$1.25

Vinnie's Dang Fine Dine is named the winner of both pork and beef challenge ... See page 6



Rock County
STAR HERALD

Rock County's oldest business, printing since 1873

Thursday, January 7, 2021

No more snow days

Luverne students can attend classes 'in session' regardless of inclement weather

By Mavis Fodness

Lessons learned from online pandemic teaching has prompted the Luverne School District to adopt a formal e-learning plan to eliminate closing schools due to inclement weather.

"It makes sense to have that option in lieu of tacking on snow days at the end of the year," said Superintendent Craig Oftedahl.

The e-learning lessons are expected to be "high quality," according to the plan adopted at the Dec. 17 School Board meeting.

Quality is defined as integrating as seamlessly as possible into the regular instruction that had been occurring up until the snow day. Teachers are to "avoid generic, out-of context tasks. Tasks would be meaningful and important to students." Tasks will also be age-appropriate.

Kindergarten through fifth-grade students will engage in activities outlined in e-learning day paper packets or through Google Classroom as provided by their teachers. Teachers are to plan for up to two days of available materials.

Sixth- through twelfth-grade students will utilize Google Classroom, Google email and possible real-time instruction to complete e-learning tasks.

Teachers post all assignments by 9 a.m. when district officials declare a "snow day." Both elementary and secondary teachers will be available from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. by email and/

No more snow days/see page 3



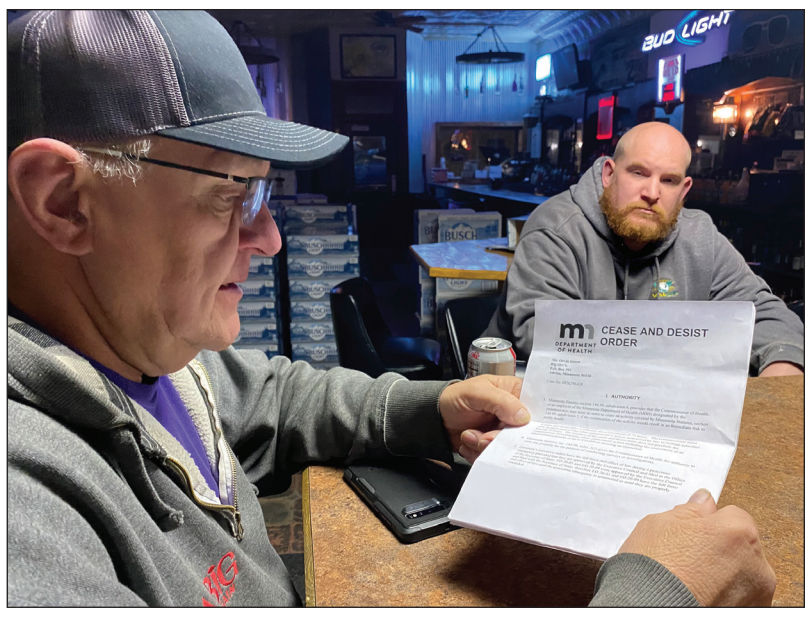
Mavis Fodness photo/0107 Frosty Jan. 4

Mother Nature opens 2021 with spectacular frosty displays

Rime ice clings to trees around Rock County Monday morning after days of winter fog blanketed the area since the New Year began last week. With the fog pretty sights around the area included scenes along Highway 75 through Luverne. Rime ice's dense structure allows the water droplets to freeze and cling on any surface. Temperatures have been mild into the New Year and will continue through the month with the exception of this week when a couple of inches of snow is forecast.

The photograph at right was captured by Star Herald designer Heather Johnson Saturday morning, Jan. 2, in the Blue Mounds State Park. The walk bridge in the former dam area stands out in stark contrast to the frosty vegetation in the background.





Lori Sorenson photo/0107 big orvs suspension

Orv Green looks over the "cease and desist" order that was delivered to his son, Derek Swenson, on Dec. 28 at Big Orv's bar in Adrian.

State orders Big Orv's to 'cease and desist' operations

By Lori Sorenson

Big Orv's in Adrian has been ordered to "cease and desist" operations and faces a 60-day license suspension after state officials cited the bar for on-site consumption of beverages.

Gov. Tim Walz's latest executive order prohibits in-person drinking and dining until Jan. 10 in order to slow the spread of COVID-19.

They're allowed to be open for off-sale liquor and food orders, but sometimes more than one customer stops in at a time.

This is what muddied the water at Big Orv's, according to bar manager Derek Swenson.

"People would stop in for a 12-pack, and sometimes they'd ask if they could have a beer at the bar," said Swenson, son of bar owner Orv Green, a Luverne native.

While off-sale business keeps some revenue coming in, he said it doesn't come close to bar sales. For example, a case of beer (24 cans) sells for $19 while a can of beer sold at the bar costs $3.25.

"The real money is made at the bar," Swenson said. "You're paying for the atmosphere and socializing."

Swenson said he knew that serving customers at the bar wasn't allowed, but he also didn't see the casual transactions as major violations.

He'd read about some bars

Big Orv's citation/see page 2

COVID-19 inoculations continue on schedule

By Lori Sorenson

The COVID-19 vaccine continues to be administered to Rock County people in the first phases of the rollout.

So far, public perception seems positive, according to local public health officials.

"Certainly there have been health care workers that have chosen to not get vaccinated or take a 'wait-and-see' approach," said Jason Kloss of Southwest Health and Human Services. "The COVID-19 vaccination is voluntary."

While some are declining, Kloss said most are eager to receive their shots.

"Many are wondering when it will be their time to get the vaccine," he said. "Obviously this depends on vaccine distribution and availability."

He said the schedule follows strict guidance from the state as to who gets the vaccine and when.

The Phase 1a first priority group included health care staff, EMS personnel and non-affiliated emergency responders.

Kloss said 67 percent of Sanford Luverne staff chose to be vaccinated.

The second priority group in Phase 1a includes assisted living workers and nursing home residents and staff.

The Minnesota Veterans Home in Luverne, for example, reported that the vaccine had arrived and inoculations started Monday.

By Friday all residents and staff will have received their first dose, and the second dose of the two-injection series will be provided in four weeks.

More than 95 percent of resi-

COVID-19 vaccine/see page 5

Planning Commission approves in-home salon

By Lori Sorenson

The Luverne Planning Commission approved a conditional use permit Monday night for an in-home salon at 603 E. Dodge Street.

Paula Gonnerman is starting a business, Salon Moleya, named for her three children — Morgan, Levi and McKaya.

The salon will be located in her home on East Dodge Street in the neighborhood east of Blue Mound Avenue.

In order to operate a business in a residential neighborhood, she had to request a conditional use permit from the Planning Commission, which hosted a public hearing on the matter Monday night in City Hall.

No member of the public attended the meeting, and the city received no written correspondence objecting to Gonnerman's plans to open a salon in the neighborhood.



Lori Sorenson photo/0107 gonnerman

Paula Gonnerman is opening an in-home salon on East Dodge.

Building official Chad McClure told the commission that Gonnerman's business plan doesn't present problems that would affect the

Gonnerman salon/see page 3

County salaries increase 3.25%

By Mavis Fodness

Rock County Commissioners approved cost of living wage increases for non-union employees at their last meeting of 2020 on Dec. 22.

The 3.25-percent increase is effective Jan. 1.

Commissioners also approved two three-year contracts with the administrator and county engineer of 3-percent increases each year.

Salaries of commissioners Jody Reisch, Greg Burger, Stan Williamson, Gary Overgaard and Sherri Thompson increased from $19,415 to $20,046.

The board also approved a one-year contract with a 3-percent increase for Land Records director Tom Houselog, whose salary increased from $105,392 to $108,554.

Other non-union employee salaries increased from 2020 to 2021 as follows:

County salaries/see page 5

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COVID CORNER

County	Total Cases	DAILY average in last 7 days	Percent Change
Rock	**1041**	**4.3**	**+3.1%**
Pipestone	881	2.6	+2.4%
Nobles	3,546	6	+1.2%
Minnehaha (SD)	25,333	95.7	+4.8%
Lyon (IA)	1269	5	+2.8%

14-day case rate in Rock County per 10,000 people:

Date Range	11/15-11/28	11/22-12/5	11/29-12/12	12/6-12/19
Rate	250.72	200.79	151.92	96.67

Vaccine Status: Phase 1a

- Health care personnel
- Long-term care residents

For more Covid-19 vaccine information, please visit:
https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine.html

School Status

LUVERNE - Elementary: In-person | Middle/High School: HYBRID
HBC - Elementary: In-person | Secondary: In-person/HYBRID

Current data as of January 5, 2021. Sources: MDH & The New York Times

Sponsored by: Rock County Emergency Management

Big Orv's ordered to 'cease and desist' operations/from page 1

that advertised big parties and served large crowds of maskless drinkers. He'd also heard that many other local establishments were quietly keeping their bars open to in-house patrons.

Nonetheless, a complainant called law enforcement in mid-December to report customers inside the bar at Big Orv's.

"They called the cops three times, and the cops never came," Green said.

Statewide, law enforcement agencies have deferred to the state MDH for enforcement of the governor's pandemic executive orders.

By law, officers have the authority to enforce the orders, but they've largely played an educational role, advising violators of possible penalties.

"We never had more than 10 people at a time," Swenson said. "And it was never past 10 p.m. That's when we're supposed to be closed."

He said it wasn't intended to be an overt defiance, but according to the state's order, it was a violation.



Lori Sorenson photo/0107 big orvs suspension

Luverne native Orv Green (left) and his son, Derek Swenson, have operated Big Orv's bar on Main Street in Adrian since 2010. Swenson considered buying the business from his dad a year ago, but COVID-19 setbacks have made the bar's future uncertain.

Dec. 21 inspection, Dec. 28 notice delivered

According to the MDH, an unannounced state official inspected Big Orv's on Dec. 21 and "found the establishment was open for on-site consumption of beverages, in violation of Executive Order 20-99, and a customer was observed not wearing a mask, in violation of Executive Order 20-81."

On Dec. 28 at 10:20 a.m. a Minnesota Department of Health official delivered an order to cease and desist operations.

"She came in here, never gave me her name," Swenson said. "She handed me the paperwork and left."

The order provided information about a 60-day license suspension and instructed Green to call the Department of Health for information about how to proceed.

So far, he said, each time he calls, he's prompted through a labyrinth of extensions that lead to an answering service. "I've left messages, but I haven't heard back," Green said.

Meanwhile, his patrons are wondering what happens next, and he and his son are wondering what the future holds for Big Orv's.

Costly shutdowns, unfair border regulations

Green opened the business in 2010 and Swenson has primarily headed up operations. In January 2020, Swenson and his wife, Candace, planned to buy the bar, but they had just bought a house and decided to hold off on the business venture.

Only a few months later, the state ordered bars and restaurants closed. "On March 17 at 5 p.m. ... on St. Patty's Day, one of the biggest days of the year in Adrian," Green said.

After bars and restaurants were allowed to reopen in June, he said it took time to rebuild business before the state shut down operations again Nov. 18.

Meanwhile, he's paid for his $2,100 liquor license and his $750 optional 2 a.m. liquor license. "Is the state going to give me a refund?" Green said.

He added that he's grateful for the pandemic relief aid he's received so far through federal, state and local aid. However, those relief dollars barely pay the bills.

Before the March 2020 shutdown, Big Orv's had done $35,000 worth of first-quarter business. The relief funds, Green said, amount to roughly 20 percent of that.

Looking into the future, he and Swenson wonder if business will ever be what it was before the pandemic.

"People are used to staying home," Green said. "I think it will take awhile for business to come back."

He said he respects the dangers of COVID-19, but he said it's hard to take orders from a metro-area governor who doesn't see how the rules affect border towns.

"You stop at Tailgator's in Brandon, and half the people in there are from Rock County," Green said.

"The same thing happens on the Iowa border; people in Ellsworth go to Sibley. People in Rushmore go to Little Rock."

Executive orders based on COVID-19 cases

Gov. Tim Walz issued Executive Order 20-99 on Nov. 18 at a time of rapid acceleration in the spread of COVID-19 across Minnesota.

State officials sought to protect Minnesotans while also preventing hospitals and health care systems from becoming overwhelmed by the surge in cases.

On Jan. 8 the governor is expected to loosen restrictions in response to a downward trend in newly reported statewide cases of COVID-19.

"If he extends it again, there's going to be a lot of people who are going to defy it," Green said. "And I'm not so sure I'll stay in business. ... The thought has crossed my mind."

According to MDH Assistant Commissioner Dan Huff, enforcement actions are a last resort after education and outreach fail to bring a regulated establishment into compliance.

It's unclear, however, if health officials had made contact with Big Orv's before last week's citation.

"COVID-19 protocols are designed to slow the spread of this virus and reduce the impacts of this pandemic," Huff said.

"Our preference is always to work with businesses to bring them into compliance, and we consider regulatory actions as a last resort. The vast majority of businesses are doing their best to help slow down the spread of COVID-19, and we owe it to them to have a consistent and fair enforcement approach."

Community calendar

Meetings

Springwater Township Board will meet (with social distancing) at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12, in the township hall.

Vienna Township Board will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12, in the Kenneth Community Center.

Free food Jan. 21

New Life Celebration Church will offer free food at 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at the Generations Building on East Lincoln Street in Luverne.

