



# Rock County STAR HERALD

Rock County's oldest business, printing since 1873

Thursday, March 22, 2018

## LIFT: 'Your efforts are paying off'

*First-ever fundraiser, 'Rising to Occasion,' draws twice the expected crowd size*

**By Lori Sorenson**

The Friday night LIFT Gala drew 200 people to Grand Prairie Events in Luverne where business leaders and organizations updated the community on the latest developments in town.

"There are so many exciting things happening in Luverne," said Chamber Director Jane Wildung Lanphere.

"This meeting is a good opportunity to get good information about what's happening in Luverne."

**Tru Shrimp update**

A highlight of the evening was an update from tru Shrimp's Jon Knochenmus, who spoke about the construction and development of Luverne's \$100 million harbor and hatchery.

"It's an exciting, exciting project that's going to be so impactful," Knochenmus said. "We're changing the aquaculture world."

He pointed to the fact that roughly 90 percent of U.S. shrimp is imported and grown mostly in ponds that are subject to contamination.

"I shouldn't even get into how they are processed," he said. "They're raising shrimp today like we used to chicken and pigs in the 1950s.... Let's just say we'll change the world with our shrimp production."

At a time when consumers are increasingly demanding information on their food origins, Knochenmus said tru Shrimp's patented tidal basin technology will be able to record every step in the process.

"There are no chemicals, no antibiotics, it's clean, and the saltwater tidal basins mimic the ocean," he said.

"I wish I could say I was smart enough to have invented this, but I can say I was smart enough to acquire the patent."

He praised Luverne's leadership in securing Lewis and Clark Water, and pointed out that tru Shrimp's process will recycle and conserve water. "The water is too valuable for us to waste."

He also praised community leadership in general.

"I say LIFT is working," he said. "I say this as an outsider ... as someone who's always been interested in

LIFT gala/continued on page 5A



Mavis Fodness photo/0322 Spring Snow Robins

## Robins signal spring, despite fresh snow

Dozens of colorful robins flocked to the trees at the Rock County Courthouse in Luverne to pick berries Tuesday, the first day of spring. While the birds are typical signs of spring, Rock County was blanketed with a new layer of snow on what the calendar proclaimed to be a warmer season.

## Hardwick cleaning up blighted property; other cities follow suit

**By Mavis Fodness**

Hardwick city officials are moving forward in the battle against blight in their community.

Cleanup can begin at 301 Ross Street South with its cost assessed to property owner James Petersen of Jasper after he failed to comply with cleanup orders delivered last month by law enforcement officials.

City Council members issued a

citation at their Feb. 14 meeting after Petersen failed to pay a \$1,000 fine or schedule a hearing on the nuisance violation.

At his Ross Street property, Petersen has "permitted the outside storage of abandoned, discarded or unlicensed vehicles," according to the citation.

He has also allowed the "accumulation of discarded, worn out,

inoperable items no longer used for purposes for which they were manufactured or made."

The city's action comes after Petersen and a half dozen other property owners were issued letters in September 2016 stating their properties were in violation of the city's nuisance ordinance.

Another violation letter was sent to Petersen in September 2017.

While other property owners made plans for compliance, Petersen failed to communicate with Hardwick officials or clean his property.

A \$1,000 fine was issued to Petersen in October 2017. The unpaid fine and lack of cleanup by Petersen led to the delivery of February's citation to his Jasper home.

Hardwick blight/see page 5A

## Sehr becomes new face of Luverne as Chamber assistant

**By Lori Sorenson**

Reva Sehr is the new face of Luverne as she assists Chamber Director Jane Wildung Lanphere in promoting the community.

"Her familiarity with the community certainly made her a good hire," Lanphere said about Sehr.

"Her involvement in the community, her volunteerism, her service on the Luverne School Board are all good things — and her computer skills are rivaled by none."

Sehr started at the Chamber in February to replace longtime Chamber assistant Lorna Bryan who retired in December.



She was honored at a March 13 reception in Sterling's to introduce her to the community.

Sehr said the job is so far shaping up to be everything she hoped for.

"I'm a good organizer, and I always thought I'd be a good office manager," she said last week. "But I didn't want to be at a desk all day — I've been doing that for 20 years already."

Reva Averill came to Luverne from Minneapolis in 1996 as a trainer for what was then Berkley Information Services, part of W.R. Berkley Corporation.

Sehr at Chamber/see page 3A

## Deragisch Insurance opens downtown



Lori Sorenson photo/0322 deragisch insurance

David Deragisch's Main Street Office displays a photograph of his family, which includes his wife, Lori, and their children Danielle (Nate) Wright, Hillary Deragisch, Brandon and Lyndsie (Johnson) Deragisch and Katie and Michael Strassburg. Grandchildren are Brandon and Lyndsie's daughter Gracie, Kaitlyn and Michael's son, Liam, and Danielle and Nate's children, Owen, Mattea and Connor.

**By Lori Sorenson**

After nearly 30 years in education, David Deragisch said he's enjoying his second career in the insurance business.

"I enjoy talking to people, and I enjoy helping people," he said, adding that people skills are useful in both lines of work.

Deragisch worked for one year with State Farm before he started his own business, Deragisch Insurance, on Feb. 1 in the former State Farm building that he and his wife, Lori, own at 122 East Main Street.

"It's a lot of work," he said about building his own clientele. "But it's going very well."

It doesn't hurt that Deragisch grew up in Rock County — born in Luverne and graduated from Hills-Beaver Creek High School.

His teaching career spans from social studies classroom teaching in

Deragisch insurance/see page 3A



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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### Meetings

**Town and Country Garden Club** will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 27, at the home of Lois Peterson. Louella Voigt will present a program on using garden produce and herbs in ethnic cooking. Call 507-597-6378 with questions.

**Caregivers Support Group** will meet from 5-6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 27, in the conference room of the Mary Jane Brown Good Samaritan Society Home. Anyone dealing with caregiving or with questions concerning available resources is encouraged to attend.

**Pleasant View Cemetery Annual Meeting** will be at 7 p.m. Monday, April 2, at the home of Brent and Jodi Taubert at 690 81<sup>st</sup> Street, Beaver Creek.

**Pink Ladies of Sanford Luverne Hospital** will meet at noon Monday, April 9, in the Sanford Blue Mound Room for a potluck salad luncheon and business meeting. Members should bring their own dishes and silverware.

### Courthouse elevator under repair

The elevator in the Rock County Courthouse in Luverne will be inoperable through March 28 because of equipment upgrades, affecting handicap-accessibility to several offices. Affected departments include auditor-treasurer, land records, county administration, veteran services, district courts, emergency management and department of motor vehicles. Contact department personnel if accessibility to the courthouse is necessary during the repair period.

### Rock County spring road restrictions

Spring weight road restrictions are in place as of Tuesday, March 6, on all Rock County roadways.

Ending dates are variable and drivers must check for updates throughout the spring. Call Rock County Highway Engineer Mark Sehr at 507-283-5010.

### Green Earth performs 'KOLD Radio'

The Green Earth Players will perform "KOLD Radio — Whitefish Bay" March 23-25 at the historic Palace Theatre in Luverne. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and at 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are available at the Palace Theatre Box Office, 102 East Main Street, Luverne, or by calling 507-283-4339.

### Kindergarten Round-up March 22

Luverne Kindergarten Round-up is scheduled for Thursday, March 22, at the Luverne Elementary School.

Session 1 is geared toward new kindergarten parents and will begin at 5:30 p.m. Session 2 is an informal "meet & greet" time and will run from 6:30-7 p.m. Children must be five years old before Sept. 1, 2018, in order to register for kindergarten. Call 283-4497 with questions.

### Atlas Banquet tickets until March 27

The Atlas of Rock County Fundraising Banquet will begin with a social hour/silent auction at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 5, at Grand Prairie Events in Luverne. Tickets are on sale now through Tuesday, March 27, at Redeemed Remnants in Luverne. Call 507-449-6101 with questions.

### Free meal at Methodist Church

A free community meal will be served at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 28, at the United Methodist Church in Luverne.

### Easter egg hunts March 31

•The Blue Ribbon 4-H Club will host an Easter Egg Hunt at the Tuff Memorial Home at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 31, for children up to 10 years old.

•Magnolia Juniors 4-H Club will host an Easter Egg Hunt and petting in the Magnolia city park starting at 10 a.m. sharp, rain or shine.

### Three Red Cross blood drives in area

The Red Cross has scheduled three blood drives in the area as follows:

•Wednesday, **March 28**, from 1:30-6:30 p.m. at the Evangelical Lutheran Church, 101 Spicer Street, **Jasper**.

•Monday, **April 2**, from 1-7 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 500 N. Kniss, **Luverne**.

•Wednesday, **April 4**, from noon to 7 p.m. at Adrian High School, 415 Kentucky, **Adrian**.

To make an appointment, visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org), download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, or call 1-800-733-2767.



Lori Sorenson photo/0322 tyana's boutique

## Celebrating grand reopening

Tyana's Boutique hosted a ribbon-cutting event Wednesday, March 14, to celebrate the reopening of the store in its new location on 211 East Main Street. On hand for the event were (from left) Tyler Bush, Reva Sehr, Tony Schomacker, Nancy Scheidt, Brian Sterling, Stephanie Van Dyke and son Blair, Brandt Van Dyke, store owners Amy and Mark Van Essen, Shanda Schaap, Karen and Bob Van Essen, Jordyn Smit, Stacy Riphagen, Manda Steensma, Betty Mann and Faye Bremer.

## Child care discussion with providers/continued from page 1A

hoops for providers to jump through."

### Low family wages keep provider rates low

An underlying problem for all child care providers is low or negative profit margins.

