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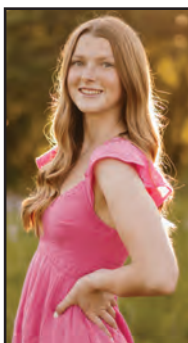
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MAY 7, 2025

Volume 22 • Issue 5

Hegland Awarded James W. Tracy Scholarship

Maria Hegland, a Randolph FFA member, has been awarded the James W. Tracy Scholarship. Mr. Tracy had a deep love for the land and farming and a desire to support youth, which led him to donate his farm to the Minnesota FFA Foundation.



Maria was presented with the scholarship at the MN State FFA Convention April 28-29, 2025.

Rice County Steam & Gas Annual Flea Market & Swap Meet, May 24 & 25

The Rice County Steam & Gas Show has announced their annual Swap Meet and Flea Market for May 24th & 25th.

(continued on page 3)

Announcements

• **Randolph Food Shelf** located at **St. Mark's Church 28595 Randolph Blvd.** Monthly Open Hours: 1st Tuesday 8:00 - 9:30 am; 2nd, 3rd, 4th Tuesdays 4:30 - 6:00 pm. Questions call (507) 263-9182.

Do you have an announcement?

Email:

hometownmessenger@gmail.com

Mark Your Calendar for Dennison Days June 20 & 21

Garden Tractor Pull Returns Friday Night and Russ Franek & The Biscuits to Perform Saturday



The annual Dennison Days Festival takes place Friday and Saturday, June 20 & 21, 2025.

The Gopher State Garden Tractor Pullers will return to Main Street Friday evening in Dennison, hosted by 625 Bar & Grill. More information

is available at www.gsgtp.com. Following the Pull, 625 will host live music.

The Kids Pedal Pull returns Saturday morning this year and will take place on Main Street at 11 AM Saturday morning as part of a full day of events during the festival.

Live Music Saturday evening from local band RUSS FRANEK & THE BISCUITS

taking the stage with his full band Saturday evening.

(continued on page 18)



Randolph FFA General Livestock Evaluation Team Places 1st at MN FFA State Convention



Congratulations to the Randolph FFA General Livestock Evaluation Team for placing 1st at the MN FFA State Convention. Wyatt Herman was 1st Place Individual, Colton Herman was 2nd place Individual, and Logan Tate was 4th place Individual. The team will be heading to the National Convention Contest, October in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Team Members - Coach Matt Duff, Wyatt Herman, Logan Tate, Maria Hegland, Colton Herman. Colton and Wyatt are from Hastings.

Tractor Parade Thank You



Thank you, everyone, for your help with this year's tractor parade. We had 163 tractors/implements plus our SRO Officer in a 1950 car, and Randolph/Hampton Fire and Rescue. Thank you to Brenda Taylor for getting great photos of most of the tractors as they passed. Check out our Facebook page for photos.

Courtesy of Randolph FFA
(additional pictures on page 16)

Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday, May 11th • Serving 9:00a.m.-3:00p.m.

Call 507-645-9992 for Reservations

- Reservations Highly Suggested -

- JOIN US FOR OUR SPECIAL BREAKFAST AND BRUNCH MENU -

Regular Menu Available 3:00-Close



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Mother's Day Breakfast

• Serving 8:30 am - 1:00 pm

• Our regular breakfast menu

• Reservations recommended

651-437-5618



We will close at 1:00 pm to give our hard working Mother's a day off to spend with their families!



The Future Is Bright!

By Pastor Larry Grove,
Hauge Lutheran Church, Kenyon

At the end of this month, young men and women will be graduating from high school all around this country. They will be leaving friends that they have spent years with and entering a new phase of life that, regardless of the path that they choose, will be exciting and often filled with wonder and apprehension.

My graduation day happened to land on my 18th birthday. The emotions that I felt that evening were all over the map. Excitement over what the future would bring my way coupled with the memories of teachers that had invested their time and efforts to pour knowledge and wisdom into my life flooded me with gratitude. The camaraderie with teammates that was fostered through all the sporting events over the years would prove to last a lifetime. The time to turn the page in my book of life had come. When I finally turned it over I found a clean, unmarked leaf that was waiting for me to fill it with the words in the next chapter.

We are blessed as a community to have a class of young people graduating this year that are special and unique in so many ways. Having watched this group over the years it is obvious that wherever they might land, that locality will be enriched.

As we look across the landscape of our country and see all the turmoil and division happening before us, I find great hope in the words of scripture. Isaiah 59:19b says, "When the enemy comes in like a flood, The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him."

It is my belief that the standard God is raising up is Godly young men and women. All around the world you can see young people taking a stand for Christ. My hope for this group is that they would join the ranks of those that are speaking out for morality and Biblical truth in the public square. Our country is in desperate need of warriors that are willing to be a part of that standard that God is raising up against the enemy of truth and righteousness.

Please pray for these graduates and encour-

age them in their walk. Their future is bright and they are the hope we are passing the torch to.

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not

to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

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AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY

Thomas

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. — John 20:24

I can understand Thomas's doubt. For whatever reason, he wasn't with the other disciples when Jesus first visited them after his resurrection, so he hadn't seen Jesus firsthand. Maybe he should have taken the disciples' word for it when they told him they had seen Jesus. Maybe he should have had more faith. Or maybe he was just an untrusting sort of person. Whatever the case, Thomas said he just couldn't believe Jesus was alive until he saw Jesus for himself.

When Jesus came again and Thomas could see him, Jesus was patient with Thomas. Jesus even showed Thomas what he said he needed to see in order to believe. But Jesus also noted that all who believe without seeing him will be blessed.

Today that includes you and me. Belief without seeing is the nature of our faith most of the time. We probably won't see Christ in person until we join him in eternity. Until then, though, we believe even though we have not seen.

We are called to have faith in Jesus for who he is, all he has done, and all he has promised. We believe because others have seen, because others have witnessed, and because their testimony is in God's Word to us, along with all of God's promises. We believe because the Spirit of God guides us into the truth of God's Word and gives us faith (see John 16:7-15; Ephesians 2:6-10). And in believing we are blessed.

