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The Patriot is the official newspaper for Clear Lake, Clearwater, Orrock, Palmer & Santiago Townships, City of Becker, Becker Township and Becker School District #726, City of Big Lake and Big Lake School District #727. The Patriot is also the legal newspaper for the Sherburne County financials.

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CLEARWATER HERITAGE FESTIVAL FUN!

By Penny Leuthard, Contributing Writer

Last week's third annual Clearwater Heritage Festival was again a hit, with people attending events all over the city throughout the weekend.

The fun kicked off with the first clue of the Medallion Hunt on Monday. Wednesday featured the Balance Bike BMX Race at Eldorado Park, followed by the Clearwater Lions' senior ice cream social and Music in the Park on Thursday.

Friday evening boasted lots of fun for all ages, with the annual Lions' dinner, Family Fun Fest, live music, and Square Dancing, all at Lions Park. The square dancing was again led by Abe Maier, his 50th year of doing so, including over 40 at Clearwater's annual celebration.

The parade was the highlight of the evening, traveling down old Main Street with spectators lined up on both sides of the road

and kids (and adults) gathering the candy that was thrown from the parade entrants. This year's Grand Marshal was Jim Repke, a 40-year Clearwater firefighter.

The evening rounded out with a spectacular fireworks show which could be viewed around Clearwater.

The fun continued on Saturday with numerous events for the public to check out, including the vintage snowmobile and car show, craft and vendor show, history booth with author Cynthia Frank-Stupnik, and Clearwater Corners' annual bean bag tournament.

The fire department held their open house and Clearwater Parts City held their annual Customer Appreciation Event. The newly offered shuttle service between Saturday's events was a welcome addition to the festivities.

Saturday's main event

HERITAGE
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Nuclear Power: Facts and Myths

Submitted Article

(Editor's Note: The following article was submitted to the Patriot on behalf of Darrick Moe, President of the CEO, Minnesota Nuclear Association)

When people think about nuclear power, they often picture Homer Simpson dozing off in a control room or Montgomery Burns scheming to cut corners for profit. Pop culture has shaped that image — but it couldn't be further from modern reality.

For decades, nuclear energy has quietly powered Minnesota's homes and businesses with reliable, carbon-free electricity. Yet despite this proven track record, nuclear remains one of the most misunderstood energy sources. As Minnesota works to meet growing energy demands and bold carbon-free goals, it's time to take a closer look at the facts.

Clean and Reliable — Not the Other

Nuclear energy generates electricity by splitting atoms to produce heat, which turns water into steam to drive turbines — all without releasing carbon



SMALL FOOTPRINT, BIG RESULTS. Nuclear energy is remarkably efficient in its use of land. Producing 1 million megawatt-hours of electricity requires about 17,800 acres of wind installations or 3,200 acres of solar panels. Nuclear can achieve the same output on just 103 acres. (Submitted Photo).

emissions. In Minnesota, nuclear is the state's largest single source of reliable carbon-free electricity, with the Monticello and Prairie Island plants running safely and steadily for decades.

While wind and solar are vital to our clean energy goals, their output depends on the weather. Nuclear fills the gap, providing dependable, always-on power when it's needed most. That's critical in Minnesota, where frigid winters and hot summers place

heavy demands on the grid.

This reliability stabilizes costs, prevents outages, and powers key industries like farming, food processing, and manufacturing.

A Small Footprint, Big Results

Nuclear energy is also remarkably efficient in its use of land. Producing one million megawatt-hours of electricity requires about

NUCLEAR
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Orrock Twp. looks to solve drainage issue on 233rd Ave. NW

By Katie Cantin, Contributing Writer

During their July meeting, the Orrock Township Board once again discussed 233rd Ave NW, where, at the June meeting, residents complained about water backing up from all the rain.

Following up on a conversation from last month, the board asked about allowing on-duty officers access to the town hall building as a safe place to use the bathroom, eat, or for other miscellaneous purposes. Dehn said he spoke with Sherburne County IT, who suggested keeping a



ROAD ENGINEER KEVIN KRUGER showed the Orrock Township Board where residents were experiencing drainage issues on their road, and discussed potential solutions. (Patriot Photo by Katherine Cantin.)

Meet MN Crime Author in Becker

Submitted Article

In 2024, 15 of the top 20 documentaries shown on Netflix were true crime while in the world of books, crime and mystery titles ranked the second most profitable book titles for U.S. Amazon sales in 2022.

Given the interest in this topic, the Great River Regional Library in Becker is pleased to have Minnesota true crime author Frank F. Weber as the guest speaker in September. Weber, also a forensic psychologist, will describe how a case is pro-



FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST AND TRUE CRIME AUTHOR FRANK F. WEBER will be at the Becker Library in September. (Submitted Photo).

filed as well as conduct a live demonstration of a lie detector test. He uses his keen understanding of how predators think, the trauma of victims and his experience in expert testimony in writing his books.

