



AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE
Rob Sanvik Agency
651-237-0977
(North Branch / Chisago)
Jeff Pynes Agency
763-689-2028
(Cambridge)

MAKING A SPLASH: Jackets, Vikings compete in rain-soaked state track & field meet. **PAGE 7**



BILL STICKELS III | COUNTY STAR

An honorable retirement

Members of the Polaris Battalion Sea Cadets helped with the flag retirement ceremony held by the Cambridge American Legion on Flag Day.

County Road 5 roundabout comes in under estimates

BY BILL STICKELS III
EDITOR@COUNTYSTAR.COM

Isanti City Engineer Jason Cook's gamble of calling for bids for the County Road 5/East Dual Blvd roundabout project "late" in the year paid off big-time as all six returned bids came in under the engineer's estimate.

Normally, government entities call for road construction bids in late winter or early spring, with bids being awarded so construction can begin during the spring in order to

fully utilize as much of construction season as possible. After talking with a few contractors, Cook predicted the city could receive favorable bids in June, with construction not beginning until late July but still concluding before the first snowfall.

Asphalt Surface Technologies proved to be the low bidder, coming in at \$1,103,947.75. That amount is just over \$400,000 lower than the engineer's estimate.

To make the news even better, that

SEE **ROUNDAABOUT**, PAGE 8

South Main Street reconstruction starts soon

BY BILL STICKELS III
EDITOR@COUNTYSTAR.COM

Despite a delay in awarding a contract-ing bid, the Cambridge South Main Street reconstruction project, which includes adding a roundabout, will still be performed this summer.

According to City Engineer Greg Anderson, preliminary work on the project will hopefully begin before the end of June. He added the portion of the project that di-rectly impacts traffic in the area will most likely begin towards the end of July. Reconstruction will start closest to the High-way 65 intersection and work its way north since that first section, which includes the roundabout at the intersections of

Kwik Trip's entrance/ exit and 40th Ave SW, will most impact traffic.

Besides the round-about, the major compo-nent of the project will be decreasing the number of lanes from two in each direction to one, plus a center left turn only lane. There will also be a walking/biking path con-structed on the western side of the road from 40th Ave SW to 24th Ave SW.

Originally scheduled to be opened and awarded at the beginning of May, the winning bid for the project was just awarded by the Cambridge City Council during its June 16 meeting. Douglas-Kerr Underground LLC, out of Mora, had the lowest bid, at \$6,079,234.41. This amount is nearly \$900,000

under the engineer's estimated cost. Addition-ally, Douglas-Kerr had the lowest bids for two alternate projects, which, at the council's discre-tion, would be completed at the same time as the main project.

Those two alternate bids were for construct-ing Garland Street and a parking lot for the pickleball courts in Heritage Greens, plus the construction of a parking lot off Central Drive for people using the Cam-bridge-Isanti walking/ biking path.

When adding up the three bids, the total cost of the project — \$6,845,727.62, it still comes in under the engi-ner's estimate for only the main project.



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The special of the day

Siena Peterson (top left), Faith Foley (top right) and Lily Koehler (left) react to the crown being put on their head, signifying their selection as 2025 Cambridge Amba-sadors during the Cambridge Ambassador Program held at Cambridge-Isanti High School on Friday, June 13. The three, along with newly crowned Little Ms. Cambridge Remmie Radatz will spend the next year representing the city at various events across the state. The three will also each receive a \$5,000 scholarship at the conclu-sion of their year of service.

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Cambridge approves purchase agreement with New Pathways

BY BILL STICKELS III
EDITOR@COUNTYSTAR.COM

The city of Cambridge has officially agreed to sell a piece of land to New Pathways for one dollar, paving the way for the non-profit organization that provides services to homeless families to construct a nice, new home of its own. Previously, the council tentatively agreed to sell the city-owned land located in the southwest corner of Heritage Greens under the condition the organization acquired enough funding to begin construction in the near future. Recently, New Pathways announced it was three-quarters of the way towards raising the \$3.5 million needed to construct a building that would house twice as many families as it currently does. Plus, the new building would offer a location for those families to stay 24/7, rather than spending nights in various churches and being transported to the organization’s current location on Ashland Street in Cambridge during

the day. A second condition of the purchase agreement is New Pathways would pay for the leveling of the ground in the entire area, plus putting in a larger holding pond. The city will maintain ownership of the land directly to the north and south of New Pathways. The land to the north will be turned into a parking lot for the pickleball courts and Heritage Greens playground. Construction of the parking lot is now included in the South Main Street reconstruction project (see article on page 1). The land to the south will continue to be offered for sale by the city. The purchase agreement with New Pathways, subject to final approval by the city administrator and city attorney, was approved 4-1, with Council member Molly Christian casting the lone nay vote. *Editor’s note: To read the Star’s previous article regarding the tentative purchase agreement, go to: www.isanti-chisagocountystar.com.*

Cambridge Farmers Market to make short move

BY BILL STICKELS III
EDITOR@COUNTYSTAR.COM

The Cambridge Farmers Market will follow in the footsteps of Isanti’s Neighborhood Market by making a short change in locations. However, this move isn’t by choice. According to City Administrator Evan Vogel, the farmers market is being forced out of its current location by the new owners of City Center Market. Not wanting to move too far away from the location where it has been held for many years, organizers of the farmers market asked if the weekly Saturday event could be held in the staff parking lot in front of City Hall. Vogel admitted a request such as this to use the City Hall parking lot has not been made before. Therefore, there is no precedence as far as willingness by the council or fees/conditions that would be imposed. Cambridge Farmers Market Treasurer Anthony Smith said they

currently don’t pay a fee to use the parking lot in front of City Center Market, however, they understand that since they have to move, it might mean they will start being assessed a fee wherever they wind up moving to. He added the new owner wants them to move “as soon as possible.” Currently, the farmers market does use the hallways of City Center Mall for markets during the wintertime. According to Vogel, non-profits are not charged a fee for that, however, a damage deposit is required. After a brief discussion, the council unanimously agreed to start letting the farmers market use the parking lot immediately as long as it can provide proof of insurance. An additional condition is neither vendors nor customers will park blocking the Fire Department’s emergency lane. The council also authorized city staff to draw up a formal contract for both parties to sign.

Planned Unit Development approved for Cambridge Shores

BY BILL STICKELS III
EDITOR@COUNTYSTAR.COM

The housing portion of the Cambridge Shores project, located on the former Munkberg farm property adjacent to Lake Fannie, is one step closer to becoming a reality after the Cambridge Council approved a Planned Unit Development and Conditional Use Permit request from the developer. According to Community and Economic Development Director Marcia Westover, Centra Homes is proposing constructing a total of 311 single-family homes in a mixture of three different styles in its 121.5-acre portion of the property. That number of houses means each property would be smaller than what zoning would normally allow, thus requiring the PUD and CUP. “All the developers want to have smaller parcels,” Westover said. “It’s not just Cam-

bridge that is facing this. It is happening everywhere. The cost to build and infrastructure is too expensive so they’re shrinking the lot size to make them more affordable.” At the same time, Westover acknowledged these proposed lot sizes aren’t that far off from other housing developments in Cambridge. “We have had a history of planned developments with smaller lots,” she said. “We can find them in the Parkwood on the Lakes area, Bridgewater, Heritage Greens, Maple Ridge Townhomes, Joe’s Lake Townhomes, and most recently Cambridge Cove.” She said during the recent public hearing during the Planning Commission meeting, they had a “robust” discussion between the commissioners and residents and non-residents in attendance before ultimately unanimously recommending to approve the

‘All the developers want to have smaller parcels. It’s not just Cambridge that is facing this. It is happening everywhere.’

Marcia Westover
Cambridge Community and Economic Development Director

PUD and CUP. Besides the smaller lot sizes, the biggest area of concern was the increased traffic the housing development and the proposed lakeshore park would bring to the area. “We will have to build something (to handle the increased traffic),” Westover said. “But we are just trying to figure out

the timing of all of that.” She added a street improvement project is planned for a couple of the streets leading into the area in 2027, so that would be the time to address those traffic concerns. Ultimately, the council approved the requested PUD and CUP on a 4-1 vote, with Council member Molly Christian casting the lone nay vote.

CONDUIT BONDING APPROVED FOR APARTMENT COMPLEX

In other housing-related action, the council gave formal approval for the possible issuance of conduit bond financing to Reuter Walton for the construction of a two-building, 180-unit apartment complex just north of the former Perkins Restaurant property. Conduit bonds provide lower interest rates as a city acts as a “middleman” for the loan. The city bears no financial responsibility for the repayment of

the loan. According to Westover, the project is now slated to be constructed in two phases, with each phase having one 90-unit building constructed. The next steps are for Reuter Walton to apply to the Minnesota Management and Budget office for final approval of the conduit bonds. After that is approved, the city must annex the land into the city limits. Finally, Garfield St. North would need to be extended, plus the extension of city utilities. Those would be done at the developer’s expense. Because of that, the developer would also ask for Tax Increment Financing to cover those extra costs. The approval of issuing of conduit bonds was also approved 4-1, with Christian again casting the lone nay vote.

