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Dakota City Christmas in the Village Dec. 6, 7, 13 & 14

The village is buzzing with preparation for Christmas in the Village to be held December 6, 7, 13, & 14 from 3-8 pm at the Dakota County Fairgrounds in Farmington.

All ages will enjoy the many displays and buildings that reflect the sights, sounds, and scents of the season!

The buildings are heated and horse-drawn trolleys will be available to take visitors throughout the village. *(continued on page 8)*

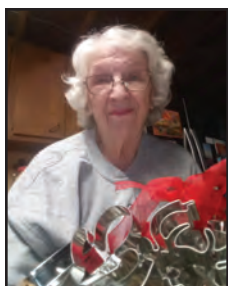


Courtesy of Dakota City Heritage Village

One Woman's Cookie Cutter Collection

Sugar cookies at Christmas is a tradition in most families. You may remember a few of the cookie cutters your mom or grandmother used when you were young.

(continued on page 10)



Joyce Moorhouse

New Homes Planned in Dundas

By Doug Jones

As the largest commercial home builder in Northfield, Dundas-based Johnson-Reiland plans 40 new homes in 2026 but just ten in Northfield. With the most building permits in 2025, Paul Reiland is planning on being the lead builder over time of 60 home lots planned next to the new Gracwin 55+ community planned near the Benedictine Center, northwest of Northfield Hospital.

Locally famous in Dundas, Reiland built out Chuck DeMann's subdivision on railway Street, opposite Bridgewater Township Hall. As Chuck DeMann told Mainstreet Messenger in 2021, he had a devil of a challenge with city hall that demanded he build "stick-built, affordable house". Finally he turned to Johnson-Reiland and Paul Reiland who offered to build custom homes that would sell in the current market. *(continued on page 5)*



L-R: Matthew Reiland, Michael Reiland, Daniel Reiland, Paul Reiland

Hopeful Heritage

By Tyler Weeks

Nothing is quite so bittersweet as retirement. On one hand, it is a time in which you depart from the field you've poured considerable time, effort, and hard work into and hopefully look back on with pride. On the other, leaving the position opens the door to countless opportunities, allowing you to harness previously unattainable time to pursue what you value.

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Larry and Kari Flom

Utility Work Starts in Northfield Township



By Doug Jones

The 80-acre Eugene Lyman farm east of Hall Avenue and the water tower is being annexed (retroactively) by the city of Northfield. *(continued on page 4)*

GRAND OPENING
WED. NOV. 26 - SUN. NOV. 30
(Closed Thanksgiving Day)

FRIDAY - BEST DRESSED COWBOY & COWGIRL CONTEST!
Enter every day for your chance to win!

BRYAN ANDERSON
Friday, November 28
7:00-11:00 PM

MICHAEL SHERWOOD
Saturday, November 29
7:00-11:00 PM

TUESDAY BINGO 6:00 PM • SUNDAY MEAT RAFFLE 3:30 PM
Dennison Lions Club Charitable Gambling Permit #2782

MAIN STREET, DENNISON • 507-782-9753 • Closed Thanksgiving Day
Monday - Tuesday - Thursday - Friday 3 PM - Close; Saturday - 11 AM - Close
Sunday - Noon - Close; Closed Wednesdays
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HAPPY Thanksgiving

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Best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday to all.

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Turned off from Jesus and the Bible?



By Ashley Dudek,
founder of Isaiah Ministries, bringing
Biblical teaching to help overcome
life's everyday challenges.
www.isaiahministries.cc

Can you believe that I did not like pizza as a kid? That's right! I remember going to a really good pizza place in my hometown called Charlie's Pizza for a pizza party as a young child. I ordered spaghetti as everyone else ordered pizza, 'cause I was not going to have any of that yucky, soft bread, with half melted cheese on it stuff. However, when the food came out, I saw the pizza and it looked sur-

prisingly good.

You see, when I thought of pizza as a youngster, I only thought of the pizza I knew—school pizza. Some of you may have liked it, but I did not. Our school pizza was in a square, there was so little cheese that you could see the red sauce, and it had a soft and soggy texture with a weird smell. So when pizza was mentioned, I was instantly turned off. Until I had the good stuff. If my memory serves me right, it was on that pizza party day, at Charlie's Pizza, that I discovered what true pizza tasted like, and it was amazing.

I often wonder if people have associated Jesus and the Bible with "school pizza." Just as I was turned off by the elementary pizza, perhaps people have been turned off from Jesus and the Bible because He and the Word were misrepresented.

One day, I was having coffee with a friend in late spring. You could feel the warmth in the air, yet there was a chill in the wind as we sat outside on the patio as I was sipping a white chocolate mocha and my friend was drinking a matcha. My friend and I were catching up on life since it had been a few years since we'd seen each other.

We eventually started talking about church and how at times some of them can be a little legalistic. Meaning people can teach the Bible in such a way that it is rule-bound and there is little life, joy, and spirit behind that knowledge of the Word they are educating on (see Ephesians 2:8-9 and 1 Corinthians 13:2). This opened the door to my friend mentioning how the Bible can at times be hard for her to read because in the past she had people in her life that twisted the Scripture by using it

out of context (see 2 Peter 3:16-18). People may do this for personal gain, manipulation, control, or other various reasons.

I eagerly sat up and told her the story about the pizza. My little heart was like, "What they did was not okay! Please try eating 'the Bread' again. The Word of God (which can be referred to with the metaphor of Bread) changes everything!" My friend, with such respect, listened and received what I had to say.

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good;

Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!
Psalm 34:8

It grieves my heart to hear stories of people who were raised in a religious, rule-bound home or church. When legalism (rules) is left and right, it can lead a person to fall into

shame or not feeling good enough. It saddens me when I hear about stories like my friend's, where church leaders twist the Scriptures, therefore causing confusion and discomfort to those who are listening to them.

I am in shock when I hear stories of people being kicked out of church for how they looked or because of a sin they had committed. Is it not the church's role to accept the outcast, the ones that look different, and the "mess-ups" (see Romans 15:7)? If we look in the mirror, sure, maybe we appear a little more polished, but we are just the same as them. We sin and mess up too.

Perhaps there was a pastor, youth group leader, or relative in your life that called themselves a Christian, but that was the last thing they acted like. *(continued on page 3)*



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Area Church Directory

First Table of God's Law

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” — Matthew 22:37-38

My wife and I recently attended a symphony. Seventy-five musicians on the stage gave their best. The star of the show was a young violinist playing a 1699 Stradivarius violin. At the end of the performance, with the crowd on their feet applauding, the young man left the stage. The applause continued, and he reappeared and bowed. The applause increased, and he returned a second time.

Was this violinist an egotistical young man? No. Giving the audience the opportunity to express their gratitude and amazement for a beautiful performance added to the listeners’ joy. If the violinist had simply walked off and not returned, the audience would have felt shortchanged. Expressing appreciation is an important part of enjoying a great performance.

The first table of God’s law to his people (commandments 1-4) calls them to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, and mind. God wants us to honor and glorify him in all we think, say, and do. The first table of the law is designed to enable us to truly appreciate God’s beauty and glory.

Calling for our love and respect in this way is not egotistical. Rather, it is a sign that the utterly amazing and loving God wants us deeply to enjoy the best life, blessings, and hope possible.

Lord God, thank you for your law, which teaches us to see and enjoy your amazing, beautiful love for us all. Help us to think and act and live in your ways always. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

CANVAS CHURCH

404 Schilling Drive, Dundas

Lead Pastor: **Jed McGuire** • www.canvaschurchmn.com

Sunday service 9:00a.m. and 10:45a.m.

YTH Wednesdays at 6:30p.m. Canvas Recovery Group meets Thursdays at 6:30p.m.

LITTLE PRAIRIE UNITED METHODIST 2980 130th St. E.

Pastor **Penny Bonsell** • pastor@littleprairieumc.org

507-663-6150 church phone • 651-503-4279 Cell

9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship; Sunday School & Nursery; Adult Group 8a.m.

CITY LIGHT CHURCH 2140 Hwy. 3 South, Northfield, MN

Pastor **Pete Haase** • **507-645-8829** Call for service times

LIFE21 CHURCH 2100 Jefferson Road (just north of Target)

Pastor **Brent Bielenberg** • **645-7730** life21church.com

10:00a.m. Worship Experience

NORTHFIELD EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH 5600 East 110th Street

Pastor **Dan Runke** • **663-0133** • northfieldefc.org

9:30 a.m. Worship; 11:00 a.m. Christian Life Classes

HOSANNA CHURCH - NORTHFIELD 205 2nd St. S., Dundas

Pastor **Dean Swenson** • **507-664-9007** • www.hosannalc.org

Sunday: 9am & 10:45am Worship with Hosanna Kids Church ages 3-5th grade and

Child Care for ages 6wks-3years at both services

Fellowship time with refreshments between services.

