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Volume 124, Issue 1

'Young Farmers' want to get in the field

But with limited acres and tough competition, it's tough to get a start in farming

by Cormac Dodd

It's no secret new or wanna-be farmers are hurting for land when one sees their highly-visible advertisements in newspapers. And the elemental struggle for a site of one's own is most deeply felt amongst a particular demographic: young men in their 20s.

"Young Farmer" is often capitalized, as if the combined adjective and the noun is shorthand for a generational angst, a means of broader identity.

Record levels of land cost and commodity price spikes cast land acquisition woes as the greatest barrier of entry in agriculture, even in light of an existing law signed by former Gov Mark Dayton to incentivize renting to emerging farmers who are pining for their start and hope to wade into the profession and lifestyle.

In 2017, the year the legislation was passed, fewer than four percent of Minnesota farmers were under the age of 35. And little has since changed on that score, industry

experts acknowledge.

As land goes for \$7000 an acre and John Deere tractors are peddled for \$350,000 or more, expenditures of this ilk are at least two examples of the industry's terrific specter of cost, the financial surreality of agriculture. Juxtaposed with the average profession that routinely involves being hired and being paid a wage for specified production at specified levels, farming occupies a unique position in the heart of the American workplace, usually on some wind-swept plain without a building in sight.

Becoming a homeowner in Minneapolis would be easier for such figures. Yet certain individuals yearn for no more than a sprawling, fertile few thousand acres.

Millennials and young adults have reckoned with the snarls of the age, forced to confront a student loan debt crisis and rates of pay that fall well below expectations. The Great Recession and the coronavirus pandemic have made becoming an adult harder.

A 2016 study found millennials were earning about 20 percent of what baby boomers did at the same age. Unsurprisingly, fewer millennials are married, and fewer have children, as loans are the steady norm.

So imagine what it's like in the jam-packed arena of farming.

"Basically, the guys who own the land do not want to give it up. And when they do, it's harder to give a younger guy a chance when other guys can pay top dollar," said Zach Hardebeck, 20, who lives in the



Marc Collins, 21, posed by his parents' grain bin set-up at their farm southwest of Murdock. Collins, as a lot of young farmers, would like to acquire some acreage to call his own. Soaring real estate prices and tough competition from established farmers makes it difficult for an emerging farmer to get a start.

Raymond-area and is an emerging farmer.

He described the hunt for farmland for rent as difficult. The number of farms dipped from 1997 to 2017, on the slide from 78,755 to 68,822, yet hardly has production slowed nor does land go untilled.

Farms have been expanding in size for decades, merging with peers and contiguous farms to galvanize lucrative partnerships, and increasingly wield major purchasing power in local and regional markets in a scrap for property gains and commercial leverage. Equipment and

land usually vanish from the scene of sale auction-style, sold to the highest bidder.

For a new guy in the market, competition can be daunting. In a bidding war, "the prices the older guys can pay blow me out of the

(Continued on page 9)

'Farmer Joel' Johnson hoping Kandiyohi District 3 voters will believe in him as he seeks office

by Cormac Dodd

In a political landscape of increased polarization, steering residents away from national issues is a tall order.

But Joel Johnson of rural Pennock, who will be running for the Kandiyohi County District 3 seat this fall, hopes to do just that, focusing on subjects more relevant to the commissioner's post.

It is one of the most hotly contested races in this part of the state, as four candidates spar for a commissioner's seat following the retirement of current County Commissioner and long-time incumbent Rolf Nissen -- a contest that will converge in a public forum July 29th.

At 59, Johnson has served on the Mamre Township board for decades. To his mind, the time is right for him to run.

"I believe in helping people," Johnson said. "We can all do more, and I know I can do more. That's why I'm running."

Johnson is a fifth generation livestock farmer located north of Pennock who began a contracting business 30 years ago.

Township boards work on a scant budget to accomplish projects such as road grading, but the proposals to bringing broadband access to rural Kandiyohi County has consumed Johnson for the last three years. It might even necessitate raising the levy within the township.

"It's a huge project and a

very important one. I've talked to Senators. Big contacts for just a township person," Johnson said.

The experience of working as a part of a team to usher in change for the good in communities as a township officer has in part encouraged him to seek election in Kandiyohi, he said. As a commissioner, he would advocate to continue to fund programs and centers that benefit Kandiyohi communities.

"People have always asked me to run. I know this area and its people well. In this divisive political climate, I think we have more in common than we know," Johnson said.

Kandiyohi's District 3 covers mainly rural stretches of Kandiyohi County, in particular the northwest quarter of the county. Yet redistricting gave the district a small sliver of the northern corridor of the City of Willmar, a development that will likely swing the election in one direction or another, due to the concentration of votes there.

"I'm trying to get those votes in north Willmar. The other candidates are too. They will have a lot of voting power in this election," said Johnson.

Karl Kaufman of Spicer, Kim Larson of Willmar and Dale H. Anderson of Belgrade are the other candidates in the District 3 commissioner race.

Kaufman, former head of the Kandiyohi County Republican Party, is a familiar figure with local political ties. The other two candidates are town-



Joel Johnson

ship officers. There will be a primary, and it's slated for August 9th.

At the debates in late July, immigration will be a hot topic, according to Johnson.

"I believe we are a nation of immigrants. I believe that this country is free to anyone," he said.

A long-time farmer, Johnson knows he has forged connections with many rural residents. In certain circles, he is known as 'farmer Joel.' He campaigns in the traditional style, door-to-door, hitting that northern Willmar section especially hard.

"I'm hoping they believe in me, that they can see it's not just agriculture with me," Johnson said. "Getting people what's needed; I think we need to return to that concept."

He has visited the women's shelter in Willmar, learning about issues facing the city.

"We need to start talking more about mental illness. We need to help people living in despair, and they are right here in Kandiyohi County," Johnson said.

"If we want to make things better, it starts at the local level. We can blame Washington all we want, but change begins here," he said.

Meeting to discuss Swift County ditch benefits slated for July 20 in Benson

by Reed Anfinson

An informational meeting with Swift County landowners on the ditch redetermination of benefits has been set for Wednesday, July 20, at Track Bar and Grill in Benson from 8:30 to noon. The presentation starts at 9 a.m.

Swift County plans on starting the redetermination process in January for all county and judicial ditches.

At the meeting landowners will find out what information they can provide to make the process more accurate, Swift County Drainage Inspector Kody Fossum said. Time is set

aside during the meeting for landowner questions.

No business will be conducted at the meeting and it is not required for landowners involved with the redetermination process to attend, Fossum said. People with questions can contact Fossum at 320-843-5341.

In April, the Swift County's Board of Commissioners voted four to one to conduct a redetermination of all county and judicial ditches in a single year rather than stretch the process out over three years.

Commissioners Gary Hendrickx, District 1-Appleton, Pete Peterson, District 3-south

Benson and Torning Township, Joe Fox, District 4-Hegbert Township, and Eric Rudnigen voted in favor of a motion to do the redetermination in one year while Commissioner Ed Pederson, District 2-north Benson and Benson Township voted against the motion.

Pederson said it would be harder to come up with the money needed for the redeterminations when it is all done at one time. However, the other four commissioners along with Fossum preferred doing it in a single year reducing the overall cost and providing more clarity on assessments.

(Continued on page 10)



Dark clouds but no rain

Things looked promising for a much needed shot of rain in Kerkhoven recently, but it was all bluff. Dark clouds gave way to more sunshine. Above, the Glacial Plains elevator in Kerkhoven was highlighted with the dark backdrop.

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Branching out: Local hemp farm explores consumer market

by Brett Blocker
Lakes Area Review

Much like the plants he grows, adapting and evolving has been the business model for New London hemp farmer Kevin Ortenblad.

His company, which initially began in 2018 as Lettuce Abound LLC, an indoor aeroponics lettuce farm operating from a repurposed storage shed, has since transitioned into the production of hemp under the banner of Hemponix. And with the transition, come high risks and high rewards.

Nestled at the end of a winding gravel driveway along an otherwise unassuming stretch of road in the outskirts of town, the site blends in easily with its bucolic surroundings. Save for the name, one could easily mistake the business as a typical, nondescript family farm. One might even mistake the 400 hemp plants sprouting outside as small pine trees, as at least one local mail carrier has done.

A tour inside the facility, however, reveals the true scope of the operation. Within the walls of the 5,000 square-foot storage shed-turned-climate-controlled-laboratory, a team of technicians weaves through row upon row of artificial wilderness, pruning the leaves of his 144 custom-bred "New London Gold" hemp plants.

In previous years, the company would focus on growing and selling this hemp seed to farmers. As of late, however, Hemponix is branching out once again, aiming to find demand in a burgeoning consumer market – in particular, creating oral and topical CBG derivatives including lotions, gummies, oils, vape products and even pet biscuits, all of which are derived from Ortenblad's home-grown variety.

And so far, that demand appears to be there.

"We're already selling in-house and online," he said, noting that several retail outlets in town are carrying his products.

Anticipating continued consumer interest and research suggesting potential health benefits of CBG, Ortenblad hopes the transition from hemp seed to hemp products will prove to be a more financially viable alternative to hemp seed, which had previously been the company's focus until earlier this spring.

While Ortenblad has already succeeded in creating a stable strain of hemp seed to be sold to farmers (including "New London Gold," which he still uses), he soon discovered the market was lacking.

"We still have the ability to do that," Ortenblad said, referring to growing and selling seeds, "but the seed market is a smaller portion of the whole hemp market." Consumer products like oils and tinctures, "are much larger."

"It comes down to total addressable market," adds Sam Romain, a marketing consultant with whom Hemponix has partnered. "When selling the seeds only, you can only sell to farmers. And the amount of [hemp] farmers is actually going down."

Following the 2018 Farm Bill, which federally recognized hemp as an agricultural crop, interest from entrepreneurial growers spiked. However, said Romain, "the market was oversaturated with these growers and there was too much supply. The prices fell out, and the farmers fell out. So the market for seed is not very good, but the consumer side is growing every day."

In addition to available CBG and CBD hemp products, which have found market demand in recent years, consumer interest also is expected to increase as a result of a recent legislation change deregulating THC products derived from hemp.

Although apparently due to confusion by some legislators regarding the bill's wording and the effects of the new law, as of July 1, Minnesota now allows for THC to be sold in edible products at levels capable of intoxication.

At this time, however, Hemponix does not sell any products that were not already legal prior to the law change. The wording of the legislation remains murky, and penalties for infractions are stiff, said Romain.

Yet despite a healthy consumer market and legislative deregulation, chal-

lenges abound for producers – namely, operational costs, licensing and keeping up with ever-changing legal requirements. Ortenblad also points to "education" around hemp products as a limiting factor, alluding to the negative stigma surrounding these plants, and the differences between psychoactive and non-psychoactive compounds that can be derived from hemp and added to – or removed from – hemp products.

Ortenblad and Romain predict these factors are keeping new small businesses like his from sprouting up in Minnesota.

"We're actually seeing an influx of major corporate

players, because they have the money and the backing," Romain said, "which is disappointing, because the day Minnesota [fully] legalizes THC, it's not going to be us out here making hay. It's going to be someone from California or New York, with billions of dollars."

Along with difficulties in securing insurance in a new agricultural market, start-up costs are extremely steep. From artificial lighting, to testing and experimentation with developing unique hemp varieties, Hemponix has seen three years of negative cash flow, Romain said, as the business worked to develop high

(Continued on page 5)



Kevin Ortenblad, owner of New London hemp farm Hemponix, pictured with one of his soon-to-bud "New London Gold" hemp plants that will soon be dried, shipped and processed into a line of CBG products.



CBG oil tinctures are among the new products developed by Hemponix, which has recently transitioned from raising and selling hemp seed to consumer products, including gummies, lotions, vape liquids and pet treats. Photos by Brett Blocker

Join us for Election Judge Training

July 14th & 19th, 5:30-7:30 pm
Swift County Courthouse LEC Room

If you need a refresher or if you are interested in becoming an election judge for the upcoming 2022 Primary and General Elections, an election judge training class will be held on Thursday July 14th and Tuesday, July 19th starting at 5:30 in the LEC.

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Ted Here.....

Having been raised in this burg it's sad to see another stone knocked out of the foundation as I drive past the now shuttered grain elevator in Kerkhoven, a victim of consolidation, changes in agriculture and, to break the camel's back, a fire. Our little town once played host to three thriving elevator companies... now we have none. In a farm community, that says a lot about our metamorphosis.

Essentially, we are no longer an ag-based town. Kerkhoven, which once boasted International, John Deere, then Ford implement dealerships, a fertilizer plant and the aforementioned elevators who one year were cited as the leading shipper of grain in the entire state, now has none of that. Sure, sure... we still do and will continue to rely on agriculture. It's just that we are now more or less bystanders to what's happening -- feeding farmers on their way through town, insuring and supplying them with essential yet smaller goods and services, hosting their churches and schools. But the business of farming has mostly outgrown our little town.

