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SEPTEMBER 24, 2026

Volume 23 • Issue 9

Chuck Schwartau Named to NACAA Hall of Fame



Hall of Fame Presentation: JJ Jones, NACAA President, Chuck Schwartau, Carol Schwartau

At the 2026 national meeting of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) Chuck Schwartau, Goodhue, MN, was one of four members nationwide named to the association's Hall of Fame.

During his 38 years with University of MN Extension, Chuck served various roles.

(continued on page 8)

Announcements

• **Dennison City Council** meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 6:00 p.m.

(continued on page 2)

Nerstrand Night Out coming up Saturday, October 3rd

Nerstrand Night Out will take place on Saturday, October 3, 2026 at the Nerstrand Fire Hall.

All proceeds benefit the Nerstrand Elementary Charter School. The event begins at 5 PM, with food from Nerstrand Meats, music,

a live and silent auction, cash bar and lots of fun! Advance Tickets are on sale now for just \$20.00 and are available from any Ner-

strand School Family. Tickets will be \$25.00 at the door on the day of the event.

Nerstrand United Methodist Church Fall Festival Oct. 3

Nerstrand United Methodist Church will host it's annual Fall Festival, Saturday, Oct. 3rd, from 10 am - 1 pm. The event includes the sale of home and holiday decor, bake and produce sale, thrift clothing, a silent auction of select items and a hearty lunch. The menu includes hot beef sandwiches, chicken wild rice soup, pasta salad, homemade pie and cake. All are welcome to this fun event.

The King & Crooners Show and End of Season Car Show October 10th in Dennison

Chris Olson returns to Dennison in October blending the old with the new in his tribute show, The King & Crooners Show at The Sapphire Event Room. Chris has entertained for many years each fall in Dennison and this year, his show expands to not only include his Elvis tribute, but also a tribute to Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Bobby Darin and more. Showtime is 7 PM on Saturday October 10th. Advance Tickets are available at Fireside Lounge. Stop in or Call 507-645-

9992. Cattlemens Saloon will host a End Of Season Car Show from 10 am - 3 pm, with Trophies Awarded at 3 PM. Registration begins at 8 AM, with gift bags for the first 30 registered cars, a Pin-Up Girl contest and DJ Entertainment all day. For more information, contact Cattlemens Saloon in Dennison.

Highway 56 and Goodhue County Road 9 converted to four-way stop Sept. 21



MN DOT installed new signage on Highway 56 and County Road 9 east of Dennison on Monday September 21st, 2026 converting the intersection to a four-way stop.

(continued on page 11)

X-Cel Energy Utility Work continues in Dennison



Contract crews have been replacing aging power poles around Dennison this summer, including most recently in the alley behind Fireside Lounge and Cattlemens's Saloon. X-Cel interrupted power in those and other areas around town to complete the project.

Nerstrand United Methodist Church

Fall Festival

Saturday, Oct. 3rd
10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Lunch Menu:
Hot Beef Sandwiches, Pasta Salad
Chicken Wild Rice Soup
Pie/Cake/Ice Cream

Thrift clothing
Silent Auction of Select Items
Puzzles, Books and More...

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Nerstrandumc.org • facebook: Nerstrand United Methodist Church

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Announcements

(continued from page 1)

• **The Hiawatha Valley Genealogy Society meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at the Goodhue County History Center, 1166 Oak St., Red Wing, MN.** The society welcomes participants of all ages and genders who are interested in discovering, researching, or expanding their knowledge of their family's ancestors. Whether you are just beginning or have years of experience, the group offers a supportive environment to help you build your genealogy skills and connect with others who share your interest. Your first meeting is complimentary!

• **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, hand-warmers. 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. Other times available per request, 507-332-8000. October 13 meeting rescheduled to **Oct. 6**. November 10 meeting rescheduled to **Nov. 4**. December 8 meeting - no change.

• **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!

• **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

How Do I Start Reading the Bible?



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

Beep. Buzz. Beep. Buzz. Jack's phone alarm goes off, and the vibrating of it makes the phone push right off the nightstand. The phone plonks down on a stack of dirty laundry. The early 5:30 a.m. rise did not bother him like every other morning, because this morning it was his birthday. Even though Jack is in his mid-twenties, he still gets excited for this special day.

Jack rolls out of bed, grabs some leftover pizza from the fridge for breakfast, does a quick shave, walks the dog, drops off the rent

check, and heads to work. A couple times throughout his workday he becomes almost like a child as he thinks, "I wonder what Mom got me for my birthday?! I can't wait to have her chicken alfredo and that German chocolate cake that oozes over with frosting!"

Jack sits down to have lunch with his coworkers, and his sister from Alabama texts, "Happy birthday, brother! Jesus loves you!" Jack smirks as he thinks, "Jesus, whatever." He texts back, "Thanks, Susie, I love you!" Another text rolls in from Mom. "Hi sweetie, Happy Birthday! So happy that God gave me YOU for my son!" He rolls his eyes, yet with kind fingertips Jack replies, "Thanks, Mom. Can't wait to see you!"

Jack's shift ends, and with an eager hop he gets into his car and makes his way to his mom's. As Nirvana plays over his dusty speakers, Jack starts to think about his father, who passed from suicide when Jack was just ten years old. "I wonder what it would have been like if he was still here . . ." Jack's heart sinks as he takes the last few drags from his cigarette. The smell of those Marlboros always reminds him of his dad. He pulls into his childhood driveway, and his mom is practically jumping off the deck with joy. Jack's excitement returns as quick as a heartbeat.

Jack smiles, turns down Cobain, and quickly pops a mint. He knows his mom dislikes his music and is not very fond of him still smoking. This does not bother Jack, though. He knows his mom has his best interests at heart.

Dinner comes and passes; it is scrumptious as always. Then comes the birthday gift.

Jack's inner child is definitely front and center as he grabs the bright blue gift bag that has way too many ribbons of dark blue and bright white.

He breaks through the packaging and unwraps the gift.

Jack knows instantly what this is. He pulls deep down into the core of his being to grab his happy voice and looks up, saying, "Wow, Mom, a Bible," with the fakest smile on his face. Jack thinks in the back of his mind, "What the heck am I going to do with this?" He doesn't let the annoying gift bother him, though. He and his mom then have some of that warm cake with vanilla ice cream as they watch the golden sun set.

As Jack got home and stepped into his apartment, he greeted his sweet dog and put that blue bag (with the Bible in it) on a high shelf in his hallway closet. He never took it down. Five years went by, and his sweet mother passed. He came home from the funeral to the same apartment, with every possible feeling floating in his inner being.

He took off his suit coat and pulled open the closet. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw the bright blue bag from five birthdays ago. He took a step back not only with his feet but his mind too. He stood up on his tiptoes, reached far back with his hands, and pulled forward that gift bag.

Tears welled in his eyes as he grabbed the leather-bound Bible. His mother had inscribed his name in the lower left corner; Jack never noticed that until this day. Jack made his way to his small dining room table and opened the Good Book.

(continued on page 3)

LUTHERAN

Dennison Lutheran Community Church
Pastor Dwayne Sutherland Office: 507-645-6042
P.O. Box 117, Dennison, MN 55018
Website: www.dennisonvang.org

Vang Lutheran Church
507-789-5186
www.dennisonvang.org
Rural Dennison
Weekly Sunday Service 9:00a.m.

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

Grace Lutheran, Nerstrand
Dwayne Sutherland, Pastor; 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 The Heart Command

I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."
— Romans 7:7

Most people agree that the commandments we have been discussing lately—about promoting justice, honesty, respect for others and their property, and more—offer clear, practical boundaries for living together in society. Guidelines like these are found in all kinds of societies around the world.

