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Announcements

• **City of Bellechester Reminder** - Dog licenses were due October 31st. If you have pets, please make sure you return the renewal form and fees as soon as possible to the city before we do our audit. If you need another form, they can be found on our website.

• **Change in Goodhue Council Meetings For Dec:** Due to the holidays in December, there will be only one meeting held. As a result, the 1st meeting on December 10 will be converted from Work Sessions to Regular Meeting. Work Sessions, will resume their normal schedule in 2026.

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

• **Three Rivers Community Action is currently accepting new Meals On Wheels clients in the communities of Bellechester, Zumbrota, Mazeppa, Goodhue, Pine Island, Kenyon, Wabasha and Wanamingo.** Receive a hot meal delivered to your home by a volunteer at lunch time up to 5 days per week. To qualify you must be 60 or older, live within city limits, have limited mobility and/or are unable to prepare nutritious meals. The suggested donation is \$5-\$10 per meal. Please contact Three Rivers at 507-316-0610 or email: oas@threeriverscap.org

Do you have an announcement?

Email:

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The Sanctuary Offers Event Space and Open Play Times

By Beth Brekke

Renovations to the former St. Luke's Church building at 308 1st Avenue in Goodhue first saw the completion of two apartments in the lower level. With the stained glass windows and pews relocated to the new church, the upper level transformed into a large, well-lit gathering space for the community.

Now known as The Goodhue Sanctuary, it

is ready for private events and monthly child recreation.

When Marcus and Brittany Huneke purchased the Church building, they saw it as a space that could be used as an indoor play area for children. Realizing their vision has taken some time but the first public open playtime was held on Saturday, November 1st.

(continued on page 3)



The Goodhue Sanctuary's upper level is available for hosting events and making memories with family and friends.

Bellechester Suppers Draw Big Crowd



A large crowd supported the annual Bellechester Community Center Deer Hunters' supper fundraiser on November 7th.

By Beth Brekke

The Bellechester Community Center is a flurry of activity from 7:30 AM when the turkeys start cooking, until well past 8 PM when the last person is served at the two annual Deer Hunters Suppers.

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Memories of Christmas Past

Every year we visit with residents of local assisted living homes and hear their memories of Christmas when they were a child. Here are some of the stories from their childhood for you to enjoy.



Anne grew up in a family of eight kids in a small town in Minnesota.

(continued on page 15)

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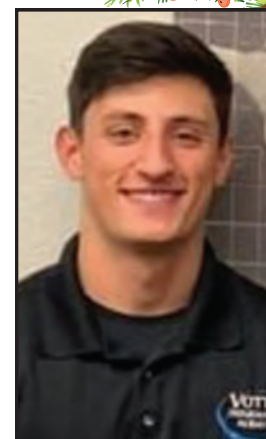
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Pastors Corner



By Pastor Eric Hanson,
St. Luke Lutheran Church

If you're like me, you have kids who talk to you "sometimes." In other words, when you want to talk to them about their day or what's going on in their lives, they'll often answer your question of, "How was your day?" with a non-committal, "Good." And then, if you try to make them unpack that "good" a little bit, they'll roll their eyes and say, "It was fine dad, just a normal day." Of course, what they don't know is that I'm not only asking about their day, I'm also seeking to connect with them. And we all know, adolescents LOVE to connect with their parents (please read a lot of sarcasm into that last sentence).

But then at other times, you get literal floods of information from them. Whether it's during a quiet time in their room at night, or a long car ride, EVERYTHING comes out at once. You hear about friends and teachers and coaches and schoolwork and sports and all the drama, victories, and losses therein. It can be such a flood of communication, in fact, that it's hard to keep up, but you try to keep up because, just like a sasquatch, you never know when it's going to show up again. Those moments are rare, and fleeting, and oh so holy.

And what's weird is that you can't manufacture moments of connection. In fact, if you try to manufacture moments of connection,

you get a lot of backfires (at least I do). Try and put together a nice, family meal and kids chew in silence ruminating on something from their day they have no intention of telling you about yet. Try and plan an activity that everybody enjoys, only to find out that one of the kids, "doesn't like this anymore." But the non-manufactured moments can be magical. A quick trip to Dairy Queen because there's no food in the house can become a night of laughter and mutual ribbing. A spontaneous night at the movie theater because you've hit one of those weird weekends where there's nothing to do and everybody is bored can become an unforgettable memory. It seems like the more I try to manufacture connection, sometimes, the harder it is to come by. But the more I'm open to connection (simply being with people I love) the easier it finds me.

I've been thinking about all of these things lately because I've been ruminating on Jesus' ministry of simply being with people. When

you read the Gospels, it seems that the coolest moments in Jesus' ministry happen not as manufactured, planned events, but simply because he made time to be with people, and in that time God created holy connection. The institution of Holy Communion happens during the Last Supper when Jesus is simply spending time with his disciples. Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well happens because he wants a drink of water and she is simply there with him. The lion's share of Jesus' teaching and healing moments seem to happen when he's doing something else; walking somewhere with his disciples, eating at a table with a group of people, or simply

spending time in a community before he moves on to his next town. Being with is the tapestry upon which God paints miracles, connection, and healing.

As a dad, I oftentimes think it's my job to DO things with and for my family; to plan events, and manufacture regular moments of togetherness. Jesus' example, however, challenges me on that front. Maybe it's my job to simply be with them, and let God do what God does. According to the Gospels, God can form a lot of connective tissue among people simply when we just allow ourselves to be with each other. I like that thought, and I'm going to keep ruminating on it.

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Sat.: 4:45PM - 5:20PM Confession, 5:30PM Holy Mass (Sunday vigil)
Tues.: 8:00AM Holy Mass
Wed.: 8:00AM Holy Mass, 9:00AM - 2:00PM Eucharistic Adoration
Rosary said 25 minutes before Holy Mass
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Mon.: 8:00AM Holy Mass, 6:30PM - 9:00PM Eucharistic Adoration
Rosary said 25 minutes before Holy Mass
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Thurs.: 8:00AM Eucharistic Adoration/Confession, 9:00AM Holy Mass
Rosary said 25 minutes before Holy Mass
All are WELCOME! But receiving Holy Communion are for those who are of age and practicing the Catholic faith.
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GRACE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH (WELS)

Pastor Martin Weigand
39774 Co. 4 Blvd., Goodhue • 651-923-4624
gracelutheranchurch@gmail.com • www.gracepeters.org
Sunday Morning Worship 8:30a.m. with communion on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.
Sunday School at 9:30a.m., Sunday Bible Study at 9:45a.m., Confirmation Class 5:45 on Wednesday at St Peter's.
8:30a.m. Quilting and Bible Study on Wednesday at St Peter's, and 10:30a.m. Midweek Bible Study on Thursday at St Peter's.

AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY Let's Go and See!

"Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." — Luke 2:15

The shepherds are relatively obscure actors in this story. We don't know their names. We're not sure if they are hired hands or tending their own flocks. They hear the angel's announcement of Jesus' birth. They run to find Jesus. And after they return to their flocks, we don't hear from them again.

Even so, the shepherds pull me further into this story. They begin in a rather ordinary space, "living out in the fields" with their sheep. When the angel suddenly appears, they are terrified! Who wouldn't be? Nothing could have prepared them to meet angels shining the light of God's glory in the middle of a field at night. Then quickly they move from terror to wonder to delight and finally to joyful worship. By the end of the night, the shepherds are the first human messengers to share the good news of Jesus' birth! Like the people whom the shepherds first told about Jesus, I am amazed at what I hear.

After the angelic choir disappears, the shepherds urge each other: "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." What else could they do? As I read this story again, I find myself responding to the shepherds: "Yes! Let's go and see, looking into the amazing good news of the child who has been born in Bethlehem!"

God, whether we've read this story before or we are hearing it for the first time, awaken in us the joy and wonder of the good news of Jesus' birth! Amen.

ST. JOHN'S EV. LUTHERAN (WELS)

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

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD

Pastor Steven Frentz
28961 365th St., Goodhue
651-923-4438
Email: stpeter@sleepyeyetel.net
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Worship at 10:30a.m.
(Communion on 2nd and 4th Sundays)

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Pastor Robbin Robbert
36620 Co. 4 Blvd., Goodhue • 651-923-4773
Sunday 9:00am Worship
Communion offered on the 2nd & 4th Sundays.

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37750 County 6 Blvd., Goodhue, MN 55027
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8:30a.m. Sunday School; 9:30a.m. Sunday Worship
6:45p.m. Wednesday Worship
www.stlukegoodhue.org

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

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

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The Sanctuary Offers Event Space and Open Play Times

(continued from page 1)

The Halloween-themed event gave kids another opportunity to wear costumes and enjoy a variety of activities.

