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JANUARY 29, 2025

Volume 18 • Issue 2

Announcements

• **OPEN INVITATION:** 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@threeriverscap.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 threeriverscap.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

Elementary School Site in Wanamingo to Close

Dear Kenyon-Wanamingo Families, Staff, and Community Members,

It is with a heavy heart that I share an important decision regarding the future of our

schools. After careful consideration and extensive discussions with stakeholders, the Kenyon-Wanamingo School Board has made the difficult decision to permanently close the elementary site in Wanamingo, effective Fall 2025. This decision was not made lightly and reflects our responsibility to ensure the long-term sustainability and success of our district.

We understand the deep ties many of you have to this site. Generations of students, staff, and families have walked its halls, building memories and traditions that are an integral part of our district's story. The Wanamingo site has been more than just a building—it has been a place where young minds have grown, friendships have formed, and futures have been shaped.

As we move forward, we are committed to making this transition as smooth as possible for our students, families, and staff. The PK-4th grade programming and Knights Kids Daycare will be consolidated into the Kenyon site beginning in Fall 2025. We are actively working on detailed plans to ensure a seamless transition.



Beth Giese
Superintendent
K-W School
District

(continued on page 4)

What's Up at Windy Willows

By Cheri Roshon

Ahhh, winter is here, and the cabin fever epidemic is upon us! Ok, so we live in a place that half the year is cold, so we are used to it, but Cabin Fever is a real thing.

(continued on page 5)



Hot Dish Cook Off and Live Music part of Dennison Flake Out Festival Sat., Feb. 1st



The Dennison Lions Club is planning the 2025 Flake Out Festival & Winter Parade for Saturday, February 1st.

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New Hair Salon Opens in Kenyon



Kenyon has been without a hair salon for a year or so. That all changed last week when the Blank Canvas Hair Haven opened at 514 2nd Street in Kenyon. Hair stylist and owner Gwendolyn Bleess grew up in Wanamingo and saw the opportunity to launch her business in the town.

Gwendolyn took her cosmetology training at Hastings Beauty School in Hastings.

She worked at Sisters Salon and Day Spa in Owatonna for the past eight years. She lives in Kenyon and wanted to provide the town with a great hair salon.

She provides all hair services; cut, color and facial waxing. She also sells Amika hair styling products such as shampoo and conditioners. The salon is open Monday through Friday 9am to 4pm and on evenings and weekends by appointment.



Gwendolyn Bleess

Shop Local for your Valentine's Delights!

By Cheri Roshon

We all know, living in small towns, that "things" are usually cheaper if we go to a larger town to purchase what we need.

But do we factor in the cost of driving to Rochester, Minneapolis, or any of the places that the price of a product may save a buck? Or the time we spend getting there?

(continued on page 4)



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Holy Spirit, Fill Us!

By Pastor Larry Grove
Hauge Free Lutheran Church
Kenyon

A friend of mine recently shared a message that was preached by Charles Haddon Spurgeon in the late 1800's. This message was so thought provoking and inspirational that I have been pondering it this whole week. It has caused me to assess my personal reliance as well as dependence on the Holy Spirit in my walk with Jesus Christ.

God the Father sent His Son to this world as a child to live and dwell with us. This is a truth that is acknowledged and celebrated by us every year at Christmas. As the year passes we also acknowledge and praise God for the gift of redemption that was poured out on all who believe at the cross of Calvary as Christ took the curse of our sins on the tree. We then rejoice at His victory over death as Christ rose to life again and appeared to over 500 people before returning to His Father.

We readily acknowledge the work of the Father and we cannot deny the work of the Son in our life if we have truly been redeemed by His blood. But what about the third person of the Triune God, the Holy Spirit? Why are we so reticent to acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

Jesus, speaking to a crowd at the Festival of Tabernacles, shortly before being arrested and tried before the Sanhedrin, shared this with the people on the last day of the festival. John chapter 7, verses 37-39 says, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

In John 14:16-17, Jesus goes on to tell them more about this Helper. He says, "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you."

