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Partners hold ceremony Page A2
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City celebration dazzles Inside

## There were no distress calls from pilot Wreckage yields few clues about why plane crashed

**By Luke Klink**

Investigators of a plane crash that killed six people east of Hawkins more than two years ago were unable to determine what brought down the craft.

In a final report, the National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable causes of this accident to be “a loss of control and subsequent in-flight breakup for reasons that could not be determined based on the available information.”

A 1979 Cessna 421C airplane, N2655B, was destroyed at 1:53 a.m., July 1, 2017, during an in-flight breakup near Catawba in Price County. The plane’s pilot and five passengers were killed.

They were:

- Pilot Kevin James King, 70, of Bensenville, Ill.
- James Francis, 63, of Norco, Calif.
- Kyle DeMauro, 21, of Bensenville, Ill.
- Thomas DeMauro, 56, of Bensenville, Ill.
- Charles Tomlitz, 69, of Addison, Ill. and
- George Tomlitz, 45, from Brookfield, Ill.

The DeMauros were father and son, as were the Tomlitzes. King was a next-door-neighbor of the DeMauros.

The twin-engine, fixed-wing, 8-seat airplane was registered to Sky King Flying Service, Inc. of Wilmington, Del., and was being operated by the pilot as a personal flight. An instrument flight rules flight plan was filed for the flight, which originated about 12:25 a.m. from Waukegan National Airport, Waukegan, Ill., and was enroute to Warroad International Memorial Airport (RRT), Warroad, Minn., on the Canadian border. The flight was en route to Canada for a fishing trip, investigators said.

According to radar data and air traffic control communications information provided by the Federal Aviation Administration, the airplane was flying at about 10,000 feet above sea level when the pilot checked in with Minneapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center at 1:17 a.m.

At 1:48 a.m., the pilot reported lightning off his left wing. The controller advised the pilot the weather

*However, based on the available information, the event that precipitated the descent and loss of control could not be determined.*

— National Transportation Safety Board report for a plane crash east of Hawkins on July 1, 2017

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### In-flight break-up



**PLANE CRASH** — A photo released as part of the final National Transportation Safety Board report for a plane crash that occurred east of Hawkins on July 1, 2017, shows the main wreckage viewed from the front.

— National Transportation Safety Board image



**THE WEATHER OUTSIDE IS DELIGHTFUL** — Winter Magic goes off without a hitch Saturday as Santa arrives in downtown Ladysmith and numerous events are held throughout the community. Photo above: Free holiday wagon rides were available as the Great Elf passed out free treats and goodie bags for the children. More pictures are on pages A11-A12.

— News photo by Luke Klink

### Marshfield Medical Center, area schools, agencies collaborate

## Planting seeds for better community health

**By Jerilea Hendrick**

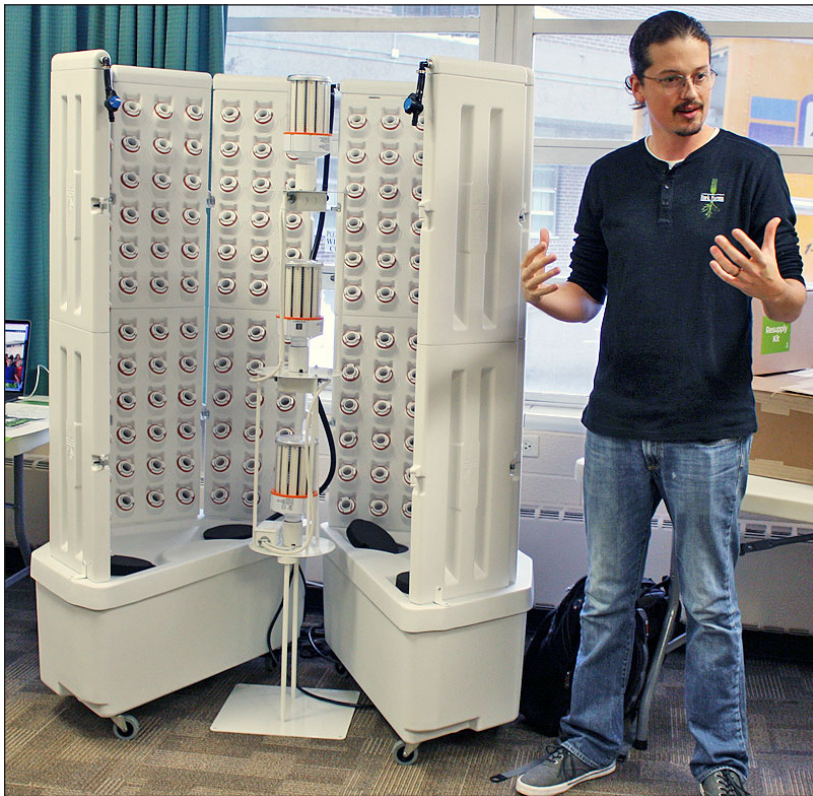
In response to the current health crisis, Marshfield Medical Center – Ladysmith has partnered with six Rusk County organizations to sponsor hydroponic gardens at each of their locations.

