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20 ISSUE 19

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PUBLISHED BY THE MAPLE LAKE MESSENGER



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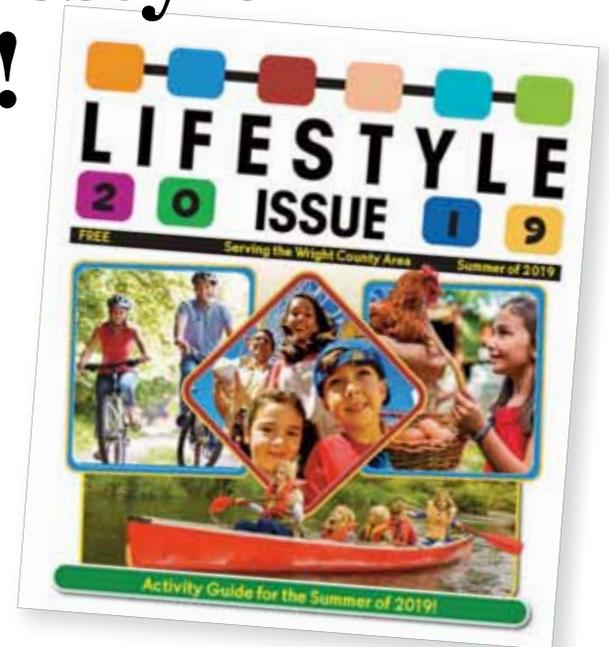
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The 2019 Lifestyle Issue is here!

Plan your summer with local events and activities found right here in your community

Take a peek inside of summer in the 2019 Lifestyle. It is packed with activities in the heart of Wright County. Meet a family who raises and releases Monarch butterflies by the hundreds every summer; check out the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners' new list of top picks of vegetable and flower varieties for Minnesota gardeners; save the dates for some baseball fun when Maple Lake hosts the State Amateur Baseball Tournament in August and learn how to improve your golf swing from a local instructor. This issue is also a great source for festivals, parades and other fun events taking place in Maple Lake and the surrounding communities this summer.



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The 2019 Lifestyle issue is published by the Maple Lake Messenger every April. For advertising information or content suggestions for 2019 please contact Don at the ads@maplelakemessenger.com
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Take me out to the ballgame

Maple Lake to host 2019 State Amateur Baseball Tournament in August

By Brenda Erdahl

Baseball enthusiasts mark your calendars for the third weekend in August. That's when Maple Lake plays host to the much loved, State Amateur Baseball Tournament.

For three consecutive weekends, thousands of players and fans will pour into Irish Country for one of the biggest amateur baseball events of the year. Contests between some of the best teams in the state will light up Irish Stadium continuously Friday night through Sunday each weekend until the championships on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 2.

"There is a lot of love for this state tournament," said Chad Raiche a member of the Maple Lake State Tournament Board. "And obviously it's good to bring people to our town."

This summer will be the third time Maple



Since the early 20th century town ball has held a spot in the history and heart of Maple Lake. With one of the best amateur baseball parks in the state, no shortage of community support, and a winning program with 19-state tournament appearances since 1975, the Lakers are a source of pride and entertainment.

Lake has hosted the prestigious event, and all three times, the city has partnered with Delano because of the sheer size of it. A third site in Dassel-Cokato acts as a back-up field.

The event is the site for both the Class C and Class B state tournaments. Class C is the larger of the two with about 48 contending teams. Class B generally has 16 or so

teams competing for the title of state champion. The last time the two towns co-hosted the games, they attracted close to 15,000 people, Raiche estimated. He figures 8,000 or so of those fans filled the seats at the Maple Lake ballpark at one time or another throughout the series.

Maple Lake's team, the Lakers, are in Class C and have a history of not only com-

peting in it but winning, and this year should be no different. Since 1925, the ball club has been to state 27 times and has won three championships, with the most recent win in 2012. The Lakers have advanced consecutively since 2016 and were ranked No. 1 in the state going in in 2013, the last time Maple Lake and Delano hosted the event.

