

A Season for Noticing

His teacher. The earth. Cars. His mom and dad. Music. Shapes. Love.

These are the things my five-year-old son, a kindergartner at Eastview Elementary in Monticello, listed when asked what he is most thankful for this year.

As tender as those sentiments are, you might wonder why I'm beginning here. As I near my fourth decade on this earth, I'm reminded of how everything — holidays included — changes as we age.

We try to hold onto the traditions we loved as kids, to tap back into that sense of wonder that once felt so natural. We'd arrive at the festively adorned table with food magically prepared and waiting, our only responsibility to eat and not make too much of a fuss.

Well, perhaps that part hasn't changed.

But what was once effortlessly carefree now involves days — sometimes weeks — of coordinating, planning, shopping, cleaning, scheduling. We wonder whether we'll make our connecting flight, which route will help us avoid traffic, whether we have enough clean sheets, and if anyone remembered to close the garage door. The very season meant to slow us down, speeds us up.

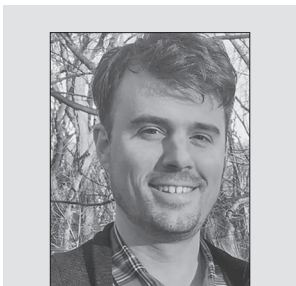
Still, the wonder isn't gone. It's just tucked into the corner of our routines and takes more effort to see. Maybe that's why children are so good at finding it; they're closer to the small things we adults tend to overlook.

That's the headspace I'm trying to return to.

Life piles so much on us: worry, stress, anxiety, bills, schedules. The simplest things — even the closest things — become the hardest to see. The things we voiced freely as children without thinking or embarrassment.

The irony is that those are the things we need most.

At the heart of Thanksgiving is this idea of gratitude for what truly matters. Yet I can't recall hearing an adult express thankfulness for something as elemental as love. We mention people we love, sure. Or places we love.



By
Andrew Diemand,
Contributing Writer

But what about just...love itself? The very force without which none of this would be happening.

Henry David Thoreau touched on this in Walden when he wrote, "Most of the luxuries, and many of the so-called comforts of life, are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind."

When you strip away the excess, you find we actually need very little. The rest are additions — things we've convinced ourselves are essential, feeding a cycle of wanting more: bigger, newer, faster.

That constant desire for more keeps us from appreciating what's already here.

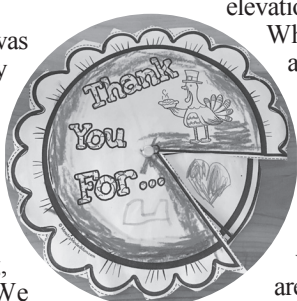
Thanksgiving is a good moment to push back against that impulse, but I encourage you to extend that practice beyond one day. Try to return to that childlike gratitude for things as simple as shapes. The earth. The presence of love. These might seem obvious, but it's the obvious that easily fades into the background.

Wake your eyes up again to the things so simple you forgot to notice them. Those are the things with the deepest impact. Even an atom, the smallest thing imaginable, holds the structure of everything that exists.

It's the smallest things that anchor us.

So take a moment to reexamine what you already have, whether it's the comfort of a familiar routine or simply the promise of a new morning. I suspect you'll find those things are more than enough.

Happy Thanksgiving.



A SIMPLE KINDERGARTEN PROJECT reminds us not to overlook love. (Submitted Photo).



Some local tax rates could be higher in 2026

By Ken Francis,
Contributing Writer

Tax rates in some jurisdictions in Sherburne County could be increasing in 2026.

A report released by the auditor-treasurer's office last week shows six of eight cities and three of nine townships in the county are proposing higher tax rates in 2026.

All nine townships held their annual meetings in March, at which time residents voted to either increase or decrease their tax levies.

In Becker Twp., the rate is proposed to go from 19.462% to 20.741%.

Blue Hill Twp. could see a slight increase from 11.840% to 12.077%.

Livonia Twp. is proposing an increase from 19.535% to 20.489%.

The other six townships are looking at a tax rate decrease.

The rate in Orrock Twp. is proposed to drop from 17.801% to 16.326%.

Big Lake Twp. is expecting a tax rate drop from 18.982% to 18.204%, with tax rates on properties within the Elk River Fire District falling from 19.516% to 17.603%.

In Clear Lake Twp. the rate is proposed to fall slightly from 12.920% to 12.200%.

The tax rate in Haven Twp. could decrease from 15.644% to 14.565%.

In Palmer Twp., the rate will decrease from 13.148% to 11.506%.

Santiago Twp. is looking at a decrease from 12.976% to 12.576%.

Like last year in the cities, Clear Lake is expecting a lower tax rate, from 45.375% to 39.093%.