We might even think, like many of God's people in ancient Israel did, that keeping these commands is possible. But the law doesn't satisfy God's requirements for our hearts. The apostle Paul painfully realized this when he wrestled with the darkness in his own heart. Though he thought he had been able to keep these commandments through his actions, he was cut to the heart when he read, "You shall not covet." God commands that we show love not only through our actions but also with our hearts. By this standard, we are all guilty of failing to love others.

Thankfully, our heart problem can be solved. "While we were still sinners," Paul writes in Romans 5:8, "Christ died for us." Jesus is the only one who could ever satisfy the demands of God's law for perfect obedience and love. And since we are forgiven through Jesus' sacrifice for our sake, the Holy Spirit gives us new hearts directed toward loving God and our neighbors.

Our new life in Christ moves us beyond mere outward obedience. By trusting Jesus, our restless hearts find true satisfaction in him alone, so that we can truly love others.

Jesus, thank you for rescuing us. By your Spirit, fill our hearts so that we can love others as you have loved us. Amen.

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<https://www.northfieldcc.org/>
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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.

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Gary Liker, Pastor
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7:00p.m. Small Group Bible Studies - Sun.

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Pastor Dustin Haider
507-789-6677
holdendalesecretary@gmail.com
Holden: 6949 County 30 Blvd, Kenyon
Dale: 9210 County 12 Blvd, Kenyon
www.holdenlutheranchurch.org
Holden/Dale on Facebook
Holden Lutheran Church on Facebook
Worship Services
September 27:
Holden 9:00a.m.; Dale 11:00a.m.
October 4:
Dale 9:00a.m.; Holden 11:00a.m.

Email your church announcements, schedule, etc. to the Mainstreet Messenger at: hometownmessenger@gmail.com



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How Do I Start Reading the Bible?

(continued from page 2)

A letter was inside the Bible, another thing Jack had not seen. He opened the cream envelope and read the note inside:

Sweet Jack,
My lovely boy who I love more than anything in the whole world (aside from Susan), you are the most talented young man full of compassion, love, kindness, and joy. I know

there have been a few hiccups along the way in your life, but nothing is too big for God. Nothing.

Jesus loves you, Jack. He loves you more than you will ever know. He is not mad at you. I am obviously not mad at you. Dad was not mad at you either. And with what happened with your dad, that was not on Jesus, my sweet son. That was Dad's free will. No shame, no guilt.

The words in the Book that is in the midst of you right now, Jack, are life-giving. If you take time to know Jesus and His Word (the Bible), it will radically transform you. Jesus changes everything.

I know you so well that I realize it might be years before you actually read this letter and potentially the Bible. If you do choose to pick

up this beautiful Book, here's a little guidance in how to start reading it.

Where do you start reading the Bible? Read the book of John and read some of the Psalms simultaneously. Perhaps one chapter of John and one Psalm a day.

What happens if something you read does not make sense? A lot of things will not make sense right away. This is okay! Take your questions and turn that into studying the Bible. Get your hands on a good commentary; that will help.

What if you skip a whole bunch of days reading the Bible? No worries! Just pick up where you left off. Jesus is not legalistic.

Can you talk to Jesus? YES! Tell Jesus everything on your heart, including the things you read about in the Bible. Tell Him all the

things that excite, confuse, and even make you upset. Do not hold anything back from Him.

Will Jesus speak to you back? YES! When Jesus speaks, He will speak with the Bible or the principles of the Word. The more you are in the Bible, the more confident you will be of His voice. Also, Jesus will speak with the tone of the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). He will never speak with condemnation, guilt, or shame.

What if you do not feel Jesus? You may not always feel the Lord, but that does not mean He is not there. Trust the Bible and what it says, not your feelings.

What kinds of things does the Bible say? The Bible says so many things! Here are a few of my favorites:

You are loved: Ephesians 3:14-19
When you make a big oopsie (aka sin): 1 John 1:9

When you are sad: Psalm 34
When you are angry: Genesis 4:6-7
Needing guidance: Isaiah 55

Needing reassurance: Joshua 1:9
You can have salvation through Jesus: Romans 10:9-10

With love, Mom.

Jack, with continued watery eyes, kissed his mother's note. He started reading John 1 and Psalm 1 that very night and has never stopped reading the Bible. If you are not sure where to start in the Bible, just like Jack, do what his mom says. These words from Jack's mom can be for you too. My sweet friends, Jesus loves you more than you will ever know. Blessings, Ashley



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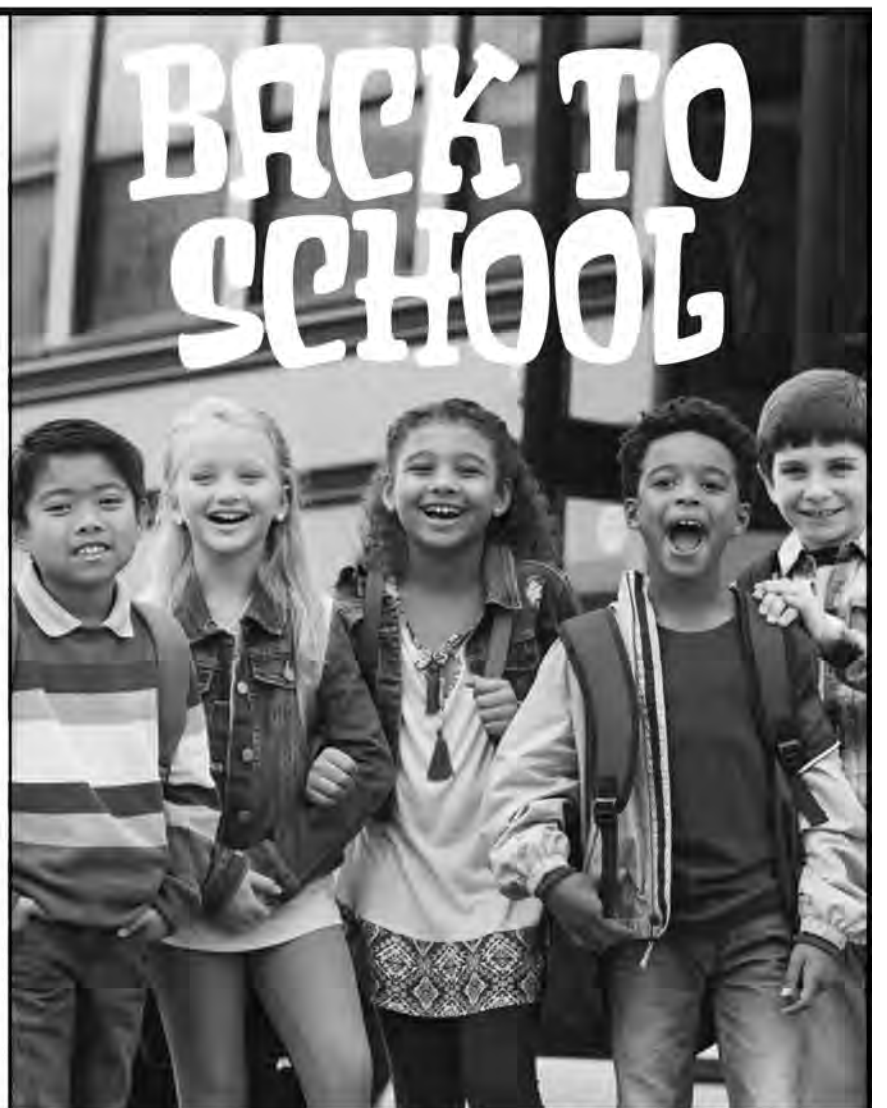
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Harriet Wiederholt

Harriet Wiederholt, a cornerstone of the Miesville community and the beloved matriarch of the Wiederholt family, passed away peacefully on Tuesday evening, August 25, 2026, at the age of 102. A woman of unshakable faith, profound kindness, and fierce work ethic, Harriet leaves behind a legacy beautifully woven into her family she loved unconditionally.

