



 Today Mostly Cloudy H 28 L 18	 Thurs Partly Cloudy H 31 L 19	 Fri Sunny H 35 L 21	 Sat Partly Cloudy H 34 L 23	 Sun Partly Cloudy H 29 L 19
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In this issue ... "Pieces of the Past" shared on pages 3 and 4!

Grygla School releases 1st Quarter Honor Roll

The Grygla School has changed their criteria for "A" Honor Roll this year. If a student's GPA is now 3.67 or higher, they will be listed on the "A" Honor Roll. In addition, they have also added a 4.0 Honor Roll. The criteria for "B" Honor Roll is 3.0-3.66. The following Grygla High School students in grades 7-12 have made the 1st Quarter Honor Rolls:

4.0 Honor Roll

12th grade: Mya Anderson, Madison Cullen, Jamie Dougherty, Levi Kiesow, Hailey Knutson, Chloe Kuznia, Gracie Lunsetter. 11th grade: Katelyn Larson. 10th grade: Kia Klein. 8th grade: Emily Johnson, Allie Sundberg. 7th grade: Janessa Torgerson.

"A" Honor Roll

12th Grade: Jared Haack. 11th grade: Andrew Loken, Avery Moe, Ellie Sabourin, Riley Saurdiff, Clayton Suchoski, Justin Thompson, Brigette Watne. 10th grade: Tre Alten, Anthony Englund, Neve-

ah Shaffer, Reece Sundberg, Sheldin Sundberg. 9th grade: Tatum Carrlson, Andrew Englund, Callie Loken, Taylor McManus, Chelsie Nelson, Blake Rychlock. 8th grade: Addison Severts, Anna Sundberg. 7th grade: Harlie Hagen.

"B" Honor Roll

12th grade: Gabe Arveson, Evan Englund, Jacob Olson, Eli Sundberg, Courtney Vad. 11th grade: Nolan Anderson, Walter Jones, Olivia Larson, Tucker Verbout, Cooper Walton. 10th grade: Devon Dickson, Jackson Grossman, Ahna Stanley, Kaylor Torgerson. 9th grade: Molly Cullen, Lewis Jones, Morgan Larson, Christian Loken, Hunter Vad. 8th grade: Gavin Aune, Lakylie Brobst, Kinsley Oslund, Brody Saurdiff, Ava Sorvig. 7th grade: Lila Alten, Owen Larson, Mollie Lunsetter, Aracely Needham.

The Goodridge School will be sharing their 1st Quarter Honor Rolls with the newspaper in an upcoming issue.



The 4.0 Honor Roll students are pictured above, while the "A" and "B" Honor Roll students are pictured below. Photos courtesy of Grygla School



Canadian Pacific to donate to local food banks, host virtual concert for 2020 Holiday Train



Every holiday season since 1999, the Canadian Pacific Train makes its annual stop in the area, bringing the 14 brightly decorated rail cars to a stop in Thief River Falls on the tracks by the City Hall. Each year, the event brings cheer to 164 communities along CP's network. Each event is free to the public, with attendees asked only to bring a canned food donation for the local food bank, with reps onsite collecting donations.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Canadian Pacific (CP) will donate to food banks in communities along its network and host a virtual concert in lieu of its regular Holiday Train program. The modified program will draw attention to food security issues, while ensuring donations go to all food banks that would ordinarily receive them, including those that typically host a Holiday Train event in alternating years.

"COVID-19 has created many challenges for communi-

ties across our network and has only increased the need at local food banks and food shelves," said CP President and Chief Executive Officer Keith Creel. "It is our honor to continue to donate to communities across our network this year, even if the train itself will not run. The spirit of the Holiday Train program and the Christmas spirit will carry on this year through our virtual concert. We will have the Holiday Train rolling again spreading Christmas cheer as soon as it's safe to do so!"

CP launched the Holiday Train in 1999, and every year since it has traveled across Canada and the northern U.S. raising money, collecting food and drawing attention to the important work of local food banks. In its first 21 years, the train has raised \$17.8 million and collected 4.8 million pounds of food for local food banks in communities along CP's network.

"We are very excited that CP has chosen a safe way to keep

the spirit of the CP Holiday Train rolling in support of local food banks like ours in these challenging times," said Calgary Food Bank President and CEO James McAr. "The need for food bank services has risen substantially over the course of this year and heading into the high-demand winter months. We hope CP's concert will prompt the train's supporters to give as generously as they're able."

Live music has always been part of the CP Holiday Train tradition. To maintain that tradition, CP will produce a benefit concert, with details to be announced when they're available.

"We support CP's decision to hold a virtual concert instead of hosting events that encourage local gathering, though we'll miss the train's bright lights and in-person shows," said Kristine Martin, President of East Side Neighborhood Services, a Minneapolis-based Holiday Train beneficiary food bank. "CP's generous dona-

tions to East Side Neighborhood Services over the years have helped us provide nutritious food to people who have difficulty accessing traditional food shelves or grocery stores. This year, being able to continue providing those services has been even more important. We're thankful to CP for their continued support and donations again this year."

CP intends to resume operating the annual train tour in 2021.

About Canadian Pacific Canadian Pacific is a trans-continental railway in Canada and the United States with direct links to major ports on the west and east coasts. CP provides North American customers a competitive rail service with access to key markets in every corner of the globe. CP is growing with its customers, offering a suite of freight transportation services, logistics solutions and supply chain expertise. Visit cpr.ca to see the rail advantages of CP.



Northern Lights fishing report

Written by Ben Kucera

On this week's journey, I set out to chase whitetails once again with my favorite weapon and season, Muzzleloader season. Saturday I walked into a new area to take a look at what was back there and jumped easily 50-70 sharp tail grouse. There wasn't much fresh deer sign in the snow but did manage to jump a doe and a fawn. They didn't stick around to give me a shot.

Sunday I passed on hunting because of the wind but mainly so that we can finally live in our new house. Besides, there are still 2 more weekends to try and fill that tag.

Monday I plan on chasing sharp tail on the last day of the season. Rough grouse closes end of December.

On another note, ice fishing has begun. Most of the Red Lake resorts let people walk out to go fishing; ice is 5-7" and for the most part it was very good. They are fishing 7-11' of water, depending on the resort and for the most part are catching through the day. The mornings are better along with dusk, but for now the resorts are asking that you come back before dark because there is open water further out and a couple big cracks.

