

# KENYON • WANAMINGO Messenger

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Volume 17 • Issue 18

## Announcements

• All are welcome to breakfast, fellowship, bible study, and prayer time every Saturday morning at Hauge Lutheran Church in Kenyon. Breakfast and fellowship start at 8:00 am. Followed by a verse by verse bible study. Finishing with prayer time at 10:00 am. All are welcome (men, women, and children) each Saturday morning!! Any questions, please contact Loren Bauer: 507-450-6623.

• Three Rivers Community Action is currently accepting new Meals On Wheels clients in the communities of Zumbrota, Mazeppa, Goodhue, Pine Island, Kenyon and Wanamingo. Receive a hot meal delivered to your home by a volunteer at lunch time up to 5 days per week. To qualify you must be 60 or older, live within city limits, have limited mobility and/or are unable to prepare nutritious meals. The suggested donation is \$5-\$10 per meal. For more information on how to sign up for meals or to be a volunteer driver, please contact Dana Bergner at 507-421-6067 or dbergner@three-riverscap.org

• Hiawathaland Transit: Service hours are 7:30am-4:30pm Monday through Friday. Call dispatch at 866-623-7505 Monday through Friday 6am-9pm and Saturday 7:00am-5:00pm. Visit [three-riverscap.org](http://three-riverscap.org) for more information.

• Wanamingo Veterans Honor Guard invite you to become a member. Join us and help us make the Wanamingo Veterans Honor Guard an even bigger success. WVHG meets the third Tuesday of each month at the Wanamingo Community Center. The VFW will meet from 7-7:30p.m. The Honor Guard will meet from 7:30-8:30p.m. For more information contact Eric Dierks 507-321-1967, Gary Floan at 507-732-7740, or Larry Van De Walker at 507-421-4674.

Do you have an announcement?  
Email: [hometownmessenger@gmail.com](mailto:hometownmessenger@gmail.com)

## Memories of Christmas Past

Each year we visit with some of our senior citizens and relate their tales of Christmases long ago. Here are four stories from years in the past.

Judy remembers celebrating the same Christmas traditions each year with her family. There was a bustle of cooking going on in the kitchen and her mother would suggest

## Christmas in Wanamingo this week



This Thursday, December 5th, will be the annual Christmas in Wanamingo. Treats will be available at businesses in the Industrial Park from 4 to 5pm and at businesses on Mainstreet from 5 to 7pm. Santa will be at Workout 24/7 from 5 to 7pm so bring the kids. A drawing for gift cards will take place at local businesses with a 1st prize of \$100.00, a 2nd prize of \$50.00 and a 3rd prize of \$25.00. Just bring in a non-perishable food item or cash donation to receive a card at any business. Get your card stamped by ten different businesses and place it in the drawing box at the Security

State Bank of Wanamingo by 7pm. Winners will be drawn the following day.

(continued on page 5)

## SERVING OUR HOMETOWNS

We want to Thank You for your continued support of the Kenyon-Wanamingo Messenger, especially this past year!

This year was an exciting year for us as we began publishing the Kenyon-Wanamingo Messenger twice each month, helping expand both communities coverage with expanded news and marketing reach.

(continued on page 7)



the kids go decorate the tree as a way to keep them distracted and out of the kitchen.

(continued on page 5)

## Christmas in Kenyon is Saturday, December 14th

Be sure to check out all the fun things to do during Christmas in Kenyon next weekend. A scavenger hunt with chances to win prizes will go on all day with clue sheets available at participating merchants.

(continued on page 5)



file photo

## Welcome to Garden View Apartments

By Cheri Roshon

I have been writing for the Messenger for awhile now, and last week I discovered that I am inspired by other people's inspirations.

The Sunset Home was sold over a year ago to Jerry Anderson, and a lot of speculation was made about what would happen to the buildings involved in the transaction.



(continued on page 7)

## Silly Soup Song

By Cheri Roshon

Going through my mother's boxes of things from her house, I have been finding some real treasures. Here is one that some of you may remember, most of you will not. The title is A Silly Soup Song, and if this doesn't bring a smile to your face, I don't know what will!

(continued on page 4)



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# MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

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## Pastors Corner

By Pastor Larry Grove,  
Hauge Lutheran Church, Kenyon

“Yesterday’s the past, tomorrow’s the future, but today is a gift. That’s why it’s called the present.”

This quote is from Bil Keene, the famous cartoonist who created ‘Family Circus’.

The reality of this quote has become so salient in my life as the days and weeks go by. I used to plan the 15 things I wanted to get done during the day and many times I struggle to get to number three or four before evening comes and my strength begins to wane. So, I am relegated to working smarter. That doesn’t always pan out positively as smarter is often even slower. But when I consider the fact that each day I have been given is a gift from God, it puts things into a proper perspective for me.

Theophrastus, a Greek philosopher had a very compelling quote. He said, “Time is the most valuable thing a man can spend.” This statement has caused me to reflect on how I allocate this precious resource that I have at my disposal. What do I involve myself in that has an impact on the landscape around me? I often find myself frivolously squandering this perk and later realize that once spent, this prized possession is impossible to recapture.

James chapter 4 verse 14 states, “What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.”

When I was younger this verse did not make sense to me. But now, as the hair that I have left has turned gray, I understand it more fully. I think back to my teen years and they seem like yesterday. So much has happened in my life and yet it has gone by so quickly.

When I was about 35 years old, a precious lady who was in her 70’s explained this concept to me and I found her description to be so

insightful. She said, “When I was 10, one year was one tenth of my life. Now that I am 70, one year is one seventieth of my life. It is now such a small piece of my existence.”

In Psalm 90 verse 12, the Psalmist asks God to help us with this. It says, “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

As I go around and visit with the elderly, I am amazed at the wisdom they have gleaned over the years. More than ever, at this point in

life, our focus needs to be on the gift that we are given each morning that we open our eyes to a new day.

A portion of scripture I would like to leave you all with is taken from

II Corinthians 4:16-18. The Apostle Paul writes, “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far out-

weighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

Let us look at each day, each minute, each hour as a divine gift from our Heavenly Father. May we always purpose to make the most of this endowment, fixing our eyes on Jesus, and never miss an opportunity to be a blessing to those God puts in our path.

## AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY

### God, the Provider (II)

*“Do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”*

— Luke 12:11-12

There is a common misunderstanding in many churches. Many Christians think there is a big difference between proclaiming God’s Word from a pulpit and sharing his truth in a conversation. Similarly, lots of Christians think the apex of evangelism happens on a Sunday morning in a sanctuary and not in a coffee shop or in a car ride to work.

As Christians, we often think that to share the gift of salvation with someone, we first have to be qualified academically or be trained in a special way. As a result, we can get tangled up in our inabilities, bogged down by our insecurities, and overwhelmed with fears of failing ourselves, others, or—even worse—God.

But you aren’t called because you’re qualified; you’re qualified because you’ve been called. Your life, regardless of religious education or ability to speak in public, is a testimony in itself. It’s the story of God’s redemption and restoration plan in you.

God knew you even before he established the foundations of the earth. He created you, wired you, and called you by name. God has adopted you as his child into his eternal family, and he has entrusted you with his kingdom work, which simply means sharing with someone the good news of forgiveness from sin and of new life in Christ forever. So share the good news today!

*God, thank you for qualifying all of us whom you have called. Strengthen us by your Spirit to share the good news of your kingdom. Amen.*

### DENNISON/VANG LUTHERAN PARISH

Pastor Paul A. Graham  
(C) 507-269-5997 • Office: 507-645-6042  
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Website: [www.dennisonvang.org](http://www.dennisonvang.org)  
You can join us for Worship online at  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/167136242800>

### TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

301 2nd Avenue, Wanamingo  
824-2155  
December 8: 9:00a.m. Sacred Space;  
9:00a.m. Sunday School; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC  
December 11: Confirmation Class 5:00-6:30p.m.  
7th & 8th Grade  
December 15: 9:00a.m. Sacred Space;  
9:00a.m. Sunday School;  
10:00a.m. WTLC Sunday School Program  
December 18: Confirmation Class 5:00-6:30p.m.  
7th & 8th Grade  
December 22: 9:00a.m. Sacred Space;  
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC  
December 24: 4:00p.m. Worship at WLC;  
5:30 Worship at TLC  
December 25: MERRY CHRISTMAS!  
December 29: 9:00a.m. Sacred Space;  
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC

### WANAMINGO LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

130 West 3rd St., Wanamingo  
824-2457  
[www.TrinityWanamingo.org](http://www.TrinityWanamingo.org)  
December 8: 9:00a.m. Sacred Space;  
9:00a.m. Sunday School; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC  
December 11: Confirmation Class 5:00-6:30p.m.  
7th & 8th Grade  
December 15: 9:00a.m. Sacred Space;  
9:00a.m. Sunday School;  
10:00a.m. WTLC Sunday School Program  
December 18: Confirmation Class 5:00-6:30p.m.  
7th & 8th Grade  
December 22: 9:00a.m. Sacred Space;  
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC  
December 24: 4:00p.m. Worship at WLC;  
5:30 Worship at TLC  
December 25: MERRY CHRISTMAS!  
December 29: 9:00a.m. Sacred Space;  
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC

### ASPELUND EMMANUEL LUTHERAN

Rob Edwards, Pastor  
429 County 1 Blvd, Kenyon  
507-824-2307  
[www.emmanuelafc.org](http://www.emmanuelafc.org)  
9:00a.m. Sunday School;  
10:00a.m. Coffee Time  
10:30a.m. Worship Service

### FIRST EV. LUTHERAN

D.J. Chatelaine, Pastor  
309 Forest Street, Kenyon • 507-789-5261  
website: [fickenyon.org](http://fickenyon.org)  
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.;  
Noon-1:00p.m. Open Prayer Time,  
1st Tuesday each month

### GOL LUTHERAN

Joe Jorgensen, Pastor  
507-838-2100  
Sunday Worship 8:30a.m. Sept.-Dec.

### GOSPEL OF LIFE FAMILY CHURCH

Pastor Steven G. Roberts  
[www.gospeloflifechurch.org](http://www.gospeloflifechurch.org)  
2010 Jefferson Rd, Northfield - Sunday 10:30a.m.  
507-259-2644  
Wanamingo - Wednesday 7:00p.m.

### ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Wheeling Twp) 19086 Jacob Avenue, Faribault  
Gary Liker, Pastor • 507-330-0025  
[www.stjohnsunitedchurchofchrist.info](http://www.stjohnsunitedchurchofchrist.info)  
Sunday School 9:30a.m.; Worship 10:30a.m.

### GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, NERSTRAND

Mike Ahrens S.A.M.  
Service 9am. Coffee hour follows @ 10 am  
Sunday School 10:15 am

### HAUGE LUTHERAN

Larry Grove, Pastor • 507-271-9761  
302 Bullis Street, Kenyon  
Sunday Worship 10:00a.m.  
with lunch following

### LANDS LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

David Krinke, Pastor  
16640 Hwy. 60 Blvd.  
[www.landslutheran.com](http://www.landslutheran.com)  
Wednesday 6:15 p.m.  
Sunday 8:15 & 10:30 a.m. at Everson Park

### STORDAHL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

Pastor Kathleen Lowery  
15049 Cty. 12 Blvd., Zumbrota • 732-5711  
Sundays 10:30 a.m. Worship

### HOLDEN/DALE

Pastor Dustin Haider • 507-789-6677  
Email: [holdendalsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:holdendalsecretary@gmail.com)  
Worship schedule found at:  
[www.holdenlutheranchurch.org](http://www.holdenlutheranchurch.org)  
Holden/Dale Facebook

### MOLAND CHURCH

507-456-4242  
Sunday Worship 10:00a.m.

### NERSTRAND UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Gary Liker, Pastor  
12 Maple Street • 507-330-0025  
Worship 9:00 a.m.

### UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Reverend Daren Flink  
429 4th Street, Kenyon • 507-951-1271  
Worship 9:30 a.m.

### ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Father Cory Rohlfing  
Deacon Newell McGee  
108 Bullis St., Kenyon  
Sunday Mass 8:00a.m.  
Wednesday Mass 5:00p.m.

### NEW LIFE CHURCH

525 Beverly St., Wanamingo  
507-824-3019  
10am Worship Service  
[office@nlcwanamingo.org](mailto:office@nlcwanamingo.org)  
Website with online services which are live  
at 10:00a.m. or can be viewed at anytime:  
<https://nlcwanamingo.org/>



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## Kambrynn Elise Ronningen

Our sweet Kambrynn Elise Ronningen was tragically taken from our lives at the tender age of 8-years old on November 22, 2024. Kambrynn will be dearly missed by her Mom and Dad, Colleen and Eric, and sister Kinsley Ronningen of Rochester, MN, along with family members and numerous friends. To know Kambrynn was to love her. She had the most contagious personality. Outgoing, friendly, empathetic, helpful, and mischievous were some of her numerous traits that everyone adored. Seemingly her charismatic personality drew people in and in an instant- were a forever friend of Kambrynn's.

Kambrynn was a 3rd grader at Plainview-Elgin-Millville. She loved going to school, learning new things, and being with her friends. With a soul beautiful enough to fill any room and a smile big enough to light any space, it only makes sense that a classroom would be a place for her personality to be a canvas in creating these friends for life. Kambrynn had an undeniable ability to make everyone feel her presence. Whether it be at school, on the soccer field, or in a horse arena, everyone knew who she was. If you didn't, no doubt--she would have introduced herself to you. She loved singing (knowing almost every word to a song after hearing it only one

time), TikTok dances, soccer, volleyball camps, sleepovers, boating, trips to Florida, dogs Major & Ivy, horses, making people laugh, her best friend and sister -Kinsley, and Mom and Dad.

Kambrynn loved the water. She loved swimming, being on her paddle board, and running up and down the beaches of the Mississippi River with her sister and friends. Kambrynn also loved to fish. Whether it was off the dock on the river catching bluegills and perch or in Florida hooking redfish, snook, and many other species, she loved the thrill of reeling them in. No one needed to worry about baiting her hook or taking her fish off, she could do that all by herself by the time she was 5-years old.

Kambrynn loved her horse Zack from the tender age of 2-½ up until she was surprised with "Z" in the fall of 2023. Almost 3x the size of her first mount, she conquered the challenge as only Kambrynn would have. She loved the horse show season and looked forward to it with zeal and zest like no other. Anyone that saw her ride knew she had an amazing talent with horses. Kambrynn earned multiple horse division and class awards, Champion Youth Walk/Trot MN Pinto 2023. In the fall of 2024, with her new horse 'Z', Kambrynn's talent earned her the opportunity to show at the WSCA Championship where she then placed in one of these prestigious classes! Hundreds of ribbons were awarded to Kambrynn's equine ability since her first show in 2019.