According to Raiche communities must earn the right to host the State Amateur Baseball Tournament and it says a lot that Maple Lake has been chosen three times. The first time was in 1984. Thirteen years later, in 1997, it returned to the local ball park.

"Typically, if you hosted in the past you had to wait 10 years to host again or put in a bid," Raiche said. "Communities put a bid together and propose it to the state board. Not as any communities are bidding, but with that said, when we hosted in 2013, they were really happy with how well it went and how nice our field was. They told me we would probably be here again before 10 years was up, then they changed the rule and we got it."

(See "Lakers Baseball" page 5)



Maple Lake Lakers

05/04	2:00 PM	vs. Roscoe	Irish Stadium
05/10	7:30 PM	vs. Howard Lake*	Irish Stadium
05/12	2:00 PM	@ Monticello	Monticello
05/15	7:30 PM	vs. New Germany	Irish Stadium
05/17	7:30 PM	vs. Delano*	Irish Stadium
05/19	2:00 PM	vs. Montrose/Waverly*	Irish Stadium
05/22	7:30 PM	vs. St. Michael	Irish Stadium
05/29	7:30 PM	vs. Maple Plain*	Irish Stadium
05/31	7:30 PM	vs. Loretto*	Irish Stadium
06/02	2:00 PM	@ Cokato*	Cokato
06/05	7:30 PM	vs. Montrose/Waverly*	Irish Stadium
06/07	7:30 PM	@ Litchfield*	Litchfield
06/09	2:00 PM	vs. Cokato	Irish Stadium
06/12	7:30 PM	vs. Dassel-Cokato*	Irish Stadium
06/16	6:00 PM	vs. Hutchinson*	Irish Stadium
06/19	7:30 PM	vs. Litchfield*	Irish Stadium
06/21	8:00 PM	@ Sartell Stone Ponys	-Farming Tournament

* league game



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Lakers Baseball

(from page 4)

Hosting the state tournament is a community-wide undertaking that requires a lot of work, dedication and volunteers. In 2013, 100 plus volunteers in Maple Lake worked tirelessly to make the tournament a success, both in the days leading up to the event and working during the games, Raiche said.

The state board requires the field to look a certain way, he added. It has to be clean, painted and have a level playing field. He credited Maple Lake Public Works with helping to get the field in such tip-top shape.

“We have a really nice field here. I remember in 2013, an outstate team was taking pictures of our field. They had never seen anything like this in their life. There are a lot of really nice parks in the state and we have one of them,” Raiche said.

Because it is only five years since the last time Maple Lake hosted the tournament, Raiche doesn’t anticipate any major improvements for the field.

This spring Irish Stadium got a new score board and later this summer efforts will be made to paint and update the bleachers if needed, but the focus of any improvements will be on perfecting the field itself.

“We want the playing surface to be top



The Lakers celebrate after winning the 2012 State Amateur Baseball Tournament title.

notch,” Raiche said.

“Some places that get the tournament put over a million dollars into their fields, we don’t have that kind of money. But our budget works for us. It gives us the small-town, nostalgic feel. It’s nice to have your Target Fields, but people also like the old school feel and that is what we are.”

The State Amateur Baseball Tournament kicks off on Friday, August 16. One or two games are usually played Friday nights and four games on Saturday and Sunday. The teams all return the following weekend, August 23-25 for more of the same, with the last weekend of tournament play on Labor Day weekend, Aug. 30-Sept. 2. The championship games take place on Labor Day.



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Flea Market open



Minnesota's first and largest outdoor flea market is now open for 47th year!

The Wright County Swappers Meet in Annandale is now open for its 47th year, so clean out your garage, basement and children's rooms.

Turn your unwanted items into cash or browse the swappers meet every Saturday through August. The Swappers Meet is located three miles west of Annandale, then north of Hwy. 55 two miles. Look for the signs, you can't miss them.