The hot colors have been red (especially glow) and gold. Some people have been walking out on Lake of the Woods, but as of now, no resorts are letting people out yet, but I expect that to change possibly this weekend.

The river in Thief has seen some fisherman on the ice by the access and are claiming 6" of ice. I wouldn't walk across the river yet, but the edges should be OK. Remember to always do your own ice checks if you are going to the river, or if you are heading to a lake and not going through the resorts. Most of the resorts have ice reports and expected days to start letting out, so give them a call.

I'm not sure what this next week will bring for me. I may be muzzleloading or go fishing; I'll have to wait and see. On the tackle side of things, I can still take orders for jigs at this time but the turnaround on rods is expected to be after Christmas at this time. If I get ahead, I will be putting jigs at the store, as well. If there are any jigs I have on my page that you would like to see in the store for convenience, get a hold of me on Facebook or shoot me a call or text at 218-684-0588 and I will do my best to get a variety in there.

Good luck hunting or fishing and let's keep it a safe season.

Ben Kucera is the owner and creator of Northern Lights Tackle & Custom Rods. He is also a Marshall County Sheriff's Deputy residing in Grygla with his wife and children. Ben is an avid fisherman who will be writing and submitting a fishing report weekly. You can follow his Facebook page at Northern Lights Tackle and/or contact him at 218-684-0588.

Grace Lutheran Church suspends in-person Worship

As of November 23rd, in-person worship services are suspended for the next four weeks at Grace Lutheran and Our Saviors in Grygla. Recorded services will still be

available on-demand on the church website and will play on Garden Valley channel 36 on Wednesdays 7pm and Sundays 9am & 7pm. gracelutherangrygla.weebly.com

Kids and thin ice – a dangerous combo

As excited as they are about the winter season, many kids are equally curious when it comes to the ice. Talking with children about ice safety now will help them stay safe during this festive time.

"We want families to get out on the ice and have a good time when conditions allow— but we also want parents to make sure kids know ice is never 100 percent safe," said DNR conservation officer Adam Block. "They should never go on the ice alone, and they should wear a life jacket and bring safety equipment, including ice picks and a cell phone in case of an emergency. Also tell them to never follow a friend or pet onto potentially dangerous ice."

Lakes and ponds that appear frozen are inviting spots for ice

skaters and children looking to explore. But ice thickness varies greatly at this time of year. Measure ice thickness in multiple locations before walking on it. There must be at least 4 inches of solid, clear ice for safe walking. Even if the ice is thick enough for walking, always watch children closely.

"By all means, get outside this holiday — but if you're hosting a party and you live near a pond, lake, or stream, be sure someone is keeping an eye on any kids near the ice," said Lisa Dugan, DNR recreation safety outreach coordinator. "And make certain that all the adults know who the designee

Kids and thin ice... Continued on page 2

CROSSWORD

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StatePoint Crossword
Theme: Disney

- ACROSS
- *Bambi and others like him
 - Nail a criminal
 - Use a paring knife
 - Cornucopia's shape
 - Lawyers' org.
 - Interior designer's focus
 - *Gibson Girl Ice Cream Parlor's draw
 - 1/100 of afghani
 - Tapestry
 - *Minnie Mouse's full first name
 - **"Be Our Guest" performer
 - Kukui nut necklace
 - #22 Down competitor
 - Dojo pad
 - Pillow filler
 - Detected
 - Burden of proof
 - Ness' domain
 - Vernacular
 - Poker amount
 - Divvy up
 - U.S. freshwater invader
 - Relating to nose
 - Golfer's warning
 - "The Three Musketeers" dueling sword
 - Isaac of science fiction fame
 - **"The Princess Diaries" leading actress
 - Pippen
 - Candle burner
 - Greek letters on campus
 - *Remy's idol Auguste ____
 - *Pongo's mate
 - Radio sign
 - J. Edgar Hoover's org.
 - Was dishonest with, two words
 - *Iago and Kevin
 - *Scar to Simba, e.g.
 - At the point of death, archaic
 - Command to Fido
 - Seed alternative, to a landscaper
 - Loses color

- DOWN
- Fraud
 - Famous Amos
 - Before long, to Shakespeare
 - Alef and Bet follower
 - *Like a Haunted Mansion visitor
 - California valley
 - *Aladdin's sidekick
 - What football and baseball have in common, pl.

- "Frasier" actress Gilpin
- Homesteader's measure
- *Shere Khan's cry
- Highland tongue
- Woman in trouble?
- Actress Davis
- Package delivery service
- Reveal the true nature
- **"How Far I'll Go" performer
- *____ of Arendelle, pl.
- Hutu's opponents, 1994
- *Raksha or Rama
- Cote d'Azur locale
- Ginger cookies
- Kind of heron
- *Beardless dwarf
- Clothing line
- Honker
- It may be perfect
- Moves down
- Itinerary word
- Cap attachment
- Part of a sleeve, pl.
- Organ swelling
- Loads
- Military group
- Sarah, alt. sp.
- Not a slob
- ____ Piper
- Object of worship
- Tear, past tense
- **"A Bug's Life" characters
- *Human child in Mon-stropolis

Results shared next week!

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Kids and thin ice...
Continued on page 2

is."

It can be easy to overlook precautions during outdoor holiday celebrations, so put safety first by following ice safety guidelines.

Ice safety guidelines

No ice can ever be considered "safe ice," but following these guidelines can minimize your risk while on the ice:

- Always wear a life jacket on the ice (except when in a vehicle).
- Children need to be supervised when they are near the ice.
- Warn children to stay off ponds, streams, and other bodies of water.
- A thin coating of ice on a pond or lake does not mean it is safe.
- Check ice thickness at regular intervals – conditions can change quickly.
- Before heading out, inquire about conditions and known hazards with local experts.



kids' corner

PEOPLE FACT:



THE AVERAGE PERSON SPENDS MORE THAN \$800 ON THESE EACH DECEMBER.