An area is set up as a safe-zone for the youngest, while older kids can choose Legos, Barbies, Hot Wheels or spend their time in a kitchen play area. Snacks were provided and about 25 families took advantage of the November event that ran from 10 AM to 1 PM. The building is handicap accessible and a mother's room is available. The space is still a work in progress as Brittany contemplates adding a mural and displays of children's artwork to the entryway.

Brittany hopes to hold open play one Saturday each month from November through

April stating, "We'll see how it's received by the community". Open play will offer different toys and arrangements each time. The events are geared mainly toward younger children (0-6) but all are welcome and special events like a Nerf gun day or crafting for older kids may be held in the future. Other possibilities include a ping-pong table or board games which can also be used when hosting family events.

The first private rental was for a shower held in July. The space is already reserved for several dates into the new year. Due to the building's location in a residential neighborhood, the city council placed restrictions on its use. Events are limited to 50 people and may only be used between 10 AM and 6 PM. No alcohol is allowed but food can be brought in and the space and tables can be decorated as desired.

The Sanctuary lends itself well to family or friends hosting birthday, anniversary or holiday celebrations as well as bridal and baby showers. There is no set fee but suggested donation for using the Sanctuary is \$100-\$200 while open play is \$10 per child or \$25 per family. The next open play date is set for December 6th from 10 AM-1 PM. Call Brittany at 651-380-4552 for more information or to reserve the facility. See more on The Goodhue Sanctuary Facebook page.



The Goodhue Sanctuary plans to host open playtime one Saturday a month. A mother's room and area of safe toys for those with very young children is part of the program.



Large play kitchen at The Goodhue Sanctuary.



Enjoy an indoor playground at The Goodhue Sanctuary during open play.

Lands Christmas Worship Services

Christmas Eve, December 24th

4:00 and 9:00 PM

At Church and Streaming on Facebook

Christmas Day, December 25th

Streaming on Facebook at 9:00 AM


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Community Help Network Delivers Meals

By Beth Brekke

The Community Help Network (CHN) began with Nancy Dahling organizing a Thanksgiving Basket project. That effort has grown to reach over 100 recipients each of the past several years and become a fully formed 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Volunteers once again gathered donations and packed

boxes with complete Thanksgiving meals. Youth from Grace, St. John's and St. Peter's WELS Lutheran churches provided much of the labor while many local businesses and individuals fund the needed supplies through the CHN.

The mission statement of the Community Help Network is "To provide immediate support to local community members by providing groceries and meals, plus benevolent support in a crisis or as deemed necessary".

In addition to the Thanksgiving baskets, the CHN provides Christmas goodie baskets to the Goodhue Living Community, and support for those fighting cancer or other medical issues. If you or someone you know is in need, or to donate, please contact Nancy at 715-216-6058 or email: nancydahling@gmail.com.



Diane Opsahl sorts items for the Community Help Network Thanksgiving baskets.

photo by St. John's WELS Church



WELS youth Rhett Miller (L) and Gus Raasch help pack Thanksgiving baskets before delivering them to local recipients. photo by St. John's WELS Church

OBITUARY

David (Pud) Dwain Gnotke

David (Pud) Dwain Gnotke, age 75, of Goodhue passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family on November 19, 2025, after a 3.5-year battle with cancer.



Dave was born on May 24, 1950, in Lake City, MN to Ernest and Eva (Rutz) Gnotke. Dave was baptized June 25, 1950, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lake City where he went on to parochial school, being confirmed May 17, 1964, and graduating from Lincoln High School in 1968 in Lake City. Dave grew up on the family farm SE of Lake City prior to moving to town in 1970. On November 11, 1972, Dave married Deborah (Dahling) at St. John's Lutheran Church in rural Goodhue and together shared 53 wonderful years. Dave worked at Di Acro a short time and went to work at ADM in Red Wing in 1971. Dave worked his way to maintenance supervisor, retiring in 2011. He never complained about work or his coworkers. He was up by 5 a.m. and on his way every day!

In retirement, Dave enjoyed caring for their country acreage with mowing their six acres of lawn, tending to Jimmy's cattle in their pasture, always keeping an eye on the beans/corn in our field, catching a game of cribbage and taking on a variety of projects around the farm. Dave was one of the founding members of the Lakesters Car Club and loved going on car cruises with the club in his '77 Oldsmobile Cutlass. In the fall, Dave enjoyed deer hunting and the camaraderie that the Wisconsin Crew always brought to it. Dave was an avid snowmobiler, and he owned and rode a total of 27 different sleds in his lifetime and never let his MS or Cancer keep him from getting on the sled to ride with family and friends. Dave enjoyed many trips to Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin snowmobiling. The 2 trips to Yellowstone and 1 trip to the Big Horns riding were a highlight for him. He loved the many snowmobile trips to the Black Hills over the years, and it was his goal to go for one last ride this winter.

Dave also was a true Minnesota sports fan. Whatever sport was in season, you can be sure he was watching it or knew if they won or lost. He enjoyed watching the Goodhue and Lake City school's activities and sports on the live stream and can live stream his grandchildren's school activities in St. Clair and Oconto, Wisconsin too. Above all, Dave's greatest joy was his family and especially his grandchildren. He never missed a chance to travel to cheer them on at whatever activity they were involved in. Since 1998, he faithfully supported his daughter, Heather, in the MS Bike Ride (TRAM) and proudly was at every finish line, no matter how hard it was for him the last few years, with Deb's help and support, he always made it. Dave was also a big supporter and participant of the MS SNO RALLY every winter for many years making lifetime friends from all over. Dave and Deb were active in the Minnesota MS chapter.

Dave will be remembered for his quiet, gentle personality, his grit, courage, determination and the way he never complained despite the 53 years MS challenges brought or the 3.5 years cancer brought his way. His love of God, his strength and spirit are lessons for us all. Dave was able to spend his last few months in St. Croix Hospice care at his home, the only place he ever wanted to live out his life with the love and care of Deb and his kitty Snooks.

Dave will be deeply missed by his wife, Deb; daughter, Heather (Jeff) Tietje of Janesville, MN. and son, Ross (Heidi) Gnotke of Oconto, Wisc.; grandchildren Ashley Allen, Teagan and Treysen Tietje and Charleigh Gnotke; brothers Elwood (Char) Gnotke, Ron (Elaine) Gnotke; sisters Linda (Lloyd) Hyberger, Marcia (Bruce Laufenberger) Petrich, Lila Schroeder; Sister-in-Law Roxanne (Dick) Lodermeier and Brother-in-Law Michael (Robin) Dahling; as well as many nieces, nephews and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, parents-in-law, a baby sister, a sister-in-law, two brothers-in-law and a great nephew.

The Gnotke Family is forever thankful and grateful for the love and support of all our family and friends that have been a part of this journey. Dave was blessed with the best oncology team at Mayo Health in Red Wing. As well as a thank you to the St. Croix Hospice these past few months, Dave was fortunate to have the best nurse and aide you can have.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the MS Society or the St. John's Church Building Fund in Goodhue.

Visitation was from 2-6 p.m. on Sunday, November 23, at Schleicher Funeral Homes in Lake City and 1 hour before the services at St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, Goodhue.

The funeral for Dave was at St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, 36620 County #4 Blvd. Goodhue, MN on Monday, November 24 at 11 a.m. with interment in St. John's Cemetery.

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Housing is Everyone's Business - And Everyone's Opportunity

By Bob Hawley, Executive Director,
Goodhue County
Habitat for Humanity



The City of Red Wing's recent Housing Summit was an encouraging first step - and an important reminder that housing challenges don't stop at any city's borders. Leaders from across sectors came together to talk about one of our region's greatest challenges - and greatest opportunities - housing. It was heartening to see so

many people working toward solutions.

Housing affects everything - our workforce, schools, economy, and community health. When families can't find safe, affordable places to live, the costs ripple through every corner of Goodhue County.

Employers are struggling to attract and keep workers because too many families can't find housing they can afford near their jobs. All types of housing are needed - quality rentals and attainable homes for purchase - in every community across the county.

At Goodhue County Habitat for Humanity, our part of that puzzle is helping working families become first-time homeowners through partnership and hard work. Habitat homebuyers purchase their market-priced homes with an affordable mortgage and invest hundreds of hours of sweat equity to help build them. They learn to manage their home and finances and witness volunteerism in our communities. Families pay taxes, gain stability, build equity, and strengthen neighborhoods.

Through our Build for Tomorrow Initiative, we're also working alongside the next generation of builders. In partnership with the



Goodhue Wildcats and Kenyon-Wanamingo Knights, high school students work side-by-side with instructors and Habitat staff to construct homes that transform lives. It's a win-win-win: families gain affordable housing, students gain hands-on trade skills, and our communities gain a stronger workforce for the future.

