





# IN YOUR CORNER

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## LAKES AREA FORECAST

We have finally broken the extreme heat that we had Sunday into Monday. Of course, the region had heat advisories and extreme heat warnings into



Mark Anthony  
Meteorologist

early Tuesday morning. At times, it felt like 100 to 110 degrees across the state.

Brainerd, Little Falls, Park Rapids and Hutchinson climbed to 98 degrees

on Sunday for the actual air temperature. Alexandria, Detroit Lakes, Elbow Lake, Kimball and Montevideo all topped out at 99 degrees on Father's Day.

Meanwhile, Granite Falls, Morris, Wheaton, and Moorhead all hit 100 degrees on Sunday. If you thought that was hot, Madison was the hottest at 102 degrees F.

Another scorcher was found on Monday as temperatures again climbed to near 100 degrees.

A cold front pushed through Monday evening and that did trigger some scattered showers and thunderstorms. On the backside of this system, slightly cooler weather pushed through on Tuesday.

Expect temperatures to be in the 80s for the midweek and then back into the lower 90s for Thursday and Friday. Hang in there as we could see some upper 70s by the weekend. Happy summer everyone!

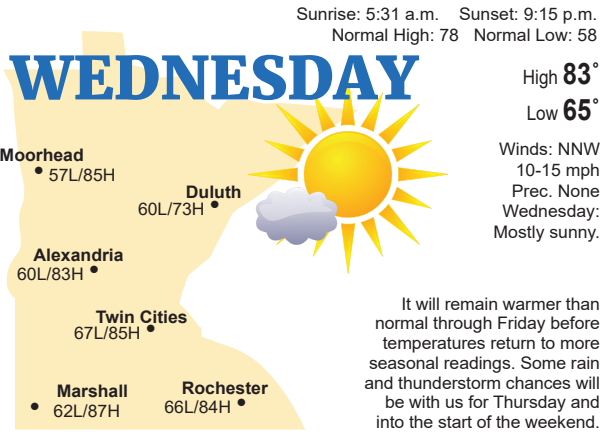
## WEATHER HISTORY

On this date in 1919, records show that the "second deadliest tornado hit Minnesota near Fergus Falls." According to the National Weather Service, that tornado killed 59 people in Fergus Falls.

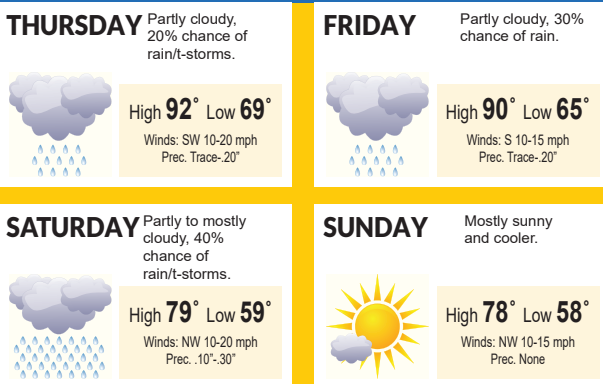
## WEATHER FACT

Did you know that the average speed of a tornado "moves forward at 30 mph, but it can vary from nearly stationary to 70 mph?"

## MN AT A GLANCE



## OUTLOOK



Your 5-day forecast is brought to you by  
Alomere Health

# Detainer filed in case of baby formula theft

By Travis Gulbrandson  
Alexandria Echo Press

ALEXANDRIA — A detainer has been placed in the file of a Minneapolis man accused of stealing thousands of dollars worth of baby formula from the Alexandria Walmart.

The document was filed in Douglas County District Court in the case of Leslie Gene Robinson, 60, who is charged with felony theft — theft of moveable property with a value in excess of \$5,000. The maximum sentence for the charge is 10 years imprisonment and a \$20,000 fine.

In the United States, a detainer in the context of criminal law is a request filed by a criminal justice agency with the institution in which a prisoner is incarcerated, asking the institution either to hold the prisoner for the agency or to notify the agency when release of the prisoner is imminent.

Under the Interstate Agreement on Detainers and the Uniform Mandatory Disposition of



Robinson

Detainers Act, Robinson has the right to request disposition of his charges by sending a request to the prosecutor and the appropriate court. Once they receive the request, they have 180 days to bring Robinson to trial or otherwise resolve the charges, unless the court having jurisdiction of the matter grants a necessary or reasonable continuance.

Robinson currently is incarcerated at the facility in St. Cloud, under the charges of felony theft and soliciting a juvenile to commit a criminal act.

The charges for which he was incarcerated stem from an incident in 2020 when Robinson and two juvenile females left a Target store in Rochester with \$1,504.07 worth of baby formula.

According to court documents, Robinson is responsible for the theft

of more than \$40,000 worth of baby formula at Target stores alone.

In Douglas County, Robinson is charged with felony theft, following a trio of incidents in 2021 in which he is alleged to have entered the Alexandria Walmart and taken large amounts of baby formula, among other items.

A Douglas County warrant was filed against Robinson on May 26, and according to the Minnesota Department of Corrections, he was incarcerated on that same day. His anticipated release date is Oct. 23, 2023.

Robinson has a long criminal history, with 88 cases disposed in the state of Minnesota, dating back to 1978. He also has at least 40 cases pending against him in the state.

The warrant against him also listed 25 aliases, including Lesley Gene Baker, Tim Baker, Carl Francis Fairbank, Carl Francis Gene and Charles Raymond Robinson.

Email reporter Travis Gulbrandson at [tgulbrandson@echopress.com](mailto:tgulbrandson@echopress.com).

## COVID-19 CASE COUNT

Total number of COVID-19 cases confirmed by the Minnesota Department of Health in Douglas County and the surrounding area as of June 17 (cumulative):  
Douglas County — 11,496 (118 deaths).  
Grant — 1,544 (12 deaths).  
Otter Tail — 14,084 (171 deaths).  
Pope — 3,316 (18 deaths).  
Stearns — 53,294 (372 deaths).

Stevens — 2,808 (14 deaths)  
Todd — 7,091 (61 deaths).  
Statewide (cumulative) — 1,460,014 (12,744 deaths).  
Active cases in Douglas County — 76 (according to Horizon Public Health as of June 16).  
People (16 and older) with at least one vaccine dose in Douglas County — 20,950 or 69.1% of the population (as of June 15).

# Spotlight: April Brejcha, CRT

Retiring this year from her 43-year career at Alomere Health, April was given the 2022 Respiratory Therapist of the Year award from the Minnesota Society for Respiratory Care. "That was a total surprise," says April. Yet to anyone who knows her, it was an honor many years in the making.

Her first experience with health care came at an early age when she volunteered at the hospital in her early teens. The Health Occupations Program offered through Jefferson High School gave her even more insight. Health care agreed with her, so she enrolled at Anoka Technical College to get a certification in respiratory therapy. She finished school on a Friday, and started at Alomere the following Monday—and stayed for over four decades. "Starting out with only a year of schooling and only \$4.50 an hour, it's turned into an awesome career for me," laughs April.

Over the years, April has seen a lot of change. The department's technology has improved dramatically, and the size of the hospital has grown as well. Yet she is quick to point out, that the values that make a good team don't change, "Everyone here really knows their jobs

and can be counted on in an emergency. Which is important, because one minute you're working on routine therapy for a patient, and the next you're responding to a code blue in the ER." This trust built over the years, has made her friendships with colleagues very close. Teaching CPR has also allowed her to make a lot of friends in the community. And yet, those friendships made it difficult to do her job during COVID. "It was hard to put breathing tubes in people you know and care about. During the first surge, many of those people didn't come home," recalls April.

In retirement, April has plans to spend more time with her family, a road trip this fall with close friends, and hopes for touring Alaska next year. She'll stay active if her husband's retirement is any indicator of their commitment to the community. "He has 7 part-time jobs," says April, "a first responder here in Alex, a safety officer at a construction company, he oversees security for the local race track, drives semi trucks, teaches policing at Alex Tech, he's on the Fair's board, and works as a security guard at Alomere Health one day a week." April is happy her husband is so industrious,

because when he was pursuing his degree in law enforcement, "That's when we first met, he had a job driving the ambulance here at the hospital."

Looking back over her long career, she will miss her friends at work the most, "They've become an extension of my family." When asked what part she is most proud of, she replies with the idea that she and her team, "...really helped people." It's safe to say, with her years of teaching CPR in the community combined with her years at the hospital, April Brejcha has saved countless lives.

From all of us at Alomere Health, thank you April for your selfless commitment to the community. We will miss you but wish you a wonderful retirement.

Want to join our award-winning team? Visit [AlomereHealth.com](https://www.alomerehealth.com) and click the "Careers" button to view all of the open positions.



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# Award-winning Minnesota author speaks at Douglas County Library

By **Thalen Zimmerman**  
Alexandria Echo Press

ALEXANDRIA — Minnesota author Margaret Standafer spoke to a crowd of almost 40 people at the Douglas County Library during a meet and greet about the topic of dementia and her award-winning book that addresses it.

The June 13 event was part of the library's annual Community Read effort.

"I thought it went fabulous," said Dawn Dailey, Douglas County Library director. "I was excited to see how many people showed."

Every year the Friends of the Library chooses a book by a Minnesota author or at least with Minnesota ties for the Douglas County Library's Community Read program and then creates

events relating to a topic in the book.

This year they decided on "I Know an Old Lady," a book about a young boy sentenced by a judge to spend his summer working for an elderly woman, rumored by the town to be a child killer.

Since the book touches on dementia, speaker events were scheduled to present information about different aspects of dementia.