Kambrynn is survived by her parents; Colleen and Eric; sister Kinsley; grandpar-

ents, Charlie Ronningen, Judy Melvin, and Stuart and Jennifer Ohr; aunts and uncles, Brian Ronningen, Rachel and Ryan Ohr, Katherine and Beau Flom; and cousins. Kambrynn is preceded in death by her half-sister Lindsey Ronningen and Grandfather Arthur "Art" Melvin.

All services were held in Kambrynn's beautiful memory at St. Joachim's Catholic Church of Plainview. The visitation was on Friday, November 29th, from 3-6 PM, and one hour prior to the service on Saturday. Her funeral was at 11 AM on Saturday, November 30th. Fr. Tojy Jose officiated. Burial was in St. Joachim's Catholic Cemetery.

## Lavern E. Benson

Lavern E. Benson, 97 of Kenyon, passed away on Monday, November 25, 2024 at Faribault Senior Living.

He was born on November 19, 1927 in Faribault, Minnesota, the son of Carl and Esther (Gunhus) Benson. He

was baptized and confirmed at Gol Lutheran Church. Lavern graduated from Kenyon High School in 1945. He served in the US Army, 1st Calvary Heavy Mortar Division, from 1950 to 1952 and was deployed to Korea. After being discharged he farmed with his brother Glenn on the family farm.

Lavern was united in marriage to Jean Ardell Luebke on November 5, 1977 at Gol Lutheran Church, Kenyon.

Lavern was quick to show his love for his family and his nephews and nieces were drawn to him and his caring personality. He loved teasing them and was known as a jokester. He also patiently taught them chores on the farm and the value of work. Lavern was active many years on a bowling league. He and Jean lived in Kenyon and together enjoyed watching the kids in their neighborhood and cheering on their great nephews and nieces and the local sports teams. Together they also enjoyed watching sporting events on TV, reading and doing puzzles.

He is survived by his wife, Jean of Faribault, sisters-in-law, Helen Porter and Nordes Luebke and many nieces and nephews and their families. He was preceded in death by his parents and siblings: Marion Benson, Edna Germundson and Glenn Benson, and two nephews and several brothers-in-laws and sisters-in-laws.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 11:00 am at Gol Lutheran Church, Kenyon Minnesota with visitation one hour prior to the service. Internment was in the Gol Cemetery. Memorials are preferred to Gol Lutheran Church or the Kenyon VFW.



### MERRY CHRISTMAS

Thank you for your patronage this year.

We look forward to continuing to serve you in 2025.



635 2nd Street, Kenyon  
Hours: Tues.- Sat. 7am to 8pm  
Sunday 8am to 6:30pm  
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### Ann Traxler

Attorney

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### Christmas at Wanamingo Lutheran & Trinity Lutheran

Christmas Eve services will be held at 4:00p.m. at Wanamingo Lutheran Church and 5:30p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church.

## Do You Have an Announcement?

Email:  
hometownmessenger@gmail.com

## Celebrating the Reason for the Season

With gratitude in our hearts,  
glory to God  
and Merry Christmas to all!



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## MERRY CHRISTMAS

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## Silly Soup Song

(continued from page 1)

Although it is in Norwegian for the most part, I think you will see the names of the people who were around back in the 30's. Maybe your grandfather (2 of mine are in here) or your neighbor from long ago. Supposedly, these were the farmers in our area. When I showed it to my mother, she smiled and said she remembered both my grandfather and my great grandfather singing this song. I invite anyone who can decipher it to send the English translation! Otherwise, just enjoy what some un-named person wrote in 1934, The copy I have was hand written by my grandmother, Anna Carlson!

### A Silly Soup Song Feb. 1934

Translation from Google translator is as follows. It was not able to translate all of the words but you can get the idea here;

I want to take the milk truck  
Andrew Blaksta,  
Oh, then we will travel to take Heder  
Peter said,  
Aa faa i sotten siller  
Talk about Josef Tiller,  
They look sloppy  
To Mr. Henry A. Thompson,  
When were they born?  
in Frank Dorn,  
Oh my God  
In Harry Starz,  
You look fierce  
said Nils Hostager,  
They smelled rotten  
Said Melvin Braaten,  
They are the ones it goes to  
To Bernie Mo,

Aa no laugen  
Sa Sievert Haugen  
Yes, e knows that song  
Sa Alfred Tongen  
Yes, you tell them  
Sa Toar-character,  
But what is the price?  
I Christ Harrison,  
Aa naa runt dallan  
said Albert Halland,  
So, eat more forn?

I K. Christopherson,  
Well, where are the employees?  
Said, Eddie Lawen.  
Ae hei ein opaa laafte  
San Olaf office,  
Tan away in my kitchen  
Sa Olaf Loken  
Turn on the sills  
In J. Peterson,  
Put on no alum  
Say yes fully,

Oh, I'll have a treat  
At Augustine  
Have no hatred  
To Henry Egtveit,  
Aa no whip rum  
I Richard Stromme,  
They become hard on the kidneys  
Said Nygaarn,  
And, I will be so ferf jamsen  
I Henry T. Thompson,  
Aa shjox da  
To Joe Blaksta,  
Go lie down on this bed  
Said Joe Walstad,  
Put on a shawl  
In C. Carlson,  
Men become the soup e tan?  
I Lewie Seltran,  
Yes egg mine  
Said Ole had,

We take a chance  
Said Jordahl Jens,  
Then they will look after their health  
Said Ole from Shel,  
They look like a silo  
Said Sigurd Kylo,  
Then I would be ashamed to be seen  
At and Clyde Green  
The mother looked up troiom  
I Herman Froium,  
There are plenty of banks  
Sa Clifford Fox,  
Create them in jacks

Brekken said,  
Say, give them ate and lean dwarf,  
Sa Clarence Stageberg,  
I went to Heller and went to Sultan Tremsa  
Said Julius Hjermstad,  
They were taken care of  
Said B. Okkelberg

Yes-a-but saints  
Said George Vangness,  
Imagine, fat me no pills,  
In Nerison Nils,  
They are told to break it  
Said Jackson Manni,  
Yes, they will be home soon  
Sa Korn M,  
Sure, they sputtered  
Said Emerson Knute,  
Chorus that has fori hen  
In T. Thoresen,  
Some car salesmen  
said Engmar Rylla,  
Yes - a Damn'  
said Eddie Tongen,  
Troste bere us  
At Trelsta Bros,  
For whatever reason  
I Carl Nerison

We will sing a herring song  
To Pete Wellvang,  
You have to train tomorrow  
of Herman Boraas,  
So we can hear how much you know  
To Mister Gust Romo  
Surah, give the song  
By Tommy Benson  
Let them take turns

Said Eimer Biorn  
Yes, I will beat the pace  
Said Sam Aslaksen,  
And aeg will play the organ  
Frigaard Jørgen said:  
Aa hahan play is now so mangless  
Said Alfred Vangness,  
Aeg the school has proven,  
Said Tiller Obert,  
My he dared,  
Said John Morset  
I understand  
When O.J. Lee.

Now let's sing the chorus  
Your Joe Boras,  
Aa the country fare nude no  
Sa Ole Stockmo,  
It's just that they can be different  
Sa Ivrr Schei,  
Yes deme purely gal  
Said Knute Leidal  
And good luck now  
Want to wear horseshoes,  
I mr. Estebo  
Sure and leave them alone  
Said Mr. Gjemse,  
No, they go  
To Bernie Flaaen.

If you are old enough you may recognize some of the names, you may even remember some of the people mentioned. If you are Norwegian you may be able to understand more of the words.

I hope you enjoyed this silly song as much as I have! And I have more blasts from the past coming your way, but so far, no more Silly Songs!

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# SEASON'S GREETINGS

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## Memories of Christmas Past

(continued from page 1)

They always had a short needle evergreen tree and all the kids would help to put the decorations, old fashioned light bulbs and icicles on the tree.

They celebrated with their extended family of thirty plus people. They would eat supper consisting of turkey with all the fixin's including rice pudding for dessert, starting at 6pm and afterward do the dishes before singing carols and opening gifts. The fun lasted until bedtime around ten pm. Judy would play the piano while the family sang Christmas carols. Her cousin even wrote a poem about the family event. She usually received clothes but one year she recalls that she and her sister both got the same kind of doll. The kids would play games like canasta, cards, puzzles and board games.

Elaine was the oldest of three and they were

the only grandchildren of her mother's parents so they were doted on by the grandparents. Her parents were very Lutheran so she remembers being very involved in the Christmas program and church service. One Christmas eve she played piano and organ for the church program.

Her dad worked for a butcher and also had his own smokehouse where he made sausage and smoked hams for the holiday meals. There was always a big delicious ham for Christmas dinner. In their house they had lots of cookies and her siblings helped make the cookies, decorate the cookies and best of all help eat the cookies.

One year her mother was able to get them a piano for a Christmas gift and their pastors wife gave them all music lessons. The other memorable gift she recalls was when her grandmother gave her a new watch.

Rosie was one of six children in her family. They lived on a farm in Iowa but her dad was a preacher. Her grandma and grandpa always spent Christmas with their family. They would decorate the tree three days before Christmas. When her mother wanted to get the kids out from under her feet, she would tell them to go in and decorate the tree.

She still has memories of the wonderful smells of holiday cooking coming from the kitchen. The menu was the same each year. It included turkey, a roast, rolls and pudding.

She can remember Christmas programs at school and church full of music and Christmas plays with kids acting out Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. Her parents didn't have lots of money but they each received a gift. A couple years it was a puppy, and she has done

the same for her own children. Some years they all received a new outfit of clothes to wear for the Christmas program. Her siblings and cousins would play outside whenever possible and enjoyed board games like Monopoly when they couldn't go out.

Don grew up on a farm with his sister. He recalls when he was a young boy and they would be bad, that someone would dress up in a Santa mask and pound on the side of the house to get the kids attention. Then they would shake their finger at them as if warning them to behave. It always worked and they would be good until after the New Year. One Christmas when he was about six years old the kids were outside making snow angels when a Santa came around the house yelling Ho Ho Ho. He was so scared he ran for the basement.

During the winter of 1968-69 there was so much snow drifted around the house that he helped put up the Christmas lights without using a ladder. One winter when he was about ten years old, he heard sleigh bells and Santa showed up by his house and asked if he had been good.

His father said, "yes he had". That year he received a bicycle.

The family always put up a Christmas Tree around the first of December where it remained until after New Years Day. His

mother would tell them where to put the decorations, tinsel and the bulbs. They would just throw the tinsel on, but his mother was very orderly and would make sure it was perfect. They didn't have a fireplace so the hung their stockings on the window on either side of the tree. He would hang a large wool work sock while his sister hung a small dress sock. Don figures she must have been a better child because her sock was always over flowing with stuff, while his had only a few things.

His dad managed the coop and his mom worked nights at the hospital. A high school girl would come and baby sit for him and his younger sister. On Christmas Eve the baby sitter and her boyfriend would join them and his parents to celebrate the holiday with a meal of chicken. The boyfriend also drove bulk truck for his dad.

On Christmas Day all the extended family would gather for a meal of turkey and home cured ham with mashed potatoes. His sister played the organ and the accordion while they sang Christmas carols.

Beside Christmas memories, Don recalls farming with a tractor and a team of Clydesdales. His dad would plow with the tractor and a two bottom 14" plow. Don drove the work horses and a one bottom sulky plow. It was so much quieter behind the team than the tractor.

## Christmas in Wanamingo this week

(continued from page 1)

There is also a fundraiser for fireworks sponsored by the Lion's Club. For \$5.00 you can enter to win one of three commemorative Wanamingo water towers through Christmas. Sign up at the Security State Bank of Wanamingo.

## Christmas in Kenyon is Saturday, December 14th

(continued from page 1)

Christmas for K-W kids toy drive donations may be dropped off at the War Lords motorcycle clubhouse all day long. Kids can drop off their letters to Santa at the Post Office.

The day starts out with the 5K run/walk at the KW high School commons area. Registration begins at 8:30am and the 5K run/walk commences at 9am. Th Kenyon Library will have kids crafts and activities at the Library from 9am to noon. The kids can visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus at Security Sate Bank of Kenyon from 9 to 11am. The Historical Society will have a cookie sale at the Gunderson House from 10am to 1pm.

The VFW will host a Bloody Mary/Mimosa Bar from 10am to 1pm and a craft and vendor sale from 10am to 3pm. There will be a wine tasting at the VFW for \$10.00 per person from 1 to 3pm as a fund raiser for the Park & Rec. A DJ will be at the VFW starting at 6pm with the Commanders 40th birthday bash.

A Holiday Centerpiece Class by Mary's



Rustic Rose will be held at CaHill's Bistro from noon to 2pm for \$35.00 per person. Free cookie decorating will be next door at Gold Door Realty from 2 to 4pm. Free horse drawn wagon rides will be loading by the Bank from 3 to 5pm. The community Christmas Tree lighting ceremony will be held at Veterans Park at 5pm. A Light up the Night parade will start at CFS and head west at 5:30pm.

There will be live music at the Kenyon Municipal Liquor store starting at 6pm. There will be a movie time at the First Lutheran Church from 6 to 8pm.

# Merry Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

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## SEASON'S GREETINGS

To our dear friends at Christmas time, warm wishes for a merry and meaningful season, and tremendous thanks for being a part of our year!

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## Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools Honors Teachers of the Year:

*Doug Thompson and Deb Hinrichs*

Kenyon, MN – Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools is proud to recognize two outstanding educators as Teachers of the Year for their exceptional contributions to the district and the lives of their students.

### Doug Thompson: A Legacy of Innovation and Dedication

Doug Thompson's journey as an educator spans an incredible 49 years, including 15 years of devoted service at Kenyon-Wanamingo Schools. A cornerstone of the district's Industrial Technology program, Mr. Thompson has inspired countless students through courses such as Woodworking, CAD, Robotics, Carpentry, and more.

Known for his energy, passion, and unwavering commitment to his craft, Mr. Thompson creates a classroom environment where students feel supported and engaged. His impact extends beyond the classroom as he served as the Robotics Coach at K-W for 14 years, fostering teamwork and innovation.

This year, Mr. Thompson embraced a new challenge by leading a Carpentry class tasked with building a Habitat for Humanity house. His willingness to adapt and take on meaningful projects exemplifies his role as a team

player and mentor. "Mr. T," as he is affectionately called, remains a beloved figure among his students and colleagues.

### Deb Hinrichs: Inspiring Excellence in Elementary Education

Deb Hinrichs, a 2nd-grade teacher at Kenyon-Wanamingo Elementary, and since joining the district in 1992, Ms. Hinrichs has become a pillar of excellence in education, combining creativity, compassion, and innovative teaching to inspire generations of learners.