Lord, help us to believe even though we have not seen. By your Spirit, lead us to know the truth that brings life in you. Amen.

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Business Planning Grants Open for Minnesota Dairy Farmers

Apply early, funding is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis

Minnesota dairy farmers are encouraged to apply for the Minnesota Department of Agri-

culture's (MDA) Dairy Business Planning Grants, a funding opportunity designed to support dairy operations in planning for the future.

Eligible projects include hiring a qualified, independent third party to help create a business plan for your dairy operation. This can include plans to:

Evaluate the feasibility of expanding your operation

Plan for environmental upgrades

Develop a farm transition or succession strategy

Update feedlot permits

Address other business planning needs

"Dairy farming comes with real challenges, and thoughtful planning is essential. We're



proud to offer Dairy Business Planning Grants to support Minnesota farmers as they look ahead to strengthen their operations.

Their hard work brings fresh, high-quality dairy products to tables here in Minnesota and beyond," said MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen.

The grant pays 50 percent of the cost to develop a business plan, up to \$5,000. Producers are responsible for the remaining 50 percent. Applications will be funded on a first come, first served basis until June 1, 2025. The MDA has approximately \$28,000 remaining to be used this fiscal year.

To see the full eligibility requirements and to apply, visit the Dairy Business Planning Grants web page. Questions at this program can be directed to Kami Schoenfeld at Kami.Schoenfeld@state.mn.us or call 651-201-6643.

Rice County Steam & Gas Annual Flea Market & Swap Meet, May 24 & 25

(continued from page 1)

Annual Swap Meet & Flea Market
Consignment Auction 9am Saturday
S.E.A.T.P. Tractor Pull 9am Sunday
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Check out their website and facebook page for more information. www.ricecountysteamandgas.com

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Monthly Food Shelf Hours:
1st Tuesday 8:00 - 9:30 am
2nd, 3rd, 4th Tuesdays 4:30-6 pm

Randolph Community Food Shelf is for anyone in need within the Randolph School District.
(Randolph, Stanton, Hampton & New Trier area)
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Th, Fri, Sat • May 8, 9, 10
10am-5pm

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sale hrs: th, f, sat. 9-5
13720 240th St E, Miesville 55009

MAP NOT TO SCALE

Shop unique one-of-a-kind gift ideas for Mother's Day Sunday, May 11!

The Savvy Senior How to Make Gardening Easier as You Age



By Jim Miller

*Dear Savvy Senior,
What gardening tips can you offer to older seniors? I love to putter around and work in the garden, but my back and knees have caused me to curtail my gardening activities, which I miss greatly.*

—Older Gardner

Dear Older,

There's no doubt that gardening can be hard on an aging body. Joints stiffen up, kneeling for prolonged periods hurts, and bending and reaching can strain muscles. But that doesn't

mean you have to give up your hobby. You just need to garden differently, add some special tools and know your limits. Here are some tips that may help you.

LIMBER UP

With gardening, good form is very important as well as not overdoing any one activity. A common problem is that gardeners often kneel or squat, putting extra pressure on their knees. Then, to spare their knees, they might stand and bend over for long stretches to weed, dig and plant, straining their back and spine.

To help protect your body, you need to warm up before beginning. Start by stretching, focusing on the legs and lower back. And keep changing positions and activities. Don't spend hours weeding a flowerbed. After 15 minutes of weeding, you should stand up, stretch, and switch to another activity like pruning the bushes or just take a break.

It's also important that you recognize your physical limitations and don't try to do too much all at once. And, when lifting heavier objects, remember to use your legs to preserve your back. You can do this by keeping the item close to your body and squatting to keep your back as vertical as possible.

LABORSAVING TOOLS

The right gardening equipment can help too. Kneeling pads can protect knees, and garden seats or stools are both back and knee savers. Lightweight garden carts can make hauling bags of mulch, dirt, plants or other heavy objects much easier.



And long-handled gardening tools can help ease the strain on the back by keeping you in a standing upright position versus bent over. There are also ergonomic gardening tools with fatter handles and other design features that can make lawn and garden activities a little easier.

EASIER WATERING



The chore of carrying water or handling a heavy, awkward hose can also be difficult for older gardeners. Some helpful options include lightweight fabric hoses instead of heavy rubber hoses; soaker or drip hoses that can be snaked throughout the garden; thin coil hoses that can be used on the patio or small areas; a hose caddy and reel for easier hose transport around the yard; and a self-winding hose chest that puts the hose up automatically. There are also a variety of ergonomic watering wands that are lightweight, easy to grip, and reach those hard-to-get-to plants.

To find ergonomic gardening tools and the recommended watering aids, check with local retail stores that sell lawn and garden supplies or try online retailers like Gardeners.com or RadiusGarden.com.

CONTAINER GARDENING

If your backyard garden has become too much to handle, you should consider elevated garden beds or container gardening – using big pots, window



boxes, hanging baskets, barrels or tub planters. This is a much easier way to garden because it eliminates much of the bend and strain of gardening but still provides the pleasure of making things grow. Trellises are another nice option that would allow you to garden vertically instead of horizontally.

CONGRATULATIONS

Class of 2025

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Congratulations

HAPPY GRADUATION!

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turn the page to an exciting new chapter.

Good luck, and best wishes!

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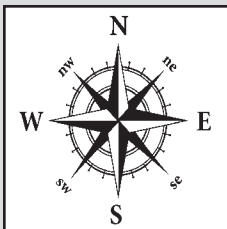
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Changes in Latitudes,
Changes in Attitudes

My First
Mini Bike



By Terry Campbell

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

Growing up a farm boy, I was intrigued by anything with an engine. Tractors, combines, swathers, skid loaders, etc. Grease and gasoline smelled wonderful to me. And diesel fuel smoke was the best. So, anything that was not foot powered had my attention. My dad had a Harley-Davidson Type 74 before he had a family, so maybe the idea of a two-wheeler was in my blood.