In verses 25-26 of the same chapter He goes on to explain even further about the Holy

Spirit by saying, "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

All of these promises from Jesus should encourage us, strengthen us and embolden us to do the work that God has called us to do.

Let us take a look at what Jesus promises us in these few short verses.

1.) Rivers of living water will flow through us. As the Holy Spirit regenerates us, we will

be motivated to share this excitement with those that we come into contact with. It will percolate out of us in an uncontrollable fashion as the joy of knowing Christ fills us with an effervescent fervor.

2.) The Spirit of truth will live in us forever. The veracity of God's Word becomes embedded into our being.

3.) He will bring to remembrance everything that Jesus ever said when we need to have the Words to share. When we feel tongue tied in a situation when the Gospel is

being shared, we can pray and ask the Holy Spirit to bring the things we need to remembrance and He will.

How can we not recognize and praise the work of the third person of the Trinity? He is the one that gives people understanding, that awakens our conscience, that convicts us of sin, and that teaches us to believe and trust the Word of God. He is also the one that empowers us to do things that we cannot even fathom.

(continued on page 3)

AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY Lightening Our Burdens

At that time I said to you, "You are too heavy a burden for me to carry alone."

— Deuteronomy 1:9

Moses, the leader of God's people during their long time of wandering in the desert, learned that he could not carry the heavy burdens of the people on his own. The Israelites had grown in number. Bearing their problems, burdens, and disputes was too much for one person to handle. So he shared the workload with other leaders from among the twelve tribes of Israel, and they developed a system that worked for everyone. (See also Exodus 18.)

New challenges are a part of life, and we cannot keep doing what we are used to if it no longer works. We can talk to a pastor, family members, close friends, or other trusted persons when our burdens are too much for us—emotionally, physically, or spiritually. Many of us today face an overload of situations that are causing anxiety in our lives: family concerns, financial troubles, broken relationships, work dissatisfaction, career pressures, societal issues. Struggling on our own is not healthy, and eventually we need help. The Lord wants us to share one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).

As followers of Jesus, we can make the right choice by lightening our burdens. Jesus invites us to receive rest for our souls (Matthew 11:28-30). We don't have to carry our burdens alone. We can give them to the Lord.

Lord Jesus, thank you for bearing our burdens. We are not alone. You have given us people who love and care for us. Help us to find rest for our souls and strength to carry on. Amen.

DENNISON/VANG LUTHERAN PARISH

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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

301 2nd Avenue, Wanamingo • 824-2155
February 2: 9:00a.m. Sunday School; 9:00a.m. Sacred Space; 10:00a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at TLC
February 5, 12, 19, 26:
Confirmation Class 5-6:30p.m. at TLC
February 9: 9:00a.m. BINGO even for all at TLC basement; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC with Noisy Offering
February 16: 9:00a.m. Sunday School; 9:00a.m. Sacred Space; 10:00a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at TLC
February 23: 9:00a.m. Sunday School; 9:00a.m. Sacred Space; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC

WANAMINGO LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

130 West 3rd St., Wanamingo • 824-2457
www.TrinityWanamingo.org
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February 5, 12, 19, 26:
Confirmation Class 5-6:30p.m. at TLC
February 9: 9:00a.m. BINGO even for all at TLC basement; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC with Noisy Offering
February 16: 9:00a.m. Sunday School; 9:00a.m. Sacred Space; 10:00a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at TLC
February 23: 9:00a.m. Sunday School; 9:00a.m. Sacred Space; 10:00a.m. Worship at TLC

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Rob Edwards, Pastor
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10:30a.m. Worship Service

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website: fickenyon.org
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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
2010 Jefferson Rd, Northfield - Sunday 10:30a.m.
507-259-2644
Wanamingo - Wednesday 7:00p.m.

