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MARCH 26, 2026

Volume 23 • Issue 3

City of Dennison Citywide Clean-Up Day

Saturday, May 2, 2026
9:00am-10:30am

Clean-Up Day for Residents of Dennison is scheduled for: Saturday, May 2nd, 2026 from 9:00am to 10:30am.

Location: Empty lot located on Cty. Rd. 9 (near North end of 2nd Avenue).

(see ad on page 12)

Announcements

**Dennison/Vang Lutheran
Holy Week**

Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion
March 29th – 9:00 AM at Vang,
10:30 AM at Dennison

Maunder Thursday – April 2nd
7:00 PM at Dennison

Good Friday Community Worship
April 3rd– 7:00 PM at Vang

Easter Sunday – April 5th
9:00 AM at Vang,
10:30 AM at Dennison

Easter Breakfast – April 5th
8:00 AM at Vang

• **Dennison City Council** meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m.

• **Wednesday Wear, Nerstrand United Methodist Church** hours are **Wednesdays 1 - 5 and Saturdays 9 - 12.**

Women's, men's and children's clothing, shoes, accessories, linens, toys and books. All things are free with donations accepted. Come and see what we have!

(continued on page 2)

Preserving More Than a Building

Vang Lutheran Church learns how wide its ministry reaches

By Rev. Sarah Jones
Church Property Resource Hub

Dennison Lions Club Spring Breakfast

The Dennison Lions Club will hold its Spring Breakfast Sunday March 29th from 8 AM - noon at the Dennison Church. Pancakes, French toast, eggs, sausage, and your beverage choice will be available. The cost is \$13.00 for adults, \$5.00 for kids and Kids 3 and under are free. This annual tradition helps raise funds for the club's community projects.



It's hard to stumble across Vang Lutheran Church outside of Dennison, Minn. The church building is located in the middle of farm fields, at least a mile from major roadways. But if you do go looking for it, you'll be rewarded with the view of a pristine, white, clapboard church with a lawn bordered by new saplings.

(continued on page 4)

Pictured to the right: Vang Lutheran Church, Dennison, Minn., is restoring its iconic steeple as part of a larger renovation project to preserve the church's historic building. The church received at \$100,000 matching grant for its preservation project.

Photo credit: Church Property Resource Hub



Little Library

Submitted

Spring is just around the corner and the Nerstrand Women's Club is happy to say that we have a new Little Library that will replace the broken one in City Park.

Vandalism causes us to have to close the Little Library in the park until spring and the new one can be installed. The Library in the 100 block of Main Street remains available.

Be sure to check out the libraries. This summer we will work hard to keep them stocked with books to interest all.



2026 Tax Statement, Property Valuation Notice



A mailing last week from Rice County to all property owners includes two documents: a Notice of Valuation and Classification for Taxes Payable for 2027 and a 2026 property tax statement.

Although both documents are important to review and understand, they contain very different information.

(continued on page 15)

Easter Brunch Menu

Sunday, April 5th • Serving 9:00a.m.-3:00p.m.

Reservations Strongly Suggested

Call 507-645-9992 to Make Your Reservations

- REGULAR MENU NOT AVAILABLE EASTER SUNDAY -



37540 Goodhue Ave., Dennison, MN
Hours: Wednesday & Thursday 11:00 AM-8:30 PM
Friday & Saturday 11:00 AM-9:30 PM; Sunday 9:00 AM-2:30 PM
Bar Open Later

507-645-9992 • www.firesidelounge.net



PROUD TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL AG MONTH
MARCH 2026



**Dennison
DEPOT**



Happy Easter to Our
Friends & Customers!

12989 Dennison Blvd. S, Dennison • 507-645-2890 • 24 Hour Pay at Pump
SPRING HOURS BEGINNING MARCH 30:
Mon.-Fri. 6am-8pm; Sat. & Sun. 7am-8pm



Announcements

(continued from page 1)

• **The Little Free Food Pantry is open and needs your donations. The Little Free Food Pantry is located by Dennison City Hall behind the big sign.** Paper products: paper towels, toilet paper, kleenex. Personal care items: soap, toothbrushes, pads/tampons, diapers/wipes, deodorant, chapstick, hats, gloves, scarves, handwarmers. Nonperishable foods: boxed/bagged grains/beans, rice, couscous, quinoa, red beans, white beans, dry pasta, bagged pasta meals, mac 'n cheese, hot and cold cereal, snack crackers, dried fruits, granola bars.

• **The Nerstrand City Council** meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7p.m. at the Nerstrand City Hall. Office hours are: Wednesdays 9:30-11:30a.m. and Thursdays 6:00-8:00p.m. Ohter times available per request, 507-332-8000.

• **Warsaw Township Meeting** is held the 2nd Monday of each month at the Warsaw Township Hall. Meeting time is 6:00p.m.

• **The Wheeling Township meeting** will be held on the second Monday of each month at 8:00p.m. at the Wheeling Township Hall. Contact Rebecca Vergin, Township Clerk.

Do you have an announcement? Email: hometownmessenger@gmail.com

Fear



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

Exhausted anxiety
Face numb
Chest tightening
Hard to breathe
Lonesome like no other
Thoughts of self-harm
Past haunting
Distress reappearing
Misunderstood
Heavy, so extremely heavy
These words describe the content of my heart this past summer. I just came off a time of dense fear and depression. It was crippling to say the least. The situation I was facing is far too long to describe at this time. In a nutshell, I had trauma from the past resurfacing,

and I was panicking and spiraling to a pretty dark place. Thanks to Jesus, I got out by speaking truth, declaring the promises of the Bible, praying, worshiping, and letting the Lord parent me.

Fear is not of the Lord. If you are feeling any sort of anxiety or panic, this is not from Jesus but from the enemy, Satan. We live in a spiritual world, my friends, and we are in a spiritual battle.

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12).

When we witness and experience rage, gripping addiction, disabling fear, distressing anxiety, and many other torments, there is a spirit behind these things. This is the enemy at work. No fear though, my beloveds, no fear.

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7). If you have a relationship with Jesus and He resides in your heart, you have authority over the enemy. “Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19).

Relationship with Jesus and having Him reside in your heart—what are you talking about, Ashley? Having a relationship with Jesus and Him living in your heart means you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, asked for forgiveness for your mess-ups, and believed that He died on the cross for your sins and was resurrected from the

dead. Then you talk to Him. You talk to Jesus and you never stop.

When you have relationship with Jesus, you have confidence that when fear springs, creeps, or stirs up, you can put your gaze on the Lord. You have assurance that Jesus has you and is with you wherever you go (see Joshua 1:9).

One way to help combat fear when it is knocking at your door (or is already inside) is by putting on the Armor of God. If you are unfamiliar with this armor, it is made up of six pieces and is shown in Ephesians 6:10–20. I will list out these six pieces with a short description of how I see them being used. I would encourage you to put this armor on and not take it off. You can put it on by praying these pieces over yourself out loud or inwardly, journaling them, or even drawing a little picture of them. Check in with yourself daily to see if any piece needs a tightening!

• **Belt of Truth—**Cling to the truth of Jesus. You can know His truth by reading the Bible.

• **Breastplate of Righteousness—**You are in right standing with the Lord because of what Jesus did on the cross. We want to do our best to live a righteous lifestyle too.