The Swappers Meet is also open Friday, Saturday and Sunday for holiday weekends. Gates open ½ hour before sunrise and admission and parking is free for visitors. Dealers may set up on trailers or tables at noon the day before the sale, there will be food on grounds. More information can be found at wrightcountyswappersmeet.com Contact Kevin and Laurie Miller at 320-274-9005 for more information.

Summer entertainment for all ages in 2019

Maple Lake

April 13 thru Oct. 27: Maple Lake Farmers Market, Fridays 3-7 p.m. on the corner of Division St. and Birch Ave.

May 27: Memorial Day program

June 1: All City Garage Sale

July 27: Movie on Birch

August 17: Gear-Head Get Together, A car show, and much, much more, the get together is a favorite among gear-heads and non-gear-heads alike in downtown Maple Lake.

Sept. 7-8: Airport Fly-in and Pork Chop Dinner,

Annandale

April 6 - Oct.: Wright County Swappers meet: Minnesota's Largest Outdoor Market is open every Saturday until October at 13594 100th St. NW South Haven. For more info visit www.wrightcountyswappersmeet.com.

May 4: All City Garage Sale

May 25: Chili Cook-Off, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

June 1: Annandale Farmers Market, Saturdays, June 1-October, 8 a.m. to noon in City Hall Square.

July 3-7: Fourth of July Celebration, . Enjoy a carnival, boat parade, kiddie parade, queen coronation, Fourth of July Parade, fireworks display and more.



Maple Lakes Gearhead Get-Together, August 17, 2019.

July 21: Heart of the Lakes Triathlon, Sunday. Starts at Pleasant Lake City Park. Visit holtri.org for more information.

Buffalo

June 2: Buffalo Triathlon, Visit TriBuff.com

June 9-16: Buffalo Days, Enjoy parades, fireworks, rides, Fishing Clinic for Kids and more.

June 20-22: Buffalo Championship Rodeo, Enjoy a full weekend of showmanship at Minnesota's oldest rodeo. Visit www.BuffaloRodeo.com for more information.

June 27-August 29; Concerts in the Park, Thursday evenings in Sturges Park.

July 19-20: Crazy Days.

August 3: All Star Clown Show, 6 p.m. at the Buffalo Civic

(See "Summer Entertainment" page 7)



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St. Patrick's Day Festival



August 17, 2019
Gear-Head Get Together

Summer Entertainment

(from page 6)

Center. The only show of its kind in North America, visitors to this event will witness 100 clowns performing classic circus routines, hilarious magic illusions and amazing juggling skills. Admission is free.

August 17: Art and Craft Festival, downtown Buffalo.

September 7: Classics by the Lake Car Show, on the shores of Buffalo Lake.

Clearwater

August 2-3: Visit Clearwater Heritage days.

See facebook for full schedule.

August 16-18: Clearwater Rodeo, put on by the Silver bullet Saddle Club. Visit www.silverbulletsaddleclub.com for more information.

Howard Lake

July 24-28: Wright County Fair, Visit www.wrightcountyfair.org for more info.

Monticello

May 18: All City Garage Sale

June 8: 24th Annual Walk N Roll Community Pathway Celebration, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at CentraCare Health parking lot and down River Street East to West Bridge park. Enjoy face painting, mountain bike challenge course, and prize give-aways.

July 10: Monticello Party in the Park – West Bridge park.

July 11-14: Riverfest – Car Show & Family Fun day, Enjoy a car show, 5K and kids fun run, parade, pie eating contest, street dance, talent show and fireworks. Visit monticelloriverfest.com for more information.

July 13: Art in the Park, 8 a.m. – 3p.m. at Ellison Park on the banks of the Mississippi River.

July 13: Taste of Monticello, 10 a.m. 3 p.m. at Ellison Park.



Buffalo Days



Maple Lake Garage Sale



Annandale Parade

Gear-Head Get Together

Every third weekend in August in Maple Lake is the Gear-Head Get Together, an event that boasts the philosophy: if you love it, bring it and show it and the more creative it is, the better. A car show, and much, much more, the Get Together, now in its ninth year, has become a favorite event among gear-heads and non-gear-heads alike.