In Zimmerman, the rate

TAXES
to page 4

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR:

Individual responsibility. That phrase is how the GOP once chose to explain it's philosophy. It means of course that everyone is responsible for their own actions. But Trump, Emmer and the GOP seem to have abandoned that philosophy. They blame America's epidemic of illegal drug use on foreigners. Have immigrants been caught force-feeding / injecting innocent American citizens with fentanyl and other illegal substances? No. The cartels are engaged in the classic capitalist role of being the supplier to the demander (American drug addicts). America's drug appetites created and paid for the cartels and their violence.

President Trump first promised to build an impenetrable wall (paid for by Mexico, of course). We haven't heard much from him about that lately, though. Instead, our giant and very expensive Navy has picked off 20+ boats from Venezuela which may or may not be involved in the drug trade. In any event, they are small potatoes and will have close to zero effect on the gigantic drug trade here in America. The root of the drug epidemic in America is right here at our doorsteps. Individual responsibility. But I don't see Trump, Emmer or any other politician acknowledging the truth of that.

Anthony Thompson
Big Lake, MN

BL FIRE from page 1

and had Big Lake Tower 1 respond as the next truck out of the station. Conditions indicated that the fire could spread rapidly toward the adjoining property of Rite Away Auto Inc., which houses hundreds of scrap vehicles.

With the help of the owners and staff of Rite Away Auto, crews were able to access the lot to slow the spread. Because of heavy fuels on the east side and flames reaching nearly 20 feet, an engine equipped with a deck gun was brought in for a fast, powerful knockdown. Additional units from Monticello and Elk River were requested to shuttle water and provide much-needed manpower to reach difficult areas of the pile.

As the fire grew in size and low-hanging smoke made operations more challenging, Captain 3 requested Becker Fire for manpower and later their ladder truck for additional elevated support. Elk River Fire also responded with their utility truck and LSU trailer to assist with air bottle refills for crews working inside the smoke.

To reach the deep-seated fuels within the pile, an excavator from Brenteson's was requested to work alongside Public Works loaders, pulling apart the large mass of leaves to allow crews to reach hotspots.

This incident was a reminder that strong partnerships make all the difference. Thanks to coordinated teamwork, quick decision making, and support from multiple agencies, the fire was brought under control and the surrounding area was kept safe.

Zimmerman Fire was requested to standby at the Big Lake Fire Station.

Big Lake Police assisted with traffic control and gaining access to Public Works and Rite Away Auto.

"We want to extend our sincere thanks to: Monticello Fire, Elk River Fire, Becker Fire, Zimmerman Fire, Clear Lake Fire (for assisting Becker during their own emergency), Big Lake Police, CentraCare Ambulance, Big Lake Public Works, Brenteson Co., Rite Away Auto, Big Lake Domino's, and the thoughtful community members who stopped by with treats for our crews," said the BLFD post.

"Big Lake—thank you for always standing behind your firefighters. Stay safe, and we'll be here when you need us."

PUBLIC NOTICES (MORE NOTICES ON PAGE 5)

2026 ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS TO PUBLISH FINANCIAL STATEMENTS DELINQUENT TAX LIST AND OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF SHERBURNE COUNTY

Sealed bids for the publication of Sherburne County's financial statement, delinquent tax list, and the official proceedings of the Sherburne County Board, are to be submitted to the Sherburne County Auditor-Treasurer Office, Sherburne County Government Center, 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Suite 100, Elk River, Minnesota 55330-1692. Bids will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on December 18, 2025, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. From the said proposal received and accepted, the County Board of Commissioners will award the bids for the year 2026 at its regular meeting on Tuesday, January 6th at 9:00 a.m. or shortly thereafter. Bids will be received for the following:

1. Publication of financial statement as required by Minn. Stat. § 375.17.
2. Publication of official proceedings of the Sherburne County Board sessions as required by Minn. Stat. § 375.12.
3. Publication of notice and list of real estate taxes remaining delinquent in Sherburne County as required by Minn. Stat. §§ 279.08 and 279.09.
4. Publication of other public notices.

Bids shall be submitted in exact accordance with the Bidding Documents. The Bidding Documents may be obtained at the Sherburne County Auditor-Treasurer Office, Sherburne County Government Center, 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Suite 100, Elk River, Minnesota 55330. All bids must be sealed and marked "Bid for Publication of the Sherburne County Financial Statement, Delinquent Real Estate Taxes, and the Official Proceedings of the Sherburne County Board." The Sherburne County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities in bidding.

By order of the County Board.
Dated at Elk River, Minnesota, this 18th day of November 2025.
/s/ Loraine Rupp, Auditor-Treasurer
Sherburne County
(Published in the Patriot: 11/29/25, 12/06/25, 12/13/25.)