Wages earned by out-state working families aren't high enough to support rates that are profitable for providers.

And Rock County rates are well below the state average for child care tuition, possibly to accommodate area wages.

"I think they feel handcuffed by their circumstances," Crabtree said.

Some at the meeting were surprised by the actual numbers when they were shown profit-loss statements, based on their average local scenarios and current rates.

"When you're in business, you need to see what your business is worth," Crabtree said.

After expenses are paid, most local providers earn roughly \$8 per hour.

She said the March 12 meeting offered providers a new way to see themselves and what they contribute to the local economy. "They're an important piece of the economic puzzle."

With the 2018 figures (not counting more than 100 jobs coming to Luverne in 2019), there's an unmet demand for an estimated 200 child care slots, and it's putting local families and employers in a bind.

It means businesses struggle to hire and retain qualified people because workers struggle to find quality, reliable child care.

*"Ultimately I hope people understand how important we are to the community and the future of our children. These kids spend more waking hours with us than with their parents, and these are very formative years."*

— Brenda Johnson, Luverne in-home child care provider

Ultimately it's putting a squeeze on the local economy, and city leaders are scrambling to get on top of the problem that's affecting communities across greater Minnesota.

The hope is that meetings like the one on March 12 will shed light on the problems that could lead to solutions.

Magnolia child care provider Sandra Mulder said she appreciated the March 12 meeting.

"It was a very open and frank discussion," she said. "Child care is an investment in the city to keep the city growing."

### Center-based care would be win-win for both providers and families

Mulder is among a growing minority of providers who recognize the wisdom of a community child care center.

"A center can offer weekend care and nights and other things that we don't," Mulder said.

"It would be a win-win

for the community and for providers."

It would address the local child care shortage and would have a side benefit of raising wages for all local providers.

Plus, Mulder said, in-home providers aren't the best match for all families, especially out-of-towners who may be more comfortable with center-based care.

"When I think about families coming here for tru Shrimp, a lot of people who aren't from here might not have a huge amount of trust putting their kids in the home of a stranger," Mulder said.

Local leaders have been studying the feasibility of a community child care center and have found that it would need to be subsidized by public and private sources.

Feasibility studies show that center-based child care businesses can't cash flow based on local wages of working families.

Other greater Minnesota cities are coming to similar

realizations and are turning attention to how to fund such subsidies in order to support families and local economies.

In Rock County, local leaders aren't committed to a center — or any specific plans — until they're finished exploring options and gathering information.

### Child care conversation continues; next meeting is with employers

"Ultimately I hope people understand how important we are to the community and the future of our children," Johnson said. "These kids spend more waking hours with us than with their parents, and these are very formative years."

Mulder said in-home providers are often overlooked and underappreciated as contributing businesses in a local economy.

"It's too bad it takes a crisis for people to realize what we do," she said.

"We're all in this profession because it's truly what we love to do."

The March 12 meeting with providers is the second in a series of four community meetings planned to address the local child care shortage.

The first one on Jan. 29 involved local leaders and elected officials.

The next one, the third, will involve major employers, and the final meeting will invite the entire community.

"These discussions have been very intentional and strategic in targeted small group settings," Crabtree said.

The dates for the final two meetings will be announced.



# Dial-A-Specialist

## Your One Stop Guide to Local Businesses

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# Luverne showcased in Pheasant Opener

Landowners sought for 2018 Governor's Pheasant Hunting Opener

By Lori Sorenson

Rick Peterson updated community members Friday night about the Minnesota Governor's Pheasant Hunting Opener that Luverne is hosting this fall.

"Luverne was selected as the host community for this year's event, and some might question what this is worth to the community," he said at the annual gala for Luverne Initiatives For Tomorrow (LIFT).

"In Marshall, they estimated the event last year brought in \$835,000 worth of ad value equivalency."

Peterson was among several featured speakers at the annual event in Grand Prairie Events where LIFT updated community members on its recent accomplishments and current projects. (See the related stories).

He said this will be the eighth year of pheasant hunting openers around the state, every host community has submitted proposals to host again.

"Luverne will rise to the occasion and this will be the best Governor's Pheasant Hunting Opener ever," he said. "I guarantee it."

## Landowners sought for Oct. 13 hunting permission

The local planning committee is reaching out to landowners who may be willing to grant access to hunters involved in the event.

The land will be hunted only on Oct. 13 as part of the Minnesota Governor's Pheasant Hunting Opener.

Invited hunters will be led by local hunter hosts, which may include local landowners. Ideal lands for the opener

include grasslands or wetlands that support huntable pheasant populations.

Landowners who grant access to their land will each receive a pair of tickets for the Oct. 12 opener's community banquet and will be entered in a drawing to win one of three \$500 cash prizes.

Landowners interested in allowing hunting access for the event can email pheasantopener@gmail.com or they can call committee members Arlyn Gehrke, 507-227-9193; Tim Plimpton, 605-759-6366; Kyle Oldre, 507-920-890.

Gov. Mark Dayton will lead the event, which showcases hunting, recreation, tourism and other opportunities that the Luverne area has to offer visitors.

"I thank the people of Luverne for graciously offering to host the 2018 Governor's Pheasant Hunting Opener," said Gov. Dayton, who started the event in 2011.

"The Pheasant Opener has become a special Minnesota tradition, made possible by our tremendous host communities. I look forward to another fantastic opener in Luverne this year."

Explore Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources are assisting the Luverne Area Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau and other local partners in planning the event.

Information and updates are available at [www.exploreminnesota.com/MNGPHO](http://www.exploreminnesota.com/MNGPHO). Follow along for social media updates using the hashtags #MNGPHO2018 and #OnlyinMN.



Lori Sorenson photos/0322 concert band and choir clinic

## Making music with the best

Luverne High School band and choir students performed a concert Saturday night for the community after working with guest conductors from the College of St. Scholastica and Brandon Valley. The 43rd Annual Instrumental and Choral Clinic and Concert are part of the Music in our Schools Festival observed each March.

The conductors, sponsored by the Luverne Music Boosters, worked with students Friday and Saturday to challenge them with difficult music and musical concepts.

Bob Goheen, 28-year director of bands in Brandon Valley High School, directed band students, and Bret Amundson, director of choral activities at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, worked with concert choir students.



# Luverne loses power Saturday night

By Lori Sorenson

Luverne electrical utilities workers are still looking for the cause of a malfunction in the west substation that caused a widespread outage in the city and surrounding area Saturday night.

The city and a good share of neighboring communities lost power around 4:30 p.m. Saturday, just as Luverne's St. Patrick's Day Parade and other festivities were getting underway.

Since the city's power distributor was also offline, it first appeared the outage originated with L&O Power Cooperative, Rock Rapids, Iowa, which brings wholesale electricity to cooperatives in the area.

But L&O eventually nar-

rowed the source of its outage to a breaker malfunction in Luverne's west substation, according to Rick Hoftiezer, city electric departments supervisor.

"We were scrambling at that point to restore power through our east substation," he said.

"Mike (Gangestad) went one direction and I went another, and we met in the middle."

He said he knew the high school was about to host band and choir concerts at 7 p.m., and the lights went on in the school shortly before 7.

As of Monday, Hoftiezer said the cause of the substation malfunction was still unknown and a testing company from Elk River was scheduled to work on it sometime this week.

## Deragisch Insurance on Main Street/continued from page 1A

Chandler Lake Wilson and H-BC to serving as middle school principal in Jackson and Luverne.

For the last 10 years of his career in education, he was high school principal and district superintendent in H-BC.

A lifetime of local relationships is now filling out Deragisch's contact list as an

insurance professional. "It's been an easy adjustment," he said last week.

Deragisch Insurance, which is affiliated with Central Financial Group, offers home, farm, business, auto and life insurance and will soon include investment products. "The most challenging thing is that insurance rates are affected by natural

disasters and things outside my clients' control," Deragisch said. But, he said, the rewards outweigh the challenges. "The most rewarding thing is knowing that you can provide what they need at a fair price with an honest conversation," Deragisch said.

He can be reached in the office, by phone at 507-449-8320 or by email, [ddinsur-ance@iw.net](mailto:ddinsur-ance@iw.net).

The Deragisch family includes Danielle (Nate) Wright, Hillary Deragisch, Brandon and Lyndsie (Johnson) Deragisch and Katie and Michael Strassburg. Grandchildren are Brandon and Lyndsie's daughter Gracie, Kaitlyn and Michael's son, Liam, and Danielle and Nate's children, Owen, Mattea and Connor.

## Sehr at Chamber office/continued from page 1A

Her work with the corporation changed through the years into software development where she was most recently employed with Continental Western Group in the information technology department.

"I loved it," she said. "But I needed change."

She said her dream job has always been to someday work for a non-profit.

"I want to make a difference," she said. "I want to do something that somehow benefits someone. ... I'm at a point where I'm looking for purpose in my life, work that makes me happy."

She said the position in the Chamber office looks to be a perfect fit.

"I love this community and I love the people, so I'm looking forward to it," Sehr said.

"When I moved here 22 years ago, I told my parents 'I'm never coming back.' I

love it here. ... It's quaint, but progressive. People are nice, the town is clean, and people take pride in their community."

She and her husband, Mark Sehr, live in Luverne. Their children are Matt, 15, and Averill, 13, currently 10<sup>th</sup> and seventh-graders in Luverne Public Schools.

# State of Minnesota may apply 'Opportunity zones' to Rock County

By Mavis Fodness

Portions of Rock County are eligible to become "Opportunity Zones," if selected by Governor Dayton for the new economic development program.

In Minnesota 509 areas are eligible for the program through the federal government's Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017.

Opportunity Zones encourage long-term investments in low-income rural and urban communities nationwide.

