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PATRIOT



STATE OF MANUFACTURING. At Pebble Creek Tuesday, Becker Mayor Tracy Bertram welcomed the assembled community leaders to her city and let them know about the opportunities available in the Becker business park. See the full story on the event on page 2. (Photo by Katherine Cantin.)

Inside

BECKER
Great River Faith in Action held their annual gala entitled, "Seeds of Hope" at Rockwoods Restaurant in Otsego Saturday. See the story on page 7.

BIG LAKE
BL Chamber Executive Director Gloria Vande Brake won a scholarship from Mid-America Chamber Executives. See the story on page 4.

CLEARWATER
Youth at Tri-County Alliance Church won first place in a Jr. Quizzers contest last week. See the story on page 4B.

PATRIOT



PATRIOT

News & Advertising Deadlines

NEWS DEADLINES
With the newspaper wrap up occurring Wednesday evening, all news items submitted to run that Saturday must reach our office by Wednesday morning by 11 a.m.

SPORTS DEADLINES
Coaches and assistants are expected to contact our sports writers by Wednesday morning, 11 a.m. at the latest to have their information included in that week's publication.

CLASSIFIEDS DEADLINES
Information for classifieds need to be submitted to our staff by noon Wednesday to be included in that week's publication of the PATRIOT.

Contact Us

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Call 763-275-0275 or email Kathy @ legals.kathy@patriotnewsmn.com

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Call 763-275-0275 or email Bill @ reporter.bill@patriotnewsmn.com

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Call 763-275-0275 or email Bill @ reporter.bill@patriotnewsmn.com

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Vue wins top spot in M8 Art contest

By Mark Kolbinger, Contributing Writer

As a Junior at Becker High School last year, Kanee Vue painted an incredible acrylic masterpiece titled, "Painted White." Art instructor Jo Eichler was so impressed with the creation that she encouraged Vue to enter the Mississippi 8 visual arts competition.



The M8 judges obviously agreed with Eichler's critical eye, as Vue was named the 2021 Superior Spotlight Award / Judge's Award winner in the annual

art contest. According to Eichler, it is the highest honor achieved by a Becker student in the visual arts competition.

For her class, Vue also wrote an essay explaining her project and the creative inspiration behind her incredible painting. "In this project, the biggest thing that influenced me to keep carrying through with the illustration is purely due to my passion in finding the uniqueness in a person," Vue wrote in her

VUE to page 2



THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF SPRING. Warm weather had residents in Becker lining up for a taste of spring on Monday. A line formed and familiar ice cream truck music blared as people of all ages purchased ice cream treats from local mobile retail ice cream outlet Brain Freeze. (Photo by Mary Nehring.)

Big Lake man charged with kidnapping child

Submitted Article

(Editor's Note: The following information was comprised from a release from the Pope County Sheriff's Dept. and other sources).

Victor Ramirez Alvarez, 22, of Big Lake, appeared in District Court on Monday on felony charges of kidnapping and depriving custodial and parental rights. He is accused of abducting a 2-year-old boy from a rural Pope County home as members of the family slept.

The Pope County Sheriff's Office identified Alvarez (also known as Benigno



BENIGNO ALVAREZ-GUTIERREZ, also known as Victor Ramirez Alvarez of Big Lake was arrested and charged this week. (Photo from Kandiyohi County Jail).

Alvarez-Gutierrez) early Friday morning for the abduction of the child that triggered an AMBER Alert on March 17.

Acting on information developed through the investigation, Ramirez was arrested by Big Lake police officers outside of his home shortly after 11 p.m. on March 17 following a brief struggle. Investigators located the child after receiving a 911 call that the child was in the garage of the caller's Paynesville residence. The child was taken to St. Cloud Hospital for evaluation and is currently in the custody of his mother.

According to a criminal complaint filed Monday, the mother of the child said Alvarez "was very fond of her son." The defendant would frequently give the mother and child rides, "hug her son, buy him things, and take photos with him," according to the complaint.

She discovered her child was missing when she returned home from work after 2 a.m. Thursday, March 17, and sometime later, headed to her bedroom to sleep. Her son was not in the bedroom. He had been in the care of family members, and they reported putting him to bed

in the room that he shared with his mother at 8 p.m.

While searching for the child, family members found a note written in both English and Spanish asking for forgiveness for taking the child and indicating a prior plan to do so.

Sheriff's deputies responding to the home found what appeared to be footprints outside of the child's bedroom. A canine brought to the scene was alerted to the child's scent, and followed it down the driver and on a roadway before it was lost.

An Amber Alert was

KIDNAP to page 4

Central Minnesota Mental Health hires new Executive Director

Submitted Article

(Editor's Note: The following information was submitted to the Patriot by Central Minnesota Mental Health Center).

Central Minnesota Mental Health Center (CMMHC) has named Jessica Brandon as its new Executive Director.

Jessica is a Minnesota native with over 20 years of leadership experience in nonprofit social service agencies, with the last 10 years as CEO of Guardian Angel Settlement Association in



JESSICA BRANDON has been named new Executive Director of the Central Minnesota Mental Health Center. (Submitted Photo).

St. Louis. She will begin in her new role as CMMHC's Executive Director April

18, 2022. "The Board of Directors of Central Minnesota Mental Health Center is excited to have Jessica Brandon become the new Executive Director," said Lisa Fobbe, current Board Chair. "With our new building and the implementation of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic funding system, we have many positive challenges ahead. We look forward to Jessica's leader-

BRANDON to page 1B

Learning session on equity to be held at Rejoice Church by Dr. McKinney

By Penny Leuthard, Contributing Writer

Clearwater area churches are always working to help educate the community on timely societal issues. Last fall Tri-County Alliance Church brought in Love2Hope for a presentation on human trafficking awareness, and next week Rejoice Lutheran Church is welcoming Rev. Dr. Karen McKinney, who will be discussing equity.

Rejoice applied for a grant through their synod,

REJOICE to page 1B



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Big Lake Veterans Memorial
Beyond the Yellow Ribbon

Submissions are being accepted for name additions to the Big Lake Veterans Memorial. If you know of a deceased area Veteran in the 55309 area code and would like to submit their name for consideration, the deadline for submittal is **April 8th, 2022**. All submissions are subject to approval by the Veteran's Memorial Committee. Application forms can be found on the **City of Big Lake Website at Veterans Memorial Name Submission | Big Lake, MN** or you can request a form by emailing biglakebtyr@gmail.com

VUE from page 1

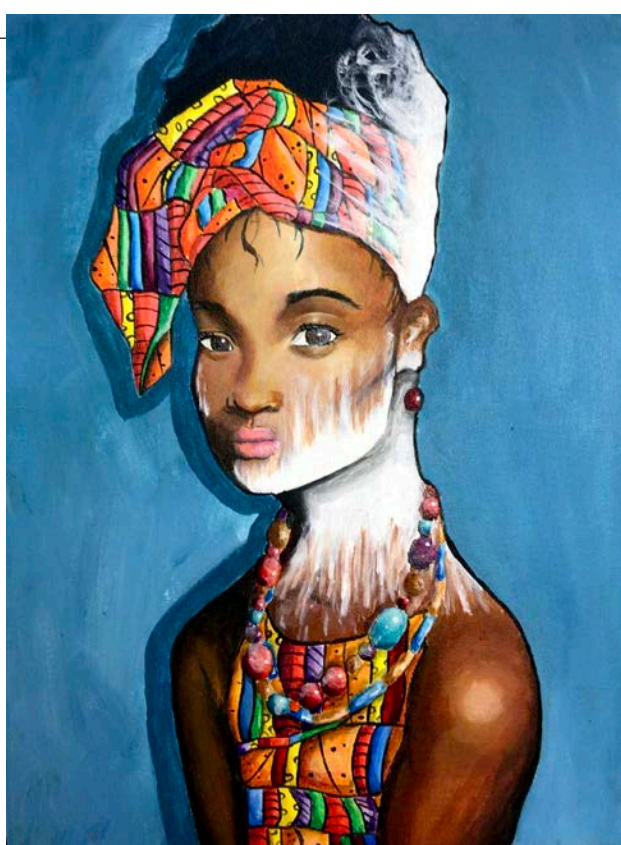
submission.

"In my work, my intentions were to solely focus on the harmful effects of assimilation. Assimilation, although valuable when speaking in terms of globalization, which helps individuals of different backgrounds connect with each other, can be incredibly damaging to cultures on a grander scale."