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State Certificate of Assumed Name Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333

The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business. ASSUMED NAME: **Ripplea** PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: **14386 100TH ST SE BECKER MN 55308 USA** APPLICANT(S) Name: **Tschida Communications, LLC** Address: **14386 100TH ST SE BECKER MN 55308 USA**

If you submit an attachment, it will be incorporated into this document. If the attachment conflicts with the information specifically set forth in this document, this document supersedes the data referenced in the attachment.

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this

document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY: **Stefanie Peterson Tschida** MAILING ADDRESS: **None Provided** EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL NOTICES: **stef@tschidacommunications.com** Work Item: **1600130800026** Original File Number: **1600130800026** STATE OF MINNESOTA OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FILED **11/17/2025 11:59 PM** /s/ Steve Simon Secretary of State (Published in the Patriot: 11/29/25, 12/6/25).

Getting Back to Work

The House is back in session after the longest federal government shutdown in American history, reaching a staggering 43 days. On November 12, President Trump signed the government funding bill into law and the House of Representatives got back to work legislating after the Democrat-imposed shutdown.

Epstein Files Transparency Act

This week, the Epstein Files Transparency Act was signed into law after it was passed in the House of Representatives by a vote of 427-1 and unanimously in the Senate. House Republicans have been consistent with our calls for transparency and accountability regarding Epstein, which is why I voted in favor of the Epstein Files Transparency Act. Unlike the Democrats, who only care about cherry-picking evidence to smear President Trump, Republicans are letting the facts speak for themselves and pursuing justice for the victims of these heinous crimes.

Making America Energy Independent Again

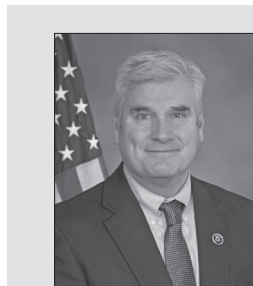
Additionally, the House passed three bills to nullify the Biden administration's Bureau of Land Management rules, which stifled American energy growth and dominance. These pieces of legislation ensure that we can cut red tape and clear the way for new developments and investments in American energy.

Supporting Minnesota Agriculture

This week, we had members from the Minnesota Agriculture and Rural Leadership program in the office. Great to catch up with everyone and discuss ways we are supporting farming and rural communities through our Working Families Tax Cut Act.

Protecting Girls' Sports

On Wednesday, we sent a letter to Governor Walz



By Rep.
Tom Emmer

demanding he reverses the state's policies around biological boys participating in girls' sports. This follows the Trump administration finding the state in violation of Title IX, which could jeopardize Minnesota's federal funding. My Minnesota Republican colleagues and I are demanding Governor Walz does what is right, changes their policies, and provides a response to the Trump administration on the Minnesota State High School League's policy that "allows participation for all students consistent with their gender identity or expressions" in sports.

Holding Governor Walz Accountable for Mas- sive Fraud Scandal

Finally, a bombshell report came out this week highlighting that Minnesota taxpayer dollars are ending up in the hands of Al-Shabaab terrorists in Somalia. Governor Walz and his administration have allowed over \$500 million in taxpayer dollars to be stolen through Medicaid, housing programs, and food nutrition programs. Now, reports indicate some of these stolen dollars are being used by Somali terrorists. In response, we sent a letter to U.S. Attorney Daniel Rosen asking that he fully investigate these reports. As Governor Walz continues to refuse to admit Minnesota has a fraud problem, we have full faith that U.S. Attorney Rosen and his team will take this matter seriously and justice will be served.

Mayor's Update

Most Minnesotans are aware that we have two "seasons" in our state: road construction and snowplowing.

With the first snowflakes hitting the ground this week, it's a good time to remind Becker residents that the city does not allow overnight street parking. This helps our snowplow drivers do their jobs safely. This is also a plea to ensure that residents keep their fire hydrants accessible throughout the winter. The fire department hopes to never have to use these water sources, but in an emergency such as a house fire, minutes can make all the difference.

Tax Statement

I wanted to take this chance to clarify one item from your recent tax statement as it pertains to the City of Becker.

The amount listed in the Truth in Taxation notice from 2025 did not include the EDA levy of \$233,848, and therefore the 2025 levy should have shown a total amount of \$10,247,399. With this year's proposed 2026 total levy of \$10,498,579, the percent change is not 4.84% as printed, but rather a 2.45% proposed increase. The city's Finance Director explained this in detail at last week's city council meeting.

TURKEY from page 1

wanted to know about brining turkeys. Afterward, Dierkes explained why people appreciate her meat market to other stores.

"That's what sets us apart from grocery stores, we're here to answer questions," she said.

Dierkes takes pride in having a knowledgeable staff that knows about all the products they offer. That is why it's important for her to retain staff.

"Not every employee is going to know everything on their first day, but as they continue to work for us, their knowledge grows," she says.