Wednesday: Middle School Ministry - doors open at 5:30; programming 6-7:15;

High School Ministry - doors open at 7pm; programming 7:30-9pm

MAIN STREET MORAVIAN CHURCH 713 Division St., Northfield

Tel: **507-645-7566** • Worship Services at 10:30a.m.

GOSPEL OF LIFE FAMILY CHURCH

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2010 Jefferson Road, Suite A, Heritage Square

on Hwy. 3, Northfield

admin@gospeloflifechurch.org

www.gospeloflifechurch.org

Sunday 10:30a.m.; Wednesday 6:00p.m.

Jay Thomas Otte

Jay Otte, age 64, of Randolph, passed away unexpectedly on Monday, November 10, 2025, at Northfield Hospital.

Born May 1, 1961, to William and Mary (Husaby) Otte, Jay's life was a testament to the values instilled in him during his upbringing on the family farm in Randolph. A graduate of Randolph High School in 1979, Jay's path

crossed with his beloved Duvae at a street dance, which started their lifelong journey together. Jay and Duvae married on August 5, 1989, at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Farmington. Together, they raised three children on the family farm.

The legacy that he built alongside family at Triple O Dairy is one that the family will always be proud of. As a third-generation farmer, Jay taught his family how to work hard, stay humble, and take pride in what they do. He poured his heart into family and the farm, both of which are better because of him. He was a proud dad; supporting all three children through coaching youth sports throughout the years.

It felt like Jay's purpose in life was farming, until grandkids came along. His role as "Papa" was truly the proudest title he carried. Whether it was riding with in the tractor, seeing him there at every sporting event, or watching every recital, his grandkids always felt his love, pride, and support.

Beyond being a farmer, husband, father, and Papa, he was a great friend. He could strike up a conversation with anyone and make them feel like an old friend. He would drop anything for someone in need and was always there to help. Jay took pride in his community and invested 18 years of service to the Randolph school board helping to ensure the students received the best possible experience.

Jay not only made the world a better place, but he also encouraged others to do the same. He passed his passion for community support, his friendship, and his commitment to family to all who were fortunate enough to know him.

He is survived by his wife, Duvae; children, Brienna (Dennis) Mulvihill of Randolph, Scott (Ashley) of Randolph and Trevor (Melissa) of Rochester; grandchildren, Lucy, Carson, Hadley, Levi, Ethan, Morgan and James; his 3 brothers, many in-laws and other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, William and Mary, and sister-in-law, Danelle.

Mass of Christian Burial was at 11 AM, Monday, November 17, 2025, at the Church of St. Dominic in Northfield. Visitation was from 4-7 PM, Sunday, November 16, 2025, at the Church of St. Dominic and continued one hour prior to mass. A reception followed mass at the church. Interment was in Lakeside Cemetery in Randolph, following the reception at the church.

Arrangements are with Bierman, Benson & Langelough Funeral Home & Crematory. www.northfieldfuneral.com

Turned off from Jesus and the Bible?

(continued from page 2)

They could have been cold, overbearing, and not very loving. Maybe there was a church or a "Christian" that judged you, did not accept you, or looked down on you. Oh, my sweet friends, I apologize if this happened to you. I am sorry for the people who have called themselves Christians but behaved the opposite. Please do not let this stop you from getting reacquainted with Jesus and the Bible.

Yes, the Bible does have certain standards, but those standards are there for our good. When we learn about the ways Jesus wants us to live, they need to be taught with love and gentleness as well as within the context of the Scriptures (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Galatians 5:22-23).

Not like the Sadducees and Pharisees. If you don't know who these groups of people were, in a nutshell, they were two religious groups in Jesus's day. They were stuck in following the "rules."

Trust me, I love doctrine (teaching of the Bible); however, it needs to be presented in the right manner. If you are reading this and have been hurt in any way by the church and/or Christians, and therefore are turned off from Jesus and the Bible, please attempt Jesus and the Bible again. They may taste completely different than in the times of the past.

Solution:

1. Know the Lord LOVES you. He is not those who hurt you and/or misrepresented the Bible. Many people quote John 3:16, which is awesome, but why do they not include verse 17? Do you know what it says? "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." Jesus does not condemn, my sweet friends, and once again, He is not those who have hurt you.

2. A little offense may arise as I say this next point, but if you have not forgiven those who have hurt you, I would highly encourage you to forgive them. We all are indeed human, and no one is perfect. I know it can be hard to forgive those who have hurt you, but Jesus must be onto something if He encourages us to forgive those who have sinned against us (see Matthew 18:21-22).

3. Give Jesus and the Bible another try. Ask the Lord for "new eyes" as you enter into conversation with Him and start reading about Him in the Word of God. If you are not sure where to start reading in the Bible, try the book of John and the Psalms. I do truly believe this time around it will be different—a Charlie's Pizza kind of different!

Utility Work Starts in Northfield Township

(continued from page 1)

The city council just recently voted for initial funding to extend Jefferson Parkway east across Hall and northeastward across the Lyman farm.

The city is still working on its “orderly annexation” (retroactive to 2023) with the township. The city is saying they will zone it all residential development for about 400 houses.

With completion of the Wall Street road rebuilding over Spring Creek to the north wrapping up, the obvious question arises when will the last two stretches of Hall Avenue get paved as traffic builds up.

Northfield City bought 13 acres from the Lyman trust in 2023 (for \$440,000 per acre), back when the city thought they had a \$30 million “Covid recovery” Federal grant from Senator Amy Klobuchar. This led to plans for a \$60 million manganese removal water treatment plant on the 13 acres, that since was cancelled by the city council. But Congress took back all unspent Covid recovery money in favored the new Trump spending plans.

The contract signed in 2023 by former

mayor Rhonda Pownell and city administrator Ben Martig promised to extend Jefferson parkway along the south and east sides of the 13 acres and “all utilities”. The contract (first disclosed by AGA in a letter to the Northfield editor published October 22nd) showed that the city, under the contract, could pay the Ly-mans \$25,000 to cancel the road and utility project (estimated by AGA (Association for Government accountability) to cost \$10 million).

But Martig and public works director David Bennett acted to head off the council reconsidering spending just \$25,000 to save taxpayers \$10 million. They rushed through a contract with SM Hedges of Jordan, which immediately started welding sections of water main pipe for burial in a northeastward diagonal across the farm and with all connecting streets. Now a \$10 million “sunk cost”, AGA estimates the full cost of streets and all utilities will be in excess of \$40 million (before interest costs).

The neighbors to the new subdivision include the Peterson brothers to the south, Dave Huber to the east and Mark Pritchard to the north.

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Hopeful Heritage

(continued from page 1)

As enticing as a world of travel, time with family, and meaningful pursuits may be, it's only fair to recognize this work with a proper sendoff first. Larry and Kari Flom will find themselves in this very scenario in less than a month, when they hang up their hats and take the step into retirement. This decision concludes two notable careers: Larry's farming business and Kari's many jobs, ending with the last six years at Heritage Bank.

Kari: "I grew up around and graduated from school in Northfield, later attending Rochester Vocational School for Child Development. I then spent the next fourteen years in the day-care business. After working and managing the Dennison Depot for 17.5 years, I took some time off to help care for my grandkids. But they grew up, leading me to work at Her-

itage Bank for the last six years."

This "small-town, family-friendly" institution started with a location in West Concord. Since then, their services have extended to Dennison and, in December of 2019, Northfield. Their family-owned and operated business strives to work in the communities they serve, investing in you and your town. Changing their name from Farmers State to Heritage Bank in 2018 better reflected this history as a multigenerational operation. Although this decision brought a notable revamp to their brand image, they have prided themselves on having faces like Kari Flom's around to fulfill customers' needs and demands since 1930. If you're wondering how an employee at Heritage Bank ever got into touch with the seemingly distant world of a farmer, the answer lies in the couple's love for parties. During one of the town's local get-togethers in the 1980s, the two hit it off and have been together ever since.

Looking at Larry's side, he grew up and graduated in the Kenyon area on the same farm he's lived on since he was two. Despite the industry's many highs and lows, these roots in no-till corn and soybean farming

have remained strong. Even during the busy planting and harvesting seasons, however, Larry has managed his Dennison farm solo. Though he and Kari brought their 2,000 acres down to 500, there was still the issue of handling marketing and on-farm work without an extra hand. To avoid the cost and time of training someone, he typically emptied loads and moved grain carts into semis without assistance. Since their grandkids usually kept Kari occupied, the latest farm equipment and technologies had to make up for the labor shortage. To guide the community and showcase farming products fit for Minnesota, Larry also hosted field days for Isaacson Implement starting around 2000. These one-day events gave customers the chance to see the newest combine models, tractors, and tilling machines harvest corn and clean up stubble.