After graduation this year, Vue plans to attend a community college to focus on her generals, while eventually pursuing a degree in Psychology.

"I am happy with how my piece turned out," Vue wrote.

"I depicted everything that I had intended and having it all finally be on the canvas is a relief."



THIS ACRYLIC PAINTING BY BECKER SENIOR KANEE VUE received the Superior Spotlight Award from the Mississippi 8 Conference Fine Arts judges, signifying it as the top piece entered from the entire conference in 2021. (Submitted photo.)

BECKER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT KANEE VUE (left) poses with Art instructor Jo Eichler. Vue was honored as the top artist in the Mississippi 8 Conference for her painting, titled: "Painted White." (Photo by Mark Kolbinger.)



Clarification

By Bill Morgan, Staff Writer
reporter.bill@patriotnewsnmn.com

In last week's article, *LGBTQ students mount protest*, it was stated that the CPL (Child Protection League) was deemed anti-LGBTQ by the LGBTQ community when in fact they have been deemed a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, an organization known for its legal cases against white supremacist groups, its classification of hate groups and other extremist organizations, and for promoting tolerance education programs.

Local leaders hear "State of Manufacturing" update

By Katherine Cantin,
Staff Writer
Reporter.Katie@PatriotNewsMN.com

Tuesday morning at Pebble Creek, Enterprise Minnesota held its "State of Manufacturing" meeting for the benefit of manufacturing leaders in the community. Government officials as well as leaders in the manufacturing field gathered to enjoy breakfast, mingle, and discuss solutions to problems faced by the industry.

Worker Shortages
The presentation reviewed the results of the 13th annual State of Manufacturing survey which takes place every September. It will likely come as no surprise that the top issues faced by manufacturers this year are workforce issues.

The manufacturing industry of Minnesota faced several mixed messages at the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, at first being told to shut down production and send workers home, then that manufacturers were considered "essential workers" and they had to get back to work, full of uncertainty about the safety and health of their employees. Following the initial outbreak in 2020 were months of new and cumulative issues.

Today, the market for talented workers in manufacturing is highly competitive. Employers have had to raise salaries and employee benefits significantly just to stay in the running for new hires, although there's no guarantee that new employees will stay long after joining the team, as other manufacturers are actively attracting them away.

So employers have needed to become much more creative in their lure and retention of new employees. One manufacturer at the meeting shared that he'd had some success in offering bonuses. One of the conditions of the bonuses is that the employee needs to stay for a certain amount of time in order to keep the money. He also mentioned that a lot of their successful hires were introduced to the company via referral from current employees.

A representative of DEED (Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development) suggested that employers focus on hiring teenagers, or at least working with local schools to develop an interest in manufacturing jobs within the student body. Only around half of teens aged 16-19 are employed, so this is the one demographic with the most potential to be tapped. The representative suggested working with the schools to offer tours to the students, and said it was very important to bring the work and the processes to the level of the student. This can be accomplished by showing the student where they can find the

end product in their everyday lives, showing them how the work relates to their studies, or by making the process of creating goods seem cool and interesting.

Some other ways to keep and retain employees may include looking at the issue from a new angle. In the survey, manufacturing leaders were asked what their company wished to be known for, when it came to attracting new employees, and the most popular answer was "a great work environment." Some companies, rather than offering yet another pay raise or even more benefits (only to be undone by a competitor) are focusing on company culture and the working environment. Flexible shifts also made this list, indicating that's another area which could be attractive to employees.

Other Issues
There are other issues troubling the minds of manufacturing leaders throughout the state, such as supply chain issues. There is increased demand for product from several of these companies, but due to inability to get materials or products to use, many manufacturers are unable to meet the demand. This, along with workforce shortages, hinder the potential growth of these businesses.

Cyber security is also an issue, which perhaps is not as present in the minds of the industry leaders but is nevertheless an issue of some concern. One of the attendees who works in cyber security stated that hackers would rather go after 10 small companies than one large one, as the process will be much easier for them.

She also stated that when asking manufacturers their plans for cyber attacks, she often heard a very troubling answer: "IT will take care of it." IT and cyber security are very different fields, and it's important to have a well-established plan in case of an attack.

It is worth noting that, pre-pandemic, the number one issue on the minds of the leaders was employee benefits, such as health care. Bob Kill, CEO of Enterprise Minnesota and presenter at the meeting, noted that this issue has in no way been resolved, but in light of these other pressing issues it has become far less of a concern in the minds of the employers.

Kill noted that many of these issues were present before the beginning of the pandemic, but COVID-19 put a lot of them under the magnifying glass for manufacturing leaders in the state.



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April

1 - 22

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Big Lake, Elk River Area, Princeton Area
Chambers of Commerce

- 1- Explore your favorite parks during this timeframe (scan QR Code for list of parks)
- 2- Take a picture and post it on the Sherburne County Area United Way's Facebook page using the hashtag along with the name of the park.
#elkriverparkschallenge2022
#biglakeparkschallenge2022
#princetonparkschallenge2022
- 3- Win weekly prizes!



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WILLIE EWING crossed the finish line to the cheers of onlookers as he broke the world record for miles driven on a snowmobile in 24 hours. (Submitted photo.)

BECKER MAN SHATTERS SNOWMOBILING WORLD RECORD

By Katherine Cantin,
Staff Writer
Reporter.Katie@PatriotNewsMN.com

Becker resident Willie Ewing recently smashed the previous world record for the most miles ridden on a snowmobile in 24 hours.

At Lake of the Woods, Baudette, just shy of the Canada border, (hosted by Sportsman's Lodge, whom the Ewings noted were very accommodating) Ewing maintained an average speed of 88.59 mph for 24 hours straight, with a top speed of 116.

The previous record for a single rider in 24 hours was 1,907 miles. But, Ewing wanted to leave no question of his skill, and he also decimated the record for a team of riders, 2,084 miles. Ewing racked up 2,125.04 miles in his 24 hour time period.

Ewing was not the only one who broke records that day, as his sled, a 2022 Arctic Cat ThunderCat (dubbed ThunderOne), also broke the record for a sled to go the most distance in 24 hours. Ewing did not switch out his vehicle and had no mechanical failures at all during his ride, even though he had mechanics, backup machine, and even an Arctic Cat engineer on hand in case they were



THUNDERONE, Ewing's machine for the ride, has now made history as well, with the most miles put on a sled in 24 hours. The machine suffered no mechanical failures at all during the ride. It is a 2022 Arctic Cat ThunderCat. (Submitted photo.)

needed. During the day, Ewing burned through 278 gallons of premium gasoline. The sled will now be retired, although Ewing said he will bring it around to shows in the future and possibly to parade-type situations to show it off.

When asked if he got tired, Ewing stated that he never did, at least not until after his ride. The track was rough enough that he needed to remain focused the entire time.

Otherwise, Ewing stated, the weather was absolutely perfect. Two hours before the ride, it was snowing, and after the ride the temperatures dropped to a point where it would have been too cold. But for Ewing's 24 hours, the weather couldn't have been more perfect.



EWING averaged 88.59 mph during his record-breaking ride. (Submitted photo.)

“We really felt like God made the conditions perfect for us,” said Ewing's wife, Rebecca Ewing.

The Ewings planned this stunt as a means of raising money for Living Word Bible Camp. The money will go towards scholarships for students who

would otherwise be unable to attend.

The Ewings' goal was to raise \$50,000 in donations, a lofty goal. They are close, right around \$45,000. All of Ewing's equipment for the ride was donated and will be sold now that the ride's over to maximize the donation to the camp. The Ewings plan to accept donations at least through the end of the year, so there is plenty of time for anyone wishing to help them meet

their goal. Donations can be made at www.1Day4Kids.com. Footage of the ride and photos are also available at this website.

BECKER Community Center

BREAKFAST WITH THE EASTER BUNNY

SATURDAY - APRIL 2, 2022
9:00AM - 11:00AM

Join the fun and have breakfast with the Easter Bunny!

The library will be offering a take and make craft.

Thanks to the Becker Lions for serving breakfast!

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Sunday, April 10th, 2022
8:30am - 11:30am
Santiago Town Hall

- Meet the Easter Bunny!
- Easter Gift Bags for Kids!
- Bring Camera and Take Photos!

Sponsored by the Santiago Lions.
Proceeds Benefit Local Communities.

