

Lakes Area Review

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2026

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GIRLS PLACE THIRD IN STATE TOURNEY
see page 12



FOUR NLS WRESTLERS MAKE ALL-CONFERENCE
see page 13



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VOL. 139, NO. 12

75¢

AROUND THE LAKES

Tuesday's Table

NEW LONDON—Tuesday's Table, a free community meal co-sponsored by The Link, will be held at Peace Lutheran Church on March 24, starting at 6 p.m. Everyone welcome. The church is located at 100 4th Avenue SW.

SAIL class

NLS AREA – S.A.I.L. (Stay Active and Independent for Life) exercise classes open to seniors 65+ in the New London-Spicer community. The free class focuses on strength, balance and fitness. Classes each Monday and Thursday, starting at 9:30 a.m. Glen Oaks Village Apartments in New London, and Each Tuesday and Thursday starting at 10:15 a.m. at the Dethlef Community Center in Spicer. Everyone welcome.

Food drive

WILLMAR—Hope For Our City grocery distribution, each Wednesday starting at 5:30 p.m. Hope For Our City is located at 1020 Hwy. 71 NE, across from the Flags of Honor memorial. Suggested donation \$1. Everyone welcome.

We Fest Karaoke

SPICER – Each Friday in March the Spicer American Legion hosts a We Fest Karaoke Contest, starting at 8 p.m., with the contest finals on April 10. The grand prize is two general admission tickets to the We Fest music series and a chance to sing the national anthem on the main stage at We Fest. The legion is located at 155 Lake Avenue South.

Easter Egg Hunt and Cookie Decorating

NEW LONDON – Join the New London-Spicer Ambassadors on Saturday, March 28th from 9 am to 11 am at Peace Lutheran Church for an Easter egg hunt and cookie decorating while learning about the New London-Spicer Ambassador program.

Ceramic tray/dish crafting class

NEW LONDON – The New London Public Library will be hosting an adult ceramics crafting class on Saturday, March 21st and 28th at 9:30 am. This event is free of charge, but you must register to participate by calling (320) 354-2943 or visiting the library.

Growing Hope Project: Collaborative Zine

NEW LONDON—Little Theatre Auditorium hosts a homemade magazine project to include sketches, poems, illustrations, and more on Sunday, March 29th from 11 am to 4 pm.

INSERTS

Teal's
Inserts may cover all or some of the total Review circulation as requested by the business placing the insert.

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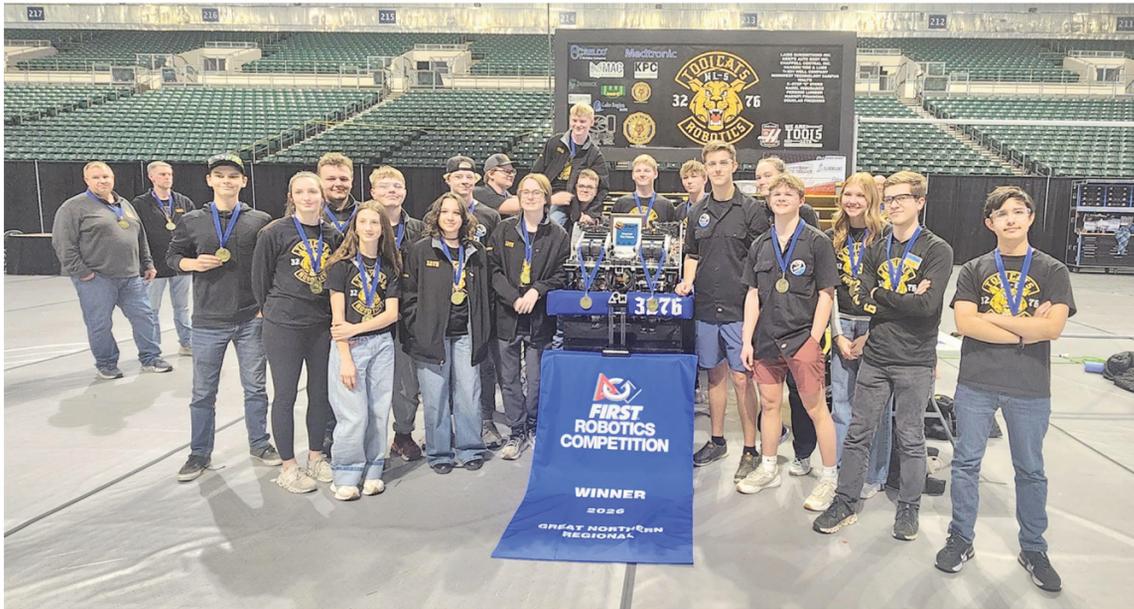


Photo submitted

Front from left: Hazel Vetsch, Maya Huda, Axel Eichhorst, Carson Stone, Jacob Skretvedt, Landon Eliason and Sam Schmitz. Second row from left: Ava Revier, Noah Condon, Coleman Davis, Samantha Wookey and Lucy Quisberg. Back row from left: Hayden Westberg, Luke Scott, Ethan Wenke, Lucas Finstrom, Owen Eichhorst, Lucas Nelson and Teagan Kavangh. Not pictured: Isaac Dowdey.

Toolcats win third straight regional championship

New London-Spicer robotics team three-peats at Grand Forks tournament, eyes fourth title in St. Cloud next month

By Shannon Urban
Staff Writer

For the third year in a row, the New London-Spicer Toolcats walked off a regional FIRST Robotics Competition floor as champions.

Team 3276 claimed the title at the Great Northern Regional in Grand Forks, N.D. on March 14, completing a three-peat that few teams in the state

can match. The Toolcats finished the qualifying rounds ranked fourth with a 13-4 record before advancing deep into the playoffs as the first pick of Alliance 1, ultimately winning the event.

The victory sets up what would be an extraordinary four-peat: New London-Spicer is also the two-time defending champion at the Granite City Regional in St. Cloud, where the team will com-

pete April 10-11 at the River's Edge Convention Center.

How FIRST Robotics works

FIRST Robotics Competition pits teams of high school students against each other in a game that changes every

Toolcats win
Continued on page 3

What's changed for locals in 12 months of Trump's deportation policy?

By Ted Almen
Publisher

A cold wind was quickly making its way across the frozen ground of a Minnesota prairie on this late February night. At the same time warmth permeated the room where a dozen men and women had gathered around the table in a neighbor's small kitchen, called together for the purpose of taking the temperature outside from an entirely different perspective.

That arctic blast of late winter weather blowing south from Canada wasn't chilling the souls of these folks, though. All of Latino descent, they had answered a plea for clarity in the fog of the ongoing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency's mission of deporting millions of undocumented immigrants from this country, a signature promise of Donald Trump's presidential campaign. Even as that operation advanced under great scrutiny, much of it negative, these local immigrants considered the consequences of being caught in the crossfire of a war they didn't start.

Yet all of them are

What's changed?
Continued on page 5



Photo submitted

Micah Chetrit, sitting on the floor to the right, works on the Toolcats robot during a competition. He was part of the very first robotics team at NL-S.

A light that endures: Micah Orr Chetrit

A family honors their son's quiet legacy of perseverance and generosity with a gift to the next generation

By Shannon Urban
Staff Writer

There are some lives that, even in their quietest moments, leave an imprint that does not fade.

And Micah Chetrit's was one of them.

Micah Orr Chetrit's middle name is a Hebrew word. It means light. His parents say they always knew it suited him, but it wasn't until after he was gone that they understood the full extent of its truth, or just how widely that light had spread.

His parents, Cyndi and Guy Chetrit, are not front-row-stage people. That's how Guy put it himself, sitting down for a conversation on a Tuesday afternoon six months to the day after losing their son. They didn't hold a large public memorial. They held a small celebration of life.

They leaned on their family. And then, quietly — in the same spirit in which their son had always done

A light that endures
Continued on page 3

Commissioners weigh safety concerns regarding hunters using rifles to harvest deer

By Ralph Dickerson
Editor

Last year the state of Minnesota passed a law, which took effect on January 1 of this year, that allows a county to decide if it wants to remain shotgun only for deer hunting, or allow rifles. During its regularly scheduled meeting on March 17, the Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners scheduled a public hearing on a draft ordinance regarding the issue for April 14 at 5:30 p.m. in the multipurpose room at the Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building located near the Hwy. 23-US-71 split in Willmar.

The state gave counties two options, pass an ordinance to remain shotgun only, or do noting and let the state law allowing rifles to go into effect. If the county wants to enact an ordinance regarding the issue, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources set a deadline of May 5 of this year for counties to enact such an ordinance, which then allows the DNR to include this ordinance in its annual deer hunting regulations handbook prior to deer season starting.

At the meeting Tuesday, county board members called the decision a difficult one, and framed it as a public safety issue due to the density of homes in the county. County board members expressed concern about allowing rifles for deer hunting due to them possessing a longer range than a shotgun.

Terry and Carol Schaefer live in



Roseville Township sent a letter to the board of commissioners, and to the Lakes Area Review, opposing allowing rifles to hunt deer. In their letter, the Schaefers said, "a 12-gauge slug can travel approximately 800 to 1,200 yards. A high powered rifle bullet (like a 30-06) can travel over two miles."

The Schaefers included a study from Stearns County that showed that on average 85 homes sit within a three miles radius of the average hunter. It also included a statistic that said over 140 hunters exist within this three miles radius, which creates a crowded zone of both hunters in the field, and homesites within range of the average deer rifle.

The Schaefers also said approximately 19,000 acres of public land exists in Kandiyohi County open to deer hunting, with many rural homes adjoining these lands. Commissioner Dale Anderson said this situation scares him.

"You have no idea who's going to be out there in that public land," said

Rifles to harvest deer
Continued on page 5

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COMMUNITY NEWS

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NLS POST PROM & 4TH GRADE FUNDRAISER

SLOPPY JO SUPPER

50th Anniversary

Thursday, March 26, 2026

4:30-7:00 pm
NLS MS/HS Cafeteria

\$8/ticket
Sold by 4th graders or at the door

Dine In, Carry Out, or Drive Thru!

You're Invited to a **Bethesda at Home** Open House

Thursday, March 26 | 1:00-3:00 p.m. | Bethesda StoneRidge

Stop in to tour our new offices, enjoy treats and good company, and learn more about our Home Health and Hospice services.

As your local expert in aging, Bethesda at Home provides *compassionate, professional care* — right where you call home.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Bethesda at Home
Serving others in faith, community, and life.

PACT for Families honors Mary Jo deCathelineau

Kandiyohi County Community Corrections press release

At its recent Annual Meeting, PACT for Families recognized Mary Jo DeCathelineau for her leadership and dedication to strengthening services for children and families across the region. DeCathelineau received both a Five-Year Service Award for her contributions to the PACT for Families Executive Board and the organization's Spirit of Collaboration Award.

DeCathelineau joined the PACT for Families Executive Board in 2020, initially completing the remainder of a term before being elected to two additional consecutive terms. She also served as Board Chair from 2022 through 2025, helping guide the collaborative's strategic direction and strengthening partnerships across the region. With more than 25 years of experience in probation through Kandiyohi County Community Corrections and years of service within the criminal court systems in Kandiyohi, Mary Jo brings exceptional insight, credibility, and expertise to the PACT for Families Executive Board. Her deep understanding of the justice system, youth intervention, and family dynamics has been instrumental in advancing cross-system coordination and promoting prevention-focused services that support children

and families. She is a mentor within the department for new probation officers at KCCC, is a leader in implementing evidenced based practices and teaches cognitive behavioral programs. Mary Jo has shown exceptional understanding and expertise with working with individuals with mental illness and trauma throughout her career.

Mary Jo also draws on her extensive community experience as a long-time member of the local Rotary Club and a Board member of the YMCA. These roles provide her with unique perspectives on community needs and collective impact, which she consistently integrates to strengthen services, align regional priorities, and maximize shared resources. A tireless champion of collaboration, Mary Jo fosters partnerships among corrections, schools, public health, human services, and community organizations. She has consistently advocated for early-intervention strategies, reduced system duplication, and meaningful family support programs that create measurable, lasting outcomes.

The Spirit of Collaboration Award is presented annually to an individual or organization that exemplifies outstanding partnership and commitment to improving outcomes for children and families. The award recognizes those who go above and beyond to build connections



PACT for Families conferred two awards on Kandiyohi County Community Corrections officer Mary Jo deCathelineau. She received the Five-Year Service award and the Spirit of Collaboration award. Pictured from left: PACT for Families Executive Director Sarah Vonderharr, deCathelineau and Kandiyohi County Community Corrections Director Dr. Tami Jo Lieberg.

across systems, reduce service barriers, and promote coordinated, community-driven solutions within PACT for Families' five-county service area. DeCathelineau has long championed prevention and early intervention efforts that support youth and families. She is also active in the community as a long-time member of the local Rotary Club and a current YMCA board member. PACT for Families leaders noted that DeCathelineau's dedication, collaborative leadership, and deep community involvement make her a deserving recipient of both honors.

Ridgewater College President Craig Johnson honored with Michael Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award

Ridgewater College press release

Dr. Craig Johnson, President of Ridgewater College, has been selected to receive the Michael Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and its Board of Directors. The award recognizes retiring college presidents whose leadership demonstrates an enduring commitment to student success and the development of student leaders.

"The strength of each student's experience is shaped in many ways by the value college presidents place on Phi Theta Kappa," said Lynn Tincher-Ladner, Ph.D., President and CEO of Phi Theta Kappa. "Dr. Johnson's nomination and election reflect a career grounded in student success from the very beginning."

The Michael Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award is an honor presented to retiring college presidents whose leadership has demonstrated an enduring commitment to student success and to the mentorship of student leaders.

Dr. Craig Johnson, President of Ridgewater College, will retire May 19, 2026, culminating eight years of



Ridgewater College Phi Theta Kappa members salute retiring Ridgewater President Dr. Craig Johnson this month as they celebrate his receiving the Michael Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award from Phi Theta Kappa and its Board of Directors. The award recognizes his leadership and commitment to student success and the development of student leaders. Front row, from left are officers Leslie Wiltschek and Nissa VanDenBroeke, and members Ava Mochinski, and Holly Risk. Back row from left: officer Jayden Kruse, Dr. Craig Johnson, member Phillip Ahlgren, Advisor Lori Anderson, and member Rebekah Youngdale.

dedicated service to the institution. Since assuming the presidency in 2018, he has led the institution through a period of significant growth and renewal. His leadership has been marked by expanding academic offerings, strengthening partnerships in the Hutchinson and Will-

mar communities, supporting strong enrollment growth, and championing a culture of belonging for students and employees.

"The impact of Phi Theta Kappa is shaped by the commitment of college leaders like Dr. Johnson," added Dr. Tincher-Ladner. "His nomi-

nation is a testament to the gratitude PTK students feel — not only for themselves, but for the generations of students who have benefited from his leadership."

Dr. Johnson will be honored during the Phi Theta Kappa Annual Convention on March 27, 2026.

