



# Goodhue-Bellechester Messenger

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## No Snow but A Street Full of Snowmobiles



More than 30 snowmobiles of all ages, makes and models lined both sides of the street alongside the Corner Bar on a snowless February 1st.

(continued on page 8)

## Schwartau Elected to Honorary Life Membership in the Minnesota State Agricultural Society

St. Paul, Minn. – At its 166th annual meeting, the Minnesota State Agricultural Society board, Chuck Schwartau of Goodhue, Minn., was elected to honorary life membership in

the Society. Schwartau began his involvement with the Minnesota State Fair in 1963 as a youngster participating in the 4-H swine competition.

(continued on page 11)

## Supporting Our Local FFA Chapters & Celebrating National FFA Week February 15 - 22, 2025



Starting in 1948, the National FFA Board of Directors designated a weeklong tradition to recognize George Washington's example and legacy as a leader and farmer.

For the past 76 years, FFA members across the country have taken part in agricultural, leadership and service-based activities during National FFA Week.

(continued on page 7)



Chuck Schwartau accepting his honorary life membership to the Minnesota State Agricultural Society board

## Announcements

- **Belvidere Happy-Go-Luckies 4-H Club** (usually) meets the first Monday of each month at 7p.m. at St. Peter's Church, rural Goodhue. New members are always welcome! Contact club leader Michelle Benrud at 651-923-5247 for more information.

- **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@threeiverscap.org

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



Marc and Brittany Huneke with daughters Ariella and Otilie. The Huneke family purchased the former St. Luke's Church building and began renovations one year ago. They recently added a son, Anton to their family and hosted an open house to view the 2 apartments constructed in the church basement.

## Former Church Becomes Goodhue Sanctuary

By Beth Brekke

Members of the Goodhue community curious about the renovation of the former St. Luke's Church building were treated to an open house Sunday, January 12, 2025. The event showcased the two newly created apartments in the basement. Owners, Marc and Brittany Huneke were on hand to answer questions about the property they have named The Goodhue Sanctuary.

(continued on page 9)

## Bellechester Tavern Expands Space



By Beth Brekke

The Bellechester Tavern, located at 616 Main Street, recently opened an expanded customer area inside the bar.

(continued on page 5)

# GOODHUE APPRECIATION DAY

## Friday, February 21st from 11:00am-2:00pm

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# Pastors Corner



By Pastor Eric Hanson,  
St. Luke Lutheran Church

I read a lot of books about God, Jesus, faith, pretty much anything theological I can get my hands on. I know, that's a shocker coming from a pastor, right? Because of all that reading though, it's hard for me sometimes to find brand-new ideas about God. That is not to say that I never find brand-new ideas about God in my reading, I just find them a lot less than I used to before I had a plethora of books in my background. I recently read a book called "The Source" by James Michener. I won't bore you with the details of the whole book, but Michener did share a brand-new idea about God I had never heard before.

Michener asserts that the word "Hebrew" comes from an ancient middle eastern word, "Haribu." (pronounced harry-boo). I can't remember what language Michener said "Haribu" comes from, but it was one of the languages of the ancient middle east that was alive and well during biblical times. The word "Haribu" he says, meant "donkey driver" or "animal driver." In other words, the Hebrews were called "Hebrews" because they were a nomadic tribe that made their living driving animals to and fro across middle eastern deserts, always searching for better pasture, and never making permanent homes in one place.

Michener then makes the claim that God chose these "Haribus" (Hebrews) as the nation through which He'd reveal Himself to the world because out of all the tribes of the middle east, they were the most open to believing the simple fact that God is one. Why were they open to that fact? Because they were nomads, constantly moving around, rarely making their camps in the same place twice. In all other ancient middle eastern cultures, gods were always tied to static locations. There was a god of that mountain, and a god of that river, and a god of that field, and a god of that hill. The Edomites had a god in their country, and the Hittites had a god in their country. If you left your mountain or river or farm or country, your god couldn't go with you because the gods were tied to static locations. For the nomadic Hebrews, however, such ways of thinking were impos-

sible. They had to be open to one God who was everywhere because they went everywhere. And so, according to Michener, of all the tribes in all the world who might be open to experiencing revelation from the One, True God who exists in all things, in all places, and at all times—who is in the places they go before they get there—the "Haribus" (Hebrews) were likely the tribe most open to such revelation.

How about that? God may have chosen the "Haribus" (Hebrews) simply because they moved around a lot.

I don't know how you react to that thought, but for me, it is both anticlimactic and delightful. Its anticlimactic because I'd expect more from God. Wouldn't he want the best nation? Wouldn't he want the most morally superior nation? Wouldn't he want the mightiest nation? The wisest nation? Nope. He chose the nation that... moved around a lot.

But it's a delightful thought too. Who knows what incredibly arbitrary, inconsequential, seemingly unimportant attribute of our own selves might just fit perfectly into some grand scheme God has for the world. That need to keep all the food on your plate from touching because mixing food items is gross—that might someday reveal a grand insight into the nature of God himself. That tendency to fill the gas tank right after it gets below the halfway mark—as if hitting empty breaks some unspoken 11th commandment—that quirk might one day open up truths about

God that folks riding on empty will never understand.

At the very least, Michener's insight tells me that God loves quirky people, and our quirks might be telescopes through which we peer into the Divine. At the most, Michener's insights tell me that God is paying attention to the tiniest, most arbitrary details of our lives & wondering how He can use even our arbitrary oddities as vehicles into our deeper selves.

Thank God for new insights and the people that bring them.

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Father Thomas McCabe • [www.holytrinitygoodhue.org](http://www.holytrinitygoodhue.org)  
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Parish Office Hours, Mon.: 9:00AM - 2:00PM  
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Sat.: 4:45PM - 5:20PM Confession, 5:30PM Holy Mass (Sunday vigil)  
Tues.: 8:00AM Holy Mass  
Wed.: 8:00AM Holy Mass, 9:00AM - 2:00PM Eucharistic Adoration  
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Mon.: 8:00AM Holy Mass, 6:30PM - 9:00PM Eucharistic Adoration  
Rosary said 25 minutes before Holy Mass  
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Sun.: 10:30AM Holy Mass  
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Sunday Morning Worship 8:30a.m. with communion on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.  
Sunday School at 9:30a.m., Sunday Bible Study at 9:45a.m., Confirmation Class 5:45 on Wednesday at St Peter's.  
8:30a.m. Quilting and Bible Study on Wednesday at St Peter's, and 10:30a.m. Midweek Bible Study on Thursday at St Peter's.

### AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY Finish Well!

*No one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel. — Deuteronomy 34:12*

Moses remained committed to the Lord until the very end of his life. He was a child of God, a diligent leader of God's people, a prophet, and much more. Moses is described as a "man of God" and a "servant of the Lord" in the closing chapters of Deuteronomy. He knew who he was and whose he was. That makes a difference in one's life. Moses was faithful. Though he was certainly not perfect, Moses finished well.

When we think about finishing well, we realize it is not a last-minute commitment. We can stay focused even when we must take detours and alter our plans. When we fall, we get up with the Lord's help. When things do not go the way we thought they would, we cannot allow our feelings and thoughts to get in the way of doing God's will. We know we depend on the Lord in all things, and we stand firm in his strength.

When our time comes to leave our home on earth to go to our eternal home in heaven (unless Jesus returns before then), we want to say, "I have fought the good fight . . . I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7). And we want to hear our Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matthew 25:21).

*Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, help me to be fully committed to doing your will until the very end of my life. May you be glorified! Amen.*

### ST. JOHN'S EV. LUTHERAN (WELS)

Pastor Randall Kuznicki  
Minneola Twp. Co. Rd. 7, rural Zumbrota  
Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.; Communion 3rd Sunday  
Sunday School and Bible Studies (Adult & Teen) 11:00a.m.

### ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD

Pastor Steven Frentz  
28961 365th St., Goodhue  
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10:30a.m. Sunday Worship  
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Pastor Robbin Robbert  
36620 Co. 4 Blvd., Goodhue • 651-923-4773  
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### ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)

Pastor Eric Hanson  
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8:30a.m. Sunday School  
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6:45p.m. Wednesday Worship  
[www.stlukegoodhue.org](http://www.stlukegoodhue.org)

### ST. PETER'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH (WELS)

Pastor Martin Weigand  
702 West Third Ave., Goodhue, MN • 715-441-5086  
Sunday Morning Worship 10:45a.m. with communion on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.  
Sunday School at 9:30a.m. at Grace.  
Sunday Bible Study at 9:30a.m., Confirmation Class 5:45p.m. on Wednesday, 8:30a.m. Quilting and Bible Study on Wednesday, and 10:30a.m. Midweek Bible Class on Thursday.





# Obituaries

February 5, 2025

- GOODHUE-BELLECHESTER MESSENGER -

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## Donald “aka Donnie or Swannie” Clarence Swanson

Donald “aka Donnie or Swannie” Clarence Swanson, 94, passed away peacefully at home Thursday, January 23, 2025, surrounded by the love and care of family. Donnie was born November 3, 1930, in Goodhue, MN to Bennett and Frances (Bremer) Swanson. They moved to Red Wing when he was 9, and he graduated from Red Wing Central High School in 1948. Swannie married Virginia “Ginger” Isensee on February 10, 1951. They were inseparable until she passed away Thanksgiving morning 1999, apart from Swannie’s time overseas serving in the Army during the Korean War 1952-53. He worked at Quandt’s Bakery, later known as Pirius Bakery, until serving in the Army. Upon his return, he worked as a mail carrier at the Red Wing Post Office. He later found his life-long career, driving motor coach at Lee Line for 62 years, traveling all states except Hawaii. He was proud to travel with the St. Olaf Choir over 25 of those years. Baseball was his game. He was a left-handed pitcher, playing for the Red Wing Scarlets and Aces and the Bay City Bombers in the 50’s & 60’s (including pitching the first game



played under lights at the Ath) and was inducted into the Red Wing Baseball Hall of Fame in 2008. He and Ginger enjoyed traveling together, escorting tours and spending time on the river on their boat, the ‘Ginger Snap’. He was a member of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, American Legion Post 54, and VFW Post 1218. In 2022, he was honored to travel to Washington D.C. with fellow veterans through Honor Flight Twin Cities and also raised the flag at a Twins Game at Target Field. He enjoyed spending time with family and friends, and particularly enjoyed the friendships and camaraderie in his morning Randy’s coffee group and ‘Old Farts’ Wiederholt’s group.

Swannie is survived by daughters Susan (Jerry) Jensen and Kim (John) Key; 4 grandchildren, Jamie (Brad) Anthony, Kristi (Matt) Schonrock, Justin Key, Jason (Kayla) Key; 5 great-grandchildren, Madelyn Anthony, and Mason, Karter, Kody, and McKoy Schonrock. Swannie is preceded in death by his wife, parents, siblings Harley (Beverly) Swanson and Elaine (Maynard) Adams.

A memorial Service will be held on Monday, February 10, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church with visitation from 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. prior to the service at church. Burial will follow the service at Oakwood Cemetery with military honors.

## Abram (Abe) Alvin Baerg

Abram (Abe) Alvin Baerg, 84, of Goodhue, went to be with his Heavenly Father on Tuesday, January 14, 2025. He was born on July 28, 1940, in Delft, Minnesota to Alvin and Anna (Krause) Baerg. He attended schools in Delft and graduated from Mountain Lake High School. For a few years he worked at the Delft Elevator then moved to Minneapolis where he worked in maintenance at Golden Valley Health Center and met his wife.

On June 6, 1964, he was united in marriage to Marilyn Hopper. Abe then became employed as a maintenance engineer in the First Bank Building in Minneapolis for 40 years under various employers. They lived in Crystal and Golden Valley, MN until they both retired. Following retirement, he and Marilyn moved to Wadena where he oversaw the construction of their new home on a 10-acre hobby farm. The land allowed him to have a huge garden and use his tractor to maintain the property. In 2016, they relocated to Goodhue to be closer to their son, Mike.

Faith and family were very important to Abe. Throughout his life he was an active member in the Baptist churches he attended. Abe supported many conservative political candidates in addition to making generous donations to various charities, his local church, and missionaries. He regularly at-

tended family and high school reunions over the years.

In his spare time, Abe loved listening to classical music, especially Mozart and Handel’s Messiah. He was good at most home repairs and loved to fix things. Abe spent his down time doing puzzles, gardening, camping, hunting, and fishing. He loved repeating jokes and puns he heard or found in Reader’s Digest. He believed in hoping for the best, preparing for the worst, and leaving the rest in God’s hands.

Abe is survived by his loving wife of 60 years: Marilyn; three children: Mike Baerg, Brad (Kimberly) Baerg and Val Baerg (Robert Rowe); three grandchildren: Jasmine, Zakary and Nickolas (aka “Enby”); four sisters: Mary Jones, Esther (Marshall) Thompson, Betty (Norman) Thompson and Nina (Ron) Wall along with many beloved nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, brother-in-law, Charlie Jones, and brother and sister-in-law, Bill and Lorraine Weise.

Visitation began at 10 am with the funeral service at 11 am on Thursday, January 30, 2025, at Cornerstone Baptist Church - 857 Rolling View LN SE in Pine Island. Pastor Tim Graham officiated. The burial was at Glen Haven Memorial Gardens in Crystal, MN. Memorials are preferred to the Cornerstone Baptist Church GIVE — Cornerstone Baptist Church or Central Seminary <https://centralseminary.edu/give/>

Arrangements are by the Mahn Family Funeral Home, Bodelson-Mahn Chapel in Red Wing.

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Four black and white photographs showing different stages of septic system installation and excavation work. The top-left photo shows a large pit being dug. The top-right photo shows a long trench being laid out. The bottom-left photo shows a completed septic line with a cover. The bottom-right photo shows a large excavator working on a septic system.

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## Choosing a Camp: A Simple Guide for Parents



By Brian Kettering, Director of Day  
Camps at Camp Victory  
Zumbro Falls, MN

Living in the age of information, it can feel like options for everything are abundant, perhaps even to a paralyzing degree. There are dozens of subscription services you can sign up for, everything from to televisions shows to groceries to coffee to video games, it's all out there. There are different news media outlets all reporting the same event but presenting it in a totally different way. There are different auto parts stores all selling the same parts, often in the same strip mall. Restaurants

that both sell burgers but with a little unique twist, within the same driving distance from your house. Public school, private school, or homeschool? What's the difference between pasture-raised and grass-fed? Are they Baptist or Presbyterian? Do you want 1%, 2%, whole milk, or half-and-half in that drink, sir?

If reading those questions got your heart pumping a little bit thinking of all the different decisions you have to make on a daily basis, fear not. When choosing a summer camp for your children, you don't need to be paralyzed by choice. Here are three helpful things to look for in a summer camp to determine whether or not that camp is offering a quality program fit for your family.

The first one is safety. Sending your kids away, whether for a day or for a week, can be a scary thing. Something that helps alleviate some of that anxiety is having a certain level of trust in a camp's policies for hiring, training, program setup, and handling of emergency situations. One thing that can be helpful to look for is certification from accreditation boards. Organizations like the American Camping Association (ACA) have very thorough and often rigid guidelines a camp must live up to in order to maintain accreditation. These guidelines include standards for everything from the kitchen to the waterfront, ensuring that operations at a camp are consistent and safe. Some camps require very thorough background checks and lengthy interview processes for potential counselor hires, as well as extensive training

on camper safety through organizations like MinistrySafe. Camps may also choose to certify their lifeguards through a Bonafide lifeguard training program such as one through the Red Cross. Kitchens at camps may also be licensed by the state, requiring regular inspections from the state Health Department. Certifications from all of these organizations should help ease the mind of a worried parent as it becomes clear that the camp really is concerned about safety. Most camps can explain their processes for all of these things if you simply give their office a call!