GREEN THUMB - Lawn & Garden Guide

Tips for maintaining healthy shrubs and trees

- Select drought-tolerant shrubs:
 - sumac, alpine currant, buffaloberry, spirea, ninebark, potentilla, smoke bush, gray dogwood, common bearberry, black chokeberry, forsythia, junipers
- Select drought-tolerant trees:
 - amur corktree, ginkgo, hackberry, Kentucky coffeetree, honeylocust, tree lilac, bur oak, American bayberry
- Newly planted shrubs and trees require regular watering until they are established.
- Apply water to the root ball once a week.
- Water established shrubs and trees when the top 6 to 9 inches of soil dry out.

Tips for maintaining a low maintenance lawn

- Set your mower at 2.5 inches or higher to promote deeper roots.
- Water only when it is necessary.
- If watering is required, it is best to water between 4 a.m. and 8 a.m. to reduce water loss due to evaporation or wind.
- Water deeply and infrequently.
 - Depending on soil type and air temperature, lawns need only a quarter inch to one inch of water (minus any rainfall) per week.
 - Sandy soils may need to be watered 2-3 times per week but with less volume each time.
 - Clay soils need to be watered only 1 time per week.
- Install a rain sensor, a soil moisture sensor or a smart irrigation controller as

WATER WISELY: START IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

- part of your automated sprinkling system to reduce over-watering.
- Use drought-tolerant turfgrasses to conserve water.

QUICK TIPS

- Select plants that will thrive in existing soil type, light, and space.
- Collect and use rainwater to water plants.
- Water evergreens until the ground freezes.
- Water in early morning to allow leaves to dry and reduce diseases.
- Mulch plants to conserve moisture.
- Use sensors and smart controllers on automated irrigation systems.
- Water deeply, but less often, to encourage root growth and drought tolerance.

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OUT & ABOUT

MON, WED & FRI Exercise with Connie

At the Chisago County Senior Center 38790 6th Ave., North Branch. From 10:30-11:30 a.m.

MON & WED 500 Cards

At the Chisago County Senior Center 38790 6th Ave., North Branch at 12:45 p.m.

MON & THUR Alcoholics Anonymous

7p.m. Main Street Church 6500 Main Street, North Branch, MN. Enter east door. Informational Hotline is 763-312-1088

MON - FRI Senior Dining

North Branch, Chisago County Senior Center 11:45 a.m. Diners need to pre-register at least one day in advance call 651-674-1956 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. An annual registration form is required before dining.

MONDAYS Bridge

1 to 3 p.m. at the Cambridge SAC, 140 Buchanan St, Cambridge

Women's only Adult Children of Alcoholics and Dysfunctional Families

7 p.m. at Cambridge Lutheran Church , 621 Old Main St N, Cambridge Mn 55008 For info. contact Rebecca at 612-702-2844 or CoraJayne 612-210-1605

Mahjong

Noon to 3 p.m. at Cambridge SAC, 140 Buchanan St, Cambridge

Fresh Beginnings Alanon

Family Groups meets Monday's 7 - 8 p.m. at Access Church, 4359 - 392nd St., North Branch. Visit minnesota-north-al-anon.org

TUES & THURS Boxing for Those w/Parkinson's

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:15 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 115



Bounce Houses int he Park at Cambridge City Park June 26.

Adams Street South, Cambridge. For more information, call 763-221-6883.

TUESDAYS Memory Cafe

First Tuesday of every month, 10 - 11:30 a.m. at GracePointe Crossing Heritage Center, 322 River Hills Place North, Cambridge. Contact Julie at 763-306-5066 for info.

Music

Chisago County Senior Center 38790 6th Ave. Music provided before the meal 11:15 a.m.

Dominos

At the Chisago County Senior Center 38790 6th Ave North Branch at 10 a.m.

Dominoes

10 a.m. to Noon at the Cambridge SAC

WEDNESDAYS Cribbage

9 to 11 a.m. at the Cambridge SAC, 140 Buchanan St, Cambridge

Wizard

11 a.m. to noon at the Cambridge SAC, 140 Buchanan St, Cambridge

Pinochle

12:30 to 3 p.m. at the Cambridge SAC

Mahjong

12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the Cambridge SAC, 140 Buchanan St, Cambridge

Alanon

7 p.m. at the Isanti Alano Club, 790 Heritage Blvd. Isanti. 763-444-4605

Chisago County Drop-In Center

Open 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Main Street Church, 6500 Main Street, North Branch. For individuals 18 yrs or older living with mental illness. Info: 651-213-5600 or Adultmental-health.org.

THURSDAYS East Central Baby Cafe

Free drop-in breastfeeding support from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Adult Enrichment Center, 540 5th Ave NW, Cambridge, MN. For info. call 763-689-1711.

Cambridge-Edgewood AFG

Cambridge-Edgewood Al-Anon Family Group meets from 7-8 p.m. at Cambridge Lutheran Church, 621 Old Main Street N. Visit minneso-

tanorth-al-anon.org for info.

Parkinson's Support Group

Third Thursday of the month – 1-2:30 p.m. The Levande, 2011 6th Lane SE, Cambridge, MN for info call 763-325-0100

Bingo

At the Chisago County Senior Center 38790 6th Ave North Branch at 10a.m.

Hand and Foot

At the Chisago County Senior Center 38790 6th Ave North Branch at 12:30p.m.

500

12:30 to 3 p.m. at the Cambridge SAC, 140 Buchanan St, Cambridge

Bunco

Third Thursday 10 a.m. to Noon at the Cambridge SAC, 140 Buchanan St, Cambridge

ACA Adult Children of Alcoholics/ Dysfunctional Families Meeting

7 p.m. at Access Church, 4359 392nd St, North Branch. For info. call 612-251-6556 or email acanorthbranch@gmail.com

Fresh Beginnings Alanon Family Group

From 7-8 p.m. at Access Church, 4359 392nd Street, North Branch. Visit minnesota-al-anon.org for info.

Medicare and Medicaid 101 Open House

Third Thursday of the month from 1-3 p.m. Get your questions answered by trained agents. (763) 689-7390 or eclrib.org for info.

FRIDAYS Cribbage

12:45 p.m. at the Chisago County Senior Center 38790 6th Ave., North Branch.

JUNE 22 Gospel Concert

The Garms Family will present a gospel concert 6 p.m. at North Isanti Baptist Church, 2248 313th Ave. NE, Cambridge. No charge, but freewill offering taken. Refreshments

JUNE 24

North Branch Summer Concert Series

featuring Native American Dance & Drum Exhibition - Keith Secola, musician. Story-time at 6:45 p.m., concert starts at 7 p.m. North Branch Central Park.

JUNE 25

Summer Playdate Series

10-11:30 a.m. Faith Lutheran Isanti Playground, 109 2nd Ave NW. Join us for a fun time to let the kids play and connect with other families. Children must be accompanied entire time. See Faith Lutheran Isanti Facebook page for info.

JUNE 26

Bounce Houses in the Park

From 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Cambridge City Park 810 2nd Ave SW. Bad weather backup Cambridge Fire Dept at 300 3rd Ave NE. Limited benches and picnic tables consider bringing a blanket or camping chair. Children must be supervised. Food trucks on site.

Veteran & youth fishing event

9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. (two-hour excursions) on Rush Lake. Join Little Wilderness in partnership with the East Central Chapter of Let's Go Fishing for a special fishing excursion designed to create lasting memories between youth and their veteran heroes. Register at https://www.littlewilderness.co/new-events-2/minnesota-veteran-amp-youth-fishing-event

JUNE 27

Cambridge Concert in the Park

featuring Taylor Swift cover band Taylor's Version. 5 - 7 p.m. Cambridge City Park.

Submit information for upcoming events to: editor@countystar.com

Developer gets go-ahead for single family homes in North Branch

BY MOLLY WHELAN

NEWS@COUNTYSTAR.COM

Single-family homes are now an option for high-density residential areas in North Branch, with the city council unanimously passing an update to allow them in areas previously reserved for multi-family buildings only.

The issue was raised by developer Kris Carroll, who plans to develop the vacant land just west of Interstate 35, across Falcon Avenue from the Wildridge communities, and south of the Ecumen facilities and furniture stores.

The planned Cedar Ridge Community meets the density requirements of six units per acre for R3 zoning with a mix of apartments and single-family homes.

The preliminary plat for the development was also approved.

Community Development Director Nathan Sondrol and his staff analyzed nearby communities' zoning for reference: Isanti, for example, does not allow single-family homes in their equivalent to an R3 district, while Cambridge does.

Council member Patrick Meacham pointed out the lot sizes for twin homes in the Schoolside Village development are the same size as the ones proposed for single-family homes in Cedar Ridge. Twin homes were already allowed in R3 before the change.

"If we only have a minimum density to hit, what does it matter what type of home it is?" Meacham said.

Carroll plans to divide the 62-acre parcel into 75 small single-family home sites, three apartment buildings containing a total of 167 units, and seven additional outlots "which will be for future commercial development or stormwater ponding depending upon the location of the parcel," according to the staff report.

Carroll told council she would like to start the project in July, and she now has the needed approvals to do so.