Speaking of knowledge, here are a few additional fun facts from the MTGA that may resonate with our readers. This year, 80% of turkey consumers were interested in purchasing precooked or ready to heat and serve turkeys. Sixty-one percent of consumers prefer white meat for their first bite of Thanksgiving turkey, and lastly, 52% of consumers enjoy their leftovers as a turkey sandwich.



By Mark Kolbinger
Contributing Writer

Post Office

Our campaign to KEEP the BECKER post office in 55308 continues, and gains momentum every day. There are still a few t-shirts left, and your letter writing efforts are getting noticed.

We know that the temporary location of the CBU's at the Becker Community Center isn't ideal, but it has allowed uninterrupted mail service for our post office box holders without having to drive to Monticello. We do have one ask: please drive carefully in and around the community center parking lots as you get your mail. There are a variety of events coming up at the BCC, including a visit from Santa Claus himself on December 6, and we want to ensure a safe experience for all of our residents.

AREA NEWS

AUCTIONS

..... UPCOMING AUCTIONS

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Vote for your favorite display online between December 9 - 14!

Big Lake
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GHOST
is a 1-year-old mixed breed pup, don't let his name fool you; he's sweet, not scary! Ghost has done well with other dogs and children in the past. He loves getting attention and will be more than happy to play tug-of-war. We like Ghost a lot, but we hope he vanishes into a new home soon!

FRED
is a 6-year-old neutered cat who is looking for a new start. In the past, Fred lived with a cat and a dog, and he got along well with both. He is an affectionate boy who expects nightly snuggles from his human(s). Fred is on a prescription urinary diet, which he needs to remain on. Fred and all cats 6 months and older at TCHS are 50 percent off in November.

PEBBLES
is a shy but sweet 2-month-old kitten who came to Tri-County Humane Society with her brother. She spent time in foster care, and her foster reported that she's a big fan of catnip. She also loves chasing around ball toys and sleeping in cushy cat beds.

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BTYR bingo a huge hit

By Mark Kolbinger,
Contributing Writer

Becker's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon (BTYR) committee held its Turkey Bingo event last Saturday at Pebble Creek, and the results were a gobbling success.

Ten games of bingo were called, with winners claiming a \$50 prize and a nice sized turkey. For the blackout games (fifth and 10th on the schedule), the lucky winners also claimed a turkey fryer that they could use just in time for the Thanksgiving holiday.

As with past BTYR events, the crowd was a robust "standing room only" size, as many community members came out to support the committee.

Becker's BTYR is a comprehensive program that

creates awareness for the purpose of connecting service members and their families with community support, training, services, and resources.

Some of their services include being a support group for veterans at the community level, helping service member families when a spouse is deployed, assistance in finding employment for Veterans and creating community events for military families and families to come together.

According to local BTYR organizer Kent Granning, the group is already making plans for their annual Meat Bingo event in February and the committee wishes to send their sincere gratitude to the citizens and businesses in the Becker community for the ongoing support.



WINNERS ABOUND. Many bingo players and raffle winners went home happy from last Saturday's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon bingo event held at Pebble Creek. (Submitted Photo.)

TAXES

from page 2

Elk River could see a rate increase from 39.524% to 41.146%.

East St. Cloud is expecting a big increase, from 53.973% to 68.538%.

Princeton's rate is rising from 56.535% to 59.611, with its RSD also increasing from 17.5% to 20.052%.

Based on the preliminary levy set in September, the report shows the county tax rate is expected to increase from 38.267% to 38.893%.

Two of seven school districts that affect Sherburne County properties will

also have higher tax rates in 2026: Princeton Dist. 477 (22.036% to 23.201%) and Big Lake Dist. 727 (27.935% to 30.052%).

The remaining five are proposing decreases. They include:

Foley Dist. 51 (24.304% to 22.066%), Becker Dist. 726 (19.685% to 18.158%), Elk River Dist. 728 (25.252% to 24.478%), St. Cloud Dist. 742 (21.697% to 21.613%) and Monticello Dist. 882 (13.631% to 12.921%).

Total taxes payable will also be affected by the market

value of the home or business and other local levies. Tax notices were sent out in November. They include line items for each taxing jurisdiction, taxes in 2025 and proposed 2026 taxes.

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PATRIOT

PUBLIC NOTICES - OBITS

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State Certificate of Assumed Name Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333

The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.

