



CROOKSTON WATCH

"NORTHWEST MINNESOTA'S REGIONAL NEWSPAPER"



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UMN Crookston dedicates campus wellness center

by Jess Bengtson

The University of Minnesota Crookston officially dedicated its campus wellness center to donor and alumnus Les Nielsen and his family during a formal event Monday, April 20 at the newly-named Nielsen Family Wellness Center.

A program featured the University of Minnesota Executive Vice President and Provost Gretchen Ritter, University of Minnesota Foundation President and Chief Executive Officer John Morris, UMN Crookston Chancellor Mary Holz-Clause, Nielsen scholarship recipient Lexi Swendra, UMN Crookston Chief Development Officer Brandy Chaffee, and UMN Crookston Director of Athletics Stephanie Helgeson, plus UMN Crookston Director of Advancement and Alumni Relations Kevin Thompson, who was the master of ceremonies.

Following the program was a reception inside the wellness center for the family and guests, which included healthy snacks, interactive stations, photo booths, and new branded swag giveaways.

During Ritter's program remarks, she touched on the five campuses within the UMN System and Crookston's commitment to its students, community engagement, and wellness.

"It is clear from all the Nielsen family has done for Crookston that they know how important and impactful it is for a student from a small town to have a superb education," said Ritter. "I'm inspired by the lives you have helped, Mr. Nielsen, in the process of not only helping our students to get an education but also helping our state to nurture these talented young people who then go on to give back so much to our communities."

During his program remarks, Morris said he often asks donors what difference they want to make in the world or how they want to shape and transform lives, and the Niensens came to his mind.

"That conversation with Les and June became a real conversation years ago, and decade after decade, year after year, their support continues to improve lives and make this place possible for so many students," he said. Holz-Clause echoed those

comments, saying the Nielsen family had been a campus supporter since the wellness center building's inception 10 years ago and what a way to celebrate than with a dedication and naming for the family. She also mentioned over 100 students have benefited so far from the Niensens' tuition scholarship opportunity and the impact it has made, along with the family's other supportive gifts, can be felt throughout the region.

Swendra, a UMN Crookston student from Red Lake Falls majoring in sport and recreation management with a minor in coaching, is currently receiving a Nielsen tuition scholarship. She said she saw the opportunities with the scholarship and made the decision to take classes in Crookston. She told the story of her brother who also benefited from the scholarship, and said she has learned so much in the three years she's been on campus so far, including finding a degree she is passionate about and meeting so many great people.

"Having these things has

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Les Nielsen and his son Randy Brian Nielsen stand in the Nielsen Family Wellness Center, which was dedicated Monday, April 20 in honor of their family. (Submitted)

Commencement set for Saturday at UMN Crookston

by University Relations

The University of Minnesota Crookston will celebrate its 59th graduating class with a commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 2 at 11 a.m. in Lysaker Gymnasium. Commencement exercises will include a reception for graduating students and their families before the ceremony. The community is invited to join us for the celebration.

The formal procession of faculty, candidates for degree, and platform guests will begin from Sargeant Student Center to Lysaker Gymnasium led by mace bearer Sharon Stewart, Ph.D., who is an associate professor in the Math, Science, and Technology Department, and includes faculty marshal Soo-Yin Lim-Thompson, Ph.D., who is a professor in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education Department.

University of Minnesota President Rebecca Cunningham

will offer remarks and The Honorable Regent Sam Heins will assist with conferring the degrees. UMN Crookston Alumni Association Board President Jess Bengtson 2010 will bring greetings from UMCAA and welcome new graduates to the alumni association. Under the direction of TJ Chapman, M.M. and M.S., lecturer in the Math, Science, and Technology Department, the UMN Crookston Community Band will perform a number of selections, and the campus vocal ensemble will perform under the direction of Associate Professor George French, Ed.D.

Crookston Student Association Officers and graduates Louis Siegel and Codey Wolff will speak on behalf of the Class of 2026. Later in the ceremony, they will pass the torch to 2026-27 CSA President Evelyn Dupont, a junior majoring in exercise science and wellness with a minor in coaching.

