

THE MAPLE LAKE MESSENGER CELEBRATES 125 Years



A TRIP THROUGH TIME

By Brenda Erdahl

On November 28, 125 years ago, the first Maple Lake Messenger rolled off the press. The man responsible was Frank T. Hamilton, son-in-law to Maple Lake pioneer James O'Loughlin.

Nine publishers, many trials, changes, and stories later, the Maple Lake Messenger continues to be a primary source of community news.

"The role of the small-town newspaper is more than just reporting the news. It's really the glue that connects the community together," current publisher Ed Pawlenty said. "We're the conversation of the community."

"We're really the only source that records a community over time," he added. "We generate new stories about local people. You are not going to find that anywhere else. Over time, that has a lot of impact."

The Messenger has been archiving the events of Maple Lake continuously since 1895 and today is the only Wright County paper established prior to 1900 that is still published under its original name.

According to The Maple Lake, Minnesota Centennial History book, Maple Lake had two newspapers prior to the Messenger, but neither lasted long, and there are no known issues remaining. The first, the Maple Lake Democrat, opened in 1888, two years before The City's incorporation. After that enterprise failed J.L. Cass started the Maple Lake news in 1892. After about six weeks, it too folded.

Evidence points to the Messenger building being located on Maple Ave. directly across from what is today the American Legion. In 1897 fire damaged the building and by 1898, only three years after its opening, Hamilton was already trying to disassociate himself from the company. He tried renting it to D. E. Haven of Minneapolis. When that didn't work out, Hamilton arranged for J.D. Taylor of Ortonville to take over the Messenger. Less than two weeks later, in 1899, the building suffered its second fire and burned to the ground.

Hamilton reportedly threw in the towel after that, and editor of the Annandale Post, S.L. Rank swooped.

Following Rank were editors A.W. Nary, William R. Brown, R.S. Peterson and C.P. Maloney. In 1948 experienced journalist Leslie Nelson bought the Messenger. Nelson is the man responsible for bringing Harold Brutlag to town, the author of the popular column that still appears in the Messenger today, Brute's Bleat.

"Back then the publishers all knew each other well. Newspapers were all individually owned. I worked at the Howard Lake Herald," Brutlag said. "The publisher, Pete Peterson and Les got along well, they were drinking buddies. Les approached Pete and asked if he had any qualms about him asking me to come to Maple Lake. I don't think Pete thought I'd leave, so he said okay."

Brutlag went to work for Nelson with the understanding that after working for him for two years he would have the opportunity to buy the paper. So, in 1968, that's what he did.

At that time, the Messenger was located west of the lumberyard on the same street as the post office, Brutlag said. The building housed a printshop, newspaper office and an apartment where Nelson and his family lived. In the mid-1980s, Brutlag and his wife built the current building on Division street and the lumberyard bought the old building, which today is no longer there.

Oh, how things change

When Brutlag started at the Messenger, they printed the paper on a press Nelson bought in 1958 to replace an old C. Potter Press that had served the Messenger for 60 years. According to the Centennial Book, it was so heavy, it took nine men to move it in.

Another key piece of equipment in the printshop at the time was the Linotype Machine. The Linotype was a hot metal typesetting system that used a led melting pot to cast blocks of metal type called slugs, Brutlag said.

The Linotype operator would sit in front of something similar to a keyboard and punch in the letters. Eventually a metal mold of the article was produced one line at a time.

"I inherited Linotype operator Blanch Pribyl. She had only 1 1/2 arms and typed

with only one hand, but she did the job well. She was fast and accurate," Brutlag said.

Those years were called the "hot type metal days" in newspaper history. The job was time consuming and in the summer it could get uncomfortably warm.

"They used to call print shops sweat shops because they got so hot on hot days. This was before my time, but they used to have a practice where the lowest man in the shop had to go get a pail of beer for the other printers. They called it 'rush the

(See "Maple Lake Messenger" Page 2)

AN AVARICIOUS FATHER. Fourteen-Year-Old Wife is Pledged for Gold Mine

Little Mrs. Annie Florence, the 14-year-old wife of Max Florence and daughter of Abraham Feinberg is in the custody of the police patron at Denver says the Rocky Mountain News and the authorities are stirred up over an attempt on the part of the father to coerce the girl into a binding marriage with Florence.

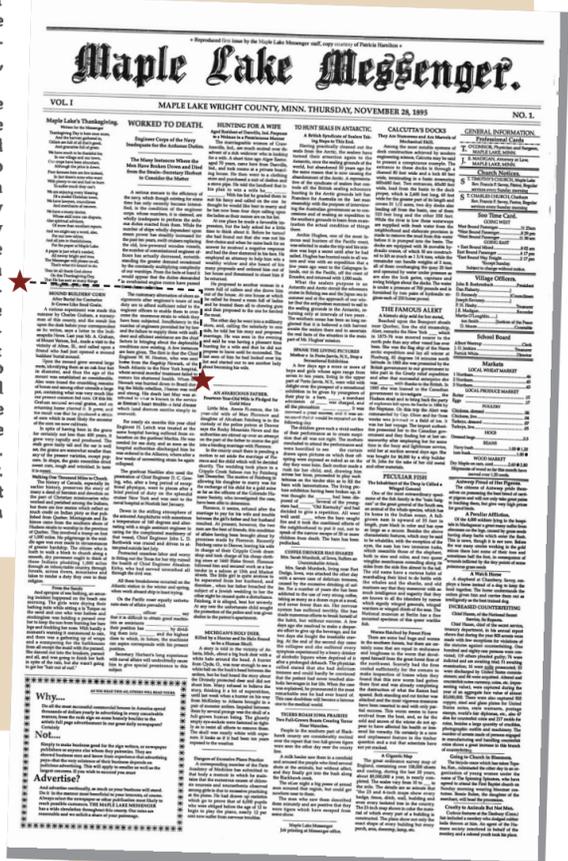
In the county court there is pending a motion to set aside the marriage of Florence and the child which will be decided shortly. The wedding took place in a Cripple Creek Saloon run by Feinberg last December. The motive of Feinberg in allowing his daughter to marry was for the exchange of his child for a gold mine as far as the officers of the Colorado Humane Society, who investigated the case, have been able to determine.

Florence, it seems, refused after the marriage to pay for his wife and trouble between the girl's father and her husband resulted. At present, however, the two men are the best of friends, this condition of affairs having been brought about by promises made by Florence. Recently Feinberg came to Denver, leaving his wife in charge of their Cripple Creek dram shop and took charge of his cheap clothing store at 1440 Blake Street. Florence followed him and secured work as a bartender in a saloon at 13th and Market streets. The little girl is quite anxious to be separated from her husband, and therefore, when her father broached the subject of a Jewish wedding to her the other night he caused quite a disturbance. Feinberg, it is alleged, beat her severely. At any rate the unfortunate child sought the protection of the police and was given shelter in the patron's apartments.

WORLD NEWS from across the globe was dropped on a small town community November 28th, 1895. Stories like Little Miss Annie Florence had many of the town folk talking.



The Messenger has been a staple of the community for 125 years. Many people have taken an important roll in this community newspapers success. Frank Thomas Hamilton who printed the first issue. Hamilton's great grand daughter Pat Hamilton displays and issue of the first Maple Lake Messenger.



★★★ Messenger Masthead 1895

Maple Lake Messenger.



Frank Thomas Hamilton Pictured above shows the Maple Lake Messenger when it was owned and ran by Hamilton. The building was located next to the Maple Lake Depot. You can still find some of the brick steps going to the depot from the lot this building was originally on.



A.W. NARY This was the site of the Messenger when editor A.W. Nary ran it. Although the year is uncertain, it was prior to 1948 when Leslie Nelson bought the Messenger.



Less Nelson ran the Messenger office when it was west of the lumberyard on the same street as the post office. Photos courtesy of Sue Sylvester



Harold Brutlag was first owner and publisher of the Maple Lake Messenger in the current building Located at 218 Division Street. Brutlag had the new office built in 1982.

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OFFICES OF THE MAPLE LAKE MESSENGER

Maple Lake Messenger

Leslie Nelson ▶

(from page 1)

growler,” Brutlag said.