“You can go to five different car shows any weekend of the summer. There are car shows, motorcycle shows, and tractor shows. The idea here is to bring everything together. If you’re a gear head, you can appreciate it all, from a souped-up lawn mower to a classic car,” founder Scott Chantland said.

Free to spectators and participants, the get-together has seen tremendous growth since its inception, doubling in size its first three years, and continuing to grow each year since. It draws people from across Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa for a unique display of mechanical ingenuity that, in the words of its founder, offers “no plaques, no trophies, just a bunch of gear-heads hanging out and looking at machines.”

There are enough shiny hot rods, collector cars, rusty re-models still in the works, motorcycles of all eras and intriguing odds and ends to practically take over the entire town. Streets are closed for the event to accommodate the 600 to 700 vehicles, 100-plus motorcycles and thousands of spectators that attend.

The annual swap meet draws in more than

100 vendors, and only gear head items are sold at this market. Enthusiasts can find everything from car, motorcycle and snowmobile parts to entire cars and full motorcycles for sale. There are also lots of petroleum related items including vintage signs. “There will be no sunglasses, compression socks or Tupperware sold at this swap meet, it’s all gear head items,” Chantland said.

For those seeking a rest or some entertainment while browsing, the bands Pullstart Diesel and The Rockin’ Hollywoods will be performing throughout the day. There will also be food and beverages from local restaurants and organizations.

Chantland emphasized that the Gear-Head Get Togethers’ success, both past and future, is due to the diligent work of many capable hands.

“What makes it all possible is a very dedicated group of Gear-Head volunteers and an incredible group of sponsors.” This year’s event will take place on Saturday, August 17. Visit www.gearheadgettogether.net for more information.

– By Brenda Erdahl

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Raising butterflies is satisfying hobby

By Brenda Erdahl

Butterflies have long held a certain amount of fascination for children. Little faces have observed the metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly through the glass of mason jars and other make-shift cages for decades.

Gina Triebold and her daughters have taken that fascination to a whole new level. They raise Monarch butterflies and set them free by



The Triebold family raises and releases Monarch butterflies by the hundreds at their cabin on Maple Lake.

the hundreds every summer at their cabin on Maple Lake.

"It's beautiful when you can just open the top of the cage and let them go. You get this tornado of butterflies. It's really cool," Triebold said.

Last year was a record year for the family who released 877 of the colorful insects back into the wild. This year they hope to break 1,000.

Triebold has been raising monarchs for close to 10 years. When her oldest daughter Camryn, who is now eight, was born, her hobby took on new meaning. Today her youngest daughter, seven-year old Mackenzie, is an "expert monarch egg hunter."

"The girls were pretty young when they started, but they still love it," she said.

Both girls have taken butterflies and caterpillars to school in their hometown of Cottage Grove and have given presentations on the subject to their classmates. According to Triebold, it's a worthwhile hobby anyone can master with a little practice and patience.

How to raise monarch butterflies

The fun begins for the Triebolds in late May



A newly released group of Monarchs rest on some flowers before heading off on their next adventure.

as soon as the first Monarchs start to appear. That's when the family begins scouring the ditches and weedy areas around their cabin for milkweed. Milkweed is the primary food for Monarch caterpillars. It's also where Monarch butterflies lay their eggs.

The eggs are usually found on the underside of milkweed leaves. They are about the size of the tip of a pencil, slightly pointy at the tip and iridescent, Triebold said.

Monarchwatch.com advises Monarch egg hunters to watch for adult Monarchs stopping

at milkweed plants as they are likely laying eggs. A female will usually lay only one egg per milkweed plant to ensure enough food for each larva.

When the Triebolds find an egg on a leaf, they take the entire leaf home. They put it on a damp cloth in a container (Tupperware with holes punched in the top works well) to keep it moist. After two to four days, the baby caterpillar will emerge. Once the caterpillar hatches, it must have a continuous supply of milkweed, Triebold said.