In the 1960's many companies made mini-bikes. Basically, made of a leftover lawnmower engine and wheels. But they were fun to zoom around on. I already had horse, but a mini-bike didn't require any feed when not in use. One day I looked at the hardware flyer from Beaver's Hardware in Kasson, and there was a new in box minibike for sale that week. My father took me in and we ordered it. I was so excited and couldn't wait for it to come. I had heard that some people go to the factory to see their vehicle assembled and I got to do the next best thing. I convinced him to let me ride along in the truck to bring it back.

My dad would drive a large cattle truck to the twin cities to haul freight back to the local

retailers when he wasn't busy farming. I loved to ride along with him whenever I could. He would load livestock at local farms and deliver the cattle or hogs to the South Saint Paul Stockyards. Next the truck box was blasted clean with a high-volume water hose at a truck wash. Then he would drive all over the twin cities loading on freight for Kasson and Rochester retailers. It was so much fun to ride from warehouse to warehouse getting the truck filled with huge boxes. Every week there was a shipment hauled back to the hardware stores in Kasson. There was the Gambles Store, Erickson's Our Own Hardware and Beavers Hardware.

The shipment was rather anti-climactic. Except for a small picture on the side, one wouldn't know what was inside the large brown cardboard box. It was partially disassembled and completely in a box. And we still had to bring it home from the store and unpack it. Once the handle bars were installed, oil added to the crankcase and fuel tank filled, it was ready. A couple pulls on the recoil start and it roared to life.

I drove that mini bike all over the farm. In the woods, through the creek and out to the field. It crossed the river and went up every hill just to prove it could be done. My dad was quite the stickler for obeying the law and explained that I must get off and push the mini-bike across the highway. It wasn't street legal and I was expected to abide by man-made rules. At least when he was watching, anyway. But that smooth asphalt road was so much better to ride on. If I looked both ways and there was nothing approaching, I would head right down Highway 57 to the field drive, instead to riding down the road ditch.

Soon I learned a few things about that little gas engine. I still have a scar on my wrist from where I touched the exhaust pipe as I checked the oil on a hot engine. I also discovered that touching the spark plug while the engine was running was a shocking experience. I could override the governor and that little 3 1/2 horse power engine would double the top end speed. I would just put my foot up and push governor over and that thing would fly. I never thought about the little Tecumseh engine flying apart from the high



rpm's. Coming back down the field drive I felt like I was flyin'.

One day I was heading back from the hog barn and I realized too late that the electric fence gate was closed at the driveway. I

locked up the brake and laid the mini-bike down, sliding right under the wire. To my amazement I came back up on two wheels and continued on. That little blue mini-bike gave me hours of fun as a kid.

A Minnesotan:
Mother's Day



By RosaLin Alcoser

May is here which means Mother's Day is once again upon us. I for one am looking forward to spending time with my own mother this Mother's Day.

Now that we're adults my mom generally spends one year with me and the other with my sister. Partly to be fair, but mainly because we live in two different states with Iowa in the middle. So unless one of us travels to the other she only gets to see one of us at a time. And she always insists on coming to us. I think it is mainly a ploy to get us to take her out to different ice cream places then she has where she lives. Which is besides the point.

These days mother's day typically means I take my mother out to brunch if she's visiting me or sending her something I know she'll enjoy if she's with my sister. But

when I was little it meant making cards, little tinkety things that we picked out for mom and homemade gifts. My mom even has a couple of the tissue paper flowers I made for her one year.

However, every once in a while when I was a child we would get her a nice gift. Which often meant doing something with my older sister or our dad getting involved. I was probably about eight the year I decided to get her a really nice gift all on my own.

After months of saving up to buy her something really nice. I managed to talk my dad into taking me into town to buy mom's Mother's Day gift at the JC Penny in Rochester. Where I picked out a pair of tiny opal earrings for her; which she still wears every Mother's Day.

I picked those earrings out from the jewelry counter at JC Penny's. Not from one of the display tables, from the counter. I looked into the case and told the lady working the counter which ones I wanted to buy. Then I paid for them all by myself.

Those earrings cost eight year old me about \$30; which is a lot of money if you're an eight year-old circa 2005. But I was so excited to give them to her, because I bought them myself without any help from my dad or older sister.

While taking my mom out to brunch doesn't have the same thrill of giving her my first big deal gift I had bought her myself. I am still looking forward to getting to spend this Mother's Day with her.

Happy
MOTHER'S DAY!

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Community

The Life-Changing Benefits of Working at a Christian Summer Camp



By Emmarie Moon
Director of Discipleship
and Recruiting at Camp Victory

Every summer, my job is to convince young adults to trade traditional internships or seasonal jobs for something more meaningful: working at a Christian summer camp. While camps are known for offering children and teens a place to grow in faith, friendships, and

fun, the staff behind the scenes often experience just as much—if not more—personal and spiritual transformation. Whether you're considering it for the first time or returning for another summer, there are many reasons why working at a Christian camp might be one of the best decisions you ever make.

1. Spiritual Growth

At a Christian camp, faith is woven into the daily routine—through morning devotionals, chapels, small group discussions, and prayer. As a staff member, you're not just facilitating these activities for campers; you're also participating and growing spiritually alongside them. This experience deepens your relationship with God and strengthens your ability to lead others in faith.

Being responsible for the spiritual guidance of young campers is a humbling and formative role. You'll learn how to lead Bible studies, pray publicly, and share your testimony. These are valuable skills that will serve you in church, school, and future leadership positions.

2. Building Lifelong Friendships

The bonds formed at camp are often among the strongest you'll ever make. Living and working in close quarters with like-minded peers—often through late nights, challenging days, and incredible highs—creates a unique environment for authentic connection. Many staff members leave camp with friends who feel like family and a support system that lasts long after the summer ends. This is the most common reason why staff come back to work at Camp. They love the community.

Even after moving states and into my young adult years, I am still friends with people I worked at camp with eight summers ago. From different states, weddings, kids and jobs, the bonds formed at camp are strong.

3. Making an Eternal Impact

Few jobs give you the opportunity to make such a direct and lasting impact on someone's life. As a counselor or staff member, you're a role model, mentor, and spiritual guide to the campers in your care. Whether it's through a late-night conversation by the campfire, a moment of prayer, or simply being a consistent source of kindness and encouragement, your influence could help shape a young person's faith for life. This is the reason many campers return to camp to work on staff, their life was impacted by a summer staff member and they want to give that experience to campers too.