Ms. Hinrichs is known for her ability to connect with each child, fostering academic and social growth in a classroom environ-

ment that is both engaging and nurturing. When you walk in her room you will see hands-on learning, and she always seems to find new ways to enhance her students' experiences. "We are proud to honor Ms. Hinrichs for her decades of dedication to the Kenyon-Wanamingo community, she is simply amazing" said Superintendent Giese.

Doug Thompson and Deb Hinrichs represent the heart of Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools. Congratulations to our 2025 Teachers of the Year and thank you for your outstanding contributions to our district and community!



Doug Thompson:



Deb Hinrichs

## Kenyon-Wanamingo School District Considers Future of Wanamingo Site



The Kenyon-Wanamingo School District has been actively engaging with community members for several months to determine the future of the Wanamingo school site. Through

public comment sessions, phone calls, and emails, stakeholders have shared their insights and concerns, providing invaluable input for the decision-making process.

At the December 9th School Board meeting I presented two potential options for the Wanamingo site. We also addressed questions and feedback gathered over the past four months. Following the presentation, the district held its annual Truth and Taxation meeting.

### Key Dates and Upcoming Meetings

The next steps in the decision process include two critical meetings in January, both taking place at the Wanamingo site:

January 6, 2025:

6:00 PM - Organizational Meeting: The School Board's annual organizational meeting.

7:00 PM - Town Hall Meeting: A final opportunity for public discussion and community engagement.

January 27, 2025:

7:00 PM - School Board Vote: The School Board will make its final decision on the two options.

### The Two Options

**Full Closure:** This option would close the Wanamingo site entirely, with the building no longer utilized by the district. The closure date would be determined by the School Board.

**Partial Transformation:** This option would repurpose the site into a multi-functional hub,

providing early childhood education, pre-school, daycare, and community education programs. The transformation aims to serve families in both communities while giving the building a purposeful new role.

### Balancing Community Needs and Fiscal Sustainability

The district's goal is to make a responsible, strategic decision that meets the educational and childcare needs of families while ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability. As Superintendent Giese noted, maintaining two sites in their current capacities makes these objectives virtually impossible.

Community input continues to be a vital part of the process. Residents are encouraged to attend the January meetings and share their thoughts as the district works toward a final resolution.

For more information, please email me at [bgiese@kw.k12.mn.us](mailto:bgiese@kw.k12.mn.us) or call at 507-789-7000.

**We wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

*Jon and Mary Held*

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**NOBLE KNIGHTS OF THE WEEK FOR NOVEMBER 22, 2024**

Front Row: Oakley Langer, KG, Mrs. Tanya Short; Clark Ellingsberg, KG, Mrs. Katie Valek; Violet Burt, Gr. 1, Mrs. Katie Benbrooks; William Cato, Gr. 1, Mr. Tony Donkers; Fatima Estevez Lima, Gr. 2, Mrs. Deb Hinrichs. Back Row: Finnley Butterfield, Gr. 2, Mrs. Megan Jordan; Korra Vodovnik, Gr. 3, Ms. Val Ashland; Lola Hernandez-Washington, Gr. 3, Mrs. Sandy Bohaty; Alaska Rongve, Gr. 4, Mrs. Chloe Gohman; Ezra Noerenberg, Gr. 4, Ms. Rhonda Thesing



## Welcome to Garden View Apartments

(continued from page 1)

Jerry decided to sell the property, and unfortunately passed away this past year.

There was talk that to renovate the property would cost more than to tear it down and start over. Rumors ran rampant, and as I tried to find out any information about the property, I kept hitting dead ends, so I finally acquiesced to the impossibility of getting enough information to write an article that wasn't based on rumors.

So...I walked away from the story.

Well, finally I was able to get the story, and I am happy to share with my readers a happily ever after experience that is evolving in Kenyon. Kenyon Real Estate LLC and a company called Revocity purchased the property. These companies are made up of local investors who want to help renovate properties that need new life and will benefit the people who live in the area. Pivotal Management & Consulting is Janna Reese and Chris Viscomi's management company, and they partnered with TREKK to help manage Garden View.

The good news is, this is a unique way to purchase inventory that needs some love and revamp it into something that provides communities with fresh blood. The rest of the staff

there, as well as the investors, decided to pursue the renovations instead of tearing it down.

The result is Garden View Apartments at 215 Huseh Street in Kenyon, and they are now leasing the 1 and 2 bedroom apartments, starting at \$1,060.00 per month. These apartments are handicap accessible, and include full sized kitchens, walk in showers, on-site laundry and parking, a Fitness Center, and your internet is included as well. There will be a few commercial spaces to rent as well, and a few extra special amenities.

I went to the Open House, and it was quite busy. I was able to talk to Janna Reese, who is also the owner of Janna's Market Grill in Faribault. Her husband was a friend of Jerry Anderson, and part of the investment group that purchased the property. "We feel grateful to be here", she said. "The Kenyon Real Estate Fund is here to invest, revitalize and repurpose properties to bring value to the community. We feel that redeveloping buildings and properties that have outlived their purpose brings local people and businesses more tangible equity. Locals taking care of each other in so many ways." Think about it. More people in town to buy groceries, gas, hardware, food..... Anything the town has to offer.

I also listened to her talking to the people who were there to see the rooms that are available. She said to one couple that all they have to do is pick out the apartment they want and go online to apply for the unit they are interested in online.

There is a \$75.00 fee for background checks, and references to accommodate the safety of the people who live there. She also

has contacts with people who can list the properties they currently own with a realtor, and offered her services to help them get moved, and who can do an auction, if that's the way they want to proceed.

All in all, this feels like a company who cares. They plan to have members of the Pivotal Management and Consulting on site at least 10 hours a week to provide in person service to the residents.

Chris is one of the management team, and I was able to speak with him as well. I asked him what the goal is for the newest living quarters in Kenyon, and he replied without

hesitation, "Doing right by the community". I think that says it all!

For more information about the investment group, or to inquire about the apartments, you can visit [www.kenyonapts.com](http://www.kenyonapts.com) or call (507) 210-8129 and speak to one of the staff. Or you can contact Chris at [chris@pivotalmanagementandconsulting.com](mailto:chris@pivotalmanagementandconsulting.com). In the meantime, check out the 21 spacious units for you or a loved one who would enjoy community living, and see what they have to offer. But hurry, as there was a lot of interest at the open house, so I don't think the apartments will stay empty long!

## SERVING OUR HOMETOWNS

(continued from page 1)

In an era of online everything, your twice monthly newspaper continues with an unwavering goal to bring hometown news to you.

Thanks to local advertisers and your voluntary subscriptions, we are in your mail box each month.

Without this support, we would not be here. We hope you continue to see value in the Messenger. While there are plenty of social media sources and on line sites out there, most don't deliver the hometown news and message like we try to do here.

Every year, many local newspapers are forced out of business. We have watched this happen many times in recent years in small rural communities..

With our small staff of 2.5, we understand this challenge first hand here at the Messenger, which is why we publish the Messenger in its bi-monthly format.

Our goal with the Messenger is to help in-

sure our home towns still have a community voice of its own, direct mailing to all residents in the zip code. This format allows the community to maintain a local paper, and better connect local residents, businesses and the community. We also understand the need for more timely information within the month, so we continue expanding our digital and online offerings, while still maintaining our dedication to our hometowns!

We remain a small family owned business with a goal of supporting our rural communities and businesses. We hope you will continue to support the Messenger with your voluntary subscription again this year.

We are proud to continue to offer you this local hometown paper, in your mail box each month. Our future success depends on the support of our local community, and we thank you in advance for your continued support of The Messenger!



*Merry Christmas*

As we gear up for another Christmas, we're happy and grateful to be celebrating it with the customers and friends who have made our year so special. We appreciate your trust in us, and we're proud to serve this community.

*Best Wishes for a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*



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**MERRY Christmas**  
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



**Best wishes to you and yours for a wonderful holiday season.**



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## That's the Latest On the Farm



**By Emery Kleven**

*Emery is now a retired farm broadcaster after starting at KDHL in Faribault in 1987. He's a 1971 graduate of West Concord High School. You can view past columns at his website RoadFarming.com. You can email him at emery@roadfarming.com.*

My friend and colleague at the West Concord Historical Society, Colleen Hayne, does a lot of research before she writes her Museum Musings.

The museum has old WC Enterprise papers that go back to before 1900. Me, I usually make up stuff or go from memory of some event. However, for this column, I did a little research. I was actually looking for my pocketknife but then I ran across some old radio scripts from 1989/90.

While working at KDHL, I would write and record Ag commentary programs for the Minnesota Farm Network that would be broadcast statewide. My 90 second commentary would

air Monday through Friday during the weeks I was scheduled. The programs would deal with the current activities of agriculture. Other farm broadcasters including Don Wick and Mike Murphy, would do these programs on a rotating schedule. The program was called 'On the Farm'.

I kept all of my scripts that were typed out IN ALL CAPS on an IBM Selectric, much like the typewriter that I learned to type on in Mrs. Peterson's typing class at West Concord High School. One of the scripts I found was about living on the farm. When you live on the farm, you take a lot of things for granted. But if you're a new person on the farm, there are some rules you need to learn. For instance, never chip, chop or scrape frozen manure with your mouth open. Never let a farm dog lick you in the face. Never question someone yelling 'Run for it!'

If you make a gentleman's agreement, eventually you'll need a lawyer. If you shook hands on it, you may need two lawyers. The chainsaw that always starts on the first pull will need three men and a boy to start it at the auction sale. If your wife empties your pockets to wash your work clothes, you'll feel lost for about a week until you get everything back in your pockets where they belong. (This, by the way, is why I was look-

ing for my pocketknife). Never spread manure with the wind and never go to town without first checking your face in the mirror.

Another program dealt with how to teach kids about living on the farm. To teach kids what animals are, we tell them that they're all cows, even if it is a bull or steer or heifer. It's a bit technical for a 5 year old. But by the time they're say 29 or so, it's okay to tell them that a bull is a man cow. A steer, well now that's a has-been bull. A heifer, that's a future cow. You can do the same for other animals. Horses for example, we teach our children or grandchildren to look at the horse, but is it a stallion, mare, philly or gelding? Eventually we need to call a cow a cow and a bull a bull.

Finally, I came across an old market report I did one day. Helium was up, feathers were down. Paper was stationary. Fluorescent tubing was dimmed in light trading. Knives were up sharply, Cows steered into a bull market while pencils lost a few points. Elevators rose while escalators continued their slow decline. Weights were up in heavy trading, Light switches were off. Mining equipment hit rock bottom while diapers remained unchanged. Shipping lines stayed at an even keel while the market for raisins dried up. Coca Cola fizzled and caterpillar stock inched up a bit. Balloon prices were inflated, Scott Tissue touched a new bottom and batteries exploded in an attempt to recharge the market. That's the latest!

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& HAPPY NEW YEAR

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# Merry Christmas & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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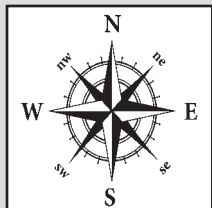
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*by Hans -10*



## Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes

# My Best Christmas Ever



By Terry Campbell

*This column is written by Messenger editor and Minnesota native Terry Campbell. Terry now splits his time between Minnesota when it's warm here and Tennessee when it's cold here.*

I always liked Christmas, it was a fun season. I remember going to town and walking the snowy cold streets from store to store and listening to Christmas music playing on the outside speakers. I remember high school girls singing Christmas carols on the bus during the ride home. It seemed like such a happy time. And then there was the anticipation of gifts. I would page through the Montgomery Wards, Sears & Roebuck and J C Penney catalogues and make lists in hope my parents would buy me that special thing I wanted.

My parents on the other hand were frugal. We were a farm family in the 1960's. There was not a lot of extra money floating around and they didn't feel like gifts were as necessary as a young kid did. So, I learned that many of those dreams were only going to come true if I took care of them myself.

What I really wanted was a snowmobile. So, I read snowmobile magazines and collected snowmobile literature from every dealer we visited. I tried to convince my dad that a snowmobile was a necessity out here on the farm. I couldn't ride my horse in the winter, so there was only one way left to get around in the snow. But I might as well have wanted a space craft, because it just seemed that far out of reach.

My dad was very logical. I couldn't argue with him and win. He said I would need to be big enough to start a snowmobile myself. He proved it by taking me to the dealership and letting me pull on the recoil cord. An eleven year old boy was just not strong enough. He intended to make me self reliant. A good lesson for a kid, but wait until you are older was a hard pill to swallow. So, I hoped and dreamed as I watched snowmobiles ride by the farm in the ditch and just did my chores every night after school.

One cold snowy December evening I was in the farrowing barn cleaning, bedding and feeding the sows. I made my spending money caring for the hogs. Kind of a little prodigal son analogy there that might have been the reason my dad assigned me those chores. I heard a strange sound outside and went out to investigate. Some times a neighbor would swing by on a snowmobile and I was always ready to run out and see it. But this time it wasn't a neighbor, it was my dad. And he was driving a snowmobile.

It was a brand new Ski Doo Olympic 12/3. It was beautiful. I wasn't sure of the circumstances but it was looking good, very good. My dad explained to me that the 12 stood for the horsepower and the 3 indicated that it was a third lighter than the other models. That way I could wrestle it out of a snowbank when it got stuck. And it had a decompressor button, so a young kid like me could start it. Suddenly, I was the king of the world. He explained that I would have to pay



for it if I wanted it and we went to the First National Bank in West Concord the following evening and I signed a loan for \$600.

When you are a kid with a tough, rugged old farmer for a dad, you don't really expect much for a show of affection from him. But he found the snowmobile that would work for

me and made it possible for me to have it. When I didn't imagine it would ever happen. He had been looking out for me the whole time. What a parent does for their child means more than words. It was the best Christmas ever.

## A Minnesotan: Oh Christmas Tree



By RosaLin Alcoser

Once again Christmas is rolling around for the year. Christmas is my father's favorite holiday. He loves the presents and the food, but the thing he gets most into with it is the Christmas tree. He's not into decorating it though, he's into going to pick out the Christmas tree.

Some families pick out a tree from a tree farm or lot all together. In my family my father goes to pick out the tree by himself. There was a brief period in time when the local Boy Scout troop would just set aside a tree for us, but for the most part my father has always been the one to pick the tree.

Every year the tree would either go one of three ways. It would fit perfectly, which was normal in the years the Boy Scouts set aside the tree. It would be way too big, taking up most of the room and occasionally having to be cropped to fit. Or it would be what my mother calls a Charlie Brown Tree.

A Charlie Brown Tree is when you bring home the smallest and most scraggly tree

that you can find. The one that most people would never bring home, but you decided to bring home and try to decorate anyway. Because once you do it will look so much better. In reality it won't but that's what you tell yourself while buying it.

The house I grew up had a big living room with tall 9 foot ceiling. Which was perfect for my father's overly zealous Christmas tree selection. The last Christmas we spent in that house was the year he went the most over the top with the tree. It was bigger than any tree he had brought home before. It was also way too big to fit in my parent's tree stand.

