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December 10, 2025

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Serving Our Hometowns Thanks To Your Support!

We want to Thank You for your continued support of the Randolph - Hampton - Castle Rock Messenger.

(continued on page 13)



Dakota City Christmas in the Village December 13 & 14

The village is buzzing for Christmas in the Village continuing December 13, & 14 from 3-8 pm at the Dakota County Fairgrounds in Farmington.



(continued on page 10)

Courtesy of Dakota City Heritage Village

Announcements

- **Randolph Kindergarten-3rd Grade Holiday Concert: Thursday, December 11 at 1:30 p.m. AND 6:00 p.m.**
- **Christmas Mass Schedule:** Wednesday, December 24 at 3p.m. - St. Mary, New Trier; St. Mathias, Hampton. Thursday, December 25 at midnight - St. Mary, New Trier. Thursday, December 25 at 9:30a.m. - St. Mathias, Hampton.
- **Randolph Food Shelf located at St. Mark's Church 28595 Randolph Blvd.** Monthly Open Hours: 1st Tuesday 8:00 - 9:30 am; 2nd, 3rd, 4th Tuesdays 4:30 - 6:00 pm. Questions call (507) 263-9182.

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. 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.

(continued on page 6)

FFA National Convention



9 members from Randolph FFA attended the National Convention in Indianapolis. Members toured the John Deere Plant in Iowa, the Caterpillar Museum in Illinois and the Reproduction Center in Indiana.

The Chapter received a 2 Star National Chapter Award. Courtesy of Randolph FFA

Toys for Tots Drive

Randolph FCCLA Chapter is sponsoring the Toys for Tots drive this year. This program helps local children in need. Families will receive Christmas gifts for Christmas.



We are collecting toys until December 19th.

Toys must be new and unwrapped.

Bring in donations to the District Office. Thank you.

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Upcoming Events...

December 12 - Ugly Sweater Party December 21 - Santa Claus Visit
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Scouts at St. Mathias Earn Their Religious Award



Submitted

These scouts were on retreat at Phillippo Scout Camp to work on their Ad Altare Dei (Latin for To the Altar of God) religious emblem. They were from six different Troops across the Metro. The retreat was led by members of the Archdiocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, including Doug Kleist from Richfield and Pat Reardon and Jimmy Wong from Woodbury.

Scouts were from Faribault, Clearwater, Burnsville, Coon Rapids and Vadnais Heights. All across the metro.

Father Jim Notebaart is the substitute priest in the phot that night. Father Mike Tix was gone.

Happy HOLIDAYS

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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 & Langehough Funeral Home & Crematory. www.northfieldfuneral.com

Charles (Chuck) Alvin Hutton

Charles (Chuck) Alvin Hutton, age 90, of Amery, WI, passed away peacefully on November 21, 2025, at Osceola Medical Center, surrounded by his family. He was born on April 20, 1935, in Northfield, MN.



C h u c k

graduated from Farmington High School in 1954, where he was one of fifty-four students in his class. He married Gloria Jean Baker of Northfield, MN, on August 11, 1962. In 1966, Chuck and Gloria moved to Wisconsin, where they built their life and raised their family.

He served in the United States Army from December 10, 1954, to December 8, 1956, and was a proud member of American Legion Post 143 in St. Croix Falls, WI. He was also a longtime member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Amery, WI.

Over the years, Chuck worked at Johnson Feed Mill and later at Byron Dresser Trap Rock. He spent much of his life farming and had a deep passion for agriculture. He also had a true affinity for John Deere equipment and would often say with a smile, "Nothing runs like a Deere." He was known for his hard work, his steady faithfulness, and his beautiful singing voice.

Chuck was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Ruth Hutton; his brothers, Herbert Hutton and Merrill Hutton; and his sister, Frances Danielson.

He is survived by his wife, Gloria Hutton; his children, Cathy (Dave) Cook and Mark (Denise) Hutton; his grandchildren, Samantha Cook, Amos Hutton, and Cyrus Hutton; and many nieces and nephews.

The family extends their heartfelt gratitude to the staff at Osceola Medical Center for the exceptional care and kindness shown to Chuck. They also offer sincere thanks to the Allied Fire Department First Responders for their dedication, professionalism, and the extraordinary support they provided during his time of need.

Visitation will be held on Friday, December 19, 2025, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at Grandstrand Funeral Home, (941 State Road 35) in Osceola and also one hour prior to the service on Saturday. Funeral services will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 20, 2025, at Trinity Lutheran Church (1578 85th Avenue) Amery, WI. A luncheon will follow at the church.

Burial will take place at a later date at Red Rose Cemetery in Northfield, MN.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Trinity Lutheran Church, American Legion Post 143, or a charity of your choice.

Randolph Community Food Shelf

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
28595 Randolph Blvd.
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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.

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The True Meaning of Christmas



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

It's that time of year again, can you believe it? Perhaps you feel the pressure of busting out the tangled lights, putting up the Christmas tree, making cookie platters, and checking off that frantic list of all the Christmas shopping you feel obligated to do. Before you know it, it's December 26th and it all felt like a grasping of the wind.

Although some may think Christmas is how the Hallmark movies portray, that is the furthest thing from the truth. So much hype gets put into this season, and to be honest, for

what? More clutter, credit card debt, and returns to the store?

I know what some of you may be thinking: "Ashley, you kind of sound like the Grinch." Maybe I do, just stick with me.

Do we honestly stop, pause, and breathe in the true meaning of Christmas? Do we even know what it is? Some of us may, with a twinkle in our eye; others may not, with curiosity on our chest; and for a few of us, Christmas may be all too familiar and we need a fresh, crisp breeze of what this time is truly all about.

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

Savior. Think about that word. What does it mean? Savior means you are saved from something, but what is this something, and who even is this Christ?

Let's start with Christ. This verse and word are indeed talking about Jesus. Fun little fact—Christ is not Jesus's last name! Christ means chosen or anointed one. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the Son of God who is the chosen one to save us! But save us from what?

Jesus saves from hopelessness. Standards of the world. Perfection. Bondage. Turmoil. Dread. He can help save us from the bottle in the hand, the joint in the midst of the fingers, the pictures on the screen, and the despair that wants to take our lives. He saves us from guilt, shame, and that sweet self-critic we can't seem to shake.

Some of you have been in the church your whole life and you can relate to all of the above; no shame, my beloveds. Some of you may have never stepped into that four-wall building and experienced the things previously listed; no guilt there either. Jesus saves nonetheless.

Jesus loves you. Even in the mess. I promise you.

I have been a follower of Jesus for a good twenty years now, and Jesus continues to save me from regrets of the past, trauma that wants to resurface, self-harm that wishes to penetrate, and depression that hungers to overtake.

