

The Lake News

"World's Largest Lake Newspaper"



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF LAKE MADISON DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION • BOX 296 • MADISON, SD 57042-0296

FEDERAL PROGRAM MAY HELP WITH CLEANER WATER

USDA and State of South Dakota Announce Opening of the South Dakota Big Sioux River Watershed Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Huron, South Dakota, December 1, 2022— The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of South Dakota are expanding their partnership through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to assist South Dakota farmers, ranchers and agricultural landowners in improving water quality, reducing soil erosion, enhancing wildlife habitat, and creating public hunting and fishing access. The Big Sioux River Watershed CREP, offered by USDA and the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks, (SD GF&P) expands the voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs available to South Dakota agricultural producers and focuses on the Big Sioux River watershed. Enrollment for the South Dakota CREP opened November 1, 2022.

"CREP is one of our most flexible tools when it comes to voluntary, locally led, partner-driven conservation efforts, and we're so glad that we're able to put it to work in South Dakota," said Steve



Dick, USDA Farm Service Agency State Director in South Dakota. "This initiative will have a positive impact in South Dakota, and we look forward to broadening the reach of the program to new agricultural producers and landscapes. We are so grateful to have support from South Dakota leaders to make this program possible."

"Landowners and producers in the Big Sioux River watershed are eligible for this program," said Kevin Robling,

GFP Secretary. "The difference between CREP and CRP is that public hunting and fishing access is required on CREP enrolled acres and participants receive a higher total payment than if they just enroll in CRP."

Through the South Dakota CREP, federal and state resources are made available to program participants to voluntarily enroll in CRP contracts and public land access agreements with the State of South Dakota for 10-to-

15-years. Participants restore cropland and marginal pastureland to grasses, wetlands, or other approved vegetation. This will improve water quality by reducing sediment, nutrients, nitrogen, and other pollutants from entering streams and rivers, and enhance wildlife habitat in the project area. In return, FSA provides participants with cost-share assistance and annual rental payments, and SD GF&P provides an additional

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LAKE MADISON

Letter from the President of Lake Madison Development Association

Thank you to all the members of LMDA that attended the Annual meeting this past Sunday. Following the meeting, your Board of Directors met to elect officers. I look forward to serving as your President for the next year.

I am going to use this letter to give you an update on the information we shared at the Annual Meeting.

Water Quality – Our guest speaker was Secretary of Game, Fish, & Parks Kevin Robling. Last year he joined us to talk about the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), a Federal and State program that had improved water quality in the James River Watershed. During the 2023 legislative session, Senator Casey Crabtree helped modify this legislation to include the Big Sioux Watershed. As of July 1, landowners in Lake County are eligible for this funding if they place land along the waterways into this program. Our Water Quality Committee is exploring the option to use some of the \$40,000 that you, our members, have donated over the past years specifically for water quality improvement projects to the CREP program.

Recreational Trail Expansion – Expansion of the recreational trail from Madison out to Lake Madison is still a priority, but we are running into numerous roadblocks. To gain access to Federal and State grant dollars, we need a public entity to serve as the administrator. To date, the county is not interested in this role. We will continue to work with developers and others to encourage them to continue to promote this expansion. If you have thoughts and ideas or would like to get involved in this project, please contact me.

Kids Don't Float – We added our third life jacket storage box at Scott Pederson Park. The county installed a concrete slab to support this effort. The storage box contains life jackets for all ages --- free to use by anyone who needs them --- and sand toys for kids and families that visit this park. The other two Kids Don't Float life jackets storage boxes are at Walker's State Park and Johnson's Point. If you would like to donate jackets to this program, please contact me and I will make arrangements to pick them up.

Golf Carts – After attending a LMDA board meeting and listening to some member express concern about golf cart use on the highways and access to The Lakes Golf Course, Senator Casey Crabtree worked to get the legislation changed. Golf carts are legal on roadways where the speed limit is 25 MPH or less. The carts must be licensed, have insurance, and be equipped with the lighting and mirrors needed for highway driving.

County Opt-Out – The County Commission voted to move forward with an opt-out to raise taxes in Lake County. This will now be brought to a public vote on September 19. Please review the material that is available (and there is a lot) and take the time to vote.

Membership Dues – You will receive an invoice for your 2024 membership dues early in 2024 (Jan/Feb timeframe) and they are due by May 1. Please pay those dues as soon as possible and include updated contact information. The contact information you provide will be included in the Directory, which is provided to each of you as part of your membership. We would appreciate receiving both your cell numbers and your email addresses as we are looking into the possibility of using texting or email to contact members when we have an emergency, when we need to share important information, or if we need help with a project.

Lake News – I am always excited when our household gets The Lake News. It's the most important communication tool that we have with all the people who live around the lake. A huge thank you to Rolly Samp who has been our publisher for 38 years!!! A huge thank you to all our advertisers too. If you have ideas for articles that you believe the lake residents might enjoy or would be information for them, please share them with Rolly.

Board of Directors – the members elected the 2023/2024 Board of Directors. Their names and contact numbers are included in the Lake News along with information on the six committees that we have in-place.

Former President and Safety Committee Chair Mark Wolfe – we honored Mark Wolfe at the meeting this year. His passing was a huge blow to our executive board as he attended every meeting filled with new ideas, a lot of passion, and a ready willingness to do the work that needed to be done to move projects forward. We miss him!

Road to Walker's Point – Please accept our thanks to the many people who helped get the road to Walker's Point paved again. Your hard work and effort along with your monetary donations made a difference. I am confident all the in-state and out-of-state visitors appreciate this paved road.

Growth – We have all realized that our lake is changing as we are seeing new developments around the lake. It is wonderful that people want to enjoy the beauty, peacefulness, and recreation offered by Lake Madison. Change and growth are normal. However, we want to plan appropriately for this change. Please encourage those people who work in public entities and our utility providers to be proactive in addressing potential problems that come along with growth. We have already experienced issues with both sewer and water utilities around the lake. We know that pedestrian and bike traffic on a highway is not the best option. As our lake community grows, we need to be sure these safety and service issues are addressed in advance of the growth.

Fire Protection – Several residents have raised questions about access to enough water and road access to homes in the event of a fire. We are working with both the Madison and Wentworth Fire Departments to learn more.

Volunteers – If you have thoughts or ideas to share, please contact a Board member. If you would like to volunteer for a committee, please call me. We would love to have your help and input.

Thank you – We moved back to Lake Madison in late 2019. I volunteered to serve on this Board and found myself working with a great group of people who love the lake, who have grown up on the lake, and who have a passion for helping others. It's been wonderful getting to know them and to work with them. I hope I can live up to their and your expectations.

I look forward to working for you and to getting to know many of you. I wish you a safe, fun, and memorable summer with family and friends.

Elaine J. Garry
President, LMDA

Keep up-to-date and stay informed

LAKE MADISON DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
www.lakemadisondevelopment.com

The Lake News

THIRD EDITION 2023

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Rollyn H. Samp, Volunteer Publisher
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Dear Fellow Lake Resident:

The Lake Madison Development Association is seeking your support of its various activities by asking you to renew your membership or to become a new member.

As a member you receive:

- Membership Directory.
- Anti-theft shield (up to \$5,000 reward).
- Three editions of the "The Lake News", including color pages of per edition, plus website.
- Lake Improvement Projects (e.g. work on inlets/outlets).
- Lake Safety Projects (e.g. Warning Sirens).
- Support for Lake County Water Quality.
- Continued testing and monitoring for bacteria and water degradation.
- Notice of local events.
- Website (www.lakemadisondevelopment.com) with pertinent information linked to weekly fishing reports and other valuable information.
- Annual Meeting with free catered picnic.

Please help us make our 2023 membership drive successful by returning your \$35 check and Information Sheet. Your participation is needed and very much appreciated!

We are continuing the volunteer \$25 donations program for our Clean Water Fund which assists in implementing county-wide programs to improve Lake water quality.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely, *Membership Committee*

LAKE MADISON DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

2023 Membership Dues: \$35.00

Name of person/s to be listed in 2024 Directory
(Because of limited space, adults only please.)

Change of home address if applicable:

Lake Address: _____

Phone number for Directory (optional): _____

Email Address: _____

(Optional: for use between you and Association only, will not be listed.)

Please fill in and return this statement with dues payment.