Eligibility was based on census and income information.

In Rock County the selected areas include portions of Luverne and Luverne Township plus the townships

of Magnolia, Martin, Clinton and Kanaranzi. Cities of Magnolia, Hills and Steen are also included in the designation.

Governor Dayton can recommend 128 out of the 509 (25 percent) state eligible zones for the federal designation.

Officials from the state Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) asked administrators from the state's 87 counties to help in the zone selection process.

"We feel strongly that local communities have the on-the-ground expertise to recommend which eligible census tracts in the county ... should be designated as opportunity zones," the state's website stated.

Rock County Administra-

tor Kyle Oldre submitted the application.

"We don't know if there is money involved," he said. "We don't want to miss out based on missing pieces from their (DEED's) side."

Letters of support were garnered from the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partner-

ship, Southwest Initiative Foundation, and the cities of Hills and Luverne.

"An Opportunity Zone designation will positively impact our community by closing the financing gap on major developments within the zone," wrote John Call, Luverne city administrator.

In Rock County's application, Oldre indicated the area's income and unemployment rates place the county in a less dire position when compared to the other identified zones.

"The poverty level is 17.90 percent, household income is \$46,528, and while unem-

ployment is 1.8 percent we believe many residents are underemployed and this zone will greatly increase the opportunities to generate more income," Oldre wrote.

Final acceptance into the program is currently scheduled in April.

**GRAVEL BIDS:**  
**BEAVER CREEK TOWNSHIP**

Crushed gravel to be spread on Township roads.

Sealed bids will be accepted on, before or at the monthly meeting

**Monday, April 9 • 7 p.m.**  
at the township hall  
(please label gravel bid if mailed)

Bids may be sent to:  
Beaver Creek Township  
Karly King, Clerk  
PO Box 67  
Beaver Creek, MN 56116

- Karly King  
Township Clerk

**REQUEST FOR GRAVEL BIDS**

Crushed gravel to be spread on Clinton Township roads.

Submit bids to  
Lowell Bonnema  
1161 21st St  
Steen, MN 56173  
507-855-2380  
bids will be opened

**Monday, April 2**  
at 8 p.m. at the Township Hall  
Lowell Bonnema, Clerk

**ROCK COUNTY VETERANS**

Did you serve on Active Military Duty?

Do you have an honorable discharge?

Contact your veteran services officer to discuss eligibility for federal and state benefits.

**Veterans Linkage Line**  
[minnesotaveteran.org](http://minnesotaveteran.org) 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838)

Help for veterans and families

**Rock County Veterans Services**  
507-283-5061  
M-F: 8 a.m. to Noon  
Rock County Courthouse



## RETIREMENT OPEN HOUSE for Ravae Benson

Friday, March 23rd from 2-4pm at our Downtown Luverne location

Refreshments will be served.

RaVae's been in banking for over 46 years and the last 28 with Minnwest Bank!

## Plenty of time

*Auntie launches child from sound asleep to classroom in 15 minutes*

I pick up my 7-year-old niece after school on Mondays. She comes to my house so that we can attend a Bible study together. At bedtime we plan the kind of pancakes she wants for breakfast — “Fluffy ones” — and put her things out for the morning. “It’s my turn for show and tell tomorrow.”



### THE NORTHVIEW

By Brenda Winter, Columnist

Last Monday evening was no different. Our problems began Tuesday morning.

I am an early riser. Waking at 6:30 is “sleeping in.” Waking at 5 or 5:30 is pretty common, so I stared long and hard at the clock Tuesday morning slowly contemplating the numbers “eight, zero, zero.”

8:00. “Hmm.”  
Eight o’clock. “That’s odd.”  
Eight o’clock? “Why would the clock say 8:00?”

“It’s eight o’clock!!! Oh my gosh, it’s eight o’clock and we are still in bed!”

I raced across the hallway and gently grabbed the shoulders of a comatose 7-year-old. “Honey, listen very carefully. We slept way too long. School is starting now. I need you to move as fast as lighting, OK?”

Her little eyeballs rolled back into her head.

I texted her mother, “What is the tardy protocol? I just woke up.” Her mother replied, “LOL. Go to the office.”

Again, I prompted the child, standing her up and trying to get her legs and arms moving.

I ran to my room and got dressed.

The child got dressed and made her way to the kitchen.

It was 8:05.  
“Will you eat an apple or a banana? Can I get you some almonds? How about a glass of milk?”

The child stared at me.

“OK, get your coat on. I’ll get your backpack. You don’t need to put your snow pants on. Put on your shoes. Your hair is fine. Let’s go.”

The child stared at me.  
It was 8:08  
“You might get a tardy slip,” I explained. “It’s not your fault. I should have gotten up on time, but I didn’t.”

We were racing down Highway 75 at breakneck speed (30 miles per hour) toward the school. “Which doors are fastest? South or north?” I asked.

Brown eyes stared blankly back at me from the back seat.

“OK. I’m going to park here in the bus zone. I think all the buses have come and gone. Let’s run.”

We ran.  
It was 8:12  
I sprinted up to the elementary school counter and explained to the kindly lady behind it, “I overslept. It’s not her fault. What do we have to do?”

The kindly lady leaned over the counter and said to my niece, “Honey, if you go fast you will make it.”

The 7-year-old took off like a deer through a cornfield and was gone.

Exiting the building, I encountered a school employee who knows me. “What’s with the untied shoes, Brenda?” she asked. She was polite enough not to bring up the uncombed hair, the mismatched clothing or my shortness of breath.

As I was getting back in to my illegally parked car, a bell rang.

It was 8:15.  
My niece was in her seat ready to start school, just like any other Tuesday.

## Good discussions occur with school walkout event

Our March 14 Facebook post about the National School Walkout event in Luverne schools drew widespread reaction from community members and Facebook readers. (See the related story in this week’s paper.)

The national event was an outcry to policymakers to enact more stringent gun laws, but local students and administrators chose a different route to recognize the national event.

Their route was “showing respect with respect,” as one person commented on our social media page.

We applaud our school officials for being proactive in the weeks leading up to March 14.

They involved students in the national discussion, respected students’ individual feelings, and allowed them a positive platform to share feelings and ideas.

### STAR HERALD EDITORIAL

Attacks in public places have become too common and as a community we need to react not only with anger and outrage at these events but with behaviors that demonstrate we live in a caring and supportive nation where violence is not a solution.

Two more national protests and walkouts are scheduled in the upcoming weeks. “March For Our Lives” is scheduled for Saturday, March 25, at the State Capitol.

April 20 is “The National High School Walkout for Anti-Gun Violence.” This date is the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Columbine High School shootings.

Our community will again have

an opportunity to use the national events as a chance to “walk up.”

As one Facebook reader commented, we should:

- Walk up to the kid who sits alone and ask him to join our group.

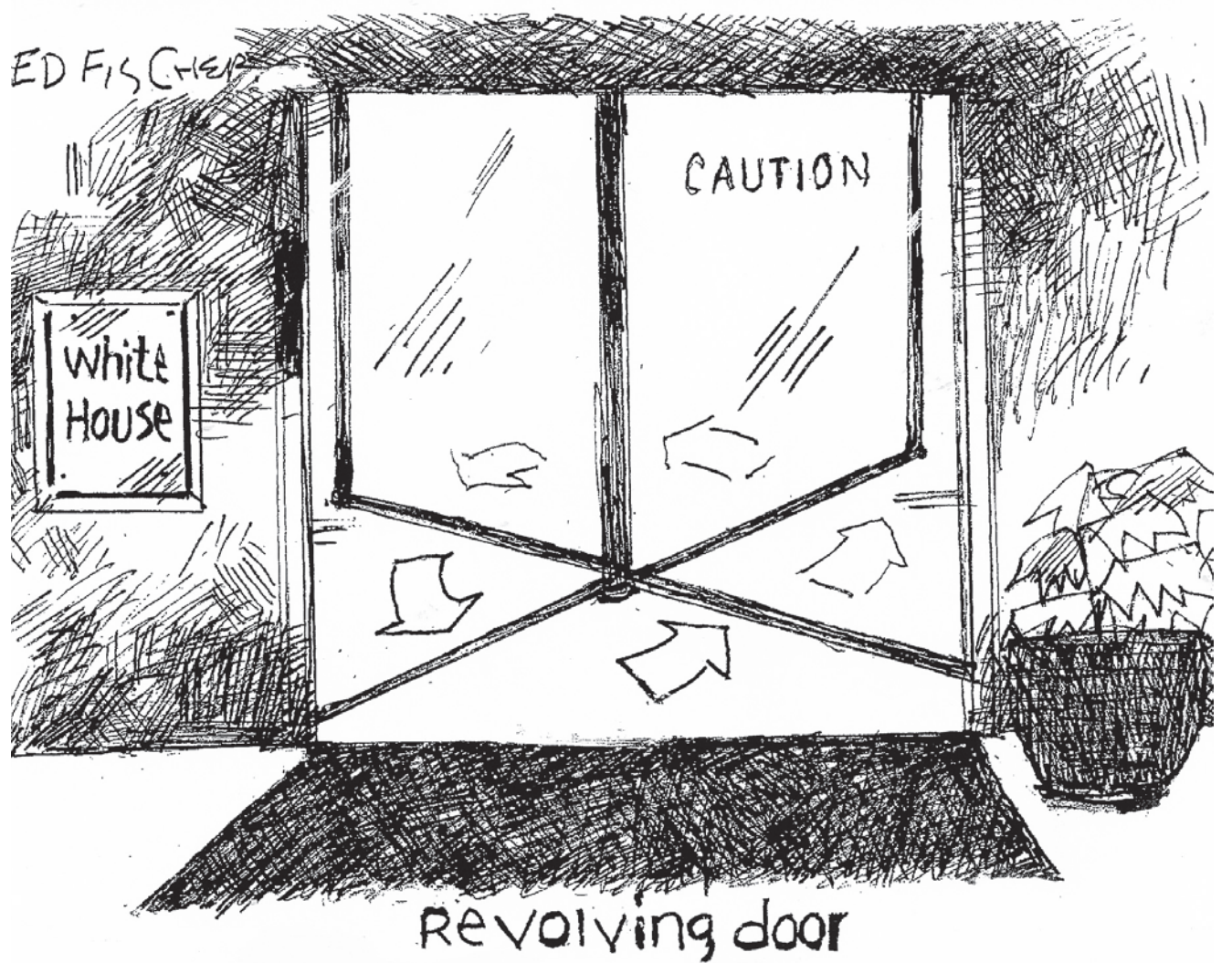
- Walk up to the kid who never has a voluntary partner and offer to be that person.