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(Wheeling Twp) 19086 Jacob Avenue, Faribault
Gary Liker, Pastor • 507-330-0025
www.stjohnsunitedchurchofchrist.info
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Sunday School 10:15 am

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Sunday Worship 10:00a.m.
with lunch following

LANDS LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

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www.landslutheran.com
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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: holdendalesecretary@gmail.com
Worship schedule found at:
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

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Deacon Newell McGee
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Shop Local for your Valentine's Delights!

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Or, most importantly, how our local friends and neighbors are doing their part to have available the things we

need to have for our daily living without driving to another town?

Starting a business in a small town is a gamble. There are less people to buy from us, and maybe not such a wide variety in the things we can stock. But most of the businesses around these parts are willing to try their best to find what you want, and at a competitive price. Sure, you can go online and find almost anything these days, but you will also spend time to find what you want, can't ask any questions, and oh yeah....pay for shipping and handling. And as I have found out recently, you may not get the product that was advertised. And just TRY to get your money back! In most cases, that won't happen.

I believe the people in this area are honest, friendly, and willing to meet you halfway to

make a deal. And look around! We have bakeries, clothing stores, gift shops, and some of the best restaurants around. Gift certificates are an easy way to gift the ones you love! You can purchase everything from guns to tires. Or cookies to massages. Even flowers to liquor. Perhaps your mom would like a gift certificate for her house to be cleaned? Or your father needs some hunting supplies? Grandma and grandpa could use a gift certificate to a restaurant so they can have a night out, and not have to cook. How about a round of golf, or a goat yoga class at Windy Willow Adventures? And jewelry! Who wouldn't like the gift of bling? A day at the spa with a massage, a foot bath and a facial, all topped off with a new hair style? All these things can be found near you, and the people who sell them to you stand by their products, and are proud to be able to sell them to you.

So, I invite you to sit down and make a list of the people you wish to gift this Valentine's

Day, and shop local! Save time and money, and get the perfect gift for the ones you love!

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Elementary School Site in Wanamingo to Close

(continued from page 1)

We recognize that this news may bring mixed emotions. While there is sadness in saying goodbye to the Wanamingo site, there is also a resolve to focus our resources on strengthening educational opportunities for all Kenyon-Wanamingo students. Our theme for this school year, Igniting Potential, Inspiring Excellence, reminds us that change, though challenging, can be a spark for growth and innovation.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to our district. Your partnership is essential as we navigate this transition and continue to provide an exceptional educational experience for our students. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions, concerns, or ideas. Together, we will honor our past while embracing the future with courage and determination.

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KENYON ROSE FEST 2025 BUTTON DESIGN CONTEST



The Kenyon Rose Fest Committee is searching for the 2025 Rose Fest Button design.

*Please submit your designs by March 2nd, 2025

*Please submit the design to City Hall or send it to info@cityofkenyon.com

*One design will be chosen to represent Rose Fest 2025 on March 14th, 2025

*Must be a citizen of Kenyon to participate, open to all ages



KENYON-WANAMINGO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS of the WEEK



NOBLE KNIGHTS OF THE WEEK FOR JANUARY 17, 2025

Front Row: Ethan Piper, KG, Mrs. Katie Valek; Eden Luedtke, Gr. 1, Mrs. Katie Benbrooks; Nola Otte, Gr. 1, Mr. Tony Donkers; Rory Hanson, Gr. 2, Mrs. Deb Hinrichs. Back Row: Melissa Binns-Sawaneh, Gr. 2, Mrs. Megan Jordan; Riley Falenschek, Gr. 3, Ms. Val Ashland; Evelyn Cacho Chable, Gr. 3, Mrs. Sandy Bohaty; Natalie Bauer, Gr. 4, Mrs. Chloe Gohman; Aspen Amiot, Gr. 4, Ms. Rhonda Thesing

What's Up at Windy Willows

(continued from page 1)

Unable to get out as much when the temperatures dip below freezing, there is only so much you can do in the house. I know some folks love to be outdoors in this cold, but I am not one of them.