Vehicles should enter the west parking lot from Lincoln Street and drive to the double glass doors on the west side of the building where volunteers will load groceries into cars. Walkers should receive their prepackaged groceries on the east side of the building. Call 507-283-4366 with questions.

Dental clinic in Luverne Jan. 28

The next dental clinic for adults and children of all ages will be Thursday, Jan. 28, at Rock County Health and Human Services. Call 612-746-1530 to schedule an appointment or stop by Rock County Health and Human Services for assistance in scheduling.

General exams and services will be provided. All forms of insurance accepted. The service is organized by #Luv1LuvAll's Rock County Oral Health Task Force.

'Read with McKenzie' by Zoom

A work-study student is available to help individual students with reading skills in 10-minute sessions on Wednesdays from 4 to 5 p.m. via Zoom. The literacy program is called "Read with McKenzie."

Contact the Rock County Library, 507-449-5040. The Zoom link is on the library facebook page.

Input sought for digital readiness

A pilot program through Purdue University aims to increase civic digital engagement in Rock County and a community survey will help the group develop an engagement plan. Paper copies of the survey are available at the Rock County Library, city offices and the Rock County Courthouse.

The 10-minute survey can also be completed online at https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/RockCountyDigitalSurvey. Surveys are accepted through Jan. 12.

Food Shelf cold weather procedures

The Rock County Food shelf has changed its curbside process for winter. Wait in line to park in one of the two parking spaces closest to the building.

One at a time, enter the building (masks and distancing required) to register and pick up vouchers. Be prepared for volunteers to put pre-boxed groceries in the car. As the parking spaces empty, the next cars can pull in. The process will require patience. See the Rock County Food Shelf Facebook page for updates.

Help write 9/11 history

The Minnesota Military Museum is seeking stories for a statewide initiative to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. The goal of the project is to look at the impact of the horrific events of that day through a Minnesota lens, and researchers are inviting stories from Rock County.

Stories can be shared directly at www.mnmilitarymuseum.org. Click on "exhibits, test-gallery and share-your-story."

County denies city's abatement bond request

By Mavis Fodness

Rock County Commissioners declined to participate in a tax abatement bond requested by the city of Luverne.

Luverne officials plan a $5 million expansion of Luverne Area Aquatics and Fitness and will pay for the project though a $5.8 million tax abatement bond.

Commissioners discussed that there was no county interest in participating in the abatement and unanimously denied the abatement request.

City officials identified 175 parcels in Luverne to act as collateral to make the anticipated bond repayments of up to $340,000 annually.

Without the county's participation, the city qualifies for a 20-year repayment period versus 15 years if the county did participate in abatement.

According to County Administrator Kyle Oldre, the abatement bond and pool improvement project was discussed at a city-county liaison committee meeting.

"They are not taking the county tax, school tax or any special assessments, just the city portion of the these parcels would go, in theory, to the bond payment," Oldre said.

A state-required public hearing for the city to issue the tax abatement bond is set for Jan. 12.

Pandemic relief funding arrives in accounts after bill passes Dec. 27

COVID-19 Relief funds are arriving in people's accounts after the legislation became law Dec. 27.

The pandemic relief bill authorizes nearly $900 billion in coronavirus-related aid, which was part of an overall $1.4 trillion spending bill that will fund the federal government through September of 2021.

The package includes financial support and relief for U.S. residents and many small businesses, including farm operations.

It provides a stimulus payment of $600 to any individual who earned less than $75,000, based on the adjusted gross income on their 2019 federal tax return. Married couples earning less than $150,000 will receive a total payment of $1,200.

There will be an additional payment for every child that was claimed on the 2019 tax return.

These direct aid payments were expected to be made before the end of 2020, but after Trump's delay in signing the legislation, many payments are arriving in 2021.

Individuals earning more than $99,000 or married couples exceeding $198,000 would not be eligible for the stimulus payments. Payments are adjusted for income categories up to that level.

The legislation also extends supplemental unemployment benefits of $300 per week for 11 weeks through March 14, 2021.

A big portion of the latest relief package, roughly $284.5 billion, will be directed to assist small businesses through the Payroll Protection Program (PPP). The PPP loans will be reserved for businesses with fewer than 300 employees that incurred at least a 25 percent loss of revenue due to COVID-19.

The PPP provisions allow for forgivable loans up to 2.5 times the average monthly payroll costs for the year. The maximum is $2 million, and PPP loans of less than $150,000 will have a simplified application process.

While specific details on the next round of PPP loans are not yet available, farm business will likely qualify for the PPP loans again, including farm operations that file taxes as sole proprietorships.

There are other provisions in the legislation that clarify eligible entities for PPP loans, eligible deductible expenses or PPP loan forgiveness, the loan forgiveness process for PPP loans under $150,000.

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H-BC School Board agrees to help cover MSHSL COVID deficit

District to pay less than High School League requested for equity reasons

By Mavis Fodness

The Hills-Beaver Creek School Board unanimously supported the Minnesota State High School League with an additional payment to help the organization reduce its operating debt.

Board members supported an amount lower than the MSHSL was requesting and passed a resolution stating the lower amount at their Dec. 28 meeting.

"We need to send a message," said Superintendent Todd Holthaus.

That message, as stated in the resolution, is one of equity among school districts.

In September the MSHSL Finance Task Force sought an additional $2.8 million from member schools.

The extra money will alleviate a budget shortfall from canceled state tournaments in late March caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The task force calculated what each school should pay extra to bolster the organization's current budget.

Member schools were placed into categories based on high school enrollment and activity classification (AAAA, AAA, AA and A, the smallest schools). No money was sought from home schools or schools with fewer than five high school students

H-BC was asked to pay $4,317 or $28.22 per student.

H-BC, an "A" school, was charged more per student than the highest classified "AAAA" schools, which paid $4.88 per student.

"MSHSL is placing a greater financial burden on smaller classification members schools' budgets," the H-BC resolution stated.

Annual MSHSL membership is on a per-pupil basis, which H-BC paid earlier this year.

"MSHSL is not following their own guiding principles nor are they recognizing that its member schools are funded primarily by the amount of pupils we serve," the resolution stated.

H-BC has 104 high school students.

Instead of $28.22 per student, H-BC based their extra payment on a per-pupil basis model created by a representative at the Springfield School District.

Under the Springfield model each school would pay $11.16 per high school student.

Board members agreed to pay $1,707 based on the Springfield plan.

No more snow days in Luverne/ continued from page 1

or classroom messenger.

Teachers keep student attendance for each class/class period.

"Students who do not participate in planned activities are considered absent for those class(es) and should be reported as absent as if they were not present for an on-campus class," according to the district's e-learning plan.

Students who do not have sufficient access to the Internet will have alternative methods to complete e-learning tasks, such as a physical textbook or additional time to complete tasks.

Students with individual education plans will complete tasks specific to their IEP.

Discovery Time Preschool will not be in session on snow days.

The e-learning plan was adopted "in an effort to minimize disruptions to academic progress and provide a reasonable plan to utilize technology and blended learning opportunities."

The district can implement up to five flexible e-learning days over a school year.

Hourly staff has five options during district snow days:

- direct work with students on flexible learning days.
- make up hours at the end of the school year.
- use hours from personal leave, sick leave or take the day without pay.



Lori Sorenson photos/0107 gonnerman salon

The Luverne Planning Commission will recommend to the City Council that Paula Gonnerman's request for a conditional use permit is approved for an in-home salon at 603 E. Dodge Street. Gonnerman's salon will occupy a 124-square-foot room in her home's 1,550 square feet on the main floor, which adheres to Luverne's city code.

Gonnerman gets nod from Planning Commission/from page 1

integrity of the area.

"It's a salon inside a house," he said. "There isn't going to be noise or offensive odors."

By city code, a home occupation may not exceed 15 percent of the floor area of the primary structure. Gonnerman's salon will occupy a 124-square-foot room in her home's 1,550 square feet on the main floor.

She doesn't plan to sell retail, and there will be no exterior display of goods on the premises. She'll schedule one client at a time, likely between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily with one night per week with later hours.

Customers will park in the driveway of her double garage. A small sign that matches the color of the house siding will indicate the salon is located inside. The business will have a separate entrance.

Gonnerman has 12 years of salon experience and most recently worked with Remmedez, which is closing its operation at Main Street and Highway 75.

The Luverne Planning Commission ruled in favor of Gonnerman's business request Monday with the added condition that she maintain proper licensure with the Minnesota Board of Cosmetology, which oversees salon operations in the state.

The commission's action Monday serves as a recommendation to the City Council, which will take formal action on it at an upcoming meeting.

"Thank you, Paula. We're happy to have you branch out in our community," said commission chairperson Caroline Thorson.



Paula Gonnerman will have a business sign for Salon Moleya next to the front door that will be the same color as the siding on her house.



Mavis Fodness photo/0107 HBC Wysong Honored

Wysong finishes term on Hills-Beaver Creek School Board

Blake Wysong (left) receives a plaque and words of gratitude during his last official Hills-Beaver Creek School Board meeting on Dec. 28 from Board Chairman Arlyn Gehrke. Wysong served one four-year term and chose to retire. "Thank you for your service and dedication to the Hills-Beaver Creek School Board" was written on the plaque. Chris Harnack ran unopposed for the four-year seat on the board and will start his term this month. Both Wysong and Gehrke removed facial masks for the picture.

H-BC budget remains in the black

By Mavis Fodness

Finances continue to be positive for the Hills-Beaver Creek School District, according to an independent audit report presented at the district's Dec. 28 meeting.

Accountant Matt Taubert presented the 2019-20 financial statement to board members for the fiscal year ending June 30.

"This is a clean opinion. It's no qualifications, which is exactly what you're looking for in your reports," Taubert said.

"The same opinion we have had for all the financial statements that we have done for the district."

Taubert is with Meulebroeck, Taubert & Co. of Pipestone and has completed the district audit since 2013.

H-BC had total revenues of $5.9 million for the 2019-20 school year and expenditures of $5.5 million.

The $323,000 positive fund balance boosted the general fund to $3.4 million as of June 30. The amount includes $2.5 million in reserves.

Taubert noted the boost would have been larger if not for a roof repair at the elementary school that lessened the general fund by $265,000

The district instituted a policy several years ago to have at least 20 percent of an annual year's expenditures or about $874,000 carried over at the end of the fiscal year.

"You're well over your target. Your unassigned fund balance is at 59 percent of what an average three years of expenditures would be," Taubert said.

The fund balance was at a negative $224,000 at fiscal year-end 2012.

"In nine years you have increased your fund balance by $3.7 million," he said. "You have some wiggle room now especially for uncertain funding times that might be coming up."

The healthy unrestricted balance will allow the district to continue without any significant cuts or changes to curriculum in the near future.

Uncertainty ahead for 2021 due to COVID-19

H-BC enters the second half of the 2020-21 fiscal year with uncertainty, according to information presented at the district's Dec. 14 Truth in Taxation hearing.

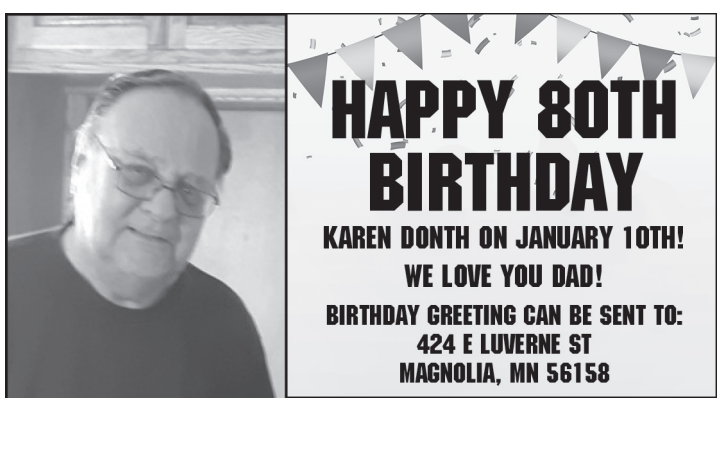
No one from the public attended the hearing in person or via Zoom.

A revised 2020-21 budget will be presented at a future meeting and could provide a glimpse of what is ahead for the district.

Six months ago, board members approved general fund spending of $4.721 million. "That budget has changed quite a bit since June," Superintendent Todd Holthaus said.

Revenue is up due to coronavirus aid dollars coming into the district along with expenses related to COVID-19. The district also purchased a new bus last fall.

After the hearing, the board approved the state-tabulated local 2021 levy of $1.371 million, or $18,800 more than last year.







Holding memories close, we're ready to lead our new generation of family



On second thought

By Lori Sorenson, editor

My sisters and I met Sunday afternoon at the farm for an impromptu social gathering.

There are five of us, but only four could make it on short notice, and it was just us — no husbands, no kids, no grandkids and, of course, no Mom and Dad.

Mom died in September of 2019, and Dad died in August of 2020.

The sisters and our families spent a lot of time at the farm last fall going through things in the garage, toolshed and outbuildings.

But the house we left alone for now. It serves as home base for charting our next steps and for transitioning to our next stage of life as new matriarchs of the family.

A wave of nostalgia hit me Sunday when I opened the front door of my childhood home to the aroma of a hot meal.

For a second, I could see Dad at the kitchen table reading the paper and Mom at the kitchen sink peeling potatoes.