Carroll initially thought single-family homes were permitted on the site due to a prior conflict in city code. While the zoning code did not officially permit

building of single-family homes in an R3 district, the section dedicated to design standards for all types of districts includes standards for single-family homes located in an R3 district.

The council considered the issue after some confusion over plans for the project, and after the developer updated plans in order to meet landscaping and other requirements. In the process, residents of the Wildridge developments expressed disdain for building housing on the site, especially apartments.

Multiple council members and the mayor pointed out the land, while long vacant, is already zoned for apartments and has been for quite some time, meaning the owner has the right to develop it as such.

"If residents wanted to stop it," council member Jeff Goulet said, "they could have bought the land."

Mayor Kevin Scheiber also referenced some Wildridge residents proposing a physical barrier between the new development and their com-

munity, which he said would have to be the responsibility of the people wanting to separate their properties from new development and not, as some residents suggested, the builders.

"I don't know how the city can expect a developer to put up some type of a barrier when they have a legal right to build," Schieber said.

The new housing will directly abut vacant commercial land that will remain spacious enough for several "big box" stores, according to council.

Building standards will remain subject to change as the city updates its comprehensive plan for the first time since 2018, with Schieber suggesting increased lot setbacks to allow for more green space between new buildings.

The council discussed increasing the setback from six to 10 feet, a move that would require a public hearing and possibly a supermajority vote, before agreeing to keep it under consideration alongside conversations about updating the strategic plan.

The hate will stop here

As I watched the tragic events unfold with the assassination of Minnesota State Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband, I felt sick to my stomach, but not just because something like this took place virtually in our backyard. More sickening, though, is the massive number of people who are more obsessed with labeling the alleged perpetrator as either a “Democrat” or “Republican.” Simply put, it doesn’t make a damn bit of difference which political party he supposedly belongs to. Here are the two possible scenarios surrounding his political affiliation: Either he hates Republicans so much he resorted to killing Democrats he felt “betrayed” the party with their recent votes, or he flat-out hates Democrats. The key word in either of those scenarios is “hate.”

The only way things like this will stop is if we stop all the blanket “us vs. them” “Republicans vs. Democrats” “liberals vs. conservatives” characterizations and look at everyone as human beings. We don’t have to agree about everything, but we must stop acting like someone who does disagree with us is evil or our enemy.

That brings me to what perhaps troubles me more than anything else. This event has brought on a self-admission that I have allowed this kind of vitriol to make its way into the opinion pages of my newspaper via letters to the editor. But no more.

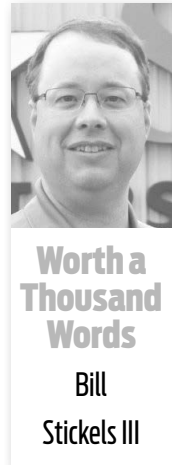
Beginning immediately, there will be no more of these overgeneralized, mean-spirited comments directed at either of the parties. No more name-calling of any group of people or even any individuals. I no longer care if more leeway is supposed to be given to comments about “public figures.” That kind of rhetoric simply won’t appear in our pages anymore.

Truth be told, that has always been our policy. However, that line in the sand has been washed away under the misguided impression we are preserving the “Freedom of Speech.” Now, we are drawing that line in concrete.

That doesn’t mean we don’t want political letters to the editor. You want to voice your opinion on the effects of tariffs? Great. Do you think the deportation of illegal immigrants is too strict or not strict enough? Bring it on. Even whether you think President Trump, Governor Walz, or any other elected official is doing a good or bad job will be accepted, as long as it is kept civil.

I recall an episode of the original “MacGyver” where the title character makes the statement, “The hate has got to stop somewhere.” Well, at least for our little section of the world, the hate will stop here.

BILL STICKELS III is editor of the Isanti-Chisago County Star. He can be directly reached at 651-407-1245, through our main office number at 763-689-1181, ext. 156 or editor@countystar.com.



Worth a Thousand Words
Bill Stickels III



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cambridge Library offers something for everyone

To the editor,
What do you think the Cambridge Public Library has to offer you and your family this summer? Well, there are lots of free activities for adults, kids, and families.

Some of the things offered are a teen book club with books and snacks, an adult book club, baby story time, story times held around the town as in the farmers market, K&A minigolf, Dairy Queen, and the Isanti City Hall,

There is a day in June for Eric Carl, who is a children’s author. Also watercolor activities are offered out on the library patio. There is also a Lego club.

There is a coloring contest for kids in the month of July and a “Find a new Book” activity for teens. Two authors: DL Dixon and Dean Hovey will visit on July 12. Antoni Gaudi is a Spanish Architect and his day is on July 14. Heritage Day is at the Isanti County Historical Society at the fairgrounds during the Isanti County Fair on July 18. Craft and Chat is offered on July 21, and Tie Dye Basics are offered on July 26. There

is a science program on July 29.

All of these programs are free, but you may have to register for some of them, so go to ecrlib.org/ events for age limits and other details, or you can get a monthly events calendar at the library front desk like I did. I hope you do a program and see what a wonderful and useful place our library is.

Barb Kruschel
Cambridge

Stauber not representing Minnesotans’ interests

To the editor,

On May 22, 2025, Pete Stauber voted in support of Trump’s H.R. 1: One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The bill does not support what people in our district want: a balanced budget. The Congressional Budget Office, economists, and more budgeting experts estimate that the bill will add \$2.4 trillion to the nation’s debt.

Quite simply, Stauber supported a bill that places the entire country at risk of collapse and will create an untenable future for the nation’s children and grandchildren: our children.

Time to contact Pete Stauber and

demand that he vote in the interests of Minnesotans. This is an abomination. And if he does not listen, then it’s time to vote him out.

L.W. Nelson
Cambridge

Artificial Intelligence

To the editor,

A.I. is going to impact everyone on earth. An untold number of jobs will be eliminated. We, as a nation, must plan for it or become obsolete. Initially A.I. will create new jobs in the design, manufacture, and installation process, but long term it will eliminate jobs in all sectors of our economy.

We must bring back manufacturing jobs to the U.S. and hopefully the tariffs will do just that. We need to kickstart trade schools to attract more students, especially in electronics. Create incentives for manufacturers to kickstart start-up process. Create incentives to research and patent A.I. technologies. Open up mining in the areas of land permits and mining of minerals for the manufacture of chips and other electronic technologies.

Steve Graning
Cambridge

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Congratulations, Class of 2025!

As the school year comes to a close, we pause to celebrate the incredible accomplishments of our students, staff, families, and this supportive community. Earlier this month, we honored the Cambridge-Isanti High School Class of 2025 at graduation—a class that has left a lasting mark on our school district.



C-I School News
Dr. Nate Rudolph

These students have come of age during a time of unprecedented change. Yet through it all, they have shown resilience, compassion, and an unshakable commitment to learning and growth. More than just academic success, this class embodies the core values of the Bluejacket Way: respect, responsibility, honesty, self-discipline, and compassion.

Graduation is not just a personal milestone—it’s also a community achievement. At this year’s ceremony, the presence of families, teachers, mentors, and local alumni served as a powerful reminder that success is rooted in the support of others. In fact, we asked alumni in the audience to stand, and dozens rose to their feet. Many once sat in the same seats as our graduates, and they are now cheering them on from new stages in life.

The Class of 2025 officially joins the ranks of proud Bluejacket alumni.

This class is also record-setting in many ways:

- Through the generosity of our local community and the C-I Dollars for Scholars organization, the Class of 2025 received \$253,850 in scholarships—the highest total in our school’s history.
- They earned a combined 2,642 college credits through College in the Schools and 189 credits through the St. Cloud Technical & Community College Vocational Welding Program.
- These opportunities represent more than \$2.3 million in college tuition savings for students and families.
- Academic excellence defines this group:
- Nine students earned a perfect 4.0 GPA and share the title of Valedictorian.
- 124 students graduated with Honors (3.33 GPA or higher), and 70 earned Honors with Distinction (3.67 GPA or higher), both surpassing records from previous graduating classes.

Three students stand among the top 1% of graduating seniors nationwide, earning prestigious recognition from the National Merit Scholarship Program:

- Gunnar Erickson, who also scored a perfect 36 on the ACT, was named a National Merit Finalist.
- Amelia Beard and Samuel Bettendorf were honored as National Merit Commended Students, reflecting their exceptional academic promise and performance.

Additional highlights from this remarkable senior class include:

- 39 seniors were inducted into the National Honor Society, recognized for their scholarship, leadership, character, and service.
- 16 graduates have committed to serving our country by enlisting in the United States Armed Forces. We thank them for their courage and dedication.
- This class also excelled in co-curricular and extracurricular activities:
- Our athletic programs earned numerous Mississippi 8 Conference Silver and Gold Academic Awards, demonstrating success both in competition and in the classroom.
- Four teams won Conference Championships: Boys Tennis, Softball, Boys Track and Field, and Girls Tennis.
- Students shined in academics and the arts:
- The CIHS Speech Team finished 6th at the state competition, with four seniors named to the Minnesota All-State Speech Team.
- Model United Nations participant Laynie Olson earned multiple national honors and finished in the top 20 overall.
- The Math Team claimed the Rum River Conference Championship, led by Gunnar Erickson, who also qualified for state.
- The Economics Team qualified for state with strong performances from several seniors.
- In Skills USA, seniors placed in the top three in categories ranging from Cabinetry to MIG welding.
- Our ProStart culinary team earned its highest-ever state finish, placing 8th overall.

