

Pine Knot News

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INSIDE

This week in Carlton County's only independent, locally owned newspaper.



Halloween is his game **Page 9**



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Coach gets 200th win **Page 17**

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Hens roam; social media finds them a home

Mike Creger
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The lost chickens of Carlton County have been found. And they've been adopted.

This week, for the second time in a month, people exploring the woods off Carlton County Road 4 between Interstate 35 and Hay Lake — along the border of Blackhoof and Twin Lakes townships — discovered hundreds of chickens roaming wild. And for the second time since Sept. 12, a call to action on social media has raised outrage and compassion as people have taken the birds in.

It isn't difficult to ascertain where the birds came from. Nearby is the Promised Land Farm, which provides meats and farm produce using what it calls

Get listed

Promised Land Farm in Twin Lakes Township announced it will post on its Facebook page, and at the website www.promisedlandfarmmn.com, information on taking hens it no longer wants. Those who would like to be on a list to be contacted when hens are available should email promisedlandfarmmn@gmail.com.

sustainable practices. That includes eggs. Rob and Lori Gamble said they've run out of options when it comes to their Rhode Island Reds that no longer produce enough eggs. "They're from our farm," Rob Gamble said plainly Wednesday morning. He said he had just talked with a deputy from

the Carlton County Sheriff's Office, which was tipped off after a post about the chickens was sent to various local and statewide Facebook groups of people interested in egg farming.

The chickens are old and not producing, Gamble said. "We can't afford to keep them and feed them until they drop dead."

The couple tried to find buyers, typically those looking for meat to make soups. There have been no takers, so the couple turned the hens loose. "It is what it is," Gamble said. "No one will buy them en masse."

He said leaving the birds to the wild wasn't as "nasty" as the larger egg producers who close barns and use gas to kill spent birds. "At least they get to fend for themselves," Gamble said.

Continued on next page



Hundreds of laying hens deemed expendable were released from the Promised Land Farm in rural Carlton the past two months. About 200 were found roaming in an area along Carlton County Road 4 this week. They were corralled and people online rallied to adopt them. *Contributed photo*

COVID-19 UPDATE



Carlton's Clayton Kauppila drove through and got a shot Wednesday at the Carlton County transportation building. "This is fabulous, what they put together to help folks so we don't have to go hunting for a shot," he said. *Jana Peterson / Pine Knot News*

Double-dose drive-in shots draw crowd

Jana Peterson
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After making Time magazine last year with one of the first drive-thru vaccination clinics in the country, Carlton County did it again this week.

This time, residents could get a twofer, two shots in the same drive-thru, both of them free. On tap were both Covid-19 and influen-

za vaccinations, inside the county transportation building on Wednesday and the county's Barnum garage on Thursday.

Getting both shots — a double, if you please — is fine according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said Ali Bachinski, Carlton County emergency preparedness coordinator.

"We are still in the midst of a global pandemic. Covid-19 is

circulating in our community, so as we move into flu season it's really important to protect yourself against respiratory viruses like influenza, and the best way to do that is to get your flu shot." She pointed out later in the press conference that getting vaccinated is also the best way to protect yourself, your loved ones and your community from Covid-19, also a respiratory illness. She backed up her advice with a

statistic on breakthrough infections, which is when already vaccinated people catch the disease. "Ninety-eight percent of fully vaccinated individuals are still not getting breakthrough disease, which means the vaccines are really effective."

She said even if someone did contract the disease, being vaccinated dramatically reduces the risk of hospitalization and death.

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ABOUT US

The Pine Knot News is the most comprehensive news chronicler in Carlton County and the only one that is locally owned and operated. Begun in 2018, our name is an homage to the area's first newspaper, The Pine Knot, which first printed in Cloquet in 1884 using paper from a local mill. The Pine Knot News is a proud member of the Minnesota Newspaper Association. We are its 2021 weekly newspaper of the year after earning 33 awards for newspaper excellence. The Pine Knot News is certified to print legal notices and is the official newspaper for most public bodies in Carlton County.