Lisa (the oldest sister) got there early to cook a ham and set the table with Mom's good dishes and spring green tablecloth.

The rest of us showed up one at a time to add to the meal — a steaming casserole of cheese potatoes, fresh cut vegetables and dip, and a giant pedestal bowl of fresh fruit.

The colorful table was beautifully presented, and I briefly considered sending a photo to Mom. It would make her really happy to see her girls together for no reason other than to enjoy each other's company.

She knew families who didn't get along and siblings who didn't speak to each other, and she said she was happy that we girls loved each other.

Also, she hoped we would continue getting together as sisters with our families even after she and Dad were gone.

On Sunday, as we each showed up at the house, we hugged — long, meaningful hugs. The kind that are discouraged during a COVID-19 pandemic.

And we sighed. A lot. In a way that said without saying, "This is the new us. This is how we will be from now on."

We took our seats at the table, Lisa in Dad's chair, I in Mom's chair, and chatted about our holidays, about Lana's recent vacation and Linda's new living room furniture.

If this is the new way of things, we could tell the next generation was going to be just fine.

We held hands around the table and bowed our heads in prayer.

We thanked God for our blessings, we asked for forgiveness for our sins, and we prayed for guidance and mercy in 2021.

… Which, ultimately, isn't a bad approach to the New Year and to our next phase in life.

DPS: Drive smart and take driving seriously in 2021

Star Herald Editorial

According to data from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, 2020 has proven to be a challenging year on state roadways.

Preliminary reports show there were 394 traffic deaths on Minnesota roads in 2020, compared with 364 in 2019. Of the 2020 fatalities:

•64 were motorcyclists, compared with 44 in 2019.

•10 were bicyclists, compared with 10 in 2019.

•45 were pedestrians, compared with 50 in 2019.

•284 were males (72 percent) and 110 were females (28 percent).

Recent fatalities include:

•A 49-year-old male passenger died in St. Paul when the driver ran off the city street while speeding and hit a tree. Alcohol is suspected in the crash.

•A 33-year-old man was killed in Benton County. The man left his car after crashing into a row of trees. He walked across the divided highway and was hit by a vehicle. The pedestrian is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol.

•A 42-year-old man driving on a snow and ice covered interstate in Blue Earth County died when his vehicle left the roadway and rolled multiple times. The driver was not wearing a seat belt.

Preventable deaths

Preliminary numbers show that of the 394 deaths in 2020:

•At least 30 are known to be distraction-related, compared with 27 in 2019.

•118 were speed-related, compared with 72 in 2019.

•At least 109 were alcohol-related, compared with 111 in 2019.

•102 were not wearing their seat belts, compared with 73 in 2019.

Frightening speeds lead to increased citations

The Minnesota State Patrol saw an alarming increase in the number of drivers going 100 mph or more in 2020.

Troopers wrote 501 more citations to drivers in 2020 traveling more than 100 mph than they did in 2019. That's a 94-percent increase.

The top speed was 153 mph for a citation written in October of 2020.

Drive smart and save lives

If you are with a driver who is distracted, speak up. Tell them to put the phone down and offer to be their designated texter.

Refuse to drive until every passenger is buckled up.

Slow down. Speed makes even a small mistake worse. Trying to save a few minutes off your drive isn't worth causing a crash.

Plan ahead before you go out by designating a sober driver, and if you see a person who has had too much to drink, speak up and find them a safe ride home.



More than 1,600 crashes in 2019 involved animals including cattle



Ask a Trooper

By Sgt. Troy Christianson, Minnesota State Patrol

Question: My neighbor's cattle are always out. They don't take care of their fence and they are getting into my yard. I can deal with that, but my real concern is the highway we live along. I'm worried someone is going to hit a cow and get hurt or something worse. There must be a law about this.

Answer: This is concerning as this type of activity could lead to a crash resulting in life-changing injuries. In 2019 Minnesota had 1,632 crashes involving animals. While most of those were deer, a significant number of the crashes involved cattle.

Throughout my career, I've responded to several crashes involving cattle, horses, donkeys, mules, sheep, swine, goats and much more. A vehicle running into (and sometimes under) a 1,000- to 2,000-pound animal can quickly turn a sedan into a convertible. Many of these crashes resulted in serious injuries and occasionally something worse.

To answer your question, yes, there is a law. Minnesota State Statute 346.16 addresses livestock "running at large." The law states that civil action can also be taken. The owner of the animal is responsible for keeping it fenced in and safely off public roadways.

Question: I was recently told that I could not keep the trailer ball mount attached to the receiver of the vehicle when it is not actually hooked up to a trailer. Is this in fact true?

Answer: There is not a law in Minnesota that prohibits leaving a ball hitch in the receiver when not pulling a trailer. I do recommend that you remove your receiver hitch when it is not in use as it can cause injury if you or others walk into it. There is also an increase in damage to vehicles that collide with a trailer hitch as it may puncture the front grill, hood and radiator area.

There are laws that prohibit obstructing the rear license plate. This includes a ball that is attached to the hitch. The law also requires that the ball hitch be of sufficient strength to control and support the weight of a trailer and must be a device approved by the commissioner of public safety.

The law also requires that your cargo is properly secured. It is important to frequently inspect your trailer, hitch, safety chains and lights when traveling.

Question I was wondering if you could address what someone, such as my spouse should do if needing to call 911 and cannot speak or type as both of those abilities are impaired. We've been thinking about getting a medical alert system.

Answer: I would agree that a medical alert device might be the best option in this type of situation. There are different options, and some of them will alert family members at another location who could then contact the 9-1-1 call center in the jurisdiction where the person in distress lives to ensure help is on the way. The problem with the medical alert devices is that there is typically a single address associated with them, so if this person was not at home when pressing their help button, it may not be helpful.

For your situation, I would recommend reaching out to the 9-1-1 call center manager that would receive the call in your jurisdiction. The computer-aided dispatch system premise file database might be able to flag a phone number, or provide other helpful information with an address that will provide background information to alert the 9-1-1 call taker if they receive a call with an open line from a specific number. This would assume you are normally at home, and the person who is not able to speak or text uses a single wireless phone.

From my experience, 9-1-1 call centers are very willing to work with citizens within their jurisdiction who feel they need additional support when a 9-1-1 call is placed and someone is not able to communicate.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.

If you have any questions concerning traffic-related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us.

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The ***Star Herald*** encourages letters to the editor expressing the opinions of readers and intends to print all letters. Letters not meeting the guidelines will not be printed. The ***Star Herald*** will verify the authenticity of all letters. Letters must have the name of the writer, a signature and address. Unsigned letters will not be considered. The ***Star Herald*** will edit for grammar, spelling and clarity. Any letters containing offensive language, libelous or slanderous material, or misleading or false information will be rewritten before being published. The ***Star Herald*** will not publish letters written with the sole intent to advertise or serve as a thank-you. Letters with more than 300 words may be edited. The deadline for letters is Monday 10 a.m. They may be delivered or mailed to the editor, ***Rock County Star Herald,*** P.O. Box 837, 117 W. Main St., Luverne, Minn. 56156.

Voice of our readers

Dispatch report

Dec. 25

•Complainant on E. Oakland Avenue reported theft from a vehicle.

•Dispatch reported phone outage.

•Complainant on 115th Street reported a water issue.

•Complainant on S. Elizabeth Street, Hills, reported a suspicious phone call.

•Complainant reported water outage.

Dec. 26

•Complainant on E. Luverne Street, Magnolia, reported a neighbor dispute.

•Complainant on Redbird Road reported sound of gunshots.

•Complainant on S. Donaldson Street reported narcotic law violations.

•Complainant on E. Main Street, Hardwick, reported a disturbance in the street.

•Complainant on E. Fletcher Street reported trespassing at location.

Dec. 27

•Complainant on W. Interstate Drive reported a theft at location.

•Complainant on E. Luverne Street reported an accidental hit and run.

•Complainant westbound on Interstate 90, mile marker 35, Luverne, reported a pursuit.

•Complainant on N. Spring Street reported she hears a baby crying outside.

Dec. 28

•Complainant reported harassing communication.

•Complainant reported a subject at location with Rock County warrant.

•Complainant reported theft of property.

•Complainant reported subject with Rock County warrant.

•Possible vehicle on fire at location on Highway 75, mile marker 8, Luverne.

•Outage reported at location.

•Complainant on Manfred Drive reported a suspicious vehicle.

•Complainant on W. Mead Court reported a noise complaint.

Dec. 29

•Deputy westbound on Interstate 90, Luverne, assisted Nobles County sheriff.

•Complainant on Minnesota Avenue reported a hazmat spill.

•Missing person was reported at location on S. Ross Street, Hardwick.

•Theft was reported at location of the creamery pond.

Dec. 30

•Complainant on E. Main Street reported a vehicle for a parking violation.

•Report of subject with Rock County warrant at location.

•Report of a vulnerable adult at location on E. Warren Street.

•Complainant eastbound on Interstate 90, mile marker 5, Beaver Creek, reported a driving complaint.

•Complainant on S. Kniss Avenue requested a wellness check and driving complaint.

•Complainant on W. Hatting Street reported harassment.

•Complainant on 85th Street reported a civil issue.

Dec. 31

•Complainant on S. Kniss Avenue reported they were locked out of building.

•Complainant on 91st Street, Beaver Creek, reported a house fire.

•Complainant on 2nd Street, Beaver Creek, reported repossession.

•Complainant on W. Interstate Drive reported attempted shoplifting.

•Complainant on E. Lincoln Street reported theft from the store.

•Complainant on 10th Avenue, Valley Springs, reported issues in the area.

•Complainant on N. Elm Street reported found property.

•Complainant on E. Main Street reported civil case.

•Complainant on E. Main Street reported a tenant issue/property damage.

Jan. 1

•Complainant on E. 7th Street, Hills, reported suspicious activity.

•Complainant on E. Luverne Street reported a disorderly.

In addition, officers responded to 2 motor vehicle accidents, 7 vehicles in ditch, 7 escorts, 22 ambulance runs, 3 paper services, 6 animal complaints, 1 fingerprint request, 2 burn permits, 1 alarm, 4 purchase and carry permits, 1 stalled vehicle, 4 traffic stops, 3 abandoned 911 calls, 1 test, 3 welfare checks and 1 report of cattle out.



Mavis Fodness photos/0107 County Swear-In 2021

County officials sworn to duty for 2021

Fifth Judicial Judge Terry Vajgrt (center) administered the oath of office to elected county positions Tuesday morning in the Rock County Courthouse in Luverne. All ran unopposed and were re-elected in November to serve another four-year term. Pictured above are (from left) District 5 Rock County Commissioner Jody Reisch, District 1 Rock County Commissioner Gary Overgaard, Judge Vajgrt, District 3 Rock County Commissioner Greg Burger and Rock County Soil and Water Conservation District 4 Supervisor Dave Esselink. Also re-elected but not present at Tuesday's swear-in ceremony were SWCD District 1 Supervisor Gene Cragoe and SWCD District 3 Supervisor Roger Hoff.



Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor Dave Esselink (left) takes the oath of office from Judge Terry Vajgrt.



Commissioner Jody Reisch (left) recites the oath of office administered by Judge Terry Vajgrt.



Commissioner Greg Burger (left) receives the oath of office from Judge Terry Vajgrt in the courtroom.



Judge Terry Vajgrt (right) finishes the oath of office for Commissioner Gary Overgaard with an elbow bump.

County salaries to increase/ continued from page 1

•County administrator Kyle Oldre, $114,756 to $118,199.

•Deputy administrator Susan Skattum, $67,017 to $69,180.

•Auditor/treasurer Ashley Kurtz, $87,880 to $90,736.

•Deputy auditor/accountant Vanessa Luettel, $48,963 to $50,544.

•County attorney Jeff Haubrich, $87,500 to $91,500.

•Assistant county attorney David Owens, $70,000 to $75,500.

•Veterans service officer (part time) David Haugom, $28,005 to $28,915.

•Sheriff Evan Verbrugge, $96,959 to $100,838.

•Sergeant Jeffrey Wieneke, $91,374 with 2021 salary still in negotiation.

•Library director Calla Jarvie, $64,209 to $66,296.

•Assistant library director Barbara Verhey, $61,963 to $63,960.

•County engineer Mark Sehr, $118,825 to $122,390.

•Assistant county engineer Andy Haakenson, $66,768 to $68,937.

•Land Management Office director Eric Hartman, $95,056 to $98,134.

•Land Management Office assistant director Doug Bos, $78,104 to $80,662.

•Rural Water manager Ryan Holtz, $78,104 to $80,662.

COVID-19 vaccine distribution continues through Phase 1a, first and second priority areas/ continued from page 1

dents have agreed to receive the vaccine, and many staff have said they are looking forward to receiving the vaccine.

"Staff understand the importance of the vaccine in keeping our residents and colleagues safe and healthy," said Douglas Hughes, deputy commissioner of veterans health care for the MDVA.

"The vaccine will help us take a big step toward ending this pandemic."

The vaccinations come after 10 months of responding to the coronavirus pandemic, which required the Luverne Veterans Home to adopt strict infection control procedures, restrict visitors and curtail group activities.

The Luverne Veterans Home currently has four positive cases among 72 residents and 206 staff.

