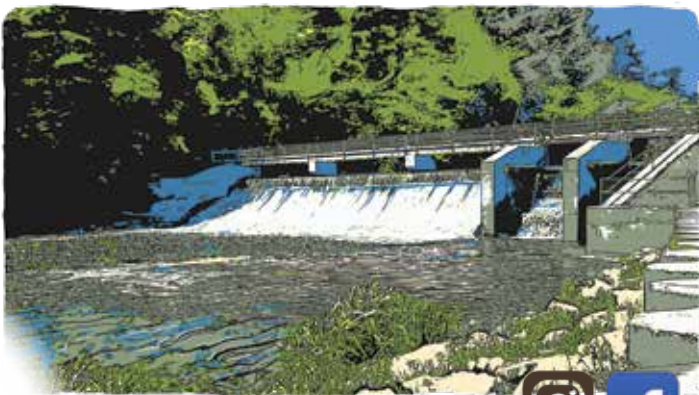


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Hay River

REVIEW

September 2026



Good Root growers finds success with ginger harvest. Photos submitted by Sue Gerlach



Prairie Farm

Ginger Fest Celebrates Wisconsin-Grown Ginger

By DM MICK

Good Root Growers in Prairie Farm will host its 1st Annual Ginger Fest on Saturday, September 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event is open to the public with no admission fee and celebrates something many people may not realize can be grown right here in Wisconsin—beautiful, fresh ginger.

Visitors will have an opportunity to tour the greenhouse and see firsthand how ginger is grown and harvested, while discovering the remarkable difference between freshly harvested ginger and the more familiar cured ginger found in grocery stores.

The day will also feature live music, a curated collection of local vendors, demonstrations, samples, specialty foods, refreshing drinks, and ginger-inspired treats. Freshly harvested Good Root Growers ginger and other greenhouse-grown produce will be available for purchase.

Guests are encouraged to bring a picnic blanket, enjoy the music, and explore the walking trails throughout the 30-acre farm.

Whether you're already a ginger enthusiast or simply curious about how this tropical-looking plant is grown in northern Wisconsin, Ginger Fest is designed to

offer plenty to learn, taste, and discover.

Last year, the Hay River Review published a story about a grant received to make this ginger endeavor possible...

Ginger Gets A Green Light

By Brianne McLennan

Sue Gerlach and Allen Freiermuth, the dedicated owners of Good Root Growers, are ready to dig deep and gingerly expand their greenhouse in Prairie Farm, Wisconsin. Thanks to a generous grant from the Menomonie Market Food

“Ginger” cont'd. on page 2...

Prairie Farm

The New Flex

By Brianne McLennan

Prairie Farm's longtime grocery store on River Avenue will soon have a new purpose, becoming the home of Hay River Strength Gym, a new 24/7 fitness facility owned and operated by Alicia Bruder. While there is much buzz and excitement over the new facility, the gym is expected to open its doors on Valentine's Day 2027.

Bruder is giving the former grocery store a complete renovation, transforming the space into a bright, clean, boutique-style gym designed for both men and women.

The extensive renovation will include new windows, doors, and siding, along with new flooring, lighting, paint, plumbing, electrical, and HVAC systems. The building will also feature a new main-level bathroom and water fountain.

Inside, members will find modern weight-lifting equipment with an emphasis on progressive overload and strength training, giving members the tools to build muscle and improve their fitness. The facility will also offer tanning and a variety of group fitness classes.

Planned classes include Dance Sculpt, HIIT, mobility and small-group strength training, with additional offerings expected as the gym develops. Bruder hopes to eventually offer classes seven days a week, with multiple class times each day.

Hay River Strength Gym will offer 24/7 access, with memberships managed through an app and members using a key fob to enter the facility. Membership pricing has not yet been finalized.

Bruder is also looking for fitness instructors to help build the gym's class schedule. Certified instructors are welcome, but she is also interested in connecting with people who may not



The home of Hay River Strength Gym, a new 24/7 fitness facility owned and operated by Alicia Bruder. Photo by DM MICK

have formal certification but are simply passionate about fitness and would enjoy leading a class. The goal is to eventually provide fitness classes throughout the week at a variety of times.

While much work remains before opening day, the

transformation of the familiar building is already underway. By February 2027, the former grocery store will have a whole new look — and a new role in the Prairie Farm community as the home of Hay River Strength Gym.

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...“Ginger” cont’d. from front

Co-op’s Fund Our Foodshed Grant program, ginger beds will soon flourish at their organic farm. As one of four local businesses awarded funding this year, Good Root Growers is poised to increase production of high-quality, heirloom, organic produce, thereby strengthening the local foodshed and delighting customers with sustainable offerings.

The Menomonie Market Food Co-op (MMFC) announced the grant recipients, highlighting the program’s role in nurturing regional agriculture.

“Funded through customer contributions at the registers and additional support from the co-op itself, this initiative aligns with the co-op’s mission of fostering a healthy foodshed by empowering regional farmers and food producers,” MMFC stated. “This year, MMFC is proud to distribute \$19,000 in grants. The Fund Our Foodshed Grant Program not only revitalizes our rural community but also provides critical support to local farming operations. By investing in projects that strengthen operational infrastructure and increase food production, MMFC reinforces the essential role small farms and producers play in sustaining rural economies, preserving valuable ecosystems, and creating new business opportunities.”

For Good Root Growers, this grant is a transformative boost in an industry where resources are often scarce.

Sue and Allen share that they are thrilled to bring their vision to life. Sue has long dreamed of growing ginger, a crop prized for its bold flavor and finicky nature. The grant will fund new ginger beds — 4 feet by 48 feet and 4 feet by 3 feet — and a

state-of-the-art drip irrigation system, optimizing their greenhouse for this spicy root. They emphasize that the automated watering system will be a game-changer, delivering precise irrigation to ensure vibrant, organic produce thrives through Wisconsin’s unpredictable seasons while minimizing water waste.

Ginger’s appeal extends beyond its zesty taste, offering health benefits that make it a valuable addition to Good Root Growers’ crops. Known for its anti-inflammatory properties, ginger aids digestion, soothes upset stomachs, and provides antioxidants that may boost immunity.

For Prairie Farm residents, fresh, locally grown ginger from Good Root Growers offers a natural remedy for colds and a flavorful way to support wellness. By cultivating ginger locally, Good Root Growers will provide a sustainable and fresher alternative to imported roots, thereby

reducing environmental impact.

Good Root Growers has deep ties to the Menomonie Market Food Co-op community. For more than a decade, Sue and Allen have been active members, supporting the co-op and selling their meticulously grown heirloom vegetables at its market. Their produce is highly sought after by local shoppers who prioritize organic, locally sourced food. The couple’s commitment to sustainable farming practices aligns closely with the co-op’s mission, making them ideal recipients of the grant. They share that being part of the co-op feels like a partnership with their neighbors, and this grant reinforces that sense of community support.

The addition of ginger beds represents a step toward diversifying their offerings and meeting growing demand for unique, health-focused produce. The new beds and irrigation system will also enhance the farm’s overall efficiency, allowing Sue and Allen to focus on nurturing

the land and providing healthy options to feed their community.

In Prairie Farm, where agriculture is the backbone of the economy, the grant’s impact reaches beyond Good Root Growers. By supporting small farms, MMFC’s Fund Our Foodshed program helps strengthen the region’s rural heritage and builds resilience against the challenges posed by industrial agriculture. As Sue and Allen prepare to establish their ginger beds, they’re cultivating a healthier, more connected community.

Sue and Allen warmly invite you to visit Good Root

Growers’ greenhouse to explore their vibrant selection of organic vegetables, herbs, and flowers, starting May 2, 2025. Extend your stay at their beautifully restored 1894 Norwegian cabin, available through Airbnb, or choose one of five unique campsites nestled among rolling hills and a pollinator habitat. These sites offer stunning views of the Hay River landscape, with trails winding through prairies and woods. Whether picking up fresh produce or savoring Prairie Farm’s serenity, Good Root Growers offers a refreshing taste of rural Wisconsin.



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Ridgeland Mural Dedication

By Donnette Mickelson

What follows is the dedication shared on June 30th in honor of the new mural in Ridgeland— painted by the Walldogs and celebrating the history of the Ridgeland Fair:

“Good evening, everyone, and welcome to this special dedication of the historic mural created by the Walldogs for the Ridgeland Fair. Today we celebrate more than paint on a wall — we celebrate the people, stories, and traditions that built this community and continue to shape it today.

For generations, the Ridgeland Fair has been a gathering place where neighbors reconnect, families make memories, and hard work is proudly displayed. The fair has long reflected the heart of rural Wisconsin and the spirit of this community.