- Walk up to your teachers and thank them.

- Walk up to someone and just be nice.

Adults should model these positive behaviors.

Let’s find ways to stop these school assaults by discussing the problem reasonably and respectfully.



## Time waiting for blocked train tracks is limited; expired license still good for active military

**Question:** I was stuck at a train crossing the other day for half an hour. What is the law on how long a train can block the road crossing and who do I report this to? How do I get this fixed as it seems to happen far too often?

**Answer:** Minnesota law prohibits trains from blocking public roadways for more than 10 minutes. You should report any issues to local government (city, county or state), which will then contact the appropriate railroad company. The state law does not apply to cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, as they regulate obstructions of streets by city ordinance.

**Question:** The law states that an active duty military member with residence in Minnesota can have an expired license. But what will happen if I were to be pulled over for a traffic violation and my license was expired?



### ASK A TROOPER

By Sgt. Troy Christianson, Minnesota State Patrol

**Answer:** If you are on active duty in the U.S. military, you do not have to renew your expired Minnesota license until you are discharged, regardless of the length of time served. The law requires you to renew your expired license or ID card within one year of being discharged from the military. If you are a spouse of an active duty military member, you are also exempt from license renewal if you do not live in Minnesota during the time of active duty.

To be sure that your driving record is maintained after your license expires, you must notify Minnesota Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS) of your military status. Send a copy of your military orders showing where you are stationed and your service date, or a letter from your commanding officer with the same information to the address below:

DVS  
445 Minnesota St Suite 163  
St Paul, MN 55101

This will allow DVS to provide you with an In Service letter outlining Minnesota Statutes that exempts active duty military members from renewal, up to one year from discharge. To expedite this process you may call 651-297-3298.

If you are stopped by law enforcement outside of Minnesota, you must provide your military ID, expired Minnesota license and In Service letter as proof of valid status. Be advised that not all states honor the In Service letter. While on leave or prior to renewing your driver’s license, always have your military ID and expired driver’s license with you. If you are stopped by a Minnesota law enforcement officer, explain your current military status. If you have notified DVS of your military status, it will be noted on your record.

To renew your license, present your expired Minnesota license and DD214 discharge papers at a DVS

location that accepts driver license applications.

Vehicle registration for vehicles owned or co-owned by active military men and women that are kept out of state are exempt from registration tax up to 90 days after discharge. Applicable sales tax, plate, contributions and filing fees must then be paid. For complete instructions on how to renew registration call 651-297-2126.

*You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.*

*If you have any questions concerning traffic-related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson — Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. Or at (Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us) Twitter: MSPPIO\_SOUTH.*

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The *Star Herald* encourages letters to the editor expressing the opinions of readers and intends to print all letters. Letters not meeting the guidelines will not be printed. The *Star Herald* will verify the authenticity of all letters. Letters must have the name of the writer, a signature and address.

Unsigned letters will not be considered. The *Star Herald* will edit for grammar, spelling and clarity. Any letters containing offensive language, libelous or slanderous material, or misleading or false information will be rewritten before being published. The *Star Herald* will not publish letters written with the sole intent to advertise or serve as a thank-you. Letters with more than 300 words may be edited. The deadline for letters is Monday 10 a.m. They may be delivered or mailed to the editor, *Rock County Star Herald*, P.O. Box 837, 117 W. Main St., Luverne, Minn. 56156.



**CELEBRATIONS**

**Open houses**

**Delores Leenderts** will celebrate her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with an open house from 2-5 p.m. Saturday, March 24, at the Luverne Presbyterian Church. Greetings may be sent to her at 517 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Hills, MN 56138.

**Card showers**

**Arvin Reu** will celebrate his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday on March 31. Greetings may be sent to him at 1112 W. Warren Street, Luverne, MN 56156.

**MENU**

**Monday, March 26:** Sloppy Joe on bun, potato salad, corn, fresh orange.

Program: Pinochle.

**Tuesday, March 27:** Cubed roast beef in gravy, mashed potatoes, squash, bread, fruit cobbler.

Program: Two-buck Tuesday sponsored by Exchange State Bank.

Senior Board Meeting.

**Wednesday, March 28:** Baked chicken, au gratin potatoes, squash, bread, apple brown betty.

**Thursday, March 29:** Italian meat sauce over spaghetti, lettuce with dressing, cauliflower, garlic bread, apricots.

**Friday, March 30:** Salmon loaf, baked potato with sour cream, mixed vegetables, dinner roll, slice pie.

Senior Dining offers well-balanced and affordable meals in a community atmosphere.

Gift certificates are available at the meal site or online at [www.lssmn.org/nutrition](http://www.lssmn.org/nutrition).

Call Lauree Teunissen at 283-9846 to make dining reservations or for home-delivered meals.

**We welcome your good news!**

Share your special happenings by using the forms on our website, [www.star-herald.com/webforms](http://www.star-herald.com/webforms).

Births, engagements, weddings and news tips are accepted by filling in the blanks.

You can even upload a picture!

As follow up, please give us a phone call to ensure your submission was received properly.

And ... remember to include a phone number so we can contact you with any questions/clarifications.



The first-time community education class "Throwing on a Pottery Wheel" at the Deuschle Studio north of Luverne was filled with the maximum of six participants. Pictured at Saturday's class are Tina Petronek (left), Annabell Petronek, instructor Jerry Deuschle, Joan Ellefson, Jill Buss and Katlin Petronek. Not pictured at the March 17 class was Skyla Stafford.

**Introductory event at art studio exposed participants to pottery wheel**

By Mavis Fodness

A first-time event at the Deuschle Studio left students feeling fulfilled through the learning of a new craft.

"Throwing on a Pottery Wheel" was a six-session event offered through Luverne Community Education.

Saturday's session was the fifth in the series at the Jerry and Kathy Deuschle art studio north of Luverne.

Joan Ellefson of Luverne was a first-time pottery student.

"I didn't know what I was getting into," she said.

Through Jerry, an instructor with Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Ellefson learned to prepare, form and complete a bowl from a rotating wheel.

"Centering is a lot harder than it looks," said student Jill Buss.

A New Year's resolution to be more creative prompted Buss to register for the class open to participants in grades nine through adult.

Buss had some pottery wheel lessons as a high school student.

"It is a lot of fun," she said. "There were a lot of failures ... but it's just clay, you can start all over again."

Practice is the secret to finishing projects from the wheel, according to Jerry



Left: Joan Ellefson carefully removes clay from the bottom of her newly made bowl.

Right: Jill Buss evens the thickness of the clay bowl on the spinning pottery wheel.

Far left top: Tina Petronek feels for the thickness of the clay as the wheel spins.

Far left middle: Katlin Petronek trims clay for her next bowl project using a thin wire.

Far left bottom: Annabell Petronek writes her name on her newly created pottery bowl.

Deuschle. Through repeated attempts students learned to feel the correct wheel technique.

Each student was able to work at one of six pottery wheels, which allowed Tina, Annabell and Katlin

Petronek to enjoy the activity at the same time.

"I am here for the experience," said their mother Tina.

As her daughters completed bowls that will be glazed and readied for firing in the last class, Tina

was still mastering the feel of a uniform thickness in the clay.

Deuschle plans to offer more introductions to various types of pottery in future classes at the local studio. Several completed

bowls were drying on racks from the first introductory event, proof that the students were learning.

"I like it when students walk away with knowledge they didn't have before," Deuschle said.



Submitted photos

In exchange for giving up their cell phones for the school day March 9 for National Day of Unplugging, Luverne students were allowed to wear hats and a button for the day.

**National Day of Unplugging yields positive results by students**

By Mavis Fodness

Dozens of Luverne Middle-High School students willingly gave up cell phone usage March 9 in recognition of National Day of Unplugging.

The school's Family, Career and Community Leaders of America chapter promoted the event that encouraged students to be without their phones for the entire school day.

At Luverne schools, students are allowed to have cell phones but are instructed to put them away or silence them during class time.

As for unplugging, students had positive reactions.

"It was close to an average day with overall speed and worry," said one student. "The only struggle was the lack of Internet."

"I did not realize my use of Google. My mind did seem to have it easier due to the lack of knowledge to what was going on nationally."

Another student said, "My day went really good. The only struggle I had was to text a family member about something"

Phones were returned to students after school, but during school students found being unplugged had its benefits. "In the hallways no one ran into anyone, so it was better

when we don't have our phones."

The National Day of Unplugging was intended for youth to notice the moments in their lives that pass them by due to the hours they have their noses buried in the devices.

Locally, some missed moments were realized.

"I talked to more people for a prolonged period of time."

"It was just one less thing to worry about. It brought the drama level lower too."

Upon receiving their devices back, a student had this reaction to the day without a cell phone.

"I would do it again."