► On Tuesday, June 7, Annie Erickson shared her personal experiences of living with her husband's dementia. She is currently writing "Love in the Time of Dementia: A Memoir in Essays." A book that challenges society's fears of dementia, according to the library's website.

► Rona Karasik, a teacher of gerontology

at St. Cloud State University, will present on the technical side of dementia on Monday, June 27, at 4 p.m.

► Dr. Joe Gaulger, professor at the Division of Health Policy and Management School of Public Health and director for the Center of Aging, will present on the professional side of handling dementia on Monday, July 18, at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

"We did three sides; the empathy, technical and professional sides of dementia," said Dailey. "We try to do things that involve the community since it's a Community Read."

All the presentations will take place in the library meeting room. "I'm just really getting into reading. I really started enjoying it now that I'm retired," said

Barb Flolo of Alexandria who attended Monday's event. "When I read that she was coming, it sounded so interesting, I had to come. And I enjoy coming to the library."

Flolo says although she hasn't read "I Know an Old Lady," she is excited to start as she hears it is "awesome" and anxious as she knows it touches on dementia, which runs in her family.

Before she concluded with an audience Q and A, Standafer spoke for nearly an hour about her reluctant beginning as an author when she tried to prove to her insistent husband that she couldn't write. She also talked about her inspiration and writing process, her completed series and an upcoming series as well as her award-winning book, "I Know an



**Thalen Zimmerman / Alexandria Echo Press**  
Award-winning author Margaret Standafer talks writing, inspiration, her completed series and her book "I Know an Old Lady" to a crowd of almost 40 at the Douglas County Library's Community Read event on June 13.

Old Lady."

"Honestly, I never thought I'd get to do something like this," said Standafer when asked what it means for her to come and speak about her work with Minnesota communities. "I absolutely love being able to do this."

"I Know an Old Lady" earned Standafer the Minnesota Author

Project's 2021 Best Indie-Published Adult Fiction Author through Minnesota Writes Minnesota Reads.

Bethany on the Lake, the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, and the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund are sponsoring this year's Community Read events.

Email reporter **Thalen Zimmerman** at [tzimmerman@echopress.com](mailto:tzimmerman@echopress.com)



**Alexandria Echo Press file photo**  
Music is always a big part of the Osakis Grand Parade.

## Get ready for the Osakis Days Festival

By **Al Edenloff**  
Alexandria Echo Press

OSAKIS — Osakis will be the place to be in Douglas County this weekend.

It's time for the Osakis Days Festival.

The fun starts on Thursday, June 23, with an Osakis Days Social at the VFW at 5 p.m., followed by a dinner at 6 p.m.

This will be followed by three days jam-packed with activities. Here's a rundown of the events:

### Friday, June 24

Downtown sidewalk sales will take place all day.

A meat raffle and horse races will be held at 5:30 p.m. at the VFW.

Knights Pub and Grub will also offer meat raffles starting at 5:30 p.m.

At 8 p.m., "Junkyard Caddy" will play country western music.

### Saturday, June 25

Kids' games will take place at Park Osagi starting at 10 a.m. This will include a bouncy house, Erickson's Petting Zoo, Sorny B's Food Truck and Noble Treats.

At 11 a.m., there will be a sand money hunt, followed by the Red River Pedal Pulls at 1 p.m.

The Osakis VFW will offer bingo at 2 p.m. and will host a street dance at 8 p.m. featuring "If Nothing Else."

Sorny B's Food Truck will also be there.

### Sunday, June 26

O-Town Tavern will host a BBQ party on its patio starting at 11 a.m. until the food is gone.

The much-anticipated Osakis Grand Parade will take place at 1 p.m., followed by a firefighters' water fight.

Bingo at the VFW at 2 p.m. will cap off the events.

Email Editor **Al Edenloff** at [aedenloff@echopress.com](mailto:aedenloff@echopress.com)



**Travis Gulbrandson / Alexandria Echo Press**  
Madison Bush holds Doug the Boa Constrictor on the Douglas County Courthouse lawn during a presentation on Thursday.

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## Snake, Rattle and Roll presentation given at courthouse

By **Travis Gulbrandson**  
Alexandria Echo Press

ALEXANDRIA — A presentation about snakes featuring several real animals was given on the Douglas County Courthouse lawn on Thursday, June 16.

The program was called Snake, Rattle and Roll, and was presented by Madison

Bush of Snake Discovery in Maplewood.

Among the reptiles displayed were a bull snake, a milk snake and a boa constrictor named Doug.

The event was sponsored by the Douglas County Library Friends and Foundation.

Email reporter **Travis Gulbrandson** at [tgulbrandson@echopress.com](mailto:tgulbrandson@echopress.com)

**Good Shepherd VBS registration is now open!**

Join us for "On The Case" as we play detective and find our way to Jesus. VBS is August 1-4, free family supper at 5:00. Mystery solving fun is from 6:00-8:30.

*This event is free of charge and includes an "On The Case" t-shirt.*

Register online at [goodshepherdalex.com](mailto:goodshepherdalex.com)  
email [goodshepherdalexsec@gmail.com](mailto:goodshepherdalexsec@gmail.com)  
or call 320-762-5152

*Registration before July 15 will guarantee a t-shirt that fits! Detectives ages 3-entering 6th grade are welcome!*



### Phone and Internet Discounts Available to CenturyLink Customers

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission designated CenturyLink as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier within its service area for universal service purposes. CenturyLink's basic local service rates for residential voice lines are \$15.96-\$27.50 per month and business services are \$34.61-\$48.61 per month. Specific rates will be provided upon request.

CenturyLink participates in a government benefit program (Lifeline) to make residential telephone or qualifying broadband service more affordable to eligible low-income individuals and families. Eligible customers are those that meet eligibility standards as defined by the FCC and state commissions. Residents who live on federally recognized Tribal Lands may qualify for additional Tribal benefits if they participate in certain additional federal eligibility programs. The Lifeline discount is available for only one telephone or qualifying broadband service per household, which can be on either wireline or wireless service. Broadband speeds must be 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload or faster to qualify.

A household is defined for the purposes of the Lifeline program as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline service is not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in the program. Consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain a Lifeline discount can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from the program.


If you live in a CenturyLink service area, please call 1-800-201-4099 or visit [centurylink.com/lifeline](https://centurylink.com/lifeline) with questions or to request an application for the Lifeline program.






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**Outreach Food Shelf**



*A Thank You to our Hunger Heroes*


Volunteers giving their time and energy, food rescue partners donating produce and groceries, manufacturers donating product, individuals and businesses donating money and more, hunger partners and many more examples of our community Standing Against Hunger. We're grateful.

**June 29, 2022 • 4:30 - 7:00 PM**  
**1205 Lake Street**  
**FOOD, TOURS AND ENTERTAINMENT**

*Mark Anthony*

PAYING TRIBUTE TO

*Elvis Presley & Neil Diamond*



*Sandy Susag*

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*Dolly Parton*



AN ECHO PRESS EDITORIAL

Closure needed in Huisentruit case



Huisentruit

Someone, somewhere — maybe even in Douglas County — may hold the key to a 27-year-old mystery: What happened to television news anchor Jodi Huisentruit?

As reported in the St. Paul Pioneer Press, Huisentruit has now been missing as long as she was alive; she was 27 when she disappeared 27 years ago on June 27, 1995.

Next Monday, friends, family and members of FindJodi.com, a website and podcast devoted to solving the case of her disappearance, will gather outside the TV station where she worked, KIMT-TV in Mason City, Iowa, to mark the anniversary, the Pioneer Press reported.

One can only imagine what Huisentruit’s friends, family members and co-workers have been going through in those 27 years.

Her disappearance struck a chord in Douglas County. Huisentruit worked as a morning news anchor and reporter for KSAX-TV in Alexandria from May 1992 to November 1993 before she was hired in Mason City. The evidence supports the theory that she was abducted in the early morning hours, soon after telling a colleague that she had overslept and was running late for work. Police found signs of struggle outside her apartment.

The Echo Press ran the story across the front page of its June 30, 1995 edition. Susan Anderson, vice president of KSAX-TV at the time, noted that there was an “awful feeling” at the station. “It’s very tough,” she said in the story. “A lot of viewers who used to watch her have been calling, expressing their concern.” Huisentruit, who grew up in Long Prairie, was not the type of person who would not show up for

work without an explanation, Anderson said. “No, that’s just not her,” she said. “When she worked here, Jodi was so energetic and just a lot of fun. She was really a hard worker and just loved the business.”

An Echo Press editorial from that same issue carried the headline, “Local community shares pain of disappearance.” The editorial noted, “In Alexandria, the name of Jodi Huisentruit has been on just about everyone’s minds. Just the mention of that name brings awful silences and looks of dread and horror. We deeply hope that Huisentruit is soon found — safe and sound.”

But, of course, that hasn’t happened.

The Echo Press continued to print stories of her disappearance — a vigil, a reward fund, a search for a white van, how the search progressed nationwide — but the case remained unsolved for weeks, months, years and now, 27 years.

Huisentruit’s memory lives on. The gathering at KIMT-TV next Monday will celebrate her life. Photos of her will be on display at the event. Organizers say they hope the gathering will bring some light to who Jodi was in life, and what she meant to those who knew and loved her.

People are also asked to “Leave A Light On For Jodi” by leaving a porch light on or lighting a candle in her memory during the weekend of June 24-26 and posting photos on social media using the #LightsForJodi hashtag.

If anyone who is reading this has information on the case, please — for the family’s sake, for closure, for human decency — contact the Mason City Police Department (641-421-3000), the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation (515-725-6010) or leave an anonymous tip at findjodi.com (970-458-JODI).