• **Feet Fitted with the Readiness of the Gospel of Peace—**Repentance, knowing the gospel, sharing the gospel, receiving God’s peace, and sharing His peace. The gospel is what I shared earlier about having Jesus in your heart.

• **Shield of Faith—**Your faith in Christ and all that He says will block the fiery arrows of the enemy that want to destroy you.

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Mainstreet Publishing

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SHOP
LOCAL

LUTHERAN

Dennison/Vang Lutheran Parish
P.O. Box 117, Dennison, MN
507-645-6042

Website: www.dennisonvang.org
Email: dennisonvangoffice@gmail.com
Dennison/Vang Lutheran Holy Week
Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion March 29th
9:00 AM at Vang, 10:30 AM at Dennison
Maundy Thursday – April 2nd
7:00 PM at Dennison
Good Friday Community Worship
April 3rd– 7:00 PM at Vang
Easter Sunday – April 5th
9:00 AM at Vang, 10:30 AM at Dennison
Easter Breakfast – April 5th 8:00 AM at Vang

Gol Lutheran

Joe Jorgensen, Pastor • 507-838-2100
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

Grace Lutheran, Nerstrand

Mike Ahrens S.A.M.
Service 9 a.m.; Coffee Hour 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School 10:15 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran

9:00a.m. Sunday School
10:00a.m. Coffee Time 10:30a.m. Worship Service

Hegre Lutheran - Pastor Chris Brekke
Sunday School 9:15a.m.; Worship 10:30a.m.

Moland Lutheran 507-456-4242
Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

First Ev. Lutheran, Kenyon

David J. Chatelaine, Pastor
Sunday 9:00 a.m. worship

Wangen Prairie Lutheran Church LCMC

Shannon Bauer, Pastor
24289 Cty. 24 Blvd., Cannon Falls
Sunday Worship at 9:00a.m. followed by fellowship.
Thursday Bible Study at 9:00a.m.

AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY Sausages

John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”

— Luke 3:10-11

The man had been invited in, and he had become part of the church. He lived on a pension and struggled with a mental illness. He had been the CEO of a large company in Toronto until his health had changed. His life had become drastically different, but he lived with a large and generous heart. He wanted to contribute, and one day he walked into the church to join others.

He said, “I have eight sausages, still frozen. I don’t like sausages, but I would like to share them with others. Can we make two pots of soup; one with sausage, and one without?” We assured him that we could do that. He enjoyed the soup that had no sausage, and he was pleased that others enjoyed the soup with sausage.

He knew that meals were harder to find at the end of the month. He had learned that a pension check goes only so far. He knew that if he shared with others, it would be good news for them. His sharing also inspired others. It was the start of our church’s Stone Soup meal, and many people have contributed to it. He was glad to find a place of peace that could help him serve others.

Stone Soup is now a community event where food, clothes, and friendship are shared on two Thursdays each month. Many are invited so that the good news can be shared. This has led many people to walk through the door of a church who might not have otherwise done so. You are invited too!

Dear God, help us to be generous and kind even if our life turns upside down. Help us to use what you have given us to bless others. Amen.

NORTHFIELD COMMUNITY CHURCH

713 Division St S, Northfield, MN 55057
Contact Us: hello@northfieldcc.org
<https://www.northfieldcc.org/>
10:30 am Worship Service (10:00 am in summer)
9:15am Sunday School

METHODIST

Nerstrand United Methodist

Gary Liker, Pastor
507-330-0025
Worship 9:00a.m.

Stanton United Methodist

Rev. Tom Countryman
Church Phone 507-321-3598
Worship 10:15a.m.

ST. JOHNS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Wheeling Township) 19086 Jacobs Ave., Faribault
Gary Liker, Pastor • 507-330-0025
www.stjohnsunitedchurchofchrist.info
Sunday School 9:30a.m.; Worship 10:30a.m.

NEW LIFE CHURCH

525 Beverly St., Wanamingo
9:00a.m. Sunday School for all ages;
10:00a.m. Worship Service
7:00p.m. Small Group Bible Studies - Sun.

HOLDEN AND DALE LUTHERAN CHURCHES, ELCA

Pastor Dustin Haider • 507-789-6677
holdendalsecretary@gmail.com
Holden: 6949 County 30 Blvd, Kenyon
Dale: 9210 County 12 Blvd, Kenyon
www.holdenlutheranchurch.org
Holden Lutheran Church on Facebook
Worship Services
Mar 29: Holden 9:00, Dale 11:00
Apr 5: Easter Sunrise Dale 7:00, Holden 10:00
Apr 12: Holden 9:00, Dale 11:00
Apr 19: Dale 9:00, Holden 11:00
Apr 26: Holden 9:00, Dale 11:00
May 3: Dale 9:00, Holden 11:00

Rejoice
For He Is Risen!



Dennison Lions Club

ANNUAL SPRING BREAKFAST

Sunday, March 29, 2026
8:00a.m.-12:00p.m.
at Dennison Lutheran Church, Dennison



All You Care to Eat
Pancakes, French Toast,
Eggs, Sausages,
Juice, Milk, Coffee

Adults \$13.00 • Kids \$5.00 (Kids under 3 Free)

Proceeds will benefit the Dennison Lions Club and
Dennison Community Church activities



Dennison
Lions Club
is a
non-profit
organization.

Fear

(continued from page 2)

- **Helmet of Salvation**—You are saved and renew your mind with God’s promises.
- **Sword of the Spirit**—This is the Bible; use it to strengthen yourself and fight against the lies of the enemy.

Jesus loves you. He loves you more than you will ever know. The Lord is coming through for you. He will perfect all that concerns you (see Psalm 138:8 NKJV). Jesus, I pray for all those reading, let them know You, Your love, and that they have nothing to fear because You are in the room. You are not

going anywhere. You are holding them and will not let go.

Lord, we put on the belt of truth. Help us cling to your promises. We put on the breastplate of righteousness. Remind us that we are in right standing with you because of what you did on the cross and help us to live in a godly way. We put on the feet that are fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace. Show us any sin that needs to be dealt with. Help us know and share your peace. We hold the shield of faith, to block the arrows of the enemy. We lean into what you say and not the lies of the enemy. We put on the helmet of salvation. If we have you in our hearts, we are saved and are going to heaven. Help us renew our minds to truth as well. We grab a hold of the sword, your Bible. Remind us to read it daily and apply its guidance. Amen to amen.

RICE COUNTY EXCHANGE

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Sunday, April 12
9 am - 12 noon
Rice County 4-H Building



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CELEBRATING OUR AREA FARMERS

2026 National Ag Month



Preserving More Than a Building

Vang Lutheran Church learns how wide its ministry reaches

(continued from page 1)

You might see some steeplejacks hard at work replacing old boards, or one of the church members tending to the community garden of squash, carrots, beets and potatoes. On Sundays, you might be lucky to hear the bell as it's rung by excited children before and after service.

Although Vang's building is hard to find, its ministry is well known in the towns and communities located in a 15-mile radius of the church. Local food pantries stock the produce grown in the small garden — up to 1,000 pounds each year. Residents connected to the church are supported in times of need by Vang's Care Team, which visits folks who are sick, grieving or in need of some companionship.

The Care Team often brings one of the many frozen, homemade meals that members make and stock in the church kitchen. Vang is a church that knows how to care for its people and community. "This is a farm church," said Steve Trolley, a dedicated member of the Garden Committee. "We know how to get through tough times together."