In the performing and visual arts:

- The CIHS Theater Department delivered three exceptional productions, including a conference-champion one-act play.
- Visual artists earned Superior and Honorable Mention ratings at the Mississippi 8 Visual Arts Festival.
- Our Triple-A Award winners, Keagen Lowman and Ava Miller, were recognized for excellence in Academics, Arts, and Athletics. Keagen was also named the MSHSL Class AA State Triple-A Winner—a rare and prestigious honor.

This is just a glimpse of what these graduates have accomplished. Their diverse achievements are a direct reflection of the outstanding support system that surrounds them—from dedicated staff and teachers to community partners and families. These results reflect the many strengths of our district that we are proud to celebrate—from the exceptional range of opportunities available to our students, to the dedicated staff and strong community partnerships that help make such success possible.

To the Class of 2025—congratulations! You’ve made us proud. We look forward to watching you continue to grow, lead, and make a difference. Always a Bluejacket.

Go Big Blue!

DR. NATERUDOLPH is superintendent of Cambridge-Isanti Schools. He can be reached at 763-689-6202 or nrudolph@c-ischools.org.

Caretaker peace of mind



Ask A Trooper
Jesse Grabow

Question: I thought I heard something about a new law in regards to caretaker information included on driver’s license or identification card record. Do you have any information on this?

Answer: You can now use your Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS) records to let law enforcement know if you’re the caretaker for someone else. That way, if you are

involved in a crash, law enforcement officers will know that there is someone at home who depends on you. They can quickly respond and ensure that the people you care for are not left alone. The new law gives you reassurance that your loved ones will be taken care of if something happens, reducing your anxiety and stress about leaving them alone.

A portion of state statutes were used with permission from the Office of the Revisor of Statutes. If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Trp. Jesse Grabow – Minnesota State Patrol at 1000 Highway 10 West, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501-2205. (You can follow him on X @MSPPIO_NW or reach him at, jesse.grabow@state.mn.us).

Propagating perennial plants

I can’t think of any gardener that doesn’t want more plants. I think the majority of us want them as cheaply as possible. This is where knowing plant propagation methods is useful.



Propagation is generally done following one of the following methods:

1. Growing plants from seed. Saving seeds from existing plants is easy and free. Research the germination requirements for each plant variety. Many natives require a vernalization (chill period). Unfortunately, if the plant is a hybrid variety the seed will revert back to one of the original parents rather than the hybrid. I harvested seeds from yellow petunias and planted them. I ended up with 4 flats of beautiful

purple petunias. Not one was yellow! Some plants can take years to grow from seed to the point of flower. Plants like American wisteria and peonies can take up to 7 years from seed germination to flower. You can also create your own hybrid by cross pollinating plants by hand. I have benefitted greatly from my sister’s hand pollination of daylily varieties.

2. Plant division is also a common method for obtaining new plants. This requires digging the plant and dividing the root system. Most perennials require division to every few years (3-5) to remain strong, healthy plants. The following site has excellent instructions that break down the process based on the type of root system. <https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/dividing-perennials/> A downside of this

method is the possible transportation/spread of invasive species like jumping worms or Japanese beetles (eggs are in the soil). Extra effort must be made to remove all existing soil before transporting the division to another location. Also beware of “hitchhiker” plants that may have their own root system intertwined with the plant being divided. Some plants like goatsbeard (aruncus dioicus) or Alchemilla mollis (ladies mantle) can have such a dense root ball that it can require a hatchet to split it! Division of perennials is best done in early spring or fall.

3. Soft tissue propagation is an alternative option for hybrid varieties or plants that take a significant number of years from seed to flower. Early summer is the perfect time to take cuttings and start the process of rooting new plants. The internet has a lot of videos and sites on how to do this. Search for information on the specific plant. This is easier than digging the plant up and dividing the root mass. Don’t expect all the cuttings to root. Dipping the base of the cutting into a rooting compound can improve the results. Be patient, check the cuttings frequently to ensure they’re not too moist or too dry. Like Goldilocks, they want the environment to be “just right”.

I have found that it’s easier to ask someone for seeds or soft tissue cuttings than asking them to divide the plant. After attempting to propagate plants, I’ve gained a better appreciation for nurseries and the amount of time and effort expended to bring a plant to the one-quart pot size.

Chisago County Master Gardeners is part of a collaboration between Chisago County and The University of Minnesota Extension to deliver practical education and research you can use at home, at work and in your community. You can reach Chisago County Extension services by email at mnext-chisago@umn.edu or by phone at 651-277-0151.

Cambridge Farmers Market receives grant to boost nutrition access

BY NIKKI WARNER
NIKKI.WARNER@STATE.MN.US

The Cambridge Farmers Market will receive a \$2,170 grant from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to strengthen its nutrition assistance programs during the 2025 season.

The funding, part of a one-time \$146,669 appropriation from the state, is designed to help farmers markets across Minnesota expand access to fresh, locally grown food for residents who rely on programs like SNAP and WIC.

“Farmers’ markets help bridge the gap between producers and families seeking healthy, affordable food,” Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen said in a statement.

The grant may be used to cover costs such as staffing, outreach materials, EBT to-



kens, or transportation assistance—tools that support the smooth operation of nutrition assistance at the market.

Cambridge is one of 29 markets statewide selected through a competitive review process. Markets were required to be located in

Minnesota and participate in at least one nutrition assistance program to qualify for funding.

More information about the Farmers’ Market Nutrition Assistance Grant Program is available on the MDA web-site.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Student Achievement Lists
Jacob Karnes and **Logan Von Dahlen** of North Branch (Dean's) from Northwest Technical College

•
Margrette Lee of Braham; **Angela Bunnell**, **Grace Gabler**, and **Jessica Jensrud** of Cambridge; **Kane Clements** of Isanti; and **Mary Beach** of North Branch (Dean's) from Bemidji State University

•
Hallie Schmit of Isanti (President's) from Bemidji State University

•
Laci Leverty and **Reese Wilking** of Isanti; **Karissa Swanstrom** of North Branch; and **Luke Flaten** of Rush City (Dean's) from South Dakota State University

•
Tyler Olson of Cambridge; **McKenzie Einberger** of Isanti; and **Chong Her** of North Branch (Dean's) The University of Minnesota-Crookston

•
Tony Lee of Cambridge (Chancellor's) from The University of Minnesota

•
Natasha Montzka of Stacy (Dean's) University of Wisconsin Law School Madison.

•
Bianca Binger of Braham (Dean's) Sam Houston State University Huntsville

•
Bauer, Nathaniel Eric, **Head, Andrew**, **Kolb, Tucker**, and **Webster, Alex** of Cambridge; **Hoglund, Lucas**, and **Wike Jr., Lucas Joel** of Dalbo; **Rohman, Cash James** of Harris; **Koehler, Makayla**, **Reintjes, Brooke**, **Spano-Shively, Harley Anne**, and

Zabinski, Charles of Isanti; **Andreotti, Shaeyna Marie**, **Berg, Jordyn**, **Bergum, Austin**, and **Kantorowicz, Carli** of North Branch; **Jungbluth, Joe**, and **Stavig, Haley Lynne** of Rush City; **Cran, Alex**, **Gruba, Hunter**, and **Hultman, Reid**, and **Zimmerman, Ethan** of Stacy (Dean's) from North Dakota State University

•
Jared Kendrick, and **Jozie Terry** of Isanti; **Emma Scott**, and **Lindsey Weidendorf** of North Branch; and **Owen Anderson** of Rush City (Dean's) from The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

•
Maraya Wilttrout of Cambridge and **Jas Parsons** of Isanti (Dean's) from University of Wisconsin-Stout

•
Degrees
McKenzie Einberger of Isanti (Sport & Recreation Mgmt B.S.) from the University of Minnesota-Crookston

•
Nathan Cox of North Branch (Associate of Science, Data Analytics) from Normandale Community College

•
Bauer, Nathaniel Eric (Construction Management), **Head, Andrew** (Strategic Communication), and **Webster, Alex** (Architecture) of Cambridge; **Zimprich, Dominic M** (Mechanical Engineering) of Isanti; **Bergum, Austin** (Biological Sciences) of North Branch; **Hultman, Reid** (Business Administration) and **Zimmerman, Ethan** (Mechanical Engineering) of Stacy from North Dakota State University

OBITUARIES

Kristie Ann Erickson

Kristie Ann Erickson, 65, of Barnum MN died Friday, February 7, 2025, surrounded by loved ones at Essentia Hospital in Duluth Minnesota. Kristie was born in Cambridge Minnesota on November 5, 1959, as the third daughter to Carl and Clarice (Torkelson) Erickson.