ANSWER: CHRISTMAS GIFTS

How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Receipt

SPANISH: Recibo

ITALIAN: Ricevuta

FRENCH: Reçu

GERMAN: Kassenzettel

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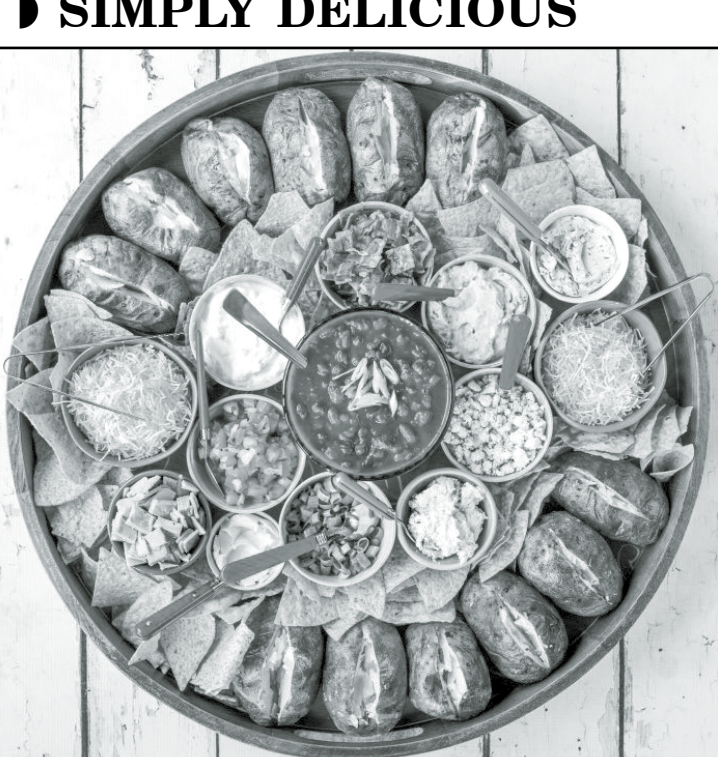
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By Kari Sundberg, Eagle Editor

I stumbled across this fun recipe on Pinterest and it spoke SUPER LOUDLY to me. I'm all for non-traditional type meals. Hit me with the unexpected, unique and fun. This fits into all of those categories. I think it'd be the perfect thing to make when hosting a holiday gathering or just a smaller family fun night.

It's a delicious Baked Potato Dinner Board with all of your favorite toppings. I'm impressed already. Make this and I'm giving you 5 stars reviews to anyone who asks. The "extras" to go along with the baked potatoes are up to you, of course, but here's some ideas to get your started.

Baked Potatoes
Chili
Chopped Bacon
Chopped Ham
Sour Cream
Guacamole
Pico De Gallo
Blue Cheese Crumbles
Grated Cheese
Roasted Garlic and Herb Butter
Cranberry Jalapeno Dip
Cream Cheese Dip (any kind)

Tortilla Chips

Obviously, based on the size of your gathering and how many people are there, will determine the size of board you use. Tip: it's way easier to find a serving board or tray with an edge. It helps keep everything in place.

The rest is simple. Prepare the board with all the toppings without the baked potatoes. Plan ahead by making room for them first. Right before you serve, place the hot potatoes on the board! In other words, keep hot food in the oven until right before serving! Easy!

If you prefer Sweet Potatoes? We've got you covered. Here's a list with a variety of delicious toppings for an epic Sweet Potato Dinner Board.

- Sour Cream
Black Beans
Ham
Bacon
Chives/Cilantro
Pico De Gallo
Tahini
Coconut Flakes
Sharp Cheddar Cheese or Blue Cheese
Specialty Butters (Honey Butter, Cinnamon Butter or any kind!)



Substitute this idea with a Sweet Potato Board instead!

Shopping Word Find

Find the hidden words in the puzzle.

BIRTHDAY
CLOTHING
GIFTS
HOLIDAY

PURCHASE
REGISTER
RETAIL
RETURN

SALE
SHOPPING
STORE
TOYS

N K M I S B P R R P S Y
M Z H T E H A R E R K A
Q I O W L U E V T U Q D
G R E A T O S U W B H
E N L E S A H C R U P T
R G I I B O C A N X J R
R E G H P Z S T F I G I
S E T P T D F S J R T B
R Y I A H O L I D A Y V
E N O B I T L Q L L Y E
G T A T D L Z C J I B Z
H Z E Y D Q T W M E K C

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

E O N - D Y A L A E S

ANSWER: One-day sale

THIS DAY IN...

**HISTORY**

- 1783: U.S. GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON BIDS FAREWELL TO HIS OFFICERS AT FRAUNCES TAVERN IN NEW YORK CITY.
- 1881: THE FIRST EDITION OF THE LOS ANGELES TIMES IS PUBLISHED.
- 1954: THE FIRST BURGER KING IS OPENED IN MIAMI, FLORIDA.

New word

TRANSACTION

an instance of buying or selling something

SHARING TREE

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American State Bank

1. Choose an Ornament from the tree or ask staff to pick one for you

2. Have staff record which ornament was chosen

3. Purchase a \$20-\$30 gift.

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Only in Minnesota: a weekly feature in the Eagle

The story of a 1979 UFO sighting in Minnesota still lives on today
Posted on Only in Your State (Minnesota) on October 23, 2020 by Betsy Rathburn.

Here in Minnesota, there are enough stories of supernatural happenings and paranormal experiences to make you think twice about venturing too far into Minnesota’s remote areas. For example, northern Minnesota is home to many Bigfoot sightings. And all around the state, rumors of haunted roads, hotels, and cemeteries abound. Today, we want to introduce yet another creepy story, this one involving a terrifying UFO encounter. Read on below to learn about this famous story, which you can still see evidence of today:

The story takes place in Marshall County, Minnesota, in 1979. One night in late August of that year, Deputy Sheriff Val Johnson was on patrol near the small town of Stephen. At about 2 a.m., he spotted a beam of light ahead on the road. He drove his squad car towards it and was soon surrounded by light. At this point,



Johnson heard the sound of glass breaking. But what happened next, no one knows. Johnson lost consciousness for 39 minutes. When he woke up, he realized that his watch and the car’s clock had both stopped for 14 minutes. When he surveyed the car, Johnson found that the windshield was broken. Other damage included broken lights and a bent antenna. It wasn’t only the car that was damaged. Johnson himself sustained some unusual injuries. He had bruises and strong eye irritation. The story made nationwide headlines, and Johnson even appeared on a popular morning talk show to discuss the incident. The legacy lives on, too. The incident was included in season 2 of the Hulu show Fargo. Many have likened the even to a UFO encounter. But others believe it to be a hoax. No matter what you believe, you can still visit the squad car involved in the incident. It’s found at the Marshall County Historical Society Museum.