The fair began in 1924 when Louis Handorf made a motion that a fair should be held in Ridgeland. Since then, the fair has continued every year, except in 1946, when a polio epidemic swept

the area, causing the fair to be canceled. In the early years, the fair was a one-day event, with exhibits of crops, flowers, and crafts, as well as food stands in the park, and of course, a parade. The first Ridgeland fair featured a horseshoe pitching contest, a tug of war between Barron and Dunn County men, a ladies’ nail driving contest, foot races for children and adults, and an afternoon baseball game. Through the years, the fair has held other events like a rodeo, dairy cattle judging, go-kart racing, horse pulling, and of course, the demolition derby and tractor pull. The modern-day Fair continues to provide fun for all and has now become a four-day affair, with a demolition derby on Friday night, a street dance on Saturday night, the big tractor pull on Sunday night, and winding up on Monday with a morning horse pull and the afternoon grand parade.

After over one hundred years, the Ridgeland Fair continues to be an event the whole family can enjoy and is truly a place where old friends meet.

This mural captures those memories and preserves them for future generations. It honors the farmers who worked the land, the families who volunteered countless hours, and the community members who kept traditions alive year after year.

Ole Jorstad and his wife Bertina, along with business partner A. Pomgratz, were running the Ridgeland Supply Company Store when Ridgeland started in 1900. After a fire destroyed much of Ridgeland’s business district along South Diamond Street in 1905, the brick building still standing here today was built. It operated as a store for over 100 years. Even my mother-in-law, Jeanette, worked at the store in the 1960’s and 70’s. The store continued to operate well into the 2000s as Jorstads Store, at which time Larry Jess, Corey Mickelson, and the late Brian Wirth purchased the building and made much-needed repairs and updates. Thank you to these community members who were so willing to have this mural placed on the building and for their value to the community and understanding why it is important to continue improving our community.

Art has a unique way of telling stories when words alone cannot. Every image, every detail, and every brushstroke in this mural reminds us

where we came from and why our shared history matters. It is a tribute to resilience, community pride, and the simple moments that become lifelong memories.

A project like this does not happen without dedication and teamwork. We extend sincere thanks to the artists, organizers, volunteers, donors, and community members who helped bring this vision to life. Your efforts have created something that will inspire pride and conversation for years to come. I encourage everyone to add your name and a few thoughts to our library time capsule, which is by the food stand, to remember this moment in time.

As we admire this mural and celebrate the history it represents, we must also remember that the future of Ridgeland depends on all of us. The traditions, events, and community spirit that make this town special do not happen on their own. They happen because people step forward to volunteer, share their talents, and give their time. Whether it’s helping with community events, serving on local committees, supporting the fair, or lending a hand when needed, every volunteer makes a difference. We invite everyone here tonight to become part of Ridgeland’s next chapter. Together, we can preserve our history, strengthen our community, and ensure that Ridgeland continues to thrive for generations to come. As we dedicate this mural today, may it serve as a reminder that history is not only found in books — it lives in our communities, our traditions, and the people gathered here tonight.

May this mural continue to honor the past, celebrate the present, and inspire future generations to cherish the legacy of the Ridgeland Fair. Thank you. Let’s enjoy this special celebration together, and let’s continue building a community we are proud to call home- a place where old friends meet.”

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Ridgeland Dallas Elementary

By Mackenzie Anderson

Summer school at Ridgeland-Dallas Elementary was filled with adventure, hands-on learning, and opportunities to explore the wonderful community that surrounds our school. Throughout the summer, students discovered that learning does not always have to happen inside four walls. Field trips, community visits, special activities, and the generosity of local organizations created meaningful experiences and memories for our students.

One of our first adventures took us to Coates Corner, where Ashlee welcomed students for a personal pizza-making experience. Students created their own pizzas and enjoyed the delicious

Summer School Adventures– Learning Beyond the Classroom

results. We are grateful to Ashlee for opening her doors and providing such a fun experience.

Students also became junior scientists and chefs during Homemade Ice Cream Day. Working together, they made vanilla ice cream in a bag, practicing following directions and making observations while enjoying plenty of smiles and an arm workout from all that shaking!

At the Ridgeland Public Library, Mrs. Donette Mickelson gave students a tour and introduced them to the many resources available, including books, DVDs, activity kits, crafts, and VOX Books. Students received goodie bags, learned about library cards, and enjoyed a

special visit that encouraged a love of reading.

Students explored another local treasure at the Enchanted Barn, where Lorin shared the history of the barn and its transformation into the beautiful space it is today. Students explored the loft, garden path, concert area, and brick pizza oven, met Highlander cows and baby bunnies, and enjoyed pizza from the brick oven. Retired Barron educator Miss Karen also joined the adventure.

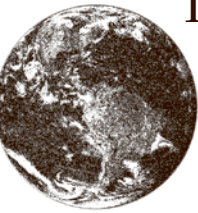
A visit to the bank gave students a behind-the-scenes look at the vault, money sorter, and drive-thru. Miss Kristin and Miss Jamie shared how the bank operates and sent students home with fun items, including a 50-cent

...“Learning” cont’d. on page 10



Students enjoyed some great weather and great experiences to end the summer months! Photos by Mackenzie Anderson

SUSTAINABLY YOU HOW TO THRIVE



By DKO Pike

2026.08.07 8:00 am Tower, MN. 63 out as a gentle, welcome thunderstorm passes over.

Writing this, I am reflecting on a long-time friend. We’re on a family retreat celebrating a major birthday. Delayed by complications in gathering eight busy lives.

This region (close to the Canadian border, north of Duluth) has experienced severe drought this growing season. Earlier erratic weather led to an explosion of damage from native spruce budworms. That dead, standing timber makes perfect tinder for a lightning strike to fire up major trouble. Especially when that spark is followed by strong winds. This frightening combination forced thousands of campers to evacuate from the nearby canoe area wilderness a few weeks ago. Some had to leave gear behind as planes landed, flying to safety those unfortunate visitors who had spent a terrifying night in the

In this time of transition, we face multiple challenges from viruses, climate crisis, and political turmoil. Douglas has decades of experience helping homeowners and land managers move toward practices that help us survive with the least impact on future generations. He is a resident of Otter Creek Township in NW Dunn County.

A Pillar of Our Shared Community

middle of a lake to avoid the flames. One of the canoes left behind melted down. Others were filled with water, intentionally sunk, to be brought back up unharmed after the flames had passed.

Cabins enjoyed for generations, now reduced to ash. Our trip might have to be postponed to another year. Even our air in Dunn County suffered as winds blew health-compromising smoke toward us, and further east, all the way to my daughter’s family in New York City.

Despite all that disruption, we enjoyed a delightful few days sharing meals, games, and playing in the refreshing water of Pike River Flowage just above Lake Vermillion. The house was perfect.

Imagine our joy gathering, sharing stories of long ago, learning each other’s latest life challenges and opportunities, all while making delicious food. Yet, that goodness was tempered by feelings for my friend who is in hospice care. He turned

95 a few weeks ago.

We met at a conference of landscape professionals in January of 1992. A keynote speaker, Cole Burrell, was a landscape designer I admired. He was such a strong leader I hesitated to question his wisdom. Don, not burdened with my reservations, kept peppering him with the right questions. Since he was seated in the row behind me, I reached over my seat to introduce myself as Cole concluded his presentation.

Cash and Roberts had recently come together as a landscape design team. Joni Cash and Don Roberts brimmed with sparks of energy and enthusiasm. I soon invited them over for a personal slide show demonstrating my principles. Our two companies were both focused on landscaping with native diversity, seeking more resilient, sustainable living environments. Perhaps a mistake? Was I giving away secrets and training our competition? Instead, I

sensed an opportunity for collaboration beyond friends with similar ideals.

Over the next several decades, my ideal came to be realized in a number of forms. Yes, we became fast friends, living just a few blocks apart, celebrating holidays and accomplishments. We shared jobs. I asked them to step in when they had the horsepower to fill gaps in my own staff or expertise. For a while we shared an outdoor storage yard and shed outside a small office. This was my first rental as I expanded beyond operating out of our home.

There, Don shared his exacting principles of proper tool care. Keeping them free of soil, sharpened and oiled on a regular basis. That is truly worth the time and effort required. Ever tried to push a shovel into hard ground when the blade is coated with soil from a previous job vs. the ease of slipping a well-oiled, sharp-edged instrument? Don influenced me in countless other ways, helping me run a more successful business.

For many years we took short trips together celebrating anniversaries. Often driving south to small towns along the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi River.

“Pillar” cont’d. on page 5...

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One Love Bread— Tradition, Community, and a Taste of Home

By Betty Glaser

Sometimes the best stories begin with something as simple as a loaf of bread.

For Melinda Vue, owner of One Love Bread, every loaf represents patience, craftsmanship, and a belief that good food has the power to bring people together. That philosophy is what inspired her to relocate her artisan sourdough bakery to Ridgeland, where she hopes her business will become part of the community for years to come.

Originally founded in Deer Park, Wisconsin, One Love Bread found a new home in Ridgeland after Melinda purchased the former Bygd Precision Manufacturing building. She said the decision came down to finding the right fit—a welcoming small town, a building that met the bakery’s electrical needs, and a place where she could continue growing the business.

