



CROOKSTON WATCH

"NORTHWEST MINNESOTA'S REGIONAL NEWSPAPER"



Publication of the Thief River Falls Times



SAT | APRIL 4 | 2026

324 Main Ave. N., Thief River Falls, MN 56701 • Vol. 2, No. 27



Sunday marks Easter, a Christian holiday that celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ three days after his crucifixion. This photo was taken outside of Zion Lutheran Church in Thief River Falls.

photo was taken outside of Zion Lutheran Church in Thief River Falls.

Man indicted for filing false tax returns

An indictment was unsealed last week charging a Crookston man with filing false tax returns and filing false claims for refunds collectively seeking more than \$500,000 he was not entitled to receive.

Philip Nelson Green allegedly filed false individual income tax returns with the IRS for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021. U.S. Attorney Daniel N. Rosen for the District of Minnesota made the announcement.

Each of Green's tax re-

turns reported one or more false items such as wage information, tax withholdings, and child and dependent care expenses. The indictment also alleges that Green filed a false second amended 2021 income tax return and a false 2022 income tax return, both of which sought more than \$250,000 in tax refunds he was not entitled to receive.

Green made his initial court appearance Tuesday, March 24 before U.S. Magistrate Judge Leo I. Brisbois of

the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota. If convicted, Green faces a maximum penalty of three years in prison for each count of filing a false tax return and five years in prison for each count of filing false claims. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

IRS Criminal Investigation is investigating the case.

Spring Clean-Up to be held

The City of Crookston recognizes the importance of maintaining a clean, healthy, and safe community. To assist in this effort, the City of Crookston will have Spring Clean-Up during the last full week in April and Fall Clean-Up during the last full week in October.

Single-family dwelling clean-up items will be picked up only on their regular garbage pickup day and must be placed on the street boulevard by 7 a.m. Only household quantities of debris will be accepted. Items should be placed on boulevards no more than 24 hours before your collection day.

Acceptable items for collection

The city will collect the following items if separated into designated piles:

- Bagged items, clothing, and cardboard – Weight limit 30 pounds per bag with each bag no larger than 35 gallons. Up to 10 bags per household will be collected. No loose garbage will be collected.
- Appliances – Limit two per household.
- Furniture and Mattresses – Limit of three furniture items and four mattresses or two mattresses/box spring sets per household.
- Demolition-Bypass pile – Limited to a maximum di-

mension of 10'L x 4'W x 3'H and may include wood, sheetrock, plaster, toilets, sinks, showers, tubs, cupboards, doors, and carpets cut into 4'x4' or smaller pieces. No materials suspected of containing asbestos, no concrete, and no amounts of demolition debris larger than 10'L x 4'W x 3'H will be accepted.

- Automotive tires and rims – Limit four per household.

Placing these items in separate piles will help speed up the clean-up process. In awareness of Clean-Up Week in Crookston, Polk County Public Health advises residents not to bring furniture, mattresses, box springs, or bed frames found on the street into their homes to prevent the spread of bed bugs (www.bedbugs.umn.edu).

Items NOT accepted

- Biohazardous Waste – Waste materials that include human pathological wastes, animal excrement, contaminated animal carcasses, blood and body fluids, medical waste and chemotherapeutic waste.
- Video display devices – TVs, computer monitors, and other video display devices WILL NOT be collected. Residents may dispose of these devices at the Polk County Environmental Services (Transfer

Station).

- Hazardous materials – No concrete, batteries, partially full paint cans, chemicals, or asbestos containing materials.

- Large amounts of demolition debris – The demolition-bypass pile is limited in size and scope (see above). Excess debris will be left and must be disposed of privately.

Specific item guidelines Demolition-bypass (limited to 10'L x 4'W x 3'H)

- Wood (except treated lumber)
- Sheetrock
- Plaster
- Toilets, sinks, showers, tubs
- Cupboards
- Doors
- Carpet (must be cut into 4' x 4' or smaller pieces)
- Household furniture: couches, chairs, tables, etc.
- Mattresses/box springs
- Small appliances (microwaves, toasters, coffee pots, etc.)
- Light fixtures (no bulbs or ballasts)
- Humidifiers
- Water softeners
- Computer equipment (excluding monitors)

Appliances (limit two per household)

- Washers
- Dryers

Meet and greet to be held with new interim superintendent

Crookston Public Schools will host a Meet and Greet event for all parents, staff and community members to come and meet new interim superintendent Todd Selk.

The Meet and Greet will be held Wednesday, April 8, from 3:30 to 5 p.m., at the Crookston High School commons.

School Board to hold special meeting

The Crookston School Board will hold a special meeting Thursday, April 9 at 5 p.m. in the Crookston High School choir/orchestra

room. At that time, the board will discuss and consider the potential closure of Washington School.

Crookston City Council to meet Monday

The Crookston City Council will meet Monday, April 6 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall in the council chambers.

The Ways and Means Committee will meet immediately following the council meeting at the same location.

To watch the meetings live, visit the city's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/c/CityofCrookstonChannel.

All notices may also be found online at www.crookston.mn.us.



The Crookston Ambassador Team recently visited Burnham Creek Healing. It's a menu of rejuvenation, really. Sarah Pester, as a teenager, got into the thick of yoga when her mom lifted off with Burnham Creek Healing in 2014. Several years later, Sarah followed in her mom's footsteps, and continued the family business, and gave it a twist of her own, Sarah-style. Since becoming certified in children's yoga, she has expanded her offerings to include family yoga sessions. She has partnered with Scruffy Tails and is looking forward to partnering with Smiley's Rescues and Linus Legacy to host yoga events with their rescue animals, with all pro-

ceeds going directly back to those two organizations. Sarah also offers Reiki energy sessions. For information about upcoming sessions, go to <https://burnham-creek-healing.square.site>, or book an appointment at 218-280-0588. Pictured are (from left) Kristy Morris Leas (Old National Bank), Taylor Wyum (Crookston Economic Development Authority), Lydia Hoffman (AgCountry Farm Credit Services), Sarah Pester, Keenan Devier (City of Crookston), Andrea Ness (LeBlanc Realty) and Bobbie Torkelson (H&R Block). Not pictured is Carrie Bergquist (America Federal Bank). (Submitted)

Because Health Needs Don't Wait.

