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NOVEMBER 26, 2026 Volume 19 • Issue 22

Christmas in Wanamingo

By Cheri Roshon

Santa Claus is coming to town! All the good boys and girls of all ages will be pleased to see what's going on in Wanamingo! On Thursday, December 3rd, it is the Wanamingo Commercial Club's presentation of Christmas in Wanamingo. The Commercial Club puts this on every year using the funds obtained from dues paid by the businesses that operate here, and benefit from this connection.

The fun begins with treats that will be offered from 4pm to 5pm in the Industrial Park where Jake's Liquor Store, Decker Power and Zumbro Valley Landscaping reside. Stop in and say hello, and see what they have in store for you. Then it is on to the Main Street businesses from 5pm to 7pm. Once again, treats will be served, and there are other events for the whole family to enjoy!

Stop in at the Wanamingo Community Center to see the Santa carving collection. From 5-7pm visit with Santa at the Olmsted Medical Center at 217 Main Street. Sit in his lap and whisper in his ear what you want for Christmas this year.


2025 Christmas in Wanamingo

There will be a Fundraiser for this year's fireworks in July.

(continued on page 4)

Angie and Barney Are At It Again!

By Cheri Roshon

They say good things come in threes, and this season is no exception:

1. Christmas is right around the corner!
2. Viking Market (formerly Kenyon Market) is now owned by Barney and Laura Nesseth.

(continued on page 8)

Information, Anyone?

By Cheri Roshon

As the winter chill is creeping up on us, and homeowners all over town are tending to the landscaping and getting the gardens put to bed, a recent renovation is taking place on Main Street, too!



(continued on page 9)

Christmas Events are just Around the Corner

Thursday, December 3rd will be Christmas in Wanamingo. There will be treats at local businesses and bring a non-perishable food item or cash donation to each participating business and get your card stamped. Completed cards will be drawn for cash prizes.

1st prize is $100.00.



(continued on page 8)

Announcements

• The Kenyon Area Historical Society is having their Annual Christmas Cookie Sale. The event will take place on Saturday December 12, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at The Martin T. Gunderson House, 107 Gunderson Boulevard, Kenyon, MN.

(continued on page 3)

Celebration Maples



By Cheri Roshon

So, you ask, what is a Celebration Maple? Well, over the past few weeks, you may have noticed the eradication of a few Ash Borer damaged trees near the Wanamingo swimming pool and ball field. They were getting to the point of having to be removed for safety reasons, the school district had them removed. The Wanamingo Community Foundation decided to apply for a funds matching grant through the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, or SMIF for short. I have been writing about this group for over a year now, so hopefully my readers will know what I am talking about, but if you haven't yet heard about it, it's high time you did!

Wanamingo was the first town in our surrounding area to have a SMIF group.

(continued on page 10)

Kenyon Area Prayer Vigil Reflection

By Rev. D.J. Chatelaine,
First Evangelical Lutheran Church



On Election Night, folks from the Kenyon-area gathered together at First Ev. Lutheran Church for a special prayer vigil service. Originally, the vigil was planned to be held at the Kenyon Veterans Memorial Park as a way to give thanks for the men and women who have defended and fought for the freedoms we have as Americans, notably the freedom to elect our leaders.

(continued on page 4)





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For advertising information, contact Journey Parsons at (507) 384-1521 or Terry Campbell at (507) 951-7417.

Announcements

• **Hiawathaland Transit**: Service hours are 7:30am-4:30pm Monday through Friday. Call dispatch at 866-623-7505 Monday through Friday 6am-9pm and Saturday 7:00am-5:00pm. Visit threeriverscap.org for more information.

• **All are welcome to breakfast, fellowship, bible study, and prayer time every Saturday morning at Hauge Lutheran Church in Kenyon.** Breakfast and fellowship start at 8:00 am. Followed by a verse by verse bible study. Finishing with prayer time at 10:00 am. All are welcome (men, women, and children) each Saturday morning!! Any questions, please contact Loren Bauer: 507-450-6623.