Larry: "It's something I enjoy. Plus, it allows me to learn something new from the company field reps who come out to help. Farming in the Dennison community has always been a great place to visit with your neighbors and friends. Sharing ideas or just trash-talking about the 'green equipment' with the locals at coffee in the mornings is always a highlight of the day."

With both of their careers containing such wonderful moments, the two undoubtedly have reason to celebrate. For Kari, it will be the workers and customers she misses the most, who constantly played a role in her daycare, manager, and bank positions. Meanwhile, Larry will treasure the land and his efforts to care for it as best he can. Though it was challenging to brave the industry at times, he has developed a love for the land that will undoubtedly stick with him beyond his career. In the coming months and years of their retirement, the two hope to enjoy more cabin time and travel around the U.S. In a world where spectacles and grandiose works occupy our time and attention, it can be easy to overlook stories like those of these two small-town workers. However, it is their faith and devotion that run these communities. Behind the stereotypes we pin to specific



Larry and Kari Flom taking a stroll through their farm near Dennison, Minnesota.

jobs and career paths are real people, experiences, and dreams, whose faces and heritage deserve recognition. Their story shows how retirement does not conclude a person's legacy; it merely spotlights it.

Holiday Recipe Contest

The Holidays are just around the corner. If you have a favorite recipe you would like to share with others, send it to us and win a gift certificate to a local restaurant.

We will be selecting the best and printing them in the Christmas issue of the Messenger in December. It can be an appetizer, main course, side dish or a dessert. Just submit the complete recipe with all ingredients and preparation instructions along with your name to messengerdrawing@gmail.com. Winners will be chosen by November 21st.

CFS Sells Dennison Location



Sighting continuing efficiency and operation efforts, CFS (Central Farm Service) has continued to sell off smaller elevator locations in their trade area, this year, closing the Dennison location.

CFS had wound down operations at the Dennison location in the past year, while continuing to grow its Randolph location.

CFS representatives stated, "as these older locations age and smaller farmers retire, it is not cost effective to make the necessary upgrades to accommodate the larger scale farmers at these smaller elevators. Consolidating is a necessary business decision."

Earlier this fall, the Dennison location was sold to a local farm partnership. The Dennison location is now privately owned. The bin site will continue to be used for crop storage and the former office and warehouse on main street will be leased to another agri business, Gobin Seeds.

Gobin Seed Company Moving Into Former CFS Building in Dennison



Dennisons mainstreet will gain a new business in December. Gobin Seed Company announced this week they are moving into the former CFS (Dennison Elevator) warehouse and office located in Dennison. Gobin Seed Company was started in 2017 by Brian Gobin. Brian had been in the seed business since 1987, selling for Trelay Seeds in Wisconsin. Trelay was purchased by Monsanto in 2005, later merged with Gold Country Seeds and now is Chanel Seed, owned by Bayer. Krissy joined

the business after she retired from her job in Minneapolis, and as the business grew, son Brock joined the family business, working with Brian and Krissy on day to day operations.

"We are excited to be a part of Dennison," Krissy Gobin stated, "we have been blessed to grow our business in an ever changing farm environment, and we look forward to having a more central location to work with our existing and new farms in the area." Krissy is also the newest member and Treasurer of The Dennison Lions Club. Brian and Krissy live in the Sogn Valley and Brock in Rural Dennison. Business Hours and more information will be announced at a later date.

New Homes Planned in Dundas

(continued from page 1)

Chuck died January 3, 2022 at 96 and a half.

World War II veteran Chuck DeMann began his project on the old family farm after turning 90. After terrible frustration with the mayor, he said that when he found Paul, he knew his prayers were answered, and indeed he paid off all his debts before he died. Paul said he gave the project his all because Chuck deserved to win as a homebuilder. In his 90's. And he did.

Johnson-Reiland is headquartered diagonally across from Frandsen Bank.

The Bluff View project of twin and four-plex homes near Spring Creek Park sell from the \$400's. Reiland plans a total of forty homes in 2026, with ten at Bluff View and 30 homes in Cannon Falls, Elko New Market and Chaska with 3/4 bedroom houses priced around \$600.

Contrary to Northfield City suggesting a new water tower and sewer and water lines are needed northwest of the hospital, Paul noted that Gracwin is set to break ground soon, followed by a 60 house development, without new city infrastructure needed. But that represents about a ten-year buildout.

80% of Reiland's buyers are retirees, usually selling their old home locally in Northfield, to move to places like Gracwin.

St Olaf and Carleton have built many more on-campus student housing in recent years. But as Mayor Erica Zweifel noted, neither St Olaf or Carleton has any incentives to encourage faculty to buy homes in Northfield and spend more time on campus.

Paul's father, Daniel, now 80, starting as a developer and homebuilder in 1974 in Savage and Bloomington. Paul moved from Prior Lake to Northfield, where his five wrestling boys helped Northfield High School to a state championship, whipping Prior Lake.

Farm Girl Chatter Silent Whispers at Dusk

By McKell Lemmerman

Hello, my name is McKell Lemmerman and I am from Mazeppa. I have turned my lifelong passion for cattle into a thriving local business. In addition to owning my own beef herd, I offer hands-on cattle services for area farmers, including vaccinating, castrating, de-horning, and implanting. Whether it's a large operation or a small family herd, I approach every job with dedication and care. No job is too big or too small. My commitment to efficiency and strong work ethic have made me a trusted name among farmers in the Southeast area

I've always been a small-town girl with big farm dreams. Every sound at dusk tells a story - of care, of rhythm, of a life rooted deep in earth and grace. This column is my way of gathering these moments on the farm.

Silent Whispers at Dusk

As I sit here admiring God's creation, the sun begins its slow descent behind the hills, casting long shadows across the fields. The sky is a masterpiece—streaked with shades of gold, rose, and soft lavender. It's the kind of

beauty that doesn't need words, just eyes willing to see it and a heart open enough to feel it.

The air has cooled, carrying with it the earthy scent of cut grass, fields being worked, and the fading warmth of the day. I'm perched on the edge of the fence, the work of the day is nearly done, but the land still hums with life.

Cows move slowly, their low moos soft and steady as they make their way out in the pasture. Not loud, not frantic—just little murmurs, like they're saying goodnight. Horses stand quietly under the shade of the old pine trees, offering gentle nickers as the evening settles in. All while a farm dog trots lazily across the gravel, tail swishing, keeping an eye on everything without a rush.

In the distance, the combine finishes its final pass through the field. Its engine groans gently, not with urgency but with satisfaction—like a farmer leaning back in his chair after supper, tired in the best kind of way. Even the tractors, parked by the edge of the field, seem to hum with quiet purpose as the farmhands end their day. Soon, the low rumble of engines joins the symphony—metal meeting earth, machine joining man in this ancient rhythm of harvest and hope. The tractor hum fades as it turns toward home, and the combine leaving behind neat rows and the scent of freshly harvested grain.

I close my eyes for a moment and listen.

It's not silent, not really. But it's a different kind of sound. A sacred kind. The kind that seeps into your bones and slows your heartbeat. The kind that makes you grateful with-



out needing a reason. I listen to the sounds—not loud, not sharp—but layered and rich. The quiet moos, the whisper of wind through the corn stalks, the clink of metal as tools are set down for the night. It's not silent. It's harmony. A lullaby of work well done.

The sunset wraps everything in gold, like heaven's own blanket tucking in the farm for sleep. It reflects off the tin roof of the barn and dances on the surface of the land, where the livestock roam and the farmers work.

I breathe it all in.

Out here, gratitude doesn't need to be spoken; it's lived. It's dust on your boots, and in the ache of your shoulders after a long day. It's in the knowledge that even if no one sees the work, God does. And that's enough.

I realize how much life there is in stillness.

The kind of life that doesn't scream for attention, but quietly hums along, working, moving, breathing—alive in every sense. Sometimes, I think people forget about places like this. Places where time doesn't demand attention but simply passes, like clouds across the sky. Where the work is hard but honest, and joy is found in the simplest things.

In the quiet harmony of this land, I am reminded that sometimes, the most beautiful songs are sung in whispers. As the light fades, I sit a while longer, not needing anything more than this moment. A quiet place, a full heart, and the soft song of the land saying goodnight.

Nightfall whispers through the fields I call home,

McKell



Schedule a check up for your furnace before cold weather arrives

Minnesota winters demand a lot from your heating system. Regular maintenance is key to keeping your forced air heating system operating safely and efficiently. Streitz Heating & Cooling offers comprehensive heating maintenance services for homeowners in Dundas, Northfield, and nearby areas, helping prevent breakdowns before they happen.