Habitat for Humanity is proud to be part of the solution, but we can't meet the full demand alone. Our volunteer-build model produces a few homes each year - life-changing for those families, but far short of the need. That's why we need strong public and private partnerships that make it feasible for developers and contractors to build more workforce and affordable homes. With the right programs, incentives, and creative financing, every sector can help close the housing gap.

Goodhue County Habitat is doing its part through HOPE Heights - a new development of 26 energy-efficient Habitat homes on Red Wing's former St. John's Hospital site within an existing, vibrant neighborhood. Infrastruc-

ture work begins in early spring 2026, followed by construction of the first twin home soon after.

I left the Red Wing Housing Summit encouraged but aware that progress depends on all of us. It's easy to assume someone else will take the lead, but lasting change requires everyone's involvement. One city cannot solve this alone - it will take a countywide approach and a shared commitment from every community, organization, and neighbor who calls Goodhue County home.

Let's build on this momentum and come together for a Goodhue County Housing Alliance - uniting cities, schools, employers, and residents to plan for housing at every stage of life and work.

Together, we can build homes, build hope, and build community.

Bob Hawley is Executive Director of Goodhue County Habitat for Humanity. Learn more at gchabitat.org.

Goodhue County Child & Family Collaborative Accepting Proposals to Strengthen Resilience & Protective Factors

By Josh Smith

Red Wing, MN (November 3, 2025) - The Board of Directors of the Goodhue County Child & Family Collaborative is announcing a funding opportunity for a three year period, beginning July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2029. The mission of the Goodhue County Child & Family Collaborative is to work in partnership to build strong families and resilient children. The Board is accepting proposals to fund projects that further the Collaborative's goal to strengthen resilience & protective factors of families, schools, and communities. Protective factors are:

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete support
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Social and emotional competence in children
- Nurturing and attachment

Applications will be accepted from public schools, governmental agencies, and 501(c)(3) organizations. Proposed projects must primarily serve children and families in the Cannon Falls, Goodhue, Kenyon-Wanamingo, Lake City, Red Wing, and Zumbrota-Mazeppa school districts. Grant awards are usually awarded for amounts of \$4,000-\$40,000. Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 5, 2025.

For more information and to obtain an application, please visit www.gccfc.org or contact the Community Engagement Specialist at josh.smith@goodhuecountymn.gov.



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Meagan Jaeger

Bellechester Suppers Draw Big Crowd

(continued from page 1)

The Thanksgiving-style meals were available to eat-in or take-out on November 7th and 21st as a fundraiser for building improvements and maintenance.

Volunteers chopped and fried 40 pounds of onions with sausage and celery, freezing the mixture until adding it to the stuffing on the day of each event.

The November 7th meal featured 9 Hams and 16 turkeys purchased from Goodhue Market. Each turkey was thawed in a 5 gallon bucket in the store's cooler before being picked up. The Bellechester Community Center Association crew roasted them on site while preparing the rest of the food which included mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, green beans, a roll, and pie and ice cream for desert.

Serving began at 5 PM and supporters came steadily until 7 PM when it slowed for the final hour. About 350 people were served with to-go meals remaining a popular option. The turkey ran out at the end of the November 7th supper but other extra food was donated

through a ministry in the twin cities area.

The local 4-H club helped serve beverages and clear tables. Organizers say they really appreciate all of the volunteers and would like to thank everyone who showed up to support them. Proceeds from the well-attended suppers will be put toward a new handicapped entrance ramp and front steps.

Pictured to the right: The annual Bellechester Community Center Deer Hunters' suppers were held at the center on November 7th and 21st. Proceeds from the well-attended suppers will be put toward a new handicapped entrance ramp and front steps.



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**Brightest Wishes
& Big Thanks**

**At the holidays and all year,
we're proud to serve this community.
Thanks for your continued support
and trust in us.**

*We wish everyone a delightful holiday season
and a happy, healthy new year!*

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**From All of Us
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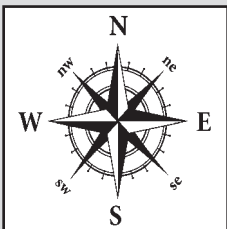
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Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes Christmas



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.

Christmas has always been a favorite time of year for me. The holiday spirit was happy and joyous. Everyone seemed to be of good cheer. I recall walking from store to store on Main Street as a kid and there was music playing everywhere. And the decorations were so festive. Everyone had an expectation of good things. My parents were practical and we had the same small artificial tree every year. It sat on top of round cabinet in the living room with the presents stacked around the bottom. They were green before it was the "in" thing to do.

I used to look through the "wish books" as a kid. They were magical. In the fall we would get the Christmas catalogues from Sears & Roebuck, Montgomery Wards and J.C. Penney. My sister and I compiled a list for our parents with hopes everything would make the cut. I remember spending hours looking but I cannot recall getting anything we had listed on our want list. I actually can't remember a single gift I received.

As I became older, I lost the excitement of getting something. When you reach to a certain age, you simply buy the things you want and usually don't much care for the things others give you. You have to act thankful for something you know you will never use. We all know what that is like.

In our family growing up we would get each person in the family one gift. That meant I would buy for seven people. I put a lot of thought into what I was going to get each one. I was certain they would love it more than anything else they received. I can still remember those gifts I purchased. One year I bought my older sister a Carpenter's record. It was the "Close to You" album. My sister was five years older than me and so cool. She got tickets to go to see the Carpenters at the Mayo Civic and when her college friend cancelled out, she took me instead. So, I knew that was the perfect gift and she would be thrilled. The last year I lived at home I bought my little brother Aaron a battery powered robot with a voice. The body of the robot was inflatable so we blew it up and pointed it at our cat, Buffy. It said, "I am Marzon" and lumbered toward the cat. Buffy was a mon-



ster slayer and took one swipe and Marzon deflated on the spot. Shortest life for a present ever.

My mother was also special and I wanted to get her something she would really appreciate. When I look back, I realize that a 12 year-old boy has no clue what to get, but I was on a mission. I had searched all the catalogues and came across the perfect thing in my mind. It was a jewelry box that played a tune when opened. And this was not just any music box. It was a Swiss Chalet. There was a water wheel on the side that one would turn to wind the mechanism. They when the roof was lifted where your treasures were kept it would play "Edelweiss". I would give my mom the cash for my purchase and she would write a check out to the mail order company. I quickly wrapped it the day it arrived. I could

barely contain myself waiting for her to open it. I do not remember my mother's reaction to opening her gift that Christmas. My mother was a diplomat. She had six kids and tried to treat each one evenly. I remember she used to say, "I love all my kids". I couldn't understand that, I mean I grew up with the rest of them.

Looking back, I realize why I can remember the gifts I gave and not the ones I received. The whole spirit of Christmas is giving. It is better to give than to receive. That is even a Bible verse. Acts 20:35 remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive".

I like being an adult. We do not give gifts to each other anymore. If you truly want to do something for someone you love, why wait until an arbitrary date? Just do it now.

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A Minnesotan: The Christmas Bat



By RosaLin Alcoser

Things from her house just kept turning up at our house; usually the things there were the more kids geared decorations. Including the light up moose that was meant to stand out in the yard. It was only out in our yard one year and did not work very well while it was out there. His head was supposed to move. Except he got broken while being put up that year. We all still maintain that my dad and grandpa broke the moose on purpose.

The Christmas decoration that still stands out to me to this day is the one that never made it to our house. And that would be the Christmas Bat.

One year when I was about six or seven mom's best friend's son, the same one who didn't pay attention to where he hid the six dozen Easter eggs, very excitedly pulled out his favorite childhood Christmas decoration. It was a light up Halloween bat that went in the window. That was flashed to look like it was flying when turned on.

I've been told that the Christmas bat was originally a Halloween bat that just never got put up until way after Christmas. However, when he was a child and asked about it he was told it was still up because it was a Christmas bat. Which led it to becoming the Christmas bat.

While I do know that the Christmas bat did not get put up that year or any other in my memory. I do clearly remember him pulling it out and telling us about how it was a Christmas decoration.

I absolutely love Christmas decorations and the whole process of decorating for Christmas. Now that I am grown I have my own home to decorate and my own decorations. But there are times when I think back to how my parents house was decorated for Christmas when I was a little kid.

Back when I was a child in the early 2000s a large number of my mom's best friend's, who would always spend at least part of Christmas with us, Christmas decorations made their way into our house. From the Nativity, that still goes up every year, to the mechanical Stantas that used to scare me as a child.

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Monsters and Witches at Bellechester Tavern

By Beth Brekke

"Double, double, toil and trouble; fire burn and cauldron bubble." This famous witch chant in William Shakespeare's Macbeth signals it's time to cast a spell. Those witches were throwing ingredients into a bubbling cauldron with evil intent but The Witches of Lake Zumbro danced through local bars Halloween week with a much better purpose. The group, along with others who came in costumes, entertained at the Bellechester Tavern on Saturday, November 1st.