Kristie grew up in the country with a great love for animals, especially her horses and dogs. Summer days were filled with walks along the wooded horse trails, and riding her favorite horse, Lightning. Playing with her older sisters, Sunday School at Cambridge Lutheran Church, 4-H, along with trips to the State Fair held special memories for her.

As a 1978 graduate of Cambridge High School Kristie was active in National Honor Society, band, basketball, track and cross country, as well as competing in the Junior Olympics in track. Being crowned Homecoming Queen her Senior year spoke to how much Kristie was liked and admired by her classmates.

After High School, Kristie attended Mankato State University, graduating in 1982 with a degree in recreational therapy, working at St. Peter State Hospital in that capacity. Kristie later acquired her R.N. degree. With her nursing degree she served eight years in the Naval Reserves and finished her 26-year career with the State of Minnesota as a nurse at Red Wing and the Moose Lake Correctional Facility. During her semi-retirement Kristie worked 13 years for Sony's Residential Services.

If there was a game to be played, Kristie would always join in, and her competitive nature would definitely shine. While watching the Minnesota Vikings her exuberant cheers would let everyone know of her team spirit!

Kristie cared deeply, smiled often and met life with enthusiasm.

She loved and cherished her family, friends and numerous pets: Lightning, Aziz, and Reggie held a special place in her heart.

While semi-retired Kristie spent much of her time caring for many family members and friends. As her final act of caring, Kristie donated her organs to those in need.

Kristie is survived by her husband, David Krier, whom she married November 5, 2010, sister, Connie (Alan) Overland, nieces Angela (Thomas) Breeden, Katie (Kilton) Kingsman, and their children, Jacob, Anna, Elijah and Titus Breeden, John and Kilton Kingsman, her stepchildren Joseph Krier, Kellyanne (Jace) Anderson and granddaughter Evalyn.

Kristie is also survived by her mother-in-law Virginia Krier, brother-in-law Dr. John (Trish) Cosgrove and numerous cousins, relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Carl and Clarice Erickson, sister Carol Cosgrove and stepmother Elaine Christensen Erickson.

A service honoring Kristie's life will be held on Sunday, June 29, 2025, at Hope Lutheran Church, Moose Lake, Minnesota.

Visitation will begin at 1 p.m. followed by the 2 p.m. service. Luncheon to follow.

Gordon Richard Evgen

Gordon Evgen, age 86, of Cambridge died June 12, 2025 at Prairie Senior Cottages in Isanti.

Gordon Richard Evgen was born January 8, 1939 in Forest Lake, Minnesota to Arnold and Hazel (Clark) Evgen. He grew up near Coon Lake. Gordon

was father to six children, Richard, Cindy, Michael, Debra, Bonnie and Brian. He became partner's with Beatrice "Bea" Riley in 1997 and they have made their home in Cambridge since 2010. Gordon loved fishing and in his younger years did some hunting as well. He enjoyed the outdoors and working in his yard. He will be dearly missed.

Gordon is survived by his partner, Bea; children, Richard (Rhonda) Evgen, Cindy Zaccardi, Michael (Kim) Evgen, Debra Evgen, Bonnie (Devon) Buege, and Brian (Molly) Evgen; Bea's children, Jerry (Julie) Riley, Terri Foote and Scott Riley; by many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by a son-in-law, Tom Zaccardi.

A memorial gathering will be held from 10 a.m. – noon Saturday, July 12 at Strike Life Tributes in Cambridge. Burial will be in Cambridge Union Cemetery. Online condolences can be made at StrikeLifeTributes.com.

Best Western Plus Isanti Earns Global Praise

Best Western Plus Isanti is pleased to announce today that it has been recognized in Tripadvisor's® Travelers' Choice® Awards for 2025.

Tripadvisor's Travelers' Choice Award winners are among the top 10% of listings around the world on Tripadvisor.

As the world's largest travel guidance platform, Tripadvisor has unparalleled authority with travelers and diners. This award is based on genuine feedback from anyone in the community who has visited and left an authentic, first-hand review on Tripadvisor over a 12-month period, making it a valuable and trustworthy designation of travelers' favorites.

"This recognition is incredibly meaningful for our team. We're a small-town hotel with a big heart, and it's our mission every day to create a space where people feel welcome, safe, and cared for while they are away from home. We're so proud to represent Isanti on a global stage. The team here in Isanti is made up of some of the kindest, most hard-working people I know. They bring joy and authenticity to every guest interaction, and I couldn't be prouder to lead this team. This honor is truly theirs." -Katie Hinrichs, General Manager

"Congratulations to Best Western Plus Isanti on its recognition in Tripadvisor's Travelers' Choice Awards for 2025," said Kristen Dalton, President, Tripadvisor. "Ranking among the top percentage of businesses globally means you have made such a memorable impact on your visitors that many of them took time to go online and leave a glowing review about their experience. We hope this recognition continues to drive business to you in 2025 and beyond."

The Best Western Plus Isanti just celebrated six years since opening its doors. The hotel serves a wide range of guests—from wedding parties and funeral gatherings to work crews, individuals and families moving to the area, local companies and organizations needing a home-away-from home for their clients or employees, community events such as the Isanti Rodeo, and athletes here to compete at popular venues like Rum River BMX. No matter the reason for a guest's stay, the goal remains the same: "To exceed the expectations of those we serve."

Managed by Golder Hospitality, a hospitality management company based in Maplewood, MN, the hotel's success is driven by a team that shows up every day with purpose, compassion, and pride in their community. This award is a reflection of their heart, hard work, and unwavering commitment to creating a welcoming space for all. - TripAdvisor

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Instructor of the Year

Jim Fridstrom, left, receives the 2024 Minnesota Firearms Safety Instructor of the Year award from Minnesota DNR Regional Training Officer Todd Schottenbauer at the Isanti County Sportsmen's Club. Fridstrom was honored for 40 years of volunteer service, mentoring youth and teaching safe, responsible hunting practices across the state..

CONTRIBUTED



North Branch's Ella Dick finished second in the Class AA State Meet, breaking her personal record and tying the school record by clearing 12 feet, 3 inches.

BILL STICKELS III | COUNTY STAR



Cambridge-Isanti's Jackson Ziebarth finished second in both the 100 and 200 in the Class AAA State Meet.

BILL STICKELS III | COUNTY STAR



North Branch's Dakota Esget ended her long, illustrious high school athletic career with a ninth place finish in the pole vault at the Class AA State Meet.

BILL STICKELS III | COUNTY STAR



North Branch's girls 4x200 relay team of Ella Kuhlman, Sophia Benedict, Dakota Esget and Sophia Thorsen finished sixth at the Class AA State Meet, as did the girls 4x100 relay team of Kuhlman, Esget, Ella Dick and Thorsen.

BILL STICKELS III | COUNTY STAR

Viking golfers have satisfying end to season

STAFF REPORT
NEWS@COUNTYSTAR.COM

Three North Branch Viking golfers ended their season with a trip to the Class AA State Tournament, where they put up satisfying scores.

Ashley Bistodeau had the highest placing of the three, coming in with a two-round total of 170, which was good enough for 31st place in

the girls tournament.

On the boys side, Nicholas Melvin shot a two-round total of 164, which placed him at 70th among the field. Carter Magnison wasn't far behind, coming in 77th with a two-round total of 167.

Braham's lone state representative, Jenna Burmaster, finished tied for 24th with a two-round total of 178 in the girls Class A Tournament.



BILL STICKELS III | COUNTY STAR

Cambridge-Isanti senior Abby Kryzer finished in seventh place in the pole vault at the Class AAA State Meet. For more photos of both C-I's and North Branch's state meet competitors, go to www.isanti-chisagocountystar.com.

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Talking active kids with the University of Minnesota

Katie Schuver, a lecturer in the School of Kinesiology, discusses why it's important for children to stay active over the summer.

Q: Why is physical activity important for kids?
Schuver: While it might just seem like a way to burn off energy, regular movement plays a powerful role in child development and has the potential to impact everything from physical health to emotional well-being and academic success. Regular physical activity helps build strong muscles and bones, supports a healthy weight and improves cardiovascular health. Additionally, studies show active children tend to perform better in school, as it improves concentration, memory and behavior outcomes.

Perhaps most importantly, encouraging kids to be regularly physically active at a young age lays the foundation for a lifetime of healthy habits and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases later in life.

Q: Are there mental health benefits associated with physical activity?

Schuver: Research suggests regular physical activity for kids can boost mood and reduce anxiety while improving sleep. Socially, physical activity offers opportunities for connection and growth. Whether it's a game of tag, an organized team sport or a dance class, these interactions help children develop communication skills, teamwork and confidence, which can impact mental health outcomes.

Q: What tips do you have for encouraging kids to be active during the summer?

Schuver: When it comes to keeping kids active, variety, fun and age-appropriate activities are key. According to the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, children and teens ages 6 to 17 should get at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity daily. For preschoolers aged 3 to 5, the goal is to stay active throughout the day with plenty of movement woven into play. Here's the good news: staying active doesn't have to mean structured workouts or rigid routines. Research shows kids are far more likely to stay engaged when physical activity feels like play.

