



## MMEA CONFERENCE TO FEATURE K-W MUSIC DEPT. 2A



## MSHSL REVERSES DECISION ON FOOTBALL AND VOLLEYBALL 12A

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## Vang Lutheran keeps tradition alive, but with modifications

By MICHELLE VLASAK  
michelle.vlasak@apgsomn.com

Although it'll look a lot different than it has for the past 39 years, Vang Lutheran Church members aren't about to let tradition go by the wayside.

Instead of the usual sit-down meal, the church's 40th annual lutefisk and meatball dinner will be curbside to ensure the safety of both volunteers and lutefisk lovers.

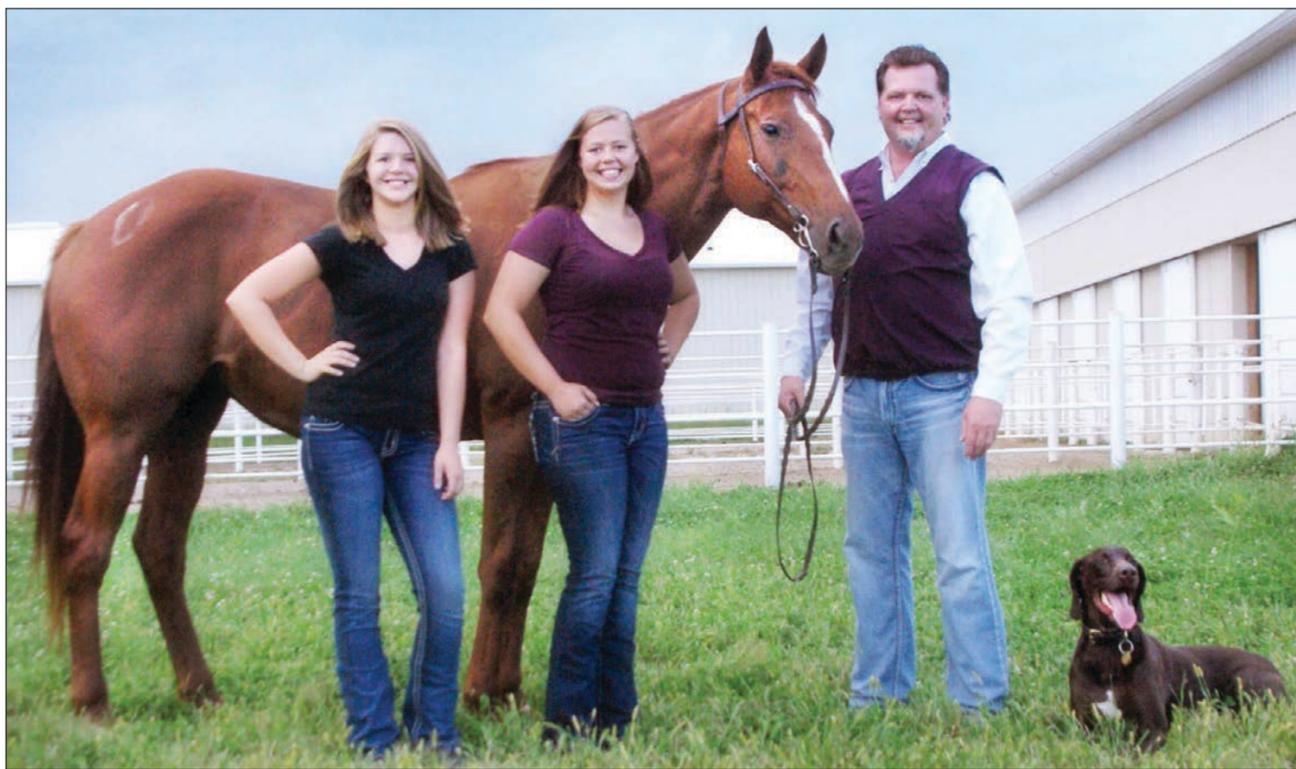
Nordis Estrem, who's helped with the lutefisk supper since it started, said this year volunteers will do different tasks than they have before given the change in the way the meal will be served. Those who usually wait on tables during the supper will deliver meals, as organizers expect even more orders for delivery than take out.