Weekdays 7 AM - 7 PM and Weekends 9 AM - 1 PM

RIVERVIEW CLINIC
323 S MINNESOTA STREET | CROOKSTON

Extended clinic hours for your schedule.
Call 218.281.9595 to make an appointment.

Crookston FFA to hold outreach night Tuesday

The Crookston FFA Chapter invites the community to its outreach night Tuesday, April 7 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Crookston High School commons. There will be a short program at 6 p.m. with FFA activities and greenhouse tours to follow. A sandwich bar will be served. Freewill donations will be accepted. Everyone is invited.

Crookston FFA members will perform opening ceremonies. All of the state-qualified teams and individuals will be introduced. FFA

teams will have booths set up with hands-on activities to share information about the Career and Leadership Development Events they are competing in this year. There will also be tours to check out the building progress on the new greenhouse.

Learn more about FFA and help support members as they prepare for their trip to the Minnesota FFA State Convention in April. For more information, email CrookstonFFAalumni@gmail.com.

Crookston Library to host Small on Space Gardening Program

Interested in growing a garden but don't have a lot of space? Join Polk County Master Gardener Volunteers at the Crookston Public Library and learn about small-space gardening.

Learn everything from what types of containers/spaces you can use, how you should prepare your soil, which plants grow best in small spaces, and more. This program is intended for both gardening beginners and pros. The event is scheduled Saturday, April 18 at 11 a.m. and is free and open to the public. Come prepared with questions and enthusiasm for gardening.

encourages gardeners to also grow the Seed Library by donating any leftover seeds from the previous year or at the end of the current year, so the library can distribute them to more community members. The Seed Library is made possible thanks to seed donations from the Family Resource Center and the support of the Polk County Master Gardener Volunteers.

A full calendar of library events can be found at larl.org/events.

CLASSIFIEDS

Horses

RIDING HORSE WANTED: Must be well trained and used to traffic. Prefer taller Quarter horse, but other breeds are acceptable. Please call Robin: 218-242-5151. P4129p

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Rural Reflections ...

Extolling the many virtues of the cordless leaf blower, a scepter in the realm of manly tools

by Grant Nelson



Dear Dave,
It's spring, Dave, at least it was for a little bit. I gauge spring based on an internal alarm clock that tells me it's time to take on blossoming projects every year. There are two ways to grapple with spring projects: you can start early and enjoy them or wait until the week before Memorial Day and perform them in a state of panic. I have tried both, starting now is best.

My goal is always the same, a Memorial Day deadline. I want all of the

planned spring projects completed by then, most of which are simple maintenance. I ordered fly traps last week to keep the cattle comfortable. They should be here soon, Dave. A large insect recently appeared on one of our outdoor cameras, which told me it was time to start trapping them. Fortunately, we had a low of 17 degrees one night, so I am counting that as a pause or partial reboot to the insect season.

Modern man was given an amazing weapon with the advent of the cordless leaf blower. Its name merely scratches the surface of what this device can accomplish, Dave. It is almost like a scepter in the world of manly tools. I have also heard some who have mounted wings on such a device and launched them as a

sort of uncontrolled, unsafe sort of drone. I think I will begin my journey to becoming known for something other than my relationship with buckthorn. I will miss hacking and squirting and basal bark treatments, but I will get used to it.

Lisa and I took our Polaris Ranger for a little drive the other night, Dave. We have always enjoyed this little activity and found an old friend at his cabin talking to another of our friends. Chatting on a Sunday afternoon in the sun, parked in a quiet first setting is pretty good for the soul, Dave. I will always try to be productive with my time; however, I believe my definition of productivity is beginning to change, for the better.

Tell everyone hello, your little bro

year of living buckthorn on our property, at which time I will begin my journey to becoming known for something other than my relationship with buckthorn. I will miss hacking and squirting and basal bark treatments, but I will get used to it.

Lisa and I took our Polaris Ranger for a little drive the other night, Dave. We have always enjoyed this little activity and found an old friend at his cabin talking to another of our friends. Chatting on a Sunday afternoon in the sun, parked in a quiet first setting is pretty good for the soul, Dave. I will always try to be productive with my time; however, I believe my definition of productivity is beginning to change, for the better.

Tell everyone hello, your little bro

Spring Clean-Up to be held

(Continued from Page 1)

- Dehumidifiers
- Refrigerators
- Air conditioners
- Dishwashers
- Hot water heaters
- Electric/gas ranges
- Freezers
- Trash compactors
- Garbage disposals

Metals

- Steel siding/banding
- Motors
- Bicycles
- Duct/vents

Relocation of items prohibited

Residents are prohibited from moving or relocating items from one location to another for the purpose of disposal. Items must be placed for collection at the originating residence only. Violations of this policy may result in penalties or refusal

of service.

Post Clean-Up Week debris enforcement

Following the conclusion of Spring and Fall Clean-Up Week, City staff will conduct inspections throughout Crookston to identify any debris or refuse left on city rights-of-way or boulevards beyond the designated collection period. Properties found with items still remaining will be documented, and the resident will receive an official notice letter from the city.

This notice will serve as a warning and will provide the resident seven days to remove the debris voluntarily. The letter will state the violation under Crookston City Code of Ordinances, Section 152.159 A – Refuse, Performance Standards, and

list the scheduled date by which the items must be removed.

If the items are removed by the resident prior to the scheduled date, no fees will be assessed. However, if the debris remains past the removal deadline, the city will proceed with removal and the property owner will be invoiced. The invoice will include:

- A \$25 administrative fee,
- A landfill/disposal fee (varies based on material and quantity), and
- A removal fee (varies based on required equipment and personnel time).