In an era where the price of a new combine could equal or out-pace the value of an entire block of houses in a rural community, it's tough to keep pace with the ever-changing dynamics of ag. One hundred sixty acre farms are now quaint; 50 cow dairies are near impossible to find. Ag, like retail and other commercial enterprises -- including even media -- has morphed away from the mom and pop variety which I grew up knowing, into the Walmart model where bigger is more efficient, more sexy and definitely more profitable than the former way of doing things.

The problem of course is that where once 10 families lived off the land, now one will control that acreage, and perhaps two or three others will benefit by employment. And the purchasing power of that one big operation can sometimes bypass the little farm store which once was an essential provider of goods and services to that ag neighborhood. The

loss of customers may eliminate the need/purpose of a foundation business 'in town' and just like that what once was thought of as a given is no longer offered.

The old "trickle down effect" wasn't just a 1980s political slogan. Now it has real, verifiable, look-what's-happened meaning, although in just the opposite direction of its first intention. The evidence of what we've lost is plain to see, and right before our eyes. In all likelihood, we will never see a return to 'the way it was.'

And I'm not even criticizing that. In fact, in pure economic theory, it's probably in the cards, sans artificial measures. When you think about it, bigger will always gobble up smaller until there are but a handful of giants. Economics works like a pyramid where the base is this huge conglomeration of stones, giving way to a slightly smaller grouping one tier above, to another diminishing number, and another and another, until finally at the top sits one grand capstone. In it are represented all the work, all the trials and errors, all the industrial achievements of a hundred or two hundred years or more of grinding efforts which made the final shiny zenith possible.

In the land of free enterprise, that is the climax, the perfection of a mathematical equation taken to its ultimate limit. It's not without casualties, though, the obvious being those left in the dust of a stampede to success.

I hate to see the Kerkhoven Farmers Elevator -- as I knew it -- come to an end, but it may have been inevitable. Each one of us opening a storefront (or church-front or school-front) on Main Street America faces the same possibility. Time will tell how long any of us will survive, but one thing is certain to me: It's up to us to make that determination. Before rejecting a stone in the foundation consider that it's unlikely to ever be replaced. So ask yourself: are you really better off without it?

OTHER VOICES

Portrait of a colonoscopy

by Jase Graves

There have been countless jokes, comedy routines and humorous articles written about colonoscopies, but I'm a firm believer that, like Mexican food restaurants, there can never be too many. Besides, we now live in a world where each individual colon has the right to assert its own unique identity that can't be categorized based on society's stereotyped definitions of a large intestine.

So, here goes.

Ever since I turned 50 and my stylist started charging extra to brush my ear hair, several of my friends and loved ones have encouraged me to schedule a colonoscopy. At first, I was reluctant, maybe because the procedure conjured images of alien abductions involving bodily probing devices the size of Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles. Or perhaps I was just afraid of what the gastroenterologist might discover based on my long history of devouring pretty

much anything that the FDA has deemed semi-edible.

My worries were so profound that for the first couple of years of my 50s, I resorted to the cumbersome, awkward and potentially disastrous take-home colon cancer screening kits. But as my friend's gastroenterologist once warned him, "There's really no graceful way to catch a stool."

And, sure enough, when I attempted to use the kits, my juggling performance usually resulted in a call for back-up from an emergency hazmat team.

But this year, motivated by the fear that I might not live long enough to become a financial and psychological burden on my three daughters, I decided to take the plunge (or the prod) and schedule a full-blown colonoscopy with all the trimmings.

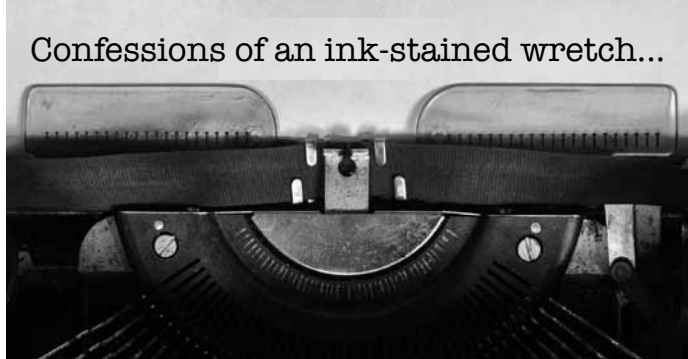
As most of you know, a proper colonoscopy begins with the preparatory process of fasting and ingesting a regimen of military-grade laxatives designed to transform

you into a human fire hose nozzle set to Armageddon strength. For me, though, the prep wasn't as traumatic as I anticipated. Rather than having to set up a campsite next to the toilet, I was actually able to do some yard work -- with the slight inconvenience of occasionally performing a penguin sprint to the bathroom.

By the end of the day, though, I understood what one of my friends meant when he advised that, instead of toilet paper, I should have a snow cone handy.

After a full day of fasting and counting enchiladas to get to sleep the night before, I was anxious to get the procedure over with in the morning so I could resume my steady diet of Tex-Mex and Andy's Frozen Custard. I'm happy to say that the entire medical staff at the clinic was extremely cordial and accommodating, even though I couldn't help thinking that they were all trying not to laugh -- along with my wife.

(Continued on page 4)



Writing about monetary policy may be hardest job in the world

by Lee Egerstrom

A few months back, I told Banner readers I would write a few columns about what I would be doing if I still had a full-time job as an economics, trade and agriculture writer for a daily newspaper.

This is the last installment in that unscheduled series. I should have written it a couple of months ago, but didn't. The following will explain why.

There is no tougher job than trying to write about federal and international monetary policies. Some of the reasons come with the complexity of issues. Other reasons are the fact that readers -- voters -- only talk about fiscal policy and that makes it hard to explain the mysteries of monetary policy.

My work with the subject came from my being a farm boy from Kerkhoven. While working as a Washington correspondent in the 1970s, my bosses -- my newspaper chain's editors -- had me writing about agriculture and trade. That became important when the Soviets started buying copious quantities of American wheat and driving up commodity prices.

My first lesson about monetary policy came one day when Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz took credit for the grain sales at a press conference. Kathy Patterson of the Kansas City Star, a reporter from either the Chicago Tribune or Milwaukee Journal, and I continued to talk about what we had heard and what was going on in the commodities markets.

A gentleman stood off to the side, eavesdropping on our conversation. He joined our conversation and said what we had just heard was hogwash -- or something like that associated with a bull. "We aren't selling anything. We are giving it away," the man said.

Who was he? We chased him down later and learned he was G. Edward Schuh, chief agricultural staff economist for President Nixon's Council of Economic Advisors. He was an Indiana farm boy who became one of the worldwide honored University of Chicago economists. He served as a guru in both the Nixon and Carter administrations, as head of agriculture at the World Bank, as head of the agricultural economics department and later applied economics department at the University of Minnesota, and still later as dean of the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota.

What that chance meeting in Washington did was force this young reporter to look into the economic importance of President Nixon's ending the Bretton Woods Agreement on currency exchange. The dollar crashed against other global currencies as currency values began trading like a raw material commodity with floating exchange rates.

The cheap dollar meant farmers and other producers of products and services could sell everything imaginable into global trade. In turn, the cheap dollar meant everything else Americans were buying became more expensive.

That made inflation the second big economic lesson I learned on the job. An impact of ending Bretton Woods was inflation hounding Nixon and Ford administrations. But fighting inflation with the tools of fiscal policy didn't work. An image some readers may remember was President Ford's WIN campaign (Whip Inflation Now.)

Inflation lingered on into the Carter administration years. President Carter eventually gave Wall Street and banking officials what they wanted, Paul Volcker Jr., to serve as head of the Federal Reserve Board. He raised interest rates sharply in 1979, almost single-handedly smashed inflation, and, this economics writer would add that Volcker caused recession in the early 1980s.

To this day, Fed observers split hairs over crediting Volcker with ending our worst fight with inflation in modern history and causing a crash in the rural American economy that never fully recovered. That latter is remembered by numbers crunchers as the "Farm Financial Crisis of 1982-1987."

The Volcker Fed policy strengthened the U.S. dollar against other currencies. That became global purchasing power and Fed watchers observed how U.S. consumers became the economic engine for the world economy during the Reagan years. Among our weaknesses today is lingering dependence on one-way trade. About 70 percent of the U.S. economy relies on consumer purchases.

People who didn't understand the Fed's monetary policy or its autonomy could blame Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter or Reagan. Or all of them collectively.

So what have we learned from that earlier time? Not much. What we are looking at today isn't on a parallel track with the 1970s and 1980s.

Inflation is back. There are fears of recession again. Trade flows are distorted. There is general uneasiness about the economy, but there are many



factors that make the current economic situation look different than in recent decades.

We have incredibly low unemployment rates and jobs are going unfilled all across America. States -- Minnesota included -- have budget surpluses because economic activity is generating income and business tax flows that defy fears of recession.

Some of the best monetary policy watchers look at these different economic conditions and can only note the conflict in perceptions.

Paul Krugman, the Nobel laureate economist and columnist for the New York Times, recently noted that wholesale prices are coming down but haven't been passed along to consumers. This includes petroleum and gasoline prices.

Most inflation reflects disruptions from supply chain problems (Trump's trade war with China, and the COVID-19 pandemic, among reasons) and to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Krugman said. Part also comes from what economists call "an overheated domestic economy" that needed the Fed to hike interest rates to cool the economy down, he explained.

Two days earlier (July 6), New York Times economics writer Peter Coy raised a question for the paper's subscribers in a newsletter, "Economy is already cooling, so why is the Fed dousing it with cold water?"

Copper prices have fallen 23 percent since the first of the year, platinum is down 13 percent, lumber down 41 percent, and oil and wheat prices are off from highs but are still being held up by Russia's war in Ukraine, he said.

He tried to explain. But good luck.

Presidents and members of Congress play with fiscal policy tools. That is what they talk about with constituents. These tools can stimulate or slow economies but have little impact on external problems created by wars abroad or pandemics that interfere with supply chain activities.

Only our Federal Reserve Board and other countries' central bankers have tools to handle monetary policy deficiencies.

Bring that up the next time you are sitting around in a coffee shop. You will discover the challenge writers have with the subject. And you might clear out the restaurant faster than a storm warning siren.

THE KERKHOVEN Banner

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Swift County continuing pursuit of PrimeWest for employee health coverage

by Mitchell Levesque

Swift County continues its pursuit of PrimeWest to be its sole health plan for Medical Assistance (MA) of Families and Children.

In a resolution put forward at the June 7 county commissioners' meeting, and unanimously approved, the county recommended PrimeWest to be the sole health plan provider. The resolution comes in the wake of an uncertain few years for the county in terms of health plan procurement, an issue that is still largely ongoing and one that the county believes affects the quality of the care constituents receive.

Reasoning given for the resolution was the provider's high county scoring, or ability to meet county health needs. Also a part of the resolution was for Swift County Human Services clients receiving MinnesotaCare to have two providers – PrimeWest and BluePlus – a requirement mandated by state law.

Swift County Human Services' history with PrimeWest dates back to 2018 when the dissolution of Southern Prairie Community Care (SPCC), an integrated health partnership, meant the county along with other member counties of SPCC had to look for a new health plan. SPCC decided to join PrimeWest, giving the choice to member counties whether they wanted to follow.

PrimeWest is a county-based purchasing organization, a system of delivering care to Minnesota Health Care Program enrollees that is administered by local counties. The option poses itself as an alternative to other models for delivering care by allowing counties more control to manage health programs and work directly with providers.

At a 2018 county commissioners' meeting, Human Services' Director Catie Lee laid out the expected benefits of joining PrimeWest. Benefits for patients included things such as improved access for dental care, early intervention for mental health and better transportation. The option also

offered such advantages as increased investment in county agencies and the chance to support local providers.

In June of 2018, the county voted to follow SPCC and join PrimeWest. A year later in the procurement for human services' health plans for 2020 it recommended that PrimeWest be the sole health plan for Medicaid options as well as one of the two providers for MinnesotaCare. The state Department of Human Services (DHS), however, issued a decision to the county saying that it couldn't have PrimeWest as the sole health plan. The county subsequently requested mediation on the decision.

Mediation fell through, however, as DHS ended up canceling that year's procurement, citing a South County Health Alliance lawsuit, leaving Swift County's managed care programs in place. PrimeWest did not join the lawsuit, instead trying to work with the DHS's commissioner on "passing stronger CPB [county-based purchasing] legislative language," according to a 2019 document concerning joining PrimeWest put forth by Lee in a county commissioners' meeting.

Fast forward to the June 7 county commissioners' meeting in which PrimeWest was recommended as the sole health plan for MA Families and Children when Lee delivered the news that DHS once again disregarded the scorings made by the county. This time concerning the county's input about senior and disability programs, requiring the county have three health plans for senior programs and two for disability.

According to Lee, the decision comes as an administrative burden to the county, which doesn't have the staff to specialize in administering multiple health plans.

"It is very difficult and very costly for us to constantly bounce between health plans," Lee said in the meeting.

In the years of procurement – 2019 and 2022 – PrimeWest has continually

scored the highest compared to other health plans. "PWH [Prime Health West] was far superior in their proposal and understanding the rural needs and the roles county government has in providing for its citizens," reads one request for board action in 2019 for PrimeWest to be the sole provider for Medicaid services.