Think water balloon battles, backyard obstacle courses or nature scavenger hunts — these aren't just fun, they're powerful tools for boosting physical health and sparking creativity. For younger children, simple activities like hopping, climbing, dancing and imaginative games can provide all

the movement they need. To keep energy levels high and boredom at bay, break activities into short, manageable bursts of 15 to 20 minutes and prioritize outdoor play whenever possible. Limiting screen time and giving kids a say in what they do also helps build lasting motivation.

Q: How can families support staying active?
Schuver: Parents and guardians are powerful role models when it comes to shaping children's attitudes toward physical activity, and the most effective way to inspire movement is to join in. Being active together doesn't just benefit physical health, it also strengthens emotional bonds and has the potential to create lasting memories. Whether it is a morning walk around the block, a weekend bike ride or a spontaneous living room dance party, these shared moments turn exercise into something joyful and deeply connected.

When kids see their caregivers participating enthusiastically, regardless of age or ability, it sends a powerful message that movement is for everyone. It's not about perfection or performance, it's about showing up, having fun and making activity a natural part of daily life.

Creating a home environment that encourages movement is important and easier than you might think. Keep jump ropes, balls and other play gear within easy reach. Replace some sedentary screen time with fun, movement-based activities that your child enjoys. Set aside time each day for active play and give children a say in what activities they do. Encourage outdoor play whenever possible.

Q: How does your work focus on kids' physical health?

Schuver: My teaching in the University of Minnesota's School of Kinesiology concentrates on the development of evidence-based strategies and programs to promote active lifestyles and healthy habits across the lifespan. My areas of interest include health promotion, physical activity, exercise and mental health, mindfulness-based strategies for health promotion, and physical activity interventions for mental health promotion and co-occurring disorders.

Katie Schuver, Ph.D., LADC, is a lecturer in physical activity and health promotion in the School of Kinesiology and lead graduate faculty for the Yoga Focus Area at the Earl E. Bakken Center for Spirituality & Healing. - University of Minnesota College of Education and Human Development

New boat operator education requirements begin July 1

Beginning July 1, 2025, more people who operate motorboats or personal watercrafts on Minnesota waters must obtain a valid watercraft operator's permit. The updated requirements, passed into law during 2023, are intended to make boating safer by ensuring people operating motorized watercraft know the rules and are properly trained.

Initially, the law applies to:

- People who were born after June 30, 2004, and are aged 12 or older.

- Anyone who wishes to serve as an "accompanying operator" for people without a valid watercraft operator's permit, or for people under the age of 12 and not eligible to obtain a permit.

Individuals who wish to rent/operate motorized rental watercraft.

- People who already possess a valid watercraft operator's permit from Minnesota or another state do not need to obtain a new permit to meet these requirements. The requirements will incrementally include more people over time. When the law is fully implemented on July 1, 2028, all motorized watercraft operators born after June 30, 1987, will be required to have a valid watercraft operator's permit. Boaters born before July 1, 1987, generally are not required to obtain a water-

craft operator's permit.

Instances in which people born before July 1, 1987, need a watercraft operator's permit include:

If they're an "accompanying operator" and allow youth or person without a watercraft operator's permit to operate a motorboat. Accompanying operators must be 21 years of age or older; in the boat or on the personal watercraft; within immediate reach of the motor controls; and possess a valid operator's permit or be an "exempt operator" (possess a valid U.S. Coast Guard license for maritime personnel, for example).

If they're renting a motorized watercraft. Renters must be 18 years of age or older and possess a valid watercraft operator's permit.

"Minnesota has a long and proud tradition of safe outdoor recreation, and a key part of that is safety education," said Capt. Adam Block, DNR boating law administrator. "While this new law won't initially apply to many boat operators, we still encourage all boaters – regardless of their age – to obtain their watercraft operator's permit."

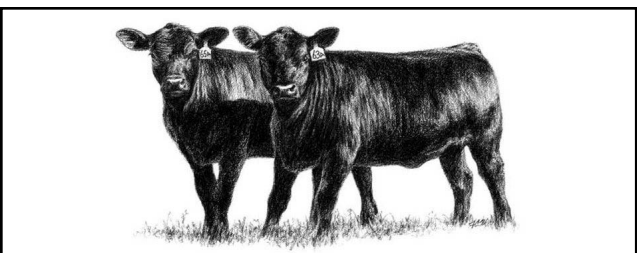
More information, including a link to complete the watercraft operator's permit course, is at mndnr.gov/safety/boatwater/boat-education-law.html
- MNDNR



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Sustainable Safari coming to Braham, Isanti

East Central Regional Library kicks off its Summer Discovery Program by inviting families to "Color Our World" through a unique animal encounter presented by Sustainable Safari. Attendees will meet fascinating

creatures, many they've likely never seen before, during this free, all-ages program. The fun begins Monday, June 23 at 10 a.m. at the Braham Event Center (655 8th St. SW, Braham), followed by a second event the same day at 1 p.m. at the

Isanti Intermediate School Gymnasium (101 9th Ave. NE, Isanti). Both events are open to the public and promise a hands-on, educational experience for all ages.
- East Central Regional Library

ROUNABOUT: Project to begin after Isanti Rodeo

FROM PAGE I

'That's just great numbers all-around, plus getting it finished this year.'

Jason Cook
Isanti City Engineer

"We had originally budgeted for \$500,000," Cook said. "That's just great numbers all-around, plus getting it finished this year."

bid means that all of the direct construction costs will be covered by the \$1.5 million local road improvement project grant. The remainder of the costs, such as engineering, design, land acquisition, etc. will be split between the city and the county, with Isanti County picking up two-thirds of the cost and the city of Isanti picking up one-third of the costs.

According to Cook, the city's new estimated "out of pocket" cost for the entire project will be \$170,000.

While Isanti County Highway Engineer Justin Bergerson wasn't willing to publicly state what the county's costs will be, based on Cook's estimate, it should be around \$340,000. The county will be using ARPA savings to fund its portion of the project.

Since this is a joint project between the city of Isanti and Isanti County, both government entities needed to approve the same bid. Both unanimously did so on Tuesday, June 17.

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NORTHERN PINES
ASSISTED LIVING

Cambridge man faces charges for kidnapping Pine City group home resident

STAFF REPORT
NEWS@COUNTYSTAR.COM

A Cambridge man, Dean Michael Simonson, 58, is facing felony kidnaping and first degree burglary charges in connection to an incident occurring at a Pine City group home.

According to the criminal complaint, Pine County Sheriff’s Office deputies responded to a report that Simonson came to the group home on June 10 around 6 a.m., where he worked but was on medical leave.

According to the report, Simonson came into the group home, woke a resident up and left with the resident in Simonson’s truck at a high rate of speed, without gaining permission to take the resident from the home. The resident was reported to needing round-the-clock supervision and is a vulnerable adult.

Law enforcement learned that Simonson was at a nearby car dealership, and cleaning staff reported that Simonson was banging on the door while arguing with the group home resident.

Before officers arrived, Simonson left with the resident in his truck. Law enforcement located the truck driving at a high rate of speed. A deputy positioned his squad car behind the truck and initiated lights and sirens. Simonson did not immediately stop and turned onto another road before stopping abruptly in the middle of the road.

According to the complaint, Simonson got out of the truck yelling that he was going home, adding that he owned the road while refusing to follow commands from law enforcement. Simonson also yelled that he was the resident’s father but is not his father.

The resident was shaking and visibly frightened. The resident told law enforcement that Simonson woke him up and told him to go with him because he had something to show him, assuming Simonson had permission to take him.

The resident reported that Simonson intended to try to switch cars at the dealership but the dealership was closed. The resident reported that the group home manager repeatedly tried

to call Simonson, but Simonson refused to take the call and threw the cell phone out the truck window.

The resident observed the squad car lights and told Simonson to stop, but Simonson refused and insisted he owned the road, according to the report.

Officers arrested Simonson, and it took several officers to assist him into the squad car due to resistance. Law enforcement later located Simonson’s broken cell phone on the side of the road.

A group home employee reported that someone had called earlier in the morning claiming to be the resident’s father, “ranting and raving” about wanting his son. Shortly after the call, Simonson “busted” into the house and took the resident posing as his father.

According to the complaint, Simonson dropped a notebook when taking the resident that contained statements another resident had said. Another employee reported that Simonson had been sending them erratic text messages with conspiracy theories related

to other employees. Simonson’s family had requested a welfare check on him as well based on nonsensical communication throughout the night.

The messages included a video of Simonson telling a relative to follow instructions or “someone will die.” In the background of the video was a list of group homes and names. The messages included Simonson praising the kidnapped resident.

The felony kidnapping (for ransom, reward or as a shield) charge comes with a maximum prison sentence of 40 years and/or a \$50,000 fine. The felony first degree burglary charge comes with a maximum prison sentence of 20 years and/or a \$35,000 fine. Simonson is also being charged with fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle which comes with a maximum jail sentence of three years and one day and/or a \$5,000 fine.

Simonson’s past criminal record includes a disorderly conduct conviction from 2003, along with minor traffic violation convictions.