Yard waste and branch collection

Yard waste and branch collection will occur Monday, April 27. ALL RESIDENTS

will need to have their yard waste and branches out on Monday by 7 a.m. as city crews will be picking up on Monday ONLY.

Place the materials on your curbside. Branches must be cut in four-foot lengths and bundled in order for the crews to take them away. Bagged yard waste must not exceed 30 pounds per bag. Any branches or tree trunks not cut to this length and bundled will be left for the owner to haul away. Twigs may be in boxes or bags. Individuals removing their diseased elm trees should call City Hall to schedule pickup.

Note that yard waste is defined as leaves, grass and other compostable material.

Crookston Area Ministries

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH
23928 265th St SW - Crookston
(East of Highland School)
Church: 281-5629
Preston Hoiseth, Pastor
Web: www.biblebaptistcrookston.org
Email: biblebaptist@midco.net
Sundays: 7:45 a.m. & 10:05 a.m., Heavenly Sonlight radio program on KROX, 10 a.m. Bible Classes for all ages including adults, 11 a.m. Morning Worship, 6 p.m. Evening Worship
Wednesdays: 7 p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Service

CLIMAX LUTHERAN CHURCH SAND HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH
P.O. Box 49 - Climax, MN 56523
Pastor Matt Williams
218-857-2215 • 218-857-3362
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Worship

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN
100 Jefferson Ave SW - Fertile
Pr. Dan Morton
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
Check out website for further information www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

FISHER LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)
209 2nd Street S - Fisher, MN
www.fisherbygland.org
Pastor Gretchen Enoch
218-891-4632
Sundays: Worship times alternate, please visit our website or call for information.

FREEDOM CHURCH
Pastor Joel Schwartz
218-275-2350
101 W 2nd St Crookston
hellofreedomchurch.com
Sundays: 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Worship

KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
1727 Widman Lane - Crookston
For information call: 218-281-6252
Sundays: 10 a.m. Public Talk, Watchtower Study
Thursdays: 7 p.m. Christian Life, Ministry Meeting

LITTLE NORWAY LUTHERAN
10802 423rd St SE - Fertile
Pr. Dan Morton
Sundays: 11 a.m. Worship Service
Check out website for further information www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

RESURRECTION FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH, AFLC
415 West 6th St. - Beltrami
Pastor Joel Kangas
Church email: resurrect@gvtel.com
Church website: www.resurrectionfree.org
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship

RODNES LUTHERAN
35473 180th Ave SE - Erskine
South of Hwy 2 on City 210
Office: 218-687-4345
Pastor Joel Smeby
www.facebook.com/RodnesLutheran
Sundays: 7 a.m. Radio Broadcast on KRJB (106.5FM), 10 a.m. Worship (live on Facebook and in person)

TRINITY LUTHERAN
402 6th St E - Beltrami
Pr. Dan Morton
Sundays: 11 a.m. Worship
Check out website for further information www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

MAPLE LAKE LUTHERAN
13960 380th St SE - Fertile
Pr. Dan Morton
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship Service
Check out website for further information www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

BYGLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)
40976 235th Street SW - Fisher, MN
www.fisherbygland.org
Pastor Gretchen Enoch
Phone: 218-893-4243
Sundays: Worship times alternate, please visit our website or call for information.

ENCOUNTER CHURCH
209 North Main - Crookston
Pastor Mathew McWaters - 218-281-4017
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m. Children's Church (ages 4-12)
Find us on Facebook

FAABERG LUTHERAN AT RINDAL, MN
4391 340th Ave - Fertile
Pr. Dan Morto
Sundays: 8:15 a.m. Worship Service
Check out website for further information www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org

GOSEN CHURCH, INDEPENDENT
Gary Johnson, Pastor
<http://www.gosen-church.com>
Facebook: Gosen Church
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service (also on Facebook and gosen-church.com)

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Pastor Noah Thompson
Pastor John Merseth
1221 Barrette St #2605 - Crookston
Phone: 218-281-4342
Sundays: 1:30 p.m. Worship

LIVING WATER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH
Nielsville, MN
Monty & Amanda Brown
For information call: 218-946-2675
Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship
Wednesdays: 7 p.m. Evening Service

MAPLE BAY FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor David Jore
Parsonage: 218-574-2222
Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
707 4th Ave. NE - Crookston
Phone: 218-456-2568
Pastor David Jahn
Saturdays: 10 a.m. Sabbath School, 11:30 a.m. Worship

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH - FERTILE
10490 438th St SW
Fertile
218-945-6649
Fr. Larry Delaney
Sundays: 8:30 a.m. Mass

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)
205 S Broadway - Crookston
Rev. Gregory Isaacson, Senior Pastor
Rev. Michael Ozaki, Associate Pastor
218-281-4276
9 a.m. Broadcast Worship live over Crookston Cable TV Channel #3, KROX Radio 1260AM, KROX 105.7FM and streaming live on Facebook: Trinity Lutheran Church, Crookston, MN.
For additional information and calendar updates, please check out our website at www.trinitycrookston.org.

Sundays: 9 a.m. - Worship at Trinity Lutheran Church, 10:45 a.m. - Worship at First Presbyterian Church
Thursdays: 1 p.m. - Book Study at First Presbyterian Church

CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - CROOKSTON & ST. PETER'S - GENTILLY
702 Summit Avenue - Crookston
218-281-1735, Parish,
218-281-1835, School & RE Offices
The Most Reverend Bishop Cozzens
The Very Reverend
Msgr. David Baumgartner
Saturdays: 9 a.m. Mass at Cathedral, 10:30 a.m. Mass at Gentilly
Daily Mass: 7:45 a.m. Tuesday-Friday (Monday Communion Service 7:45 a.m.)
Please visit our website: www.crookstoncathedral.com for more information.