## OBITUARIES

### Wilma Jeffer

Wilma Jeffer, 74, Luverne, died Sunday, March 18, 2018, at the Mary Jane Brown Good Samaritan Home in Luverne.

A time of fellowship will be from 4-7 p.m. Friday, March 23, at the Dingmann Funeral Home in Luverne. A memorial service will be at 7 p.m. Friday at the Dingmann Funeral Home. A private family committal of remains will be at a later date.

Wilma Smidstra was born June 21, 1943, to Charles and Reika (Kracht) Smidstra in Rock Rapids, Iowa. She moved to Luverne as a teenager and graduated from Luverne High School in 1961.

Wilma married Joe Jeffer at the American Reformed Church in Luverne on Aug. 29, 1963.

Wilma was a woman of many talents. She was an ace shot with either a gun or bow and arrow. Wilma was also good at fishing. She taught herself to crochet. She also became interested in rubber stamping and made hundreds of greeting cards for family and friends. She volunteered for ten years at the Mary Jane Brown Home



in Luverne and was honored as Volunteer of the Year.

Wilma loved spending time with her children and grandchildren. She especially looked forward to the summers when her son and his family would come home from

Virginia.

Wilma is survived by her husband, Joseph Jeffer, Luverne; a son, Richard (Pam) Jeffer, Midlothian, Virginia; a daughter, Rachelle (Mark) VanderWaal, Edgerton; four grandchildren, Joey Jeffer and Kristin Jeffer; Tanner VanderWaal (special friend Courtney Anderson) and Brady VanderWaal (special friend Shelbi Westover); Joey Jeffer and Kristin Jeffer; and a brother, Ben (Lylas) Smidstra, Luverne.

She was preceded in death by her parents and five siblings, Albert Smidstra, Jennie Vande Weerd, Jessie Wiersma, Susie Kelderman and Bert Smidstra.

Arrangements are provided by Dingmann Funeral Home of Luverne, www.dingmannandsons.com. (0322 F)

### Annie Boll

Annie Mabel Boll, 91, Luverne, died Tuesday, March 13, 2018, at the Touchstone Living Center in Sioux City, Iowa.

A memorial service was Friday, March 16, at St. John Lutheran Church in Luverne. Burial followed at Memory Gardens Cemetery near Luverne.

Annie Andersen was born on Aug. 20, 1926, to Marten and Anne (Rhode) Andersen in Lake Benton. She attended country school through the eighth grade.

On July 31, 1946, Annie married Elmer Boll at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tyler, where she also was baptized and received her confirmation in May 1947. The couple made their home in Lake Benton, Verdi, Kanaranzi and later Luverne. They were blessed with five children. In addition to raising their family, Annie worked in production at Campbell's Soup in Worthington for over 25 years. Elmer preceded her in death on Nov. 2, 1988.

In 2011 Annie moved to Northern Hills assisted living facility in Sioux City, Iowa. A few years later she moved



into the Touchstone Living Center in Sioux City.

Annie was a member of St. John Lutheran Church in Luverne. She enjoyed quilting, knitting, crocheting and woodworking projects. She was an animal lover and was especially fond of her cats. Throughout her life, family was very important to her.

Annie is survived by four children, Larry (Carlene) Boll of Luverne, Elmer "Fred" (Natalie) Boll of Luverne, Cindy (Robert) Collins of Sioux City, and Rose Baustian of Glendale, Arizona; 13 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren; a son-in-law, Duane (Judy) Scherff of Albert Lea; a sister, Martha Yonker of St. Paul; and other relatives.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Elmer; a daughter, Linda Scherff; a grandchild; two great-grandchildren; and six siblings, Marie Otkins, Hannah Utley, Evelyn Carrillo, Arthur Andersen, Walter Andersen and Harry Andersen.

Arrangements were provided by Hartquist Funeral Home of Luverne, www.hartquistfuneral.com. (0322 F)



Submitted photo

Six Luverne High School students earned recognition at the Big South Conference Speech Tournament March 15 in New Ulm. Students included (front, from left) Destiny Matthiesen, Melanie Rittenhouse, (second) Shane Berning, Chance Tunnessen, (back) Julia Ferguson and Courtney Wendland.

## Six students earn speech medals at conference meet

### Team competes at last regular meet in Marshall Saturday

Luverne High School was one of 11 conference schools represented at the Big South Conference speech tournament in New Ulm Thursday, March 15.

Participants competed in two rounds with the top speakers eligible for the medal final.

Six members of the Luverne speech team broke into finals and earned medals.

They include Shane Berning, fourth, and Chance Tunnessen, fifth, in extemp speaking; Courtney Wendland, fifth, and Destiny Matthiesen, sixth, in extemp reading; Melanie Ritten-

house, sixth, in discussion; and Julia Ferguson, sixth, in storytelling.

"Competition was extremely tough," said co-coach Caroline Thorson. "We had students who took second place in both preliminary rounds and still not qualify for finals."

Thorson, who coaches the 51-member team with Gavin Folkestad, added that the conference competition exposed the students to a high level of competition.

"Although they were disappointed when they didn't break into the medals round, they feel good about how they performed in their preliminary rounds," she said.

The speech team travels to Southwest Minnesota State University for the Marshall Invitational on Saturday and then will have a break before subsection competition on April 3.

## DEATH NOTICE

### Rosella Dammer

Rosella J. Dammer, 84, Worthington, died Thursday, March 15, 2018, at South Shore Care Center in Worthington.

A funeral service was Monday, March 19, at the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Worthington. Burial followed at the Little Rock Cemetery in Little Rock, Iowa.

Arrangements were provided by Dingmann Funeral Home of Worthington, www.dingmannandsons.com. (0322 DN)

## 1952: Harley's roller rink opens

The following appeared in the Rock County Star Herald on May 22, 1952.

### Roller Rink Will Open Sat. Night

The grand opening of Harley's roller rink will be 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

Harley Jensen, owner has completed installation of the portable rink which will accommodate approximately 150 persons. He had erected a new tent which covers the 50 by 120 masonite skating surface.

The rink is located opposite the Luverne swimming pool at the recreation grounds.

Music will be provided with the use of a public ad-



## BITS BY BETTY

By Betty Mann, president Rock County Historical Society

dress system. The rink will be open to the public 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Saturday evening.

Skating will be every afternoon 2 to 4 p.m. except Monday and Tuesday and every night 7:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Mr. Jensen extends a cordial invitation to both

young and old to attend a grand opening Saturday evening.

Donations to the Rock County Historical Society can be sent to the Rock County Historical Society, 312 E. Main Street, Luverne, MN 56156.

Mann welcomes correspondence sent to manmade@iw.net.

## REMEMBER WHEN

the building to the agencies on five-year leases.

### 50 years ago (1968)

A jury of 11 women and one man brought in a verdict in favor of Plaintiff Henry Spykerboer of Ellsworth in district court yesterday in his suit against the Beaver Creek Mutual Insurance Co. The verdict enables him to recover \$7,500.10 for the theft of 41 head of feeder cattle. Spykerboer's cattle were reported missing from a feedlot south of Luverne last September.

Originally, the amount of damages sought was \$7,780. However, three head were recovered which has a value of \$517.50, Spykerboer alleged, but he had to pay out \$146.60 in order to obtain possession of the animals.

Spykerboer claimed that an insurance policy he carried with Beaver Creek provided for coverage in the event of loss by theft.

### 75 years ago (1943)

A ruling received this week by the county ACA office restricts the sale of corn from steel bins to a seven day supply for any one individual, Leonard A. Arp, chairman, reports.

Previously, a person could buy a 30-day supply of shelled corn from a commodity credit corporation if he intended to use it for feeding purposes. Reason for the restriction, according to word received by Mr. Arp, is to be able to meet emergency situations

that may arise. Price of the corn remains at 81 cents per bushel.

### 100 years ago (1918)

Yellow paint brush artists made their initial appearance in Luverne and rural sections tributary thereto yesterday morning shortly after midnight, and before they had ceased their labors four business places, two residences and one church building in Luverne, and two country homes had been more or less daubed with yellow paint.

The places painted were the store buildings of Fred C. Gimm, Robt. C. Mannigel and Wm. Carstens; the residences of John Meints and Rev. H. W. Baumann, and the German Lutheran Church of which Mr. Baumann is pastor, and the home of Joe Willers, northeast of Luverne, and that of Carl Wiese, in Mound township, F.J. Snook's restaurant windows were also covered but the composition was eggs instead of paint.

That Messrs. Gimm and Snook were more or less tardy in closing their restaurants on the afternoon of the Red Cross sale is said to be the main cause for their businesses being decorated.

While the Red Cross sale was in progress someone painted and placed a large placard on a shoe-drill brought in for the sale by Mr. Wiese, bearing the statement, "Donated by Carl Wiese, Value \$0.00," painted in yellow, but when the drill was placed on sale it brought \$35.00

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Tonya Wickhurst (left) dons a costume for Subway's entry in the parade. Serena Sterling (center) sees the world through green-colored glasses. At right, Melissa Fick distributes candy.

# Luverne turns green for St. Patrick's Day

Luverne celebrated St. Patrick's Day Saturday, March 17, with a parade and other festivities. Below, (from left) Macy Chapin, Kara Zak, Vanessa Chapin and Brooklyn Gillette wait for the next round of candy from parade entries. At right, a small crowd lines the streets for St. Patrick's Day Parade entries.

Star Herald photos by Lori Sorenson



## Early spring is the time to prune fruit trees; here's how to do it

I am finally getting started pruning my orchard. This winter has not been conducive to working outside, and when I look back in my journal to last year, I was nearly finished by now. So let's get at it!