I have days when my chest is weighed down with the heaviest of bricks, my heart beats as fast as a hummingbird's wings, and fear wants to spiral me down to despair. But guess what? Jesus rushes in. Jesus consoles me and settles my heart by the Word of God and speaks to me with words and tone that represent the fruit of the Spirit. Before I know it, the darkness has fled, he has saved me from self-destruction of all sorts, and I am back on my feet running the race.

Commercial break: For those who do not know, the Word of God is the Bible, and the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Jesus also saves us from sin, which we all are so guilty of, including me. Pride. Control. Jealousy. Anger. Comparing. Offense. Those are just a few of the sins I have been washed clean from (and some of them I am still working through), thanks to Jesus.

He will meet you, too, in the middle of the rage, in the mix of the fix, the crippling anxiety, the sailor's mouth, the emptiness, and that bed of yours that is drenched with tears. He can save and forgive you.

Consider this Christmas (and all the others) that it is not about the presents, food, peppermint mochas, Santa, or reindeer. It's about the Savior, Jesus, and how He was born, to then die for sin, to soon after be resurrected, all for you.

Jesus does not need you polished or per-

fected. He does not work that way. He just needs you to cry out to Him, share with Him the mess-ups (aka, confess your sins), accept what He has done for you (died on the cross and rose from the grave), and then talk to Him and never stop. As you confess and believe these things, you enter into the Lord's Fatherhood and become His child.

Perhaps you have been going to church for some time now, but for whatever reason, Jesus has become a little too familiar or has been put on the shelf next to the elf. Bring Jesus down, draw near to Him, and start that dialogue again. For the unchurched, truth remains, talk to Jesus and get to know Him. It is all about a personal relationship, my friends.

The majestic snow will be on its way (perhaps it has already come as you read this), and as you gaze upon the purest of flakes, know that is how Jesus looks upon all of His children. For a daughter or son of the King, He does not see the crimson-red sin that mirrors the color of Santa's sack, but rather He gazes upon you with starlit eyes and sees you as sweet and tender as a white woolly lamb.

Therefore, rejoice in that, for Jesus is our Savior who saves from hopelessness of all kinds and sin, which is the true meaning of Christmas. While you are at it, might as well go make a few Christmas cookies, partnered with some hot cocoa and even marshmallows. I can't come across as a complete "bah humbug" now, can I? I might even string a couple lights too!

Verses that inspired the article: Ecclesiastes 1:14, Galatians 5:22-23, 1 John 1:9, Romans 10:9-10, Romans 8:15, Hebrews 10:22, Isaiah 1:8, and Nehemiah 8:10.

Merry Christmas & HAPPY NEW YEAR

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to 2026.

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A Great Turnout for St. Mary's Annual Sausage Supper held Nov. 23



photos courtesy of St. Mary's Catholic Church



Holy Night

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,
which is Christ the Lord.”
Luke 2:11

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Merry Christmas!

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Memories of Christmas Past

(continued from page 1)

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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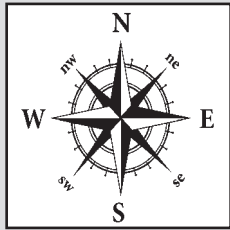
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Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes Christmas



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 monster 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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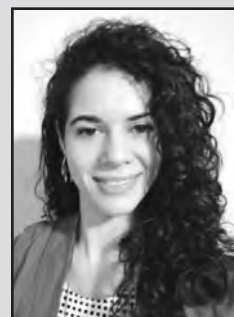
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A Minnesotan: The Christmas Bat



By RosaLin Alcoser

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.

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.

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 — re-



mains 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.

Holiday Cheer

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That's the Latest Squirrels



By Emery Kleven

Emery is now a retired farm broadcaster after starting at KDHL in Faribault in 1987. You can view past columns at his website RoadFarming.com. You can email him at emery@roadfarming.com.

My mom and my Uncle Roger, who married my mom's sister Norma, would argue about squirrels. My mom would talk about how she feeds the squirrels in the fall and winter while Uncle Roger would say that they're nothing but large rats with bushy tails. He wouldn't waste his time and money feeding them. They never did agree on anything about the furry rats except to agree to disagree. Well, I'm on the feeding the squirrels side for the most part. I had a neighbor who would use a catch 'em' alive trap for the little red squirrels as they would continue to chew on his electrical wiring on his house. That

qualifies as being ok not to feed them. After he caught a squirrel in his trap, he would tell the neighborhood kids that he just relocated the squirrel closer to the river and by that he meant in the river.

Last year my 300 year old red oak in the back yard produced more than 100 pounds of acorns of which 90 pounds I put in the freezer, much to my wife's chagrin. Yes, I had to displace some frozen pizzas and some frozen beef and one frozen lasagna to make room for the nuts. And by displacing them, I mean I ate them. This year there were no acorns on the backyard oak as it's an every other year thing with it, so I actually have to buy some critter food. Now as Paul Harvey used to say on his radio program, this is partly personal, but to Keiven, I owe you another \$5 as I was checking your corn on the old Kleven farm in October and about 15 ears of corn fell in to my Hy-Vee plastic bag. The squirrels sent the bag with me so they'd get some fresh Minnesota corn.

Speaking of the fall harvest, I was traveling up I-90 when I passed a truck that had the oversize load sign and flashing lights on it. As I got closer to it, I saw what was so big on the truck that he needed to take up most of 2 of the 3 lanes. It was a grain cart. This grain cart, like some I've seen in the fields in recent years, would hold more grain than many of the grain bins I used to fill in the fall. I thought back to the days of my youth hauling grain with a gravity box. Sometimes gravity failed to work when the corn was 30% or more moisture content. High moisture and low test weight corn defies the law



A small gravity box wagon similar to the one Emery used on the Kleven farm in the 1960's and 70's.

of gravity. It made the unloading of the corn a lot more work. I thought we went big time when we used the tractor that had a cab on it and we hooked two gravity wagons in tandem behind it. The front one was our 250 bushel Parker gravity box and the back one was the small 180 bushel wagon. Those two plumb full wouldn't even make a dent in that grain cart I passed. Compared to that cart, it was like I was pulling two bushel baskets with rope handles behind the tractor.

As I drive up and down the aforementioned Interstate 90, there are two Stonehenge wannabees. One is made of old pickup

trucks, mostly from the 1960's. They aren't lined up like Stonehenge so that you can tell what time it is, but they are all lined up in a row in front of a windbreak, much like a used truck lot. The other Stonehenge is made up of old gravity box wagons. Now I think these are lined up so that you can look at the shadows they cast when the sun is out and you can pretty much tell the time by them. For me, it's sad to see a part of American agricultural history that I lived through, just rusting away out on a hillside. But as I've been told, that's progress.