Her journey into artisan sourdough began in 2023

when she connected with Cal Kalmon, founder of the original One Love Bread. The Kalmon family had built a loyal following for their handcrafted sourdough before closing the business in 2022. Determined to continue that tradition, Melinda purchased the business and spent six months learning every step of the sourdough-making process directly from Cal before relaunching One Love Bread in 2024.

“My family told me I picked the hardest bread to learn,” Melinda said with laughter. She wasn’t exaggerating. Each loaf is made using only three ingredients—100 percent organic flour, water, and salt, but simplicity doesn’t mean easy. Every batch takes three days to complete before it is ready for delivery on the fourth day. “It teaches you patience,” she explained. “You can look at the dough and tell by its consistency whether it’s going to turn out.”

That dedication is shared by her team of six employees, who carefully handcraft every

loaf using traditional baking methods, long fermentation times, and no preservatives. The result is bread known for its rich flavor, hearty texture, and natural ingredients.

While many people picture a small bakery producing a few dozen loaves each day, One Love Bread operates on a much larger scale. The bakery produces approximately 2,000 loaves of artisan sourdough every week, 2,000 soft sourdough pretzels each month, and nearly 5,000 wonton wrappers monthly. Customers can choose from 14 different varieties of sourdough bread, while two delivery drivers keep shelves stocked at food co-ops, grocery stores, farmers markets, and restaurants throughout western Wisconsin.

Melinda chose to specialize in naturally fermented sourdough because she believes it offers health benefits as well as exceptional flavor. The slow fermentation process can make the bread easier to digest, particularly for some people who are sensitive to gluten or wheat. She said one of the greatest rewards is hearing from customers who thought they could no longer enjoy bread. “Many tell us they haven’t

been able to eat bread for years, and now they can,” she said. “That means everything to us.”

When asked which loaf best represents the bakery, Melinda didn’t hesitate. Our Original Alaskan Sourdough is our signature bread,” she said. “It’s our most popular loaf.”

One Love Bread products are already becoming familiar throughout the region. Locally, customers can find them at Balsam Lake Brewery and Market, Dragonfly Gardens in Amery, Klinger’s Farm Market and Sokup’s Market in Chippewa Falls, Luck Natural Foods, Menomonie Market Food Co-op in Menomonie and Eau Claire, and The Coffee Grounds in Eau Claire.

Several area restaurants also feature One Love Bread products on their menus. Cedar Lodge in Ladysmith serves the bakery’s crab rangoons and soft sourdough pretzels. Nick’s La Cabana Restaurant in Spooner offers cream cheese wontons, crab rangoons, and pretzels, while Phat Bob’s in Holcombe also serves the popular appetizers.

Although the bakery continues to grow, Melinda says she’s just getting started.

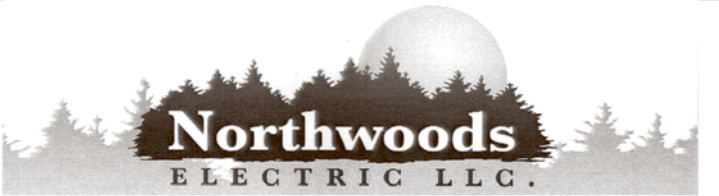
Her future plans include hiring additional employees and opening a small retail area inside the warehouse where customers can purchase fresh bread directly from the bakery.

More than anything, however, she hopes One Love Bread becomes known as a business that values people as much as its products. “Food is a bridge that connects cultures and communities,” Melinda said.

As Ridgeland welcomes one of its newest businesses, Melinda is equally excited to become part of the town she now calls home. She looks forward to learning more about the community, participating in local events, and building lasting relationships with her neighbors.

After chatting with Melinda, it’s easy to see that One Love Bread is about more than flour, water, and salt. It’s about preserving a tradition, serving others with care, and proving that sometimes the simplest ingredients create something truly special.

In every loaf, there is a little patience, a little craftsmanship, and, just as the name promises, a whole lot of love.



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...“Pillar” cont’d. from page 4

Almost thirty years ago, they made a bold move. Starting a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm growing vegetables for people without land, time, or skills to provide their own organically grown produce. Shares sold in winter resulted in boxes with an amazing variety of roots and greens, delivered to the Twin Cities every week during the growing season. After six years, they made a decision to sell. Sadly, they discovered their well had become polluted due to a neighbor’s poor land stewardship and resulting nitrate runoff.

Twenty years ago, they moved a few miles southeast into Otter Creek Township to become an important garlic supplier to the best restaurants in the Twin Cities, including Don’s son Alex’s Restaurant Alma. Meanwhile, I had the opportunity to work at the lake home of a wealthy client on Long Lake. As I frequently traveled from near New Auburn back to Minneapolis, I could take a short detour off Highway 64



Don and author celebrating a birthday, October, 2010.
Photo by Kenneth J. Kroening

to reconnect with Don at the end of my workday.

Then I fell in love. Not love at first sight, but I sensed the realization of a dream held dormant by the demands of raising two daughters. The land surrounding Don and Joni’s Otter Creek farm was so lightly populated that it remains beyond rural (less than 800 residents in 36 square miles). Locals referred to this northwest corner of Dunn County as God’s Country. It can best be described as the middle of nowhere. Large parcels of undeveloped, rolling

hills that escaped the last glacial advance. It is a rough topography, too steep for row crops. Land best suited for hunting and logging.

Fortunately, the 80 acres just north of Don and Joni was held by an engineer living in Bloomington. He rarely even visited the property. I negotiated to purchase the land using proceeds from selling our family cabin outside Wisconsin Dells. Then we built a new home. These changes were a big disruption for Don and Joni. Their quiet

“Pillar” cont’d. on page 14...



HOMESTEAD HACKS

By Sam Dodge

I notice the Cricket chorus is filling out these days, and the Monarchs are busy on the milkweed blooms. The Fireflies have tapered off into a very occasional late-night blink. The little summer toads are starting to get their growth. The fallow fields here are glowing goldenrod yellow, interspersed with little wild asters.

By the time you read this, we'll probably have processed or eaten the last ears of sweet corn. Jennifer discovered a neat trick for stabilizing the corn ears while cutting the kernels off the cob- our bundt pan has just the right center hole to jam either end of the ear in while you cut, and the kernels fall right into the pan.

Today I froze beans and corn and cleaned up the now-cured earlier half of the garlic crop. We seem to have a different set-up almost every year for curing. This year we did it 2 ways. I laid a combo ladder down on 2 chairs and arrayed it with various oven racks and wire shelving in the woodshed. That handled about half of the crop. The other half is tied up in twin bundles of ten, one on each end of a rope that I hung over the rafters of one of our picnic shelters. The hanging bundles went up a week later than the racked ones went down, so my thumbs will have a week to desensitize after rubbing off the dirty outer skins of the first harvest.

The onions came in about 10 days later, so they're strewn all over the picnic tables for curing. They'll probably need until September to dry up enough for storage. The red potatoes finished a few days ago, so they're hanging out in dark crates for a couple of weeks before they go in the root cellar. It's been a dry year, and we've done enough soil improvement that we no longer have to wash the clay off the spuds before they start their cure... better if they can just get brushed off, never washed until it's time for cooking.

And tomatoes, and peppers, and cabbage, and carrots,

I'm a mostly self-educated putterer/maker/doer who has a hard time stopping his brain from thinking, his body from moving, and his hands from twisting and fixing bits of this and that into semi-useable gewgaws. Sometimes I get actual ideas, and sometimes I even make actual, useful things.

A Cure for Summer



Our bundt pan has just the right center hole to jam either end of the ear in while you cut, and the kernels fall right into the pan.

and on and on... I have to pull the first batch of sauerkraut out of the cellar to sample it tonight. There's more cabbage ready to get chopped, salted, and packed in fermentation vessels. We love our kraut!

The tree fruit is impatiently waiting its turn for attention too. The crab apples have gone past blushing to show a highly visible, almost angry purple as I look up toward the orchard. Some of the summer apples finished way too quickly this year in the heat and drought... I sure hope the winter apples can hang on for cooler weather. Things are changing, and it's a conundrum how to deal with it. We set this place up when it was USDA Zone 3B, and we're careening toward 5A... a very different paradigm. Food storage becomes trickier and more energy-intensive the warmer we get. And man, my soggy t-shirts do indicate that it's been sweltering!

But for the moment, we are enjoying the fruits of our labor like they are going out of style. So much deliciousness! I don't quite get how people survive year after year without ever being "in relationship" with their sustenance. What a difference individual care and attention makes in the quality of the food, from seed to salad! I hope Y'All at least find a Community Supported Agriculture vendor to get your

goodies from if you can't get around to growing your own. Or maybe you have an Auntie or a Nephew who brings you bounty from the Earth they stir.

Evening's falling, the Monarchs are ascending to their roosts in our pines, the Cricket chorus is groggy but awakening... the air is starting to cool. Time for me to get back out to the garden!