In addition to being a farm church, Vang also carries the heritage of its Norwegian immigrant founders. The standing church building was designed by Olaf Hanson in the late 19th century and boasts many features that reflect the traditional stave churches of Norway, including the woodwork of the altar, the soaring ceilings and the sanctuary's layout in the style of a cross. The congregation keeps their Norwegian heritage alive through the annual lutefisk dinners, which bring hundreds of residents through their doors every fall. When the congregation learned that its steeple was in danger of collapsing, they rallied to find a way to not just patch it but to faithfully restore it as a treasured part of their ancestors' legacy.

The steeple restoration project was a huge undertaking for a small, aging, rural congregation. Members had always been able to find the funds necessary for immediate repairs, but the steeple would cost more than many of those smaller projects combined. One of the members, who also sits on the board of a local historical society, learned about a competitive capital grant for churches called the National Fund for Sacred Places. The grant would provide matching funds up to \$100,000, half the amount needed for the project. Vang decided to apply in 2021, and although it did not receive the grant, members were encouraged to apply again the next year. "The National Fund team walked us through the application and told us what we could improve," said Pam Kester, who worked on the grant. "That was really helpful, this was the first grant we'd

ever applied for."

Vang strengthened its application by including all the different ways the church was benefiting its surrounding communities. "It was eye-opening to think about all the ways we were ministering to people," Kester said. "We didn't realize all that we were doing."

In addition to the Care Team's work and the garden's bounty, the lutefisk dinner helps educate and engage people in Norwegian tradition. The church also had supported over 40 interns who became Lutheran pastors all over the United States, raised money for a local nonmember family whose child was fighting cancer, and partnered with another local Lutheran church to support a full-time pastoral call. Vang's impact and reach impressed the National Fund for Sacred Places, and the church was accepted into the program in 2022.

Vang was thrilled to have its application accepted, but members knew they had to get to work — it was going to be a big push to raise \$100,000 for the matching funds. Vang was also the first rural church to be part of the program; the other members of their cohort were large congregations in urban areas with big donors. "We didn't know how we were going to do it," said Rain Kester, who served on the congregation council at the time. "We thought we were starting out way behind everyone else." But after meeting their cohort members, Vang was encouraged and excited. "All these churches, even though they're big, are navigating the same challenges we are," Kester added. "Membership decline, old buildings, less money in the plate. If they could raise the funds, we could too."

Vang met and exceeded its fundraising goals in just two years by reaching out to the same network of folks that they had impacted in their many decades of ministry. They found contact information for their former members and made phone calls, telling them about the project and why it was important. They talked to community leaders and organizations, all who had been touched by Vang in some way.

The donations poured in — gifts of money, time and talent. Residents who weren't church members donated their labor, supplies and sponsored particular parts of the project that they cared about.

While these donors may not have had a particular attachment to the steeple, they were interested in supporting the church. "We didn't have to do much convincing," Kester said. "We just had to pick up the phone and call people. A lot of folks were eager to support this place."

Vang's successful fundraising for its restoration project has been an inspiration in its community and beyond. Now at the end of their capital campaign and steeple project, the congregation continues their good work in Southeast Minnesota.

They've recently called a new pastor whom they are sharing with Dennison Lutheran Church and are collaborating with other rural



Vang is surrounded by farmland, some of which the church uses for its community garden. The garden contributes up to 1,000 pounds of fresh produce to local food pantries annually. Photo: Church Property Resource Hub

parishes to sponsor an intern from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.

The Rev. Peter Coen-Tuff, interim pastor since July 2025, said he was inspired to take the call by seeing how the church was still serving and dreaming. "They had all these dying trees around their property, so they took them down and planted new ones," he said. "When you're planting trees, you're thinking about the future." This small congregation knows it can do big things!

Property Stewardship Lessons

- Small churches can have a big impact! List all the ways your church serves your members and neighbors to find out how far-

reaching your ministries are.

- Folks beyond your congregation want to support you. Think about all the organizations, individuals and groups that have been touched by your church when you are fundraising for your building or another big project.

- We preserve more than buildings; we preserve sacred places. Our buildings and land make ministry possible. Good use of our property is as important as ensuring a stable structure.

Questions or resource requests? Contact us at CPRH@elca.org.



St. John's United Church of Christ

Presents Drama of the Leonardo da Vinci Painting of the Lord's Supper
19086 Jacobs Ave., Faribault, Minnesota
Wheeling Township
Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026 8pm

This year's presentation of the Last Supper Drama at St. John's UCC will be held on Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026. The production features a monologue of each disciple and their relationship with Christ. In addition to the in-person production, we are pleased to provide a live stream at both Facebook and YouTube at St. John's UCC Faribault, MN.

"A great beginning to Holy Week" is among the many reflections of this long-standing tradition.

The 2026 Cast

Andrew	Alan Meyer
Peter	Bob Sommers
James	Craig Mueller
Philip	Matthew Schwake
Bartholomew	Brian Bauer
Thomas	John Brandenburg
Matthew	Keith Keller
James the Less	Doug Spike
Judas	Gordie Wiegrefe
Simon	Brian Little
Thaddeus	Kyle Keller
John	Paul Meyer



Got a Great Local News Story?
Tell us about it today! 
 Email:
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McTeacher's Night
 Bamco3 McDonald's Fundraiser benefiting
Nerstrand Elementary School
 Tuesday, March 31st from 5:00pm to 7:00pm
 Bamco3 McDonald's will donate 15% of sales from
 Mobile & Kiosk orders. Join us at McDonald's to
 raise funds for your local school.

 525 4th St SW, Faribault

**Yoga Flow Class
for Beginners**
 Join us each Monday in April for a one hour beginner's Yoga Flow class
 6pm - 7pm
 \$12 per class or all four for \$40
 Mondays in April
 @ WildWood
 Please bring your own yoga mat and arrive 5 - 10 minutes early
 315 Main St, Nerstrand MN 55053

**TIPPING OUR CAPS
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MARCH 2026**
 Thank a farmer this spring for helping
 ensure we can all eat tomorrow.
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 farmers with the coverage they need to
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 QUESTIONS, CONTACT:
DANA@NERSTRAND.CHARTER.K12.MN.US **507-333-6850** 205 2ND ST S, NERSTRAND, MN 55053

**Sewing
week.**
 the
Schedule

 Bring your own machine and prepare to leave
 the week with more confidence, experience and
 even a thing or two you sewed yourself!
Learn to Sew*
 Tuesday, April 21
 6-8pm | \$40 *must register online*
Table Runner Class*
 Wednesday, April 22
 6-8pm | \$30 *must register online*
Pop-up Fabric Shop
 Friday, April 23
 9am-1pm
Sewing Retreat Weekend!!
 Friday-Sunday, April 24-26
 \$125 *must register online*

 Registration & More Info
 Each class includes personalized
 instruction, hands-on learning
 and opportunities to grow your
 fabric stash!
 *register for both the Learn to
 Sew AND Table Runner Class and
 receive a \$10 discount!
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Farm Girl Chatter The Most Wonderful Time of Year...No Not Christmas, Calving Season!