Opening Dorothy’s Scrapbook from 1986-1989

Written by Kari Sundberg, Eagle Editor
Alright, so here’s the real deal. It has been SO QUIET around town, like many other places, due to COVID and things operating differently. I didn’t have a lot of extra “news” items for this week’s paper. When those times happen, it’s fun to share some pieces of the past. For me as the editor, though, I always feel a little guilty sharing those because I think it’s taking the easy route to fill the pages – like letting the past do the work for me instead of drumming up a new story myself. HOWEVER, so many of you have said that you love when past newspaper clippings are shared and that it’s some of your favorite pieces of the paper! With that being said, I thought I’d fulfill those requests for some flashbacks and fill a couple of pages this week beings we had the space. But instead of hitting up my own newspaper archives in the office, I hit up my Grandma Dorothy Miller’s old scrapbooks! She has SO many! It’s crazy to think of the years and years of Grygla Eagle and The Times pictures and stories that she clipped out and made into numerous scrapbooks! Does anyone remember when she used to write the Reiner News for The Times? Remember when all the townships would designate one lady to call all the neighbors and get all the latest gossip, er, um, NEWS? Oh my gosh. I’m actually chuckling as I write this because the first thing I remember about the Reiner News is demanding my grandma NOT write about me in there! One time, I brought a high school boyfriend – nope – not even a boyfriend – just someone I kind of (not really even) liked – over to her house. We decided to make a little outing from Ada to Goodridge to visit everyone. Well, Grandma decided to write about our trip up to visit in the Reiner News. I was so mad because by the time the paper came out, he was already OLD NEWS...EXPIRED NEWS. I told her from that day forward to stop writing anything about me. Ohhhh, those memo-

Karla Dahlen & Wayne Byklum wed June 8



Sheila Verbout and Dean Wiskow wed

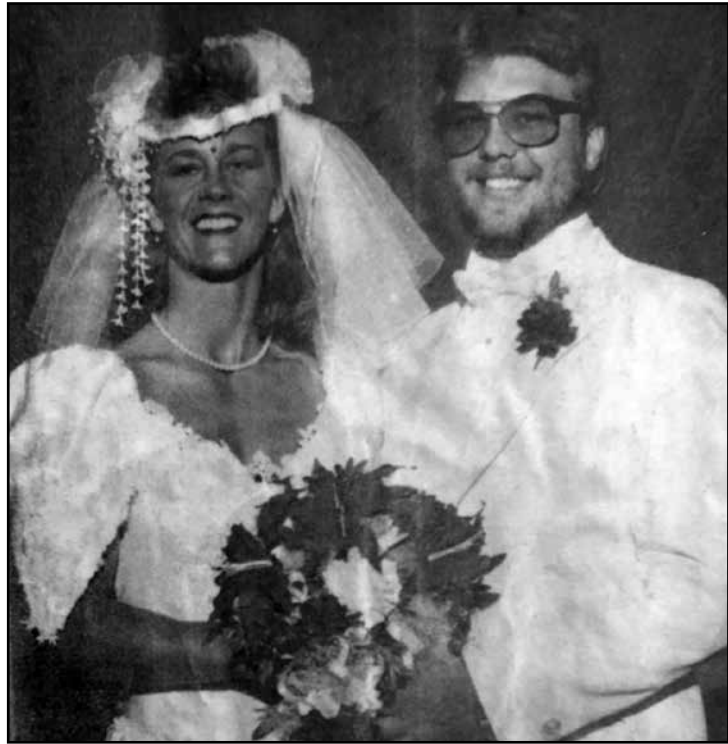


Sjulestad & Paulson marry



ries make me smile. I can still hear her today. I’d be over there visiting...she’d grab the phone and sit down at the bar in the kitchen and call all the neighbors. Each greeting would be the same: “Yeah, well, what’s new today then.....” And the Reiner News was slowly transforming into what would become a weekly newspaper column right there in her kitchen. I know that was the norm back then. And it’s honestly identical to social media today. Really, it’s the same thing. But I often think how funny it would be to start calling all the neighbors in Spruce Grove Township and asking for the latest gossip. “Who’s been over? Where did you go yesterday? Who’s birthday were you celebrating last night and what did you serve?” They’d think I had lost my damn mind. Maybe one day, if the news is still slow like it is now, I’ll resurrect my grandma’s township news. I could go even bigger and just start calling people around Grygla. How fun would THAT be? Or maybe I could just start pulling people’s Facebook statuses and publishing them for a fun version of local news. Uff. No. I think I’ll sit that one out. Instead, let’s look back on a few things taken directly from Grandma Dorothy’s scrapbook. She has so many tucked away in her closet, but on this page of the Eagle, we have wedding announcements that were cut out and put in her 1986-1989 scrapbook. We also have one big story from 1990 shared on the back. Enjoy this blast from the past and hopefully we have BREAKING news to share next week – maybe about all of our local township people. Hehe. Anyway, a big congratulations to these happy couples, too, as they are still married 20+ years later!

Lois Verbout Wed to Tim Anderson Aug 13



Janita Sigerud-Anthony McLean wed Sept. 19



Word of the Week
...enhancing vocabularies
one Grygla Eagle at a time.
Lagon
\Lo-Gawm\
Noun
The principle of living a balanced, moderately paced, low-fuss life.