County Commissioner Gary Hendrickx, District 1-Appleton, at the June 7 meeting discussed PrimeWest's significantly higher scores. "We don't know where this journey is going to take us, going with PrimeWest, but we do know they are a high-class organization," he said.

According to the request for mediation made against DHS by the county in 2019, the department "offered no explanation for its decision not to select PrimeWest as the single health plan."

In discussing the most recent decision made by the DHS, Lee described prior meetings with DHS to get together and score various providers and the agreement that was felt at those meetings. "We felt we were aligned," she said concerning the tone of the meetings.

Lee continued, summarizing past events with DHS. "What we're trying to say is that you [DHS] asked for our voice; you didn't like it, and so you disregarded it," Lee said.

A statement from Cynthia MacDonald, the state Medicaid director read, "This procurement process makes the people we serve the top priority." It continued by saying, "We believe we put forth strong requests for proposals that make enrollee choice the paramount value at play."

The process for mediation involves the county presenting to a board that hosts three members, one from the Association for Minnesota Counties, another from DHS and another designee agreed upon by both parties. From there the mediation board presents to the state county commissioner of Human Services for them to then make a decision.

THREE BUNS AND a HURRICANE®

BY ALISON NELSON



D.C., The Finale.

We returned on a direct afternoon flight back to Minneapolis from Reagan International, with nothing more than a slight gate change to disrupt our plan. There was plenty of room for carry ons, and the pilot gave a funny speech that made everyone applaud before we left. It was as pleasant as could be.

When we got to Minneapolis, I called the stay and fly hotel and said we were ready to be picked up. The guy must have been waiting for a call, because he said someone would be there in five minutes. And he was. With no one else needing a ride, we had the shuttle to ourselves for a short ride back to the hotel. It was good to be back in Minnesota.

As we got closer, I took the keys out of my backpack and put them in my pocket so they'd be handy when we arrived. Turning the corner by the parking lot my mom said, "Your car's not there."

Oh, mom. "I'm sure it is," I said, probably snarky, with ill-placed confidence. I looked out from the shuttle window to where I was sure my car was, and it was indeed not there.

Ummm? There are times, especially as I get older, that I think I am losing my mind. Yes, I definitely parked the car in the back of the lot, as that is where they told me it had to be parked. I hung my little permit in the rearview mirror and backed it into a spot the night before we flew out. Had it been towed? How could it not where I left it?

"I'll go talk to the front desk," I told my mom and kids, everyone a little travel weary and ready to go home.

I asked if it had been towed. "We haven't towed a car for months," the guy said, slow-springing into action. "It must have been stolen." He was pretty nonchalant about it, in hindsight. I was handed an incident report to fill out as he dialed the Bloomington Police.

Honestly, I didn't know what to think. I parked a car, came back for it keys in hand, and it was gone. It's a helpless feeling, but nothing that freaking out is going to fix. So we waited for the police to come.

The front desk clerk was friendly, but not overly concerned or apologetic. "Can you still get to where you're going tonight without your car?" Uh, no. I live a hundred miles away, you clown; if I didn't need a car to get here I wouldn't have driven it here. He offered us free drink tickets for the evening reception while we waited, which I took but had no intention of using. I can't be drinking while I wait for the police and before I drive my kids home, dummy.

The police did arrive shortly, with the usual questions: Did I have the keys with me? Yes. Had I given anyone else permission to drive it? No. Were there any liens against the automobile? No. All logical things to check, but no leads there. It was just taken. Also, one would think a hotel that makes its long-term parking patrons park in the back would put a security camera trained on that part, but they did not. Dumb.

In what was probably a routine rundown, the officers said people steal cars to strip them of parts, or they take them to commit other crimes so they're not identifiable in

their own vehicles, or they simply needed a ride to Minneapolis and when they get there, they'll dump it. Huh. Very friendly, gave me their phone number and report number, and we were free to go. Someone would call us if they found it.

My aunt had arrived to pick up my mom, and my brother was on his way with a car for us to take home (hooray for family rescues!), so we went to the mall for supper, still in shock. It was a good excuse to tell the kids we could not go spend money at the Lego store. We had just been on vacation, and now we might need to buy a vehicle.

As of a week later, there is no word on our car. This, you may remember, is the same car that got broken into at Fort Snelling just three years earlier, only a couple miles from this hotel, on the Fourth of July, when Jesse was out of town on a band trip. I hope it brings these jackholes the same bad luck it brought us. And no more traveling to the metro area over the Fourth of July when Jesse is out of state with a marching band.

There's a Seinfeld episode where Jerry reserves a rental car, and when he arrives at the counter the woman tells him they have the reservation, but not the car. He is indignant, and tells her anyone can take reservations, but the holding of the reservations is the most important part.

Seems if you stay at a hotel that allows you to leave your car parked there, you should be able to expect your car is there when you return. The holding of the car is the most important part.

Come on, Embassy Suites. You're better than that.

Colonoscopy

(Continued from page 4)

I have to admit that I was a little nervous since this was the first time I'd ever been put to sleep (when not listening to a sermon in church), but the nurse anesthetist told me that it would be like taking a really good nap – while basically on the same drugs that killed Michael Jackson.

When I woke up, I expected to feel like I had been on the receiving end of a Build a Bear Workshop stuffing station. Instead, I felt surprisingly refreshed, well-rested and oddly ventilated.

I'm pleased to report that the doctor found my colon extremely boring and said that

he wasn't interested in seeing it again for ten years. I did request the bowel portrait family value package with two 8x10s, three 5x7s and eight wallets. He didn't laugh.

Following the procedure, my wife drove me to the closest Mexican restaurant, and I experienced a great sense of satisfaction and relief that I had overcome my anxieties and done what was best for my health – while consuming an obscene amount of chips and salsa.

So, if you've been putting off your own colonoscopy, let me encourage you to get it done. You'll have a great

sleep, you can gorge guilt-free on your favorite food when it's over, and it just might help you live long enough to become a financial and psychological burden on those you love the most.

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Graves is an award-winning humor columnist from East Texas. His columns have been featured in Texas Escapes magazine, The Shreveport Times, The Longview News Journal, and The Kilgore News Herald. Contact Graves at susanjase@sbcglobal.net.

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The Truncated Dream

by Alma Contreras Lopez

The risk of immigrating in search of the long-awaited American dream is undoubtedly dangerous. The bad thing about this is that, although people know the risk that this practice represents, they still undertake the journey forced by necessity.

The lack of jobs in poor, underdeveloped, or developing countries, the lack of opportunities, and not having access to basic needs. All of this added to practice that in many of these countries is seen as normal, a risk that many have faced, where if they are detained by immigration, they will be sent back to their country, and many will keep trying. In most cases, being deported is the easiest thing that can happen.

But there is the other side of the coin, the one where, because it is an illegal practice, you never know if the coyote is a good person, if he will help them cross the border, or if he is just a scam. The doubts may be many, but since the acquaintances have already gone through the border many times, the distrust towards the coyotes is not much, regardless of the stories of unscrupulous human traffickers who

leave immigrants abandoned to their fate in the middle of the desert.

Despite all this, we know that immigration to the United States does not stop, on the contrary, it seems that it is increasing.

Perhaps you have already heard of the unfortunate event that happened in Texas, where 53 people died after being abandoned in a trailer in San Antonio.

The stories and reasons for the dangerous trip, according to a note from an Hispanic newscast here in the United States, ranged from achieving the long-awaited American dream to others coming to meet their relatives who already reside in the country, a case that moved me, was that of a 24-year-old girl who, seeing her mother sick with cancer and in need of surgery costing about 8,000 dollars, left Honduras in the hope of raising that money and helping her mother.

In recent years, migrants have faced other tragedies and challenges enduring the dangerous heat and terrain while trying to cross the US-Mexico border, as these types of tragedies are not isolated.

In 2017, 10 people died and dozens were injured from

heat-related conditions after being discovered in a trailer at a San Antonio Walmart.

In 2003, 18 victims between the ages of seven and 91 were found dead in the back of a truck with around 100 other people when temperatures exceeded 37 degrees Celsius.

In March 2021, a truck filled with 25 people collided with an SUV in an isolated stretch of California's Imperial Valley, killing 13 immigrants.

These situations are what we see, but I imagine that because it is an illegal practice, perhaps we do not realize all the dangers that undocumented immigrants face in their attempt to achieve a dream that ends, on many occasions, in nightmare.

Word of the week: option
Spanish: opción
Pronunciation: op-see-on

Comments or story ideas? Alma Contreras can be reached at almagbym@hotmail.com



Alma Contreras Lopez

El sueño truncado

por Alma Contreras Lopez

El riesgo de inmigrar en busca del anhelado sueño americano es sin duda muy grande. Lo malo de esto es que, aunque las personas saben el riesgo que esta práctica representa aun así emprenden el viaje obligado por la necesidad.

La falta de empleos en países pobres, subdesarrollados o en vías de desarrollo, la falta de oportunidades, el no tener acceso a las necesidades básicas, todo eso sumado a una práctica que en muchos de esos países se ve como "normal", un riesgo que muchos han enfrentado, donde no pasa más que inmigración te mande de regreso a tu país para seguir intentándolo. En la mayoría de los casos que les deporten es lo mas ligero que puede pasar.

Pero esta la otra cara de la moneda, esa donde, por ser una practica ilegal, nunca se sabe si el coyote es una buena persona, si de verdad les ayudara a pasar al otro lado de la frontera, o si solo es un estafados. Las dudas quizás sean muchas, pero como ya los con-

ocidos lo han intentado una y otra vez la desconfianza hacia ellos no es mucha. A pesar de las historias de traficantes de personas sin escrúpulos que dejan abandonados a los inmigrantes a su suerte en medio del desierto.

A pesar de todo esto sabemos que la inmigración rumbo a los Estados Unidos no para, por el contrario, pareciera que aumenta.

Quizás usted ya escucho del lamentable suceso que paso en Texas, donde 53 personas murieron tras ser abandonadas en un tráiler en San Antonio.

Las historias y motivos del peligroso viaje, según una nota de un noticiero Hispano aquí en los Estados Unidos, van desde el alcanzar de tan deseado sueño americano, otros venían a reunirse con sus familiares que ya residen en el país, un caso que me conmovió fue el de una joven de 24 años, que al ver a su madre enferma de cáncer y en la necesidad de una operación de un costo de unos 8,000 dólares, salió de Honduras con la esperanza de juntar ese dinero y ayudar a su madre.

En los últimos años, los migrantes han enfrentado otras tragedias y desafíos que soporatan el calor y el terreno peligrosos mientras intentan cruzar la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México, pues este tipo de tragedias no son aisladas.

En 2017, 10 personas murieron y decenas resultaron heridas por condiciones relacionadas con el calor después de ser descubiertas en un camión con remolque en un Walmart de San Antonio.

En 2003, 18 víctimas de entre 7 y 91 años fueron encontradas muertas en la parte trasera de un camión con unas 100 personas más cuando las temperaturas superaron los 37 grados centígrados.

En marzo de 2021, un camión lleno con 25 personas chocó con un SUV en un tramo aislado del Valle Imperial de California, matando a 13 inmigrantes.

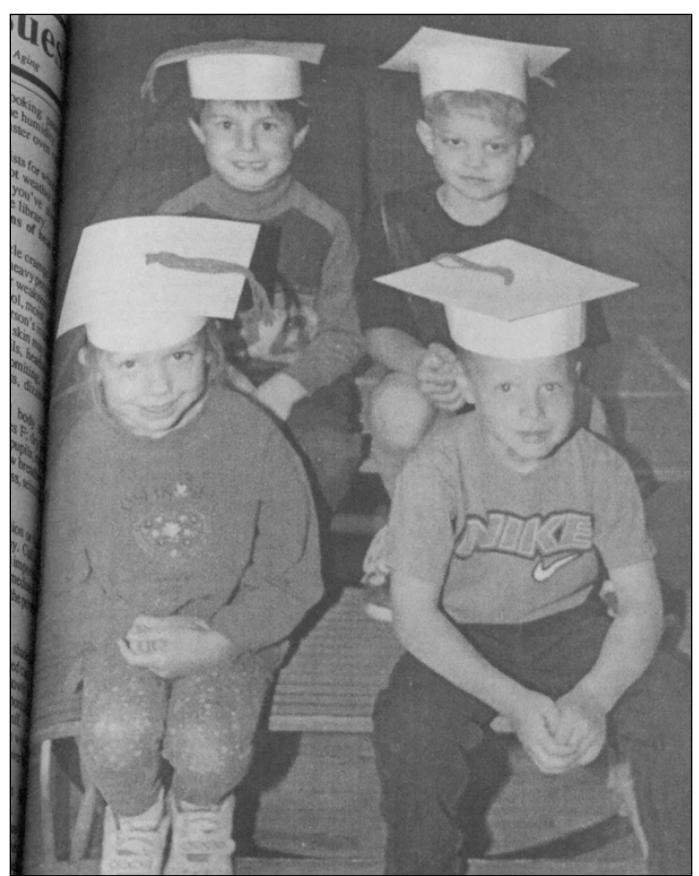
Estas situaciones son las que vemos, pero me imagino que por la tratarse de una práctica ilegal, quizás no nos damos cuenta de todos los peligros a los que se enfrentan los inmigrantes indocumentados en su intento por alcanzar un sueño que termina, en muchas ocasiones, en pesadilla.