Priority group 3 of Phase 1a includes other health care workers (dentists, chiropractors, optometrists), pharmacists, health care workers in correctional facilities, funeral directors, mental health workers, school nurses and group home residents.

Phase 1b includes frontline essential workers, teachers and persons 75 years or older.

Phase 1c includes other essential workers and persons 65 to 74 years old and persons 16 to 64 years old with high-risk medical conditions.

Phase 1d includes all others, but Kloss said the start of later phases will depend on the time frame of second dose administration.

"Keep in mind that this is only the first of a two-dose vaccination," Kloss said. "The second dose must be given within about 30 days of the first dose."

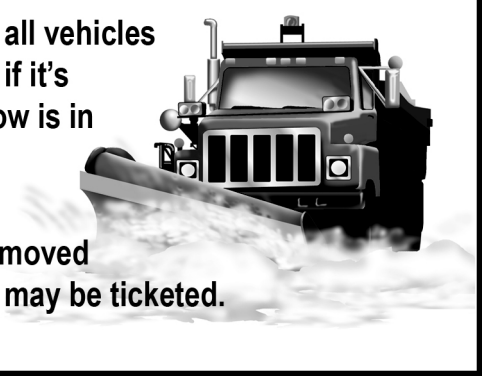
This means health care and EMS personnel and long-term care facilities will need to be given another dose in about 30 days to receive full protection from COVID-19.

"This will likely delay the progression to the subsequent phases," Kloss said.

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A REMINDER FROM
THE CITY OF
Luverne
STREET DEPARTMENT
It is the responsibility of all motorists to arrange for off-street parking so the Public Works Department can plow the city streets.
Please remove all vehicles from the street if it's snowing or snow is in the forecast.

Vehicles not removed from the street may be ticketed.

Hills-Beaver Creek Public Schools
I.S.D. #671
Open Enrollment Deadline: January 15th
January 15th is the deadline for nonresident students to apply for open enrollment to the Elementary School in Beaver Creek or the Secondary School in Hills, District Office or online at www.hbcpatriots.com. Open enrollment forms may be picked up in the district office of the Hills-Beaver Creek Public Schools from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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- Learning enhanced by a low ratio of student to teachers
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- Staff know students as individuals and are determined to help students succeed.

Hills-Beaver Creek School provides a student-centered environment that encourages individual talents and differences.

Star Herald
COMMUNITY

Double winner



Leroy Austin (left), owner of Vinnie's Dang Fine Dine in Luverne, received the 2020 We Love Pork Challenge trophy Dec. 28 from the Rock County Pork Producers representative Kevin Barnhart and the Luverne Area Chamber and Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Submitted photos

"Forkin' Good Burger" earned the "We Love Beef" challenge trophy.



"Pork Platter Like No Other earned the "We Love Pork" challenge trophy.



Vinnie's Dang Fine Dine owner Leroy Austin takes local 2020 beef and pork burger battles

By Mavis Fodness

Vinnie's Dang Fine Dine owner Leroy Austin became a double winner last week when the Luverne Area Chamber honored the Luverne restaurant with the "We Love Pork" challenge trophy.

In September customers voted Austin as the "We Love Beef" burger battle winner.

"The response to our two dishes and how all the public voted is a little overwhelming," Austin said. "We never thought we would win both contests in the first year."

Both contest entries featured the diner's signature menu of American cuisine with a twist.

"That's one of the things that sets us apart — everything is made fresh daily and cooked to order," Austin said.

A joint effort went into Vinnie's beef entry called "Forkin' Good Burger," which consisted of an all-beef patty stuffed with cheese, battered in the diner's famous Vinnie's Crispy Batter. The stuffed patty was then deep fat fried and topped with barbecue sauce, American and Swiss cheeses, thick hickory bacon and a fried egg.

"It will be hard to beat it in the 2021 Burger Battle," Austin said.

"The inspiration came from my son, Chandlar, who insisted we have to do something out of the ordinary to make a splash since it is our first year in the contest," Austin said.

The beef burger was followed by the creation of "Pork Platter Like No Other" for the most recent contest.

The platter included two smoked baby back ribs with hickory smoked pulled pork on top of Texas toast. Completing the dish are Mesquite barbecue sauce and cheesy hash browns.

Austin purchased the diner in November 2019 from previous owner Vince Gacke, who closed the diner months before putting the business at the corner of Hwy. 75 and Hatting Street up for sale.



Mavis Fodness photo/0107 Vinnies Dang Fine Dine

For 2021 owner Leroy Austin said an expansion is planned for Vinnie's Dang Fine Dine, along with another customer experience.

In the reopening, Austin's focus is on the customer and a positive experience.

The burger contest wins confirm Austin's focus is getting noticed.

"I believe what got it for us was our customer service. We received 5s (top score) on every ballot except for one of them," Austin said.

According to the Chamber, 1,210 beef burgers were consumed in the beef contest from Aug. 17 through Sept. 19. In the pork contest, Oct. 19 through Nov. 21, 682 pork meals were sold.

Both contests occurred under state health restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic, which closed or limited indoor dining to 50 percent or less.

The restrictions came during the fourth month of business for Austin. He was forced to think of ways to re-

Vinnies, continued on pg. 12

Remember when

10 years ago (2011)

•Terry and Chantel Connell and Roger and Kathy Fick signed papers Tuesday afternoon authorizing the sale of the K&R Auto property to Connell Car Care.

The Connells will move their East Main Street business to the South Highway 75 location.

"This is exciting," Terry said. "It's going to be a good move."

He said construction will begin immediately to expand the K&R shop building, which will double the space Connell Car Care currently has in its downtown shop.

The move will also increase the lot space for displaying cars for sale. The property extends west to South East Park Street, and south to Edgehill Street behind the car wash on the corner.

"We will shoot for moving the whole operation for Connell Car Care this summer," he said.

Specifically, Connell said he plans to expand the tire sales portion of the business and the wheel alignment services, in addition to handling more auto repairs.

25 years ago (1996)

•It's the same office with the same people that offers basically the same services, but it has a new name.

The former Rock County ASCS office has combined with the former FmHA office and now operates under the name "Farm Service Agency" in the Farm Services building just west of Taco John's on Gabrielson Drive.

"The whole purpose of this reorganization is to provide better service for farmers," said Roger Carlson, director of the new agency. "It's one-stop shopping so we're not chasing people around to different agencies as far as the government is concerned."

The move was a result of the federal legislature abolishing the Farmers Home Administration last fall. FmHA is the government credit agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that loans money for farms, housing, and community services.

50 years ago (1971)

•Construction in Luverne during 1970 was down from the 1969 figure by more than half a million dollars, according to the information compiled at the city administrative assistant's office.

The 1970 total of $471,880 is considerably lower than 1969's $1,210,625, but 1969 was also the year of construction for the new $900,000 public housing for the elderly which composed 74 per cent of the total construction costs during that year.

During 1970, seven new homes were built accounting for $151,900. These figures are based on cost estimates submitted by the owner or builder when an application is made for a building permit. Since 1961, 188 new homes have been constructed.

In 1968, building costs totaled $1,051,211. The new First Methodist Church in Luverne comprised $400,000 of this figure. In 1967, estimated construction costs totaled $427,450. Figures were higher in 1966 at $722,925, but 1964 still stands unsurpassed with costs reaching $1,601,500.

In 1969, seven new homes were built compared with 22 in 1968; 15 in 1967 and 1965; and eight in 1966.

75 years ago (1946)

•Although no birthday party has been planned, the fact still remains that Rock county will be 75 years old Monday, January 7.

It was January 7, 1871, that Rock county was fully organized, and the new board of commissioners, consisting of H. A. Gregory, Daniel Wilmot and P. J. Kniss took their oaths of office.

Immediately following the organization, about 50 residents of the county met at Luverne, selected as the county seat, to celebrate the event, and the day's festivities concluded with a grand dance at the home of Philo Hawes, at which Ole P. Steen and Dudley Whitehead furnished the music.

100 years ago (1921)

•There were one hundred and four marriage licenses issued in Rock county during the year of 1920, according to the records in the office of Clerk of Court O. E. Ferguson. This is seven more than were issued during 1919, the total number for last year being ninety-seven, and forty-eight more than were issued in 1918, or almost twice as many as during the closing year of the war. The average for the twelve years previous to 1918 was 82 per year.

The number for 1920 is the highest for any year in Rock county since 1907 with the exception of 1915, when 109 licenses were issued. The year of 1914 was the next highest, with 101 licenses issued.

December has been the most popular month for weddings in 1920 as well as in 1919, the number of licenses issued for the past month being 19, and in December, 1919, 15. June and February tied for second place the past year, fourteen licenses being issued during each month. The third highest number was during September, when ten were issued.

Following are the number of licenses issued during the other months of 1920: January, 5; March, 7; April, 2; May 6; July, 8; August, 7; October, 7; November, 5.

During the month of 1919 the number of licenses issued were: January, 1; February, 11; March, 6; April, 4; May, 5; June, 7; July, 3; August, 7; September, 12; October, 13; November, 13; December, 15.

Celebrations

Card showers

Jeane Swenson will celebrate her 90th birthday on Friday, Jan. 15. Greetings may be sent to her at 5501 W. 46th Street, Apt. #115; Sioux Falls, SD 57106.

Karen Donth will celebrate his 80th birthday on Sunday, Jan. 10. Greetings may be sent to him at 424 E. Luverne Street; Magnolia, MN 56158.

Menu

Monday, Jan. 11: Ham and scalloped potatoes, peas, bread, fruit cobbler/crisp.

Tuesday, Jan. 12: Spaghetti, green and wax beans, fruit cocktail, garlic bread, cookie.

Half-Price Day sponsored by Main Street Financial.

Wednesday, Jan. 13: Pork loin, candied yams, broccoli, bread, bar.

Thursday, Jan. 14: Baked fish, scalloped potatoes, beets, dinner roll, gelatin.

Friday, Jan. 15: Meatloaf, baked potato with sour cream, broccoli, bread, bar. This day is half-price day, sponsored by the Rock County Board of Commissioners.

LSS Dining offers well-balanced and affordable meals.

Call Lynette Hoiland at 283-9846 to arrange to pick up a dinner or for home-delivered meals.

Gift certificates are available at the meal site or online at www.lssmn.org/nutrition.

College News

Minnesota West releases dean's list

Several area students were named to the Minnesota West Community and Technical College Fall 2020 semester dean's list. Students must earn a minimum of a 3.5 GPA with at least 12 graded credits to qualify for the dean's list.

The following students were named:

Adrian: Elizabeth Tosch, Brady Vortherms, Emily Zemler.

Beaver Creek: Thomas Dysthe, Lauren Tatge.

Hills: Abby Knobloch.

Lismore: Sydney Knips.

Luverne: Tenley Nelson, Ashley Overaag, Justyce Ripka.

Rushmore: Dalton Gravenhof, Aunna Groenewold.

Obituaries

James Hendel

James Louis Hendel, 85, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, died Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2020, at the Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital in Sioux Falls.



A Mass of Christian burial was Monday, Dec. 14, at St. Lambert Catholic Church in Sioux Falls, with burial at the St. Adrian Cemetery in Adrian.

James Hendel was born on Oct. 27, 1935, to Louis and Ida (Ruffing) Hendel in Adrian. He attended St. Adrian Catholic School. Following his graduation from high school, he enlisted into the United States Marine Corps. Upon his honorable discharge from the Marine Corps, James returned to Adrian.

James married Marlys Dilly, and they were blessed with four daughters. James worked for over 35 years as a scale operator for Iowa Beef Processors.

In 1991 James made his home in Sioux Falls where he met Phyllis Emmett. They were married on June 5, 1992, in Sioux Falls. He then worked at Starmark Cabinetry for 10 years before retiring due to ill health.

James was a parishioner of St. Adrian Catholic Church, where he sang in the choir and was a member of the Knights of Columbus Council. He enjoyed taking his daughters fishing when they were young. He also enjoyed trap-shooting and taking care of his garden and lawn. He especially enjoyed spending time with his family.

James is survived by his wife, Phyllis Hendel, of Sioux Falls; four daughters, Jackie (Alan) Altman of Luverne, Pamela (DJ) Dressel of Lakefield, Sherry (Doug) McKenney of Canton, South Dakota, and Lorie (Ken) Adelman of Bellingham; a stepson, Patrick (fiancée Dana Whitehouse) Ruml of Howard, South Dakota; a stepdaughter, Nichelle (Jay) Crowder of Manhattan, Kansas; 15 grandchildren, Aaron (Caiti), Phillip (Cali), Autumn, Blair, Danielle, Christopher, Matthew (Kaitlyn), Brianna (Grant), Ryan, Evan (Samantha Hotzler), Tristan, Allison, Amelia, Andrew and Lucy; five great-grandchildren; two sisters, Joan Wolf of Clara City and Ruth Lorang of Adrian; brother-in-law Lyle Healy of Chester, South Dakota; sister-in-law Judy Hendel of Luverne; and many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Leo and Robert Hendel; a sister, Donna Healy; two brothers-in-law, Roman Wolf and Marvin Lorang; sister-in-law Joan Hendel; and great-granddaughter Gracie Marie.

Arrangements were provided by George Boom Funeral Home of Sioux Falls, georgeboom.com.

(0107 F)

Eugene Stoterau

Eugene Arthur Stoterau, 86, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, died Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2020, in Sioux Falls.