COMMENTARY

How to close the global vaccine gap

By Michelle McMurry-Heath, Washington, D.C.

The United States has lent its support to a multilateral agreement to waive intellectual property rights on Covid-19 vaccines. Proponents of the waiver would have us believe this will get more people vaccinated more quickly. In fact, it will do nothing of the sort.

If the waiver becomes international law, it will strip away the very legal protections that made it possible for U.S. and European companies to develop life-saving vaccines in record time.

That will leave us ill prepared for the next pandemic. Worse, an IP waiver does nothing to address the very real barriers to vaccine access in developing countries, which we urgently need to solve if we want to end this pandemic.

The fact is, the developing world is awash in Covid-19 vaccines. That doesn’t mean the pandemic is over, of course. Especially in Africa, vaccination rates remain worryingly low – in some cases, they’re still in the single digits.

But the problem isn’t a lack of vaccines themselves. Rather, a combination of vaccine hesitancy and regulatory, infrastructure, and logistical barriers are to blame for low inoculation rates.

We can’t end the pandemic until we solve these on-the-ground problems.

For starters, global leaders need to cut through the red tape that’s tying up some vaccine shipments. In 2021 alone, drug companies manufactured a staggering 11.2 billion doses, enough to give two shots to every adult on the planet. But many of those doses aren’t reaching the patients who need them.

Many developing countries also don’t have enough trained healthcare workers to administer

all the doses they’ve received. The 92 low-income countries receiving free shots from the World Health Organization-backed COVAX program leave 25% of their doses unused, according to Duke University researchers.

It’s not too late for the global community to address these problems. They can draw on lessons learned from U.S. efforts to address vaccine hesitancy, infrastructure, and logistical challenges.

The World Health Organization and numerous NGOs can target education campaigns to push back on vaccine distrust. The WHO can also help poorer nations improve storage infrastructure. Former FDA chief Scott Gottlieb suggests that WHO officials can take on more of the burden of record-keeping to relieve overwhelmed clinicians.

Meanwhile, the World Trade Organization can make a difference in addressing logistical challenges. New rules should limit export restrictions and reduce customs formalities.

Unfortunately, much of WTO leaders’ time has been tied up by a petition that calls for waiving intellectual property protections on Covid-19 vaccines and treatments. Those two governments claimed that weakening IP rights would allow developing countries to access vaccines faster.

That was never true. Biotech companies succeed or fail based on intellectual property rights – and many would go out of business if the U.S. suddenly dismantles this cornerstone of our economy, as it appears poised to do.

Michelle McMurry-Heath is a physician-scientist and president and CEO of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization. This piece originally ran in the International Business Times.

1912: Lake Darling lots priced at \$75 to \$300

**This Week in 1972 – 50 years ago:** The Alexandria City Council voted unanimously to give the Airport Commission authority to draw plans for an early bid opening for an airport terminal. Also present were members of the Airport Commission, Alexandria Developers, County Commission and several city and county offices. Cost of the new terminal structure could be in the \$10,000 to \$15,000 neighborhood. Money would come from funds budgeted the past two years for terminal improvements.

**1972, 50 years ago:** After 50 years in business, Engstrom Furniture will close its doors. Originally operated by five brothers, there are two—Ed and Les—who are still active in the business. The closing of the store will be followed by a remodeling for the building’s new tenant, Peder Engh, who bought the building and intends to move his Gambles store to the Engstrom building.

**Three area women** enlisted in the United State Women’s Army Corps and left for training. The three are Rita Ziegelmann, Pam Johnson and Doreen Duecker. All three women are presently undergoing basic training at the U.S. Women’s Army Corps Training Center at Fort McClellan, Alabama.

**1997, 25 years ago:** The Alexandria City Council was unable to hold its Monday night meeting because it did not have enough members attending. Long-time city officials can’t recall a time when this has



RACHEL BARDUSON  
Observations from the Archives

ever happened. Alexandria’s charter requires a quorum of at least three of the five voting council members to conduct business. Only two were in attendance: Harvey Weisel and Dave Benson. The other three members were on vacation out of state.

A call for bids for computer equipment was authorized by the Alexandria School Board. The district plans to create another computer lab at the senior high school with IBM compatible equipment. School officials are meeting with local businesses that have expressed interest in sharing funding in the project. The businesses could then use the lab to train employees in computer skills at the lab during off-school hours. Total cost of the equipment is estimated at \$68,000.

**2012, 10 years ago:** A new water tower was put in place near the intersection of Front Street and Nelson Avenue in Brandon. The new tower will provide residents with clean drinking water and better pressure. Brandon received a \$1,685,000 loan and a \$957,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development’s water and environmental programs for the project. The old water tower will be dismantled and hauled

away.

A five-county public health department is being explored by Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens and Traverse counties. The Horizon Community Health Board aims to integrate three public health departments included in the five counties.

**Just for fun, 1912 – 110 years ago:** Lakeshore lots are priced at \$75 to \$300 on Lake Darling with only \$5 to \$25 down.

**1972 – 50 years ago:** Teen dance at the Barrett Pavilion. “America” will be playing. \$1.75 admission.

**The Resorters Golf Tournament** is already filled to capacity with 328 registrations.

**Sports Trivia, 1972 – 50 years ago:** The Brandon Fin and Feather Club will begin banding ring-neck pheasants to help determine possible reasons for the death of some of the released birds and their movements. The birds are being provided by the Fin and Feather Club and the Brandon FFA for a total of about 600 birds. It is hoped that bands found on dead birds will be sent to the Fin and Feather Club along with possible cause of death.

**1997 – 25 years ago:** Roger Bakewell of Alexandria finished 30th in the In-Fisherman Professional Walleye Trail Champion Midwest Pro-Am event held on Leech Lake near Walker. The local optometrist hooked a total of five walleye during the event weighing in at 15.24 pounds.

Rachel Barduson of Alexandria is a regular contributing columnist to the Echo Press Opinion page.

COMMENTARY

Electricity shortages projected this summer

By Ted Cash, general manager of ALP Utilities, Alexandria, Minn.

With summer on the way, I wanted to discuss an issue that has been in national media recently concerning the potential for electric service interruptions across the Midwest, including Alexandria.

Projections of energy shortages during the summer of 2022 have been made by both the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) and the Southwest Power Pool (SPP). MISO is an independent, not-for-profit organization that its members and their customers, like ALP, count on to generate and transmit the right amount of electricity every minute of every day.

However, with warmer-than-normal temperatures forecasted throughout the MISO footprint, the summer peak electrical needs are projected to be 124 gigawatts (GW), while projected available generation is only 119 GW.

The risk of electricity shortages is not unique to the MISO service area. Traditional power plants across the U.S. are being retired, or taken-out-of-service due to environmental concerns, more quickly than they can be replaced by renewable energy. Intermittent renewable resources, such as wind and solar farms, are not always available and other dispatchable resources must be called upon to ramp up quickly to meet electric demand.

For example, during Winter Storm Uri in 2021, there was very little wind or solar power available throughout the Midwest or South Central U.S. To make things worse, the frigid temperatures caused some coal and natural gas power plants in the southern states to become unavailable. One of ALP’s power suppliers, Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) was called upon to run all of its fossil fuel generators, including

the diesel generators of six individual members located in the Southwest Power Pool footprint.

The fossil fuel generation supported the electrical reliability of the region, but even so, many municipal utilities and rural electric cooperatives, including four MRES members, were ordered to take outages (service interruptions) because there simply wasn’t enough power in the region to supply everyone’s needs.

Work is currently being done to develop large-scale battery storage solutions, but most batteries can only provide 4-8 hours of power production. MRES and its partner, MidAmerican Energy Company, are studying a pumped storage hydroelectric project, which would act as a huge battery storing intermittent renewable energy until it is needed when the wind isn’t blowing or the sun isn’t shining. These solutions take time and the pace may not be fast enough to meet the short-term needs we are facing today.

MISO is closely monitoring the many challenges this summer season may bring. They are coordinating with member utilities like ALP and other grid operators to arrange electrical imports from neighboring regions and preparing to call upon emergency resources to meet the 2022 summer peak demand. This may mean that ALP and other members in the MISO footprint will be called upon to run their local generation.

It may even mean that members will be asked to reduce electrical consumption or take outages to support the reliability of the grid.

MRES will work closely with MISO, the local transmission operators in MISO, and SPP to provide members with as much notice as possible of actions required by these system operators during any potential Energy Emergency Alert (EEA).

NEW PAID POLITICAL LETTER POLICY TAKES EFFECT

The Echo Press paid political letter policy is now in effect – with changes from previous elections.

Election-related letters to the editor advocating for or against a candidate, ballot measure or political party will be considered ads and are subject to a charge for the first 7 inches – \$17.50 if the letter-writer submits their content online through our business partner, Modulist.news, or \$22.50 if we enter the letter in for you. After that, the cost is \$11.50 for each additional inch. A 7-inch letter generally contains about 150 words.

The maximum length of a paid letter is 250 words. As with other letters to the editor, they must be submitted with the writer’s name, address and phone number (only the writer’s name and city are published). Unlike regular letters to the editor, paid letters are not limited to one letter per 30 days.

You can submit your letter online through our

trusted editorial content submission platform at Modulist.news. From there, you will need to sign up for an account so we have your contact information. That way, if we need to reach out to you, we have it.

After you sign up, you can create a new listing for a “Community Engagement Letter,” which is what we are calling election-related letters.

For the Tuesday, Aug. 9 primary election, the last batch of paid political letters will be published on Wednesday, Aug. 3 and no new issues may be raised. No paid letters will be published in the Friday, Aug. 5 issue.