Palabra de la semana: opción
Inglés: option
Pronunciación: óp-shen

Looking Back

25 years ago... July 1997

Kinderpix
Members of this past school year's KMS kindergarten class were these four youngsters. From left, they are: (front) Shannon Haglund and Aaron Zimmer; and (back) Joseph Kappes and Joseph Bauman.



50 years ago... July 1972

Riley

and Dan Riley each had two hits.

In the second game of the Benson doubleheader Kerk led 5-2 after three innings before the game was called because of darkness. Benson's two unearned runs came in the 1st with Kerk scoring three in the 2nd and two in the 3rd. Guse was the pitcher. This game will not be re-played.

Kerk meets Maynard here on Friday which starts the district playoffs. Winner of this game plays the winner of the Benson-Montevideo game Monday night.

PRICIPAL HIRED
HAROLD Hagert has been hired as principal at the Murdock school, according to Supt. Palm.

Hagert hails from Maynard, having graduated there and also is a graduate of Mankato State college. Previously he was at Mapleton Public school for one year and most recently at Glencoe since 1966. He is married and has four children and they will move here as soon as housing is available.

Hagert replaces Ron Breuer who was principal at Murdock for one year and has accepted a similar position at Morris-town.

What's in a name? Well, identity, or lack thereof, for one thing.

by Cormac Dodd

The Kerkhoven EDA paid a few hundred dollars to be included in the Western Minnesota Prairie Waters Visitor and Relocation Guide. But an editorial oddity -- or an outright foible -- spans the top of the single page dedicated to Kerkhoven in the magazine.

An aerial photo of Monson Lake State Park, located near Sunburg, is displayed much more prominently than the photo of the Kerkhoven water tower, showing half of what the town looks like from the nosebleed angle.

Or from afar, even the grain elevators captured in miniature on the page.

Monson Lake is approximately 10 miles from the city limits of Kerkhoven. More than that, the description associated with the picture labels the lush scene as Marsh Lake State Park, which does not exist. There is a Marsh Lake Dam near Appleton, although it is not a state park.

So neither Kerkhoven's quaint prairie downtown, nor its popular swimming pool are showcased on the brochure's colored pages.

"That's Monson Lake. That's not even Kerkhoven," said Andy Thorson. He then stated he wished a photograph of the Pillsbury Pool in Kerkhoven had been contributed to better represent the city.

The Kerkhoven EDA agreed to renew their membership to the Prairie Waters during their July meeting, and discussions identified ways in which the EDA could make their money count even more in their second year as members of the four-county-wide effort of regional partners.

Benson, Appleton and Kerkhoven are the Swift County members of Western Minnesota Prairie Waters.

The purpose of the organization, which is considered a regional tourism effort, is to promote the area as a great place to visit, work, and live.

"Pooling resources al-

lows us to coordinate regional events, create and maintain a regional website, and provide a toll-free hotline for requests. Our efforts generate around 3000 informational requests each year," states the Prairie Waters website.

"It's nice to have a presence in there. I've thought for the last 10 years, boy, it would be nice to have Kerkhoven in here," Eric Rudningen said.

An online edition of the Prairie Waters Visitors and Relocation Guide is accessible via the organization's website. Rudningen said he might contact a leader at the organization and see if editing the online PDF is possible.

If permissible, photographs thought to be more representational would be sent to feature in the online version of the magazine.

"The online one is probably even more read than the physical copy anyway," Thorson said.

RILEY THROWS PERFECT GAME
DWAYNE Riley pitched a perfect game (no one reached first base) a week ago Thursday against Maynard beating them 5-0. He also struck out eight men. Kerk scored four runs in the 1st on three base hits with Don Dahl having the big hit for the inning. Dan Riley slammed a homerun in the 3rd to wrap up the game.

The Benson team again proved to be a jinx for Kerk as they beat them 5-3 Monday night. Dan Riley started on the mound but was relieved by Frank Diederich in the 5th. Benson scored three runs in the 4th on three straight hits and scored two more in the 5th on two hits and two costly errors. Kerk rallied in the 7th with three hits but was only able to score three times. Rick Peterson and Brad Dean both hit doubles and Doug Guse

Local hemp

quality products they felt comfortable putting their name on.

The transition from hemp seed to hemp derivatives, too, came with a steep learning curve. Developing unique strains required a lengthy process of completing laboratory analysis testing of his mother plants -- from which the crop is cloned -- and working out the intricacies of climate controlled lighting, watering and fertilizer.

The company also has since done away with his aero-

ponics system -- a holdover from Lettuce Abound LLC -- in favor of a new watering and fertilizing system using specially designed rings that nurture the plants through drip feeding along the base of their containers.

However, with a batch of his new product line of gummies, tinctures, vapes, pet treats and moisturizing and roll-on muscle lotions now on the market, and available to a healthy consumer base, Ortenblad is optimistic about his fu-

ture prospects. His experimental outdoor crop, which relies on natural lighting, is already showing promise, though the battle against pests remains ever-present.

"It's been really expensive to get to this point, and hopefully now, we'll get some pay-back," Ortenblad said.

"We'd love to grow a local base," adds Romain. "And if we can get enough local demand, we'd definitely be open to delivery service, which is popular on the West Coast."

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75 years ago... July 1947

Reporter Finds No Discs Claimed In Area But Folks Are On The Lookout Anyway

Well anyway, they can't blame it on the weather around here.

Those flying discs or saucers, we mean.

There haven't been any reported in this entire area.

Which probably speaks well for the character and habits of the local people.

For instance, we asked a number of local people whether or not they had observed any strange objects flying through the air.

We asked

Laurence Friedlein: "No, I haven't seen any discs but I caught an awful big fish over the week end. Caught 'im right by the ear, too. However, the fish turned out to be my brother in law."

Squint Lindman: "I saw nary a disc. And don't think I wasn't looking, either. I'm squintin' more than usual, but let me tell you about that 12 pound northern I caught over the eek end."

Jim Homme: "Did I see any discs? Huh! I don't drink."

Bill Shores: "Well, I'll tell you: just between you and me, I think them things were discs the Pennock pitcher was throwin' at us the other night."

100 years ago... July 1922

Issues of the Kerkhoven Banner from July 1922 are not available.

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Kerkhoven 264-1246

Baptist

BETHEL CHURCH
Kathy Weckwerth, Pastor
Wednesday:
 6:30 pm Prayer Meeting
Sunday:
 10 am Worship Service
Wednesday:
 6:30 pm Prayer Meeting

Catholic

AREA CATHOLIC CHURCHES
Sacred Heart, Murdock
Fr. Jeremy Kucera
Sunday:
 10:30 am Mass

Covenant

SALEM COVENANT CHURCH
Rural Penock
Pastor Jonathan Wilson and Don Ruffenach,
Director of Youth & Children's Ministry
salemcovpenock.org
Wednesday:
 6:15 PM 7th-8th grade meet at Salem to go tubing & swimming at Games Lake
 6:30 PM Summer Bible Study in the Gospel of Mark, in the library
Sunday:
 9:30 AM Worship
 10:30 AM Coffee Fellowship
 7:00-9:00 PM "D-3: Disciples Digging Deeper" Bible study, for teens entering grades 9-12, at the Ruffenach's

Evangelical Free

KERKHOVEN EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
Joshua Hamm, Pastor
Nathan Kveene,
Youth Pastor

Saturday:
 6:30AM Men's Bible Study
Sunday:
 8:30AM Prayer
 9AM Service
Tuesday:
 6PM Missions Mtg.
 7PM Deacon Mtg.

Lutheran

BUFFALO LAKE LUTHERAN, BETHESDA LUTHERAN PARISH
Pastor Jennifer Thul
Wednesday:
 7 pm Camp Fire worship at Monson Lake
Sunday:
 No worship at Buffalo Lake
 No worship at Bethesda
Tuesday:
 C&C at Bethesda
 9am Food
 9:30am Bible study
Wednesday:
 7 pm Camp Fire worship at Buffalo Lake

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Sunburg, Minnesota
Pastor Jennifer Thul and Nancy Carlson, Lay Leader
Wednesday:
 7:00pm Campfire Service at Monson Lake
Sunday:
 9:15am Coffee
 10:00am Worship
 Council, time TBA
Wednesday:
 7:00pm Campfire Service at Buffalo Lake

KERKHOVEN LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor Michael Buller
Wednesday:
 11:00 am Meals on Wheels delivery
 11:00-11:20 AM Prairie 5

Food Drop
Sunday: Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
 9:00 am Worship/Holy Communion
 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship
Tuesday:
 8:30 am Pack KMS food bags
Wednesday:
 11:00 am Meals on Wheels delivery

MAMRELUND & ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCHES
Pastor Jennifer Thul
Sunday:
 8:15am St. John's Worship
 10:00am Mamrelund Worship

MONSON LAKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Wednesday:
 7:00pm Campfire service at Monson Lake
Sunday:
 8:15am Communion
Wednesday:
 7:00pm Campfire service at Buffalo Lake

NORWAY LAKE PARISH Rural New London
Rev. Wayne Kopitzke
Thursday:
 No Joint Council Meeting
Sunday: Pentecost 6
 8:45 AM Worship at ENL
 10:30 AM Games Lake Park Worship

SUNBURG FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Rural Sunburg
Rev. Ron Knutson, Pastor
Sunday:
 10:00 a.m. Sunday School/Adult Bible Class
 10:30 a.m. Worship

Funeral service for Phyllis Loven Monday at Kerkhoven Lutheran

Phyllis Elaine Loven died peacefully in her home in Kerkhoven on Friday, July 8. She was 77 years old.

Phyllis was born on April 19, 1945, to Henry and May (Foshager) Roisum in Willmar. She was baptized, confirmed and married at West Lake Lutheran Church, rural Sunburg, all by – as she occasionally pointed out – the same pastor, Rev. K. A. Bodin. Phyllis and her older brothers, Lowell and Dennis, grew up on the family farm in Arctander Township north of Pennock. It was a typical small farm with cows and pigs and horses and (evil) chickens – apparently, she hated picking eggs; but most stories involving Phyllis revolve around having fun with her many cousins and friends. There is also a rumor that her brothers made her be – not play – BE, second base during their backyard baseball games.

Phyllis attended ISD #54 through sixth grade, then high school in Kerkhoven, graduating in 1963. Following high school, she attended the Willmar Area Vocational Technical School. Phyllis worked for many years at Northern States Supply in Willmar before becoming a familiar face at Don's Building Center in Kerkhoven for over 25 years. She retired in 2008.

On September 24, 1966,

Phyllis was united in marriage to Wallace Loven, Jr. The couple resided in Willmar over the next few years, with son Daniel born in 1969. After moving to Kerkhoven in 1970, the family became members of Kerkhoven Lutheran Church, where she served for a time as a council member, treasurer, Sunday School teacher and on the Altar Guild. Son Michael was born in 1977.

Phyllis enjoyed dancing with Wally, making frequent trips to Glenwood or Brooten for evenings of polkas and waltzes. There were many, many camping and fishing trips, to Sibley or Monson Lake, the North Shore, all over northern Minnesota, nearly all enjoyable, nearly all rained on. For many years - decades, playing whist with their Kerkhoven card-club friends was a monthly highlight. As a life-long baseball fan, Phyllis spent countless afternoons and evenings watching and listening to Twins games; she also rarely missed Dan's or Michael's games when they were playing. She loved to read books about prairie life, or biographies or the occasional romance. After retiring, she and Wally enjoyed several vacations, with Rustad Bus tours to Alaska and Branson being favorites.

Phyllis was blessed to have two beautiful granddaughters,



Emily and Vanessa. She loved them dearly. Few things put a smile on Grandma Phyllis's face like hearing about Emily's latest exploits in the swimming pool or having Vanessa read her a story.

Phyllis was preceded in death by her parents. She is survived by her husband, Wally; her sons, Dan and Michael (Lisa); her granddaughters Emily and Vanessa; her brothers, Lowell (Kathryn) Roisum and Dennis (Linda) Roisum; and many relatives and friends.

Funeral services will be held on Monday, July 18 at 11:00 a.m. at Kerkhoven Lutheran Church. Visitation will be for one hour prior to the service and on Sunday, July 17, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the church. Casual dress is preferred, as are memorials, in lieu of flowers.

CARD OF THANKS

The Red Cross held a blood drive in Sunburg on July 7th. 55 units were collected which helps 165 patients. Thank you to the generous donors, volunteers Cheryl, Deloris, Arnie and Milton for helping, and to Hope Lutheran Church for hosting the blood drive.

Kathy Peterson and Pat Berg, Sunburg Blood Drive Coordinators

NOTICE TO ALL CHURCH SECRETARIES:
 The Banner prints church schedules as a free service. We MUST have all church notes in the Banner office by **NOON Friday** to make it into the next issue.