Thank You

Cheri Wolfe, Secretary/Treasurer
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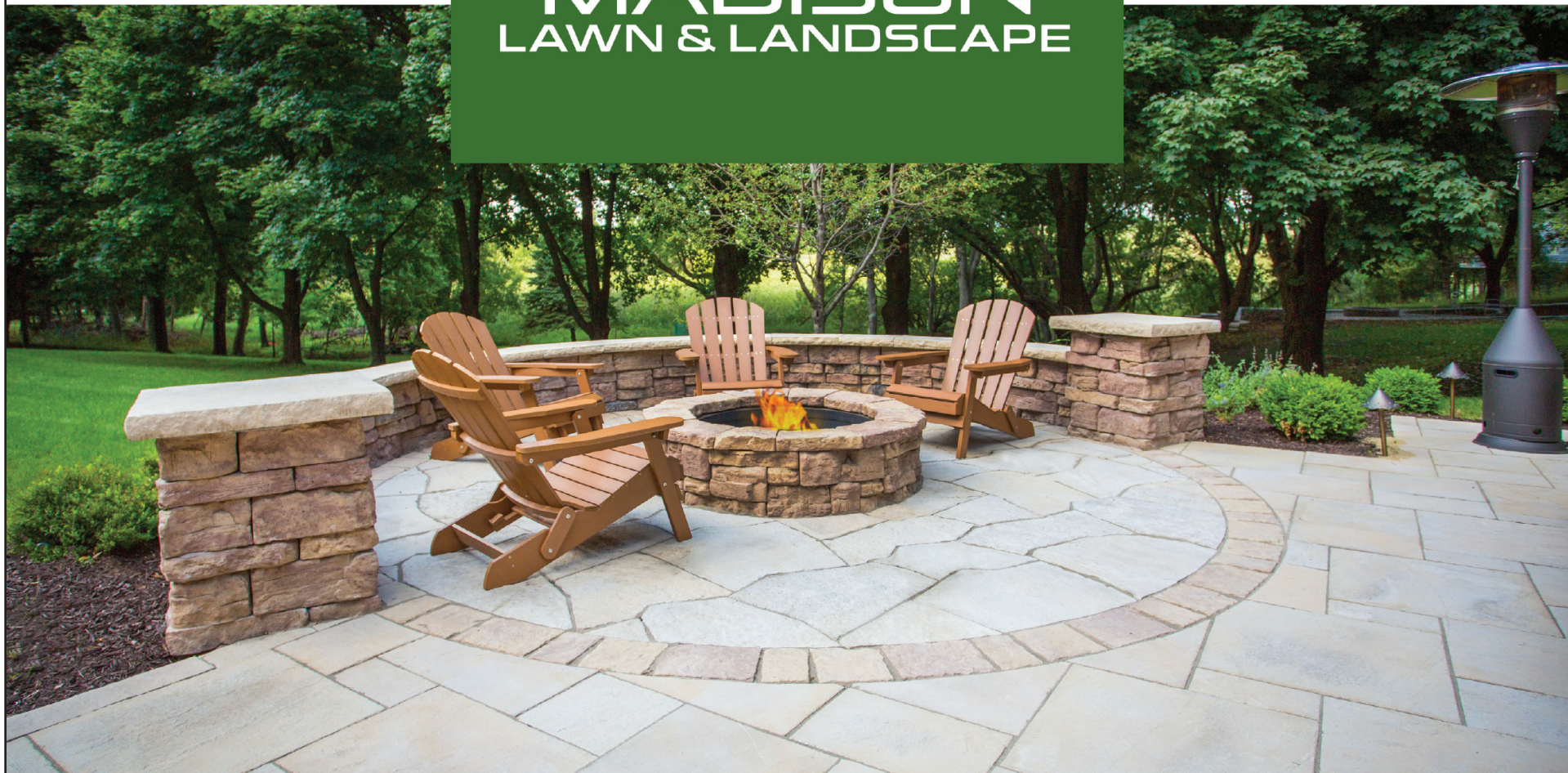


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Letter to the Editor

On September 19th (or sooner if you take advantage of the early/absentee voting options available) you will be asked to determine the fate of the \$2,800,000 property tax opt out passed by the Lake County Commission on July 6, 2023. This opt out will raise your County property taxes by 52% according to the latest estimates received from Lake County officials. After this resolution passed, a group of 15 concerned Lake County voters collected 705 signatures on petitions and submitted them to the Auditor for verification. Without needing to examine all signatures, it was determined that the number exceeded the 402 necessary to refer this action to a county wide vote of the people. On September 19th you will be asked to vote "yes" to approve this excessive 52% increase or to vote "no" to keep the current property tax structure. I will outline why a "NO" vote is appropriate.

An opt out is a provision within State law that allows Counties and School Districts to raise additional monies over the maximum allowed under the existing property tax guidelines. South Dakota has a total of 66 Counties. According to information received from the SD Department of Revenue, only 20 counties currently have opt outs. The biggest is Minnehaha County which currently has seven separate opt outs. The next largest is Lawrence County which decided to utilize the opt out to fund their Public Safety Building. None of the remaining opt outs exceed one million dollars. Why then does Lake County need an opt out of \$2,800,000.

Let's take a look at School District opt outs.

The latest information I could locate shows SD with 149 school districts with 66 utilizing opt outs to supplement budgets. The Sioux Falls School District is the largest at 9.1 million and Harrisburg has the second largest at 2 million yearly. Of the remaining 64 opt outs, none exceed one million dollars. Why then does Lake County need an opt out of \$2,800,000? This excessive, greedy request by the County Commission is reason enough to vote NO.

During the months of March thru June the County Commission listened to various presentations on income and expenses to gain a better understanding to the budget process. They also conducted three presentations (Town Hall Meetings) to inform the citizens of Lake County and to gain support for one of their three methods to produce added funding to the County. During these Town Halls the County concentrated on three ideas:

1. Road & Bridge Tax Levy which would have produced just under 1.2 million dollars. Those monies would go only to the Highway & Bridge account and would have added .60 per thousand to your county tax bill.

2. Request an opt out for 1.5 million dollars. These monies would go into the General Fund and be spent at the discretion of the Commission. This option would have increased your county tax bill by .79 per thousand.

3. Combine both items listed above and ask for the Road and Bridge Levy and also the opt out.

I attended 2 of the 3 Town Halls and the attendance to these events was good and questions were many. Most questions and responses talked about the condition of the roads in Lake County and the costs involved

to maintain these roads. In my opinion, the take away from these two meetings was that the "People" definitely did not want both ideas implemented and preferred the Road and Bridge Levy option. Why then did the Commission pass an opt out resolution for \$2,800,000? They appear totally out of touch with the wishes of the "People". Vote NO to defeat this resolution.

The Commission talked many times of their need to fund maintenance and repair of the County roads. The more I listened the more I doubted their commitment to the roads. This became more evident as I examined budget information on the county web site. In the 2023 budget the highway funding was reduced by \$787,000. That was a 4.4% decrease from 2022 and a 7.4% decrease from 2021. This took place while the Commission still needed to transfer \$1.6 million from reserves to balance the 2023 budget. What would the Commission do with the \$2,800,000 opt out money? I question their unknown intentions and again ask for your NO vote.

This opt out will increase the County portion of your property taxes by \$129 per \$100,000 of value. This will apply to all properties in Lake County. Commercial, agriculture, and residential properties will all feel this 52% increase in the county tax. Get informed by going to the Lake County web page and searching for your property tax information. Calculate your increase, calculate the increase your neighbor will pay, your employer, your farm friends. Pass the word on how excessive this opt out is. Most of all, remember to vote in the special election on September 19th. Vote NO!

Steven Kant, Wentworth, SD
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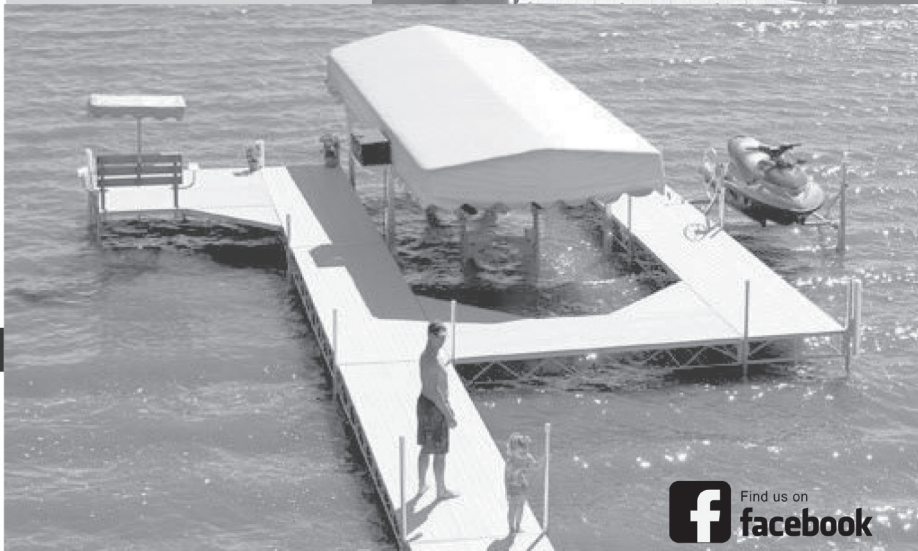
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Continued from page 1

annual rental payment for the enrolled acres open to walk-in public hunting and fishing access.

Eligible practices include permanent wildlife habitat, filter strips, wetland restorations, rare and declining habitat for prairie, duck nesting habitat, prairie strips, marginal pastureland wildlife habitat buffers, and marginal pastureland buffers.