ASSUMED NAME:

Frontline Electric
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: **18234 235th Ave. NW, Big Lake, MN 55309, USA**
NAMEHOLDER(S):
Name: **Cor Bellator Corp.**
Address: **18234 235th Ave. NW, Big Lake, MN 55309, USA**
Name: **Scott D. Green**
Address: **18234 235th Ave. NW, Big Lake, MN 55309, USA**
Name: **Carrie D. Green**
Address: **18234 235th Ave. NW, Big Lake, MN 55309, USA**

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY: **Carrie D. Green**
MAILING ADDRESS: **18234 235th Ave. NW, Big Lake, MN 55309, USA**

EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL

NOTICES:

frontlineelectricsys@gmail.com
Work Item: **1595912700039**
Original File Number: **1595912700039**
STATE OF MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FILED

11/06/2025 11:59 PM

/s/ Steve Simon
Secretary of State
(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/22/25, 11/29/25).

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ASSUMED NAME:

Living Stone Construction LLC
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: **3940 150TH AVE CLEAR LAKE MN 55319 USA**
NAMEHOLDER(S):
Name: **Living Stone Handyman Service LLC**
Address: **3940 150TH AVE CLEAR LAKE MN 55319 USA**

If you submit an attachment, it will be incorporated into this document. If the attachment conflicts with the information specifically set forth in this document, this document supersedes the data referenced in the attachment.

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY: **Jesse Hanych**
MAILING ADDRESS: **None Provided**
EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL NOTICES: **Jesseh@livingstone-handyman.com**
Work Item: **1599456400020**
Original File Number: **1599456400020**
STATE OF MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FILED

11/13/2025 11:59 PM

/s/ Steve Simon
Secretary of State
(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/22/25, 11/29/25).

CITY OF BECKER NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER VACATION OF THE A PORTION OF DRAINAGE AND UTILITY EASEMENTS WITHIN THE PROPERTIES CURRENTLY IDENTIFIED AS PID #60-00494-0105 AND #60-00447-0105

After receiving a petition signed by the majority of the owners of land abutting easements proposed to be vacated, which easements are legally described below, on the properties currently identified as PID #60-00494-0105 and #60-00447-0105, and pursuant to Minnesota Statute § 412.851, the City of Becker City Council duly called for a public hearing to consider vacation of said easements.

Notice is hereby given that a hearing will be held before the City Council of the City of Becker on the 2nd day of December, 2025, in the City Hall City Council Chambers located at 12060 Sherburne Ave SE at approximately 5:00 pm to consider the vacation of said drainage and utility easements which are legally described as:

The southeasterly 5.00 feet of Lot One (1), Block One (1) LTTM PROPERTIES, Sherburne County, Minnesota, except that part of said southeasterly 5.00 feet lying within the northeasterly 5.00 feet of said Lot One (1), Block One (1) and that part of the southeasterly 5.00 feet lying within the southwesterly 25.00 feet of said Lot One (1), Block One (1)

AND

The northwesterly 6.00 feet of Lot One (1), Block One (1) E AND E ADDITION, Sherburne County, Minnesota, except that part of said northwesterly 6.00 feet lying within the northeasterly 6.00 feet of said Lot One (1), Block One (1) and that part of the northwesterly 6.00 feet lying within the southwesterly 10.00 feet of said Lot One (1), Block One (1)

Anyone interested in this issue is encouraged to attend and comment at the Public Hearing. If you are unable to attend, please provide written comment to Austin Petersen at P.O. Box 250, Becker, MN 55308 or by e-mail to apetersen@ci.becker.mn.us by 4:30 p.m. December 2nd, 2025.

/s/ Austin Petersen, Associate Planner

City of Becker

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/22/25, 11/29/25.)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

a Truth in Taxation public hearing will be held on Monday, December 1st at 6:30 P.M. for the purpose of City Resident's commenting on the 2026 tax levy. Any persons wishing to make public comment on this request may do so by attending the meeting that will take place at the Clear Lake City Hall, located at 7684 1st Ave West or in writing to the city clerk. Written comments must be received prior to the hearing date.

/s/ Ryan McCann, City Clerk

City of Clear Lake, MN

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/22/25, 11/29/25.)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING VACATION OF DRAINAGE AND UTILITY EASEMENTS

Notice is hereby given that the Clearwater City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, December 8, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as possible, in the council chambers at Clearwater City Hall, 605 County Rd 75 NW, Clearwater, MN 55320, to consider vacating the platted drainage and utility easement which straddles the shared boundary between Lots 1 and 2, Block 2, Sunrise Crest, which is located entirely within Wright County PID 104-026-002020 in the city of Clearwater. The petitioning property owner has requested that said portion of drainage and utility easement, recorded with the Office of the Wright County Recorder via the plat of Sunrise Crest (Doc. No. A760436), be vacated so that the two aforementioned lots can be combined to accommodate construction of one new single-family dwelling thereon. Persons wishing to comment on this item may do so during the public hearing. Comments may also be submitted in writing prior to the meeting date.

/s/ Annita Smythe, City Administrator

City of Clearwater

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/22/25, 11/29/25.)