• **Three Rivers Community Action is currently accepting new Meals On Wheels clients in the communities of Zumbrota, Mazeppa, Goodhue, Pine Island, Kenyon and Wanamingo.** Receive a hot meal delivered to your home by a volunteer at lunch time up to 5 days per week. To qualify you must be 60 or older, live within city limits, have limited mobility and/or are unable to prepare nutritious meals. The suggested donation is $5-$10 per meal. For more information on how to sign up for meals or to be a volunteer driver, please contact Dana Bergner at 507-421-6067 or dbergner@threeriverscap.org

• **Wanamingo Veterans Honor Guard invite you to become a member.** Join us and help us make the Wanamingo Veterans Honor Guard an even bigger success. WVHG meets the third Tuesday of each month at the Wanamingo Community Center. The VFW will meet from 7-7:30p.m. The Honor Guard will meet from 7:30-8:30p.m. For more information contact Eric Dierks 507-321-1967, Gary Floan at 507-732-7740, or Larry Van De Walker at 507-421-4674.

Do you have an announcement?
Email:
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AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY

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

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E-mail your church announcements, schedule, etc. to the Kenyon-Wanamingo Messenger at: hometownmessenger@gmail.com

Pioneer and Perfecter of Faith

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

— Hebrews 12:1-2

Our reading today invites us to reflect on the life of faith as a race marked out for us.

And who has gone before us to mark it out? Jesus, the pioneer (or trailblazer) of faith.

He did it all, providing this great gift for us. He paved the way when we were so lost in our sin that we were like dead people walking in darkness (Isaiah 9:2; Ephesians 2:1-5). He made us alive to faith. He justified us, he sanctified us, and he sustains us through every trial. Jesus lights the way for us, and he will bring us safely through to where he is. As the apostle Paul describes it in Philippians 1:6, "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion."

Some Bible translations describe Jesus' role here as the "author and finisher" of faith, and that reminds me of some treasured gifts that grace our family's home. My mother-inlaw and late sister-in-law gifted us with beautiful, handmade quilts. They "authored" these treasures, designing them on graph paper, choosing colors, cutting pieces of fabric, and quilting them together. They also "finished" these artworks beautifully, down to the last binding stitch. I benefit from these gifts of grace, resting under someone else's finished work.

In our life of faith, we depend on Jesus' accomplished work. From start to finish, we can fix our eyes on him, following his lead and relying on his guidance and finished work every step of the way.

Pioneer and Perfecter of faith, where would we be without you? Lead and guide us, Lord, and may we rest in you. Amen.

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Kenyon Area Prayer Vigil Reflection

(continued from page 1)

But, the cold and rain pushed us inside. This vigil was led in collaboration by Pastor D.J. Chatelaine (First), Pastor Darren Flinck (United Methodist), Pastor Larry Grove (Hauge), Pastor Dustin Haider (Holden & Dale), and Pastor Joe Jorgensen (Gol). This was one of ten similar election night vigils held across Southern Minnesota. The spirit of the vigil was to come together in community at the end of a stressful and divisive election cycle, to pray for our country, and to remember the unity that we share as members of the Body of Christ.

The vigil featured heartfelt prayers, songs, a reading from President Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address, and a blessing for uncertain times. We prayed for the peaceful transition of power, that our leaders may lead with wisdom inspired by God's love and care for all Creation, and that we may join closer together in Kenyon during divisive times such as these. We ended our time together with a candle-lit singalong to "This Little Light of Mine" and were sent out to share the Peace of Christ with each other, the wider community, and the world. It was a reverent and joy-filled evening, as we centered ourselves on God's love for the world and our calling to respond and share that love the best way we can.