Born at home in Douglas Township on August 21, 1924, to John and Jeanette (Schaffer) Weber, Harriet Catherine was raised on a 120-acre farm. Though she quickly discovered that farm work "wasn't fit for girls" and resolved early on to build a life in town, her rural upbringing instilled in her a lifelong resilience. Academically gifted, she graduated from Hastings High School at just 16 years old, followed by attending the Minneapolis Business College, where she furthered her business knowledge that would be invaluable in her career.

Harriet's natural aptitude for business and leadership came to define her adult life. Alongside her beloved husband, Sylvester "Cy" Wiederholt, whom she married on June 6, 1946, they laid the foundation for Wiederholt's Supper Club in Miesville, Minnesota. Following Cy's untimely passing, Harriet proved her incredible strength by managing and operating three thriving local businesses started by Cy: the Supper Club, Vendrite, a 600-machine vending operation, and some Red Wing Shoe Stores.

For decades, she has been the iconic face and heart of Wiederholt's Supper Club. Positioned at the front door, she greeted generations of guests with an authentic smile, making every diner feel like a member of her own family. Her fierce work ethic was never bound by age; she took immense pride in her work and led by example, eventually passing

the restaurant down to her sons, John and Charlie; John and Charlie later passed along the business to Charlie's son and daughter-in-law, Jesse and Becky Wiederholt. Seeing the restaurant remain in the family gave Harriet great pride and comfort.

Harriet's life was deeply rooted in her Catholic faith and the daily practice of the Rosary. It was this unwavering faith that gave her the strength to navigate profound personal losses, accepting the deaths of her husband Cy, her sons George and Gary, her grandchildren Kelly and Jenny and her son-in-law Gordy Sanders with grace, holding onto the belief that all things rest in God's plan.

Though a tireless businesswoman, family always came first. Her home was famously transformed into a magical "Winter Wonderland" every Christmas, a tradition her grandchildren and great-grandchildren will always treasure. Harriet was also known for her calm composure at the card table, her sharp instincts, her talent as a left-handed golfer and bowler, her exceptional home-cooked meals, and her quiet, non-judgmental acceptance of everyone she encountered.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Cy; sons, George and Gary; siblings, Bernard, Jerry, Alberta Horsch, John "Jack", Jim, and Ann McGree; granddaughters, Kelly Kochendorfer and Jenny Wiederholt-Pine; and by her son-in-law, Gordy Sanders.

Harriet is survived by her loving children, Jan (Bob), Charlie (Cheryl), John (Missy), Paul (Tammy), along with a large, adoring family of grandchildren, Jay (Bradley), Cory (Ami), Jesse (Becky), Lindsay (Chris), Hallie

(Betsy), Talli (Joe) and great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and friends who will forever carry her lessons of kindness, humility, and hard work.

Mass of Christian Burial was held 10:30 a.m. Friday, September 4, 2026, at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Miesville. Father Andrew Brinkman and Father Michael Tix concelebrated. Interment followed in the parish cemetery.

Family and friends were cordially invited to a visitation from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. Thursday evening, and for one hour prior to Mass on Friday morning, all at the church.

In lieu of flowers, Harriet's family requests

memorials be made to St. Joseph Catholic Church or to Hastings Health and Senior Living in Hastings in memory of Harriet.

Arrangements are being completed by Starkson Family Life Celebration Chapel of Hastings.



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Dolly Parton

"Global icon and humanitarian, Dolly Parton, known to the world as a beloved singer, songwriter, philanthropist, actress, playwright, and author died peacefully August 25, 2026 in Nashville, Tennessee. She was 80 years old.



OFFICIAL OBITUARY
of Dolly Parton
1946-2026

Dolly is preceded in death by her beloved husband of 59 years Carl Thomas Dean (1942 – 2025), her mother Avie Lee Caroline Owens (1923 – 2003), and father, Robert Lee Parton, Sr. (1921 – 2000).

A rhinestone life that shone bright enough for the world to see, Dolly will forever stand as an inspiration not only through her timeless music and prolific songwriting, but also her wit, warmth, and kindness that made us all feel like family. Dolly Parton's legacy is one of love, compas-

sion, and resilience. With a seven-decade career, she inspired multiple generations of artists and fans with her music and an unwavering commitment to making the world a better place. Her songs will continue to resonate with people of all ages, and her philanthropic work will have a lasting impact.

At Dolly's request, a small, private service was held for immediate family. Dolly's fans and friends from around the world are encouraged to pay tribute to Dolly on social media by tagging @DollyParton or by leaving a message at www.dollyparton.com

In lieu of flowers the family asks for donations to be made to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library at www.imaginationlibrary.com"

Credit: Dolly Parton Social Media

The Annual Lutefisk and Norwegian Meatball Supper

Vang Lutheran Church

2060 County 49 Blvd
Dennison MN 55018

Saturday, October 3rd 2026



Menu:

Lutefisk with melted butter, Norwegian Meatballs with Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Corn, Fruit Soup, Lefse and Norwegian baking's

Join us for our annual supper, buffet style

In church seating starts at 11:00am through last seating at 1:00pm and 4:00pm with last seating at 5:00pm.

No reservations are needed.

Groups of 8 or more please call church at 507-789-5186 to reserve a table.

Home or business delivery is by reservation only, from 11:30am-2:15pm and 4:30pm through 5:30pm. Call 507-789-5186 and leave message.

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Gary David "Cecil" Hutton

Gary David "Cecil" Hutton, 74, of rural Kenyon, died Monday, August 24, 2026, at his home.



Cecil was born February 18, 1952, to Cecil and Marian Hutton in Northfield, Minnesota. He grew up on the family dairy farm near Little

Prairie, Dundas. Cecil grew up doing chores and milking cows from an early age with his parents and five brothers. He was active in the Full O'Pep 4H club showing dairy cattle and he wrestled in high school.

Cecil attended Dundas and Northfield schools, graduating in 1970, and from there he attended two years of college at the U of M. Summer jobs driving spray trucks for AgriHelicopters in Owatonna led him to work towards his pilot's license. He traveled to Oklahoma to get his pilot's training at Al-

lied Helicopters in Tulsa. From there, he sprayed crops by helicopter for 34 years. Cecil was a talented and hard working pilot who loved flying over the countryside. He often said, "You know there is a God when you see the beauty of nature from the air."

Cecil married Robin Shimpach on October 10, 1981, after meeting her in a cornfield. They lived in Cherry Grove Township for four years and then moved to the Flom Brother's Farm in Sogn Valley. Here they raised three children, Neil (New Zealand), Vincent (Oregon), Tamsen (Minneapolis). Cecil was so proud of his children, and encouraged them in music, education and sports.

On the 40 acre farm, Cecil planted thousands of trees, beginning in the spring of 1986. He put in two dams, three ponds, a ball field, and many miles of fence for the horses. His goal was to have a wildlife refuge, which became a reality. He was awarded the Outstanding Woodland Manager by the Goodhue County Soil and Conservation District. The last few years he was delighted to have a pair of kingfishers nest by his ponds. Cecil was so proud of his farm.

Cecil loved bluegrass music, George Strait, Reba McIntire and barbershop music. He loved to sing, and was a tenor in his family's barbershop quartet, "Dad and His Lads". He sang with his dad, the "Real" Cecil, and brothers Duane and Darrell. Cecil loved to

listen to St. Olaf and Concordia concerts online. College sports were another favorite weekend activity, he'd watch online when he couldn't get to the games.

Talking and visiting with anyone and everyone he met was a favorite pastime. From the nurses and doctors at the hospital, to the farmers, grocery checkout workers, to people he just met, he loved to ask them questions and find out all about their life histories if he could.

In the last 10 years, Cecil struggled with his health. He tried to stay positive, and kept up with his mowing and upkeep on the farm the best he could. For years he had a giant garden up on the hill where he grew beautiful, huge vegetables that he sold at the Farmer's Markets in Cannon Falls and Dennison. He loved to feed the birds and planted some perennials down by his shed, where he had a feeding station he could see from his office.