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for Triebold family

As the caterpillar grows it will have to be moved to a larger container. Since the Triebolds often have multiple caterpillars, they put them in containers according to size. If small ones are in the same space as large ones, they might get eaten.

Triebold likes to house the larger caterpillars in a large container with standing milkweed stalks. She uses wet floral foam to stand her stalks upright. This kind of habitat works well as it allows the caterpillars' waste to fall to the bottom of the cage. Waste in close contact with the caterpillars can cause disease, she said. She also noted it is very important to keep the cages clean throughout the entire process.

At this point they are big enough to play with and the girls enjoy letting the little insects crawl all over them, Triebold said.

Once the caterpillar is full size (about two weeks) it will climb to the top of the cage and attach itself with a silken thread and form a "J" before shedding its skin for the last time. This is when the chrysalis forms.

After about two weeks, the butterfly will emerge. According to Monarch Watch, the adult wings will be visible through the

chrysalis covering when it is ready to come out.

"You don't want new butterflies emerging over feeding caterpillars as they can make the caterpillars ill," Triebold noted. "We move the chrysalids and tie them up in another container."

The Triebolds like to keep the Monarchs indoors during all stages of growth to protect them from predators and give them more consistent temperatures. The girls generously give up their playroom each summer for this purpose.

From caterpillar to butterfly

Watching the butterfly emerge is a "really cool process to watch" Triebold said, but before letting the Monarchs out into the world, make sure their wings are fully inflated and dry, she advised. This can take three to four hours. The new butterfly will cling to its chrysalis during this period. Once they start to open and close their wings it is okay to let them warm themselves in the sun on an interior screen door or in a mesh cage outside if it's not too cold, she said. The temperature should not be below 60 degrees when they are released and make sure the weather is favor-



Raising Monarch butterflies is a rewarding hobby for the Triebold family. (Inset) This picture shows the various sizes of Monarch caterpillars from egg to full grown. Look closely at the left side of the top leaf to find an egg.

able.

"You don't want to let them go if a storm is on the way. You want to give them a chance to find shelter before any storms," Triebold said.

Back when the girls were younger, they released every butterfly one at a time. Now that

some of the fascination has worn off, they let them go in groups of 50 which can be just as enchanting, Triebold said

A summer of fun

The Triebolds collect eggs, hatch and raise

(See "Butterflies" page 10)



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Butterflies

(from page 9)

Monarchs throughout the entire summer. Milkweed can be found in parks, and ditches all over Minnesota and it can be grown in gardens as well. Monarchwatch.org is a good resource for beginners and there are plenty of books available on the subject, Triebold said. The best way to learn though, is through trial and error.

The hobby of raising Monarchs seems to be getting more and more popular, accord-

ing to Triebold.

“When we’re out harvesting food people will come up to us and say ‘oh, you are out looking for Monarchs,’ so that’s really cool,” she said.

Her daughters enjoy gathering food for their little charges and even find themselves explaining a little of the rearing process when they are approached by other children in parks.

“They will show them (the other children) what caterpillars and milkweed look like,”

Triebold said.

Conservation

Monarch habitat is in jeopardy across the U.S., but in Minnesota the biggest threat to the tiny insect is the declining amount of milkweed. Milkweed is considered a noxious weed by many which means it is often destroyed.

Advancements in weed control in farming

and even the practice of clearing roadways and ditches can lead to loss of food for Monarch caterpillars, Triebold said.

While planting milkweed is probably the easiest and most effective way to help, taking in and raising the Monarchs gives the Triebold family a sense of pride and joy.

“As long as you think it’s fun, keep doing it,” she advised.

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1. Once the caterpillar is full size it climbs to the top of the cage and attaches itself with a silken thread to form its chrysalis. 2. The Triebold girls generously give up their playroom every summer for the Monarchs. 3. From left, Camryn and Mackenzie Triebold pose with butterflies they have raised.