Out of the Darkness

OPEN DOOR
CHRISTIAN CHURCH
Resurrection Sunday Service
April 5th 10:00 AM
New London Spicer High School Gym
101 4th Ave SW New London MN

Everyone is Welcome!

A light that endures Continued from page 1

things — they made donations to various causes that had a positive impact on Micah's life and that he cared deeply about. The New London-Spicer robotics program was one of them.

"It's not about the money," Guy said plainly. "To me, that's not the focus at all. The gift that you're giving back to us is keeping Micah's memory alive — the life, the legacy that he lived."

And what a legacy it is.

A life, however short, well lived

Micah was diagnosed with a rare form of muscular dystrophy at age six, the same year his family moved to Spicer. The disease progressed slowly but relentlessly, moving from his legs to the rest of his body, eventually taking his mobility and, near the end, even his facial expressions. What it never touched was his mind, his humor, or his instinct to give.

Former NL-S teacher, Joyce Friedrich, said it perfectly, "of all the things Micah accomplished during his abbreviated time with us, his imprint on others left an enduring impact. The way he lived his life with the challenges put before him was a true testament of perseverance."

When Micah transitioned to high school at NL-S, he arrived the same year the school's robotics program was being born. Andy Paulson, then shop teacher, launched the program, and Micah was in his very first class. In fact, he and his family were part of what helped shape it.

Paulson, who still coaches robotics in Perham, said Micah taught him to see every person as an individual and help them become their best — and that, he added, had made him a better teacher.

Guy Chetrit, an engineer himself, mentored the NLS robotics team for several years



Micah Orr Chetrit

alongside his son. He describes the program as one that opens doors for students who might otherwise go unnoticed — kids who aren't the star athletes, who are drawn to videography or marketing or technical problem-solving, who need a place where those things matter. "It really is a program that caters to a variety of students," he said. "It suited Micah because of his physical limitations, and he was able to flourish there."

In many ways, robotics gave Micah exactly what he needed—a place where physical limitations mattered less than creativity, problem-solving and persistence. The Chetrits both agreed that the program is an incredibly influential one. "The robotics program helped students discover who they were and where they were going."

And it's still opening doors for kids who need it. That, the Chetrits would tell you, is exactly why it still has a special place in their hearts.

Micah went on to achieve Eagle Scout rank at 16, compete at State in MathCounts, and earn MVP honors with the NLS robotics team. But Guy is quick to say those accomplishments are only part of the picture. The harder part — the part he's most proud of — is watching his son figure out how to compensate and continue to live his life fully.

"As the disease progressed," Guy said, "he really leaned into

his intellect. That's where his strength was, and that's where he thrived." When Micah could no longer walk safely in a crowded school hallway, he moved to a mobility scooter. But even as the disease slowly stole his physical abilities, it was never able to touch his spirit.

And when the disease eventually stole his facial expressions, he leaned harder on his words and his humor. NL-S literature teacher Abigail Duly shared a seemingly small moment that shows just that, "On his first day in class with his mobility device, he hit the doorframe and said, 'I just wanted to let you know I'm here—I didn't see a doorbell.'"

Micah Orr Chetrit graduated from NLS in 2013 and from Minnesota State University Mankato in 2017 with a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering, graduating summa cum laude. He was hired by IBM out of a career fair before he even finished his senior year, and went on to work in the company's microprocessor design group in Rochester — at the leading edge of large-frame computer architecture.

A spirit of strength and giving

Despite his challenges, he insisted on living independently, in his own home, in a wheelchair, in a city an hour from his parents. "He insisted on independence. Even in a wheelchair, he lived on his own and built his own life" both Cyndi and Guy explained.

After he graduated and began earning a salary at IBM, Micah quietly supported multiple charities and helped individuals in ways his family only learned about after his passing. It was simply how he operated — generosity as a habit, not a grand gesture.

"He wanted to make people's lives better, even behind the scenes," Cyndi recalled.

"We heard that from many people. He really came alongside people, quietly, most of the time. With a very generous heart."

After he passed, the messages came pouring in. From teachers who had quietly been affected by having known him. From classmates and competitors who flew in from California, Utah, and Indiana for his celebration of life. From parents in the community who told Guy and Cyndi what their son had meant to their children — things Micah had never mentioned to his own family.

Cyndi said. "It helps us go through this grieving process to know that he really made a difference."

The family hopes the donation and Micah's story will encourage others to support the fund, as well as encourage people throughout the community. But everything else aside, they've described already receiving so much more than they've given. "The gift to us is that people are telling his story—that his legacy continues."

And giving was simply part of who he was.

Although the disease took things from him gradually — first his ability to walk safely, then his mobility, eventually even his facial expressions — what it never managed to take was his mind, his humor, or his deep instinct to look after the people around him.

Overall, the hope is that Micah's story encourages others—especially young people—to pursue their passions, to persevere and to become who they are meant to be. Because that is exactly what Micah did.

In a life marked by challenge, he built something lasting: connection, inspiration and a quiet, enduring light.

And for those who knew him—or are just now hearing his story—that light will remain.

Toolcats win continued from page 1

season. Each fall, teams receive a new challenge and spend the following months designing, building, and programming an industrial-size robot from scratch — all within strict rules on size, weight, and materials.

This year's game, Rebuilt, challenges three-team alliances to score points by collecting and shooting foam balls, called fuel, into a central hub. At the end of each match, teams earn bonus points by climbing a tower. Alliances must work together strategically, with each robot playing a defined role in the overall plan. Team 7257, the Sauk Centre Semiconductors acted as Alliance Captain, team 3276, our own New London-Spicer Toolcats, were 1st pick, and team 7048, the Fargo Red River Rage, rounded out the winning alliance.

A design built to win under pressure

The Toolcats' robot this season featured a double-turret shooter design that allowed the team to score quickly even when opposing robots were actively playing defense. That reliability proved critical during the playoff rounds, when teams are more likely to face strategic defensive play.

The path to the championship wasn't entirely smooth — the team encountered power issues during several playoff matches. But the pit crew diagnosed and resolved the problem between rounds, and the robot performed without issue in the final match.

Coach Aric Harrier described the methodical process his students used to track down the problem. "Power issues are a common thing with robot collisions," he said. "If there is a power issue after a match, my on-field student technician/programmer Owen Eichhorst would look to see if the robot lights are off, then check the computer logs for brownouts and other vital issues as they quickly got back to the pits, where the pit crew was waiting to do whatever needed to be done."

When the first fix didn't hold, the students dug deeper. Harrier explained that after ruling out the 120-amp breaker as the culprit, the team theorized that heavy defensive play against

their high-volume double-turret shooter was causing collisions that stressed the robot's internals — allowing a switch to make contact with a nearby part. "We tightened up some parts that screws were backing out [off] with new thread lock compound and moved our breaker slightly to avoid the nearby part," Harrier said, "and that proved to work in our final match."

For Harrier, the episode was also a reminder of what the program is really about. "With veteran students graduating each year, it's neat to watch new team members — who think they work hard during the year — when the clock is ticking between matches," he said. "The sense of urgency really goes up and the students get more focused and speed up dramatically."

What's next

The Toolcats now turn their attention to the Granite City Regional, where they have won the last two years. The event runs April 10–11 at the St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center. A win there would give the program four consecutive regional championships across two different events — a remarkable run for a small-school program competing against teams from across the region.

The stakes are historically high. Harrier noted that last year, the Toolcats finished fourth in the world out of 3,702 teams — the best finish ever by a Minnesota team. The returning drive team gives him confidence heading into St. Cloud: driver Carson Stone, co-driver Jacob Skretvedt, technician Owen Eichhorst, human player Coleman Davis, and media captain Ethan Wenke all return from last year's championship squad.

Harrier said the team has clear goals before the Granite City Regional. "We need to score more fuel in autonomous, dial in our double-turret shooters to make a better percentage of shots, and most importantly the bot needs to be more robust to take on the heavy defense," he said.

He also credited the broader community for making the program possible. "We would

not have a successful program without the backing of our community and sponsors," Harrier said. "The money from sponsors and donors has allowed us to replace worn parts and focus on robotics, teamwork, problem-solving, gracious professionalism, kindness, confidence, leadership, mentor-

guided engineering, and grit through hands-on learning."

FIRST Robotics regional events are open to the public. Matches are fast-paced and loud, and the combination of engineering problem-solving and head-to-head competition makes them an entertaining watch for fans of all ages.



Photo by Brooke Eischens

A community of women gathered Friday night to prepare for Saturday's free clothing swap at Little Theatre Auditorium.

Could clothing swaps be the new trend?

By Brooke Eischens

Women throughout New London and surrounding communities gathered Friday night to prepare for Saturday's free women's clothing swap at Little Theatre Auditorium.

The event was dreamt up by Heather Kalevik while going through closets at home. She thought, *rather than just getting rid of all of these clothes, how fun it would be to gather a few friends and revamp our wardrobes together?* She created a Facebook post with the idea, which sparked quite a bit of interest and required coordinating a sizable space.

Heather reached out to Maria Novak to see if Little Theatre would host the swap and open it up to the public. Maria loved the idea and many were willing to help make it happen.

People donated their time, tables, clothing racks, hangers, and gently used clothes in exchange for fellowship

and free clothing (if they wanted).

The swap ran from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 14. All donated clothing, shoes and accessories were free for the taking. Anyone was welcome to bring their own bag, but a suggested \$5 donation allowed guests to fill a provided paper bag with whatever they could fit — from shoes to formal wear. Proceeds were split between local family support nonprofits and Little Theatre Auditorium, and leftover items from the swap were donated to The Link.

"We're hoping it's an event that will grow," said Maria.

The next dream?

A children's clothing swap!

Heather, Maria and the gals already have the plans in the works, so keep your eyes and ears open toward the end of summer for Little Theatre Auditorium to announce the official date.

THIS WEEK IN LAKES HISTORY

Compiled by Ralph Dickerson

The Early Years

New London Review, March 19, 1885

General Grant Worse

The Medical Record of the 14th says: The ulcerative process in the anterior pillar has, since the consultation, extended to the adjoining side of the tongue, and the bridle of tissue bounding the perforation of the anterior pillar internally gave way Wednesday and Thursday the patient was in reasonably comfortable state. His temperature normal and pulse regular, but he was suffering somewhat from the effects of insomnia. His digestion is good, and semi-solid food taken easily and with reasonable relish. He

suffers no pain. In face of all these general symptoms, the local difficulty has markedly increased and parts in the vicinity of the ulcerations are becoming more infiltrated.

An associated press dispatch the 14th says: Gen. Grant went to bed early on Wednesday night, but he did not fall asleep until nearly midnight. He suffered considerably from a pain in his right ear. The ulcerations in his throat had also taken on a more angry appearance, and cocaine was again used to allay the pain....

100 Years Ago

New London Times, March 18, 1926

COURT DOINGS

Albin Levender of Harrison was arrested by Sheriff Bonde at the Levender shack on a charge of furnishing liquor to a person who became deathly sick. Levender was arraigned in Municipal court, waived examination, and was bound over to the District court. Levender was also arraigned

in Municipal court on Monday on a charge of maintaining a nuisance. He will be given a hearing at 10 o'clock a.m. on March 31.

Lillian and Claries Peterson of Lake Elizabeth were taken to the Sauk Center training school for girls by Sheriff Bonde, Tuesday evening.

75 Years Ago

New London Times, March 22, 1951

Bob's Broadcast

Farmer friends, don't forget, the date for the annual Farmers' Party. It's next Friday evening, March 30, at 8:00 o'clock at the New London high school auditorium.

...

We are expecting your kiddies this Saturday for the Easter Egg Hunt, unless

another snow storm blocks all the roads. Then it will be one week later.

At present there is nearly three feet of snow on the ground in this area. This added to the total snowfall this season, breaks the all-time record of 86.5 inches in the 1916-17 season by 6.9 inches...

50 Years Ago

New London-Spicer Times, March 18, 1976

Deer in bus barn

As Jim Saulsbury and his drivers were putting away their school buses last Monday morning after making the morning run, one of the drivers noticed eyes glaring at her in the bus barn. The driver, Mrs. Bob Messenbrink, then realized it was an adult deer, lying on the dirt floor of the large building, it apparently thinking it was hidden. Saulsbury arrived first behind that bus and quickly called the "Times" office. Upon arriving with my camera, I found the deer still lying in the same position. At I crept up to get a close shot, the deer exploded and ran through the open doorway, across Hwy.

23 and then onto the golf course. As you guessed, the photo didn't turn out, and the deer didn't stick around for a second shot.

Why was the deer bedded down in the bus barn? Who knows. It might have been chased in there by something; but it certainly didn't appear to be wounded in any way. Very interesting and unusual though!

Special notices

REMINDER

The Continuing Education Committee will meet Wednesday, March 24 in the morning.

Please turn in your renewal certificate at the high school before that time.

25 Years Ago

Kandiyohi County Times, March 19, 2001

Community education bill gaining support

A bill for a special levy for equalization of funding for community education program in Minnesota schools is fast gaining support, both around the state and within the Legislature.

According to NLS Community Education Director Tom Scearcy, so far a resolution supporting the Youth in Community Education legislation has been passed by 51 advisory councils, 25 cities and 64 school districts.

Search recently was one of four persons who testified in St. Paul in behalf of the bill before the House education and finance committee.

This committee, chaired by State Rep. Barb Sykora, reached favorably to the bill.

"It went very well," he said.

"The committee seemed to be very attentive. I think the committee realizes there hasn't been an increase in funding in 14 years."

This week, he said, he expects the Senate committee will hear the bill.

Youth in Community Education is a measure which asks that school districts be allowed to enact a special levy for children's outside-of-school programming.

"What this means," Search said, "is everyone will pay the same—\$2.31 for every man, woman and child in the district—regardless of where they live in the NLS district."

The bill originated locally three years ago, the brainchild of Scearcy. It was written with "a lot of help" from the offices of State Sen. Dean Johnson and State Rep. Al Juhnke....

10 Years Ago

Lakes Area Review, March 19, 2016

Public expresses concern over NL-S' proposed transgender policy

Parents and grandparents concerned over the transgender and gender nonconforming students policy being considered by the New London-Spicer school board attended the board's listening time prior to the regular meeting Monday night.

Generating the most controversy is language in the policy that states, "A student should not be required to use a locker room or restroom that conflicts with the student's gender identity."

Also controversial is lan-

guage in the policy pertaining to sports participation: "Generally, students should be permitted to participate in physical education and sports in accordance with the student's gender identity that is consistently asserted at school. Participation in competitive athletic activities and contact sports will be determined on a case-by-case basis."

Typically, the school board's first reading of a proposed policy is informational and action is not taken at that time. The board votes to approve or deny on a proposed policy following its second reading...

CIVIC NEWS

Bond refinancing saves district taxpayers nearly \$240,000

By Shannon Urban
Staff Writer

A competitive bond market delivered good news for local taxpayers at the March 9th board meeting when the New London-Spicer School District refinanced \$8.25 million in debt at a lower interest rate than anticipated.