On Dec. 6 Fork Farms founders Alex Tyink and Steve Tyink met with representatives from Marshfield Medical Center – Ladysmith, Bruce School, Flambeau School, Ladysmith School, North Cedar Academy, ADRC and Connections to train how to use their sponsored hydroponic gardens.

MMC-L is excited for the opportunity to respond to the current health crisis and hopes the education surrounding the garden will help create a healthier community. Director of Clinical Services Shelley Barg said Rusk County was selected for the placement of the gardens after identifying the county as having a high need reflected in a high level of food insecurity.

Ladysmith Science Department Chairperson and teacher Matt Bunton said, “I’m very excited to have the hydroponic garden as a learning tool for my students. When discussing current environmental issues, food insecurity is a huge issue both locally and globally.”

The hydroponic gardens will allow each organization to grow a large amount of food in a small space in a cost effective, sustainable method. The gardens challenge the current food system by offering a low cost and efficient way to provide healthy



**HYDROPONIC GARDEN SYSTEM** — Fork Farms President Alex Tyink taught individuals from six Rusk County organizations about the hydroponic garden system he designed. The system is capable of easily and safely growing up to 330 pounds of fresh, organic food. The gardens are sponsored by Marshfield Medical Center - Ladysmith as a way to promote healthy eating and to give greater access of healthy foods to kids in Rusk County.

— News photo by Jerilea Hendrick

organic food. The goal of the project is to not only provide healthy food to the community, but also to create an impact on skills and education.

Fork Farms provided each school with a curriculum book broken down

into lesson plans for grades kindergarten through grade 12. Each lesson targets the learning level of the student as they learn about the biology and chemistry of hydroponic gardens, growing food, food safety

and the food system.

The gardens provide a real hands-on experience of growing food.

Bunton said Ladysmith students will “be taught how to use the equipment and then will grow food to be used directly in our school lunch program at Ladysmith Middle and High School.”

Flambeau Middle and High School Agriculture Instructor Jenna Behrends is excited for the nearly endless ways the hydroponic garden can benefit the school’s students. Behrends said, “teaching students about agriculture and where their food comes from at a young age is important, because many of them are so far removed from the farm.”

Alex Tyink said the indoor food growing industry is expected to grow to \$30 billion over the next 10 years so it’s important to learn how to do it inexpensively. The Fork Farms hydroponic gardens are cost effective and sustainable said Tyink.

Of the advantages of learning about hydroponic gardens, Bruce School student Sawyer Gerber said it will be an opportunity for students to “recognize where the future of farming lies, in terms of hydroponics.”

The partnership with MMC-L brings typically high priced food to a food scarce community with cost efficiency. In the standard food system, some of the lettuces the hydroponic gardens grow typically cost \$12-16 per pound. The hydroponic

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## City council OKs bond sale for armory, street work

**By Luke Klink**

The Ladysmith Common Council voted 5-0, Monday, to approve selling \$2.22 million in general obligation bonds with revenue already designated for several different uses.

The projects are:

- Army Reserve Center conversion to City Shop: \$1,250,000.
- Replenish general fund balance (reimburse 2019 road costs):

\$672,000.

- Rebuild intersection of W. Fifth Street and Gates Avenue: \$240,000.

- Other street work: \$58,000.

The winning bidder on the bonds was the Milwaukee financial services firm, Baird with a 2.5 percent combined interest rate.

Baird’s interest rate will be 4 percent from 2020-2029. After that the rate will fluctuate between 2 and 2.5 percent. The net interest cost to the

city is \$696,042 over the 20 year life of the repayment.

Five firms bid, including BOK Financial Securities at 2.5 percent, Bernardi Securities at 2.53 percent, Northland Securities at 2.54 percent and Bankers Bank at 2.60 percent. The four firms all had higher net interest costs than Baird.

Sean Lentz, senior municipal adviser for Baird, told the council that five bids is a good number of activ-

ity on the bonds. “We are pleased with the results,” he said.

The bonds will replace existing debt that is expiring and falling off the city’s books. It is therefore expected to have no impact on the city’s tax levy.

“The bids were extremely close,” Lentz said.

**Future projects in the pipeline**

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Gardens: Hospital teams with schools, groups

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gardens being that cost to a dollar or less, according to Alex Tyink.

The Fork Foods hydroponic garden is a two half-circle panel system with a 25-gallon water tank at the bottom. The panels are connected with two water hoses and use gravity and pressure to cycle water through the garden with the help of a submerged pump. Each panel has 144 ‘snaps’ or places for seedlings, together the system allows for a total of 288 snaps for growing plants.

