

Kittson County Enterprise



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Pictured above, Otters!

Three river otters popped up on the ice at Lake Bronson on Friday, April 8 for a play date around 8:30 a.m. These animals are common throughout Minnesota, according to the DNR website, and adults can weigh up to 30 pounds and grow up to 4 to 5 1/2 feet long, including an 18-inch tail.

(Enterprise photo by Anna Jauhola)

A dy(e)ing traditional art, reborn

Marie Lindstrom passes on Ukrainian Easter egg hobby to great-niece

By Anna Jauhola

Even in a strict Ukrainian household in the far reaches of Kittson County, there were colorful traditions that made life interesting and entertaining.

Marie (Weleski) Lindstrom, who grew up in Caribou just 1 mile from the Canadian border, remembers Fourth of July picnics, services at St. Nicholas Church and of course, dyeing Easter eggs with her mother. This activity wasn't just a one-morning venture — it was an art that took years of practice.

Lindstrom was born to Ukrainian immigrants and remembers watching her mother create patterns with dye and preserving them using beeswax. Then she learned the art and taught it to her daughter, Leanna Sandahl.

Dyeing Ukrainian Easter eggs, called pysankas, became a big hobby for Lindstrom when her late husband, Virgil, worked at the bus plant in Pembina.

"He'd be gone all day, so I had to have something to keep me out of trouble," she said, laughing. "It's a good pastime. I find it all very relaxing."

Ukrainian Easter eggs are not only intricately dyed, they are made from real eggs — usually chicken, but Lindstrom has used goose, emu, rhea and ostrich eggs as well.

You must start with fresh eggs straight from the bird. Lindstrom's eggs come from Al Johnson's chickens down the road. If they have any dirt or manure on them, she soaks them in a vinegar-water solution and lets them air dry overnight. She orders all her dye and materials from the Ukrainian Gift Shop, a store in Minneapolis. She started off using a traditional kistka, the tool used to melt and put beeswax on the egg. Once she made enough money from selling her eggs, Lindstrom purchased an electric kistka.



MARIE LINDSTROM, of Lake Bronson, has been dyeing Ukrainian Easter eggs for many years. She started working on this year's batch a few weeks ago. Shown in the foreground are, from left, an ostrich egg she dyed, which took her 30 hours; two emu eggs, which took about eight hours; and a variety of chicken eggs she created over the years. Two eggs she dyed in the last week sit on nails on the board behind the emu eggs. They were varnished and drying.

(Enterprise photo by Anna Jauhola)



The eggs are raw when she starts dyeing. The graduated process goes from lightest colors to darkest. So, any pattern she wants to show up in white, she makes that pattern on the egg with the beeswax. Then she applies dye in this order: yellow or gold, green, blue, orange, red or pink, and finally black, dark red or purple, and royal blue.

After applying each color, she then covers it with beeswax to prevent dyes from mixing.

When complete, she melts

the wax off over a lit candle, and carefully wipes it dry with a paper towel or rag. Then she applied a coat of varnish with her hands, lets the egg dry overnight on a pedestal of three nails and applies a second coat. Once that's dry, she drills holes with a dremel on the top and bottom of the egg, uses a wire to break up the yolk and a rubber bulb to blow out the insides. A careful washing under a thin stream of water cleans out the egg.

Continued on page 2

Council considers relief on rehab loan repayment

By Anna Jauhola

The Hallock City Council will hold a special meeting later this month after hearing a request from a business owner to prorate or forgive a loan Monday, April 4.

Davy Nesmoie, who owns a building on Second Street South in Hallock, took out a Small Cities Development Program loan for commercial rehabilitation in 2015.

Nesmoie attended the meeting and said he used the loan to repair the roof. The deferred loan was for \$13,270, which would be forgiven if he owned the building for more than 10 years after the date of the loan.

Nesmoie told the council he's on year six, but has a buyer for the building who plans to start a business there. The building is currently rented and occupied by Prior Electric. If he sells the building under the current terms, Nesmoie must repay the entire deferred amount.

He first bought the building in 2009 and converted it into a chiropractic clinic, in which he had his practice.

"I paid off my portion of this loan — in fact, I paid it off early," Nesmoie told the council. "I paid it this past January, because the lady that wants to buy my building, I wanted to make the closing go smoother. Then all of a sudden, this \$13,270 showed up on the preliminary title search."

When a business owner signs a Small Cities Development Program agreement, the city then places a lien on the building, according to the agreement provided by the city, which was signed by Nesmoie.

The document Nesmoie signed was prepared by Northwest Community Action out of Badger, which the city works with to loan out money for rehab projects.

"So, I didn't see this

until the first week of March. I didn't really know it was there," Nesmoie said. "And our agreed upon price in the purchase agreement sure didn't have this \$13,270 in it."

