

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

TREE SERVICE

CROW'S NEST TREE SERVICE



- Tree Trimming/Removal • Lot Clearing
- Stump Grinding • Aerial Services
- Fertilization and Pesticide Injection
- Right of way maintenance • Fully Insured

Ben Bradford, Owner
Spicer, MN • 320-212-3292

MEDICAL/DENTAL



Benson Family Eye Care

219 South 14th St., Benson
Dr. Todd Trudel, OD
Dr. Jacob Bollman, OD
Mon-Fri 8AM-5PM
PH 320-842-4131
www.toddtrudelod.com
Most Insurances Accepted

Expanded Summer Hours, including Fridays. Call for an appointment.

Family Dentistry

Dr. Anthony Hilleren

Bluestem DENTAL

210 South 13th Street • Benson
PH 320-842-4191 bluestemdental.com

FISCHER LASER EYE CENTER

Your Family Eye Doctors

- Cataract Surgery
- LASIK Surgery
- Comprehensive Eye Examinations
- Area's Largest Eyewear Selection

www.FischerLaser.com

WILLMAR 235-2020
PAYNESVILLE 243-2020
OLIVIA 523-2020
LITCHFIELD 593-2020
NEW LONDON 354-2020

ROOFER

Architectural & Shingle Roof Systems

Preferred Roofing

Licensed & Insured
Free Estimates LIC# BC769996

320-905-5245

Sue Lundberg

Owner & Operator
7 Miles South of Murdock on Co. Rd 3
875-2013
Mon. & Thurs.: Noon - 9:00 p.m.
Tues., Wed., Fri., & Sat.: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

SUSIE'S Styles
• Nexcus products available

CONTRACTORS

RESIDENTIAL * COMMERCIAL * AGRICULTURAL

All Types of Flat Work
Concrete Stamping & Staining
Driveway Sealing - Epoxy Coating
Concrete Polishing
ICF Basements & Foundations

DOUBLE J CONCRETE

2396 HWY 9 NE, NEW LONDON
320-354-4945 www.doublejconcrete.com

FINANCE

CITIZENS ALLIANCE BANK

Customer Driven. Community Focused.®

Murdock
520 Main Avenue, PO Box 50
Murdock, MN 56271
(320)875-2431
www.citizensalliancebank.com



Rolling hills and bird-planted cedars feature the idyllic countryside which Mark Haugejorde envisions as a Minnesota destination golf course. His dream is

not universally held; some in Lake Andrew Township, including one of the land's owners, are trying to stop the development.

Tangled golf course web

(Continued from page 1)

golf, he said, and he sees the 187 acres of CRP land with its varied topography as a canvas for economic growth, possibly generating as high as \$5 million a year -- with a lot of great golf being played in the meantime.

The hills make such a perfect bed, little dirt would need to be moved, Haugejorde has iterated.

Now a distinct cohort of locals have come to the fore in a generalized chorus of dissent, and have become detractors who pass petitions -- several have gone around. For some, their realization is a revelation... many others have lamented the proposal since its inception.

Most of those 35 who flooded the Lake Andrew Township Hall -- some immediate neighbors -- support the plaintiffs in the civil case and express fears about the millions of gallons of water an 18-hole course would pump from the local aquifer.

"I think you when you speak to individuals within the Lake Andrew Township there are different types of objections, mainly environmental. They have expressed they do not see a benefit to the activity," said Bonnie Watson, Lake Andrew Township Clerk.

"I would describe the atmosphere of the meeting Tuesday as tense," she continued.

The traffic of beverage carts would crimp some of the best wildlife habitat around, in the telling of those opposed, and fertilizer runoff will mar nearby tributaries with grave downstream impacts, and could endanger surrounding lakes. Such statements, as of now, are untested. They imagine a noxious, lighted clubhouse in the night.

Tuesday's meeting at Lake Andrew town hall was emblematic of a white-hot ordeal that involves inner-family litigation and, as the 35 filtered into the building, evidence of the discontent that simmers in northern Kandiyohi County.