This year marks the campus' 118th graduation ceremony after its inception in 1906 as an agricultural high school, the Northwest School of Agriculture. The NWSA held its first ceremony in 1909. In the fall of 1966, classes began for students at the new University of Minnesota Technical Institute, and the UMN "Tech" and NWSA shared the campus for two years. In spring 1968, a torch was passed from the 60th and final graduating class of the NWSA to the first graduating class of the UMN Technical Institute. The University of Minnesota Crookston earned its approval to offer baccalaureate degrees in the early 1990s and, by the end of the academic year in 1994, 20 students had completed bachelor's degree requirements and were recognized at the 86th commencement ceremony.

"Iron and Feathers: Art of the Northwest" on display

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council has announced the opening of "Iron and Feathers: Art of the Northwest," an exhibit featuring paintings by Ross Hier and Beau Bakken at the Historic Fournet Building in downtown Crookston. This exhibit includes 35 original pieces of art in watercolor on paper and acrylic on canvas.

Beau Bakken of Hallock has been professionally creating art by commission since 2008. He has been a consistent entrant into NWMAC's exhibits and won first place in the annual Northwest Minnesota Art Exhibit in 2011, 2014, and 2022, and given a People's Choice award in 2025. He won the Artist of the Year in 2016. Beau was the featured artist in the Around the Farm exhibit at the NWMAC gallery in Thief River Falls. His work consists of large outdoor murals, outdoor business signs, indoor murals, and indoor wall hangings and paintings.

Beau said, "My paintings in this exhibit are captures of the Red River Valley, painted with the hope that fellow citizens of the valley would find them relatable."

Ross H. Hier attended the

University of Minnesota earning a Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife management and had a 35-year career with the wildlife section in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. His time was spent researching mallards, ring-necked ducks, and the Lesser scaup, as well as managing wildlife management areas in Polk and Red Lake counties. Nature has excited him for as long as he can remember and his creative need to express this love led him to watercolor painting.

Ross said, "Northwest Minnesota is such a diverse piece of geography... native grasslands, the Aspen Parklands and transition zone between prairie and forest landscapes interspersed with agricultural tracts. The ancient Lake Agassiz beach lines are quite profound on the east side of the Red River Valley and serve as linear maps for migrant birds where substantial grasslands and wetlands serve as stop-over areas for birds moving further north. The diversity of nature in northwest Minnesota is amazing. Nature has always been a force that triggers my creative thought process. I love painting with watercol-

ors for their elusive nature and spontaneity."

Ross continued, "It's an honor to exhibit in the town I have long resided in and to share this exhibit with the outstanding artist, Beau Bakken. His work never ceases to amaze me. This exhibit presents the viewers with two different artists who use different painting mediums and rather different styles. I hope the exhibit brings viewers much joy and thankfulness as we celebrate the premier region of Minnesota through art. Thanks to the Northwest Arts Council and especially Exhibit Specialist Trey Everett." Twenty-seven works in the exhibit were created by Ross.

An artist reception will be held on a to-be-determined date at the Fournet. Details will be announced in the future at <https://northwest-minnesotaartsCouncil.org>.

The Fournet Building is located at 101 N. Broadway in downtown Crookston. Parking and admission is free. Take the stairs or elevator to the second floor where the gallery is located in the atrium. The gallery is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



CeCe Teneal's Divas of Soul is coming to the Crookston High School auditorium on Tuesday, May 5 at 7 p.m. The performance is part of the Civic Music League's Entertainment Series. (Submitted)

Civic Music League to host CeCe Teneal's Divas of Soul

Take a ride on the "Midnight Train to Georgia" over "River Deep, Mountain High" while award-winning vocalist CeCe Teneal delivers you the "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" you deserve in Divas of Soul.

The Crookston Civic Music League welcomes CeCe Teneal to the stage of Crookston High School auditorium Tuesday, May 5 at 7 p.m. as the next concert in the Civic Music League's Entertainment Series.