The district received nine bids for its general obligation school building refunding bonds, with New York-based Jefferies submitting the winning offer at 2.61 percent. The rate came in below the 2.8 percent estimate financial advisors had projected during pre-sale discussions.

“We like to see three bids, so you got nine. That’s great. Very competitive,” said a representative from Ehlers, the district’s financial advisory firm, presenting the sale results to the school board. The refinancing targets the

2027 through 2033 maturities of bonds originally issued in 2016. The combination of a lower interest rate and premium received on the bonds will save approximately \$239,000 in debt service payments over the life of the bonds.

Board chair Mark Peterson expressed relief at the outcome given recent market volatility.

“It’s great to see that we got a good rate in this market being what it is right now,” he said. “That was not a guarantee, and it’s really nice it came in on the low side.”

The district also benefited from strong credit ratings. Standard & Poor’s affirmed the district’s underlying rating of A-minus stable, citing the local economy, household income levels slightly higher than the county average, and balanced operating results. Additionally, the district

received Minnesota’s triple-A credit rating through the state’s credit enhancement program, which helps school districts secure more favorable borrowing terms.

The bond proceeds will sit in escrow from the April 2 closing date until May 7, when the old bonds are redeemed. During that period, the funds will earn interest at a locked rate of 3.74 percent, generating approximately \$31,000 for taxpayers.

“That premium that’s received on the bonds will go towards financing the prepayment of those bonds,” the Ehlers representative explained. “What happens when you receive premium in a refinancing situation is it reduces the par amount of the bonds, and that’s how you end up with the savings for your debt service payments.” The 2016 bonds being

partially refinanced will continue with their original payment schedule for the 2034 through 2036 maturities, which were not included in the current refinancing.

The school board voted unanimously to approve the resolution awarding the bond sale.

“It’s fantastic to save taxpayers some money,” Peterson said following the vote. Superintendent Jamie Boelter noted the savings comes as the district navigates challenging financial circumstances at the state level, including potential cuts to special education funding and uncertainty around compensatory aid.

The refinancing represents one of several financial strategies the district has employed to maintain fiscal stability while managing rising operational costs.

Prairie Woods \$1 million grant plan adds trails, ADA compliant dock and new yurts

By Ralph Dickerson
Editor

The Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners approved Resolution 2026-17 supporting Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center submitting a \$1 million grant to the state Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund administered by the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources for projects on its Phase I improvement plan for the park. These Phase I projects include: new natural surface hiking trails and accessible routes, a wetlands boardwalk with ADA accessibility, a new canoe and kayak dock and launch with ADA accessibility, the reconstruction of the existing yurt, and the creation of an ADA accessible yurt and a new drinking water station at the pavilion.

“I’m here today to request a letter of support for a state grant application for Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center,” said Prairie Woods Executive Director Jennifer Swenson. “...Prairie Woods, as you know, currently serves more than 20,000 visitors every year, including school groups from across the state, and many of those travel from up to 75 miles annually to visit Prairie Woods and bring their students.”

Commissioner Duane Anderson asked Swenson if the grant required a match. She said it required a 25% match, and Anderson asked where Prairie Woods intended to get the money for the match.

“Prairie Woods has some funds that we are dedicating towards a match, plus other grants that are pending,” said Swenson.

She then broke down the funding sources. She said some came from donations to Prairie Woods, and other funds came from an account in Prairie Woods’ name with the Willmar Area Community

Foundation. “Lots of donations that we’ve received over the years have been (put) together for opportunities like this,” said Swenson.

As part of her presentation to the board, Swenson explained some of the Phase I projects proposed with this grant application.

Swenson said the floating dock at the canoe/kayak area served the park well for many years, but lacks ADA accessibility. Even so, around 1,400 people per year use the dock.

“It can be difficult for visitors,” explained Swenson.

Swenson said the yurt, a large canvas structure, serves outdoor groups year round, and also serves as an overnight space in addition.

“In the winter time we use it as a warming house for the programming,” said Swenson. “It’s right along Kettle Lake, so groups will warm up in the yurt and then do a few rounds of cross country skiing.”

Prairie Woods intends to replace the current yurt with a new one, and then construct a companion ADA compliant structure.

Swenson said Prairie Woods offers a variety of natural habitats that makes the park unique. She said the park contains native prairie wetlands, woodland and undeveloped shoreline on Lake Florida. In addition, the park includes a glacial ridge and a narrow land bridge by Lake Florida Slough.

“These are rare places where visitors can come and actually experience all those different variety (sic) in one contained landscape,” said Swenson.

If Prairie Woods receives the grant, Swenson said the park does not expect construction on the Phase I projects to start until sometime in 2028. The park needs to finish the final design and secure the proper permits first.

Youth movement: Spicer chooses Nelson to fill vacant council seat

By Ralph Dickerson
Editor

The Spicer City Council tabbed resident Megan Nelson to fill the seat vacated by Ted Kroll earlier this year. Nelson’s appointment lasts until election day, at which time voters elect a candidate to fill the remaining two years on Kroll’s original term.

Nelson possesses the option to only hold the seat until the end of the year, or file to

run for the two years remaining on Kroll’s term. In selecting Nelson, council members said they wanted younger representation on the city council.

Former Mayor Denny Baker also applied for the vacant council seat. Mayor Robin deCathelineau queried the council on why members favored Nelson over Baker. She said, “with Denny we wouldn’t have any training.

He could just step into the role and run with it.”

Council member Shelly Munyon said she understood deCathelineau’s point, but thought the city simply needed younger members on the council. Munyon said she believed if elevated to the council, “she’s going to put in the study,” to learn the job. Council member Troy Block said appointing her now gives “her some background before the end of the year if she runs.”

Council member Zach Larson agreed with tabbing someone younger to fill the seat. Larson said he supported either Nelson or another applicant, Andrew Madsen.

In applying for the position, Nelson described herself as a “longtime Spicer resident. (I) enjoy getting involved, (and) in helping our community.” As for her experience, Nelson said she currently serves as the executive secretary for the Green Lake Property Owners Association.

As mentioned earlier, former Spicer Mayor Denny Baker also applied for the vacancy. Baker listed his reason for seeking the office as one in which he wants to see the city to continue to progress.

Aaron Thompson, a native of Albert Lea, MN in southern Minnesota, moved to Spicer in 2018 from Olivia, MN.

Thompson said his nearly 30 years as a business owner in similar sized communities in the state allowed him to see the challenges facing Spicer, and understands how public and private partnerships work.

Thompson also said he served 23 years with the Olivia Fire Department, working his way up to assistant chief. He retired from the department in 2018.

“I also served as the department president, which means I was involved in planning budgets, prioritizing equipment needs and acquisitions and worked closely with the Olivia City Council and the surrounding township boards,” said Thompson in his resume sent to the council. “I also served on the fire relief board, which researched and made recommendations for retirement plans and compensation for our volunteer crew.”

On his application for the vacant city council seat, Andrew Madsen said he “would like to get into public service and hopefully help my community.” Madsen also said he wanted “to make the city of Spicer great (and) to help local businesses thrive and maybe help lower taxes.”

Do you want to comment on this story? Email ralph@nslakesareareview.com.

Coffee with Kandiyohi exploring interest in increasing community childcare options

Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services press release

Kandiyohi County HHS is launching a new community outreach effort, “Coffee with Kandiyohi”, designed to create a simple, welcoming way for residents to learn more about becoming licensed child care or foster care providers.

Starting at the end of March, county licensors will be setting up various dates and locations at local coffee shops across the county for informal drop-in opportunities to allow individuals to ask questions, learn about li-

censing and training requirements, and explore available grants and supports. This effort is part of our ongoing commitment to increasing access to child care and foster care by meeting community members where they are and reducing barriers to getting started.

Event dates and locations will be announced via our county Facebook page and website. We’ll also be sending notice to local papers, such as yourself, to spread awareness. Our first event will be at Lake Affect Coffee in New London on March 31st from 10a-12pm.

Farm to Food Security grants open

Minnesota Department of Agriculture press release

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for the Farm to Food Security Grant program. Established by the Minnesota Legislature in 2025, the program is modeled after the former federal Local Food Purchase Assistance Program and supports local farmers and producers by funding projects that purchase local food and distribute it to Minnesotans experiencing food insecurity.

Individuals, nonprofit organizations, for-profit businesses, Tribal governments, government entities, agricultural cooperatives, economic development organizations, and educational institutions are eligible to apply. The program supports purchases of Minnesota-grown and -raised foods including produce, meats, and other whole, minimally processed, and processed foods with at least one primary ingredient that is 80% grown or raised in Minnesota. Grant funds may only be used for food distributions that take place in Minnesota.

“This program connects Minnesota grown food with people who need it, while helping small farmers build new markets and stable income,” said MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen. “We modeled it after a federal program that demonstrated real impact, and I appreciate the bipartisan work at the Legislature that made this program possible in Minnesota.”

The MDA may award up to \$1.3 million in total funding for this program through a competitive review process. Applicants may request between \$20,000 and \$100,000, with a dollar-for-dollar match required on all funds over \$50,000. This is a reimbursement grant, meaning awardees will need to pay for the project costs first, then submit receipts after the contract is signed in order to receive reimbursement.

Full grant eligibility requirements and application details are available on the MDA’s Farm to Food Security webpage. Applications are due by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2026.

Kandiyohi County Road and Bridge Meeting

Press Release

Kandiyohi County Public Works Department Office Conference Room
1801 Highway 12 East
Willmar, MN 56201

Tuesday, March 24th, 2026
8:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Tentative agenda items will include reports, updates and potential actions in the following areas:

- 8:00 AM • 2026 Construction Plan, Mel Odens
- 5 Year Construction Plan, Mel Odens
- 8:30 AM • Maintenance Summary & Update, Todd Miller
- 9:00 AM • GLSSWD Phase II Update, Corey Smith
- 9:30 AM • Drainage Department Update, Austin Hilbrands
- Other

The agenda may be subject to change

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What's changed? Continued from page 1

documented aliens or naturalized citizens... they are in this country legally. But as has been widely reported in the media, that fact didn't always matter. In September of last year the Supreme Court voted 6-3 to allow ICE agents to detain and interrogate people based solely on ethnicity, language and accent, plus their presence at certain job sites known to typically employ immigrants.

One year later

In February of 2025, shortly after the inauguration of Donald Trump and the anticipated commencement of his vow to expel all illegal immigrants from the U.S., a quiet gathering of local Latinos was called to try gauge their level of anxiety related to this policy. It was not like deportation of the undocumented was something new to this country... Trump's predecessor Joe Biden was reported to have removed more than 271,000 people during his last year in office, and Barack Obama had previously been dubbed the "Deporter in Chief."

However, it was the vitriol with which Trump announced his plans to undergo mass deportations of millions of people from this country which caught the nation's attention. Phrases like 'they're eating the dogs and cats,' calling people illicitly crossing the border from Mexico rapists and murderers, and more recently calling Somalis "garbage" alarmed immigrants both legal and illegal. It also helped to fuel a contempt of immigrants among the President's most staunch supporters, whether they had any interaction with these foreigners or not.

As it turns out, that anxiety, that fear of ICE activity, was not allayed by their legal status. (A year ago at least one person interviewed was undocumented... she did not attend this follow-up, for undisclosed reasons.)

The questions for both this article and the one a year ago were asked in English, translated into these people's native Spanish language; the answers were likewise translated back into English.

By far the most prominent theme coming out of both conversations was that these immigrants wanted exactly what people coming to the U.S. for hundreds of years have sought: a better life for themselves and a bright future for their children. While that hasn't changed in the past 12 months, they do feel less secure in that search.

"She said she make a plan with her husband," explained our translator. "What will happen if for some reason they are detained? So he's trying to make a plan to (keep) together family."

Immigrants are careful not to draw unnecessary attention to themselves. It is "...really necessary to don't have any resistance with with the offi-

cers." After witnessing what took place in Minneapolis this winter, nerves are on edge even for naturalized citizens. "We learned this year that doesn't matter. You just need to look like me, like everybody here," one man said. "It is the principal reason for being afraid."

"Even if they were white, even that doesn't stop these guys to kill this people. If he's just against the government it's good enough to receive a shot."

Feeling betrayed

Many local immigrants work at jobs which put food on Americans' tables. It's the kind of work that, to be honest, most Anglos won't touch. It's only natural then to feel some level of betrayal when realizing that they can be stopped and detained based solely on the color of their skin. "We do everything legal," one man said. "So yeah, it's a big thing, right?"

The sentiment around this kitchen table was that immigrants are being treated poorly. "Disrespected, for sure," said one, and another noted that in the present tense the haters are less likely to keep their opinions to themselves. He blamed that on the current Administration's policies which, in his words, give that permission.

"The First Amendment give you the right to say stupid things, yes? But right now looks like it's not only say... you can do stupid things. So, yeah, it's sad, because we feel like a target."

Too close for comfort

In February of 2025 when we first met, the President's threats seemed like they were a world away... something happening in Washington, D.C., but not in West Central Minnesota. But when ICE agents spread out across Minneapolis, then came to Willmar, the idea of being detained -- and possibly deported -- changed from subtle unease to a conceivable possibility. An ICE stop at a local gas station added an exclamation point to that.

"She feels afraid to walk to the school with the kid," said our translator. "She need to carry with the ID."

"It's weird, because some people is really nice, more nice than normal, and the other is more aggressive."

"Like one month ago, I have an issue in my truck. I was fixing the bumper, so looked like I was hiding there. And one old lady really nice and really kind stopped and she told me, 'You need help? You're hiding from somebody. I will be here until you go, okay?' That kind of stuff happens. But some people looks to us no nice."

Been here longer

Early in U.S. history, Mexico included a large swath of today's United States. In fact, many in the Latino community can trace their lineage in the Americas back umpteen cen-

turies, certainly farther than anyone of European descent. Today, the majority of Mexicans are a mixture of indigenous and European (mostly Spanish) heritage.

"I mean, in the continent, and I don't want to go in that argument, but I'm been longer... my ancestors were here before," said one man. "And I feel like people just don't want to acknowledge that. At this time it doesn't matter if you your ancestors were here before or not. I think right now what it matters that we are here, right?"

"I don't know. What is the point from this government."

"I feel like it's something about blaming other races, blaming the people of color. It's like we are second class humans."

Everyone has rights

While it was startling to hear of the number of children who were being withheld from schools in the Cities, there was much less of -- but not none -- of that happening at KMS. No one of the assembled had kept their kids home during 'Operation Metro Surge' -- a fancy name given to the rousting of people resembling immigrants. But at least one mom in the room thought of it.

"I was thinking that maybe I would keep them, home for a few days at the beginning. But then I say, 'We are legal here, right?'" She didn't want to be afraid, but even more than that she didn't want to pass fear on to her children. "So I say, okay, let's go. Let's keep going, and we'll see."

Another mom told how she related reality to her 15-year-old. "I told him, 'You know what? It can happen to you. It can happen to me. So you have to be careful if you go somewhere. Yes, you are Mexican American, but still the chances are higher.' And then one time, one day, he came from school and he's like, there's many, many friends don't want to go to school anymore." Her son wondered if their home could be a sanctuary should trouble arise for friends' families.