By McKell Lemmerman

The most wonderful time of year is finally approaching — and no, it doesn't come wrapped in ribbon or lit by a Christmas tree. For me, the real holiday is calving season. While some farmers are already deep in it and others won't begin until April or May, the feeling is universal: anticipation mixed with exhaustion, humor tangled with responsibility, and a quiet sense that something meaningful is about to unfold. It's the season when sleep becomes negotiable, coffee becomes essential, and your social circle narrows to a barn full of cows who have absolutely no respect for your bedtime.

Calving season has a way of reminding you who is truly running the schedule — and it isn't you. You can check a cow ten times with nothing happening, convince yourself it's safe to rest, and return twenty minutes later to find a calf already on the ground. Somehow they always seem to choose the coldest, crappiest, or darkest hours of the night to begin. There you are, half-awake in chore boots, stained jeans, and an old ratty sweatshirt that has seen better days. You step outside to cold air that fills your lungs and wakes you faster than an energy drink. Yet under the moonlight and barn lights, the exhaustion feels secondary to the purpose of you playing tug-o-war to the barn. Calving season is not gentle. It tests patience, endurance, and emotional resilience. You experience the highs of healthy deliveries and the heartbreak when outcomes aren't perfect. Agriculture teaches you quickly that life is precious and unpredictable. Those challenges also deepen your respect for the animals in your care and the responsibility you carry as their owner. Every healthy calf on the ground represents months of preparation, late-night checks, and unwavering commitment.

During this season, you become many roles at once: caretaker, problem solver, night watch, and occasionally your cows' unofficial OB-GYN doctor. Each trip to the barn carries suspense. Some nights are peaceful; others demand quick thinking and steady hands. When a delivery stalls, time stretches thin. You have to move the mom to the chute to work as her OB doctor. You find the feet, wrap the chains, your breath fogs in the air while you work carefully, aware that your actions matter. Then the thud...a calf finally arrives, wiggly and drawing that first determined breath. The biggest sigh of relief washes over you in a way that words can't quite hold. You stand there in bedding and silence, heart pounding, grateful for the fragile miracle in front of you that you just helped. Although a cow that can have her own calf is the biggest blessing, there is something that really touches your soul when you are able to

give assistance to a live calf.

Then comes the moment that feels almost sacred. A newborn calf, still slick with life, lifts its head for the first time. A first-time mother circles, confused yet instinctively protective, nudging her calf toward its feet. Watching those shaky legs attempt their first stand feels like witnessing resilience in its purest form. Under the soft hum of a barn light, steam rises from warm bodies into the cold air, and the world narrows to this quiet exchange of life and care. In those moments, it's impossible not to feel the presence of something greater — a reminder of creation unfolding exactly as it was meant to. The barn becomes a chapel of sorts, straw beneath your boots and breath hanging like incense, where gratitude comes naturally and prayers feel as simple as whispering, thank you for this life.

Calving season carries humor right alongside its difficulty. There's always the cow who insists on doing the exact opposite of what you expect, the calf that runs everywhere except where you need it to go, or the realization that you've been talking to livestock like coworkers because they're the only ones awake with you. You laugh at the absurdity — muddy knees, frozen fingers, hair doing whatever it wants — because humor is part of surviving the season. The cows don't judge, and somehow that makes the long nights lighter.

Yet woven through the laughter is something deeply emotional. There are moments of heartbreak that sit quietly in your chest, reminding you how fragile life is. When the calf is stillborn and you hear those low sounding moos call out from mom. It is almost like she is begging for her innocent baby to awake and nurse, but there was never a call back to her. In those times, faith becomes steady ground. You do what you can with the skills you've been given, then trust the rest to God. The successes — every healthy calf standing, every mother calmly licking her newborn — feel like small blessings placed gently in your hands.

As the season unfolds, the barn becomes its own world. Mornings arrive in pale pastel yellow, blue and green light with frost sparkling like glass and little steam rolls curl-



ing upward from warm breath. You begin measuring time not by clocks but by arrivals — who calved overnight, who's close, who needs watching, who is left. The rhythm feels ancient and grinding, echoing cycles of life that existed long before you and will continue long after.

Through the exhaustion and wonder, you find spiritual reflection woven into ordinary tasks. Standing in the quiet before dawn, listening to a calf nurse for the first time, you feel a profound humility. Life is beginning right in front of you — messy, imperfect, miraculous. It's a reminder that care is a calling, stewardship is a privilege, and every breath is a gift. In these moments, faith doesn't feel distant or abstract; it feels present in

warm straw, steady hands, and the fragile strength of a newborn finding its footing.

By the time the season slows, you carry more than fatigue. You carry pride in the lives you helped bring into the world, lessons in patience and adaptability. You have a renewed appreciation for the work that sustains both animals and people. Calving season isn't just a task — it's an experience that grounds you, humbles you, and reminds you why you chose this life in the first place.

Despite the sleepless nights, stubborn cows, and endless barn checks; you find yourself looking forward to doing it all again. Calving season isn't just work. It is the unforgettable privilege of witnessing life begin — one wobbly, determined calf at a time.

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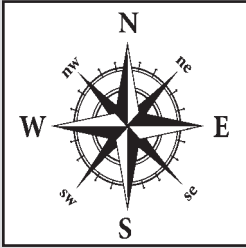
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Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes

A Polaris in Florida



By Terry Campbell

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

I have always had a love affair with horsepower. If it had an engine, I was intrigued by it. My job as a young kid was to mow lawn on the farm. I was too young to drive a big tractor yet, so I spent hours on a garden tractor. I loved the sound of a motor running, what a great combination, the rumble and the fragrance of engine oil and fuel. Hasn't changed much over the last sixty years, just a different

variation of the internal combustion engine.

This winter we vacationed in Florida, and spent time at Cocoa Beach. A certain restaurant on the beach, Longboards Tiki Beach Grill was our favorite. We sat outside on the deck by the ocean. The first day we were going to watch a space launch, since Cape Canaveral is just a few miles away and we would have a ring side seat of the blast off. It seems launches are scheduled regularly and scrubbed almost as often.

As we left the restaurant, we noticed a row of Polaris Slingshots lined up outside. My first thought was perhaps a club had stopped for lunch, but my wife noticed they were for rent. Now it was getting more interesting. A Polaris Slingshot is the result of mating the front end of a sports car with the rear of a motorcycle. They are made in Huntsville, Alabama. With nothing more exciting to do, we decided to rent one and head down the Florida beach on state Highway A1A. It took a couple minutes to scan the card and initial the waiver, and away we went. The sales guy gave us a four-digit code to start it and seemed more concerned we wouldn't remember the code than that we would make it back. I wanted the fun, so I requested one with a manual transmission.

It looked fast and mean. I was already comparing it against my favorite sports car. It had no doors and was a total open air experience. A 1,700 pound vehicle with a 2 liter four cylinder engine generating 204 horsepower at 7,500 rpm. That is 8 pounds per hp. My Corvette has a 5.7 liter engine developing 350



horsepower at 5,200 rpm. A ratio of 9.5 pound per hp. They both go from zero to 60 mph in five seconds and consume about 25 mpg. This little Slingshot has a 12.5 to 1 compression ratio though, requiring 91 or higher octane fuel.

Time for the rubber to hit the road. I found that the Slingshot had better traction with one tire than the Chevy with two. As I ran through the gears all I could get was a squeak and it wasn't the rear tire breaking with the pavement. It was the rear drive belt slipping. Definitely impressive traction, probably due to the weight distribution. The Slingshot cruised at 65 mph turning 2,500 rpm and redlined at 8,000 rpm, but there was no way I was push-

ing that flimsy thing anywhere near that point. No danger, I discovered because the engine has a cutout when it reaches 125 mph.