NOTICE OF HEARING ON ADOPTION OF THE 2026 CITY FEE SCHEDULE

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of Big Lake will meet on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Big Lake City Council Chambers located at 160 Lake Street North, Big Lake, MN, to consider adoption of the 2026 City Fee Schedule.

Persons desiring to be heard with reference to the proposed 2026 City Fee Schedule will be heard at this meeting.

/s/ Gina Wolbeck, Clerk

City of Big Lake

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/29/25.)

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 727 NOTICE FOR BIDS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the School Board of INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 727, Sherburne County, located at Big Lake, Minnesota that it will receive sealed bids on:

Building Envelope Improvements

UNTIL 12:00 P.M. (Noon) Friday, December 12th, 2025 at the District Office located at 701 Minnesota Ave., Big Lake, MN 55309

All bidding contractors are required to attend a Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting to be held at the ISD #727 (Big Lake Public Schools) District Office which is located at **Door J of Independence Elementary School 701 Minnesota Ave., Big Lake, MN 55309 on Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025 at 10:00 A.M.** Project Specifications will be distributed at the Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting.

/s/ Terrence Zerwas| Director of Buildings and Grounds

Big Lake Schools | District Office

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/22/25, 11/29/25.)

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

This represents a summary of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Big Lake Public Schools #727. A complete set of minutes will be on file at the District Office and on our website at www.biglakeschools.org upon Board approval.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of Independent School District No. 727, Big Lake Schools, was called to order on November 19, 2025.

II. ROLL CALL

All Board members were present.

III. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion passed to approve the agenda.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. OPEN FORUM

No participants

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion passed to approve the following:

A. PREVIOUS MINUTES

B. CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS

C. CREDIT CARD REPORT

D. PERSONNEL

E. EXTENDED FIELD TRIP REQUEST: BOYS BASKETBALL

F. EXTENDED FIELD TRIP REQUEST: DANCE TEAM

G. RETENTION OF VENDOR

PARTNERED RESPONSE TO

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

VII. DONATIONS

A motion passed to approve the donations.

VIII. AUDIT PRESENTATION

A motion passed to approve the audit as presented.

IX. FINANCIAL REPORT

A motion passed to approve the financial report as presented.

X. COMPREHENSIVE ACHIEVEMENT AND CIVIC READINESS ANNUAL REPORT

Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Minda Anderson, presented the annual report.

XI. APPROVE SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT

A motion passed to approve the contract as presented.

XII. APPROVE DATE FOR 2026

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

A motion passed to approve Wednesday, January 7, 2026 for the Organizational Meeting at 6:30 PM in the Middle School Student Center followed by a work session.

XIII. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE/

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

XIV. SCHOOL BOARD STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

XV. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

XVI. ANNOUNCE AND APPROVE CLOSED SESSION FOR SUPERINTENDENT

EVALUATION/GOAL SETTING AFTER

ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING

A motion passed to enter a closed session after adjournment.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Reasoner adjourned the meeting at 7:38 PM.

(Published in the *Patriot* 11/29/25.)

SECOND NOTICE

Prairie Lake in Clear Lake Township has an aeration device causing open water until ice is out.

Areas affected are marked as of DNR requirements.

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/29/25).

Larry L. Voigt, 89, Clear Lake, MN August 3, 1936 - November 21, 2025

Larry L. Voigt, age 89, of Clear Lake, formerly of Annandale, died Friday, November 21, 2025, at his home surrounded by the love and care of his family.

Mass of Christian Burial will be held 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at St. Ignatius Catholic Church, Annandale. Visitation will be held from 4:00-7:00 p.m. on Monday at Dingmann Funeral Care Chapel, Annandale with a Prayer Service at 6:30 p.m. Additional visitation will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday at the church. Burial will be held at the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery near Little Falls.

Larry Lee Voigt was born on August 3, 1936, in Jordan, Minnesota, the youngest of three boys to Howard and Lucille (Zaun) Voigt. He graduated from Jordan High School in 1954 and began his journey in the workforce at the creamery at the age of 15.

After graduating, Larry enlisted in the United States Army in June of 1956, serving until his honorable discharge. Upon returning home, he resumed his career at the creamery. He would meet the love of his life, Marlene Huss, on a blind date at a Christmas party. They were united in marriage on May 21, 1960, in New Prague at St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church, embarking on a lifelong journey filled with love.

Larry and Marlene established their family in south Minneapolis, where Larry's work eventually led him to Bridgeman's Ice Cream and Emrich Baking Company. Larry later began working at Walker Methodist Nursing Home, transitioning from the kitchen to the laundry department and ultimately the maintenance department, showcasing his remarkable ability to fix and improve anything he en-

countered.

In 1998, Larry and Marlene retired to Annandale, embracing a new chapter of life.