MERRY

Christmas

& HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We Wish You Merry & Bright Holidays




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CVEC Announces Winter Term 2026 Courses

Cannon Valley Elder Collegium (CVEC), a vibrant learning community for people aged 50+ in Minnesota's Cannon River Valley and beyond, presents fifteen courses for Winter Term 2026.

CVEC's successful formula hasn't changed in nearly 30 years:

- Thought-provoking courses, engaged elder students
- Wide variety of fascinating course topics
- Outstanding instructors who are retired professors, teachers, community experts
- No tests, no grades, no papers to write
- Affordable tuition - course books and materials are extra

CVEC's Winter Term 2026 starts January 5, and ends February 27. Registration is open from November 24 - January 5. Registration for courses with openings continues until January 16. Go to www.cvec.org for complete course details and to and register.

From paradox to parasites, from music to Madame Bovary, from disagreement to dance - there's a wide range of topics for CVEC's Winter 26 courses. Twelve courses will be taught in-person at Northfield locations, and four courses are offered online via Zoom.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Wishing you the best this Holiday Season.




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Dakota City Christmas in the Village December 13 & 14

(continued from page 1)

Lefse (packaged) will be available at the Village General Store this year! Our friends at Norseland Lefse make real potato lefse right here in Minnesota and we have found it to be the most authentic!

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.

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 build-



ing 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!

(continued on page 11)



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!



The Christmas in the Village Event

DECEMBER 13 & 14

FROM 3-8 PM
at Dakota City Heritage Village on the Dakota County Fairgrounds in Farmington

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

(continued from page 10)

Demonstrations will take place in the Carpenter shop, Harris House, McMenomy House and the Blacksmith Shop.

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

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!



The post office is ready to deliver letters to St. Nicholas. Visit Christmas in the Village Dec. 13 or 14 from 3-8 and bring your letter to St. Nicholas in a self-addressed, stamped envelope. He will respond and send you a letter back!



Upon arrival at Christmas in the Village, guests can experience a complimentary trolley ride from the south parking lot, expertly pulled by our majestic horse teams. Dakota City Heritage Village proudly welcomes back these exceptional teams each year, providing visitors with a charming and memorable transportation experience throughout the village. The village's historic buildings are beautifully lit, with most featuring cozy wood stove heating and the warm hospitality of volunteer hosts.

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Merry Christmas

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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.

Merry Christmas

Thanks for dropping in on us this year, we look forward to seeing you in 2026!



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Holly Thyme Craft Show

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Sundays: November 30, December 7, 14
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Serving Our Hometowns Thanks To Your Support!

(continued from page 1)

In the continuing era of online everything, your hometown Messenger newspaper con-

tinues with an unwavering goal to bring hometown news to you.

Thanks to local advertisers and your voluntary subscriptions, we are in your mail box each month with your hometown news and information.

Without this support, we would not be here. We hope you continue to see value in the Messenger and will support the paper with your voluntary subscription.

While there are plenty of social media sources and on line sites out there, most don't deliver the hometown news and message like we try to do here.

Every year, many local newspapers are forced out of business, consolidate, or reduce coverage. We have watched this happen many times in recent years in small rural

communities..

With our small staff and some volunteers, we understand this challenge first hand here at the Messenger, which is why we publish the Messenger in its monthly format.

Our goal with the Messenger is to help insure our home towns still have a community voice of its own!

This format allows the community to maintain a local paper, and better connect local residents, businesses and the community. We also continue to understand the need for more timely information between issues, so we will continue expanding our digital and online offerings, while maintaining our dedication to

our hometowns!

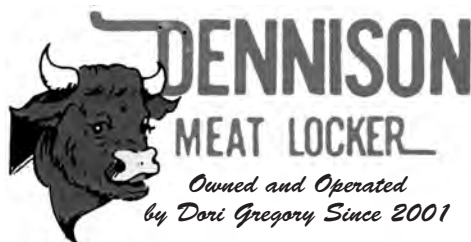
We remain a small family owned business with a goal of supporting our rural communities and businesses. Your voluntary subscription along with our local and area business that advertise on these pages will keep us here for you!

We are proud to continue to offer you this local hometown paper, in your mail box and welcome your comments, suggestions and story ideas. Our future success depends on the support of our local community, and we thank you in advance for your continued support of The Messenger!

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Merry Christmas
& HAPPY NEW YEAR

To all of our valued readers and friends,
go our sincere best wishes for a
merry and bright season.

We are proud to be a part of these fine communities.
Thank you for your readership and support.

Happy Holidays!
From All of Us at The Messenger



Randolph-Hampton-Castle Rock

Messenger



Our 5th Graders Rock!



Courtesy of Randolph School
A huge congratulations to our amazing 5th grade band on their concert! From the first note to the last, they showed hard work, teamwork, and tons of heart! We're so proud of their dedication and excited to see where their musical journeys take them next. Great job, 5th graders!



December & January Upcoming Events

December 10	FFA Fruit Sales Delivery Day
December 11	7 pm FFA Alumni Board Meeting, Ag Room
December 14-15	State FFA Winter Leadership Development Events @ St. Cloud State University
December 15	6-7 pm FFA Monthly Meeting, Ag Room
December 15	7-9 pm FFA Outreach Class, Ag Room
December	Winter Break, FFA National Chapter and SAE Workday, Ag Room
January 7	4:30- 9 pm - FFA Regional Advisor Meeting
January 8	7 pm - FFA Alumni Board Meeting, Ag Room,
January 14	7-8 am - FFA Officer Meeting, Ag Room
January 19	6-7 pm - FFA Monthly Meeting, Ag Room
January 19	7-9 pm FFA Outreach Class, Ag Room
January 19	State Degrees, Proficiency, Region Officer Applications Due to Wagner
January 20	Region Floriculture, Small Animal, Fish & Wildlife, Nursery & Landscape CDEs, PEM
January 28	FFA Officer Meeting, Ag Room
January 28	Region Advisor Application Review Night, Chatfield
January 30	Region Winter Leadership Day, Riverland Community College, Austin
January 31	FFA @ The World's Toughest Rodeo (Members and Family Invited)

Randolph Public Schools has the following Positions Openings

Elementary Paraprofessional

High School Paraprofessional

Submit resume to:
Michael Kelley, Superintendent, Randolph Public Schools
P.O. Box 38, 29101 Dawson Avenue Randolph, MN 55065
Phone 507-263-2151, ext. 204
OR send via email to: kelleym@district195.org Positions will be open until filled.

School Closings/Delays Information

Courtesy of Randolph School

School closings and delays are a process that we take seriously. Some examples of what is taken into consideration are safety, educational processes, family disruption and specific school district circumstances. With the winter season coming upon us I wanted to get information out to our School District families and community so you have an understanding of our thought process regarding school closings and delays. Listed below are criteria used in making these decisions.