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WEATHER

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	EXTENDED
			
HIGH 49 LOW 40	HIGH 54 LOW 35	HIGH 55 LOW 37	MONDAY: Mostly sunny. High 59. Low 39.
Mostly cloudy.	Mostly sunny.	Sunny.	Forecast courtesy meteorologist Dave Anderson, CBS News 3

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Hens ...

Continued from previous page

“They’ll get killed one way or another,” Gamble said. “Gassing is much more humane,” said Wayne Martin, an educator for the University of Minnesota Extension Service in St. Paul. He specializes in livestock and said domesticated hens “have no clue on how to survive in the wild. They will starve, if not killed off by predators.”

Kyleen Pedersen said it has been obvious on both occasions when birds were found that they were suffering. She is a former resident of the area and has chickens of her own. She created the Facebook posts about the hens. Relatives still in the area around the farm have alerted Pedersen to the finds.

In September, hens were feeding on a dead chicken. This week, after being corralled, the hens were obviously thirsty, Pedersen said.

Martin, from the extension service, said the hens would especially struggle this time of year with a declining amount of bugs to forage.

Solution

Martin said he would ask farmers around the state what they are doing with spent hens. “I can see there’s a need for information about this.”

Pedersen has a solution and the Gambles are welcoming it. Social media has made it “easy for me to find them homes,” she said. She estimates there have been at least 300 hens found and adopted.

Martin said that while a hen may not produce enough eggs to make them profitable for a farm, they’re perfect for backyard operations. Peak laying years are the first two years, he said, but hens can keep laying for five to eight years. “They’re still good in providing a family eggs for a week.”

Lori Gamble said she’s tried using social media in the past to flush interest in unwanted birds to little success. She was glad to hear the hens released and found alive have found homes. Pedersen is compiling a list of those interested in taking birds in the future. The Gambles said having a place for their hens would be welcomed.

“People are taking 20 at a time,” Pedersen said. “Everyone is looking for



Hens at the Promised Land Farm wander free within fences, as seen in this photo from the farm’s website. But no domesticated chicken can live for long in the Minnesota wilderness. *Contributed photo*

chickens.”

“Our intention was never to do any harm,” Lori Gamble said.

Gamble said some family issues have made things a bit of a scramble at the farm this fall. She said the couple will update their Facebook and web pages to provide information on taking chickens.

The cost of keeping any livestock has risen sharply in the past months, Rob Gamble said. Feed grain costs have gone up 25 to 33 percent, he said. “We can’t have hundreds of feathered pets,” he said.

Pedersen said she hopes the outpouring of help in the past two cases will end the Gambles’ practice of

letting birds fend for themselves. People are out there and want to help, she said. “It isn’t all that dang hard.”

Pedersen said as much later in her Wednesday afternoon post to the Facebook group called Duluth Chicken Club. “With the power of social media, you can find homes for all the ones that are unwanted.”

Calls and emails to the Carlton County sheriff and attorney seeking comment went unanswered Wednesday before press time.

SENIOR DINING

Arrowhead Senior Nutrition menu:

Friday, Oct. 15
Creamed chicken & biscuit, green beans, fresh fruit

Sat-Sun, Oct. 16-17
Frozen meals available

Monday, Oct. 18
Tater tot hotdish, tossed salad, juice, fruit

Tuesday, Oct. 19
Roast turkey, mashed potatoes & gravy, dressing, dessert, cake

Wednesday, Oct. 20
Sloppy Joe with bun,

coleslaw, potato chunks, whipped gelatin

Thursday, Oct. 21
Egg & sausage muffin sandwich, hash browns, juice, yogurt

Friday, Oct. 22
Chicken noodle soup, egg salad sandwich, juice, fruit

Call the Senior Center, 218-879-5870, from your car for curbside meal pickup. Meals are served Monday-Friday at 11:30 a.m. Registered customers are offered meal service

for a \$4 contribution, \$8 for under age 60. Menus subject to change without notice. AEOA is a private, nonprofit, nongovernmental agency.

Happy 90th Birthday
Jolanne Orlowski
♥ OCTOBER 23 ♥

With all our love,
Cathy, Mike, Susie,
Cyndie, Stephie, Tim, Lisa
& Families, and Grandkids
& Great-grandkids




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