I prefer the warmth of my own home, and going out looking for new and fun things to

do. One place I love going to is Windy Willow Farm Adventures. Located at 9748 110th St. E, Northfield, it is not far from Dennison, and once you get there, you will be greeted by humans and animals, all of which are friendly!

This winter, Colleen and the crew have come up with some pretty fun and unique classes for you to not only enjoy, but come away with a handmade treasure to keep or to gift to someone special. On top of the classes, there is a very nice collection of handmade gifts for everyone on your list. You can get farm fresh eggs, baked goods, jewelry, coffee cups and so much more!

Some of the classes coming up are:

Glass Mosaic Class where you will pick one of 3 projects to make with glass. Class part 1 is on Feb. 8 at 1 pm, and Class part 2



is Feb. 15th at 4:30 pm.

Next up is Mandala Rock Painting on Feb 9th at 1:30 pm

Bunny Bonanza Come and play with the bunnies! A very popular event, bring the whole family and immerse your self in some bunny fun from 10 am to 4 pm on Feb 15th & 16th!

And the most fun class ever...GOAT YOGA! There will be about 15 classes for this very popular class, so go to the website

and get signed up for this or any other classes happening through the winter!

Who says winter can't be fun??? For more information, shoot them an email at windy-willowfarmadventure@gmail.com, or visit the website to learn more about this incredibly fun place to play!!! And please pass this along to any of your peeps who are interested in turning a cold Minnesota winter into a really fun adventure!! See you there!

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Ann Traxler
Attorney

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Enter online by e-mailing your name and phone number to:
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Six winners will be selected on February 4, 2025 and you may pick up your prize on February 12th.

KENYON • WANAMINGO
Messenger

The Savvy Senior Are You at Risk for Developing Glaucoma?



By Jim Miller

What can you tell me about the eye disease glaucoma? My older brother was recently diagnosed with it and lost some of his vision, but never had a clue anything was wrong. Could I be at risk too?

--Stressed Sibling

Dear Stressed,

Yes! Having an immediate family member with glaucoma significantly increases your risks of developing it, but there are other risk factors you need to be aware of too. Here's what you should know.

What is Glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that can

damage the optic nerve and cause vision loss and blindness if it's not treated. This typically happens because the fluids in the eye don't drain properly, causing increased pressure in the eyeball.

But the scary thing about glaucoma is that with no early warning signs or pain, most people that have it don't realize it until their vision begins to deteriorate.

While there are two main types of glaucoma, the most common form that typically affects older adults is called open-angle glaucoma. This disease develops very slowly when the eye's drainage canals become clogged over time, leading to blind spots in the peripheral or side vision. By the time you notice it, the permanent damage is already done.

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Are You at Risk?

It's estimated that more than 3 million Americans have glaucoma today, but that number is expected to surge to more than 6.3 million by 2050. If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you're at increased risk of developing it.

Are you African American, Hispanic/Latino American or Asian American?

Are you over age 60?

Do you have an immediate family member with glaucoma?

Do you have diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, migraines or have extreme nearsightedness or farsightedness?

Have you had a past eye injury?

Have you used corticosteroids (for example, eye drops, pills, inhalers, and creams) for long periods of time?

What to Do

Early detection is the key to guard-

ing against glaucoma. So, if you're age 40 or older and have any of the previously mentioned risk factors, especially if you're African American, you need to get a comprehensive eye examination every 18 to 24 months. Or, if you notice some loss of peripheral vision, get to the eye doctor right away.

If you're a Medicare beneficiary, annual eye examinations are covered for those at high risk for glaucoma. Or if you don't have vision coverage, contact EyeCare America, a national public service program that provides free glaucoma eye exams through a pool of more than 4,600 volunteer ophthalmologists. Visit AAO.org/eyecare-america or call 877-887-6327 to learn more.