"We are excited to partner with SD GF&P to offer this great watershed conservation incentive for South Dakota landowners and producers," Dick said. "Working together, we can deliver critical environmental benefits through voluntary conservation efforts, enhance agricultural productivity, and improve water quality in South Dakota, the Big Sioux River watershed, and downstream."

The South Dakota CREP includes all or portions of the following 18 counties in the Big Sioux River Watershed: Brookings, Clark, Clay, Codington, Day, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Kingsbury, Lake, Lincoln, Marshall, McCook, Minnehaha, Moody, Roberts, Turner, and Union counties.

Eligible participants can qualify for annual rental payments, cost share for installing the approved conservation practices, and incentive payments

for certain practices. In addition, SD GF&P will provide eligible participants additional annual rental payment.

Interested farmers, ranchers, and agricultural landowners are encouraged to contact the Farm Service Agency (FSA) at their local USDA Service Center, a Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist, or GFP private lands habitat biologist to learn more or to participate. Find contact information at "<http://www.farmers.gov/service-locator>".

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit "<https://www.usda.gov>" ■

LAKE MADISON DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Election of Officers
 - a. President – Elaine Garry
 - b. Past President – Jackie Haggard Tuschen
 - c. First Vice President – Matt Samp
 - d. Second Vice President –
 - e. Secretary/Treasurer – Cheri Wolfe
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Approval of minutes from the May 4 and July 26 meetings
6. Approval of the Financials – fiscal yearend for 2022 (presented at the Annual Meeting) and YTD July 31, 2023
7. Committee Review and Reports and Support Services
 - a. Every Board member is asked to sign up to serve on one committee
 - b. Establish goals for 2023/2024 and meet quarterly to work to achieve goals
 - i. Safety – open (formerly Mark Wolfe)
 - ii. Membership – Lead = second vice president
 - iii. Water Quality – Lead = Martin Jarret
 - iv. Fishing and Habitat = Murrey Driggs
 - v. Activities = Open
 - vi. Community and Government Relations = Open
 - vii. IT Support = Matt Samp
 - viii. Administrative Support = Cheri Wolfe
8. Contribution to CREP fund – should LMDA use this fund as a tool to improve water quality?
 - a. \$40,000 in water quality fund
 - b. Establish requirements for fund contribution, i.e.
 - i. Contribution must be used in Lake County,
 - ii. Must provide a quarterly report to LMDA on use of funds with details
 - iii. Must return unused funds after five (5) years
 - iv. Other???
9. Board Terms – if your term is up in 2024, please find a replacement
 - a. Goal is to have one board member from each HOA
 - b. Bylaws allow up to 50 Board members
10. Board meeting dates for 2023/2024
 - a. See Annual Meeting agenda for these dates; please add to your personal calendar
11. Adjournment

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An Introduction to Wakeboarding Tips & Tricks

by Andy Whitcomb

Wakeboarding is like a cross between snowboarding and skiing. Invented by surfers, this board is now about five feet long and two feet wide. With feet secured to the board in boot-like bindings, the adventuresome individual usually is towed around behind a powerboat, capable of reaching at least 20 miles per hour and scoots around and over the boat wake like a giant topwater lure. How to master wakeboarding is similar to most skills: practice. But while doing some research on this beginner's guide to wakeboarding, some basic wakeboarding tips and tricks were assembled.

ATTITUDE

While still on the learning curve, be prepared to wipe out. There may be some snickers from the boat, but their turn is next. Just enjoy the process, the water, and the fun.

PREPARATION

Many wakeboarding lessons and tutorials mention stretching ahead of time to help avoid injury. In addition, the best wakeboarding equipment for beginners is gear that fits. Not only should the life jacket (and helmet if needed) be of proper size, but even though a loaner or test board may be used when starting out, consider that



the sizes of the bindings and even the board itself can influence both safety and fun factors. And work out some hand signals with the boat operator so everyone can remain on the same page.

LEAN INTO IT

Initially when learning how to master wakeboarding, just standing on the board counts as a trick. Instructional videos on wakeboarding techniques for beginners abound but bent knees and "letting the boat do the work" will help with the procedure. Then, by tapping into your possible experience from skateboarding, boogie boards, or even sledding, you can use that knowledge of balance, angles, drag, and center of gravity to achieve more advanced wakeboarding tricks like edging, spinning, and jumping.

Some sources of wakeboarding tips and tricks mention that there are lakes with high-speed cable systems that can tow you around too. However, if going the traditional boat route, check the registration situation. The wakeboard will not need to be registered unless you are heading to a tournament, but the powerboat registration should be up to date so you won't find yourself in hot water.

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Zebra Mussels and Their Impact on the Missouri River

By Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

The Missouri River in South Dakota, renowned for its outstanding recreational areas, fishing holes and scenic campgrounds, draws a wide swath of tourists from around the world. However, these welcoming public waters have become the home of one unwelcome intruder--the infamous zebra mussel.

Endemic to southeastern Europe, the zebra mussel made its journey to the United States Great Lakes in the '80s as an unlikely stowaway, clinging

to the hulls of large ships and barges. Since their arrival, the mussels have proliferated across the Midwest, spreading from one river system to the next.

So how can a mollusk, merely the size of a fingernail, inflict millions of dollars in economic damage to local recreation, agriculture and hydroelectric power generation? Martin Goding, Gavins Point Dam maintenance and operations manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, explains that one zebra mussel can spawn more than a million eggs in a season, overrunning the local ecosystem. Once established, the mussels latch onto every viable surface in the water--they envelop pipes, ruin beaches and disrupt

hydroelectric dams.

In 2015, local governments detected South Dakota's first infestation of zebra mussels in Lewis and Clark Lake. Goding says this discovery ignited a fierce battle against the

invasive species.

With few effective treatments at their disposal, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been forced to adjust to operating within a river infested with mussels. The change has significantly

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increased the maintenance costs associated with running Gavins Point Dam. Pipes, essential for cooling the dam as it produces electricity, now require routine disassembly and cleaning. Over the course of six months of warm weather, the dam's lakeside gates collect an additional 30 tons of weight from the relentless accumulation of zebra mussel shells and the debris they carry.

"We have spent a million and a half dollars over the last five years just in maintenance to deal with this invasive species--and that's not even counting the cost of materials," said Goding. "Zebra mussels have really impacted the operation and turned maintenance into a nightmare."

Beyond maintenance, zebra mussels have also disrupted power generation. Outbreaks of zebra mussels within the dam's infrastructure have resulted in unscheduled and forced outages, interrupting an energy source that has been historically reliable.

"One could safely say that

Gavin Point Dam has lost a million dollars in power generation over the last five years," said Goding.

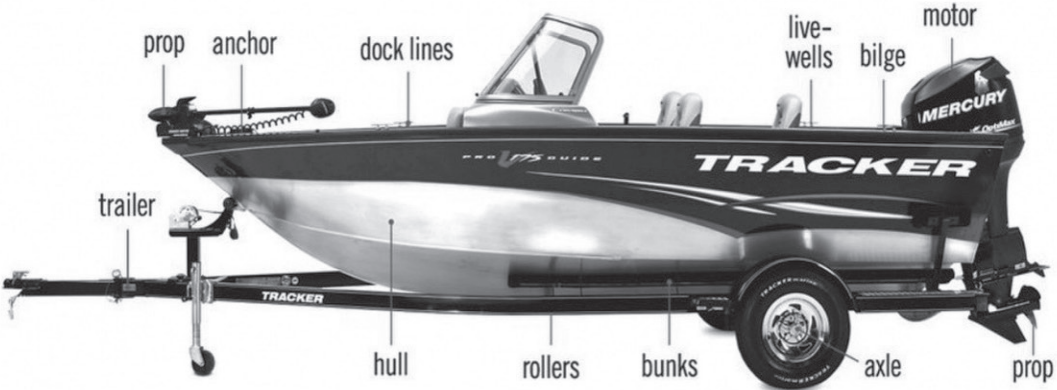
Since the initial invasion in 2015, some strategies have emerged to mitigate damage from the invasive species. The introduction of UV lights

and the addition of strainers have curbed the presence of zebra mussels within the dam. Even still, the mussels have continued their spread northward through the Missouri River to Lake Sharpe near Pierre, S.D.

According to Goding, the

experiences at Gavins Point Dam serve as a stark warning for dams and water systems yet to face infestation.