For help or questions, please call the Modulist team at 701-241-5509. One of the team members will answer your questions, or be able to walk you through any obstacles. Or you can contact the Echo Press at 320-763-3133.



OBITUARIES & DEATHS

Orrin Alfred Lommen



Orrin Alfred Lommen, the youngest son of Alfred and Hannah (Dau) Lommen was born on February 15, 1940 in Alexandria MN. In 1959 he graduated with the first senior class to graduate from Jefferson High School in Alexandria. Following graduation he worked for Kluver Garbage Collectors for several years. He then got his dream job of working for the City of Alexandria in the street department. He was known for his hard work ethic. He worked there until his retirement in 2002. He loved his job and the people he worked with over all those years.

A favorite past time of Orrin's was to drive around Alexandria in whichever Buick vehicle he owned at the time. He reminisced quite often about what "used" to be where and how places had changed. He remembered when Broadway was not tarred, and cars parked diagonally. He was a great Alexandria historian. Orrin was a man of faith. He was a member of First Lutheran Church in Alexandria his whole life. He found comfort in his relationship with God.

Orrin had a kind, gentle soul. He loved and cared for his family deeply. His yard was important to him. His flowers, his grass, the birds that were overfed, and even those pesky squirrels. He spent many hours on his John Deere tractor meticulously mowing his yard. During the winters, while he was able, he blew the snow for the two blocks of sidewalk by his home—that was just who he was.

After his retirement, Friday mornings became his time to make the weekly trip to Miltnona to the Locker Plant. He was known for his grilled burgers and homemade barbecue sauce. Orrin attended 50+ Minnesota State Fairs. He brought many goodies back to Alexandria to share with many friends. Sweet Martha's cookies and that famous State Fair taffy. His Lipton iced tea was a favorite drink he never tired of. Hours were spent by the TV enjoying Minnesota Gopher sports, men's or women's, he watched them all. The Andy Griffith show became a favorite, he could tell you what Barney Fife was going to say or do next!

Orrin passed away at his home Tuesday, June 14, 2022. Orrin was preceded in death by his parents, his sisters Donna Lommen and Gloria Lommen, and his brother, Howard Lommen. He is survived by his family, Dewey and Joni Marusak, and their children and grandchildren, Heidi (Chad) Borgen, Brenna and Brayden, Justin Marusak, Brett (Angie) Marusak and Hunter, and good friend and life-long neighbor, Jan Kalina.

"Your wings were ready but our hearts were not."

A Funeral Service will be held 11:00 AM on Wednesday, June 22, 2022, at First Lutheran Church in Alexandria. Visitation will be held for one hour prior to the service on Wednesday. Burial will take place at Kinkead Cemetery.

Arrangements are with the Anderson Funeral Home and Crematory. [www.andersonfuneral.net](http://www.andersonfuneral.net)

Margaret Ann Kreklau



Margaret Ann Kreklau (Steinkraus) passed into the Lord's presence on June 8th, 2022.

Margaret was born to Edwin and Eileen Steinkraus (Miller) on December 3rd, 1947 in Wadena, MN. She attended Sebeka Public School, (as one of the "town kids"), and graduated from Sebeka High School in 1965.

Margaret married Curtis Kreklau (one of the "farm kids") on May 21st, 1966, and they shared life together for 56 years of love, patience and kindness. Their union resulted in two children, Curtis, Jr. and Corinne.

Margaret worked at St. Luke's hospital in Fargo. She was then a stay-at-home mom for her children until they were in school. After that, she worked for a non-profit to assist needy families, and then went on to work in the Assessor's office for Douglas County. She moved on to get her Realtor Broker license and sell real estate. She retired after working for MNDoT as a right of way agent. She spent much of her time volunteering her services to her church, including administrative duties, preparing bulletins and making the baked goods for fellowship time.

The biggest job that she performed was as a loving mother to her children and grandchildren. Actually, she was Mama Bear for her children and grandchildren. She also loved to celebrate her spiritual gift of hospitality, hosting holidays for family, friends, neighbors and others who were blessed to partake of her gift of hospitality.

She enjoyed crafts, sewing, pontoon rides, computers and gadgets, and especially her grandchildren. She was a lifelong member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Lyra Chapter; and served as the Grand Ruth for the Grand Chapter of MN in 1999.

She is survived by her husband, Curtis Kreklau, her son, Curtis Kreklau, Jr., her daughter Corinne Schrantz (Kreklau), and grandchildren Keiko Kreklau, Curtis Kreklau III, Quinn Schrantz, Mason Schrantz, and Rebekah Kreklau. She was preceded in death by her parents Edwin and Eileen Steinkraus (Steinkraus and Wife), her older sister Myrna Kempf (Steinkraus), and many uncles, aunts, cousins and extended family.

A Memorial Service will be held at 11:00 AM on Thursday, July 28, 2022, at the United Methodist Church in Alexandria. Visitation will be held for one hour prior to the service on Thursday.

The family requests that memorials be sent to the Salvation Army or the Samaritan's Purse in honor of Margaret.

Arrangements are with Anderson Funeral Home and Crematory. [www.andersonfuneral.net](http://www.andersonfuneral.net).

Barbara Gerdes

Nov. 19, 1946 - May 29, 2022

OSAKIS, Minn. - Barbara Gerdes, 75, Villard, Minn., died Sunday, May 29, in Galeon.

Visitation will be from 5-8 p.m. Sunday, June 26, at Lind Family Funeral Home in Alexandria. Visitation will continue from 10-11 a.m., followed by a memorial service at 11 a.m., Monday, June 27, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Villard. The Rev. Ryan J. Pumphrey will officiate. Interment will be in Grove Lake Cemetery near Glenwood, Minn.

Arrangements by Lind Family Funeral & Cremation Services.



LAW ENFORCEMENT BLOTTER: JUNE 10-12

DOUGLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Friday, June 10

Suspicious vehicle, Seventh Avenue W. Public assist, caller has questions about eviction process, Seventh Avenue W. Public assist, Seventh Avenue W. Fire, grass fire, East Second Street, Carlos.

Saturday, June 11

10-52 with one vehicle, vehicle in the lake, Centennial Drive NW, Garfield. Property damage crash, truck pulling a trailer with seed tipped over, County Road 82 SE. Fire, lawnmower on fire, Three Havens Drive NE. Public assist, Seventh Avenue W. Driving complaint, vehicle swerving, County Road 108 NW, Brandon. Assist other agency, 17th Avenue E. Assist other agency, Third Avenue E. Assist other agency, State Highway 29 S. Suspicious person, person walking all over the road, caller had to slam on her brakes, County Road 14 NE, Miltona. Suspicious activity, mailboxes open and stuff laying everywhere, unknown if there is any damage, East Lake Cowdry Road NW. Suspicious activity, mail all over the road, Firemans Lodge Road SW. Driving complaint, car swerving all over

the road, Nokomis Street W, Osakis.

Property damage crash, minor crash, State Street S, Garfield.

Motorist assist, County Road 5 NW, Brandon.

Public assist, people keep driving by with cameras, Forada Beach Road SE.

Public assist, Latoka Rest Area. Motorist assist, Central Avenue S, Brandon.

Driving complaint, road rage incident, County Road 82 SE.

Juvenile trouble, trouble with son vaping, County Road 82 NW.

Driving complaint, female is intoxicated, East Lake Cowdry Lane NW.

Suspicious vehicle, cite marijuana and drug paraphernalia, East Lake Cowdry Road NW.

Sunday, June 12

Assist other agency, State Highway 29 N. Assist other agency, State Highway 29 N.

Suspicious activity, mailbox was struck and damaged last night, Firemans Lodge Road SW.

Suspicious vehicle, vehicle pulled over to do some work, North McKay Avenue.

Theft, gas drive-off, looked unintentional, State Highway 29 N.

Public assist, Oak Street S, Miltona.

Public assist, caller reports some kids dropping off some garbage bags at the business and taking off, State Highway 29 N.

Assist other agency, Third Avenue W. Assist other agency, Interstate 94.

Attempted fraud, identity theft, Tabbert Road NW.

Theft, two packages taken from mailbox, County Road 40 NW, Garfield.

ALEXANDRIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Friday, June 10

Assist other agency, Ninth Avenue W. Driving complaint, driving at a very high rate of speed through mall parking lot, State Highway 29 S.

Public assist, Elm Street. Assist other agency, Centennial Drive NW, Garfield.

Assist other agency, Three Havens Drive NE.

Assist other agency, County Road 82 SE.

Attempted fraud, caller needs to report a scam of someone impersonating Venmo, Parkview Road NE.

Suspicious activity, Sixth Avenue E. Driving complaint, Broadway Street.

Public assist, advised of recent noise complaints, North Nokomis NE.

Theft, customer left before paying for food, State Highway 29 S.

Public assist, caller wanting to report an assault that occurred a few months ago, Seventh Avenue W.

This is not a comprehensive report of all local law enforcement activity, rather, a brief recap of daily calls for service.

Additional Highway 29 closure expected to begin on June 22

GLENWOOD — On Wednesday, June 22, Highway 29 will close south of the Highway 55 intersection near Glenwood. Crews will begin construction on the southern portion of the overpass bridge, as well as the roundabout at 160th Street.

As a reminder, Highway 29 is also closed north of the Highway 55 intersection. With the additional closure south of Highway 55, traffic will be detoured to County Road 28, Highway 55 and Highway 28 to and from Glenwood. The extended detour will remain in place through October.

For those traveling to/from Starbuck, Highway 114 is being used as part of the detour route.

Highway 55 will remain open as part of

the detour, and traffic will switch to the new alignment of Highway 55 later next week. Motorists may encounter minor delays when that change occurs.