While there's currently no cure for glaucoma, most cases can be treated with prescription eye drops, which reduce eye pressure and can prevent further vision loss.

Kenyon we are here for **you**.

Try our evening hours.

Monday: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Wednesday: Closed

Thursday: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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Talking Winter Injuries with U of M

By University of Minnesota Medical School

Wintertime in Minnesota brings freezing temperatures, slippery conditions and an increase in winter-related injuries. Mahmood Gharib, MD, with the University of Minnesota Medical School and M Health Fairview, talks about common winter injuries and how to avoid them.

Q: How can you reduce the risk of falls on icy surfaces?

Dr. Gharib: Slips on icy sidewalks, driveways and roads often lead to fractures, sprains and bruises. A few simple precautions can go a long way in preventing falls, such as walking like a penguin with slow, flat-footed steps and a wide stance to maintain balance. Be especially cautious around areas prone to black ice, such as near drains and downspouts. Stick to designated sidewalks and avoid shortcuts through grass or other untreated surfaces.

Q: How can I protect myself from injuries related to shoveling?

Dr. Gharib: Cold weather tightens muscles, increasing the risk of strains. Shoveling snow

is a common culprit for these injuries if done without proper technique. Make sure to dress warmly, use ergonomic shovels and clear snow early and often during storms to avoid back strain. Push snow instead of lifting it, and bend at your hips and knees. If the snow is heavy or you're not physically up to the task, don't hesitate to ask for help or hire a professional for snow removal.

Q: What extra precautions are important for winter sports?

Dr. Gharib: Winter activities like skiing, snowboarding and ice skating can result in fractures, sprains, and even concussions if proper precautions aren't taken. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

Pay attention to snow and weather conditions and stick to designated areas that are safe and appropriate for these activities.

Always wear protective gear, including helmets. Helmets with a multi-directional impact protection system (MIPS) offer extra protection.

Avoid areas close to roads, fences or densely populated trees.

Sled feet-first and ensure children are supervised by adults.

Learn how to safely adjust your speed and technique to avoid collisions and falls.

Also, remember that prolonged exposure to freezing temperatures can lead to hypothermia and frostbite, both of which can be serious if not addressed promptly.

Q: How serious are spinal and head injuries?

Dr. Gharib: Spinal and head injuries should not be taken lightly. Whether mild or severe, these types of injuries need immediate atten-



Getty Images

tion. For head injuries, the symptoms can range from mild concussions with headaches to severe traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) that could cause paralysis. It's critical to seek medical help right away if someone loses consciousness or has persistent symptoms. Spinal injuries, particularly those involving the spinal cord, can lead to significant impairments. Timely treatment is key to minimizing long-term damage, and some cases may even require surgery and ongoing rehabilitation.

Q: How does your research support a healthier Minnesota?

Dr. Gharib: My research at the University of Minnesota is centered on advancing education and expanding interventional pain management options for patients in need. By contributing to publications and staying in-

involved in the latest studies, I aim to develop and share innovative, evidence-based treatments for spine and musculoskeletal-related conditions. This work not only enhances my ability to offer patients tailored, minimally invasive options but also helps educate others in the medical community. Ultimately, it's about empowering patients with effective solutions that alleviate pain, improve function, and restore their quality of life.

Dr. Mahmood Gharib is the medical director of the Spine Health Program and associate division director in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Minnesota Medical School and M Health Fairview. He specializes in rehabilitation medicine, helping patients restore function and improve their quality of life.

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Hot Dish Cook Off and Live Music part of Dennison Flake Out Festival Sat., Feb. 1st

(continued from page 1)

The club is holding a raffle in conjunction with the days events to raise funds to support Lions Clubs activities, support other area non-profit entities and those in need, which the club donates to and supports throughout the year.

A \$500 1st Prize, plus other cash and prizes will be given away. Winner will be announced around 9 PM Saturday night at Fireside Lounge.

(Need Not Be Present To Win).