- * **Safety** - Includes temperature and road conditions for our school buses, students and families driving. Communication occurs between the plowing services and Randolph School personnel who drive the roads early in the morning. We make every effort to decide between 5:30 a.m. and 5:45 a.m.
- * **Temperature** - Minus 25-30 degrees regular temperature and minus 35-40 wind chill, depending what part of the winter we are in, are red flags when consideration begins for closing/delaying. We use the National Weather Service information which takes its data reading from the Stanton Airport.
- * **Communication is via TV Stations 4, 5, and 11.** Randolph Schools Quick Hits, and Randolph School Web Site. However, if only a small number of schools report to TV stations then it may not be put on the air.
- * **Randolph Child Care** - When school is closed we also close Randolph Child Care. When school is closed early during the school day we close Randolph Child Care one hour after school is dismissed early. Same scenario when school is delayed two hours then Randolph Child Care is delayed two hours.
- * **Randolph Preschool and ECFE** - These programs also follow Randolph Schools when closed or delayed. When School is delayed 2 hours, there will be no A.M. preschool. When school is closing early, then preschool will close early, and there will be no Monday evening ECFE if it is on a Monday.

Reminder: Distant Learning Day may coincide with a Snow Day.



Randolph FFA

December 10, 2025

- RANDOLPH-HAMPTON-CASTLE ROCK MESSENGER -

Page 15



Middle School Challenge

7 & 8th graders had a sample of FFA Contest, at PEM's Jr High Challenge, where they were quizzed on 100 IDs - wildlife, crops, trees, landscape plants, indoor plants, horse, cat, rabbit, dog breeds.

Out of 320 students - Levi Marthaler tied for 2nd place 96/100 correct, Thomas Cooper 3rd place 95/100 correct. *Courtesy of Randolph FFA*

*Cherry Christmas
& Happy New Year*

Thank you for your business in 2025!
We can't wait to see you in 2026!

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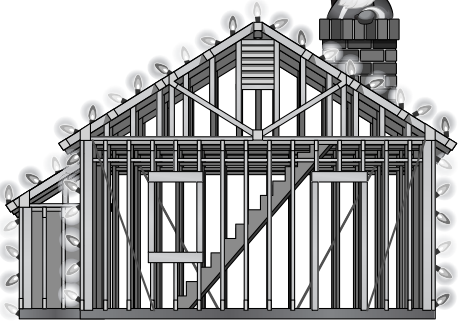


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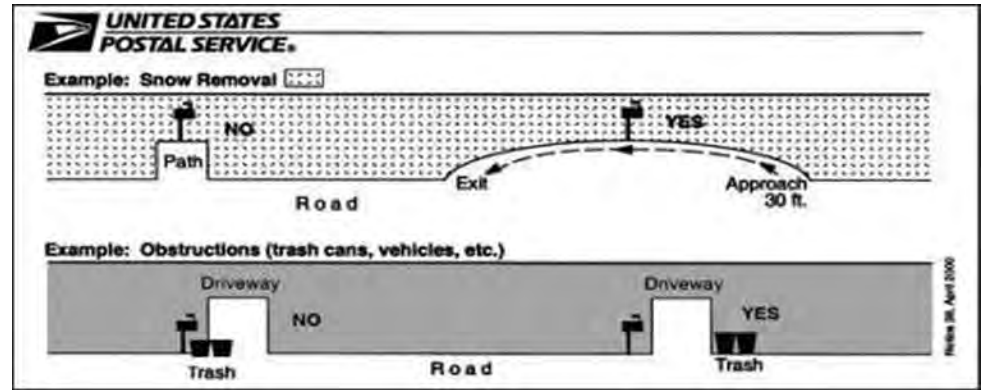
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The Savvy Senior How to Make a Home Safer and More Accessible as You Age



By Jim Miller

Dear Savvy Senior,

What simple tips can you recommend for making a home age friendly? My husband and I are in our late-sixties and want to remain living in our home for as long as possible.

—Home Body Hanna

Dear Hanna,

Many older adults, like you and your husband, want to stay living in their own home for as long as possible. But being able to do so will depend on how easy it is to maneuver your living space as you get older.

There are literally dozens of simple adjustments and modifications you can do to help make your home safer and more accessible for aging-in-place. Here's a summary of tips from the National Institute on Aging and AARP, which offers a free room-by-room guide with practical suggestions for older adults living independently.

ENTRANCE WAY:

Have at least one exterior doorway with step-free access. If not possible, consider a ramp.

Add a bench in the foyer to sit on when removing shoes or to set down items while locking or unlocking the door.

BATHROOM:

Install a walk-in shower with a bench and nonskid decals or mats to prevent falls.

Add a hand-held nozzle to the shower head to facilitate rinsing off while seated.

Install grab bars on the shower wall and near the toilet.

Put in a taller toilet or add a toilet riser.

Consider plugging in a nightlight.

BEDROOM:

If stairs are too difficult to manage, create a bedroom on the main level by transforming



a den or an office.

Make sure the bed is easy to get in and out of. Purchase bed risers, if needed.

Invest in an adjustable bed for extra comfort.

KITCHEN:

Purchase a stove with safety features that alert the resident when a burner is on or have automatic shutoffs.

Relocate major appliances to make them easier to reach.

Add slide-out drawers or trays to existing cabinets for better access.

Install a lever-style, light-touch or sensor faucet, which is easier to use than a faucet with turn-style knobs or handles.

FURNITURE & RUGS:

Get rid of furniture and clutter to make rooms easier to move around in.

Use chairs with armrests, which makes sitting and standing easier.

Avoid furniture with sharp corners, which can cause bruises and cuts when bumped up against.

Hide cords out of pathways — but don't put them under rugs.

Area rugs, if used, should be secured to the floor with a nonslip mat or anti-slip rug tape.

For more tips, get a copy of AARP's "HomeFit Guide" which is a 36-page fully



illustrated guide and has more than 100 aging-in-place tips and suggestions that can be made to an existing house or apartment or incorporated into designs for a new residence.

It explains how a smartly designed or modified home can meet the varied and changing needs of its older residents. It also features easy-to-do, low-cost and no-cost fixes that lessen the risk of trip hazards and increase the safety of high-use areas like the bathroom, kitchen and stairway.

In addition, AARP also offer videos and a HomeFit AR app (available for iPhone and iPad) that can scan a room and suggest improvements to help turn your house into a "lifelong home," free from safety and mobility risks.

Visit AARP.org/HomeFit to order or download a free copy of this guide, or to watch their videos. You don't need to be an AARP member to access this content.

If you'd like more hands-on help, you could also hire an occupational or physical therapist that works with older adults. He or she can come in, evaluate your home and recommend aging-in-place solutions. And if you get a referral from your doctor, Medicare will usually cover a home walk-through.