Weber says he did not plan on being published when he began writing.

"I wrote to vent from my forensic work," he says. "I needed to get it out, and I've always loved a good mystery."

After writing stories

AUTHOR
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Supervisor Dalton Keiderling said that the water used to drain into a yard, but the ditch has been filled in. He thought the homeowner might agree to allowing the township to install a catch basin so the water can be properly redirected down the hill again. The board directed their road engineer to look into the matter with the homeowner and come up with quotes to do the work, pending the homeowner's approval.

Sheriff's Report

Sgt. Alex Dehn gave the monthly report for the sheriff's department, noting 154 calls for service last month. Notable calls included two thefts at the Sand Dunes Food and Fuel.

lock box on site that officers can access as needed to get a key to the building. Board Chair Anne Felber asked Dehn to get more information on the type of lock box recommended.

Open Forum

Lisa Miller spoke to say she appreciated the board investigating the greenways (public access to the lake that is not paved). She noted she lived next to one and would like to make some improvements to it, such as removing a dead tree, but didn't want to do so since it was township owned land. She wanted to know if there would be op-

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THE VETERANS APPRECIATION DINNER at the Clearwater Legion boasted one of Minnesota's best foods – tater tot hot-dish. (Photo by Penny Leuthard)

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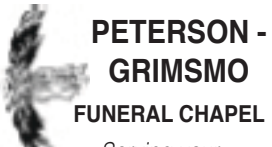
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Night to Unite brings neighbors together

By Bill Morgan,
Editor

Several Night to Unite gatherings occurred Tuesday in Becker, Big Lake, Clear Lake and surrounding communities.

Becker had a total of five Night to Unite neighborhood get-togethers that were visited by emergency personnel as well as staff and elected politicians from the city.

"It was great to visit with people and hear about what is important in our community," said Becker Mayor Mark Kolbinger. "Thanks also to the Becker Fire and Police Departments for their participation."

Night to Unite is a nationwide, annual event that offers residents a unique opportunity to get to know their neighbors, chat with local law enforcement officials, and ultimately build a safer community.

From barbecues to pool parties, each neighborhood decides how they want to celebrate the event. Some neighborhoods have potlucks, pizza parties, or ice cream socials, while others choose to simply sit on the lawn and visit with one another.



A GOOD GATHERING of emergency personnel, staffers and council members from Becker posed in front of a Becker fire truck on Tuesday. (Submitted Photo).



BIG LAKE MAYOR PAUL KNIER (FAR RIGHT) watched with great interest as a Big Lake fireman operated the ladder from one of the BLFD trucks as others stood and watched Tuesday. (Photo from Facebook).



SHERBURNE COUNTY SHERIFF COMMANDER BEN ZAWACKI visited with lifelong Santiago residents Dick and Jeanette Harshman at Santiago Night To Unite. (Patriot Photo by Mary Nehring).

More than 200 compete in BL Graniteman



ATHLETES FROM THE OLYMPIC DIVISION take off from the beach at Lakeside Park to start the 2025 Big Lake Graniteman Triathlon. (Photo by Ken Francis.)

By Ken Francis,
Contributing Writer

The skies were hazy from the residual smoke from Canadian wildfires Saturday morning. But it didn't stop about 200 athletes from competing in the 2025 Graniteman Triathlon at Lakeside Park in Big Lake.

The event featured two different categories. The Sprint Division began with a 0.33-mile swim followed by a 14.45-mile bike ride and a 3.1-mile run.

The Olympic Division was a 0.9-mile swim, 24.83-mile bike ride and a 6.2-mile run.

At 8 a.m. the Olympic Division athletes plunged into the lake on the first leg of their two-plus hour journey.

Diego Morles, 16, of Minneapolis was the first competitor to exit the water in 23:40 and head for the his bike, with Steven Voss, 40, of Osseo just 20 seconds behind.

Then the race got even tighter, and Voss had taken the lead by the time the bike race was over.

But in the end, the running portion of the triathlon made the difference as Big Lake distance standout Kade Layton, 20, passed his oppo-

nents and won the triathlon in 2:21:29.

Layton was in eighth place after the swim, more than three minutes behind Voss. He had the ninth quickest time in the bike race in 1:18:51 and was still more than six minutes behind Voss when the 6.2-mile run began.

But Layton's run time of 32:28 was the fastest of any competitor and enough to overtake Voss, who ran 40:18 and finished about a minute behind in 2:22:27.

Kyle Sweeney, 27, of Maple Grove was the third athlete in the men's division in 2:24:16. Peter Goldberg, 36, from Minneapolis took fourth in 2:34:43 and Corey McCusick also of Minneapolis, 49, finished fifth.