Business and residential access within the work zone is being maintained at all times, but entrance locations may change. The Minnesota Department of Transportation urges motorists to slow down in work zones and never enter a roadway that has been blocked with barriers or cones.

For more information and to sign up for email updates, visit the project website: [mndot.gov/d4/projects/glenwoodoverpass](http://mndot.gov/d4/projects/glenwoodoverpass).

For real-time traffic and travel information in Minnesota, visit [www.511mn.org](http://www.511mn.org).

We Are Water Minnesota opens June 23 at Legacy of the Lakes Museum

ALEXANDRIA — The traveling exhibit We Are Water MN is opening this week at the Legacy of the Lakes Museum. The exhibit, from the Minnesota Humanities Center, reflects on Minnesota's water story and encourages people to think about their relationships with and responsibilities to water.

The exhibit also features numerous interactive elements and local stories. The museum is the third of six sites for the exhibit this summer and will display it until Aug. 15, when it will move to Otter Tail County.

An opening reception for the exhibit will be held on June 23, from 5-7 p.m. for the exhibit, which will include light refreshments and a short program. The reception is free and open to the public.

The exhibit can be viewed during the museum's open hours: Monday-Friday 10 a.m.

to 5 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays noon-4 p.m. For the duration of the exhibit, the museum is also offering free admission on Tuesday nights from 5-7 p.m.

For information on the exhibit and related programs offered by the museum and local partners, visit [legacyofthelakes.org/wearewater](http://legacyofthelakes.org/wearewater).

We Are Water MN is led by the Minnesota Humanities Center in Partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Minnesota Historical Society, and the Minnesota Departments of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources.

We Are Water MN is funded in part with money from the Clean Water, Land, & Legacy Fund that was created with the vote of the people of Minnesota on Nov. 4, 2008, and by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

David V. Martin

Feb. 11, 1932 - June 19, 2022

ALEXANDRIA, Minn. - David V. Martin, 90, Alexandria, Minn., died Sunday, June 19, in Windmill Ponds.

Visitation will be from 10-11 a.m., followed by a memorial service at 11 a.m., Thursday, June 23, at Alexandria Covenant Church.

Arrangements by Anderson Funeral Home and Crematory.

Dwight L. Johnson

March 3, 1953 - May 23, 2022

ATLANTA, Ga. - Dwight L. Johnson, 69, Atlanta, Ga., formerly Kensington, Minn., died Monday, May 23, in Atlanta.

A funeral will be 11 a.m. Monday, June 27, at Christ the King Church in Pine Mountain, Ga.

Arrangements by Anderson Funeral Home and Crematory.

Jack R. Kangas

March 7, 1933 - June 17, 2022

FARGO, N.D. - Jack R. Kangas, 89, Kensington, Minn., died Friday, June 17, in Sanford Medical Center.

Visitation will be from noon to 1 p.m., followed by a celebration of life with military honors at 1 p.m., Thursday, June 23, at Anderson Funeral Home Chapel in Alexandria. Interment will be in Finnish Apostolic Cemetery.

Arrangements by Anderson Funeral Home and Crematory.

Leslie Gebert

Oct. 28, 1937 - March 27, 2022

PERHAM, Minn. - Leslie Gebert, 84, Perham, Minn., died Sunday, March 27, in Perham Living.

Visitation will be from 10-11 a.m., followed by a memorial service at 11 a.m., Saturday, June 25, at Karvonen Funeral Home in Wadena, Minn.

Arrangements by Karvonen Funeral Home.

Randall Riemer

May 23, 1952 - June 13, 2022

HENNING, Minn. - Randall Riemer, 70, Henning, Minn., died Monday, June 13, in his home.

Visitation will be from 10-11 a.m., followed by a funeral at 11 a.m., Wednesday, June 22, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Henning.

Arrangements by Karvonen Funeral Home.

Cremation

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# BAND

From Page 1

favorites is Summer of 69 by Bryan Adams, which he said he would play “over and over and over again” and whose voice he emulates today.

His love for music took root in grade school after falling in love with the sound of The Beatles. His music teacher, Mr. Schlangen, taught Justice and his classmates by practicing the songs of the Fab Four. A moment that Justice said, “really planted a seed.” He was hooked.

At 16, he received his first guitar and turned previously written poetry into lyrics and string picking into music. He combined both into songs.

After graduating from Jefferson High School in 1996, he moved to Montana where he began seriously working on his craft and kick-started his performing career at the Haufbrau House – a “legendary bar” in Bozeman, Montana, according to Justice. A while later he moved

back to Minnesota, and met his wife. Together, they went back to Montana and eventually to Alaska where he and his wife had two children and lived for 12 years in a mountain cabin. Somewhere in the timeline, he spent a brief stint in Hawaii so he could experience the surf.

While in Alaska, he became co-owner of a music store, joined the band 907, recorded his first album, evolved his performing career through bars, clubs and festivals and recorded his second album, “The River,” which features his painted interpretation of the Alaskan Kenai River as the cover.

In 2017, he moved back to Minnesota to be closer to family, and started performing around Douglas County. In 2019, he recorded his third album “Say No More” at Pachyderm Studios in Cannon Falls where notable acts like Nirvana, Trampled by Turtles, Soul Asylum, Mason Jennings and more have recorded. The cover for “Say No More” was designed by Alex



Thalen Zimmerman / Alexandria Echo Press  
Robb Justice poses in front of one of his many guitars at his studio in Carlos.

Zablotsky, a Californian who has created work for The Simpsons, American Dad, KISS, Joe Rogan, Alice in Chains and many more.

He’s opened for artists like the Wailin’ Jennys and Eilen Jewell and jammed with a member of Hootie and the Blowfish.

Today, he writes music and prepares for gigs in his garage turned jam-studio. A space filled with his old 45s, posters of Alaska and the Beatles, pianos and a growing collection of guitars. It’s also where he plans to teach music. But for now, it’s where he jams.

Outside of music, he paints and creates jewelry and wooden utensils for “Rock and Sol” — a website featuring his necklaces made from guitar strings and agates and

homemade cooking utensils.

“I love to create things. I don’t know how to not, you know?” said Justice.

The following interview has been edited for length and clarity. Listen to part one of the interview in podcast form by going to <https://www.echopress.com/echo-press-minute>, or by downloading the episode on the Echo Press Minute Podcast through Spotify, Apple Music, Google Podcasts, and Audible.

**Q:** Besides music, do you have a full time job?

**Justice:** Music is my main work, and playing gigs. And I do a lot of other stuff as far as art — painting and I make jewelry and wooden utensils and tables. I’m just kind of constantly making stuff. And working on houses. We bought and sold a couple of houses. And so, you know, with a couple of kids, I’m busy. When I lived in Alaska, I had a partner at a music store, too. So I was teaching as well, which I’m going to start doing down here.

**Q:** Did you take lessons yourself? Or were you mostly self-taught?

**Justice:** Mostly self-taught, yeah. I just pay attention to people that know what they’re talking about. I was fortunate when I lived in Alaska. The guy that played bass with me was a Nashville studio musician. He played with Garth Brooks, and he really knew his stuff.

**Q:** With the art and the houses and music, how do you find time to balance all that?

**Justice:** I’m lucky to have a very understanding wife and family.

**Q:** What challenges come with making music a full-time job?

**Justice:** I work more than everybody. I don’t really ever stop working, you know. I mean, as far as the practices and the rehearsals and the writing and the promotion, and the contacts. It’s all really time-consuming.

**Q:** If you could collaborate with any musician, either dead or alive, who would you pick?

**Justice:** It might sound kind of funny, but I really love Jack White. I really think he’s in touch with a lot of genres of music like I am and we have a lot in common. I think he would be my living choice. It’s a tough question because I have so much respect for so many great songwriters. I love Chris Stapleton. I love Bob Dylan. I Love

John Lennon and Paul McCartney. The list goes on and on — I love John Denver and John Fogarty. It’s hard to say because they’ve all done so much for music.

**Q:** Besides Jack White, who inspires you today?

**Justice:** My kids have me listening to a lot of pop music. I love Post Malone and AJR. Those guys are fantastic. Chris Stapleton would be probably the act that I would be closely associated with as far as my style, my voice and my presentation. I have that punk and rock and roll in my blood but I’m very country-western. I’m a country boy.

**Q:** What keeps you in the country roots and blues and Americana area?

**Justice:** It’s more grounded. I think I like that. The humbleness of Johnny Cash and just the realness of it. I kind of like to be really raw and truthful, you know? Yeah, I think that’s the best way. Kind of raw and truthful.

**Q:** Your website says you’re inspired by the untrammelled landscape you surround yourself with, could you elaborate on that?

**Justice:** Yeah, that comes from the longing to be somewhere where you think that nobody’s ever been before. It is really inspiring. And Alaska is full of those places, and Montana as well. But Alaska was just a huge inspiration to me living there. I just loved the land and the untouched beauty. It’s unreal. I don’t know how to explain the inspiration that you get from it. It’s really to me where everything makes sense. You can really get a good perspective on how everything works when you go to those kinds of places. The way the rivers are eating away at the banks, to the way the animals behave. It’s really important to soak some of that stuff in and I think it reflects in my art and music.

**Q:** Do you prefer performing live? Or would you rather just be more of a studio musician?

**Justice:** Both. I absolutely love it when we connect. Sometimes I’m not good at connecting. Sometimes the audience isn’t wanting to be very connective. When we connect, playing live is the best. I absolutely love working in the studio because you are able to.... pull it all the way apart and then put it back together. That is fascinating to me, and I

really enjoy that part of the process.