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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.*

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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 decline. 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.*

University of Minnesota Talking Digital Detox and Mental Health



Sabine Schmid, PhD,
University of Minnesota
Medical School

The holiday season is meant to bring rest and celebration, but it often becomes stressful as we rush through to-dos, check off lists and even lose sight of what actually matters to us. Any change in routine — even if invited — can stir emotions and demand extra mental energy. Technology and artificial intelligence has the potential to support, but also undermine our intentions, depending on how intentionally we navigate them.

Sabine Schmid, PhD, with the University of Minnesota Medical School, discusses why intentionally disconnecting from electronic devices, AI and all things virtual this season may support our mental health, and how reconnecting with people, nature and the physical world can help us feel more grounded and human.

Q: Why do so many people feel drawn to “unplug” during the holidays?

Dr. Schmid: The seductive allure of digital tools, while undeniably enriching, is also subtly drawing us away from our bodies, our relationships and the physical world right in front of us. Holidays interrupt our routines, and that disruption gives us a chance to notice just how much of our daily life is mediated by screens and digital notifications. Many of us spend the year immersed in virtual spaces — constantly reachable, constantly stimulated, unaware of the

consequences, until we can suddenly realize something’s gone missing.

Humans evolved in physical environments: in contact with other people, nature, touch, movement, shared meals and shared silence. When the gap between our digital life and our physical life becomes too wide, it creates tension. The desire to unplug isn’t a rejection of technology; it’s our nervous system signaling a need to reduce certain inputs for optimal functioning.

Q: What are your tips for disconnecting from electronic devices without creating new stress?

Dr. Schmid: It’s helpful to start with intention rather than strict rules. Instead of saying “no screens at all,” try identifying what you hope to gain: more presence with loved ones, a calmer mind, time outdoors or simply relief from constant alerts.

Then consider small, manageable steps:

- Designate short “device-free windows” each day.

- Leave your phone in another room during meals or conversations.

- Replace one digital habit with a physical one: a walk, a puzzle, a handwritten card or cooking with someone.

If you feel anxious without your devices, that’s normal. It signals how intertwined our tools have become with our routines. By approaching unplugging with curiosity rather than judgment, you create space for choice rather than deprivation.

Q: How can reconnecting with the physical world support mental well-being during the holidays?

Dr. Schmid: Our bodies are constantly sending us information — through breath, temperature, muscle tension and sensory input. When we spend most of our time in digital environments, we stop noticing these signals. Reconnecting with the physical world reactivates our senses and grounds us in something real and stable.

Being in nature, touching snow or soil, listening to wind or voices instead of notifications — these experiences calm our physiological stress systems. Sharing physical space with others reminds us that relationships are built through eye contact, tone of voice and shared activity. Even simple tasks like cooking, decorating or taking a walk invite our minds back into our bodies. Presence is a physical act, not just a mental intention.

Q: What advice do you have for people who feel lonely or disconnected in an increasingly digital world?

Dr. Schmid: Loneliness often feels sharper at the holidays because we expect closeness — and the contrast can be painful. Technology can help us stay connected, but it can also create a sense of distance if it replaces embodied, in-person moments.

My advice is to reconnect with something physical, even if it feels small: reach out to one person in real time, take a walk in a familiar neighborhood, visit a public space like a library or café or join a community activity. Being around others — even strangers — helps remind us that we exist in a shared physical world.

It’s also important to allow yourself the full range of emotions that holidays bring. Loneliness isn’t a sign of failure; it’s a signal that connection matters deeply to us. And connection doesn’t always require words — sometimes it’s found in shared silence, shared space or shared experience.



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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 intersection 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: Hi. I have two grandsons, one 17 years old with a driver's license the other is 15 with a permit. They both have a bad habit of driving with one hand on the wheel. I stress how dangerous this is and both hands need to be on wheel all the time. I drive at the 9 and 3 position and try to have them do the same. Any suggestions?

Answer: When it comes to driving try to keep at least 10 inches between yourself and the steering wheel. When it comes to hand placement, keep your hands at the 8 and 4 o'clock or 9 and 3 o'clock positions on the steering wheel. Avoid the 10 and 2 o'clock position. Keep your thumbs turned out on the steering wheel.

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 English 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 on-

line 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)

MISSING PERSON

S I N C E J U L Y 6 , 2 0 2 4

NICOLE "NIKKI" ANDERSON

5 FOOT 10 INCHES

135 LBS

Last seen on July 6, 2024 wearing a grey sweatshirt and camouflage pants in the City of Randolph.

ENDANGERED MISSING PERSON



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The Dakota County Sheriff's Office continues to actively investigate the disappearance of Nikki and is seeking any information leading to her whereabouts. You may provide information anonymously at the link above or call 651-564-9097



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October 8, 2025
RANDOLPH CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Call to order:

The regular Randolph City Council meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m. by Mayor Marie Jacob

Roll Call:

Present were Mayor Marie Jacob, Council Members Tony Price, Randy Ferguson and Keith Sande, Treasurer Sandy Nicolai and Clerk Mary Haro. Also, in attendance was Bolton & Menk engineer, Matt Blazer and legal counsel, Greta Bjerkness.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda with adding the land use application to the agenda, was made by Jacob and seconded by Price.

All voting in favor, none opposed, motion passed 5:0.

Public Comments:

A citizen noted that at the end of Cynthia Path they put in a gravel road and asked if doesn’t that change the land structure for the water to get to the pond since there is no culvert. Matt will look at the area.

Prior Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the September 10, 2025 council meeting minutes was made by Price, seconded by Jacob.

All voting in favor, none opposed, motion passed 5:0.

Treasurer's Report and Payment of Bills:

Motion to approve the payment of bills was made by Jacob, seconded by Price.

All voting in favor, none opposed, motion passed 5:0.

Old Business

Water Tower Bryce discussed the repairs to the water tower that we need to made after the mishap with the broken shaft. We were lucky to have found parts to repair it because ours is obsolete. We could replace the turbine with submersible. He is getting bids for that. We cannot just put a new turbine down with a new motor because it will not pump enough gallons per minutes. It won’t meet the capacity. He discussed this with the fire department and found out in order to get to the gallons per minute we would need to do a new sub-

mersible with a new 480 electrical service to the pump house. He started to get bids but because of the road construction he stopped because bids are only good for 30 days. He wanted approval from us first before he goes out for bids. The cost could be between \$80,000 - \$100,000. We finally have a dial tone in the well house; however, our call center has been destroyed. He was told not to fix that because you will be throwing money away as we will have to update with the new equipment. The submersible is the way cities are going – they are readily available. They can do this during the winter months and think it will only be down for a day. If we get the bids, they will get the parts ordered and they will get everything ready to go. Tony would like to review this, so he will get together with Bryce and Brent to go over everything.

Bryce will plan to flush hydrants the last week of October 27 – October 31.