"I love Halloween, it's my favorite holiday," said Andrea Lodermeier, winner of both the October 31st and November 1st contests hosted by the Bellechester Tavern. Fans of the Hellraiser movie franchise would easily recognize Andrea's Pinhead creation. She picked the character based on its popularity and scary, evil look. Her love of horror movies lies mainly with the makeup and special effects and she enjoys executing that in her costumes. Her black overcoat and vest were thrift store finds she refashioned adding safety pins and chains. Her head was covered with a skullcap and "pins". The pins were actually silver plastic sticks from cotton swabs. She removed all of the cotton and used Spirit Gum, a professional-grade glue used in theatrical makeup, to adhere them to the skullcap and the makeup-covered skin of her face. The process took about 2½ hours and earned her the \$75 costume contest prize.

The Witches of Lake Zumbro danced their way into the tavern at 7 pm. The group is based in Mazeppa and performed "The Witches Dance" to a near-capacity crowd. With music playing and broomsticks tapping, the witches cackled and solicited donations for the Lake Zumbro Improvement Association.

The Bellechester Tavern and Goodhue's 2nd Street Pub were two of five bars that hosted the group on November 1st. The group travels by bus and performed at 17 places between October 24th and November 1st. Starting in the Rochester area, their tour included a childrens' Halloween party at the VFW on Oct 31. Other area establishments included Tilly's, The Pondy, Mac's Park Place, Rock Bottom, Buck Wild, and the Neptune.

What began as a few ladies having fun has grown to a group of more than 20 with a mission. Seeing an opportunity to raise funds for the Lake Zumbro Improvement Association, the group collects free-will donations at each stop. This year's effort raised over \$2,000.00. The money is used for projects such as caring for the recreational areas and cleaning up the riverbank. All of the broomsticks are made from driftwood collected around Lake Zumbro.



Do you recognize any of the local women participating in the Witches of Lake Zumbro fundraiser benefiting the Lake Zumbro Improvement Association? *photo by Sally Trom*



Andrea Lodermeier won the November 1st Halloween costume contest at the Bellechester Tavern. She created this "Pinhead" costume using cotton swab sticks glued to her face and a skullcap.

Each participant creates their own witch costumes that include hats, capes, scarves



Jeanie Stumpf came to the Bellechester Tavern November 1st looking for her lost dog.

and jewelry. Six new witches picked up brooms this year and they expect a total of up to 30 witches next year. Signup begins in mid-September and practices are planned for Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The group



Two witches showing off their homemade costumes and makeup during their Halloween week tour.

is led by Sally Trom who can be reached at 507-250-7211. See photos and video on their Witches of Lake Zumbro Facebook page.

Farm Girl Chatter **The Heart of Agriculture**

By McKell Lemmerman

Agriculture isn't easy. It's not just a job — it's a way of life. And it's one of the hardest, most humbling, and most rewarding paths a person can walk.

It's early mornings that begin before the sun even peeks over the horizon — when the rest of the world is still asleep, and you're already knee-deep in work. It's long days that stretch into night, when you collapse into bed with sore muscles and dirt still under your fingernails. It's the kind of tired that runs deeper than your bones — but so does the satisfaction that comes with it.

It's planting with faith, not certainty — putting seeds in the ground and trusting that God will send the rain, the sun, and the right conditions for life to grow. It's watching the weather like your livelihood depends on it — because it does. It's knowing that no matter how hard you work, there are some things you can't control — and choosing to keep going anyway.

But agriculture isn't just rows of corn or fields of hay. It's also the heartbeat of the barn. It's livestock — cattle, horses, pigs, sheep, goats, chickens — animals that rely on you for everything. It's feeding them before you feed yourself. It's bottle calves in the kitchen and heat lamps in the garage. It's standing in freezing wind to pull a calf that wouldn't come on its own, and laying in the dirt beside a sick animal, doing everything you can to give it a chance to live.

It's the quiet trust in a good horse, the soft nudge of a cow who knows you mean well, the flurry of feeding time, and the stillness of the barn at night when everything has finally settled. It's life and death, heartbreak and hope — sometimes all in the same day.



Most people will never understand the weight of this life. They won't know what it feels like to raise something from nothing — to pour your blood, sweat, tears, and prayers into the land and your livestock, and then do it all again tomorrow. They won't see the hard choices, the long hours, or the sacrifices made behind the scenes. They don't see the birthday parties you miss, the vacations you postpone, or the holidays spent hauling hay or helping a heifer in labor.

But you do — because you were called to this life.

Not everyone gets to live it. And truthfully, not everyone could. It takes a special kind of person to farm and ranch — to care so deeply, work so hard, and live so selflessly. It takes strength. Grit. Patience. Wisdom. And a whole lot of faith. It means trusting God not just with your future, but with every single day.

You get to live a life connected to creation in a way most people never will. You get to witness miracles — new life being born, fields turning green, rain falling on dry ground. You get to see the beauty in hard work, the sacred in the ordinary, and the hand of God in every sunrise.

So be thankful — every single day. Not because it's easy, but because it's real. It's honest. It's good.

In the world of agriculture, nothing ever stays the same for long. Prices rise and fall. Weather patterns shift. Costs fluctuate. Markets for corn, soybeans, wheat, hay, and livestock can change overnight — driven by global events far beyond the fencerow. One year brings record yields; the next, drought or flood. Still, through all of it, farmers keep going.

They plant in the spring not with certainty, but with hope. They work the ground knowing full well that conditions may not cooperate — yet they press forward anyway. From dawn to dusk, and often beyond, their hands work the land while their minds navigate a thousand unseen variables: crop futures, feed

prices, machinery breakdowns, trade news, and the forecast that never quite holds.

What sets farmers apart isn't just their ability to endure — it's their willingness to do so again and again, season after season.

While others may measure their days in meetings and minutes, farmers measure in seasons and yields. Their work is physical, yes — but it's also deeply mental and emotional. It's a life built on resilience, on lessons passed down through generations, and on a profound connection to land and livestock.

Technology has changed. Equipment has advanced. Markets have gone global. But the heartbeat of the farm — the people — remains the same: gritty, grounded, tireless.

To the outside world, a dip in soybean prices may be just a headline. A spike in fertilizer costs may be just a graph. But to a farmer, those numbers mean something real — a decision to replant or not, a loan to carry forward or not, a hope for profit, or just enough to keep going one more year.

And still, they rise before the sun. They walk the rows. They fix what's broken, make do with what they have, and carry the weight of generations on their shoulders.

Because for most farmers, it isn't just business — it's legacy. They keep going not because it's easy, but because it matters: to their families, their communities, and to a world that depends on them, often without realizing it. In a world of fluctuation and uncertainty, the farmer remains a steady presence — a constant. A quiet, powerful force that feeds not just our bodies, but our sense of what it means to endure — and to do so with purpose.

So, when you're exhausted, when the bills stack up, when the weather won't cooperate or the herd has had a rough week — remember this:

God didn't choose just anyone for this life. He chose you.

He saw something in you — something strong, something steady, something faithful — and knew you were the right one for the job.



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The 2025 Goodhue Wildcats clawed their way to the state finals this month. They defeated W-E-M on November 11th in the quarterfinals with a 29-28 win. A week later they soundly romped over Holdingford in the semi-finals with a 24-7 win.

November 22 the Wildcats met the Jackson County Central Huskies for the State Championship Class AA Football playoff. The Wildcats played hard recovering five fumbles from the Huskies. The Wildcats led 15-12 in the fourth quarter, the first time the Huskies had trailed all season. The Huskies had outscored their opponents by an average 41 points per game for the season, so the Wildcats were their first formidable adversary this year.