"He's like, yes, we have a room available. I'm like, it's okay. We can do that. That's fine."

Acts of kindness

Adversity often brings with it kindness. Even with all the right documents some immigrants are still too afraid to go out in public. One person in the gathering told of groceries being brought to the apartment where he works, and another told of someone who collected money from her church to be used to buy groceries. "So I (purchased) some groceries and I distribute them with five families."

Is this happening because people don't have money to buy food, or because they were too apprehensive to venture out? The answer is both. Some were just fearful of going out shopping, while others were even afraid of going to work and because of that were

low on funds.

What's changed?

Since the dawn of the current deportation activity, brown-skinned immigrants and naturalized citizens carry their documents when they leave their homes.

Profiled people don't go out as much for groceries or other necessities, for fear of being stopped.

Parents consider pulling their children from school.

These are all results of a heightened anxiety caused by a dragnet federal policy which sweeps up the good with the bad. No one seems to be against the arrest of the truly criminal, but in many cases it's been people with very minor or even no legal issues who are detained and held without proper due process. Yet that right is supposedly guaranteed by the Constitution for everyone in this country, citizen or not.

Still, not every change has been bad. As one man related, his neighbor now watches out for them like a hen over her chicks.

"You know her (the neighbor, born and raised in Kerkhoven). Okay, she take care of us. When we go to Walmart, she sent to me a message, 'Hey, are you okay? Let me know when you're home. Go get groceries and go back, please.'"

It also made these immigrants feel good to see the support they were getting from Anglo citizens who were protesting harsh ICE procedures against people of color.

"We feel really good when I saw the news all the people in the meetings in Minneapolis are white, and that make us feel really well. They start to sing. I feel my heart and almost start to have some drops of my eyes."

"It really moves me," added a woman. "I feel like I want to go and be there, but then I think, what if I go there and they try to detain me, and then people try to protect me, and I put them more in risk? But I'm really grateful for that. Thank you. We are in moral depth to them."

"Local people are getting used to us now. I mean, I feel like, welcome here," said another in the group. "I feel like we're making a change here in rural Minnesota."

"We want to be part of the community. I'm really happy to be here in Minnesota. I have told my kids all the time, yes, we have to work harder, we have to win our space in the society. It doesn't matter if we're here, or we're in Mexico."

Our host wrapped up the conversation with this: "We are coming from a place that we need to fight to survive. And we came here and are still fighting. We're here, we're afraid of ICE. We're there, we're afraid of a cartel. I mean, at the end of the day, it's like where are you safe? Very safer to be here."

RECORDS

Motor vehicle crash involving school bus

WILLMAR – On Friday, March 13, 2026 at 7:50am, the Willmar Police Department was dispatched to a motor vehicle crash with injuries. This crash occurred at the intersection of 6th St and 11th Ave SE in the city of Willmar. Officers arrived on scene at 7:54am and found a Palmer school bus and a 2019 Ford F250 pulling a livestock trailer both involved in the crash. Officers determined there were four juvenile students on the bus, all with minor injuries. All four were transported to Rice Memorial Hospital via CentraCare Ambulance for treatment and evaluation. No other injuries were reported. The 2019 Ford F250 suffered disabling damage as was towed from the scene. The Willmar Police Department is seeking to identify a small, black SUV that was in the immediate area at the time of the crash that left prior to officers arriving on scene. Any information can be sent to the Willmar Police Department. The Willmar Police Department was assisted by the Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office, Minnesota State Patrol, CentraCare Ambulance, Willmar Fire Department, Kandiyohi County Rescue Squad, City Line Towing, Plamer Bus, and the Willmar Public Schools.

Motor vehicle pursuit

WILLMAR TOWNSHIP – On March 17 at roughly 9 p.m. in the city of Willmar, Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Deputies located a vehicle near the area of 1st Street South and Willmar Avenue SE that was reported stolen earlier in the city of Willmar. As the vehicle turned into the Cash Wise parking lot, deputies initiated a traffic stop. The vehicle initially pulled over, however, the driver and three passengers refused to exit despite demands from deputies. The driver then accelerated through the parking lot in an attempt to elude law enforcement. Deputies initiated a pursuit as the vehicle turned onto 5th Street SE and continued southbound at a high rate of speed. During the pursuit the vehicle briefly stopped near Lakeland Drive and Becker Avenue SE, at which time the three passengers exited and fled on foot. Deputies and officers were able to locate and apprehend all three individuals, who were arrested and transported to the Kandiyohi County Jail. The driver continued to flee for several more miles until a sheriff's deputy successfully executed a PIT (Pursuit Intervention Technique), safely disabling the vehicle. The driver was taken into custody without further incident. The driver was arrested and transported to the Kandiyohi County Jail and is being held on charges of felony fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle, receiving stolen property, driving after revocation (of license), reckless driving and fifth degree drug possession. The Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office was assisted by the Willmar Police Department.

BOARD & COUNCIL MEETINGS

March 23, 2026

- Kandiyohi County Township Association Spring meeting, Willmar Conference Center, starting at 8 a.m. Location 240 23rd Street SE.

March 24, 2026

- Lake Andrew Township meeting, 7 p.m. 3453 150th Ave. NW, New London.

March 26, 2026

- New London Township meeting, 5 p.m., New London Town Hall, 16151 County Road 9, New London.

March 30, 2026

- Green Lake Township meeting, 6 p.m. Prairie Meadows School, 650 County Road 10W, Spicer.

April 1, 2026

- New London City Council meeting, 5:30 p.m. 10 Ash Street SE, New London.

April 6, 2026

- Kandiyohi City Council meeting, Kandiyohi City Hall/Civic Center, 432 Atlantic Ave. 7 p.m.
- Dovre Township meeting, 7 p.m. in the town hall, 3077 County Road 27 NW, Willmar.
- Colfax Township meeting, 7 p.m. 26490 5th St. NW, New London.

April 7, 2026

- Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners meeting, 9 a.m. Health and Human Services building second floor meeting room, 2200 23rd St. NE, Willmar.
- Spicer City Council meeting, 5:30 p.m. Dethlefs Community Center, 217 Hillcrest Ave. Spicer.
- Pennock City Council meeting, Pennock Community Center, 305 Dakota Ave. 7 p.m.
- Regal City Council meeting, 7 p.m. 14451 Hwy. 55 NE, Belgrade, MN.

Rifles to harvest deer Continued from page 1

Anderson.

Later Anderson said if the county does allow rifles for deer hunting, neighbors need to talk to one another about not only the location of each hunter's deer stand, but the location of homes in relation to those stands to ensure each hunter knows which directions not to shoot due to either another deer stand within range, or a home.

Commissioner Roger Imdieke also expressed concern switching from shotguns to rifles due to the population density in the northern part of the county around the lakes. He said the county board needed to hear more from the public on this issue.

"We haven't heard from a high degree of landowners whose homes and yards are potentially at risk with the longer direction or longer distance that a rifle is capable of," said Imdieke.

He then gave an example of the population density. Imdieke said when he first started hunting at age 15, he hunted in an area with only two farm sites. Today this same area contains both those farm sites,

but also 12 homes in the area.

"You. have to think about, you know, the safety too and what might happen with a straight bullet that travels a lot further than a shotgun slug would travel," said Imdieke.

Commissioner Corky Berg, a hunter himself, said when deer season opens, thousands of hunters across the state take to the fields in an effort to bag a deer. He said so many hunters crowded into relatively small spaces with high-powered rifles does create safety issues the board needs to take into consideration before it make a decision one way or the other.

"We have so many families living around lakes and in... the rural areas," said Berg. "We have a lot of people that can be impacted by this and have lots of concerns. So I'm really cautious about going forward."

From his point of view, board chair Steve Gardner said it comes down simply to a safety issue. When discussing the issue, he said the board needs to consider both sides of the issue. He said many people living in the rural areas of the

county told him they already fear going outside during deer season. Some farmers do not want people out in their fields, nor do they turn out their farm animals during this time of year due to fear of them getting shot.

Gardner then relayed a story from his youth that reinforced his view of the safety aspect of this debate. As a young man he went hunting in a rifle zone in the northern part of the state, and two deer came into view around 50 yards away from him standing broadside to him.

Gardner said he took the shot with his rifle and hit the deer. Only after taking the shot did he notice a farmstead about 800 yards away in his direct line of fire.

"The shame I felt for taking that shot, regardless of whether or not it was successful, lives with me to this day," said Gardner.

Commissioner Duane Anderson called the decision a hard one for him, and sarcastically thanked the state legislature for dumping this decision onto the county. While not decided one way or the other,

Anderson said he does lean toward allowing rifles.

Anderson said in his district, the southern part of the county, a significant amount of wide open spaces exist that allows hunters to see everything in their line of firing, which allows them to see the backstop for their bullets. He also favored allowing rifles for the youth. It allows them to secure a firearm designed for them which allows youth to hunt with their parents.

Anderson said some people hunt with AR pistols, and try to modify them for hunting purposes. He fears them wrongly modifying the firearm.

"If they modify it wrong, they get in violation of federal law, and they can get into trouble," Anderson said.

The county board wants much more public input on the issue prior to making a decision. The county intends to publish a draft ordinance next week, then hold a public hearing to gather community input prior to making a decision one way or another.

Do you want to comment on this story? Email ralph@nslakesareareview.com.

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OPINION

Ted Here..... by Ted Almen

Now, over 50 years later, I have to believe that there are still a few of you Wildcat readers out there who will remember the moment when Rick Peterson hit you. Having watched this game for all those years, and having played it, I cannot think of another 160-pound load of dynamite to explode on our local football field.

Richard Allen Peterson -- appropriately RAP -- died last week. He was just 71, but for all the fight in him this guy went 42 rounds with multiple sclerosis before he finally hit the showers.

Rick was a member of the Kerkhoven-Sunburg High School Class of 1973... one of those storied groups of guys (girls were just then starting to realize the opportunities of Title IX) that started coffee shop talk and fire-side banter. Their football team ran the table on the old West Lake Conference, and had an undefeated regular season before succumbing to a strong, also undefeated Appleton squad in a post-season playoff game.

Dave Hannig was the head coach, assisted by Harsey Scott. Peterson was in the backfield, along with Steve Gulsvig and quarterback Terry Baker. But it was probably on defense where Rick made his biggest impression, coming at opposing players with a fearless running head start from his safety position. Flying through the air, he would down an opposing player with his helmet... something that, thankfully, is much more guarded in today's game. I wonder how many concussions he must have suffered. But -- and all you 1970s-era players will nod in remembrance

-- when you 'got your bell rung' all the coach did was crack open a small capsule of smelling salts, wave it under your nose and send you back in the game.

The game of football has changed so much in the last 50 years, with trying to prevent head injuries taking the main stage. Even back in the day, we were issued helmets with only webbed straps as protection for our noggins. And it wasn't even that long before that face masks had made their debut (late 1950s). Going way back, helmets were made out of leather. So much for shock absorption.

I had the opportunity to be on a couple of football teams with Rick Peterson, although several years younger and mostly just a fan. But a fan of his I was... just watching him play with so much gusto made me want to try do the same. And I did play his position once he graduated, although nowhere near his level.

I was also privileged to play several seasons of Norway Lake-Sunburg baseball with Rick, where he donned the 'tools of ignorance' as the old sportswriters called catcher's equipment. I also remember the game (was it at Sauk Centre?) where he came in the dug-out between innings and told Tim Baker to put on the gear... said he was having a hard time seeing the ball. It wasn't long after that when we learned he was diagnosed with MS. That was the end of his illustrious playing days, and a lesson that life isn't always fair and can change in an instant.

Rick's funeral will be held Wednesday at Mamrelund Lutheran Church. He'll probably skip it for a ballgame in heaven. R.I.P. R.A.P.

ASK A TROOPER

By Sgt. Jesse Grabow



Question: I enjoy reading your column in the weekly newspaper. I have a question I hope you can address. We've had some heavy fog recently and I get frustrated with the vehicles that do not have their lights on. Sometimes the headlights are on and the rear lights are not. What is the advice/law in using your lights during the daytime when there is fog/rain/snow?

I think in the newer vehicles, the owners don't check if the lights are on thinking they automatically come on under those conditions. More often than not my 2025 Subaru does not have any lights on, at least in the early stages of lower vision conditions. I look at my dashboard and can see if the headlights are on via the instrument lights. Then I go outside to the rear and sometimes the rear lights are not on.

The best way I have found is to get to know your vehicle switches and lights. So, when I am parked, I can try the different positions on the switch to see exactly what lights are coming on. If the light conditions haven't triggered the auto lights, I can manually turn them on. In general, I keep the switch in the position of headlights and running lights (rear lights included) automatically coming on when light conditions warrant coming on. They automatically turn off when the car is turned off.

Thank you for addressing my question.

Answer: Thank you for the question and you bring up a lot of good advice and points. Your headlights and taillights must be turned on at sunset and used until sunrise. Use them during weather conditions that include rain, snow, hail, sleet or fog, and any time you cannot clearly see the road ahead for at least 500 feet.

People often fail to turn on their headlights in rain and fog due to a false sense of security,



over-reliance on automatic light sensors that don't always activate, and the mistaken belief that lights are only for seeing, rather than being seen. Other factors include confusion with daytime running lights (DRLs) and simply for getting.

Key reasons for this dangerous habit include:

- **Misunderstanding of Purpose:** Many drivers do not realize that in the rain, headlights are crucial to make their vehicle visible to others, especially from the rear.
- **Automatic System Failure:** Auto-light sensors often do not register daytime, overcast, or rainy conditions as "dark enough" to activate headlights.
- **Dashboard/DRL Confusion:** Modern dashboards are often always lit, leading drivers to mistakenly believe their headlights are on.
- **Habit/Forgetfulness:** Drivers often forget to manually activate lights if they are used to automatic systems.
- **Ineffective DRLs:** While Daytime Running Lights are on, they often do not activate rear tail lights, making the car invisible from behind.

A portion of state statutes were used with permission from the Office of the Revisor of Statutes. If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Trp. Jesse Grabow - Minnesota State Patrol at 1000 Highway 10 West, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501-2205. (You can follow him on Twitter @MSPP10_NW or reach him at jesse.grabow@state.mn.us).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trump's bankruptcies

To the editor:
I had heard that President Donald Trump had gone bankrupt in the business world. I wanted to know more about it since he was now influencing the largest economy in the World.

I typed the words Donald J. Trump bankruptcies in my search engine on my computer and discovered that Trump has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy 6 times. You can look it up yourself.

That was a little disturbing to me and so I feel the public should know more. I have had a limited amount of experience with bankruptcies but wanted to share what I know.

First, Chapter 11 bankruptcy is a "reorganization" process under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, primarily used by businesses—and sometimes individuals with high debt—to restructure financial obligations while remaining operational. Digging a little deeper and applying the KISS (Keeping It Simple Stupid) method, I want to expand in a little more detail what bankruptcy is about.