**Q:** You said sometimes the audience doesn’t connect, but when they do, what kind of feelings come over you?

**Justice:** That friendship feeling, you know? It’s more like when you’re dancing with somebody. It’s that experience together. Doing something together, something fun together that is making you both uplifted, you know, and that’s cool. That’s the best. I feel so fortunate to be able to get to do that.

**Q:** Would you say the magic of music can bring together two strangers?

**Justice:** Oh, absolutely. Big time. I’ve had short periods of time with people where you move them or there’s an experience there. A shared thing. And it’s like you’ve known each other for a long time.

**Q:** You’ve opened for some pretty big acts. Who is your favorite person to open for and what was that experience like?

**Justice:** The Wailin’ Jennys was a really special experience. That was at the Kenai River Festival. There were thousands of people there and they were just as kind and nice as can be... Last year, Mark Bryan from Hootie and the Blowfish came up and sang a Hootie song with us. That was at the Lake Darling Resort over the Fourth of July.

**Q:** Do you prefer those bigger types of shows? Or would you rather do something more intimate?

**Justice:** Those bigger shows are really fun, high-energy. There have been times where you connect with the whole crowd and you can feel a pulse and that’s really powerful. It’s a different type of thing than singing Amazing Grace for somebody at a really special time when they are crying. That’s really special too.

**Q:** Does performing ever take its toll?

**Justice:** It sure can. There have been many want-to-quit moments. You feel like you’ve given your heart and soul, and it just gets bounced off a wall or you’re not getting that reciprocal connection when you’re really trying. I’ve learned how to kind of manage that, you know, to not take things so personally. As a younger person, that’s tricky. I’ve learned sometimes that when people aren’t even clapping, they’re still just enjoying the heck out of it. And physically, it definitely can, too. I’ve had some issues with my neck and shoulders from playing guitar so much.

**Q:** What keeps you doing it?

**Justice:** I think it’s sustainable. I could fail at being a plumber, or a painter or contractor or I could fail at being a musician. My point is, do something that you believe in and love. I might fail at it. But I might fail at trying to do some other business. And this is what I feel like it’s sustainable for me. I probably wouldn’t ever stop unless I have to, physically. It’s very rewarding. It keeps me going.

Email reporter Thalen Zimmerman at [tzimmerman@echopress.com](mailto:tzimmerman@echopress.com)

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Christina Lake Lutheran Church is celebrating our **150th Anniversary**  
Please join us on **Sunday, July 24, 2022**  
Service Time: 10:30am   Meal to follow

**150th Anniversary Celebration meal registration**

\*Must be received by July 6th

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact #: \_\_\_\_\_

Meal: \$15 per person   No. of people \_\_\_\_\_   Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable to: Christina Lake Lutheran Church**

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\*\*No meal tickets will be sold the day of the event.



# GOING GOAT

Alexandria girl will show goats at Minnesota State Fair thanks to BELLE grant

By **Thalen Zimmerman**  
Alexandria Echo Press

**Alexandria**  
Hayden Lennes, 12, of Alexandria, will show goats at the Minnesota State Fair after receiving the Beginning Exhibitor Livestock Learning Experience (BELLE) grant a year after her sister, Reagan, received the same one.

“I was surprised,” said Hayden. “My aunt didn’t really know if I was actually going to get it because my sister got it. But, when I got it, I was really excited.”

In 2021, Reagan Lennes received a letter informing her that she was selected to receive the BELLE grant from the Minnesota State Fair Foundation for her work in 4-H and experience showing pigs at the Douglas County Fair. Her sister, Hayden, received the same grant for similar achievements a year later.

Farming and a passion for animals run in the blood of the Lennes girls. Also in 2021, their grandfather, Warren Engelbrecht, father of Hayden’s mom, and his family were honored through the Minnesota Farm Family Recognition Program for their work with humanely raised, non-antibiotic hogs and their contribution to the community through the Viking Sportsmen Club, FFA and 4-H.

Hayden loves animals, so much so that she dreams of taking care of them as a veterinarian, but for now, showing them at fairs will have to do. Her show animal of choice is goats, unlike her sister who preferred pigs.

“I really don’t like showing pigs,” said Hayden, who first became interested in showing goats after watching her cousins. Eventually, they took her under their wing, and she did her first open show, which she “really liked.”

An open show is available to anyone who wishes to show an animal regardless of age or affiliation with 4-H and FFA.

The goats Hayden will be showing are housed less than a mile from her family on

her cousin’s farm. She makes regular visits to practice walking and “setting up” the goat to prepare for this summer’s showings. She said the hardest part of showing is making sure the goat doesn’t run away. Although, she says that doesn’t happen to her often.

At the county fair last year, Hayden won the reserve champion for how she presented her goat and the way she answered questions about the body parts and the quality of its health and care.

“Start with saying you give it water,” said Hayden’s mom Lisa Lennes. “That’s the most important thing.”

Hayden says it means a lot to her to go from open shows and county fairs to the state fair. She added that although the competition may be harder, she looks forward to the niceness of the facility and the number of animals she will be surrounded by.

Along with receiving financing for the costs of showing animals, the grant also pairs Hayden up with a mentor who offers tips and advice to prepare her for the state-level competition. Her sister told her to “always be smiling.”

While the grant guarantees Hayden a spot at an open show during the state fair, she will still have to pass the interview portion at the 4-H county level showing if she wishes to show with the 4-H group at state.

Hayden is one of 16 recipients of the BELLE grant. The grant is funded by the Minnesota State Fair Foundation to Minnesota residents between the ages of 10 and 18 who have never shown animals at the state fair.

According to the Minnesota State Fair website, “The Minnesota State Fair is committed to showcasing our state’s finest agriculture, and we recognize the importance of cultivating youth experiences in the livestock industry. We also understand that exhibiting at the Minnesota State Fair can stretch the family budget.”

The grant awards \$500 for



Thalen Zimmerman / Alexandria Echo Press

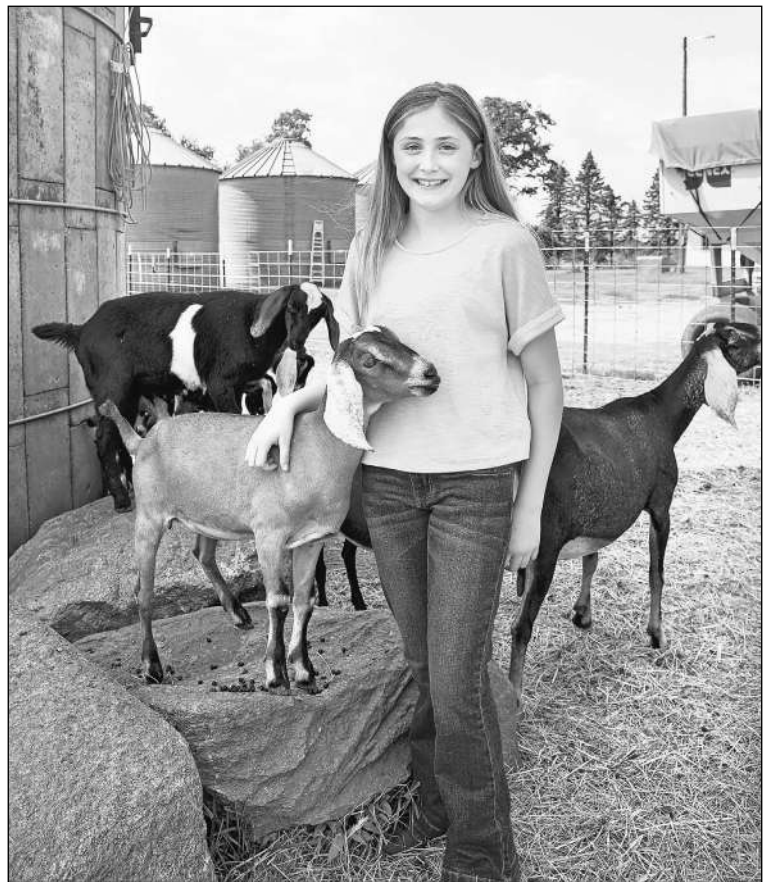
Hayden Lennes poses with goats leased by her cousin. She will show goats at the Minnesota State Fair, which begins Thursday, Aug. 25, and ends Monday, Sept. 5.

large-animal exhibitors — goats, beef and dairy cattle, horses, sheep, swine and llamas — and \$250 to small-animal exhibitors — mostly rabbits and poultry.

To be eligible for the BELLE grant, applicants must:

- ▶ Complete the online application.
- ▶ Be a Minnesota resident between the ages of 10 and 18 as of the first day of the state fair, who has not previously exhibited at the Minnesota State Fair.
- ▶ Submit one letter of recommendation from a trusted source who can speak to your livestock show and animal care experience.
- ▶ Participate in the 4-H, FFA or open class show of their preferred species during the Minnesota State Fair.
- ▶ Sign the BELLE grant code of conduct upon being selected for the program.

Email reporter Thalen Zimmerman at [tzimmerman@echopress.com](mailto:tzimmerman@echopress.com)



Thalen Zimmerman / Alexandria Echo Press

Hayden Lennes poses with a goat on her cousin's farm.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### Happy Anniversary

Please join us in celebrating Norm and Bonnie Salto's 55th Wedding Anniversary on June 25 from 1-4 at the Corral in Nelson. No gifts please.



### Birth Announcement

Jaycee Joy was born on June 11, 2022 at 9:18 pm at Glacial Ridge Hospital to Amanda and Jared Volesky of Alexandria. She weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces, and was 19 inches long.