W O R S H I P *guide*

Baptist First Baptist Church 304 S. Main St., Cambridge, 763-689-1173. Call the church office or visit our website for current service times and programs. firstbaptistcambridge.org North Isanti Baptist Church Lead Pastor: Travis Blake 2248 313th Ave. NE, Cambridge, MN 55008. www.nibchurch.com Email: nibchurch@msn.com 763-689-3576. 8:30am Worship Service (traditional style) 10:45am Worship Service (contemporary style) Springvale Baptist Pastor Zane Hall 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Sunday Worship Wednesday: 6:00 pm Band of Brothers Thursday: 10:00 am Ladies Bible Study 410 County Road 6 NW Stanchfield, MN 55080 763-689-1373 springvalechurchmn.org Sunrise Bible Church 41300 Second St., North Branch, Pastor David Stertz. Sunday school for all ages 9:30am, Sunday morning Worship 10:30am, Sunday evening 6pm, Wed. Kids 4 Truth & Bible studies for all ages 6:30pm. More info at sunriseiblechurch.org or 651-674-4107.	Lead Pastor: Jason Hovis Pastor of Youth: Kohl Hanson Sunday School for all ages 9:00 am Sunday Worship Service 10:00 am Wednesday AWANA 6:30 pm Wednesday Youth Group 6:30 pm Karmelcov.org Evangelical Free Dale Evangelical Free Church 45268 Brunswick Rd, Harris, MN 763-689-5817 Pastor/Teacher Dr. Harvey Martin. Sunday School – all ages 9am. Sunday Service 10:25am. www.daleefc.com	Lutheran Braham Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA) Central Drive W. & Cty Rd 4, Braham 320-396-2755 Sunday: 10 a.m. Worship Service - In-person & Live on Facebook Office hours 9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tues., Wed., Thurs.	Living Branch Lutheran Church (LCMS) 6486 Elm St (PO Box 335), North Branch 651-674-5576 Pastor Glen Kleppe Sunday Worship 8am Sunday Adult Bible Study @ 9:15am VBS! June 22nd-26th; 6-8pm www.livingbranch.org email: office@livingbranch.org Long Lake Lutheran Church (ELCA) 3921 277th Ave NW Isanti, MN 55040 763-444-5315 Pastor Sue Olson All Are Welcome! Sunday Schedule Worship: 9:00 am Communion the 1st & 3rd Sunday	St. John's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) 980 West 4th Street, Rush City 320-358-3623 Sunday 8:45am Worship Monday 10am Longer Look Bible Study stjohnsrushcity.org St. Stephen's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) 400 SE 8th St., (Isanti #4 E.), PO Box 37, Braham 320-396-3103 9:30am Sunday School & Adult Bible Study. 10:30am Worship. ststephensbraham.org Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA) 38460 Lincoln Trail, North Branch 651-674-7047 Pastor Paul Cannon In person and online worship 9 am worship 10 am Fellowship and Coffee Hour 9 am Sunday School www.trinitynorthbranch.org office@trinitynorthbranch.org	Journey of Faith Bible based worship. 651-600-9878. faiththroughaction777@gmail.com Sunday fellowship 9am Worship & Youth Ministry 10am Come as you are. All welcome. Junction Bowl. 123 Cajima Street, NE, Isanti. Refreshments served. JustPassinthru IHS Ministries Becoming Agape – Allowing the Holy Spirit to transform lives 763-228-0883 Meeting at Crossroads Commons 1001 1st Ave. E., Suite 100, Cambridge MN justpassinihs@gmail.com Justpassinthru.net Pastor Tom Bakke Sunday mornings at 10 am Sunday nights and Wednesdays
	Kost Evangelical Free Church 37405 Kost Trail, North Branch, MN – Jct. of CR 11 & CR 72 651-583-3281 · Kostchurch.org Pastor Josh Jensen Sunday worship service 9:30 am followed by fellowship & Sunday School Youth group Wednesdays 7 pm Respawn Gaming Ministry for teen boys – 2 Fridays per month.	Cambridge Lutheran Church (ELCA) 621 Old North Main Street, Cambridge 763-689-1211 Traditional service: 8:30 a.m. Contemporary service: 9:30 a.m. www.cambridgelutheran.org - fb.com/CambridgeLutheran	Salem Lutheran Church 4638 381st Ave. NW, Dalbo, MN 55017. 763-689-1687 Join us for worship every Sunday at 10:30 Sunday School 11:00 resuming in the Fall Coffee fellowship after worship www.salemlutherandalbo.com	Methodist Common Ground - A United Methodist Community 404 Cypress St. North, Cambridge. 763-689-2071. Pastors Amelia & Andrew Buschena. Sunday 9:30am Worship. Livestream of services and more info at commongroundumc.org. Everyone Counts!	Pentecostal The Journey New Life Church 601 Heritage Blvd NE, Isanti Pastor David L. Willis. Sunday 10am Worship & the Word & Kids' Church. Sunday 6pm Family Worship. Wednesday 7pm Family Breakout Classes. 763-689-4471 Thejourneynlc.org
	Oxlip Evangelical Free Church 29237 Roanoke St NW, Isanti (1 mile West of Cty 5 and Hwy 47) 763-444-5134 oxlip.org 9am Worship Service 10:45am Christian Education Awana children's ministry Wednesdays 6:30 to 8pm	Christ Ev. Lutheran Church (WELS) 32962 Vickers St. NE, Cambridge, 763-689-5333 Pastor Samuel L. Biebert. Sunday Worship 9am, Sunday School/ Bible Class 10:30am www.christcambridge.com	Spring Lake Lutheran Church (ELCA) 8440 Erickson Road, PO Box 958, North Branch, MN 55056 (9 mi. E. of Cambridge on Hwy. 95, North one block on Erickson Road). 651-674-4606. Pastor Vicki VanderVegt.sllchurch.org Email: sll.church@gmail.com 8:15am Worship with fellowship following		<i>This directory is paid for and made possible by the participating churches listed.</i> <i>Proud to sponsor and salute our local churches</i>
	Wyanett Evangelical Free Church 12 Miles West of Cambridge on Hwy 95 www.wyanettevangelicalfree.org Pastor Bruce Talso 763-221-4469 Sunday School 9:30 am Morning Worship 10:30 am Mondays - Women's Evening Bible Study 6:00 pm Tuesdays - Men's Bible Study 5:00 pm Wednesdays - Midweek Bible Study/ Prayer 2:00 pm Thursdays - Women's Morning Bible Study 9:30 a.m. at Heart Matters Ministry, 403 1st St. Princeton A LOVING CHURCH PROCLAIMING A LIVING MESSAGE!	First Lutheran Church (ELCA) 43779 Gates Ave., Harris. 651-674-4498. Handicapped accessible. Pastor Vicki VanderVegt Sunday Worship 9:20am Coffee & fellowship following service Email: firstlutheran@q.com www.firstlutheranharris.org	Salem Lutheran Church 4638 381st Ave. NW, Dalbo, MN 55017. 763-689-1687 Join us for worship every Sunday at 10:30 Sunday School 11:00 resuming in the Fall Coffee fellowship after worship www.salemlutherandalbo.com		
		Joy Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) 1155 Joy Circle, Cambridge 763-689-4355 www.joylutheran.net Pastor James Ritter 8:30 a.m. Traditional Service 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Service	St. John Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) 28168 Jodrell St. NE, North Branch Located 6 mi. E. of Isanti on Co. Rd. 5; (or 7 mi. W. of North Branch on Co. Rd. 5); then 1-1/2 mi. S. on Co. Rd. 12. 763-444-5988, Paul Anderson, Pastor; Sunday 9am Worship; 10:20am Adult Bible Study; Thursday 6:30pm Bible study. Email: stjohnlutheran@att.net		



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NOTICES

DESTRUCTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 34CFR300.573, school districts must notify parents when the information contained in their child's special education record is no longer needed to provide public educational services to the child. This is a public notification to parents or eligible students (students who are of legal age except where guardianship or conservatorship has been established) of the District's intent to destroy all special education records, except for archival information such as name, grades, attendance records, classes attended, grades completed and number of years completed for its own records based upon federal law, for those students ages 32 and older at the end of the 2024-25 school year.

Published in the Isanti-Chisago County STAR on June 12, 19, 2025

PUBLIC NOTICE
CITY OF ISANTI SPECIAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Notice is hereby given that the City of Isanti will be holding a Special Municipal Election on Tuesday, August 12, 2025. The office to be voted for is the mayor's seat with a term ending on December 31, 2026.

The City has two polling place locations:

Precinct #1 Isanti City Hall 110-1st Avenue NW

Precinct #2 Isanti Community Center 208 ½ First Avenue NW

The polls will be open from 7:00 am and will close at 8:00 pm on August 12, 2025.