Reading pictures for print was another time-consuming process during Brutlag’s day. After taking and developing a picture, it was sent to St. Cloud where it was engraved on a piece of metal and then that was sent to the printer.

“If you took a picture on Thursday or Friday, there was a good chance you could get it in the next week’s paper,” Brutlag said.

The Linotype days were followed by the computer era, but it wasn’t a fast transition. There were steps in between. The Messenger’s first advancement in that direction was the Compugraphic 4. The switch from the Linotype to the Compugraphic took place in the 1970s, Brutlag said. The new system was much easier to operate and offered a wider range of font styles and sizes.

In the early 1980s, Brutlag stopped printing the paper in Maple Lake and sent it off to Buffalo to the print shop there. In the 2000s, Theresa Andrus started printing the paper in Sauk Center at Sauk Center Web Printing where it’s still printed today.

Despite the technological advancements, putting out a paper was still a time-consuming process. While the Linotype was no longer melting hot lead to make letter molds, the pages still had to be printed and laid out on oversized “paste up sheets.” Those sheets were then delivered to the printer who photographed each one individually and turned it into a negative to make a plate. The plate is what the printer put on the press, Brutlag said. It wasn’t until the 2000s that the Messenger began sending pages to the printer electronically.

“There was a period in the 2000s where we still had to run the pages up to Sauk Center,” current owner Michelle Pawlenty said.

New owners

On January 1, 2000, Theresa Andrus became the eighth publisher in the paper’s then 104-year history when she and her husband Doug purchased the Messenger from Brutlag. The Andrus’ were photographers from the Excelsior area and Theresa had experience working for Larson Publication in Osseo and the Monticello Times.

In 2011 Andrus sold the paper to Ed and Michele Pawlenty. Ed has been in the newspaper business for most of his life.

“When I was nine years-old I asked my dad what I could do to get money to buy a bike. He



Downtown Maple Lake In 1948 experienced journalist Leslie Nelson bought the Messenger. **INSERT:** Nelson is pictured in front of the Messenger office when it was west of the lumberyard on the same street as the post office.

Photos courtesy of Sue Sylvester

said, ‘get a job,’ so I got a paper route,” he said. “I was only nine and you had to be 12 to get a route so I signed up under my brother’s name.”

After graduating from college with a business degree he started an internship at the Pioneer Press. For the next 33 years he made his way through the ranks holding several different positions before ending as the circulation operations director.

In the early 2000s he began to see the writing on the wall and decided he should start looking for something different. He had an idea to buy his own paper, but there weren’t a lot of options available, he said. Then the Messenger in Maple Lake came up for sale.

To Michele, his ambitions came completely out of the blue.

“He came home and said, ‘I’m going to buy a paper,’ I said ‘fine, that’s fine, they’re like \$1 go ahead,’” she said.

Despite her initial surprise, Michele jumped right in, putting her accounting background to work to help run the business. But she said she had a lot to learn when it came to being a publisher.



Theresa Andrus: On January 1, 2000 Theresa Andrus became the eighth publisher in the paper’s then 104-year history.

Photos from Messenger archives

“I didn’t know any newspaper terms or anything about AP style or column inches,” she said. “I had to learn pretty quickly.”

Fortunately, Andrus stayed around for a while to help ease the transition and she also had the benefit of an experienced staff in Linda Ordorff and Brutlag.

Today the Pawlentys also own the Battle Lake Review, the Ashby/Dalton Post and the

Annandale Advocate.

Good times, bad times

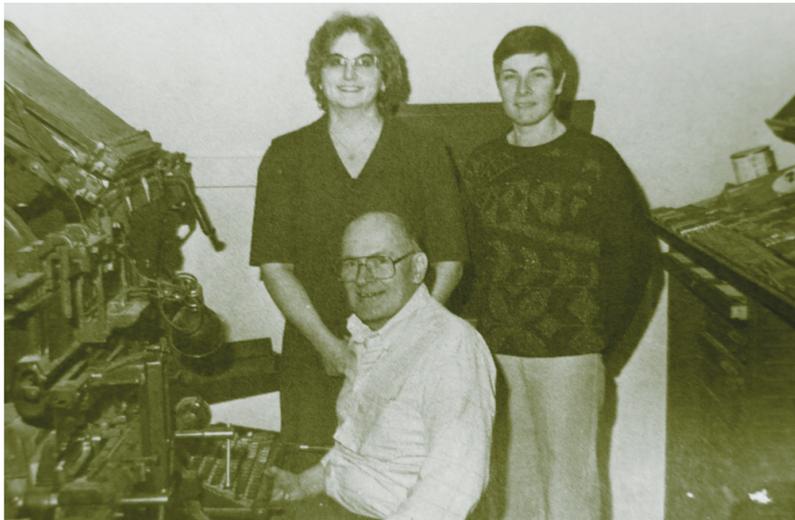
A lot of Maple Lake history has been recorded since the Messenger rolled out its first edition 125 years ago. Some events have been exciting to cover, like The City’s 100th anniversary celebration in 1990, and others have been tragic, said Brutlag remembering a school bus collision and Silver Creek fire where lives were lost.

Michele will always remember the car vs moose accident on Hwy 55 about five years ago. Messenger reporters covered the story so well Channel 5 News called and asked to use it. Jessica Miles, a news anchor at the station, even came out to talk to staff and take some pictures.

“That was cool to see TV news want a story from us,” Michele said.

2020

Today Ed and Michele’s son Nick has joined the Messenger team as the news/layout editor and other new faces have come on board as well, but the goal of the Messenger remains the same as it was 125 years ago – to record and relate the stories, accomplishments, good times and bad times of the people of Maple Lake.



Harold Brutlag sits in front of the 1911 vintage Linotype machine at the Messenger office with his 1989 staff behind him. Brutlag bought the Messenger in 1968 and sold it in 2000 to Theresa Andrus.



Pawlenty’s Purchase Messenger Ed Pawlenty (second from left) and Michele Pawlenty (third from left) bought the Maple Lake Messenger in 2011. Harold Brutlag pictured upper right still writes his column “Brute’s Bleat,” every week.

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1942 Cyclone in Maple Lake

On Sept. 11, 1942 a tornado hit the village of Maple Lake causing substantial damage. At left is an overview of some of the wreckage.



Bill Doherty Home This is what was left of the Bill Doherty home after the 1942 twister swept through Maple Lake.



Creamery The tornado caused extensive damage to the local creamery as well.

Liquor Store In this picture, it appears that the roof of the liquor store on Birch Ave was blown off. You can see the rubble lying in the street and on the sidewalk. This was later the site of the Municipal Liquor store.



New Ball Park Opens Friday

★★★ Messenger Article, July 13th 1950

The first baseball game under the lights in Maple Lake will be played Friday evening of this week with Watertown as the competition.

Erection of the towers was completed Monday night and crews working evenings will have the field in playing shape by Friday evening.

It's no stretch of the imagination to state that Maple Lake now has the finest athletic park in this community and in the state.

Although the grandstand will not be erected this year, the park itself is completed.

The eight 90-foot towers holding 144 lights will assure ample illumination and will far exceed lighting facilities of any park in this territory.

Dimensions of the field are 375 feet to centerfield.

To give the park a big league appearance are the many signs painted on the 7-foot fence which encircles the entire park.

A hearty invitation is extended to every person in this territory to take part in the opening celebration here Friday night. The game will get underway at 8:30.

Tornado Strikes Area

★★★ Messenger Article 1950

Winds of tornado velocity struck this area about 11:30 Thursday morning inflicting damage to several farms in the community totaling thousands of dollars.

Most seriously damaged was the farm of Ben Munstenteiger, 4 miles southeast of Maple Lake. Damage estimated at between 25 and 30 thousand dollars was inflicted by the twister. Buildings wrecked beyond repair were the barn, machine shed, corn crib, silo, hog shed and several other smaller outbuildings.

Fortunately, the cows and the calves who were in the barn at the time the wind hit, all escaped without injury.