As a family they created lasting memories through camping trips and outdoor adventures. His love of the outdoors naturally drew him to pastimes like fishing and squirrel hunting. Known for his playful spirit, Larry was a natural

jokester who never met a stranger. His love for Christmas shone brightly in his heart. He was a handyman with an innate talent for fixing anything, always ready to lend a helping hand. His loyal companions, beloved dogs Sparkey, Peppy, Major, Max, and Kitty, brought him joy throughout his life. While he reflected on his years, Larry often expressed, "I wouldn't change a thing about it," a testament to his contentment and gratitude for the life he lived. Above all, his family stands as his greatest legacy.

He leaves behind his wife of 65 years, Marlene of Clear Lake; children, Bryan (Bonnie) Voigt of Litchfield, Sandra (Tim) Ryan of North Branch, David (Denise) Voigt of Big Lake, Karen (Mark) Rinehart of Clear Lake, Linda (Brian) Sudman of Deerwood, Kathleen (William) Dolezal of Waverly, Sarah (Todd) Eigenheer of Maple Lake, and Jessica (Justin) Goff of Annandale; 18 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; and other family members and friends. Larry was preceded in death by his parents; granddaughter, Jennifer Voigt; and brothers, LeRoy and Vernon.

Arrangements entrusted to Dingmann Funeral Care Burial and Cremation Services of Annandale.

Obituary, Guestbook, Video Tribute, and Funeral Webcast online at www.dingmannfuneral.com.

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Lorraine J. Bluhm, 91 Annandale, MN September 17, 1934 – November 19, 2025

Funeral Services were held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, November 26, 2025 at Rejoice Lutheran Church in Clearwater for Lorraine J. Bluhm, age 91 of Annandale, who passed away on Wednesday, November 19, 2025 at Parkview Care Center in Buffalo. Pastor Carol Olson officiated. Burial will take place at the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery in Little Falls.

Visitation took place from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday at the Daniel Funeral Home in Clearwater and one hour prior to services on Wednesday at the Church.

Lorraine was born on September 17, 1934 in Willmar, Minnesota to Melvin and Katie (Ruter) Johnson. She married Robert Bluhm on July 19, 1952, in California. They lived in Mounds View until 1975. She worked for Fridley State Bank as the Secretary to the President. They then moved to Annandale where Robert built

Lorraine's Dream Home. Lorraine was a charter member of Rejoice Lutheran Church in Clearwater.

She enjoyed crocheting, crossword puzzles, reading, watching the wildlife outside her window, traveling, trips to the casino. Lorraine especially loved the time spent with her family.

She is survived by her children, Gregory (Cindy Ann) of Clearwater, Cindy (Lyle) Landowski of Buffalo, Cathy Carlson of St. Peter; grandchildren: Adam and Alicia (AJ), Joseph (Bridget) and Jessica (Marvin), Donald (Amanda) and Deanna (Matthew); great-grandchildren, Olivia, Kylee, Kennedy, Julius, Liam, Charley, William, Maddy, Blake, Alana, Lila, Josie, Clara; and many niece, nephews, and extended family.

Lorraine was preceded in death by her parents; husband in 2014; siblings, Merlin, Sharon, Arlene.



David "Dave" Gronert, 80 Becker, MN March 13, 1945 - November 21, 2025

David "Dave" Gronert, age 80 of Becker, MN, passed away peacefully with his family by his side on November 21, 2025, at the St. Cloud Hospital.

Funeral Services were held on Saturday, November 29, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at Glendorado Lutheran Church, 1100 186th Avenue NE, Princeton with visitation at 10:00

a.m. Pastor Barbara Peterson officiated. Burial will be at the Glendorado Lutheran Cemetery. A luncheon followed.

Dave was born to Raymond and Adeline (Myhre) Gronert on March 13, 1945, in St. Paul. He attended Murray High School and graduated in 1963. Dave served in the U.S. Navy from May 1967 – February 1971, serving four years of active duty and two years reserve. Dave worked all his life doing many different things. His last job before he retired was as a maintenance engineer and boiler operator at Plym-

outh Foam. He worked there for 17 years and that is where he met his wife, Sheila. They were married in Las Vegas on

October 8, 1999. Dave enjoyed traveling, camping, fishing, and anything outdoors. He enjoyed working with his hands. Dave especially liked vintage cars. He loved his family most of all.

Dave is survived by his wife, Sheila, of 26 years; children, Tracy (Eric) Botten of New Brighton and David (Theresa) Gronert of St. Paul; stepchildren, Jacob Zindler of Boyceville, WI and Angela (Tom) Hart of Foreston; eight grandchildren; and brother, Doug (Marilyn) Gronert of Fridley. Dave was preceded in death by his parents; and his sisters, Sandy Bacher and Linda Bradley.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Williams Dingmann Family Funeral Home in Princeton.