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, MENTOR
105 Harrison Ave N - Mentor
Pastor Rev. Michael Sletto
218-637-8263
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH - LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD
33276 339th Ave. SW - Eldred, MN
c/o Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Crookston, MN - 218-281-1239
Pastor: Steven Bohler
Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Service

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, ERSKINE (NALC)
Church Office: 218-687-4035
332 Vance Avenue - Erskine, MN 56535
Rev. Pamela Thorson, Pastor
Sundays: 9 a.m. Worship
Worship also on GVTel TV, Facebook and Youtube

HARVEST CHURCH
520 Fisher Avenue - Crookston
218-281-2264
Pastor Dave Finsaas
www.harvestchurchcrookston.com
Sundays: Worship Service online or in-person at 10:30 a.m. Livestream can be found on our Facebook and YouTube channel. Facebook: Harvest Church Crookston YouTube: Harvest Church Crookston, MN Instagram: @harvestchurchcrookston

NEXUS CHURCH
605 3rd Ave NE - Crookston
Lead Pastor, Danny Holwerda, Jr.
Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship

OUR LADY OF SORROWS' CHAPEL - Society of St. Pius X
600 E Robert St - U.S. Hwy 2 E - Crookston
218-281-6880, 218-773-8020
Sundays: 2 p.m. Holy Mass

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN - LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD
Crookston
Pastor Steven Bohler
Sundays: 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. Services, 9:30 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Study

ST. LAWRENCE CHURCH - MENTOR
Fr. Larry Delaney
Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Mass

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - EUCLID
Sundays: For the months of January, February, and March, weekend Mass on Sundays at 8:30 a.m.
Tuesdays: Mass at 8:30 a.m.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN (ELCA)
1214 University Avenue - Crookston
Email: stpauls@midconetwork.com
Website: stpaulscrookstonmn.com
Phone: 218-281-3638
Pastor Curt Peterson
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship
You may worship via Facebook Live: [facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn](https://www.facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn)

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, FISHER (LCMS)
Church Office: 218-891-4581
Pastor Doug Thompson
Website: tclstpaul.org
Email: trinity.st.paul.parishes@gmail.com
Sundays: 10 a.m. Bible Study, 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m. Worship Service - Communion celebrated on the second and last Sunday of the month.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
321 5th Avenue South - Crookston
218-281-5402
Pastor David Johnson
Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
2814 Cherry Street - Grand Forks, ND
Bishop Derek Pruitt
435-979-4491
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
510 North Broadway - Crookston
218-281-4853
crookstonfirstpres.org
Rev Michael Ozaki, pastor
Sundays: 10:45 a.m. Worship (live-streaming at crookstonfirstpres.org or on our Facebook page) Communion 1st Sunday
Thursdays: 1 p.m. - Book study

HOPE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
11330 435th St SW - Fertile - 218-945-3677
www.hope4fertile.org
email: hope4fertile.worship@gmail.com
Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship

PRAIRIE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
27897 170th Ave. SW - Crookston
218-281-3506 or 218-280-2084
Pastor Pat Baranski
Sundays: 10 a.m. Church Service, 11 a.m. Sunday School - Adult Sunday School

THRIVING LIFE CHURCH
22722 350th St. Erskine, MN 56535
Pastor Jim Binder
218-556-1545
<https://thrivinglifemn.org>
Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
701 Eickhof Blvd - Crookston
218-281-3393
website: crookstonmethodist.com
- view services here
email: wesleyumcrox@gmail.com
Rev. Ruth Sanders, Pastor
Sunday, April 5: Easter worship at 9 a.m., Breakfast to follow

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Fax: (218) 681-4455
e-mail: trftimes@trftimes.com
http://www.trftimes.com

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The *Crookston Watch* is published weekly every Saturday and distributed to over 4,600 households in Northwest Minnesota and surrounding area. The *Crookston Watch* is published in conjunction with the Thief River Falls Times, which is published weekly every Wednesday.

The *Crookston Watch* shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The *Crookston Watch's* liability for other errors or omissions in connection with an advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.

Obituary

announcements

Dale Knotek, 90

 **Crookston** - Dale Howard Knotek, age 90, died Sunday evening, March 22, 2026. He was born to Charles and Gladys Knotek on April 4, 1935, in Ravenna, Nebraska. He lived a short time in Central City, NE, but all his years of school K-12 were spent in Holdrege, NE. He graduated from HHS in 1953. He participated in HHS basketball and track, setting the Nebraska state H.S. high jump record in 1953 which stood for many years.

He enrolled at the University of Nebraska Lincoln, participating in track there as well. Dale loved to tell the story of having to jump against Wilt Chamberlain, who was enrolled at the University of Kansas at that time. Dale graduated from UNL with a degree in Psychology/Personnel Management in 1958.

Dale served the required military service at that time at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO and Ft. Lee, VA, followed by years in Army Reserves, mustering out in 1964.

He married Mary Ann Thompson of Sterling, NE in 1959 and they raised a family of four children: Jeffrey (Staci) Timothy (Crystal), Leah (David), and William Ladd (Katherine).

Dale began his working career at Zion Lutheran Church in Rockford, IL as Youth Director for four years, followed by four years at the University of North Dakota Lutheran Center as associate to the Lutheran Campus Pastor. While working at UND, he procured his Master's Degree in Counseling and Guidance.

When the University of Minnesota Crookston opened, Dale was hired as Student Activities Director, taught a psychology class, and was registrar for a short period of time. He worked at UMC for thirty years with wonderful staff and administrators, retiring in 1996.

Through the years, Dale took many courses from Luther Seminary in St. Paul and was a Synod Authorized Minister (SAM), serving as a temporary pastoral replacement for vacant parishes in the Red River Valley (NW Minnesota Synod).

Gordon R. Tiedeman

Gordon R. Tiedeman of Walker passed away on February 27, 2026.