No memorial service is planned at this time. Condolences may be sent to Barnett-Lewis Funeral Home, 901 South Minnesota Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD 57104.

Eugene Stoterau was born on Aug. 15, 1934, to Harvey and Nora (Smith) Stoterau in Luverne.

After attending school in Luverne, he worked at John Morrell for 43 years. He also worked part time for Ronning Enterprises and still found time to coach Grey-Y basketball. He was a great supporter of the Minnesota Twins, Vikings and Gophers.

He enjoyed fishing, and after retirement spending summers at their acreage near Alexandria/Miltona, where he enjoyed gardening and wildlife.

Eugene is survived by his wife, Marvelle (Kizer) Stoterau of Sioux Falls; son Lynn (Maggie) Stoterau of St. Cloud; grandson Daniel Stoterau of St. Cloud; daughter Lynda Stoterau of Sioux Falls; son Troy (Sandy) Stoterau and their son Tre and daughter Keiley of Sioux Falls; siblings Marcia (Larry) Binford of Moorhead, Dale Stoterau of Brandon, South Dakota, Karol (Jerry) Mohs of Alexandria; and brother-in-law Bob Moe of Hibbing.

Eugene was preceded in death by his parents, an infant brother, and sisters-in-law Donna Stoterau and Carmen Moe of Hibbing.

(0107 F)

Edward Berning

Edward B. Berning, 90, Adrian, died Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020, at the Sanford USD Medical Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



A funeral Mass was Saturday, Dec. 19, at St. Adrian Catholic Church in Adrian. Burial with full military honors provided by the Adrian American Legion was at St. Adrian Cemetery.

Edward Berning was born Sept. 10, 1930, to Henry and Louise (Farwick) Berning in Lismore. He graduated from Lismore High School. He served his country in the United States Marines during the Korean Conflict.

Ed married Dolores Konz on Aug. 17, 1954, at St. Adrian Catholic Church in Adrian. The couple farmed by Wilmont for 12 years. In 1967 they moved to Adrian, and in 2015 they moved to their apartment in Adrian on Tennessee Avenue.

Ed was a member of St. Adrian Catholic Church and the Adrian American Legion. He enjoyed playing cards, traveling to casinos with Dolores, dining at the Luverne Pizza Ranch, playing slots on his iPad, and especially spending time with his family.

Ed is survived by his children, Doug (Willy) Berning of Adrian, Diane (Dave) Banck of Luverne, and Larry "Kono" (Tess) Berning of Adrian; five grandchildren, Bryan Banck, Tim (Becky) Banck, Kelly (Rory) Witt, Jeremy (Alesha) Berning and Aaron (Dianne) Vander Plaats; eight great-grandchildren; two brothers, Alvin Berning of Luverne and Jim Berning of Owatonna; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Dolores, on March 22, 2017; grandson Jason Berning; an infant brother, Raphael; a brother, George Berning; two sisters, Lorraine Van Peursem and Marie Smeins; a brother-in-law, Myron Smeins; and two sisters-in-law, Gert and Rita Berning.

Arrangements were provided by Dingmann Funeral Home of Luverne, dingmannandsons.com.

(0107 F)

Death Notices

Nicholas De Boer

Nicholas R. De Boer, 90, Leota, died Saturday, Jan. 2, 2021, at Sanford Luverne Hospital in Luverne.

A funeral service will be at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 7, at the Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church in Leota. Burial will follow in the Leota Community Cemetery. Visitation is from 5-8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 6, at the church. Per MN Executive Order, masks are required along with social distancing and occupancy limits.

Arrangements are provided by Hartquist Funeral Home of Luverne, hartquistfuneral.com. (0107 DN)

Lianne Buckmiller

Lianne M. Buckmiller, 64, Pipestone, died Sunday, Dec. 27, 2020, at the Avera Heart Hospital of South Dakota in Sioux Falls.

A private family service took place, with interment at Oslo Cemetery in Flandreau, South Dakota.

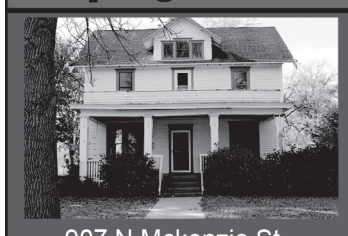
Arrangements were provided by Hartquist Funeral Home – Pipestone Chapel in Pipestone, www.hartquist-funeral.com. (0107 DN)

Burdell Willers

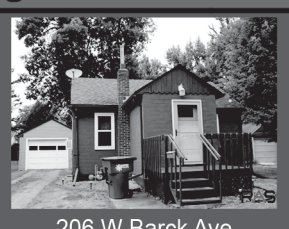
Burdell Willers, 95, Luverne, died Monday, Jan. 4, 2021, at the Heartland Hospice in Baxter.

To live-stream the funeral service, visit http://www.facebook.com/DingmannFH. (107 DN)

With over 40 years of experience Cragoe Realty
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Buying or selling real estate? You'll be SOLD on us!



907 N Mckenzie St
Luverne, MN $114,000
Large older 3 bedroom home on a lot and a half property. Single Detached garage. House has a half bath main and full bath upper floor. All 3 bedrooms are on the upper level. Beautiful hardwood flooring throughout main floor.



206 W Barck Ave
Luverne, MN $86,500
The perfect starter home for anyone looking to invest in property. 1 bedroom, 1 bath home. Non Legal bedroom in the basement. This home has been completely refinished with paint, new carpet and fresh wood work.

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507-283-2647 or 800-689-2647

1990: Steen residents' quick action prevent spread of elevator fires

The following appeared in The Rose History in 1911.



Bits By Betty

By Betty Mann, president Rock County Historical Society

Rock County Village (continued from 12-31-20 edition of the Star Herald)

For several years following its founding, Virginia was at a standstill so far as any material growth was concerned. It proved its advantage as a grain market from the start, but it was not until the early nineties that development along broader lines commenced. Among the early business enterprises was a lumber yard established by J. H. Zenker in March, 1890. The town experienced the most pronounced era of progress in building operations and expansion during the period which included the years 1891 to 1894. Early in 1891 the pioneer store was taken over by the firm of Miller & Roan, formerly of Rock Rapids. A second general store was established later in the same year by Hensing & Thorstad.[7] C. C. Berge was the first hardware merchant. The E. M. Dickey Co., which established the first grain warehouse in the year of founding, was the first to erect an elevator, which was done during the summer of 1892. The year 1893 was an especially active one and witnessed a number of substantial building and business improvements.

In 1895 a town hall was built by a stock company organized by the citizens of Steen. A business directory compiled in July of that year contained the names of the following men: George J. Roan, general store; W. E. Bauer, general store; C. Clemetson, billiard and pool hall; T. L. Peyer, harness shop; George Heath, blacksmith; O. A. Helgeson, livery and feed barn; C. Brant, manager Edmonds Co. elevator; Dickey & Co., elevator; J. H. Zenker, lumber and fuel; C. C. Berge, hardware; G. N. Graves, agent Illinois Central railroad; C. H. Peterson, postmaster.

On February 24, 1900, Steen was visited by a fire which consumed the two elevators of the town and destroyed 20,000 bushels of grain contained therein. For a time the depot building was threatened with destruction, but the energetic work of the citizens prevented further spread of the conflagration. Both of the elevators were rebuilt.

In late years Steen has enjoyed with others of her sister villages the prosperous times that have been incident to Rock county's marvelous agriculture development.

One of the finest little school houses in the county is found at Steen. It was erected in 1905 and was occupied for the first time at the beginning of the September term. This building replaced a former one, erected in the days of the town's infancy.

There are two church organizations that maintain houses of worship in Steen — the German Evangelical and German Lutheran. The Lutheran church was organized in the summer of 1890 with sixteen charter members by Rev. Theodore Maesse, of Fulda. The present church edifice, the first in the village, was erected in 1895 at a cost of $1800 and was dedicated on October 20 of that year. Rev. H. W. Baumann, of Luverne, is the present pastor.

[7]This partnership did not exist long. E. J. Thorstad, the junior partner, became sole proprietor in October, 1891.

The story of the village of Ashcreek will begin in the Jan. 14 edition of the Star Herald.

Donations to the Rock County Historical Society can be sent to the Rock County Historical Society, 312 E. Main Street, Luverne, MN 56156.

Mann welcomes correspondence sent to mannmade@iw.net.

Business News

Farmers Mutual Hail recognizes Shirley Top as Top-Producing Crop Insurance Agent

Shirley Top (pictured, right) with Kozlowski Insurance Agency and Financial Services Inc. of Luverne has recently been recognized as a top-producing crop insurance agent for Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company (FMH).

FMH recognizes the top-producing agents in total premium each year.

Top has been recognized as placing 28th in the company's Top 50 Agents in Crop Hail Premium list.



In addition, Top ranked seventh in the state of Minnesota for combined Multi-Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI) and Crop Hail premium in 2020 with FMH.

2021 will mark 34 years in the crop insurance business for Top. "I love working with farmers," she said.

She said the most important part of her job is working with clients, helping them understand their options, and assisting clients in weather and price-related claims.

Southwest MN CEO is holding a SOUPER SUPPER



This will be a drive-thru style for COVID precautions.

JANUARY 23, 2021
Hiawatha Lodge, Pipestone, MN
2:30 - 5:00 pm

JANUARY 31, 2021
Springbrook, Beaver Creek, MN
2:30 - 5:00 pm

We will be serving Soups from various local restaurants and Cinnamon Rolls from the Edgerton Bakery.

FEATURING:
50/50 DRAWING AND AN ONLINE AUCTION (LATER)

ONLINE AUCTION ITEMS
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SYDNEY LEIGH SENIOR SESSION • COLLEGE WORLD SERIES TICKETS
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PRE-SOLD TICKETS
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AT-THE-DOOR TICKETS
Adult $12 & Kids $10
50/50 DRAWING TICKET
$5 each

Questions on Pre-Orders (Due By January 13th) call: 507-920-3309

Prep sports get green light to start competitions on Jan. 14

By Brennen Rupp

The hit HBO series, "Game of Thrones," coined a term, "The Long Night," referring to a time period of a prolonged winter.

The Long Night is over for now in Minnesota.

Nov. 20 marked the last youth sporting event that took place in Minnesota before a "pause" was put into effect until Jan. 4.

Now teams have received the go-ahead to start practicing to prepare for what will be a wild winter sports season.

"We're really excited the first day is finally here," Hills-Beaver Creek girls' basketball coach Kale Wiertzema said.

"The first day jitters are alive and well throughout the halls. It's been a long wait, but having the opportunity to get back on the floor is what we wanted and now it's finally here."

Last week the Minnesota State High School League announced that teams can start competitions on Jan. 14.

"These experiences are so important to students and they have been anxiously waiting to get these winter seasons started," MSHSL Executive Director Erich Martens said in a statement released on Monday, Dec. 28.

"By implementing these safety protocols recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and required by the Minnesota Department of Health, we have the best chance to provide safe seasons with reduced interruptions and also plan for full postseason experiences."

With a date set for competitions, coaches and athletes can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel.

"This is a great step in the right direction for all sports and activities at all levels of competition," Luverne boys' hockey coach Phil Paquette said. "We are looking forward to getting back on the ice and starting the hockey season."

The updated safety protocols for youth sports will require all participants to wear masks during competitions and practices. The exceptions to this rule are gymnastics, wrestling, cheerleading and swimming.



Photo Courtesy of Cade Wenninger/0107 Outdoor rink

Outdoor ice skating rinks like the one in Pat Von Tersch's back yard in Luverne became even more important during Minnesota's COVID-19 lockdown as prep athletes continued to skate to prepare for the season.

"We are excited for the opportunity to start both practices and contests in this winter season," Martens said. "The commitment to safety by our more than 500 member schools is critical to not only start our seasons, but to finish them as well."

During the pause, youth athletes stayed in contact with their coaches via Google Classroom and Zoom meetings.

Hockey players were able to skate outside on ponds, lakes or homemade ice rinks.

"You can tell that the kids are giddy and ready to go," Luverne boys' basketball coach John Sichmeller said.

"It was fun to see kids walking into school this morning with their new basketball shoes and the excitement they have when talking to them."

He said recent past shutdowns have taught coaches and athletes not to assume a schedule.

"We used to tell them not to take any games for granted, but now it will be to not even take any practices for granted," Sichmeller said. "Just enjoy the time you get to be with your friends because we have all been missing that."

He said athletes so far are taking that approach.

"They know how much they have missed out on already so I think they are all excited that we finally get a chance to have some fun."

During the shortened fall season, there were no state tournaments. For some sports, like volleyball, there was no postseason play due to the pandemic shutdown.

Now it appears the MSHSL will at least attempt to have postseason play, which could include state tournaments.

The Luverne girls' hockey team made a trip to the state tournament last season. Tony Sandbulte, the girls' hockey head coach, said his team is excited to get back on the ice together.

"I'm really excited for our players, especially our seniors and their parents," Sandbulte said. "These girls have skated most of their lives, so I'm grateful they can play their senior year and put closure to their varsity careers on the ice."

He said the team is ready to work and to take advantage of play time and practice.

"The late start and guidelines will definitely make for a different and interesting season," Sandbulte said. "But we're happy to make the adjustments if that allows us to play."

The first competition for the Luverne gymnastics team is scheduled for Jan. 21. The focus for head coach Phoebe Flom and her team will be getting into shape.