The twister apparently came from the southeast and after striking the Munstenteiger farm, shifted slightly to the northeast and abated after it had crossed Maple Lake.

Other farms which were struck in this immediate territory was the Harold Elsenpeter farm where the damage was slight. On the Bob Pribyl farm, a windmill was blown over, part of the porch removed from the house, the silo and machine shed blown over.



Bicholar Waxweiller Farm Buildings by the score were demolished and livestock killed when the tornado hit the St. Michael area Thursday. On the Bicholar Waxweiller farm, three miles northwest of St. Michael, the barn lay in splinters on the ground.

Considerable damage was done to cottages and outbuildings in Salerno Bay. A large frame garage, the property of H.J. McFetridge, was caved in. The cottage owned and occupied by Ed Haggerty was also badly damaged.

Walter and Leo Robasse on the Fred Robasse farm escaped injury when the wind ripped off the roof of a chicken coop. The men were cleaning the chicken coop at the time of the storm and were unaware of the wind until the roof departed from the rest of the building. Several other farms were also nicked in that locality.

Damage was especially severe in the vicinity west of St. Michael where many farm buildings felt the impact of the winds as can be seen by the photos on this page.

Harold Elsenpeter who was in the house the time the storm struck said it appeared as if a huge cloud of dust was traveling

along the fields at a terrific rate of speed. A wooden silo on his farm was shattered at the top.

In an interview with a Messenger reporter shortly after the storm, Mrs. Munstenteiger stated she was talking to her mother over the telephone when she heard a terrific roar. Sensing something out of the ordinary, she grabbed her young son, David and fled to the basement. The Munstenteiger house is situated only about 150 feet from the rest of the buildings which were demolished.

In the village of Maple Lake there were no signs of wind at the time the storm struck. A heavy rain was falling at the time and the sky was a threatening black.

Mr. Munstenteiger is making plans to build a new barn. The damaged property was partially covered by insurance.

Precipitation which started Wednesday night and continued to Thursday evening totaled 3 inches in the Maple Lake area.



George Kirscht Farm Barn and shed on the Kirscht farm, between St. Michael and Monticello were down minutes after the wind struck.

Messenger Masthead 1949

The Maple Lake Messenger

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1944

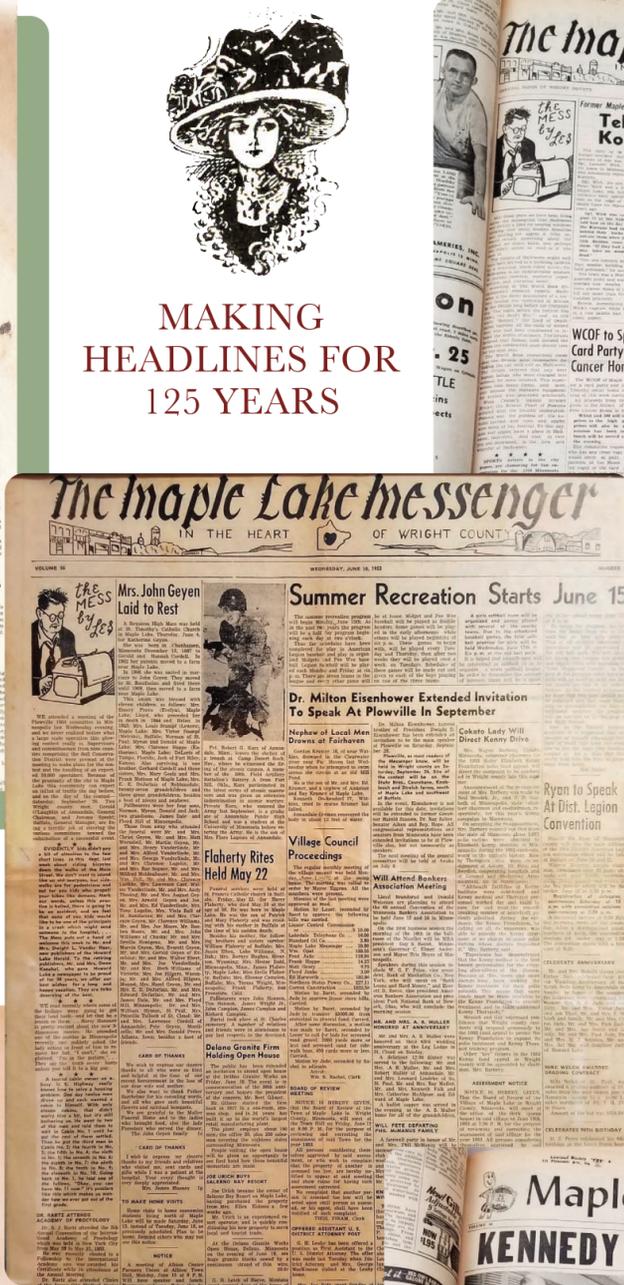
Messenger Masthead 1918 MAPLE LAKE MESSENGER.



1918

Messenger Masthead 1918

MAPLE LAKE MESSENGER.

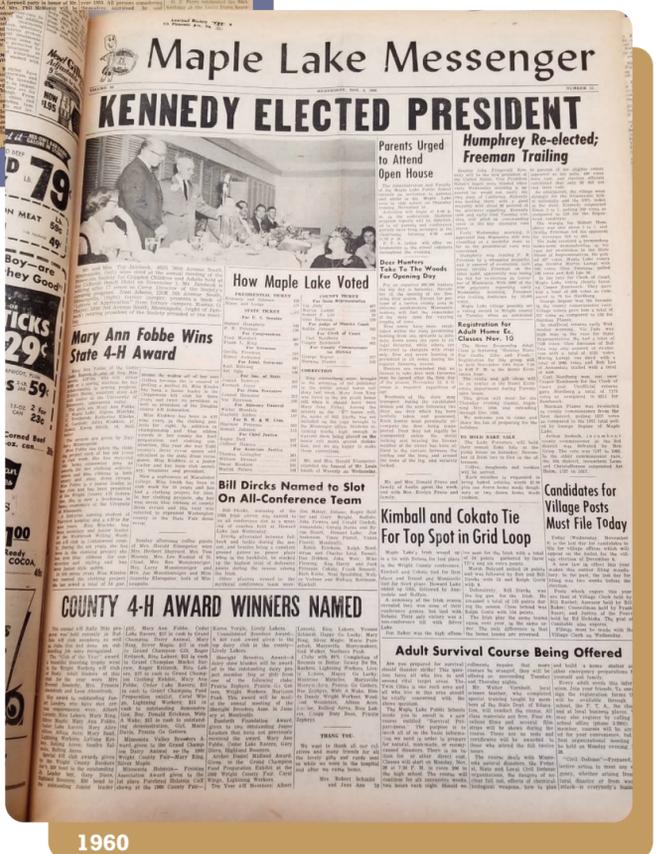


1953



1950

1968



1960

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From the Archives Taken from the Wednesday, July 22, 1964 Messenger

Airport for Maple Lake Assured

With the signing of options for land, an airport for Maple Lake is assured and will be completed in 1964.

The landing strip will be located on the Tom and Jim Mooney farm, and a portion of the Jim Pribyl farm, just northeast of the village.

The strip will run from the northwest to the northeast, just a short distance north of the lake. The actual strip will measure 2,600 feet in length and 150 feet in width. However, adjoining land, which will be the property of the airport, will make the strip 400 feet in length.

Funds from the Minnesota Department of Aeronautics up to \$20,000 are available for construction for the first year. Future plans in the hopper for the strip include an access road, which will enter the strip area near the Dewey Elletson farm and wind its way to the lake at the extreme northwest corner. The state also has plans to dredge this portion of the lake so as to make it available for landing of seaplanes.

Through the energies of flying enthusiasts, members of the village council and businessmen, plans for this airport have been in the making for a period of two years. This year the Maple Lake strip was put on the top of the list at the state department of aeronautics with the understanding the strip was to be completed in 1964. In the



event that Maple Lake could not meet the qualifications for providing land, etc., they would be dropped to the bottom of the list with the result they would not be considered again for a period of 15 or 20 years.