The next thing to look for is value. "Is my kid going to get my money's worth out of this camp?" This question will almost always come up when considering summer camp options for your children. One of the best things you can do to get a head start on this question is to look at the prices of several different camps within a reasonable driving distance and make some comparisons. However, as with any product, cheap does not always mean good. Scan the website of a camp and see if you can find a sample of a daily schedule anywhere. This may help you determine whether or not a camp offers a reasonable number of the things you care about. If you value an educational camp experience, see how much time a day is spent on educational programming. If you value fun activities, pay attention to the number of activity rotations that are on the schedule. If you value a spiritual or religious experience, see about chapel, memory verse, or devotional times in the schedule. Once you've deter-

mined which camps will offer you the things that matter most at a price you can appreciate, you'll be ready for number three, which is...

Fun. Is my camper going to have fun? Are they going to make friends? Are their counselors going to make them feel welcome? Will they come home singing and dancing and droning on and on about how their day or week at camp was the best time of their lives? While it's nearly impossible to predict exactly what an individual's experience somewhere new will be, there are some signs you can be looking for to determine whether or not a camp's summer programs will be fun. Take a look at a camp's social media page and ask yourself the following questions. Do the staff look excited? Are the children smiling? How much singing and dancing do you see in the videos? Does the property look vibrant, green, and alive? Sure, these things can be easy to capture and edit down to their pinnacle moment in media, but if you're still not sure, see if the camp you're considering has any open house events you can come to. Many camps offer events year-round, some in the spring and some in the fall. Stop by the camp on one of those days and ask yourself the same questions, but in the real setting.

Hopefully once you've considered all of these things, you'll be ready to send your child to camp this year with confidence and peace of mind!

# Camp Victory

ZUMBRO FALLS, MN

SUMMER CAMP 2025

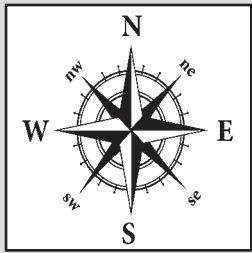
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## Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes

### Red Wing Pottery



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 have had this Red Wing crock around the farm for most of my life. I remember when my parents got it. It was in October of 1968. Our neighbors, Lester & Lillian Derby, had a farm auction since they were retiring from farming and moving into town. I got to skip school and go with my dad to the auction. It was a magical time for an eleven year-old boy, as I always enjoyed farm auctions. Most of the farmers from the neighborhood were there and the mood was quite upbeat and kind

of festive. And the Concord Church of Christ ladies had a lunch kitchen set up in the old tin shed across from the barn, serving sloppy joes, kool-aid and chocolate frosted brownie bars.

My parents bought quite a number of things at the auction that day, and this 15 gallon Red Wing crock was just one of them. But it has stuck in my mind and for some reason has remained on the farm for the last fifty-six years. I was always aware of the town of Red Wing, just 45 minutes to the north-east of the farm because of the Red Wing Pottery and the Red Wing work boots we wore. The town as named after a great Dakotah Nation chief who had befriended the first settlers who moved there. The native Indians hunted the bluffs and fished along the shores of what is now Lake Pepin, long before the first French Voyageurs set foot there in 1680.

In 1861, John Paul, a German immigrant moved to Red Wing and discovered a rich pocket of clay on the land that he intended to farm. A potter by trade, he used this clay to make the first Red Wing stoneware. In the early days settlers needed stoneware crocks and jugs for safe food and beverage storage. Large crocks up to fifty gallons were used for storing vegetables and pickling foods. They had wire handles on the sides and a wooden lid with a bail to secure the top.

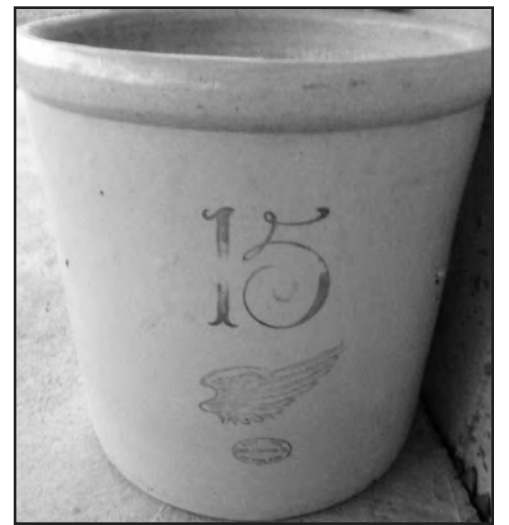
Every home and business had a water crock for drinking water and crocks of all sizes were used to store lard, butter, eggs, salted meats, eggs and vegetables. Stores and manufacturing businesses used the crocks to hold liquids and chemicals needed for their daily operations. The largest crock known was an

eighty-gallon size.

The early stoneware was colored because they were fired by wood and coal and the soot and ash would discolor the pottery. By 1895 the kilns were converted to oil heat so it was possible to produce white glazed stoneware.

As towns and cities grew and installed sewer systems the demand increased to include manufacturing ceramic drain pipes. The production in Red Wing grew at a rapid rate. By 1906 there were at least four companies producing stoneware and sewer pipes in Red Wing. Over time competition from established eastern kilns and the invention of the refrigerator caused the decline of the Red Wing stoneware. By 1936 there was only one company left producing stoneware in Red Wing and it took the name of Red Wing Potteries. The product line was reduced to flower pots and vases and lunch and dinner ware.

So, the Red Wing crock doesn't hold anything but memories any longer, but when I



see it, I am reminded of a wealth of old friends, family and people from days long gone by.

## A Minnesotan: The Problem With Geese



By RosaLin Alcoser

There is nothing I fear more on this earth than geese... well maybe snakes, but geese are the more immediate threat. Because here in Minnesota geese are everywhere.

Geese are at the park, in the parking lot, on the sidewalks, and even standing in the middle of the freeway in some cases- like they own the place.

It started out when I was a small child and the geese would chase me around the park honking. Since I was about the same size as them I guess it made sense that they were going after me.

Thankfully in response to these attacks my sister would chase the geese away from me so that I was not mauled to death by a goose at age six.

However, it did not stop as I got older. To this day geese will still chase me if given the chance. Now I can out run the geese or avoid them all together.

When I was in community college in Rochester the geese that would hang out on campus would chase me across the campus on an almost daily basis. Which my mother did not believe was happening until she saw me take off running at the sound of 'Honk! Honk!' and a flock of geese start charging at me.

Don't worry I made it to the car before the geese caught up to me and lived to tell the tale.

My fear is not just limited to geese either. It does extend to water brands as a whole. I have also been attacked by ducks and gulls. The only reason the loons, swans and crane have not gotten to me is because I am not fool enough to go anywhere close to them after the incident with the duck.

A couple years later when I was in University back south I was at the park with some friends. We were sitting on a bench watching the ducks, but not doing anything to the ducks. When a duck walked up to me and bit me on the leg with its serrated beak.

While ducks do not have teeth it does hurt when they bite you with their serrated beaks.

It is because of that duck and many, many geese that I now stay clear of all water birds. As I now live under the belief that if I give them space they just might not try to kill me... or at least not have the opportunity to.

P.S. as I write this two ducks have landed on my patio and taunted me with their serrated beaks.



## Bellechester Tavern Expands Space

(continued from page 1)

The newly renovated space was added to the bar in the 1960's and used for a walk-in cooler and cold storage.

Owners, Brian and Jody Gordon built a new walk-in cooler with four times the square footage. Brian says the larger cooler can better accommodate shipments of 100 cases each of several brands of beer delivered at one time. The former cooler space maintains access to utilities and the private upper level but opens the center area of the bar, creating more room for patrons. The expansion offers additional space for small gatherings such as birthday parties and will allow more variety in live music. BC Tavern hosts local musicians nearly every weekend but space limited them to solo or duet performers. They are experimenting with larger ensembles in the expanded area as well as table placement and décor. Outdoor seating is available in the summer but the Bellechester Tavern is a great stop along the snowmobile trail in the winter or visit with a friendly bartender any day of the year.

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## Supporting Our Local FFA Chapters & Celebrating National FFA Week Feb. 15 - 22, 2025

(continued from page 1)

“National FFA Week is a significant event that really showcases the heart of our organization,” says Christine White, chief program officer for the National FFA Organization. “Local chapters use this as an opportunity to highlight program success, recognize community supporters and amplify the mission of the organization.”