Cecil is survived by his wife, Robin; sons, Neil (Charlotte), Vincent; daughter, Tamsen; grandchildren, Stella and Jules; brothers, Duane (Linda), Lynn (Dawn), Brian (Pam) and many nieces and nephews. Cecil was preceded in death by his parents, Marian and Cecil and brothers, Darrell and Paul.

A Memorial Service was held 2:00 PM, Saturday, September 12, 2026, at Holden Lutheran Church in Kenyon. Visitation was one hour prior to the service at the church.



Sogn Valley Orchard

Open:
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Everyone's Invited to our

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Menu:

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Raymond "Ray" Howard Sands

Raymond "Ray" Howard Sands, 95, of Kenyon, died on Monday, September 14, 2026, at his home with his daughters by his side.

Ray Sands, a life-long musician, farmer, was born January 9, 1931, on his family's 200-acre dairy farm near Kenyon, Minnesota. He was a third-generation farmer and was one of four children born to Charles "Charley" and Florence Sands.

Ray learned to milk cows by hand at the age of five and began playing the accordion at age nine. By the time he was 11, he was performing alongside his siblings in the family band. Ray attended country school and farmed alongside his father on the family farm, milking cows, raising turkeys and planting and harvesting crops in the field. He took over the farming operation after his father's passing, continuing the dairy herd until he retired from milking in 2009.

After graduating from Wanamingo High School in 1949, Ray was invited to play accordion with a municipal band in Zumbrota to help raise money for a new hospital. That experience helped lead to the formation of the Polka Dots, who went on to become a successful old-time polka band that toured throughout Minnesota and the Upper Midwest. In 1963, Ray was asked to lead the band and continued doing so until their final per-

formance in August 2022.

On December 12, 1970, Ray was united in marriage to Susan (Fossum) Sands at Holden Lutheran Church. Together, they shared a life centered around family, music, farming, and their community. They had two daughters, Kristy and Heidi, who performed with them at numerous venues.

Ray performed with the band for more than seven decades, bringing the happiness of polka music to festivals, fairs, nursing homes, conventions, dance halls, and community celebrations. He recorded several albums and CDs with the Polka Dots and the Ray Sands Combo, including milestone recordings commemorating the band's 40th, 50th, 60th, and 70th anniversaries. He also helped make musical history when the Polka Dots became the first old-time band to record an LP with their signature song, "The Ping Pong Polka." Throughout his remarkable career, Ray performed internationally at polka festivals in Austria, Norway, Denmark and Sweden, appeared on nationally syndicated polka shows and was featured on Prairie Home Companion and a movie called "His Neighbor Phil." The band also played at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and the Southwest Polka Festival in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Ray received numerous honors for his contributions to polka music and his community. In 2000, he was inducted into the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame. He was named Kenyon's Rose Fest Parade Grand Marshal and Kenyon's Citizen of the Year in 2009, and in 2020, he was selected as Goodhue County Citizen of the Year.

Ray's greatest legacy was the joy he brought

to others through his music. For more than 70 years, he rarely turned down a request to perform, continuing to share his talent with audiences of all ages. Whether playing for a crowded dance hall, a community celebration, or a nursing home gathering, Ray understood the simple power of music to bring people together and create lasting memories.

His dedication to music, family, farming, and his community made him a beloved figure whose influence will continue for generations. Ray will be remembered for a life filled with music, hard work, generosity, and a genuine love for the people around him.

He is survived by his daughters, Kristyn (and Matt) Jacobson of Kenyon, Heidi (and Mikkel) Gusenius of Minnetrista; grandchildren, Bryan and Colin Jacobson, Rylan and Marika Gusenius; brother-in-law, Robert Fossum and his nieces.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Susan Sands; parents, Charley and Florence Sands; brothers, Wilbur and Duane Sands, and his sister, Doris Nodland.

Visitation was at Michaelson Funeral Home, Kenyon on Friday, September 18, 2026, from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Funeral services were

held on Saturday, September 19, 2026, at 11:00 AM at Emmanuel Lutheran Church - Aspelund with a visitation starting at 10:00 AM. Interment was in the Emmanuel Lutheran Cemetery in Aspelund.



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It is that time of year in the Master Gardener World



By Lorrie Rugg
Master Gardener Coordinator,
Rice and Steele Counties

You might wonder what time of year it is. It is the time of year for you to apply to be in the

class of 2027 Interns for the Master Gardener Program.

You can find the link to the application at z.umn.edu/StateMG2027app.

Applications will be accepted until October 01, 2026.

What does applying to the program mean? The Master Gardener program has 2 parts. The first part is the online coursework that begins the first week of January. It is a 13-module course through the University of Minnesota. They do one module a week, and it lasts through the first part of May. There is a short quiz after each module that is open-book. Don't let that scare you - you take the quiz until you get the questions answered correctly.

After the coursework has been completed, the second part of the program kicks in. That part is Community Service hours. During your Intern year, you must complete 50 hours of service. How do you get that accomplished? You do that by helping the Master Gardeners with the projects they are involved with. We have a Teaching Garden at the Rice County Fairgrounds that is a labor of love for the Master Gardeners. We are continually working in the garden to make it better. We host a Garden Day program in March at St.Olaf College with a variety of speakers.

We give away trees and shrubs for an Arbor Day promotion. We have a booth in the Garden during the County Fair and also at Passport to Agriculture held here at the Fairgrounds. These are some of the projects we are involved with here in Rice County.

We do have monthly meetings, and that also counts as Community Service hours. So there are many ways to get those 50 hours the first year. Once those 2 parts are completed in January of 2028, you become an Active Master Gardener. In the following years, we as active Master Gardeners have to complete a minimum of 25 hours of Community service and get at least 5 hours of additional education through classes or webinars.

I have been a Master Gardener for almost

26 years and have thoroughly enjoyed my journey. I have made so many friends and learned so much more about gardening than I ever thought imaginable. We have fun and do lots of good work along the way.

If this sounds like something you would be interested in and have more questions, send me an email, and I would be more than happy to have a conversation about the program. My email address is brow3298@umn.edu.

We all share a passion for gardening and love to talk about it and share our research-based gardening information with you. Come join us and have some fun!

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- Make yourself easy for drivers to see by using your lights and flashers;
- Remember that it is Minnesota law to use slow-moving vehicle emblems on equipment traveling less than 30 miles per hour; and
- Consider using a following vehicle when moving large equipment on roadways, especially at night.
- Get Some Sleep - Make sure to get enough sleep and rest to refresh the mind and body. If you are spending long hours in a combine or tractor, be sure to take short breaks often.
- Don't Rush - It may take an extra moment or two to walk down every step or double-check a piece of equipment. But that extra time may be a lifesaver. Don't cut corners when it comes to safety.
- Identify hazardous areas on equipment and make sure you stay away from moving parts. Beware of pinch points, shear points, wrap points, pull-in areas, thrown objects, crush points, stored energy hazards and freewheeling parts.
- Shut down equipment, turn off the engine, remove key and wait for moving parts to stop before dismounting equipment.
- Lock entrances to grain handling areas.
- Install ladders inside bins.
- Do not enter grain bins that are being loaded or unloaded. Flowing grain can trap and suffocate you in seconds.
- If it is necessary to enter a bin, shut off and lockout power before entering. Use a safety harness and safety line. Have several people available outside the bin to lift entrant out in case of an emergency.
- Wear proper dust-filtering respirators when working in and around grain handling areas. High amounts of dust and molds could be present and could be very dangerous.

Chuck Schwartau Named to NACAA Hall of Fame

(continued from page 1)

For about 15 years, Chuck was one of the few Extension Educators in the country who fo-

cused on dairy labor management. As a result, Chuck has been an invited speaker at several regional, national, and international conferences and written articles and recurring columns in over a dozen ag publications in the U.S. and other countries.