The strip to begin with will be constructed of sod. The only requisite for summer upkeep as far as the village is concerned is the mowing of the grass three times a year. Snow removal costs will be absorbed by the state.

It is expected that actual construction of the strip will begin early this fall.

Birch Avenue



THEN. This picture was taken in what looks to be the mid to late 1950s. Local historians Jeff and Sue Sylvester said they could make out a Plymouth Fury from 1956 in one of the downtown parking spaces. The view is from Birch Ave looking north. On the horizon you can just make out the Red Owl Agency which the Sylvesters believe was still under Bob Trotter's ownership which lasted until 1960 when Andy and Zita Manuel bought it. Notice Wright Theatre on the left looks to be thriving. The theatre was gutted by a fire in 1965 and never reopened, nor did the bowling alley underneath reopen.



AND NOW. This picture was taken in 2020 looking down Birch Ave. in the same direction.

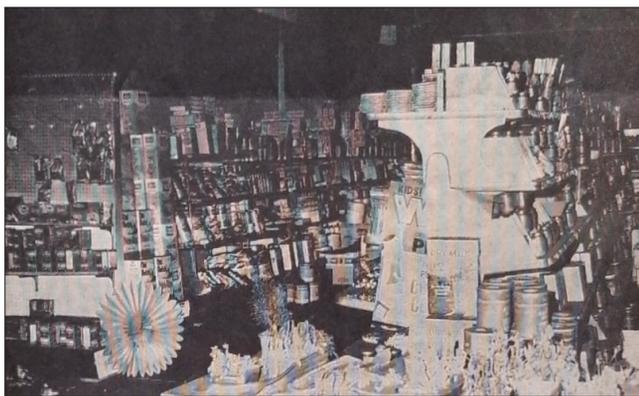
Fire, Smoke And Heat Damage Store

Taken from the Wednesday, June 4, 1969 Messenger

A thick layer of soot coated the entire interior of Andy's Red Owl Wednesday morning following a fire in the store Tuesday night, May 27th. The fire, believed to have started in the basement, was confined to the rear portion of the store and the basement.

Maple Lake Fire Dept. answered the call which was turned in by Pete Dougherty when he heard the burglar system alarm. The fire department fought the fire for more than an hour before they were sure the fire was completely out.

Smoke and intense heat were responsible for the majority of the damage. The photo taken from the front door of the store, shows in the foreground wilted tomato plants and a completely blackened ceiling. The plastic covers on the coffee cans were melted from the heat. 1400 lbs. of po-

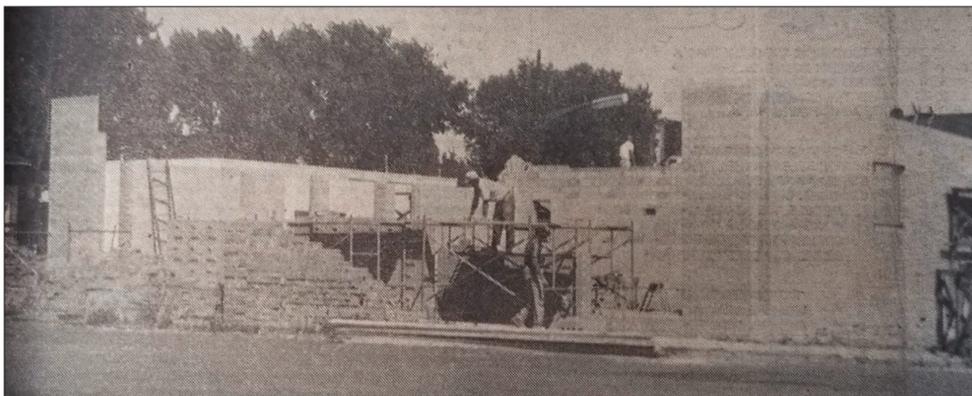


tatoes, at right, were literally cooked from the heat of the fire. 400 cases of pop stored in the basement were also part of the 100 percent loss of merchandise.

Besides merchandise loss, all of the store's fixtures will have to be re-

placed, as will the ceiling, floor and paneling.

Andy Manuel, owner of the food market, hopes to have the store back in operation within a month's time.

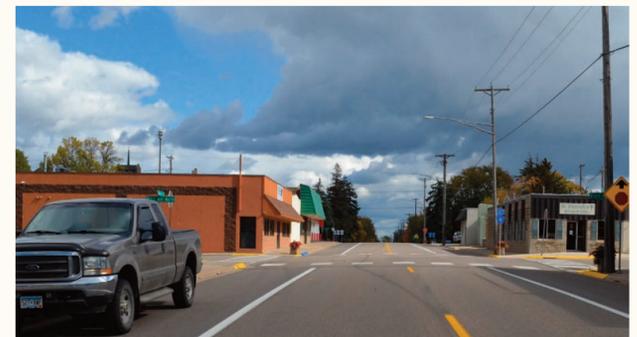


Post Office Building Shaping Up Bricklaying on the new post office was practically completed when this photo was taken on a Thursday afternoon in 1964. Steel for the roof was expected to arrive by Monday of the following week and work was continued to complete the building as soon as possible.

Division Street



THEN. This scene of Division Street in Maple Lake was reprinted from the original negatives of A. Pearson Co., Inc. Their representatives traveled the upper Midwest, from the early 1900's thru the 1960's, taking pictures of towns for the purpose of marketing black-and-white post cards.



AND NOW. This is Division Street in Maple Lake today taken from about the same location. Notice the absence of the Red Owl Agency and the old water tower. The water tower was torn down and replaced in 1992.

★ Messenger Masthead **1957**

MAPLE LAKE MESSENGER

VOLUME 81 WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1964 NUMBER 38

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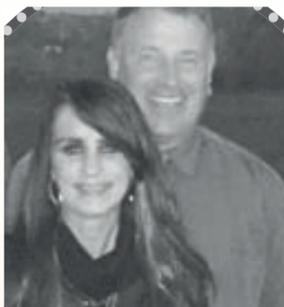
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Maple Lake Messenger 125 Years – 1895-2020



Ed & Michele Pawlenty
(2011-2020)



Harold Brutlag
(1968 - 2000)

In June of 1957 The Maple Lake Messenger ran a piece called "Meet Maple Lake Businessmen". "Meet the business-owners of Maple Lake" would be a better way to say it in today's world. Looking back through 125 years of history, many terms are no longer used and new terms have evolved, however, the business owners both past and present are the people that continue to build shape and mold our community.

Lake Central Insurance Services

73 Years – 1947 - 2020

Lake Central Insurance Services started in 1947 as Annandale State Agency. In 2007 it purchased Security State Agency of Maple Lake from Gary and Denise Swearingen. The Maple Lake agency dates back to the 1920s as part of Security State Bank. In 2009, Clearwater State Agency opened. A 2012 re-branding saw all three offices under the name Lake Central Insurance Services.

Today Lake Central Insurance Services is owned by Lake Central Bank in Annandale. Paul Manuel is the general manager. Manuel has a long history in Maple Lake. His family owned Andy's Red Owl for many years, and he worked there, bagging groceries when he was in the first grade. After a long career in the exhibit/tradeshow display business, Manuel joined Lakedale Telephone where he was an inside sales rep. In 2007 he transitioned into insurance at Annandale State Agency. When Swearingen decided to sell, Manuel's ties to Maple Lake made him the perfect fit to run the new agency. Lake Central Insurance Services is an independent insurance agency offering all your insurance needs under one roof.



The 2020
Lake Central
Insurance Team.

The Creamery

CLIFF PETERSON pictured to the right, was the manager of Maple Lake Farmers Creamery and Drying Plant. Butter manufactured at the creamery was graded AA, and ranked with the best that was made in Minnesota.



Maple Lake Wine & Spirits

72 Years – 1948 - 2020

Maple Lake Wine and Spirits originated in 1948 when the City of Maple Lake bought the Birch Ave. business, and it became a municipal liquor on and off sale store. Carole Bestland started her career in 1979 at what was then the Maple Lake Muni. In 1989 the store moved to Hwy 55 attached to H&H Sports Shop. At that time Maple Lake Liquor became an off sale only store. In the fall of 2010, the liquor store moved to its current location, 901 State Hwy 55 east and was renamed Maple Lake Wine & Spirits. Bestland retired in 2015 and Angela Berthiaume took over as manager in January of 2016.