Funeral services for Gordy will be held on Saturday April 18 at 11 a.m. at Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Crookston, with visitation 1 hour prior to the service. A visitation will be held on Friday April 17 from 5:30-7 p.m. with a prayer service following.

Interment with Veteran's honors following the funeral at Calvary Cemetery, proceeded by lunch and fellowship back at Cathedral.

In lieu of flowers please

Dale was an avid cross-country skier and helped build and maintain several C.C. trails in the area. He was a member of the Crookston Bikers Association and swam laps at the community pool every day possible. He enjoyed spending time up at the cabin at Union Lake.

When he was forced to enter the Villa St. Vincent Benedictine Living Community in the fall of 2023 because of emergency health issues, Dale was physically fit, had a thick head of hair, and all of his teeth! (This was still true until the day he died.)

Dale was a member of Crookston Lions and served on many of their committees, also taking his turn as President. He was active on many Crookston community boards and committees, including Habitat for Humanity where he served as chair for many years, and served on International Habitat Builds in the Philippines and Costa Rica.

He and Mary Ann have been members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Crookston since 1967, and he has been chairman of the Board of Deacons and on numerous committees.

Dale was preceded in death by grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles, and several cousins.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Mary Ann; four children and their spouses: Jeff (Staci), Tim (Crystal), Leah Ellefson (Dave) and W. Ladd (Katie); nine grandchildren: Alissa Brandvold (Trevor), Jake Knotek (Jenna), Lexi Olschlager (Ty), Jaxon Knotek, Tyler Ellefson (Tessa), Samuel Ellefson (Kaylee), Brittny Ellefson, Derek Knotek, and Dylan Knotek; ten great-grandchildren: Izraya Brandvold, Abel Brandvold, Siloam Brandvold, Sequoia Brandvold, Aviella Olschlager, Owen Olschlager, Rowe Olschlager, Cal Ellefson, Adalaigh Knotek, and Nevaeh Knotek.

Dale was proud of the accomplishments of his children and grandchildren and will be missed by his wife and family.

A celebration of Dale's life will be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in June of 2026. Service details will be available at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1214 University Ave, Crookston, MN 56716. A00003B2026AP04

Gordon R. Tiedeman

contribute to "The Reel Hope Project" Give —The Reel Hope Project—or the Walker Area Pregnancy Center 102 8th St., Walker, MN 56484.

Beatrice A. Swenson, 90

Beatrice A. Swenson, 90, Shelly, MN, passed away on Wednesday, December 10, 2025.

Memorial service will be held on Friday, April 10 at Fredrikson-Ganje Funeral Home, Halstad.

Visitation will be one hour before the memorial service at the funeral home.

Interment will be in Zion Lutheran Cemetery, Shelly.

Claudia Cirks, 89

 **Moorhead** - Claudia Annette Cirks, 89, passed away on Friday, January 23, 2026, at Sanford Hospital in Fargo, ND.

She was born at home in Fergus Falls, on August 1, 1936, along with her twin, Claudette, to Pliny and Edna Haarstad.

Adopted by Hans and Gladys Haarstad in 1939, Claudia was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran faith. She attended country school and graduated from Newfolden High School in 1954.

On February 16, 1957, she married the love of her life, Dennis Cirks, at Bethesda Lutheran Church in Newfolden. Together, they lived in nine Minnesota cities with Dennis' Northwestern Bell employment. During this time, they added three children to the family, along with losing a beautiful daughter at birth. In 1966, they moved to Crookston, and resided there until Fall 2023 when they moved to Linden Assisted Living, Moorhead.

Claudia had many interests and talents that brought her joy. She enjoyed arranging and growing flowers, craftwork of any kind, sewing, decorating, cooking and baking, shopping, and taking cruises to Norway and Alaska. Together, they enjoyed fun years of camping, square dancing, playing cards, and family Christmas at their Tulaby Lake cabin.

She dedicated her life to those she loved. Claudia was a devoted member of Trinity Lutheran Church; teaching Sunday School/Religious Release, volunteered in WELCA, Altar Guild and coordinated the Prayer Chain. Claudia's faith was also demonstrated outside of the

walls of the church. This was evidenced when she volunteered with Home Delivered Meals.

Claudia was employed at various jobs in Crookston including: Dahlgren & Co., CHS Cafeteria, Ames Chiropractic, Anderson Fabrics, and Stennes Granite, East Grand Forks.

Claudia is survived by her husband of almost 69 years, Dennis; children: Diane (Dale) Surprenant of Moorhead, Mike (Diana) Cirks of Glenwood, Rebecca "Becky" (Dan) Cymbaluk of Crookston; grandchildren: Casie (Dana) Coulter, Kate (Jay) Puterbaugh, Matthew Surprenant, Krystyna (Andres) Freeman, Nicole (Zachary) Jones, Dr. Anna Cymbaluk, Cody (Morgan) Cirks, Zach (Ally) Cymbaluk, Tanner (Tracy) Cirks, Britnee (Cole) Taylor; sixteen great-grandchildren; sister, Claudette (Winton) Forsberg, Cottage Grove; and other beloved friends and family.

She is preceded in death by her daughter, Kristi Larae; parents, Hans and Gladys Haarstad; parents-in-law, Walter and Elaine Cirks; siblings, Virginia (Leonard), Pliny Haarstad, Jorris (Alice) Haarstad; sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, Gloria (Larry) Skalsky; Gary (JoAnn) Cirks.

Claudia leaves behind a legacy of love and compassion. Her life and smile left a positive impact on all she met. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends, whom she loved deeply, and all who had the privilege of knowing her.

A funeral service celebrating Claudia's life will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Crookston, on Saturday, April 11, 2026, at 11 a.m.

Visitation will be one hour prior.

Interment will be after at Oakdale Cemetery in Crookston.

www.stenshoelhouke.com
A00003B2026AP04

TRF Times to host annual Home, Sport & Family Show

The Thief River Falls Times will host the 34th Annual Home, Sport and Family Show next weekend at Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls. Show hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 11 and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 12. Admission is \$5 for those 16 and older, \$3 for ages 6 to 15, free for those under the age of 6 and \$15 for families. Admission is free from 3 to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 12. Your entry ticket will get you entered for a chance to win \$200 in TRF Chamber Bucks.