Participants reflected on the warmth and sense of belonging they felt that night, and expressed gratitude for the opportunity they had to be together, despite the cold and rain outside. They also shared a hope for future community prayer services, something that can continue to work to build relationships, bring our community closer together, and remind us of our identity as children of God. In the days, weeks, and months ahead, please continue to pray for Kenyon, our state, and our country as we journey through life. And may we remember that we are all in this together, rooted in God's love for the world.

Christmas in Wanamingo

(continued from page 1)

It is $5 per entry for a beautiful large rendition of our beloved water tower. Donations will be taken from now until Christmas at Security State Bank on Main Street. Really, they are beautiful, and everyone should have one!!!

There will be drawings for local gift cards, too! 1st prize is $100.00, 2nd prize is $50.00 and 3rd prize is $25.00. You MUST bring in a non perishable food item or cash donation and receive a card at any business. You also MUST have 10 different business stamps to qualify for the drawing. Once you have collected 10 or more stamps on your card, get it to the drawing box at the bank and give it a kiss for luck before you drop it in the box. The official drawing will be held the next day, and the winner will be notified.

As you walk the street, chat with friends and neighbors, enjoy the treats from the businesses, and remember the reason for the season, please also think of all the people who may not be as fortunate as you are, and consider a donation to the Salvation Army to make someone else's Christmas a brighter one. Wishing you all a very Happy Holiday Season!!

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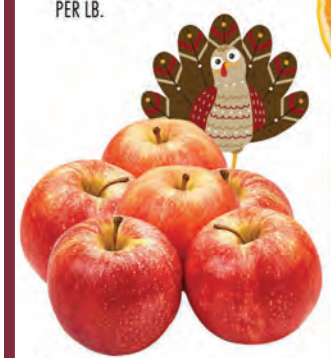

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Christmas Events are just Around the Corner

(continued from page 1)

Stop by the Wanamingo Community Center to see the Santa carving collection. Santa will be at the Olmsted Medical Center at 217 Main Street. Stop between 5 and 7pm for a visit.

Saturday, December 5 from 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. downtown Kasson turns into a winter wonderland for the day! Families can snap photos with Santa, pose with our giant Yeti, and hop the trolley for stops all around town. Kids can get their hands busy with holiday crafts and games, warm up with a cup of hot chocolate, decorate an ornament or enter our coloring contest, and keep an eye out for giveaway baskets along the way. It's a full day of holiday cheer, and every participating business helps make the magic happen.

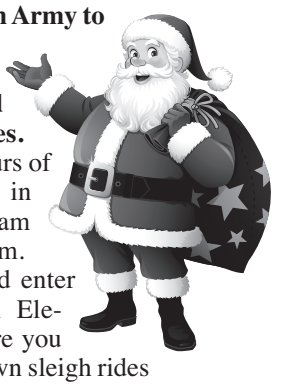
Christmas in West Concord will be held on Saturday December 5th. The Bell Tower Center will have coffee, cocoa and hot cider starting at 9am. Check out the silent auction, festival of wreaths and the Christmas Program at 5pm. There will be a free community supper from 5:30 to 7pm. The American Legion will have fresh homemade doughnuts starting at 7am and there is a Christmas Marketplace at the Historical Society from 9am to 2:30pm with lunch served from 11am to 1pm.

On Saturday, December 5th in Goodhue, you can experience the Christkindlmarket German Christmas Market, featuring German food and beverages, children's activities, artisans, crafter and vendors, horse drawn rides and meet Santa and the Grinch from 11am to 3pm.

Thursday, December 10, from 5 to 7pm Kenyon businesses will be open for evening shopping and will hold prize drawings. Shoppers can also sign up at local businesses for the Kenyon Commercial Club's ham drawing. Santa will stroll through downtown and stop at State Farm for photos. The library will host its annual Candy Land event.