News in Brevity

The Dean's List for the past spring semester at Minnesota State University, Mankato included Hannah Gareis of Kerkhoven, High Honors, Will Magaard of Murdock, Honors, and Ryan Torkelson of Murdock, High Honors.

Vera Rozeboom died June 29 at 91

Vera June Rozeboom, of Murdock, died on June 29 at the age of 91. A celebration of life service will be at noon on Sunday, July 24th at Harvey Anderson Funeral Home in Willmar with lunch and fellowship to follow. Private burial will be at Bethany Reformed Cemetery in Clara City.

Vera was born June 5, 1931, on a farm near Steen, MN the daughter of Dick and Laura (Winkowitsch) Aukes. Vera attended grade school in Steen and graduated from Luverne High School.

She was united in marriage to Conrad Rozeboom on December 17, 1948, in Steen. They moved to a farm near Murdock in 1950. She and Conrad were blessed with 10 children. Tragedy struck when their son Darrell drowned in the creek on the farm at age

three in 1954.

The Rozeboom family participated in 4-H activities for many years. Vera was a member of Bethany Reformed Church of Clara City, where she was active in numerous organizations. After retiring, she and Conrad spent their winter months in southern Texas. Her greatest joy each year was the week the family spent at a lake resort "up north." The large Rozeboom clan filled as many as eight cabins in later years, creating memories enjoyed by all. Her greatest wish was for her family to know Jesus and be saved.

Vera is survived by her husband, Conrad; children: Linda (Verne) Meyer, Susan (Al) Kramer, Conley (Linda), Lora, Dale (Cheryl), Jane (John) Folkert, Karen (Warren) Formo, Kevin (Barb) and Kyle (Gretchen); 30 grandchildren;



41 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her nine siblings, son Darrell and grandson John Folkert.



Pastor's Corner

Unintended Consequences

by Rev. Jonathan Wilson Salem Covenant Church

I love fiction books, movies, and theater, but not all fiction. I prefer fiction with happy endings, where the right side has clearly won. Real life is much more complex. Victory rarely settles conflict, it only sets the stage for new conflict, and defeats are mere set-backs. In real life followers of Jesus are called to declare God's will for peace, healing, and relationship for the true reconciliation of conflict. Recent events give Christians a chance to live into that calling.

Along with many evangelicals I rejoiced in the SCOTUS ruling, this past June 24, that dissolved the constitutional protection for elective abortion. Life is God's gift (Acts 17:24-27), human life is stamped with God's image (Genesis 1:27), and each human life is God's special design (Psalms 139:13-16). Humankind is loved so much by our Creator, that God redeems us through new birth (John 3:3) in and through Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17). We are tasked by God our Creator to be stewards of this gift of life and of Creation. (Psalm 8, Genesis 1:28).

I rejoice, but I do not gloat. The SCOTUS ruling is not a "victory" for followers of Jesus. Indeed, only one question is settled -that of constitutional guarantee – perhaps only while "conservative" judges

hold the majority. I discern that the ruling is less a final resolution on the American "right to life," and more an escalation in a culture war. This makes me apprehensive of this ruling's unintended consequences. Here is a short list of some that may unfold:

- Abortion will not phase out; the issue will take front-and-center stage in local elections.

- As elected officials stake positions, local struggles over abortion access will intensify, with renewed battles over zoning, free speech, health and safety codes, and other issues related to abortion access.

- One possibility is that the pro-choice position will find enough traction to amend the Constitution. This is only a remote possibility at present; when one counts "red" versus "blue" states the math is not there. At present. Back-lash is an historic reality.

- Also, followers of Jesus will feel the heat of public resentment, and already do. Many in social media and news outlets blame activist evangelicals for the ruling. Blame, not credit: This is how the issues are perceived in the public.

As these complex outcomes unfold, followers of Jesus can stay engaged in ways that promote peace and healing. First Peter 3:15-16 states, "Always be ready to explain to anyone who asks you the reason for the hope that you have. Yet do so with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience ..."



In terms of being engaged with conviction, gentleness and respect, one example has been set by churches of all kinds in their support of life-affirming pregnancy centers. These life centers meet the real needs that surround an unexpected pregnancy. Many of these centers also provide post-abortion care and counseling.

Whether we live in a pro-choice state (Minnesota) or pro-life state (South Dakota), followers of Jesus will still have lots of chances to bring gentleness and respect to the abortion issue. By giving resources and volunteer effort to life centers, followers of Jesus can share in the care for and support of women and girls in crisis pregnancy before the choice has been made whether to carry the child to term. My guess is that gentleness and respect in the counsels of God have saved far more bodies and souls than have protests, insults, and rancor.

So, in light of the SCOTUS ruling, Jesus followers are still called to speak to our faith and convictions, and also, to still serve those in need, doing all these things with gentleness and respect. This issue is not going away. No SCOTUS decision will ever have the power to prevent an unwanted pregnancy.



No, we mean a REAL superhero. Find out how you can help the Kerkhoven Ambulance. This valuable community organization is looking for new members.

Interested in becoming a real community hero? Pick up an application for membership to the Kerkhoven Ambulance Service at City Hall.

You never know when your family, friends or neighbors are going to need a real superhero. Are you willing to wear the cape?



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McKinley Square development at a halt for now

by Cormac Dodd

Plans to develop McKinley Square in Kerkhoven have come to a halt for now, details relayed by Eric Rudningen at the July Kerkhoven EDA meeting.

Local interest in erecting townhouses on developable land, with cost at an approximated \$400,000 per unit, has not been in evidence, months after an open house was hosted by the Kerkhoven EDA in conjunction with various members of staff at Don's Building Center.

The open house was hosted to see whether sufficient local--or regional--interest in the project could be shored up

as a part of a greater push to expand residential availability in the packed town of Kerkhoven.

"We had good attendance at Suki's meeting, but there is not a big call for high-end duplexes in Kerkhoven. That's what has deterred Suki in the past. He has a vision," said Rudningen.

Duplexes, mid- or low-end would be better suited to the socioeconomic makeup of the city, according to EDA members.

So the search to expand move-in opportunity in Kerkhoven, a bedroom community, continues.

Rudningen said he would continue to speak to Donovan

Halverson on the McKinley Square project, because the potential is obvious.

Of this project--which would have to include commitments from three: Donovan Halverson, a contractor, and a financier (the eventual owner)--Rudningen said, "It's always been a delicate balance, but I'll keep picking at it."

It's no secret: the cost of building has soared to new heights in the pandemic era. And for the fee the townhouse project would demand, a buyer could potentially build a home to their own tastes.

Yet Halverson owns the land at the center of town, what amounts to a city block,

Live Well, Age Wisely

With Laura Thomas, Director of Aging Well at Prairie Five Community Action Council

given me already is a taste of understanding what others with medical concerns may be feeling and experiencing.

There's a lot of running around to appointments and exams and this is one area where Prairie Five is able to help. Our RIDES public transportation system has vans and volunteer drivers that travel among communities and can go out of town and out of state. It is important to call in advance to make sure the request can be fulfilled. Did you know that if you are going to a medical appointment, you can have a companion ride along at no cost? Call RIDES dispatch at 1-877-757-4337 with questions or to get a ride scheduled.

What about all the expenses? Medicare Savings Programs and Extra Help are two options that could help with costs for people who meet eligibility criteria. Prairie Five Loan Closets have a variety of durable medical equipment available at low rental rates. If you have a surgery in mind for down the road and get your Medicare through an Advantage plan, be sure to participate in Open Enrollment this fall to make sure that you have a plan that gives you the best bang for your premium buck when it comes to co-pays and co-insurance. I'd love to answer any questions you may have about the programs I've

mentioned or coverage options. My direct number is 320-226-8861. Approximately 75% of people have a fear of public speaking. It's something I actually enjoy but my level of anxiety before going to a medical appointment is probably similar to what some people feel behind the microphone: racing pulse, sweating, and Pepto Bismol on my breath! It's awful. Then there is the underlying stress of having something wrong and wondering how it will all turn out. I didn't want to talk about it at first but I had a conversation with my aforementioned coworker as her husband had gone through the same surgery. Reaching out was hard but turned out to be the best thing I could do. Talking about it and having that connection really calmed me and alleviated some of the stress. I've found great ideas for other ways to deal with the stress -- reach out if you'd like a list!



mentioned or coverage options. My direct number is 320-226-8861.

We've all found ourselves in situations that are undesirable, don't go as expected, or are just plain disappointing. "What is the lesson in this?" or "Where is the opportunity in this?" are two questions I've learned to ask myself to gain some perspective or pull myself out of negativity about it.

My favorite piece of equipment at the gym has been the rowing machine for quite a while. Back in April, I decided to challenge myself with increases in intensity and time. It veered into 'too vigorous' territory when a knee became sore so I took a couple of days off. I thought I was taking it easy on my next workout, but wow did it hurt after. I told myself it wasn't a big deal but when a coworker stopped me in the hall and asked, "What happened to your knee?!" because she could see it swollen through my jeans, I realized it was time to take it seriously.

I will have orthoscopic surgery on my knee in August to remove some torn cartilage. The time, travel, expense, and stress of what goes into the process of a medical procedure has been very eye-opening. While sometimes we only see the lesson in a situation long after it's passed, one thing it's

"ASK A TROOPER"

by Sgt. Jesse Grabow of the Minnesota State Patrol

less of weight, provided the GVW of the combination does not exceed 26,000 pounds;

- Towing vehicles up to 10,000 pounds GVW when the combination exceeds 26,000 pounds GVW.

Class C is valid for:

- All Class D vehicles requiring a hazardous materials, passenger, and/or school bus endorsement.

Class B is valid for:

- All Class C and Class D vehicles and all other single unit motor vehicles including buses with proper endorsements;

- May tow vehicles with a GVW up to 10,000 pounds.

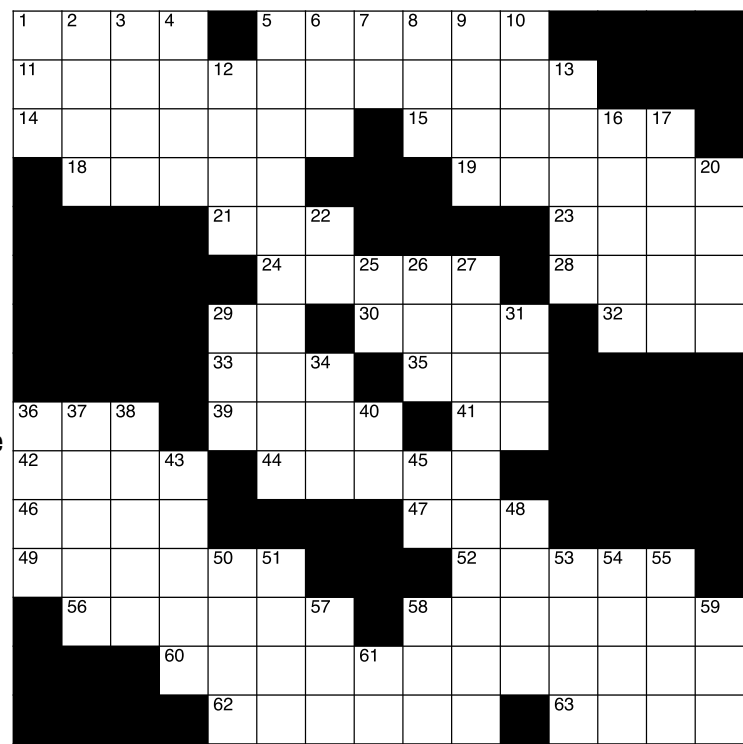
Class A is valid for:

- Any vehicle or combination of vehicles with proper endorsement(s).

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Trp. Jesse Grabow -- Minnesota State Patrol at 1000 Highway 10 West, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501-2205. (You can follow him on Twitter @MSPPIO_NW or reach him at, jesse.grabow@state.mn.us).