Unfortunately, Jackson County had one more touchdown and the Wildcats ended a hard fought a hard final game 15-20. The Wildcats were playing for their team mate Austin “Randy” Holst who passed away last February 25th from injuries sustained in an automobile accident.



photos by Chace Landsteiner



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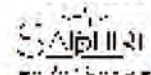
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One Woman's Cookie Cutter Collection

(continued from page 13)

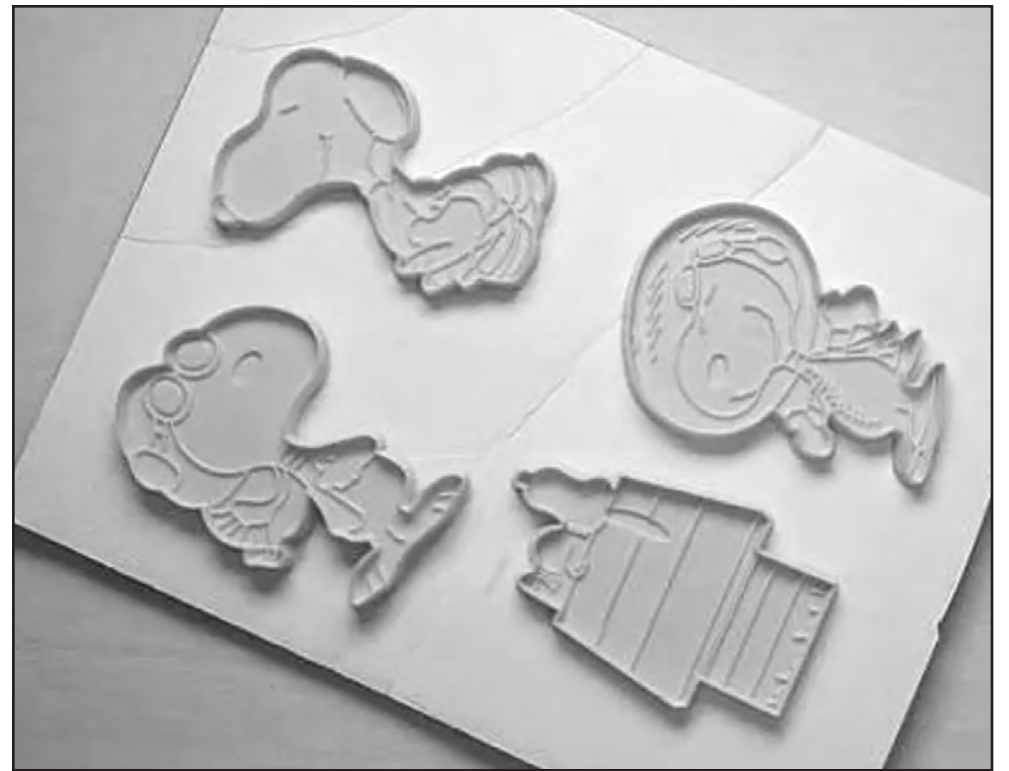
Some were individual orders of one specific design and others were large orders of 500 to 1,000 of the same style. A national hotel chain ordered their image for all their franchises to use for baking cookies.

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.



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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Memories of Christmas Past

(continued from page 1)

She recalls that times were tough and the family did not have a lot of things.

The kids would hang their every day stockings in the living room in anticipation of getting treats on Christmas Eve. She recalls one year how her brother looked out the upstairs window and said he saw sleigh tracks in the yard. They all began to get excited until her dad yelled up the stairs to get back to bed. The next morning, they came down to find a tangerine, banana, candy and nuts in the stockings.

Christmas was very simple and they usually received one present each from their parents. Usually, it was a new pair of pajamas. Her oldest brother gave her a present one year she really wanted. It was a copy of the book, Little Women. Even though she couldn't read it by herself yet, it was a treasured gift. The family would open one present Christmas Day and then they headed off to church. She remembers playing the Virgin Mary, holding a doll in a manger scene when she was about six-years old. The noon meal was usually a goose with all the trimmings. Anne hated the stuffing, and her mom would ask her to take the bowl of dressing from the cooked goose to the table and she would cry that she didn't want to eat any of it. Her grandma would stay

with them over the Holidays and make steamed pudding. Anne didn't like that either.

They all shared the toys they received. One year her brothers received a set of blocks which resembled buildings and they would all arrange them on the living room floor, setting up a miniature village to play with for hours at a time.

As the family grew her mother talked their dad into buying a small farm in the country so the kids would have room to play. They moved to a forty-acre place in the country and had a cow to milk, a pig to raise and chickens to take care of. The farm had a pond to skate on and a hill to toboggan down. Her dad owned a gas station and a bait shop and she remembers going to the river with him as a young child and helping to net minnows for the customers.

Carole grew up with three sisters in the city and recalls her father would get a tree to decorate a couple weeks before Christmas. They would flock the tree and decorate it with balls, lights and strings of popcorn. After Christmas he would set it outside for the birds to eat for the winter. Carole and her sisters would find the wrapped presents when the parents were not home and open them carefully to snoop at what they were getting. Then re-wrap the packages and act very surprised on Christmas morning when the parents gave them each their gifts.

The Christmas meal was oyster stew and chili. She remembers so much food it was unreal. Her favorite was the milk from the oyster soup. Another favorite was lefse with butter, brown sugar and cinnamon sugar.

One year when Carole was ten years old, she had her eye on a guitar in the Used-A-Bit

store in town. She looked longingly at it every day when she walked by and was so disappointed one day to see it was gone. Much to her surprise, her parents had purchased it for her and presented it on Christmas morning.

Shirley grew up outside Claremont on a small farm with three brothers and four sisters. Her childhood was lots of fun and she had a great dad who worked very hard. He would cut blocks of ice and sell them for people with ice boxes for keeping their food cool. Folks would come to buy ice at fifteen cents a block and her dad would give the kids change to run into town to buy candy.

One Christmas Eve her dad went to town and bought lots of nuts. The family would sit around until late in the night cracking and eating nuts. Christmas morning they would open presents with often included homemade dresses from her mom. One year she received a great big life size doll. Another year the present was a tricycle she had to share with her sisters. When she was twelve, they all received a bicycle which they shared as well.

Dan was raised in a big family of three boys and four girls on the east side of St. Paul. His dad loved Christmas and always made it a big celebration. They had lots of relatives who would come to spend the day at their house. His mom would cook a turkey or a large ham and all the relatives brought side dishes, desserts, snacks and candies. Someone always brought a fruit cake and it seemed that would last until April. He looked forward to Christmas as soon as Thanksgiving was over.

His parents would hide the presents in a locked room until Christmas eve. They would send the kids down to the basement where they waited while hearing people come and go with boots thumping across the floor upstairs. Finally, they were called upstairs where presents were waiting for them. The presents were mostly toys and some clothes. The older boys got tools and one year the best gift was an electric train and tracks. He had one cheap uncle who would always give him a tie. The kids would make presents for their parents at school. He remembers his mom and dad always seemed happy to open them. The evening slipped by fast and then they were sent off to bed to await Christmas Day.

It was during the depression and WWII years and they didn't go many places because gas was rationed. The street car was the main mode of transportation. He would ride the street car about a mile to school each day. His older sister dropped out of school and got a job as a housekeeper on the other side of town. Marty, one of his older relatives went to college and ended up playing for a pro football team in St. Louis. He was considered quite a celebrity in the family. They lived by Hillcrest Golf Club and the boys would caddy for money. He only knew one uncle who was wealthy enough to play the 18 hole golf course. His dad worked for the Pioneer Press Dispatch and they printed two papers daily, one morning issue and one evening issue. Dan was hired on as an engraver after finishing with school. In the early days they had one color picture per issue.

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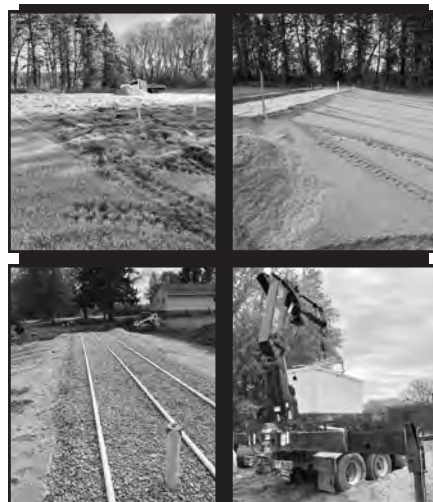


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More Egg Stuff + Cold and Flu Season



By Shauna Burshem, D.C.

For years, eggs were painted as “cholesterol bombs,” but newer research shows that dietary cholesterol from eggs has little effect on blood cholesterol for most people. In the right dietary context, eggs can actually support healthier cholesterol profiles and heart health. The key is differentiating cholesterol from saturated fat: they don’t behave the same in the body, and food context matters.

A recent American Journal of Clinical Nutrition study tested three diets varying cholesterol and saturated fat. Participants following a high-cholesterol, low-saturated fat plan that included two eggs per day lowered their LDL cholesterol over five weeks, while groups eating higher saturated fat saw LDL rise. The takeaway: cholesterol from eggs didn’t raise LDL; saturated fat did.

Mechanistically, saturated fat impairs the liver’s ability to clear LDL efficiently, increasing circulating LDL. Eggs provide cholesterol without burdening the system with saturated fat, allowing normal LDL clearance and helping prevent artery buildup. It’s not the eggs at breakfast that pose the problem—it’s typically the bacon and sausage alongside them.

Observational data echo these findings in older adults: weekly egg intake was associated with a 29% reduction in heart disease deaths and a 17% reduction in all-cause mortality. Moderation appears to be protective, aligning with the idea that eggs can fit into a cardiometabolic-friendly diet when the rest of the plate is thoughtful.

To maximize benefits, choose pastured eggs, avoid cooking with high-omega-6 vegetable oils, and pair eggs with nutrient-dense whole foods like greens and avocados. This keeps saturated fat and linoleic acid in check while leveraging eggs’ nutrients—supporting heart health and overturning outdated guidance that unfairly cracked the humble egg.