Becker Twp. discusses redistricting

By Mark Kolbinger, Contributing Writer

The 2020 census has led to redistricting conversations across state and county level units of government and on Monday, the Becker Twp. Board of Supervisors were able to discuss local impacts.

Sherburne County is tasked with trying to come up with five commissioner districts that each represent approximately 19,000 residents and some of the options could have a profound impact on Becker Twp. residents.

Some of the options under consideration would split the township into two separate districts.

This caused the supervisors to discuss if it would be better to have one person or two representing the township's interests in Elk River.

Supervisor Luke Babler let his opinion be known in no uncertain terms, stating that he was completely against splitting the township into two separate commissioner districts. "Since I've been on the board, not one commissioner has ever come in to talk to us," Babler said. "Why would two come in."

Clerk Lucinda Messman noted that Sherburne County just that day sent another proposal for the board to review. This one would separate Becker city from the township in terms of commissioner

districts, and in the process create an "island" of 47 residents near Mallard Drive who would have to be placed in a separate precinct for voting purposes. The county offered to provide the voting machines and computers needed for that separate precinct, but the supervisors were worried about ongoing costs for a two precinct election. There was also the issue of finding enough election judges from that precinct, as well as the issue of finding enough judges to follow the guidelines for political party representation.

Usually the county has authority to apportion the districts, but if it creates additional precincts then the township gets to make the decision.

After the discussion, the supervisors unanimously approved a resolution calling for Messman to notify the Secretary of State that Becker Township will have just one precinct for the elections.

Broadband
Messman discussed the ongoing request from Midco and Sherburne County as it relates to a broadband project in the township. The proposal would ask for up to \$75,000 in township ARPA funds to help extend high speed internet to 49 residences, with Midco approximating that 22 families would likely take advantage of the new service. The Supervisors kicked

around a number of options and seemed to be stuck on the merits of the proposal and the public funding of a private enterprise.

In the end, the board asked Messman to invite a representative from Midco to the next meeting to explain the merits and financing of the project, including what future additions could benefit the township.

In Other Business, the Board:

- Heard from Sgt. Dan Frank about last month's 174 calls for service. Frank also previewed an upcoming Toward Zero Deaths (previously Safe and Sober) law enforcement saturation that could bring officers from several surrounding jurisdictions to the area;

- Discussed Xcel Energy's proposal for moving a power transmission line completely out of the existing right of way on Co. Rd. 11 - a public hearing will be held at the next Planning Commission meeting;

- Discussed a variety of fees and permits for swimming pools;

- Approved a motion seeking quotes for the replacement of fire signs in the township;

- Approved a motion to acquire land for the reconstruction of 97th St.;

- Authorized a \$6,800 quote for the scraping and re-painting of the Town Hall;

- Reminded the public of several upcoming meetings, including the CMRP

meeting scheduled for 3:30 until 5:00 p.m. on April 6th at Pebble Creek; the Public Hearing for home based businesses on April 11, and the reorganizational meeting at 7 p.m. on April 4;

- Discussed the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting to be held on April 5 at 6:00 p.m.

The board's next regular meeting will be held on April 18 at 7 p.m.

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Area Chamber News

 Membership Meeting April 20 - Noon Location TBD Easter Egg Hunt April 9 - 3-4:30 pm Faith Lutheran Church	 Membership Meeting Mar. 29 - 11:30 am BLPD Community Room Community Fair April 23 - 10 am - 1 pm Reduced Booth Prices!	 Membership Meeting April 14 - 11:30 am CL Twp. Hall Annual CVBC Expo Sun., May 1, 10 am - 1pm @ Clearwater Legion
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If you would like more information on any of these events or if you would like to become a member of these organizations please reach out to them:

Amity Felton 763-262-2420 Chamber@BeckerChamber.org	Gloria Vande Brake 763-263-7800 Info@BigLakeChamber.com	Glenna Soenneker 320-267-4361 GSoenneker@GMail.com
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Big Lake's Chamber ED lands scholarship Vande Brake, 6 other chamber leaders receive scholarship awards

Submitted Article

Mid-America Chamber Executives (MACE) announced the recipients of their 2022 Annual Conference Scholarships today. MACE is comprised of chamber professionals belonging to their state chamber executive organization or state chamber of commerce in the six-state area of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Big Lake's Chamber Executive Director, Gloria Vande Brake was Minnesota's winner.

The honor will entitle the recipients to attend the 2022 Annual Conference free of charge. It will also include recognition before, during and after the event. Each state within the MACE region was invited to nominate an unlimited number of deserving recipients, but only one individ-



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Gloria Vande Brake received a scholarship from MACE for her participation in Big Lake's Chamber of Commerce. (Submitted Photo).

ual from each state receives the award.

The MACE Scholarship Recipients are:

Becky Bartoszek, President/CEO, Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce, WI;

Nate Brown, Sales Coordinator, Bismarck Mandan Chamber EDC, ND;

Colette Mesman, Executive Director, Platte

Area Chamber of Commerce, SD;

Michelle Redlinger, Executive Director, Washington Chamber of Commerce, IA;

Justise Rhoden, Executive Director, Aurora Chamber of Commerce, NE;

Gloria Vande Brake, Executive Director, Big Lake Chamber Of Commerce & Industry, MN.

About MACE

Mid-America Chamber Executives (MACE) is made up of chamber professionals belonging to their state chamber executive organization or state chamber of commerce in the six-state area of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. MACE is the go-to organization for chamber news, education, resources and networking in the Upper Midwest.

KIDNAP from page 1

issued at 4:36 p.m. Thursday. The child's father and his family were interviewed and determined to have no involvement in the abduction, according to the complaint.

After issuing the Amber Alert, authorities received a tip from the manager of an unnamed restaurant where the defendant worked. Employees had seen the defendant with a child that appeared to be the child in the Amber Alert at 8:15 p.m. Thursday.

During the investigation, the complaint alleges that Alvarez texted and called the child's mother and spoke to her on speakerphone as investigators listened. He claimed to be surprised by the kidnapping and said that he was driving back from California. He made no mention that he knew of the child's whereabouts.

Law officers went to the defendant's residence and found clothing that the child was last seen wearing, but not the child.

At 11:14 p.m. Thursday, Alvarez was stopped while driving and taken into custody, but the child was not with him.

At 11:47 p.m. Thursday, an officer responded to the call from the couple who discovered the child in a booster-style seat in their garage.

During an interview with law enforcement, Alvarez allegedly admitted that he had taken the child from the residence. "He admitted that he dropped the child off in an empty garage at a residence of someone he knew, but stated that no one was home," according to the complaint.

The residents had not been alerted to the child's presence in the garage.







The charge of kidnapping — to facilitate felony or flight — filed against Alvarez carries a possible prison sentence of 20 years and or a \$35,000 fine. The charge of depriving another of custodial or parental rights carries a possible prison sentence of up to two years or a \$4,000 fine.

Bail was set at \$1 million without conditions and \$500,000 with conditions

The Pope County Sheriff's Office has been assisted in its investigation by Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, West Central Drug and Violent Crimes Task Force, Glenwood Police Department, Starbuck Police Department, FBI, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Stearns County Sheriff's Office, Big Lake Police Department and Alexandria Police Department.

PetNet Works

Working with the community to find homes for needy pets

 Themias is a 2 year old spayed mixed breed dog who has been at the shelter for almost 3 months. She's loved here, but she needs to find a permanent home! Lucky for Themias, Kira's Memorial Fund has gifted her a free dog training consult with Prodigy Pups Dog Training! Now all she needs is you!	 Daisy is a 2-year-old spayed American Staffordshire Terrier mix who is a happy-go-lucky pup. She seems to be friendly with other dogs, however all introductions should be slow and proper. Daisy would love an active home with her own someone to play with her!	 Lina was adopted as a barn cat, but farm life is not the life for her. She's a 2-10 year old spayed cat who has done well with other cats. Lina is a little shy at first, so she'll need a patient adopter. Lina qualifies for our Fabulous Five Dollar Feline promotion and her adoption fee would be waived for a senior or veteran.
 RUDY is a 3 YO spayed kitty who enjoys playing with crinkle ball toys and is used to having access to a scratching post. Rudy qualifies for our Fabulous Five Dollar Feline promotion and her adoption fee would be waived for a senior or veteran.	 Gemma is a 1-year-old spayed Am Staff Terrier mix. Interactive toys will help to keep her busy in her new home. Gemma would benefit from additional socialization to help gain her confidence and learn some doggy manners.	 Pong is a 6 month old neutered cat that has done well with other cats and dogs in the past. This chatty kitty is going to make someone a good companion. He loves to chase the laser pointer and hunt around jungle balls. Pong is a curious kitty who likes to explore.