This spectacular evening

will include a celebration of 30 years of chart-topping music from artists like Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight, Chaka Khan, Tina Turner, Whitney Houston, and more. This performance has wowed audiences worldwide, featuring hits from the Disco Era to Broadway to Pop. An award-winning songstress in her own right, Teneal has been nominated for four Independent Music Awards and claimed the title for 2011 Best Gospel Song

and 2011 Best R&B Album, as well as 2018 Best Soul/Funk/Fusion Song. Her energy is contagious and will have attendees dancing in the aisles.

Admission is by season ticket only. Season tickets can be purchased at the door before the concert Tuesday, May 5. For ticket information call Elaine Metzger at 218-281-2681 or Emily Luckow at 218-281-5907.

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An investiture ceremony was held Friday, April 24 for The Honorable Anne M. Rasmusson, who has been appointed to the Minnesota Court of Appeals. Rasmusson's investiture ceremony was held at the University of Minnesota Crookston. (Photo by Anna Phalen)

Argentinian guest artists to collaborate with GGFSO at Crookston concert

The Greater Grand Forks Symphony Orchestra will host the Orchestra of Indigenous Instruments and New Technologies in several upcoming area performances as part of its annual Sounds of the Prairie Chamber Music Festival and culminating in its final concert of the 2025-26 season. A concert will be performed Friday, May 8 at 7 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church in Crookston. A freewill offering will be accepted.

For this second edition of the festival, musicians of the GGFSO join forces with Argentina's OIANT to introduce audiences to the beauty and intensity of the music of the original peoples of the Americas. This program brings together culturally unique indigenous instruments with the traditional sounds of violin, viola and piano, along with pre-recorded soundscapes, creating a rich and immersive sonic experience.

CD 7 Republicans hold convention, endorse Fischbach

On Saturday, April 25, the Seventh Congressional District Republicans held their annual convention to endorse a Republican congressional candidate. More than 500 people attended, including delegates, alternates, guests, legislators, and local and statewide Republican candidates.

With Michelle on the ballot, voter turnout will increase in our Republican district and it will help drive Republican victories in the statewide races this November.

The delegates voted to endorse Congresswoman Michelle Fischbach. In the last election, Fischbach previously outperformed President Donald J. Trump by over 5,000 votes in CD7.

The group also discussed and approved resolutions for consideration for the State Party Platform. Many statewide candidates for governor, secretary of state, state auditor, and attorney general, and U.S. senator, addressed the convention and asked for the delegates' support at the Minnesota Republican State Convention, which will be held in Duluth at the end of May.

"It is always great to see everyone from across the district, as well as so many statewide candidates, attend the convention," said CD7 Chairperson Tiffany Lesmeister-Knott. "I am encouraged to see the delegation come together and endorse a strong candidate. I am confident that Congresswoman Michelle Fischbach will continue to represent the district well."

CD7 also hosted a training, which was open to the public, the day before the convention. Anthony Kern, from Turning Point Action, led a voter outreach training. He also spoke at the banquet that the committee hosted on Friday night. More than 200 guests attended the banquet.

Campus wellness center

(Continued from Page 1) helped me to continue my education and grow as a person, and it's all thanks to the Nielsen scholarship because it has allowed me to focus on academics rather than worry about how it is going to be paid for," said Swendra. "Over 100 students here can have the same sense of relief that I do about how our college is funded, and, actually, almost half of my high school graduating class from Red Lake Falls makes up that number. "It is truly amazing to see how a person's extreme generosity can make such an impact on so many others. On behalf of all the student scholarship recipients, we are forever thankful for your generosity and thank you for the lasting impact you have made on all our lives." Nielsen approached the

podium and first told the story of when he graduated from the Northwest School of Agriculture 68 years ago and had to work through his nerves to give a speech, and said he felt the same way that very day. He expressed his feelings of being so blessed to be able to support the school and its students and staff. "I've always had a lot of respect for the school as it has always helped quite a few members of the Nielsen family," said Nielsen. "The university's commitment to northwest Minnesota, its people, has made a great supporter of this area for 125 years since the campus started." Nielsen also shared gratitude for Chaffee and Holz-Clause, acknowledging their support over the years, and thanked visiting Chancellor

