us all. We are grateful and blessed that God gave us a farmer. Thank you to all the farmers, everywhere, for the time and effort you've taken to make sure our country and our world are being fed.

Harvest time is a busy season and we also want to remember to give room on the roads for the farm equipment. They are large and heavy, they have to make wide turns, they are sometimes over the center line and they can't always see cars behind them, so please be considerate when driving. Give them room, and if you need to pass them, please make sure you do it safely.

Farmers, don't get into a big rush during harvest. Accidents happen so quickly, so be safe and shut the machine off before you fix or repair anything. Be cautious of storage bins, also fires that can start and so many other things that seem like a simple fix but turn into an accident waiting to happen.

Until next time, enjoy this beautiful fall weather we're having. Stay safe, but not fearful. Stay healthy and enjoy your life. Remember also, we all have our opinions, but respect other people's opinions. Don't fight and argue and lose family and friends over different opinions. Respect one another. God bless you and God bless our country, pray for our leaders and God Bless the Farmer!

## Hemp

Continued from page one

The harvesting process is quite labor intensive. A lopper is used to chop the plant at the base.

"It's basically a big scissors," Evans said. "Then we bring them up to the barn, hang them upside down on a line for a couple of weeks, and once they're cured, dried and shucked, we take them to a processor to have everything refined into oil. Last year, we did it all by hand. We put in so many hours. It was unbelievable."

Evans said they told themselves they were not doing that this year, especially when they have three times the product as last year. So, they invested some of their profits back into the business.

"It took us almost three months to trim everything we had last year," Evans said. "So, we are buying a trimming machine this year. It's still very manual. It's much more like a garden than a field because each individual plant takes so many hours to get from a seed to the oil that we make."

Seeds are planted near the end of May. The hope is that the plants mature before a big freeze.

"This is the time of year when we start freaking out because if we get a freeze, they go dormant and they won't finish," Evans said. "But it's staying above freezing and this last couple of weeks of weather have been advantageous for us."

Prairie Roots utilized four different varieties of seed this year. They will continue to research and develop genetic variations to find which ones could finish faster than other ones, so there's no such a risk at the end of the growing season. Evans said there was "incredible heart-break" last year when a three-day freeze hurt their overall yield.

While developing their own seeds will save on money — seeds last year cost roughly \$2,000 — it will also help them create breeds based on taste and smell. "It's all about genetics," Schaar said.

The biggest challenge of all, however, is passing the MDA testing.

"The MDA comes out here and clips off buds, and then they send it in," Evans said. "It needs to be below 0.3%. If it tests above that level, we actually have to chop those plants, burn those plants, get rid of those plants."

Evans pointed out that just the strains that tested high would need to be destroyed, not the entire three-quarter acre garden. While they were pleased to pass all of their strains, the businessmen strongly believe there is room for improvement regarding limits.

"Last year, we only had two different strains, so if one failed, there went half our crop," Evans said. "And even if you get 0.4% instead, there's a process that can take out the THC, so it shouldn't be illegal. The processor could take out the THC, leaving the CBD, and then it would be a legal product again."

Schaar said there's a lot of lobbying for raising the minimum from 0.3% up to 1%, but so far, it's falling on deaf ears.

"Even at 1% of CBD in the product, you're not going to get the intoxicating effects," he said. "There's a lot of risk involved, especially when you need to have a 12-acre minimum to get crop insurance."

Evans said that once you pass the MDA testing, you can basically do whatever you want with the bud.

"You can sell it as smokables or make it into a topical," he said. "There's nothing illegal you could do with it."

When Schaar was searching for something to help him sleep, he tried the smokable flower before dabbling with the under-the-tongue tinctures.

"I'm not a huge smoker," he said. "I fancy my lungs. So, I tried other things to see if it still works. The tincture worked for me. When we started growing it, we targeted what products we wanted to bring to market and decided to go with the tincture because not everybody wants to smoke. And there's enough stigma behind it to keep people from trying it."

Schaar said there's a long list of potential benefits of the oils, including help with inflammation and help with anxiety.

"It helps people," he said. "My life is way better with CBD."

While they don't have the capital or knowledge to take on the refining process, the growers plan to continue being involved in every other aspect of the process, including the development of an irrigation system, nutrition program and Integrated Pest Management program.

"From a business standpoint, we want to be as vertically integrated as we can," Schaar said.

Local businesses have started partnering with Prairie Roots, to put 1 fluid ounce bottles of oil on their shelves.

"Our bottles of 750 milligrams is on sale right now for \$35," Schaar said. "But we'll be discontinuing that in a week because in November, we want to give a veteran deal. For every bottle that somebody buys in the month of November, we're going to match it with a free bottle we'll donate to a vet. It's fun to grow cannabis, create our own product and build our own brand,

but we also wanted to weave in something where we could give back to the community in different ways."

Schaar said massage therapists Kari Dass (Tyler) and Shelley Nelson (Walnut Grove), along with Hair Co. owner Laura Albertson, were the first to carry the oils.

"We're super grateful to any of the local businesses that want to work with us," he said.

Schaar explains that he'd been infatuated with the whole idea since 2012, when he graduated from Southwest Minnesota State University with a degree in biology.

"I did my senior capstone project on CBD, where you take this one class and devote an entire semester scouring through all the research that's out there in the journals and whatnot," he said.

Now, that dream has become a reality. The hemp plot also works well for Evans, who owns and operates Prairieland Painting.

"It feels like all the time and effort we put into this is absolutely worth it because people are getting true benefits from the product itself," Evans said.

Marijuana's medical benefits were documented by the 1830s, and it didn't get outlawed in the U.S. until the Marihuana Tax Act of 1937. Then in 1970, it was officially made illegal under the Controlled Substances Act.

"It became illegal because it was a reason to target black people, to put them in jail," Evans said. "Hemp used to be the No. 1 crop in the United States before they illegalized it. They realized there were a lot of Mexicans and black people that smoked weed. It was a very easy way to incarcerate someone because they always had weed on them."

Schaar noted that hemp is now making a comeback in the textile industries, like clothing. It is also being used in protein powders and for industrial uses.

"There's some wild stuff out there, like hempcrete," he said. "It's like a brick except it's made out of hemp. And it's fireproof. So that portion of this industry is just starting to fire up. The cannabinoid part of the industry, growing for oil and CBD, is way more popular right now."

For years, the U.S. was the biggest importer of hemp. Schaar said it's time to fix that, stating, "We've got all this farmland and all this demand evidentially in our country, so why don't we grow it ourselves? Fiber can be used for anything and everything. So, it'll be interesting to see where the industry goes and what comes of it."

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