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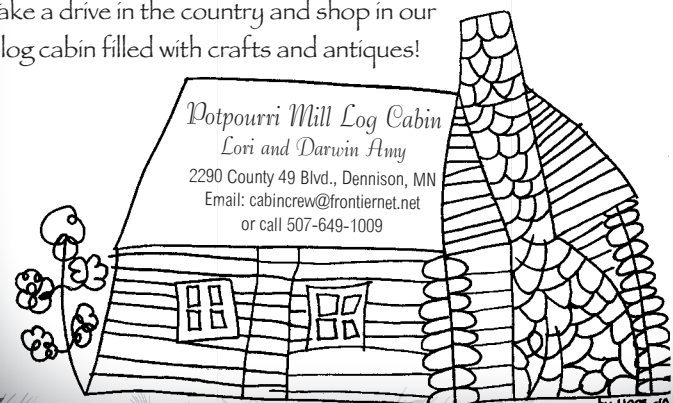
Saturdays: November 29, December 6, 13

Sundays: November 30, December 7, 14

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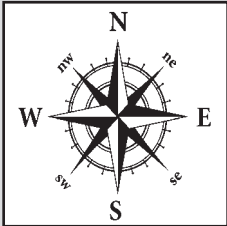
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Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes

Hunting Season



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.

It is that time of year again. Hunting season. When the manly tradition of heading out into

the woods to shoot meat for your freezer arrives. I don't have a problem with hunting. I owned a gun shop for many years and made a living selling firearms and ammunition. But some hunters lack common sense. Like the one who came in opening day to buy a hunting license and slugs for his 16 gauge. I was all sold out of 16 gauge-ammo already. And he thought it was my fault he couldn't go hunting. I made a comment about there being 364 other days in a year to purchase ammo, he didn't think it applied to him.

Being a lifelong farmer, I raised livestock to keep myself in meat all year long, so cleaning game seemed more work than I wished to invest. Being a landowner, I found myself dealing with the hunters who didn't respect private property. We had over 100 acres of woodland which seemed mighty tempting to many people. It was also home to my beef cow/calf herd and I preferred to keep it that way.

We leased the woodland out to a hunter who paid way more in hunting rights than he could ever harvest in meat. But he enjoyed the sport and we could trust him to not shoot our cattle. But outside of that we had some interesting interactions. Anyone who hunts is required to have permission to enter private property. Without that you become a trespasser. Your hunting license becomes rather worthless once you cross that line.

One autumn day in the late 1980's we were cutting firewood deep in the property when one of my friends noticed a guy sitting on a stump above us with a shotgun. I walked up to him and asked what he was doing. He told me he knew Campbell, the owner, and had

permission to hunt. I, with my father's sense of humor, asked what Campbell looked like. His answer was rather evasive until I informed him who I was and requested he leave ASAP.

I often times came down to check the cattle and found the gates left open. We eventually hard wired the electric fence in front of the gates to prevent unauthorized access. Every fall while riding through on my daily herd check I would come across a deer stand. My paid hunter only used a ground blind so we knew it was an interloper. For liability reasons we had to dismantle the trespasser's unit and see if he would show up to claim it. Whoever did it must have had lots of money because they donated a couple stands each year.

One fall I was hauling round bales out of the field and met a pickup coming into the field drive. The driver looked most displeased to see me and waved me out of the way. I looked displeased right back and motioned him to leave. When I returned for another load of bales, I saw that same pickup parked in the corner of my field. I reported it to the sheriff and had him ticketed for trespassing. Another early fall morning while I was plowing, I interrupted a couple hunting pheasants in my cornfield. They were mad I was scaring the birds and I told them to leave immediately.

The funniest story was watching a tree stand being built in my back field one harvest season. I was irritated that no one got permission to do so and it boiled over the night before hunting opener. I took my chainsaw out and cut the saplings off level with the ground. I chained all four trees together and pulled them out of the field. My neighbor told me later that a guy showed up in their barn early



the next morning while they were milking their cows. He was mad as could be, and asked them what happened to his deer stand. They couldn't stop laughing and told him to go ask the property owner. He never did and I assume it was the same guy I had ticketed for trespassing.

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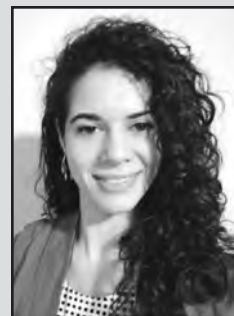
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A Minnesotan: Thanksgiving Turkeys



By RosaLin Alcoser

Once again the days are growing short, the nights are growing long, the air is now cold and November has truly rolled around. Which means once again that it's time for Thanksgiving.

The Thanksgiving Day turkey is one of the most icon part of the holiday. Weather he is on your table or only on your TV screen I can assume that a turkey will be present at most of your Thanksgiving celebrations.

While I could go on with story's of turkey cooking mishaps. The many hunting stories of great turkey hunts that could

be collected or about my older sister's confirmation turkey; yes she got a turkey as a confirmation gift. Instead I'm going to tell you about a group of turkeys that my husband often talks about and misses just a little bit.

This summer while my husband and I were vacationing in South Dakota. We encountered a rafter of big old mean Toms right outside of our Air B&B. There had to be about five or six of them out that evening.

At first these turkeys were neck wrestling in the drive way right were we had been parking our car. We slowly rolled towards the turkeys just enough to get them to move. This did work as they did move. They moved all the way to slightly father up the drive way; where they decided to resume their neck wrestling.

After serval minutes of watching these big old Tom Turkeys neck wrestle each other from our car. We finally had to beep the car horn to scare them away so that we could get out of the car.

While this did send them running it did not send them running far.

Once we were safely inside and away form the turkeys my husband, who is from the cities, figured out that if he stood on the deck and called at them they would call back. A lot of time that evening was spent with him yelling 'balalala' at the turkeys to get them to call ack to him. Which much to his delight they did.

Dakota City Christmas in the Village December 6, 7, 13 & 14

(continued from page 1)

Hot chocolate, apple cider, hot soups and ice cream are available in the Drug Store.

Apple cider donuts and popcorn will be available in the Fire Barn with warm up fire barrels and benches set up nearby.

The Dakota Garage will be open and hosted by the IMCA car club members. Visitors will find a photo booth, kid's activities and a baked potato bar and beverages in this new building. Parents are encouraged to bring their children's letter to St. Nicholas in a self-addressed envelope (not sealed) to this building where the special post office box is located. After the event, children will receive a letter in the mail from St. Nicholas. Saint Nicholas will be visiting with children in the Depot.

The popular model engine train display (scale G) will be back this year again in the Library. The free "Making Minnesota", a children's activity book from the Minnesota Historical Society will be available in the



School House where children will be invited to add a paper ring to the paper ring chain decorating the tree and to write their name on the chalkboard.

Choir groups and musicians will be sharing music in the Church. Sing along Christmas carols will also be available there. Some of our choir groups enjoy caroling outside and walking through the village as they sing! Demonstrations will take place in the Carpenter shop, Harris House, McMenomy House and the Blacksmith Shop.

Be sure to check out the Tree Lighting Ceremony on Saturday, December 6 at 6 pm at the Bandstand. Farmington High School's New Dimension choir will share their holiday music and Saint Nicholas will arrive in a Model T 1922 Doctor's Coupe with skis!

Admission price is \$5 (cash) \$5.50 (credit card) with children under 5 free.

Tickets are available at the gate, or online at www.dakotacity.org (continued on page 9)



Join us for the Opening Day Tree Lighting Ceremony on Saturday, December 6! We will gather in the middle of the village at the Bandstand Gazebo. The ceremony begins at 6 pm sharp with a welcome and introduction of St. Nicholas who will be arriving in a 1922 Model T Doctor's Coupe. The Farmington High School New Dimension Choir will perform and St. Nicholas will lead us in the countdown to light the gorgeous tree in the middle of the Bandstand Gazebo. Gates and buildings open at 3:00 pm. Enjoy hot chocolate, cider, hot dogs, sloppy jos, soups, ice cream and cookies and 1919 root beer at the Drugstore. The new Dakota City Garage will be serving baked potatoes, popcorn and soda and water. The Fire Barn will have popcorn, Brand Apple Farm apple cider donuts, and hot beverages. Demonstrations and music will be provided in some of the buildings. More info at www.dakotacity.org

Nerstrand Big Woods State Park to close during special hunt Dec. 6 and 7

Nerstrand Big Woods State Park will be closed to all visitors Dec. 6 and 7 for a special deer hunt, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The purpose for the hunt is to prevent overpopulation of deer and to protect other resources.