Again this year, more than 700,000 FFA members will spend the week of February 15 - 22 developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

They will do so in creative and innovative ways. Whether volunteering to clean up the local fairgrounds or throwing a citywide party to celebrate the 1732 birth of our first president, there is no limit to how this week can be recognized.

“It could be hosting a breakfast for teachers, an open house for FFA supporters or bestowing chapter-level degrees. It truly is an opportunity to celebrate all things FFA. As a former member and agricultural educator, FFA Week is something I always looked forward to since it was a way to share my passion for the organization,” White says. “FFA members should embrace the planning, execution and celebration that occurs with developing activities and events for FFA Week. The skills of teamwork, communication and advocating are ones you will carry with you beyond your FFA experience.”

Keep track of all that is happening by following #FFAWeek on your social channels. Find more about all the resources available at [FFA.org/National-FFA-Week](http://FFA.org/National-FFA-Week).

The organization also wants to Thank Alumni and Supporters!

Whether they wore the blue jacket or simply support an organization they were never a member of, these individuals are celebrated on National FFA Alumni and Supporters Day. Since 1971, alumni and supporters have found ways to significantly contribute to their local chapters.

Jeremy Krerowicz, the past president of the Denmark FFA Alumni in Wisconsin, fondly remembers his time as a member, and he used those experiences as motivation to lead the 2020 Outstanding FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapter.

“Our members love to see the students grow,” Krerowicz says. “We love seeing

them being recognized at state and national conventions, during their chapter banquet and throughout the community. It shows that we are doing our part. We help them with the resources they need to get that far.”

In every state in the nation, alumni and sup-

porters chapters work to create environments where people and communities can develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success.

Find out more information at [www.mnffa.org](http://www.mnffa.org), or [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)

## 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 improvements. 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](mailto:producesafety.mda@state.mn.us) to request a paper copy of the questionnaire, or for more information.

## Glessing Re-Elected to American Farm Bureau Board of Directors

Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) President Dan Glessing was re-elected to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Board of Directors during the AFBF Annual Convention held in San Antonio.

Glessing was re-elected by delegates from the Midwest region to serve a two-year term. The board is comprised of state presidents from the Midwest, Northeast, Southern and Western regions, providing broad representation and voices on important issues affecting farming and ranching.

“It’s an honor to be re-elected and have the opportunity to represent both Minnesota and Midwest agriculture on the national stage,” said Glessing. “I look forward to continuing to collaborate with my peers from across the country, providing a voice for our organization and its members.”

Joining him on the board representing the Midwest are Brent Johnson (Iowa), Randy Kron (Indiana), Ben LaCross (Michigan), Joe Newland (Kansas), and Brad Olson (Wisconsin).



Dan Glessing

## Minnesota Farmers Encouraged to Participate in Annual Survey

*Corn and soybean growers should anticipate calls in February*

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is encouraging farmers to take part in its annual pesticide and fertilizer use survey. This year the phone survey is directed at corn and soybean producers. The data helps the MDA track the use of agricultural chemicals on Minnesota farms and provides guidance to educational and research programs.

The survey began February 3 and be completed by February 26. Survey questions will focus on pesticide and fertilizer applications on corn and soybeans grown in Minnesota for the 2024 season. The annual survey is completely voluntary, and farmers are not asked any personal questions.

The survey is conducted for the MDA by the USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service out of their regional offices in Missouri and Arkansas. The calls will often be identified as ‘Nass Call Center’ on caller ID.

Minnesota farmers may be getting calls from multiple agencies and companies conducting a variety of surveys this time of year, but the information gathered from this survey is critical for research purposes.

If you have questions about the MDA’s annual survey, or if you wish to view results of previous surveys, visit the MDA website at [www.mda.state.mn.us/pesticidefertilizersurveys](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/pesticidefertilizersurveys). Producers can also call the Minnesota Department of Agriculture at 651-955-4066 from 7 a.m. – 9 p.m., Monday – Saturday.



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## No Snow but A Street Full of Snowmobiles

By Beth Brekke

The show must go on. There was no snow on the ground February 1st, the day of the Goodhue-Bellechester Railriders annual vintage snowmobile show. Of course that meant there would be no trail ride but it didn't stop enthusiasts from bringing their sleds to town. From early 1970s to nearly new models, 32

unique machines lined the street along the side of Goodhue's Corner Bar.

Most owners were local, trailering from Goodhue, Bellechester and Red Wing. Jeff Ryan brought 8 of the 16 sleds in his collection that are stored just a few blocks from downtown. Jeff really enjoys working on the vintage models to get them all running. "That one almost beat me," he says of a particular Yamaha, but when he found the right part at a junkyard, "it started right up".

Attendees split their time between admiring the variety of snowmobiles on display, voting for their favorites, then sharing stories and a meal inside the Corner Bar. Awards and a raffle drawing for prizes generously donated by local businesses wrapped up the day.

The Railriders club is funded through .5%



A modern design Yamaha sled sits in front of a unique 1970 Play Cat 400 at the Goodhue-Bellechester Railriders annual snowmobile show.

## 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?

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!

of the state gas tax, the Department of Natural Resources, licensing fees and grants. The money is awarded through a county organization then distributed among local snowmobile/ATV trail riding clubs. The Railriders also raise a portion of their own needs through an ATV ride and raffle. The funds have been used to purchase a grooming machine and pay for other trail maintenance needs. Volunteers spend 8-12 hours each fall putting up markers along the 42 miles of

trails in their territory and removing them in the spring.

There may be some changes to the trails coming in the future. The Minnesota Department of Transportation called for a public input meeting to discuss new regulations for snowmobiles crossing state highways and using right-of-ways. More information will come at a later time. For now, members are just hoping for some snow.

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## Former Church Becomes Goodhue Sanctuary

(continued from page 1)

Brittany is a nurse at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester and in addition to farming, Marc works for Riverland College's Farm Business Management program. "A few weeks before the church went up for sale, we were actively looking for a rentable office space for Marc. I wasn't having any luck," Brittany said, "but I had seen the church pop up for sale at that same time so I joked, 'We could buy the church and make you an office in there!' Surprisingly, it took a lot less convincing Marc than I thought. From there, the dreaming just sort of escalated".

Marc and Brittany both love hosting parties. Although they did not know each other when they were in high school or college, they had each been the person organizing get-togethers for their friends. The Huneke's even hosted their own wedding on their farm East of Bellevue. They continue to welcome large outdoor events but note, "Like most people, hosting anything in the winter months is nearly impossible, which is sad because the winter time can become very depressing; it's the time of the year we need social interaction the most!".

"I'd found myself at work constantly day-dreaming and Marc started to dream about it too," Brittany said about purchasing the church and transforming it into something that would benefit the whole community. "Days went by and I kept thinking about the church and all the potential its space could continue to bring to the community. I envisioned the pews being out, and a wide open space where children could play." The Huneke's enjoy taking their three children, Aribella (5), Otillie (2 1/2), and infant Anton to

both indoor and outdoor parks and decided to pursue this vision before they would be too old to enjoy such a space. "I knew it was something we had to go for."

The Huneke's purchased the church on February 29, 2024. Their main vision to transform the upper level into an indoor play/park-like area would have to wait. "We knew to be able to afford the upkeep—but also make our dream for the upstairs to be a community space—we would need to generate income. It seemed some form of apartment(s) in the basement would be the most sensible way." Work began promptly but the renovation took longer than the couple had hoped. They did a lot of the work themselves but enlisted help from family, friends and 14 contractors, including an architect to comply with building codes.

Brittany said it was a learning experience and she is now tuned into the details of construction. "The first big surprise was the initial inspection when the inspectors said we would need to redo the entire basement ceiling and that it had to be two layers of sheetrock. That truly changed everything and tacked on so much more money and sweat equity. We also ended up putting in interior drain tile around a large portion of the basement. While the drain tile got done quickly and wasn't much to clean up, it was a huge additional expense."

The original plan was to make the basement one large apartment but as the project progressed, it made sense to divide the space into two separate but connected living spaces. An interior door was included between the apartments mainly as a safety feature and way to move furniture but could also accommodate multi-generational family living.