Becky Youngberg, 50, of Shakopee was the top female finisher in 2:31:57. She was fourth overall.

Amy Preusser, 27, from Melrose was second in 2:37:58. Cristin Tandberg, 46, of Minneapolis placed third in 2:41:51. Marilea Osterlund, 50 of Rochester took fourth in 2:43:00 and Dawn Labiosa, 60, from St. Paul finished fifth in 2:59:35.

Anthony Hirschman, 45, from Minneapolis won the Sprint Division in 1:08:25. He was also the top finisher

last year in 1:07:36.

Brenner Hohenstein, 28, of Minneapolis finished second in 1:11:39. Josh Sell, 46, from Waconia took third in 1:12:53. Ben Myers, 38, from Maple Grove was a step behind in fourth in 1:12:58 and Jeron Hall, 19, of Elk River rounded out the top five in 1:13:19.

Andrea Myers, 49, of Minneapolis was the top female finisher in 1:14:47. She finished second in the Olympic Division last year.

Jennifer Martone, 53, of Minneapolis took second in 1:17:42. Raychel Tong, 17, of Minneapolis placed third in 1:19:25. Sarah Thompson, 44, from Rogers was fourth in 1:25:31 and Mary Deeg, 63, of Annandale finished fifth in 1:25:51.

The Big Lake Triathlon is the final segment of a three-part competition. Triathlons at Sturgis Lake in Buffalo and Warner Lake in Clearwater were held earlier in the season.

Complete results for all three triathlons and past year's triathlons can be found at mtcresults.com.

Grand Champion!



ELLA LARSÉN, a member of St. Pats 4-H Club in Duell, earned a grand champion purple ribbon and a trip to the Minnesota State Fair for her bee garden project she submitted to the Benton County Fair a few weeks ago. She is pictured with her purple ribbon behind her in the right photo. This is Ella's ninth year in 4-H. (Submitted Photos).

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Wednesday, September 17	2pm - 5pm	Big Lake Township, 21960 County Rd 5 NW, Big Lake
Friday, September 26	2pm - 5pm	Sherburne County Fairgrounds, 13372 Business Center Drive, Elk River (enter across from YMCA)
Saturday, September 27	9am - 12pm	Sherburne County Fairgrounds, 13372 Business Center Drive, Elk River (enter across from YMCA)

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12U softball team takes Monsta!

Submitted Article

Becker Blast 12U Navy team won the 12U Monsta National Tournament this past weekend.

This tournament is a 64 team, 4-day event with teams coming from all over the Midwest (Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota).

Becker's team went 3-0 in Pool Play on Thursday and Friday, putting them in the Platinum Bracket. In the Platinum Bracket on Saturday and Sunday, they notched extra inning wins against Hammand, WI (SCC) and Granstsborg, WI, and secured a come-from-behind victory against a powerhouse team from Centennial Lakes.

Perhaps the most exciting game was a last inning come-from-behind victory against Eden Prairie in the championship game to capture the title.

The team is coached by Steve Esping, Anna Willhite and Ben Johnson.

BECKER'S BLAST 12U NAVY TEAM. Front row, left to right: Alyse Denne, Finlee Esping, Mirra Koubsky, Aysa Johnson and Lyra Willhite. Back row, left to right: Coach Steve Esping, Talia Boyer, Zoe Sheiber, Emily Thiel, Coach Anna Willhite, Kenzie Basgall, Piper Dickinson, Kinny Johnson and Coach Ben Johnson. Missing - Braelyn Bolton. (Submitted Photo).

3-on-3 Basketball Tourney at BCC

By Bill Morgan, Editor

Several volunteers and members of Becker's Basketball Board gathered at the basketball courts at the BCC to host their fifth annual 3-on-3 basketball tournament for kids in grades 4-6.

On a perfect summer evening Tuesday, dozens of kids and their families descended upon the community center to play some basketball in timed, 3-on-3 games where kids learned the fundamentals of the game and just had fun.

Eighteen teams coming from Becker, St. Cloud, Sauk Rapids, Zimmerman, and St. Michael attended.

Mike + You = Cure had volunteers running the concession stand to raise funds for their cause.

Parents and friends placed lawn chairs around the courts and cheered on the youngsters as they battled to show off their skills.

Ryan Goodman of the Becker Youth Basketball organization emceed the event and kept the players on task for the timed games.

All teams wore jerseys to identify who they were playing with and many youths fine-tuned their skills on the side of the courts as they awaited their turn to play. First place teams received a trophy, while second place teams garnered a medal.



THE BOYS had fun as they commanded the court and showed off their skills during their timed games at the BCC. (Patriot Photo by Bill Morgan).



THE GIRLS demonstrated competitiveness but they also displayed good-natured fun with a lot of smiles and laughs. (Patriot Photo by Bill Morgan).