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Clear Lake Twp. considers disc golf installation at park

By Penny Leuthard, Contributing Writer

During their March meeting, Steve Gradin approached the Clear Lake Twp. Board to present a proposal for installing disc golf at the township park.

Gradin, who lives near the park, said neighbors support the idea and several volunteered to help install it, explaining it would be a good family activity.

The board was not opposed to the idea, as they want the park to be used more often, but they were unsure of where the disc golf baskets could be placed without disrupting the township's mission to keep the park's natural habitat.

A lengthy discussion was held, and a township map referred to as potential locations were looked at. A decision was made to start with three baskets, see how much they get used, and then determine from there if more can or should be installed. Gradin will meet with Supervisor Bud Stimmler and Township Engineer Terrance Vander Eyk after the snow is gone to determine where the first three could be placed.

Road Report

At 7:15 Eyk opened the single bid, received from Schendzielos, that had been submitted for surface improvements on 71st St. A motion carried approving the bid to remove the black-

top and replace it with four inches of class 2 for \$9,500.

Julia Espe approached the board to request three variances so she would be able to build a four-season porch over a portion of her deck; one for a setback from the ROW, one for impervious surface, and one for her septic tank. After a brief discussion, a motion carried to approve all three variances and send positive comment forms to the county.

Outdoor AED

Outdoor AED Specialist Joel Vogel gave the board a presentation on AED Smart Monitored Cabinets and their lifesaving features. AEDs (automated external defibrillators) are used to help those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. The AED Smart Monitored Cabinets are easy-to-use outdoor medical devices that can analyze the heart's rhythm, and if necessary, deliver an electrical shock, or defibrillation, to help the heart re-establish an effective rhythm.

Vogel shared local experiences and informed the board about local groups and cities that are placing the units in their communities. Seeing the obvious benefits, the board expressed interest in purchasing one for outside of the township hall, as the system does require electricity.

Vogel was directed to order one for Clear Lake Twp., and the board will

continue discussions on how the yearly fees will be paid and where additional units could be placed around the township.

Other Business

The board reviewed the site plan for the new township park pavilion. Consensus was that the building and playground locations were fine, however Eyk was asked to come back with a couple of different proposals for the parking lot so it doesn't conflict with the trail that goes through the area.

Chairman Gary Gray informed the board he had met with neighbors about what they would like to see in the playground, and had obtained eight quotes, which ranged from \$20,000 to \$25,000. Even with the money that will likely be left over after building the pavilion the township will still be short of funds. Gray will go to the Lions to ask for help in purchasing the equipment.

A motion carried approving the township's new mailbox ordinance.

The sheriff reported 148 calls for service for February, including 96 traffic stops, one fire, one warrant arrest, and one stolen vehicle recovery.

The next Clear Lake Twp. meeting will be April 19 at 7 p.m.

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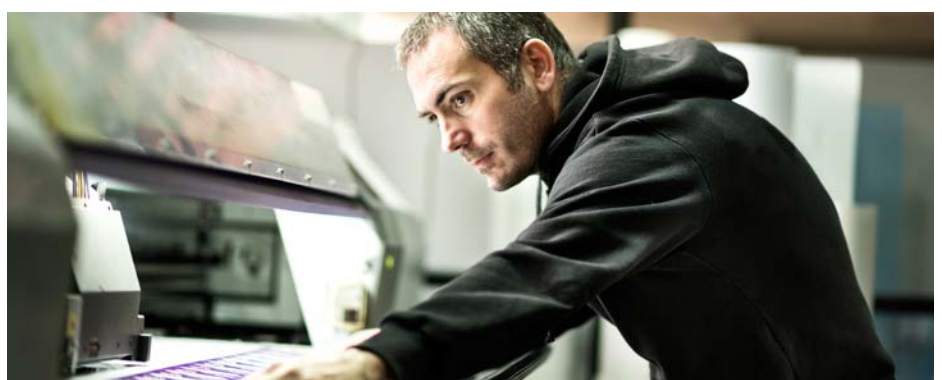
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Area News

GRFIA holds "Seeds of Hope" Gala



GRFIA BOARD CHAIR Jason Hammerback (L) and Executive Director, Maureen Baty (R) spoke on the volunteerism and successes of the organization's 2021 season. (Patriot Photo by Bill Morgan).

By Bill Morgan, Staff Writer
reporter.bill@patriotnews.com

Last Saturday at Rockwoods in Otsego, over 220 guests, volunteers, partners, sponsors and supporters of Faith In Action came together to hold a special gala that included a dinner, silent auction, entertainment and a rundown of the organization's mission.

Board Chair Jason Hammerback and Executive Director Maureen Baty gave the rundown where they identified the services they provide and recognized the numerous volunteers who served the organization and the community so selflessly.

Hammerback reminded the guests the organization uses just 8% of the financial support they get for administrative costs.

"The other 92% goes towards supporting our mission of serving the elderly and disabled and those in need," he said. "We are grateful for the support of you that join us in this mission."

A lot of what GRFIA does for the community is providing transportation to doctor's offices, grocery stores and other destinations for the elderly or those incapable of driving. They also provide cleaning services, minor home repairs, yard projects and set up and delivery of furniture and beds.

In 2021, GRFIA coordinated 22,400 miles driven by their volunteers, 621 rides to the grocery store or doctor's offices, donated 1,050 hours of driving for other purposes, spent 580 hours cleaning, mowing, shoveling, respite care, friendly visits and handyman services, 1,500 hours of small group and church projects, delivered furniture to 60 local families, acquired 47 new clients, recruited 16 new, ongoing volunteers and enlisted 354 new group volunteers.

At last Saturday's gala, dozens of tables were set up in the foyer and in other rooms outside the main banquet room where over 75 silent auction items were presented for bidding. Some of the big auction items were some hand-painted stones from Target Field that have the Minnesota Twins logos painted on them. Also, Stillwater Hot Air Balloon donated two tickets for a scenic large basket excursion over beautiful St. Croix River valley. New Scenic Cafe & Rustic Inn Cafe donated a two-night stay in the Skiff

House in Two Harbors by the infamous lighthouse on Lake Superior. A beautiful 70"x90" handcrafted quilt was created by Eileen Bialka and donated to the auction. And, Winlectric donated a framed, autographed photo of former Viking QB Fran Tarkenton with a value of \$350.

Patrick Albanese, a self-proclaimed magician and comedian best known for being part of the infamous comedy team, *Triple Espresso*, was GRFIA's entertainment at the gala. Albanese lives in Des Moines, IA and was born and raised in Arlington Heights, IL. He fed the crowd plenty of hilarious jokes Saturday while he amazed all with his slight-of-hand magic skits for about an hour.

Following the comedy act, GRFIA members held a "Heads or Tails" game to the delight of the amused crowd.

GRFIA would like to thank the following sponsors: **Platinum:** Beau-

Son's Electric. **Board Members** for GRFIA are: Hammerback, Randy Pelletier, Steve Leen, Doreen Novak, Sandra Kruse, Candice Hanson and Doug Anderson.

From the gala program that was dispersed to every chair in the banquet room:

"Faith in Action volunteers didn't miss a beat in 2021 when it comes to serving our elderly & disabled clients, while continuing to prioritize everyone's safety and comfort level as we adjust to the 'new normal.' Volunteers have provided countless rides to doctor's appointments and the grocery store, friendly phone visits, assisted with cleaning, minor home repairs, large yard projects and so much more!"

"With the help of volunteers and Becker Furniture World, our Furniture for Families Program was able to bless over 60 struggling families with furniture in 2021. Thank you to our amazing volunteers who



COMEDIAN AND MAGICIAN Patrick Albanese put on quite a show for the 220+ guests at last Saturday's GRFIA gala in Otsego. (Patriot Photo by Bill Morgan).

dry Oil, Becker Furniture World, Darter Plastics, Hubbard Electric, J&B Group, Northwest Machine, Pellco Machine and PEM. **Gold Sponsors:** Guardian Angels Senior Services, Marksmen Metals, Morrell Companies, M&M Precision Machining, Sherburne State Bank and Victory Ministries. **Silver Sponsors:** Bergan KDV, Country Lumber, Kwik Trip, Liberty Paper, Lutheran Trust, Monticello Lions Club and Olson &

have served so selflessly!" "Along with the generosity from individuals, organizations and our wonderful church partners who have given to Faith in Action, we are able to continue to share Christ's love and sow seeds of hope in our community!"