It had a terrific stereo system that drowned out the scream of the engine. Ashley cranked it up as we blasted down the Atlantic sea coast highway. You get quite the feeling of speed when you are basically sitting on and watching the pavement go past. There is not much of a windshield either. I was surprised that it seemed very stable and had solid traction. Fun to drive but no danger of one being on my wish list. I prefer the V-8 over a four banger. Still, I would do it again. Nothing beats the sunshine and fresh ocean air on a warm day in Florida.

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A Minnesotan: Goats



By RosaLin Alcoser

goat would only stop bleeding if my sister sat outside next to it. Causing her to spend the whole day sitting outside with said goat.

One of my favorite goat stories I have heard was back when I lived in the Ozark region of Southern Missouri. I heard it from one of my mother's high school friends out in the Jefferson City area. Their house is built into the side of a hill. Making the top of the hill and the roof of the house is about on the same level as the roof, which had a skylight.

One day they heard something going "clomp! Clomp!" on the top of their roof. Naturally they went outside to see what was making the clomping sound. Low and behold what did they see out there, but a goat was walking on top of their roof. Right up there by their skylight.

In the end, the goat was removed from the roof, after as I am told getting to close to the skylight for comfort.

My sister sticks to her claim that everyone has at least one story about an encounter with a goat. If you have not had an encounter with a goat that warrants a story, there is still time. You just have not had that goat story-worthy experience yet. And if you never have one, then you are not spending enough time seeking out goats.

High on the hills lives a lonely goat. Well maybe, I am not sure exactly how lonely the hill goats are. My sister, however, does believe that everyone has at least one good story about an encounter that they have had with a goat.

Our goat encounter story happened when the neighbor's new pet goat got loose and ended up on our parents front porch when we were children. Not knowing who's goat it was we put the dog in the house and the goat in the dog's fenced-in yard, thinking that whoever owned the goat would come looking for it, which they did. This arrangement drove our dog nuts, and the

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The Farm that Came to Town A Guy Could



By Jayne Bredlau

We've all known a lifelong farmer who moves to town after turning over the farm to the kids, or sells it to an eager young person ready to live off the land. No more early morning livestock feedings, thawing frozen water troughs, no racing the sun and season to get everything planted, harvested and stored away for another winter. No more vegetable garden that needs weeding (so much weeding!), harvesting and canning. A rest has been well-earned.

Except, the farm never leaves the heart of the farmer. The knowledge, love and legacy are crucial to spur the next generation of farmers to greatness. The saying applies, "necessity is the mother of invention." I am convinced that farmers are the original "mothers"

of invention.

My Dad, who wasn't a farmer but he was clever, would say, "A guy could..." and then share his latest idea to create, fix or solve a challenge. A guy (or gal!) could put a screw and washer here, flywheel there, pound posts, hammer boards, frame up or mark out the exact details for the thing-a-ma-jig. To make the work, work. To get-er-done.

Hi - I'm Jayne, owner of The Greensted Grocery store in Zumbrota. In 2018 my husband, Dean, and I started a small "urban farm" growing microgreens in our garage. No, we'd never heard of microgreens; we had no plans to start up a farm business. We had no investors, tools, infrastructure, nothing. Not even a shovel. We didn't know a darn thing about what we were doing. We bought some soil, seeds and plastic growing flats. We planted the seeds, you know, trying out all of our YouTube best tips, tricks and how-tos. They grew! They were delicious. But we had so much to learn.

We bootstrapped everything. We tried and failed. And succeeded. We took risks, asked questions, dug deep into all of our mental, physical and spiritual reserves. We cried, laughed, got mad and glad. We showed up at Farmers Markets, took opportunity and knocked on doors. In the end, we created a registered trademarked brand - The Greensted®. Under the brand we had five microgreen products, packaged, labeled, barcoded and ready for retail sales. By 2021 our microgreens were offered in 50+ grocery and co-op stores. We set up large scale production, harvesting, packaging and distributing 200+

pounds (1000+ packages) of microgreens per week. Like farming the production schedule was rigorous, planting and harvesting our field of dreams every week. There was no wiggle room. No vacations. No "off the clock" time.

Then we learned vegetable gardening (we had to buy a shovel first) and offered produce share boxes. Soon after we opened our locally sourced grocery store, The Greensted Grocery, in July of 2021. Turns out three enterprises were kind of a lot, though.

In October of 2025 we had the opportunity to move our "farm to town." We created a new brand, The Greensted Fresh-n-Local® - a name that suits the vision of binging the best in regional, wholesome, clean and au-

thentic foods to our community. It is great being part of the buzz and vibe of downtown Z-town. Our farm products (dairy, meat, eggs, produce) come from local farmers. Packaged goods are sourced from small businesses throughout Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin. The mission: Your hometown source for all things local.

A guy and gal could, so we did. What's your story?

I look forward to sharing great stories behind the products in our store, in future The Farm that Came to Town columns.

~Jayne

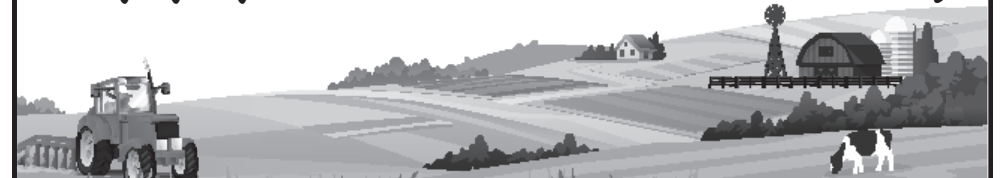
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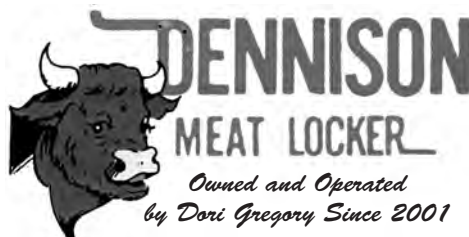


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Plant a Native Shoreland this Summer to Improve Lake Water Quality

Residents of the Cannon River Watershed are invited to learn how native plants can improve water quality, support pollinators, and create beautiful, low-maintenance landscapes

through a series of upcoming workshops and events this spring.

The Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (CRWJPO) is encouraging landowners, lakeshore residents, and gardening enthusiasts to explore the benefits of native landscaping. Native plants have deep root systems that help filter runoff, stabilize soil, and absorb excess rainwater before it reaches lakes and rivers. They also provide essential habitat for pollinators and wildlife.

"Native landscapes are a powerful tool for protecting our local waters," said Emmie Scheffler from the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization. "Even small changes in how we manage our yards and shorelines can have a big impact on water quality across the watershed."

To help residents get started, several partner organizations are hosting workshops and educational events throughout March and April. Topics include reducing traditional turf lawns, planting for pollinators, and landscap-

ing practices that protect water quality.

Upcoming events include:

Rain Gardens: Plan, Prep, Plant, Maintain" Virtual Workshop by the Scott SWCD, March 26, 6-7 p.m.

Rain Gardens: Plan, Prep, Plant, Maintain - Online Webinar by Scott SWCD, March 26, 6 - 7 PM

Le Sueur County Horticulture Day by the Le Sueur County Master Gardeners - April 11, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Le Center

Landscaping for Clean Water Intro Class (Online) by Dakota SWCD - April 22, 6-7:30 p.m.