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SALVIA-BLUE-VICTORIA. For pollinator gardeners, salvia 'Victoria Blue' held its top spot.



VALENCIA TOMATO. The truly yellow 'Valencia' tomato achieved high marks.



SQUASH. Squash was among 200-plus plants considered.

Contributing Writer

Want to know some of the best vegetable or flower varieties to try in your garden or planter this coming year? Before ordering seeds from a catalog, take a closer look at University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners' new list of top picks just for Minnesota gardeners.

More than 120 volunteers from 46 counties around the state announced their favorites for Minnesota gardeners after growing and observing six kinds of vegetables and two flowers last summer. This annual-top-picks effort goes back to 1982, and more than 200 plants are on the list.

"We can help save frustration and money by guiding gardeners toward varieties that really do well in Minnesota," said Sue Schiess, chair of the Extension Minnesota Master Gardener seed trial leadership team. "I don't think you can get that information any place else."

In a blind test, Master Gardeners monitor half a dozen varieties of each plant for disease and insect tolerance, growth and germination rate. They rate flowers for their bloom color, size and fragrance; vegetables are rated for taste and flavor, as well as productivity. Schiess said the trials help sort out the "buzz" about new plants.

"Like the 'Victoria Blue' Salvia—that was a Minnesota winner from a number of years ago," she said. "In spite of the chatter about fancy newer varieties that are more expensive, they did not do as well as the 'Victoria Blue'."

Minnesota Winners: 2018 Seed Trial Results

Some highlights about the Minnesota winners for 2018:

- Edamame (young soybeans) was trialed for the first time and Master Gardeners chose the variety 'Chiba Green' as their favorite. They reported all varieties tested were easy to grow, Schiess said.

- The truly yellow 'Valencia' tomato achieved high marks for a slightly acidic, slightly sweet taste and soft skin.

- For pollinator gardeners, salvia 'Victoria Blue' held its top spot, in spite of many new challengers on the market. Its blooms lasted past several frosts into October.

'Sneak peek' at next year

What's on 2019's list? Volunteers will test varieties of arugula, gold beets, sugar snap peas, red cabbage, mint, tall yellow snapdragons, a red-blossoming nasturtium and a very early tomato called 'Fourth of July,' Schiess said. "We want to know—what do they taste like?"

"Minnesota Winners" are in county display gardens around the state. The 2019 Minnesota Landscape Arboretum's teaching garden in Chaska also features these varieties. "Minnesota Winner" plants will also be for sale at the Hennepin County Master Gardener Annual Plant Sale on May 18.

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Five ways to improve your golf game



By Brenda Erdahl

Warmer weather has finally arrived and that means golf is back in session. At the first hint of spring admirers of the sport flock to their favorite courses, but after a long winter, even skilled golfers may need a quick brush-up on the basics. Whether you are a seasoned golfer, new to the sport or somewhere in between, Derek White, Clubhouse Manager at Albion Ridges offered up five tips that may reduce a few strokes off your

golf game this summer.

The mission is to grow the game of golf, by making it fun, with that said, the most important rule to remember is “swing your swing,” White said.

Those iconic words were first used by “The King” himself, Arnold Palmer who went on to say “Not someone else’s. Not the one you wish you had. No, swing your swing.”

Nobody’s swing is perfect, said White who gives adult and youth lessons at the rural Maple Lake

course. He advised to not copycat the best in the world, but rather play the way that is most enjoyable to you because if you are having fun, the odds are you will play better.

The second rule of thumb is to know your game. Know your tendencies and match those tendencies to the course, he said. Knowing your tendencies may mean recognizing your flaws.

White suggested asking yourself questions like, if I’m going to miss, does it go to the right or the left, or do I hit shots a little heavy?

Using your tendencies and course knowledge before you even swing is good course management and decision making.

Choosing the right club is also very important. Wind, hazards and

obstructions in landing areas should influence your decision of which club to use. The right club could be the difference between falling short and landing in the water or hitting the green, White said.