As many of you know, I am a passionate advocate for optimizing your vitamin D levels. The best way to do this is through sensible sun exposure, but as we get into fall, that becomes much trickier. The days get shorter, and the sun sits lower in the sky,

meaning we get less of the essential UVB radiation needed to produce vitamin D in our skin. This is especially true for those of us living in northern states, where the change in seasons significantly reduces our ability to make enough of this crucial vitamin.

When sunlight isn’t enough, we must turn to our diet. I always tell my patients to look for foods rich in vitamin D to bridge the gap. Some of the best sources are fatty fish like wild-caught salmon, which can have between 383 to 570 IU per serving, and rainbow trout, which offers around 645 IU. You can also find it in herring, tilapia, and fortified dairy products like plain yogurt or kefir, which typically provide around 100 to 116 IU per cup.

Supplementation is another key strategy, but it’s important to do it right. I always advise starting with a 25-hydroxy vitamin D test to know your baseline. The goal is to reach a blood level between 60 and 80 ng/mL, which is where the real protective benefits are seen. When choosing a supplement, go for vitamin D3, which comes from animal sources and is much more effective than the plant-based D2. Since D3 is fat-soluble, be sure to take it with a meal containing healthy fats like grass-fed butter or egg yolks to ensure your body can absorb it properly.

Chiropractic care during cold and flu season: The spine and nervous system are at the very core of how our bodies manage health, and their communication pathways have a direct influence on immune system function. When spinal joints lose their mobility or become misaligned—what chiropractors refer to as vertebral subluxation—this communication gets disrupted. Left unchecked, these interruptions can throw the autonomic nervous system off balance, impacting not only stress responses but also the body’s capacity to mount a strong immune defense. Chiropractic adjustments directly address these spinal issues, working to restore that critical nervous system connection so your body can handle stress more effectively and maintain resilience against illness. From what I’ve witnessed in my own practice, and what’s being shown in studies over the years, chiropractic care produces positive changes in immune markers. Adjustments have been linked with increases in protective immune cells and antibodies such as cytokines and salivary IgA—key players in how your body fights off threats. There’s also solid evidence showing that chiropractic care can lower stress hormones, which otherwise suppress healthy immune activity. Instead of a passive approach to health, chiropractic offers a proactive and hands-on way to support and even strengthen your immune system.

Making chiropractic care part of your personal wellness routine just makes sense if you want to optimize your body’s ability to stay well. Of course, habits like regular movement, getting enough sleep, good hydration, and even workstation ergonomics matter too. But if you truly want to give your immune system that extra edge, chiropractic should be at the top of your list.

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

Alzheimer's



By Noel Aldrich, PhD, CNS
Licensed Nutritionist

In the early 1900s, Dr. Alois Alzheimer performed an autopsy on the body of a patient who had died after symptoms of dementia. In his investigation, he observed formations in the brain tissue that have become known as “amyloid plaques,” and the condition received his name. This plaque buildup has been the focus of research and proposed medications for decades. In more recent years, the urgency to understand this disease has become more obvious as a 2023 article in the Alzheimer’s and Dementia Journal reported a 145% increase in deaths from Alzheimer’s between 2000 and 2019. Although billions of dollars have been applied in researching medications to stop or reverse the progress of Alzheimer’s, a medical solution has not been found.

In 2017, Dr. Dale Bredeesen, published “The End of Alzheimer’s,” which has become a New York Times Bestseller, and Dr. David Perlmutter describes as “a monumental work.” Dr. Bredeesen not only describes the discovery of the cause of Alzheimer’s, but also presents the solution, which his team has effectively used to help hundreds of clients stop the progress of Alzheimer’s and in many cases reverse the symptoms.

Dr. Bredeesen describes the discovery of the amyloid precursor protein as the key to understanding the progress of cognitive de-

cline. Every human being produces amyloid precursor proteins in various cells of the body including brain cells. How your body processes these precursor proteins determines whether amyloid plaques develop or not. Dr. Bredeesen presents four primary causes for amyloid plaques to develop: 1) Inflammation, 2) Glucose toxicity, 3) Nutrient deficiency, and 4) Environmental toxicity. When one or more of these causes become predominant in your body, then amyloid plaques will begin to build up. When you make a priority to remove these causes from your body, the brain can return to clarity and health.

In other words, Alzheimer’s disease can be described as a metabolic disorder, which can be addressed with dietary changes and nutrition. Inflammation can be addressed with whole food sources and healthy oils. Glucose toxicity, often associated with diabetes, can be reversed by consuming foods that have a low glycemic index. Nutrient deficiencies can be identified with proper blood tests and whole food choices, and environmental toxins can be removed from your body through guided detoxification protocols. Dr. Bredeesen presents testimonials from clients who have followed these steps to return to active lifestyles.

Adding quality fats, fermented foods, fresh vegetables and fruits, and removing quick, processed foods from your lifestyle can make a significant difference in your brain activity. According to the Brain Health and Alzheimer’s Prevention Program at Loma Linda University over ninety percent of Alzheimer’s cases can be prevented with simple changes in diet and lifestyle. Contact me to discuss your health goals for the coming year. Nutrition is designed for healing. I can help you reach greater health freedom in 2026. 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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Messenger

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The Best By Par

By Tyler Weeks

While the rest of us are enjoying warm nights by the fire and brilliant blankets of snow, the sports world shares a universal sadness over winter. Across football, soccer, and other outdoor sports, teams are forced to either pack up their things or move indoors for the season. Luckily, these communities often have indoor arenas and stadiums to sustain

themselves through the winter. Zumbro Falls Golf Club has not had the same luxury, however, having to close its green and rely on other means to stay afloat during Minnesota's cold season. Wanting to fix this while giving members a chance to practice their winter swings, Kevin Kautz and his son Kaleb recently closed their deck for the installation of four state-of-the-art golf simulators.

Alongside a driving range and practice green, these developments have produced a system with stunning graphics that will remain available through the winter season. Their efforts to stay open seven days a week, year-round, are actively making golf more accessible to the larger community.

Kevin: "We looked for a system that could fit our seasonal needs for golf."

(continued on page 18)



Season's Greetings

With best wishes from our entire team this holiday season.

We look forward to your continued friendship in 2026.

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JEFF AMY
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TIGÉ WALKER
507-323-0319

The Best By Par

(continued from page 17)

The [simulators'] amazingly clear graphics are about as close to real golf as it gets. Sand flies when you hit out of the traps; water features have moving water; selected courses have different animal species in the background. Even hitting yardages are spot on to the same distance you might hit a ball outside."

When Kevin first constructed Zumbro Falls Golf Club in 1999, golf simulators were hardly on his mind. With rolling hills and four ponds surrounding this 9-hole course, his only priority was to open such a beautiful venue up to golfers. After a year of construction and the beginning of a new millennium, the course's opening brought members flocking to drive fifteen minutes north of Rochester, 63, to enjoy a rather scenic round of golf with water views on every hole. Getting through the course is no easy feat, though, as golfers must utilize every club in their bag to get through its two 550-yard holes, several unexpected breaks, and their famous hole #4, the 180-yard par three that has never seen a hole-in-one in the course's 25 seasons of operation. With the addition of their first grapes planted nine years ago, golfers now enjoy a lovely vineyard on hole #6. In 2023, they officially became licensed and had their first toast of wine the following winter.

Aside from the course, the clubhouse offers breakfast, lunch, and dinner items, a pictur-

esque wedding venue, and the previously discussed winery and staff. These developments bring us back to the present, when Kevin and Kaleb realized the inevitably slow business of the winter season. When mid-October arrived along with its cold weather, the two were ready with a plan to close in the club's deck and erect four simulator bays within the over ten feet of newly available ceiling space. Without fastening anything to the floor or ceiling, they installed the system alongside minor cosmetic improvements in a five-day process with better-than-expected results. Actually installing the courses was another matter, as it took nearly two weeks of round-the-clock downloading to acquire and configure 2,000 courses from around the world. Since the simulators are only popular during uncomfortable weather, the club plans to take them down on May 1st. The winter season certainly does not mean that leagues will stop, however:

"We are offering six men's league nights, a couple's night, and a ladies' night. All of our leagues are casual and play a 2-person scramble format. Each league will have sixteen people and play every other week. We will be open for business seven days a week, opening every day at 10:00 a.m. and closing at 8:00 p.m. Our rates are \$40/hour per bay. A four-some would only pay \$10/hour."