"This is about our normal time between the start of the season and our first meet," Flom said.

"Although the girls have had a longer time off, so getting into shape may be a little more difficult. We never feel ready for the first meet, but we will do our best."

The Luverne girls basketball team is coming off a succesful season in which they earned the No. 1 seed in the section tournament.

The Cardinals suffered a heartbreaking loss at the hands of Windom Area in the subsection championship. The Eagles hit a game-winning shot at the buzzer to knock the Cardinals out of postseason play.

Since that devasting loss the Cardinals have been hungry to get back out on the court.

"The energy level was as high as it has ever been on the first day of practice," Luverne head coach, TJ Newgard said.

"Coming off a season where we had some success coupled with a heart-breaking loss to end the season has added some extra motivation.

The entire team is anxious to get back on the court and compete each week. We will take it game by game and never take anything for granted."

2021 shaping up to be an exciting year for the State of Hockey



Rupp's Rants

By Brennen Rupp, reporter

Youth sports, including hockey, started back up again on Jan. 4. The prep athletes that had been training on local ponds, lakes and homemade ice rinks took to the ice for the first day of practice as they prepare for the upcoming season.

Jan. 4 also marked the first day of training camp for the Minnesota Wild. On that same night, the top-ranked Minnesota Golden Gophers improved to 10-0 with a win over Arizona State University.

The year 2021 is shaping up to be an exciting one for the hockey fanatics that reside in Rock County.

Cardinals Hockey

The Luverne girls' hockey team figures to be one of the top teams in Class 1A. The Cardinals are fresh off a season in which they finished with a 20-4-1 season and made an appearance in the state tournament.

Luverne will return a strong core that includes Kamaryn Van Batavia, who led the team in goals (42) and points (67).

Van Batavia will be joined by Rylee Gee and Reghan Bork, who both finished tied for second on the team with 40 points.

The Cardinals will also return Cheyenne Schutz and Mallory Von Tersch between the pipes.

Luverne will be led by six seniors and a strong group of underclassmen as they aim to make it back to the state tournament in 2021.

For the boys hockey team, the Cardinals will be led by four seniors in 2021. The Cardinals wrapped up last season with a 15-10 record. The Cardinals pulled off a minor upset of the Marshall Tigers in the section tournament before falling to eventual state qualifier Hutchinson.

With a group of four seniors leading the way, the Cardinals will look to put together a deep postseason run in 2021.

Collegiate Level

The Golden Gophers are currently the top-ranked team in the country and are one of the early favorites to win the Frozen Four.

In the program's 100th season bringing home a National Championship to the State of Hockey would be something special.

Luverne graduate Jaxon Nelson is centering the fourth line for the Gophers. Nelson currently has two goals and two assists for the Gophers.

A bit south of the Gophers is the Minnesota State University Mankato Mavericks.

The Mavericks were contenders to win the Frozen Four last season before COVID-19 put an abrupt end to the hockey season.

The Mavericks are currently the fifth-ranked team and own a 5-1-1 record.

WIth Dryden McKay, one of the best goalies in the country, leading the way ,the Mavericks are a legitimate contender to win the Frozen Four in 2021.

The question is, can the Mavericks put their dreadful Frozen Four history behind them? They currently own an 0-6 tournament record. Is this the year they break through and advance?

Then there is the University of Minnesota Duluth Bulldogs. The perennial powerhouse has won the last two Frozen Fours and figure to be a factor once again this season.

The Bulldogs currently own a 6-3-2 record and are the fifth-ranked team in the USCHO.com rankings.

St. Cloud State University is two years removed from being a No. 1 seed in the Frozen Four. The Huskies currently own a 7-4 record and figure to be players in the Frozen Four.

Into the Wild

The Minnesota Wild will begin their season on Jan. 14 on the road against the Los Angeles Kings.

The opening game of the season will also be the much anticipated debut of the Russian sensation, Kirill Kaprizov.

The Wild may not be much of a factor in the playoff race, but with Kevin Fiala and Kaprizov the Wild figure to be an exciting team to watch each time they take the ice.

Puppies will be puppies

By Scott Rall
Outdoors columnist



It was a few months ago that I shared with you that I had gotten a new puppy. He is a male black Labrador and is now 6.5 months old. His name is Ghost.

When future dog owners are contemplating a new puppy, they often use the seasons of the calendar to decide when would be the right time. House-training puppies in the winter is harder, but I contend that it is the best time to get a new hunting companion.

The average Labrador will live to be about 12 to 13 years of age before they head to doggie heaven. Picking up a new puppy in June-July makes that dog too young to be effective in its first hunting season.

The majority of serious dog training starts when the dog is about 8 to 10 months old. This allows the dog's mind and body to mature to a point where advanced training can be absorbed without asking too much of their little minds.

A late fall or early winter pickup allows the dog to be nine to 10 months of age when the hunting seasons open in late September. Many of the things new puppy owners complain about are really not problems at all. They are what I call "a puppy being a puppy."

They would never expect a human child to be potty trained at 12 months of age but expect little dogs to act like big dogs and then are disappointed when they can't or don't.

I was reminded of this point just the other day. My gal was folding clothes in the bedroom and the puppy was running around and playing under the bed. It wasn't until she saw some shreds of cardboard that she realized the puppy was into something he shouldn't have been.

Low and behold, Ghost had chewed eight inches off of two limited-edition artist proof prints by artist Jerry Raedeke that were gifts from two different conservation organizations for my payment of a life membership.

This was not the puppy's fault but what I call owner/operator error. Ghost was just doing what puppies do. When I was under the sink with an Allen wrench twisting on the motor stem of the garbage disposal that was stuck, he crawled right under the sink with me.

Again, he was just doing what puppies do, but many dog owners would have reprimanded him for that action.

All dogs are descendants from wolves, and if you watch any nature shows these wolf pack puppies always roughhouse with their parents and other members of their pack.

Getting excited and peeing a little as a baby dog when someone comes to the door is something they will grow out of but is again just a puppy being and acting like a puppy.

They like to nip and bite, and gently training will fix this problem too.

I have come to the conclusion that after having more than 10 puppies in my life over the past 25 years, you are one of the lucky ones if your puppy is one that actually acts like a puppy.

Behavioral problems like overly aggressive, overly protective and the other end of the spectrum being so meek and timid as to shy away from all other dogs and in many cases most humans, are not considered a puppy being a puppy in my book. These would be considered actually behavior issues that need immediate and proper attention.

Ghost is starting to settle in and be a little less rambunctious. This happens naturally as they age. As he was lying across my lap and I was scratching him behind the ears, I said, "Ghost, you are doing a fabulous job of being a puppy."

He has done and acted just like any 6.5-month-old puppy should. What humans see from their perspective and their measure of what they think a puppy should do and be, they consider many puppy issues as bad puppy manners.

Things that frustrate and disappoint. The fact of the matter is that in most cases the puppy is doing exactly what almost every other puppy of its breed would do at their age. Dogs only live a short while and only about 1/20th of that is as a puppy.

Enjoy these early months because cute puppy breath goes away way too soon and their desire to chew up valuable prints will wane as well.

The Star Herald reached out to churches for their worship information in the absence of in-person worship services, due to coronavirus social distancing. Those that responded are listed here. Those that would like to have information posted here should call the Star Herald or email editor@star-herald.com.

St. Catherine Catholic Church
203 E. Brown St., Luverne
St. Catherine Ph. 283-8502; www.stscl.org
Monsignor Gerald Kosse, Pastor
Public mass will be celebrated with a limit of 50 percent capacity of the church. Masses: 9 a.m. Wednesday, 10 a.m. Friday and 8:30 a.m. Sunday. No mass, communion service or rosary at care centers at this time. 5 p.m. Saturdays and 8:30 a.m. mass will be live streamed on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/pg/stccluverne/videos/. Visit www.stscl.org for more information.

Luverne Christian Reformed Church
605 N. Estey St., Luverne
Office Ph. 283-8482; Prayer Line Ph. 449-5982
www.luverncrc.com — office@luvernecrc.com
Roger Sparks, Pastor
We are streaming Sunday services live on Roger Sparks' Facebook page at 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Send him a friend request if you're not connected. You may also visit our website for delayed broadcasts. Also our services are on local cable TV at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and at 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays. In all circumstances, may we joyfully declare: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." Psalm 124:8.

First Baptist Church
1033 N. Jackson St., P.O. Box 975, Luverne
Ph. 283-4091; email: fbcluv@iw.net — www.fbcluverne.org
Walt Moser, Pastor
Sundays, 10:30 a.m. In-person worship service. Service is also on Facebook Live at 10:30 a.m.

Grace Lutheran Church
500 N. Kniss Ave., Luverne
Ph. 507-283-4431; www.graceluverne.org — graceluverne@iw.net
Ann Zastrow, Pastor
Saturday, Jan. 9: 5:30 p.m. Worship service. In-person worship service in Sanctuary. Sunday, Jan. 10: 9 a.m. Worship service. 10-10:45 a.m. Sunday school. 10:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom. Wednesday, Jan. 13: 7 a.m. Men's Bible Study. 7-7:45 p.m. Confirmation for 6th-8th grade. Online, TV and Radio Worship options are still available. Online Sundays 9 a.m. on the church website www.graceluverne.org, click Worship tab or go directly to our Facebook page at Grace Lutheran ELCA, Luverne. TV: Vast Channel 3 will air our worship service Mondays at 4:30 p.m. and Fridays at 10 a.m. – NEW TIME! Radio: KQAD-AM Radio will air our worship service on Sundays at 8:15 p.m.

Bethany Lutheran Church
720 N. Kniss Ave., Luverne
Ph. 507-283-4571 or 507-449-0291 or 605-215-9834
pastorapalmquist67@yahoo.com
Andrew Palmquist, Pastor
Sunday, 10:15 a.m. Worship service; worship online as well. Monday, 6:30 p.m. Zoom Bible study. See our Facebook page, Bethany Lutheran Church (Luverne). Also visit els.org with our sister churches for online worship opportunities.

American Reformed Church
304 N. Fairview Dr., Luverne
Ph. 283-8600; email: office@arcluverne.org
Mike Altena, Pastor
Sundays, 9:30 a.m. indoor service. Worship services are also broadcast on Vast Channel 3 on Mondays at 6 p.m. and Wednesdays at 4 p.m. DVD's available upon request. To stay up to date on announcements, follow us on Facebook and Instagram @arcluverne.

First Assembly of God Church
1075 110th Ave., 2 miles west of Luverne on County Rd. 4

United Methodist Church
109 N. Freeman Ave., Luverne
Ph. 283-4529; email: luverneumc@iw.net
Thursday, Jan. 7: 1-3 p.m. Food Shelf curbside. Saturday, Jan. 9: 8 p.m. AA meeting. Sunday Jan. 10: 9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday school. 10:30 a.m. Worship service – SD In-house worship service — Services held on radio and live on Facebook. YouTube will also have services posted. 4:30 p.m. Genesis to Revelation Bible Study with safe distancing. Monday, Dec. Jan. 11: 8 p.m. AA meeting. Wednesday, Jan. 13: 8 p.m. AA Meeting. Thursday, Jan. 14: 1-3 p.m. Food Shelf curbside.

First Presbyterian Church
302 Central Lane, Luverne
Ph. 283-4787; email: Firstpc@iw.net— www.fpcluverne.com
Jason Cunningham, Pastor
Worship services in-person and through Facebook Live Sunday **10:15 a.m.*** Our Facebook page can be found under First Presbyterian Church of Luverne. We are also on the local Luverne cable station at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and 10 a.m. on Thursdays.

St. John Lutheran Church
803 N. Cedar St., Luverne
Ph. 283-2316; email: stjohn@iw.net
www.stjohnlutheranluverne.org
Rev. Dr. Phil Booe, Pastor
Worship services Saturday 5:30 p.m. and Sunday 9 a.m. Limit is 75 people. Services will be available on the Vast channel 3 Sunday and online at the city website, cityofluverne.org.

Living Rock Church
500 E. Main St., Luverne
Ph. 449-0057; www.livingrockswmn.org
Billy Skaggs, Pastor

New Life Celebration Church
110 N. Oakley, Luverne
Ph. 449-6522; email: newlifecelebration@gmail.com

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
305 E. 2nd St., P.O. Box 36, Hardwick
Ph. (507) 669-2855; zionoffice@alliancecom.net
Jesse Baker, Pastor

Ben Clare United Methodist Church
26762 Ben Clare Ave., Valley Springs, S.D.
igtwlb@WOW.net
Bill Bates, Pastor

First Lutheran Church
300 Maple St., Valley Springs, S.D.
Ph. (605) 757-6662
Laura Phillips, Pastor
Video worship via YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHdQwVxFcU4

Palisade Lutheran Church
211 121st St., Garretson, S.D.
Ph. (507) 597-6257 — firstpalisade@alliancecom.net
Laura Phillips, Pastor
Video worship via YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHdQwVxFcU4

First Presbyterian Church
201 S. 3rd St., P.O Box 73, Beaver Creek
Ph. 507-935-5025
email: lori.firstpres@gmail.com
Thursday 10 a.m. worship service on VAST and Mediacom. 7 p.m. Sunday 10:15 a.m. worship service viewed live on First Presbyterian Church Facebook page. Tuesday 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. worship service on VAST and Mediacom.