Alicia Glimsdahl hoped the concerns she and her neighbors have would be considered, but as the Tuesday address hit its 15 minute mark, none were. Glimsdahl lives a quarter of a mile from where stakes would be planted for Tepetonka Club. Her three children ride their bikes along the gravel road connected to land that still yields an annual harvest of hay for livestock farmers in the area.

She has researched potential tax cuts Tepetonka Club LLC would be eligible for and said, "It's disheartening to think we might have to make up a tax deficit for a millionaire's sandbox," alluding to the six figure membership fees associated with the club that has been called 'exclusive but not exclusionary.'

"It was a sales pitch. And he's a pretty good salesman, but I think he left the meeting in a hurry because he realized there isn't any public support here," said a separate individual who owns adjacent property, who wished to remain nameless.

An air of confidence has

held the public appearances of Tepetonka Club LLC. They did not field questions Tuesday. But audio recording -- and a detail corroborated by at least 10 witnesses -- catches a bold statement: Tepetonka Club and their representatives will own the land.

Tepetonka Club have every right to open up a golf club wherever they wish, so long as they do so fairly. But some are of the opinion they are being treated unfairly, that their voices have not been heard.

Haugejorde was contacted for this article, but elected not to comment. Haugejorde and the Tepetonka Club maintain they have handled matters with the utmost fairness.

A binding purchasing agreement has been established, even if they have not yet closed on Cedar Hills, the land in contention.

The lay of the land has a postcard grandeur about it. That, all parties involved agree on, even if it's all they agree on.

A Tangled Legal Case

In a years-long search, Haugejorde toured Land of 10,000 Lakes and its neighbors. He wished to discover land that would inspire. He found it five miles from his childhood home. One of the land's owners, Sherrie Ulman agreed to sell the 187 acres to him. The two were contemporaries at New London-Spicer high school.

Since then stakes, fluttering pink ribbons attached, have been pounded into the rich black dirt amongst the gopher holes and steepness of the hills on which wind-ragged cedar trees stand several feet tall, giving the place the name Cedar Hills

The civil case went kinetic in late April when Dean Thorson, 56, sued older sister, Sherrie Ulman, 67, and older brother, Dan Thorson, 61, after he heard word of the sale.

But May 6, District Judge Stephen Wentzell dismissed motions asserting farm bylaws were violated and awarding a partial summary judgment to the defendants -- Dan Thorson and Sherrie Ulman -- and that the bylaws did not apply to Cedar Hills Century Farm.

This is crucial because family farm corporations are bound to a two-thirds sale system: in such circumstances, all the rightful owners of a property -- in this case the three siblings -- would have to espouse a purchasing agreement for it to be viable. But the May ruling dealt a fatal blow to that angle of legal defense.

The trial was extended May 6. The next, and most recent phase of the trial, is Thorson's claim that his sister failed in her fiduciary responsibility in the described purchase -- what amounts to his amending the initial complaint regarding bylaws. Judge Wentzell has deemed this allegation actionable. So there will be another hearing.

The purchase agreement was for \$1.2 million between the two elder Thorson children and Tepetonka Club LLC, a figure allegedly not in sync with the current land

valuations with the per-acre cost coming to over \$6000.

Of course, Dean Thorson and his wife Laurie were not included in the huddle of brokering. Tepetonka Club LLC did not approach him, nor were they brought into negotiations by Dan or Sherrie, Dean said.

Sherrie Ulman and Dan Thorson did not have the 187 acres assessed before the sale, as the civil suit in the alleges: "committed corporate waste by agreeing to sell the Kandiyohi County agricultural property at significant discount and without having the property appraised. Further negligence in not including Dean Thorson is at issue as well, stated the most recent order.

The trial moves on, and potential for compromise appears elusive.

Planning

OMC Golf Course Design, the Australian company tasked with designing Tepetonka Club, is renowned for their breathtaking courses.