Speakers include Ricki Klasen from Klasen's Greenhouse on why most gardeners fail and how to avoid failure Saturday at 1 p.m. and One Vegetable One Community on this year's Vegetable of the Year - leafy greens Sunday at 1 p.m.



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Minnesota Crookston earns series sweep of Wolves

The University of Minnesota Crookston baseball team earned an important sweep with a 10-5 victory over Northern State University Sunday, March 29 at the Minnesota Crookston Baseball Field. The Golden Eagles had great starting pitching all weekend with Nate Benning (Sr., LHP, Browerville) earning Sunday's victory.

The Golden Eagles improved to 17-10 (10-5 NSIC) with the victory Sunday. Northern State dropped to 7-13 (5-10 NSIC). Minnesota Crookston is in fourth place after the weekend sweep of the Wolves. Northern State is tied for 11th. The Golden Eagles have won six straight. Minnesota Crookston is 15-2 against the Wolves since April 28, 2021.

Benning improved to 3-0 with Sunday's victory. The southpaw hurled six innings, allowing two runs on three hits. Benning struck out six, and walked two. After allowing 11 earned runs in the first two games, Benning has been steady for Minnesota Crookston in his last six outings, as the Golden Eagles are 5-1 in games he threw. He has allowed just 12 earned runs in 29.1 innings

in his last six appearances, for a 3.71 ERA. Kaylor Chamberlain (So., RHP, Mankato) tossed a scoreless seventh with no runs on no hits, as he continues to be effective out of the bullpen. Nate Heymann (Jr., RHP, Waimea, Hawai'i) allowed two runs on three hits in one frame. Joey Connelly (Sr., LHP, Eden Prairie) allowed one run on one hit in the ninth.

Hyunwoo Kim had a strong start for Northern State, but was saddled with the loss. He allowed three unearned runs on five hits in six innings. Kim struck out seven, and walked five. The Wolves gave up eight unearned runs with three errors Sunday.

Minnesota Crookston found ways on to the base paths, with nine hits and eight walks. Americo Sculati (R-Sr., OF, Golden Valley) continued a strong weekend, hitting 2-of-3, with an RBI and two runs scored. Jackson Fliflet (R-So., C, Wahpeton, N.D.) went 2-of-4, with two RBI and two runs scored. Caden Kappes (Jr., 2B/SS, Wahpeton, N.D.) finished 2-of-3, with two RBI. Elias Leach (Fr., OF, Plymouth)

went 2-of-5, with two runs scored.

The Golden Eagles jumped on the gas early on with three runs in the bottom of the first. A Sculati single with the bases loaded scored Tori Uhlich (Jr., OF, Wahpeton, N.D.) to give Minnesota Crookston a 1-0 advantage. Fliflet hit a sacrifice fly to score Leach to make it 2-0. Aaron Wensloff (Jr., IF, Roseau) scored on a balk to extend the lead to 3-0. The game remained 3-0 until the top of the fifth. Kyle Konechne came through with a two-run home run, scoring Andrew Nieves to trim the deficit to 3-2. The Golden Eagles added to their lead in the bottom of the seventh. Fliflet doubled to center field, plating Sculati to widen the gap to 4-2. Fliflet scored on a balk to push the lead to 5-2. Northern State made a charge in the top of the eighth. A two-run shot from Casey Vining, plating Dylan Soulek to trim the deficit to 5-4. Minnesota Crookston padded their lead in the bottom of the eighth with the bases loaded and two outs. Fliflet reached on an error,

scoring Uhlich to extend the advantage to 6-4. Connor Bushbaum (R-Sr., OF, Saginaw, Minn.) walked with the bases juiced to plate Leach and push the lead to 7-4. Kappes delivered a two RBI single, driving in Fliflet, and Sculati to push the edge to 9-4. Kappes stole second, and

Bushbaum crossed on the throw to make it 10-4. The Wolves got a run back in the top of the ninth when Dillon Castellanos came across on a wild pitch. However, Connelly shut the door with the final out as Northern State fell 10-5.

Minnesota Crookston

headed to Minnesota Duluth for a three-game series Friday, April 3 and Saturday, April 4 in Duluth. The Bulldogs are 8-19 (6-9 NSIC) entering the weekend.

Golden Eagle Tennis heads into the final weekend of the regular season

The Golden Eagles are on the road this weekend for their final two regular season matches. They will travel to Sartell for a match against St. Cloud State University and one against Minnesota State University Moorhead. The Golden Eagles have put themselves in an outstanding position heading into the final weekend with a 5-3 conference record and now winners of four straight games, all within the NSIC.

In singles this season, Daniela de Lucas Rivera (Jr., Madrid, Spain) is now 7-8, Asli Oktay (So., Istanbul, Turkey) is 5-10, Nadia Cases

Mundet (Jr., Barcelona, Spain) is 10-6, Terez Drasilova (Fr., Naples, Fla.) is 5-2, Abril Manas Hernandez (So., Barcelona, Spain) is 5-9, Kavya Singh (Sr., Agra, India) had a massive senior weekend as she improved to 8-5. In doubles, de Lucas Rivera and Drasilova are 3-5 on the season and Singh and Cases Mundet improved to 9-2 this weekend.

The Huskies

The Huskies are coming into this weekend with a 3-10 total record, going 1-7 in the conference. Mathematically, the Huskies have been elimi-

nated from tournament contention. They will be looking to play the part of spoiler as both the Golden Eagles and the Dragons are both still fighting for a spot in the tournament in two weeks.