In addition to workshops, the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization offers free one-on-one assistance for watershed residents interested in native shoreland plantings. Services include site evaluations, plant selection guidance, shoreline restoration planning, and information about funding opportunities.

The organization is currently offering up to \$500 in cost-share funding for native shoreland plantings for eligible property owners within the Cannon River Watershed. Learn more at: <https://www.cannonriverwatershedmn.gov/nativeshoreland>.

Rice County Event Invites Women to Talk Conservation Across Landscapes

Women from across the region are invited to come together for an evening of conversation, connection, and inspiration focused on conservation across the landscape.

The Rice County Soil and Water Conservation District and Minnesota Women in Conservation will host a special gathering on Wednesday, April 1 at 5:30 p.m. in the Straight River Room at the Rice County Fairgrounds in Faribault.

This free event is designed to bring together women who care about the land and water in their communities. Whether participants are farmers, landowners, lakeshore residents, conservation professionals, or simply interested in learning more, the evening will offer a welcoming space to connect and share ideas.

Topics of interest may include restoring native prairie, improving soil health, planting trees, regenerative farming, enhancing wildlife habitat, and protecting the water quality of local lakes and streams. The gathering will encourage conversation and collaboration among women who are working in different ways to care for the land.

Dinner and beverages will be provided, and children are welcome to attend.

The event is free, but attendees are encouraged to RSVP by contacting Teresa Demars, at (507) 332-5408 or Teresa.Demars@riceswcd.org.



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Open to all women

Dinner and beverages provided

Children Welcome

Wednesday, April 1st
5:30 PM

Straight River Room at
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RSVP + send any questions to Teresa Demars - Teresa.Demars@riceswcd.org









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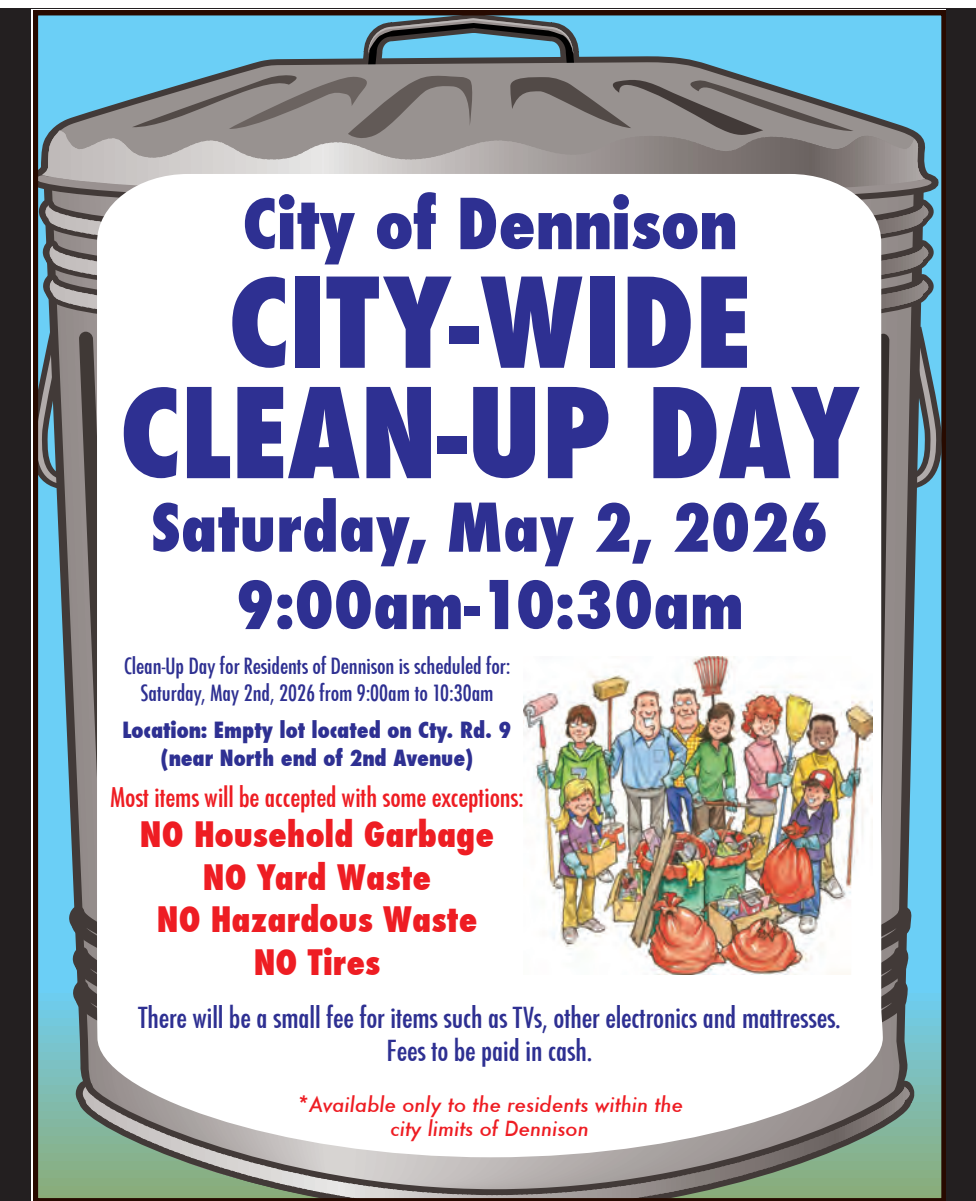


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Saturday, May 2, 2026 9:00am-10:30am

Clean-Up Day for Residents of Dennison is scheduled for:
Saturday, May 2nd, 2026 from 9:00am to 10:30am

Location: Empty lot located on Cty. Rd. 9 (near North end of 2nd Avenue)

Most items will be accepted with some exceptions:
NO Household Garbage
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Essential Exercise



By Noel Aldrich, PhD, CNS
Licensed Nutritionist

Why is exercise important? There are thousands of online sources and books describing how to get in shape and how to get fit. For many the goal of building muscle may not be motivating, so what other reasons are there for regular exercise and what is the minimum amount of exercise required?

Your body is designed for movement. Every part of your body benefits from regular

movement throughout the day. As modern lifestyle increasingly promotes sitting in one place for long periods of time, the body functions begin to have a harder time working properly. Daily movement benefits bone health, liver health, and the body's ability to get rid of toxins.

As the body ages, bone strength will be directly related to the amount of strain and use placed upon the bones. If there is minimal movement or pressure placed on the bones, the cells that build bone material will not be stimulated to reinforce the bone structure and make it stronger. Generally, the strongest bones are measured in twenty-year-old individuals who are coming to the end of the growth stage and have experienced some of the most active years of life. But healthy bones can be maintained throughout your entire life with a healthy food plan and regular exercise. In her book, *Healthy Bones, Healthy You*, Lara Pizzorno states, "At age 72, I have the bone density of a thirty-year old!" Lara describes exercises that build bones safely. These exercises provide the regular stimulation needed to keep the cells active that maintain bone density.