Magnolia United Methodist Church
501 E. Luverne St., Magnolia
Ph. 605-215-3429
email: magnoliamnumc@gmail.com
Nancy Manning, Pastor
Sunday, 9 a.m., in-person with livestream available on the church's Facebook site.

Steen Reformed Church
112 W. Church Ave., Steen
Ph. 855-2336
Jeremy Wiersema, Pastor
Sunday, 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Worship service in-person with livestream available on Facebook and YouTube. Radio worship on KQAD Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
112 N. Main St., Hills
Ph. 962-3270
Sunday, Jan. 10: 10 a.m. Worship service at Bethlehem. No Sunday school. Worship will be streamed live to Facebook at Bethlehem of Hills. You can find more info on our website blchills.org.

Hills United Reformed Church
410 S. Central Ave., Hills
Office Ph. 962-3254
hillsurc@alliancecom.net
Alan Camarigg, Pastor

Happy New Year … Expect more of the same …??

Built on a Rock

By Rev. Michael Geiger, guest columnist, Cross & Crown Lutheran Georgetown, Texas

A blessed and happy New Year to all!

I have a prediction for 2021. It will be like 2020.

WHAT!!! Say it isn't so! I am SO done with 2020 and ready for 2021!

In many ways, so am I. 2021 is before us with many new experiences and opportunities. We will sit down today or soon and plan out what we hope to accomplish, set resolutions to change mindset or behavior, and pray that the challenges of 2020 will NOT follow us in 2021.

I too am optimistic. But not because we have a vaccine, or because it's not an election year, or because the stock market is ending the year higher than it has ended any previous year (at least at the time of this writing.)

I am optimistic because I/we enter the year with the same faithful, loving God with whom we entered 2020 and 2019 and 2018 and …

I am optimistic because the promises of God that were true last Jan. 1 are the same today. Here are a few.

The calendar changes … we change … situations change … but God doesn't change in 2021! "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." James 1:17

Seasons change … winter to spring, spring to summer, summer to fall, fall to winter … they may be cooler or warmer than last year, but the fact that they change testifies that God's faithfulness hasn't changed. "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease." Genesis 8:22

If I stop and reflect, every day of 2020 I had the compassion and mercy of God shown to me. He promises the same every morning of 2021. "Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 22-23

In spite of the social distancing, Zoom gatherings and six-foot spacing, we still are connected to the love of God found in Christ. Nothing will separate us from that in 2021 either. "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any power, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

The list could go on … which reminds us whatever events and experiences we have in 2021, we can engage in them with the consistent, unchanging promises of God!

May your 2021 be filled with many realizations of the loving and faithful God who has allowed you to enter a New Year.

To see other devotions or worship services of Cross and Crown Lutheran Church (WELS) in Georgetown, Texas, visit the website www.crossandcrowntx.com and click on Live Stream. (Rev. Geiger is the nephew of copy editor Esther Frakes.)

These weekly church page messages are contributed to God's Work through the Church and by these concerned and responsible citizens & businesses:

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Star Herald
PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice of public hearing for conditional use permit

Notice of Public Hearing for Conditional Use Permit
For Schwartz Farms, LLC

Pursuant to the Rock County Zoning Ordinance, notice is hereby given by the Rock County Planning and Zoning Commission that a public hearing will be held at the Rock County Law Enforcement Center located at 1000 North Blue Mound Avenue, Luverne, Minnesota at 7:00 p.m., Monday, January 11th. The purpose of this hearing is to rule on the application for Conditional Use Permit for the following:

Applicant & Property Owner:	Schwartz Farms, LLC
Location:	SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 31 of Luverne Township, T102N, R 45W, Rock County, Minnesota
Conditional Use:	Expansion and operation of an existing feedlot to more than 1000 Animal Units
Zoning District:	A-2, General Agriculture

The conditional use permit is for the expansion of an existing feedlot on the property described above. The existing feedlot consists of a total confinement barn housing 3300 head of finishing swine. The total capacity of the existing feedlot is 990 animal units.

The proposed expansion shall consist of increasing the number of head of finishing swine within the existing barn by 330 head, which will increase the total capacity by 99 animal units.

After the expansion, the site will house 3630 head of finishing swine. Manure from the total confinement barn is stored in a poured reinforced concrete pit under the floors of each of these barns. Total animal units after the expansion will be 1089 animal units.

To help mitigate the risk to public health by following the recommendations from the Department of Health and Human Services, along with Governor Walz' statewide response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the total number of attendees present at the meeting will be limited in order to meet the Governor's requirements of 10 or less. Masks will be required in the meeting room.

If you wish to offer comments relative to the public hearings being held and do not need to be present, we ask you to submit that those comments by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, January 11. Comments can be submitted in writing to the Rock County Land Management Office, located at 311 West Gabrielson Road, Suite 4, Luverne, Minnesota, or submitted by e-mail to: eric.hartman@co.rock.mn.us

If you wish to actively participate in the public hearing process itself from an off-site location, we are providing live access to the meeting through a teleconferencing service. To access the meeting, dial the following phone number: (425)436-6320 Then when prompted, enter the access code number: 108575

Dated: December 31, 2020

By Order of the Rock County Planning and Zoning Commission
Eric Hartman, Zoning Administrator
311 W. Gabrielson Road
Luverne, MN 56156
507-283-8862

(12-31, 01-07)

Rock County Commissioners meet Dec. 8

Rock County Board of Commissioners **9:00 A.M.**
Herreid Board Meeting Room/Zoom Video Meeting **December 8, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Overgaard with all Commissioners present. Also in attendance were County Administrator Kyle Oldre, County Attorney Jeff Haubrich, and Star-Herald Reporter Mavis Fodness.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all who were in attendance.

Motion by Reisch, seconded by Burger, to approve the December 8, 2020, County Board agenda, declared carried on a voice vote.

Motion by Thompson, seconded by Reisch, to approve the November 17, 2020, County Board minutes, declared carried on a voice vote.

Motion by Overgaard, seconded by Williamson, to approve the consent agenda, declared carried on a voice vote.

1.County Board 2021 Meeting Schedule:
January 05 – January 19
February 02 – February 16
March 02 – March 16
April 06 – April 20
May 04 – May 18
June 08 – June 22
July 06 – July 20
August 03 – August 17
September 07 – September 21
October 05 – October 19
November 02 – November 16
December 07 – December 21

Mark Sehr, Engineer, requested approval of Resolution 19-20, a County State Aid Highway Funds advance; on a recommendation by the Engineer, motion by Burger, seconded by Thompson, to approve, declared carried on a voice vote.

Ashley Kurtz, Auditor/Treasurer, presented the claims and per diems of $1,900.00; motion by Thomson, seconded by Reisch, to approve, declared carried on a voice vote. A complete listing of the claims is available upon request at the Auditor/Treasurer's office.

DECEMBER 8, 2020 CLAIMS OVER $2,000

A & B BUSINESS INC	$2,512.68
BMO HARRIS COMMERCIAL CARD	2,961.01
BUFFALO RIDGE CONCRETE	3,840.00
COMMISSIONER OF TRANSPORTATION	4,949.99
ELECTION SYSTEMS & SOFTWARE INC	5,950.82
ERICKSON ENGINEERING	4,601.00
EVERBRIDGE INC	4,129.17
MARTIN/GREGORY E	3,060.10
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	2,687.50
MVTL LABORATORIES INC	2,073.80
NUFFER/ALLEN	4,698.00
NUSS TRUCK & EQUIPMENT	129,214.00
REKER CONSTRUCTION & AGGREGATE LLC	19,030.80
RETROFIT COMPANIES, INC	2,050.00
ROCK MOTOR SPORTS LLC	2,134.57
ROCKMOUNT RESEARCH & ALLOYS INC	4,667.87
SANDERS INC	3,933.95
SANFORD HEALTH	9,445.36
TOLLEFSON PUBLISHING	2,603.88
80 PAYMENTS LESS THAN $2,000	26,782.36
TOTAL	$241,326.86

The County Board was in receipt of the Fund Balance report; motion by Williamson, seconded by Burger, to approve, declared carried on a voice vote.

The Administrator and Auditor/Treasurer informed the County Board of a second round of CARES funds coming the counties; motion by Burger, seconded by Thompson to send a letter requesting the state set the minimum amount going to counties at $250,000 declared carried on a voice vote.

The County Board briefly reviewed materials to be presented at the Truth in Taxation hearing following the County Board meeting.

The Administrator briefly reviewed a construction timeline of new Armory, scheduled to break ground in May 2021.

Motion by Williamson, seconded by Reisch, to approve the Participation Agreement with NextEra for county owned property located within the Walleye Wind footprint, declared carried on voice vote.

Motion by Williamson, seconded by Thompson, to appoint Nancy Walker, Deputy Director of Southwest Health and Human Services to the Rock County Opportunities Board, declared carried on a voice vote. The appointment was a result of a vacancy of Commissioner Williamson's appointment.

The County Board was informed that Greg Lingen, Sergeant of the Rock County Sheriff's Office, has submitted his letter of resignation effective December 31, 2020. The County Board wished to acknowledge Sergeant Lingen resignation and thanked him for his 22 years of service with Rock County. Motion by Burger, seconded by Reisch, to authorized the Sheriff to back fill the vacant sergeant position with a deputy.

The County Board was informed that Linda Maras, Transit Bus Driver submitted her letter of resignation; the County Board also wished to acknowledge Mrs. Maras' resignation and thanked her for her 20 years of service to Rock County.

Board was informed the COVID vaccine is to start being administered to 1a category by the end of the month. As additional vaccine is received in the area additional categories of recipients are identified.

Commissioner Reisch stated that he attended the following meetings: Budget Committee, Personal Committee of the County Board

Commissioner Thompson stated that she attended the following meetings: n/a

Commissioner Williamson stated that he attended the following meetings: One Water One Plan and Rock County Opportunities.

Commissioner Burger stated that he attended the following meetings: Personnel Committee of the County Board.

Commissioner Overgaard stated that he attended the following meetings: Digital Ready meeting, AMC Annual meeting, Extension, Solid Waste and Rural Energy.

With no further business to come before the County Board, motion by Reisch, seconded by Thompson, to adjourn, declared carried on a voice vote.

(01-07)

H-BC School Board meets Dec. 14

Hills-Beaver Creek Dist. 671
Minutes
December 14, 2020

The Hills-Beaver Creek School Board met for its semi-monthly meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the H-BC Secondary School Media Center/via Zoom Mtg for Guest attendees – based on MN Statute 13D.021.

Board members present were Bosch, Gehrke, Knobloch, LaRock, Rauk, Rozeboom and Wysong. Superintendent Holthaus, Principal Kellenberger and Business Manager Rozeboom were also in attendance.

Motion by LaRock, second by Wysong, and carried to approve the agenda.
PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPERTY TAX (DISTRICT LEVY 2020 PAY 2021) AND FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET REVIEW

Visitors to the meeting were Mavis Fodness of the Star Herald and Chris Harnack.

PATRIOT PRIDE:
-Football Team Associated Press State Champions
-All District Football Team: Chase Bosch, Zander Wysong, Tory Knobloch, Max Scholten, Tyson Bork, Calvin Erickson, Gavin Wysong.
-Tyson Bork and Gavin Wysong District Offensive Players of the Year
-Tory Knobloch District Lineman of the Year
-Coach Metzger-District Coach of the year
-Abby Knobloch, Volleyball All Conference, Taryn Rauk, Volleyball All Conference Honorable Mention
-Volleyball All Conference Academic--Lauren Tatge, Allison LaRock, Hannah Fick, Abby Knobloch
-Volleyball Team All State Academic as a Team
-H-BC Staff Appreciation!

BOARD COMMITTEE MEETING REPORTS:
•Building/Grounds Meeting 11/30 & 12/14
•Staff Development/Tab 12/2
•Personnel/ Finance 12/07

Motion by LaRock, second by Bosch, and carried to approve Consent Agenda:
-Minutes - 11/23/2020
-Bills
-$20,000 Covid Relief Fund Grant from Rock County to be expended by December 31, 2020
-World Best WorkForce 2019-2020 Goals and Progress Report to MN Department of Education
-District World Best WorkForce 2020-2021 Plan
-Homebound Assignment for Ms. McGaffee
-Adding 10 workdays to the Secondary Principal Contract for the 2020-2021 school year.
-Hiring Drew Carver as Part Time Elementary Special Needs Paraprofessional
Motion by Wysong, second by LaRock, and carried to approve Resolution certifying District #671 Property Tax Levy 2020 pay 2021.

DISTRICT NON-ACTION ITEMS:
•MSHSL Added Invoice
•Secondary Principal Report
•Superintendent/Elementary Principal Report

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING:
-District Fiscal Year 2020 Audit
-MSHSL RESOLUTION

DATES TO REMEMBER:
-Regular Board Meeting, Monday, December 28
-Regular Board Meeting/Organizational Meeting, Monday, January 11
Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Tamara Rauk, Clerk
(01-07)

Rock County Commissioners meet Nov. 17

Rock County Board of Commissioners **9:00 A.M.**
Herreid Board Meeting Room/Zoom Video Meeting **November 17, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Overgaard with all Commissioners present. Also in attendance were County Administrator Kyle Oldre, County Attorney Jeff Haubrich, Deputy Administrator Susan Skattum and Star-Herald Reporter Mavis Fodness.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all who were in attendance.