The three-bedroom apartment is very spacious and includes the updated former church fellowship area's kitchen; dining and multi-purpose rooms; 1.5 baths, and a full-size washer and dryer. The smaller apartment has one bedroom with a large closet, tiled shower and washer/dryer combo. All utilities and outdoor services are included in the rent and the first tenants moved into both apartments since the open house. (continued on page 10)



Visitors to an open house at The Goodhue Sanctuary Apartments admire this dining and multi-purpose area of the 3-bedroom unit.



The large open area of the former St. Luke's church basement was renovated and divided into two rental apartments.

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## Former Church Becomes Goodhue Sanctuary

(continued from page 9)

Visitors to the event were excited to see the progress and impressed with the phase-one outcome. St. Luke's member, Robert Hinsch said he was glad to see the repurposing rather than tearing the building down, to which Marc jokingly replied, "There were a few times I wanted to (tear it down)".

Over the past year, the Hunekes not only changed the church building's purpose and grew their understanding of construction issues, they also grew their family. Just weeks after closing on the property, they learned that Brittany was pregnant and welcomed their son in December. Saying they spent "almost every spare minute of our life" at the church during the final months of the project, Brittany hopes to spend more time with their new family addition in the remaining weeks of her maternity leave.

The next phase of the renovation is still in the planning and research stage. "As for now, I'm looking forward to letting our tenants get settled in and spend these next few weeks relaxing a little. But, come spring, if the city



**The Goodhue Sanctuary 1-bedroom apartment boasts a large closet and tiled shower. Both newly created units have their own laundry.**

still allows it-we are looking forward to cleaning, painting and prepping to make the upstairs useable and ready for the public to enjoy once again."

See more before and after photos and follow the progress on The Goodhue Sanctuary Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567031109131>



**Before and after pictures of the St. Luke's fellowship area kitchen turned apartment.**



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## Schwartau Elected to Honorary Life Membership in the Minnesota State Agricultural Society

(continued from page 1)

He went on to a career with the University of Minnesota Extension Service, which has kept him involved with 4-H at the fair every year since. Even during a seven-year period away from the university, he judged 4-H exhibits and demonstrations at the fair.

Upon returning to the Extension Service in 1985, he worked with, and often managed, various 4-H livestock shows and has been involved with the 4-H Dairy Show every year since 1986. In 1986, Schwartau joined the staff of the fair's Open Class Beef Show and led it as superintendent from 1992 to 2021. His main goal in those 35 years was to provide the most positive experience possible for exhibitors and the visiting public. Through the years his staff included his wife, children, cousins, and close associates making it a true family affair! Even after official retirement,

he worked with the new department leadership for a smooth transition. Over the years, Schwartau has been a director and president of the Minnesota Federation of County Fairs, a director and secretary for the Goodhue County Fair for 32 years, an active member of First Lutheran Church in Red Wing, and township clerk for Featherstone Township in Goodhue County. He proudly adds this honorary life membership recognition to his Minnesota State Fair 50 Year Award, which he received in 2015. Being required to miss the State Fair for the first time in 67 years in 2024 due to medical treatments, the 2025 State Fair will be a special event!

The State Agricultural Society is made up of delegates from each of the state's county fairs, plus representatives of more than 40 statewide associations representing agriculture, horticulture and education. The Society is charged exclusively with the production of the annual Minnesota State Fair and management of the historic 322-acre State Fairgrounds.

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended expositions in the world. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. The State Fair is financially self-supporting and does not receive government appropriation. Follow along on Facebook, X, Instagram and Threads @mnstatefair for year-round updates. The 2025 Minnesota State Fair is Aug. 21 through Labor Day, Sept. 1. Visit [mnstatefair.org](http://mnstatefair.org)



Chuck Schwartau accepting his honorary life membership to the Minnesota State Agricultural Society board and Minnesota State Fair CEO Renee Alexander

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By Noel Aldrich, PhD, CNS  
Licensed Nutritionist

We are all familiar with the concept of “comfort food.” When you want to celebrate, or you want to introduce some happy experience into a day that has been challenging then you may be choosing a “comfort food” to enjoy. A short list of those items we enjoy may include chocolate, cheese, coffee, alcohol, soft drinks, candy, chips, pie or cake. We each have a deep, emotional connection with food, which can be positive or negative. How does food affect mood?

In a recent blog post, “Could Diet Alter Your Personality,” Dr. Austin Perlmutter presents some of the current research identifying how the foods we eat can impact how we engage with life. This may not be too hard to understand when you consider how you express yourself when you are not feeling well. You do not have a lot of energy. You do not want to start a new project. You may isolate yourself. So, if a person consistently expresses these traits without a short-term illness, what

is influencing how they feel, which results in these personality traits? Perlmutter suggests we take a look at what we eat.

All the food we consume passes through the gut, which is also called “the second brain.” The gut is “the second brain” because many of the proteins and hormones that influence brain activity are produced in your gut. The more quality whole foods you consume, the more helpful hormones are produced. Many of the signals produced in the gut are made by the bacteria that live in the intestines. These bacteria produce chemicals that are associated with reduced anxiety, decreased depression, and less irritability. The connection between the gut and our thinking has been clearly documented by Dr. Natasha McBride in “Gut and Psychology Syndrome (GAPS).” Dr. McBride has demonstrated with the GAPS protocol how improving the quality of food going into the gut transforms how we think.

Our mind is constantly receiving input from our surroundings. The food we consume is one of those inputs. Headaches, brain fog, and irritability can be signs of inflammation caused by the food eaten. An inflamed brain is not able to process information effectively resulting in poor choices, outbursts, or isolation. A Health and Retirement study published in 2023 evaluated 4,364 participants for inflammation and their thinking abilities. Low levels of inflammation were associated with greater openness, better thinking and more agreeableness. Higher levels of inflammation have been associated with depression and dementia. Consequently, our food choices can greatly affect our thinking and the mood we express.

We can help our brain to function at optimal levels with quality nutrient sources. Wild caught salmon, extra virgin olive oil, cod liver oil, and walnuts are all great sources

of omega-3 fatty acids, which the brain uses to make new connections. Decreasing sugar sources like soft drinks, fruit juice, white sugar, and corn syrup will help reduce inflammation so the brain can work more efficiently. High sugar intake is a challenge for many Americans, not only affecting their mood but also increasing the risk of diabetes. The brain functions best with the right balance of proteins, fats, and sugars.

The right balance of nutrients promotes neuroplasticity, which is the description of how the brain can make new connections and improve physical abilities in the body. The brain is making new connections every time we think through a process, learn a new skill, or make a new memory. Young people make new connections very quickly, which means a quality food plan is especially important in these years. Helping a young person recognize those foods that sustain good brain activity will help them engage in a positive way with their surroundings and help them to thrive for the rest of their life.

As an aid to support your quality food plan, I will host a special series “What Mothers Want to Know” in the month of March focusing on the health questions moms ask most and providing the answers to their questions. An answer to a specific question will be delivered to the participant’s email address each day during the month of March. Thirty questions will be addressed in thirty days. You may send a question to nutritionproportion@gmail.com. You can register to receive the email series in March by sending me your email address where you want the answers sent.

You can also 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, or check out my website at www.nutritionproportion.net

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

Talking Arthritis with University of MN



Marta Michalska-Smith, MD, U of M Medical School and M Health Fairview

Arthritis affects one in five American adults and that number is expected to rise as the population grows and ages, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The chronic condition can be especially painful in the winter as frigid temperatures cause arthritis symptoms to worsen.

Marta Michalska-Smith, MD, with the University of Minnesota Medical School and M Health Fairview talks about the causes of arthritis, treatment options and research to improve knowledge around this chronic condition.

Q: What is arthritis?

Dr. Michalska-Smith: Plainly speaking, arthritis means inflammation of a joint. This causes joint pain and stiffness, and over time, damage to the joint. There are many types of arthritis, including osteoarthritis, crystal arthritis and autoimmune inflammatory

arthritis, which includes diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and psoriatic arthritis.

Q: What causes arthritis?