Raffle tickets are available now, and can be purchased at 625 Bar & Grill, Dennison Depot, Fireside Lounge, Heritage Bank, or any Lions Club Member. They Make a Great Christmas Gift too!

The Annual Lighted Parade will take place at 6:30 PM, and anyone can participate. A Cash Prize will be given to the best float.

Other returning favorites include Euchre at Fireside Saturday morning, with 100% Prize Payout. Designer Purse & Gift Card Bingo at City Hall in the afternoon.

New this year, Cook up your best HOT DISH recipe and bring it down to city hall for judging, with a cash prize for 1st and 2nd place. Live music will also be a part of the



The Devney Brothers

evening festivities, with Melissa Schultz at 625 beginning at 6 PM and The Devney Brothers returning to entertain at the Fireside beginning at 8 PM

If you have any questions, contact Lion President Diane at 612-532-0268. Check out the full schedule in this issue of the Messenger.

Do You Have an Announcement?

Email: hometownmessenger@gmail.com

Flake Out Festival

..EUCHRE..

TOURNAMENT

Saturday, February 1, 2025

9:00 a.m.

at

Fireside on the Patio

Bring partner if possible, not required.

Questions? Contact Jen at 507-649-0602.

\$2000 Team Entry

100% Payout

FLAKE OUT Festival

& WINTER PARADE

DENNISON, MN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2025

9:00 AM **Euchre at Fireside on the Patio, 100% Payout**
Bring partner if possible, not required. \$20 team entry. Questions contact Jen at 507-649-0602.

HOT DISH COOKOFF
\$5.00/entry. Tasters will pay \$5.00 to taste all entries/vote.
12:00 PM Bring Entry to City Hall • 12:30 PM-1:30 PM Tasting/Voting
2:00 PM Hot Dish Winner Announced (1st & 2nd Place Payout)

2:00 PM **Kickball Tournament** Sign up at 625 Bar & Grill

4:00 PM **Designer Purse & Gift Card Bingo at City Hall**
\$30/packet, 10 games, designer purses and \$150 gift card packages

6:00 PM **LIVE MUSIC from Melissa Schultz at 625 Bar & Grill**

6:30 PM **11th Annual Denni Dazzle Parade \$150.00 Prize for Best Float!**
Hosted by the Dennison Lions. Call or text Diane at 612-532-0268

8:00 PM **LIVE MUSIC AT THE FIRESIDE "The Devney Brothers"**

9:00 PM **Raffle Winners Announced at Fireside**

Flake Out Festival Raffle Saturday, February 1

Buy a Raffle Ticket from any Lions Member, Fireside Lounge, Dennison Depot Gas Station, 625 Bar & Grill or Heritage Bank in Dennison for \$5.00 for your chance to win!

Grand Prize \$500.00 Cash!
2nd Prize \$250 Cash • 3rd Prize \$100 Cash

Plus Many Additional Prizes from Local Area Businesses!

SPONSORED BY DENNISON LIONS CLUB CHARITABLE GAMBLING PERMIT #2762. MUST BE 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER.

1st Prize \$500!

FLAKE OUT Festival

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2025

Buy a Raffle Ticket from any Lions Member, Fireside Lounge, Dennison Depot Gas Station, 625 Bar & Grill or Heritage Bank in Dennison for \$5.00 for your chance to win!

Grand Prize \$500.00 Cash!

2nd Prize - \$250 Cash • 3rd Prize - \$100 Cash
Plus Many Additional Prizes from Local Area Businesses

Raffle Drawing held at 9p.m. at the Fireside Lounge. Need not be present to win. Winner is responsible for any taxes or fees. Complete list of additional prizes available upon request.
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Multigenerational Farm Transition Retreats Available for Farmers

Events are free of charge and held in three different locations

Multigenerational Farm Transition Retreats are available for Minnesota farmers considering farm transition or succession plans. These retreats are offered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) in partnership with the University of Minnesota (UMN) Extension, and the Southern Agricultural Center for Excellence.