Bryce indicated that he received a call from C&S Chemicals that their meter is acting up. He indicated they have to do some work to make the new meter fit. They need two working shut offs so they need to get a plumber to make the necessary repairs to get the meters installed. Either we have to hire a plumber and bill them or they have to hire a plumber. Sandy and Bryce will connect to find out what meters to purchase.

New Business

Deputy Sherer was present to discuss that scam attempts are ramping up again. The sheriff’s office will not call regarding missing jury duty and will not ask to send gift cards or cryptocurrency. He also noted that are numerous bus stop arm violations. If you see this, try to get a license number and call them to report it. He noted that they have a few more park rangers hired so they have now reached their capacity. Also, a reminder to keep dogs on a leash especially if it is known that the dog bites. He noted there is a horse missing in Eureka which is now considered stolen. He asked if we would like a speed trailer placed in the city and we indi-

cated we would like one on County Road 88 by Dickman. It was noted there were some young teenagers in the city that were ringing doorbells and kicking in doors – they were caught. It was discussed about e-bikes and it was noted that you have to be at least 15 to ride an e-bike.

Liquor License for R Bar The R Bar would like to renew their liquor license. Clerk Haro indicated she received all the paperwork from them to process the license. Motion to approve the liquor license for 2026 for the R Bar was made by Haro, seconded by Ferguson. All voting in favor, none opposed, motion passed 5:0.

Storm Siren Relocation Mayor Jacob indicated that she was told that many cities are going away from the storm sirens because it comes across their phones but it was noted that many cities still use them. Keith Sande presented a bid of \$9,800 to relocate the storm siren pole to the east side of the fire hall. He indicated it would cost more to move it towards the park. They are eliminating the light on the pole because they already have lights on that side. Also Matt noted that the city’s septic tank is in the parking lot. It will be installed more up the hill. We will be without a siren for a day to a week. We just need to notify the residents. It was asked if the fire department was paying for any of the costs – they thought it should be covered by the city. It is necessary to move the siren to get the back wall fixed. The rest of the bids for the work on the back wall have not changed and everyone will honor the bids from last year. Motion to approve the bid for the relocation of the siren was made by Jacob, seconded by Haro. All voting in favor, none opposed, motion passed 4:0. Keith Sande abstained from the vote.

Sewer Project: Matt received a schedule from NGE. They are getting Dickman ready to pave. The other streets will be paved next week and then the restoration will start. The concrete curbs on Dickman are 2 – 3 weeks out. They will also be pouring some of the driveways on Dickman. Next week the driveways on the rest of the streets will be paved. Dickman is the last street to be completed and we are looking at a completion date of the first week of November. The pond site still needs a change order from NGE and then it has to come in front of the council for approval. It is hopeful that they will start this fall but the liners won’t get done until next Spring. It was noted there is a pile of dirt on Dixie by mail boxes with a sign to move the pile so they get to the mail boxes. Matt will look into this. It was noted that the sod that will be laid this Fall is guaranteed to next Spring. The street signs and mail boxes will be put back up before winter. A citizen did ask about the project and if it is on budget and at this point it is on budget but the delay claim held us back from getting the work done on time. She indicated all she was asking for is that the council be honest and that the citizens be kept up to date on the project.

Land Use Application

Based on the recommendation from the planning commission, Clerk Haro made a motion that we take the recommendation of the Planning Commission and deny the land use application from North Pro Rail, sec-

onded by Sande. All voting in favor, none opposed, motion passed 5:0. At the next meeting we will have to adopt findings of fact denying their application, so Greta and/or TJ will get that done.

Water Rates Sandy discussed the current rates that we charge for water usage. The last increase was in April of 2022. Our rates are currently .01451 for the first 1000 gallons and then is .00439 after 1000 gallons. In December 2019 it was .00225 and increased to .00325. Then in April of 2020 it went from .00325 to .00439 where it is today. The minimum charge is currently \$14.50, in 2019 it was \$10.75 and in April 2022 it was \$13.00. We also have a state surcharge, a water meter maintenance fee and a water tower repair fund fee that are added to the invoices. We need to discuss business rates as well. In order to change the rates, Greta indicates we would just need to amend our fee schedule which would be an ordinance amendment. It was noted that we could just change the rates to - the more you use, the more you pay. Just increase the rates for higher usage rather than have a residential and business rate. Greta will gather the tiered rates for us from other communities before our next meeting.

Council Member Reports

It was asked about the transloading of the windmill parts and how they are being transported out. There was a temporary easement built in the township for them to transport them out by Dubbels Trucking onto County Road 56. Dickman is not wide enough for them.

Clerk Haro noted that the front door has not been latching so when leaving you should make sure to pull the door shut. It may just need a new handle.

Also the carpets need cleaning so she will contact Service Master to set up a date to come and clean them.

Mr. Kelley discussed the holding pond by the football field and indicated they are going to put a fence up on the school side so no one cannot get to the holding pond. We have a dead tree by the water tower. Marie will look into getting it taken down.

Marie has been getting calls regarding the speed limit in the city that it is too fast. It is a county road so we don’t have any say in the limit. She contacted Mike Slavik and was told to change the speed limit you have to petition the state to have a speed study done, which is expensive, and the results become the new speed and unfortunately seldom does it go down but often times it goes up. He did indicate that with the support of county transportation that he contacted the school about starting the process for a school speed zone which we can do because they have a School Resource Officer (SRO). Marie noted that the parking on Dawson by Felton’s is tight especially for buses. Please drive by and look at and see if we should consider putting up no parking signs between certain hours. Matt noted that we should make a decision at next month’s meeting if we decide to put up signs.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Ferguson, seconded by Haro, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m. All voting in favor, none opposed, motion passed 5:0.

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

HAMPTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING OCTOBER 14, 2025

The Hampton City Council met on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at Hampton City Hall for the Work Session and Regularly Scheduled Meeting. Present were Mayor John Knetter and Council Members David Luhning and Nick Russell. Absent was Jerry Huddleston and Anthony Verch. Also present were Brad Fisher and Madison Richard of Bolten & Menk, Marlin Reinardy and Ryan Otto.

Work Session Called to Order – Mayor John Knetter called the City Council Work Session to order at 6:35 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the framework and policy direction for the City’s forthcoming Cannabis Ordinance, which will regulate the sale, manufacturing, and cultivation of cannabis within city limits. Mayor Knetter emphasized that the city aims to align the ordinance with Minnesota’s state cannabis statutes while maintaining appropriate local control.

Madison Richard explained that cities cannot issue cannabis licenses, as licensing authority rests with the Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management. Municipalities may, however, implement registration ordinances to maintain local records and conduct compliance checks. She cautioned that registration would create administrative costs and legal liability. The council agreed to defer all registration responsibilities to Dakota County, which limits cannabis establishments to one per 12,500 residents, avoiding duplication and local liability.