Dr. Michalska-Smith: Osteoarthritis is often referred to as “wear and tear” and “non-inflammatory” arthritis, but these are misleading terms. We used to think that osteoarthritis was caused by degeneration of the cartilage, which cushions and protects the bone, due to repetitive stress over time. However, we now know that osteoarthritis is a disease not only of the cartilage, but of the bone and joint tissues as well, and that inflammation is an important part of the disease. Although it does become more common as we age, genetics, previous joint trauma, diet and bone alignment all factor into who develops osteoarthritis, as well as when, where and how severe it becomes.

Autoimmune Inflammatory arthritis occurs when a person’s immune system becomes dysregulated and attacks their own joint tissue, causing inflammation and damage. In this type of arthritis, the immune system can sometimes attack other body tissues, as well, such as the eyes or lungs.

Crystal arthritis, such as gout, is caused when the body deposits crystals in and around the joint space which then triggers a strong inflammatory response.

(continued on page 13)

### WHO'S READY FOR GOLF CART SEASON?

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## Alcohol Consumption; Vitamin D Essential; Covid Vaccine News



By Shauna Burshem, D.C.

It seems the way we think about alcohol consumption may be on the verge of a major shift. According to U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy and a recently released report, alcohol is now officially linked to seven types of cancer, including breast, liver, and colorectal cancers. Interestingly—and quite frankly, shockingly—around 16.4% of breast cancer cases can be attributed to alcohol consumption. To top it off, alcohol is now considered the third-leading cause of cancer in the United States, trailing just behind tobacco and obesity. Many people will wonder how could something as socially normalized and celebrated as a glass of wine at dinner or a beer at a party carry such a heavy risk, and yet so many of us remain completely unaware? Currently, alcohol labels simply warn about risks like birth defects and impairment, but they completely leave out the potential cancer connection. Surgeon General Murthy and health experts are pushing for new warning labels and updated drinking guidelines to educate the public. Think about it—what if we could save lives simply by adding a line of text on a bottle? It feels like a small change with monumental potential. Women, in particular, face greater risks even with smaller amounts of alcohol due to biological factors. The bright side? Experts say cutting back even now

could reduce future risks and, in some cases, reverse harmful effects. Personally, I enjoy having a few beers on the weekend. While experts point out that some damage from drinking can be reversible, they also stress that cutting back can significantly reduce future risks. This isn't about demonizing beer or alcohol; it's about being informed and making mindful choices. If updated labels and federal guidelines help create awareness, we all stand to benefit, ensuring that what we enjoy in moderation doesn't silently harm us in the long run. In the last couple years, I have mindfully cut back on my beer consumption, limiting myself to just a few a week. I started doing this as these research reports started to trickle out. Now, with the recent news reports, if you're like me, a little awareness might just change how you approach your next drink.

**Vitamin D deficiency** is an often-overlooked concern that impacts nearly 40% of Americans. Fatigue, muscle aches, frequent colds, and even feeling down can all be signs of low vitamin D, but many misinterpret these issues as something else. These seemingly minor symptoms can point to deeper health challenges if ignored for too long. Keeping vitamin D levels within the ideal range of 60-80 ng/mL is key to staying healthy and warding off chronic conditions.

Getting outside for just 10-20 minutes a day without sunscreen is one of the easiest ways to boost your vitamin D naturally. However, for those who can't spend time in the sun daily, or for individuals with darker skin tones or diets low in fatty fish, fortified dairy, or egg yolks, supplements can be a lifesaver. Adding foods rich in magnesium, like spinach and nuts, can also support how the body uses vitamin D, enhancing its impact. The ideal D3 dose in the wintertime is 35 per units per pound of bodyweight, plus 100-200 units of vitamin K2. For example, a 160lb person should take 5600 units of D3 daily in the winter.

Healthy vitamin D levels do so much more than strengthen bones—they also lower the risk of serious illnesses like heart disease, cancer, and autoimmune disorders. Regular blood tests are the best way to monitor your levels and make adjustments if needed. A combination of sunlight, a nutrient-packed diet, and supplements can make a huge difference in your health, protecting you from potential long-term problems while helping you feel your best every day.

**COVID-19 VACCINE NEWS:** A peer-reviewed study conducted by high school students at an FDA lab has uncovered some pretty startling details about Pfizer's mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. Yes, you heard that right—high school students. These young researchers, working under the guidance of FDA scientists, took a deep dive into the vaccine and confirmed something concerning. The study, which got published on Dec. 29, 2024, in The Journal of High School Science, found that Pfizer's mRNA vaccine contains levels of residual DNA contamination way higher than what's considered safe—6 to 470 times over the regulatory limits, to be precise. The students tested two separate batches of the vaccine and found “residual DNA to a level that exceeds 10 nanograms per dose.” To put it in perspective, anything beyond this limit raises eyebrows, and these results shot way past that threshold. Now, what does this



mean exactly? That part is still a bit of a mystery. According to the study, the impact of these leftover DNA fragments on health isn't fully understood yet. But here's where it gets serious—the researchers noted these DNA fragments could cause something called “insertional mutagenesis,” a fancy term for DNA mutations that might lead to cancer. This revelation was first brought to light by Maryanne Demasi, Ph.D., an investigative medical journalist. To me, it's impressive and fascinating that high school students, while under the mentorship of FDA scientists, made such a critical discovery. It just goes to show, sometimes the biggest insights come from the least expected places.

**Keeping our kids healthy and free from injuries while they play winter sports is an absolute must.** Chiropractic care can be a valuable addition to their warmup and recovery routines, offering another layer of protection and performance enhancement for young athletes—and their proud parents. I'd love to share why I personally believe chiropractic care is a game-changer for winter sports. Whether your little ones are zooming down the slopes, gliding gracefully on ice, or powering through cross-country trails, keeping

their bodies in top shape matters more than you think. Regular chiropractic care works hand in hand with things like warmups and cool-down stretches to set the stage for fewer injuries, better performance, and faster recovery times. Honestly, the benefits go beyond just the kids—families can see the difference too! Here's why I think incorporating chiropractic care into your winter sports routine is so crucial. Take balance and coordination, for instance. When your kids are on skis or snowboards, the ability to control their movements is everything. That effortless glide? It's no accident. Spinal adjustments, which enhance the body's natural ability to sense its position (proprioception), can really elevate performance in big ways. And let's not forget the importance of injury prevention. When the spine and joints are in proper alignment, the risk of sprains or strains can drop dramatically. Add in faster recovery from falls, improved flexibility, and even better strength, and this is why chiropractic care, kids and winter sports go hand in hand.

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

## Talking Arthritis with University of MN

(continued from page 12)

Gout is more common in men and in those who have heart disease, kidney disease, diabetes, obesity or high blood pressure.

**Q: How is arthritis treated?**

Dr. Michalska-Smith: Strengthening the muscles that support the joint through physical therapy is a core aspect of treatment for osteoarthritis. Medications, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, topical diclofenac gel and steroid injections into the joint can also be used. Many people will ultimately benefit from a joint replacement.

Treatment for autoimmune inflammatory arthritis centers around medications that target and suppress the immune system. These medications come in pills, injections and infusions, and require monitoring by a rheumatologist. There are many different options for treatment and each type of autoimmune inflammatory arthritis has specific medications which work better for that disease.

Gout treatment needs two distinct approaches. Anti-inflammatory medications such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory med-

ications (NSAIDs) and prednisone are used to treat gout flares while medications which help lower the uric acid level help prevent future flares.

In all types of arthritis, a healthy diet and physical activity are key to maintaining healthy joints.

**Q: How does your research support your clinical work?**

Dr. Michalska-Smith: I am so excited about the advances we are making in the understanding and treatment of inflammatory arthritis and the work being done at the University of Minnesota to move this forward. I am currently involved in a clinical trial of a new therapeutic for the treatment of inflammatory arthritis – chimeric antigen receptor therapy (also known as CAR-T cell therapy). This type of therapy involves genetically engineering a person's own immune cells to target other “problematic” immune cells which are then given back to the patient. This therapy has the potential to alter the immune system in a more permanent way, and even lead the way for a cure for inflammatory arthritis.



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## SEMCAC Announces Recent Individual Artist Grant Awards



This activity is 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.

The Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council (SEMAC) announces its February capstone events, showcasing recent grant recipients throughout southeastern Minnesota.