Special hunts will take place at other Minnesota state parks and recreation areas this fall, and access to the parks will vary. Park visitors are advised to check the alerts and notices on state park and recreation area websites (mndnr.gov/park-list) to find details about any upcoming special hunts as they make their plans.

"Too many individuals of one species can throw an ecosystem out of balance," said Mark Cleveland, Parks and Trails natural resource policy and program coordinator. "When deer populations grow too large, they over browse on native plants and young trees, making it harder for forests to regenerate. Dense deer herds also create conditions where diseases spread more easily. Special deer hunts in state parks and recreation areas are one of the tools we use to protect natural resources and keep ecosystems healthy."

The deadlines have passed for youth and adults to apply for the permits to participate in these special hunts, which include regular firearms, muzzleloader and archery options.

As of 2023, state park and state recreation area special hunts require use of nontoxic (nonlead) ammunition. An exception is for youth hunts in the shotgun-only use area of Minnesota, where hunters are not required to use nontoxic ammunition. However, those not using nontoxic ammunition for special hunts in the shotgun zone must remove all parts of harvested deer from the state park or state recreation area, including the entrails. For details, visit the DNR hunting regulations webpage (mndnr.gov/regulations/hunting).

Nontoxic ammunition protects animals, such as bald eagles, ravens and bobcats, from ingesting lead while feeding on deer gut piles. It takes only a very small amount of lead to cause lead poisoning in wildlife.

For a list of parks that are hosting special hunts during the 2025 hunting season, visit the state park hunts webpage (mndnr.gov/parkhunts).



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Dakota City Christmas in the Village December 6, 7, 13 & 14

(continued from page 8)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please have your confirmation receipt viewable on your cell

phone or printed on paper to show the gate attendant as you approach the admission gate. Thank you!

Interested in serving as a Volunteer, hosting a building or scooping ice cream in the Drug Store? Maybe you would like to volunteer with your child in the Harris House the McMenomy House. All volunteers receive free parking and an orientation as to your volunteer duties. See our volunteer link above or call our office at (651) 460-8050 for more information.

Handiwork Volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate their craft in a building or out side on a porch. We welcome woodcrafters, wood carvers, blacksmiths, spinners, knitters, and more! See our Sign up Genius link



Be sure to visit the model train display at the village library during Christmas in the Village. Engineer and model train enthusiast Don is creating a running train display that will captivate audiences of all ages!

above.

Musicians are welcome to share their talent in our Bandstand, front porch or in the Museum. Please call our office for more information. (651) 460-8050.

Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Please call our office at (651) 460-8050. Please leave a message if you get our voicemail. You can email us also at info@dakotacity.org. Check us out on Facebook!



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One Woman's Cookie Cutter Collection

(continued from page 1)

Probably was a drawer in the kitchen with a dozen or so cookie cutters. Imagine collecting cookie cutters of every variety and style. Joyce Moorhouse of Randolph, Minnesota has done just that and currently has about 40,000 by her estimate.

Joyce received her grandmother, Alma's cookie cutters in 1954. She recalls spending time with her grandmother as a young girl and making hearts out of the left over dough for her grandfather. When she had a family of her own it became a holiday activity for the whole family to bake and decorate Christmas cookies. Before she knew it she had about 400 cookie cutters and the collection began to multiply. At first, she would hang them above the kitchen cabinets. She noticed when visitors would come into her kitchen their eyes were drawn to the collection displayed up high. Christmas designs were the most popular followed by Easter images.

Joyce was an avid cookie maker and looked for special cookie cutters. One time she was looking for a specific design and the tin smith who created her cookie cutters was too busy to make it. Her husband Al stepped in and took the challenge. He designed and made the exact cutter she was looking for and to the quality required for her baking needs. From

that first project a family business was born.

Al started ASM Cutters in 1993 to create and manufacture custom cookie cutters. A home business which grew over thirty years to manufacture and deliver more than 300,000 handmade, precision cookies cutters nationwide. People would send a picture or drawing of a pet, house, car, tractor or anything they desired a cookie to resemble. Some were individual orders of one specific design and others were large orders of 500 to 1,000 of the same style. A national hotel chain ordered their image for all their franchises to use for baking cookies.

Joyce's passion for collecting led her to explore garage sales, thrift shops and online sales for unique cutters. Many cost only a nickel while others were a bit more expensive to procure. The best cutters are metal but many manufactured during World War II when materials were hard to find were made out of plastic. The plastic ones may be good collectibles but do not work as well as a metal cookie cutter. The recommendation is to not wash the metal cutters but wipe them clean and dry to best keeping.

One of the rarest cookie cutter sets is a four-piece Peanuts cartoon edition made in 1971. It is still in the original packaging. The unusual and hard to find cutters are the most fun to procure and Joyce has found some of these on e-bay auctions. Her collection has been the subject of a couple national magazine articles and a CBN television special. Joyce has also served as the president of the National Cookie Cutter Club.

On December 6th at the Randolph Historical Society museum Joyce will be on hand with a display of some of her Christmas cookie cutters. The event is from 11am to



3pm and will feature Christmas cookies decorating, a drawing for a cookbook Joyce has compiled and kids get a free cookie cutter.

Joyce says the secret for the best sugar cookies is in the butter in the recipe.

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Christmas Sugar Cookies Recipe

Ingredients

Cookies

- 1 ½ cups powdered sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon almond extract
- 1 egg
- 2 ½ cups Gold Medal™ all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar

Frosting

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoons milk or half-and-half

Instructions

In large bowl, mix 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar, the butter, 1 teaspoon vanilla, almond extract and egg until well blended. Stir in flour, baking soda and cream of tartar. Cover and refrigerate at least 3 hours.

Heat oven to 375°F. Divide dough in half. On lightly floured surface, roll each half of dough 3/16 inch thick. Cut into assorted shapes with cookie cutters, or cut around patterns traced from storybook illustrations. If cookies are to be hung as decorations, make a hole in each 1/4 inch from top with end of plastic straw. Place on ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake 7 to 8 minutes or until light brown. Remove from cookie sheet to cooling rack. Cool completely, about 30 minutes.

In medium bowl, beat all frosting ingredients until smooth and spreadable. Tint with food color if desired. Frost and decorate cookies as desired with frosting and colored sugars.



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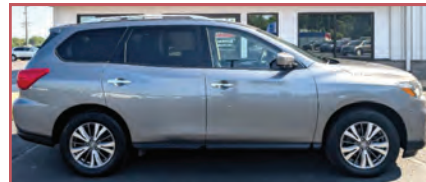


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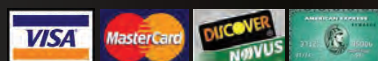
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Sleep



By Noel Aldrich, PhD, CNS
Licensed Nutritionist

Sleep is an essential part of maintaining a healthy life. Though we may resist it sometimes due to workload or social events, we quickly experience the consequences of those missing minutes of sleep. There is an increasing trend for using sleep aids to help achieve a good night of sleep. Sleep aids like Ambien, Benadryl, Tylenol PM, Zopiclone, or Z-Quil are popular choices for helping the body to move into a sleep cycle. Both the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and Statista predict an annual increase of 6% sales of over-the-counter sleep aids. With this growing trend across our society, let's look at the consequences of these sleep aids and the natural options for pursuing quality sleep.

While these sleep aids can help a person fall asleep, the sleep aids do not help the brain to acquire restful sleep and renewal. The sleep cycle is a time for your brain to be able to re-

move useless proteins and garbage that have built up during the day. Your brain is very active throughout the day processing information at one quintillion calculations per second. All this processing will generate some garbage during the daytime, so a key purpose for sleep is to give the brain a chance to move out the garbage during quiet time. This natural cleaning process, called glymphatic flow, only happens during the deep sleep cycles. Sleep aids like Ambien help a person to reach the light sleep cycle but disrupts the ability of the brain to reach the deep sleep cycle where the garbage clearing can take place. A 2025 research article published by the Sleep Research Society found sleep aids decreased the amount of time in the deep sleep cycle. The sleep aid may help a person achieve a quantity of sleep, but the quality of sleep is greatly reduced.

The quality of sleep is measured by the amount of deep sleep achieved where the excess proteins from the normal day activities can be removed. These excess proteins in the brain are associated with symptoms of Alzheimer's and dementia. A 2023 research article in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease studied over 3000 healthy senior adults for 15 years and discovered that White participants who used sleep aids were almost twice as likely to develop dementia compared to those who did not use sleep aids. The Sleep Research Society found that individuals with insomnia who did not use sleep aids had better brain wave patterns than those who did use sleep aids for insomnia. Therefore, drugless ways of promoting quality sleep need to be

considered.