In singles this season, the Huskies are 32-42. Brooklyn Broadwell, a Thief River Falls native, and Lara-Maria Schaefer each lead the team at 10-3. The Huskies are 12-24 in doubles this season. Lara-Maria Schaefer and Liliana Ruy Sanchez Mendivil lead the way at 7-6.

The Dragons

The Dragons come into this weekend fighting for a chance in the NSIC Tournament. They are 3-11 this season with a 2-6 conference record. The last team in right now is 4-4, so the Dragons would need some help, but this weekend will be huge for them.

The Dragons have gone 46-88 in singles this season, with Luzmary Diaz Castillo leading the team at 12-8 and Sophia Felderman at 10-10. In doubles this season, Felderman and Diaz Castillo lead the team with a 9-3 record.

This will be the final weekend of the regular season for the Golden Eagles. The Golden Eagles are still in the race for a spot in the tournament, but one win would secure the team a spot in the tournament. The Golden Eagles are currently slotted at four in the NSIC. That would currently line them up to play the University of Sioux Falls for the third straight season.



Mauricio Arriaga received individual awards for Most Improved Wrestler and the Rod Hanson Most Dedicated Award during the team banquet on Tuesday, March 31. (Photo by Carrie Bergquist)



Lucas Perala and Gavyn Hlucny were recognized for reaching career win milestones during the 2025-26 season the Crookston High School wrestling banquet on Tuesday, March 31. Perala reached the 50 career wins milestone, while Hlucny finished his career with 159 wins, becoming the 11th member of the 150-Win Club. (Photo by Carrie Bergquist)



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Pictured from left to right are players and coaches from the Crookston boys basketball team: front row - Sam Widseth, Jacob Halvorson, Beau Smith, Ean DeLeon, Gunnar Groven, Colton Osborn, Sawyer Anderson; back row - Head Coach Bruce Erdmann, Nolan Cassavant, Gavin Reitmeier, Carter Fee, Reggie Winjum, Nolan Johnson, Josh Hesby, Cam Martin, Landon Meier, Assistant Coach Corey Baril and Assistant Coach Lukas Maska. (Photo by Tiffany Biermaier Photography)



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The Art of Grit: the story of three women's cross country runners at Minnesota Crookston



Pictured from left to right are Minnesota Crookston women's cross country runners Madison Hilliard, Grace Alwardt and Emma Williams. (Submitted)

At the starting line, every runner faces the same challenge: the clock ticks, the course stretches out, and the only thing that matters is how far they can push themselves. For the women of the University of Minnesota Crookston cross country team, the sport is more than just miles and medals—it's a test of grit, a lesson in perseverance, and a place where lifelong bonds are formed. Junior Grace Alwardt from Lake Elsinore Calif., senior Madison Hilliard from Jacksonville N.C., and junior Emma Williams from Nashauk, each arrived at the university with different sto-

ries, backgrounds, and reasons for running, yet they share one thing in common: a nonstop drive to compete, grow, and help one another. Their journeys share the heart of college athletics, where the finish line is only the beginning of lessons that extend far beyond the course. Alwardt grew up surrounded by running. Her mother, a marathoner and high school coach, and her father, a runner as well, instilled in her a love for the sport. "I started running in sixth grade and ran varsity all through high school," she says. Hilliard, on the other hand, discovered her passion

for running at a young age through local clubs and middle school track. "I started running in third grade," she recalls. "My dad was the one who really pushed me to stick with it." However, Williams' story is slightly different—she didn't take up running seriously until later in high school. "My friends were like, 'just come run, and I thought it was crazy at first,'" she remembers. "But I loved the individual challenge. When you push yourself, you're competing not just for yourself, but for your team as well."

Aside from their varied backgrounds, the three quickly formed strong bonds as teammates. Williams recalls that the preseason trip helped the team click immediately. "You're thrown together, and you bond fast. Being the oldest returners last season made us even closer," she says. Grace points to a small but meaningful gesture: "When Hilliard made us cinnamon rolls my freshman year, I felt a real connection with Williams and the upperclassmen group." Hilliard adds that being the only one from her class helped her connect with others quickly, establishing the foundation for lasting friendships.

Running, however, hasn't come without challenges. Alwardt battled IT band issues that eventually developed into chronic knee and hip problems. "Two surgeons told me to medically retire, but the third said, 'if this is what you really want, go for it.' That motivated me to keep going," she says. Hilliard, meanwhile, faced mental health struggles in her freshman year, finding comfort and strength in running, even as constant hip problems continued. Williams ex-

perienced early success only to be derailed by a knee injury going into her sophomore year, creating a chain reaction that tested her both physically and mentally. "Mentally, it's tough to know what you're capable of but not be able to reach it immediately," she says. "That's the hardest part of a mental sport."

Even with support from teammates and coaches, the pressure to perform continued to weigh heavily. Williams admits that, while she has never felt judged by teammates, it's difficult not to tie self-worth to the sport when it populates your entire life. Hilliard agrees, saying performance defines her to an extent. Alwardt reflects, "Pressure is a privilege. In high school, I had it from myself, coaches, and teammates and I still carry it with me, even here."

The sacrifices made for the sport go beyond physical effort. Alwardt spends hours in the athletic training room, doing rehab, stretching, and enduring ice baths to stay competitive. Williams, a self-proclaimed homebody, struggles with missing family moments, including watching her young nephew grow up. Hilliard, living 32 hours from home, often forgoes social events and family time to focus on her sport. Yet, through every challenge, the bond between these athletes remains unfaltering.

Their choice to attend UMC reflects a mix of athletic, academic, and personal reasons. Alwardt laughs, "STEVE (Krouse), all caps, exclamation points. My parents call me a free spirit, and I wanted to explore. I could see the team bond, even if I didn't expect the cold!" Emma appreciated the small, rural campus, which

mirrored her upbringing in rural Minnesota, and Hilliard was drawn to the academic programs and the program's growth under Coach Steven Krouse.