"Our workers will not be working next to each other, there will be a limited amount of [volunteers], and the ones making the food will be kept 6 feet or better apart, and may be in different rooms. They will be wearing masks, and if they aren't feeling good, we will be asking them not to show up. We're following all the guidelines."

Given the slight changes, the meal will still include lutefisk with melted butter from Olson Fish Co., Norwegian meatballs (with gravy) from Lorentz Meats, mashed potatoes from Bridget's Cafe in Zumbrota, corn, cranberries, coleslaw, fruit soup, lefse, Norwegian baked goods and special to this year, a commemorative 40th anniversary water bottle.

Estrem has been a member of Vang Lutheran since 1963 and it is also the church where her husband was baptized. She remembers the early years of the supper when they peeled and mashed the potatoes by hand. At that time, only the women worked in the kitchen. Since the number of attendees has increased to include others outside from Vang Lutheran's congregation, Estrem says high school students and all members of the church (both men and women) come to help.

See LUTEFISK on 3A



Pictured from left, Chelsea Gilster, Paige Gilster and Jeff Gilster, of Blu-Sky Stables. (Photo courtesy of Paige Gilster)

# RACING PASSION

## Kenyon native turns passion for horse racing into profession

By MICHELLE VLASAK  
michelle.vlasak@apgsomn.com

Paige Gilster's passion for horses and horse racing quickly flourished from a childhood passion to profession in a matter of years.

Riding horses for pleasure in her early years on Kenyon trails, Gilster developed an interest in horse racing through annual Father's Day trips to Canterbury Park in Shakopee and realized horse racing was something she wanted to take on as a career while in college at Iowa State University.

Today, the 2013 Kenyon-Wanamingo graduate resides in Lexington, Kentucky, as an assistant manager of Timber Town Stables. Through developing a thoroughbred (a breed

of horse developed in England for racing and jumping) horse breeding business under the name Blu-Sky Stables since November 2014, with the help of a partner and her father, Jeff Gilster, she was led through a roller coaster of emotions and a rewarding experience in being connected to a horse (Finnick the Fierce) nominated to race in this year's Kentucky Derby.

Due to the pandemic, the 2020 Kentucky Derby (originally scheduled for May) was held the first weekend in September without any spectators. Gilster said she is fortunate to have a good relationship with the owners of Finnick, describing them as a second family to her. Luckily, they had a ticket to give her so she could attend the race. Since

many racetracks were shut down from March to May, Gilster says it was difficult to enter Finnick in a race, due to there being too many horses and not enough races. For an industry that depends on the horses to pay them back by racing, the pandemic took a huge hit on both the industry and owners.

### A great accomplishment

Through working at Canterbury Park for one summer while in college, she met a state veterinarian and established business with him to find her first mare. Gilster said the vet sent her a couple of options and ultimately chose one named Southern Classic. By February 2015, the mare was in Iowa at college with Gilster breeding her with a stallion, and she

had her first foal in March 2016. Although that foal wasn't fond of racing, it was athletic and enjoyed jumping over obstacles. Southern Classic had her second foal in 2017, Finnick the Fierce, and after that, she experienced fertility problems and has since stayed in Kentucky with Gilster. Southern Classic is now at Timber Town with Gilster in foal to the stallion Honor Code. Gilster says she is due at the end of February 2021.

After Finnick was born, they noticed he had a rare genetic cataract which left him blind in his right eye. While Finnick could race just fine, buyers are typically looking to get the best "bang for their buck," meaning they prefer two eyes over just one.

See HORSE RACING on 3A

## Wanamingo Community Center to reopen to local civic and nonprofit groups

By MICHELLE VLASAK  
michelle.vlasak@apgsomn.com

Among the list of items on Wanamingo City Council's Sept. 14 agenda was a resolution discussing the use of the Community Center, adopting a policy requiring water shut-off valve combinations when two or more town home lots are combined and bringing awareness to the installation of a new utility pole.

The community center was closed from the first part of April through early July. Since July, Mayor Ryan Holmes used his emergency powers to allow for groups whose numbers didn't exceed 50% capacity to utilize the Community Center. The council affirmed Holmes' action at the July 27 City Council meeting.