"Lewis and Clark Lake is beyond prevention," said Goding. "We have crossed that bridge and they are not going away." ■



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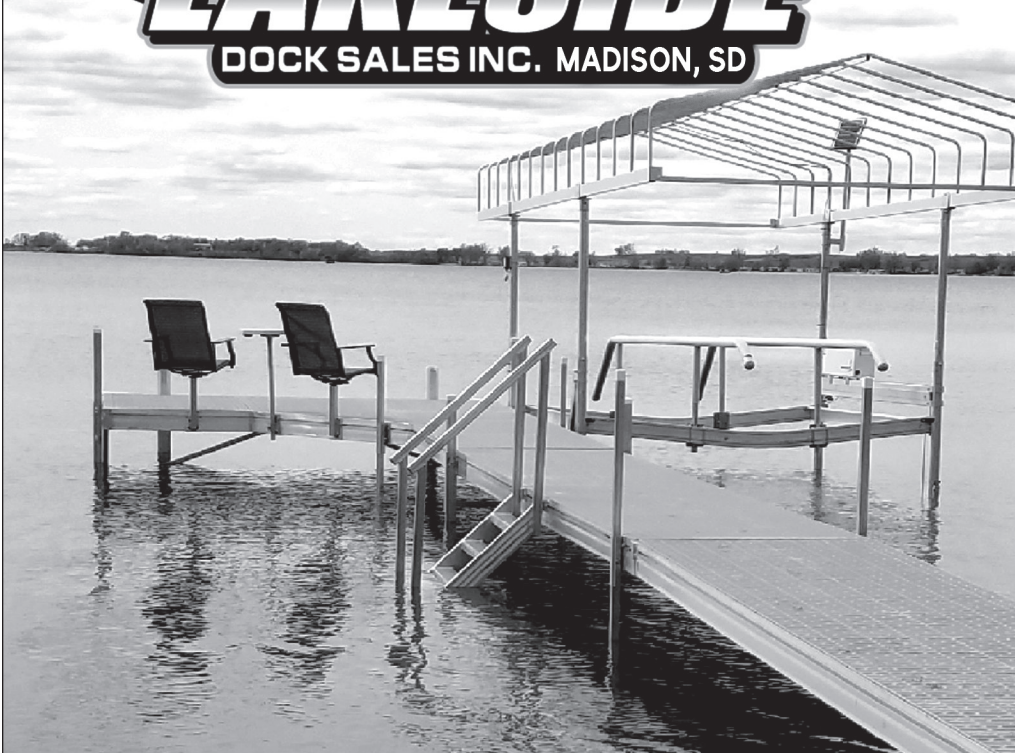


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COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF EAST RIVER ELECTRIC

Madison Daily Leader

A three-judge panel of the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled in favor of East River Electric Power Cooperative, upholding a lower court's ruling to dismiss a lawsuit brought by Dakota Energy Cooperative seeking to terminate its wholesale power contract early in order to buy power from Guzman Energy, a for-profit, Colorado-based energy broker.

The ruling upholds a contractual commitment between East River Electric and Dakota Energy, confirming that Dakota Energy must honor its long-term power contract until its agreed upon termination date of Dec. 31, 2075, and that no provision in the wholesale power contract or East River's bylaws allows for early termination of that obligation. "Dakota Energy's member-owners

are the real winners here," said East River Electric CEO/General Manager Bob Sahr. "East River Electric is a not-for-profit, local wholesale power cooperative that has provided dependable energy, some of the lowest rates in the nation and reliable infrastructure to its members for more than 70 years. We look forward to serving Dakota Energy and the rest of our members for generations to come."

The legal dispute started in November 2020 when Dakota Energy, an electric distribution cooperative based in Huron which provides power to areas in Beadle, Hyde and Hand counties, filed a lawsuit seeking to exit its long-term wholesale power contract with East River Electric.

Federal District Court Judge Lawrence Piersol in April 2022 granted summary judgment to

East River Electric and its power supplier, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, dismissing the case. Dakota Energy appealed to the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals. The 8th Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed Piersol's ruling.

"The courts have spoken clearly twice now. Dakota Energy has not met the legal standard for pursuing its claims," Sahr said. "The contract stands, and it's past time to stop wasting member-owners' money on attorney fees."

In 2022 alone, East River Electric invested more than \$75 million in local transmission projects for its member cooperatives. Over the years, they have spent millions in the Dakota Energy territory to respond to growth and provide members with affordable electricity.

"A lot more goes into the electric utility business than just

buying energy," Sahr said. "East River's member cooperatives own us, and our dedicated workforce responds during storms, builds and maintains a reliable transmission network, and supports local economic development, all at some of the lowest rates in the entire country. We're here for the long haul and work only for the members at the end of the line."

East River Electric is a wholesale power cooperative headquartered in Madison which is owned by and serves 24 electric co-ops and one municipal electric system in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. It has long-term power supply contracts with its member systems to ensure long-term reliability and cost control. ■

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Answer key on page 27

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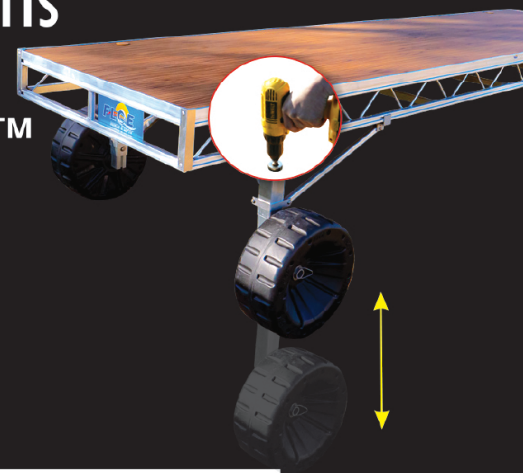
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Dakota State University Student research looks to confirm snake fungal disease

DSU student,
professor partner

Madison Daily Leader

After a friend spotted a snake with weird-looking scales on the outskirts of Sioux Falls, Dakota State University student Adam Peak was intrigued.

“We researched it and discovered that it was likely a rare infection that was going on,” Peak said.

That infection, commonly referred to as Snake Fungal Disease, is caused by the fungus *Ophidiomyces ophiodiicola*, which is a threat to wild snakes, explained Dr. Andrew Sathoff, assistant professor of biology.

Peak, a senior biology major, started using assignments in classes to do more research on the disease.

“Adam gave an excellent disease profile presentation in microbiology,” Sathoff said.

The presentation inspired Peak to partner with Sathoff on a research project. Peak started with a literature review in 2022 and found that the disease had not been recorded so far in South Dakota. Most published research has focused on vipers, other venomous snakes and Colubrids (typically nonvenomous) affected by the disease.

Through his research, Peak hopes to discover whether the Snake Fungal Disease can affect the Plains Garter Snake, South Dakota’s most common snake. “From what we’ve been reading, the disease appears to have a very wide host range,” Sathoff explained. “That’s common for fungal diseases.”

Dr. Kristel Bakker, professor of biology, has also assisted Peak in securing permits to go on state land for the research.

To conduct the research, Peak has been collecting shed snakeskins and live samples from snakes. He has been storing them in the refrigerator at about 4 degrees Celsius, which helps



DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY student Adam Peak is researching Snake Fungal Disease and whether it can affect the Plains Garter Snake.

preserve spores.

This fall, Peak will work with Sathoff to complete cultures, swabbing the snakeskin and attempting to feed the fungus to

encourage growth.

So far, he hasn’t noticed the disease forming or growing.

“I have noticed a lot of scarred scales along snakes because older



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SAMPLES of snakeskins and live samples will be used to swab and attempt to feed fungus to encourage growth.

specimens can survive it,” Peak said. “A lot of older populations have been found to have had trace amounts of the disease in their white blood cells, showing they fought the disease off.”

The disease eats the scales of the snake. However, scales can also be removed through competition, fighting and predator attacks. Peak’s research will help determine the cause of scarred and missing

scales.

While many may see snakes as pests, they are an essential part of the ecosystem and play a crucial role in leveling the populations of pests like grasshoppers, locusts and even field mice, Peak explained.

Peak and Sathoff hope to do some soil DNA extractions as well. Regardless of the results, the research will produce a publication. ■

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Madison nears full integration with L&C

Rural water here in 2024

By **ZAC ZWASCHKA**
Madison Daily Leader Reporter

Madison's integration into the Lewis & Clark Rural Water System (L&C) is on its home stretch, and according to L&C Executive Director Troy Larson, residents can expect the city to be fully connected by around this time next year.

Madison -- along with 19 other member cities across South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota -- joined L&C more than 30 years ago, and with Madison being one of the last to be incorporated, this is a welcome completion to a lengthy project.

Larson explained that there

are three items remaining for Madison's integration, all of which are making significant progress. Among these are two 16-mile segments of 16-inch diameter PVC pipe that will connect Madison to the broader L&C system.

"Both of them expect to be substantially complete by the end of this year," Larson said, adding that between the two, nearly 90% of piping has been placed.

Construction on these segments began in April and May, respectively, with Halme Construction of Lake Norden handling the southern end and Carstensen Contracting of Dell Rapids working to the north.

On top of this, Larson said that additional pumps will be needed to ensure the water flows smoothly to its



MADISON'S INTEGRATION into the Lewis & Clark Rural Water System is nearing completion, with residents being set to receive the water in August of next year. Here, pipe is being laid for a million-gallon ground storage reservoir being constructed east of the Madison Water Treatment Plant.

destination.