4. Developing Real-World Skills

Christian camps provide hands-on training in areas like communication, conflict resolution, teamwork, time management, and adaptability—the top 5 most sought-after skills in the workplace. From organizing events and leading activities to handling unexpected situations, the job pushes you to grow in confidence and competence. A camp alumni and area school principal says this of camp staff: "When you see camp experience on an applicant's resume you pay attention. Camp staff are energetic problem-solvers, and the ultimate team players. They have an attitude of joy that comes from serving a higher purpose. That skill set raises their ap-

plication to the top of the list."

Plus, many camps offer certifications in areas like first aid, lifeguarding, or ropes course instruction, which can be valuable resume additions for jobs beyond the summer.

5. A Break from the Digital World

Unlike many jobs that revolve around screens and office spaces, working at a camp immerses you in nature and face-to-face interaction. The simplicity of camp life—free from technology and distractions—gives you space to reflect, connect with others, and be fully present.

Final Thoughts

Working at a Christian summer camp is more than just a job—it's a calling and a journey of transformation. It challenges you, grows you, and blesses you in ways few other experiences can. Whether you're drawn by the opportunity to lead, grow in your faith, or serve others, one summer at camp could leave an eternal mark on your life—and the lives of others.

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Class of 2025

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RANDOLPH HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2025



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Kenna Gergen



Avery Gillen-Rexroad



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AJ Golden



Jackson Green



Gavin Greene



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Class

2025

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Riggs Kosir	Hunter Kriesel	Hayley Kroll	JD Kuhn	Dylan Lamont



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Devon Root



Ben Schlaefli



Nora Sexton



Frank Stehr



Sarah Streiff



Mickolas Swanson



Ronald Thurber



Jonathan Toledo



Chloe Vought



Breckan Zimmer

Not Pictured: Astin Gibson-Martinez, Jonny Simon



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7:00 p.m.

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Sadie Wagner

Randolph FFA Reporter

 Sadie Wagner is the Randolph FFA Reporter. Sadie is a 10th grader at Randolph High School. She has been in FFA for 3 years. Sadie plans to attend college for nursing or sports education.

Sadie's SAE is Sheep Entrepreneurship and Beef Placement. With sheep Sadie raises show sheep and shows them in the summer. She has learned about proper care and nutrition for her sheep. Sadie's favorite FFA memory was attending the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. She enjoyed listening to the speakers at the session we attended. Outside of FFA Sadie is involved in varsity hockey and soccer, NHS at Randolph High School where she mentors younger kids, and showing sheep and cattle throughout the summer.

- Courtesy of Randolph FFA




A piece of advice Sadie would give to another FFA member is "To work through the hard times and you will reach your goals."

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Lindsay Taylor

Randolph FFA Reporter

 Lindsay Taylor is the Randolph FFA Reporter. Lindsay is a 10th grader at Randolph High School. This is her 4th year in FFA. Lindsay plans to attend college for something agricultural related or attend cosmetology school.

Lindsay's SAE is Swine Entrepreneurship, she raises show swine to show throughout the summer at numerous jackpot shows, the Dakota County Fair, and at the Minnesota State Fair. One main thing Lindsay has learned about from starting her SAE is proper nutrition for all her animals. Lindsay's favorite FFA memory was attending the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. She enjoyed listening to all the sessions and getting to learn more about FFA. She also enjoyed hanging out with all her friends and getting to meet new people as well. Outside of FFA Lindsay is involved in 4-H where she shows cattle and swine at the Dakota County fair. She is also the Vice President of her 4-H club and the Vice President for the executive board for Dakota County 4-H. - Courtesy of Randolph FFA



A piece of advice Lindsay would give to another FFA member is "Try and attend as many things you can in FFA. I have made so many memories through them and learned so much!"

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Mark Your Calendar for Dennison Days June 20 & 21

(continued from page 1)

Other events making a return this year are the Clutchmen Classic Car & Bike Show, Antique Tractor Pull, Bingo, Pancake Breakfast, Bags Tournament, Kids Bingo, Purse & Gift Card Bingo and more.

Anyone with questions or suggestions for events for the 2025 festival should contact Lions Club President Diane Ruddle.

Pictured to the right: Alex Tacket will be performing Friday, June 20th.



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Saturday Schedule of Events

- 8-11a.m. **All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast** Under Mainstreet tent. Hosted by Nerstrand-Dennison Fire Dept., and Dennison Community Church. \$12 for adults, \$5 for kids 12 & under, 3 & under FREE. Includes pancakes, eggs, sausage, coffee, juice, milk.
- 8a.m. **Farmers Market Downtown**
Citywide Garage Sales
Classic Car Show on Mainstreet Presented by Clutchmen Car Club. Registration \$10. Trophies at 1p.m. Contact Jason Aldorfer 612-203-4172
- 8:30a.m. **Euchre at Fireside Lounge** For information, contact Jen Eggum 507-649-0602
- 9:00a.m. **Scavenger Hunt - \$100 Cash Prize!** Meet and sign up at the tent. Hunt will begin at 9am.
- 10a.m. **Antique Tractor Pull Begins on the Hill** Sign up begins at 8:30a.m.
Cow Milking Contest Main Street, hosted by David Flom Dairy
- 11a.m. **Food Stands Open**
Kids Pedal Tractor Pull on Mainstreet (At Mainstreet intersection) Sign up begins at 10:30a.m.
- Noon **Kids Bingo** Under the tent. Presented by Dennison Lions. Ages 3-11
Kickball Tournament Hosted by 625 Bar & Grill. Sign up at 625 Bar & Grill
- 1:00p.m. **Car Show Trophies Awarded**
- 1-3p.m. **Kids Carnival**
- 1:30p.m. **Parade Downtown - A Kiddie Parade Leads Off Main Parade** (Ages 12 & Under)
\$100.00 Prize for Best Parade Entry! Sign up at Noon. South Mainstreet. Call 507-645-9992
- 2:30p.m. **625 Bar & Grill Bags Tournament - Prizes for 1st, 2nd & 3rd Place!** Sign up at 625 or call 507-782-9061
- 4:00p.m. **Purse & Gift Card Bingo** Presented by Dennison Lions & Fireside Lounge
- 6:00p.m. **Pie Eating Contest - \$250 Cash Prize!** Under the tent. Sign up at 625 Bar & Grill
- 6:30p.m. **Keg Toss - \$150 Cash Prize!** Across from Fireside Lounge
- 7:00p.m.-12a.m. **Live Music - Russ Franek & The Biscuits** 18+ event. No Cover Charge. 21 to drink.
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For updated info. go to www.dennisondays.org

Dangers of Chewing Gum



By Shauna Burshem, D.C.