Being too big for the tree, the tree, which at this point only had lights and some glass balls on it, of course fell over in the middle of the night. Glass and sap covered everything in the room and my mom spent the days leading up to Christmas trying to get it off of the floor. After that the tree stand was replaced with a bigger one to accommodate the overly zealous trees.

Which worked most years, except the first Christmas that my older sister came home with her husband. That year my dad brought home a Charlie Brown Tree. That he cut down himself. This tree not only had holes in it, but also was way too small for the tree stand. Causing it to fall down, thankfully undecorated, for the opposite reason of the overly zealous tree for a few years before.

That year the tree ended up being tied to the bannister in multiple places at its base and lashed into the stand. Then to keep the tree from leaning it had to be tied again higher up on its trunk, also to the bannister, with a piece of ribbon.

Since then the tree's he's come home with have been nice and reasonable. However, I'm sure there's another overly zealous and Charlie Brown trees to come down the road.

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## Minnesota Farm Bureau Annual Meeting Recap

By Minnesota Farm Bureau

The MFBF Annual Meeting represents the culmination of the grassroots policy development process for the organization, with issues surfaced by counties at the local level presented to the state delegates for adaptation into the MFBF policy book. Based on the surfaced issues, the Board of Directors then set priority issues for the upcoming year, focusing on the top issues from throughout the process.

Vice President Carolyn Olson of Lyon County was re-elected to a two-year term. Also re-elected to the board for three-year terms were Jeff Pagel of Olmsted County (District 1), and Miles Kuschel of Cass County (District 6). Also elected to complete two years of a three-year term vacated by former District 7 Director Shayne Isane was Bruce Brenden of West Otter Tail County. Newly elected members to the board serving one-year terms were Tiffany Kobbermann of Pope County as the Promotion & Education Chair and Katie Drewitz of Fillmore County as the Young Farmers & Ranchers Chair.

Several Young Farmers & Ranchers competitions were held, including the Excellence in Agriculture contest, Achievement Award, and Discussion Meet. The winners of each competition will represent Minnesota at the American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas in January.

Winning the Excellence in Agriculture competition was Luke Daninger of Forest Lake (Washington County). The award recognizes individuals on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability, and involvement and participation in Farm Bureau and other organizations.

Winning the Achievement Award were Dustin and Katie Wiese of Pequot Lakes (Cass County). The award recognizes individuals on a combination of their farming operation growth and financial progress of operation, Farm Bureau leadership, as well as leadership outside of Farm Bureau.

Winning the Discussion Meet was Megan Horsager of Clara City (Chippewa County). The contest is designed to simulate a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each participant. Individuals are evaluated on an exchange of ideas and information on a pre-determined topic, with the top contestant offering cooperation and communication while analyzing agricultural problems and developing solutions.

Six students were the recipients of scholarships through the Minnesota Farm Bureau Foundation. View recipients.

Recipients of the Al Christopherson Scholarship include Kendra Kendra Blaschko (Le Sueur County), Emma Kuball (Rice County), Owen Rozeboom (Dakota County) and Ella Thome (Mower County).

Recipients of the Paul Stark Memorial Scholarship include Alexis Hoefs (Le Sueur County) and Mary Lanoue (Lyon County).

Former Minnesota State Fair Director Jerry Hammer, John Hart with the USDA Wildlife Services program, and Tom Rothman who recently retired with the University of Minnesota - Extension received the Distinguished Service to Agriculture award, and three couples were recognized as Honorary Life Members:

Bernie Aronson of Lincoln County  
Jerry and Lori Beckel of Le Sueur County  
Al and Diane Christopherson of Kandiyohi County

Katie Emmett with Sleepy Eye FFA was named the FFA Advisor of the Year.

Nick Schiltz, instructor at Riverland Community College, was recognized as the Post-Secondary Agriculture Educator of the Year.

Nicole Kudrle, University of Minnesota Extension educator in North St. Louis County, was named the Extension Educator of the Year.

Mark Dorenkamp with Brownfield Ag News was named the Ag Communicator of the Year.

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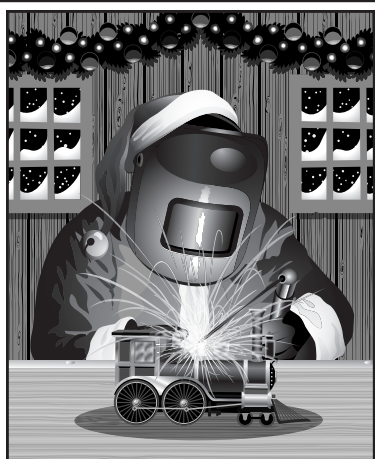
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## Minnesota Farm Bureau Sets 2025 Legislative Session Priority Issues

By Minnesota Farm Bureau

EAGAN, Minn. - The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Board of Directors

recently identified its top legislative priorities for the 2025 session following the organization's annual meeting, held Nov. 21-23.

These priorities reflect grassroots policies established by Farm Bureau members, focusing on key issues impacting agriculture and rural communities in Minnesota.

"The Minnesota Farm Bureau is committed to advancing a set of priority issues that reflect our members, agriculture and the issues they face on their farms and ranches across the state," said MFBF President Dan Glessing.

As the state's largest organized agriculture group, Minnesota Farm Bureau advocates on behalf of its members across a wide range of issues. The following five priority areas have



been identified for the upcoming state legislative session to support the vitality of farmers, ranchers and rural communities:

**Generational Farming** - Support and champion those interested in entering and transitioning farms generationally.

**Environmental Stewardship** - Implement practical and scientific conservation policies using resource management, funding and voluntary practices.

**Research & Innovation** - Shape tomorrow's agriculture with smart ideas, education, and forward-looking solutions.

**Economic & Rural Prosperity** - Create a successful environment that expands oppor-

tunities and resources to strengthen rural communities and the agriculture industry.

**Animal Emergency Preparedness** - Ensure that Minnesota is well-positioned to respond to and prevent crises affecting farmers and their livestock.

"No matter what happens during the next legislative session, our members know the importance of engagement with elected officials to shape policy that will positively impact their livelihoods," said Glessing. "We look forward to working with both sides of the aisle and agency leaders to share our stories."



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## Christmas in Wasioja events

Christmas in Wasioja brings a strong sense of history to our seasonal celebrations, and this year is no exception.

The Wasioja Creamery, privately owned by Jean Bartel, is filled with Christmas trees and other decorations on the main floor and in seven rooms upstairs. Jean explained that

when she and her husband, Ted, renovated the creamery years ago, it seemed only natural to collect a variety of artificial trees and fill the building with Christmas.

The Creamery open house this year is Sunday, December 8 from 1 to 5 o'clock, with live music by the Wildwood Flowers, who also performed last year. Centenarian Richard Staub, a World War II veteran, plans to be on hand to share memories. Until then, the volunteer bakers will be busy making seasonal goodies, including large and small kransekake, which will be for sale.

The Wasioja Church is decorated and the piano freshly tuned in preparation for the Candlelight Christmas Service, with Levi Livingood at the piano beginning at 5 p.m. and the service at 6 p.m.



Jean Bartel and Lois Hancock are decorating the Wasioja Church for festivities on December 8. The public is invited to join us at the Wasioja Creamery 1-5 p.m. and the Wasioja Church at 6.

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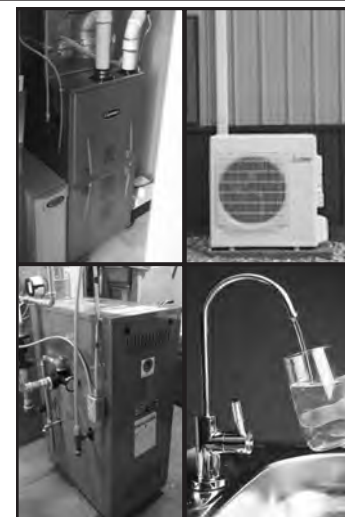
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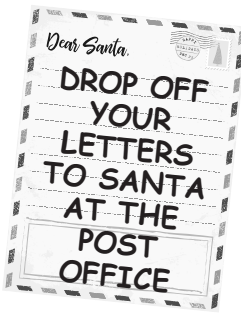




# Christmas in Kenyon

Schedule of Events for  
Saturday, December 14th

- 9am Ugly Sweater 5K Run/Walk @ KW High School Commons Area  
*(Registration begins @ 8:30am)*
- 9am-12pm Kids Crafts and Activities @ Kenyon Public Library
- 9am-11am Visits with Santa and Mrs Claus @ Security State Bank
- 10am-1pm Historical Society Cookie Sale @ The Gunderson House
- 10am-1pm Bloody Mary Bar/Mimosas @ The VFW
- 10am-3pm Craft/Vendor Sale @ The VFW
- 12pm-2pm Holiday Centerpiece Class by Marys Rustic Rose – held at Cahill Bistro  
*(pre registration is required cost \$35)*
- 1pm-3pm Wine Tasting @ The VFW \$10/person Park n Rec fundraiser
- 2pm-4pm Free Cookie Decorating at Gold Door Realty
- 3pm-5pm Free Horse and Wagon Rides on Main Street by the Bank
- 5pm Community Tree Lighting Ceremony @ Veterans Park
- 5:30pm Light Up the Night Parade (starts at CFS Elevator and will proceed west on main street and make loop back to CFS)
- 6pm DJ music and Commanders 40th Birthday Bash at the VFW
- 6pm Live Music @ Kenyon Municipal Liquor Store
- 6pm-8pm Movie Time @ First Lutheran Church - Free to public  
*movie title will be announced at a later date*



All Day - Christmas for K-W Kidz Toy Drive -  
donation drop off on Main Street at Warlords MC

All Day - Scavenger hunt- sheets available at participating  
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Holiday Light Contest Winners to be announced at the Tree Lighting Ceremony.

*Thank you to all the volunteers for stepping up and  
making these events happen !*



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## Cratchit! That is—catch it! A Dickens of a Christmas mystery!

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Moriarty, Sherlock Holmes' nemesis, is dead to begin with. Depressed, Holmes has lost his purpose—his motivation for sleuthing. But “ding dong merrily,” along comes Dr. Timothy Cratchit—that’s right, a grown-up, “God bless us, every one” Tiny Tim! Dr. Cratchit asks Sherlock Holmes to investigate the murder of his dear friend and benefactor—formerly Mr. “Bah, humbug!”—Ebenezer Scrooge. Now the once-despondent Sherlock Holmes is intrigued and inspired: “The game’s afoot!”

This heartwarming production by the Man-



torville Theatre Company promises festive cheer and mystery—a perfect holiday treat!

Under the expert direction of Bill Schnell, a talented cast of six brings beloved characters from Arthur Conan Doyle and Charles Dickens to life. Jerry Casper plays Sherlock Holmes and Nick Mezacapa is Ebenezer Scrooge. Greg Miller portrays Dr. Timothy Cratchit and other characters. Becca Messick plays Emma Wiggins and additional roles. Ryan Frank is Dr. Watson and more. Lindsay Herr plays Martha Cratchit, Abigail Fezziwig and others. Cheryl Farck portrays various characters.

“A Sherlock Carol” is written by Mark



Sherlock Holmes (Jerry Casper) reads a threat letter sent to Ebenezer Scrooge. Dr. Cratchit (Greg Miller) asks Sherlock to investigate the murder of dear Mr. Scrooge.

Shanahan and was originally produced by Raymond Bokhour and Drew McVety.

Secure your seats now <https://www.mantorvilletheatrecompany.com/tickets.html> or leave a message at 507-635-5420.

The play runs Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m., through Dec. 8.

Send any inquiries to [mantorvilletheatre@gmail.com](mailto:mantorvilletheatre@gmail.com).

## Steeplechase Now Open

Skiing and snowboarding will open at 10am on Saturday December 7th. Steeplechase is located at 59468 423rd Ave Mazeppa and the phone number is 507-261-8033.



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## Talking Rural Health with U of M



**Dr. Kirby Clark**  
University of Minnesota

In the next 10 years, one in three Greater Minnesota residents is projected to be 65+ years old — increasing the demand for healthcare services for older adults. At the same time, one in three rural physicians plan to leave the workforce in the next five years, according to the Minnesota Department of Health. These compounding issues raise important questions about the future of rural healthcare.

Kirby Clark, MD, with the University of Minnesota Medical School and M Health Fairview, talks about issues facing rural communities, the shortage of rural physicians and how this growing problem can be addressed.

**Q: What are some of the biggest health issues facing rural communities today?**

Dr. Clark: Rural communities face several pressing health issues, including a shortage of physicians and other healthcare providers, limited access to specialty care, inadequate access to comprehensive primary care and an increasing load of chronic diseases like dia-

betes, hypertension, mental health disorders, addiction and health issues related to aging. Rural areas have disparities in health outcomes for a variety of reasons, including geographic isolation, poverty, economic instability and reduced access to social services. In addition to the healthcare system, employment opportunities, educational opportunities and access to healthy food are key to a community's health. Addressing these issues requires expanding access to care, improving prevention and supporting community-based health initiatives.

**Q: Why is there a shortage of physicians in Greater Minnesota? What can be done to address this shortage?**

Dr. Clark: The shortage of physicians in Greater Minnesota stems from a combination of factors, but the main issue is the challenging and sometimes obscure path for rural youth to become rural physicians. Additional factors include the challenge of practicing medicine in a rural community, which requires an impressive skill set and depends on colleagues and organizational support. The programs that prepare physicians for comprehensive, full-scope primary care, including obstetrical care, do not always get the recognition and promotion in the public eye that might make it a more attractive path for trainees and young people, either. Trainees may also prefer the amenities of larger cities.

To address this shortage, we should make the path clear for rural youth to become physicians in their communities, promote rural primary care as a career path and invest in rural-focused medical education programs. Supporting our current rural physicians to

give them the time and resources to connect with and inspire the next generation is also a key part of the puzzle.

**Q: What are the benefits of training medical students in rural areas?**

Dr. Clark: Training medical students in rural areas has benefits for both the students and rural communities. By training in rural communities, students gain first-hand experience providing patient care to rural people, mentored by rural doctors who are experts in rural medical care. The students learn to be adaptable, flexible, and creative — the skills necessary to treat diverse patient populations and a breadth of medical conditions with limited resources. When students are able to have a long, immersive training experience in a rural community during this formative time in their lives, they can see the joy in rural practice and living in a rural community, and can aspire to become a rural doctor one day. Not only do the rural communities get a chance to recruit their next doctor, the students also bring fresh ideas and knowledge to rural medical practices and rural communities.

**Q: What's a common misconception about rural health?**

Dr. Clark: One common misconception about rural physicians is that they are not as highly trained or skilled compared to physicians in urban areas. Rural physicians quite often have a broader skill set and manage a wider variety of conditions. Many of the most incredible and skilled physicians I know practice in our rural communities. Not only do I see them providing up-to-date, comprehensive care in their communities,

but I see these rural doctors at medical conferences pursuing additional training and leading discussions throughout their careers. Rural doctors understand their communities and their health needs, so they seek out the training to provide what their patients need.