On Saturday, December 12 the Kenyon VFW will host a Sip and Shop featuring local craft vendors open from 11am to 3:30pm. A pork commercial meal will be served from 5 to 7pm. The Kenyon Area Historical Society will hold its annual Bake Sale & Cookie Walk at the Gunderson House. The Kenyon VFW Toy Drive will be accepting donations thru December 21st during normal operating hours. Gifts will be distributed to local families and children in need on Tuesday December 22nd from 5 to 7pm at the Kenyon VFW.

On Saturday, December 12th, Triton's Community Education joins with Dodge County's Salvation Army to bring sweets and treats to all the good boys and girls of all ages. There will be 3 hours of family fun to join in on, starting at 10 am and going until 1 pm.



You can park and enter through the Main Elementary Door. Here you will find horse drawn sleigh rides waiting to whisk you away, maybe even through some snow? There will be free pictures with Santa, and you can decorate cookies with the girl scouts. There will be crafts to make to bring home and hot cocoa to sip on while you do so.

And gift giving just got easier, too! Local vendors and crafters will have unique products on display for those hard to buy presents for, because these gifts are handmade and one of a kind! The winter wonderland will put you in a festive spirit for your holiday shopping pleasure as you peruse the colorful displays of gifts and sweets. As you can tell, the elves among us have outdone themselves again, so be sure to avoid the Christmas Last Minute Shopping Blues and find that special handcrafted gift for everyone on your list.

Angie and Barney Are At It Again!

(continued from page 1)

3. Angie Anderson is bringing her famous home cooking directly to Viking Market!

Angie, a Kenyon native and local favorite chef, is known for her incredible comfort food at Angie's Cafe on Main Street. To help everyone eat well while staying on a budget, she is introducing "make-ahead" kitchen treasures. In addition to purchasing these meals at her restaurant, you can now buy her homemade soups, chilis, and other delights at Viking Market. Along with the soups and chili, there will be other "homemade" specials from time to time at Viking as well. Be sure to pop in and check out the offerings available.

Viking Market already offers holiday staples like Swedish meatballs, world-famous pølse, and the best herring in the Midwest. Adding Angie's home-cooked meals makes it an even better destination for great food at competitive prices. And don't forget about Angie's bulk take out specialties such as Alfredo's and lasagnas that you can call ahead and order for those special get togethers and the holidays that are up and coming! If you have a meeting for work, a funeral to host, or a bunch of relatives showing up to mingle and get fed, give yourself a break and order ahead! They'll never know you cheated!!!

Shopping locally keeps our small-town economy strong, reduces shipping impacts, and directly supports our friends and neighbors. There is nothing quite like walking into a business where people know your name and appreciate your support. At Angie's, it always feels like home. I know the quality of her food, and I'm particularly fond of her pizza's. You can have the pizza cooked for you, or get it as a "take and bake" so you can cook it at home. And of course for those of you who don't have the time at lunch to go sit down and relax a bit, Angie has "Grab N Go" meals in microwavable containers so you can still eat good food without the hassle of making it. Think meatloaf , mashed potatoes and gravy, with a veggie. Or how about a Pork Commercial? And if you have an idea for a grab n go, just call the restaurant at 507-789-1100 and put in a request! Input welcome! She aims to please.

Being as this is a time of year to focus on the blessings in our lives, I asked Angie to tell me something she is grateful for. No hesitation here! "I am so grateful for my staff. Amber and Dakota know the ins and outs of the business and are very invested in making this a success. I don't know what I would do without these ladies! And Thomas cooks every other Sunday, which gives me time to take care of other things that need doing. And for my customers that make all the hard work worth it!"

We are thrilled to see this partnership happen and encourage everyone to support our local businesses this season.

Wishing you all a very Happy Holiday Season from the crew at the Messenger!





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Information, Anyone?

(continued from page 1)

The information booth that now resides next to the Larson Cabin has had a facelift. Members of the Wanamingo Community Foundation have gotten together to make it more accessible, and added a touch of greenery and a cement pad to the space. Dirt was brought in from Zumbro Valley Landscaping, the plot was leveled, a cement pad was poured and some grass and hostas were planted to make it less muddy and more beautiful.