GRYGLA LIBRARY LINK



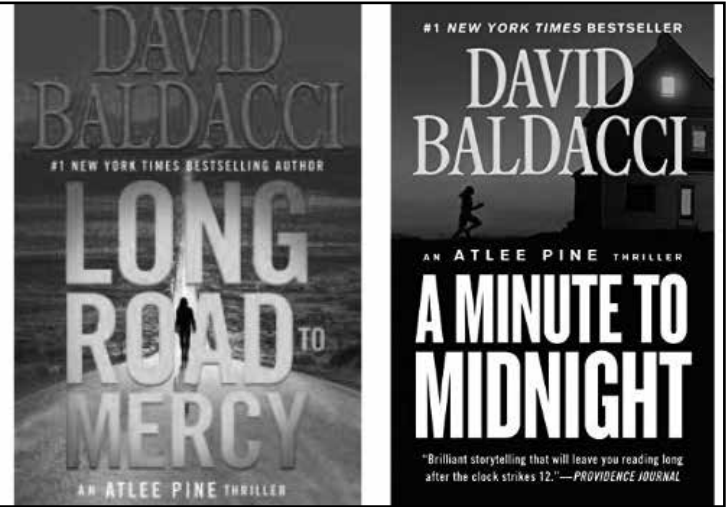
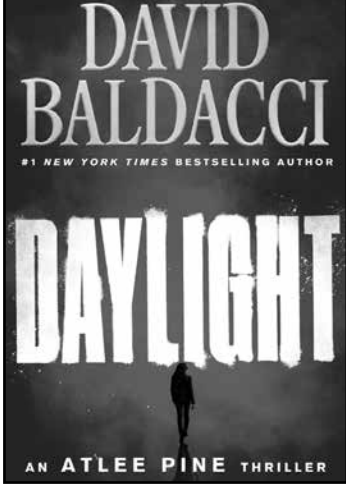
Written by Kari Sundberg, Grygla Librarian
First, I’ll start by letting you know that the library will only be open from 4-6pm this week. Our favorite sub, Travis Smith, will be working this week, but since he also teaches, he’s unable to get there until 4pm. Thanks for being understanding about hours changing and the library having to close here and there. With the uncertainties of COVID, quarantine, getting sick, family members getting sick, your patience is appreciated. Stay tuned on the hours for next Wednesday – let’s hope we can be open the usual 2-6pm, but if not, it’ll be 4-6pm again.

Moving on to my book recommendation for the week. Actually, it’s a series recommendation that comes directly from my husband Robert. He just finished reading 2 of the 3 books in David Baldacci’s “Atlee Pine” series. Book 3 was just released November 17th, so it hasn’t come yet, but he’s super pumped for it to arrive and it’s on order through the library. You’ve probably heard of the popular author David Baldacci; maybe you’re already a fan of his books as around 50 or so have already been published. He writes a lot of thrillers, with many being in specific series, though he’s written some standalone novels, as well. Some of his popular book series include the John Puller series, Amos Decker and The Camel Club series, and this one that Robert’s currently reading, the Atlee Pine series.

The three books in order are: Long Road to Mercy (2018), A Minute to Midnight (2019) and Daylight (just released in November of 2020). In an article written back in 2018, the author talks about his inspiration for the series character FBI Special Agent Atlee Pine. Baldacci is quoted: “The star of my next series, Atlee Pine, is an FBI Special Agent who grew up in rural Georgia, and the first female protagonist I’ve had as a lead series character in all of my books. The inspiration behind Atlee Pine is multi-faceted. I’ve written about a lot of female characters in my novels, and I’m very comfortable writing about women, but I wanted to explore an avenue where the female was the lead character and the lead protagonist. Atlee Pine’s name came to me very swiftly. I wrote it down and then thought about what sort of character I wanted to build from that. As a writer, I think you can tell when you want to stretch your wings and challenge yourself to do something different. Writing a female as the lead protagonist was something different for me, and it was a challenge for me as a male to write a female character. Doing something different with each book is what drives me as a writer and what keeps me excited. I hope this means that readers are excited when they’re reading it too. Atlee is unlike my previous series characters in another

way as her background is very different. I’ve never started writing about a character with such a horrendous, enigmatic past. She has lost a twin, her other half, someone she has searched for her whole life. When we meet Atlee Pine (in Long Road to Mercy) she is trying to overcome this horrendous beginning to her life and is trying to find both the truth about her sister and the real person that she is. I’m tremendously excited about her as a character, and I can’t wait to bring her to everyone else. Atlee also lives in a different environment to my previous characters. I’ve never written much about the Western United States, and she is based in rural Georgia, working as the only resident agent at an FBI office which covers an area of over 1000 square miles. She’s very much a loner in a very lonely setting. My previous books are set in big cities with lots of people, lots of things going on, and hundreds of agents. Atlee is very much a lone wolf, and writing that has been a challenge for me, but one I’m very much excited to dive into.” That article was written back when the book one came out in the series, which was so popular that it kept going with its third book just being released a few weeks ago!