Sun Exposure: Natural sunlight plays a vital role in supporting overall health. Sunlight-derived vitamin D remains in the bloodstream two to three times longer than supplements, making it a more effective and sustainable way of maintaining optimal levels. When the sun's rays touch your skin, a cascade of benefits begins. Your body produces beta-endorphins, which are natural pain relievers and mood enhancers, helping to reduce stress and boost mental well-being. At the same time, sun exposure triggers the release of nitric oxide, a compound that lowers blood pressure and improves circulation, ultimately reducing the risk of heart disease. It's amazing how something as simple as a few minutes of sunlight can make such an impact on both your mood and your body.

However, the benefits of sunlight do come with a caveat—strategic and safe exposure is key. Overuse of sunscreen, for example, can block up to 97.5% of UVB rays, limiting your body's ability to synthesize sufficient vitamin D. While all natural sunscreen is essential for preventing sunburn and reducing the risk of skin cancer, it's important to balance its use with safe, unprotected exposure during low-UV hours, such as early morning or late afternoon. Experts recommend spending around 10–20 minutes in the sun a few times a week—just enough for your skin to kickstart the production of vitamin D without causing damage. Simple practices like this allow you to reap the benefits of the sun while staying safe.

The importance of sunlight becomes even clearer when considering longevity. Research shows that people who actively avoid sunlight often have a shorter lifespan compared to those who incorporate sensible sun exposure into their routine. Sun avoidance has been equated with the health risks of heavy smoking, serving as a stark reminder of how critical natural sunlight is for our bodies. Beyond physical health, the psychological impact cannot be overstated—whether it's the calming warmth of sunlit mornings or the sense of renewal that comes from a sunny afternoon, the sun has a way of nurturing both body and mind.

While soaking up the sunshine does won-

ders, remember that balance is crucial.

If you're fair-skinned or live in an area with intense sunlight, consider wearing hats or lightweight, protective clothing to prevent overexposure during peak UV hours. For deeper skin tones, slightly longer exposure may be necessary to achieve the same vitamin D benefits. The sun isn't just a source of light—it's a natural healer. Learning how to use it wisely not only enhances your health but also strengthens your connection to something that's been a part of life since the beginning.

Chew Gum? Recent research has revealed that chewing gum could be far more concerning than we previously thought, acting as a significant source of microplastic exposure. A study soon to be published in the Journal of Hazardous Materials Letters found that each piece of gum may release hundreds to thousands of microplastic particles into our mouths during chewing, placing it among the top contributors to microplastic exposure in everyday life. Microplastics, defined as tiny fragments of plastic smaller than a sesame seed, are all around us—in the water we drink, the air we breathe, and now, potentially, in something as routine as chewing gum.

The study, conducted by researchers at UCLA, observed that both synthetic and natural gum bases can release microplastics, especially in the first eight minutes of chewing. While the exact health implications of ingesting these tiny plastic particles remain unknown, the findings highlight another unsettling way microplastics infiltrate our bodies. It leaves us questioning whether this seemingly harmless habit could carry unforeseen consequences and sparks concern over what else we might unknowingly ingest as part of our everyday routines.

These findings underscore the urgent need for closer regulation of materials used in consumer products like chewing gum, as well as a broader discussion about microplastic pollution and its pervasive role in our lives. While the full health impact is still unclear, studies like this remind us of the ongoing challenge of living in a world where plastic has become so deeply embedded in our daily experience. It's not just about chewing gum;

it's about taking a step back and looking at how intertwined plastic is with the choices we make every day.

Chiropractic and Knee trouble: Chiropractic care for knee problems is often overlooked yet can be incredibly effective in addressing not just the symptoms but the underlying causes of discomfort. When the knee functions improperly, it isn't always just the knee that's to blame—it can stem from areas like the hips, lower back, or even foot alignment. Chiropractors focus on realigning the body to promote proper joint mechanics and reduce stress on the knee. I've talked to countless patients who initially thought their pain was "all in the knee," only to discover that subtle imbalances elsewhere in their bodies were the culprits.

One of my favorite aspects of chiropractic care is its ability to provide relief without invasive procedures. Techniques like gentle manual adjustments, soft tissue therapy, and targeted exercises work together to restore mobility and alleviate inflammation in the knee. I've seen patients walk out with smiles after realizing they could move more freely after months of being hindered by stiffness or pain. What's more, many report improved overall posture and balance, which further reduces strain on the knees in their daily lives. It's amazing how a few adjustments can make such a difference.

Of course, every knee problem is unique, and that's what makes chiropractic care so personal and effective. I've worked with athletes recovering from ACL injuries as well as



people in their golden years simply looking to stay mobile and active. Each plan is carefully tailored to the individual's needs, ensuring long-term support for their lifestyle. For me, it's about helping patients feel heard and cared for while guiding them toward a better quality of life—something that keeps me passionate about this field every single day.

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



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Dependent



By Noel Aldrich, PhD, CNS
Licensed Nutritionist

There is a strong drive within many of us to be able to do an activity without the assistance of another. Perhaps this started when you discovered how much more of the world you could explore when you learned to walk, or maybe when you learned to ride a bike without someone holding on to you. As we move into May, many young people will graduate from school and take on new responsibilities and new adventures. We use phrases like “spreading their wings” and

“gaining independence.” While it cannot be denied that knowledge and practice lead to new abilities, some reflection will note there are things we are dependent on that should not be forgotten.