We are enjoying the fruits of our labor like they are going out of style. Photos by Sam Dodge

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All Aboard with the Ridgeland Library Review

By Donnette Mickelson

You might notice that barn quilts have been popping up in our community. After our summer art show, community members who painted barn quilts in the past year now have the opportunity to hang their barn quilts in their forever homes.

We are finalizing the dates and details of our upcoming barn quilt classes and programs beginning in September. Updates will be posted on the Ridgeland website at <https://www.ridgelandwi.com/>, the library Facebook page, and the library and local flyers.

New Books

“North American Odyssey: 12,000 Miles Across the Continent by Kayak”, Canoe and Dogsled” by Amy and Dave Freeman donated in memory of Tim Bever.

Newly married couple Amy and Dave Freeman decide to take their honeymoon as an adventure across North America. They travel from Alaska to Key West by kayak, canoe, and dogsled. It is a three-year adventure as well as a reflection of our use and misuse of the environment. It is a real adventure by these Minnesota authors,

awarded National Geographic Adventurers of the Year.

Book Sale!

We are getting ready for our annual Ridgeland Fair Labor Day weekend book sale. By deselecting books from our collection, we give ourselves room to add new materials for checkout. Be sure to stop by the farmer’s market and check out the sale.

Discover Your Library

We are getting ready to launch our new program available to all ages. Anyone and everyone can participate in our monthly challenges. Pick up the first challenge at our booth during the fair.



After our summer art show, community members who painted barn quilts in the past year now have the opportunity to hang their barn quilts in their forever homes.
Photo by Donnette Mickelson

Reflecting on Feb 5, 1967

By Bud Cadman, DVM

In March 1967, I was one of 64 seniors at Iowa State University’s School of Veterinary Medicine in Ames, Iowa. With less than three months of formal education remaining, we were preparing to enter the working world. I had already accepted a position in a mixed-animal practice in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, while several classmates were still deciding what their futures would hold. Those choices often became the subject of our lunchtime conversations.

One of our classmates, Chuck Howe, had just returned from a trip to northwest Wisconsin where he had purchased a single-person veterinary practice. When I quizzed him about the location of the practice, he

indicated it was in Ridgeland, WI. When I asked where Ridgeland was, and before Chuck could answer, Gary Runyan, the class clown, said “Cadman, Ridgeland is so far north in Wisconsin, way out in the hinterland where there’s mostly Jack pine, Jack rabbits, and still a few Indians roaming around”. Runyon went on, “Whenever somebody has gone to Ridgeland in the past, most of them are never heard of again”. He continued that “Ridgeland wasn’t at the end of the world, but if you went out to the north end of Ridgeland and looked north, you could see the end of the world”.

I did not learn what led to the sale of the veterinary practice until a little more than a year later, when I stopped in Ridgeland to

visit Chuck on my way home from a Canadian fishing trip. He told me that at about 9 a.m. on Sunday, February 5, 1967, the usual group of locals gathered at Ridgeland’s Dairyland Café to shake dice for coffee and sweet rolls. After their break, they left to begin the day. Among them were Dr. Dean Ludvigson, the local veterinarian, and Dale O’Flanagan, the Tri-State inseminator. Either man might invite someone from the coffee group to ride along, but although both offered that morning, no riders were available.

It was a cold, windy Sunday morning. About an hour and a half after the gathering at the Dairyland Café ended, the two men met again under tragic circumstances. Dr. Ludvigson and Dale O’Flanagan were driving toward each other, about two miles south of Dallas, through blowing snow and gusty winds. Both vehicles were near the center of the road when they crested a knoll and collided head-on, killing both men instantly.

The members of Ridgeland, a community of about 300 people, were devastated when they received the news of the accident. Both men were very active, involved, and appreciated community-wide. They left a very large void for which their families and the people of Ridgeland had to cope. When I started practicing in Ridgeland, on July 5, 1969, I heard many recollections of the accident and the contributions of both men. Although I never met either individual, I could appreciate how their absence was grieved by so many people.

With Dr. Ludvigson’s death, he left his widow, Thela, with their three children, a now vacant veterinary practice, and a large home that had an enclosed porch at the rear of the house that had been converted to a small clinic and dispensary. Apparently, the decision was soon made to attempt to sell the home and veterinary practice, and then the remaining family would move to Barron, where the children had

been attending school, and Thela was the Barron School nurse. Notices were sent to Midwest veterinary schools announcing that there was a mixed-animal veterinary practice for sale immediately in the small Village of Ridgeland, WI. That notice was read by Chuck Howe, and he decided to come to Ridgeland and check out the situation.

As I recall, Chuck took off from Ames, IA, and headed to Ridgeland on a Thursday after school and returned to Ames the following Monday. When he returned, he was the only member of our class of “almost veterinarians” who owned his own practice. It is my assumption that he most likely dealt with Thela and Ralph Peterson, owners of Ridgeland Bank. Ralph probably recognized that Chuck was a good and genuine person with a farm background who would be willing to work, and that was exactly what the Ridgeland community most certainly needed at that time.

When I came to Ridgeland in 1969, I told Chuck I would work for him for one year and suggested that he keep his ad in the “Veterinarian Wanted” column of the WVMA monthly magazine because I would probably move on. Then I met Janelle Schlough in her father’s dairy barn when she helped me suture an injured heifer—and here I am, still in Ridgeland, married to Janelle for 53-plus years and very content. In hindsight, if I had it to do over, I would not change a thing.



United Lutheran Church

Prairie Farm, WI

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Drive-Thru or Drop-Off
Join us for fellowship
and refreshments!

Fall Bazaar
Wednesday,
September 16th
Dinner begins at 4:30
Free Will Donation
Auction begins at 6:30
Communion Sundays
September 6th &
September 20th

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YouTube Live: United Lutheran Church Prairie Farm
(no longer available to view on Facebook)
Pastor Sara Feld (715) 455-1454
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School District of Prairie Farm

September 2026

Corey Berghammer, Superintendent • John Casey Fossum, Principal

715-455-1861

www.prairiefarm.k12.wi.us

Principal’s Report

Welcome back!!! It has been a busy summer around the district as we finished up projects and held a variety of student activities. Fall activities are well under way and it has been fun having students back in the building. School will officially start on Tuesday, September 1st with all students PreK-12 reporting for class. The school day runs from 8:00-3:20.

The district held its annual Prek-12 open house on Wednesday, August 26th running from 2:00-6:30 pm. This is always an exciting time as we welcome students and families back into the building for the year. Thanks to all the students and families that attended helping to kick off the school year.

The district has hired a number of new staff members that will serve in various roles throughout the district. Below you will find a list of the new hires and their positions.

- HS Language Arts – Erin Stone
- HS Social Studies – Austin Capelle
- Special Education – Ashlie Tweed
- School Year Sub - Kristine Giammattei
- Para – Stacey Humphrey
- Para - Nichole Welle
- Para – Micahlee Skjerly

While students don’t officially start until September 1st, many have returned and the buildings have been busy. High school volleyball, football, golf, and cross country are underway. Many other organizations have begun their yearly activities as well.

Leadership Council held a great evening of orientation for students entering 6th grade. Sessions designed for students and parents helped provide valuable information as they begin to enter the next level of schooling. Thanks to all who attended!

Throughout the summer a lot takes place behind the scenes and I just want to take a moment to thank our custodial staff (Don Larsen, Brett Graunke, Tara Ducommun, Lorie Lien, and Don Roemhild) and our office staff (Torrie Litomsky, Linda Stehling, Michelle Buckley, and Tanya Larsen) for having the building and scheduling ready to go for us when students arrive. This is a huge task and is done very well by these individuals. Thanks!

I am excited to have students and staff back in the building and am looking forward to another great year here in the Prairie Farm District as we enter the 2026-2027 school year.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to stop by the district office, or contact me at fossum@prairiefarm.k12.wi.us or 715-455-1861.

Sincerely,
Casey Fossum
PreK-12 Principal
School District of Prairie Farm
715-455-1861 ext. 258

*Paid for by the Prairie Farm School District.
It is the policy of the School District of Prairie Farm that no person may be discriminated against in any program or activity as required by s.116.13 Wis. Stats.*

From the Superintendent

The 2026-27 school year is here. We are starting to see students coming in and out of the building as they are busy preparing for their fall athletics and activities. We have had new staff orientation and we held our August staff in-service and open house. We have an amazing group of new staff this year. They will be filling various roles here at the Prairie Farm School District. We are very excited for the upcoming school year.

The Prairie Farm School Board adopted their strategic plan in the fall of 2024. This plan contains pillars of success which details various goals the district would like to accomplish. This past August, the school board held a special work session to discuss the Prairie Farm School District Strategic Plan. The Prairie Farm School District Strategic Plan can be found on our website. Also, at the July school board meeting, the board reviewed and revised some of their goals for the upcoming school year. The school board goals for 2026-27 school year are as follows:

Teaching and Learning:

- Regularly review academic achievement data and support programs to meet goals.
- Utilize a statewide cohort to compare academic achievement data.