Attendees will be guided through hands-on planning and discussion on farm transition for the whole farm family; all generations actively involved in the farm are encouraged to attend. Topics covered in detail will include family and business goals, job responsibilities, financial needs of farm and families, inheritance considerations, and mechanisms of transfer.

These events are free of charge and are being held in three different locations; farmers can choose the one most convenient for them. Attendees should plan on attending both days.



Mankato

Friday, February 21, 5 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

**Saturday, February 22,
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

St. Cloud

Friday, March 7, 5 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 8, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Rochester

Friday, March 21, 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

**Saturday, March 22,
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

Registration is available online; the event address and further meeting details will be provided in the registration confirmation.

Educational resources on farm transition and estate planning are available on the UMN Extension website. For questions or comments contact Nathan Hulinsky at huli0013@umn.edu or 218-828-2680.

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What Sets Top Ag Producers Apart?

By Garen Paulson,
U of MN Extension educator,
ag business management

In agriculture, the difference between average and top producers isn't always dramatic leaps but often small, consistent improvements that add up to big results. These elite farmers, often referred to as "5 Percenters" by Dr. David Kohl, set themselves apart by excelling in key areas of efficiency, financial management, planning, and communication. Here's a closer look at what makes them leaders in their field.

They prioritize efficiency

Efficiency is a hallmark of top producers. They excel at producing high yields while keeping costs low, leveraging their knowledge and skill to ensure productivity without waste.

These producers:

Grow reliable crops year in and year out – Their "green thumb" ensures consistently strong yields.

Master the art of marketing – They don't aim to hit market peaks but are adept at forward marketing, tracking trends, and seizing opportunities to stay competitive.

Invest wisely – They focus on inputs with the best returns, avoiding wasteful spending.

Operate just a little better than their peers –

By consistently improving efficiency by even 5%, they achieve better cost structures and significantly higher profits over time

Research and records show that top producers consistently achieve lower production costs while maintaining higher yields. This translates into better profitability and liquidity. Interestingly, efficiency often proves more critical than farm size, with smaller operations thriving thanks to precise management and attention to detail.

They regularly analyze finances

Top producers don't leave financial outcomes to chance. They rely on data to guide decisions, tracking key performance indicators to understand past performance, current standing, and future goals.

These farmers use both internal benchmarking (against their own historical performance) and external benchmarking (against peers) to identify areas for improvement.

Their financial discipline extends to:

Outstanding bookkeeping – Accurate, up-to-date records enable precise financial analysis.

Tracking family living costs – By aligning living expenses with farm and non-farm income, they maintain financial stability.

This financial awareness helps them adapt to market trends and control costs, reinforcing their position at the top.

They create detailed plans and budgets

Budgeting is another area where top producers excel. They develop detailed annual budgets that project revenues, costs, and cash flows, using these forecasts to make informed decisions.

Key practices include:

Identifying break-even points – Knowing



the profitability thresholds of each enterprise helps guide pricing and marketing strategies.

Focusing on long-term goals – Rather than chasing short-term tax benefits, they consider whether investments, such as new machinery, will drive sustained profitability.

This forward-looking approach ensures that decisions are not only financially sound but also aligned with overarching goals.

They communicate well and often

Effective communication is crucial for managing modern farms, where relationships with suppliers, buyers, and landlords have evolved.

Top producers:

Hold regular team meetings – These go beyond daily tasks, fostering alignment, adaptability, and morale while valuing input from all team members.

Build relationships – Whether negotiating fertilizer contracts or selling grain, they navigate a landscape where personal ties may no longer play a central role.

For example, today's grain buyer might be located two counties away, or landlords may be absentee owners unfamiliar with farming. Clear, professional communication is critical in maintaining these relationships.

They are resilient

Agriculture's inherent cycles—tight margins and boom periods—test the resilience of producers. Top managers stay grounded during lean times and maximize opportunities in prosperous periods by focusing on these key factors.