Emeritus Fred Wood for his part in the Wellness Center's inception and for being the "spirit" behind it. During her toast, Chaffee said she considers Les to be a "unicorn" as he has genuine care for others and one example was to name the facility in honor of his entire family rather than just himself. Helgeson added notes about Nielsen's years of support for the campus and offered Nielsen and his son Randy Brian the "key" to the Wellness Center and a lifetime membership to the venue. The planned dedication was first announced months ago after the campus received \$6.2 million, its largest gift in history, from Nielsen and family. Ten years ago, when the campus wellness center was being built, Nielsen and his late

wife, June, also provided a large gift for the project in honor of their son, Mitch Lien Nielsen, who passed away in a motorcycle accident.

Council to meet Monday

The Crookston City Council will meet Monday, May 4 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall in the council chambers. The Ways and Means Committee will meet immediately following 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.

Crookston Area Ministries

<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>TRINITY LUTHERAN 402 6th St E - Beltrami Pr. Dan Morton Sundays: 11 a.m. Worship Check out website for further information www.unitedinchristlutheranparish.org</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>FREEDOM CHURCH Pastor Joel Schwartz 218-275-2350 101 W 2nd St Crookston hellofreedomchurch.com Sundays: 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Worship</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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 KJRB (106.5FM), 10 a.m. Worship (live on Facebook and in person)</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>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: 5 p.m. Mass at Cathedral Sundays: 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.</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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)</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST 707 4th Ave. NE - Crookston Phone: 218-456-2568 Pastor David Jahn Saturdays: 10 a.m. Sabbath School, 11:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>CHURCH OF CHRIST 321 5th Avenue South - Crookston 218-281-5402 Pastor David Johnson Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH Evangelical Lutheran Synod Pastor Noah Thompson Pastor John Merseith 1221 Barrette St #2605 - Crookston Phone: 218-281-4342 Sundays: 1:30 p.m. Worship</p>	<p>MAPLE BAY FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH Pastor David Jore Parsonage: 218-574-2222 Sundays: 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10:30 a.m. Worship Service</p>	<p>ST. JOSEPH CHURCH - FERTILE 10480 438th St SW - Fertile 218-945-6649 Fr. John Kleinwachter Sundays: 8:30 a.m. Mass</p>	<p>TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, FISHER (LCMS) Church Office: 218-891-4581 Pastor Doug Thompson Website: tlcstpaul.org Email: trinity_st.paulparishes@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.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>NEXUS CHURCH 605 3rd Ave NE - Crookston Lead Pastor, Danny Holwerda, Jr. Sundays: 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p>ST. JOSEPH CHURCH - MENTOR 16180 336th St SE - Mentor 218-637-8178 Fr. John Kleinwachter</p>	<p>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 Sundays: 9:45 a.m. Sunday School (Sept.-May), 10:45 a.m. Worship (Communion 2nd Sunday)</p>

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DEATHS

Mariann Averill, 87

Rapid City, SD - Mariann Gunhilda (Nackerud) Averill, 87, passed away on April 22, 2026.

A visitation took place Friday, May 1, 2026, from 10-11 a.m. at Stenshoel-Houske Funeral Home in Crookston.

A graveside service followed at Oakdale Cemetery in Crookston.