GRFIA is located at 13074 Edgewood St., SE in Becker and their phone number is 763-263-4277. Their website is located at www.grfia.org.



NUMEROUS guests put their names to the sign-up sheet for the plethora of silent auction items at Saturday's GRFIA gala at Rockwoods in Otsego. (Patriot Photo by Bill Morgan).

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To hold elective city office, individuals must be a U.S. citizen, a qualified city voter and at least 21 years of age on the date of taking office.

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THE TOURIST SEASON

will soon be upon us and the call of the open road will shortly bring thousands of visitors to Big Lake, famed as a summer resort; hence let everyone contribute his time for dressing up the village and once so done let the good work continue to the end that we may acquire the reputation of a spotlessly clean village.

E. KLAVENESS,
Health Officer of Big Lake, Minn.
April 11, 1927

THIS ADVERTISEMENT (LEFT) published in 1927 was scanned from the History of Big Lake book. (Submitted Photo).

Big Lake had a tourist season?

By Bill Morgan, Staff Writer • reporter.bill@patriotnews.com

In 1927, a notice was published to all citizens of Big Lake to clean up around their properties in anticipation of the upcoming tourist season.

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How to "Summerize" your Winter Ice Fishing Gear!

Now that the ice season is basically over, the transition from winter gear to summer gear is in full swing! So here are a bunch of "summerizing" tips related to ice gear storage. These are not organized - kinda like most of us! LOL. Disclaimer: I am not a mechanic, just a fishing guide on a budget that has to maintain a ton of stuff - so I've learned a few things over the years that have worked for me. So on that note, use these tips at your own risk! LOL.



By Captain Josh Hagermeister

Portable Fish Houses: Clean thoroughly to get any debris and smells out of the house that may attract mice throughout the summer months. Place dryer sheets or moth balls to keep rodents away. Refresh the items in July.

Wheel houses/skid houses: Clean thoroughly to get any food crumbs, smells, or anything that will attract rodents. Store in a dry hard floored shed. Outside somewhere in the back grove equals mice - and they have all summer to get in and eat wires, cushions, etc. Grease the heck out of the wheel/axle pivot systems (or they may seize up from rust), power wash the frame bottom (10 trips down the highway means a ton of road salt on a frame). Charge and disconnect all batteries (unless you have a security system). Plug all vents to keep mice out. Do not let anything dangle from the house to the ground - it's a ladder for rodents! Stuff the place with dryer sheets or moth balls. Crack the roof vent or windows to prevent mold behind all of that nice pine interior. Spray all exterior or interior wire connectors with a corrosion protectant. Lube the door locks and hitch lock. Fill propane tanks. Cover regulator (gas line) vents so spiders or moisture can't get into regulators. Double check your insurance coverage. Finally, hang some Rosary beads from the doorknob and cross your fingers.

Electronics Batteries: Disconnect from the unit and charge full using a 2 amp charger (a fast charge will cook batteries). Spray battery connections with a protectant along with the connectors on the unit itself. Recharge every couple of months until next ice season. The same holds true for four wheeler or snowmobile batteries. It's not uncommon to get 4-5 years out of a battery if maintained. Now go get a high speed transducer and mount the Vexilar or Humminbird to the boat and use it all summer long.

Ice rods/reels: Clean the handles of the rods/reels - rodents and pets love to chew on foam and cork handles that smell tasty! Pop open the reels and lightly oil. Loosen the drags to minimal tension to save tension washers etc. Store in a dry place, out of the reach of pets. Try to avoid hot storage places like the garage attic - the summer heat will destroy line, rod varnishes, glues, etc. If you have young kids or grandkids (2-4 yrs. old) maybe keep a couple ice rods ready to go for them to use in the boat or off the dock. Five year olds are ready for the big show—a 4-5ft set up. OK, now I'm side tracked.

Ice tackle: Put in the boat or tackle box, use it all summer. Who said tungsten ice jigs aren't a deadly summer option for huge "pannies"? SSSHHH!

Gas Augers/equipment: You still have one? Never use ethanol gas in small gas tools/equipment first of all, but even if you do, or don't, add Sea Foam to the gas (I'm a big fan). Run the auger for five minutes to get through the system. Empty gas into your car or boat tank, then run auger empty until it quits. Remove gas tank lid and let the tank dry. Feel free to spray a lube into spark plug hole and pull a few times to "coat" piston area to prevent corrosion. These simple steps will also keep your wheelers

and "sleds" happy - at least all of mine like it! Sharpen all auger blades (beat the fall rush) and spray with a lube to prevent any potential rust. Check the lube levels in the auger crankcase.

Electric augers: Hmmm, not much for maintenance. Simply charge batteries and maintain the battery charge throughout summer. Do not store in a hot place. Heat kills more batteries than cold. Spray blades with a lube to prevent rust etc.

Bait Stuff: Use the bait pucks all spring and summer for waxies and spikes. When the bait shops are out of waxies or spikes for the summer, then go to www.Speedy-Worm.com and get spikes and waxies all summer. Why wait for ice? I like to use the bigger bait pucks for leeches, drill a couple holes in them and let them float in the live well - forget the Styrofoam disaster cups! I also let the kids (myself as well just in case the plastics bite is off) use the bait pucks for taking small amounts of crawlers/leeches to wherever. Any unused bait pucks can be run through the dishwasher when nobody is home.

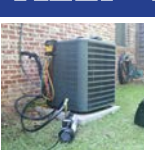
Portable Aerators: remove all batteries and spray the electric pump motor shaft with lube.

Coordinates: Don't forget to save all of those "honey holes" onto another unit or "chip." Some of the spots may be great summer haunts as well. And ya never know when the unit might fail in storage causing you to lose your coordinates.

Well I hope that helps a little, I'm sure I've forgotten something that I normally take for granted and do myself. Happy equipment equals happy fishing! Lotsa Fish! Losta Fun!

Minnesota Fishing Guide Service, www.MinnesotaGuideService.com Capt Josh Hagermeister 320-291-0708, 218-732-9919

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National poetry month @ SHC

Submitted article

(Editor's Note: The following article was submitted by the Sherburne County History Center.)

The Sherburne History Center Book Club will commemorate National Poetry Month by sharing and discussing poetry at their meeting on April 7, 2022 at 1 pm.

Anyone interested in sharing their favorite poem or simply wanting to discuss poetry is welcome to join the group at the Sherburne History Center.

The SHC Book Club meets each month to discuss specific books about Minnesota or by Minnesota authors. Because of the national commemoration for poetry in

April the group chose to offer this unique variation at their meeting.

If you have any questions about the event, please contact Mike Brubaker, Executive Director, at 763-275-2210, or by email at: MBrubaker@SherburneHistoryCenter.org

Sherburne History Center is located at 10775 27th Ave SE in Becker. The Sherburne County Historical Society collects, preserves and explains the history of all of Sherburne County. Its mission is to foster a sense of community by connecting people with the county's past and help people understand the past so they can make informed choices about the future.

Bulldog boys fall in section final



THE BECKER BULLDOG BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM just missed out on the state tournament, losing in the section finals to the Princeton Tigers. Here the team, managers and coaches show off their second place medals and trophy. (Submitted photo.)

By Mark Kolbinger, Contributing Writer

The Becker Bulldog boys basketball team put together an impressive playoff run, but ran into state ranked Princeton in last Friday's Section 5AAA final, losing to the Tigers, 77-67.

The first 12 minutes of the game were even, as the teams were tied at 22 with about six minutes left in the first half before the Tigers went on their first run to build a comfortable half-time lead, 42-30.

However, Becker still had some fight left and the Bulldogs came back to out-score the Tigers in the second half, 37-35.

With 4:21 left in the game, Princeton led 67-56 before the Bulldogs put together a furious rally. Princeton looked to be sur-

viving the onslaught, but then the Bulldogs gave the Tigers a real scare, cutting the lead to just six points, trailing 73-67 with just 1:24 left in the game. But those would be Becker's last points, as Princeton survived to qualify for the state tournament.