Specific habits you can start that will help to reduce those sleepless nights include:

- Sleep in a completely dark room. Reduce as much light as possible.
- Aim to be in bed by 10 pm. Sleeping before midnight is critical for circadian rhythms.
- Adjust the temperature of the sleeping area to 65 degrees, no higher than 70 degrees
- Remove electronics and electromagnetic fields (EMFs) from your sleeping area. These forces disrupt your body's natural production of melatonin and serotonin.
- Practice relaxation techniques in preparation for bedtime including breathing exercises, relaxing stretches, meditation, or massage.
- Stop eating food at least three hours before bedtime, especially grains and sugars.
- Stop drinking water two hours before bedtime.
- Stop using computers, cell phones, or TVs at least an hour before bedtime. The blue light from these devices stimulates wakefulness.
- Avoid alcohol
- Avoid caffeine

Additional natural supplements are available to assist the transition to deep sleep cycle. Melatonin and GABA supplements have been effective for some individuals. Supplements containing valerian root or passionflower have also been helpful to increase relaxation and quiet the mind. Magnesium threonate is a targeted magnesium supplement that delivers magnesium to the brain



and helps promote rest. These recommendations are not replacements for establishing a consistent, quality bedtime routine as outlined above.

Protecting your brain involves more than just wearing a protective helmet on fast rides. You can protect your brain every day by providing opportunity for quality sleep. The result will be greater mental clarity and improved quality of life. Make healthy sleep a priority in your personal health care this coming year.

Contact me to discuss your health goals for the coming year. I can help you create space for improving sleep and natural healing. Contact me at nutritionproportion@gmail.com, check out my website at www.nutritionproportion.net, or follow me on Facebook at Nutrition Proportion USA.

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



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Public Health Spotlight

Be Alert to Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning in Your Home as the Weather Gets Colder

By Tisha Bergner, PHEPC

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas formed by the incomplete combustion of fuels. When people are exposed to CO gas, the CO molecules will displace the oxygen in their bodies and lead to poisoning.

The problem with CO since CO has no odor, color or taste, it cannot be detected by our senses. This means that dangerous concentrations of the gas can build up indoors and humans have no way to detect the problem until they become ill. Furthermore, when people become sick the symptoms are similar to the flu, which can cause victims to ignore the early signs of CO poisoning.

The CDC estimates that approximately 400 people die from unintentional CO exposure in the United States every year. Data specific to Minnesota show that an average of 14 people die due to unintentional CO poisoning each year. Approximately 300 people visit emergency department each year for treatment of symptoms linked to unintentional CO exposure.

The good news is that carbon monoxide poisoning can be prevented with simple actions such as installing a CO alarm and maintaining fuel burning appliances.

CO is produced whenever a material burns. Homes with fuel-burning appliances or attached garages are more likely to have CO problems. Common sources of CO in our homes include fuel-burning appliances and devices such as:

- Clothes dryers.
- Water heaters.
- Furnaces or boilers.
- Fireplaces, both gas and wood burning.
- Gas stoves and ovens.
- Motor vehicles.
- Grills, generators, power tools, lawn equipment.
- Wood stoves.
- Tobacco smoke.

Carbon monoxide leaks from appliances can cause poisoning. Detection is required in new construction and when installing boilers and water heaters (under fire and boiler codes).

Protecting your family from CO poisoning is easy:

1. It is important to know what appliances in your home are fuel-burning and make sure that they are maintained properly. All of these appliances should be vented to the outside. You should have your fuel-burning appliances (ex. furnace) checked by a qualified heating contractor every year to look for potential problems. It is also a good idea to know the signs of a potential CO problem:

- Streaks of soot around fuel-burning appliances, or fallen soot in a fireplace.

• Absence of an upward draft in your chimney.

- Excess moisture and condensation on windows, walls and cold surfaces.
- Rusting on flue pipes or appliance jacks.
- Orange or yellow flame in combustion appliances (the flame should be blue).
- Damaged or discolored bricks at the top of the chimney.

Never use appliances intended for outdoor use inside. Examples include barbecue grills, camp stoves, portable generators or gas-powered lawn equipment. Do not use an oven to heat your home. Not only is it a fire risk, it is also a carbon monoxide hazard. Do not run or idle your vehicle in an attached garage. Instead, back your vehicle out right away. Check that your vehicle's exhaust pipe is not blocked, for example, by snow during the winter.

2. Identifying CO poisoning can be difficult because the symptoms are similar to the flu. CO is often called the "silent killer" because people will ignore early signs and eventually lose consciousness and be unable to escape to safety.

For most people, the first signs of exposure include mild headache and breathlessness with moderate exercise. Continued exposure can lead to more severe headaches, dizziness, fatigue and nausea. Eventually symptoms may progress to confusion, irritability, impaired judgment and coordination, and loss of consciousness.

You can tell the difference between CO poi-

soning and the flu with these clues:

- You feel better when you are away from home.
- Everyone in the home is sick at the same time (the flu virus usually spreads from person to person).
- The family members most affected spend the most time in the house.
- Indoor pets appear ill.
- You don't have a fever or body aches, and you don't have swollen lymph nodes that are common with the flu and some other infections.
- Symptoms appear or seem to get worse when using fuel-burning equipment.

3. Install and maintain CO alarms in your home

Minnesota state law (MN Statute 299F.50) requires that every home have at least one operational CO alarm within 10 feet of every room legally used for sleeping. All CO alarms should conform to the latest Underwriters Laboratory (UL) Standards. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement of your CO alarm, and take note of the suggested replacement date. These will vary depending on the manufacturer.

Don't ignore a CO alarm if it is sounding. If people in the home are exhibiting symptoms of CO poisoning, immediately leave the building and call your local fire department. In cases where residents are feeling fine, call your local gas utility company or a qualified technician to help identify the cause of the problem.

Infant Safe Sleep Week in Minnesota is November 16-21

Unsafe sleep environments and practices can put infants at increased risk for sleep related unintentional injury or death. Annually, approximately 50 babies in Minnesota die suddenly and unexpectedly, and most of those deaths happen in an unsafe sleep environment.

Parents and caregivers should know the ABCs of safe sleep:

- **ALONE:** Infants should always sleep or nap alone.
- **BACK:** Always put a baby on their back to sleep or nap.
- **CRIB:** Babies should always sleep or nap in their own safety-approved crib or play yard without blankets or pillows.

Rice County Public Health would like to help share this message with caregivers of infants and young children. "All caregivers should know and practice the ABCs of Safe Sleep: A baby should sleep alone, on his or her back, in a safe crib," says Fae Schumacher, Rice County Family Child Health Supervisor. "Crib mattresses should be firm, sheets should fit tightly and there shouldn't be anything else in the crib, including pillows, blankets, crib bumpers or toys." Infants also should not be placed to sleep on a couch, in a car seat or in the caregiver's bed.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, research continues to show that bed-sharing raises the risk of a baby's injury or death. The risk goes up when the co-sleeper is impaired by fatigue, alcohol or drug use. While bed-sharing should be avoided, having the infant sleep in the same room as parents in their own crib for at least the first six months is recommended.

Rice County Public Health staff are available to conduct a home safety visit for caregivers of young children. In partnership with "Cradle of Hope," staff can also provide a portable crib if needed, to ensure that every baby has a safe place to sleep.

For more information, contact Schumacher at 507-321-4978.

More information on infant safe sleep can be found on the Minnesota Department of Health website at

www.health.state.mn.us/people/womeninfants/infantmort/safesleep.html



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Ask A Trooper

By Sgt. Troy Christianson,
Minnesota State Patrol



Question: Hello, I want to work for a farmer during planting and harvest season driving a semi. I have a valid Class D driver's license but no Commercial Driver's License. Can I cross a state line while working for the farmer, Minnesota into North Dakota?

Answer: Yes, as long as you stay within 150



air miles of the farm. If you have additional questions regarding commercial motor vehicles please contact cmvinfo@state.mn.us

Motorists need to be especially alert when they share the road with farm equipment that is often so large and heavy that accelerating, slowing down and stopping take more time and space than other vehicles. These vehicles also have large blind spots for operators and make wide turns and sometimes cross over the center line. All these factors can and do result in serious crashes.

Motorists are urged to:

- Slow down and use caution when approaching farm equipment. Don't assume the operator can see you.
- Watch for debris dropped by trucks. It's safer to brake or drive through debris than to veer into oncoming cars or off the road.
- Wait for a safe place to pass.

Farm equipment operators should:

- Use lights and flashers to make equipment more visible.
- Use slow-moving vehicle emblems on equipment traveling less than 30 mph.
- Consider using a follow vehicle when moving equipment, especially at night.
- Properly secure your load.
- Ensure all lights are clean and fully visible.
- Ensure all safety equipment, including brakes and tires, are well maintained.