He was instrumental in developing the Farm Beginnings® program to help young farmers get started with practical knowledge of ag production and management (utilized now by at least fourteen states).

Use of tools he helped develop to assess a dairy's management, grew into the MN Dairy Initiative. Chuck organized more than fifty dairy farm advisory teams in his region, and he helped write and teach an extensive 12-hour dairy labor management curriculum.

Chuck's survey of all Minnesota dairies



Chuck Schwartau speaking to NACAA banquet following Hall of Fame presentation

Farm Girl Chatter Behind the ears, Keeping Cattle in the Landscape

By McKell Lemmerman



There's something about learning life from behind the ears of a horse that you can't learn anywhere else.

There's no steering wheel, gas pedal, or button you can push to make a horse do exactly what you want. You have to

learn to communicate. You have to learn how to feel. You have to learn when to ask and when to simply let the horse do its job. And then there's cattle.

Working cattle from horseback is an art. It isn't simply sitting in a saddle and steering. You have to understand the horse underneath you and the cattle in front of you. You learn how a cow moves, where they want to go, and how your horse needs to position itself to move them there.

A shift of your weight.

A turn of the reins.

A change in your horse's feet.

Sometimes, it's nothing more than putting

yourself in the right place at the right time.

Your body controls the horse, and your horse helps control the cattle.

That is where the magic is.

Ranch rodeos, sorting, penning, cutting, and roping have carried pieces of that old Western way of life into today. The equipment may have changed, and the work may look different, but the partnership between horse, rider, and cattle remains.

There is grit in it.

There is patience in it.

And there is a whole lot of humility.

A good horse will teach you that you don't know as much as you think you do. A good cow will humble you even faster.

But that's why I keep coming back.

Because horses aren't just about riding. They're about learning a language without words. They're about trusting something with a mind of its own. They're about getting dusty, getting frustrated, making mistakes, climbing back on, and trying again.

They're about carrying forward a piece of the West that could easily be forgotten.

So, as the combines get ready for another harvest and the fields begin to turn, I find myself appreciating both sides of agriculture—the modern machinery that keeps our farms moving forward and the horses that remind us where we came from.

Maybe that's why, when someone asks me "Why horses?," I don't have just one answer.

Because no matter how much the world changes, there will always be something worth learning in the saddle.



with over 150 cows was instrumental in developing labor management programs.

Chuck wrote and delivered a farm safety program emphasizing dairy farms and worked with University of Wisconsin-River Falls on a similar program for Wisconsin. The program was delivered to over two hundred farm units and morphed into a similar program for pork producers and certified custom manure applicators.

Chuck also wrote parts of a UMN beef correspondence course, reaching four Midwestern States, and conducted extensive research among dairy farm families in a four-county area about stresses on the dairy farm. He also worked with farm mediation, managing initiation of over two hundred requests for mediation by creditors and following through with over one hundred farms that requested mediation.

Chuck was a NACAA National Search for Excellence presenter four times, and had 3 National finalists, 6 Regional finalists, and forty-four state-winning communications entries.

Chuck's service to NACAA is extensive, serving as the National Treasurer, NC-Regional Director, NC Region and National Communications Committee Chair, NACAA representative to the Education Foundation Board of Trustees, NACAA Education Foun-

dation Trustee (currently), NACAA representative and NACAA program chair for JCEP's Galaxy III, and Chair of Joint Council of Extension Professional's Galaxy IV in Pittsburg, PA (2013). He served as President of Minnesota Association of Extension Ag Professionals, consistently attended NACAA Annual Meeting /Professional Improvement Conferences, and was a NACAA Achievement Award (1989) and Distinguished Service Award (1994) recipient.

Chuck's humanitarian activities are extensive. Of note, Chuck was elected as a lifetime member to the MN State Agricultural Society (MN State Fair), a prestigious honor in recognition of his over 50 years of work with the fair.

He has served on numerous community advisory boards and committees, often in leadership positions. Among those are several terms on the church council for First Lutheran Church, Red Wing, 32 years on the Goodhue County Fair board of directors and over 40 years of multiple positions working at the Minnesota State Fair.

Over his 38-year career with the Extension Service, Chuck served in Dakota, Winona, Wabasha, and Goodhue Counties plus the Rochester Regional Office as a livestock educator and Regional Extension Director.

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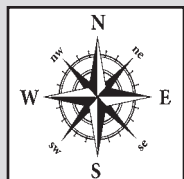
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Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes Observations in a Hospital Cafeteria



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.

A year ago, I had an hour to pass waiting for someone at St. Mary's Hospital. I was looking for something to do while they had a test and took the occasion to walk to the patient and visitor cafeteria for lunch. As I sat there with my sandwich and a drink I observed others in the room. It was a rather sobering hour of reflection. A hospital does not catch you at the best in your day.

A family with three teenage kids was sitting

by the wall. They were all focused on talking and eating and sort of ignoring the one child, a boy in his late teens. He just sat there lost in thought not touching his food. The rest seem oblivious to his plight. I sensed that his mind was in a much darker place than his family was aware of. A young person should be filled with plans and dreams of the future and not staring down the dark tunnel of hopelessness.

A woman in her early thirties was sitting all alone at a small round table. She looked haggard and worried and seemed to be shouldering her sadness all by herself. There was a look of trepidation and fear etched in her face. The whole food thing was more of a distraction than a necessity, one was supposed to do it whether you were hungry or not. At noon you found food and then tried to tell your body to consume it because it was needed. Even if your body didn't want it or was ready to reject it.

A couple that looked to be in their sixties were sitting right behind me. While moving a chair to get more comfortable, the man bumped into me and said he was sorry. Then we struck up a conversation. He had been a working man all his life and a diagnosis had brought him to Rochester. They had exhausted all the remedies that the medical community had to offer, and he was resigned to the fate he was facing. His concern was more of how his wife would fare in the future without him. He didn't show any bitterness or remorse for the health problem that he was facing, but just a practical factual assessment of the situation. What was interesting was



that he wanted to talk to me about Jesus. He didn't believe that his life was particularly worth holding on to, but that there was something better awaiting him. He wanted to be sure his wife was cared for after he was gone and also share the comfort that he felt about where he was going.

The fourth couple sat at a small table to the left of me and I deduced that they were an old farm couple. He wore a seed corn hat and she was in a farm wife's house dress. They were finishing the meal and she was concerned that the extra packets of condiments were not wasted but taken home for a future use. A practical woman, being sure that nothing was wasted even though her body was wasting away from something she had no

control of. He was uncomfortable in the surroundings, unsure of what he was going to do without her company in the future and completely helpless in the current situation.

I felt a sense of somberness looking around because I had lived through these age groups in my life. I had stopped at this cafeteria to pass an hour of time during my busy day and now I was witnessing four lives possibly watching what little time they had left slip through the hour glass of life. It is good to look at others through a different lens and feel empathy for what they may be going through. And take the time and effort to be kind because you never know what their life may actually be like.

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A Minnesotan: Pumpkin Spice Monsters



By RosaLin Alcoser

The longer I live in the Cities I have become more and more aware of what my husband likes to call the pumpkin spice monsters. A pumpkin spice monster is one who goes crazy for pumpkin spice as soon as it is out and consumes as much as is humanly possible before it goes out for the season or the store runs out.

I have probably noticed this due to the fact that I am now around more coffee shop and large box stores than I was in my younger days. Due to the amount of specialty seasonal items coming in pumpkin

spice that should not come in pumpkin spice that have been made in recent years. I am happy to report that so far I have not seen any pumpkin spice soap, cat products, or trash bags this year. It could still happen, but it hasn't yet.