NOTICES

RUMMAGE SALE: 1001 Memorial Dr., Crookston. Friday, May 1, 9am-5pm, Saturday, May 2, 9am Until Everything Is Gone. Country Figurines, Inherited Dolls, Bryer Horses, 66 Mason Jars, 55 Drinking Mugs, Lots of Misc! CRXF1135p

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PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: Pine to Peak LLC, 1776 51st ST S Fargo ND 58103 USA

APPLICANT(S) Name: Connor J. Fuglseth **Address:** 776 51st ST S Fargo ND 58103 USA

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

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 2015 Ford F-150 4x4 Super Cab XL 3.5L V6 Auto, 123,755 Miles w/ARE Metal Service Topper
 2008 Ford F-350 XL, Only 79,702 Miles, 6.4L V8 Powerstroke Diesel, Auto, Reg. Cab, 8ft. Box, 4x4, Knapheide Metal Service Topper
 2005 Ford Freestyle SE One Owner, 3.0L V6, Auto, Power Front Seats, 229,979 Miles
 2014 GMC Acadia Denali AWD, 3.6L V6 Auto, Fully Loaded, 142,736 Miles
 2013 Dodge Journey SXT AWD 3.6L V6, Auto, 218,258 Miles
 2014 Nissan Sentra 4dr 1.8L 4 cyl, 120,935 Miles, (Weak Trans)
 1996 Chevy Cheyenne 3500HD, 7.4L V8, 5 Sp, 74,611 miles, Dually, Reg Cab, 11ft. Service Box
 1997 Ford F-150 XLT 4x4 Off Road, Flare Side, 5.4L V8 Auto, 221,395 Miles
 2001 Jeep Grand Cherokee Laredo 4x4, 4.0L 6 Cyl, 217,410 Miles
 2003 Ford F-150 FX4 5.4L V8, Auto, 4x4, Ext. Cab, 6.5ft. Box, 269,100 Miles
 1993 Ford F-150 4x4, 5.0L V8, Auto, Reg. Cab, 8ft. Box, 96,011 Miles
 2002 Ford Ranger XLT Sidestep, 4.0L V6 Auto, 4x4, 193,576 Miles
 1992 Suzuki Carry 4wd Mini Truck, 5 Speed Manual, 24,765 Km
 2007 Chevy Silverado 1500 LT 4x4 4.8L V8, Auto, Ext. Cab, 6.5ft. Box, 263,697 Miles
 1995 Chevy Silverado 1500 Ext. Cab, 6.5ft. Box, 4x4, 267,529 Miles
 2009 Chevrolet Traverse LT 3.6L V6, Auto, 187,654 Miles
 2012 GMC Yukon XL Denali 6.2L V8 Auto, 4x4, Leather, AWD, 242,156 Miles
 2007 GMC Acadia SLE AWD, 3.6L V6 (Bad Motor) Auto, 246,336 Miles
 1988 Ford 1900D Day Cab, Cummins Diesel, 10sp Trans, Tandem Twin Searw, 81,214 Miles

MOTORCYCLES/DIRT BIKE/MOPED
 2019 Indian Scout ABS 1133cc, 8,837 Miles, Windshield, Saddle Bags
 2008 Kawasaki KLR650 9,990 Miles, Windshield
 2000 Yamaha V Star 650 Classic, Windshield, Only 4,007 Miles
 1986 Harley Davidson Electra Glide Classic, 90 Cu Engine, 37,341 Miles
 Coleman CT1000 Mini Bike 3hp Engine
 Riverside Moped FZP 14011, Made in France 1,619 Miles
 Yamaha PW50 2 Stroke w/Training Wheels

TRACTORS & SKIDSTEER
 1982 Versatile R35 4WD, Diesel CAH 4 Hyd. Remotes, 18.4-3R38 Tires, 2,854 Hours Showing
 Case 931 Comfort King, Diesel, 3pt., 2 Hyd. Remotes, Cab 4,024 Hours Showing, w/Allied 790 QT Loader & Bucket
 Ford 9N Gas, 3pt., 540 PTO, Hyd. Loader w/6ft. Bucket
 IH 8 NE Gas, 540PTO, 7.50-16 Rear Tires, For Parts
 2014 Bobcat S570 2 Speed, Cab w/Heat, 10-16.5 Tires, Power Bob-Tach, 1759 Hours