"We're adding pumps to a pump station just a mile west of Crooks that is needed to get the water pumped up to

Madison. That contract is progressing very well, and we expect that it will hopefully be completed in the next couple months," Larson added.

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The final item is a million-gallon ground storage reservoir to be built east of Madison's Water Sanitation Plant. Construction on the reservoir kicked off in May, and Larson said that it's set for completion in August of next year.

Larson described the reservoir as the "final piece of the puzzle," as its completion date will signify Madison's full integration with L&C.

Once completed, the L&C system will deliver 44.19 million gallons per day (gpd) to its 20 members from an aquifer adjacent to the Missouri River, which is pumped to a treatment plant near Vermillion. From this total, Madison is slated to receive a million gpd.

Madison has technically been receiving L&C water since 2017 via a wheeling plan where Madison receives water from the Big Sioux Community Water



CONSTRUCTION ON Lewis & Clarks Rural Water System's million-gallon ground storage reservoir for Madison began construction in May. It's completion will signify the final piece of the puzzle for the city's full integration into the L&C system.

Corporation (BSCWC), who purchased it from the Minnehaha Community Water System (MCWC).

While this plan has helped Madison maintain its water needs over the last half-decade, it was always meant to be temporary.

Part of the reason Madison's integration has taken so long is L&C's reliance on federal funding for 80% of the project's costs, with the other 20% being evenly divided between the member cities and states they inhabit.

Larson explained that at

times, federal funding was "minimal at best, leading to small, incremental progress." However, a recent surge in federal spending has resulted in a boost of efficiency, as L&C has a record 17 active contracts throughout its service area.

This is an all-time high for L&C, and Larson noted that previously, three to four consecutive contracts was the best they could hope for.

"Fortunately, we've seen an influx of funding, and that's really helped us make a push to get to the finish line," he added.

Madison's integration into the original project is a critical milestone, as water of increased quality and quantity will finally be available to residents. As completion nears and expansion plans gain momentum, further information will be forthcoming. ■

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RESTORATION WORK makes train rides more authentic

By MARY GALES ASKREN
Madison Daily Leader

Passengers will get a more authentic experience this year when they ride the yellow car on the PVH&M Railroad at Prairie Village.

"The inspiration for this were the seats out of the State Fair car," said Bob Gehringer, a Prairie Village volunteer who serves primarily on the railroad committee. The State Fair Special, a 50-ton combination car constructed in 1909, was sold to Tristan Scott of Ethan last year.

Bench seats from that car, which carried passengers, baggage and mail in its heyday, have been installed in the refurbished passenger car, replacing the tables and chairs which were previously used. Volunteers have done the restoration work.

A new ceiling and new paneling have been installed. Wainscoting, window frames and trim have been painted. Tiffany-style lights have been installed. The seats are currently being reupholstered.

"We got the benches done. We're still working on the backs," Gehringer said.

While a team of volunteers has been responsible for much of the work, one man took responsibility for the armrests on the seats: Gary Johnson.

"He stripped them all, hand-sanded them and put them back together again," Gehringer reported.

Work on the passenger car is just one of several tasks undertaken this year. Work on the track continues. A professional crew will come in to pull up about 400 feet of track, grade the railbed, relay the track and then shore it up with crushed rock.

"We did three sections of track ourselves," Gehringer said.

Work on the track is necessary because in recent years, the track has been sinking into the original railbed.

In addition, two of the caboose cars have been recently sold.

"We have much more stuff than we can maintain," Gehringer reported.

Although the engines are stored in the roundhouse, cars are stored on side tracks where they are not protected from the elements. When the



TIFFANY LIGHTS and bench seats create a more authentic experience for passengers of the PVH&M Railroad at Prairie Village. Work on the yellow passenger car was completed by volunteers.

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decision to sell the cars was made, they were advertised on Facebook Marketplace.

"A lot of people were interested, but they gave up when they found out how much it cost to move one," Gehringer said.

House movers were needed to move the State Fair Special last year. Despite some buyers losing interest, offers were received and accepted on the two cars.

Part of maintaining the railroad is training new volunteers to step into some of the roles. Last week a senior at Brandon Valley, Miles McDaniels, was working with Gehringer to prepare one of the diesel engines for use this year.

McDaniels started volunteering last year and is learning routine tasks, such as the proper way to throw a switch in order to avoid injury. He is also becoming familiar with the engineer's role by shadowing the trained

volunteers.

"I don't drive, but it's fun being up there," he said about riding the engine. In the fall, McDaniels will be studying mechanical engineering at the S.D. School of Mines and Technology and interning with the 1880s Train in Hill City.

The train at Prairie Village runs at 2 p.m. every Saturday through the season with more than one ride being offered if there is enough interest. The train will also run on Sunday twice during the season – on Father's Day and during the Jamboree.

Most weeks a diesel engine will be used. However, a steam engine will run on Railroad Day, which is Aug. 6, and during the Steam Threshing Jamboree. The committee may also run steam on other weekends if there are sufficient volunteers with the time necessary to prepare the steam engine for use. ■

HERKIMER

Inherits Joke Book

The late Maury Byer had a joke or two for every customer at Marr's Beach (Now the Harbor). What ever happened to his joke book? Herkimer, the lonely fisherman in Bourne's Slough inherited it.

Did you hear about the Labor Day joke?

It didn't work for me.

Why does ice cream always get invited to the party?

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What did the little corn say to the mama corn?

Where's Pop corn?

Why did the robot go on vacation?

It needed to reboot his batteries.

Why did the teacher jump into the pool?

He wanted to test the water

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How does a cucumber become a pickle?

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What kind of tree fits in your hand?

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What do mermaids sleep on?

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But have you ever had a crop that was so prolific you didn't have enough storage space? Or you let your bounty sit on the garage floor in a box too long and all your hard work rotted? These scenarios can be avoided with a little preparation and planning.

Tomatoes, corn and zucchini seem to be in an overabundance in the late summer and early fall. Here are some tip and recipes to use those nutrient rich ingredients in your next meal.



Tomatoes

There is a wide variety of options when it comes to fresh tomatoes: salsa, gazpacho, tomato sauce and homemade ketchup. My favorite is a fresh batch of tomato and basil soup. Some people don't mind the skin in the soup, I on the other hand, am not a fan. I use a pot of boiling water drop the freshly washed tomatoes into the water for about 30 seconds then place them carefully into a bowl of ice water. After they're cooled, the skins will pull right off with your fingers. This soup freezes quite nicely for up to 6 months, so you can enjoy your harvest long into the winter.

Tomato & Basil Soup

2.5 lbs. fresh tomatoes
1 yellow onion -diced
4 carrots peeled and diced
6 cloves garlic- minced
1- 8 oz. can tomato paste
1/3 C. flour
1- 32 oz. carton of vegetable broth
3 TBSP. olive oil
12 basil leaves
1 TBSP sugar
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/8 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
1 C. half n' half
2 TBSP. butter

1. Saute onion and carrots on medium - high heat for 7 mins in oil and butter.
2. Add garlic saute for 1 minute.
3. Add flour. Whisk continually for 1-2 minutes.
4. Add tomato paste. Stir for 30 seconds.
5. Add: broth, tomatoes, sugar, salt, red and black pepper and basil leaves.
6. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
7. Let mixture cool down for about 10 minutes then blend in batches.
8. Reheat and stir in half and half.
9. Serve and enjoy.

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Corn

Corn can be frozen and saved for up to one year if you follow the proper steps. Frozen corn is great all year long in chili's, muffins, chowder or alone with butter and salt.

How to freeze corn:

1. Remove husk and clean thoroughly.
2. Place into a pot of boiling water for 4 minutes.
3. Remove and place immediately into iced water.
4. Once cooled, hold corn vertically and cut downward with a sharp knife. *(Fun tip: if you have an angel food pan, place the corn in the middle and the kernels will fall into the pan.)*
5. Place kernels on parchment paper in a single layer and freeze.
6. Transfer to a freezer safe ziplock for up to 12 months.

*You may want to measure the amount of kernels you place in each bag and mark it with a sharpie.. this l)eaves the guess work out of defrosting in the future.



Zucchini

This vegetable is quite versatile in texture and use. Used as a replacement for pasta, you can peel zucchini into long flat straps for lasagna or small noodles and saute with your favorite sauce. Other ideas are grilled as a side dish, use in soups, raw salads or bread. My favorite use for extra zucchini is bread! It's a sneaky way to get vegetables into your families tummies without them even knowing they're eating vegetables.

Zucchini bread

- 2 C. flour
- 1 1/2 C. sugar
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 TBSP. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 eggs
- 2 C. zucchini- grated or shredded
- 3/4 C. vegetable oil
- 1 TBSP. vanilla extract
- 1 C. walnuts-chopped (optional)

1. Pre heat oven to 350°F
2. Combine: flour, sugar, baking soda, cinnamon and salt.
3. Beat eggs, mix in zucchini, oil and vanilla.
4. Add dry ingredients into wet ingredients.
5. Fold walnuts into batter (optional).
6. Dived evenly into 2 well greased loaf pans.
7. Bake for 50-60 minutes.
8. Cool on a wire rack.
9. Serve and enjoy!