**Regional Premiere of "Waitress"** - The Rochester Civic Theatre presents this hit musical comedy-drama following the story of Jenna, a waitress and expert pie-maker who dreams of a way out of her small town and rocky marriage. Evening performances at 7:00 PM on February 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, and 22, with matinees at 2:00 PM on February 9, 16, and 23. An ASL-interpreted performance with audio descriptions will be available February 13. Located at Rochester

Civic Theatre, Rochester, MN.

**"Conservar es Celebrar" by Andrew Mazariegos-Ovalle** - Opening Friday, February 7, from 6:00-8:00 PM at the Northfield Arts Guild, this exhibition features reimagined piñata art celebrating sacred creatures like Guatemala's Quetzal bird, Chile's Moscardón bee, and Puerto Rico's Coquí frog. The exhibition is part of the Carleton College & St. Olaf College Emerging Artists Group Showcase in Northfield, MN.

**ABBAolutely Fab in Kasson** - Kasson Mantorville Community Education presents ABBAolutely Fab - an all-star lineup of Twin Cities and British musicians on Saturday, February 8 at 7:00 PM at the WiFi Performing Arts Center. Led by powerhouse vocalists Jenny Russ and Katy Vernon, the show features ABBA's greatest hits including "Dancing Queen," "SOS," "Mamma Mia," "Take A Chance On Me," and "Waterloo."

**Rochester Music Mashup Album Release Party** - Join diverse local songwriters at Treedome in Rochester on Sunday, February 9, from 4:00-6:00 PM for this unique showcase featuring both raw and produced versions of genre-spanning tracks. The project, spanning progressive rock to R&B, represents collaborations with Blue Lagoon Recording Room and Carpet Booth Studio.

**Datura Glow Suzanne Szucs Artist Reception** - Meet photographer Suzanne Szucs at the opening reception on Monday, February 10, from 5:30-6:30 PM at 125 Live Gallery in Rochester. The exhibition will run through March 22, with the artist present at the reception to discuss her work.

**Emergence Cassandra Buck Artist Re-**

**ception** - Opening concurrently at 125 Live Gallery in Rochester on Monday, February 10, from 5:30-6:30 PM, this exhibition explores femininity and artistic expression through mixed media compositions blending acrylic paint with traditional fiber materials.

**Big Turn Music Fest - Downtown Red Wing** comes alive February 14-15 with 110 bands performing across 15 venues. The festival theme "Experience Red Wing Through Music" includes games, karaoke, RED talks, and winter adventures throughout the downtown area.

**Legends of Jazz Valentine Show with Thomasina Petrus** - The Zumbrota State Theatre hosts this special Valentine's Day performance on Friday, February 14 at 7:00 PM. Through stunning vocal impressions and storytelling, Petrus brings Billie Holiday's legacy to life while paying tribute to jazz legends Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Etta James.

**Remembering Our Connections** - Mother-son duo Trina Brunk and Aidan Gersky present an intergenerational music performance at the Northfield Depot on Friday, February 14, from 7:00-9:00 PM. Additional performances will be held February 6 and 20 at 2:00 PM at Three Links Care Center Chapel.

**Winona Symphony Orchestra Annual Children's Concert** - The orchestra presents two free performances of "Peter and the Wolf" on Tuesday, February 18, at 9:00-9:45 AM and 10:30-11:15 AM in the Winona Middle School Auditorium. This annual concert introduces school-age children to orchestral instruments through musical storytelling.

**Community-Created Gourd Mosaic** - Artist Rachel Pauli of Gourdeous Jewelry leads this collaborative community project at the Winona Public Library. After creation sessions on February 1 and 8, join the unveiling celebration on Saturday, February 22 at 10:30 AM to see how individual contributions form a collective artwork using gourds as canvas.

**Frozen River Film Festival** - The Frozen River Film Festival celebrates its 20th anniversary February 9-16 with screenings at various locations throughout Winona, MN. FRFF shows documentaries and films that engage audiences in thoughtful conversation about important contemporary issues. The festival features film-centered opportunities that celebrate the art of independent cinema in the Driftless Region. Special programming and events will be announced throughout the festival week.

**Concert for Kids in Southeast Minnesota** - Rochester Symphony performs this special concert at John Marshall High School Auditorium on Tuesday, February 25, with shows at 10:00 AM and 11:30 AM. This free concert is programmed specifically for 4th graders, with all schools within a 45-mile radius invited to attend. Grant funding provides bus-ing for participating classes.

All events 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.

For more information about these events or SEMAC's grant programs, visit [semac.org](http://semac.org) or contact the office at 507-281-4848.

## The 2025 Session Promises to be Historic



**Rep. Pam  
Altendorf (R)  
District: 20A**

The Minnesota House of Representatives is back in business for the 2025 legislative session. I am honored to be reelected and to serve District 20A. The committees I was chosen to serve on are the Education Finance and the Children and Families Finance and Policy committees, and I was recently named vice-chair of the Elections Finance and Government Operations committee.

Being trusted to be the vice-chair the elections committee is something I take very seriously and will be working to find common sense solutions to tighten up election laws.

Whether you're a Republican or a Democrat, everyone should want to ensure that our elections are not only transparent, fair, and accurate, but can also be validated. No one likes to wait two months after an election to determine who the winner is. No one wants courts to be forced to get involved. No one should be in a situation where 20 ballots were thrown in the trash can. All of

which just recently happened in a Minnesota House race near Shakopee. None of this lends itself to having faith in our elections system.

I also want to look at other states and find out what they do differently than here. So many Minnesotans are growing tired of election-related headaches, and I'm hoping we can look for ways to improve our system and bolster confidence.

You may have seen in the news lately there has been a struggle for power in the Minnesota House of Representatives and the issues have been over elections which are being contested in the courts. A term that would have started out in a 67-67 tie is now a 67-66 Republican majority. This is due to a court case which found overwhelming evidence that a Democrat candidate failed to live in the district of which he chose to run for office.

During my first term in office, a common theme was that everything was "historic," such as the historic surplus and historic spending. I really thought we were going to put these "historic" years behind us at the Capitol and get to work. However, with the Democrats refusing to come to the Capitol on January 14th to be sworn in with us, we are not seeing normal. They are threatening to stay home until the House is back to a 67-67 tie, so it's clear we're all going to need to hold on tight again this year as we are going to continue plowing historic ground!

It is truly my honor to serve you, and the best way for me to do that is to know how you feel. Please contact me any time at 651-296-8635 or by email at [rep.pam.altendorf@house.mn.gov](mailto:rep.pam.altendorf@house.mn.gov). I look forward to hearing from you!



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## Ask A Trooper

By Sgt. Troy Christianson,  
Minnesota State Patrol



**Question:** *I have seen numerous times where a bicyclist will not stop at a stop sign, if they are sharing the road with automobiles. I have seen a couple of close incidents where the bicyclist is almost hit as well. Are bicyclists under the same rules if they are sharing the road with automobiles?*

**Answer:** There was a state law change back in August of 2023. It states, “a bicycle operator who approaches a stop sign must slow to a speed that allows for stopping before entering the intersection or the nearest crosswalk. If there is not a vehicle in the vicinity, the operator may make a turn or proceed through the intersection without stopping.” Nothing in this subdivision changed the right-of-way requirements. It is important to note that bicyclists must still stop at intersections controlled by a red light, a peace officer, or a person authorized to control traffic.

Essentially, the bicyclist can yield or perform a “rolling stop” at a stop sign if they don’t violate anyone else’s right of way. When approaching a stop sign, the bicyclist should be traveling slow enough to stop before the crosswalk if necessary. However, after yielding, if there is not a pedestrian crossing in front of them or other traffic approaching near enough to constitute an immediate hazard, they may continue without making a full stop.

**Question:** *What allows private for-profit ambulance companies to run tax-exempt license plates on their vehicles?*

**Answer:** Vehicles owned by ambulance services specifically intended for emergency response or providing ambulance services are exempt under the Minnesota State statutes. All services must have a valid license issued by the board. The license shall specify the base of operations, the primary service area, and the type or types of ambulance service for which the licensee is licensed. The licensee shall obtain a new license if they wish to expand their primary service area, or to provide a new services.