CLUES ACROSS

1. Absence of difficulty
5. Preserve a dead body
11. Gratitude
14. The act of coming together again
15. More cushy
18. Visionaries
19. Large, fish-eating bird
21. Indicates near
23. NY Mets legend Tommie
24. Icelandic books
28. Pop
29. Hammer is one
30. Sense of self-importance
32. Thyrotrophic hormone
33. Can't be found
35. Electronic data processing
36. Passports and licenses are two
39. Snake-like fishes
41. Air Force
42. Popular computers
44. Intermediate ecological stage
46. Wings
47. Used in combination
49. Laid back
52. Jewelled headdress
56. Slow
58. Famous Falls
60. Reassertions
62. Periods of time
63. Hyphen



7. Famous Mr. T character
8. Consumed
9. Chinese dynasty
10. Menace to yards
12. Ireland
13. Palm trees
16. Fungal disease
17. Willis and Robert are two
20. Affirmative! (slang)
22. It shows who you are
25. The First State (abbr.)
26. Get older
27. Associations
29. Woman (French)
31. Sunscreen rating
34. Brew
36. Leader
37. Plants in the legume family

38. Burn with a hot liquid
40. Junior's father
43. Scads
45. Morning
48. Length of a line (abbr.)
50. Double curve
51. Small, thin person
53. Worn by exposure to the weather
54. Mars crater
55. Humanities
57. Word element meaning ear
58. To the ___ degree
59. Residue of something burned
61. It cools your home

CLUES DOWN

1. Body part
2. Mimics
3. Expel large quantities
4. Sea eagle
5. Genetically distinct varieties
6. Dialect of Chinese

hellos are better in person. that's why we're local.

simple human sense



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SUDOKU

			4				9	
			3	7		5	6	
2		4			8			
8					6		2	9
9	3							4
		7					1	5
	2		5	3				
			6		1	2		

Level: Advanced

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

BLUEBERRIES WORD SEARCH

B A K I N G X C O M P O U N D S O B S N
T A F D N I T V G K T K W H S U B W L B
L G N E A C A K L T V X U Y Y S N A I M
C T J F U H Y N Y O S K R L W N F J A
I C W I E K P W T P W Y T E I O A M R N
Q F L A V O N O L H V S E E I W M A J I
P Y R R E B E U L B O T I T W M O N O T
A T I E T F Q U M Y K C I H G R R G M E
P O L Y P H E N O L S R Y J I W A A J C
M D B O C B U H G F T M Q A G S S N R R
T S T I F E N E B U Y X V S N H S E D E
C D T B W H C Y N Q A N T X L I S S I U
A O C O Q Y G T H K N R H G X J N E F Q
P K G F A T P S N I M A T I V P J S H C
U E L N R K U O L D O O F R E P U S S F
R C F F I X A L S T N A D I X O I T N A
P I I I Q T O O Y M Y R I C E T I N X Y
L U B L X K I O S G N I V R E S P E Y M
E J E N O G I V S X P X I C H W G D R R
B Y R C D J R M E F I D Y L L E J B Q S

WORDS

- ANTHOCYANINS
- ANTIOXIDANTS
- BAKING
- BENEFITS
- BLUEBERRY
- BUSH
- COGNITIVE
- COMPOUNDS
- FIBER
- FLAVONOL
- HEART
- JAM
- JELLY
- JUICE
- MANGANESE
- MYRICETIN
- NUTRITIONAL
- POLYPHENOLS
- PURPLE
- QUERCETIN
- SERVINGS
- SUPERFOOD
- SWEET
- VITAMINS

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.



PUBLIC NOTICES

"BECAUSE THE PEOPLE MUST KNOW"

Important Drainage Informational Meeting

Swift County Redetermination of Benefits Landowner Informational Meeting

Swift County is beginning the Redetermination of Benefits Process this upcoming January 2023, for all County and Judicial Ditches. There will be a Landowner Informational Meeting held for information that is involved in the Redetermination of Benefits Process and what information that you can provide to make the process more accurate. If you have questions there will be a period of time where concerns can be answered. No business shall be conducted at this meeting, this not a required meeting to attend.

Date: July 20th, 2022

Location: Track Bar and Grill -- Benson MN

Time: 8:30am -- Noon, Presentation Starts at 9:00AM

If you have any questions please contact Kody Fossum -- Swift County Drainage Inspector 320.843.5341 B1 & 2c

TO THE VOTERS OF PILLSBURY TOWNSHIP,

SWIFT COUNTY NOTICE OF PILLSBURY TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR ELECTION

Notice is hereby given that the election of a Pillsbury Township Supervisor (for a six-year term) will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022. The filing period for this office begins at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 2, 2022, and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 16, 2022.

The place of filing for a Pillsbury Township Office is the Office of County Auditor, Swift County Courthouse, 301 14th Street North, Benson, MN 56215

Lyle Stai
Pillsbury Township Clerk
B1c

Vital Statistics

SWIFT COUNTY VITALS REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2022
RONALD VADNAIS, SWIFT COUNTY TREASURER & REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS

MARRIAGES
Nicholas Daugherty, Renville and Alannah Parmer, Raymond
Diego Gutierrez Martinez,

Benson and Johanna Knorr, Benson

Paul Wolf, Clara City and Brenda Carlson, Murdock
Scott Lonneman, Benson and Kellie Jo Lubitz, Benson
Michael Evenson, Benson and Kassandra Long, Benson

BIRTHS

Boys
Nelsen & Katlynn Lundebrek
Anthony James & Michelle Wangstad
Danny & Laura Whitley

Girls

Joseph & Hunter Mitleyng
Mark & Laura Mitteness

DEATHS

Evonne Fragodt, 85, Benson
Peter Hilleren, 63, Benson
Diane Jensen, 74, Benson
Allen Loen, 77, Benson
Helen Mortenson, 86, Benson
Vera Rozeboom, 91, Murdock
Lou Schake, 89, Benson
Goldie Schneider, 103, Appleton
Bonita Tjosaas, 75, Appleton
Mona Welch, 80, Kerkhoven
Arlene Wills, 90, Benson
Linda Schmidt, 71, Correll



FARM NEWS & VIEWS

from Extension Agents and others in Agriculture

What's with the yellow soybeans?

by Liz Stahl and Angie Peltier, Extension Educators – Crops, Seth Naeve, Extension Soybean Specialist, and Dan Kaiser, Extension Nutrient Management Specialist

Yellow soybeans have been spotted in fields throughout western Minnesota this year. Dan Kaiser, Extension Nutrient Management Specialist, and Seth Naeve, Extension Soybean Specialist, joined moderators and Extension Educators Angie Peltier and Edna Hanson to discuss a cause of this yellowing, iron deficiency chlorosis (IDC), on a recent U of MN Extension Strategic Farming: Field Notes program.

What is iron deficiency chlorosis (IDC)?

IDC does not occur due to a deficiency of iron in the soil. IDC is caused by the inability of some plant species to extract iron from the soil in a plant available form. This results in the yellowing, or chlorosis, of leaves between the leaf veins while the veins remain dark green.

Conditions that favor IDC

IDC is particularly a problem in soils with a high pH, and in soils with large amounts of calcium carbonate. Compaction and poor soil drainage can also affect the availability of iron, while environmental conditions influence the development of IDC.

The amount of bicarbonate in the soil correlates with IDC in soybean - the more bicarbonate in the soil the higher the occurrence of IDC. Bicarbonates are formed in the soil typically when water-logged soils trap carbon dioxide.

There is also a linkage between high soil nitrate content and IDC. IDC issues can be greater where residual nitrates are higher in the soil. IDC may be higher in fields where drought conditions last year led to higher residual nitrate levels this year.

Managing IDC

Planting a tolerant variety is the number one defense against IDC in soybean. Tolerant varieties have higher yield potential than less tolerant varieties where IDC is a problem, and potentially even greater yield potential when other practices that reduce

IDC are used.

Applying an ortho-ortho EDDHA iron chelate source in a band directly on the soybean seed at planting has been effective at managing IDC. The greatest economic advantage can occur when areas of a field with a history of IDC symptoms are targeted with an in-furrow iron-chelate at planting, and where IDC levels have been moderate or high. Foliar applied chelates however, may only green up tissue that comes into contact with the product. New vegetative growth after treatment may still be yellow, as iron is not mobile in the plant.

A companion crop of oats with soybeans has also been shown to help reduce IDC. The oats help take excess nitrate and moisture from the soil. The oats should be terminated before they reach more than 10 inches in height, however, as competition with the soybean crop for water could be an issue when moisture is limiting.

Attempts to acidify soil may sound good in theory, but in practice, the majority of our soils have a high buffering capacity, which means they have high resistance to a pH change. It would take a large amount of elemental sulfur to result in a very small drop in pH, and pH levels would likely rise back to where they were within two to three years.

To learn more about IDC management in soybean go to <https://z.umn.edu/IDCsoybean>. You can also listen to the recording of this episode at <https://strategicfarming.transistor.fm/episodes>.

Young farmer (Continued from page 1)

water," Hardebeck said.

And owing to increased mechanization, industry stalwarts move into the office and continue to operate farms well into their seventies, further slowing the exchange of land.

Hardebeck's search for property to farm began after he graduated from high school in 2020. Now that he has taken a degree from Ridgewater College, more resources have been poured into that search, which includes advertising in the Peach, a regional advertising supplement comprised of 13 newspapers.

Patience is the key, weathering what could be years of frustrations. You want to go into business for yourself but you can't. Rather than feeling blackballed, this generation of farmers and workers know they might have to wait.

Hardebeck is not alone in the classifieds. In a recent issue of the Peach, no less than three vie for prominence on the Dawson pages alone. Those types of announcements have become common throughout the publication.

A 'looking to rent' presence in the paper has led to limited calls, garnering little interest, Hardebeck said.

Mark Collins, 21, a Murdock native, has begun the search for land and, also from a farming family, has sentiments that it might prove difficult.

Commodity farming is what he would like to go

into for himself, deep in the grain belt. The same goes for Hardebeck.

"Forty miles down the road. That's the radius you work within now. I'd just like to get something and make it work. I don't need to farm the entire county," he said, in acknowledgement of the take-anything-you-can-get mentality.

Young farmers are defined as those within first 10 years of the trade, according to the Future Farmers of America.

Rather than campaigning on the premise of pathos, obviously young farmers have reason to identify themselves as such in the print, the bolder the font the better, in expressing their interest in buying land.

There are very tangible benefits to renting to industry newcomers, though questions remain whether the tax breaks are substantial enough.

The legislation aimed at easing young people into the fields was established in full five years ago, in 2017, but shows an inability to interlock with shifts upward in land cost and taxes.

And the tax break enticements cap at \$7000, according to Hardebeck.

"It's a fair incentive. The sympathy thing, the give-a-guy-a-chance thing doesn't work. Money talks, but ideally, you'd have a higher cap than that," Hardebeck said.

The tax let-off did not emerge out of the blue: A

group called the Minnesota Young Farmers Coalition -- which was broken down into regional chapters that hope to steer fresh leases into younger hands -- testified to state lawmakers.

The omnibus bill grants landowners income tax credit equaling five, 10 or 15 percent of the sale price when entering into business with beginners.

There are entry points, of course, templates. As Hardebeck continues the search, he works for a larger, established farm to pay the bills on a path many like him take in their careers, not just in agriculture but in many professions.

"It's common to work for neighboring farms and break off later when you're able to get your own operation going," he said.

Like many emerging farmers, Hardebeck knows the business; he was raised on a family farm but said there is no room for him, which is not uncommon.

Family members of Hardebeck's offer counsel.

It is a dizzying financial world, rife with potent concerns, pinned to loans: one eye on international markets, the mind frets over local moisture deficits

"They just say be patient and your time will come," he said.

Strategic Farming: Field Notes tackles corn rootworm, corn soybean disease and fungicide recommendations

by Angie Peltier, Regional Educator

On the June 29, 2022 Strategic Farming: Field Notes episode, Bruce Potter, Extension Integrated Pest Management Specialist, Andy Nesseth, part owner, agronomist and crop consultant from Extended Ag Services of Lakefield, MN and Dean Malvick, Extension corn and soybean plant pathologist joined moderators and Extension educators David Nicolai and Ryan Miller to discuss corn rootworms and crop diseases.

To listen to a recording of this episode subscribe to Strategic Farming: Field Notes on your favorite podcasting platform or visit this website: <https://strategicfarming.transistor.fm/#>.

Corn rootworm

Sticky trap survey. The feeding of corn rootworm larvae prunes corn roots. This injury can reduce yield by affecting water and nutrient uptake and reduce harvestability when affected plants lodge. Determining potential rootworm risk should be based in part on the adult populations in a field. The period over which rootworm beetles are laying eggs is critical for understanding potential rootworm pressure in the following growing season.

To help corn producers, their advisors, and corn entomologists better understand what is happening with rootworm populations in Minnesota farm fields, in 2018 Extension corn entomologist Dr. Ken Ostlie started to explore the potential for a network of corn rootworm cooperators. This Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council-sponsored trapping program uses sticky traps to capture corn rootworm beetles as they move within corn fields.

Participants place and monitor traps, counting beetles weekly and reporting trap catches to UMN Extension. Some corn rootworm populations have proven themselves capable of overcoming multiple management tactics. When combined with evaluations of root injury, the information gathered through this trapping network provides information regarding how well (or not so well) hybrids expressing Bt proteins are managing rootworms. "Looking at beetles as they emerge is one of the best ways to develop a rootworm management plan," states Bruce Potter. Adds Andy Nesseth, "We are monitoring rootworm populations for our clients.... to provide them with

some information to make decisions in the future and select the best management strategies that they can."

Concerning sticky trap catches. Discussion also focused on some of the most recent results from the network that have begun to concern entomologists. In some livestock-heavy regions of Minnesota where continuous corn is common, rootworm population densities in fields planted to non-Bt hybrids and in Bt hybrids have recently become indistinguishable, revealing resistance-management concerns need to be addressed to maintain long-term crop productivity.

Responding to a question from Potter about how he advises his clients, Nesseth shares that, "We try to put together as best we can a four-year window of management. We know we need to have a non-host crop in there at some point because we can't rely on traits and insecticides to manage rootworm effectively." Crop advisors like Nesseth work with producers to develop multi-year management strategies that include strategic deployment of non-Bt hybrids and hybrids expressing different rootworm Bt proteins. It helps to have field-specific beetle data to inform conversations and decisions. "We need to have conversations based on real things and not just assumptions," says Nesseth.