The panels open for caretakers to work on, monitor and harvest plants.

An energy efficient light system stands in the center and is set on an 18-hour light cycle to provide plants needed light energy.

The Fork Farms hydroponic gardens are designed for optimal success. The Appleton based company is dedicated to food security, according to Alex Tyink. The low cost system is natural since the seeds are planted in a biodegradable volcanic rock matter and the minerals and nutrients fed to the plants are mineral-salt based, not petroleum based.

Each garden can produce 330 pounds of organic food each year. Each of the gardens are starting with leafy lettuces but the gardens are not limited to growing just lettuces. The gardens are optimized for growing green leafy, perishable food but individuals have successfully grown a plethora of foods such as cucumbers, strawberries, cherry tomatoes, squash, herbs and much more.

The caretakers of the hydroponic gardens check the chemistry of the water, looking for correct pH and mineral and nutrient levels and adding adjustments as needed.

Checking the garden takes only a few minutes each week. Caretakers record progress and findings and in the mean time learn the science behind growing food.

Bruce School student Logan Golubiff attended the training and said the hydroponic garden is “a great opportunity for our students to learn how to grow their own food and... allows us to experience a new form of sustainable farming.”

Students will learn the benefits of

indoor, sustainable agriculture. Alex Tyink said the gardens provide access to fresh foods year round, eliminate transportation costs of getting the food to plates, eliminate spoiled food, drastically increase nutrient levels in the food, and increase shelf life of food.

Behrends said, “It’s going to be a great educational tool...especially in food science, plant science, in our middle school introduction to AG class.” Behrends also sees the school’s FFA members benefiting from the garden.

The current food system is broken, said Alex Tyink. It usually takes three and a half weeks to get food to the store, which depletes nutrients and has a severe negative impact on the environment. This system will allow the schools and organizations to grow food cheaper than they can buy it and that will have an enormous positive impact on the environment.

The Fork Food hydroponic gardens are made mostly with parts made in Wisconsin. The lights and pump are made in California and Canada, respectively, only because these things are not made in Wisconsin. Tyink said, “we want you guys to have this for 30 years.” Each garden has a lifetime warranty.

The MMC-L partnership included a re-supply kit for each of the gardens. The supplies will last about a year while the garden is capable of producing 20 pounds of food in 21 days.

Steve Tyink told the attendees another application for the gardens some schools have used is to set the hydroponic gardens up in their “zen” classrooms for therapeutic purposes. The sound of the water is relaxing. Some schools have also sold extra produce and used the funds to purchase band uniforms.

Barg said the MMC-L hydroponic garden will be located in the lobby and will be used for education by the nutritionists and diabetes departments to teach healthy cooking classes. Barg says she hopes to share their garden with as many people in the community as possible.

Marshfield Medical Center Community Benefit Coordinator Emily Brunsted said MMC is piloting the

hydroponic gardens in Rusk County and hopes to expand to other high need areas. With 60 percent of Rusk County students receiving free or reduced lunches, MMC-L wants to increase access to healthy foods for greater health. Getting kids excited about growing foods will lead to them being excited to eat them.

Rusk County schools are excited to be able to incorporate the hydroponic gardens into their curriculums and in their cafeterias.

North Cedar Academy Director of Residential Life and Student Services Bonnie Smith said, “the garden will provide not only produce for the school and community but it will also be an invaluable learning resource for our students. ... the chance to learn more about hydroponics and take that knowledge back to their own communities would make a global impact.”

Smith said North Cedar Academy intends to serve some of the produce to their students but they plan to donate at least half of the produce to the local food pantry. She said this opportunity will create a sense of empowerment in their students as they take the knowledge back to their own communities and make a positive impact there.

At Ladysmith School Bunton said the priority of any extra produce sold would go toward seeds and resupply kits and the greenhouse so the school can continue to support food related programs. Beyond that immediate need, a great extension of the project would be supporting some experiential learning opportunities related to agriculture.

At Flambeau School Behrends said beyond the classroom she is hoping to collaborate with the cafeteria so the produce can be served to student during lunchtime. Extra produce could also be treated like the school’s greenhouse “where money made from sales of plants will help benefit the class or FFA program.”

At Bruce school, Golubiff and Gerber are hoping to use the garden as a beneficial learning tool in classrooms and use the produce in the school’s lunch program and salad bar.

Golubiff said, “hopefully, the garden will inspire out students to be a little more conscious about the food they put in their bodies, and teach them about different types of vegetable production.”

Alex Tyink called the partnership an incredible program and unique opportunity for the community.