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Photos by Thalen Zimmerman / Alexandria Echo Press  
Miss Rune Stone Queen Ezoza Ziyodullaeva, left, First Princess Hailey Roers, middle, and Second Princess Penelope Gardner wave to parade-goers during the 2022 Rune Stone Days Parade on Sunday.

## SUN

From Page 1

did not finish until 3:50 p.m. Most years, it goes until 6 or 7 p.m. “We’re glad we quit when we did,” said

Hausmann. “The heat was getting to us.” Temperatures reached nearly 100 degrees on Sunday. Rune Stone Days ended with a Kensington Norseman baseball game that led

the home team to lose 8 – 4, against Carlos. With the wind as a factor, Norseman player Trent Koloski said they were “hitting the crap out of the ball.”

Email reporter Thalen Zimmerman at [tzimmerman@echopress.com](mailto:tzimmerman@echopress.com)



Kensington Rune Stone Days parade-goers watch as the Alexandria Shriners perform a choreographed four-wheeler performance.

## VIRAL

From Page 1

likes on Youtube and 12,000 reactions with 3,100 shares and 1,500 comments on Facebook.

According to its website, You Betcha is a Midwest Entertainment company that celebrates Busch Light, ranch, and all things Midwestern. They post on Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Tik Tok.

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**4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY AD DEADLINES**

**Deadline for Echo Press July 6th issue  
Friday, July 1st at 10:00am**

**Deadline for Classy Canary July 6th issue  
Wednesday, June 29th at Noon**

Alexandria ▶▶▶

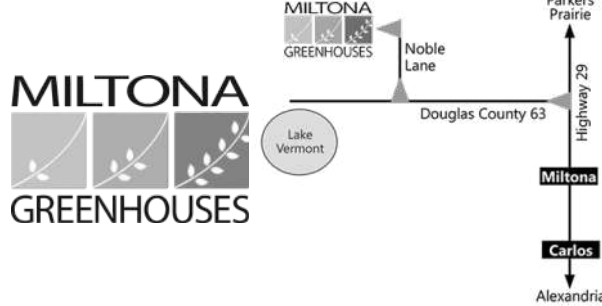
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Thalen Zimmerman / Alexandria Echo Press  
Nearly 300 people attended Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County’s Hard Hat Events Home Run Lunch on June 15.

## HABITAT

From Page 1

Wednesday, June 6. With teary eyes and a cracking voice, the newest habitat homeowner, Jenna Hill, accompanied by her mentor Gretta Siegel, shared her experience.

“My name is Jenna, and I am proud to say I am a Habitat homeowner,” she began. “I am a single mom of two. My children are my life. They are my world... I want them to know they are loved, that they are important, and I will always be their biggest supporter, their loudest fan and always put my desires aside to give them the life they deserve... My children are the reason I applied for Habitat. I wanted a place for them to call home, a place they are proud to call home, a place they can have their friends come over and not feel ashamed.”

She said her son and daughter are “loving their new home.”

“They feel safe. They feel happy. They are blessed to have a home,” Hill said.

After being denied on her first application attempt, she eventually applied again. She said she remembered painting in the basement when she got the call. She dropped her paintbrush and ran upstairs, happy tears already welling.

Over the months, she completed 300 sweat equity hours of the required 200, and on April 28 of this year, Hill closed on her home.

Hill said overall, the experience has changed her life. She not only was able to put her family in a home, but she made lifelong connections, especially with her mentor and her family.

“Even if I didn’t get approved to buy a house, the support from the Habitat staff, the relationship with my mentor and her family and the experiences I had have been more than enough,” said Hill. “I feel fulfilled, cared for, mentored, and I want to give back... it’s amazing, life-changing, and it opens doors.”

Hill ended by encouraging those in need to apply.

“The worst thing that could happen is that they are told no,” she said.

Habitat Board Chair Brooke Zabel opened the event with a welcome message about the organization’s mission to “put God’s love into action by bringing people together to build homes and hope.”

Executive Director Lori Anderson thanked the thousands of Habitat volunteers while providing statistics on the need for affordable housing in Douglas County. According to Anderson, one in four residents pays more than 30% of their income on housing, surpassing the affordable housing threshold. She also stated that due to building materials price hikes and supply shortages, Habitat will need an extra \$25,000 to build each home.

Nicole Fernholz, executive director

## 3 WAYS TO DONATE

- ▶ Text DOUGLAS to 26989 to access text-to-give options.
- ▶ Donate by mail – HFH of Douglas County, 1211 N Nokomis NE, Alexandria, MN 56308.
- ▶ Donate by phone – call 320-762-4255.
- ▶ Go to the website <https://hfhdouglascounty.org> and click on DONATE.

of the Alexandria economic development commission, backed what Lori Anderson said by providing more statistics. She said with an 8.3% population growth, Douglas County is the 13th fastest growing county in Minnesota, resulting in more people and fewer homes as more people have moved into the area than moved out. She added that the average annual income of residents — \$53,000 — shows they cannot afford Douglas County’s median home value of \$229,511 with the 30% income rule.

“The bottom line is that we need a variety of houses in our area to ensure we have the houses available for all the different households,” said Fernholz. “From an economic point of view, workforce housing isn’t just a necessity but a real need for our businesses and community to grow. Community programs like this [Habitat] and community engagement like yours help make that happen. So thank you for being here today and being a part of the solution.”

Co-founders Dave Anderson and Bob Loucks spoke of the humble start of the home-building organization in Douglas County. Anderson choked up as he spoke about seeing photos of all the homeowners helped throughout the years. He was privileged to be a part of a build in Vietnam.

Anderson went on to say he was inspired to start a Habitat for Humanity in Douglas County after visiting a Habitat build site in Sioux Falls.

“I thought, ‘Why couldn’t we do that in Alexandria?’” Anderson said.

Anderson reached out to Habitat of Minnesota, who suggested putting a notice in his church bulletin, so he did.

Loucks said he joined after seeing a flyer in the church bulletin. At first, he was reluctant as he thought he didn’t have time to be involved but his wife convinced him to go anyway.

Only three people attended the initial meeting. Anderson, Loucks and John Aponte. Together, the trio worked diligently for more than a year to become a recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. And on Jan. 31, 1997, they did.

Twenty-five years later, Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County has helped 131 families and 362 individuals.

“Because of the support, hard work, dedication and vision of thousands of people like you here today, 80 families have new or improved homes,” said Zabel. “51 aging in place homeowners can remain safely in their home. And 102 international families have been supported.”

Email reporter Thalen Zimmerman at [tzimmerman@echopress.com](mailto:tzimmerman@echopress.com)

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## PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Douglas County Drop-In Center designed for people with Mental Health Issues to gain acceptance, support, & social activities. The Center is open daily. 1106 Broadway Street, Alexandria, MN. Call 320-763-6261

**It is the responsibility of the advertiser to check your classified ad on the first day of publication.**

If you find an error, please call us at 320-763-3133 so a correction can be made. To ensure greater accuracy, we request that ads be typed or printed neatly. Echo Press shall not be liable for failure to publish an advertisement, except for the refund of any amount prepaid for the publication of that advertisement. Liability for errors shall be limited to either republishing the advertisement in a subsequent issue or crediting the cost of one insertion occupied by the error, at the option of the Publisher.

## HELP WANTED EDUCATION

**Agriculture Teacher & FFA Advisor 7-12, 1.0 FTE Parkers Prairie School District 2022-2023 school year**  
Classes include Welding I/II, Metal Fabrication, Horticulture, Floriculture, Super Mileage, Introduction to Ag for JH students, Wildlife Management, School-To-Work classroom, and STV supervision. Other electives are offered in rotational years. Completed applications include the following: resume, cover letter, at least 3 current letters of recommendation, transcripts, and a completed application form. **Applications can be found at [isd547.com](http://isd547.com)** or request an application at [lnori@pp.k12.mn.us](mailto:lnori@pp.k12.mn.us). Applications should be sent to **Secondary Principal Carey Johnson Parkers Prairie Public School, PO Box 46 Parkers Prairie, MN 56361**. Questions regarding the position should be directed to Secondary Principal Carey Johnson and will be answered by phone at 218.579.0437 or by email to [cjohnson@pp.k12.mn.us](mailto:cjohnson@pp.k12.mn.us)

**Health, Nutrition & Forensics Teacher 0.8-1.0 FTE Parkers Prairie High School 2022-2023 school year**  
The assignment includes Health 10, Health 8, Nutrition, and Forensics. This position is currently 0.8 FTE, with the potential of becoming full-time, given the specifics of the master schedule and expertise of the candidate. Completed applications include the following: resume, cover letter, 3 current letters of recommendation, transcripts, and a completed application form. **The application is available on our website at [www.isd547.com](http://www.isd547.com)**. Click on Employee Opportunity to download an application form. Applicants must hold a 7-12 Health license from the Minnesota Department of Education or have the ability to secure the licensure. Applications can be emailed or mailed to: **Secondary Principal Carey Johnson Parkers Prairie High School 411 South Otter Avenue PO Box 46 Parkers Prairie MN 56361** [cjohnson@pp.k12.mn.us](mailto:cjohnson@pp.k12.mn.us) Questions? Call either: 218.574.0437 or 218.338.6011 x 152. Position open until filled.

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FOUR DECADES OF MEMORIES

Alexandria's Lee Backhaus grateful for 41 years as MSHSL official

**By Eric Morken**  
Alexandria Echo Press

**Alexandria**  
Alexandria's Lee Backhaus has kept himself busy in sports throughout the course of his life.

At age 67, Backhaus can still be found on the diamond during the spring and summer months. He was in the dugout as part of the coaching staff that helped lead the Alexandria Cardinals to a Class AAA third-place finish at the baseball state tournament on June 15 in Chaska. Backhaus also helps out coaching in Alexandria's summer Junior Legion baseball program.