Please remember that this is a complicated process and I am not going to get into much detail. "The Devil is in the Details" applies here.

I wanted to come up with a simple way to explain the Trump bankruptcies. I came up with the Dr. Seuss characters "Thing 1" and "Thing 2".

Thing 1 is an individual and Thing 2 is a corporation.

Thing 1 is identified in our system of laws by a birth certificate at birth. This identification has been happening in our legal system for many, many decades and hasn't changed much.

Thing 2, the corporation, is formed when individuals or groups of individuals create, through our legal system, a new entity. This new entity is recorded in state government just as the birth certificate identifies the individual.

In our legal system this new entity, is in some cases, is looked at the same way as an individual. Lending institutions lend money to Thing 1 by requiring two things.

You are familiar with them if you bought a home. The bank identifies how much capital is available to support the loan.

This capital comes from the value of the house you are buying, which is appraised by a certified appraiser. The Bank then requires you to come up with a down payment which is also capital available to the bank and gives the bank some risk protection in case something happens and they have to call the loan.

The bank also requires you to prove that you can make the payments on the loan by asking you about your monthly and yearly income. When lending institutions lend money to Thing 2, they require the same things but the money,

capital, comes from the investors who put money into the corporation.

In one of the Trump cases the corporation planned building a casino. The bank wanted to know the market value of the casino once it is built. The lender also wanted to know where the money was coming from to make payments on the loan.

In the casino example, the corporation seeking the loan estimates how much money will be spent by the patrons who come to gamble as well as other income and subtracts the expenses in running the casino. The net is used to pay on the loan.

Something happens and the loan payments to Thing 2 aren't paid. The lender wants the loan payment and is putting pressure on Thing 2 by threatening to liquidate the business if the payments are not made.

Thing 2 decides to file a chapter 11 bankruptcy, reorganization, through the bankruptcy court system. With this filing, Thing 2 must reorganize his business so that it can operate at a profit.

In many cases a portion of the business is sold. This reorganization plan is submitted to the Bankruptcy court for approval.

Debt is usually forgiven as part of the plan for profitability. The lender absorbs the loss for the portion of the loan that cannot be paid. In the Trump bankruptcies, Trump is both Thing 1

and Thing 2.

Trump has put some of his Thing 1 wealth into Thing 2. How does this play out in the bankruptcy?

Since the bank loaned the money to Thing 2, the corporation, they can only cover their losses from the capital pledged in the Thing 2 loan. As long as Thing 1 continues to pay his loans, he has no requirements to cover the losses from of the Thing 2 business.

He only loses the money he invested in Thing 2. In the Trump bankruptcies, they all follow this pattern.

First, Trump will overestimate the income generated by the property. There is not enough money to make the loan payment.

The lender wants this payment so it wants to liquidate the assets. Secondly, Trump will overvalue the property as he seeks the loan.

If the bank accepts this overvaluation and loans Trump the money, the bank is now in trouble since the property was valued above the market value by Trump. If the lender liquidates the property, it will not cover the loan.

A reorganization plan is developed. Part of the business is sold to another investor at the real market value of the

property not the original overvalued price.

The chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization plan is approved by the court. During these business deals, Trump is drawing a healthy salary from the Thing 2 business as the operating officer.

This pays for his expensive life style which may well also make the loan payments on his expensive homes. Since this is the Thing 1 part of the scenario, his personal wealth is not touched by the bankruptcy of the Thing 2 business.

He moves on to invest in a Thing 3 corporation. All this is repeated throughout his bankruptcies.

His personal wealth grows. The lenders take the losses and in the end those losses are covered by the banks through higher interest rates and fees charged to their customers. Money doesn't grow on trees; somebody somewhere must find the money to make up the losses generated by the bankruptcies.

Signed,
Ronald Van Nurden
New London Township

Letter to the Editor Policy—Lakes Area Review welcomes readers to express their views by submitting Letters to the Editor. All letters need to be signed and dated with the name of your town included. A phone number must also be included for verification purposes. Letters will not be published without verification of authenticity by the author. All letters are limited to 500 words or less. Only one submission per 15 days will be accepted. Letters written by multiple parties must include all person's names and phone numbers for verification. Letters may be mailed to: P.O. Box 838, New London, MN, 56273 or emailed to: editorial@nslakesareareview.com

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AN ELECTRIC STATE of MIND

The Right was right about fraud in Minnesota

By Ralph Dickerson
Editor

Former US President Harry S. Truman ran his administration on this phrase: "The buck stops here!" Meaning Truman took responsibility for the decisions and actions of his administration. When it comes to the administration of Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, it seems his administration operates with the saying "what buck?"

According to various reports social services spending exploded under his administration. In many of these programs, costs ended up several times higher than projected, with investigations that revealed that for many of these programs fraud accounted for the massive increase. This level of malfeasance in these social safety net programs flies in the face of Governor Walz and Attorney General Keith Ellison's testimony before the US Congress that they took reports of fraud seriously.

Republicans on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform released a report on the fraud that occurred under the watch of Governor Walz and Minnesota Attorney General Ellison. This report chronicled explosive growth in three social services programs in Minnesota: the Housing Stabilization Program, the Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention program for children with autism and the Integrated Community Support Program.

According to the Republican report, when created the state of Minnesota expected the Housing Stabilization Program to cost just \$2.6 million per year. The program started with 278 providers offering support to 8,126 recipients.

The report said the number of providers increased over three fold to 883 providers, with recipients growing to 21,679 recipients, more than double, and a cost of \$108 million per year.

According to the United States Attorneys Office and the Pioneer Press, the cost grew from \$2.6 million to \$104 million, slightly less than stated in the Republican report, and the number of recipients grew to over 21,000. While the numbers did not exactly match, the basic claim of a massive increase

in cost and people served proved true.

The Republican report also examined the autism support program Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention program. The report said the program grew from \$20.4 million to \$342 million, recipients grew from 791 to 5,705 and providers from 41 to 328. The report also claimed this program identified 1-in-12 Somali children as suffering from autism, with the rate in Minnesota much lower at 1-in-28.

The Minnesota Reformer examined this program, and though the numbers did not agree, the basic claim of explosive growth again proved true. The Minnesota Reformer reported initial costs of the program at \$6 million, and it grew to \$192 million, a 32-fold increase in costs.

Both the Republican report and the Minnesota Reformer agreed on the number of providers as the program started with 41 and grew to 328. They disagreed on the statistic regarding autism in Minnesota, with the Minnesota Reformer story claiming a statistic of 1-in-38. The Minnesota Reformer story did not delve into the number of immigrant children reportedly diagnosed with autism, so this statistic remains unverified by outside sources.

Finally, the report discussed the Integrated Community Support program in Minnesota. It claimed the program started with 21 providers and quickly grew to 458, and grew from 164 recipients to 2,444. The cost also increased greatly, from an initial \$4.6 million to \$170 million, a 36-fold increase.

The US Attorney's office discussed this program, but did not provide a yearly breakdown. The attorney's office simply said since its inception in 2021, the program spent a total of \$400 million, which averages to \$80 million per year on this program. Again, the general claim of vast spending in the program bears out.

Governor Walz said his administration took reports of fraud seriously and investigated these allegations. Who did his administration hire to investigate these claims, Barney Fife? The investigations appear inept at best.

It took a change of administration in Washington DC to actually take these reports seriously. I think I know why the Walz administration, and Attorney General Ellison,

basically ignored reports of fraud.

Do I think they participated or personally benefited from the fraud? No, they did not. They just did not take reports of fraud seriously because people on the right heard rumors of fraud and started talking about it, and the Walz administration simply did not believe it due to people on the right saying it.

This process, people on the left automatically dismissing allegations from people on the right, played out in Washington DC regarding former President Joe Biden's son Hunter, and also Biden's cognitive impairment. The right said it, so the left dismissed it.

When reports first surfaced in late 2020 of a laptop left in a repair shop by Hunter Biden, reports quickly arose claiming this story came from a Russian disinformation campaign designed to hurt the chances of Joe Biden winning the election. Only after the election did we learn the laptop did actually belong to Hunter Biden, not to a Russian disinformation campaign.

Then during President Biden's term in office, reports surfaced that questioned President Biden's mental sharpness. The left, and many in the press, quickly dismissed these reports as "deep fakes" or outright lies. So many on the left claimed Biden remained mentally sharp and fully capable of serving another term.

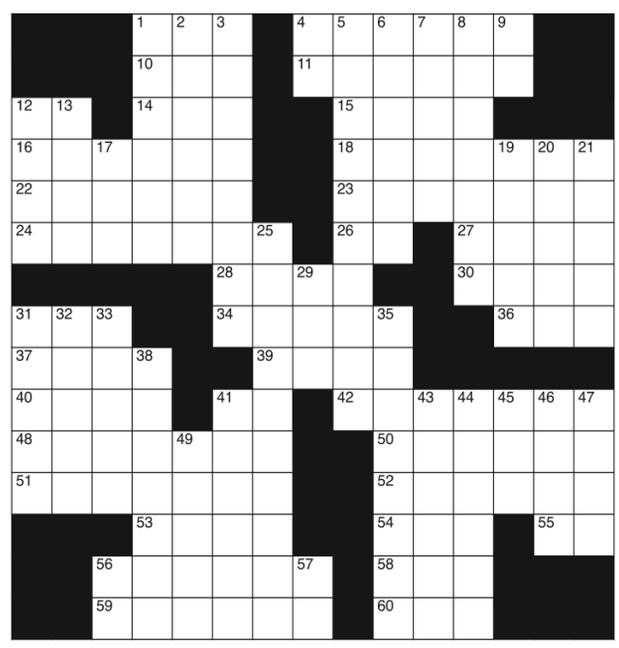
It took Biden's disastrous debate performance to prove to the world that he, indeed, suffered from mental decline. Even after the debate, many on the left claimed Biden suffered from fatigue or a cold, which explained his poor performance.

No one bought the left's bill of goods. The left spent years telling people to not believe the videos of Biden wandering off during a photo-op, him falling asleep at meetings or walking feebly off stage after an appearance, but his debate performance gave credence to these rumors.

Fraud flourished in Minnesota simply because the party in power in the state, the left side of the aisle, refused to believe any report about fraud if the right mentioned it. The left did not believe the reports simply because people on the right reported on the rumors coming out of these departments from whistleblowers.

- CLUES ACROSS**
- Inclined to do
 - Sketches
 - Book of Chronicles (abbr.)
 - Atomic #58
 - Dorm official
 - Small Eurasian deer
 - Southern constellation
 - Workers' groups
 - Former
 - Excellent
 - Romance language related to Spanish
 - Reference
 - Equally
 - Dirty towels
 - A cargo (abbr.)
 - Ammunition
 - You get one in summer
 - Slang for trucks with trailers
 - Swiss river
 - Exchange rate
 - British School
 - College teacher
 - Foreign Service
 - Horse gear
 - Cost to fly
 - A salt or ester of boric acid
 - Mocking
 - One who bird-watches
 - Concluding passage
 - A major division of geological time
 - Sodium
 - A way to produce
 - Soak
 - Laughed loudly and harshly
 - Affirmative

- CLUES DOWN**
- Moth species phalonia _____
 - Quantum of energy



- Break the law
- Location of White House
- Official cancellation of a decision
- Where rockers work
- Cut of beef: _____ mignon
- Nocturnal burrowing reptile
- Atomic #62
- Genus of evergreen subshrubs
- Flowering plant of the legume family
- Inches per minute (abbr.)
- Tropical fruit
- Hot fluid beneath the earth's crust
- James _____, painter
- Popular dessert
- Payment (abbr.)
- Cuisine style
- Genus of true flies
- City in western France
- Arrogance
- One holding a position of command
- Weekday
- An evening party
- Print errors
- Not good
- Egyptian Sun god
- East German town
- Olfactory property
- Atomic #37
- "Pollock" actor Harris

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

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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MINIMALISM
MOPPING
ORGANIZE
POLISH
PURGE
RECYCLING
RENEWAL
SANITIZE
SCRUBBING
SORTING
STORAGE
VACUUM

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

THREE BUNS and a HURRICANE®

BY ALISON NELSON



I typically do laundry on the weekends . . . Sunday afternoons, if there is nothing else going on, is my time to wash, dry, fold, and put away. If I don't do it all at once, we live out of baskets and wear wrinkly clothes everywhere. Sometimes the weekends are busy and I don't get my laundry day. That's mostly acceptable, as we have enough clothes to get through two weeks without washing. The boys do start raiding Jesse's sock drawer, though, which he does not like. It's a whole thing.

If I wait two weeks to do the laundry, there is obviously at least twice as much to do. One load of each sorted pile turns into maybe three, and I can't get them done all in one day. As the week picks up again, I don't get to them at all.

Now one would think that we could just walk around those piles wherever they are sorted - laundry room, bedroom, bathroom, wherever. I can walk around them. It seems the kids can't. The piles end up spread across the whole room and mushed together again! I don't see it happen, but I imagine them kicking through it like freshly fallen fluffy snow. It's maddening, especially since they're 15 and 18. Walk

around!
I guess that's my kick in the pants to try to get it done every week.

Our boys had some friends over last weekend. If you imagine four boys eat a lot, wait until that group multiplies. I went to CashWise to pick up some necessities before they got to our house. As I was going through the checkout line with my piles of pizzas and snacks, the older gentleman ringing me up asked, "Do you have kids?" I do, I said, and today they're having a little party.

In less than 16 hours, which also included a bit of sleeping, these boys put away six pizzas, two rotisserie chickens, a pan of brownies, a double batch of cookies, eight bags of chips, egg bakes, more eggs scrambled, three dozen sausages, a whole bowl of apples, and 66 mini muffins.

They're talking about doing it again in a month or so. I should probably start saving. Other than the dent in the budget and the cooking it required, their party was a heartwarming experience to witness. They arranged a basketball tournament and made hilarious little prize buttons for the winners. There was a lot of pool playing, hide and

seek in the dark, and some late night exploring around the farm. It seemed like the kind of things that happened when I was in high school - no phones, just unplugged shenanigans. I'm happy to feed that.

The blizzard-that-wasn't came after the boys went home. I looked forward to camping out in our house all weekend watching the weather outside, and was half asleep for most of Saturday. The ridiculous wind on Thursday kept me awake all night, and between that and the lively houseful on Friday night I was surprised I could keep my eyes open at all. I really wanted to see the 16 inches of snow threatened for our area. Surprise, surprise, it didn't show.

I'm looking forward to spring, and do wish it would dry up so the dog's feet weren't always muddy. But I also love a good snowstorm, especially when I don't have anywhere to be. Those excuses of holing up at home kind of go away when the weather warms up. People aren't as accepting if I say I just want to sit in my house where it's air-conditioned.

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at First, 11am Worship at East, 12pm First
Communion Instruction at East, 2pm Pastor

leads Glen Oaks Worship; Wednesday,
March 25: 9am "Your First Coffee" at First,
10am Newsletter Assembly at First, 11am
Strength & Balance Training at First, 5:30pm
Meal served by the Bangor CVII youth at
East, 7pm Midweek Lent 5 Worship at East;
Thursday, March 26: 7am Kandiyohi County
Food Shelf Radio for Relief Event.