Their consistent efforts in efficiency, financial management, planning, and communication enable them to weather challenges and thrive over the long term.

By striving for continuous improvement in these areas, any producer can begin to close the gap and step into the ranks of the 5 Percenters. The rewards? Greater profitability, resilience, and peace of mind in an ever-changing agricultural landscape.

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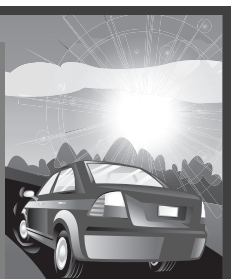
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Minnesota Produce Farmers Asked to Complete 2025 Grower Questionnaire

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is calling on produce farmers who have never completed the Grower Questionnaire, or who have not filled it out since 2022, to complete the 2025 edition.

Completing this questionnaire helps farmers identify the federal food safety requirements that apply to their operations and gain access to additional support to improve food safety practices on their farms. By participating, growers contribute to a more accurate picture of Minnesota's produce sector, allowing the MDA to provide tailored resources and guidance.

"The Grower Questionnaire helps us stay informed about Minnesota's evolving produce industry and allows us to support farms in improving food safety practices and keeping local produce safe for consumers," said Assistant Commissioner Patrice Bailey.

Farmers who complete the Grower Questionnaire may also be eligible for the Produce Safety Mini-Grant, which offers up to \$800 in reimbursements for on-farm food safety im-

provements. Applications for the 2025 Mini-Grant will be available later this winter.

The Grower Questionnaire should be filled out once every three years by each produce farm. Farm contact and location information collected through the questionnaire are considered private and confidential and will not be shared with the public. General farm statistics are compiled and shared out publicly.

If growers choose not to complete the questionnaire, the MDA Produce Safety Program will reach out directly to discuss potential inspection requirements.

Farmers may complete the 2025 MDA Grower Questionnaire online.

Farmers can contact the MDA Produce Safety Program at 651-539-3648 or email producesafety.mda@state.mn.us to request a paper copy of the questionnaire, or for more information.



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Native Plants 101

Workshop

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH, 2025

9 AM - 11 AM

Straight River Room

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LEARN ABOUT:

Minnesota Native Plants

Learn about the benefits, limitations, ecological information and identifying factors for some of our Minnesota native plants. There will also be some preserved native species present to see in person!

Native Plant Projects

Types of native plant projects, where or how to start them, available cost-share and more!



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Learn more about this event at:
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Native Plants 101 Workshop

Join us for a workshop on Minnesota Native Plants! We will go over some of the basics of native plants, different types of plantings and available cost-share programs that can help with these projects.

Native Plants 101 Workshop

Time & Location: Feb 08, 2025, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Straight River Room, 1900 Fairgrounds Dr, Faribault, MN 55021, USA

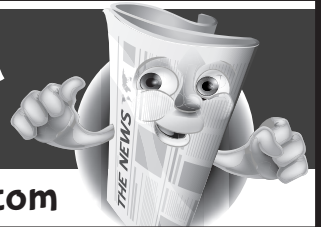
About The Event

Join us on Saturday, February 8th, 2025, from 9 - 11 am to learn about some Minnesota Native Plants. Learn about the benefits, limitations, ecological information and identifying factors of some of our Minnesota native plants. There will also have some preserved native species present to see in person! We will also go over some common native plant projects, ways to start them and available cost-share to help with these projects.

To RSVP to this event, please call or email Trevor Rudenick at (507) 357-8556 or trevor.rudenick@lesueurcounty.gov.

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& WINTER PARADE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2025

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\$5.00/entry. Tasters will pay \$5.00 to taste all entries/vote.

12:00 PM Bring Entry to City Hall

12:30 PM-1:30 PM Tasting/Voting

2:00 PM Hot Dish Winner Announced

(1st & 2nd Place Payout)

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