Business Operations:

- Adopt and review long range financial, facilities, and equipment plans.
- Continue to utilize our regional cohort and analyze pupil expenditures, property tax rates, wages, benefits and enrollment.

Communication and Engagement:

- Send three district newsletters.
- Conduct a follow up staff, family and community survey
- Develop and implement a strategic plan for the Spring 2028 Referendum (communication, budget and engagement).

We appreciate the commitment and dedication of the Prairie Farm School Board. Their commitment towards student success and our staff goes way beyond our monthly meetings.

As always, please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Corey Berghammer
cberghammer@prairiefarm.k12.wi.us
Superintendent
715-455-4219

What’s Happening

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| September 1 | FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL |
| September 7 | Labor Day-No School |
| October 8 | Parent-Teacher Conferences
No School |
| October 9 | No School |
| October 26 | Teacher Inservice-No School |

For the most up to date sporting events,
please visit www.prairiefarm.k12.wi.us



We welcome our new teaching staff for this year. From left to right; Erin Stone, High School ELA Teacher, Ashlie Tweed, Special Education and Austin Capelle, High School Social Studies.

Panther Tractor Project

Students at Prairie Farm High School are completing a mechanical and cosmetic rebuild of a 1975 International Harvester 1066-Blackstripe as part of a hands-on agricultural mechanics project. This project gives students real-world experience in mechanics, problem-solving, and teamwork.

The International Harvester Black Stripe was a powerful and iconic tractor which was produced from late 1975 through 1976. The International Harvester Black Stripe 1066 was produced 1971 through 1976. It featured a 6-cylinder turbocharged diesel engine delivering around 125 horsepower, making it ideal for heavy fieldwork. This specific 1975 International



Harvestor was donated to the Prairie Farm High School in collaboration with Prairie Farm Lions Club.

Raffle tickets are available now! Follow us at tinyurl.com/24mt9nxe



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PRAIRIE FARM
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
August 17th, 2026—6:00 p.m.—IMC
MINUTES

Members Present: Roemhild, Miller, Richards, Bates, Cadman, Nedland, Nelson
Members Absent:

A) Call to order (subject to Section 19.83 Wisconsin Statutes) by President Roemhild at 6:00 p.m.

Mission Statement: The Prairie Farm School District in partnership with family and community provides educational experiences which foster academic excellence, lifelong learning and citizenship.

B) Pledge of Allegiance

C) Adopt Agenda

Motion by Bates to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Nelson. Motion carried.

D) Minutes of July 13th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting

Motion by Nelson to approve the minutes of July 13, 2026, Regular Board Meeting, seconded by Cadman. Motion carried.

E) Reports

1) FCCLA National Trip Presentation

F) Business

1) Public comment residents/parents

2) Policies-Second Reading

First reading

a) 7530.02-Staff and School Officials Use of Personal Communication Devices

b) 7544-Use of Social Media

Second reading

c) 5885-Student School Board

d) 7217-Weapons

Motion by Richards to approve the second reading as presented, seconded by Bates. Motion carried.

Emergency Closing Information

The District will utilize our automated calling system to alert families of school cancellations and delays. If you are not receiving the automated calls, emails, or text messages, please contact the schoool office. We will be also notifying the radio and television outlets.

Middle School Orientation Event

Members of the Prairie Farm Leadership Council hosted the annual 6th grade orientation event for students and parents! The presentations contained information about activities that will be available, procedures for middle school, tech tools, and much more. We appreciate the Leadership Council members and advisors for making this opportunity possible. Also, thanks to the parents and students for attending the event. We are excited to start the year off strong!



- 3) Employee health insurance for 2026-2027
Motion by Nelson to approve the employee health insurance for 2026-2027, seconded by Nedland. Motion carried.
- 4) Annual Seclusion and Restraint report
Motion by Cadman to approve the Annual Seclusion and Restraint report as presented, seconded by Nedland. Motion carried.
- 5) Academic Career Planning for 2026-2027
Motion by Miller to approve the Academic Career Planning for 2026-2027, seconded by Bates. Motion carried.
- 6) Revisions to the PFC Coaches Handbook
Motion by Richards to approve the PFC Coaches Handbook, seconded by Cadman. Motion carried.
- 7) Revisions to the PFC Coaches Year and Service/Longevity document
Motion by Richards to approve the revisions to the PFC Coaches Year and Service/Longevity document, seconded by Bates. Motion carried.
- 8) PFC student-athlete self-transportation permission form
Motion by Cadman to approve the PFC student-athlete self-transportation permission form as presented, seconded by Bates. Motion carried.
- 9) Payroll check deposit in the amount of \$289,059.54
Motion by Bates to approve the payroll check deposit as presented, seconded by Nelson. Motion carried. Roemhild and Nedland abstained.
- 10) Financial report: AP in the amount of \$256,139.77, direct withdrawals in the amount of \$217,969.78 and PCard withdrawals in the amount of \$22,651.17
Motion by Cadman to approve the financial report as presented, seconded by Nelson. Motion carried.
- 11) Committee and other reports, information or comments

a) Superintendent's report
Mr. Berghammer gave an update on the summer projects around the school.

b) Other information
- 12) Future meetings, Monday, September 21, 2026, Regular Board Meeting
- 13) Motion and roll call to go into closed session pursuant to Section 19.85 (1) (c) of the Wisconsin Statutes, to consider the employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of support staff, supervisors and teaching staff employees under which the Board has jurisdiction.
No closed session.
- 14) Roll call and return to open session
- 15) Resignations

a) Brendan Bauer, School Year Substitute, effective July 28th, 2026
Motion by Richards to approve the resignation, seconded by Nedland. Motion carried.
- 16) Contracts

a) Stacy Humphrey, Paraprofessional, for the 2026-2027 school year

b) Nichole Welle, Paraprofessional, for the 2026-2027 school year

c) Micahlee Skjerly, Paraprofessional, for the 2026-2027 school year

d) Ashlie Tweed, Special Education Teacher, for the 2026-2027 school year

e) Ryan Gilbertson, PFC Middle School Football Coach, for the 2026-2027 school year

f) Sidney Berghammer, PFC Assistant Softball Coach, for the 2026-2027 school year

g) Brooke Bates, PFC Assistant Softball Coach, for the 2026-2027 school year

h) Jeff Young Jr., PFC Assistant Baseball Coach, for the 2026-2027 school year

i) Lance Lindolff, Bus Driver, for the 2026-2027 school year

Motion by Cadman to approve the contracts as presented, seconded by Bates Motion carried.
- 17) Volunteers

a) Corey Berghammer, PFC varsity football

b) Beth Schradle, PFC varsity volleyball

c) Grace King, PFC varsity volleyball

Motion by Nelson to approve the volunteers as presented, seconded by Nedland. Motion carried.
- 18) Possible action from items in closed session
- G) Adjournment
Motion by Bates to adjourn at 7:22 p.m., seconded by Nedland. Motion carried.

...“Learning” cont’d. from page 4

piece and a book for our school library.

Summer school was also about giving back. Students decorated some mason jars, created handmade cards, filled the jars with flowers, and delivered them to local businesses and community members as a small thank you for their continued support.

At the Country Petaler, students learned about agriculture and the natural world. Kelly and Jeff shared information about corn, flowers, and farm life, while students visited the animals, enjoyed popsicles, and took

home an ear of corn.

The final weeks brought even more learning. Ms. Stephanie, the “Bug Lady,” introduced students to fascinating insects and reptiles. At Rural Farmstead in Prairie Farm, Ms. Tasha helped students learn about agriculture and the growing process while exploring a sunflower field.

We wrapped up summer school with the Ridgeland Wilson Fire Department. Mr. Matt and Mr. Willy provided an educational presentation and brought the fire truck for a fun water celebration.

We are incredibly grateful to the businesses, organizations, community members, and

Students enjoyed some great weather and great experiences to end the summer months! *Photos by Mackenzie Anderson*

volunteers who welcomed our students this summer. Most importantly, students learned what it means to be part of a community, one that gives generously, shares its knowledge, and invests in its children.

Thank you to everyone who opened your doors, shared your time and talents, provided treats, welcomed our students, or helped make this summer so special. We are fortunate to have such a supportive community behind Ridgeland Dallas Elementary!



Hepburn Street Helps the Community

By Bart Gosnell

Saturday, September 12, The Packer Inn will be hosting our 6th annual Charity Cook-off.

What’s new?

- Baby Back Ribs instead of chicken
- A new trophy! The best fundraising team will still win the Capt Hepburn trophy, but we will have a second trophy for the People’s Choice. When guests get their plates, they will get two tickets. Deposit the ticket in your two favorite teams’ tip buckets.
- More grillers competing
- 3rd party sponsorship of teams
- September instead of October

What’s the same?

- Lids off at 4 p.m.
- In the street between Packer Inn and Allram Lumber
- Grill teams are encouraged to make an accompanying side dish
- Each team is raising funds for a local organization.
- \$15 suggested donation gets you a plate. Please try every griller’s ribs!