With this expansion, Zumbro Falls Golf Club aims to attract golfers year-round, especially during the slower winter season. To those who would prefer to wait until everything thaws again, however, the winery and eatery will always be there to keep members occupied. More importantly, Kevin and Kaleb have given a previously underutilized space a valuable, year-round use. You can catch one last look at their course before the snow or test out these new simulators off Hwy 63 just south of Zumbro Falls. When that fated frost does eventually roll around,



Practice green

the golfing community can rely on simulator bays like these to ease the burden of a harsh winter. After all, if you love something enough, no amount of obstacles will stand in the way of pursuing it. Instead of letting the challenge of winter tear them down, Zumbro Falls Golf Club built around it. The result has provided the golfers with year-round practice

and reminded them of a crucial lesson in the process- decisions made for the community are the best by par.

To join one of their leagues or book a bay from an online tee sheet, reach out to Zumbro Falls Golf Club at 507-421-3101 or on their website.

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Ask A Trooper

By Sgt. Troy Christianson,
Minnesota State Patrol



Question: *At a 4-way stop, when 2 cars stop at exactly the same time, which one has the right of way? Is it the car on your left? It seems like no one knows what to do these days and everyone just sits there.*

Answer: That is a good question for a good topic. Right-of-way and yielding laws help traffic flow smoothly and safely. They are based on courtesy and common sense. Violating these laws is a leading cause of traffic crashes.

- Intersections without traffic lights or signals: When you reach an intersection at the same time as another driver, the driver on the left must yield to the one on the right.

- All-way stops or flashing red traffic lights: When you reach an intersection at the same time as another driver, the driver on the left must yield to the one on the right.

- Left turns: When you want to make a left turn, you must yield to vehicles approaching from the opposite direction that are in the in-

tersection or close enough to pose a risk of a crash.

- Green arrow signal for left turn: When a green arrow signals that you are allowed to turn left, you must yield to other vehicles or pedestrians already in the intersection. After yielding, you may continue in the direction of the arrow.

- Uncontrolled “T” intersections: When you approach an uncontrolled “T” intersection, you must yield to all cross traffic if you are the one turning.

- Entering a public road from a private road or driveway: You must stop and yield to pedestrians and traffic.

- Transit and metro mobility buses: When driving in the right lane, you must yield to transit and metro mobility buses merging from a bus stop or shoulder. This includes yielding to any school bus trying to enter the lane from a shoulder, a right-turn lane, or other location where the school bus has stopped to load or unload passengers. The school bus must use the left turn signal to indicate intent to move into the right-hand lane.

- Funeral processions: When a funeral procession identifies itself with headlights or hazard warning lights, you must yield to the entire procession.

- Pedestrians: You must yield to pedestrians crossing at intersections and crosswalks, whether marked or unmarked.

Question: *Can I get some clarification on stop signs. I always wonder where to stop. Is it at the stop sign or at the stop line I sometimes see on the road. Thank you.*

Answer: This is a good question that I do get fairly often. Here is what you need to

know and do when it comes to stopping.

Stop signs:

- Come to a complete stop at stop signs.
- If there is a marked stop line, stop before the line.

- If there is a pedestrian crosswalk, stop before entering the crosswalk.

- Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, bicyclists and traffic before proceeding.

Obstructed view: If your view of the intersection is obstructed, be prepared to stop again for traffic or pedestrians in your path.

You must also come to a complete stop:

- Before entering a road from an alley, private driveway, parking lot or parking ramp. Always stop before crossing a sidewalk or crosswalk.

- At an intersection or crosswalk with a traffic signal displaying a red light. Wait until the light turns green and your path is clear before proceeding.

- At any intersection or crosswalk, marked or unmarked, where a pedestrian or bicyclist is crossing the road. Stay stopped until they have passed your lane.

- At a flashing red traffic light. Treat it as you would a stop sign.

- At a freeway ramp meter when the light is red.

- At a railroad crossing with a stop sign.

- When a flag person or traffic device directs you to stop.

- At a bridge that has been raised to open a path for boats.

Question: *I want to make sure my child is safe in the car, but I've heard that some car seats sold online are fake or don't meet U.S. safety standards. How can I tell if a car seat is unsafe?*

Answer: Good question. I reached out to the expert who is the Community Programs and Occupant Protection Manager for the Minnesota Safety Council and here is what I found out.

Fake, counterfeit, or non-compliant car seats can look real, feel sturdy, and even have labels—but they may break in a crash or miss critical safety features that keep children safe. Some of these car seats are being sold online and may even look like a real car seat, but they aren't made to save lives. If you look closely, some may say they were made for dolls or have labels in broken Eng-

lish like: “Never leave child unattended.”

What to look for in a legitimate U.S. car seat:

- Safety labels written in English
- Chest clip as part of the 5-point harness
- Manufacturer name, model number, and weight/height limits

- Registration card and owner's manual
- Statement that it meets all U.S. federal safety standards (FMVSS)

Red flags for fake, counterfeit or non-compliant seats:

- No U.S. safety labels, or labels only in other languages

- Missing chest clip, registration card, or manual

- Unknown manufacturer

- Very low prices or sold by unknown online sellers (avoid buying car seats from third-party sellers)

Important note: Some car seats may be legitimate and crash-tested in other countries (like European models) but do not meet U.S. safety standards. For example, many European car seats do not have a chest clip, which is a required feature for U.S. seats. Even if these seats are safe elsewhere, they are not compliant for use in the U.S.

Need help?

You can always contact your car seat manufacturer or a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) if you have questions, want to verify a seat, or need help with installation. A one-pager on compliant car seats and a list of all U.S. car seat manufacturers and their contact info is available here: <https://buckleupmn.org/infants-children/finding-the-right-car-seat/>

If you buy a car seat online and the deal seems “too good to be true,” it might be!

For more information and guidance, visit: <https://buckleupmn.org/>

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)

Holly Thyme Craft Show

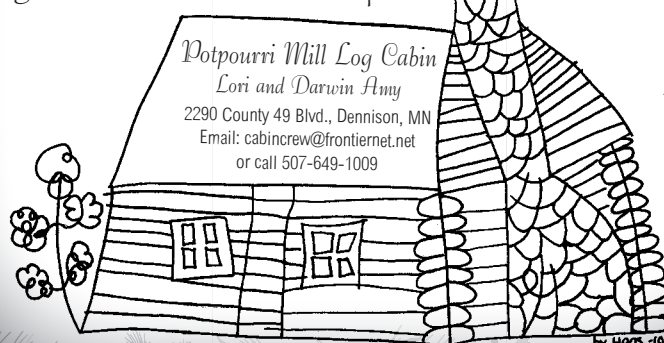
Saturdays: November 29, December 6, 13

Sundays: November 30, December 7, 14

Hours: 10:00a.m. to 5:00p.m.

Call 507-649-1009 to set up other dates and times to shop in our cabin.

Take a drive in the country and shop in our log cabin filled with crafts and antiques!



Steering Wheel Safety

One small habit that can have major safety implications behind the steering wheel is where to put your hands on the wheel. Whether you've been driving for 50 years or 5 months, safe steering wheel techniques are critical to maintaining control in an emergency and ensuring your safety in the event of an airbag deployment.

Give Yourself Space: Make sure you have at least 10 inches between your chest and the steering wheel. If the airbag deploys, that space is what keeps you safe.

Best Hand Positions: Avoid the traditional 10 and 2 o'clock position. Keeping your hands slightly lower helps reduce the risk of injury if the airbag deploys. Aim for:

9 and 3 o'clock

8 and 4 o'clock

Relax Your Thumbs: Keep your hands on the outer rim of the wheel, and don't tightly grip the inside. Rest your thumbs turned out along the rim instead.

Making these simple, deliberate adjustments to your steering habits will enhance your overall safety on the road. Together, we can drive Minnesota toward zero deaths.



Goodhue City Council Meeting Minutes
October 22, 2025
6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Council Members Michael Brunkhorst, Chris Schmit, Jeannine Nagel, Joe Benda Members Absent: Mayor Ernie Valenzuela Others Present: Lisa Redepinning, City Administrator, Lori Luhman, Administrative Assistant/City Clerk, Pete Grimsrud-News Record, Mike Ayres-Goodhue County Sheriff Department, Phil Hofstad Remote: Bob Vose, City Attorney

Call to Order

Acting Mayor Schmit called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approve or amend Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda made by Brunkhorst, seconded by Benda, motion carried 3-0-0.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the October 8, 2025, work meeting minutes made by Benda, seconded by Brunkhorst, motion carried 3-0-0.

Approval of Bills

A motion was made to approve the bills by Brunkhorst, seconded by Benda, motion carried 3-0-0.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Farm Lease renewals for 2026
November and December meeting dates changed to one meeting only each month. There will be no work meetings. Regular City

Council meetings will be held November 12 and December 10 at 6:00 p.m.

City Contribution to Employee Health Savings Account change to \$1350 for single plan and \$2900 for family plan for 2026 □ Application to Conduct Off-site Gambling Pull-Tabs for Lion’s Christmas Party December 13, 2025; lease agreement must accompany application

Resolution No. 25-17 approving Application to Conduct Off-site Gambling for Lion’s Christmas Party December 13, 2025

Motion to approve consent agenda, made by Brunkhorst, seconded by Nagel, motion carried 3-0-0.