OPEN DOOR CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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Wednesdays @ 6PM
For Adult study locations
and times visit
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516 4th Ave SW, New London
Friday Recovery Church: 7-8:30
p.m.; Wednesday Evening Youth (7-
12th) @ 6-8 p.m. Sunday Services are
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Teach People to Love Jesus

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100 4th Ave. SW, New London
Phone: (320) 354-2774
www.peacenewlondon.org
Pastors: Todd Mattson &
Linda Lagergren
Deacon: Amanda Randall
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship Service;
Wednesdays: 6 p.m. Worship Service
ALL ARE WELCOME
Check website for more information.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

104 Birch St. SE, New London
Phone: (320) 354-4510
Pastor Tony Ferreira
Saturday Bible Study: 9:30 a.m.
Saturday Church Service: 11 a.m.

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Missouri Synod
19903 56th Ave NE Atwater
www.stjohnatwater.com
(320) 974-8984
Pastor J. Christian Strickland
Sunday: 9 a.m. Sunday School & Bible
Study, 10 a.m. Worship Service
Please check our website for more
information about our church, various
activities, and past worship service videos.
Please join us in worship and fellowship

OBITUARIES

Paul Brian Reller, 67

Paul Brian Reller passed away at home on March 6, 2026, at the age of 67. A celebration of life to allow friends and family to gather in remembrance will be held at a future date. In lieu of donations, the family would like to suggest you honor Paul's memory by spending time outdoors and caring for your natural spaces.

Paul Reller was born on April 20, 1958 in Minneapolis to Ruth and Maury Reller. He was one of six children from their union. The family moved from the cities to Eagle Lake during his youth, where he spent much of his time in the water and enjoying nature. It was there that Paul met and married Margie Lehman.

Although their relationship did not last, they raised two incredible daughters, Sara and Johanna, whom they loved deeply while building a home and working the land together.

Paul spent some time in healthcare providing hospice care to the community before turning to his passion for craftsmanship into building willow and cedar furniture. Paul dedicated his life to the restoration and stewardship of the oak savanna, often working with the DNR. His work was very hands-on, including digging out tree stumps by hand, clearing underbrush, and burns to care for the land; he collected prairie grass and flower seeds and sowed them by hand. Deer and birds were fed daily for 40 years. He spent the warmer months tending his vegetable gardens and growing pumpkins for the deer and sunflowers for the birds. Over the last 20 years Paul enjoyed the companionship and love of his partner Teri. She has been compassionate and steadfast, meeting him where he was at.

In addition to his children, Sara Reller and Johanna (Luis) Garcia, Paul is survived by his partner, Teri McCarthy; siblings: Carl Reller, Patricia Reller, Maurine Reller, and Kurt (Missy) Reller; grandchildren: Natalie and Andrew; step-mother, Lavonne Reller; as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins, and other family and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Ruth and Maury; and sister, Janet Reller.



Paul Reller

Milo DeGeest, 76

Milo DeGeest, 76, of New London, died Saturday, March 14 at Bethesda Grand in Willmar. His memorial service will be 11:00 am, Saturday, April 11 at Harvey Anderson & Johnson Funeral Home in Willmar.

Visitation will be one hour prior to the service. Arrangements are with Harvey Anderson & Johnson Funeral Home.

Milo DeGeest was born on March 30, 1949, in Granite Falls to Emmet and Eleanor (Yeager) DeGeest. He attended country school near Kerkhoven and later graduated from Kerkhoven High School in 1967. Following high school, Milo continued his education at St. Cloud State University. After completing college, he started his own construction company.

On October 20, 1973, Milo was united in marriage to Rebecca Johnson at the DeGeest family farm near Kerkhoven. The couple lived in Willmar for a few years before settling in New London, which became their lifelong home.

Milo began his career at Willmar State Hospital and later worked at WRTC for many years. He then went on to work at the State of Minnesota with MSOCS in a management role for 38 years, retiring in 2011.

Milo was an active member of MSOC Associated, Pheasants Forever, and Ducks Unlimited. He enjoyed driving through car lots, collecting unique rocks, pheasant hunting, fishing, and gardening, especially tending to his zinnias.

Milo is survived by his wife, Rebecca; his daughters, Billi (Jon) Rudningen and Emma (Scott) Kramer; his grandchildren, Lily (Jon) Eiyneck, Noah and Emmet Rudningen, and Madison and Jaxen Kramer; his great-grandchildren, Foster, Savannah, and Grayson; and his siblings, Barb Provencher and Larry (Voni) DeGeest.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Emmet and Eleanor DeGeest, and his brother-in-law, Jay Provencher.



Milo DeGeest

SENIOR MENU

Mon. Mar. 23

Chicken & Dumplings
Green Beans
Diced Pear Cup
Wheat Bread & Marg.
1% Milk

Tues. Mar. 24

Chicken Broccoli Rice Casserole
Sliced Carrots
Gala Apple
Dinner Roll
Margarine
1% Milk

Wed. Mar. 25

Meatloaf
Baked Potato
Broccoli
Applesauce Cup
Wheat Bread
Marg. & Sour Cream
1% Milk

Thur. Mar. 26

Diced Turkey & Gravy
Mashed Potatoes
Stuffing
Whole Kernel Corn
Diced Peach Cup
Dinner Roll & Margarine
1% Milk

Fri. Mar. 27

Potato Crunch Fish Fillet
Mashed Sweet Potatoes
Mixed Vegetables
Wheat Dinner Roll
Marg. & Tartar Sauce
1% Milk

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Willmar 320-264-3261
Clara City 320-847-3583
Kerkhoven 320-264-3261
Harvey Anderson & Johnson
FUNERAL HOMES
New London 320-354-2211
Belgrade 320-254-8262
Paynesville 320-243-3618

A Discombobulated Lenten Season
I didn't grow up in a church that observed Lent; we kind of jumped from Christmas to Easter with a touch of Holy Week preceding. So years ago, when I transitioned to my current denominational family, the church year and its seasons were a true gift to me. I especially have found the Lenten season, beginning on Ash Wednesday, culminating in Holy Week and the joys of Resurrection morning, a time for familiar, patterned spiritual growth. The season offers time for quiet reflection, generous sharing and intentional self-sacrifice. These weeks tend to be simple and familiar, a subdued period for inner growth.

This year, however, my Lenten sensibilities have been discombobulated. With an Ash Wednesday snowstorm, we postponed its observance by a week, so that this time around, we had already worshiped the First Sunday in Lent before we received ashes. It was a momentary glitch in my well-laid Lenten plans, and I was just finding my rhythm again when, due to another snowstorm, we cancelled last week's Sunday worship service.

As I type these words, I am finishing details for this coming Sunday, and then it will already be Palm/Passion Sunday, Holy Week and Easter. It's beginning to feel like the Lenten season that wasn't. With the interruptions of extended cold weather, Spring feels to be months away, and I'm feeling the need to reorient my soul to be well prepared to celebrate Resurrection.

Perhaps you, too, are a bit taken aback that Easter Sunday is so soon at hand. The good news is that it's not too late to refocus and form an intentional preparation plan.

The three cornerstones of Lenten observance – prayer, almsgiving and self-denial – can provide some shape to the next days prior to Easter morning.

Consider a dedicated, daily time to spend with God. You can pray, meditate and renew your mind while on your way to work, or on your daily walk, or in the first moments of day as you drink your favorite hot beverage. You can use the guidance of a devotional book or on-line site. Or you can go spiritually "rogue" and simply make space for some solitude, listening for Love's invitations.

PASTOR'S CORNER

By Pastor Timothy W. Routh

Faith Lutheran, Spicer

Thinking of others by giving to local agencies that provide resources to those facing challenging times is another way to open our hearts. Local food shelves especially can use cash gifts during March because their "buying power" is increased. It may be good a time for some spring closet cleaning (my congregation sponsors a "40 things in 40 days" project, where participants choose one gently used clothing or household item per day, collected in a bag, to be taken to an area service agency). If you've been lax in supporting the faith community you call "home," this is a good time to catch up your regular giving.

Your soul will also benefit from a time of intentional self-discipline. Free yourself from social media for a day or week or longer, using the regained time for a walk in nature, or a real face-to-face conversation with someone you have missed, or by reading a print book. You can even experiment with intermittent fasting to see if it might be a benefit to your body. Give yourself permission to address the grief or the dysfunction you recognize in your life, finding a good outlet for your healing.

It's been an unusual Lenten season thus far for many of us, but it's not too late to find some benefit in these next few days before the "big days" of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Resurrection Morning. I encourage you to reorient yourself in these topsy-turvy days. Your future soul will thank you.

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Dinner theatre to raise funds for 2027 mission trip

By Ralph Dickerson
Editor

On March 29, at 4 p.m. and again at 6 p.m. Hope Presbyterian Church in Spicer hosts a fundraising Dinner Theatre called "The Committee Strikes Again." The free will offering dinner theatre serves as a fundraiser for the church's 2027 Belize mission trip.

The flyer for the dinner theatre calls the show "a comedic look at a church committee trying to put on a dinner theater, only to find themselves remembering all the previous skits that went wrong."

The event consists of a

four-course meal, music and of course, lots of laughter. To obtain tickets, visit the church, call 320.796.2650 or email the church at hopepres@gmail.com.

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2:30-6:30pm
Adults \$10 • Children (5-12) \$6
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ALL YOU CAN EAT • Dine-in or Take-Out
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PUBLIC NOTICES

MINUTES

NLS Minutes
Monday, February 9, 2026 -
Regular Meeting
District Conference Room
and via Teleconference 4:30 pm

School Board Regular Meeting Minutes

1. Convene - Call to order, Pledge of Allegiance.
The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Peterson at 4:30 pm.

Board Members in Attendance: Mark Peterson, Darryl Nelson, Del Brouwer, Laura Nelson, Kristi Barber, Margo Wooley, Karen Nelson

Others in Attendance: Jamie Boelter, Pam Harrington, Tricia Lilleberg, Ryan Tillemans, Mya Magnuson, James Magnuson, Matt Dickhausen (MCEA), Bob Meyer (MCEA)

Attendance via Zoom: Ashley Elliott, Carla Vagle, Andrew Regnier, Jenny Marxhausen, Holly Carlson, Kristine Lang, Robin DeCathelineau, Stephanie Slagter, Rebecca Bellman, Tracy Detloff, Teresa Depuydt, Kate Sawatzky, Jennifer Hellickson, Grace Figueroa-Ghent, Connie Swanson, Jacob Beranek, Josephine Kamm, Leah Zimmerman, Lesley Burandt, Lisa Sieve, Malibu Sand, Sarah Goelz, Stacy Brisendine, Heather Van Beck, Sabrina Johnson, Cammie Holmquist, Hannah Hanson, Troy Vagle, Todd Marxhausen, Anna Graham, Rachel Sawatzky, Brea Braegelman

2. Changes to the agenda.
 3. Approval of the agenda for February 9, 2026. (Action) **Motion to approve the agenda by D. Nelson and seconded by Brouwer. Motion carries 7-0.**

4. Comments from visitors. (Comments from visitors must abide by the criteria set forth in the Board Meeting Public Participation Policy 206.)
 4.1 Comments from Visitors Reminder of Expectations

5. Recognition of Visitors, Open Forum, and Recognitions
 5.1 Proud of & Above and Beyond

6. Approval of the Consent Agenda (Action)
 6.1 Approval of Minutes from January 12, 2026 School Board Meeting
 6.2 Approval of January/February Bills
 6.3 Approval of Omnibus **Motion to approve the Consent Agenda by K. Nelson and seconded by L. Nelson. Motion carries 7-0.**

7. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda for Consideration

8. Reports & Presentations
 8.1 Buildings and Grounds Update (Standing Item)
 8.1.1 Weight Room Tour with Ryan Tillemans
 8.2 LCER Recap - Tricia Lilleberg
 8.3 Community Education Advisory Committee Update

8.4 District Advisory Committee Update
 8.5 MSBA Leadership Conference Update
 8.6 Educational Foundation Update
 8.7 Labor and Transportation Update
 8.8 Finance Committee Update
 8.9 Administrative Notes to the Board

9. Communications/Marketing & Stakeholder Engagement
 9.1 Board Committee Assignments

10. Facilities & Finance
 10.1 Enrollment #'s as of February 6, 2026 (Standing Item)
 10.2 Business Manager Update - Pam Harrington
 10.3 Ehlers: 2016A Refunding Presentation

11. Technology

12. Student Achievement & Student Support
 12.1 Strategic Plan Update (Standing Item)

13. Workforce

14. Next School Board Meeting: School Board Regular Meeting - Monday, March 9, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. in the District Conference Room and via Teleconference

15. Future Topics: PLT Updates (Ongoing), Strategic Plan Update (Ongoing), Enrollment (Ongoing), Referendum Spending Update, MCA Science Score Discussion, Cell Phone Usage Feedback by Building, MSBA/MASA Day at the Capitol (March 9)

16. Adjournment (Action) **Motion to approve Adjournment by Brouwer and seconded by Barber. Motion carries 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted by:
 Laura Nelson, Clerk

(Published on March 21, 2026)

NOTICE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

DATE: March 10, 2026

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that default has occurred in the conditions of the following described Mortgage:

INFORMATION REGARDING MORTGAGE TO BE FORECLOSED

- Date of Mortgage: **September 30, 2020**
- Mortgagors: **Gregory J. Stegeman, an unmarried individual**
- Mortgagees: **Co-op Credit Union of Montevideo**
- Recording Information: Recorded on **October 6, 2020**, as Document Number **670664**, in the Office of the County Recorder of **Kandiyohi County, Minnesota**
- Assignments of Mortgage, if any: **N/A**

INFORMATION REGARDING MORTGAGED PREMISES

6. Tax parcel identification number of the mortgaged premises: **95-690-1530**

7. Legal description of the mortgaged premises: **Lot 3 and part of Lot 2 of Block 8 in Ramblewood Addition to the City of Willmar, the part of Lot 2 being herein described as follows, to-wit: Commencing at a point on the North line of said Lot 2, which is distant Westerly 3 feet from the Northeasterly corner thereof; thence Southwesterly at right angles to said North line a distance of 60 feet, thence Southerly to a point 7 feet West of the Southeast corner of said Lot 2; thence Easterly on the South line of said Lot 2 a distance of 3 feet to the point of beginning, Kandiyohi County, Minnesota.**

8. The physical street address, city, and zip code of the mortgaged premises: **1237 Ramblewood Ave SW, Willmar, MN 56201**

OTHER FORECLOSURE DATA

9. The person holding the Mortgage: is not a transaction agent, as defined by Minn. Stat. 58.02, subd. 30.
 The name(s) of the residential mortgage servicer and the lender or broker, as defined in Minn. Stat. 58.02, is **Co-op Credit Union of Montevideo.**

10. If stated on the Mortgage, the name of the mortgage originator, as defined in Minn. Stat. 58.02, is **Co-op Credit Union of Montevideo.**

INFORMATION REGARDING FORECLOSURE

- The requisites of Minn. Stat. 580.02 have been satisfied.
- The original principal amount secured by the Mortgage was **\$96,000.00.**
- At the date of this notice the amount due on the Mortgage, including taxes, if any, paid by the holder of the Mortgage, is: **\$90,655.79.**
- Pursuant to the power of sale in the Mortgage, the Mortgage will be foreclosed, and the mortgaged premises will be sold by the Sheriff of **Kandiyohi County, Minnesota**, at public auction on **May 5, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.**, at the **Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office, 2201 NE 23rd Street, Suite 101, Willmar, MN 56201.**
- The time allowed by law for redemption by Mortgagor or Mortgagor's personal representatives or assigns is **6 months** after the date of sale.
- Minn. Stat. 580.04(b) provides, "If the real estate is an owner-occupied, single-family dwelling, the notice must also specify the date on or before which the mortgagor must vacate the property if the mortgage is not reinstated under section 580.30 or the property redeemed under section 580.23." If this statute applies, the time to vacate the property is **11:59 p.m. on November 5, 2026.**

THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

Name and address of Attorney for Mortgagee or Mortgage Assignee:
Elizabeth Bloom of the firm of Nelson Oyen Torvik PLLP
221 North 1st Street
Montevideo, MN 56265

Name of Mortgagee or Mortgage Assignee:
Co-op Credit Union of Montevideo

(Published on March 21 & 28, April 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2026)

Important Information Regarding Property Assessments
*****This may affect your 2027 property taxes*****

The Board of Appeal and Equalization for the City of Kandiyohi in Kandiyohi County, Minnesota, will meet from 6:00 to 6:30 p.m. on Monday April 13th, 2026, at the Kandiyohi City Hall/ Civic Center 432 Atlantic Ave Kandiyohi, MN 56251. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor.