When we bought the Packer Inn, we knew that in order to succeed in the community, we had to support the community. Wisconsin taverns have a tremendous history of community support. A place to socialize, grab a bite, cheer on a team, and enjoy some fellowship. We are proud to be part of the fabric of this great community.

We started by having our friends, the Beer Belly BBQ Team, cook a couple of cases of chicken on Dairy Days Sunday. We roasted sweet corn and added some potato salad to round out the meal—a free-will offering. After we recouped the cost of the meal, we donated the profits to that year’s group or organization. Some years were more successful than others, but every year had great food, fun, and fellowship.

Any Wisconsin town festival is a loooong weekend, and Dairy Days is no exception. By the time Sunday afternoon rolled around, most of us were too pooped to pop. We decided to move the Charity Chicken Dinner to a different weekend entirely. PFHS Homecoming seemed like a natural choice. Lots of folks in town for the football game and the dance. Cooler fall temps made standing next to a hot grill not such a chore. We put our heads together with our friends and neighbors at Allram Lumber, and “Hepburn St. Helps the Community” was born.

Every griller was responsible for one case of chicken and the means to cook it—we provided the rest. \$10 suggested offering got folks

all the chicken they could want. Voting was done in the form of tipping. The first (and second year) winner was Jason Shatley, who was cooking (and head coaching) for the PFHS Football team.

We took the cost of the chicken out of the free-will donations and split the remainder with all the grilling teams; a couple hundred extra for each team. There was a great energy all day, and everyone left with full hearts and fuller bellies. We knew we had to do this event again.

This will be our 6th Charity cookoff. We’ve made some adjustments. We’re going to try baby back ribs this year. Cooking an entire case of chicken requires special equipment that not everyone has. We thought if it was only 6 slabs of ribs, we could get more teams, new competitors, and even more fun. Ribs are more expensive than chicken, so we have changed our suggested donation to \$15. We’ve also added 3rd party sponsors. Some talented pit masters can’t make it on September 12, but they still want to contribute.

The spirit of the cook-off has always been community fundraising. The Capt Hepburn Trophy has always gone to the best fundraising team. Grillers are a competitive bunch, though, and want to settle the question of “Who’s got the best food?” Not “Who can raise the most funds?” With the soul of competition in mind, we have added a second trophy. Now, when a guest gets their plate, they also get two tickets. Put a ticket in the tip bucket of your two favorite ribs. Whichever team gets the most votes will be the People’s Choice Best Ribs 2026.

Prairie Farm recently consolidated with Clayton for athletics. This year the homecoming game will be in Clayton on a Saturday. With this in mind, we decided to move the cook-off date. It will be September 12, and since it’s a Prairie Farm event, we’re going to have a PF Alumni bean bag tournament while the ribs are cooking. Two-person teams, with one member being a PFHS alum. Sign up at the Packer Inn!

It’s going to be a great day. Come hungry and leave happy, knowing that you have supported at least 10 local groups.

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Sunday Sept. 20

Serving: 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
(Dine In or Take Out)

12 & Up: \$15
5 - 11: \$8
4 & Under: Free

Harvest Festival

Cabbage Rolls,
Mashed Potatoes and Gravy,
Green Beans, Salad,
Cheese, Buns,
Pie, & Beverage

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FIELD & WOODLAND WANDERINGS

By Martha Wright

“What I Did On My Summer Vacation.” Most of us probably remember having to write that essay upon our return to school in the fall. I had my most essay-worthy summer ever in 2025 thanks to the Wisconsin Master Naturalist program available through the University of Wisconsin Extension office to state residents who are interested in nature. Multiple locations across the state offer participants 40 hours of instruction in various aspects of nature.

Many of the locations, such as the Beaver Creek Reserve

Martha Wright lives in the Hay River area where she spends as much time in the woods as possible. She enjoys long nature walks, looking for new plants to identify, and foraging for wild edibles. Her favorite wild edible is red clover blossoms made into fritters.

Summer Vacation Essay

near Fall Creek, Wisconsin, and the Hunt Hill Nature Center outside Sarona, Wisconsin, have a week-long training session with participants staying on the campus for the duration. I did not have enough vacation days to miss work for a week, but the Carpenter Nature Center in the St. Croix Valley, the closest location to my home, spread their training out over six Saturdays, one each month from March through August.

When I learned about the program in 2024, all the sites were already full, so I checked frequently at the beginning of 2025 and was one of the first to get signed up. In January, I wrote my Saturdays on the calendar at work to make sure I would not be scheduled on any of them. It was still touch-and-go in May when we had

an unexpected inventory count, but thankfully, the count was done early so second shift techs were not needed.

Perhaps that is why the session in May is one of the most memorable to me, because I could have missed it. We met in the morning, in the wind and rain, at the Oak Ridge Waterfowl Production Area near Star Prairie, Wisconsin, for a bird banding demonstration. While we were there, we were also led on a plant walk by an employee of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Following that, we had a soil workshop with a scientist from the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

We ate lunch and spent the afternoon at the Riverwood Nature Center in Star Prairie, a beautiful location along the Apple River. It is housed



On our plant walk, we found several of these earth star fungi.



A Ruby Meadowhawk dragonfly I found after our dragonfly session. Photos by Martha Wright

Ridgeland

Commander Mike Steffe, Al Windsor, Dick Micheels, Arnie Thompson, Vern Gilbertson, David Waldenberger, and Ray Glaser admire the new sign made by David Kistner.
Photo submitted by Betty Glaser

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in the old Utgaard Hatchery where I used to buy my chicks years ago. On a tour of the grounds, we were treated to a short workshop about the turtle nest protector built to keep predators like birds and raccoons from scavenging the turtle eggs. We also learned that they had a thrift shop which helped to fund the nature center.

Another memorable session happened in July when we met at Kinnickinnic State Park south of Hudson, Wisconsin. First we participated in a river seining event and learned about microfish like darters, shiners, and sculpins. A DNR educator from Minnesota talked about mussels in the St. Croix River. Her enthusiasm for her topic was remarkable, as a fellow student mentioned later, “I keep thinking about mussels because she was so excited about them.”

We listened to a forester talk about native plant communities and invasive species. When we went into the woods to look for native plants, we found a rare Rattlesnake Plantain (*Goodyera oblongifolia*), which is one of our northern orchids. After that, we listened to a self-taught expert on dragonflies and damselflies in Wisconsin.

Following the talk, we went down to the river where we found several species of each.

We ended the year with presentations from all of the students about our Training Projects. I made a brochure listing children’s books related to various nature topics. Others had done projects like an endangered plant survey for the DNR, working with a group doing invasive species control, or building nesting boxes for one of the nature centers we had toured. Our final session was a pizza party at the Borner Farm Project, a one-acre vegetable farm in Prescott, Wisconsin, that also bakes pizzas in brick ovens for community gatherings.

We came from all walks of life. An army recruiter, a retired investment banker, a technical writer, an elementary teacher, and more– with a common interest in nature. Several of us said we felt like we had found our people. Now we are part of a large network of volunteers across the state as we continue to attend advanced training and participate in volunteer work each year. It was a summer vacation (albeit spread out over several months) that will keep on giving joy throughout the years ahead.

4-H
GROWS HERE

My name is Ann Lee, and I have served as Dunn County's 4-H Assistant for nearly two years. With a long-standing passion for supporting youth through positive learning experiences, I've worked in community programs including the Dallas Children's Community Garden, local after-school and library programs, and church education.

Dunn
County Fair

By Ann Lee

It hardly needs to be said that there is an immense amount of work that goes into organizing the Dunn County Fair. Equally so, much effort goes into preparing the animals and the projects for fair entries. Even though it might have been a bit daunting, the Dunn 4-H Youths were fully up to the task. Because of the dedication that the leaders, volunteers, and parents have shown, the 4-H Youths were not lacking in knowledge or abilities. Many looked like seasoned professionals as they worked with their animals.

For the last few years, the Dunn County Educator, Zachary Rozmiarek, has brought to the Dunn County Fair the Stuffed Animal Show. The Stuffed Animal Show has been a gentle way to introduce younger children to the fair. They are given opportunities to become accustomed to being in a fair atmosphere and to learn how to show animals without the factors of working with a live animal. The Stuffed Animal Show has been so successful that Rozmiarek has shared the idea with 4-H Educator colleagues from other counties who have gone on to hold Stuffed Animal Shows of their own.

Recently, during a Dunn County 4-H Youth Activities Council trip to the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, eight Dunn County 4-H



Meat Animal Project Members at the Dunn County Fair. Photo by Paula Powers

members had a unique experience rescuing endangered native freshwater mussels. Because of record low water levels and drought conditions, native freshwater mussels are being stranded on the St. Croix River's dry shores and shallow rock pockets. These exposed mussels face severe risks of dehydration and stress due to lack of water or high water temperatures. The 4-H members demonstrated the fourth part of the 4-H pledge, "My hands to larger service," by assisting the park ranger in relocating the mussels into deeper water.