Motion by Reisch, seconded by Thompson, to approve the November 17, 2020, County Board agenda, declared carried on a voice vote.

Motion by Burger, seconded by Williamson, to approve the November 03, 2020, County Board minutes, declared carried on a voice vote.

Ashley Kurtz, Auditor/Treasurer, presented the claims and per diems of $2,400.00; motion by Reisch, seconded by Burger, to approve declared carried on a voice vote. A complete listing of the claims is available upon request at the Auditor/Treasurer's office.

NOVEMBER 17, 2020 CLAIMS OVER $2,000

BIG TOP TENT RENTALS	$2,770.00
CEMCAST PIPE & PRECAST	11,130.00
CHS	8,423.68
COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	6,491.00
FALLS ARCHITECTURE STUDIO, LLC	4,875.00
FLEET SERVICES DIVISION-ADMIN FMR	7,034.42
GRAHAM TIRE-WORTHINGTON	8,937.76
KETTERLING SERVICES INC	9,802.05
LYON COUNTY LANDFILL	15,076.66
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	4,757.15
QUADIENT FINANCE USA INC	8,181.12
SANDERS INC	3,974.52
SANFORD USD MEDICAL CENTER	7,436.70
SEACHANGE	2,904.63
SOUTHWEST HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	16,738.34
STAPLES ENTERPRISES INC	3,198.24
TOLLEFSON PUBLISHING	2,820.61
W & N CONSTRUCTION INC	7,580.00
WEX BANK	2,045.82
ZIEGLER INC	14,229.70
65 PAYMENTS LESS THAN $2,000	32,590.31
TOTAL	$180,997.71

The County Board was in receipt of the Fund Balance report; the Auditor/Treasurer stated they are still processing the seconded collection of Ag real estate. Motion by Williamson, seconded by Thompson, to approve the Fund Balance report as presented, declared carried on a voice vote.

The County Board was in receipt of the 2021 tax capacity rates for all municipalities throughout the county; no action was taken.

Kurtz reported that Rock County had a 94.94% voter turnout, which is similar to other presidential elections. She stated that her office has received positive feedback regarding the setup of polling places and the overall process. The County Board congratulated Kurtz and staff for their efforts in ensuring a safe and successful election process.

The Administrator and Auditor/Treasurer presented a CARES Funding update stating that the initial balance has increased due to allotments returned from townships; the current balance is roughly at $219,000. The County Board had discussion on how to distribute the remaining funds and recommended the following additional allocations:

•Food Shelf - $35,000
•District 2184 Community Education - $35,000
•Family U - $22,000
•Rock County Opportunities - $45,000
•Hills-Beaver Creek School District - $20,000
•Luverne School District - $20,000
•Jasper First Responders - $4,300
•SWHHS - $30,285
•Sanford (training expenses) - $7,400

After considerable discussion, motion by Burger, seconded by Reisch, to approve the additional allocations identified and authorized the Administrator and Auditor/Treasurer to make necessary adjustments to utilize all CARES funds, declared carried on a voice vote.

The County Board was in receipt of a letter from Minnesota Department of Health informing them that Rock County's COVID-19 positive rate was at 5%; no action was taken.

The County Board was informed that the Transit Advisory Committee has a vacancy due to the passing of Alyce McClure. The new member should be someone representing the senior citizen population.

The County Board was in receipt of a request from Next Era for a letter of support for the Walleye Wind project, a project that is estimated to generate approximately $20 million county tax revenue over the first 30 years of operation. The letter of support is beneficial for project's PUC application; the PUC hearing for the Walleye Wind project is scheduled for December 9, 2020. Motion by Reisch, seconded by Williamson, to issue a letter of support for the Walleye Wind project, declared carried on a voice vote.

The County Board was informed that the Land Management Office has issued (18) notifications for parcels that are non-compliant with the Rock County Riparian Buffer Ordinance; the notices also includes corrective action plans that allow property owners 11-months beginning December 1, 2020 to comply with the ordinance before penalties are assessed. Presented as information only.

Motion by Williamson, seconded Thompson, to approve a Johnson Controls maintenance contract renewal for $52,605.00, a 3% increase effective 11/01/2020 – 10/31/2021, declared carried on a voice vote.

Commissioner Reisch stated that he attended the following meetings: Southwest MN Opportunity Council, Community Corrections, Plum Creek Library Executive Committee, Sergeants Union negotiation and City/County Liaison.

Commissioner Thompson stated that she attended the following meetings: Southwest Regional Development Commission, Canvassing Board, Career Force webinar meeting and AMC District 8 meeting.

Commissioner Williamson stated that he attended the following meetings: Rural Water, Canvassing Board and Beaver Creek township.

Commissioner Burger stated that he attended the following meetings: AMC District 8, Sergeant Union negotiation, Southwest Mental Health and Community Corrections.

Commissioner Overgaard stated that he attended the following meetings: AMC District 8, Luverne Area Community Foundation Charitable event, City/County Liaison, Extension, Transit Advisory and stated that he completed Board of Equalization certification.

With no further business to come before the County Board, motion by Thompson, seconded by Overgaard, to adjourn, declared carried on a voice vote.

(01-07)



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RECYCLE!

CARDS OF THANKS

Thank you for all the cards, phone calls, flowers, and gifts I received for my 90th birthday. It was all greatly appreciated. God's blessings to all.

Audrey De Beer

(1.2-1.7)

We want to thank you all for the kind words and expressions of sympathy and support during this difficult time of losing our mom and grandma, Dorothy Kraayenhof. Words are not enough to show our gratitude for the memorial gifts, flowers, cards, phone calls, meals and most importantly, prayers!

Loree Ness and Scott, Kristi, Katie and Anna
Van Der Weide

(1.7-1.9)

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(12.19-1.14)

EMPLOYMENT

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Ellsworth Public School is accepting applications for a Paraprofessional. Applications can be found online at https://www.ellsworth.mntm.org/district/district-vacancies.cfm or by calling the school office at 507-967-2242.

(12.19-1.7)

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- Assist with medical appointments and errands
- Work closely with the family to maintain high standards of care

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- You're passionate about providing reliable and stable long-term care
- At the core, you're a hard worker who wants to perform and be rewarded in return
- You're known as someone who shows up on time every time
- Come with a desire to learn. No specialized training is necessary. Training will be provided.
- You're able to lift up to 50 lbs.
- As a plus, you love to travel to neighboring states, the East Coast, or abroad

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Vinnies plans new experience in 2021/contined from page 6

gain lost income and turned to social media to increase sales.

"We do bulk orders that customers can order weekly by Monday morning and pick up Tuesday," he said.

Austin pulled from his over 20 years of experience in the restaurant business.

At age 14 he began washing dishes and completed every job possible from cooking, service, bartending and managing over the years.

'Our hope is to expand our facilities and a new exciting experience in the coming months.' —Leroy Austin



Mavis Fodness photo/0107 Vinnies Dang Fine Dine

In just over a year in operating Vinnie's Dang Fine Dine in Luverne, owner Leroy Austin was selected by area residents as the winner of the recent "We Love Pork" challenge. Austin's entry also earned the trophy for this year's "We Love Beef" challenge.

"I've always liked to cook. I just love food and how it makes people feel," he said.

Austin brought a positive attitude to the difficulties of complying with the pandemic restrictions while getting his business off the ground.

"Business is obviously down quite a bit, but the people of Luverne have been very good to us. As with every restaurant or business that had to shut down in Minnesota, we struggle, but are tough, and we'll hang in there."

Despite the pandemic restrictions, Austin expanded operating hours and increased staff from two at the time of opening to the current four employees.

Austin said he is looking forward to 2021.

"Our hope is to expand our facilities and a new exciting experience in the coming months," he said.

In addition to adult son Chandlar, Austin and his wife, Kristi, have one other adult son, Zach. The couple moved to Garretson, South Dakota, three years ago, where they still live.

Community Education

Call the Luverne Community Education office, 507-283-4724, for registration information.

Basketball for grades K-2 begins Jan. 9 for six sessions. Fee is $15.

Men's Basketball meets Wednesday evenings from January through March. Fee is $30.

Defensive Driving 4-hour refresher classes are scheduled for Jan. 21 or Feb. 11.

Distance Learning with Clay – for all ages (1-101). Pick up a chunk of clay the week of Jan. 25 and in your own home, with instructions from Jerry Deuschle, build your creation. To then apply paint and for drying and firing, make appointment at the studio. Fee is $20.

Register for Student Driver Education. Luverne school students grade 8 and older may register for February or June session for $340, which includes 30 hours of classroom instruction and 6 hours of behind the wheel instruction.

The February option begins on Feb. 1 and will be virtual, so list your child's school gmail address when you register.

How to play chess for students grades K-8 after school; three sessions Feb. 2, 9 and 16. Fee is $15.

For adults, 55 years and older, a **10-week health and wellness Aging Mastery Program** developed by the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging. Class is virtual through Zoom on your computer or iPad. On Feb. 4 they will teach you how to use Zoom if you have not done it before! Class begins on Feb. 11. Fee is $5.

Register by Feb. 6 for for the ACT Prep Class that will begin Feb. 22 virtually. Fee is $125 and includes taking a practice test and an individual conference with the teacher to review the test and tips for taking the actual test. Fee is $125,

School of Fish with Mike Frisch, TV show host and pro angler, will be Feb. 6 for students grades 3 through high school. Participants get a rod and reel, tackle box with tackle, gift card, snack pack and workbook. Each participant may bring an adult fishing buddy. Fee is $30. Dress for the weather.

The event takes place at The Lake. Participants will be ready to compete in Luverne's Ice Fishing Derby on Feb. 20.

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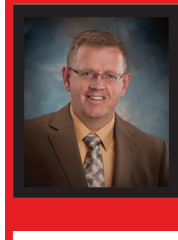

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A note from Mayor Patrick T. Baustian *We're All in This Together*



Now that 2020 is over let's look forward to the new year with the hope and anticipation that 2021 will be the year that we can put COVID-19 behind us. As you can see below, the distribution of the vaccine in now underway and will continue until every Luverne resident has access to the vaccine. More financial assistance from the state of Minnesota as well as the federal government will be available in the coming weeks. It's so encouraging to finally be able to talk about the good things to come in the days and weeks ahead of us. Please continue to follow current COVID-19 protocol, social distance and mask up.



Local vaccine rollout going as planned

Excerpts from 12/31 Star Herald - Local public health officials say Rock County's vaccine rollout is going according to plan.

"Right now, we are in the midst of Phase 1a for COVID vaccination," said Jason Kloss of Southwest Health and Human Services. The people prioritized to receive the vaccine in this phase include: health care staff, EMS personnel and workers and residents of Long Term Care facilities.

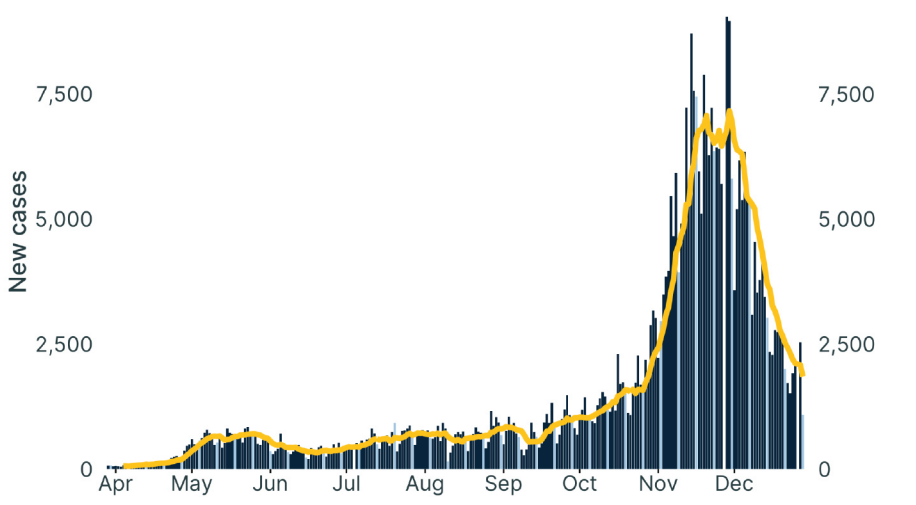
"Hospitals and clinics in our region have received their first shipment of vaccine and started to vaccinate their staff," Kloss said. "SWHHS has also received our first shipment of vaccine and will be offering the vaccine to EMS personnel starting this week."

He said longterm care facilities in the region have signed contracts with approved pharmacies and are scheduled to have residents and staff vaccinated starting this week through the early part of January.

"Keep in mind that this is only the first of a two-dose vaccination," Kloss said. "The second dose must be given within about 30 days of the first dose." This means health care and EMS personnel and longterm care facilities will need to be given another dose in about 30 days to receive full protection from COVID-19.

New COVID-19 cases in MN by date reported

Based solely on cases confirmed by the MN Department of Health. Line represents 7-day rolling average. Light blue bars are Mondays.



Source: Minnesota Department of Health. Graphic by David H. Montgomery | MPR News

MPRnews

Data as of December 28, 2020

I am confident that Luverne Area Residents, working together, will emerge from this pandemic much stronger as a community.

Luverne MINNESOTA *Love the life!*

Sincerely,

Mayor Patrick T. Baustian