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Brown Heaping Honors in Football

By Bill Morgan, Editor



BECKER SENIOR SAW-YER BROWN, is heaping numerous awards and honors following the 2025 season. (Patriot Archive Photo).

Becker football player and senior captain, Sawyer Brown, has been honored with a number of state awards since the conclusion of the high school football season a couple of weeks ago.

The awards go as follows:

- All State Academic Team – this award was presented at the Prep Bowl;
- All State Football Team – this game will be played on December 13;
- Vikings All State Team – this award will be presented at the Vikings game on December 7.

“We are so proud of Sawyer,” said Head Coach Dwight Lundeen. “He is a four-year letter winner in football. He has had an amazing career and is a positive role model in our schools. It has been a real privilege for me to coach Sawyer Brown.”

Becker girls dominate opener

By Mark Kolbinger, Contributing Writer

The Becker Bulldog girls basketball team opened the 2025-26 campaign last Saturday with a 72-38 win over Jordan in the Breakdown Tip Off Classic.

The Panthers were a very respectable 20-9 a season ago and boast a pair of Division 1 players in Morgan and Jordan Staloch, thus Coach Dan Baird and the squad were expecting a difficult contest.

“However they (Jordan) really struggled with our press and in your face man defense,” Baird said. “Our quickness basically won out over their size. They were taller at every position and we were faster.”

The Bulldogs went into the game with a plan to compete on the boards, and to win the turnover battle (Becker

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committed just 11 to the Panthers' 24).

“As a coach, I’m super excited about this because the girls practiced so hard the last 10 days and were really hungry!” Baird said. “I loved to see the hard work pay off, which really sets us up well going into our really tough December schedule.”

The Bulldogs received a very balanced attack, with Andie Changamire scoring 23 points, and adding five rebounds, and six assists. She shot nine-for-13 from the field and three-for-four from the three-point line.

“Andie played amazing defense on Jordan Staloch, holding her to two points and frustrating her along the way,” Baird noted.

Adele Changamire had 22 points, four rebounds, five assists and five steals.

“Adele’s energy and

north/south attacking style of basketball really kept Jordan on their heels the entire game,” Baird said.

Other notable performances included Juliana Stach going three-for-three from the three-point line (nine points) and securing eight rebounds, while Alyse Denne scored seven points, and had three steals and zero turnovers. Rowan Hausmann chipped in five points, while Ella Tschida added four and Tess Brown two.

“Alyse’s energy really sparked us and her efficiency rating of 3.17 VPS in 29 minutes led the team,” Baird said. “Overall, we as coaches were super happy with how our players understood their roles and played team basketball!”

Check out next week’s Patriot for the annual winter sports preview.

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Hornet swimmers master sections

By Bill Morgan, Editor

The Big Lake swim and dive team recently participated in the Section 5A tournament and it was a fantastic meet where everyone on the squad achieved PB's, and some even lowered their personal best time from prelims.

Section Results
200 Medley Relay - 7th place. Team consisted of Emma Wood, Emmelia Kortenkamp, Charlotte Overby and Adelyn Fox, who all received medals;

200 FR - Piper Fridgen finished 10th while Madelyne Fridgen - finished 14th;

200 IM - Maia Wenderski took 15th place while Emmelia Kortenkamp finished 16th;

50 FR - Emily Edlund captured fifth (new PB) while Abigail Fridgen took ninth (new PB) and Adelyn Fox finished 16th;

Diving - Kayleigh Pregler took 15th place;

100 FL - Emily Edlund took fifth (new PB) while Abigail Fridgen took sixth (new PB) and Char-



THE BIG LAKE SWIM/DIVE TEAM posed for a fun photo recently as they continued to perform well even after the regular season ended. (Submitted Photo).

lotte Overby took 11th;
100 FR - Adelyn Fox finished in 16th place;

500 FR - Piper Fridgen took 13th place while Madelyne Fridgen captured 14th place;

200 FR Relay - 6th place finish with the team consisting of: Emily Edlund, Piper Fridgen, Adelyn Fox and Abigail Fridgen, who all medaled;

100 BK - Emma Wood took 11th;

100 BR - Kyla Wenderski finished in 11th place while Emmelia

Kortenkamp took 14th and Maia Wenderski took 15th;
400 FR Relay - 5th place finish with the swimmers being: Emily Edlund, Madelyne Fridgen, Piper Fridgen and Abigail Fridgen, all receiving medals.

The team's year-end celebration will be December 18 at Rockwoods Event Center at 6 p.m. At the event, the coaches will be handing out year-end awards and announcing next year's captains for the 2026 season.

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE FOR THE PATRIOT'S READER'S CHOICE AWARDS CANDIDATES!