Other projects in this line of destination, such as Sand Hills, was built in Mullen, Nebraska, five hours from a major city. Now it is rated by Golfweek as the best American course constructed since 1960. New London is less than two hours from Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Haugejorde and the extensive contacts he has grown throughout a career allowed him to bring OMC Golf on board, whose architects are most suited for this project, he believes.

A tentative timeline for Tepetonka Club was noted by Haugejorde at a New London Chamber of Commerce meeting on May 26. Much of the construction will take place in 2023, if the Tepetonka Club acquires the land, in a scenario that will be decided by the legal system.

"We're going to move almost no dirt," said Haugejorde, according to an article in the Lakes Area Review. "We'll do some burning around the perimeter of the golf course and build the greens, but all of those hills will have been left uncut."

The name Tepetonka Club hearkens to a successful Green Lake resort, one operational for 40 years after its 1895 construction.

"People from other states came to Hotel Tepetonka for the fishing and the clear water. The only difference here is that they will be coming to play golf," Haugejorde said at the New London chamber meeting.

Walk through Cedar Hills

Dean Thorson cannot explain why his brother and sister elected to sell. His son, daughter-in-law and grand-

children have lived in the original farmhouse now for five and a half years.

He said the bylaws were mishandled by an attorney who drafted the contract in 1999.

He and his wife Laurie say -- in remarks difficult to dispute -- their portion of the property has been sold without their consent.

What also stands out is they live three miles on and are the ones who have maintained the farm site, and most happily, they added, since 1987 when re-seeding took place as the land went from crop production to CRP, reviving native prairie habitat. The five who live in the farmhouse on Cedar Hills would be facing a forced exit if the purchasing agreement is approved in court.

"We don't dare tell my father about this," Dean Thorson said. "Because it would kill him."

"We're against the sale of our family land. It doesn't matter if it's for a golf course or not, although we would be opposed to a golf course coming here even if it wasn't our property," Laurie Thorson said. "The retention of the land is more important to us than whatever money."

Here heated hunting quarters look out on the sweep of the land, below a feckless prairie sky. The deer stand was built in 2008 when their son returned from military service in Iraq. The rich black soil brings swarms of flies in damp periods. Fawns run rife in spring.

Dean Thorson recalled what sections of the land, walled by three-strand barbed wire, were dedicated to pastures. If the property has to be sold, Dean and his wife would rather see it returned to crop production.

Those pushing Tepetonka have permission to be on the property insofar as they have a permit. They come every so often, driving new stakes into the ground, bewildering to the Thorsons who find them when its time to bale hay.

No bad blood or animosity has, at least before this, has ever swept through the family, they say. Ulman and Dan Thorson had periodically visited from their respective homes, Dean said, always enjoying it, whether for the premier hunting it offers or just the mere relaxation that comes so easily there. Deepening what is an odd tale, financial need doesn't seem to be, to Dean, the pressing motive of his siblings' desire to sell.

"They have told everyone that the Thorson family embraces the golf course," Laurie Thorson said. "Well, we're here -- we actually live here -- and we don't. We're not interested in selling."

THINK OF THE ROMANCE!

OR, if you have kids, think of the cozy time around a fireplace.

Offered for sale, a two-way gas fireplace, only driven to church on Sundays (actually, it came out of a church, so kind of the same thing.)

New, this would cost thousands. This slightly used unit is offered for only \$300. You come and get it (Kerkhoven). Call Ted at 320-264-3071 or 320-264-1301. First come, first served... this won't last long!

So... what's new at Walts?

Walt's Rewards

IT'S FREE
IT'S EASY

Go to
RegisterLoyalty.com/walts
Download the Walt's App to track points and get monthly specials

Walt's

Corner of 1st Street and Willmar Ave.
PH 320-235-5740 • www.waltsr.com

Advertising questions?
Come to the Village for answers... Village Ink. PH 320-264-3071 (Kerkhoven Banner), 320-847-3130 (Clara City Herald) or 320-354-2945 (Lakes Area Review, New London-Spicer).