Congratulations go out to the Dunn County Junior and Senior Dairy Judging Team members on their win at the Area Animal Science Days. They are now qualified to go on to the 2026 State 4-H Dairy Judging Contest on August 23rd in Madison at the Alliant



The Dunn County 4-H Dairy Judging Teams. Photo submitted by Ann Lee

Energy Center. The members of the Junior Team are Aubrey McClelland, Abigail Dietsche, Mackenzie McClelland, and Anya Lange. The Senior Team members are Blake Sparrgrove, Kylee Schlough, Cole Quilling, and Tyler Quilling.

If you live in Dunn County and don't want to miss out on 4-H activities like these,

join Dunn County 4-H today! For more information about these events, call Zachary Rozmiarek at 715-232-1636 or visit our Facebook page.

Leaders aren't born. They're grown.

Brody Wantoch as he relocates an endangered freshwater mussel to safety in the waters of the St. Croix River. Photo by Zachary Rozmiarek



Molly Beyrer with Dunn County 4-H Educator Zachary Rozmiarek as she introduces her stuffed horse at the Stuffed Animal Show at the Dunn County Fair. Photo by Jennifer Rozmiarek



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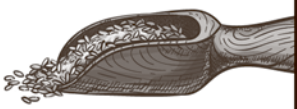
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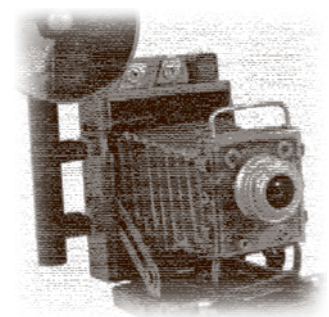
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PHOTOS FROM OUR PAST

If you have an interesting photo from our community's past that you'd like to share, email it to me at lonchristopherson1@gmail.com or stop by the Ridgeland Library Thursdays, 3-5.

By Lon Christopherson

If you ever are looking through old photos of your parents or grandparents and run across some with signage or writing that is backward, it's a good chance that photo was taken at a photo booth sometime in the 1930s through the 1950s. In the early days of the Ridgeland Fair, the Photo Booth was a popular place.

It was a place where you could capture the memories of a great day with a special friend at a time when not everyone had or could afford a camera. The popularity of photo booths began in the late 1930s and grew throughout the 1940s and 50s. In the 1940s, for a quarter at a coin-operated photo booth, you could get a strip of 4 or 8 black-and-white or sepia-toned photos,



Have fun at the Ridgeland Fair, everyone, and take a photo with a friend! Photo submitted by Lon Christopherson

depending on the machine, so there were plenty of images to share with family or friends. The wait time for the chemical process was 5-10 minutes for developing the prints. As you can tell from these Ridgeland Fair Photo Booth photos, the writing on these photos, from the Keep Smiling stickers given out at Alma Bilse's Chiropractic Booth and the Cracker Jacks writing on the bib overalls, is reversed.

That is because vintage analog photo booths produce mirror images because they use a direct-print camera process

to expose the image straight onto the paper. Instead of creating a negative that flips the image orientation a second time, the light hits the paper exactly as the lens sees it, causing text and image orientation to be horizontally flipped. So if you have an old photo with reversed writing on it, it probably came from a photo booth, quite possibly the one at the Ridgeland Fair. Today, photo booths still exist, but more as a novelty, as cell phones today capture people's selfies at special events everywhere, including the Ridgeland Fair.

Prairie Farm Ladies Civic Club

The Prairie Farm Ladies Civic Club had the pleasure of participating in National Night Out, which was held locally at Ridgeland Park on August 4. Over 50 bags were packed with school supplies and handed out to local kids for the upcoming year. There were also a variety of snacks and drinks provided for the evening. All of this was made possible by generous donations from the Prairie Farm Area Lions Club, Thrivent Financial, and the Prairie Farm Ladies Civic Club. All of these volunteers would like to wish the students, teachers, school staff, and families a fun-filled, safe, and successful school year!



COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

September 3	Dallas Library Board Meeting at Dallas Library, 6 p.m.
September 5	Dallas Library Closed
September 5	Ridgeland Area Library Closed
September 5 & 6	Ridgeland Fair Farmers Market at the Community Center Parking Lot hosted by the Ridgeland Civic Club, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
September 7	Ridgeland Fair Farmers Market at the Community Center Parking Lot hosted by the Ridgeland Civic Club, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
September 10	Dallas Library Hosts Wits Work at the Dallas Library, 1 p.m.
September 17	Ridgeland Civic Club meeting at the Ridgeland Area Library, 6 p.m.
September 21	Ridgeland Senior Citizens 500 Card Club with Potluck at Ridgeland Community Center, 12:30 p.m.
September 21	Willard L. Hinzman American Legion and Auxiliary Meeting at Ridgeland Community Center, 6 p.m.
September 24	Ridgeland Area Library Historical Meeting at Ridgeland Area Library, 5:30 p.m.

Put your event on the Community Bulletin Board by contacting Betty Glaser at bls5524@yahoo.com or (715)529-1451.

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...“Pillar” cont’d. from page 5

retreat interrupted by the noise of home construction for months. Yet, also the perfect job for Don’s other son, Aaron, to work with the local crew of builders out of Colfax. He brought a new level of sophistication to the finishing touches, like window trim and how to mount the wooden stairs with no fasteners visible.

One of the reasons I wanted to purchase that land, in addition to the steep topography and some interesting native plants (blue beech and witch hazel to name just two), was to live side-by-side with this couple I’d known for almost twenty years. Don remains

an amazing resource for community contacts. He knew who had the skills to help with tasks I could not accomplish alone. Driving the neighborhood with Don, he told me who lived in most of the homes near ours. Along with details about their family history. He had taken the time to get to know neighbors.

One example of his helpful attitude and willingness to dig in happened before we closed on the land sale. He knew we planned a visit with some family members. He imagined it would be useful if we had a path to show them more than what we might see from our nearest road. Then fired up his tractor, cut through a dividing fence, and proceeded to mow from

our shared property line out into a former melon patch meadow. It was no small effort, as volunteer green ash made it impossible to mow without chopping some of those trees out of the intended path. It worked, and we were grateful.

Don showed me the ropes in a number of other ways. He took me along to more than one dinner party to introduce me to people he had grown close to. My first visit to the Traditional and Green Skills Event at Prairie Farm High School was a result of Don asking me to drive him to a special community event.

He spread my name around, letting others know of my experience as a landscaper focused on sustainability. A conversation between Don and Mame Gale led to me speaking to the Lower Chippewa Invasives Partnership, becoming a board member, and ultimately helping restore Galloway Creek, assisted by Menomonie High School and UW - Stout students.

Don is the type of guy musicians write songs about. His reputation for rarely being seen in public

TOWNSHIP & VILLAGE MEETINGS

Contact Town Clerks for details

Township/Village	Clerk/contact info.
Town of Arland	Pam Fall 715-455-1074 pamela.fall@thrivent.com
Town of Dallas	Karolyn Bartlett 715-837-1039 townshipofdallas@yahoo.com
Town of New Haven	Katie Bovee 715-643-3703 clerk@townofnewhavenwi.com
Town of Prairie Farm	Vicki Buck 715-495-2798 buckdv@chibardun.net
Town of Sand Creek	Pam Meinen 715-205-3511 sctown@chibardun.net
Town of Sheridan	Joe Boesl 715-205-6193 clerkofsheridan@gmail.com
Town of Vance Creek	Kara Norberg 651-491-3067 clerk@tn.vancecreek.wi.gov
Town of Wilson	Denise Schlough 715-949-1938 ddtsschlough@mosaictelcom.net
Village of Dallas	Lynn Anderson 715-837-1186 vdallas@chibardun.net
Village of Prairie Farm	Sherrie Siebert 715-455-1714 clerk@villageofprairiefarm.gov
Village of Ridgeland	Kristin Huset 715-949-2265 bkhuset@chibardun.net

without an orange shirt led to a jazz number written and performed at Mabel Tainter Theatre by Jay Collins.

He and Joni remain committed to helping young people get back into farming through both the Wisconsin Farmers Union and the Land Stewardship Project. That led to ensuring his farm was sold to young people who followed in his footsteps with a new CSA when he could not keep up with chores in his 80’s. Don and Joni moved into

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Menomonie ten years ago. Their farm is now managed by the industrious couple Taya and Seamus Sweet.

Don’s legacy will long persist. Those who have the good fortune to know Don will long remember him. During his long life, he thrived in multiple careers, including: US Navy and then merchant marine sailor during the Korean War, bringing troops both ways, bookstore owner, librarian, taught Library Science, all before starting Cash and Roberts. He continues sharing books and recommendations of titles he has read recently.

His care for others will live on. We are all grateful for the many ways he improved the world and for his grace in the way he is leaving us for whatever comes next.