For the game, the Tigers hit just three of 19 shots from three point range, while the Bulldogs hit seven in the same number of attempts.

The big advantage for Princeton came in the rebounding department, where the Tigers had 44 and Becker had 27. This led to a 22-13 advantage in second chance points for the #1 seed Tigers.

Both teams took care of the ball well, with Becker committing 12 turnovers to Princeton's 11. With the loss, Becker

finished its season with a record of 17-11, while the Tigers improved to 27-1 overall and qualified for the state tournament.

Princeton went on to win their opening game in the state tournament, 73-63 over Austin.

For the season, Eric Seavert led the Bulldogs with a 17.6 point scoring average, while Brady Paumen averaged 14.5 per game. Julias Hendricks was the third Bulldog to average double figures at 10.4 per game.

Becker scoring versus Princeton: Alex Weiss, nine (six rebounds); Nick Berglund, five; Hendricks, 15; Hayden Harmoning, five; Seavert, seven (eight assists); Paumen, 21 (seven rebounds); Carter Callahan, five.

Sports News

Bulldogs fall in title game, finish 2nd in state

By Mark Kolbinger, Contributing Writer

The Becker girls basketball team's most recent run to the state championship fell just one game short, as the Bulldogs fell last Saturday in the Class AAA title game, 60-51, to the Totino-Grace Eagles.

"We had a tough time with Totino-Grace's 2-3 matchup zone," Bulldog Coach Dan Baird said. "They were long, controlled the pace, and contested shots well forcing us to shoot 6-for-26 from the three point line (23%), where we normally shoot 40%."

Baird's team battled the entire game, and trailed just 28-24 at halftime, but the scoring touch that has led to so many incredible accomplishments throughout the season couldn't be found by the Bulldog shooters.

"Their game plan slowed us down and made shooting tough," Baird added. "They also out rebounded us 33 to 26."

The Eagles' Hannah Herzig was a difference maker for her team, as she had 31 points in the contest.

Becker's Adeline Kent, the team's lone Senior, answered the call for the Bulldogs. In the end, the shooting woes were just too much to overcome.

"Addy Kent played great for us with 18 points, six rebounds, and four steals... she played great in the three games at the State Tournament," Baird said. "She played like a Senior that didn't want to lose! Her grit made for some great tournament moments. As a team, we ran out of gas. Totino was a big part of that."

Becker did have chances in the second half, but wasn't able to get over the hump to take the lead. The Bulldogs pulled to within 44-41 with about 10 minutes remaining, but Totino answered with a 7-0 run to put the game out of reach.

"They (Totino) deserve all the credit and played like a championship team," Baird added.

With the loss, Becker finished their incredible season with a 25-5 overall record.

Becker scoring: Dani Nuest, five; Maren Westin, 10 (four assist, six rebounds); Ayla Brown, seven (six assists); Kent,



THE BECKER BULLDOG GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM finished off a great season with the second place trophy and medals after making it to the Class AAA state championship game, where they fell to private school Totino-Grace (Submitted photo.)

18 (six rebounds, four steals); Lexi Rose, nine; Liz Mackedanz, two.

Quarterfinals
Becker opened the state tournament with a hard fought, 53-48 win over Austin in the opening round.

Becker used a 12-0 run at the end of the game to seal the victory, after the Bulldogs held a 22-20 halftime lead.

Shooting woes for the Bulldogs were reflected in their percentages, as Becker hit just 32% of their shots in the first half, while in the second half they hit 52%, including a 56% performance from beyond the 3 point line.

Austin used a 10-0 run early in the game to take a seven point lead just 4:11 into the first half, before Becker strung together their own run, 13-0, to lead by six points with 5:45 left in the opening stanza.

Maren Westin was hot early for the Bulldogs, scoring 11 first half points, while Dani Nuest had six rebounds and Adeline Kent had four steals to help keep Becker in the game despite their shooting difficulties.

The second half saw three tied scores and six lead changes, as the Bulldogs held on for the victory.

Becker scoring: Nuest, eight (four assists, eight rebounds); Westin, 15; Ayla Brown, seven (seven rebounds); Kent, 13 (four steals); Alexis Rose, eight; Liz Mackedanz, two.

Semifinals
Becker built a huge advantage in their Thursday semifinal game against Mankato East and then hung on down the stretch for a 67-63 win that propelled the Bulldogs into yet another state title game.

It was a clash of styles right from the opening tipoff, as Becker used its full court pressure and up-temp style and Mankato East countered with their inside, post-up game. For the game, Mankato held a 38-18 advantage in points scored in the paint.

"This was a tough, hard fought game especially after the drama of the Austin game," Coach Baird said. "We came back from seven down to score the final 12 points of the game."

It was a very close first

half, with the teams tied up at 23 apiece with just over four minutes left before halftime. Big buckets from Dani Nuest and Adeline Kent helped Becker to carve out a 33-29 halftime lead.

Becker hit just two of eight three point shots in the opening half, while Mankato was 0-for-7.

In the opening minutes of the second half, Becker went on the attack and put together a 10-2 run, including three pointers from Lexi Rose and Westin and a pair of runners from Adeline Kent, as Becker took a 43-31 lead in the first three minutes.

Becker's help side defense was also much better, with the much taller Mankato team was getting harassed from both sides, as Bulldog coach Dan Baird's adjustments seemed to be working.

Becker maintained a comfortable lead, ahead 49-35 as the teams headed into a TV timeout with 11:59 remaining in the game.

The next five minutes saw Becker extend the lead to 59-44, with the final shot

being a huge three pointer from Lexi Rose, as the Bulldogs advanced the ball with three long passes and zero dribbles on the fast break to find her wide open on the left baseline.

This led to a Mankato timeout, and a quick 6-0 run of their own to force Baird to call his own timeout.

From there, the Bulldogs missed a few shots and all of the sudden it was a 60-60 ball game with just 1:31 remaining on the clock.

Baird called another timeout and ran a set play for Westin out the break, which led to a 12 foot jumper and another Becker lead, 62-60. Rose then hit another huge three for the Bulldogs to give her team a 65-62 advantage and the Bulldogs took care of the ball down the stretch to make it to the championship game.

Lexis Rose was the hot hand for the Bulldogs, scoring 21 points on 6-for-11 shooting from beyond the arc, while Liz Mackedanz logged nearly 20 minutes off the bench for the Bulldogs and collected six points while playing tough

inside defense against the taller Mankato squad.

"We let a lead slip away, but came up with a key play or two to win the game despite losing the momentum," Baird said.

Becker scoring: Nuest, four (four assists); Westin, 15 (six rebounds); Brown, 11; Kent, 10 (five assists, four steals); Lexi Rose, 21 (five rebounds, four steals); Mackedanz, six.

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BULLDOG LIZ MACKEDANZ logged nearly 20 minutes off the bench for the Bulldogs in their semifinal victory over Mankato East. (Submitted photo.)

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HONORS POUR IN FOR BULLDOG GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

By Mark Kolbinger, Contributing Writer

A long and very successful basketball season came to an end last weekend for the Becker girls basketball team, which started practice back in November. After 30 games and nearly double that number of practices, one would assume that the team and coaches are exhausted and would take a week or two to catch their collective breath.

"I'm actually not exhausted," Coach Dan Baird said Monday afternoon as he reflected back on the season. "We had 12 girls at open gym this morning. It really means a lot to these kids."

It's that intense dedication and elite work ethic that has defined the program the past several years and led to an amazing amount of success.

The end of the official basketball season also means that a number of awards are being bestowed upon the Bulldog players, including having three players named to the Class AAA All-state team. Having one team member receive the honor is a big deal, but having three members is a true rarity.

Senior Adeline Kent, as well as juniors Dani Nuest and Maren Westin,



THREE BULLDOGS were named to the Class AAA All-Tournament Team for their efforts in helping Becker reach the championship game. Pictured in the front row are Adeline Kent, Maren Westin and Ayla Brown. (Submitted photo.)

each earned the All State honors from the Minnesota Girls Basketball Coaches Association. The announcement was released just before the tipoff of the state tournament. In all, 41 players were named to the team, 10 from each class (there was a tie for 10th in Class A, thus the 41 total players).

All three girls have al-

ready announced their college decisions, with Kent, the team's lone senior, planning to play basketball next season for the University of Tampa.