Being dependent on something is not a sign of weakness. Recognizing what we are dependent on can give us greater clarity and wisdom on the essentials of life. For example, you are dependent on oxygen. We take this for granted until we get “the wind knocked out” of us, or when we find ourselves in a hospital bed with an oxygen mask. You are dependent on pure water. When you were born, your body was 70% water. How important that you keep pure water flowing through so that you do not become a “stagnant pond” growing all kinds of unhealthy things. The general guideline is half your body weight in fluid ounces, so a 200 pound individual should be drinking around 100 ounces of water a day, which is about 12 cups.

You are also dependent on vitamins and minerals. Most of the vitamins were discovered in science observations during the first part of the 1900s. They were first described as “vital amines” noting the vital role these

nutrients played in providing health and vitality. With each vitamin there is a list of deficiencies noted when the vitamin is absent in a person’s regular diet. Deficiencies point to our dependence on these essential nutrients. When Vitamin A is absent, you may notice night-blindness, or some kinds of skin disorders like eczema or psoriasis. When B vitamins are absent, you will notice mood swings, fatigue, or mental health challenges. When Vitamin C is absent, illness increases and sores develop in the mouth and on the skin. When Vitamin D is absent, illness increases, weight can increase, and insomnia can increase. These are just the beginning of the ABCs and Ds of vitamins.

Minerals are essential for a healthy immune response, promoting energy, and helping the body muscles to function properly. Most Americans do not consume enough magnesium each day. Magnesium is essential for helping you to relax as well as helping the body to produce energy. Zinc is used in more than 300 different reactions in the body, aiding the proper activation of the immune system and helping the digestive process. Iodine is the key mineral for the hormone produced by the thyroid that keeps your metabolism in balance. This mineral tends to be deficient in many clients living in the Midwest region. Minerals and vitamins work as a team to complete the perfectly designed function of your body.

Knowing you are dependent on vitamins and minerals for healthy living should help you to consider the best way to acquire these nutrients each day so that you can be more

independent on other activities. Will taking a multi-vitamin or mineral tablet work best for you? Can you identify those foods that are the best source for these nutrients and make sure to eat them regularly? You will note our great grandparents were strong and lived active lives without supplements, so getting your nutrients from food is possible. In today’s world of convenience foods and fast eating, the nutrient value has significantly declined requiring us to take a closer look at the sources of our food.

If you choose to take vitamin supplements to help maintain a healthy life, make sure to identify a quality supplement that obtains its vitamins from fruits and vegetables. There should be ingredients listed that mention fruits and vegetables on the nutrition label. A simple test on the quality of the supplement is to place a tablet in a glass of water and return one hour later. If the tablet has fallen apart in the water then it is a tablet your body can easily absorb. If the tablet has not fallen apart and remains whole there is a chance you are not getting any nutrients from that vitamin.

I am available to review your questions about supplements, testing, and food plans. 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.*

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Ask A Trooper

By Sgt. Troy Christianson,
Minnesota State Patrol



Question: Are trailer hitch load extenders legal? Occasionally I haul some lumber that sticks out beyond my tailgate and would like to know if I can use this.

Answer: Yes you can. Note that when the load upon any vehicle extends to the rear four feet or more beyond the bed or body of such vehicle there are some requirements. At the extreme rear end of such load a red, yellow or orange flag or cloth not less than 16 inches square shall be displayed.

At the times when lighted lamps on vehicles are required, a red light or lantern plainly visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the sides and rear shall be in addition to the rear light required upon every vehicle.

Another good reminder is to always make sure any and all items you are transporting are properly secured.

Question: The other day I came across a railroad crossing sign with the word "EX-EMPT" placed on it. What is that all about?

Answer: An X-shaped sign identifies a rail-

road crossing. If there is more than one track, a sign below the crossbuck indicates the number of tracks.

Warning signs, pavement markings, gates and flashing red lights are positioned at most railroad crossings. Pavement markings include a stop line, an "X," and the letters "RR" painted on the pavement in front of the crossing.

An "exempt" sign means that bus and truck drivers, who are usually required to stop at railroad crossings, may proceed without stopping. However, drivers still need to look in both directions for trains.

Question: In one day, Monday I had three incidents where cars did not yield right of way when they had a flashing left turn arrow. I have observed several other incidents involving other drives as well. It seems of late people seem to think the flashing arrow gives them the right of way.

Answer: A flashing yellow light or arrow means "caution." Proceed through the intersection with caution. Yield the right of way to vehicles and pedestrians already in the intersection. If you are turning left or making a U-turn, you must yield to oncoming vehicles that are close enough to be an immediate hazard.

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The Hampton City Council met on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at Hampton City Hall for the regularly scheduled meeting. Present were Mayor John Knetter and Council Members Jerry Huddleston, Anthony Verch, and Nick Russell. Absent was David Luhring. Also present were Brad Fisher and Angie Smith of Bolton & Menk, Chris Meyer Treasurer, Melissa Timm, Luke Nicolai, and various residents.

Regular Meeting Called to Order – Mayor Knetter called the regular meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Disclosure of Interest – Mayor Knetter stated that he is a member of the Fire Department and will not be voting.

Approval of February 4, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes – Motion by Verch, seconded by Huddleston, to approve the February 4, 2025 regular meeting minutes. All voted in favor. None opposed. Motion passed 4-0.

Approval of Disbursements - Motion by Verch, seconded by Russell, to approve the March disbursements. All voted in favor. None opposed. Motion passed 4-0.

Public Comments: Melissa Timm addressed the council about a reconstruction project on Highway 47 starting at Highway 50. She suggested adding a pedestrian blinking light triggered by a pedestal to improve safety at the intersection. She requested the council's support for this upgrade, which the county showed interest in.

Luke Nicolai expressed concerns about the approval process, urging the council to thoroughly read all 420 pages of documents before making any decisions. He emphasized the importance of understanding the details and recommended a public hearing for the community to voice their opinions, rather than relying on brief, ineffective open houses. He also discussed the policy around data request fees, questioning the need for a new policy when ex-

isting procedures are available. Finally, he suggested that a lack of trust in the council is driving many data requests and urged the council to foster better transparency. The council thanked both speakers for their time.