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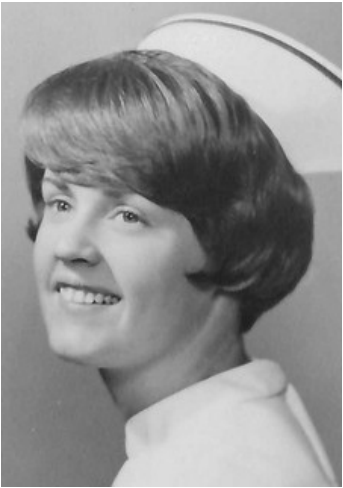
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Karen Rae Karlstad
August 8, 1946 –
August 11, 2026

Karen Rae Karlstad, age 80, of Connorsville, WI, died Tuesday, August 11, 2026, at home due to cancer. Karen was born August 8, 1946, in Black River Falls, WI. She grew up and was educated around Merrilan, WI, graduating from Lincoln High School in Alma Center, WI, in 1964. She then went to college at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, where she attained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing.

She then worked as a registered nurse at the old Mount Sinai Hospital in Minneapolis for 5 years before returning to UW Eau Claire to teach nursing for a year. She then moved to St. Paul, MN, where she worked as a registered nurse at Regions Hospital (then Ramsey County Medical Center), where she continued her career in multiple positions, including in nursing administration for over 30 years. Karen married Dennis Karlstad on May 1, 1982. After marriage, Karen became a member of the West Akers Lutheran Church, where she was organist from the late 1980s to 2026 and where she continued her love of music she learned as a child.



Karen was preceded in death by her parents, Edwin and Marion (Faldt) Holmgreen, and siblings: Mike Holmgreen and Mary Fredrickson. She is survived by her husband, Dennis, and children, Paul and Mari.

A Memorial Service will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 5th, 2026, at West Akers Lutheran Church, E1795 1440th Avenue, Prairie Farm, WI 54762, (651) 808-3368, with Rev. Mark Woeltge officiating and interment following in the church cemetery. Memorial contributions can be made to the West Akers Lutheran Church. Arrangements are with Rausch-Lundeen Funeral Homes, Dallas & Cameron.

PUBLIC NOTICE
United Lutheran Church,
Prairie Farm, WI
Community Food Drive

Coming together through God to support our local food Pantry.

September 13, 2026, 10 a.m. to Noon

Drive-through or drop-off with fellowship & refreshments

All non-expired items welcome.

Most needed items: Napkins, Kleenex, Paper Towels, Toilet Paper, Canned meals, Mac and Cheese, Boxed Dinners. Cash

Donations are always welcome to buy items in bulk.

God’s work. Our hands.

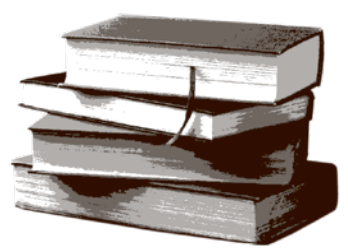


By Barbara Petersen

Summer Reading Activities Party

Our Summer Reading Activities party was on August 29. Library visitors who had been working on a path of stars this summer were eligible for prizes. Each participant—child, teen, or adult—got a sheet of paper with the path on it, and stars were filled in when books were read, visits were made to our library or another library anywhere in the state, or weekly activities were completed. Rewards for checking out materials (including movies and audio material), attending story time, doing paper puzzle pages, coloring contests, recommending materials, playing outdoors with our equipment, and keeping track of reading time allowed them to move along the path of stars and accrue points. Participants could select prizes based on points they earned. The records were tallied before our party. Both adults and children were eligible for prizes.

This summer we had 15 new youth involved in the summer program! We also included adults and had 20 adults participate! One of the prizes is a bicycle, donated by Steve Haas. We thank our supporters of the Dallas Library for helping us have some “super” prizes for our party.



MICKELSON’S BOOK BINGE

By Donnette Mickelson

In 2005, Steven Rinella did something that only 2% of people get the opportunity to do, and only 20% have success in completing this opportunity. He was chosen to receive a hunting tag for the American bison in the state of Alaska. My first thought was “there are bison in Alaska????” Yes, there are approximately 1,000 free-range bison in Alaska.

The Book Report

Dallas Public Library

Bike Rack

We now have a bike rack. For those who bike up to the playground, the library, or to catch the bus, the bike rack is over by the playground. The use of a wooden pallet made a nice place for the bike tires. Gus, our Village Maintenance Person, made a wonderful base for it. We hope this will help keep the bikes safe and no longer lying on the sidewalk.

Public Use Policy

We have a new Public Use Policy that is posted by the patron computer. This covers our rules for using this computer as well as the costs for printing documents. Usage of the computer is free, but there are time limits and other rules to keep in mind. When you come in to use the computer, please read the Public Use Policy.

Book Check Out Change

We have also changed the policy on checking out books. We used to have a three-week limit. It is now changed to two weeks. We are hoping that if you finish a book early, it can get back in circulation sooner. If you need a book for a longer period of time, you can stop in and renew it. You may also call to renew books.

School Supplies

We will finish collecting school supplies the first week in September. Donations will be taken to the Dallas-Ridgeland Elementary School in Ridgeland about the second week in September. We have a box sitting in the hallway for any items you can supply. Think of what your children or grandchildren use—pencils, pens, rulers, crayons, markers, highlighters, tablets, pocket folders, etc. You may drop bagged donations in the drop box if you can not come during our regular hours. Our children will certainly be thankful.

New to Us

Barb and Carl Wehman recently donated a librarian’s story time chair to the Dallas Library. The blue rocker is perfect for our readers to use while reading stories to our younger patrons. If you stop into the Library, check out the new chair in the children’s room.

Thursdays at the U

With the start of September, UW-Eau Claire-Barron County campus will start offering Thursdays at the U. The lectures take place at the Blue Hills Lecture Hall every Thursday for an hour,

“Library” cont’d. on page 16...

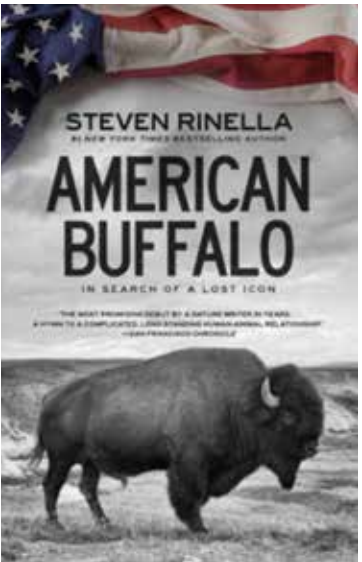
“American Buffalo”

In Search of a Lost Icon

By Steven Rinella

This book is a narrative of his hunting trip as well as a history of the bison, its importance in the ecosystem and the American West. The book is educational and entertaining as Rinella takes the reader along into the Alaskan wilderness on a once-in-a-lifetime hunting adventure as he shares the challenges, excitement, and danger of such a trip.

As the book progresses, he takes us along on the historical decline of the bison and the conservation efforts to bring back the animals. He also examines the controversial topic of culling the managed herds as part of the conservation of the bison and the modern thoughts of ecology and how modern



conservation helps balance healthy ecosystems of this ancient majestic animal. Even if you are not a hunter, Rinella’s book is filled with adventure and history that will give you a new appreciation of the “American Buffalo”.

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Sunday School 9:00 A.M.

Sunday School recesses run until fall

Pastor Roger Quandt

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...**"Library"** cont'd. from page 15

starting at 12:30 p.m. and ending at 1:30 p.m. These free lectures are open to the public and cover a wide range of topics including the arts, sciences, and local culture. Many of the sessions are also live-streamed and archived online. Some of the lectures this semester cover "Imaging Forgotten Holocaust Sites in the Baltic," "Mushroom Health," "Investigating the Paranormal," "Indian Mounds of Wisconsin," among others. We have flyers on Thursdays at the U available at the Dallas Library. If you see a topic that interests you, feel free to attend a lecture.

Wits Works in September

Wits Works (ADRC sponsored program) continues on September 10. The one-hour session on the second Thursday of each month, from 1:00 to 2:00, helps us to activate and improve our Memories. The sessions are free, and you can attend the ones that fit your schedule. This hour becomes a good workout session for your

Some beautiful summer colors outside the library.
A great summer reading program prize!
Photos submitted by Barbara Petersen

brain. We also enjoy a chance to socialize with other people as well as challenge ourselves with puzzles and games. The topic for September is Roamin' in Rome and exercise. Join us on the 10th for some fun with others who are challenging themselves as well as having a good time.

Stay Connected

Library hours
Tuesday and Thursday- 2 to 6 p.m.
Saturday- 9 a.m. to noon.

Like us on Facebook! Dallas Library - WI.

Email: dplibrary2018@gmail.com.

Mailing address: Dallas Public Library, P.O. Box 84, Dallas, WI 54733.

Physical address: 100 Dallas Street W., Dallas, WI.

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