**Q: How does your work at the U of M advance rural health in Minnesota?**

Dr. Clark: As the director of the Rural Physician Associate Program (RPAP), an internationally recognized program for training rural physicians, my work is to inspire medical students to experience and consider serving our underserved rural Minnesota towns. RPAP helps third-year medical students live, work and play in rural Minnesota communities for nine months during a formative period during which they gain the majority of their clinical experience. I connect rural physicians and healthcare organizations to education and training pathways, and amplify rural communities' own fantastic efforts to inspire their local youth to healthcare careers. Our students learn the breadth of rural practice and joys of rural medicine, while building lasting relationships with patients, staff and mentoring physicians. Students who experience this hands-on training are three times more likely to return to practice in rural communities, and 65% return to practice in Minnesota.

*Kirby Clark, MD, is an assistant professor at the U of M Medical School, a family medicine physician with M Health Fairview, the director of the Rural and Metropolitan Physician Associate Programs and faculty of the St. John's Family Medicine Residency Program.*



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## Alcohol Truths



By Noel Aldrich, PhD, CNS  
Licensed Nutritionist

What do you know about alcohol? Is a little alcohol once in while okay? During a physical exam a frequent question asked is how much alcohol you consume, so what is the big deal? Let's identify some truths about alcohol.

Alcohol has been a beverage produced by humans for centuries. When grains or fruits are processed with specific yeast or bacteria the result is the production of alcohol as a byproduct of the fermentation process. A standard US drink contains fourteen grams of alcohol. Fourteen grams of alcohol are in a typical twelve-ounce beer, a five-ounce glass of wine, or a 1.5 ounce shot. The longer the distillation process, the greater the concentration of alcohol in the drink.

The type of alcohol produced from this fermentation is ethanol. Ethanol is the only alcohol considered safe to consume. Other forms of alcohol are fatal if consumed. While ethanol does not immediately cause death, there are some health concerns to consider.

In science laboratories, ethanol is used as a sanitizing agent. To clean lab tools and counter surfaces, ethanol is used to kill anything on the surface. To guarantee a surface is clean and ready for the next science experiment, everything is cleaned with ethanol. Ethanol kills any bacteria cells that may be on equipment or a countertop. If ethanol is trusted as a chemical to kill bacteria, what do you think it does to cells in your body?

To a single cell, ethanol would mean death, but your body does have a way to detoxify from alcohol, but at a cost. The first step changes ethanol to acetaldehyde, which is a known mutagenic agent, which means acetaldehyde can promote cancer. The American Association for Cancer Research published the 2024 Cancer Progress Report and noted an increased risk of six

types of cancer associated with consuming alcohol. Those types of cancer include liver, breast, colon, esophagus, stomach, and head and neck cancer. The increased risk is the result of the increased acetaldehyde effecting the cells of the body to promote the development of cancer cells.

In a 2024 study from the UK Biobank, there were 135,103 older adults ranked according to the amount of alcohol consumed and the report of cancer diagnosis. A low-risk drinker was described as an individual who consumed between 1 and 10 drinks per week. Even at this low consumption level, a low-risk drinker had higher cancer mortality compared to an occasional drinker. With increased alcohol consumption, the cancer risk increased.

In addition to the cancer concerns, alcohol effects the size of your brain. A 2022 study published in Nature Communications reviewed the MRI brain scans of 36,678 middle-aged adults. Even low levels of alcohol consumption resulted in a decrease in gray matter and white matter of the brain. The evidence showed decreased brain volume got worse with increased consumption of alcohol.

Alcohol consumption has negative effects on other areas of the body as well. As noted, alcohol kills bacteria, so the good bacteria in your intestines will be killed also. The result is an imbalance of the bacteria community inside your gut that results in inflammation, decreased immune strength, and increased digestive problems. The balance between testosterone and estrogen is affected by alcohol consumption.

Alcohol promotes the conversion of testosterone into estrogen. Extra high levels of estrogen are associated with increased cancer risk and decreased levels of testosterone effect a decline in muscle mass and fertility. Alcohol also increases the production of cortisol, a hormone related to stress. High cortisol levels are related to sleep disorders, inability to relax, and increased anxiety. None of these goals are on my Christmas list this year.

As you move through the holiday season, consider how you are celebrating. There are many ways to enjoy the celebration and the relationships of the season without using alcohol. Make healthy choices that will benefit you and the ones you love.

Contact me to discuss your health goals for the coming year. I can help you realize greater health freedom in 2025. You can contact me at [nutritionproportion@gmail.com](mailto:nutritionproportion@gmail.com), or check out my website at [www.nutritionproportion.net](http://www.nutritionproportion.net)

*\*Information and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and may not reflect those of The Messenger.*

## Weight Training for Health



By Shauna Burshem, D.C.

Resistance weight training is a highly effective exercise method that offers numerous health benefits, particularly for those conscious of maintaining their vitality and youthfulness. One of the most impressive advantages is its anti-aging effects. Engaging in regular weight training helps maintain muscle mass and strength as we age, combating the natural decline that occurs over time. This preservation of muscle is crucial not only for physical appearance but also for maintaining functional independence as we grow older. By incorporating resistance training into your fitness regime, you can slow down the aging process and promote a healthier, more youthful body.

In addition to its anti-aging benefits, resistance weight training plays a vital role in promoting bone health. It stimulates bone growth and increases bone density, reducing the risk of osteoporosis and fractures, which are common concerns for aging populations. The stress that weight training exerts on bones encourages them to adapt and strengthen, making it an essential exercise for maintaining a robust skeletal framework. This benefit is particularly important for women, who are at a higher risk of developing osteoporosis as they age. By prioritizing weight training, individuals can ensure that their bones remain strong and resilient throughout their lives.

Beyond its impact on aging and bone health, resistance weight training significantly enhances muscle tone and metabolism. Regular lifting results in more defined muscles, contributing to an improved physique and increased self-confidence. Furthermore, the increase in lean muscle mass from resistance training elevates your resting metabolic rate, allowing your body to burn more calories even when at rest. This effect can aid in weight management and fat loss, making it an invaluable tool for those looking to improve their overall body composition. By integrating resistance weight training into your routine, you can enjoy these metabolic benefits while achieving a toned and healthy body.

Scientific evidence shows autism isn't just a neurological condition, according to the authors of a scientific review published on Preprints.org. Science researchers Brian Hooker, Ph.D, Jeet Varia Ph.D., and Martha Herbert, M.D, Ph.D, a pediatric neurologist and neuroscientist, co-authored the report, which is undergoing peer review with Development and Psychopathology, a Cambridge University Press journal.

The authors examined the findings of 519 studies to illustrate how autism spectrum disorder (ASD) affects multiple body systems, including the immune, digestive and central nervous systems.

Herbert, an autism researcher since 1995, told reporters the science of autism has become "enormously richer" and ASD "can no longer be considered just a 'psychological' problem — it's a whole-system problem ... involving many systems that influence each other." She and her co-authors also contend that the latest scientific evidence suggests ASD is largely driven by environmental factors. These include exposure to toxins in food, the environment, medicine or personal care products.

COVID-19 vaccines pose a 112,000% greater risk of brain clots and strokes than flu vaccines and a 20,700% greater risk of those symptoms than all other vaccines combined, according to a peer-reviewed study that calls for a global moratorium on the vaccines. The study, published last week in the International Journal of Innovative Research in Medical Science, found reports of 5,137 cases of cerebral thromboembolism after COVID-19 shots over 36 months. This compares to 52 reported cases following flu vaccination and 282 cases for all vaccines over the past 34 years. According to the study, this represents an "alarming breach in the safety signal threshold concerning cerebral thrombosis adverse events" following COVID-19 vaccination. The research data was collected from the U.S. government's Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), for their analysis. This data is published on the CDC website and is collected from doctors and hospitals filing reports on adverse events from the COVID-19 vaccine as well as other vaccinations such as the flu shot. The data also indicated 9,821 reports of atrial fibrillation — an irregular heart rhythm that is "the most common identifiable cause of cerebral arterial thromboembolism"

*\*Information and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and may not reflect those of The Messenger.*



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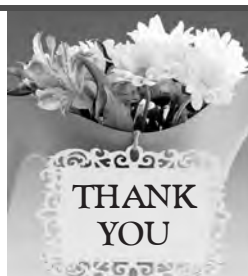


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## The Savvy Senior How to Find Legal Help When You Can't Afford a Lawyer



By Jim Miller

Dear Savvy Senior,

Can you recommend any programs or organizations that provide free or low-cost legal services to seniors? I believe I need some professional legal help but have limited income and very little savings.

--Almost 70

Dear Almost,

Whether you need help drawing up a will or a contract, or you're facing some sort of legal

jeopardy or dilemma, hiring an attorney can be expensive. Most lawyers today charge anywhere between \$100 and \$300 an hour. Fortunately, there are a number of different programs and organizations that offer free legal advice and may help you find a free or low-cost attorney. Here's where look for help in your area.

**Legal Aid:** Directed by the Legal Services Corporation, legal aid provides free legal assistance to low-income people of all ages. Each community program will differ slightly in the services they offer and income qualifications. Visit [LSC.gov/find-legal-aid](http://LSC.gov/find-legal-aid) to locate a program near you.

**LawHelp:** Powered by Pro Bono Net, a national nonprofit organization, [LawHelp.org](http://LawHelp.org) is a terrific resource that will help you locate free legal aid near you, get answers to your legal questions and even fill out legal documents. These free services are for people with low to moderate incomes.

**Free Legal Answers:** This is an online program created by the American Bar Association that matches low-income clients with volunteer lawyers who agree to provide brief answers online for free. This service will not answer criminal law questions and it's not available in every state. See [ABAFreeLegalAnswers.org](http://ABAFreeLegalAnswers.org) to look for a program in your state.

**Senior Legal Hotlines:** There are around 30 states that offer senior legal hotlines, where all seniors over age 60 have access to free legal advice over the telephone. To find out if this service is available in your state, go to [ProSeniors.org](http://ProSeniors.org) and click on "Resources," followed by "U.S. Senior Legal

Hotline Directory."

**Senior Legal Services:** Coordinated by the Administration on Aging, this service may offer free or low-cost legal advice, legal assistance or access to legal representation to people over the age of 60. Your Area Agency on Aging can tell you what's available in your community. Call the Eldercare Locator at 800-677-1116 to get your local number.

**Local Law Schools:** More than 200 university law schools across the country have pro bono programs that offer free legal assistance provided by law students, who are supervised by their professors. See [AmericanBar.org/groups/center-pro-bono](http://AmericanBar.org/groups/center-pro-bono) - scroll down and click on "Directory of Law School Public Interest and Pro Bono Programs" to locate a program near you.

**Pension Rights Center:** This is a nonprofit consumer organization that provides free legal assistance for problems with pension, 401(k) or other retirement plans. Go to [PensionRights.org/find-help](http://PensionRights.org/find-help) to search for help in your state.

**Stateside Legal:** For military members, veterans, and their families, [StatesideLegal.org](http://StatesideLegal.org) provides access to free legal information and legal assistance in your area.

**National Disability Rights Network:** This is a nonprofit membership organization that provides legal assistance to people with disabilities through their Protection and Advocacy System and Client Assistance Program. If you are disabled, visit [NDRN.org](http://NDRN.org) to find help in your state.

**Other Options:** If you can't get help from one of these programs, or find that you aren't eligible, another option is to contact your state or local bar association to see if there are any volunteer lawyer projects in your area or if they can refer you to a low-fee lawyer. To contact your state or local bar association, go to [FindLegalHelp.org](http://FindLegalHelp.org).



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## SEMCACh Welcomes New Outreach and Accessibility Manager



**Sharon Mansur**

The Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council (SEMCACh) is pleased to announce Sharon Mansur as its new Outreach and Accessibility Manager. In this newly created position, Mansur will work to expand SEMCACh's reach and ensure its programs and services are accessible to all communities across the region's eleven counties.

Based in Winona, Mansur is an acclaimed dancer, choreographer, and multimedia artist who also has extensive experience in arts administration, education, and community engagement. Her background includes work with Dance Place in Washington, DC, BAX/Brooklyn Arts Exchange in New York, and several local organizations including the

Frozen River Film Festival and Art of the Rural in Winona. She currently directs The Cedar Tree Project, a creative platform supporting Arab contemporary artists.

"Sharon's background as an individual artist who has received multiple grants, fellowships, residencies, and other support for her work, as well as her experience as an educator, arts administrator, and community organizer make her an ideal person to take on this new position at SEMCACh," says Anastasia Shartin, Executive Director of SEMCACh. "Throughout its nearly 50-year history, SEMCACh has had a two-person staff, making this a significant step for the organization and one that I hope will expand and deepen our impact throughout the region. Sharon's commitment to supporting artists and to engaging rural communities through the arts will help SEMCACh achieve these goals."

In this new position, Mansur will focus on developing partnerships, advancing accessibility initiatives, and creating professional development opportunities for artists and arts organizations across the region.

SEMCACh activities are made possible by the voters of Minnesota through grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

SEMCACh serves these eleven southeastern Minnesota counties: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, and Winona.

For more information about SEMCACh, visit [semac.org](http://semac.org) or contact the office at 507-281-4848.



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# SMIF

## SMIF Awards \$200,000 in Small Town Grants



**Tim Penny**  
So. MN Initiative Foundation

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) recently approved 25 grants totaling \$200,000 to support small towns of 10,000 or less in SMIF’s 20-county region. Each grant seeks to impact the culture, education, economy and/or social aspects of a town by investing in collaborative initiatives that help make the community more welcoming.

The Small Town Grant program was launched in 2017 to support smaller communities which can benefit from additional financial resources to help them grow and address challenges. The recent approval of 25 grants has pushed the total of Small Town Grants awarded to 138 projects since the program began. Through this program, SMIF has surpassed a milestone this year, investing more than \$1 million for a total of \$1,172,490 in the small towns of our region.

The Small Town Grant program is supported, in part, by a generous donation in memory of Paul O. Johnson who wanted southern Minnesota’s smallest communities to thrive. Paul’s legacy is being continued by his family, Amy De Jong, Paula Rehder and Scott Johnson.

The 2024 Small Town Grant award recipients are:

\$10,000 to A Great Day Farm Foundation in Dundas to expand adaptive cycling opportunities for adults with disabilities.

\$10,000 to Adams Town and Country Recreation Pool Corporation to host a Day of Car-ing where community members will come together to build a pickleball court.

\$7,835 to the Cannon Falls Area Chamber of Commerce to create videos featuring city attractions and events that will attract people to consider Cannon Falls as a place to live.