The discussion then focused on zoning and land use. Richard noted that retail sales would be appropriate in commercial districts, manufacturing in industrial zones, and agricultural cultivation in agricultural areas. Indoor cultivation could occur in industrial zones, while outdoor cultivation would require proper screening, fencing, and security. The council reached consensus on these zoning classifications and agreed to maintain flexibility where industrial and agricultural uses overlap.

Buffer requirements and operational hours were discussed next. The council agreed on a 500-foot buffer from schools and residential treatment facilities to anticipate future development. Business hours for retail cannabis establishments will align with existing liquor regulations, generally 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and limited hours on Sundays, ensuring consistency and minimizing legal challenges.

Signage, noise, and odor standards were reviewed. The council agreed to follow state restrictions prohibiting cannabis imagery in signage and to apply existing city sign regulations. Noise limits will comply with MPCA standards, and odors must not be detectable at property lines or within adjacent tenant spaces. Council Members noted that existing odor controls in city facilities provide a suitable model for cannabis operations.

Finally, the council agreed that Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) would be the preferred mechanism for regulating cannabis businesses rather than interim permits. No separate local cannabis fees will apply beyond standard CUP application fees. Madison Richard will draft the ordinance incorporating the council’s guidance, which will be reviewed at the next meeting and later presented for a public hearing. Mayor Knetter thanked Madison Richard for her guidance and noted that the session clarified zoning, regulatory responsibilities, and operational standards.

Adjournment - With no further discussion, Mayor Knetter adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Regular Meeting Called to Order – Mayor Knetter called the regular meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Disclosure of Interest – None

Approval of September 9, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes – Motion by Luhning, seconded by Russell, to approve the September 9, 2025 regular meeting minutes. All voted in favor. None opposed. Motion passed 3-0.

Approval of Disbursements - Motion by

Russell, seconded by Luhning, to approve the disbursements. All voted in favor. None opposed. Motion passed 3-0.

The deputy provided an overview of recent law enforcement activity, highlighting that scam activity remains widespread in the area. He described a new scam involving individuals sending explicit photos and demanding money to prevent public disclosure, as well as scams where perpetrators impersonate law enforcement and request payment via gift or prepaid cards. The deputy emphasized that legitimate law enforcement agencies never request such payments and encouraged residents to help raise awareness.

The deputy also reviewed juvenile curfew hours: children under 12 must be indoors from 9:00 p.m.–5:00 a.m. (Sun–Thu) and 10:00 p.m.–5:00 a.m. (Fri–Sat); ages 12–14, 10:00 p.m.–5:00 a.m. (Sun–Thu) and 11:00 p.m.–5:00 a.m. (weekends); ages 15–17, 11:00 p.m.–5:00 a.m. daily. Residents were encouraged to report suspicious activity. He additionally noted that archery deer hunting season is open and referred residents to the Minnesota DNR website for guidance.

Mayor Knetter reported vandalism at the city park pavilion, including multiple incidents over time. The deputy stated law enforcement will increase patrols during evenings and weekends. Council members discussed potential deterrents, and the deputy recommended security cameras. The council thanked the deputy for the update.

Public Comments: Mayor Knetter introduced Ryan Otto to discuss a minor price adjustment for snow removal services, noting the city’s contract allows modest increases. Ryan explained the proposed changes included \$200 for plowing, \$75 for salt, and \$125 for salt pickup and hauling, reflecting slight operational cost increases. The council agreed no formal motion was necessary and expressed appreciation for Ryan’s reliability.

Ryan clarified that the current contract remains in effect through the 2024–2025 season and must be renewed for 2025–2026. He also discussed maintenance issues, including a few potholes, a low-hanging tree near the post office, and snow removal responsibilities at the new water tower site and hockey rink. The council confirmed these responsibilities and emphasized prompt responses to additional plowing requests.

The council thanked Ryan for consistently maintaining city roads and public areas in a professional and timely manner.

Petitions, Requests, and Communications: Mayor Knetter raised concerns about inoperable and unlicensed vehicles in the city-owned Main Street parking lot. He proposed installing signage to address long-term storage, with council input on wording. Council Member Luhning suggested language stating, “Inoperable and unlicensed vehicles will be towed,” while Council Member Russell proposed adding a 72-hour limit.

(continued on page 27)

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HAMPTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING (continued from page 26)

The council agreed that clear signage and consistent enforcement would address resident complaints and directed staff to draft signage guidelines. Knetter noted that the regulation would apply to all city-owned parking areas, and the item will return for formalization. Council members also discussed potential updates to the city ordinance to ensure consistency across municipal properties.

Ordinances and Resolutions: Mayor Knetter introduced Ordinance 2025-08 regarding the Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP), aligning city infrastructure improvements with Dakota County's planned mill and overlay project on County Road 47. City Engineer Fisher provided background, explaining the LRIP process and noting that municipal support strengthens the county's application for state funding.

Resolution 2025 – 08 In Support of Dakota County's Application to the Local Road Improvement Program for the County State Aide Highway 47 Reconstruction Project from Trunk Highway 50 to County State Aide Highway 86 – Motion made by Luhning and seconded by Russell to approve In Support of Dakota County's Application to the Local Road Improvement Program for the County State Aide Highway 47 Reconstruction Project from Trunk Highway 50 to County State Aide Highway 86. All voted in favor. None opposed. 3-0.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees:

Engineer Report – Brad Fisher of Bolton & Menk provided an update on the Water

Tower Improvement Project. He reported that paving on Lincoln Street, including the final wear course, was completed and drainage was satisfactory following recent rainfall. Restoration work at the water tower site will occur after major operations are complete. Painting and coating of the tower are ongoing but delayed due to weather, with completion expected later this week or early next week, depending on temperatures. Following painting, the electrical contractor will install wiring in about a week to ten days, after which the tank will be disinfected, final grading completed, and site restoration finished, marking the end of this year's construction. Pay Application No. 6 was included in the disbursements for approval, and Fisher confirmed that the contractor agreed to extend the project deadline to June 30, 2026, to allow additional time for demolition of the existing tower.

Fisher discussed transferring the star lights from the old tower to the new one. The contractor will remove and install the lights at no additional cost if the city allows a short schedule extension, though a minor charge from the electrical contractor was incurred for a dedicated electrical line. Installation and testing will occur soon, weather permitting. Mayor Knetter and Council Member Russell confirmed the stars had already been removed from the old tower, and Knetter noted he would replace the bulbs before re-installation. Fisher will coordinate with the contractor's coating specialist to align timing with testing plans.

Council Member Luhning raised concerns about verifying the approved paint color and

options if it did not meet expectations. Fisher acknowledged that any changes would require a change order brought back to the council for discussion. He accepted responsibility for approving the paint specification and will review his notes and coordinate with staff before proceeding. The council agreed to review documentation and discuss potential changes at a future meeting prior to authorizing any additional costs.