Whatever you decide to do with your extra produce, just remember to have fun with it and share with those who may not have the bounty you do!



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Expanded Mountain Lion Hunting Nixed

By JOSHUA HAIAR
South Dakota Searchlight

After receiving hundreds of written public comments, the state Game, Fish and Parks Commission denied a proposal Thursday that would have allowed the use of dogs to hunt mountain lions in a broader area of the Black Hills. However, the commission directed the Department of Game, Fish and Parks to reassess its mountain lion management plan and bring recommendations next fall for the 2024 hunting season.

Commissioner Travis Bies — who made the motion to deny the proposal — said he supports hound hunting for mountain lions in the Black Hills, but agrees with GF&P Wildlife Director Tom Kirschenmann, who testified that the move would be premature without more research. “I certainly understand the request from the houndsmen for more opportunity,” Kirschenmann added.

Hounds are utilized in mountain lion hunts for their scenttracking abilities. Once the hounds detect the mountain lion’s trail, they pursue and often force the lion to ascend a tree. This “treeing” makes the lion more visible for hunters. Research presented at a 2021 commission meeting indicated the mountain lion population was projected to decline.

As of December 2022, the estimate stood at 275 mountain lions in the Black Hills, but it’s projected to drop to just under 250 by the end of 2023. If the recent average of 26 females killed by hunters per season continues, the number could plummet to just above 200 by the end of 2024, according to the department.

Wildlife Program Administrator Andrew Norton said the implementation of the hound hunting proposal would “exacerbate that decline in population.” And until the department brings hunters and wildlife advocates together to decide if that’s something the public wants to do, the commission agreed that the move would be premature. “I’m not looking for this to happen overnight,” Bies said. But as with some of his fellow commissioners, he made it known that “I’m 100% for bringing dogs into the Black Hills.”

The proposal would allow for the annual harvesting of up to 12 mountain lions per year — six female and six male — in the Black Hills Forest Fire Protection District, which encompasses the entirety of the Black Hills in South Dakota. In addition, 15 permits already allow the use of dogs in Custer State Park.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Commissioner Robert Whitmyre said he had never seen so many public

comments filed on a petition in his two years on the commission. “We had over 500 folks one way and 300 folks on the other way,” added Commissioner Stephanie Rissler — with the majority of comments in favor of the proposal. “I think this is a bigger topic than just using hounds in the Black Hills.”

Advocates believe that using hounds would increase the success rate of hunts and help manage the mountain lion population more effectively. “I really like the way this proposal is written,” testified Finn Sacrison, a Rapid City houndsman. “The fact is that the petitions we brought forward are about opportunity.” That view was echoed by James Thompson of Madison, who wrote, “Using dogs is the most ethical way of hunting cats. If you tree a female you can walk away and continue hunting.”

The proposal was also supported by South Dakota Bowhunters Incorporated, which said the move would minimize the predation of elk, mule deer, and other sought-after animals. “I fully support allowing the houndsmen of South Dakota to be able to have an opportunity to help take more lions and give our big game populations a better chance of survival,” wrote group secretary Dana Rogers of Hill City. Critics argue that hounding mountain lions makes the sport too easy for the hunter and commercializes the activity. “As an avid spot and stalk hunter, I am against the use of hounds in the Black Hills,” wrote Hunter Schofield of Rapid City. “It will take away from the foot hunters that hunt mountain lions. The use of dogs will pressure the wildlife which are pressured enough as it is.” ■

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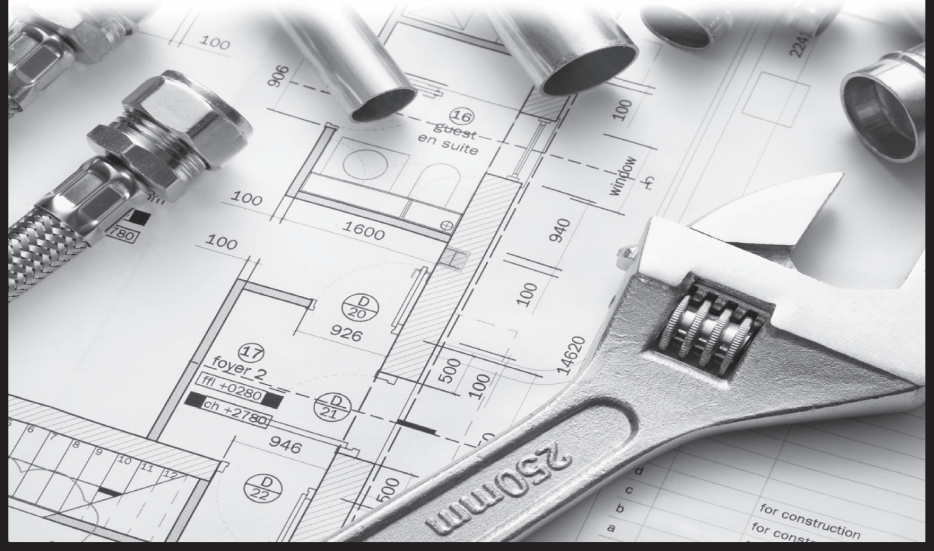
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Getting the drop on summertime perch

By **NICK SIMONSON**
Pierre Capital Journal

While yellow perch are most notably pursued through the ice and are a primary target of many anglers throughout the region during the cold weather months, these fish can provide fast summertime action and a stockpile of delicious fillets that can rival the stash that winter anglers accumulate.

Connecting with roaming schools of large yellow perch can require some work, but once found they can provide fast action using some very simple methods throughout the summer.

TOUCH ‘EM TROLLING

Many times, anglers will encounter sizeable perch while trolling transition areas for walleyes. Here, larger yellow perch will also be feeding on the minnows, small crayfish, freshwater shrimp and other prey items that their bigger cousins are seeking out.

Offering up a minnow on a single-hook Lindy rig or trolling half a crawler on a harness or

slow-death setup is a great way to make initial contact with schools of perch, which by their nature tend to roam and follow break lines, weed-lines and other natural edges underwater.

Once a few perch are picked up in a particular area through trolling methods, consider offering up a more targeted presentation to stay on the school and effectively bring fish to the boat.

THE JIG IS UP

Utilizing a jig can help quickly add perch to a fish basket or livewell for a summer fish fry.

Whether transitioning from trolling for these fish or making contact while working a weedline and finding a school stacked up, a jig allows a precise presentation of bait. Jigs in sizes of 1/16- to 1/8-ounce typically match up with the mouths of those desired perch from 10 to 12 inches in length, and they can deploy a pinch of crawler, small leech or minnow effectively.

Consider using compact plastics such as Lindy Fuz-E-Grubs, or 3-inch curlytailed plastics to add some bulk when

fish are aggressive and keying in on larger food items. Additionally, jigs dressed with krystal flash or marabou will also provide some shimmer and additional attraction to set perch off.

When perch are encountered away from shore, utilize jigs to further pinpoint holding areas along bottom transitions where mud turns to gravel, sand or chunk rock. Look for schools to hole up along weed-lines as well, especially those where the wind has been blowing in for any amount of time, as current-driven prey items such as small baitfish and aquatic insects will be stacked up in the area as well.

Rock reefs and rip-rap can also provide natural and man-made barriers that corral perch in a particular spot, especially in funnel areas where water pushes under bridges or narrows in a lake. Mark these as key jigging places for perch on a GPS or lake map.

SLIP AWAY

Offering a minnow or small leech under a slip float is another great way to target summertime perch

in these prime locations and the depth can easily be adjusted if the school moves out or down from where they were first encountered. A simple setup of a No. 4 or No. 6 octopus hook under a split shot or two to balance out the buoyancy of the chosen float is all that’s needed for fast fishing when a school of yellow perch is discovered. It’s a great way to get young anglers in on the action and utilizes any wind or current to provide added action to the bait below as the bobber moves with the slightest breeze or surface disturbance.

Swap out a small jig — plain or dressed depending on fish preference — for the plain hook and experiment with the offerings to find what works best on a given day.

While perch may be a primary pursuit in the winter, they can provide a good deal of action in summer as well, especially as things warm up and they are actively feeding. Knowing how to find them and identifying school location through trolling tactics and then staying on them with more precision through jigging and slip floating are great ways to add a few more fillets to the frying pan and summer memories. ■

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LCM Connecting to our Community

At the Lake County History Museum, we're making our own history these days with an emphasis on expanding ways we can serve our communities. Because our members give life to the museum, shaping our programming and giving us direction, we are working to increase our membership by 10%.

We seek new members not only because memberships and donations help to fund our operations, but also because we know new members will bring new ideas for preserving and sharing the history of Lake County. In recent years, History Happy Hour and family programming have made local history more readily accessible.