When pruning fruit trees, it is always important to make pruning cuts that result in the tree growing toward the outside. Also, don't allow the tree to get taller than your ability to harvest the fruit. So if you

are cutting back a branch in the middle of the tree, make the cut just above a bud that is facing toward the outside because that bud will become the next branch.

Any branches that cross each other ... always remove the branch that is growing toward the inside. In the



### KNOW IT AND GROW IT

By George Bonnema, Luverne Horticulturalist

event they are both growing the right direction, remove the branch that will give the neighboring branches the most space.

No branches should be allowed to rub against each other.

The statement about being able to throw a hat through the tree is accurate.

Opening up the tree allows air movement, which helps prevent fungal diseases and allows sunlight to filter in, improving the quality of the fruit ... there is a reason why the best apples are always at

the top of the tree.

Don't be afraid to be aggressive in pruning. Too many apples results in lots of small fruit and often overloaded branches that end up breaking from excessive weight. Fewer but larger apples are a good trade-off.

Apple trees produce fruit from "spurs" that form on mature wood. If the spur has an apple this year, it will not have one next year. Some trees thin their fruit naturally and consequently bear annually

(every year). Other trees set fruit on every spur one year, resulting in no fruit the following year, and then with no fruit that year, they produce heavily the next ... and the cycle continues.

You can break that every biennial cycle by clipping the small apples from every other spur early in the season. I said clip the apples ... do not remove the spur. Yeah, I know that is time-consuming, but once you do it, you should have an ongoing annual crop. The results are worth the effort.

Tall ornamental grass should be cut to the ground as soon as you can get at it (yesterday).

I cut a bunch of them last week and the new growth is ready to take off. Waiting until the temperature gets warm will mean you either cut off some of the new growth (bad or not so bad, depending on how long you wait) or you end up cutting them higher, leaving an unsightly collar of old dead growth at the base.

If the clump of grass has been growing for several years, it tends to die out in the center as it expands to the outside. To correct that, lift the clump, use the spade to chop the root mass into sections and replant just one section back in the hole.

You will have renewed that plant, and it will be happy until the same thing in several years.

Two weeks ago I cut some branches of lilac and rose of China, put them in a vase of water, and set them in a sunny window. The flowers are just beginning to color, and I am happy to get a jump on spring, getting to appreciate a fragrance that is one of my favorites now and then again in its natural bloom time.

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The Luverne Area Community Foundation invites applications that will enhance the quality of life in the following areas:

- Arts & Humanities
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- Environment
- Education
- Community Health & Wellness including physical & mental health
- Community & Civic Affairs
- Nutrition
- Recreation

#### How to apply?

Find an application and instructions on our recently updated website!

[www.luvacf.org](http://www.luvacf.org)

or contact Emily Crabtree at

507-220-2424 or [emily@luvacf.org](mailto:emily@luvacf.org)

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Students and staff sit in quiet reflection March 14 as the names of the 17 victims of the Parkland High School shooting were read. They were represented by 17 Luverne students and staff dressed in black for the daylong event. The Florida victims' pictures were projected on a screen during the event.

## Luverne students show solidarity for shooting victims during National School Walkout Day

Story and photo by Mavis Fodness

March 14 marked the one-month anniversary of the school shootings in Parkland, Florida.

The Women's March Youth Empower-organized event encouraged students to walk out of class at 10 a.m. for 17 minutes Wednesday, one minute for each victim killed in the school shooting.

In Luverne 25 students walked out in support of the national movement. They returned to class after 17 minutes.

They joined 675 other Luverne students in grades 6 through 12 who participated in a daylong event in remembrance of the slain students and staff at Parkland and what it would mean if the incident occurred locally.

In Luverne 17 students and staff dressed in black and stayed silent during the seven-period school day.

A student-organized assembly took place before students were released from school on Wednesday.

At the assembly the individuals in black took turns speaking, each one reciting the name of a Parkland victim and a short biography while the victim's picture was projected on a screen.

A single rose was placed in a vase for each victim.

The assembly included 17 seconds of silence when all students and staff sat quietly, some with heads bowed.

Senior Ashlee Boltjes was the final black-dressed individual who spoke.

"I reiterate that this was not a political movement," Boltjes said. "We were simply trying to honor the victims of the Parkland shooting."

Organizers of the national movement had encouraged students to walk out of school as a demand for Congress to pass legislation to keep the nation safe from gun violence.

In Luverne the walkout became a learning experience.

Two of the student organizers, Jacinda Hustoft and Shane Berning, said they wanted to honor those impacted by gun violence and not make a political statement.

"Kids don't think they can do anything," Berning said.

Middle-high school principal Ryan Johnson challenged staff to build respect in students and students build respect for one another.

"We all have responsibilities to manage ourselves ... to get along with each other and show respect," he said. "We have to make this a safe place."

As a reminder, students and staff were encouraged to wear black in support of the families, community and others impacted by the Parkland incident and other mass shootings.



**Above left:** Principal Ryan Johnson (far left) addresses the student body as local students and staff represent the 17 students and three staff members killed in a Feb. 14 mass shooting at a Parkland, Florida, high school.

**Above right:** Freshman Rebecca Austin slips a red rose into a vase after reading a short biography about Luke Hoyer. "I was 15 years old and was well known for always being happy. I always seemed to be smiling and many would even say that my smile was contagious. But I was a victim of the Parkland, Florida, shooting."



As principal Ryan Johnson (far right) called for showing and teaching respect at the middle-high school, the 17 students and staff who represented those killed in Parkland, Florida, joined hands in solidarity.



Luverne's 675 middle and high school students gathered in the gymnasium for National School Walkout Day Wednesday, March 14. Instead of leaving class in protest, student leaders conducted a daylong event featuring 17 black-clad students and staff to represent the 17 individuals killed at a Parkland, Florida, high school shooting a month earlier.

## National Ag Week: A time to focus on state's valued industry

National Ag Week is being celebrated March 18-24 in Minnesota, as well as across the United States, with Tuesday, March 20, being designated as "National Ag Day."

It's a good time to reflect on the traditions and advancements that help drive the United States and Minnesota agriculture industry.

Following are some brief highlights of Minnesota's Agriculture Industry.

- Minnesota had a total of 73,200 farms in 2017, compared to 80,992 farms as recently as 2007. Minnesota ranks ninth in total farm numbers, with the top five states being Texas, Missouri, Iowa, Oklahoma, and California.

- 47,800 of the Minnesota farms in 2017, or 65 percent, had gross sales of less than \$100,000 for the year, while 5,300 farms, representing only 7 percent of the total farms, had gross sales exceeding \$1 million in 2017.

- Approximately 88 percent of Minnesota's farms are family or individually owned, while another 10 percent of farms are partnerships and corporations, mostly held by families.

- There were nearly 26 million acres of land in production in Minnesota during 2017, which is about at the same level as for the four previous years (2013-2016).

- The average farm size in Minnesota in 2017 was 354 acres, which is up one acre from 2016 and compares to 348 acres in 2013.

- Minnesota crop production accounted for over \$9.5 billion in total production value in 2017, which was led by corn at \$4.5 billion and soybeans at \$3.5 billion.

- Minnesota typically ranks first nationally in sugar beet, sweet corn and green pea production, and usually ranks third or fourth in corn, soybean, and spring wheat production.

- Minnesota ranks first in the nation in turkey production, usually ranks second or third in hog production, third or fourth in overall red meat production, sixth in cheese production, and eighth in milk production.

- Minnesota ranked fourth nationally in total ag exports, trailing only California, Iowa and Illinois. The state's exports were valued at over \$7.1 billion in 2016, with the top export products being soybeans, corn, feed, and pork, with exports of wheat, dairy products, and beef growing rapidly. The state's main ag export markets are Canada, Mexico and China.

- Minnesota ranks fourth in the U.S. in ethanol production, with 20 ethanol plants producing over 1.2 billion gallons of ethanol per year, which includes several ethanol plants in southern Minnesota.

- Minnesota's ethanol industry generates an estimated

\$6.7 billion in economic output, as well as being responsible for more than 17,900 jobs. Iowa leads the nation with 43 ethanol plants, which produce nearly 4.2 billion gallons of ethanol annually.

- According to a recent survey, 4 in 5 Minnesotans say that farming is very important to the Minnesota economy, and 75 percent of Minnesotans have a positive view of farmers, even though only 38 percent indicated that they actually know a farmer.

- Based on the annual Farm Business Management Summary of over 1,100 operations in southern and western Minnesota, the average farm spent a total of nearly \$845,000 in 2016 on crop and livestock input costs, hired labor, interest expense, real estate taxes, capital purchases, and family living expense. Most of those dollars were spent in the regional community.

- In a recent survey, over 95 percent of Minnesota residents, and a similar percentage of the state's farmers, believe that protecting Minnesota's water resources is important.

- In addition to the direct employment for farm production, Minnesota's agriculture industry provides an estimated 63,800 jobs in the food processing and manufacturing sector.

- The U.S. farmer today produces enough food and fiber for about 165 people. This number compares to 19 people in 1940, 46 people in 1960, and 115 people in 1980.
- Farmers receive just over 17 cents of every consumer dollar that is spent on food. The other 83 cents of the food dollar is spent on processing, packaging, marketing, transportation, distribution, and other costs in the retail food supply.

- Following is the farmer's share of common food products (and the est. retail value) as of February 2018, based on USDA average prices: bacon - \$.66/lb. (\$.53/lb.); sirloin steak - \$1.90/lb. (\$.89/lb.); boneless ham - \$.66/lb. (\$.59/lb.); milk - \$1.48/gal (\$4.49/gal.); eggs - \$1.34/doz. (\$2.19/doz.); breakfast cereal - \$.05/box (\$.09/box); potatoes - \$.57/five lbs. (\$.49/five lbs.); tomatoes - \$.80/lb. (\$.51/lb.).