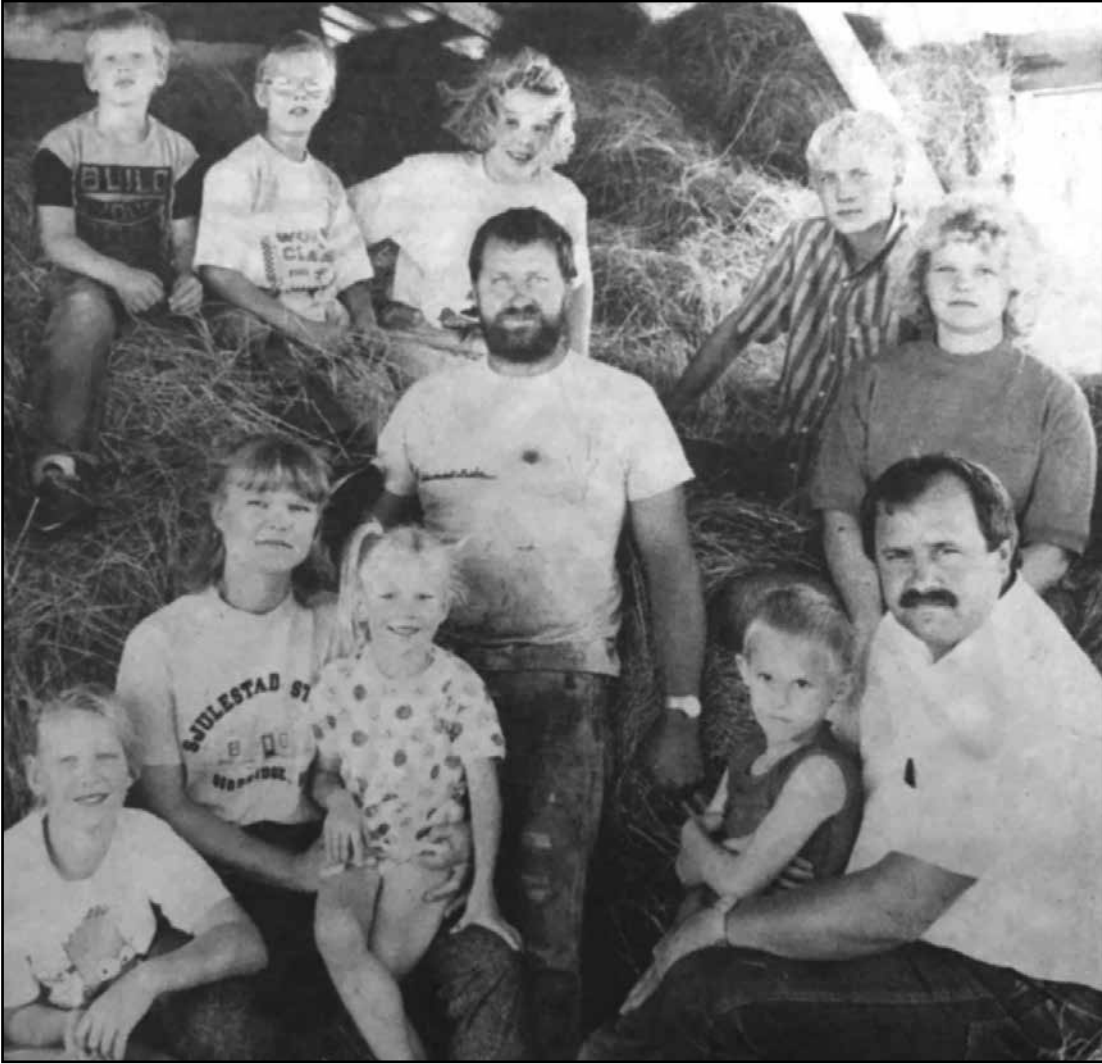
A summary on the latest released novel, Daylight: For many long years, Atlee Pine was tormented by uncertainty after her twin sister, Mercy, was abducted at the age of six and never seen again. Now, just as Atlee is pressured to end her investigation into Mercy’s disappearance, she finally gets her most promising breakthrough yet: the identity of her sister’s kidnapper, Ito Vincenzo. With time running out, Atlee and her assistant Carol Blum race to Vincenzo’s last known location in Trenton, New Jersey -- and unknowingly stumble straight into John Puller’s case, blowing his arrest during a drug ring investigation involving a military installation. Stunningly, Pine and Puller’s joint investigation uncovers a connection between Vincenzo’s family and a breathtaking scheme that strikes at the very heart of global democracy. Peeling back the layers of deceit, lies and cover-ups, Atlee finally discovers the truth about what happened to Mercy. And that truth will shock Pine to her very core. There is a waiting list for Daylight through the library, but I’m happy to get you on it, or at least start you off with the first two books. I know Robert really enjoyed them – I think he finished the first book in just one day. (He doesn’t sit still for too long, but it was over hunting season when he was in the stand. Ha.) Happy reading and see you at the library soon when our house is back to healthy!



Pictured above: Baldacci’s first two books in the Atlee Pine series.

Pictured left: No, it’s not a wedding photo, but it was taken from the 1986-89 scrapbook! Norma and Lynnn Hanson of Goodridge were among those who journeyed by covered wagon from Ft. Abercrombie to Mandan in North Dakota with the Red River Centennial Wagon Train. They are shown here with their team of Belgian draft horses and a wagon they refurbished for the trip. Participants in the trip traveled and lived much the same as their ancestors did during the 1800’s.

Pieces of the Past: Bjerklie brothers get Outstanding Cooperator Award



(1990) Bjerklie Brothers farming operation has been selected by the Pennington County Soil and Water Conservation District as “Outstanding Cooperator” for 1990. Rick and Joni Bjerklie, along with Rodney and Cheryl Bjerklie, and their seven children own 480 acres and rent an additional 420 acres in Hickory Township of eastern Pennington County near the western boundary of the Red Lake Indian Reservation. Pictured at right are Rodney and Cheryl with their sons, Ryan (16) and Lucas (6). At left are Rick and Joni with daughters, Kelly (12) and Emily (5). At top left are Rick and Joni’s son Matthew (9); Rodney and Cheryl’s son Aric (10) and daughter Allison (13).

(Taken from the August 15th, 1990, issue of The Times, written by Marvin Lundin, Times Editor)

About the only thing there seems to be disagreement about in the one big happy family of Bjerklie Brothers of rural Trail is the way in which brothers Rodney and Rick Bjerklie came to marry sisters Cheryl and Joni Sjulestad, whose parents operate the Sjulestad Store.

“Dad said he just couldn’t keep the Bjerklie boys out of the store,” Cheryl explains. “Yeah,” Joni agrees, “they were always hanging around over there.”

Rodney sees it differently. “One year the Red Lake River froze over,” he counters with just the hint of a smile, “and the Sjulestad girls migrated to the south.”

Both explanations leave an interviewer just a little sorry he brought up the subject in

the first place. You get the feeling the question has come up more than a few times before.

The Bjerklie families have been selected by the Pennington Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as recipients of the 1990 “Outstanding Cooperator” award, formerly known as the Conservation Farmer award. They will be honored at the state convention of the Minnesota Association of Conservation Districts in December and the Pennington SWCD banquet next spring.

Townships included in this year’s competition were Goodridge, Reiner, Highlanding, Star, Hickory, Deer Park and Mayfield. The Bjerklies farm in Hickory Township just west of the Red Lake Indian Reservation boundary.

When the term “family farm” was coined, families like the Bjerklies must have provided the inspiration.

Rodney and Cheryl, who were married in 1972, have four children: Ryan 16, Allison 13, Aric 10 and Lucas 6. Rick and Joni, who were married in 1977, have three children: Kelly 12, Matthew 9 and Emily 5. Everyone has a role to play in the farming operation and all take that responsibility seriously.

Rick refers to his nephew Ryan as “our third arm” in describing his value to the farm. In fact, Ryan and the rest of the children took over operation of the farm a couple of weeks ago while Rodney, Cheryl, Rick and Joni spent three days at the We Fest near Detroit Lakes.

Of course, there wasn’t much for the children to do except milk 35-40 cows twice a day, take care of the feeding and bedding of the dairy herd, look after 800 laying hens and pick eggs three times a day, feed and water another

150 heavy chickens, make the meals, take care of the younger children and do a little field work. On the Bjerklie farm, that’s a piece of cake.