Pay attention to the wind. This goes hand-in-hand with choosing the right club for the conditions. Not every golf game is played in perfect weather. A good player knows how to make adjustments for the wind depending on the shot. Use the wind to your advantage when you can and adjust your swing when hitting into the wind. Becoming a better golfer also means fixing some common mistakes. The most common in White’s experience is grip, ball placement and stance.

“Fifty percent of my lessons are working on ball placement,” he said. “The first thing I always do is change their set up. I look at their grip, ball placement and stance.”

If your club is bottoming out or if you are hitting the top of the golf ball, your set up is likely the problem. “Fixing your grip, ball placement and stance will drastically improve your ball striking,” he said. To further improve your game and get the most enjoyment out of it, White offered these four swing tips:

Driver: Create a launch pad setup to hit the ball further. Make sure your feet are set-up slightly wider than shoulder width, this should create an athletic, powerful stance with the proper knee flex.

(See “Golf Game” page 13)



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Golf Game

(from page 12)

At address, tilt your spine away from the target so that your right shoulder is lower than your left. Make sure to position the ball just inside your front or lead foot. This ensures that you catch the ball on the up-swing, producing a higher trajectory and longer distance.

Irons: Use a towel to stop hitting iron shots heavy or fat. Grab your 9 iron and your golf towel. Place the towel nice and flat approximately 4-5 inches behind your golf ball. Hit several shots with the goal of missing the towel as the club approaches impact. If the club continually strikes the towel, you've got too much weight on your back leg on the downswing. Work on driving off your back foot to the front foot as you come down and through the shot. For a real challenge, gradually move the towel closer and closer to your golf ball. This will ensure contact with the ball first, followed by a divot in front of the ball.

Chipping: Change your ball position in your stance for different ball flights and trajectories. Adjusting the trajectory of your chip shots can easily be done by changing the location of your ball in your set up. For a lower, running chip shot,

place the ball in the back of your stance off the toe of your back foot. For a higher, softer chip shot, place the ball in the front of your stance off the toe of your front foot. Practice this with different stance widths to achieve the best results for your swing.

Putting: Look "up" at your putts for a better read of the green. The age-old debate of whether to read putts from behind the hole or from behind the ball is a hotly contested idea. For me, there is no correct answer as different putts demand different perspectives. If your putt is downhill, read the putt from behind the hole. If your putt is uphill, read the putt from behind your golf ball. This will help your eyes accurately access both slope and distance.

Besides the recreational aspect of golf, the sport can also be a good source of exercise. The USGA just released findings that walking 18 holes is equivalent to running a 5K or walking five miles, depending on the course and how spaced out the holes are, White said.

Besides the recreational aspect of golf, the sport can also be a good source of exercise. The USGA just released findings that walking 18 holes is equivalent to running a 5K or walking five miles, depending on the

course and how spaced out the holes are, White said.

Golf is also a lifelong sport, meaning it can be played at virtually any age. The key, is to start early, and most importantly, promote safety and have fun, White said.

To further improve your golf game and get the most enjoyment out of your golf game many instructional videos can be found online or you can contact a local golf pro at your favorite golf course to help you get the most out of your swing.



Local golf courses provide fun and excitement for players of all abilities. Find more information on local golf courses in your area community guide.



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The Maple Lake market is open Fridays from 3 to 7 p.m. and features everything from home-grown vegetables to crafts, and organic soaps

Local Farmers Market's

Providing good food and good company

By Brenda Erdahl

Maple Lake's Farmer's Market opens mid-June in the empty lot on the corner of Birch Ave South and Division Street in downtown Maple Lake.

Every Friday, from 3 to 7 p.m. until mid-September, an assortment of healthy, locally grown foods can be found there.

In its fourth year, the Farmers Market is bigger and better than ever. What started in the summer of 2016 with 85 customers has now grown to 200 or more.

The Market was founded by John Northenscold Sr. as way to support local growers, bring healthy foods to the community and attract business to downtown Maple Lake. Up to 20 local vendors visit every Friday to sell their wares that range in variety from vegetables and fruits to crafts and homemade lotions. Vendors from all over Wright County bring their farm raised produce, meats and home-made breads, cheeses, preserves and organic soaps.