What else can we do? We are eager to hear what our

members - both new and longtime - would like to see and do.

Members benefit not only in having a voice, but also in receiving our quarterly newsletter, discounts on books, and invitations to our events. A basic, individual membership is \$25, but other levels of support enhance our ability to expand programming.

We are also making history by establishing the second South Dakota chapter of the National History Club. Established for middle school and high school students in 2002, the National History Club encourages students to enjoy history by engaging in activities which they find meaningful.

Programming Coordinator Christina Blessinger will work with high school teachers

Jacob Ludemann and Steve Gors to establish the club. Students will choose the activities which they would like to pursue.

Christina hopes they will compete in the National History Day competition held each year at the Old Courthouse Museum, in Sioux Falls. However, that decision will be left up to students.

They might take field trips to art and history museums, help to develop displays at the Lake County History Museum, work with staff and volunteers at community events, or take cemetery tours. Christina has a long list of ideas to help students begin brainstorming possibilities.

The only criteria for joining the club will be an interest in history. The chapter will

need at least four students to serve as officers to get a charter. That is the national organization's only criteria; there are no membership dues or other obligations.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Christina at 605-256-5308

Please consider increasing your membership to the next level. We had a great year in 2022 with exciting new programs and more than doubling our reach to the public. Christina has a fun year planned with new kids and adult programs. Invite family and friends to become members! Your investment in the museum is an investment into the Lake County Community. ■

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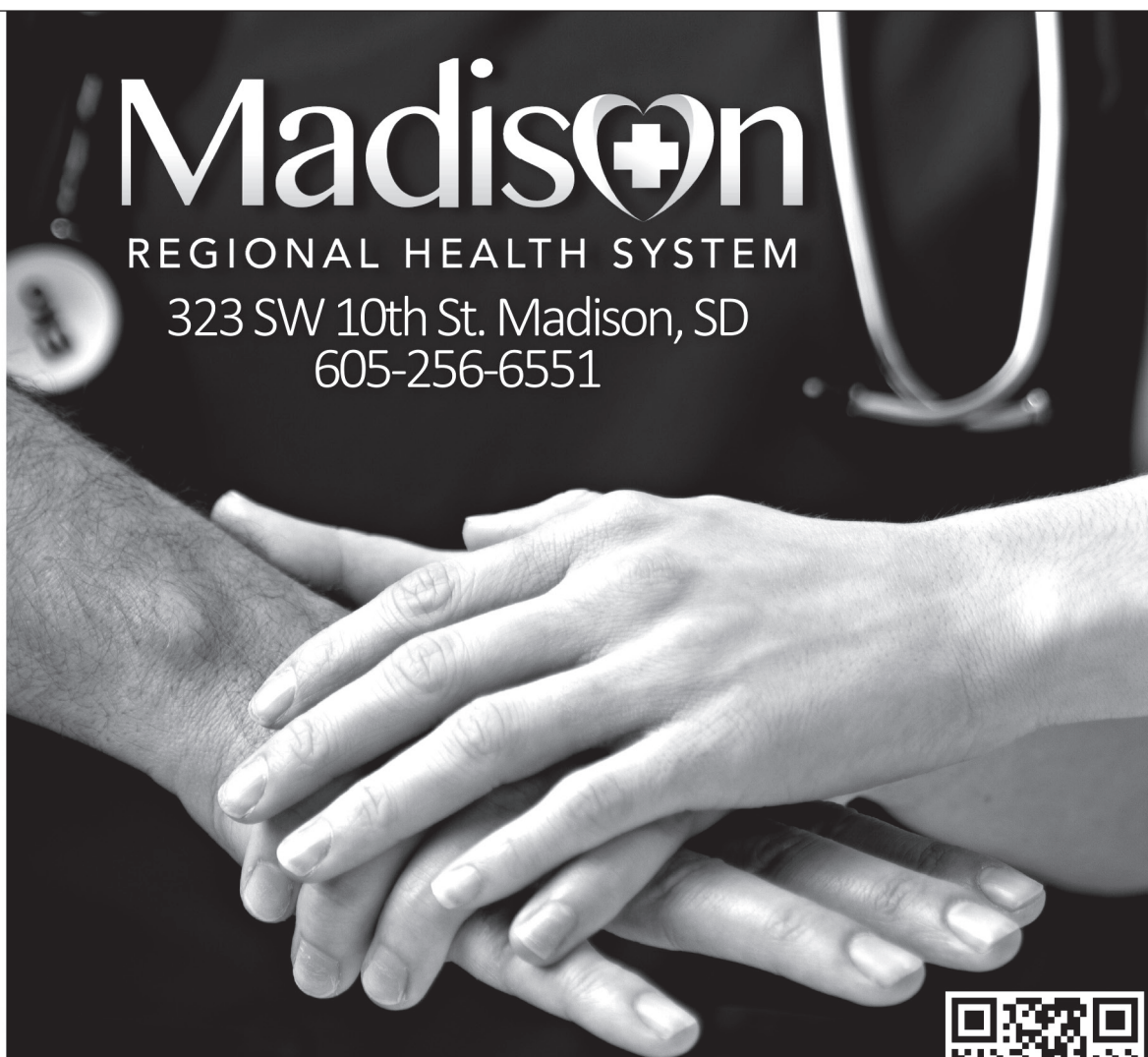
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Prairie Village NEWS

By **FARON WAHL**, *Manager*

Major league baseball legend Yogi Berra famously coined the phrase "It ain't over till it's over." He was so correct.

We just wound down the 60th anniversary version of our annual Steam Threshing Jamboree. The dust hasn't settled yet (literally), and countless details tied to finishing a show of this magnitude will go on and on for some time. Most of what's left isn't visible to the attendee or Labor Day guest, but there is a lot to do.

In other words, it ain't over. Yes, the formal event has ended, but the followup tasks currently comprise some considerable lists. The difference between the

current lists and those prior to the event is that, while many of the items are time-sensitive, most of the deadlines aren't as tight.

When it comes down to it, this is pretty much the same scenario that repeats itself throughout our entire year.

Village events, camping, building prep, and our multifaceted daily operations aren't just start/stop functions.

They require planning that overlaps and resembles a slowly spinning wheel with the spokes visually blending.

Frankly, that also goes for all off-season work. Many people assume there is nothing going on here in the late fall and dead of winter. But just as the wrap-up

for the current year closes by

November, planning for the next season is already moving in earnest. That planning begins in the fall, ramps up a bit in December, and is really rolling just after New Year's.

So, even when our fall operations eventually involve physically closing the main gate for the winter, it still ain't over. That juncture on our calendar simply represents the very last details of one season melding into the ramp-up for the next. There is no specific start or end. It's perpetual.

My final analogy involves our great staff. They represent a mix of mostly seasonal employees who may be with us just one year or may return a couple of seasons, while a few regular employees stay with us year after year. Either way, when the main season winds down, some tears usually flow as the impact of stepping away from this tight staff family begins to sink in.

It feels like it's over.

But, as Mr. Berra would tell us, it ain't over.... because it's not truly over. The next season may seem a long way off, but this one and the next are already intricately tied. A couple of us will see the whole thing through in person, others will be away for a few months, while still others may need to find themselves elsewhere by next season. Letting go is sometimes part of it, but that doesn't mean it's over.

To my dedicated, hardworking, and lovable staff: whether you're able to remain part of this team next season or not, you are now part of a close-knit family, the ties of which are knotted securely.

You have become a deeply important piece of my life and that of others, and you don't just suddenly go away or become forgotten. You're a part of us now, and that doesn't end.

So, staff members, don't worry that it's over. It ain't over. And one way or another,