\$4,954 to the City of Emmons to create a more welcoming environment at the city park by building a shade structure with picnic tables and replacing or painting old equipment.

\$6,925 to the City of Eyota to bring new vendors with multicultural food to the farmers market and to enhance the city website to bring people together.

\$4,953 to the City of Kilkenny to turn a vacant lot into a community space with benches, lighting, flowers and a band shell.

\$4,953 to the City of Lanesboro to rehabilitate a softball field and park shelter to be accessible, inclusive and inviting to all

residents.

\$10,000 to the City of Mantorville to beautify their Main Street by reflecting the town’s varied backgrounds and values in its design and improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

\$10,000 to the City of Oronoco to enhance the city’s brand identity to recruit new businesses, attract new residents and increase commercial and residential development.

\$10,000 to the City of Saint Charles to implement a new city comprehensive plan that will foster a sense of belonging by prioritizing inclusivity and accessibility in designs for public spaces, amenities and services.

\$7,125 to the City of Springfield to build a strategic economic and housing development plan for the city through a series of community engagement events that will result in a shared vision of community needs.

\$10,000 to the Dodge County Environmental Services in Mantorville to create interpretive signage for a more inclusive Restoration Park.

\$9,685 to the Forward New Prague Foundation to complete landscaping for the Praha Outdoor Performance Stage located in a public park.

\$2,000 to the Hummingbird Trail Association in Henderson to host a kickoff event for their trail project.

\$10,000 to the Madelia Community Theatre Inc. to create the Madelia Arts Collaborative, a hub hosting multiple artistic disciplines in the hopes to enrich the cultural fabric of Madelia and provide lifelong learning opportunities for all residents.

\$10,000 to Mainspring in Caledonia to support an engagement process which will uncover how Mainspring can better support local entrepreneurs and artists in the forthcoming renovation of the building’s lower level, creating a multi-use community space.

\$10,000 to the Minnesota Agricultural Interpretive Center (Farmamerica) in Waseca to host farm-to-fork events by partnering with local farmers, chefs and organizations like the Hmong American Farmers Association and to develop a hydroponic lab.

\$10,000 to the Montgomery Arts and Heritage Center to make Montgomery Museum in the Streets, a walking tour to celebrate the diverse stories that make up the community’s history.

\$10,000 to the National Ruby-Throated Hummingbird Center in Henderson to create exhibits and interactive visual displays for their center.

\$7,500 to Rushford Area Historical Society to create an all-inclusive community museum with accessibility to displays and a storage facility.

\$4,000 to the Spring Valley Business Alliance to create ADA accessible pocket parks along the city’s historic downtown.

\$7,070 to the St. Charles REC Club to brighten Main Street with new streetlight banners designed with input from residents to foster a sense of ownership and inclusion.

\$10,000 to STEP, Inc. in Fairmont to disperse essentials baskets to help new residents, people with income below the federal poverty threshold and individuals involved in elder services feel a sense of belonging.

\$10,000 to the Village of Le Roy to construct the Le Roy Main Street Pocket Park, an accessible and inclusive space designed



with the input of residents to create a sense of community.

\$3,000 to Waterville Arts and Recreation Council to purchase metal framing to complete “Summer in Minnesota,” a mural constructed, designed and painted by residents.

“We knew when we started this program that it could have a huge impact on the smallest communities in our region,” said Tim Penny, president and CEO of SMIF. “Now, 138 projects later, we have invested more than \$1 million into southern Minnesota through this grant. This is an investment that will last for generations. We are once again grateful to Paul Johnson’s family for continuing his legacy and giving SMIF an opportunity to leverage additional funding for small town support. Without them, we would

not have been able to reach this milestone so soon.”

“We are pleased and honored to be able to continue our father’s legacy by supporting small towns in the region of Minnesota where we were raised,” said Paula Rehder.

“We are seeing the potential of his gift realized through the amazing projects that these small communities have proposed that will make a difference in the part of the country that was near and dear to our father’s heart,” said Amy De Jong.

For more information about the Small Town Grant Program, visit [smifoundation.org/smalltowngrant](http://smifoundation.org/smalltowngrant) or contact Sarah Scheffert, communications and community vitality specialist, at 507-214-7015 or [sarahs@smifoundation.org](mailto:sarahs@smifoundation.org).



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## Ask A Trooper

By Sgt. Troy Christianson,  
Minnesota State Patrol



**Question:** I have some new drivers in our house. We got talking the other day and they didn't know what "hand signals" were. Can you write about that to help inform others that might not be aware?

**Answer:** Congratulations on the new drivers. That is an exciting and concerning time as you help them get more experience and confidence as they undergo the process.

When the signal is given by means of the hand and arm the driver shall indicate intention to start, stop, or turn by extending the hand and arm from and beyond the left side of the vehicle in the following manner and these signals shall indicate as follows:

- left turn: hand and arm extended horizon-

tally

- right turn: hand and arm extended upward, except that a bicyclist or motorcyclist may extend the right hand and arm horizontally to the right side of the bicycle or motorcycle.

- stop or decrease speed: hand and arm extended downward.

**Question:** Who is responsible for making sure the roadway is cleaned up and free from spilled liquids, glass and other car parts from a crash?

**Answer:** I have noticed that responding agencies and tow companies usually work as a team to treat the injured, direct traffic, investigate the crash and clear the scene as soon as possible for everyone's safety. This is especially important on roadways with higher speed limits.

Below is a general list of responsibilities at a crash scene, although each scene differs as to the crash severity and what is needed.

### Law enforcement general responsibilities:

- Securing the incident scene
- Assist disabled vehicles
- Provide medical aid until help arrives
- Serve as incident commander along with

### Fire/Rescue

- Direct traffic



- Conduct crash investigation
- Supervise scene clearance

### Fire/Rescue/EMS general responsibilities:

- Protect the incident scene
- Provide medical care
- Provide initial HAZMAT response and containment
- Suppress fire
- Rescue crash victims from vehicles
- Arrange transportation for the injured
- Provide advance emergency medical care
- Determine destination and transportation for the injured
- Coordinate evacuation with fire, police and ambulance/airlift
- Remove medical waste from scene
- Assist in incident clearance

### Towing Companies general responsibilities:

- Removing vehicles from scene
- Protecting victims' property and vehicles
- Provide transportation for uninjured vehicle occupants
- Remove debris from roadway (scene)

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 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us) Twitter: MSPPIO\_SOUTH

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*Opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are not necessarily those of The Messenger.*

## To the Editor: Veterans Day Program Closing the Faucet

A quarter of a century ago, a Superintendent of Schools walked into a middle school principal's office after a Veterans Day Program and said "I don't ever want to hear the word God mentioned in this building again. There are people who do not believe in God." Three years later, after a lack of support from the Christian community and perjured testimony from school district officials (See Depositions and Trial Transcripts), it would cost the principal his job...but not his soul. It was the drip that has now become an open faucet in most school districts.

As I look back on this defining moment in my life, I now know that it was transformational in both spirit and truth. Beginning at Bethel Regional High School in Bethel, Alaska and ending at Park River High School in Park River, North Dakota, I finally found school districts that were not afraid to invoke the name of Jesus at a Veterans Day Program. As a matter of fact, they gloried in showing reverence with voices rather than a simple moment of silence.

Today, if our students want to attend a Veterans Day Program and hear the name of Jesus, they will have to leave the school district. It is one of the reasons that a large number of area veterans drove to the Rochester International Event Center to celebrate this special day. While we applaud those Byron students who served tables and left special messages for veterans, we would much prefer to go to our local schools where we could stand beside our children and grandchildren and thank God for America, our fallen comrades, our men and women in uniform, and those in attendance who have served their

country in one of the services. But there is more.

Over the past four years, we have seen our country brought to its knees by a godlessness that we had not seen before. Now that the country has said no to a political party that is actually a party of darkness, I believe it is time we "stand the post" before stepping into the light and embracing what should be a special time for our students: attending a Veterans Day Program where they can openly thank God right beside the veterans who put everything on the line for them. They should not have to leave their own community to "hear" a prayer that reminds them of what a great country we once were...and how great we can be again. A teachable moment for all!

Finally, it is time that local superintendents, pastors, and veterans join hands and find a way to get it done for 2025. While there may be members of the community who will object, we should not be deterred. Due to the fact that the veterans have the right to use the building just as any other tax paying group does, this annual event will be open to whoever wants to attend. Not only will no one be forced to attend, but there will be no more school officials sinking the ship on our children. It is time to close the faucet. America is back! Go Air Force!

Dr. James Russell Lehman  
Kenyon MN

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## Let Wild Rice Add Flair to Your Turkey Leftovers!

Wild rice is the perfect ingredient to elevate your holiday leftovers, adding both rich flavor and a satisfying texture to your holiday meals. Packed with nutrients and a natural, smoky flavor, wild rice complements turkey beautifully, creating hearty and healthy dishes that are perfect for post-holiday feasts. Whether stirred into a savory casserole, tossed into a salad, or served as a side, wild rice brings a unique twist to traditional leftovers, making them feel fresh and exciting. Plus, its high fiber and protein content make it an excellent choice for those seeking a nutritious and flavorful way to enjoy their turkey long after the holiday has passed.

Wild rice is an "all-purpose" ingredient, versatile enough to be used in virtually any type of recipe. Its great taste and distinctive flavor is a great way to add flair and elegance to your holiday leftovers. Try incorporating the unique flavor of wild rice into your Thanksgiving leftovers by trying these easy-to-prepare recipes:

### Classic Creamy Wild Rice Soup

The ideal way to use turkey leftovers is in one of America's favorite soups – Classic Creamy Wild Rice Soup. Hearty, simple, and extremely flavorful, this comforting soup blends the great flavor of wild rice with turkey, onion, sherry, and almonds. It also freezes well to allow you to enjoy it long after your holidays are over.

### Cherry Turkey Wild Rice Salad

Cherry Turkey Wild Rice Salad includes tender chunks of roasted turkey which pair perfectly with the nutty texture of wild rice, while tart cherries add a burst of freshness. The creamy dressing brings it all together, offering a balance of richness and tang. Each bite is a delicious combination of flavors and textures, from the crunch of walnuts to the subtle sweetness of the dried cherries, making this salad irresistibly satisfying and bursting with seasonal goodness.

### Turkey Wild Rice Pot Pie Skillet

Turkey Wild Rice Pot Pie Skillet is a mouthwatering blend of creamy, savory taste sensations. Tender turkey breast is paired with sweet, caramelized carrots and onions, all enveloped in a rich, velvety cream sauce. Shredded Parmesan adds a delightful depth of flavor, creating a perfectly melted finish that coats the wild rice in a creamy texture. The crispy onions on top provide a satisfying crunch, balancing the richness of the dish with their crispy, golden texture. Every bite is a comforting mix of savory, creamy, and crispy – a dish that warms both the heart and the palate.

For even more great recipe ideas to turn your holiday turkey leftovers into an unforgettable meal, search the world's largest wild rice recipe library at [www.mnwildrice.org/search.php](http://www.mnwildrice.org/search.php). Enter the keyword "turkey" and search to see all the delicious ways to prepare new and creative turkey-wild rice combinations.

#### CLASSIC CREAMY WILD RICE SOUP

- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 6 tbsp butter
- 1/2 cup flour
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- 1/2 cup shredded carrots
- 1 cup cooked, cubed turkey breast
- 3 tbsp slivered almonds
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup half and half
- 2 tbsp dry sherry

In large saucepan, sauté onion in butter. Add flour, stirring until bubbly; gradually stir in broth. Stir in wild rice, carrots, turkey, almonds, and salt; simmer 5 minutes. Stir in half and half and sherry; heat through. 6 servings.

#### CHERRY TURKEY WILD RICE SALAD

- 2 cups turkey breast, cooked and cubed
- 3/4 cup chopped onion
- 3/4 cup thinly sliced celery
- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- 1 pkg (5 oz) dried cherries
- 1/2 cup toasted walnuts

#### Dressing (whisk together; chill):

- 1 cup each: mayonnaise and bottled poppyseed dressing
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper

In large bowl, combine ingredients. Add dressing; toss. 6 servings.

#### TURKEY WILD RICE POT PIE SKILLET

- 2 cups turkey breast, cooked and cubed
- 3/4 cup each, chopped: carrots and onion
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 tsp each: salt and ground black pepper, divided
- 3 tbsp canola oil
- 2 cups low sodium chicken stock
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 3 cups cooked wild rice
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 3/5 cup packaged crispy onions

In large skillet, stir-fry first 4 ingredients, 3/4 tsp salt, and 3/4 tsp pepper in oil. Remove from skillet; set aside. In same skillet, whisk stock and flour; bring to boil. Whisk in cream, then cheese. Add remaining salt and pepper, turkey mixture, wild rice, and peas; heat through. Top with crispy onions. 4 servings.

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## CITY OF WANAMINGO City Council Election Canvassing Board Meeting Monday, November 12, 2024 7:00 P.M. Wanamingo City Council Chambers – 401 Main Street

### Wanamingo, MN

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Holmes.

#### PRESENT:

Council: Ryan Holmes, Eric Dierks, and Jeremiah Flotterud

City Administrator: Michael Boulton

**ABSENT:** Council: Stuart Ohr & Rebecca Haugen

Deputy Clerk: Karen Masters

**ALSO PRESENT:** Brad Kennedy, Trevor Aase, Parker Erickson, Brian Gudknecht, Josh Revland, and Brandon Lunde

**ADOPT AGENDA:** Flotterud motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Dierks. Passed 3-0-0.

#### PRESENTERS:

##### Brandon Lunde - Wanamingo Fire Department Truck Committee

FD Truck Committee presented original idea to the City Council for a new class 1 fire engine in April 2024. The Fire Department, Townships, and City met in August of 2024 to hear the proposed new truck presentation.

The truck committee has eight committee members that have spent significant time gathering information and helping to put together specifications for a new pumper truck.

The committee investigated E1, Toyne, Rosenbauer, and Pierce for a new class 1 fire engine. E1 is considered the cheap/short term option. Toyne was considered too far away in west central Iowa. Wanamingo has two Rosenbauer trucks currently and they are out of Wyoming, MN. Pierce has a great reputation, out of Appleton Wisconsin, and have service in Apple Valley, MN.

Committee worked to develop specs with Rosenbauer and Pierce to obtain an apples-to-

apples comparison bid

Specifications include custom chassis, five seats, medical cabinet, class 1 pumper, storage, and 70" plus 10.

Engine would be 450 HP Cummins with 5 speed Allison transmission

Further specs include 1,000-gallon tank, 200-inch wheelbase, and a 1,250-gpm pump (SAM system), and an inverter instead of a generator.

Factors to consider – Rosenbauer offers L9 Cummins Diesel (cheaper motor that fits current emissions standards) – Pierce offers X10 Cummins Diesel (more expensive and adds canister for emissions cleanout). Rosenbauer \$1,046,948 while Pierce \$1,180,892.