Petitions, Requests, and Communications:
Randolph-Hampton Fire Department: At the annual meeting held on February 10th it was voted to raise their retirement by \$1,000, from \$2,800 to \$3,800. Motion made by Verch, seconded by Russell to approve the \$1,000 increase towards the pension. All voted in favor with Mayor Knetter abstaining from voting. None opposed. Motion passed 3-0.

Chris Meyer, the Treasurer, presented the Fiscal Year Ending December 2024 financial statements to the City Council. He highlighted key financial points, including a large cash balance of \$3.4 million, with \$2.3 million allocated for water tower replacement and \$262,000 set aside for January bond payments. The city has a zero balance in CDs and investments, though the treasurer is monitoring rates for potential future investments. The Water Fund had operating income for four consecutive years, a first in 15 years, due to lower maintenance expenses. The Sewer Fund also had a small operating income, with revenue from sewage dumping contributing to the pavement project. The city currently has four bond series outstanding, totaling \$5.2 million. Meyer will submit the financial reporting form to the state auditor by March 31st and publish it in the newspaper.

Mayor Knetter thanked Meyer for his work, and Councilor Huddleston inquired about the internal audit. Meyer explained that he needs a couple of council members to assist with the annual internal audit review and will schedule it for April or May. Councilors Huddleston and Russell volunteered to participate.

Mayor Knetter addressed a growing con-

cern at the city council meeting: the high costs the city incurs in fulfilling public data requests, particularly those involving Bolton & Menk, a contractor the city hires for engineering and planning services. Many of these requests involve data stored on Bolton & Menk's servers, not the city's systems, and often require searches of irrelevant or repetitive information. The city is expected to incur tens of thousands of dollars to retrieve this data, which typically involves emails and documents unrelated to official city records.

The Mayor proposed a solution: charge requesters the same hourly rate the city pays Bolton & Menk for retrieving this data. He cited an example involving a request from Kimley-Horn for city-related information, which led to the city being charged for research on emails and documents unrelated to official city matters. Since the information ultimately becomes part of the city's public records, the Mayor argued it's fair for the requester, not the city, to cover the costs for retrieving data from Bolton & Menk's internal systems.

Councilman Huddleston raised concerns about handling internal data requests and suggested further discussion on the topic. The Mayor clarified that requests for city-held data, whether digital or printed, would still be charged the established rate of 25 cents per page. However, for data stored on Bolton & Menk's servers—such as emails and documents not yet processed into city records—the Mayor argued it was inappropriate for the city to absorb the costs. Instead, the requester should cover these expenses.

Councilman Verch acknowledged the public's desire for transparency, especially regarding large projects like the data center, which may be driving many of these requests. While he understood the eagerness for quick access to information, he agreed with the Mayor's point that the city should not bear the cost of

retrieving data that hasn't yet been made public.

The conversation also addressed the need to refine the data request process. The Mayor encouraged requesters to review available documents before submitting new requests, as many questions could be addressed at council meetings or through phone calls. He emphasized that while the city should remain transparent, it shouldn't have to absorb the costs of redundant or excessive requests for data that hasn't yet been processed into public records.

Throughout the discussion, Councilman Verch acknowledged the increased interest in local governance, with more citizens attending council meetings.

He appreciated the public's concerns but emphasized the need to balance transparency with the city's limited resources. The goal is to ensure that data requests don't overwhelm the city's budget.

In conclusion, the Mayor reiterated that the 25-cent per page fee for data stored on city servers would remain unchanged, but any requests for data held by Bolton & Menk would be subject to the same hourly fees the city pays the contractor. This policy aims to ensure that the city isn't burdened by unnecessary data retrieval costs while still maintaining transparency.

Councilman Russell supported charging requesters for data retrieval but proposed a compromise where the city could cover part of the costs. However, he recognized that, given the city's reliance on external contractors, it may not be feasible for the city to absorb any portion of the fees. The Mayor clarified that the city already accounts for the costs of the clerk's time and effort in processing requests, but the real concern is the high fees paid to external contractors like Bolton & Menk for extensive data searches.

(continued on page 24)



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Hampton City Council Meeting

(continued from page 23)

A formal motion was made to adopt the new fee schedule, charging external requesters the actual fees the city incurs from contractors like Bolton & Menk and attorneys for data retrieval. The motion was seconded by Councilman Verch and passed unanimously, ensuring that the costs of extensive data searches are borne by the requesters, not the city.

In addition to the data fee discussion, the Deputy provided updates on community issues, including warnings about fraud—particularly scams involving individuals impersonating law enforcement officers and demanding payments through gift cards or cryptocurrency. He advised residents to remain cautious and report suspicious activities. The Deputy also discussed traffic safety, reminding residents about the need to register side-by-sides and the importance of stopping for school buses with flashing red lights. He also highlighted curfew laws and the dangers of reckless driving.

Councilman Russell briefly mentioned ongoing graffiti issues in city parks, encouraging residents to report such incidents to help authorities track and address the problem. The Deputy agreed and reiterated the importance of reporting these issues promptly.

The meeting concluded with the Deputy being thanked for his updates, and the council returned to discussing the motion regarding data request fees. The unanimous approval of the new fee schedule marked a significant step in ensuring that external requesters bear the costs of extensive data searches, protecting the city's limited resources.

Angie Smith from Bolton & Menk provided an update on the AUAR (Alternative Urban Areawide Review) process, which is now moving into Phase Three. Phase One focused on scoping, while Phase Two involved creating

the draft AUAR, which included a technical analysis by Kimley Horn, along with the draft mitigation plan. The draft was then sent out for a 30-day public review, with additional public review for the scoping phase.

Phase Three is the final period, where public and agency comments from the draft AUAR were reviewed and addressed. These comments were incorporated into a table with responses, which were then added to the final AUAR document, including the final mitigation plan. Smith highlighted key concerns raised during the review, including water resources (both groundwater and surface water), air quality (particularly related to diesel backup generators), traffic impacts, and zoning. These issues were addressed in the final document and mitigation plan.