There has since been requests to open the Community Center back up to civic groups like the Lions and Honor Guard, and nonprofits like the ward, carvers and the bluegrass music group for regular use. The use

of outdoor facilities and slowed meetings of civic groups in late spring and summer worked out well, but as it gets colder, City Administrator Michael Boulton says these groups wish to be inside and on a regular basis. The custodian has been and is willing to continue disinfecting the Community Center weekly at a minimum and after each use.

The council approved opening the Community Center to civic groups and nonprofits at 50% (or less) capacity, or 60 individuals.

### MERC pole installation

Wanamingo residents will soon notice a new addition of a utility pole in the center of town. Boulton said the MERC (Minnesota Energy Resources) has asked to install a 35-foot utility pole with antennas within Wanamingo city right-of-way.

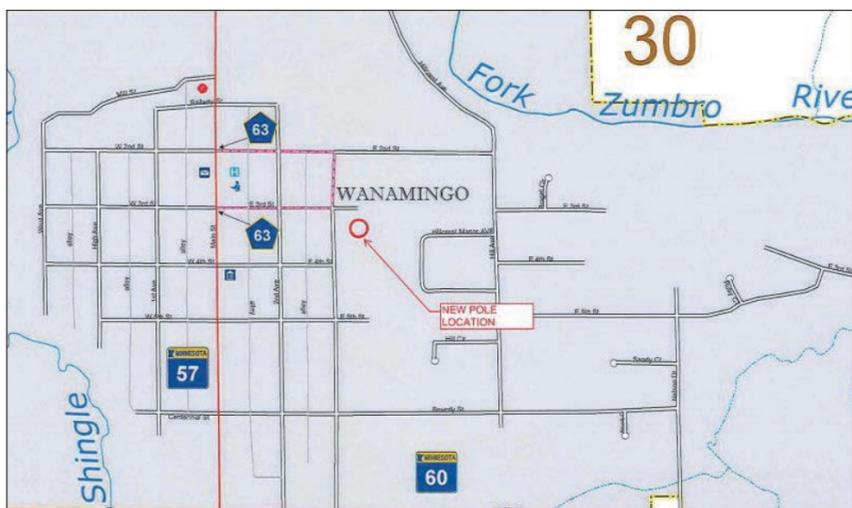
Instruments on the pole will read local customers' gas meters. Once installed, MERC will no longer need to send workers on

foot to manually read gas meters throughout town, said Boulton. The proposed location of the pole would be near the center of town (the alley right-of-way behind 313 Third Ave.) with enough elevation to read all the gas meters within Wanamingo.

Boulton and City Consulting Engineer Brandon Theobald have been working with MERC contractors on the proposed pole, radio and antenna placement.

Identified concerns included not exceeding the maximum height in the r-w Residential District of 35 feet (including antennas), avoiding current poles and overhead wires, avoiding underground city utilities and keeping the placement near property lines in order to allow maximum access to adjacent property owners.

MERC's contractors originally wanted a 43-foot pole and antenna combination. MERC has made the maximum height of 35 feet work for their utility pole and antennas. Boulton said the



Pictured is a map that indicates the location of the new pole. (Image courtesy of city of Wanamingo)

pole location was originally intended to be in the right-of-way behind 329 Third Ave., next to an existing Xcel Energy pole and overhead wires. MERC agreed to move the pole to the right-of-way on the 313 Third Ave. near the property line with 329 Third Ave.

The city water and sewer lines are in front of the properties and not in the rear of the properties near the alleys. The proposed pole installation will not interfere with water/sewer mains or services.

The adjacent property owners understood the need for the

pole, reasoning for the placement and were happy to be consulted after speaking with Boulton. After review, recommendations and adjustments, Boulton provided permission for the installation.

See CENTER on 3A

### CONTACT US

editor@apgsomn.com  
classifieds@apgsomn.com  
circulation@apgsomn.com  
News: 507-333-3128

### COMING UP

Rash of local thefts has Goodhue County Sheriff's Office hosting a crime watch meeting in Wanamingo.

### ONLINE

Check out videos, photo galleries and community calendar.

Or find us on Facebook & Twitter

### NEWS TIP?

Contact the newsroom at 507-333-3148 or the sports desk at 507-333-3129 if you know of any news or sports you think our readers would be interested in reading.