Joining the sticky trap network. According to degree-day models, corn rootworm egg hatch is currently peaking in southwest Minnesota. This is therefore the time of year that Bruce Potter begins to send out yellow sticky traps to those in his on-farm trapping network. Those with an interest in monitoring sticky traps should contact Bruce Potter (bpotter@umn.edu).

Adult beetle management. A potential threat that rootworm beetles pose to the 2022 crop is clipping silks during pollination. Consider treating if there are more than seven or eight rootworm beetles feeding on silks early on during pollination and silks have been clipped to have less than 1/2 inch exposed. However, beetle densities do not often get high enough to impact kernel set. According to Potter, "Some people might want to try some adult beetle control, but that's sort of a dicey proposition." Effective adult management through foliar insecticides is also quite difficult to achieve. Applications need to be timed

to when female beetles swollen with eggs can be observed in fields. One might unintentionally time an application too early, in which case they will be controlling the beetles that emerge first -- mostly males. An application that comes too late can allow significant egg laying to occur. More than a single application can be required in some years due to this timing uncertainty. As a result, adult beetle control is not recommended as a general management practice.

Gathering data in 2022 for 2023 corn. "We're really done managing rootworms for this crop. Everything that we're doing now is going to be for the 2023 crop," states Potter. An alternative to the use of sticky traps to determine your 2023 rootworm risk, whole plant beetle to determine the number of beetles/plant can be effective (<https://extension.umn.edu/corn-pest-management/scouting-corn-rootworm#interpreting-whole-plant-counts--1430611>). If there is an average of 0.75 (second year) to 1.0 (three or more years) or more beetles per plant, then a 2023 corn crop planted in that same field will be at risk for significant injury. For those northern corn rootworm populations that lay their eggs in soybean fields (aka: extended diapause), 2024 crops are at risk at higher levels (4.5 /plant). These thresholds are based on work in non-Bt corn. About whole-plant scouting, Bruce Potter says, "One thing to be aware of when scouting whole plants is that weather conditions can really affect beetle activity. But if you plan to scout between 10 am and 3 pm, counts should be pretty representative."

Resistance issues often aren't simple.... Research has shown that resistance to one Cry3 Bt protein in effect provides resistance to other Bt proteins. For example, rootworms that are resistant to Cry3Bb1 (Yieldgard Rootworm) are also resistant to Bt traits mCry3A (Agrisure RW) and eCry3.1Ab (Agrisure Duricide). Ryan Miller asked, "If we lose a trait in a field, let's say the population builds resistance to a given Bt trait, is that trait gone forever?" In addition, even if one moved away from planting hybrids with Bt proteins to which their rootworm populations are resistant, rootworm population shifts back toward sensitivity are unlikely to occur. There is no evidence that having the Bt-resistance trait negatively affects either rootworm productivity or survival and so even when the Bt trait is no longer deployed there is no "cost" to the population's holding onto the Bt-resistance trait.

How late planting may affect rootworm pressure. When eggs are hatching in fields of late-planted corn, larvae encounter smaller root systems and injury symptoms can be much more significant than when larvae feed on larger sized root systems. As silks in earlier planted fields begin to

degrade as a rootworm beetle food source, nearby later-planted fields may also attract these beetles.

Sudden death syndrome of soybean

Now that corn and soybean plants have emerged, they enter a period of time during the later vegetative growth stages in which few diseases are apparent, although exceptions occur! It is often during the reproductive phases that diseases develop further and symptoms and signs appear.

One of the diseases that can cause significant yield loss in soybean is called sudden death syndrome (SDS) (<https://extension.umn.edu/pest-management/sudden-death-syndrome-soybean>). Although this disease is more prevalent in southern Minnesota, over time as the fungal pathogen has spread further north so has disease risk. There are regions of the state in which soybeans have experienced the early-season environmental conditions (wet soils after planting) that favor infection by the fungus that causes SDS. Whether or not we will see foliar symptoms and severe SDS will depend upon significant rainfall occurring during reproductive (R) growth stages in July and August.

"Some of the diseases that we will see a bit later on are getting established right now," according to Dr. Malvick. Early season symptoms have been observed in Dr. Malvick's SDS research plots in Waseca and Rosemount, MN. According to Malvick, "Even in our inoculated research trials, there is a very low incidence of early-season symptoms. Whereas later on we may see 50-70% of plants showing those symptoms." It is recommended that people learn to identify SDS symptoms and manage according to a field's disease risk rather than trying to "find this needle in a haystack" by relying on early-season scouting to pick out the fewer than one percent of plants that might exhibit early-season symptoms.

Tar spot of corn

First observed in Minnesota in 2019 and now well-established in southeast Minnesota, tar spot infections in corn (<https://blog-crop-news.extension.umn.edu/2021/10/increasing-tar-spot-of-corn-in-minnesota.html>) has since spread within the state and can now be observed as far north and west as St. Cloud, MN. Tar spot in Minnesota is new enough that although corn hybrids differ in their susceptibility, many seed companies do not yet have tar spot ratings in their seed catalogues.

At this point in the growing season, there is not much that can be done to manage tar spot beyond preparing to diligently scout the corn crop and making sure that a fungicide that has shown high levels of efficacy against this disease is available should you need it (<https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/>

publications/fungicide-efficacy-for-control-of-corn-diseases}).

In the limited years that tar spot has been observed in Minnesota, symptoms haven't been previously observed before around the third week in July. With late planting throughout much of Minnesota, there is a chance that initial infections might be observed on younger plants than they have in previous growing seasons. Weather conditions are also important for disease development. "If we have a very dry August, there may be little tar spot in 2023," states Malvick.

Those areas of the state in which corn is the dominant crop in the rotation are likely at more risk for tar spot as fungal inoculum can build up, causing more spores to be released to cause the first infections. More spores can produce more of the raised, black fungal structures, each of which can produce more spores for additional cycles of infection.

Scouting for tar spot is important as the fungus that causes tar spot can produce multiple cycles of infection. Finding the raised, black fungal structures characteristic of tar spot infection toward the beginning of an epidemic can help producers to know where the risk of tar spot this season is greatest so that they can properly time a foliar fungicide application to meet their level of risk. States Malvick, "Fungicides are one of our major ways to control tar spot, and some have been shown in other states to be highly effective. Application timing is still under some debate. Early timing hasn't shown a lot of benefit, while the tasseling/R1 stage is likely optimum for a single time." for three to four weeks after application and there will likely be instances when delaying an application just a bit can mean that a single application is needed, rather than two. However, applying a fungicide too early can risk both not protecting the uppermost leaves that contribute the most toward grain yield and may necessitate an additional fungicide application. Applying one too late can run the risk of the crop sustaining more yield loss than is necessary.

White mold in soybean

Fungicides differ in their efficacy in protecting soybeans from fungal diseases (<https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/publications/fungicide-efficacy-for-control-of-soybean-foliar-diseases>}). Adequate carrier volume, full label rates of active ingredients and proper application timing can provide the best protection against white mold. "We need to get the fungicide on early to prevent most of that infection because once white mold gets established, we can't stop it very well with a fungicide," says Malvick. If forecasted weather conditions are favorable for disease to occur and rows are closing, application should be timed to coincide with beginning flowering (R1), if rows haven't yet closed wait until full flower (R2). Applications that occur at beginning pod (R3) tend to provide a less protection than earlier flowering timings. Malvick reflects that, "With an early application during flowering, sometimes a second application occurring at R3 is very helpful, but of course this gets very costly."

Frogeye leaf spot in soybean and fungicide resistance. Similar to tar spot in corn, frogeye leaf spot (FLS) is caused by a fungus that each newly developed lesion capable of producing spores causes multiple cycles of infection. Unlike tar spot in corn, isolates of the FLS pathogen in Minnesota have been confirmed to be resistant to the widely-used strobilurin (QoI, Group 11) class of fungicides. Producers may consider a beginning pod (R3) fungicide application if disease is already present in the lower canopy and warm and humid weather conditions favor FLS. In that instance, please pay close attention to the active ingredients listed on the label of your intended product. If a Group 11 fungicide is listed, your product will be relying on the other fungicide groups for FLS management. Sometimes the rates of individual non-QoI active ingredients in fungicide pre-mixes are below the rates that are effective for managing FLS. To both improve efficacy and reduce development of fungicide resistance, select a different formulation of your intended active ingredient if the rate of the remaining effective a.i. is lower than the label rate of formulations with that a.i. alone.

Foliar fungicides

Results from multi-year trials with fungicides on corn and soybean in Minnesota can be found here: <https://blog-crop-news.extension.umn.edu/2020/07/foliar-fungicide-decisions-for-corn-and.html>

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Ditch benefits meeting

(Continued from page 1)

Some of the ditch systems in the county were constructed back in 1907 and have never had a second look as to who is benefiting from them.

"I don't believe that we are ethically assessing people on these ditches when we are doing repairs, cleanouts, or any project," Fossum told commissioners at their October 5, 2021, meeting.

While there are the original lands that were assessed for ditch benefits, "there are now a lot of people who have patterned tiled and private tiled, and we have private ditches coming into our ditches from people who are not paying benefits to the ditches.

"So the farmers that are currently assessed in it are having to swallow the cost. I don't believe that what we are doing right now is ethically correct," Fossum told commissioners.

As part of the redetermination process, buffer easements have to be purchased based on the 2017 state buffer law.

For the purchase of the buffer easements on the county ditches, the estimated cost, using a land value of \$6,000 per acre, would be \$3,393,600.

The purchase of the easements for the judicial ditches is estimated at \$1,595,760. The total easement purchase price is estimated at \$4,989,360.

In March, the county board approved hiring H2Overviewers for \$728,591 to conduct the redetermination of benefits on county and judicial ditches. However, that price is based on doing all 36 ditch systems in the same year.

The county has about 183,000 watershed acres served by its county and judicial ditches based on an estimate by Houston Engineering. At that acreage, H2Overviewers is charging \$3.98 per acre for the redetermination process.

If the county goes over 200,000 acres, the price falls to \$3.88 per acre and over 250,000 acres, it falls to \$3.78 per acre. To reach over 250,000 acres or more, however, the county would have to talk with the joint drainage authorities it has with neighboring counties on shared ditch systems and get them to agree to participate.

Fox asked Fossum if he had talked with neighboring coun-

ties to see if any were interested in doing redeterminations on joint ditches.

Chippewa County has showed an interest but Stevens and Pope are leaning away from it based on cost, Fossum said. They don't have as many systems as Swift County, so it is not as high a priority for them. Swift County shares five or six ditch systems with Chippewa County, he said. Two have already had redeterminations.

There is one small ditch system with Kandiyohi County, but Fossum is waiting to hear from them on their interest in participating with Swift County.

Swift County is not going to start the process until January, which gives it additional time to discuss financing options for the buffer payments and redetermination process, Fossum said.

Bryan Murphy of H2Overviewers plans to participate in the meeting by video conference call to explain the process and methodology for doing the redeterminations. Two of the ditch viewers assigned to the process will also be participating.

Fossum has recommended county commissioners attend the meetings to keep up with what is involved with the redetermination process.

Financing options

To work out the financing options for the estimated \$4,989,360 in easement payments and the \$728,591 for H2Overviewers, Fossum participated in several meetings with Swift County Auditor Kim Saterbak.

These two costs will not be charged to all taxpayers in Swift County but are a debt incurred only by the landowners who benefit from the ditch systems.

Fossum and Saterbak are looking at two scenarios to finance the redetermination process.

Option one is to use ditch and county general fund reserves to pay H2Overviewers.

"The funds taken from county reserves would be treated as a small, short-term loan so that the taxpayers of the county who are not benefiting from the redetermination know that their taxpayer dollars are being used wisely,"

Fossum said.

The county board would set the interest rate on the loan of county funds and the principal and interest would be paid off by those in the ditch systems.

When the final redetermination public hearings are completed, the county will send out assessment notices to the landowners on what they owe for the redetermination process. The landowners will then be given a 30 to 45 day window to make a prepayment, eliminating potential interest charges.

Swift County would then bond to pay for the remaining balance and use a multi-year assessment on the ditch funds to pay off the bonds.

Historically, other counties that have used a prepayment option with the ditch redeterminations have seen about 70 percent paid upfront, Saterbak said. "If we get that, maybe we don't want to bond. Maybe we just want to do multi-year assessments and get it paid off in a short time, depending on how much we have left to pay," she said.

This option would involve the county continuing to use its own funds to finance the redetermination. The payments could be made in one to three years depending on how much was outstanding.

If the county only gets 40

percent paid through prepayments, then it might have to bond, Saterbak said.

Landowners will have some additional cash coming their way to help them pay for the redetermination process with the checks they will get for the buffer easements on their property.

The second option is that Swift County pays for the redeterminations and buffer easements through bonding upfront with any prepayments escrowed to pay off the bonds, Saterbak said.

"These are the two best options we have narrowed it down to," Fossum said of the research he has done with Saterbak. The county won't be faced with how it pays for the redetermination process until sometime next year.