ATV/UTV/GOLF CARTS/GO KARTS
 2022 Massimo F-Boss 550 EFI, Side by Side, 4x4, Auto, 110 Miles, 42 Hours
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 2003 Polaris Ranger 500 4x4, 862 Hours, Auto
 2011 Polaris Ranger RZR 800 HO EFI 4,329 Miles
 2013 Polaris Sportsman Touring, 500HO AWD, 1,407 Miles (Clean)
 2004 Polaris Sportsman 600 Twin, 4x4, 4,500 Miles
 2003 Can Am Bomber Quest XT 650 4x4, 1,659 Miles w/Katrin 60in. Plow
 2007 Honda TRX250TE Recon, Elec. Shift, Elec. Start (Clean)
 1998 Polaris Sportsman 500 4x4, Auto, 3,500 Miles
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SNOWMOBILES
 2012 Polaris RMK 800 155 Track, (Bad Engine)
 2001 Polaris Edge Super Sport 550 Fan (Bad Engine)
 1973 Arctic Cat Cheatah 400, S/N 3034518
 1972 Arctic Cat Panther 340, 2,478 Miles
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3PT EQUIP/SKID STEER ATTACHMENTS/MISC.
 Farm King 6ft. Finishing Mower 3pt, 540 PTO
 Land Pride AT2672 7.2in. 3pt. Finishing Mower, 540 PTO
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 3 Prong Bale Spear Fits Allied 790 Loader
 Skid Steer MT Cone Log Splitter, Hyd. Drive Woods 59 Belly Mower, 59in. W, Model 159AC
 Wolverine TL-1272W 86in. Skid Steer Tiller Attach, Hyd. Drive
 2 Wolverine QC2-26-18G 3pt Ball Hitch Attachment
 Speeco Cat 1 3pt. Quick Hitch
 2 John Deere 8000 Series Rear Wheel Weights
 2-12in. Rubber Skid Steer Tractor-Off Bobcat 1530
 Allied 795 Loader Mounts off a JD 7000 Series
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 Companion 5th Wheel Hitch 20K
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 Miller Blue Star Mod. ZE Welder, w/Tecumseh Engine on Cart
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Rural Reflections ...

See the poetry of the trees

by Grant Nelson



Most of what I love depends upon the plants around here. The cows like the grass, my wife likes her flowers and the birds like the trees; actually, I think we all like the trees.

There are few things you can do for less money to improve your residence more than planting trees. Trees are a fairly cheap improvement, and the greatest cost is your own sweat to plant the tree. You can gain privacy, shade your home, block the north wind and improve the skyline of your home with some thoughtfully planted trees.

If you read nothing more, read this; don't plant your trees so closely together. I think people space trees based on the size of the tree at planting. With care, your tree will become much bigger and will require space to grow. If the tree's roots do not have enough space to gather moisture and nutrients, the tree will suffer. Grown trees that have branches that intermingle

provide an environment for fungus to grow too. Most trees will have some sort of directions on a tag that tell you how far apart they should be planted.

Your success at growing trees will depend on your commitment. There are too many people who believe you can plant a tree anyway you feel like and then ignore the tree and still expect it to quickly suit your needs. I find little in life happens without some effort on my own part, same with trees.

Two years ago, Pennington Soil and Water Conservation District planted nearly 500 trees at our place. These trees were planted to replace the buckthorn we had removed. Next, I hand planted about 100 trees in a separate location to eventually block the snow, help the pollinators and feed the wildlife.

The tree rows planted by Pennington SWCD had weed matting laid around the trees and tree tubes around some of the trees. The matting prevents weeds and the tubes protect the trees. There is still the possibility of weeds in the area between the tubes and the matting. I spent much of the summer of 2024 weeding that area. I contracted the work done in 2025.

I have also sprayed

Plantskydd to protect the trees that are not protected by tree tubes. Many of those trees protected by tree tubes lost their protection when some elk came through the winter of 2024-25 and removed the tubes and ate the leaves from the trees. The Plantskydd is dried blood which creates a predator response in the animals that would feed on the trees. It worked when the deer recently came back to our place.