I do enjoy pumpkin spice in my coffee or in a baked good. I just rather have it in the fall and not before Labor Day when they come out. However, with that being said I do typically get one when it first comes out to guarantee that I get one from the coffee shop. Since the pumpkin spice monsters exist and it might not still be there when I'm ready to enjoy it in mid September. Once that happens I make a small batch of pumpkin spice syrup at home for coffee and call it a day.

This year I got one from Caribou on the first day it was out. In the middle of August. I walked in at 8 AM on a Thursday and the store was crazy busy with people ordering pumpkin spice coffee drinks in such profuse. To the point that one of the people working behind the counter looked me dead in the eye and said "people gotta have their pumpkin! Pumpkin! Pumpkin! Pumpkin!" with the franticness of someone over run by a title wave of people.

Now all there is for me to do at least, is wait until mid to late September to see if there is any left or if the pumpkin spice monsters have consumed it all before October this year. In which case I will buy a can of pumpkin and make it myself.

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Highway 56 and Goodhue County Road 9 Converted to four-way stop Sept. 21

(continued from page 1)



DENNISON, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Transportation converted the intersection of Highway 56 and Goodhue County Road 9 into a four-way stop on Sept. 21 as a way to reduce vehicle crashes.

On Monday, Sept. 21, the MnDOT sign shop installed signs for the new four-way stop, which include signs in advance of the intersection warning of the stop ahead as well as other temporary signs that will warn of the changes.

On Tuesday, MnDOT maintenance crews installed raised medians at all four legs of the intersection to provide additional awareness to approaching motorists that the intersection requires a stop.

Traffic at the intersection was temporarily changed earlier this summer during a construction project on Highway 56 south of the intersection. A detour of Highway 56 forced vehicles to slow at the intersection because of the detour to the south.

Previously, Highway 56 had thru traffic and County Road 9 had stops. However, the intersection saw a spike in crashes in 2025.

(continued on page 12)

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Eat Sauerkraut for Good Health!



By Shauna Burshem, D.C.

The Wonders of Sauerkraut: When it comes to supporting your body from the inside out, sauerkraut is one of those humble foods that quietly does a lot of good. Its biggest gift lives in raw, unpasteurized versions, which are loaded with live probiotics. These friendly bacteria help balance your gut flora, and that matters more than most people realize. The fermentation process also breaks down fibers and natural sugars, so your body can absorb nutrients far more easily. Add in the active enzymes that support your gastrointestinal function, and you have a food that genuinely helps digestion run smoothly. On top of that, sauerkraut delivers a solid dose of vitamin C, vitamin K1, and iron, giving your body real

nutritional value with every bite. Since a healthy gut microbiome strengthens your natural barrier against harmful pathogens, this simple fermented cabbage becomes a quiet ally for your immune defenses too. And here is the part I love: it offers plenty of dietary fiber with very few calories, so you get all these benefits without the guilt.

The good news does not stop at digestion and immunity. Sauerkraut contains vitamin K2, which plays a fascinating role in directing calcium into your bones rather than letting it settle into soft arterial tissues, supporting both bone strength and heart wellness. It also delivers antioxidants that help combat cellular damage and reduce inflammation, something anyone focused on holistic health can appreciate. If you want to enjoy the full range of these advantages, reach for the refrigerated, unpasteurized options, since those preserve the live probiotic cultures that pasteurized versions lose. Just keep one thing in mind: fermented cabbage can be high in sodium, so enjoy it thoughtfully as part of your overall wellness routine. A little goes a long way toward feeling your best!

Chiropractic care for neck and back pain: If you have been living with neck or back pain, you already know how much it can steal from your day. Chiropractic care offers a natural path to relief by focusing on the root of the problem rather than just masking it. When the bones of your spine become stuck or shift out of their proper position, they can irritate nearby nerves and create real discomfort. Through gentle, precise adjustments, a chiropractor helps guide those joints back into alignment. Many patients feel a noticeable difference after just a few visits, and the beauty of it is that your body does much of

the healing on its own once the pressure is eased.

Pain relief is wonderful, but the real gift is getting your life back in motion. When your spine is aligned and your joints move the way they should, everyday activities become easier, whether that is picking up your kids, hitting the gym, or simply turning your head to check your blind spot while driving. Over time, consistent care helps restore mobility and supports long-term function, so you are not just feeling better today but building a stronger foundation for the years ahead. Think of it like tuning an instrument: small, regular adjustments keep everything working in harmony, helping you stay active and comfortable.

What draws so many people to chiropractic care is that it is a safe, drug-free approach that treats you as a whole person, not just a set of symptoms. Instead of reaching for medication that only covers up the pain, chiropractic focuses on helping your body heal naturally and function at its best. Your care can include posture guidance, stretches, and wellness habits that prevent problems from creeping back in. Suitable for all ages and gentle enough for the whole family, this holistic approach is about more than easing neck and back pain today. It is about supporting your overall wellness and keeping you feeling your best for the long run.

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

Highway 56 and Goodhue County Road 9 Converted to four-way stop Sept. 21

(continued from page 11)

A short time later, MnDOT and Goodhue County implemented some immediate changes to help drivers better recognize and understand the intersection, which included:

Larger sized stop signs on County Road 9 for enhanced visibility. "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" signs were also installed to provide additional notice to County Road 9 drivers.

STOP AHEAD and stop bars were repainted on eastbound and westbound CR 9 to provide enhanced pavement marking guidance to drivers.

Transverse rumble strips were installed on eastbound and westbound County Road 9 to alert approaching drivers of the intersection.

Vegetation was cleared in the southwest and southeast corners near Highway 56 and County Road 9 to further lengthen sightlines.

The crash details were analyzed and MnDOT led discussions with law enforcement, first responders and others to develop additional plans for changes to reduce crashes. The four-way stop was developed from these discussions.

Corn Maze After Dark at Windy Willow Farm

Ready to get lost in the dark?! Join us at Windy Willow Farm for a whole new way to experience the corn maze!

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October & early November events, happenings and goings on at WildWood!

315 Main Street | Nerstrand | WildWoodofNerstrand.com

Women in Business Networking Group

Thursday, October 8 | 9am | no charge

Bring your own coffee and come mingle and learn about other women-owned/managed local businesses {or just come to meet and make some new lady friends!}.

Barre Class : October Series

Thursdays, October 8, 15, 22 & 29 | 6:30pm | \$12 for one class or \$40 for all four Hosted by Barre w/Greta

If you love movement, you will love this full body workout! This fitness class incorporates ballet into a 50 minute workout to improve your strength and flexibility! All materials provided — come to one or come to all!! Must pre-register online.

Meal Prep Class

Tuesday, October 13 | 5:30pm | \$95

Hosted by Tina of Inspire Health & Wellness

Inspire Health will bring everything to prepare 3 family size meals with each meal consisting of over 1.5 lbs of meat and over a pound of veggies. {All seasonings, spices and olive oils included.} The three take home meals for this class will be meatball soup, steak bites w/mixed veggies and buttered ranch chicken w/green beans as well as FREE chocolate peanut butter protein bites included in meals! Ticket price includes three take home family-sized meals, supper during class and the class itself! Register for this class sooner than later as it has sold out before! Must pre-register online.

The Savvy Traveler : Modern Trends, Smart Tech Tips and Seamless Planning

Monday, October 19 | 6:00-7:30pm | FREE, but must still register online

Hosted by Linda Dorn of Northstar Journeys by Linda

Ready to reset, reconnect and explore the world on your own terms? Whether you are curious about easing into safe solo travel, seeking a refreshing scenic escape, or eager to join a group of like-minded travelers, this 90-minute workshop is designed to turn your next getaway into a reality. Join Linda, educator, travel advisor, and founder of Northstar Journeys by Linda, for an inspiring, conversational session on today's top travel trends—including emerging “Cool-cations,” luxury rail and immersive ocean and river cruises. Discover how to leverage digital tools and AI as your personal “travel intern” to streamline logistics, cut through research fatigue and unlock authentic experiences without the crowds. You'll leave with practical safety strategies, savvy planning tools and a blueprint to move from dreaming to exploring your next destination. Must pre-register online.