As a municipal liquor store, profits directly support public services and projects, which helps keep property taxes low. They give back to the community through a variety of fundraisers to local food shelves and the fire department and they host a local wine club that has more than 300 members. They offer a generous selection of wines and spirits.



Maple Lake Wine and Spirits Assistant Manager Kate Heberling (left) and Store Manager Angela Berthiaume presented a \$1,125 check to the Maple Lake Fire Department earlier this year, the result of a store fundraiser.



Roger & Karen Milner (1985)



Roger & Karen Millner (1991)

M&M Bus Service

47 Years – 1973-2020

Entrepreneurs Roger and Karen Millner opened M&M Bus Service Inc. in Annandale in 1973. In 2001, the Millners opened another location in Maple Lake. The family owned business continues to be run, owned and managed by Roger and Karen and their four children. Today, in addition to providing transportation service for Annandale, Maple Lake and Buffalo Schools, they also have a full line auto repair business in Maple Lake called M&M Express Lube and Car Care and a power equipment store called M&M Express Sales and Service. In addition to the Maple Lake store, M&M Express Sales and Service has locations in Buffalo, Big Lake and Brainerd. For more information, visit their website at www.mmexpresssales.com.



TED LAUER, ran Lauer's Cafe, in June of 1957. Ted carried everyone's favorite beverage and served it with a home cooked meal. Lauer's Cafe was located on the corner of Birch and Division where St. Patrick's Books is located.

The V by HH

8 Years – 2012 - 2020

Harney started cooking when he was 19- he worked his way up from a dishwasher to prep cook to the highest end as a chef. He worked in Greek and Italian cooking with some French and Spanish cooking as well. He gained a lot of experience in preparing himself in management and preparing to own a business.

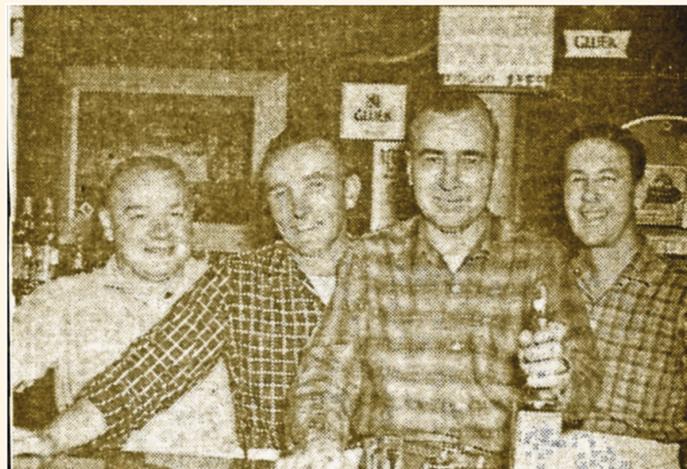


Harney is pictured working an event with Sinbad.

Harney worked at the Maple Lake Cafe in town around 1999 and was approached by the VFW to take over their building in 2012. He worked for a company that owned the San Francisco 49ers when he was younger. He also won the Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year award in 2015.

Harney had worked at a lot of places before ending up in Maple Lake. He worked in catering and large cooking environments, worked in a meat market for a couple years and also high end restaurants before he ended up in Maple Lake.

Harney now is the sole owner of The V By HH which offers catering, a large event space and a bar and restaurant that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. He also offers outdoor seating, pull tabs and meat raffles through the Maple Lake Lions and can cater to any event. He can be contacted at (320) 963-3405.



THE MUNICIPAL LIQUOR STORE, was under the management of Johnnie Paumen and his able assistants Rollie Couette, Norman Geyen and Ray Olson. The establishment served on and off sale liquor at the time and the cocktail lounge had air conditioning which brought many area residents into the watering hole on hot summer days.

Since 1971



116 E. Hwy 12, Darwin, MN
(320) 693-5902

Since 1973



10606 Hemlock St. Annandale
320-963-2060

Since 1974



720 Elm Street E. Annandale
320-274-5737

Since 1976



2134 Co. Rd. 8. NW Maple Lake
320-963-5993

Since 1981



Highway 55 Annandale
320-274-8283

Since 1982



200 Congress St. W. Maple Lake
320-963-6191

Since



Hwy 55 A
320-27



Since 2020



57 Birch Ave. So. Maple Lake
320-316-2500

Since 2018



Maple Lake • Buffalo
612-513-9698

Since 2015



65 Maple Ave. Maple Lake
320-963-5966

Since 2012



66 Maple Ave. N. Maple Lake
320-963-3405

Since 2008



412 - 7th St. N.E Buffalo
763-682-3828



MAPLE LAKE'S banking institution, The Security State Bank, observed its 50th year of service in 1957. The bank was located in downtown Maple Lake on Birch Ave. The bank building is currently used for classes by Wright County Community Action. The drive through window can be seen thru the alley.

M&M Express Sales and Service

16 Years - 2004- 2020

M&M Express Sales and Service has been filling the Maple Lake area's outdoor power equipment needs since 2004. Last year they celebrated their 15th anniversary and business continues to boom. Owner Sam Millner and Store Manager Kurt Jonas lead a knowledgeable crew at their shop adjacent to M&M Express Lube and Car Care, also owned by the Millner family. M&M Express Sales and Service specializes in selling and servicing outdoor power equipment from zero turn mowers and garden tillers to compact tractors. They also have a complete inventory of hand-held power equipment. Stop by the Friday after Thanksgiving, Nov. 27, to take advantage of their Black Friday specials. From 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. special deals will be available on certain Stihl, Husqvarna and Echo hand-held power equipment products. In addition to the Maple Lake store, M&M Express Sales and Service has locations in Buffalo, Big Lake and Brainerd. For more information, visit their website at www.mmexpresssales.com.



Pictured from left is the M&M Express Sales and Service crew: David Parks, Victor Sorenson, Kelly Stoll, Owner Sam Millner and Manager Kurt Jonas.

Bernatello's Foods
38 Years - 1982- 2020

Bernatello's Foods started as Bud's Pizza, a back-room tavern pizza in Annandale. The pizza took off with sales to bars and bowling alleys in the 1970s. It officially became Bernatello's Pizza in 1982 when Bill Ramsay bought a 50 percent share of the company. The name changed to Bernatello's Pizza as a nod to Bernard Garthe, original founder of the company.

Bernatello's quickly grew into a frozen pizza manufacturer, servicing supermarkets around the Midwest. The Ramsay family made Bernatello's Pizza a household name. In 1995 Bill Ramsay bought out the other half of Bernatello's from Bud Garthe and officially made it a family owned and operated company.

Bernatello's Foods continues to be a family owned business based out of Maple Lake and Kaukauna, WI. Bill Ramsay, his daughter JJ and his son Dave are intricately involved with the day to day operations. Recently they celebrated the completion of an expansion project at their Kaukauna plant that will allow them to produce more pizzas.



Meet the owners of Bernatello's Foods: Dave Ramsay, JJ Halverson, Bill Ramsay and Donna Ramsay.

Since 2007



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Since 2006



Annandale
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Since 2004



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Since 2002



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Since 1997



270 State Hwy 55 NE, Buffalo
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Since 1996

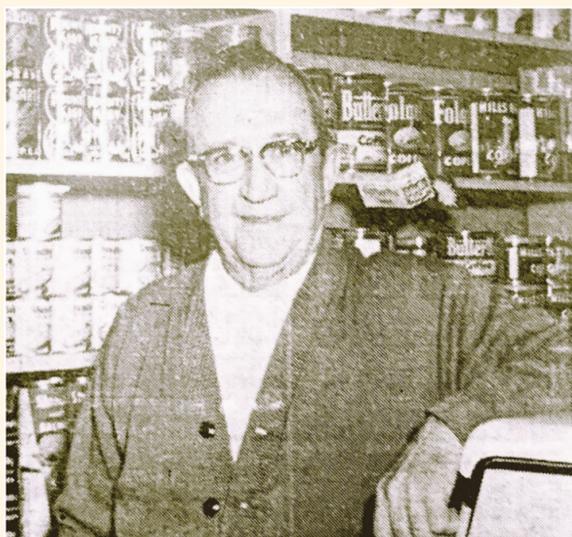


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Since 1996



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612-868-2938



LEO WEISMANN had the distinction of being the oldest merchant in town 63 years ago. He opened his business in 1922 and carried lines of food, ready-to wear and jewelry.