Question: Can you explain what the lines on the highways and streets indicate? I feel like a lot of people can't figure it out. Thanks.

Answer: Pavement markings direct and regulate traffic.

White lines separate lanes of traffic traveling in the same direction.

- White dashes: You can change lanes where this marking is present.
- Shorter and thicker white dashes: The lane is ending.
- Solid white line: You should not change lanes. Solid white lines also mark cross-

walks, stop lines

at intersections, parking stalls and the edges of a roadway.

- Double solid white lines: You must not change lanes.

- Solid white line with bicycle insignia: This area is for bicycle or electric-assist bicycle traffic only.

- If you are on a bicycle, you must travel in the same direction as adjacent traffic.

Yellow lines separate traffic moving in opposite directions.

- Solid yellow line: You must not pass. Passing in a no-passing zone is illegal.

- Yellow dashes: You may pass.

- Mixed lines (solid and dashes): A solid yellow line may appear on one side of the roadway while a line of dashes appears on the other side. You must obey the marking in your lane of traffic.

- Double solid yellow lines: You must not pass, regardless of which side of the line you are driving.

Question: In your last article you wrote about "pavement markings." Could you talk about "turn lanes" as I think there are quite a few people who get confused by this?

Answer: Turn lanes near intersections separate left-turning or right-turning traffic from through traffic. White arrows, sometimes accompanied by the word "only," indicate that drivers must stay within a designated lane while turning onto the cross street. If your vehicle is in this type of lane, you must turn. Some turn lanes have multiple arrows, allowing you to turn left or right, or to go straight. To discourage drivers from changing lanes near an intersection, turn lanes are separated from through traffic lanes by solid white lines.

A center lane between lanes of traffic traveling in opposite directions may be designated for left turns only. This type of lane is marked by parallel solid and dashed yellow

lines. These lines are sometimes accompanied by white arrows on the pavement. Vehicles traveling in either direction can use these lanes to make left turns onto another roadway or a driveway.

Question: I feel like I see so many vehicles tailgating and following too close. I remember people talk about a so-many second following tip. Can you remind me and others what that is?

Answer: Applying the "Three-Second Rule" helps you keep a safe distance between your car and the vehicle ahead of you. This rule is for standard-length vehicles driving in ideal conditions.

1. Choose a fixed reference point at the side of the road ahead, such as a telephone pole, signpost, tree or bridge.
2. When the vehicle ahead of you passes the reference point, begin counting: "One-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand-three."
3. If you pass the reference point before you finish counting, you are following too closely.
4. Gradually slow down until you reach a safe following distance and speed.

When road conditions are poor, or if you are driving a vehicle longer than the standard length, increase your following distance to a four- or five-second count.

If the vehicle behind you is following too closely, slow down slightly and allow it to pass.

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

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson — Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us)

Harvest Season

As cooler weather creeps in, we'll see more large farm equipment on our roads. This is a crucial time to be extra cautious and patient while driving. Farm equipment is large and heavy, making it hard for operators to accelerate, slow down and stop. The equipment also makes wide turns and sometimes crosses over the center line. In addition, farm vehicles can create large blind spots, making it difficult for operators to see approaching vehicles behind them.

By following these simple guidelines, we can all help ensure a safe harvest season.

For Drivers: Stay Alert

Be patient: Farm equipment is large and slow-moving. Pass only when it's safe and legal to do so.

Watch for debris: Debris on the road due to harvest work can make for dangerous conditions.

Stay focused: Avoid distractions like your phone. It's easy to miss something when you're not paying full attention.

For Farmers and Equipment Operators: Stay Alert

Be seen: Use proper lights and safety flashers. Use slow-moving vehicle emblems on equipment traveling less than 30 mph.

Keep it clean: Clean mud and debris off your equipment before you hit the road.

Check your hitch: Double-check hitches and safety chains before you go.

Stay focused: Minimize distractions like cell phone use.

Let's all work together to make sure everyone arrives home safely this harvest season. Together, we can help drive Minnesota toward zero deaths.



Fall Driving Alert: Watch for Deer

Fall brings beautiful colors and crisp air, but it also brings the increased risk of deer on the roads. Deer are most active around dawn and dusk, which means the chance of a crash rises dramatically during your commute. The best way to avoid a deer-vehicle crash is to stay attentive behind the wheel and expect the unexpected.

Tips for All Drivers:

Slow down in areas known for deer or where fields and wooded areas meet.

Be extra cautious from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. as this is the peak time for deer activity.

Use high beams when possible at night to spot deer eyes reflecting light.

Never swerve to avoid a deer. Swerving can cause you to lose control and go off the road, or crash into oncoming traffic.

Watch for one deer but expect more. Deer often travel in groups.

Tips for Motorcyclists:

Slow down and use both brakes (front and rear) to stop as quickly as possible when encountering an animal.

If contact is unavoidable, release the brakes and attempt to swerve slowly behind the animal, only if there is room in your lane.

Always focus on maintaining control of your motorcycle.

Slow down, stay alert and always buckle up! Your seat belt is your best defense in case of a crash.



Winter Hazard Awareness Week is November 17-21



By Joe Johnson
Rice County Sheriff's Office -
Emergency Management

As winter approaches, it's critical to prepare for extreme cold, snow, and icy conditions. These storms can last a few hours or several days and cut off heat, power, and communication.

Winter storms create a higher risk of car crashes, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, residential fires and heart attacks from overexertion.

To help ensure that you and your loved ones are prepared, follow these steps below:

Create an Emergency Kit: it should have essential items like food, water, blankets, winter

clothing sand or cat litter, phone charger and flashlights. Be sure to have one in your home, car and at work.

Stay fire safe: keep combustibles away from wood stoves and space heaters. Have fireplace and wood burning stove chimneys inspected and cleaned prior to use, extinguish candles before leaving room. Stay in the kitchen when cooking.

Be alert for CO: Carbon monoxide is an odorless, tasteless, and invisible byproduct of fuel and wood burning appliances and vehicles. Install CO alarms on every level of your home and in each sleeping area. Consider adding a CO alarm in your ice fishing shelter as well. Signs of CO poisoning includes headaches, nausea, fatigue, vomiting and disorientation.

Give snowplows room to work: check road conditions on 511mn.org before heading out. Be patient and stay five car lengths behind the plow. Slow down to a speed that's safe for current conditions and give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination. Buckle up and ensure your young passengers are in the proper seat for their age and stage of development. Avoid unnecessary travel if road conditions are poor.

Enjoy the outdoors safely: There is no such thing as 100% safe ice; carry ice picks and know how to self-rescue if you fall through. Wear layers of loose-fitting warm clothing, hat, and mittens. Be alert for frostbite and hypothermia. Protect your back and listen to your body when shoveling. If something doesn't feel right or you are tired, take a



break and re-evaluate how you feel before shoveling again.

Prepare early to ensure your family's comfort and safety. For more tips, visit www.rice-countymn.gov/623/Winter-Hazard-Awareness

county.mn.gov/623/Winter-Hazard-Awareness

— Joe Johnson is the Rice County Sheriff's Office Emergency Management

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Performance review of governor's office shows failures begin at the top

BY: SENATOR BILL LIESKE

Minnesota's nonpartisan Legislative Auditor has released a report on Gov. Tim Walz that should concern everyone, regardless of politics. The audit found that the Office of Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan mishandled money, payroll, and property over a two-and-a-half-year period. It documented missing receipts, late vendor payments, inaccurate payroll adjustments, and untracked state assets.

In total, the Legislative Auditor listed 12 separate findings of noncompliance. Timesheets were not properly reviewed, reimbursements were sometimes wrong, and documentation was missing for many transactions. Auditors even found that some employees split up credit card purchases to stay under spending limits, a practice that defeats the purpose of those limits entirely.

The auditors said these weaknesses "create the opportunity" for more serious problems. That is a warning that we should all take seriously. The governor's office is supposed to set the example for good management. When Gov. Walz's office fails to follow basic financial controls, it undermines the public's confidence and sets a poor standard for every state agency.

It's easy to dismiss the review as small clerical mistakes, but it points to a larger pattern of poor oversight that Minnesotans have seen across multiple parts of state government. Rules go unenforced. No accountability. No transparency. No protecting taxpayer dollars. And who foots the bill? You and I do.

The governor's staff says many of the issues have now been fixed. Still, several of the same problems appeared in past audits and were never fully resolved. The public deserves better stewardship than that. Minnesotans expect competence and honesty from their leaders, and that starts with managing taxpayer money carefully. Especially in the governor's own office.