If you believe the value or classification of your property is incorrect, please contact your assessor's office to discuss your concerns. If you disagree with the valuation or classification after discussing it with your assessor, you may appear before the local Board of Appeal and Equalization. The board will review your assessments and make corrections as needed. Generally, you must appeal to the local board before appealing to the county Board of Appeal and Equalization

Given under my hand this 12th Day of February 2026,
 Julie Woltjer, MCMC
 Clerk/Treasurer

(Published on March 21 & 28, 2026)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

Notice is hereby given, That the Board of Appeal and Equalization of the City of New London in Kandiyohi County, Minnesota, will meet 5:30 - 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday April 8, 2026, at the New London City Hall, 10 Ash Street S.E. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor. If you believe the value or classification of your property is incorrect, please contact your assessor's office to discuss your concerns. If you disagree with the valuation or classification after discussing it with your assessor, you may appear before the local Board of Appeal and Equalization. The board will review your assessments and make corrections as needed. Generally, you must appeal to the local board before appealing to the county Board of Appeal and Equalization.

Emily Thielen
 Clerk-Treasurer of the City of New London

(Published on March 14 & 21, 2026)

IRVING TOWNSHIP Important Information Regarding Property Assessments
*****This may affect your 2027 property taxes*****

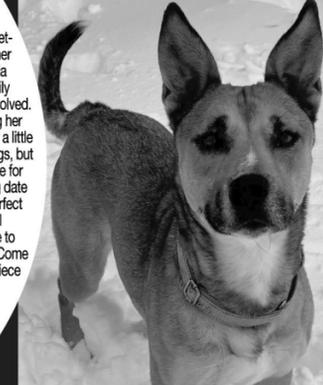
The Board of Appeal and Equalization for the Township of Irving in Kandiyohi County, Minnesota, will meet from 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday April 7th, 2026, at the Irving Town Hall. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor. If you believe the value or classification of your property is incorrect, please contact your assessor's office to discuss your concerns. If you disagree with the valuation or classification after discussing it with your assessor, you may appear before the local Board of Appeal and Equalization. The board will review your assessments and make corrections as needed. Generally, you must appeal to the local board before appealing to the county Board of Appeal and Equalization.

Donnel Williamson
 Irving Township Clerk

(Published on March 21 & 28, 2026)

PET OF THE WEEK: Meet Hestia, a lovely 2.5yr old shepherd mix with a gentle heart and a playful spirit! This sweet girl can be a little shy when meeting new people, but once she warms up, her affectionate personality really shines. Hestia loves snacks (who doesn't?) and will happily show off her playful side when toys are involved. Whether it's a game of toss or just carrying her favorite toy around, she's always ready for a little fun. She does decently well with other dogs, but since every friendship is different, we'd love for any potential canine siblings to have a dog date with Hestia first, just to make sure it's a perfect match! If you're looking for a sweet, playful companion who just needs a little patience to blossom, Hestia might be the girl for you. Come meet Hestia and see if she's the missing piece of your family!

Hawk Creek Animal Shelter
 Box 709, 250 28th St SW
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 Hours: Tues - Fri 12-6, Sat & Sun 12-4,
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Sat Mar 28
Poultry BINGO • 11-1
 Doors open at 10am
Under the Radar • 6-10

Full Menu Available MONDAY \$12
 Beef Commercial TUESDAY \$12
 Homemade Hot Dish (Varies Weekly) WEDNESDAY \$12
 Steak Night THURSDAY \$13
 8oz. Sirloin with side
 8oz. Ribeye with side - Market Price.
 Add salad bar to both steaks for \$6.00.
 THURSDAY \$13
 Grilled or Battered Walleye w/Side FRIDAY
 Chef's Special SATURDAY
 Mexican Night (Varies Weekly)

6 Game Pull Tabs and E-Tabs Open
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 BINGO every 2nd & 4th Tues - 6:30pm

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TUESDAY All-You-Can-Eat Broasted Chicken

WEDNESDAY Walleye

THURSDAY Beef Commercial all day

FRIDAY All-You-Can-Eat Cod

SATURDAY All-You-Can-Eat Ribs
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WE FEST KARAOKE CONTEST

LAST 2 NIGHTS TO COMPETE IN OUR WE FEST KARAOKE CONTEST!
 MAR 20 | MAR 27 | 8:00PM
 FINALS ON APRIL 10TH
 • COME EARLY TO REGISTER
 • WINNER MOVES ON TO SEMI-FINALS IN JULY

SAT, MARCH 28
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 Chicken Cordon Bleu w/ White Wine Sauce or
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SIBLEY STATE PARK PROGRAMS
 (800 Sibley Park Rd NE, NEW LONDON, MN 56273)

Whose tracks are these?

Saturday, March 21
 1 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Come explore the exciting world of tracks and other signs animals leave behind. The park is home to a variety of wildlife and many of them have unique feet that help us figure out how they live their lives.

We'll make an air-dry clay model of a track to take home. While they dry, we'll explore the unique qualities of the animals in the park by looking at their furs, skulls, and, of course, their feet!

We'll be meeting at the Interpretive Classroom located in the downstairs area of the Interpretive Center - Also known as the Trail Center.



Afternoon Hike

Saturday, March 28
 1 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

The park is home to unique environments and the plants and animals that call them home. Come explore these environments and what makes them special as we hike the Pondview Interpretive Trail.

We will be meeting at the Sibley Interpretive Center. The trail is a 0.7-mile loop with a maximum grade of 7 percent over 190ft.



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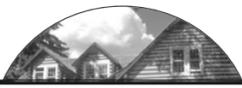
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SPORTS

NLS falters at state after opening win; finish 4th

GIRLS BASKETBALL

By Bruce Strand
Sports Reporter

No matter how well you play otherwise in a basketball game, you might lose anyway if you just can't put the ball in the basket.

That was the case for New London-Spicer as the Wildcats capped a terrific season with losses in the semifinals and third-place games at the state tournament.

"It hurts, of course. The girls were believing in themselves, and they were very prepared," coach Mike Dreier said. "We just couldn't buy a basket. Why that is, who knows. We've been a good shooting team."

The Wildcat lost to Duluth Marshall 71-56 on Friday evening at Williams Arena, dropping them into the third place game, which they lost to Perham 66-52 at Concordia-St. Paul.

"We just didn't shoot at all. The girls deserved a better ending than that. They gave everything they had."

NLS out-rebounded Marshall by 20 and Perham by 10 but scored more than 20 points below their average. Of course, good defense by state tournament opponents had something to do with that. NLS also gave up more turnovers than usual.

The Wildcats were 12-for-58 on 3-pointers in the tournament, although they were able to beat Minnehaha Academy



Photo by Bruce Strand

Korbin Tanner tallied 47 points in three games and made the all-tournament team.

without a single 3-pointer. They just had one good stretch from outside the arc, making six in the second half against Duluth Marshall. Against Perham they were 4-for-23 from long range while trying to catch up.

Thrillers against Fairmont in the section finals and Minnehaha at state lifted NLS to 30-1 and wound up being the season highlights and last two wins. They finished 30-3, and made the final four at state. "We had a really good season," Dreier said.

The Wildcats had four senior starters — Ayla Caskey, Taylor Munsch, Katelyn Delzer,

and Roxanne Klein — and a fifth senior off the bench, Addison Peltier.

"They were the cornerstone of the team," Dreier said, asked to comment on the senior group. "They led us all year. They set the tone. They showed up to practice every day and worked hard. They set an example for the younger kids, and with positive results."

The fifth starter, Korbin Tanner, 6-foot-2 freshman post, was a bright spot for the Wildcats, battling double teams to score 46 points in three games, while snagging 32 rebounds, earning a spot on the 10-play-

er All-Tournament Team.

D-M 71, NLS 56

The Wildcats had a horrible start against Duluth Marshall, falling behind 18-3 with frigid shooting and a batch of turnovers. They closed to a respectable 30-23 at the half and got within five points twice in the second half. But they fell back again, never able to catch fire as they finished 18-for-67 on field goals.

NLS dominated rebounds 54-34, which alone would win most games, but suffered a 10-18 turnover deficit in addition to the poor shooting. It was the only game all season the opponent had a turnover

advantage.

Marshall's super soph Chloe Johnson was good as advertised with 36 points and 12 rebounds. Fouled 13 times, she cashed 14 of 19 free shots. Morgan Lucero snipped for 12 points on three-pointers and Cairin Berger had 11 points and four steals.

For NLS, Korbin Tanner battled for 20 points and 13 rebounds, shooting 7-for-18 and 5-for-8. Taylor Munsch had 10 points, going 3-for-9 on three's. Tanner and Munsch both fouled out. Ayla Caskey, shooting 2-for-17, had nine points.

NLS 23 33 — 56
DM 30 41 — 71

New London-Spicer Statistics — 18-67 FG (8-27 3FG), 12-21 FT, 54 rebounds, 18 turnovers, 19 fouls

Scoring: Taylor Munsch 10 (6r, 3a, 3s), Ayla Caskey 9 (4r, 4a, 3s), Korbin Tanner 20 (13r, 1a), Katelyn Delzer 3 (6r, 1a), Roxanne Klein 6 (6r), Paycen Rutgers 5 (4r, 3a, 1s), Ezri Boelter 0 (3r), Kyla Vick 0 (1r), Addison Peltier 3 (1r), Brooke Barney 0 (1r), Harper Olness 0 (1s) **3-pointers:** Munsch 3-12, Caskey 2-10, Tanner 1-1, Rutgers 1-4, Peltier 1-1.

Duluth Marshall Statistics — 21-50 FG (9-26 3FG), 20-27 FT, 34 rebounds, 10 turnovers, 16 fouls ...

Scoring: Candice Ndomb 6, Cairin Berger 11, Chloe Johnson 36, Morgan Lucero 12, Melanie Carlson 6 ... **3-pointers:** Lucero 4-8, Johnson 2-4, Ndomb 1-7, Berger 1-7, Carlson 1-2.

Perham 66, NLS 52

Perham, one of the state's best 3-point shooting teams, sank 11 of 29 while NLS struggled at 4-for-23, the difference in the game.

NLS had a 39-29 rebound edge but trailed the whole game except for a brief early lead. Taylor Munch netted 12 points, Korbin Tanner nine, and Roxanne Klein and Katelyn Delzer eight each. Klein snagged 11 rebounds.

Regan Hemberger sank 21 points on seven treys for the Yellowjackets. Lauren Gjerde had 16 points on 8-for-9 shooting.

Perham 27 39 — 66
NLS 23 29 — 52

Perham Statistics — 25-57 FG (11-29 3FG), 5-10 FT, 29 rebounds, 12 turnovers, 9 fouls ... **Scoring:** Ashtyn Kunza 12 (5r, 3a), Kaia Anderson 12 (6r, 12a), Sophia Nelson 2, Lauren Gjerde 16, Regan Hemberger 21, Claire Pilgrim 2, Olivia Phillips 1 ... **3-pointers:** Kunza 2-3, Anderson 2-5, Hemberger 7-16.

New London-Spicer Statistics — 21-64 FG (4-23 3FG), 6-9 FT, 39 rebounds, 12 turnovers, 13 fouls

Scoring: Taylor Munsch 12 (8r, 5a, 2s), Ayla Caskey 4 (2r, 1s), Korbin Tanner 9 (5r, 1a, 3s, 1b), Katelyn Delzer 8 (4r, 1s), Roxanne Klein 8 (11r, 1a, 1s), Ezri Boelter 0 (1r, 1s), Paycen Rutgers 8 (6r, 1a, 1s), Kyla Vick 3 (1r), Evalyn Swenson 0 (1r) ... **3-pointers:** Munsch 2-8, Tanner 1-1, Vick 1-4.

*Box score key: r, rebounds; a, assists; s, steals; b, blocks.



Senior Ayla Caskey, top left, one of five NLS seniors ending their careers in the state tournament, drives against Duluth Marshall. For the tournament, Caskey totaled 13 points, six rebounds, four assists and four steals. Freshman Korbin Tanner, top right, totaled 29 points, 18 rebounds, two assists, three steals and a block in the tournament.



Photo credits SmugMug

NLS girls JV hoops went 24-2

JV BASKETBALL

By Bruce Strand
Sports Reporter

The New London-Spicer junior varsity girls basketball team posted 24-2 record,

coached by Joey Dreier. They were undefeated in conference. The losses came against Albany (at the buzzer) and Alexandria.

Harper Olness, eighth-grader, averaged 13.0 points, 7.6 rebounds and 2.3 steals per game. Sydney Thorstad averaged 8.7 points, 4.6 rebounds and 2.8 steals. Mya

Schoumaker averaged 5.2 points, Kyla Vick 4.9, Jaedynn Clancy 4.2 and Macee Schoumaker 4.2. Bri Triplett shot 46 percent on three's.

Also seeing action were Brooke Barney, Sydney Peltier, Evalynn Swenson, Piper Westby, Lydia Netland, Hayden Van Dyke, and Evalina Keefe.



File photos by Ralph Dickerson

Pictured in varsity action, eighth grader, top left, Harper Olness averaged 13 points and almost eight boards a game for the JV squad. Sydney Thorstad, at left in varsity action, scored almost nine points a game and grabbed five boards.