I'll see you down the road. ■

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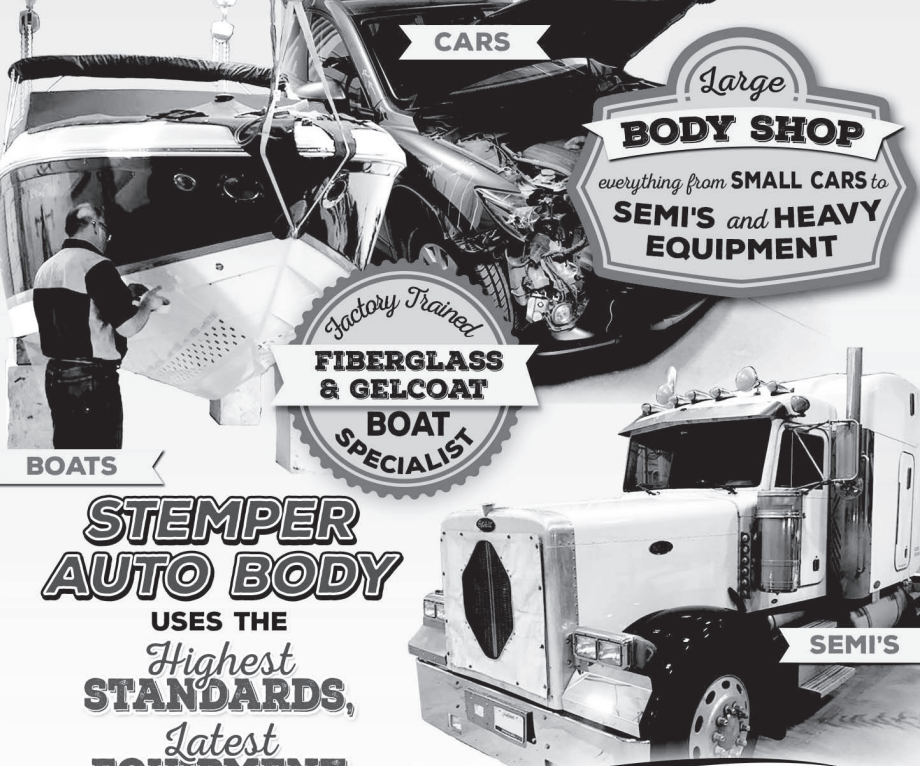
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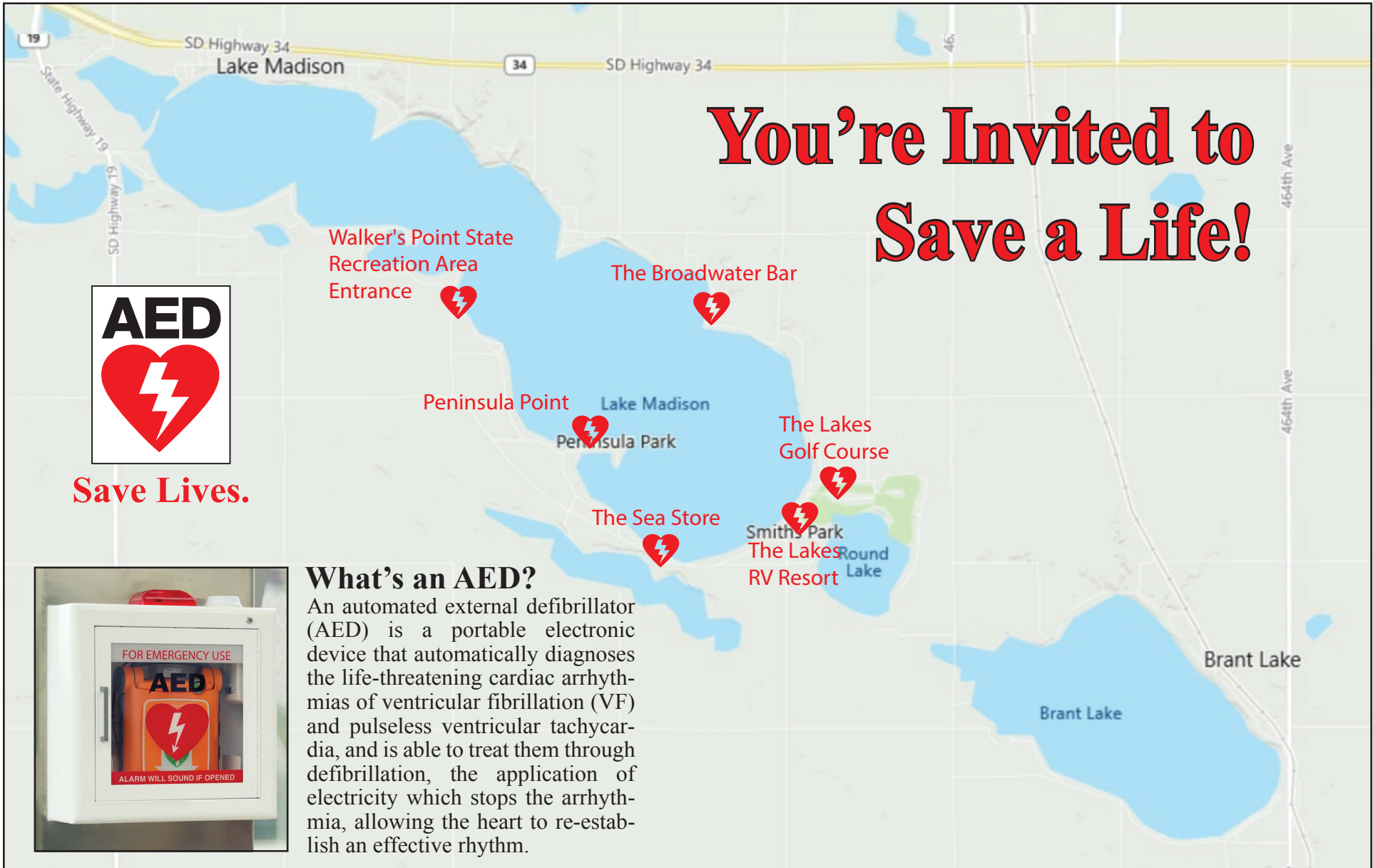
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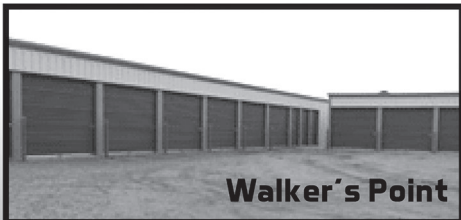
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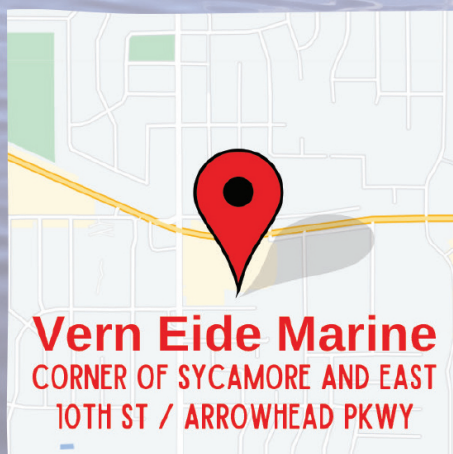
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THE FLORAL SHOP IS NEARLY IN BLOOM

By ZAC ZWASCHKA
Madison Daily Leader Reporter

The Floral Shop in Madison is nearly ready to blossom after a massive rebuilding project. Back in April, owner Brittany Waldman announced her plan to fully renovate her shop, tearing down the old and planting the seeds for the future of the business. “I’m very happy with it,” Waldman said, “and I’m so excited for everyone in the community to come see what we’ve done.”

The Floral Shop is nestled at 45493 234th St., and this location is effectively the only thing that hasn’t changed in some capacity. The building itself is entirely new, with construction being carried out by Howard’s Callies Homes Inc. Within this brand new structure is an increased retail space, a designated design room that allows for up to four workers,

painted concrete floors, updated bathrooms, as well as a full-size display cooler with access from the main area and much more. Given that demolition work didn’t begin until early June, Waldman is thrilled with the current state of the project. She noted that Callies Homes, as well as their subcontractors, did a “fantastic” job maintaining her schedule, ensuring that the shop would be ready for the busy winter season. “It’s been so much fun to watch it all happen,” Waldman commented.

“It’s a pretty big investment in ourselves as well as our community.” She also thanked her family and friends for their continued support, especially Rene and Bill Brunner, who Waldman purchased the shop from in 2019. Waldman added that Rene has been an invaluable mentor since she bought the shop, and that showing her the new space was a



BRITTANY WALDMAN, owners of The Floral Shop in Madison, stands outside of her new building, which was completely renovated over this summer.

special pleasure.

Along with the additions in the front, the back of the building now features a sizable garage for extra storage space and climate-controlled prep for incoming and outgoing flowers.

“This is going to make life so much easier for delivery drivers,” Waldman remarked. On top of this, the garage will also give the company van a permanent home, resulting in more space for customer parking in the freshly paved lot. If this wasn’t enough, the front-most portion of concrete is connected to the building’s heated floor system, which Waldman stated will mitigate slipperiness from ice and snowfall.

Aside from some additional windows and doors, the interior of the building is mostly complete, with Waldman and her team preparing the space for its public debut. While the shop isn’t technically open yet, they are still taking orders for weddings, funerals and their other services.

The largest addition remaining is a solid structure greenhouse that will be four times bigger than its previous version.

This larger greenhouse will be more weather resistant as well as connected to the rest of the shop through a door to the left of the main entrance. Waldman explained that the greenhouse will be constructed by Wisconsin’s United Greenhouse Systems, with the structure hopefully completed by the end of September.

Once this is finished, the shop will be fully open, and Waldman plans to celebrate this through a community open house. She added that the initial feedback she’s received has been great, and that she can’t wait to show it off to the rest of her hometown. Waldman has also announced the new building’s first workshop, where community members will be invited to join the crafting of winter containers. This workshop is slated for November and will host both independent and guided activity as visitors use berries, birch sticks, spruce tops and other decorations to make their own unique containers.

“It’s a lot of fun,” Waldman said. “To see how different everything is that walks out the door is just awesome.” ■

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