A big thank you goes out to Hader Farms for providing the funds for the cement pad to be poured. Bruce and Patty Prigge donated and planted some hostas on the east side of the booth, with the help of Larry Vande-Walker. Larry and Bruce raked out the plot and put grass seed down. The grass is already coming up, so by spring it should be looking really good.

So, what is an information booth used for? Well, 35 years ago, the Southeastern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, now called the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, or SMIF for short, gave Wanamingo its first monetary grant to spruce up the town. This came in the form of supplies to build a booth to which the residents of Wanamingo could post upcoming events, information on activities around town, and information about different organizations such as the Lion's Club and other groups. Currently, the Lion's Club, Wanamingo Community Foundation and Adopt a Spot have information posted, but there's plenty of room for more. Anyone in town can place posters or notices in the 3 separate hinged boxes for people to see what's going on. Of course, once you post an event and the event is over, removal of the notice is required as well. When I want to know what is currently happening in town, I go to Area 57 and look at the entry board, or over to the Post Office where people hang things to let the locals know what's up. Now we have another source of information to check into.

So, next time you need to know what's going on in town, or are strolling by on a walk, stop and check out the Information Booth and see what your Wanamingo Community Foundation is doing for our town. For more information on the Foundation, go to wwwwanamingo@SMIFoundation.org. They welcome residents in town to come to their monthly meetings to give input or maybe lend a hand on the projects they are sponsoring. It's a great way to get involved with your hometown!

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- Infant & toddler toys
- Craft kits & activity sets

Celebration Maples

(continued from page 1)

Thirty five years ago, the first project completed on this agenda was the information booth posting the happenings in Wanamingo. But that is literally another story in the saga of SMIF. This particular project I am speaking about is a $5000.00 project to replace the trees that were removed with six young Celebration Maple trees. These trees will grow quickly to provide shade for people who come to watch the kiddos swim, and the baseball teams play. Right now, people come to watch, but there was no shade to sit under or picnic tables to sit at so people attending could talk to each other and hear the latest happenings in the area, otherwise known as gossip. In order to make it feasible to congregate instead of just watching from their cars, the trees were planted, and the idea of picnic tables was born. So far, the picnic tables are still on the wish list, but the trees are planted, and looking happy and healthy.

So, the way this works, money is raised from various activities, such as the gambling fund at Jake's Liquor Store and JB's Tavern. There is a meat raffle at Jake's on Sundays and one at JB's on Friday nights. Money from these events and others are put into the Wanamingo Community Foundation. Once a project is approved and the cost assessed, a matching grant is applied for through SMIF. If it is approved, the project goes forward without any money coming out of the resident's pockets. I encourage you to learn more about this Foundation on their website, or by talking to the people on the board. The website is Wanamingofoundation.org The board members are Michael Bolton, Gary Bakko, Larry Van deWalker, Susie Beulke, Patty Prigge, Jennifer Ohr, Michael Alme, Lisa Johnson, Brent Leininger and Barney Nesseth. For the readers in Kenyon, you also have a brand new SMIF group that can do the same for your projects in town.

The people in charge of this project would like to extend a big thank you to Jesse Steberg and his crew at Zumbro Valley Landscaping for the trees purchased and their donation of delivering the dirt and the labor involved to see this to fruition. It really does take a village to get these projects off the ground. So, next time you take a stroll or a drive to the area mentioned, stop and take a look at the new trees! Someday, they will be as big as the maples that line the Main Street of our town!

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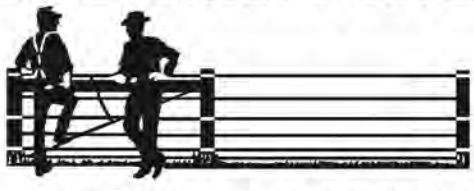
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