Smith then outlined the next steps: the city council is being asked to approve the final AUAR and mitigation plan tonight, which will then be sent for a 10-day agency review period. After that, the city council will revisit the plan in April for final adoption. The council will also review any objections from the agencies during that time.

The final AUAR document includes mitigation strategies for two possible development scenarios: Scenario 1 (commercial and industrial development) and Scenario 2 (a data center). For Scenario 1, mitigation focuses on potential zoning changes, water resource management (including protecting a DNR-designated trout stream), and addressing construction impacts such as dust and noise. Scenario 2, focused on the data center, includes mitigation for water use (especially for cooling needs), hazardous waste from diesel backup generators, and noise concerns from the facility's operation.

Smith also noted that while this is the final step in the AUAR process, additional reviews

and public hearings will take place as more specific development plans are submitted. The AUAR is a living document that will be updated every five years to reflect new information and ensure ongoing mitigation efforts are in place.

The city council approved the motion to move the final AUAR and mitigation plan forward, initiating the 10-day agency review period before it returns for final adoption in April.

Ordinances and Resolutions:

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees:

Engineer Report – Brad Fisher of Bolten & Menk provided an update on the water tower project to the mayor and council. The team has finalized the color selection for the tower after evaluating swatches in various lighting conditions, with approval expected soon. Work is progressing with material procurement and structural preparations, and subcontractors may begin site work next week, depending on weather and conditions. However, no work will begin on Lincoln Street yet, with at least seven days' notice being given to nearby residents in case of limited access. Construction will start slowly, with more visible progress expected in late spring, followed by a pause as materials are prepared, and then further activity in late summer for the tower's erection. Weather conditions will determine the timeline for the removal of the old tower. Fisher emphasized that residents would be notified of the upcoming work. The council thanked Fisher for the update.

Water / Sewer Report – Nothing to report

Park Report – Nick Russell provided an update regarding the graffiti situation, mentioning that he reached out to A Brighter Image of Minnesota, the company that handled the previous case, but did not receive a response. He

suggested either repainting the entire building with a few gallons of paint or contracting the job out, depending on the council's preference. Mayor Knetter left the decision to Russell, noting that he is in charge of the parks, and Russell proposed using a red color to match the Cardinals. Russell assured that the repainting could be done in one day and should only take a couple of hours. He also mentioned that once the weather stabilizes, he would open the tennis courts and fill in the cracks.

The council discussed the issue of wood chips, with Councilman Russell expressing concern about the current situation. Mayor Knetter suggested waiting until the ground is drier to handle the wood chips, similar to how it was done in the fall, as the chips that are blown in are expensive. Russell asked if the chips would be used for playgrounds, to which Knetter confirmed. Councilman Huddleston noted that playground chips are more cost-effective.

Street Report – David Luhring was absent but there was a quote for Street Sweeping at \$170.00, when David gets back he can sign the contract and Kelly will get the street sweeping schedule for the spring.

Councilman Huddleston mentioned if anyone has received complaints about snowplow damage, including one instance where a plow went about a foot and a half into a yard. Mayor Knetter advised taking a picture of the damage and sending it to Kelly to address with the contractor. Huddleston agreed to follow up on this.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: None

Adjournment - Motion by Russell, seconded by Verch, to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor. None opposed. Motion passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Kelly Roan



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CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
13						14				15				
16						17				18				
	19					20			21	22				
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48					49		50			51		52		
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57	58	59	60					61			62	63		
64						65	66			67				68
69						70				71				
72						73				74				

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

SUDOKU ANSWERS

W	O	B	E	E	S	E	S	P	I	Y
E	I	R	A	T	E	R	O	T	Y	A
L	T	A	L	L	A	D	O	A	D	E
A	S	A	E	R	E	S	N	O	S	D
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	6				9				
4	3				5	7	6		
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9	4						7	3	
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	7			6			3		
			5	3	2			1	6
				9				5	

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

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- THEME: MOTHER'S DAY
- ACROSS
1. T. Rockwell's "How to Eat Fried ____"
6. Pro football org.
9. Tea servings
13. Relating to axis
14. Gershwin or Levin
15. Break of day
16. Repeat, in music
17. Red Cross bed
18. Arm bones
19. *Mother ____, personification of physical world
21. *Mother ____, fictional dog owner
23. Opposite of hence
24. Sleeveless garment
25. Money source
28. Golfer's destination
30. Pass, as time
35. "Metamorphoses" poet
37. *The Beatles: "Mother ____ comes to me"
39. "The Goldbergs" sibling
40. Unacceptable, to a baby
41. Alpine singing
43. Resembling wings
44. Fill with optimism
46. Fill to satisfaction
47. Orion's ____
48. Like funeral atmosphere
50. Lice eggs
52. Morse code dash
53. Remainder of a cigarette
55. Before skip and a jump
57. *Mother of ____, a.k.a. Daenerys Targaryen
61. *Mother ____, Missionaries of Charity founder
64. PassÉ
65. Stir or fuss
67. Add together
69. Anomie, alt. sp.
70. Decompose
71. Very angry
72. Puppy sounds
73. "____ no evil, hear no evil"
74. Tennis-affected joint
- DOWN
1. Took place
2. Yoked team
3. Capital of Latvia
4. Kind of ray
5. Cast-off skin
6. French Riviera city
7. "To" follower
8. Wood turning device
9. Tulip starter
10. Leo's Karenina
11. ____ gum, food additive
12. Put metal to the pedal, p.t.
15. Difficult to detect
20. With ample space
22. Employ
24. Green and lush, as in trees
25. *Mother ____, investigative journalism nonprofit
26. Convex molding
27. Twofold
29. Cambodia's neighbor
31. A in UAE
32. Heaped
33. Famous Teatro alla ____
34. *Mother ____, personification of planet
36. Shower with affection
38. Abominable snowman
42. River in Hades
45. Personify
49. *Mother Superior is the head one at the convent
51. Foray
54. Former Russian leaders
56. *Mother of ____, a.k.a. nacre
57. June 6, 1944
58. Raja's wife
59. On the surface
60. Emeralds and rubies
61. Carrying bag
62. Hunk of something
63. Lowest female singing voice
66. Female forest ruminant
68. Archery bow wood



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