**Question:** *Can you talk about railroad crossing safety and the laws that cover it?*

**Answer:** I have responded to and investigated a number of train/vehicle crashes in my career. A majority of them resulted in fatal or serious injuries to the vehicle occupants. In Minnesota, failure to yield the right of way, disregard of a traffic control device, improper turn and inattention and impatience are cited as the most common factors contributing to motor vehicle/train crashes.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has worked to share the following rail safety tips:

- Yield the right-of-way to trains at high-way-rail crossings. It's the law.
- Never drive around lowering gates, it's illegal and deadly.
- Never race a train to the crossing; even if it is a tie, you lose.
- Always expect a train on the tracks; trains do not follow set schedules.
- Look for a second train when crossing multiple tracks.
- Exit your vehicle immediately if it stalls on the crossing, get clear of the tracks and call 911.
- Always stop your vehicle, behind the white line when crossing gates are down or lights are flashing. Wait for the crossing gates to rise and lights to stop flashing; look both ways, listen and proceed with caution.

The chance of death or serious injury from a motor vehicle/train crash is 11 times greater than for other highway collisions. At 50 mph, it takes a fully-loaded freight train 1.5 miles to come to a full-stop. By the time the train engineer sees a vehicle or pedestrian on the tracks, it is often too late.

Because of their size, approaching trains may appear to be traveling at a slower speed therefore drivers often misjudge the distance of the train.

As a bicyclist or pedestrian you must always look both ways before crossing railroad tracks, cross only in designated areas and never cross when gates are down. Railroad

tracks and property close to the tracks (railroad "right-of-way") belong to the railroad. People who don't have permission to be on railroad property are trespassing. Even if there is not a "No Trespassing" sign, it's still illegal and dangerous to be on the property.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and of course, drive sober.

## Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk Make a Game Plan for Super Bowl LIX and Commit to Sober Driving

For Super Bowl LIX on Sunday, February 9, 2025, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reminds drivers: Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk. Get ahead of the game and create your plan now. If you're going out to a Super Bowl party and you plan to drink alcohol, make sure you plan for a designated driver to get you home safely at the end of the night. If you're hosting a party, prepare plenty of food and non-alcoholic drink options for your guests, especially for the designated drivers. If you're a designated driver, be the night's MVP and keep that commitment front and center.

“Super Bowl is a special night each year for our community to come together to celebrate, but we need responsible drivers on our roads,” said Tammy Fiedler. “If you are planning to be away from home during Super Bowl LIX, make a game plan to ensure you don’t find yourself without a designated driver if you need one. If you’re hosting a party, make sure you take care of your designated drivers. Remind your friends and family: Fans Don’t Let Fans Drive Drunk.”

Drunk driving can have a range of consequences, including the possibility of causing a traumatic crash. These crashes could cause you, someone you love, or a total stranger to suffer serious injuries or even death. Help set up your team — your friends, family, and other partygoers — for a night of success.

### Host a Winning Party

If you're hosting a Super Bowl party, prepare plenty of snacks and non-alcoholic drinks for your guests and the designated drivers. Ask your guests to designate their sober drivers in advance. Remind drinking guests that they have a long evening ahead of them, and encourage them to pace themselves, to eat food, and to drink plenty of water.

Another important reminder: Never serve alcohol to minors. If an underage person drinks and drives, the person who provided the alcohol can be held liable for any damage, injury, or death caused by the underage driver.

### Be the DD MVP

If you're planning to be a designated driver, know that you're the night's MVP. Commit to a sober evening. If you are attending a party or are at a bar or restaurant, enjoy the food, the company, and the nonalcoholic drinks. Your positive influence could help keep others on the right track. If someone you know has been drinking and tries to drive, take their keys and help them get home safely. Remember: You're the night's quarterback, and others are relying on you.

Drivers should be safe during the Super Bowl by planning ahead if they intend to drink. They shouldn't wait until after drinking to plan how to get somewhere. Impairment clouds a person's judgment. Drivers should secure a designated sober driver or call a taxi or rideshare for a sober ride home.

If a driver finds they are unable to drive, they should give their keys to a sober driver so that person can get them home safely. When a friend has been drinking and is considering driving, friends should be proactive — take away the keys and help them get a sober ride home. If anyone spots a drunk driver, contact local law enforcement.

For more information on impaired driving, visit [www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving](http://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving).

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](mailto:Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us))



The Vikings may be out of the running to become Super Bowl Champions this year, but driving responsibly is always a win! As you enjoy the game and festivities with friends and family this Super Bowl Sunday, remember that the best play of the day is getting home safely.

### In honor of the Vikings, here's a Purple Pride Mocktail recipe to enjoy during the game:

- 1/2 cup grape juice
  - 1/2 cup sparkling water
  - 1 splash of lemonade
- Garnish with a lemon slice and a few frozen blueberries



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## Bellechester City Council Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

Call the meeting to order. Meeting is recorded, and the recordings belong to the City of Bellechester.

Pledge to the flag

Roll call was taken: The council in attendance: Mayor Jody Gordon, Council people Mark Gerken, Kyle Blattner, Jered Buxengard and Rich Majerus as well as City Clerk Lisa Redepenning, Treasurer Kyle McKeown, City Engineer Matt Mohs, as well as Jake Gilsdorf were also present.

**Open Public Hearing** – public hearing was opened at 6:00.

**Public Hearing – 1st reading of Pool Ordinance** – Mayor Gordon read the Pool Ordinance. With no residents or comments public

hearing was closed. Motion was made by Rich Majerus with a 2nd by Kyle Blattner to close the public hearing.

**Close Public Hearing** – Public hearing was closed at 6:04.

**Open Regular Council Meeting** – Regular council meeting was opened at 6:04.

Minutes of the November 20, 2024 minutes were reviewed and motion was made by Jered Buxengard with a second by Rich Majerus to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Bills were reviewed with a motion by Kyle Blattner with a second by Mark Gerken to approve and pay the bills as presented. Motion carried.

**Old Business:**

• **Update – Sewer Lining Project** – City Engineer provided an update. Work will continue as weather permits. Some items will be

carried over to spring. Manhole work needs to be completed, but remaining work is minimal. Some lateral lining may be carried over to spring, but they hope to finish as much as they can.

• **Pay Application No. 4** – This will complete Visu-Sewer work on our project. \$303,714.29 is the amount \$36,783.64 is being held. Motion was made by Rich with a 2nd by Kyle Blattner to approve the payment of Pay Application #4. Motion carried.

• **Update – Water Meter Project** – all meters are installed, and project is complete

• **Pay Application No. 2 – \$49,561.50 withholding \$11,939.63.** Motion was made by Kyle Blattner with a 2nd by Rich Majerus to approve payment of Payment Application #3. Motion carried.

• **Update – Water meter billing set-up** – Kyle met with Dakota Supply to get meters reading equipment setup. Meeting with Banyon on Thursday to go thru billing, this will be the final stage.

• **Junk Ordinance Discussion** – What can the county enforce now. Current junk ordinance will be sent to county.

**New business:**

• **Approve Goodhue County Hazard Mitigation Plan** – Motion was made by Mark Gerken with a 2nd by Jered Buxengard to approve the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**Engineer Report** – see above.

**Clerk Report – Nuvera Email Charge** – Effective January 1, 2025, the charge for email only accounts will become \$12.95/month. I will be working on converting to .gov email, which is free. After all year end items are done, I will work on this. Quarterly Billing – will need to be done. Are we continuing like normal until we are good with charges? If so, the cut off will be the 19th of December and will be mailed. 2nd Half Council Pay – This will be done the week of the 23rd.

**Treasurer Report** – make sure the data transfers over to new meter program.

**Water/Wastewater/Facility Report** – none.

**Mayor Concerns: AG Partners** – dust issues were discussed with them. We will looking to a dust ordinance to be reviewed.

**Council Concerns:** No passing sign was questioned. Someone will contact Wabasha County regarding this. Flashing signs will be looked into.

**Adjourn**

Motion was made by Kyle Blattner with a second by Jered Buxengard to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 6:36. Motion carried.

Submitted by Lisa Redepenning – City Clerk

## ATTN: Goodhue & Dennison Homeowners!

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**Saturday,  
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**Wade Hayes 7:00 PM**



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