For more than four decades, Backhaus spent a good portion of his winter and fall months working as a Minnesota State High School League official across multiple sports. That run came to an end after this past winter season on the MSHSL schedule as Backhaus decided the 2021-22 school year would be his last working as an official.

"It has been a nice run, and I want to thank God for keeping me physically, mentally and emotionally able to officiate for over 40 years," Backhaus said. "I'm sure come next winter I will miss it, my



Eric Morken / Alexandria Echo Press  
Alexandria's Lee Backhaus talks with then-Junior Legion baseball player Spencer Schmidt during a game against New Ulm on July 11, 2021. At age 67, Backhaus is a coach in the Alexandria baseball spring and summer programs. He also worked 41 years as an official across multiple sports before deciding this past winter season on the Minnesota State High School League schedule would be his last of a long and memorable career as an official.

partners and the games, but I'm at a point in my career where I am physically getting too close to not being able to keep up with all those young legs. "I'm retired and want to spend more time



Contributed  
Alexandria's Lee Backhaus was presented with this plaque from the Minnesota State High School League after working as an official for league games for 40 years.

in the warmth of the southern sun...It has been such a blessing and a huge part of my life. I just hope that when I am not around, a coach or two will say 'I sure wish Lee would have been our ref or ump tonight.'"

The MSHSL is looking for officials across all sports, and Backhaus gave his time and energy to many under the league's umbrella. The majority of his career was spent officiating boys and girls basketball, along with umpiring softball and baseball games.

Backhaus also worked high school volleyball

matches for more than 10 years, along with officiating games at the next level in basketball and volleyball through the Alexandria Technical and Community College.

Just like for players, there are games and moments that stand out in the minds of officials too. Backhaus had many of those moments through his 41 years.

"Officiating district championships," Backhaus said. "I officiated games with teams ranked in the top 5 in the state of Minnesota. I officiated a game in Starbuck versus Ortonville when Ortonville was No. 1 in the state and Starbuck was No. 3. I've had the pleasure of officiating moms and daughters, and fathers and sons. Even officiated a player who got his 1,000 point and also officiated the game his son got his 1,000 point. I partnered with the grandson of a coach from Elbow Lake, Dale Champ."

Backhaus worked the last regular-season girls basketball game in the old Starbuck gym.

"I officiated many first games in new gyms," he said. "Umped a perfect game. Umpired a 1-0 district finals game that took

**BACKHAUS:** Page 13

BASEBALL ROUNDUP

Junior Legion Black off to strong start

**By Eric Morken**  
Alexandria Echo Press

The Alexandria Integrity Title Junior Legion Black baseball team is in the midst of a busy start to its summer, and the team got off to a 9-1-1 start after five straight wins late this past week.

Alexandria was at the Morris Tournament through the weekend where it got an 11-4 win over Morris Area-Chokio-Alberta on Sunday.

A six-run second inning broke the game open. Gavin Klimek, Jordan Kuhnau and Brady Swensrud all doubled in the game, and Ben Scott added a triple. Klimek and Kuhnau both had three RBIs, and Scott added two.

Landon Rathes had 11 strikeouts in just 4.1 innings before Kuhnau and Scott pitched the final 2.1 innings.

Another highlight from the weekend came in an 8-0 combined no-hitter against Mound-Westonka.

Carter Simonson was dominant through 5.2 innings as he struck out 13. His only blemish was three walks before Scott came in to complete the no-hitter over the final 1.1 innings.

Alexandria had another powerful offensive display in that game as



Contributed / Heather Scott Photography  
The Alexandria Integrity Title Junior Legion baseball team won its home tournament that ran June 10-12 by beating Totino-Grace in the championship game. It was part of a 9-1-1 start for the team. Team members are, back row, left to right, coach Erik Waage, Caleb Gimbel, Landon Rathes, Cameron Marcado, Kyle Voyles, Sawyer Ruhmor, Cam Simon, Ashton Schmitz, Gage Castle, Jordan Kuhnau, Caleb Lind, coach Lee Backhaus, front row, Bernice Wagner, Colton Converse, Gavin Klimek, Corbin Farrow, Carter Simonson, Brayden Larson, Ben Scott, and Brady Swensrud.

well. Colten Converse, Kuhnau, Kasen Muscha and Cam Simon all doubled, while Klimek tripled.

ALEXANDRIA 060 000 5 - 11 10 0  
MORRIS AREA 011 002 0 - 4 5 0  
ALEXANDRIA PITCHING - Landon Rathes - W, 4.1IP, 2H, 2R, 2ER, 3BB, 11SO; Jordan Kuhnau - 1IP, 0H, 2R, 2ER, 2BB, 1SO; Ben Scott - 1.1IP, 3H, 0R, 0ER, 2BB, 1SO  
ALEXANDRIA OFFENSE - Gavin Klimek - 1-3, 2B, 2BB, 1 run, 3 RBI; Kuhnau - 2-3, BB, 2B, 1 run, 3 RBI; Caleb Gimbel - 0-3; Colten Converse - 0-2; Sawyer Ruhmor - 1-2, 1 run; Kasen Muscha - 0-3; Brady Swensrud - 2-3, 2B, BB, 2 runs, RBI; Gage Castle - 3-4, 2 runs; Ben Scott - 1-3, BB, 3B, 1 run, 2 RBI; Cam Simon - 0-1, BB, 2 runs; Cameron Marcado - 0-3; Carter Simonson - BB, 1 run

ALEXANDRIA SUMMER BASEBALL

Full schedules for the Alexandria Legion and Junior Legion baseball teams can be found at the Alexandria Youth Baseball Association website at [www.alexeyouthbaseball.com](http://www.alexeyouthbaseball.com).

LQPV 002 00 - 2 4 2  
ALEXANDRIA 142 05 - 12 10 0  
ALEXANDRIA PITCHING - Brady Swensrud - 3IP, 4H, 2R, 2ER, 5SO; Jordan Kuhnau - 1.2IP, 0H, 0R, 0BB, 4SO; Caleb

Gimbel - 0.1IP, 0H, 0R, 0BB, 0SO  
ALEXANDRIA OFFENSE - Klimek - 1-3; Ashton Schmitz - BB; Gimbel - 2-4, 2 2B, 1 run, RBI; Kuhnau - 0-2, BB, 1 run, RBI; Ruhmor - 0-2, BB, 1 run; Castle - 1-2, BB, 2 runs, RBI; Swensrud - 3-3, 2 runs, RBI; Scott - 2-3, 2B, 2 runs, RBI; Cam Simon - 1-2, BB, HR, 2 runs, 3 RBI; Colten Converse - 0-2; Caleb Lind - BB, 1 run, RBI  
ALEXANDRIA 100 003 4 - 8 11 1  
MOUND-WESTONKA 000 000 0 - 0 0 4  
ALEXANDRIA PITCHING - Carter Simonson - W, 5.2IP, 0H, 0R, 3BB, 13SO; Ben Scott - 1.1IP, 0H, 0R, 1BB, 1SO  
ALEXANDRIA OFFENSE - Klimek - 1-5, 3B, 2 RBI; Kuhnau - 2-4, BB, 2B, 1 run; Castle - 0-3, BB; Ruhmor - 0-3, BB; Swensrud - 1-4, 1 run, RBI; Simon - 2-4, 2B, 2 run; Corbin Farrow - 1-2, BB, 2 runs; Converse - 2-4, 2B, 1 run, RBI; Kasen Muscha - 2-4, 1 run, 3 RBI  
ALEXANDRIA 306 12 - 12 9 1  
PERHAM 000 00 - 0 5 3

**LEGION:** Page 13



Lowell Anderson / Alexandria Echo Press  
Brandon-Evansville's Hunter Koep shot a score of 96 out of a possible 100 at the Class 3A championship on June 15 at the Minnesota State High School Clay Target League's trap shooting championship in Alexandria. Koep's 96 helped Brandon-Evansville to a team score of 481 out of a possible 100. That was still good for sixth place overall as of Monday afternoon with Class 8A and Class 9A totals left to be decided.

Douglas County teams perform well in trap championship

**By Eric Morken**  
Alexandria Echo Press

ALEXANDRIA — The nine-day Minnesota State High School Clay Target League's trap shooting championship in Alexandria was wrapping up early this week with some Douglas County area teams looking like they were going to qualify for the state tournament.

The championship in Alexandria is a qualifying event for the Minnesota State High School League's state tournament that runs on June

24 at the Minneapolis Gun Club in Prior Lake. The top 40 teams from the entire championship earn a trip to that final shoot to determine a team and individual state champion.

With two class levels left to shoot on Monday and Tuesday, Brandon-Evansville, Alexandria, and Ashby were Douglas-County area teams still within the top 40 scores. Minnewaska barely got

**TRAP:** Page 13

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<b>Grand Marshal</b> Greg DeGier	<b>4. Fergus Falls High School Marching Band</b>	<b>9. 728 Cadets Marching Band</b>	<b>14. Hibbing Marching Bluejackets</b>
<b>1. Host Band: Alexandria Marching Band</b>	<b>5. River City Rhythm Drum &amp; Bugle Corps - Honor Unit</b>	<b>10. Sauk Rapids-Rice High School Marching STORM</b>	<b>15. Waconia High School Marching Band</b>
<b>2. Richfield High School Marching Spartans</b>	<b>6. Two Rivers Marching Band</b>	<b>11. Sartell HS Marching Band</b>	<b>16. Champlin Park Marching Rebels</b>
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