An increasing health challenge across America over the last four decades has been the rise in fatty liver disease, specifically non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. This health challenge may go unnoticed since you can-

not see or feel the difference initially. According to the American Diabetes Association about 38% of Americans have a fatty liver and up to 70% of individuals with diabetes have a fatty liver. In 2019, the Journal for the American Medical Association reported that a fatty liver is becoming one of the most common liver disorders in children. A fatty liver develops when fat begins to be stored in the liver. When fat builds up in the liver, the liver cells are not able to function properly, fatigue increases, blood sugar levels increase, cholesterol levels increase, and health begins to decline.

Daily exercise can be an effective way to reduce and eliminate fat build up in the liver. The Journal of Sport and Health Science published a report in January 2026 showing a dose response to the amount of exercise and reduction of fatty liver. The study presented the minimal amount of movement to reduce fat build up in the liver was 25 minutes of brisk walking at least 5 days a week. A moderate level of movement was 30 minutes of walking or aerobic exercise 5 days a week. The maximum level of movement to provide any benefit for liver health was 45 minutes 5 days a week. Movement can include aerobic exercise, cardiovascular exercise, and resistance exercises. More than 45 minutes each day did not provide any additional benefit to liver health.

Daily movement will also benefit the ability of the body to detoxify and remove toxin buildup. The body has an amazing drainage system known as the lymphatic system. The lymph vessels in the human body are small

vessels that absorb the excess water and fluids that come out from the blood vessels. These lymph vessels act like drain tiles returning the excess fluid to the heart for recirculation. Lymph vessels have no pump and no muscle to move the fluid along the pathway. Lymph tubes are dependent upon body movement to cause the fluid to move from one part of the body to the next part of the body. When a person sits for long periods of time, or is unable to move due to illness, the lymph fluid can build up resulting in swelling tissue and inflammation.

In order to reduce inflammation and improve overall health, daily movement is a necessity. Identify those moving activities that you enjoy. A daily walk, bicycle ride, aerobic exercise, pickleball, rebounder, or vibration plate, are just a few ideas that are among the popular choices available to you. Set a SMART goal for yourself and see what progress you notice. A SMART goals is:

- S – Specific
- M – Measurable
- A – Achievable
- R – Relevant
- T – Time Bound

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

Allina Clinic Purchase Headed for April 7 Council Vote

Courtesy of KYMN Radio News

Northfield Hospital + Clinics plans to bring its proposal to purchase the Allina Health Northfield Clinic to the Northfield City Council's April 7 meeting for final approval of the \$6-million acquisition, NH + C president and CEO Zander Abbot reported to the council.

Abbot presented an acquisition progress report to the council which has final say on the matter. NH + C announced its intention to merge with the clinic in December and spent the intervening weeks focused on due diligence regarding patient care and access as well as financial, legal and operational elements of the purchase.

"The Northfield Hospital and Clinic's board of directors met for the first time just last on February 26, to review this due diligence," NH + C president and CEO Zander Abbott reported to the council. "The work went very well. We got excellent questions and feedback and the board remains supportive. The board of trustees met again to do a second round of due diligence review, at which point the board of trustees of the hospital looked to propose a motion to recommend to this body that Northfield Hospital and Clinic proceed with purchasing the Allina Northfield Clinic building."

Abbott has touted the acquisition's positive impact on health care and health care access in Northfield as well as its strengthening the financial position of the Northfield hospital.

"It's coming to the City Council, we're getting updates, because as a municipal hospital if the action involves the sale of real estate then the City Council needs to approve that per our charter," Northfield Mayor Erica Zweifel explained on the KYMN In the Morning show following Abbot's report.

Elements of the purchase highlighted in the

report included:

Allina Health being granted a 12-year right of first refusal, should NH + C change its ownership structure as a municipal hospital, although there is a carve-out should NH + C become an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit.

An assurance from Abbott based on conversations with Rice County officials that the purchase will not affect city tax revenue, with NH + C assuming the tax burden — \$223,000 in 2025 — going forward.

The launch of the clinic under NH + C ownership is targeted for September of this year.

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Change starts in your community Minnesotans behind the 'Speaking of Cannabis' campaign

Recently, you may have noticed messages about "Speaking of Cannabis" online, in stores, and around your community.

Much like alcohol, cannabis is now legal for adults 21 and older, but that doesn't mean it's always safe. Using it during a time when the brain is actively growing can have harmful and long-term effects on things like memory, coordination, concentration and mental health. The "Speaking of Cannabis" campaign was created to support parents, caregivers, mentors and other trusted adults to understand and talk to the youth in their communities about the risks of cannabis use.

"Speaking of Cannabis" is rolling out in southeast Minnesota. It's sponsored by 11 Public Health departments in Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha and Winona counties.

Local data highlights why this work matters. According to the 2025 Minnesota Student Survey, 3.7% of Rice County eighth-, ninth- and 11th-graders reported cannabis use in the past month, slightly above the statewide rate of 3.1%.

Concerning for young people whose developing brains are more vulnerable to the effects of cannabis is how young people perceive the risks of its use. In Rice County, only 61.2% of eighth-graders, 59.1% of ninth-graders, and 52.5% of 11th-graders believe cannabis is harmful. The goal of this campaign is to help parents better understand the risks linked to youth cannabis use, feel more confident talking with their children about these dangers, and to know where to find trusted resources.

"The cannabis we see today is very different from what was around in the '70s and '80s, bringing new risks and a higher potential for addiction," said Grace Pint, Rice County Public Health Substance Use Prevention Coordinator.

"Speaking of Cannabis" started in northeast Minnesota, and was originally created by public health staff from Carlton, Cook, Lake and St. Louis counties and the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa's Human Services Division, with support from a Minnesota Department of Health Infrastructure Grant.

Through a partnership with PlaceBased, a media company specializing in out-of-home advertising, "Speaking of Cannabis" messages — such as digital displays, posters, and window clings — will be found throughout southeast Minnesota communities.

This work is made possible by a grant from the Cannabis and Substance Use Prevention program of the Minnesota Department of Health's Health Improvement Bureau. For more information, visit www.speakingofcannabis.org or access the site through the Rice County Public Health website at www.ricecountymn.gov/287/Health-Promotion-Wellness.

FBI, County Warn of Scam Aimed at Property Owners Applying for Permits



Rice County has joined the FBI in warning the public about an emerging phishing scheme by criminals impersonating government officials to

solicit fraudulent payments for planning and zoning permits.

The criminals, who have already targeted several Rice County property owners, leverage publicly available permit information to identify potential victims and increase the legitimacy of the scam. Victims of this scam have been identified nationwide.

Rice County's Environmental Services Department has taken steps to mitigate the likelihood applicants receive these scam emails, said Julie Runkel, Rice County Environmental Services director.

How the scam works

Individuals and businesses with active applications for land-use permits are being targeted by criminals impersonating city and county planning and zoning officials, fraud-

ulently requesting fees associated with these permits. Victims receive unsolicited emails citing their permit information, zoning application numbers and/or property addresses. Victims are instructed to pay invoices for fees related to their permits and directed to make payments via wire transfer, peer-to-peer payment or cryptocurrency.

Common indicators of the scheme are:

- The emails contain detailed, accurate information about planning and zoning requests, including property addresses, case numbers and the true names of city and county officials.

- The emails use professional language, formatting and imagery consistent with legitimate government communications for planning and zoning applications, including review processes, planning commission procedures, regulatory compliance and relevant ordinances.