Some of the ladies' most cherished memories come from shared experiences both on and off the course. Alwardt recalls the preseason trips yearningly: "We train, explore, and just have fun—volleyball, pool games—it's the best." Hilliard treasures car rides blasting music or baking for the team, and moments of shared victory, like placing fourth at Augie last season. "Car rides when we are all in a car together while Grace blasts music and has her toes out the window. Or Augie twilight this past season when we placed fourth." Williams highlights the adrenaline and energy of conference week, when everyone is locked in and the post-race camaraderie is unmatched. "Conference week because everyone is so locked in and ready for the race."

Preparation is a ritual for all three student-athletes. Williams applies Icy Hot and takes ibuprofen while keeping her hair the same for every race. Hilliard has her lucky socks, honey, and salt ritual, washing the socks before every race of course. Alwardt comes with a clear mind, confidence, and the team's prayer, often accompanied by favorite pre-race meals like pink waffles with whipped cream and sprinkles.

Looking ahead, the team's intentions are clear. Williams hopes to help the team move up in both conference and regional standings while achieving personal bests in her senior season. Alwardt shares similar goals: seeing the team place third or fourth in the conference and improve at regionals, while also giving her best for the team. Hilliard, after graduation, plans to continue running by competing in a

half marathon in September and a full marathon in October, with hopes of qualifying for Boston.

For these women, cross country has provided lessons that extend far beyond running. "Food is fuel. Don't be afraid," Grace advises. Williams highlights mental toughness, noting, "If you work hard for something you love, it pays off." Hilliard reflects on the team bond: "Be ambitious and stay motivated. Your teammates are your family." Outside of athletics, Alwardt enjoys Fortnite, Clashing, hiking, and her go to snack are the Brookside pomegranate chocolates. Williams plays Clash Royale and indulges in caramel chocolates and enjoys a game of bags. Hilliard loves reading, baking, and caramel cold brew M&Ms—often stolen by Grace.

When asked for advice to younger athletes, the three offer wisdom shared from experience. "Don't quit," Alwardt says with a laugh. "I wanted to so many times, but I'm glad I didn't. It opens doors in and out of sports. (Jokingly) Punch people." Williams reminds athletes to appreciate the short-lived nature of their college careers: "It goes by fast. Appreciate every moment—you'll never be a college athlete again." Hilliard concludes with simple, strong advice: "Find your support system, support those around you, and don't give up on something you love."

Grace Alwardt, Madison Hilliard, and Emma Williams embody the heart of Minnesota Crookston cross country—a mix of dedication, resilience, and sisterhood. On race day, they aren't just running against the clock or other teams; they're testing their limits, building lasting relationships, and carrying lessons that will follow them well beyond the finish line.



Crookston senior Gavyn Hlucny received several individual awards during the team banquet Tuesday, March 31. Hlucny received the award for most pins throughout the season with 14 wins by fall. He received the most dominant wrestler award, averaging 4.45 team points per match; and he received the Wrestler of the Year Award following the most successful season of his career, which included a fourth trip to state and fifth place finish. (Photo by Carrie Berquist)

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Crookston Wrestling Banquet



Pictured from left to right are 2025-26 Crookston High School wrestling letter winners: Jaron Knutson, Lucas Perala, Jose Arriaga, Gavyn Hlucny, Mauricio Arriaga and Emma Pierson. (Photo by Carrie Bergquist)



Five Crookston wrestlers received recognition from the North Star Wrestling Conference following the 2025-26 season during the team banquet on Tuesday, March 31. Pictured from left to right are All-Conference selections Lucas Perala, Jaron Knutson, Mauricio Arriaga and Gavyn Hlucny, and Honorable Mention selection Emma Pierson. (Photo by Carrie Bergquist)

Minnesota Crookston equestrian falls to Delaware State at ECAC Championships

The University of Minnesota Crookston equestrian team fell 12-7 in the first round of the ECAC Championships Thursday, March 26 at Delaware State Fairgrounds in Harrington, Del.

The Golden Eagles end their NCEA slate with a 1-8. Delaware State advanced to face UC Davis Friday.

Allison Patron (Fr., Bend, Ore.) picked up her second MOP honor of the season, earning Minnesota Crookston's first-ever post-season MOP in any discipline. Patron earned the accolade in Reining, picking up a 69.5-69 victory. The Golden Eagles had a 3-2 overall win in Reining. Brooke Hoven (Sr., Ankeny, Iowa) picked up a 67-63.75 victory. McKenna Hooyer (Jr., Rock Rapids, Iowa) took a 67-65 win for her third victory in a row.

In Fences, Maggie Lawler (Fr., Algonquin, Ill.) continued her impressive showing in the 2026 calendar year

after earning ECAC Flat Rider of the Month in February. Lawler set a new program record in Fences with an 87.5 to win her point, and claim her second MOP honor in the event for the season, and her fifth MOP of her career. Anna Rajski set a new personal best with an 83.5 to tie her point.

In Flat, Belle Syrett (Jr., Winnipeg, Manitoba) and Ryann Mitchell (Fr., Camano Island, Wash.) picked up victories.

In Horsemanship, Emma Mutnansky (So., Cass Lake) won her seventh point of the season with a 71.75-68.75 win. Hooyer and Siara Mosby (So., Bremerton, Wash.) each had great rides, but were edged by just 0.25.

Minnesota Crookston's 2025-26 season was highlighted by their first-ever NCEA win, with a victory over Delaware State University earlier this season.



Crookston wrestling Rookie of the Year awards went to Emma Pierson and Kolton Bahrenfuss based on a team vote following the 2025-26 season. The awards were presented during the team banquet Tuesday, March 31. (Photo by Carrie Bergquist)



Crookston wrestlers Mauricio Arriaga (6th) and Gavin Hlucny (5th) were awarded All-State Wrestling Certificates at the Crookston High School wrestling team banquet on Tuesday, March 31. All-State certificates are awarded to the top six wrestlers in each weight class at the MSHSL State Wrestling Championships. (Photo by Carrie Bergquist)

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