Committee removed a few items from the specs to bring down the prices by \$70,000-\$80,000

The Rosenbauer Commander offer is good through November 15th to sign the contract. Fire Department membership voted 29-1 to go with the proposed Rosenbauer Commander

The final price could be lower. There is roughly \$50,000 built in for change order items so as not to increase the price if something is missing before build.

Truck would be delivered at the end of 2026 or early 2027 from Rosenbauer (Pierce is nearly an additional year out for delivery).

Holmes asked what truck(s) are proposed to be replaced. Lunde stated that the 1991 Mac Pump and 1999 Equipment Truck would be replaced. Gudknecht stated that the pumper truck is 33 years old. Once pumper trucks reach 30 years old the ISO ratings can slip for the fire department and cause increases to homeowner's insurance. Erickson stated that the pump on the Mac is no longer manufactured and that replacement parts are difficult to obtain. Flotterud asked about how the truck would be paid/financed. Boulton stated that the 2018 Fire Tanker bond payment would be paid off in 2027. The debt service of roughly \$31,000 would be planned to be shifted to the new tanker. Boulton stated that the fire department has over \$250,000 saved for future trucks/equipment that could be utilized on the truck. Boulton stated that the City/Townships are putting \$16,000/year away toward the new truck with \$5,000-\$10,000 increases coming in 2025, 2026, and 2027. Boulton stated that a bond could be taken out for 10-15 years.

Boulton stated that the bond payments could be between \$100,000-\$150,000. The City and townships will need to increase yearly contributions by roughly \$50,000/year (City 54% and Townships 46%). Gudknecht stated that the fire relief association is hoping to contribute charitable gambling toward the payments but could not specify an amount due to the unknown. Boulton stated that roughly \$100,000 of the \$250,000 cash came through fire relief association charitable gambling contributions. Aase stated that there are other financing options through USDA and FEMA. There are options through these programs on yearly grants to offset interest and/or principal payments. The fire department recently received two grants totaling \$14,000 for helmets and turnout gear, reducing the budget and increasing the savings. Lunde stated that the 1979 tankers in the next truck that will need to be replaced. There are talks to replace this with a used tanker or modify the 1991 Mac to a tanker. The fire department understands that the cost for replacement of vehicles is too much and that we will need to get creative moving forward. However, the class 1 pumpers are the one piece of equipment that must meet high standards. Holmes thanked the fire department truck committee for all their work for a very thoughtful process. The Council appreciates all the effort and forward thinking regarding the fleet. Holmes thanked the fire department for working so well with the City and townships to plan ahead and offer an open process. Flotterud stated that he agrees with the purchase but would like to be careful on the levy and that pushing out the payments would not be the worst consideration.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

##### RESOLUTION:

**24-065 = Certifying the 2024 Local City Council General Election Results:** Dierks moved to approve, seconded by VanDeWalker. Ryan Holmes received 636 votes with 10 write-in votes for Mayor. Jeremiah Flotterud received 533 votes, Stuart Ohr received 523 votes, and there were 6 write-in votes for City Council. here were officially 710 votes cast in Wanamingo on Tuesday November 5th out of 764 eligible voters (plus 62 voters registered on election day) or roughly 86% turnout. Passed 3-0-0. Administrator Boulton presented the certificates of election to Mayor Holmes, Councilmember Flotterud, Councilmember Ohr, the declared winners after the canvassing board (City Council) approved the results.

24-066 = Re-Establishing the Polling Precinct and Precinct Location for the City of Wanamingo: Dierks moved to approve, Sec-

onded by Flotterud. Passed 3-0-0.

24-067 = Authorizing the Order of Fire Department Pumper Truck Utilizing Approved Exemption to the State Bid Process: Flotterud moved to approve, Seconded by Dierks. Boulton stated that the item was added to the agenda because the fire department must provide Rosenbauer an answer by November 15th. Flotterud stated that the City could still back out of the build with minimal cost. Flotterud stated that it was good to lock in the price. Flotterud would like to explore scenarios for bond payments to keep yearly payments from pushing up the property tax levy. Lunde stated that the fire department may look at converting the outgoing 1991 Mac pump truck at a tanker truck once the new pumper truck is delivered. Estimates are roughly \$60,000. Passed 3-0-0.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

**Boulton asked the Council to provide him feedback regarding setting the 2025 final property tax levy at the November 18th City Council meeting.** Boulton stated that the preliminary levy was set at \$1,170,000 or an increase of 9.35% from \$1,070,000 in 2024. Boulton stated that changes have occurred since the preliminary levy was set that include the Goodhue County Sheriff policing contract being lower than anticipated, the City not budgeting for tree removal from Emerald Ash Borer, and the Emerald Valley II Addition City cost share if the developer moves forward in 2025. Boulton advised the Council not to go lower than 7% levy increase but may want to consider keeping the 9.35% levy increase to cover costs.

**Administrator Boulton and Public Works Director Kennedy spoke about the health insurance renewal meeting that occurred earlier in the day.** The City is an 8.4% increase on insurance premiums for 2025. The two employees that have dependent coverage are seeing a 17.4% increase (\$94/month for one and \$159/month for another). Boulton stated that the City had budgeted for a 7% increase and it was assumed that dependent coverage would increase similarly. Boulton stated that the City insurance is based off age ranges. Kennedy stated that these increases more than eat up the proposed cost of living raises. Kennedy stressed that if left as proposed that the City could lose an employee to a higher paying job. Boulton stated that the personnel committee would be recommending changes to allow for employees over 65 to opt out of City coverage and obtain Medicare supplements.

(continued on page 27)

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## Wanamingo City Council

(continued from page 25)

The City would pay the supplement rates if the cost were less than the city plan. Boulton stated that the savings could be \$1,000/month per employee for the City and offer better coverage to the employee. Boulton indicated that this change in policy would see immediate cost savings impact in 2025. Boulton stated that with the savings the personnel committee would investigate increasing the current city contribution toward dependent coverage from the current \$450/month. Kennedy and Holmes stated that it would be a one-year fix. Boulton agreed since the preliminary indications for 2026 are 15% increases. Boulton asked if the Council had concerns with at least \$100/month increase. There were no objections to consider at least a \$100 increase at the November 18th City Council meeting.

\*Next City Council meetings are on 11/18/2024 at 7:00PM.

**Adjourn:** At 8:25PM a motion to adjourn was made by Dierks and seconded by Flotterud. Passed 3-0-0.

Signed: Ryan Holmes, Mayor

Attest: Michael Boulton, City Administrator

## CITY OF WANAMINGO

### City Council Regular Meeting

Monday, November 18, 2024 7:00 P.M.

Wanamingo City Council Chambers – 401 Main Street

Wanamingo, MN

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Holmes.

**PRESENT:** Council: Eric Dierks, Rebecca Haugen, Ryan Holmes, Jeremiah Flotterud, and Stuart Ohr

City Administrator: Michael Boulton

Deputy Clerk: Karen Masters

**ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Brad Kennedy, Patrick Michener – SEMMCHRA, Beth Haas – Zumbrota News Record, and Daren Strobel –

Kenyon Leader.

**ADOPT AGENDA:** Ohr motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Dierks. Passed 5-0-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Haugen motioned, seconded by Flotterud. Passed 5-0-0.

### PRESENTERS:

A) Brad Kennedy reported on:

Hauled and land applied biosolids from the WWTP. Completely cleaned out and repaired air lines.

2) Worked with Jason's Sewer Sucking and Excavation to pump out grit tank at wastewater treatment plant. The tank needs to be pumped out yearly to remove solids.

3) Worked with Jason's Sewer Sucking and Excavation to pump solids out of five manholes that filled with solids after jetting sewer lines city wide.

4) Utilized the street sweeper and leaf vacuum to suck up the leave numerous times this fall. Went around and cleaned out storm sewer grates of leaves by hand as well.

5) Riverside Park winterized – water turned off/draind, volleyball nets taken down, and screen shelter doors screwed shut.

6) Durst Outdoors completed asphalt patching on previous water line repair, sewer line repair, alley ramps, and damage from garbage truck.

7) Snow Equipment hooked up, serviced, and ready for the first snowfall.

8) The new wellhouse work is nearly complete and the facility should be operational in the coming weeks. We are waiting on Automatic Systems to finish the communication integration between the two well houses and the water tower. Once the new wellhouse is operational there is a couple of weeks' worth of work to be completed in the other wellhouse by the contractor.

B) Patrick Michener, SEMMCHRA reported on:

1) Small Cities Development Program sur-

vey results have been completed for the City of Wanamingo

2) Survey results - 44 qualified income answers while 36 qualified where work needed to be completed

3) There was a 30% response rate in the survey process. That means that the application will include 12 units for \$345,000.

4) The pre-application is due November 27th at 4:00PM to MN DEED

5) The final application will occur in Spring 2025

6) The funding announcements from MN DEED will come out Fall 2025

7) If funded work on individual homes could start as early as March 2026

Flotterud asked the amount that could be funded per household. Michener stated that there is a \$25,000 per household cap for funding. Michener stated that SEMMCHRA was hoping to find other funding sources to increase the dollar amount per household. Michener stated that the average project is running around \$30,000, creating a funding gap. Michener stated that most of the work is in roofing, windows, and doors. Holmes said that SCDP is a great program for the City to take advantage of to improve single family dwellings.

### NEW BUSINESS:

#### RESOLUTION:

**24-068 = Approving Changes to the Wanamingo Personnel Policy:** Flotterud moved to approve, Seconded by Ohr. Boulton stated that the personnel committee is recommending that language be added to allow employees 65 and older to voluntarily opt out of City group health insurance and sign up for Medicare. The City would cover the Medicare Part B premium and advantage or supplemental plan if the cost were less than the group health insurance premiums. This could save the City over \$1,000/month for each employee that opts for the Medicare option. The Personnel Committee is also recommending increasing the health insurance dependent premium City share from \$450/month to \$600/month. Dependent health insurance increased significantly causing a potential spike in out-of-pocket coverage for those employees who have dependent coverage. Kennedy stated that this increase has caused employees to consider their long-term employment with the City. The Personnel Committee sees a need to increase the City share in order to attract and maintain quality employees. Boulton stated that the proposed dependent premium City share in-

crease is only a one-year band aid as the City insurance agent has seen projection for roughly 15% increase for 2026 renewals. Boulton stated that the Personnel Committee and City Council may need to adjust again in 2026. Boulton stated that health insurance is 20% more in SE Minnesota than the rest of the state. Boulton stated that this is due to Mayo Clinic and Olmsted Clinic's negotiating power and the leverage that they have in SE Minnesota with insurance companies. Flotterud stated that the Medicare option more than offsets in the dependent premium City share increase and is a no brainer. Holmes agreed that the increase is necessary for dependent coverage especially with the lower wages in comparison to other communities for staff. Passed 5-0-0.

**24-069 = Approving Pay Request No. 7 to The Joseph Company, Inc. for the Well House Portion of the 2022 Utility Improvements:** Ohr moved to approve, Seconded by Dierks. Boulton stated that the pay request is for the prefabricated building, dirt work, well pump, and other various items. The total pay estimate is \$371,373.42. Kennedy stated that project completion would be roughly a month. Boulton stated that there is \$76,082.30 left to be paid out to the contractor for work that will be completed on the project. Passed 5-0-0.

**24-070 = Approving Delegation for Cannabis Registration Agreement with Goodhue County:** Flotterud moved to approve, Seconded by Haugen. Boulton stated that the City Council had indicated to Goodhue County a willingness for the County to take on the registration and enforcement of cannabis in June 2024. Flotterud asked if the City would be giving up taxes. Boulton stated that the City would give up the registration fee, but not the sales tax if there were a cannabis business in Wanamingo. Flotterud stated that he has a difficult philosophy giving up control and tax dollars to the County. Dierks agreed that he disliked giving up potential tax dollars to the County. Boulton stated that the proposed agreement allows for the City to provide 30-day notice to terminate. Boulton stated that the City of Wanamingo will still craft a cannabis ordinance for regulation within the City that will include zoning restrictions. Boulton stated that samples are just starting to come out in other cities. Boulton stated that he hoped to have a draft ordinance in front of the Council by January 2025.

(continued on page 28)



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## Wanamingo City Council

(continued from page 27)

Flotterud stated that he prefers that the City retain the power. Boulton stated that the State has yet to release much of the rules that govern the many cannabis businesses that could be applied for within the County and Wanamingo. Boulton stated that the City lacked staff time and that it would fall to him to administer. Boulton stated that he did not want the liability on the City or himself of potential error in the registration or enforcement process on cannabis businesses. Flotterud asked if the agreement could be approved later to allow for more research. Boulton stated that the County is requiring approval and the signed agreements back by November 27, 2024. Holmes stated that the lack of State guidance for the entire cannabis rollout was frustrating. Holmes stated that the lack of action by the State leading up to the January 2025 business licensing opening pushes the City into a corner. Holmes stated that the City will have to delegate to the County the registration and enforcement process at least until the process becomes clear. Passed 5-0-0.

**24-071 = Approving the Renewal of Agreement with Goodhue County for Building Inspection and Authorizing the Mayor and City Administrator to sign the Agreement:** Ohr moved to approve, Seconded by Haugen. Holmes stated that the City has enjoyed a great 14-year relationship with Goodhue County Building Permits and Inspections Department. Passed 5-0-0.

**24-072 = Declaring 1984 Ford Dump Truck and 1984 Chevrolet Lift Truck Surplus Property and Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Property by Houghton Auction Services:** Dierks moved to approve, Seconded by Haugen. Boulton stated that the City had recently received \$1,700 through Graves Online Auctions for the 1998 Ford Ranger. Kennedy stated the Houghton seems to be a better location to sell equipment rather than Graves Online Auctions or Oronoco Online Auctions. Passed 5-0-0.

### OLD BUSINESS:

**2025 Proposed Property Tax Effects Table** – The proposed 2025 Wanamingo tax rate is 75.044%. This is based off tax capacity of \$1,568,304 less TIF of \$9,217 = \$1,559,087 (fully taxable tax capacity). The City preliminary levy was \$1,170,000. You take the preliminary levy and divide it by the fully taxable tax capacity to get the 2025 proposed tax rate.

**2025 Proposed Tax Rate** - Property Tax Effect – The 2025 proposed tax rate is 75.044 while the 2024 tax rate is 71.978. This means that on \$100,000 estimate market value would see a \$22.00 increase in 2025 taxes compared to 2024. This means that on the \$200,000 estimate market value would see a \$55.42 increase. This means that on the \$300,000 estimated market value would see a \$88.684 increase. This means that on \$400,000 estimated market value would see a \$105.55 increase. However, most residential properties saw a 2-4% increase in valuation. So, the tax rate change increased 3.066%. A 2%-4% increase in valuations would lead to increase of 5.066% to 7.066% in City portion of the property tax increase for 2025, depending on valuation increases from the previous year.