“We never expected to get rich farming,” Cheryl explains, “but the farm is sure a good place to teach kids they have to work for what they earn.”

And the kids are learning. Not only do they take part in the normal farm activities, they also mow lawn for Nazareth Lutheran Church and cemetery and this year have six acres of sweet corn that they hope they can beat the raccoons to harvesting.

Joni and Cheryl are also in the poultry business and they credit – or possibly blame – Rodney for getting them started in that three years ago. He mentioned that “it might be nice to have a few chickens around the place.” Now they have a flock of 800 laying hens and the remaining 150 of what had been 500 heavier birds for butchering. Eggs are sold to neighbors and to retail stores in the area.

Of course, Cheryl and Joni do the dressing of the birds with Joni operating the plucking machine and Cheryl doing the eviscerating. The demand is growing and where there’s a few dollars to be made there is a few ways to get the job done.

As entrepreneurs, the sisters are conservative in their approach. They got their chicken house for the effort of moving it to Rodney and Cheryl’s farmstead and Joni found four sections of rollaway laying nest boxes for free when she went to a garage sale. “We didn’t want to spend a lot of money,” Cheryl said in a bit of understatement.

As if the farm didn’t provide enough work, Rodney has worked full-time since 1977 as weatherization director for Inter-County Community Council at Oklee.

“When I took the job they said it would last until Christmas,” he said. “But I guess they didn’t say which Christmas. So every year when I get past Christmas, I figure I’m safe for another year.”

Rick has been working part-time at the Gully Coop Elevator but plans to give up that extra job to devote more time to the farm. He worked at Arctic Enterprises in Thief River Falls from 1972-1980.

Joni has worked with the Head Start program in Oklee and Fosston and will be working with a new program in Thief River Falls this year.

Both brothers are graduates of Oklee High School where they were involved in the wrestling program. Rick had his wrestling career cut short when he had to fill in on the farm following his father’s death.

Although it’s a 20 mile drive to Oklee, the families are involved in school and other activities. Ryan has been a varsity wrestler since 7th grade and was voted most improved wrestler a year ago. He also plays football. The younger boys have started in the wrestling program as early as Kindergarten. Allison plays volleyball and all of the girls take piano lessons.

An activities bus provides late transportation during the school year, but many miles are driven each year to allow the children to participate in school events. As much as they can, both families try to attend the events their children are involved in.

For both Rick and Rodney, the world around them stops when deer hunting season comes around. They hunt near home but the pursuit of the wily whitetail is an all-consuming effort. Waterfowl and upland game may also be found in the area, and the brothers put forth extra effort to help the area wildlife.

Rodney and Rick don’t see anything unusual about their children taking on responsibility at an early age. They were 19 and 16 years old when their father, Lewie Bjerklie, died in 1971. The farm had about 70 head of Hereford-Angus beef cows and 320 acres of land when they assumed the responsibility for its operation.

They kept on with the beef herd until 1982 when they sold out the beef cows and went into dairying, building a 32x100 barn with a pipeline milking system and five milker units. They sell Grade A milk from their 40-cow grade Holstein herd through the Goodridge Cooperative Creamery Association.

Replacement heifers are raised on the farm and dairy steers are sold as feeders at about 500 pounds. In 1985 a 16-foot addition was put on the barn and a manure pit system installed. Rodney says he would give up the pipeline milkers before he would give up the manure handling system.

That system involved pumping manure into a fenced 150x200 foot pit about 12 feet deep. There it accumulates for two years. Every other fall – hopefully when the wind is in the right direction – the slurry

in the pit is agitated for a day and a 3,000 gallon spreader tank is rented. For about three days, the Bjerklie’s pump into the tank and spread the liquid manure on their fields and pasture.

They own a share of the pump which they say can fill the 5,000 gallon tank in about a minute. It takes about 10 minutes to spread the load once they get to the field. More time is spend in transport than in filling and spreading.

Because of the availability of the liquid manure, the Bjerklies have to use very little commercial fertilizer. Their land is mostly peat ground and they raise their own hay and corn as well as small grain. The hay is a mixture of alfalfa and orchard grass, the latter used because it does well on the peat ground and has more protein than timothy or other alternate hay crops.

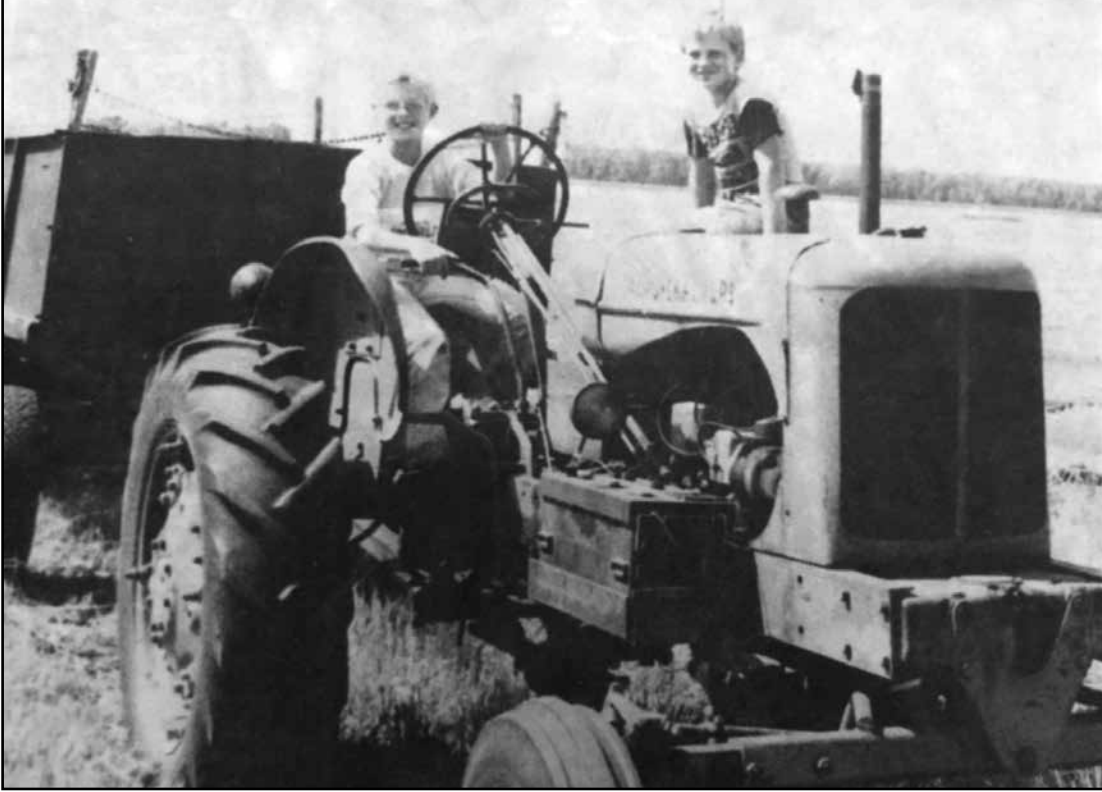
They added 160 acres to the farm in 1975 and rent about 420 acres as well. Just over 200 acres of their land has been placed in the Conservation Reserve Program. This year the crop includes about 80 acres of barley and 30 acres of corn. If the corn matures it will be harvested for grain; if not, it will be used for silage.