As we celebrate National Ag Week, everyone should take time to appreciate the abundant supply of safe and affordable food and energy that is provided by farmers and the U.S. agriculture industry.

*Written by Kent Thiesse, Farm Management Analyst and Vice President, MinnStar Bank. Facts listed in this article are from USDA, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, National Farmers Union, American Farm Bureau, National Corn Growers Association, and other sources.*



Freshman Leah Wynia received the Star Greenhand Award.

Left: Installed as 2018-19 officers for the Luverne-Adrian FFA Chapter are (from left) Cassie Flanagan, Gretchen Jacobsma, Trevor Mente, Kaylee Ossefoort, Michael Kinsinger and Hallie Hough.

Lori Sorenson photos

## Luverne-Adrian FFA Chapter hosts annual banquet Monday

Members of the Luverne-Adrian FFA Chapter were honored Monday during the group's 2017-18 awards banquet.

### Seniors recognized

Fifteen seniors and their parents were recognized. They include:

- Eli Bakken, son of Peter and Carrie Bakken.
- Hans Bakken, son of Paul and Jennifer Bakken.
- Trey Baustian, son of Tom and Theresa Baustian.
- Jeffrey Cauwels, son of Chad Cauwels.
- Amber DeGroot, daughter of Steve and Jean DeGroot.
- Payton Fick, son of Jeff and Missy Fick.
- Tyler Fick, son of Kevin and Julie Fick.
- Alena Hilfers, son of Marty and Lucy Hilfers.
- Aric Meinerts, son of Todd and Barbie Meinerts.
- Gena Natte, daughter of Chris and Kris Natte.
- Tyler Reisdorfer, son of Bruce and Linda Reisdorfer.
- Kalvin Ross, son of Dale and Vicky Ross.
- Cody Saker, son of Randy and Lisa Saker.
- Ethan Thorson, son of Jason and Karla Thorson.
- Mckenna Westphal, daughter of Lee and Casey Westphal.

### Individual pin awards

Scholarship pins were given to members who have achieved a 3.2 cumulative grade point average.

Pins were earned by Shelby Kracht, Jason Rops, Hunter Sandbulte, Austin Henning, Carson Ehde, Halle Hough, Melissa Teal, Tyler Reisdorfer, Destiny Matthiesen, Katlin Petronek, Leah Wynia, Carter Loosbrock, Riley Severtson, Will Stegenga, Cody Saker and Mckenna Westphal.

Leadership pins were awarded to members who earned 100 or more points during the school year.

Pins were earned by Justin Dohmann, Destiny Matthiesen, Hunter Sandbulte, Anita Cole-Kraty, Halle

Hough, Trevor Mente, Aleck Schoeneman, Hannah Kruse, Eli Bakken, Tyler Fick, Aric Meinerts, Gretchen Jacobsma, Eric Somnis, Leah Wynia, Blake Madison, Michael Kinsinger, Kaylie Ossefoort, Paige Hinrichs, Paige Madison, Trey Baustian, Alena Hilfers, Dylan Mente, Hans Bakken, Amber DeGroot, Payton Fick, Gena Natte, Ethan Thorson, Mckenna Westphal, Jeffrey Cauwels, Tyler Reisdorfer, Cody Saker and Calvin Ross.

Greenhand degree pins were given to first-year members. Pins were earned by Justin Dohmann, Austin Henning, Shelby Kracht, Destiny Matthiesen, Eric Somnis, Leah Wynia, Keegan Weston, Trinity Grimord, Cassie Flanagan, Gretchen Jacobsma, Tanner Hinrichs, Jayson Rops, Katlin Petronek, Hunter Sandbulte and Melissa Teal.

Star Greenhand Award was given to Leah Wynia.

Chapter degree pins are given to second-year members. Earning pins were Tacey Baustian, Carson Ehde, Alex Hartman, Carter Loosbrock, Brayden Tofteland, Blake Madison, Justice Brandt, Kynzie Hamann, Anita Cole-Kraty, Riley Siebenahler and Mason Wenzel.

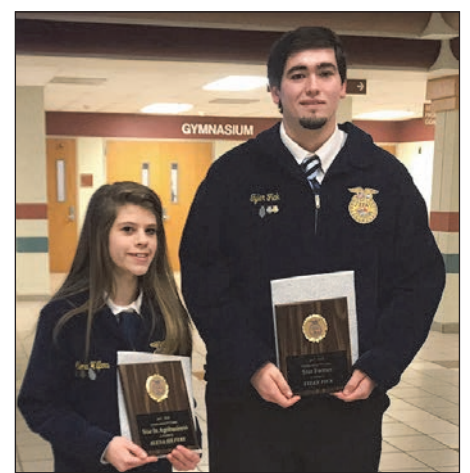
### Proficiency awards

Chapter members earn proficiency awards through a supervised agricultural experience project where they keep records.

Earning freshman proficiency awards and their area(s) of expertise were Leah Wynia, swine production placement and small animal care and production; Destiny Matthiesen, ag sales and service; Austin Henning, dairy production.

Earning sophomore proficiency awards were Blake Madison, swine production entrepreneurship; Alex Hartman, sheep production and fruit and vegetable production; Kynzie Hamann, swine production placement; Justice Brandt, ag sales and service and small animal care and management; Brayden Tofteland, swine production placement.

Earning junior proficiency awards were Brooke Brust, ag sales and service; Paige Hinrichs, ag sales and service; Halle Hough, beef production entrepreneurship, swine production, home and/or community development and ag sales



Alena Hilfers (left) and Tyler Fick earned the Star Agribusiness and Star Farmer designations respectively.

and services; Hannah Kruse, beef production and vet science; Paige Madison, sheep production entrepreneurship; Kaylie Ossefoort, beef production and ag mechanics; and Riley Severtson, grain production.

Senior proficiency awards were given to Alena Hilfers, landscape placement, home and/or community development, and ag mechanics repair and maintenance; Eli Bakken, ag mechanics repair and maintenance; Jeffrey Cauwels, beef production; Amber DeGroot, forage production entrepreneurship and fruit and vegetable production; Tyler Fick, beef production and ag mechanics repair and maintenance; Cody Saker, ag sales and service, beef production, and ag mechanics repair and maintenance; Ethan Thorson, ag sales and service placement and ag mechanics repair and maintenance.

Star in Agribusiness was earned by Alena Hilfers.

Tyler Fick was named Star Farmer and also received the Dekalb Ag Accomplishment Award.

### Officers for 2018-19

Installed as officers for next school year were President Hallie Hough, Vice President Trevor Mente, Secretary Kaylie Ossefoort, Treasurer Michael Kinsinger, Reporter Gretchen Jacobsma, and Sentinel Cassie Flanagan.



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## Oye, Petersen make list for LHS

By John Rittenhouse

Two members of the Luverne High School girls' basketball program received postseason honors from Big South Conference officials last week.

One Cardinal player made the 2017-18 All-BSC Western Division Team, while another drew honorable mention.

Senior guard Joci Oye, who led the Cardinals in scoring this winter, is one of 10 players forming the All-BSC squad.

Junior guard Mackenzie Petersen is one of five players to draw honorable mention from the league's coaches.

League champion Marshall is one of three teams to have a pair of players listed on the all-conference roster.

Senior Hannah Meier and freshman Jordyn Hilgemann represent the Tigers on the team.

Pipestone and Worthington matched Marshall by securing two all-conference selections each.

Pipestone senior Shelby Bloemendaal and sophomore Zoe Velde made the squad for the Arrows.

Senior Emma Thuringer and sophomore Naymer Diew are the Trojans on the list.

Redwood Valley, Jackson County Central and Windom have one player each selected to the squad.

JCC sophomore Alaina Wolff, RWV senior Rose Frank and Windom junior Maurissa Isaacs round out the all-conference team.

Other players drawing honorable mention include JCC juniors Melissa Brandt, Marshall junior Kaia Sueker, RWV freshman Sydney Sommers and Worthington senior Anneke Weg.



Submitted photo

Tot skaters (from left) Ophelia Visser, Aliyah Tiesler, Allydia Lynch, Ellianna Kopp, Nevaeh and Ellanor Seavor are performing the number "Duck Pond" during the annual ice show at the BMIA Friday and Saturday.

## Skaters to present ice shows at BMIA Friday, Saturday

By John Rittenhouse

The Blue Mound Figure Skating Club is set to stage its 27th annual ice show at the Blue Mound Ice Arena Friday and Saturday nights.

Skate Carnivale, the name of the 2018 spectacle, makes its debut on the indoor rink at 7 p.m. Friday.

An encore performance is set for the same time Saturday. Each performance includes 28 numbers.

Fourteen numbers are set for the first half of the show, and 14 more follow after the intermission.

According to Cathy Shearer, one of the BMFSC's coaches, some of the more than 60 starters have been preparing for the shows since early February.

The participants represent 15 to 16 different communities and the states of Minnesota and South Dakota.

The skaters performing solo numbers have been honing their routines since the arena opened for the season late last fall.

Among the soloists are Ashley Hohn, Anna Boyd and Hannah Hofer, the three senior members of the BMFSC.

The 2018 version of the event also includes some annual group numbers that have been fan-favorites over the years.

The always-popular Father/



Submitted photo

Three seniors are skating in their last ice show as members of the Blue Mound Figure Skating Club this weekend. They are (from left) Ashley Hohn, Hannah Hofer and Anna Boyd.

Daughter and Figure Skaters/Hockey Players numbers are in the lineup again this year.

The opening performance

for each show is a production number consisting of 28 different skaters.

Tickets (\$7 for adults and

\$3.50 for students) can be purchased on the night of the events.