Halloween Cookie Decorating Class {adult/child}

Friday, October 30 | 6-8pm | \$45/ticket

Hosted by Kari of Sweet Q's Cookie Co.

Bring your little ghouls and gremlins this Halloween Eve to learn to decorate cookies with royal icing, with Kari of Sweet Q's Cookie Co.! Come and decorate your very own Halloween-themed cookies to the tune of all your favorite spooky tunes. Halloween costumes encouraged! Everything you need to learn some basic skills to decorate with royal icing will be provided. (All baking and icing prep included in the class will be done for you.) This class is geared toward kids and their adult caregivers or loved ones and is perfect for anyone from beginners looking to enhance their skills to professionals looking to just have a good time! This class is open to individuals of all ages. Participants under the age of 10 must have a ticket *and* be accompanied by an adult ticket-holder. Must pre-pay; details on the website.

3rd Annual Makers Market

Saturday, November 7 | 9am-1pm | Open to the public!

Boasting festive Christmas Market vibes nestled in a quaint small town setting. Peruse indoor and outdoor talented creators, bakers, woodsmen and metal twisters, candle makers and chocolate swirlers, crafters and inventors, tasty food vendors, live music and more!

Live Harp Rejuvenation Evening

Thursday, November 12 | 6:30-7:30pm | free-will donation

Hosted by Sarah Swan-McDonald

Escape the noise of daily life and relax during our Evening of Sound and Rejuvenation with live harp provided by Sarah Swan McDonald. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. so you can settle in and fill a cup with some warm tea before the harp music begins at 7:00 p.m. This is not a concert, but a 30-minute session of simple, quiet music designed to help you unwind. In this dimly lit space, you are invited to bring your own yoga mat, bolster, pillows, or blankets to create a comfortable spot on the floor. As the slow and meditative melodies fill the room, tension will dissolve and your mind will drift into stillness, leaving you feeling restored and refreshed. Admission is by free will donation, making this evening of rest accessible to everyone.

Sourdough 101

Saturday, November 14 | 11am-1:30pm | \$95

Hosted by Ashley of Ten Acre Baker

Join Ashley and enjoy a hands-on, beginner-friendly sourdough baking experience! In this class you will go through all the steps of making, baking and taking care of your own sourdough, no experience needed! You'll head home with everything you need to keep baking, including...your own jar of active sourdough starter, essential sourdough tools, a printed recipe card and informational guide and not one, but TWO doughs — fully mixed, stretched, and ready for you to bake at home. During class, you'll use all of the tools — plus your hands, a bowl, and the dry ingredients provided — as we walk step-by-step through preparing your very first loaf of sourdough. Only one participant per paid ticket. Must be 18+ to attend. Must pre-register online.

As always, WildWood is open for public and private rentals!

More information and event tickets available online at wildwoodofnerstrand.com/happenings

An Inconvenient Study



By Noel Aldrich, PhD, CNS
Licensed Nutritionist

Science is a powerful tool. A tool can be used for good, or it can be used improperly, which can result in significant harm. True science is the observation of causes and reactions in a controlled setting, or in a setting carefully described to understand probable cause. We have grown up in the age of science. We are familiar with the idea of looking for clues as we watch our favorite detective shows and murder mysteries on TV. However, many of us do not take the time to look for clues ourselves, but we trust others to tell us what the evidence is. There is no shame in asking questions. When evidence is presented, questions should be asked, just like questions are asked in TV shows. When it comes to science and your body, you need to be the one to ask the questions.

Questions have been asked for many years regarding the effectiveness of vaccinations. To evaluate the evidence, the United States government established the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) (<https://vaers.hhs.gov/>) in 1990 as a database for reporting adverse events directly related to a vaccination. Since 1990, more than 2.5 million adverse events have been reported. This number of adverse events certainly justify asking questions, but how to answer those questions is more challenging.

The gold standard, or “ideal” situation, for scientific study is to have a control group and a test group. In asking the question, “Is this vaccine safe to give to a child?” – how do you have a control group and a test group?



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Would a parent volunteer their child to be the test subject of an untested substance? Typically, the answer is “no.” So, how do we evaluate the safety of a vaccine? Since vaccines have been around for more than 50 years, there are records that can help bring clarity to this question. Those documents are now becoming part of public record.

A new documentary titled “An Inconvenient Study,” (available on YouTube) presents the recent history of an important research project designed to evaluate the safety of childhood vaccinations. The study completed by the Henry Ford Health Systems of Michigan reviewed the health history of 18,000 children. Sixteen thousand were vaccinated and two thousand were unvaccinated. The results showed a 250% increased risk of chronic health problems among vaccinated children compared to unvaccinated children. The complete study was published on the US Senate website by Senator Ron Johnson because the original researchers were not willing to publish the results. This documentary provides access to the resources for each of us to be able to ask more questions.

In a follow-up podcast (<https://www.westonaprice.org/podcast/>) #555, Del Bigtree noted there are additional studies that have been done that show increased risk related to vaccinations. A 2017 science article authored by Mawson evaluated vaccinated vs. unvaccinated children in Mississippi and found increased rates of chronic illness among the vaccinated. Another study authored by Lyons-Weiler in 2020 looked at children in Oregon and those who were vaccinated had more doctor visits and illness compared to those unvaccinated. Another 2020 study authored by Hooker and Miller observed increased risk for asthma, ear infections, or developmental delay with increased number of vaccinations received. Science is providing an answer to the question, “Is this vaccine safe to give to a child?” The answer raises even more questions and a lot of intense emotions.

Another important question to ask is, “What additional ways can I help my child have a strong immune system and be as healthy as possible?” Nutrition is designed to support a healthy body. The immune system cannot do its job without the right vitamins and minerals. A vaccination never provides vitamins and minerals to help the immune system get stronger. When you feed the body what it needs to grow strong and respond quickly, then you will have less illness and chronic disease. While this article focused on the impact of vaccinations on children, the same question must be asked about vaccinations at any age. There is no shame in asking questions.

As a nutrition specialist, I can help you learn how to strengthen your immune system using the whole foods and vitamins your body needs. Finding the resources for true health can be located right in your local grocery store. Contact me to discuss your health goals for the coming year. A No Charge Consultation is available for you to ask your questions and begin to get some answers. Nutrition is designed for healing. 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.*

CITY OF NERSTRAND, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

JULY 21ST, 2026

7:00p.m.

221 Main Street, Nerstrand

1. Call to Order/Pledge Allegiance
2. Roll Call: Gretchen Gilmore, Pam Caron, Betty Voge, Karla Ingersoll and Todd Evavold
3. Public Hearing: N/A
4. Public Forum: N/A
5. Consent Agenda N/A
6. Staff Reports N/A
7. Ordinances N/A
8. Resolutions N/A
9. New Business

A. August meeting reschedule- Reschedule to August 5th.

B. Tobacco License Application- The Council is requesting Dallas Amy to attend a council meeting to meet the council.

10. Unfinished Business

11. Adjourn

Motioned by Karla and voting anonymously approved by all.

Next City Council Meeting is scheduled for August 5th 2026, at Nerstrand City Hall.

Todd Evavold, Mayor

LeAnna Anderson-Speiker, City Clerk

CITY OF NERSTRAND, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 5th, 2026

7:00p.m.

221 Main Street, Nerstrand

1. Call to Order/Pledge Allegiance
2. Roll Call: Pam Caron, Betty Voge, Gretchen Gilmore, Betty Voge, Todd Evavold, Karla Ingersoll
3. Public Hearing: N/A
4. Public Forum:

Kyle Flom from Flom Disposal was in attendance and presented a brief presentation on their history with Nerstrand and a desire to continue that relationship with Nerstrand. The City had inquired with Flom Disposal for Budgeting purposes what the rates would be for our next contract and we are looking at a 5% increase to that service.