After finishing their high school careers, Nuest will enroll at Michigan Tech, while Westin will attend the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay as both players continue their

basketball careers.

The Bulldogs also saw three players named to the Class AAA All-Tournament Team at the conclusion of the state tournament. Kent and Westin were joined on the team by teammate Ayla Brown. These awards honor those players who displayed the tenacity and made the biggest contributions to their



DANI NUEST was one of three Bulldogs to earn All State status for the 2021-2022 basketball season. (Submitted photo.)

team's state tournament success.

In addition to those all-state and all-tournament selections, Baird was proud to announce another honor for his lone senior.

Adeline Kent has been selected to play in the MN Girls Basketball All-Star Series, which features the top 41 seniors in the state. The games are scheduled to be played at the Academy of Holy Angels in Richfield on Saturday, April 9. Game times are at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

At the All-Star Series, the MN Miss Basketball committee will also name the 2022 MN Miss Basket-

ball winner. Last month, Kent was named to the watch list and this week she was informed that she is a finalist for the award, given annually to the top girls basketball player in the state.

The All-Star event and Miss Basketball announcement will be a fitting tribute to Kent's wonderful career as a Becker Bulldogs basketball player.

For the rest of the Bulldogs, there are apparently no days off as they are busy working on their skills in preparation for another stellar season come November.

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Endangered Species who Made a Comeback

Recently while leading a photo tour throughout Florida to photograph birds, it occurred to me how much things have changed. I don't mean how much things have become worse, or crowded, but rather how much several species have increased in population.

I've been traveling to Florida since the late 1960's and early 70's when my grandparents retired there. Even back then I was interested in wildlife. I recall riding my bike to a rehab facility not far from my grandparents that had an injured Brown Pelican. At the time Brown Pelicans were nearly killed off in North America. In 1970 the Brown Pelican was listed as a federally endangered species. Like so many other large birds, the Brown Pelican was a victim of DDT. I felt so honored to be able to see the Brown Pelican, even though it was injured and in a wildlife rehab clinic. Today the Brown Pelican is doing very well and can be seen along most of Florida's coasts, and it was removed from the endangered species list in 2009. My photo group saw and photographed many Brown Pelicans.

Back when I visited my grandparents, I would spend any free time searching high and low for an

American Alligator. I thought if I could just see one it would be so cool, but I was never lucky enough to find one. Their population was decimated by uncontrolled hunting in the early 1900's and the American Alligator was listed as a federally endangered species in 1973.

This protection allowed the American Alligator to rebound and by 1987 it was removed from the endangered status. Today you can see huge gators in many places through the southern part of the state. What a thrill to see them now. All the participants on my photo tour had never seen an American Alligator before, so this was a real highlight to see one in the wild and to capture some wonderful images.

Another species that is doing good now but was nearly killed off is the Osprey. The Osprey is a fish-eating raptor and was another victim of DDT. The chemical DDT caused thinning of their eggshells and interrupted nearly all



By Naturalist Stan Tekiela

Osprey reproduction. With the banning of DDT in 1972 and protection from the Endangered Species Act, the Osprey started to slowly recover.

Now the Osprey is doing great. One morning during the photo tour we took a boat out onto a freshwater lake where over 275 pairs of Osprey were nesting together. Just about anywhere we would go, my group noticed Osprey in the sky. We even saw them nesting in the parking lot of a large shopping center.

Another species that we saw and admired during our photo tour was the Wood Stork. When I was young the Wood Stork was nearly impossible to see. Every time I visited my grandparents in Florida, I would look for this rare bird. I thought it was a cool bird because it's the only stork species found in the United States.

This three foot tall bird with a huge black bill was placed on the Federal Endangered Species List in 1984. Protection from shooting and from DDT

allowed this bird to recover enough to be downgraded from endangered to threatened in 2014. During the photo tour we visited a nesting colony of Wood Storks and was able to see and capture images of these amazing birds up close and personal.

So, as you can see, from me, leading a photo tour of Florida birds brings back so many memories and reminds me of some fabulous wildlife success stories. Sometimes we must remind ourselves of these success stories during these uncertain times when it seems like so many things are not going well.

My grandmother who loved feeding the birds in her yard in Florida would be amazed at the abundance of these species today. It sure is encouraging to be able to see and capture so many wonderful images of these birds. Until next time...

Stan Tekiela is an author / naturalist and wildlife photographer who travels the U.S. to capture images of wildlife. He can be followed on Instagram.com, Facebook.com, Twitter.com. You can contact him via his web page at NatureSmart.com.

Assistant superintendent of secondary education named

Submitted article

(Editor's Note: The following article was submitted by St. Cloud Area School District.)

St. Cloud Area School

District announces Kay Nelson has accepted the position of Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education. Ms. Nelson brings over 30 years of experience as an educator, including

21 years as a K-12 music teacher, secondary choral director and curriculum director. She has served as the Assistant Superintendent in the Sartell-St. Stephen school district for

the past nine years. Nelson assumes the role July 1st as Dr. Laurie Putnam, current Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education, becomes Superintendent of St. Cloud Area Schools.

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Grace Lutheran Church (LCMS)
Pastor: David M. Johnson, 763-262-7782, 11185 27th Ave SE. Services: Sun. Worship 9am, Sun. School 10:30am, Wed. J.U.M.P. 6pm.
Becker Baptist Church
Pastors: Nathan Bucher (Senior), Kevin Drehmel (Youth) & Amy Drehmel (Dir. of Child/Fam. Ministry), 763-261-4202, 11951 Hancock St. Services: Sun. Worship/Children 10:30am, Sun. School 9:15am, Wed. AWANA/ Youth Group 6:30pm during school year. www.beckerbaptist.org.
Becker Evangelical Free Church
Pastors: Gerald Deppa (Interim Senior), Chris Salvevold (Youth), 763-261-4125, Becker High School, Office: 11373 150th Ave SE. Services: Sun. Worship/Teaching/Fellowship 10am.
Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church
Father: Mike Kellogg, 763-447-3339, 12100 Sherburne Ave. Services: Sat. Mass 5pm, Sun. Mass 8:30am & 10:30am. Masses held 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays of the month. (Masses held on 2nd & 4th Sundays in Big Lake).
Faith (Becker) Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Pastor: Yolanda Denson-Byers & Vicar Molly Wills, 763-261-5751, 11755 Sherburne Ave. Services: Sun. Worship 9:30 am, Sun. School 8:30am, Wed. Confirmation 5:30pm, Senior High Youth Group 1st & 3rd Wed. 6pm www.faihlutheran-becker.org.
Oakwood Community Church Assemblies of God
Pastors: Gerry Bass & Sarah, 763-220-6004, 13140 1st St (SW Corner of Becker Furniture World). Services: Sun. Bible Study/Sun. School 9am, Sun. Worship 10am.
Snake River Free Church
Pastor: Steve Johnston, 612-219-8648, 180th St SE. Services: Sun. Worship/Sun. School 10:30am., Hymn Sing is second Sun. of every month.
Becker Christian Center & Abundant Grace Church
Pastor: Ken Hanson, 763-262-2177, 15455 59th St SE. Services: Sun. Praise & Worship 9:30am, Wed. Family Fellowship 7pm.
Beacon House of Prayer
Pastors: Brian & Linda Holmes, 763-263-3771, 12264 Pleasant Ave. Services: Thurs. Worship 6:30pm.
Free Grace United
Pastor: Kevin Wilson, 763-245-0001, Becker High School, 12000 Hancock St, Enter door 11. Services: Wed. Worship 6:30pm.