The original loan amount was \$21,270. Nesmoie said he's also had two other Economic Development Association loans, each of which was prorated and five-year terms, to remodel the building. He owns a building in Baudette, where he resides, and told the council that city gave him a 10-year, prorated loan — it is reduced by 25 percent every so often, and in year six, it is forgiven, he said.

"I don't even remember signing this thing," Nesmoie said, referring to the Small Cities rehab agreement. "Because I think it would have stuck in my head that I would have to hang onto this building for 10 years. Nevertheless, it says if I sell it before the 10-year period, I have to pay back the entire amount."

"So you're looking to have it prorated, right?" asked Mayor Dave Treumer. "But I mean, you signed this. That is your signature, right?"

"Yeah. Like I said, all my other loans are prorated. I'm just asking for a fair shake on it," Nesmoie said.

The council tabled the request to confer with the city attorney, noting they've never had to deal with this type of request and wanted to be sure it's done legally. They will hold a special council meeting later this month after asking legal advice and make a decision about how to handle the loan.

"Since we've never done it before, it'll set a precedence that's almost making a rule we do that," Treumer said. "So I'm not against anything, we just really should have legal guidance and go from there."

In other business, the council:

Continued on page 3

In this issue...

Horticultural Society sets spring workshop
Page 2

KC Museum: Elmer W. Johnson
Page 3

Margie's Musings
Page 4

Obituaries: Daniel Ingeman, 73 Harriet Sanner, 90 Audella Stammes, 96
Page 5

Card of Thanks
Page 5

Classifieds
Pages 6-7

Legals
Pages 7-8

Community Calendar
Page 9

MDHA scholarships for youth camps
Page 10

Old Timers Hockey
Pages 10

Americian Crystal gives to KC Robotics
Page 11

The Calf Whisperer
Page 12

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County commission mulling full-time deputy issue

By Anna Jauhola

Sheriff Mark Wilwant plans to retire Jan. 1, 2023, which is the end of his term after being elected four years ago. At its Tuesday, April 5 meeting, the Kittson County Commission further discussed how to move forward with hiring a full-time deputy before Wilwant departs.

Wilwant and Deputy Matt Vig attended the meeting with how many reports they made over the last few years, numbers the commissioners requested. Wilwant warned the commissioners those numbers are skewed for a few reasons — COVID, being one; but also each report is based on the original call, but may contain several other charges for which a report is not made.

"So you wouldn't get a number on that," Wilwant

said. "There's your number, but if they find drugs or make other charges on that stop, there isn't another (report) made. Each situation is one number."

Between March 23, 2020, and March 29, 2022, the Kittson County Sheriff's office handled 3,797 calls for service.

This spring, those interested in being elected sheriff of Kittson County can file for that position. Wilwant and Vig said they're sure someone from within the department plans to file, but in the case someone from the public wants to file, that's where it gets sticky in hiring a full-time deputy.

If someone within the department is elected sheriff, the department will need a new full-time deputy. But, if someone from the public is elected, then the department would

have too many full-time employees.

They'd like to begin advertising for the position and have someone hired in the next few months. Wilwant said they'd know whose filed by then and would have a better idea of who to hire.

The commission's personnel committee has been working on the issue, will take the numbers presented at the meeting and plan to get back to the sheriff by the next meeting in April.

In other business, the commission:

• Convened as the county ditch authority board and approved a drain tiling permit for DK Farms of Greenbush. The organization will be tiling about 40 acres that will drain into State Ditch 95.

• While convened as the ditch authority, the board heard from County

Engineer Andrea Weleski about County Ditch 13. Weleski said the next best step is for benefitted landowners to start a petition and get a bond for improvement on the ditch, which would be submitted to the watershed district for approval and design.

• Reconvened as the county board and heard updates from Weleski — MnDOT cannot get box culverts for the Highway 75 project from Hallock to the Canadian border, so that will not take place. The Highways 75/175 project in the city of Hallock will still happen, which is good because the same company that took the bid for that project also was the low bid for the CSAH 1 project this summer.

• Approved the low bid of \$3,759,682.46 from Davidson Ready Mix and Construction for the

regrade project on CSAH 1 southwest of Hallock. This is 11.25 percent over the engineer's estimate. The project will span from CSAH 10 to CSAH 7 at the Kennedy beet piler.

• Approved hiring Dana Olson as the new maintenance foreman for the highway department. Olson has been a motor grader operator for the county over the last eight years. "He comes with a lot of knowledge and is a good, hard worker," Weleski said. He started in the position Monday, April 11 so he can shadow outgoing maintenance foreman, Shawn Anderson. There were two internal applicants for the position. Olson's pay will be set at \$32.87 per hour. In conjunction with this, the commission approved Weleski to begin advertising for a new motor grader operator.

Continued on page 3

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