5. Consent Agenda

(All items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and have been made available to the City Council in advance of the meeting. The items will be enacted in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a council member or citizen requests, in which event the item will be removed from this agenda and considered in normal sequence.)

• Regular Meeting Minutes of July 14th, 2026

• Special Meeting Minutes of July 21st, 2026

• Payment of Claims

A motion was made by Pam and vote was approved by all.

6. Monitor Revenue and Expenses

Karla has revamped the way we look at our budget and monthly expenses. She is improving the processes.

7. Staff Reports

(continued on page 15)

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Kids are back in school, and that means we all need to be careful. Watch for buses, children walking to school and bicycles on the road. By playing it safe, we all can have a brighter future.



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CITY OF NERSTRAND, MINNESOTA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (continued from page 14)

Clerks-Sent 1 disconnect and 3 past dues. Budget Items to mention Computer and UPS. Council wants UPS to be ordered now so we do not lose any equipment to a lightning strike or power surge.

Fire Dept- 5 Calls, applying for grants, hired a new Fireman, and meeting with the townships to discuss upcoming contracts.

Public Works(PW) Dept- The City of Nerstrand's Utility systems are not at risk of being "hacked". They would need to be online for that to occur. Ours are not. The City Hall roof is leaking in two areas due to flashing and roof ball. July 25th PW team serviced and checked lift station pumps, found some issues but there is a plan. July 13th meet with Rural water. Aug 6th meet with Bollig. Aug13th meeting with Rural water. PW wants to know what is Councils priority on roads to be paved so they can get quotes for budgeting.

8. Ordinances-N/A

9. Resolutions

A. 2026-27 Donations for the Banners

A motion was made by Karla and a vote was approved by all.

B. Review and Finalize Financial Policy (2026-28)

A motion was made by Gretchen and a vote was approved by all.

• 2026-26 Donations for the Park-trees

A motion was made by Gretchen and a vote was approved by all.

10. New Business

A. Streets and Highways-Pothole repair- Steve had already done this ahead of the meeting without knowing it was on the agenda.

B. City Hall Capital Improvement (2nd Floor layout)-Move to unfinished business
11. Unfinished Business

A. ACH Contract-Soon the City will offer ACH for Utility Bills

A motion made by Karla and a vote was approved by all.

B. Review Snow removal contract

Minor changes to the snow contract. Ensure in front of sheils building is added and through park.

• City Hall Tuck Pointing-Chimney is in worse shape than we thought. Tuck pointers would like to know how we would like them to address the issue. A motion was made that they are to cover with cement to stop the structure degradation was made by Karla and all voted to approve.

12. Adjourn

A motion was made by Karla and a vote was approved by all.

Next City Council Meeting is scheduled for Sept 15th, 2026, at Nerstrand City Hall.

Todd Evavold, Mayor

LeAnna Anderson-Speiker, City Clerk

CITY OF DENNISON MEETING MINUTES August 6th , 2026

The August Dennison City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Jeff Flaten

on Thursday, August 6th, 2026 at 7:00 pm. Present were Councilors Caleb Voight, Heidi Cooke, Nichole Schloesser and Diane Ruddle, and clerk Jessica Page.

Councilor Voight moved to approve the meeting minutes from June 4th 2026. Councilor

Schloesser second. Motion passed 5:0.

Councilor Schloesser moved to approve the meeting minutes from July 9thth 2026. Councilor

Ruddle second. Motion passed 5:0.

Councilor Schloesser moved to approve the Treasurer's report. Councilor Cooke second. Motion passed 5:0.

Sheriff: Not present.

Todd Greseth: August 25th major budget meeting for the county. Large number was thrown out, but Todd felt it will be able to be brought down to a more manageable level. There is currently a court case regarding the data center in Pine Island, so it's on hold for now. Todd noted there are now folks showing up in support of the data center, as well as those who are against it. Districts 2 and 4 have races for the General Election. There are 2 candidates running for sheriff.

Old Business/Committee Reports/Building Permits: Lots of re-roofing permits going through, but nothing else.

Administrative Issues:

1) The Sapphire Event Center and Liquor License. Last month, an email was forwarded to the council from Councilor Schloesser regarding her research on the issue. The mayor also forwarded emails from the city attorney and the state Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement office on liquor licenses and State Statue 340A. The city attorney reviewed Or-

dinance 72 and prepared a memo outlining the changes she believes would be appropriate to create a new "event center" category. She also presented a draft ordinance that would enact the changes.

Being that some of the council members didn't receive the emails or didn't have enough time to review the information, it was decided to hold off on a final decision on the liquor fee. The city council then passed a new resolution, incorporating the same language used from Resolution 1-2026-01, except for allowing the lower fee until the August 6th council meeting.

Mayor Flaten moved to keep the license at the full cost for the remainder of the year.

Councilor Cooke second. Motion passed 5:0.

2) Continued discussion on repealing Ordinance 32 and replacing with Ordinance 90, Firearms in the City Limits. Last month, the city council came to a consensus regarding the language for a fine/penalty for Ordinance 90. Council feels the final version is ready to move forward.

Public hearing is scheduled for September 3rd at 6:45.

3) Opus and billing issues update. The mayor and city clerk had a conference call with Mike Shuba from Opus on July21st. 7 issues were discussed. The mayor believes the meeting was productive and helpful in resolving the highlighted issues. If more issues need to be addressed or necessary follow-up is warranted, the mayor won't hesitate to ask for more meetings and more accountability/clarity.

(continued on page 16)



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THEME: SOLAR SYSTEM

ACROSS

1. Ancient Peruvian
5. Hit the slopes
8. Bro or sis
11. Thomas the Engine's warning
12. *Sun, e.g.
13. Twist and distort
15. Carpenter's groove
16. *Jupiter's inner "ring"
17. MC Hammer's "2 ____ 2 Quit"
18. *It makes up the majority of Jupiter's mass
20. Narrative poem
21. "When ____ Cry" by Prince
22. Louisville Slugger
23. Chase
26. Puffy cloud
30. Nurses' org.
31. Frozen drink
34. Ricci of fashion
35. Same as climate
37. Buddy Holly's "Peggy ____"
38. Knight's breastplate
39. Flying toy
40. a.k.a. pennant
42. Possesses
43. Appetizer
45. Like certain pine
47. Large edible mushroom
48. ____-Arts, or fine arts
50. Disparaging remark
52. *The largest moon in the Solar System
55. *Jupiter's Great Red Spot
56. Up it in poker
57. Exclamation of disgust
59. Famous diarist Samuel ____
60. Like decorated cake
61. Reply from a tunnel
62. Tarzan's adoptive dad
63. Neither here ____ there
64. Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, acr.

DOWN

1. It would
2. Master of ark
3. Buffalo Bill's last name
4. In conflict (2 words)
5. Coach-and-four
6. Type of leaf cabbage, pl.
7. *Reason for Mars' redness
8. Kind of palm
9. Author Murdoch
10. Sandwich with acronym name
12. Snow mover
13. Flash of light
14. *Farthest planet from sun in our Solar System
19. Make awake
22. Opposite of vend
23. Gets ready for a trip
24. Dark
25. Indian restaurant yogurt staple
26. ____ Zhen in "Fist of Fury"
27. *The Solar System spans roughly 1.6 ____-years
28. Uniate church member
29. Impudent
32. ____-friendly
33. *Center of the Solar System
36. *The smallest planet
38. Per ____, or yearly
40. Vigor
41. Approved
44. 4 years for a U.S. President, pl.
46. Daisies
48. Bench in Mexico
49. Larger key on the right
50. Pas in ballet
51. Between trot and gallop
52. Effect of pain?
53. Mussolini, with Il
54. Not counterfeit
55. Relaxation location
58. Ornamental pond dweller

SUDOKU

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