Old Business - None

New Business

Motion to accept the two-year Goodhue County Prosecution Services contract for years 2026-2027, was made by Brunkhorst, seconded by Benda, motion carried 3-0-0.

Public Comment - None

Administrator Comments

Redepinning reported that we have not received a response from the Solar Garden inquiry or the Telecommunications Tower company at this time.

Council Comments - None

Mayor Comments –

Administrator Redepinning read Mayor Valenzuela’s letter of resignation to the council. Council referred to Attorney Vose for

guidance to proceed. Options were relayed and Council stressed importance of filling the Mayor position. A motion was made to direct staff to create a resolution that will accept the Mayor’s resignation thus appointing Acting Mayor Chris Schmit as Mayor for the remainder of the Mayoral term and declare a vacancy for a council member seat, motion by Brunkhorst, seconded by Nagel, motion carried 3-0-0.

Other

Council member Joe Benda read his letter of resignation effective December 31, 2025, and announced he will try to make the next two meetings if feeling well enough.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 6:26 p.m. by Council Member Brunkhorst, seconded by Benda, motion carried 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted, Lori Luhman, Administrative Assistant/City Clerk

Bellechester City Council Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2025 @ 6:00 PM

Call the meeting to order at 6:00. Meeting is recorded, and the recordings belong to the City of Bellechester.

Pledge to the flag

Mayor Jody Gordon opened the regular city council meeting at 6:00.

Roll call was taken: The council in attendance: Mayor Jody Gordon, Council member Rich Majerus, Mark Gerken Jacob Gilsdorf, and Nick Keller as well as treasurer Kyle McKeown. Absent was City Clerk Lisa Redepinning and City Engineer Matt Mohs. Jo Poncelet and Jackie Distad were also present.

Approve or Amend of Agenda – Motion was made by Rich Majerus with a 2nd by Nick Keller to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Minutes of the August 20, 2025 meeting were reviewed and motion was made by Jake Gilsdorf with a second by Nick Keller to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Bills were reviewed with a motion by Nick Keller with a second by Rick Majerus to approve and pay the bills as presented with not paying Banyon bill. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- Visu Sewer Change Order No. 2 Approval (contract balancing change order – required by RD). This is a contract balancing change order. The final contract amount is \$917,015.60. Motion was made by Rich Majerus with a 2nd by Mark Gerken to approve Change Order No 2 contingent on RD concurrence. Motion carried.

- Visu Sewer Final Pay Application Approval – Motion was made by Rich Majerus with a 2nd by to approve Pay Application #9 in the amount of \$9170.16 contingent on RD concurrence. Motion carried.

New business:

- Lead Service Line Replacement project planning and timing – documents will be forthcoming from Matt in November.

- BCCA Discussion – Matt had a list of priorities that he will provide to us. We have estimates at this point for upgrades. There was discussion on the future of the building.

- 2025-2026 Snowplowing – Brian Gordon is interested in providing this service. He will provide us a quote.

- Utility Rate Discussion/Update Household count – Tabled.

- Approve Prosecution Agreement with Goodhue County Attorney’s Office. Motion was made by Rich Majerus with a 2nd by Mark Gerken to approve the prosecution agreement with Goodhue County. Motion carried.

Engineer Report – None

Clerk Report – Goodhue County Prosecution Agreement - FYI - \$60/month currently, increasing to \$63/month for 2026 and \$66/month for 2027. Previously was a 1 year agreement, now it’s for 2 years. Assessment Warning Letters – FYI – there are only 2 remaining unpaid. Rural Development Update – FYI – we were told that we need to wrap up our project and submit invoices by end of November. Matt will have more information on this at meeting. Mower Purchase – if you were going to do this with the funds from our grant, it better get purchased now if you want it to be submitted for reimbursement. Paid Family Medical Leave – FYI – the State of MN is requiring this. There are no small business exemptions, we have to do it. Since our payroll is low, the cost per year will be less than \$100, and starts in 2026. Office Supply Purchases – FYI – I purchased toner, copy paper, window envelopes and file folders. Quarterly Reporting done – FYI – Fed withholding, state sales tax, state unemployment and county building permits are filed and paid.

Treasurer Report – None.

Water/Wastewater/Facility Report – Flushing hydrants on the 24th of October. MPCA will come to inspect on October 30th. Discharge possible mid-November. Continued work on GIS mapping.

Mayor Concerns: None

Council Concerns: Fire truck association hired a lawyer to look at agreement. The association board is taking over for the committee.

Adjourn

Motion was made by Mark Gerken with a second by Jake Gisdorf to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 6:43 Motion carried.

Submitted by Lisa Redepinning – City Clerk

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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

To the Editor:

City officials also are not thinking on a regional level when they need to be regarding data centers. The Prairie du Chien and Jordan aquifers are two prominent aquifers for the SE Minnesota region. For a brief perspective of just who relies on these 2 aquifers in some capacity for private wells and municipal water: Rice county has 7 cities. Dakota county has 34 cities. 8 out of 10 cities in Goodhue county connect to at least one of them. That’s 49 communities so far. Olmsted County, Winona County, Dodge County also connect to them in varying capacities and the list goes on since the Jordan aquifer touches 7 states. 6 hyperscale data centers (Pine Island, Apple Valley, Cannon Falls, Farmington, Faribault, Lakeville) are currently proposed to draw from these 2 aquifers alone. 4 of them are being sued by the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. None of them have done full environmental assessments. Not a single one. Being in the karst region our aquifers are at the highest vulnerability risk for being compromised by human activities and remediation efforts are also harder to do. These 7 cities are intentionally and wantonly jeopardizing the entire region’s groundwater supply and they need to be taken to task and held accountable. Residents of SE MN should be infuriated by the complete lack of regard these 7 cities have for the most basic element needed to survive: water. Let them know it before it’s too late.

Aubree Derksen
Pine Island, MN
612-709-8331

NOTICE OF COUNCIL VACANCY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Goodhue has extended accepting applications from Goodhue residents interested in an appointment to fill a City Council seat until the term expires December 31, 2026. Meetings are held on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday at 6:00 pm.

The Council may appoint any individual who is eligible for election to the office of City Council. To be eligible, a person must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of the City and at least 21 years old. Interested candidates will be required to fill out an application form and submit by December 5, 2025 and attend the council meeting on December 10th, in which council appointment will be made.

Applications will be available at City Hall and on our website. Please contact City Hall via phone: 651-923-4310 or email: cityclerk@cityofgoodhue.gov by 4:00 p.m., December 5, 2025, with any questions.

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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: HAPPY HOLIDAYS

ACROSS

- Shapeless form
- Hot springs resort
- Not square
- Private theater box
- Relating to ear
- Rome's Colosseum, e.g.
- I ____ you so!
- *The opposite of a store the day before Christmas?
- "Auld Lang Syne" poet
- *Partridge's perch (2 words)
- Vegas numbers
- New Zealand's indigenous people
- Fuss
- Tabby's favorite herb
- More so than swell
- Big-headedness
- Resembling an ape
- John Wayne Gacy's ____ the Clown
- Photographer Dorothea of "Migrant Mother" fame
- Type or kind
- Like a sheep after a haircut
- D'Artagnan's weapon of choice
- Superlative of #33 Down
- U.S. central bank
- Wilma and Fred's hometown
- *Latke's main ingredient
- Word of possibility
- Turning token taker
- Exclamation of sorrow
- * ____ Obody of "It's a Wonderful Life"
- Raspberry drupelets
- Saintly glow
- Letter opener
- Hunts for food
- Banana leftover
- Guesstimate phrase
- *Color on a Kwanzaa flag
- Not divisible by two
- Scholarship criterion

DOWN

- Deli acronym
- Chicago's central district, with The
- Gawk at
- Wish harm upon, arch.
- One of The Beatles
- Pileus, pl.
- "The Road Runner" corporation
- Group of cows
- Bed-and-breakfast alternative, pl.
- *"The Nutcracker" step
- Certain cephalopod, pl.
- It's sometimes humble
- *Chuck Berry's "Run, ____, Run"
- Reason to strike
- Grass bristle
- Famous one, slangily
- Open-mouthed
- Like a well-defined muscle
- Hot alcoholic beverage
- Washing sponge
- Type of heron
- Rondeau, alt. sp.
- *Santa's beverage of choice
- Not well
- *Original home of Christmas tannenbaum
- Fur shawl
- Extremely unfriendly
- Plane trick
- Reprieve in a desert
- Muscle to bone connector
- Skidded
- Weighed
- 4,840 square yards
- Told an untruth
- Head of family
- Wrap in waxy cloth
- Comfort
- Financing acronym
- Stewart of "Maggie May" fame

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