- The email addresses contain usernames similar to city or county planning and zoning departments but originate from non-governmental domains, such as "@usa.com"

- Email delivery may be timed to coincide with ongoing communications with city and county officials regarding the permitting process.

- Attached PDF invoices contain itemized statements of purported fees and direct applicants to request payment instructions via email, rather than telephone, to ensure a reliable audit trail for all correspondence related to the application. This is designed to deter the victim from calling the city or county to verify the fees.

- The emails emphasize urgency, threatening delays or other obstacles in the permitting process if the applicant does not immediately render payment.

Tips to protect yourself

- Do not assume emails are legitimate based on the use of city or county letterhead, seals, names of officials or proper spelling and grammar.

- Verify the email address, including the domain name, matches the email address of the official with whom you are corresponding and does not contain extraneous characters or misspellings.

- Check the county official website (www.ricecountymn.gov) for notices about ongoing impersonation schemes.

- Call the Rice County Environmental Services Department using the phone number listed on the official website (507-332-6113), to verify outstanding fees.

- Log into your permit application in RT Vision. All legitimate invoices will be shown on your permit application.

Report it

- If you or someone you know has fallen victim to this impersonation scam, file a complaint with the IC3 at www.ic3.gov. Include any available information including:

- The email address, date of email, phone number, if provided;

- The date of your project's scheduled hearing, if applicable; and,

- The amount listed in the fraudulent invoice, the method requested to pay fees and bank account information, if provided.

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2026 Tax Statement, Property Valuation Notice

(continued from page 1)

Property tax statements, though produced and mailed by the county, include a listing of

taxes payable for all taxing entities applicable to a particular parcel – i.e. school district, city/township and economic development authority. The statement also lists applicable fees, which in Rice County includes a solid waste service fee for all parcels containing a building valued at \$5,000 or more.

Property owners will this year notice an increase in that fee to \$60.

Initiated in 1990 and last increased in 2012, the fee helps cover costs of solid waste alternatives the state requires counties to provide its residents. That includes recycling, household hazardous waste disposal, composting and waste reduction as well as general solid

waste systems.

Most property owners will see the service fee as a line item on their property tax statement. Property owners who own multiple buildings, homes, mobile homes or apartment units will see a lump sum figure determined by multiplying the number of units owned by \$60.

Commercial/industrial buildings with a valuation of more than \$5,000 are also assessed the solid waste service fee based on a formula approved by the Rice County Board of Commissioners.

2026 valuation determines 2027 taxes

The Notice of Valuation document notifies property owners of the market value and classification of their property for assessment year 2026. Property taxes paid in 2027 will be based on this classification.

If you believe that your valuation and classification are correct, it is not necessary to contact your assessor and/or attend any of the listed meetings.

If the property information is not correct, if you disagree with the value/classification or have questions about your notice, first contact the Rice County Assessor's Office at 507-332-6102 to discuss any questions or concerns.

All property owners can attend the Open Book meeting in Faribault to have a one-on-one discussion with the assessor. Often your issues can be resolved at this level. The assessor will advise you of your further appeal rights, if needed.

Read your notice carefully for all your appeal options. If you live in a jurisdiction with a Local Board of Appeal and Equalization

meeting, then your appeal must start with your local board before advancing to the County Board of Appeal and Equalization.

2026 Local Boards of Appeal & Equalization and alternate meetings Open Book Meeting

• Monday, April 6, 2026 – 10 a.m.-6 p.m. – Rice County Government Services Building, 320 Third St. NW, Faribault

Local Board of Appeal and Equalization

• Tuesday, April 7, 2026 -- 9 a.m. – Forest Township Hall, 3625 Millersburg Boulevard, Faribault

• Wednesday, April 8, 2026 – 9 a.m. – Shieldsville Township Hall, 7250 154th St. W, Faribault

• Thursday, April 9, 2026 – 9 a.m. – Wells Township Hall, 18400 Roberds Lake Boulevard, Faribault

Rice County Board of Appeal and Equalization

• Wednesday, June 17, 2026 – 6:30 p.m. – Rice County Government Services Building, Commissioners Room, 320 Third St. NW, Faribault

Making payments

Property owners who have not received their property tax statement(s) or need to update their mailing address should notify the Rice County Property Tax & Elections office at 507-332-6104 as soon as possible.

Property tax statements are also available to print through Beacon, found on the Rice County website, at https://bit.ly/RiceCo_PropertyTaxRecords.

Rice County first half property taxes for real/personal property are due Friday, May 15, 2026.

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Two ties and a date change: 2026 Township election results

Rice County township elections brought a few surprises: Not only did a race in two townships end in a tie, but 84% of Morristown Township voters approved moving its election day from March to the first Tuesday in November to align with state and federal elections. The change takes effect in this November.

Races for Bridgewater supervisor seat C and Wells’ open supervisor seat both ended in a tie. According to state statute, each township’s canvassing board will determine the winner by lot. The statute is silent on a method for making the determination.

In Erin Township, voters -- by a more than a 2-1 margin -- turned back a proposal which would have had its clerk and treasurer appointed rather than elected. Last year, the question failed by four votes (54%-46).

Other results from township elections received so far are below. Results are unofficial until canvassed by the township’s canvassing board. A check mark (☐) indicates the winner.

Bridgewater
Supervisor Seat C:
Frances Boehning – 76 ☐ Michael Little - 76
Supervisor Seat E:
Nick Bolton- 97 ☐ Mark Kuktavy - 53

Cannon City
Clerk:
Marilyn Caron – 24 ☐ Write-ins – 3
Supervisor:
Clayton F. Mechura - 24 ☐ Write-ins – 2

Erin
Clerk:
Sharon Kaisershot – 58 ☐ Write-ins – 7
Supervisor:
Joseph LeBrun – 61 ☐ Write-ins – 5

Question: Providing for the appointment of the clerk and treasurer by the town board?
Yes - 20 No - 55 ☐
213253

Forest
Supervisor:
Larry Conrad – 39 ☐ Write-ins – 1
Supervisor (special election): Daniel Deutsch – 41 ☐

Morristown
Clerk: Erin Duhme – 19 ☐
Supervisor: Andrew Wagner – 18 ☐

Question: Shall the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November be designated as the date of the Morristown Township general election?
Yes – 16 ☐ No - 3

Northfield
Supervisor: Foster Transburg – 39 ☐

Richland
Clerk: Robert Sommers – 13 ☐ Supervisor: Sean Bauer – 13 ☐

Shieldsville
Clerk: Susan Cepelcha-Novak – 34 ☐ Supervisor: Andy Ernste – 36 ☐

Walcott
Clerk: Kourtney Spitzack – 28 ☐ Supervisor: Tom Donkers – 27 ☐

Warsaw
Clerk: Debra DeGrood – 24 ☐ Supervisor: Andy Hopkins – 20 ☐

Webster
Supervisor:
Eric Ekstrand – 81 ☐ Dwayne Harnack – 71 Paul Sirba – 1
Write-ins - 18

Wells
Clerk: Gray Gunhoyd – 17 ☐
Supervisor (both write-ins) TIE
Jeff LaCanne – 1 Brenda Pittman - 1

Wheatland
Clerk: James Duban – 49 ☐
Supervisor (all write-ins): Gary Pavak – 26 ☐ Others - 20

Wheeling
Clerk: Mikela Medin – 22 ☐ Supervisor: Mark Bongers – 22 ☐

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