The Bakery

THE HOMETOWN BAKERY was a popular place in downtown Maple Lake. The bakery was owned and operated by Bob James who baked a large assortment of fresh baked goods daily. The thriving business attracted buyers from many nearby towns, as well as the folks in and near Maple Lake.



The Butchery of Maple Lake

28 Years - 1992 - 2020

Doug Lindenfelser purchased A Meat Shoppe from Leroy Draeger on May 1, 2020 and renamed it the Butchery of Maple Lake. A Meat Shoppe had been a family run business in Maple Lake since 1992. Lindenfelser grew up on a dairy farm near Albertville and one of his biggest influences was his uncle Gordy Lindenfelser, owner of Hackenmueller Meats. Before coming to town, Doug spent 20 years as art director at J&B, a meat wholesaler in St. Michael where he learned the ins and outs of the meat industry. Lindenfelser was drawn to the small town feel and the meat shop's location on Hwy. 55. "Purchasing the business in the middle of a pandemic when meat prices were at an all-time high, rebranding the meat market and giving it a complete remodel all in the first year will be a year I will never forget. It is with high hopes that the work I am putting forth this year will help propel me to being a long-standing business and staple in the community."



STARRY'S PRODUCE was the place to buy country fresh eggs and poultry. Ed Starry is shown above running eggs through the firm's grading machine

MCP Collision & Glass

"Committed to Excellence for 40 Years - 1981 - 2020"

Mike and Vicki Zieska lived in Annandale behind the Redi-Mix plant when they decided to start Mike's Custom Paint with the tag line "We Paint Anything!" He worked out of a 30x30 facility which he built over his father-in-law's garden in Mike & Viki's backyard eventually expanding it to a 6,300 sq. ft. repair facility and an office space on Hwy. 55. They eventually sold both locations and moved into MCP Collision and Glass' current 13,200 sq. ft. facility on the east end of Annandale on Hwy. 55. MCP has been in their current location for 30 years and is celebrating their 40th year anniversary!

Their name has changed over time since Mike's Custom Paint. It was MCP Paint, Body & Frame and MCP Collision Center ending with MCP Collision & Glass.

MCP Collision & Glass has a team that has been together for a long time - they are family, quality people, highly experienced and trained in the newest cutting-edge technology, specializing in collision repair. "We will be here if you need us!"



1988



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Since 1995



86 Oak Avenue North
320-963-3200

Business Owners CONTINUED



Dojo Karate

20 Years – 2000 - 2020

For 20 years Masters Christ Hourscht and Keith Stormoen, founders of Dojo Karate, have taught martial arts as a means to promote mental and physical health. It started in 2000 with a single dojo in Elk River and has grown to include seven locations throughout the area. Buffalo and Elk River remain corporate schools with Hourscht overseeing the Buffalo location and Stormoen heading up the Elk River location. Their schools in Maple Grove, Medina, Monticello and Rogers and Waconia are individually owned. Last winter they opened a seventh location in Minnetonka.

All of Dojo's instructors are first degree black belt or above, have gone through the school's training program and have a passion for watching families grow and train together. Master Hourscht has over 20 years of experience in the Martial Arts. He received his Black Belt in 1993, 2nd degree in 1996, 3rd degree in 1999, 4th degree in 2004, his 5th degree Black Belt in 2009 and his 6th degree Black Belt in 2018.

Dojo Karate's slogan is "for kids, for adults, for life" and appeals to people of all ages.



RAY MENTH is shown with one of his sod trucks about to start out on a delivery. This picture was taken in the summer of 1957. Sod was a booming industry in Maple Lake back then. This particular load had about 1,000 rolls of sod. Each roll was one foot wide and nine feet long.

P A S T A N D P R E S E N T



DeZiel Heating & A/C

22 Years – 1998 - 2020

Since 1998 the family owned and operated DeZiel Heating & A/C has successfully served the residents of Wright County and the West Metro with all of their HVAC needs. Earlier this fall DeZiel moved, but that hasn't stopped them from providing the same top-of-the-line care their customers have come to expect.

The thriving company has outgrown its home on 5th Street NE in Buffalo, but don't worry, they have not moved far. A few miles east on Hwy. 55 will take you to the original humane society at 4375 Hwy. 55 SE. This will be DeZiel's new home. Not only does the new site offer more office space, it has an inviting outdoor environment for employees and doggie mascot, Louie.

Owners Mike and Dana DeZiel are originally from Maple Lake. Mike went to school for HVAC and carries master competency cards in gas, refrigeration, sheet metal and hot water steam. DeZiel technicians specialize in residential heating, cooling and indoor air quality.



DAVE MANUEL owned Manuel's Shoe Store on Birch Ave in Maple Lake. In 1957 it featured a complete line of shoes and had modern shoe repairing equipment.



RAY MULLER was the proprietor of Muller Appliance in 1957. Ray's store was located on Birch Ave in Maple Lake where the Pagel Law Office is today. It stocked plumbers' supplies, appliances, TVs and other "sundries."

Darwin Monument and Precast

49 Years – 1971 - 2020

Jenny and Mark Smith own Darwin Monument and Precast, located on Highway 12 in Darwin. The family business originated as Precast Systems, Inc. in 1971. In 2007 the Smiths opened Darwin Monument where they specialize in personalized memorials and are known for their compassion, impeccable craftsmanship and up-front pricing. In April 2021, the company will celebrate its 50-year anniversary.

Jenny's parents moved from St. Paul to Darwin to open Precast Systems, Inc. Jenny's mother's family was in the septic tank business. In the beginning, they manufactured septic tanks and feed bunks. Soon their business expanded to include other precast concrete products. In 2007, Jenny's aunt and uncle, who own a monument company in LaCrosse, WI, guided her and Mark into the monument business. They learned how to engrave, design, and set memorials. Now the Smith's children have a hand in the operation, making them a three-generation company.

Precast systems continue to manufacture septic tanks, feed bunks, bunker silos, steps, retaining wall blocks and more. Darwin Monument manufactures headstones, grass markers, memorials, engraved boulders and engraved pavers.



Customers are greeted by Wendy Wuotila and owner Jenny Smith.



Emily Smith Engraves a Monument

Oak Realty

46 Years – 1974 - 2020

This area is much more than the place we work. We are all active in the community, from various non-profit/civic groups to lake associations, schools and churches. We love participating in local traditions like the Maple Lake St. Patrick's Day Parade. Teamwork and professionalism have long been the cornerstones of our company. From the moment you set foot in our office, you'll find these are qualities we truly stand behind, both individually and as a team.

We pride ourselves on exceptional customer care and creative marketing. We are proud to be an innovative company. We are always seeking new systems, tools, and solutions to bring into our business that help you buy or sell your cabin, lake home, or house with greater confidence and ease. Our Seriously Local expertise is ultimately much more than selling a property. It's building a community! Our Maple Lake office is located North of Highway 55. Feel free to give Dean or Tiffany, our Maple Lake area experts, a call @ 320-963-2088.



The "affable" Jake Jaeger is the manager of Central Lumber Co. in Maple Lake in 1957. One of two lumber yards serving the area.



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Making Headlines



A TRIP THROUGH TIME

From the Archives

Taken from the 1968 Maple Lake Messenger

Hubert H. Humphrey

Under peaceful conditions in the tranquility of his home town, Vice President Hubert Humphrey gave what may well be termed as the kickoff speech in his quest for the presidency of the United States. A crowd estimated at about 2,500 gathered at Waverly on Sunday to hear the ebullient vice president point out how it's going to be if he is elected to the nation's top office.