While the farming operation of Bjerklie Brothers is consolidated, its base of operations is somewhat spread. Rick and Joni lived with his mother on the home farm until 1985 when they moved to a double wide mobile home across the road. His mother married Kenneth Peterson and they live on the home farmstead.

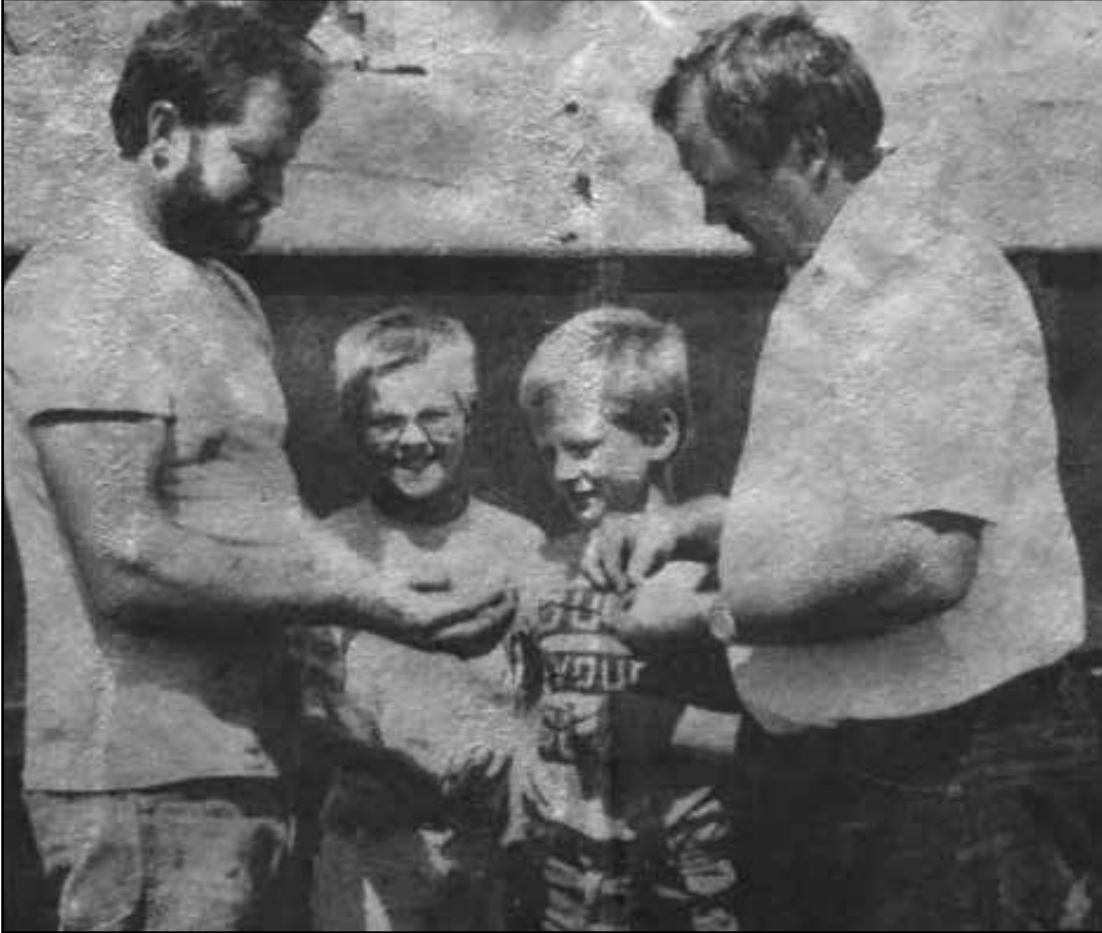
Having grandma close by is something special for the Bjerklie children. They call her “The Dairy Queen” because she keeps her freezer well supplied with ice cream treats and welcomes their visits.

Rodney and Cheryl live about a mile and a half west on what was the Thore Skomedal place. Skomedal, now 101 years old and claiming the first 100 years were the hardest, lives in Thief River Falls.

Perhaps the Bjerklie brothers and sisters get along so well together because they share the same goals and objectives. Perhaps it is because they don’t have the time to disagree. But more likely it is summed up in Joni’s brief explanation: “We work hard but we like what we do.”



(1990) Every chance they get, Aric (left) and Matthew Bjerklie enjoy driving the farm tractors. This occasion was the combining of barley near the Rick Bjerklie residence. Aric, 10, is the son of Rodney and Cheryl Bjerklie. Matthew, 9, is the son of Rick and Joni Bjerklie.



(1990) As the last few kernels of barley trickle out of the unloading auger of their combine, Rick (left) and Rodney Bjerklie check a handful of the crop. Also pictured are Rick’s son Matthew (right) and Rodney’s son Aric.



(1990) Joni (left) and Cheryl Bjerklie felt that their fledging egg business needed a little boost so they made this sign which stands near the farm driveway. The sisters, whose maiden name is Sjulestad, have about 800 laying hens and this year raised about 500 heavy chickens for fryers.



(1990) Ryan Bjerklie, 16, take a few seconds from operating a combine on the Bjerklie Brothers farm in Hickory Township of Pennington County to smile for The Times camera. The son of Rodney and Cheryl Bjerklie, Ryan is viewed as “a third arm” in his value to the farm operation.