FLAMBEAU FFA PARTICIPATES IN QUIZ BOWL — Flambeau High School FFA members competed in WITC’s Dairy Quiz Bowl on Thursday, Nov. 14. The students came home with an admirable second place finish, placing behind Osceola. The event had nine teams competing. Following the competition, Flambeau and Bruce FFA members toured the Schmitz Family Farm in Bruce, led by herd manager, Summer Granica. Pictured are the two school’s FFA members.

City: Bonds to fund multiple streets, armory

Continued from Page A1

In other road work matters, the city continues to plan for additional street reconstruction in 2021 including sections of Lake Avenue, First Street, E. Second Street, W. Third Street and W. Fourth Street.

These are not part of this week’s bond sale by the city council.

Financial assistance for the above projects is being sought from several programs including Community Development Block Grant for two-thirds of non-assessable costs such as street reconstruction and storm sewer, DNR Clean Water Fund for sanitary sewer main replacement, DNR Safe Drinking Water Loan Program for water main replacement. Tax Incremental District for one-third of non-assessable cost of street reconstruction, stormsewer and 25 percent of sidewalk. Special assessments would, presumably, be used to pay back assessable portion of CWF and SDWLP loans, along with 75 percent of sidewalk and 100 percent of curb and gutter. If the city receives preliminary approval of CWF and SDWLP early in 2020, complete applications will need to be filed by next June 30 for SDWLP, and by next Sept. 30 for CWF. While “principal forgiveness” is possible with CWF both programs are beneficial regardless, with a current interest rate of 0.99 percent.

These largely downtown streets were selected to be done now because Tax Incremental District funding is currently available to assist with the cost. It had been thought that would no longer be available after 2021, but in fact, it is available until 2025. While it is unlikely that TID 8 will have sufficient cash to cover these costs, that will depend in part on how successful the city is in getting Community Development Block Grant, Clean Water Fund and Safe Drinking Water Loan Program money. Even if the TID will cover some costs, some money will likely need to be borrowed up front and then repaid from annual TID receipts over up to one decade.

While preliminary cost estimates have been prepared, actual costs will be based on public bids received. Assessments will be calculated based on actual bid costs. Grant and loan applications are already being worked on, which was part of the impetus for getting preliminary costs estimates together. There seemed to be consensus that a public information meeting can be deferred until, perhaps, February, when the city may know whether

the requested Clean Water Fund and Safe Drinking Water Loan Program money will be approved.

Because the announcement of CDBG awards isn’t anticipated until next August, construction won’t realistically be done until 2021.

Other streets

The state Department of Transportation’s one-time Multimodal Local Supplement Program or “MLS” holds potential to finance up to 90 percent of the cost of resurfacing streets, with minimum project size of \$250,000, but provides no assistance for underground work. For that reason, applications are being submitted for the following streets, where surface conditions are the primary issue:

- Barnett Road.

■ Flambeau Avenue for which the Town of Flambeau is a joint applicant.

■ Gustafson Road.

It was pointed out, after legislative “earmarks” are taken from this program, what remains available statewide may not go far.

Armory

There were 37 contractors signed up on a recent walk-through of the former Army Reserve Center with six general contractors signing bid documents. Crews from the Flambeau Correctional Center have done some preliminary demolition at the armory, saving the city some money. Wood framed offices were removed from the south end of the drill hall and heavy wire cages were removed from the former supply room.



EASY TO USE SYSTEM — Seedlings are placed into one of the 288 snaps where it will grow until it is able to be harvested 21-28 days later. Alex Tyink and Steve Tyink show how the snap is easily removed for cleaning.



STARTING SEEDS — A flat of seeds will allow students to start 160 seeds, that once germinated, they will plant into the hydroponic garden.



HANDS ON SCIENCE — Individuals from Bruce School, Flambeau School, Ladysmith School, North Cedar Academy, Connections and ADRC attended a presentation by Fork Farms and held at Marshfield Medical Center - Ladysmith on Friday, Dec. 6. Each of the organizations will have a hydroponic garden where it will be used for education and giving access of fresh, healthy food to those who need it most.

SUDOKU

4	8				9		3
	3				8		
			6				
		8	2		3		5
	6		7		4		
1							
2	5				9		
		9	3				
		1		5			2

Level: Intermediate

Here’s How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

5	9	3	1	4	2	8	6	7
8	2	6	9	7	3	1	4	5
4	1	7	6	5	8	2	3	9
1	7	4	5	3	9	6	2	8
2	6	5	7	8	1	3	9	4
3	8	9	4	2	6	5	7	1
7	5	1	2	6	4	9	8	3
6	4	8	3	9	5	7	1	2
9	3	2	8	1	7	4	5	6

Answers for last week’s puzzle



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Doubt / Drama

Legally Blonde The Musical / Musical

Aboveboard / Comedy

\*\*\* The Boys in Autumn / Drama

The Great American Trailer Park Musical / Musical

\*\*\* This is a season extra not part of the season ticket and cannot be used in place of one of the regular season shows.