Absentee voting is administered through Isanti County. Absentee in-person voting can be completed at the **Isanti County Government Center at 555 18th Avenue SW, Isanti, MN 55040.**

Absentee Voting Hours at Isanti Government Center are as follows:

Monday-Friday (Beginning June 27, 2025) 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Saturday, August 9, 2025 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Monday, August 11, 2025 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Posted: June 3, 2025

Published: June 12, 2025 & June 19, 2025

Published in the Isanti-Chisago County STAR on June 12, 19, 2025

STOREHOUSE SELF STORAGE PUBLIC NOTICE

1982 19' O'Day sailboat, MN registration MN 5279, LV with 5 hp Mercury outboard motor and trailer at 4896 Highway 95 NW Cambridge, MN 55008 to be sold at auction on June 21, 2025, at 10:00 am for non-payment of \$825.00 in storage fees. Pine Brook Investments dba Storehouse Self Storage.

Published in the Isanti-Chisago County STAR on June 12, 19,

2025

ISANTI COUNTY ZONING OFFICE

The Isanti County Planning Commission Subcommittee working session scheduled for Wednesday June 18, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. has been cancelled and rescheduled for Wednesday July 16, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the upstairs training room of the Isanti County Government Center, 555 18th Avenue SW, Cambridge, MN 55008 to discuss revisions to the Isanti County Zoning Ordinance.

Trina Bergloff
Zoning Administrator

Published in the Isanti-Chisago County STAR on June 19, 2025

PROBATE

STATE OF MINNESOTA COUNTY OF ISANTI DISTRICT COURT TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT PROBATE DIVISION

Court File No. 30-PR-25-44
In the Matter of the Estate of:

James William Keenan, aka James W. Keenan and James Keenan, Deceased.

NOTICE AND ORDER FIXING TIME AND PLACE OF HEARING

NOTICE IS GIVEN that a Petition for Descent Decree has been filed with the Court;

Any objections to the Petition must be filed with the Court prior to or at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed the Petition may be granted.

IT IS ORDERED, that the Petition

will be heard on July 29, 2025 at 3:20 p.m. by the above named Court at Isanti County Courthouse., 555 18th Avenue Southwest, Cambridge, Minnesota. via-Zoom

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the petitioner give notice of the hearing to all interested persons in the manner prescribed by Minn. Stat. §524.1-401, and/or any other relevant notice provisions of Minn. Stat. Chap. 524 and/or Minn. Stat. Chap. 525.

Dated: _____
Judge of District Court: Steffen, Jason (Judge)

Dated: _____
Erin Boettcher
Court Administrator
Attorney:
Joseph F. Schmidt, #96994
3114 Orchard Ave. N.
Golden Valley, MN 55422
(612) 275-2956
(612) 605-5712 (fax)
jfschmidtlaw@gmail.com

Published in the Isanti-Chisago County STAR on June 12, 19, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING

CAMBRIDGE PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF MEETING

The City of Cambridge Planning Commission will hold a regular meeting on **Tuesday, July 1, 2025, at 7:00 pm** in the Council Chambers of Cambridge City Hall, 300 3rd Avenue NE, Cambridge, Minnesota 55008, to discuss the following public hearing items and other items

on the agenda.

1. **PUBLIC HEARING** – A request by Katie Lenzmeier, 1698 10th Ave SE, Cambridge, MN 55008; for an Interim Use Permit for the keeping of Fowl. The legal description is Lot 6, Block 2, Silver Oak Ridge 2nd Addition, Isanti County, Minnesota.

2. **PUBLIC HEARING** – A request by Vanessa Sorenson, 760 Marigold Dr S, Cambridge, MN 55008; for an extension to an Interim Use Permit for the keeping of Fowl. The legal description is Lot 12, Block 3, Silver Oak Ridge Addition, Isanti County, Minnesota.

3. **PUBLIC HEARING** – A request by the City of Cambridge, 300 3rd Ave NE, Cambridge, MN 55008; for an easement vacation within Cambridge Opportunity Industrial Park 6th Addition, for the 7th Addition to the same. The legal description is Outlot A, Cambridge Opportunity Industrial Park 5th Addition, Isanti Township, Isanti County, Minnesota.

4. **PUBLIC HEARING** – A request by the City of Cambridge, 300 3rd Ave NE, Cambridge, MN 55008; for a Preliminary Plat of Cambridge Opportunity Industrial Park 7th Addition. The legal description is Outlot A, Cambridge Opportunity Industrial Park 5th Addition, Isanti Township, Isanti County, Minnesota.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING** – A request by Jon D. Jondahl, 9457 US 10, Ramsey, MN 55303; for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) amendment of Townhouses at Joe's Lake (for the development Honeysuckle Villas). The legal description is Outlot A,

Townhouses at Joe's Lake 2nd Addition, Isanti County, Minnesota. The location is between 16th Ave SE and Honeysuckle Ln SE.

6. **PUBLIC HEARING** – A request by Jon D. Jondahl, 9457 US 10, Ramsey, MN 55303; for a Preliminary Plat for Honeysuckle Villas. The legal description is Outlot A, Townhouses at Joe's Lake 2nd Addition, Isanti County, Minnesota.

7. **PUBLIC HEARING** – A request by All Energy Solar, 1264 Energy Ln, St Paul, MN 55108; for an Interim Use Permit for Ground Mounted Solar. The legal description is a lengthy metes & bounds description including part of the NE ¼ of the NW ¼, Section 5, Township 035, Range 023, Isanti County, Minnesota.

8. **PUBLIC HEARING** – A request by Cellco Partnership DBA Verizon Wireless, 10801 Bush Lake Rd, Bloomington, MN 55348; for a Conditional Use Permit for a Small Cell Wireless tower. The request is in the Right of Way near the intersection of 8th Ave NW and Winnetka PI N.

More information is available at Cambridge City Hall, 300 3rd Avenue NE, Cambridge, MN 55008, including full legal descriptions. Cambridge Planning Commission Meetings are typically scheduled on the 1st Tuesday of every month and are open to the public.

Marcia Westover
Community Development Director

Published in the Isanti-Chisago County STAR on June 19, 2025

Phone and Internet Discounts Available to CenturyLink Customers

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission designated CenturyLink as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier within its service area for universal service purposes. CenturyLink's basic local service rates for residential voice lines are \$16.32-\$33.50 per month and business services are \$34.61-\$60.89 per month. Specific rates will be provided upon request.

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A household is defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Services are not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in these programs. Consumers who willfully make false statements to obtain these discounts can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from these programs.

If you live in a CenturyLink service area, visit <https://www.centurylink.com/aboutus/community/community-development/lifeline.html> for additional information about applying for these programs or call 1-800-201-4099 with questions.



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Starting Salary: Successful candidates will be placed on to the pay scale based upon the number of years of law enforcement experience. 2025: \$27.97 - \$40.49 per hour. 2026: \$28.53 - \$42.13 per hour. Must have a minimum of an A.A. Degree in Criminal Justice or Law Enforcement; have a current P.O.S.T. License, or eligible to be licensed by time of appointment. Must possess a valid driver's license.

Must successfully complete a background investigation, physical examination, and psychological examination.

Must have strong oral and written communication skills in English and the ability to act without direct supervision and exercise independent judgment in emergencies.

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To apply visit www.co.stevens.mn.us under Employment Opportunities.

Upload a legible photocopy of your Minnesota P.O.S.T. License or eligibility letter from Minnesota P.O.S.T. Board and a resume and cover Letter by 4:00 p.m., Monday, June 30th, 2025.

Stevens County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. ADA accommodations available.



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- Help shape policy, improve systems, and elevate the voices of those we serve

WHAT YOU BRING:

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 - Confidence using technology and a growth mindset when learning new tools
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 - Remote work flexibility after one year (or earlier for highly experienced hires)
- Federal Student Loan Forgiveness Program Eligible.
- A chance to be part of something bigger—serving people, improving systems, and leading change in our community

EMPLOYMENT VARIABLES: Applicants subject to criminal background check. The typical schedule is a 40-hour work week, Monday through Friday. Additional hours may be required but vary based upon workload demands.

READY TO LEAD?

For more information or to apply go to:

<http://www.co.stevens.mn.us>. under Employment Opportunities by 4:00 p.m., June 23rd , 2025.

ADA accommodations available. Stevens County is an EOE.

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RIDESMART 2025



NORTH BRANCH SUMMER CONCERT SERIES



June 17-July 15, July 29, and August 12 funded by ECRAC Funding

August 19 funded by The North Branch Area Education Foundation

Tuesday evenings

Food trucks & fun begins at 6 PM

Story Time at 6:45 PM

Concerts start at 7 PM

FREE

This concert series is brought to you by:

JUNE 17 Viking Plaza NBHS	Minnesota State Band Official Band of Minnesota
JUNE 24 NB Central Park	Native American Dance & Drum Exhibition Keith Secola - Musician
JULY 8 NB Central Park	Church of Cash Johnny Cash Tribute Band
JULY 15 NB Central Park	The Whitesidewalls Doo-wop, Rockability, Rock & Roll
JULY 22 NB Central Park	On Tap Country and Rock Band
JULY 29 NB Central Park	Monroe Crossing Bluegrass Band
AUGUST 5 NB Central Park	Night 2 Unite - No Band Community Night Out
AUGUST 12 NB Central Park	Hard Days Night Beatles Tribute Band
AUGUST 19 NB Central Park	Next Door Down Andy Spofford Variety of Hits



Grand Opening Celebration

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Friday, June 27 • 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
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