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Lakers split a pair to end regular season

by manager James Cortez

The Norway Lake-Sunburg Lakers ended their 2022 amateur baseball regular season by splitting a pair of County Line League games. The Lakers fell to the Atwater Chuckers on Friday night by a score of 11-6, but finished their regular season schedule by defeating the New London-Spicer Twins in Sunburg on Sunday by a score of 8-5. The Lakers will now head into the County Line League playoffs trying to secure a spot in the Region 4C tournament. They will begin the postseason with an opening round game at Spicer this Saturday, 1:30 p.m.

leading 3-2, the Chuckers took back the lead for good in the bottom of the third when they scored three runs on four singles, a walk and a sacrifice fly. With Atwater leading 5-3, Ryan Torkelson took over for Carlson on the mound and pitched the next four innings for the Lakers, giving up six runs over the four innings and giving way to Ruter, who pitched the eighth inning for the Lakers. While Atwater extended its lead to 11-3 through eight innings, the Lakers were unable to muster any offense during that time.

But the Lakers had one more push left in them in the ninth inning, scoring three runs and having the bases loaded, threatening the Chuckers' lead. In the ninth, Ruter was hit by a pitch with two outs, Aaron Zimmer walked and Christian Diederich reached on an error to load the bases. Brandin Dahl walked to drive in Ruter, and Torkelson singled, scoring both Diederich and Zimmer, cutting the Atwater lead to 11-6. But the game would end with the bases loaded with Lakers as a strikeout would finish the game.

Cortez and Torkelson led the Lakers' offense with two hits and two RBIs apiece. Carlson took the loss on the mound, giving up six runs on seven hits in his three innings of work.

Final Score
Lakers...201 000 003- 6 R, 6 H, 0 E
Atwater...113 102 30X- 11 R, 16 H, 3 E

Norway Lake-Sunburg Hitting:
Weston Gjerde: 0 for 4, 2 bb, run
Justin Johnson: 0 for 2, 2 bb, 2 runs
Spencer Almen: 0 for 2
Jared Cortez: 2 for 3, 2b, bb, 2 rbi
Titian Norton: 0 for 0, bb
Jaiden Henjum: 0 for 5, sb

Luke Ruter: 1 for 3, bb, hp, run, sb
Aaron Zimmer: 0 for 4, bb, run
Regan Carlson: 0 for 2
Christian Diederich: 1 for 3, 2b, run
Brandon Rasmusson: 0 for 3
Brandin Dahl: 0 for 0, 2 bb, rbi
Ryan Torkelson: 2 for 4, hp, 2 rbi

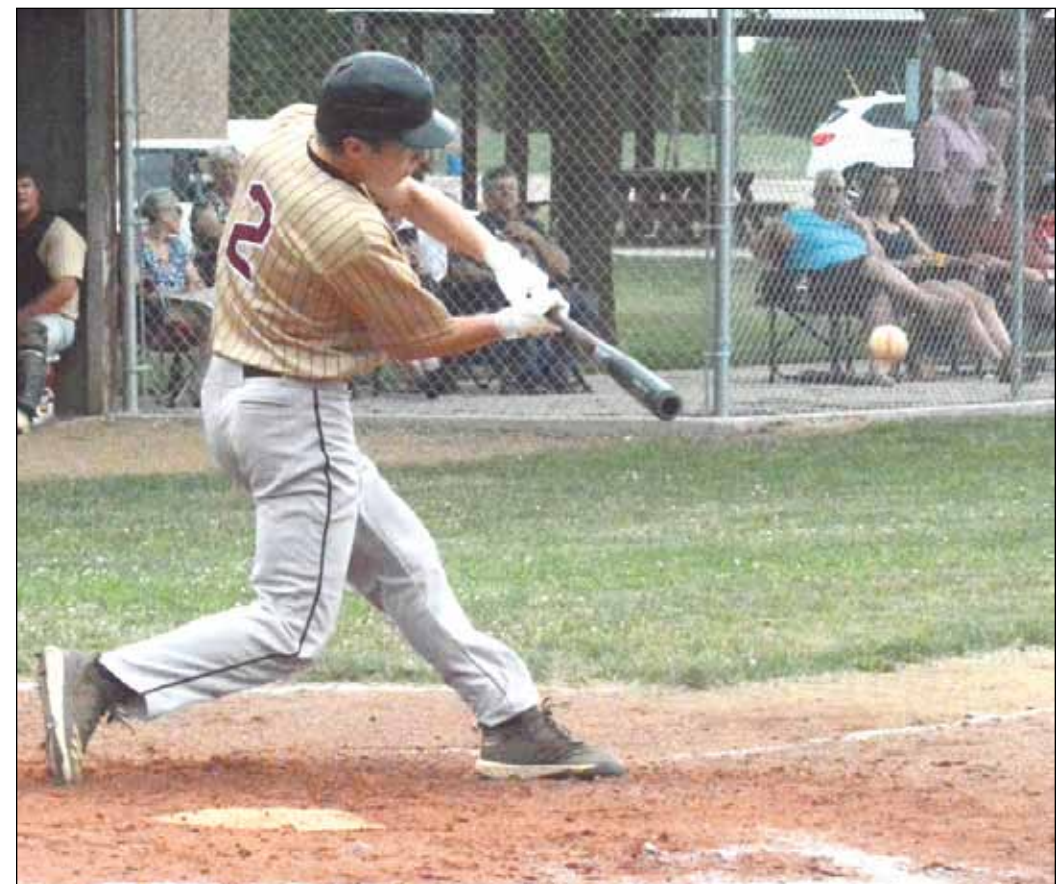
Norway Lake-Sunburg Pitching:
Regan Carlson: (L) 3 inn, 7 H, 5 R, 5 ER, 3 BB, 4 K
Ryan Torkelson: 4 inn, 9 H, 6 R, 6 ER, 1 BB, 0 K
Luke Ruter: 1 inn, 1 H, 0 R, 0 ER, 0 BB, 2 K

Lakers 8, New London-Spicer 5

The Lakers returned home to Willie Reigstad Park in Sunburg last Sunday to take on the New London-Spicer Twins in the regular season finale, and came away with an 8-5 victory. The Lakers used a four-run eighth inning rally to come back and snatch the win from the Twins. The Lakers got a complete game effort from Weston Gjerde on the pitching mound and three RBIs each from Johnson and Cortez to help secure the win.

The Twins actually took an early lead in the game with a couple of homeruns. A two-run homer in the first and a solo shot in the second off of Gjerde gave New London-Spicer a 3-0 lead after two innings. The Lakers cut into the Twins' lead in the bottom of the third inning by scoring two runs of their own. Torkelson led off the third by getting hit with a pitch. Gjerde followed with a walk and Johnson singled, scoring Torkelson. After an out, Jaiden Henjum was also hit by a pitch, loading the bases, and Ruter followed with a sacrifice flyout to right field, plating Gjerde and making the score 3-2.

Gjerde settled in on the mound after the first two innings and was able to hold the



Young Jared Cortez had himself a dandy couple of games at the plate for the Norway Lake-Sunburg Lakers this past weekend, with five hits in eight at-

bats including three doubles and four runs batted in. Above, he put the ball in play on this plate appearance in Sunday's game against NLS.

Twins' offense at bay through the middle five innings of the game. Meanwhile the Lakers' offense was able to tie the game in the fifth inning and took the lead in the seventh. In the fifth, Cortez doubled with two outs and scored on a Henjum single, tying the game at 3-3. In the seventh, the Lakers took the lead when Gjerde was hit by a pitch with two outs. Johnson followed with a single and Cortez drove in Gjerde with a single, giving the Lakers a 4-3 lead.

But New London-Spicer would not go quietly in the game as they scored two runs in the top of the eighth inning to regain the lead at 5-4. The Lakers were poised to get out of the inning unscathed, but were unable to complete a tailor-made double play ball, allowing the frame to continue for the Twins. They tacked on two runs on the Laker error and two singles.

So, after relinquishing the lead in the top of the eighth, it was the Lakers' turn to put some tallies on the scoreboard in the bottom half of the inning. Aaron Zimmer led off the Lakers' eighth with a double to the right centerfield gap. After a groundout, Carlson reached on an error and Torkelson was hit by a pitch, loading the bases. Gjerde hit a sacrifice fly to centerfield, scoring Dahl, who was pinch running for Zimmer, and tied the game at 5-5. Johnson followed with a single, scoring Brandon Rasmusson, who was running for Carlson, giving the Lakers a 6-5 lead. Cortez

then doubled to the left field fence, scoring Torkelson and Johnson, and making the score 8-5 in favor of the Lakers. Gjerde shut the door on the Twins in the ninth, setting the visitors down in order and preserving the comeback win for the Lakers.

Gjerde finished the complete game victory giving up eight hits, walking four and striking out four. The Lakers' offense piled up 10 hits in the game, with Johnson and Cortez picking up three each.

Final Score:
NL-Spicer...210 000 020- 5 R, 8 H, 0 E
Lakers.....002 010 14X- 8 R, 10 H, 1 E

Norway Lake-Sunburg Hitting:
Weston Gjerde: 0 for 2, bb, hp, sac, 2 runs
Justin Johnson: 3 for 5, run, 2 rbi
Jared Cortez: 3 for 5, 2 2b, run, 2 rbi
Jaiden Henjum: 1 for 2, 2 hp, bb, rbi
Luke Ruter: 0 for 4, sac, rbi

Aaron Zimmer: 2 for 4, 2b, run
Christian Diederich: 1 for 4
Regan Carlson: 0 for 3, bb
Ryan Torkelson: 0 for 2, 2 hp

Norway Lake-Sunburg Pitching:
Weston Gjerde: (W) 9 inn, 8 H, 5 R, 4 ER, 4 BB, 4 K

With the split to end the regular season, the Lakers' record stands at 3-10, 2-8 in County Line League play. The Lakers will enter the County Line League playoffs as the number six seed and will travel to Spicer for a first-round match-up with the Twins this Saturday. The league playoffs are a double-elimination format with the top three teams automatically advancing to the Region 4C tournament. The fourth team in the playoffs will play in a play-in game with the ability to reach the region tournament with an extra win. The game this Saturday against New London-Spicer is slated to start at 1:30 p.m. in Spicer at Green Lake Diamonds.



Laker first baseman Christian Diederich made a nice stretch for an out in Sunday's final regular season contest, against New London-Spicer at Sunburg.



There's a reason why old-time baseball players called a catcher's equipment "the tools of ignorance." Laker catcher Chris Moist took a foul tip off the mask during this at-bat in Sunday's game against the New London-Spicer Twins, played at Sunburg. The Lakers came back for a nice 8-5 victory.



Weston Gjerde threw a gem for his Norway Lake-Sunburg team on Sunday, going the route and allowing only four earned runs in the 8-5 win.



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Cumulus canopy

A monstrous cloud hanging over KMS High School on a recent evening spelled anything but ominous. It was just one of those fluffy summer cumulous varieties which make for a pretty picture and that's about it.

Exchange experience was gratifying, valuable for two foreign students at KMS this past school year

by Cormac Dodd

Sophie Lehner, 16, from Austria, had been at KMS since December. Melvin Vickstrom, 17, from Sweden had done the full year at KMS, dorming with the Nystrom family, Cliff and Kristy.

Ahead of their farewells post-school term, the two attended a KMS School Board meeting to report on their experiences at the school.

"I liked the sports, the school spirit. The teachers were great and very welcom-

ing," Vickstrom said.

"I'll miss the clubs, the school spirit. I was in basketball when I first got here and now I am in track and field," Sophie said.

Each iterated they felt welcomed and included in the social fabric of the town in their statements, delivered during public comment. Initially complimented on their English-language proficiency, when asked about the nature of such language learning in Sweden Vickstrom said he began to study English in the

third grade. Sophie, who also studied French and Latin in school, began learning English in the fourth grade.

German is Austria's national language, and when asked, Sophie said she spoke German rather than English when amongst friends in Austria.

"How do classes here compare to classes back home?" said Chris Wenisch, a KMS school board member.

"The tests are easier here. It's more studying in Sweden," Vickstrom said.

The board spoke of the spe-

cialization that occurs in European education at the high school level, where students select a "path" which then dictates the tenor and theme of courses they take, different than the general courses offered in most American public schools.

"My major is economics, so I have a lot of math," Vickstrom said of his path.

Upon her graduation, Sophie hopes to study medicine at a university. Class sizes in her native Austria are akin to numbers at KMS: 20 to 25

students per teacher. She was complimentary of KMS' use of Chromebooks, not seen in her schools back home, when she described this technology as convenient.

"A few classmates and my sister recommended this. I want to improve my English and get to know the U.S, a different culture," she said, when asked why she elected to study abroad.

Cliff Nystrom, host to Vickstrom, was also present at the meeting.

"He's had some really cool

experiences. He's gone to two Wild games, the state fair. I taught him a thing or two about hockey," Nystrom said of Vickstrom.

The last remark was made in jest, seeing as Nystrom is an accomplished hockey player who competed in a men's league in Willmar Wednesday nights.

"The foreign exchange students are a huge asset. It's a great experience for the kids and for them," KMS High Principal Ted Brown said.

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