Maple Lake high school band and the Lakettes who participated in the parade and platform program drew accolades from all visitors, and especially from the vice

president. "That band sure can play, Mr. Thomas" was one of the aside remarks he made from the rostrum. And "Krista you did a nice job" was aimed at Mrs. Elsenpeter after she completed her encore appearance with the HHH song. Looking down at the Lakettes stationed in front of the speaker's platform, the vice president thanked the girls for their participation, adding "my aren't they pretty, and Bobby (his son) is noticing that too." Before the band members departed for home, the vice president shook hands with and congratulated each of the youngsters.



Maple Lake's State Senator Victor N. Jude shared a prominent position on the speaker's platform at the Waverly reception for Vice President Hubert Humphrey, Sunday afternoon. He referred to Senator Jude as a long-time friend, and one who voted right as his alternate at the recent National Democratic convention. Pictured on the Vice President's right are Alice Smith, mayor of Waverly, Senator Jude and Mrs. Harold Ogle, a member of the reception committee which was headed by Al Peterson, who also officiated as master of ceremonies at the afternoon's program.



Messenger Masthead 1965



Wright Theatre Guttled by Fire

Taken from the 1965 Maple Lake Messenger

Fire causing an estimated damage of over \$25,000, gutted the interior of the Wright Theatre Thursday of last week. Also suffering water and smoke damage were the two apartments, the bowling alleys and the postoffice space all housed in the building.

The alarm was turned in by Woody Stuhr at about 12:30. Firemen were on the scene almost immediately, but even at this time smoke could be seen filtering out from the roof and windows.

Mrs. Melvin Borell, her infant son, Tommy, and her sister, Sheila Pribyl were trapped in one of the apartments and had to

be evacuated by firemen. Shortly after they were rescued, their apartment was entirely engulfed with smoke.

Mr. and Mrs. David Larson, occupants of the other apartment, were not at home at the time of the fire.

As of Monday of this week, the cause of the fire had not been determined. Mrs. Borell said she was watching TV when she heard a loud puff and the breaking of glass. Opening her apartment door, she found the corridor filled with smoke. Jack Nugent attempted to get to the apartment by the front entrance, but was also driven back by smoke.

Mrs. Kenneth Falk, one of the owners of the building, was in the theatre about 11 o'clock, but noticed nothing unusual at that time.

Firemen found the heaviest blaze was at the rear of the building behind the movie screen, and they centered several hoses in this area.

A brisk wind from the south posed another problem for firemen, and they decided to seek aid from the departments at Anandale and Buffalo.

Although the postoffice portion of the building was not too severely damaged, it was thought at the time, it would be wise to move the equipment and records into the new building which was ready for occupancy. Volunteer workers completed this chore in but a few minutes.

The building, a brick structure, is one of the finest buildings on main street. It was built by the late A.B. Muller in 1941.

Ray Muller said Monday that plans are under way to get the bowling alleys back into operation and that the two apartments would be re-decorated. Their plans for the theatre are indefinite.



SCRAMBLED EGGS Messenger reporters were at the scene of this delivery truck vs train accident in December of 1969 to capture this photo. The caption reads: Andy Manuel's delivery truck tangled with a train on the Soo Line Tuesday, Dec. 31 at the Starry Produce crossing. Besides being done-in in the front, the rear left side had a hole knocked in it from the railroad cars. Rick Elsenpeter, driver of the vehicle, was waiting for assistance in getting the truck back on the road after having slipped into the ditch when the accident occurred. Besides the truck being a total loss 25 1/2 dozen eggs were scrambled.



Firemen Leo Dircks and Lee Coyea are shown in the Messenger photo above rescuing Tommy Borell, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Borell, from the upstairs apartment of the Wright Theatre building where they were trapped. They also took Tommy's mother and his aunt, Sheila Pribyl, down the ladder to safety.

★ Messenger Masthead 1950



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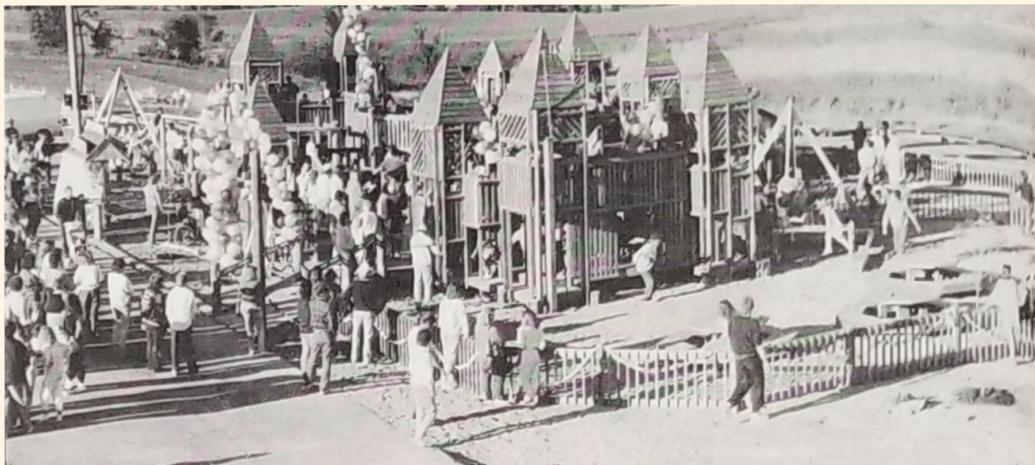
Making Headlines

A TRIP THROUGH TIME



From the Archives Wednesday, September 1990 Messenger

Volunteers spend year in playground planning



Construction on Centennial Playground lasted from Tuesday evening to Sunday afternoon. At 5 p.m. the tools were set aside for balloons and streamers. More than 500 people of all ages gathered to recognize the efforts of the many volunteers. To a roar of cheers, the children stormed their new playground to investigate every corner and apparatus.

By Julie Gutknecht

What began more than a year ago as an idea, on Sunday became a reality.

The school board meeting in August of 1989 brought together the district and an organizing group of parents who were anxious to provide their children and the community with a new playground to compliment the new elementary school. Coverage of the meeting stated in part: "According to (Mitch) Klitzka, the effort becomes a community project in which everyone who participates can be proud. "It could be a wonderful vehicle to pull the community and the school together," (Ron) Sheldon added.

To the majority of those involved during this past year, the project was a resounding success on all levels.

The children at Maple Lake's two elementary schools worked on promoting their playground to the community and their parents. They were thrilled on Jan. 29 when Architect Paula Weiss put their ideas down on paper. She represented the architectural firm of Robert S. Leathers who has become known as the "Johnny Appleseed of the Swing Set." The firm specializes in providing a community with a program incorporating fund-raising activities and a strong volunteer effort to construct a unique safe play area.

An over-sized thermometer was designed to show the

progress of the \$50,000 project and the work began in earnest. It was decided to name the playground in the city's honor on its hundredth birthday and Centennial Playground was christened.

Also introduced on Design Day in January was Maple Man who became cheerleader for the playground and made numerous appearances on its behalf. Fund-raising activities culminated this fall with the day-long Family Festival and Celebrity Auction with the thermometer pushing ever-so-close to the mark.

In addition to fund-raising activities, organizers and committee chairpeople spent the year developing the volunteer force and supplies necessary to construct the 12,000 square foot playground.

Last week brought all their efforts together when construction began. The first days saw tools being collected and it was Tuesday night when the first shovels hit the dirt and post holes were dug. The next five days were packed from morning until night with the hammering, sawing, and shoveling of more than 200 volunteers daily. School children, high school and elementary, also joined the fun as classes were allowed breaks to pitch in and work.