Medicaid spending on pause to find fraud

Governor Walz recently announced a 90-day pause on Medicaid payments in more than a dozen high-risk programs while a private firm, Optum, reviews billing records for signs of fraud or abuse. The decision follows ongoing federal investigations that have already uncovered hundreds of millions of dollars in fraudulent claims.

Minnesota's Medicaid spending has grown quickly, and that growth has very clearly made the system vulnerable to exploitation by bad actors. Some providers billed the state for services that never happened, while others took advantage of weak oversight to enrich themselves at your expense.

One of the worst examples, the Housing Stabilization Services program, ballooned from a \$2.5 million pilot into a \$300 million operation before being shut down entirely because of fraud. Thirteen other programs will now face a full review.

An audit is long overdue, and many of us have been calling for one for a long time. But I question if Optum was the right choice to

lead it. The effectiveness of an audit depends on independence and transparency. Given Optum and UnitedHealth Group's longstanding business involvement in Minnesota Medicaid programs, there would appear to be a serious conflict of interest.

In addition, the pause in payments has raised serious concerns among legitimate providers who worry they may not be able to keep helping people during this review process.

The governor says the goal is to restore public trust. It's the right idea, but he is way too late to the game. For too long, he ignored and dismissed genuine concerns about fraud. Only now, after years of warnings, has he decided to act. One questions the timing.

Stopping fraud should not be a partisan issue. Every Minnesotan benefits when programs work honestly and efficiently, and when taxpayer money actually reaches the people it is meant to help. This audit is an opportunity to rebuild that trust, tighten oversight, and show that government can still work for the people who fund it. I just wish it had been done much sooner.

County 2026 Truth in Taxation statements are in the mail

Rice County property owners should watch the mail for their 2026 proposed tax statement.

Commonly referred to as the Truth in Taxation statement, it includes a property's estimated market value, exclusions if applicable, as well as a list of proposed 2026 taxes for each taxing authority for the property's jurisdiction. It also includes the actual figures for payable 2025 which serve as a comparison.

The proposed taxes are based on the preliminary levies approved by each applicable taxing authority. Final levies will be certified by the end of December.

The statements also list the time, date and location of required Truth in Taxation meetings for each taxing authority. These meetings provide taxpayers an opportunity to speak directly to elected officials who approve the levies and budgets, and to offer comment on how tax dollars are being spent.

While Rice County Assessor's Office staff will be available during the county's Dec. 11 Truth in Taxation meeting, the annual opportunity for property owners to challenge their estimated market value took place in June.

Rice County holds its Truth in Taxation meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 11 in the board room on the second floor of the Rice County Government Services Building, 320 Third St. NW, Faribault. The meeting will begin with a presentation on the proposed 2026 county budget and levy.

Property owners can also participate virtually during the county's meeting via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3421170614>. The participant meeting ID is 342 117 0614, passcode: 1234. Anyone requiring special services to attend or participate should call 507-332-6100 or email shari.noll@ricecountymn.gov 24 hours before the meeting begins.

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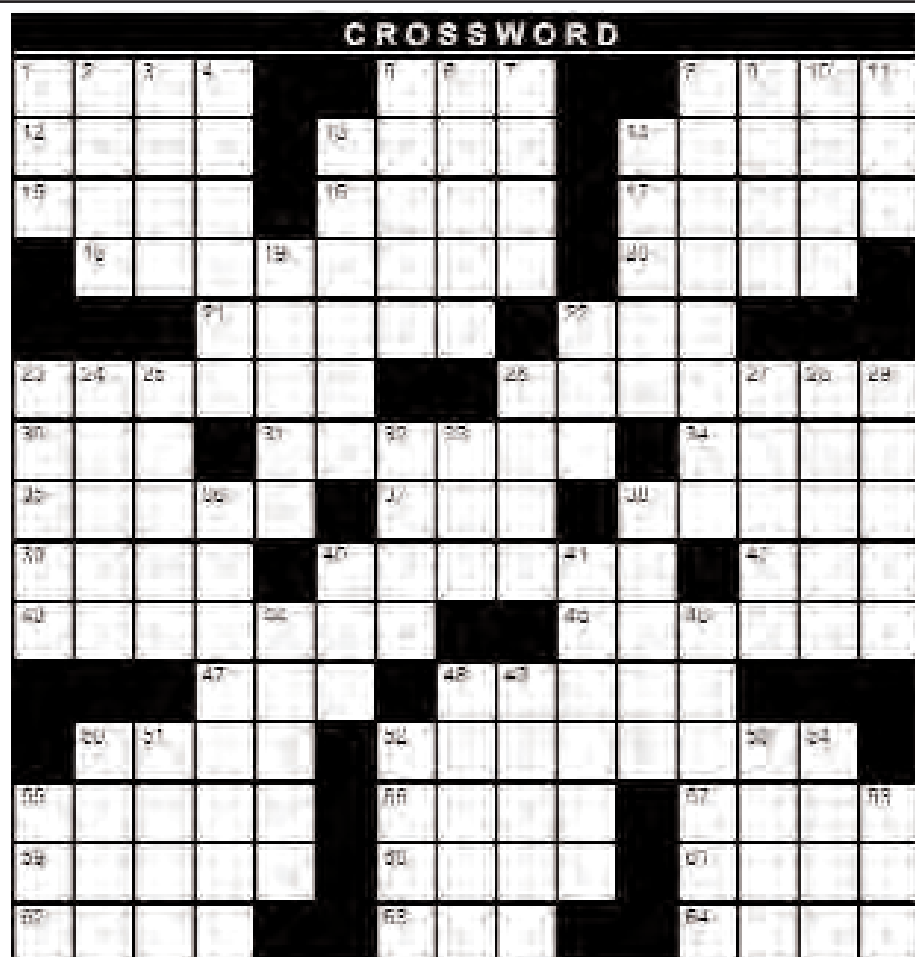
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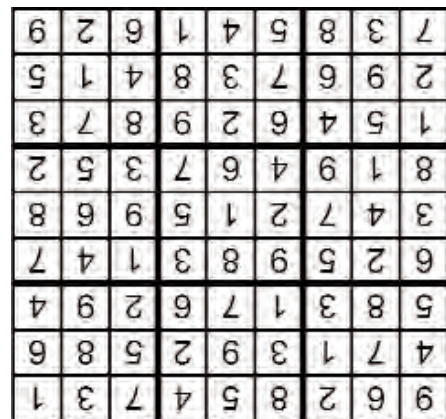
THEME: IN THE WOODS

ACROSS

1. Flows' partners
5. "When Harry ____ Sally..."
8. Sound of laughter
12. "Hide" behind the bush
13. BÈBÈ's mother
14. *Age units in the woods
15. Rum cake
16. Placido Domingo's solo, e.g.
17. Concluded
18. "Into the Woods" star Anna
20. Come clean, with up
21. Terra ____
22. Urge Spot to attack
23. One of seven gnomes
26. Prior to the present (3 words)
30. FEMA provisions, e.g.
31. Erratum, pl.
34. Int. org. in Brussels
35. Merge
37. Time frame
38. Right-hand page
39. 1920s art style
40. Cause of wheezing
42. Like The Hot Chili Peppers
43. ____ God we ____," on U.S. currency
45. Some vipers
47. Clairvoyant's gift
48. Source of chocolate
50. Form of payment
52. *Edible fungus
55. Multi-layered cake
56. MÈlange
57. Utah's national park
59. Bake an egg
60. Plural of #22 Down
61. "____ the Woods" play and movie
62. Prefix for multiple
63. Japanese honorific
64. Barely got by

DOWN

1. Singular of #1 Across
2. *Woodpecker's pecker
3. *One lost in the woods
4. Posture
5. Boy Scout's badge
6. "Fear of Flying" author ____ Jong
7. *Furniture wood
8. *Conifer's dropping
9. Peters out
10. Def Leppard's "Rock of ____"
11. Psychedelic drug, acr.
13. St. Valentine, e.g.
14. Equip again
19. One of Seven Dwarfs
22. Rejuvenating spot
23. ____ Arabia
24. Wrinkle-prone fabric
25. Declaration of Independence, e.g.
26. 2002 Winter Olympics state
27. Mother-of-pearl
28. Weasel's cousin
29. *Golf's great
32. Catch one's breath
33. A in MOMA
36. *Scientific study in woodlands
38. Meteorologist's tool
40. Nile reptile
41. Masculine one and proud of it, pl.
44. Theater greeter
46. Something extraordinary
48. "Mea ____," or "my fault"
49. Hailing from the East
50. Type of salmon
51. *Seed covering
52. *Trunk growth
53. Sty cry
54. Speck
55. Recipe amt.
58. Go-ahead



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