• BIG LAKE
Acts Seventh-Day Adventists Community Church
Pastor: Bill Nixon, 763-263-2287, 20455 187th Ave NW. Services: Sun. Worship 9am, Sat. Sabbath School 10:15am.
Bethany Bible Church
763-263-2167, 511 Eagle Lake Road. Services: Sun. School 9am, Sun. Worship 10am.
Bridgeview Assembly of God
Pastor: Steve Royalty, 763-263-6274, 20500 County Road 11. Services: Sun. School 10am, Wed. Service 6:30pm.
SVEA Hill Covenant Church
Pastor: Don Bellach, 763-263-6322, 16392 235th Ave NW. Services: Sun. Worship 10am.
Cornerstone Baptist Church
Pastor: Gordon Langdon, 763-263-7878, 15300 County Road 35.
Hope Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Orrock
763-262-0028. www.hopeintherefuge.weebly.com.
IFLESIA AMOR VIVIENTE Living Love Church
Pastors: Juan & Patricia Aguayo, 763-607-5403, 21 Lake St N. Services: Sat. 6pm.
Lord of Glory Lutheran Church
Pastor: Marty Mably, 763-263-3090, 15550 190th Ave NW. Services: Sun. 8am & 10am.
Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church
Father: Mike Kellogg, 763-447-3339, 440 Lake St N. Services: Sat. Mass 5pm; Sun. 8:30am & 10:30am. Masses held on 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month (Masses held on 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays in Becker).
Riverside Church
Online: www.myrc.church, 763-263-2410, 20314 County Road 14. Services: Sun 8:45am, 10:30am & 12:05pm.
Saron Lutheran Church
Pastor: Kyle Sidlo, 763-263-2209, 311 Lake St. S. Services: Sun. Worship

9:30am, indoors or livestream.
• SANTIAGO
South Santiago Lutheran Church ELCA
Pastor: Daryl Thul, 763-662-2048, 14675 37th St. Services: Sun. 8am in Sanctuary Worship, 10am in Sanctuary. Audio broadcast in parking lot for both services.
Our Savior's Lutheran Church E.L.S. & Princeton Evangelical School
Pastor: Timothy Zenda, 763-662-2570, 18977 17th St. Services: Sun. School/Bible Class 10:30am, Divine Worship 9am.
Glendorado Lutheran (ELCA)
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Pastor: Shari Routh, 920-573-0193, 1100 186th Ave NE. Services: Sun Good Shepherd 9am, Sun. Glendorado 10:30am.
Gethsemane Church (ELCA) - Ronneby
Pastor: Barbara Peterson, 320-983-5002, 14478 78th St. NE. Services: Sun. Worship 10am.
Glendorado Evangelical Country Church
Pastor: Sam Alfano, 763-662-2244, 16999 Glendorado Road NE. Services: Sun. School 9:30am, Sun. Worship 10:30am.

• CLEAR LAKE
Living Waters Church
Pastor: Mark Stahl, 320-292-0250, 7830 Church St. Services: Sun. Worship 10am, Wed. Bible Study 6:30pm.
Trinity Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
Pastor: Josh Reber, 320-743-2919, 8641 Main Ave. Services: Sun. Worship 8:45am, Sun. School 9:45am.
SHED Church - Non-Denomination in Palmer
Pastor: TBD, 320-241-0123, Palmer Town Hall, 4180 105th Ave. Services: Sun. 5pm.
St. Marcus Catholic Church
Father: Joseph Backowski, 320-743-2481, 8701 Main Ave. Services: Mon. & Wed. Mass 8am, Sat. Confessions 4:15pm, Sat. Mass 5pm, Sun. 8am.

• DUELM
St. Lawrence Church
Father: Joseph Backowski, 320-968-7502, 10915 Duell Road NE. Services: Sun. Mass 10am, Tues. Mass 8am.

• CLEARWATER
Clearwater United Methodist Church
Pastor: Alison Hendley, 320-558-2581, 405 Main St. Services: Sun. Wor-ship 9:30am.
Freedom Bible Church
605 Lime St. (Old Clearwater Post Office). Services: Sun. Bible Study 9:30am & 6pm, Sun. Worship 10:45am, Wed. Bible Study 7pm.
Rejoice Lutheran Church - ELCA
Pastor: Jim Bump, 320-558-6851, 1155 County Road 75. Services: Sun. School that begins in Worship 9:30am. Livestream worship at Rejoice's Youtube Channel, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsJGuBda4orT9TWYi5vmGw
Church of St. Luke
Father: Dennis Backer, 320-558-2124, 17545 Huber Ave NW. Services: Sat. Mass 5pm, Sun. Mass 8am & 10am, Weekday Mass Tues.-Fri. 8am/ Sat. 9am.
Tri-County Alliance Church
Pastor: David Fogal, 320-558-2750, 8464 160th St NW. Services: Sun. School 9am, Sun. Worship 10:30am.

• SILVER CREEK
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Pastor: Ken Tatenhorst, 763-878-2820, 11390 Elliot Ave NW. Services: Sun. Worship 9am
Silver Creek Community Church
Pastor: Zach Pryor, 320-963-3957, 4282 114th St NW. Services: Sun. Wor-ship 9am, Sun. Fellowship 10am, Sun. School 10:30am.

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Obituaries

Lyman Ganz, Age 82
Palmer, MN
March 10, 1940 – March 16, 2022



from Foley High School, Class of 1958. He married Judy Hammer on June 19, 1965 at St. Lawrence Catholic Church. Lyman worked as a silo builder, built cabinets and was a finish carpenter for many years. He was a member of the Local 930 Carpenters Union. He was an avid coon hunter for most of his life. Lyman was a past council member, usher and active member of St. Lawrence Catholic Church.

He is survived by his wife, Judy, of Palmer and son and daughter: Mike (Julie), Palmer and Joy (Rod) Schafer, Cold Spring, 5 grandchildren: Cassie (Brandon) Kozak, Jared (Marissa) Ganz, Jacob Ganz, Dylan Schafer, Brady Schafer and 3 great grandchildren: Olivia, Owen and Macy. He is also survived by his brothers and sisters: Kathy Monarski, Margaret Putnam, Mary Ganz, Gary Ganz and Joy Fish. He was preceded in death by his parents and brothers and sisters: David Ganz, Audrey Gunderson, Lorraine Betzold and Harlen 'Buddy' Ganz. The family would like to thank the caregivers at St. Benedict's for all their care and compassion.

Service with Dignity, Foley Funeral Home, foleyfuneralhome.net.

By Penny Leuthard, Contributing Writer

Youth at Tri-County Alliance (TCA) Church of Clearwater are having a great time 'buzzing in' their answers during this year's Junior Bible Quiz (JBQ) season, doing so well they were awarded first place in the West JBQ League last week.

JBQ is a fun and competitive way for kids grades 1-6 to learn the Bible. They do so by studying the answers to hundreds of Bible questions and competing in a game show fashion that even includes buzzers.

TCA's winning team is named Spirit Seekers. Meets are held the third Saturday of November, February, and March (January's meet was cancelled due to poor weather). The West JBQ League competition was held in Willmar.

The Spirit Seekers ended their regular season with an impressive win/loss record of 13/2, which resulted in their being awarded the first place trophy. Six of their members also won an award for having top scores; First place, Lillie Neuman; fourth, Abe Gallagher; sixth, Anna Teigen; and tied for ninth place, Naomi and JoJo Neuman; and 10th place, Trevor Tasa.

Although TCA's youth have been part of JBQ for four years, this was only their second full season. The 2019-2020 season was interrupted by the pandemic and the 2020-2021 season was completely cancelled.

Sherburne SWCD offers conservation webinars

Submitted article
(Editor's Note: The following article was submitted by Sherburne SWCD.)
The SWCD is hosting a free Conservation Webinar Series on Tuesday evenings throughout the month of April. These webinars will highlight topics and tools that promote conservation in our own backyards.
Registration is required, sign up at: www.

SherburneSWCD.org/webinars
Tree Pests and Problems
Tuesday, April 5th 6 p.m.
David will cover some common pests, stressors, and diseases that will impact trees in 2022. He will discuss symptoms to look for and actions to take to give trees the best chance of recovery and long-term survival.

The Benefits of Native Plants
Tuesday, April 12th 6 p.m.
Questions about native plants? Franny's got it covered. In this webinar, attendees will learn about the plants native to Sherburne County and how they can help attract more pollinators.
Protecting Wetlands and Shorelines
Tuesday, April 19th

6 p.m.
The Sherburne SWCD is partnering with Sherburne County Planning and Zoning to provide an overview of the rules and regulations for wetland and shoreline alterations. The presentation will also provide resources for native plantings including opportunities for technical and financial assistance.

TCA CHURCH'S JUNIOR BIBLE QUIZ TEAM. (Back) Head Coach Valorie LaBeau, Pastor Dave Fogal, and coaches Sarah Tasa and Katie Neuman, and Children's Ministry Director Megan Larson. (Front) Abe Gallagher, Trevor Tasa, Naomi Neuman, Lillie Neuman, JoJo Neuman, Anna Teigen, and Sophia Larson. (Submitted photo.)



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