Boulton asked if the City Council had a consensus to keep or lower the final property tax

levy. The Council set the levy at \$1,170,000, up from \$1,070,000 from 2024 (9.35%). There was no consensus on a change to reflect in the December City Council agenda packet.

**Enforcement Process – Mead Johnson - Reckitt** – 330 day written letter toward meeting goal of waste pH – Boulton stated that the City had not yet received a letter from Mead Johnson – Reckitt for the month. Mead Johnson – Reckitt pH of wastewater discharge was within range during most of the month of October. The frac tank was installed and incorporated into their process back in March. Mead Johnson – Reckitt goal is to install a new lift station with pH treatment, which will wait until 2025. The temporary, above ground tank is having a shell constructed around it for winter to keep it from freezing. Goodhue County Building Permits and Inspections did not require a permit for the work, since it is a temporary structure. Boulton stated that the Wanamingo staff are still monitoring the wastewater discharge from Reckitt-Mead Johnson. The pH levels of the wastewater discharge are being adjusted before being sent to the wastewater treatment plant. Prior to December 2023, results have regularly shown extremely low and at times high pH levels along with the presence of high levels of QAC (Quaternary Ammonium Compounds) have been sent to Reckitt-Mead Johnson. The pH levels should be within 5.0 and 9.5. City Staff have been working with Reckitt-Mead Johnson toward the achieved solution of pH levels within the limits.

Reckitt has introduced failsafe measures for the tank, including having security staff check the tank on each security round check. The valve now has a lock and the key has to be signed out when opened/closed. The City appreciates the open dialogue and work, to date, from Reckitt-Mead Johnson. The City continues to keep the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency informed during this process, including Carolle Ternus the new Municipal Wastewater Compliance and Enforcement staff member. Boulton stated the Enforcement Process would remain on the monthly agenda until Summer 2025 (or later), or when the permanent structure is completed. Boulton stated Reckitt-Mead Johnson would be required to provide written monthly updates to the City Council.

Flotterud stated that he and Kennedy had received estimates on State Bid for a Ford F-250. The base price for gas is \$50,000 while the base price for diesel is \$59,132. Flotterud stated that the ¾ pickup will be 5 years old in 2025. Flotterud stated that the City should be able to sell the current truck for at least \$25,000 with it being purchased on State Bid for \$35,000 in 2020. Flotterud stated that the warranty would soon be up and that maintenance is costly, including \$2,000 for tires. The vehicle has 20,000 miles and is now a liability. Flotterud stated that the City should be buying new trucks and selling old trucks every three years. Flotterud stated that the City could work with potential buyers to choose the accessories to get a truck that the public would want to buy. Flotterud stated that the City would still go through the legal process to sell, but would have a better idea for the desired accessories. Ohr stated that potential buyers do not want the base model

but rather most of the bells and whistles. Flotterud and Kennedy stated that the next pickup would not have to be a ¾ ton. Kennedy stated that the F-550 could pull any trailer. Kennedy stated that the current F-250 was purchased because the 2000 Chevrolet one-ton was the only vehicle that could pull trailers. The City only needs two pickups that can pull heavy trailers. Flotterud stated that the truck purchases should be treated like a lease to always keep a new vehicle around for the lowest cost. Flotterud stated that the City has a great deal in leasing the John Deere Skid Loader. Flotterud stated that the City could pay for the new truck out of the revolving fund loan account that has \$66,000. Flotterud stated that the account could be paid back with the sale of the old truck. Boulton stated that there is a \$25,000 to \$35,000 gap and that this would take cash away. Boulton cautioned that the City Council should consult with the EDA before thinking about spending these funds as they are intended for economic development. Boulton stated that the City does have a street equipment fund which will levy \$45,000 in 2025. Boulton stated that this money and funds from street capital and levy for future street projects are dedicated toward the 2025 street shop rehab. Boulton stated that the truck purchase should go through the capital improvements planning process. The City could make this a priority in 2026 with street capital funds. However, the City would either need to spend cash in 2025 or not complete the street shop rehab project in 2025. Boulton stated that over the next five years the City will be spending

much of the built-up cash to finish out the well house project, paying off planned debt service payments, and future regional sanitary sewer project. Boulton stated that the Council must be careful to keep up cash flow and cash reserves. Boulton stated that the Council may not have the capacity to increase the levy and/or utility rates in the future due to lack of growth. Holmes agreed that trading trucks is a great idea but that it does not fit into the 2025 budget and that spending reserve funds is not wise.

\*Next City Council meeting on 12/9/2024

Adjourn: At 8:26 PM a motion to adjourn was made by Ohr and seconded by Flotterud. Passed 5-0-0.

Signed: Ryan Holmes, Mayor

Attest: Michael Boulton, City Administrator

\*\*\*

## Kenyon City Council Meeting November 12, 2024

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a City Council Meeting was duly held in the City Council chambers at 7:00 p.m. on the 12th day of November 2024. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Henke.

The following members were present: Mayor Doug Henke, Council Members Mary Bailey (left at 7:40 pm), Lee Sjolander, and Kim Helgeson

Absent: Molly Ryan

Also present: Interim Administrator Frank Boyles, Administrative Assistant Holli Gudknecht, Finance Director Whitney Kylo, Engineer Derek Olinger, Attorney Scott Riggs,

(continued on page 29)



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## Kenyon City Council

(continued from page 28)

Public Works Director Wayne Ehrich, Officer Brian Homeier, Officer Josephine Homeier, Police Chief Jeff Sjoblom, Don Kirchmann, Elana Brunner, John Mortensen, Todd Kiefer, Tasha Homeier, Hailee Homeier, Aaron Miller-BCM, Daren Strobel-Kenyon Leader, Pastor DJ Chatelaine-First Lutheran

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### CITIZEN COMMENT

Pastor DJ Chatelaine introduced himself. He is the new pastor at First Lutheran Church. He encouraged the city to let him know if they could partner with the city on any projects.

### ADOPT AGENDA

Addition: / XI / New Business / J / Establish an Exchange Safe Zone in Kenyon

Motion by Bailey seconded by Helgeson to approve the amended agenda. Motion carried 4-0-0.

### CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Helgeson seconded by Bailey to approve the Consent Agenda, which includes payment of check numbers 76562 through 76663; 5181E through 5220E. Motion carried 4-0-0.

### PRESENTATIONS/

### PUBLIC HEARINGS/RECOGNITIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

### Oath of Office for Kenyon Police Officer Josephine Homeier

Chief Sjoblom recited the oath of office for Officer Josephine Homeier. Officer Josephine Homeier introduced herself to the council members.

### ENGINEERING

## 2025 Street and Utility Improvements

Engineer Olinger stated that the design work for the 2025 street and utility improvements is being worked on and should be completed in February.

### 8th Street Development

Engineer Olinger stated that he had attended a meeting with CEDA, City Staff, and a local developer to discuss a potential low density housing development in the city. Issues were identified that could impede a new development. Bolten & Menk could prepare a high-level layout and cost projection for a new development. The EDA recommended having the layout and cost projection completed.

### 8th Street Development Cost Proposal Approval Request

Motion by Henke seconded by Bailey to approve the 8th Street development cost study by Bolten & Menk. Motion carried 4-0-0.

### Pearl Creek & Gates Avenue Utility Improvements

Engineer Olinger stated that the work is now substantially complete. There are still a few repairs needed to close out the contract. Payment #10 includes work completed between September 28 and November 1 and a portion of the retainage that was withheld. The remaining retainage withheld will be paid when all repair items are completed. Aaron Miller, BCM Subcontractor, addressed the remaining items to be completed. They are waiting until the ground is frozen to minimize additional damage.

### Pay Application #10 to BCM Construction

Motion by Bailey second by Helgeson to approve pay request No. 10 to BCM Construction in the amount of \$31,726.22 for work completed through November 1, 2024. Motion carried 4-0-0.

### LEGAL

### OLD BUSINESS NEW BUSINESS

### Canvass 2024 Election Returns and Declare Results

The Council met as the Canvassing Board to canvass the results of November 5, 2024, General Election.

Motion by Helgeson second by Sjolander to approve and declare all 2024 canvassed election results.

Motion carried 4-0-0.

### Goodhue County Sheriff's Department - Communications Subscriber Agreement - with Kenyon PD

Motion by Sjolander seconded by Helgeson to approve the communications subscriber agreement between the Kenyon Police Department and Goodhue County Sheriff's Department.

Motion carried 4-0-0.

### CEDA 2025 Contract

Interim Administrator Boyles stated that the contract with CEDA is up for renewal. The EDA recommended increasing the CEDA contract from one day a week to two days a week for a total annual fee of \$53,580. The increase was requested to accomplish all the work the EDA desires to have done.

### Proposed Increase in Scheduled Hours

Motion by Sjolander seconded by Helgeson to approve the 2025 CEDA contracted services.

Motion carried 4-0-0.

### 2025 Proposed Agreement for Continuation of our City-County Joint-Powers "Agreement for State Building Code Administration"

Interim Administrator Boyles stated that Goodhue County requires the City of Kenyon to approve a yearly agreement to conduct residential and commercial building inspections. The County has done an excellent job conducting inspections for the city. The term of the contract would be for one year starting January 1, 2025.

Motion by Helgeson seconded by Sjolander to approve the 2025 agreement with Goodhue County for State Building Code Administration. Motion carried 3-0-0.

### Resolution 2024-27: Adopting Assessment for Delinquent Utility Bills

Interim Administrator Boyles stated that this resolution would authorize delinquent utility bill amounts to be certified on property taxes.

Motion by Helgeson second by Henke to adopt Resolution 2043-27 adopting assessments for delinquent utility bills. Motion carried 3-0-0.

### Goodhue County Delegation Agreement for Cannabis Retail Registration

Interim Administrator Boyles stated that either the city of Kenyon or Goodhue County could be responsible for the retail registration and compliance checks on cannabis retail businesses. Attorney Riggs recommended deferring this issue until more information was received. He stated that the city would be premature to decide this now since the state has not established the rules yet.

## Update of City of Kenyon Administrative Policy #29 - Pothole Repair

Public Works Supervisor Ehrich stated that the city Pothole Repair policy had recently been updated.

Motion by Sjolander seconded by Henke to adopt updated Administrative Policy #29 - Pothole Repair.

Motion carried 3-0-0.

## Consider Adoption of Administrative Policy #37 - A Policy Relative to Expectations for Members of the City Council, Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Authorities

Interim Administrator Boyles recommended adopting a policy to set meeting attendance standards for members of the city's various boards, committees, commissions, and authorities. The policy would encourage attendance at meetings.

Motion by Sjolander seconded by Helgeson to adopt updated Administrative Policy #37 - Relating to Expectations for Members of the City Council, Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Authorities.

Motion carried 3-0-0.

## Periodic Request for Proposals (RFP) for Selection of Professional Service Firms

Interim Administrator Boyles stated that it is standard practice to periodically send out requests for proposals for selection of professional service firms.

Motion by Sjolander seconded by Helgeson to approve sending out RFPs for professional service firms. Motion carried 3-0-0.

### Safe Zone

Police Chief Sjoblom stated that in the interest of public safety, he would recommend creating a safe exchange zone in Kenyon. This zone would be used for child custody exchanges and swapping of internet purchases. Two parking spaces in the parking lot next to the police department building could be designated for these exchanges and would be monitored by 24-hour video surveillance. The cost of signage would be about \$55.

Motion by Sjolander seconded by Helgeson to designate a safe exchange zone in Kenyon. Motion carried 3-0-0.

### Schedule of Upcoming Meetings

KMU Meeting: Tuesday, November 19 @ 4 p.m.

EDA Meeting: Tuesday, November 26 @ 8 a.m.

Township Fire Contract Meeting: Tuesday, December 3rd @ 6:00 p.m.

Truth in Taxation Public Meeting: Tuesday, December 3rd @ 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission Meeting: Wednesday, December 4 @ 6:00 p.m.

City Council Meeting: Tuesday, December 10 @ 7 p.m.

## COUNCIL AND STAFF GENERAL COMMENTS

Council Member Sjolander thanked all the veterans, election judges, new council members for running, and staff and council that worked on getting a new administrator hired.

Attorney Riggs wished everyone an early Happy Thanksgiving.

Motion by Sjolander seconded by Helgeson to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 pm.

Motion carried 3-0-0.

Holli Gudknecht, Administrative Assistant  
Douglas Henke, Mayor

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

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THEME: SPORTS

ACROSS

1. Combat vehicle
5. Semi
8. \*Biathlon gear, sing.
11. Keiko of "Free Willy"
12. \*Ashi Waza and jugodi sport
13. Audience's approval
15. Tandoori bread
16. Ned Stark's daughter, "Game of Thrones"
17. R'ntgen beams
18. \*Warning track sport
20. Monetary "thank you," pl.
21. Indigo dye shrubs
22. "Arabian Nights" bird
23. Destroyer
26. Danced to certain Polish music
30. Crematorium container
31. One without magic powers in Harry Potter stories
34. Largest volcano in Europe
35. Do nothing (2 words)
37. Singer Yoko
38. Be at the helm
39. Tropical tuber
40. \*Player who delivers in a crucial sports moment
42. Recipe qty.
43. Display proudly (2 words)
45. Smells
47. Lake, in France
48. Clean a spill (2 words)
50. #8 Across, pl.
52. \*Cornerback and direct snap sport
55. Russian pancake
56. Pasta option
57. Go cold turkey
59. \*Reward for multiple sports championships, pl.
60. "Breaking Bad" victim
61. The Beehive State
62. King Kong, e.g.
63. Type of lightbulb, acr.
64. Spooky

DOWN

1. Boatload
2. Riyadh native
3. \*Collegiate sports grp.
4. Topeka native
5. Not urban
6. Short poems of pastoral life
7. \*Hockey score
8. \*Powerful shot in hockey
9. 11th letter of Roman alphabet, pl.
10. Elvis' " \_\_\_\_ Now or Never"
12. White and black stork
13. Glorify
14. \*Gully and deep mid wicket sport
19. Foe
22. Fish eggs
23. Corrodes
24. Heep of "David Copperfield"
25. Preface
26. Scheme
27. Mr. T's TV show "The \_\_\_\_"
28. Olden days constipation treatment
29. \*Bag of nails and baby ton sport
32. \*Eagle and mulligan sport
33. African migrator
36. \*Turkey and split sport
38. Woody perennial
40. Chlorofluorocarbon, abbr.
41. He gets a flag?
44. Reprieve in a desert
46. Not light-transmitting
48. Dots and dashes code
49. Did like goo
50. Women's underskirt
51. Plural of cow, arch.
52. \*Sports transgression
53. Plucked string instrument
54. Pinocchio, e.g.
55. Type of undergarment
58. Olden day "your"





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