To further benefit its customers, the Maple Lake Market has an EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) terminal which allows patrons to use their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits, formally known as Food Stamps, also known as SNAP. Market Bucks which increases the SNAP buying power up to an additional \$10, has also been a successful and popular option at Maple Lake and other farmers markets.



Garden fresh vegetables are always a popular item at Farmers Markets.

As an added convenience, the EBT terminal can also process credit and debit cards for buyers.

Recently, Maple Lake organizers introduced the Power of Produce Club, or POP. POP empowers kids to make healthy food choices. Children from four to 12 years old

(See "Farmer's Market" page 15)

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Farmer's Market

(from page 14)

can come to the POP booth each week with one of their parents to get a free \$2 token to be spent on any fruit or vegetable.

As another incentive to eat healthy, organizers have incorporated a frequent buyer reward program which rewards a shopper with \$5 for five visits to the market.

The goal is to make fresh, healthy foods easily accessible to everyone, and there is a lot of that to enjoy at the Maple Lake Farmers Market.

Beck's Produce out of Elk River is a frequent vendor at Maple Lake and well known for its sweetcorn. In addition to vegetables and fruits, in season's past vendors have sold jams and jellies, pickled garlic, homemade pies and a goat cheese, goat milk skin lotion, gluten free breads, hot sauces, flowers and plants and honey. Maple Lake's farmers market also had its share of crafts and artwork.

Even if all of last year's vendors



The Maple Lake Farmers Market is open mid-June to mid-September in the empty lot on the corner of Birch Ave South and Division Street downtown.

return, there is still plenty of room for more and organizers are always looking for new people willing to sell their wares.

A farmer's market is more than just a place to buy produce, however. Farmers markets are good places to interact with your neighbors, organizers have said.

People that shop at farmers markets have 15 to 20 social interactions per visit compared with 1 to

2 social interactions at a grocery store. Farmers markets provide spaces to meet and greet, and like Maple Lake, some even have musical entertainment.

To make the Maple Lake Farmers Market easy to find, it has become a member of Minnesota Grown through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and is listed in 155,000 copies of the Minnesota Grown directory, and

on their website which got over 300,000 search hits last year.

The Maple Lake Farmers Market is also listed on Local Harvest, a national on-line directory of farmers markets, and is a member of the Minnesota Farmers Market Association.

Weekly e-mail and Facebook notices keep patrons aware of market happenings and privy to recipes. To get the very latest news on the market and up-to-the hour vendor offerings, stop at the headquarters booth to get on the list. Visitors can get in on free prize drawings and recipe cards there too.

The Maple Lake Farmers Market has a handicap accessible toilet at the market so everyone can enjoy healthy foods and the upbeat, welcoming atmosphere of the Maple Lake Farmers Market.

For more information visit the Maple Lake Farmers Market on Facebook.

Local Farmers Market's



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June - October, 8:00 a.m. - Noon
City Hall Square

Buffalo Farmers Market
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May - October, 8am - Noon
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Dassel Farmers Market
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June - October 2:30-5:30 p.m
Downtown Dassel - Bandstand Park

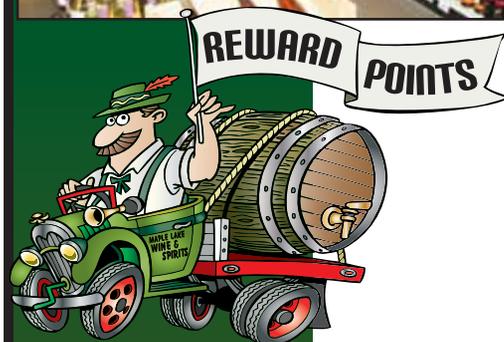
Delano Farmers Market
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May 4 - October, 2pm - 6pm
Flippin' Bills Parking Lot

Monticello Farmers Market
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