John Rittenhouse photo/0322 lhs gb

Luverne's Joci Oye (left) made the 2017-18 All-Big South Conference Western Division Girls' Basketball Team. Mackenzie Petersen (right) drew honorable mention.

## BOWLING CLIPBOARD

Thursday Bowling National League  
March 15

Games won: Rock Stars 4; Troublemakers 3; Stooges 3; Those Guys 1; Real Guys 1; Those Girls 0.

High Scratch Game Men: Dave Nelson 234; Billy Debates 231.

High Scratch Game Women: Kathy Matson 166; Marie Opheim 150.

High Scratch Series Men: Zach Runia 599; Dave Nelson 575.

High Scratch Series Women: Kathy Matson 473; Marie Opheim 382.

Team High Scratch Game: Troublemakers 554; Rock Stars 538.

Team High Scratch Series: Troublemakers 1509; Rock Stars 1501.

Team High Handicap Game: Rock Stars 684; Troublemakers 671.

Team High Handicap Series: Rock Stars 1939; Troublemakers 1860.



John Rittenhouse photo/0322 hgb

H-BC's Grace Bundesen (left), Kourtney Rozeboom (middle) and Sidney Fick (right) made the 2017-18 All-Red Rock Conference Girls' Basketball Team. Paige Tilstra (pictured below) drew honorable mention from the league's coaches.



John Rittenhouse photo/0322 ahs gb

Adrian High School basketball players Hannah Bullerman (left) and Lexi Slater (right) made the 2017-18 All-Red Rock Conference Girls' Basketball Team. Paige Bullerman (right) received honorable mention.



John Rittenhouse photo/0322 ehs gb

Ellsworth High School basketball players. Devin Dreesen (right) made the 2017-18 All-Red Rock Conference Girls' Basketball Team. Ashlyn Meester (left) received honorable mention.

## Red Rock Conference honors nine area basketball players

By John Rittenhouse

Nine players from the Star Herald coverage area landed postseason honors from the Red Rock Conference girls' basketball coaches last week.

Three players from Hills-Beaver Creek, two from Adrian and one from Ellsworth made the 2017-18 All-RRC Basketball Team.

One player each from H-BC,

Ellsworth and Adrian drew three of the 12 honorable mention selections doled out by the league's coaches.

H-BC senior Kourtney Rozeboom and juniors Sidney Fick and Grace Bundesen made the all-league squad, as did Ells-



Tilstra

worth senior Devin Dreesen and Adrian seniors Lexi Slater and Hannah Bullerman.

H-BC senior Paige Tilstra, Adrian senior Paige Bullerman and Ellsworth sophomore Ashlyn Meester received honorable mention.

Southwest Christian led all teams by securing four all-league selections.

Seniors Brooklyn DeKam

and Emily Nerem, junior Hannah Nerem and sophomore Jazlynn Prins made the team for the E-Gals.

Red Rock Central and Murray County Central landed two all-league roster spots.

RRC senior Hannah DeCock and junior Haley Simonson cracked the list, as did MCC senior Riley Schmitz and junior Montana Beckmann.

Rounding out the all-conference squad are Edgerton senior Chynna Berning, Westbrook-Walnut Grove junior Grace Woelber, Fulda junior McKenzie Evers, Heron Lake-Okabena senior Kiana Leighty and Mountain Lake Area sophomore Margo Stoesz.

Other honorable mention selections include Red Rock Central juniors Vanessa Kedl

and Kaitlyn Rindfleisch, Fulda senior Emily Schroer and junior Evany Luna, Southwest Christian senior Sydney Van Hulzen, Murray County Central senior Rachel Van Imperen, Edgerton sophomore Gabrielle Buckridge, MLA senior Jermeel Rodney and W-WG sophomore Camryn Bunting.

# Bass earns recognition long before fateful night

To be honest, putting together an all-conference story for the Star Herald is a pretty mundane task.



I contact my sources at the area schools, and we set up a time for me to show up at the school to get my photographs.

It's a simple process that I really didn't think too much about until last week, when I found out H-BC senior Trenton Bass was selected to the All-Red Rock Conference basketball squad.

Bass, I'm sure most of our readers know, didn't step on the court for the Patriot boys this winter.

He sustained a serious neck injury during the second game of the football season last September in Mountain Lake.

After a lengthy stay at a hospital in Sioux Falls followed by a rehabilitation stint in Colorado, Bass returned to Hills on Dec. 21 and resumed his studies after the Christmas break.

Seeing Bass in a wheelchair at some H-BC basketball games wasn't a pleasant vision, but that's the reality of the situation right now.

I prefer recalling some of the memories I have of Bass being a standout three-sport athlete for the Patriot football, basketball and track programs.

Based on what I found out last week, I'm not alone in that line of thinking.

While some may believe Bass being named to the all-district football and all-conference basketball teams may be based on some form of pity recognition, I'm not one of them.

I believe the decisions of the coaches who selected Bass to those honorary squads were based on what he accomplished for H-BC in both sports in prior years.

Before sustaining his injury in Mountain Lake, Bass ran for 52 yards and a two-point conversion during what ended as a

## FROM THE SIDELINES

By John Rittenhouse, sports editor



Star Herald file photo

Trenton Bass puts up a shot during a home game against Red Rock Central during the 2016-17 regular season.

28-20 win.

The week before that, Bass ran for two touchdowns, a pair of two-point conversions and set up two more touchdowns with impressive punt returns during a 46-0 home win over Heron Lake-Okabena.

I think opposing coaches came to realize that H-BC wasn't the same team that started the season with two wins when Bass left the picture.

They would be right in their thinking because the Patriots lost four of their next six regular season games before bowing out of the playoffs in the opening round.

I think it's safe to say the H-BC boys' basketball team missed Bass as well.

He was a starting guard for an H-BC team that won 11 games in 2016-17 and would have been one of two returning starters for a

team that rallies late in the season to win 11 games this year.

It was clear to me early in the season that the H-BC Patriots missed the experience Bass would have given them when they lost nine of their first 12 games.

I'm not an expert in what takes place when the coaches gather to form all-conference teams, but I do know this.

H-BC football coach Rex Metzger and basketball coach Steve Wiertzema didn't nominate Bass to receive postseason honors.

Opposing coaches did, and I'm positive they based their decisions on what Bass meant to prior H-BC basketball and football teams.

Trenton Bass may have been in a wheelchair when I snapped his photo last week, but he definitely deserved to be in the shot.



John Rittenhouse photo/0322 hbb

Hills-Beaver Creek's Jax Wysong (left), Trenton Bass (middle) and Preston Wilhelmi (right) made the 2017-18 All-Red Rock Conference Boys' Basketball Team.

## Area boys collect postseason awards for basketball accomplishments

By John Rittenhouse

Six athletes from the Star Herald coverage area raked in postseason honors from Red Rock Conference boys' basketball officials last week.

Three players from Hills-Beaver Creek, one from Adrian and one from Ellsworth made the 2017-18 All-RRC Basketball Team.

One AHS player drew honorable mention from the league.

H-BC senior Trenton Bass, junior Preston Wilhelmi and sophomore Jax Wysong made the all-league team, as did Adrian senior Ryan Wieneke and Ellsworth junior Brandon Kramer.

Adrian junior Christian Weidert drew honorable mention.

A total of 19 players made the all-conference squad, including three each from Westbrook-Walnut Grove and Southwest Christian.

W-WG seniors Matt DePrez and Anthony Ross and junior Andrew Quade grace the list, as do SWC seniors A.J. Vanderby and Logan Walhof and sophomore Jacob Van Dam.

Mountain Lake Area, Fulda and Murray County Central landed two all-league selections each.

MLA senior Weston Osland and junior Drake Harder made the team, as did Fulda seniors Mathias Kunerth and Dalton Slinger.

Senior Tyler Groves and junior Nate Everson represent MCC.

Rounding out the all-league

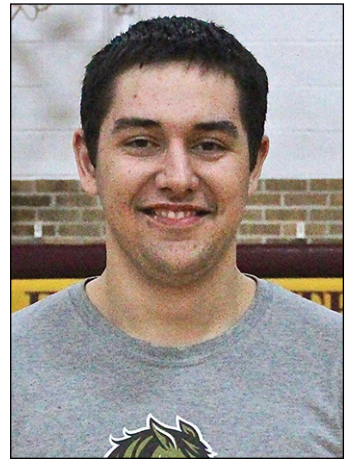


John Rittenhouse photo/0322 ahs bb

Adrian's Ryan Wieneke (left) made the 2017-18 All-Red Rock Conference Boys' Basketball Team. Christian Weidert received honorable mention.

team are Red Rock Central senior Brady Rasmussen and Edgerton senior Trey Gilbertson.

Other players drawing honorable mention include W-WG seniors Tyson Elzenga and Kyle Kuehl, Heron Lake-Okabena senior Ben Sheldahl and freshman Eli Fast, RRC senior Sam Hanson and junior Spencer Halland, SWC sophomore Avery Pater, MLA sophomore Abraham Stoesz, MCC junior Spencer Wajer and Fulda senior Leighton Gehl.



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Movie - "God's Not Dead: A Light In Darkness"

April 5 (Thursday) • 6 p.m.  
Bank Nite FREE Family Movie - "The Nut Job: Nutty by Nature"  
(Sponsored by Papik Motors and First Farmers & Merchants Bank)

April 14 (Saturday) • 8 p.m.  
The Locals present "One Hit Wonders"  
Tickets \$20 Adults / \$10 Students  
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April 15 (Sunday) • 2 p.m.  
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- \*Saturday - Sweet Saturday, 9 a.m. until gone - caramel & cinnamon rolls

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