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NLS boys had solid shooting Lageson makes all-conference

Boys BASKETBALL

By Bruce Strand
Sports Reporter

New London-Spicer had three double-digit scorers and some accurate shooting during a 13-15 boys basketball season. The Wildcats were 7-9 in the Wright County Conference West, with one section win before bowing out.

Zach Lageson, junior guard, averaged 12.9 points, 2.8 assists and 1.7 steals per game, leading NLS in each category. He was named to the all-conference team.

The next two scorers were sophomore Ethan Nelson with 11.5 points per game and a team-leading 4.9 rebounds; and senior Beckett Newman, who averaged 11.1 points in 19 games, missing nine with injury.

The next were three juniors. Grant Henjum averaged 9.6 points and 4.4 rebounds, Loudon Johnson 9.5 points, 1.8 assists and 1.6 steals, and Gavin Vick 7.6 points and 4.0 rebounds.

The Wildcats made a solid 46.2 percent on field goals and 32.5 percent on 3-pointers with 155 of them.

Lageson hit on 53.1 per-



Photo by Bruce Strand

Zach Lageson squared up for a three-point shot against Rockford.

cent overall and 45 percent on three's, leading the team with 45. Also making more than half their shots were Henjum, 51.9 percent, including 6-for-12 on three's; and Nelson, 50.4 percent, including 34.8 percent on three's with 23. Close was Johnson at 47.8 percent including .305 on

three's with 25.

Shooting over 70 percent on free shots were Nelson, 61-for-84 (.726); Lageson, 71-for-100 (.710); and Henjum 41-for-58 (.707).

Newman, Nelson, Henjum, Vick and Johnson got honorable mention to all-conference.



Photo submitted

The New London-Spicer kindergarten to sixth grade wrestlers, and coaches. The squad earned a trip to the state tournament, to be held March 26-29 at the Rochester Mayo Civic Center, by winning three of four matches in region action.

Wildcat K-6 wrestlers earn state tourney trip

YOUTH WRESTLING

By Bruce Strand
Sports Reporter

New London-Spicer's K-6 dual wrestling team qualified for the Northland Youth Wrestling Association state tournament by winning three of four matches on the Region 4 meet at Pierz on Saturday, March 14.

NLS lost to Holdingford in the first round 38-33, then defeated Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa

51-27, Alexandria 48-28 and Morris Area/Hancock/Chokio-Alberta 44-34. NLS had lost to that team 51-27 two weeks earlier.

"This is a huge deal for the NLS wrestling program," said head coach Justin Schneider. "This team has put in a ton of work to get to this point."

The state tournament, NLS's first since 2022, is slated for March 26-29 at Rochester Mayo Civic Center.

The team includes 45-pounders Garrett Bendickson, Lucas Contreras, and Carter Quam; 50-pound Finn Melges; 55-pounders Grady Bendickson

and Ryder Hoffman; 60-pound Collin Quam; 65-pounders Easton Schneider and Lincoln Hoffman; 70-pound Henry Hoffman; 75-pounders Ryan Quam and Xavier Walz; 80-pounders Gannon Bendickson and Conway Thompson; 84-pound Crew Kershner; 88-pound Sulley Hoffman; 93-pound Josiah Nelson; 102-pound Hunter Lucas; 115-pound Tatum Westby; 130-pound Keagan Korsmo; and heavyweight Drew Dahl.

The coaching staff consists of Schneider, Dustin Hoffman, Bostyn Thompson, Stephen Westby, Josh Nelson, and Tyler Bendickson.Arena.



Top left: Junior Caleb Nelson, shown here at a home meet, earned all-conference honors this year. He holds a 126-81 career record. Top right, Sophomore Kellon Hanson, shown in a home meet, also earned all-conference honors. He holds a career record of 65-17 with two years remaining in his career.



File photos by Ralph Dickerson

NLS wrestling awards, top records listed

WRESTLING WRAPUP

By Bruce Strand
Sports Reporter

New London-Spicer had four all-conference wrestlers

after an 11-11 season. They are seniors Garrett Leenstra and Holton Hanson, junior Caleb Nelson and sophomore Kellon Hanson.

Holton Hanson, the lone state qualifier, was 30-8 this year, placed second in the section, and went 1-2 at state, at 152 pounds. He was 151-68 in his career.

"Holton has had the ability to reach the state tournament for several years, and it was great to see him achieve that goal this season," coach Shawn Hattlestad said.

Leenstra placed third in the section at 285. He was 32-10 this year and 79-57 in his career. Nelson was 26-14 at 172 and has a 126-81 career mark

with a year left. Kellon Hanson was 33-7 at 121. He's 65-17 career with two seasons left.

Also over 100 wins was senior Andrew Sandau, 22-13 this year at 127 and 116-60 in his career. Also with winning records were senior Matthew Gehrke, 26-16 at 215, and sophomore Jeremiah Nelson,

24-16 at 145.

Hattlestad reflected, about the season: "Each year, we continue to see this group of young men develop not only their skills, but also their passion for the sport. Wrestling teaches far more than just getting your hand raised or earning a spot on the podium—it instills the value

of hard work, discipline, and sacrifice."

The coach said this was an enjoyable group to coach: "They embraced being pushed every day and consistently responded with effort and determination. Their willingness to work made coaching them incredibly rewarding."



Photo submitted

Girls Hockey advance to the south regionals

The River Lakes Stars girls 12-U A hockey squad won the district five championship and advanced to the south regional tournament for a shot at a spot in the state tournament. Squad members pictured in front row from left: Maya Dolly, Macey Barten, Paisley Ashbury, Peyton Akersopn and Anna Wagner. Second row from left: Sophie Haglund, Layla Garner, Clara Hoepner, Emeri Prosser, Lainey Martinka, Willa Prosser, Alizabeth Baloun and Finley Davis. Third row from left: coaches Nate Prosser, Steve Barten, Kyle Akerson and Mike Haglund.



Photo submitted

Boy Hockey advance to the south regionals

The River Lakes Stars boys Bantam A squad placed second in the district championship and advanced to the south regionals for a chance to advance to state. Pictured in the front: goalie Owen Redington. Second row from left: Gavin Meyer, Carter Stavros, Johnny Martinka, Soren Selander, Cru Ruegermer, Noah Einarson and Myles Gehrking. Third row from left: Cam Dahl, Jensen Davis, Jack Heying, Davis Wuertz, Easton Musterman, Liam DuFrance, Easton Hess and Dylan Bayer.



Photo submitted

NLS 3rd grade girls win their first tournament

New London Spicer 3rd grade girls travel basketball team took home 1st place at their very first tournament in Paynesville Saturday February 21st!. Pictured first row: Madeline Veeder, Lennon Spears, Rylee Bice, Ryann Rohloff, Briella Kennedy, Rayna Kase, Grace Christenson. 2nd row: Coach Lyndsey, Coach Krystal, Marin Deisting, Hadley Winther, Wren Lesteberg, Dillon Wallentine, Lillian Frauendienst, Coach Katie. Not pictured: Evelyn Knight.

In an era of misinformation, local journalism may matter more than you think

By Shannon Urban
Staff Writer

Ted Almen can trace his family's commitment to local journalism back three generations. His grandfather was a newspaper publisher. So was his father. And for more than four decades, Almen has carried on the tradition, running small community papers in rural Minnesota.

"It's in our blood," he says. "It's what I wanted to do coming out of college, and it's all I've ever really wanted to do."

But the industry Almen inherited looks nothing like the one his grandfather knew. Since 2005, more than 2,000 local newspapers have shut down across the country, leaving roughly 20 percent of Americans in what researchers call "news deserts"—communities without a single reporter covering city council meetings, school board decisions, or local elections.

In Minnesota alone, approximately 12 percent of local news outlets have closed since 2018, averaging about 11 closures per year. Almen himself had to shutter one of his papers, the Raymond-Prinsburg News when advertising support dried up.

"The support for it just got so small that we couldn't continue operating," he explains.

Yet even as newspapers disappear, something unexpected is happening: a growing recognition that local journalism might be exactly what a polarized, misinformation-weary public needs most.

The trust problem

In a time when misinformation spreads rapidly online and trust in national media institutions has eroded, local journalism — grounded in the everyday lives of communities — may offer something increasingly rare: proximity, accountability and trust.

"Journalism is one of the pillars of democracy," Almen says. "We need good reporters, people who are going to tell the truth, and we need them to be supported for this democracy to survive and to thrive."

The irony is sharp: at a moment when trust in media has cratered, local news organizations often maintain deeper connections with their commu-

nities than their national counterparts ever could.

At a recent forum on the future of local media hosted by the Citizens League, representatives from outlets across Minnesota gathered to discuss an industry in crisis—and the surprising opportunities emerging from it.

Tanner Curl, executive director of MinnPost, a nonprofit news outlet approaching its 18th year, describes local journalism as fundamentally "a human to human endeavor."

"At a time when the institution of media is mistrusted, when media outlets are mistrusted, how do we forge those relationships, those connections, neighbor to neighbor?" Curl asked the forum audience.

Why local matters

Local newspapers have long functioned as a community's record keeper — an institution that informs, entertains and archives the life of a place.

When local reporters stop attending city council meetings, residents lose visibility into how their tax dollars are spent, what developments are being approved, and which officials are serving their interests. The information gap doesn't stay empty—it gets filled by speculation, rumor, and increasingly, deliberate misinformation.

"When you lose access to that information," Almen said, "it becomes hard for people to understand where they have influence and agency in their communities."

Tim Murphy, a program officer at the McKnight Foundation who leads its local media initiatives, laid out the stakes plainly at the forum: "Without a local media environment that actually keeps citizens engaged, informed, and activated and inspired, any progress on any of our issues that any of us care about becomes really, really hard."

In fact, in areas where local coverage has disappeared, civic engagement tends to decline. Fewer residents attend public meetings or vote in local elections, and misinformation can fill the vacuum where verified reporting once existed.

In local reporting, sometimes it's a human-interest story about a resident's unusual

hobby. Sometimes it's a feature about a local event or school activity. And sometimes it's the careful scrutiny of a government decision that might otherwise pass unnoticed.

But even those small stories, journalists argue, are what ultimately knit communities together. And while national political debates often dominate headlines, local journalists say their work remains rooted in everyday life.

The business model problem

Trust doesn't pay the bills. And the financial model that sustained local journalism for more than a century has fundamentally collapsed.

Across the United States, the traditional foundations of local journalism are shifting beneath the industry's feet. Newspapers have closed, reporters have vanished from once-covered government meetings and the economic model that sustained community news for decades has weakened.

Advertising revenue that once funded newsrooms has migrated to digital platforms. Murphy estimates the shift began roughly 20 to 25 years ago, "in which advertising dollars used to drive the majority of the journalism work that was happening at different publishers around the country."

Local journalism has traditionally operated on a simple business model: subscriptions and advertising. Local businesses bought ads, readers subscribed and the revenue funded reporters who covered the community.

But as advertisers moved to targeted digital platforms like Google and Facebook, local papers found themselves scrambling to replace what had been reliable, sustaining income.

Almen has watched it happen in real time. His community of Kerkhoven, Minnesota, has "probably less than half" the businesses it had when he returned to run the family paper in 1980. Those businesses didn't disappear because of social media—they closed for a variety of reasons. But the ones that remain increasingly direct their advertising dollars elsewhere.

"That has hurt us tremendously," Almen says.

The economics have forced painful adaptations. Papers that once employed multiple reporters now rely on only a few, and often their publishers also cover beats. Part-time stringers and citizen contributors fill gaps. Postage costs—a particularly brutal expense for free community papers—have increased seven or eight times in the past decade.

"You have to run a tighter ship," Almen says. "You can't make mistakes the same way you could before."

Heather Cantrud, general manager of the 152-year-old Daily Journal in Fergus Falls, attributes her paper's survival partly to leadership that "operates within its financial means."

"If we don't have the money to do it, we don't do it, even if we want to," she told the forum.

New models, new hope

The crisis has spawned experimentation. Nonprofit newsrooms like MinnPost and Sahan Journal have emerged with diversified funding models that include foundation grants, individual donations, and advertising partnerships.

Meanwhile, traditional papers are adapting. Cantrud's newsroom has embraced digital newsletters, social media, video content, and even artificial intelligence for tasks like transcription and data processing.

Part of the need to shift has been due to changing audiences. Younger audiences often consume news differently, relying on social media or short-form video instead of traditional newspapers. And even loyal readers may struggle to distinguish verified reporting from the swirl of information circulating online.

"We're going to be in a place for quite some time where we have to be willing to adapt," Cantrud says. "We

can't just stick to the way it's always been done."

But Cantrud also defends print's irreplaceable role in democracy.

"You can't hack a physical newspaper," she points out. "That physical newspaper is still going to have the original article, how it was written. That is what goes into the public record. That's what goes to the historical societies. A physical newspaper is part of the historical record."

The stakes

At the forum, speakers repeatedly returned to a fundamental point: local journalism isn't just about local communities. It's about the health of democracy itself.

"Local journalism undeniably tells the stories of who we are as a country," Murphy said. "It's not conflated with national politics. It's not conflated with special business interests. It actually tells the story of who we are. When we lose that sense and that grounding of real communities, we lose something really important." The Washington Post famously broke the Watergate story because its publisher, Katharine Graham, was willing to absorb financial losses in pursuit of accountability journalism. When she was warned that the coverage was costing millions, her response became legendary: "It's a good thing we can afford it."

The principle scales down. A small-town paper might not uncover presidential corruption, but it might expose a mayor embezzling funds or a developer skirting environmental regulations.

"Every journey begins with the first step," Almen reflects. "This is kind of the first step of journalism."

Looking forward

Asked if he's optimistic about the future of small independent newspapers, Almen pauses.

"I'm hopeful," he finally

says. "I'm hopeful that people will realize that what we do is important, and we're kind of keeping a history of the communities, besides entertaining and informing."

His hope isn't naive. He knows Main Streets have changed, that revenue determines survival, that he himself had to close a paper he loved when the math stopped working.

Alexis So Tang, editor-in-chief of the Minnesota Daily, the University of Minnesota's student newspaper, sees young journalists who haven't given up despite the industry's troubles.

"The Daily still gets a lot of applications," she told the forum. "People are still signing up for the journalism program. We haven't all just accepted what's happening."

Cantrud encourages a mindset shift—looking at the industry's turbulence not with dread, but as opportunity.

"Challenge your own mindset to look at everything in a positive light instead of a negative," she says. "Look at the opportunity for change and see how you can make that into something good."

The challenges facing local journalism are severe and structural. The industry needs new business models, philanthropic support, policy interventions, and communities willing to pay for the news that keeps them informed.

But the need for local journalism has never been clearer. In an information environment polluted by misinformation, algorithmic manipulation, and partisan rage, the local reporter attending the school board meeting might be democracy's last, best line of defense.

"We're kind of keeping a history of the communities," Almen says. Because in an age of misinformation and fractured attention, the local paper might be the last place where a community can be documented



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— Photo by Amanda Orlowski

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