Fisher then addressed plans for demolishing the existing water tower. The contractor provided conceptual renderings for salvaging the tank and is willing to honor original alternate bid pricing if the city chooses that option. He explained that removal would involve detaching the roof and cutting access holes to allow proper crane lifting and balancing, which is standard for tanks of this size. Fisher shared photos to illustrate the process and potential staging areas and requested council direction by December to align with crane scheduling and site logistics.

Mayor Knetter commended the visual examples and confirmed the proposed removal method aligns with industry standards. He noted that structural modifications, such as cutting access holes for lifting beams, are normal and can be repaired afterward. Council Member Russell agreed with the approach, and Council Member Luhning asked whether accurate tower dimensions had been provided to Council Member Jerry. Fisher confirmed that while exact engineered drawings were unavailable, all existing documentation had been shared and field measurements could be taken if needed.

Water / Sewer Report – Mayor John Knetter reported that hydrant flushing will take place later this month. He stated that the city is still discharging at the wastewater treatment plant and that all sample results continue to look good. There were no additional updates for water or sewer operations.

Park Report – Council Member Russell reported that, aside from the recent vandalism at the park pavilion, there were no new issues to report. All repairs and restoration work at the pavilion have been completed. Mayor Knetter commended the appearance of the dugouts and thanked Russell for his efforts in overseeing those improvements. Russell also shared that he had spoken with Mr. Kelly at Randolph School, who confirmed that their ongoing project is still expected to be completed this fall.

Street Report – Council Member Luhning reported that several street repairs remain necessary before winter and recommended obtaining patching material to minimize potholes and road damage. Council Member Russell asked whether it would be worthwhile to hire a contractor for hot patching before the asphalt plants close for the season.

City Engineer Fisher advised that asphalt plants typically shut down in early to mid-November, depending on temperatures. Luhning agreed to make a few calls to check contractor availability and pricing and, if unable to secure assistance, proceed with cold patch repairs as needed. Mayor Knetter asked to be updated by the weekend.

Russell also inquired about scheduling street sweeping before winter. Luhning stated he would coordinate with Kelly to schedule the work, noting that last year's sweeping occurred too early and resulted in poor results. Russell suggested asking the contractor to also clean the hockey rink area, which is currently filled with pine needles and debris. Luhning and the City Clerk agreed to reach out and see if that could be included in the upcoming sweep.

Unfinished Business – Gambling Ordinance: Mayor Knetter opened the discussion on the gambling ordinance and proposed adding a section to require full council approval for any organization not currently authorized to operate within the city, while leaving existing language unchanged. Council Member Luhning supported the amendment to ensure oversight and maintain local resident involvement. Knetter noted that organizations are licensed by the state and that the fire department has withdrawn from operations. Knetter asked the Clerk to confirm with the city attorney that the proposed amendment is allowable. A motion to add the amendment was made by Luhning, seconded by Russell, and approved unanimously.

Pavilion Vandalism and Security: Mayor Knetter and Council discussed recent vandalism to the women's bathroom at the city pavilion. Luhning recommended filing a formal report with the sheriff's department, which the council agreed to do. The council also discussed the potential for submitting a claim to the city's insurance, contingent on repair costs relative to the deductible, and will verify the deductible amount before proceeding. The discussion included security options for the pavilion and other city properties, such as installing trail cameras, either cellular or Wi-Fi enabled, to monitor activity and store footage locally or on a secure server. Luhning offered to consult with a security specialist on feasible camera options, and the council agreed to continue exploring solutions to minimize potential vandalism, including at the future water tower site.

New Business – None.

Adjournment - Motion by Russell, seconded by Luhning, to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor. None opposed. Motion passed 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Roan

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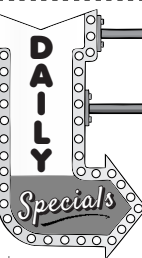
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11					12				13	14	
15					16				17		
	18				19				20		
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				47				48	49		
	50	51				52				53	54
55						56				57	
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3	8	9	2	1	5	4	7	9
4	7	5	6	3	9	8	2	1
2	9	4	8	5	1	6	7	3
8	2	6	3	4	7	9	5	1
4	5	1	6	2	9	7	3	8
9	3	2	7	6	1	8	4	5
1	4	7	2	8	5	3	9	6
6	8	5	4	9	3	1	2	7

SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

1. Shapeless form

5. Hot springs resort

8. Not square

11. Private theater box

12. Relating to ear

13. Rome's Colosseum, e.g.

15. I ____ you so!

16. *The opposite of a store the day before Christmas?

17. *"Auld Lang Syne" poet

18. *Partridge's perch (2 words)

20. Vegas numbers

21. New Zealand's indigenous people

22. Fuss

23. Tabby's favorite herb

26. More so than swell

30. Big-headedness

31. Resembling an ape

34. John Wayne Gacy's ____ the Clown

35. Photographer Dorothea of "Migrant Mother" fame

37. Type or kind

38. Like a sheep after a haircut

39. D'Artagnan's weapon of choice

40. Superlative of #33 Down

42. U.S. central bank

43. Wilma and Fred's hometown

45. *Latke's main ingredient

47. Word of possibility

48. Turning token taker

50. Exclamation of sorrow

52. * ____ Odbody of "It's a Wonderful Life"

55. Raspberry drupelets

56. Sainly glow

57. Letter opener

59. Hunts for food

60. Banana leftover

61. Guesstimate phrase

62. *Color on a Kwanzaa flag

63. Not divisible by two

64. Scholarship criterion

DOWN

1. Deli acronym

2. Chicago's central district, with The

3. Gawlk at

4. Wish harm upon, arch.

5. One of The Beatles

6. Pileus, pl.

7. "The Road Runner" corporation

8. Group of cows

9. Bed-and-breakfast alternative, pl.

10. *"The Nutcracker" step

12. Certain cephalopod, pl.

13. It's sometimes humble

14. *Chuck Berry's "Run, ____, Run"

19. Reason to strike

22. Grass bristle

23. Famous one, slangily

24. Open-mouthed

25. Like a well-defined muscle

26. Hot alcoholic beverage

27. Washing sponge

28. Type of heron

29. Rondeau, alt. sp.

32. *Santa's beverage of choice

33. Not well

36. *Original home of Christmas tannenbaum

38. Fur shawl

40. Extremely unfriendly

41. Plane trick

44. Reprieve in a desert

46. Muscle to bone connector

48. Skidded

49. Weighed

50. 4,840 square yards

51. Told an untruth

52. Head of family

53. Wrap in waxy cloth

54. Comfort

55. Financing acronym

58. Stewart of "Maggie May" fame

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Left to right: Steve King, Jeff Amy, Tige Walker

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