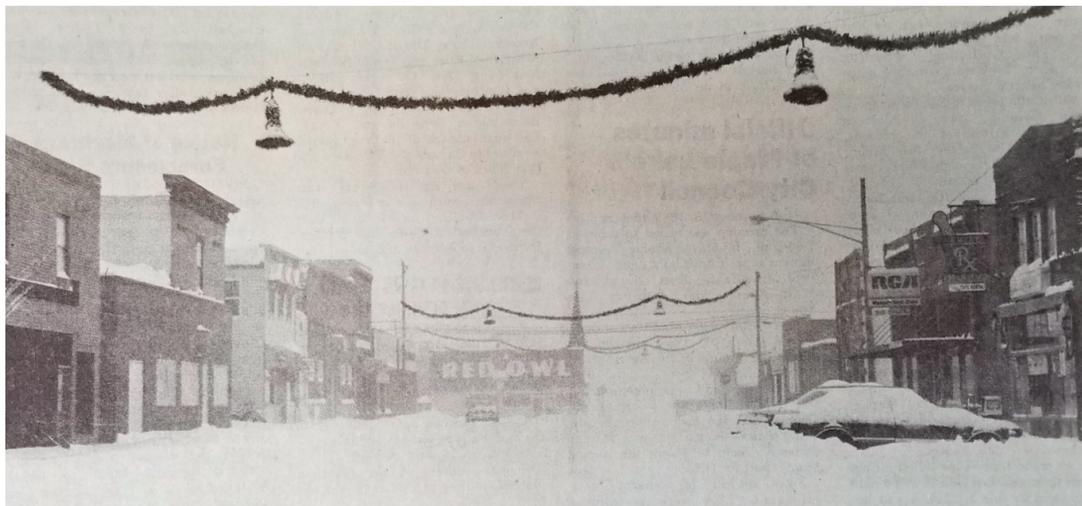
Everyone involved can lay claim on a portion of the success of Centennial Playground. A success for Maple Lake's citizenry of all ages for many generations.



Co-coordinators Theresa Andrus (with microphone), Mitch Klitzka (left) and Pat Anderson (not pictured) were honored for their year's worth of hard work with a five-minute standing ovation at opening ceremonies on Sunday afternoon. In turn they recognized Robert Cooper and Michael Cohen (both in dark glasses) who were the construction managers from the Robert S. Leathers firm. The children presented them with Centennial Playground T-shirts and nail and yard signs which they made in the child care area. According to Andrus, construction finished shortly before five and as the program began the sun broke through the previously overcast skies. The guests at the open-playground ceremonies were entertained with music by Joe Thomas and Sarah Eisenpeter.



This group of high schoolers assisted the building crew during a break from their classroom work by helping clean up the site as Bart Lauer and Brandon Goelz (behind) are doing. Helping to set some of the posts are Kevin Provo, Derek Bebus and Mike Muller. Many came back to put in more time after school hours as they realized the work was both fun and rewarding.



WINTER WONDERLAND This picture of downtown Maple Lake was taken around the holidays in 1985. Notice the festive decorations that stretched across the street. The caption reads: Birch Ave. So. was a dismal sight Sunday afternoon as the snow fell and the wind started to blow. The snowbird on the right was dug out Monday afternoon.



MORE SNOW. This picture was taken in 1968. The caption below it reads: Sisters Clairmond and Lillian must have thought it a little strange to enter St. Timothy's parochial school through this chasm at the entry of the school. Note how the drifts tower some three or four feet above their heads. The playgrounds at the school, which were exceptionally hard hit by the whirling snow, were all cleared out by a crew of parishioners who came with equipment, trucks and shovels on Sunday in order that school might continue as usual on Monday.

★ Messenger Masthead **1995**

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 Volume 100 Established 1895
 Number 37 Wednesday, July 5, 1995 Maple Lake, Minnesota 55358

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A TRIP THROUGH TIME



From the Archives

Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2014 Maple Lake Messenger

Bull Moose struck on Hwy. 55

By Vicki Grimmer

A bull moose, estimated to weigh between 800 and 900 pounds was struck and ultimately killed on Hwy. 55 near the Maple Lake beach access on Monday evening.

According to the Wright County Sheriff's office, a report was received at approximately 8:15 p.m. that a Chrysler Sebring convertible driven by Donald O'Connor of Maple Lake struck a moose that was in the roadway. Donald was injured as a result of the collision and was transported to Buffalo Hospital. A passenger in the vehicle, Terry O'Connor, his wife, was also injured and was transported to the hospital.

Wright County deputies were first on the scene, followed quickly by Maple Lake Fire and Rescue.

"It happened about 50 yards west of the beach access," said Maple Lake Fire Chief Todd Borell. "We were only told that there was a car accident with injuries and that the top of the car was peeled off. I expected to see the car under a semi, something much different than it was when we got there - hitting a moose never even crossed my



Maple Lake Firefighters displayed the moose prior to DNR testing.

Photo submitted by Lisa Hegle

mind. There hasn't been a moose in the area in years. I looked like the moose hit and shattered the windshield, forcing it in on the driver and passenger and then folded the convertible top back before landing back on Hwy. 55. Both people in the car were transported to the hospital by ambulance, the driver by Maple Lake ambulance, the passenger by Allina."

According to Borell, the DNR collected parts of the moose for testing, trying to

answer the whys of a moose appearance so far from its northern Minnesota home.

Nicholas Snavelly, assistant area wildlife manager for the Minnesota DNR, was at the residence of a fire department member where the carcass was taken for butchering.

"Essentially we take these samples to do a general health assessment," said Snavelly. "Everything is sent to a diagnostics lab to help determine any underlying health issues, the brain tissue to see if brain worm is present, also the heart, liver and lungs as well as a check for the parasite load on the outside of the body, the hide. True cause of mortality is that it was hit by the car, but ultimately the question is whether other factors led it to being in Maple Lake."

Terry O'Connor, a nurse herself, has somewhat disjointed memories of the accident. "We were at Walmart (in Buffalo) and heading back home," she said. "I looked up and saw this big brown animal. I didn't know what it was at first, just something flying through the air coming right at our windshield. I was knocked out, but my husband got my phone and called 911. He was able to swerve the car over and stop. When I opened

my eyes, the windshield was right in my face, we both had tons of glass in our eyes and in our mouths. I remember looking at Don and he had blood running down his face. My first thought was why do we have all this glass all over us and why is the top down on the car."

Mrs. O'Connor had a concussion and several stitches at her hair line. Mr. O'Connor sports 40 stitches, most of them on his face. Both consider themselves lucky to be alive. "Everyone keeps telling us we were lucky to be in such a small car, the moose just hit the windshield and rolled over the top," said Mrs. O'Connor. "We're both pretty beat up, but we know it could have been an awful lot worse."

The unusual accident in Maple Lake was covered in depth by a KSTP 5 Eyewitness news team, reporter Jessica Miles and photographer Dave Peterson.



Donald and Terry O'Connor recovering in their Maple Lake home after Monday evening's collision with a moose.

Photo by Jessica Miles



O'Connor's Chrysler Sebring awaiting insurance disposition at Harding's Towing in Maple Lake.

Photo by Kayla Erickson

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REMEMBER THIS? Racing beds in the summer was an entertaining Maple Lake diversion for several years. According to Marie Mavencamp, the passenger in this picture, they started at Division Street and raced up Birch Ave. to the post office then back again. This image was captured in 1979. Mavencamp's dad, Jack Pribyl is driving. He also built the contraption and entered it in the race for his business Pribyl T.V.

Puckett lands big one on Maple Lake

Wednesday, Sept. 21, 1994

The baseball season is over because of the strike, but Kirby Puckett, venerable right-fielder with the Minnesota Twins, hit a homerun with his casting rod Thursday morning when he caught this 12 lb., 6 oz Northern while fishing on Maple Lake with Joe Rassat, Berkley Tackle Rep, Maple Lake. Puckett's brother-in-law, Dan, made up the three-man party.

Puckett was using a Berkley

Power Rattle when the large fish hit. He said Rassat was a good net man when he scooped up the fish. They were fishing in about 17 ft. of water on Little Maple and Puckett played the fish for about five minutes before he had it tiered out enough to bring it along side of

Rassat's boat.

Joe said they caught a lot of other fish, mostly smaller northern, but he didn't feel the bass were hitting very well.

Pleased with the catch, as his broad smile shows. Puckett commented, "We always catch fish when we fish with Joe."



Puckett with a 12-pound 6-ounce northern pike from Maple Lake.

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