Trees need water, too. The last few years have seen hit and miss rain. There's been enough to keep the trees alive while they set their roots. The spruce trees in the yard have been watered by me; however, I don't have the time to water the other 600 trees. It's best to plant native trees as they use less water. The melting snow and early-spring moisture should give us a little growth spurt, at least that is my hope.

I could end this column with a great poetic quote, but a tree's beauty is in the rhyme of the work they do to block the wind, shade the ground dwellers, house the birds and make the air good to breathe. You just have to learn to see their poetry, and to do that, you must plant some trees.

LETTER

Children's mental health crisis spiraling out of control

Per the Crookston Watch's policy, this letter was shared with Interim Superintendent Randy Bruer. He didn't respond to our email.

To the Editor:
 The children's mental health crisis is spiraling out of control, and yet it is still being ignored and neglected. For too long, conversations about student well-being have been framed around awareness rather than action. But this is not a theoretical issue and is the largest public health crisis that students currently face. According to Minnesota Student Survey data, Crookston High School reached a 10-year high for suicide at-

tempts in 2025. The 2025 data showed a 45% increase in the suicide rate from 2019, going from 5.7 to 8.3%. This translates to around 50 students who have tried to take their own lives before even graduating from high school.

Just one suicide leaves the community reeling and failing to understand what we are doing wrong, and yet nothing gets done to help these children. At what point do we stop pretending this is acceptable? If dozens of students were being harmed in any other way, there would be immediate action, investigations, and accountability. Where is the

urgency from those in positions of leadership? School boards exist to respond to the most serious issues facing students. Yet despite clear data showing this crisis is the worst crisis students are experiencing and it is getting worse, there has been no action by the school board. A government official's first duty is protect the ones they serve and our school board is failing the first and most important duty. We have already had children die, how many more need to die before we do something?

Andrew Mendez
 Crookston

Crookston Public Library to host upcoming events

The Crookston Public Library invites the community to a diverse lineup of events this May, ranging from intergalactic celebrations for youth to profound author visits and opportunities for community advocacy.

May the 4th Be With You: Star Wars Celebration

The month kicks off in a galaxy far, far away on Monday, May 4, from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Attendees of all ages are invited to "Master the Force" during the library's Star Wars-inspired celebration. Whether you're a wise Jedi Master, a Stormtrooper, or a Wookiee, the afternoon will be packed with intergalactic fun, including:

- Creative crafts to help

you build your own galaxy.

- Action-packed games and a library-wide scavenger hunt.

- Galactic prizes for the boldest adventurers.

Costumes are highly encouraged as the library celebrates the saga in style!

Friends of the Library Open House

On Tuesday, May 12, from 5-7 p.m., the library will host an Open House for those interested in joining or learning more about the Crookston Public Library's Friends of the Library. Meet current members, as well as library director Chris Boike, and discover how you can get involved and support your public library. Refreshments will be served.

"Dear Jacob" author visit with Patty Wetterling and Joy Baker

Following the Open House on Tuesday, May 12, the library will host a deeply

moving program at 7 p.m. that day in the River Room. Authors Patty Wetterling and Joy Baker will discuss their memoir, "Dear Jacob: A Mother's Journey of Hope."

For 30 years, the disappearance of Jacob Wetterling haunted Minnesota and transformed the nation. Patty Wetterling will share the intimate account of her decades-long search and the resilience of a mother's love. She is joined by Joy Baker, the blogger whose independent research helped lead to the breakthrough in the case. A book signing will follow the presentation, and books will be available for purchase. Admission is free, thanks in part to funding from the Minnesota Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund.

All programs are free and open to the public. The Crookston Public Library is located at 110 N. Ash St. A full calendar of events can

Goodrie named RiverView Employee of the Month

While change can feel a little scary at first, it can also open the door to something great. Just ask Erika Goodrie. After making the leap from working with animals to helping people, she's found her stride - so much so that she was named RiverView Health's January Employee of the Month.

Erika has been a patient access representative in the Rehab Services Department for nearly two years, supporting her team and brightening patients' days.

"I had spent the previous 10 years working in the ani-

mal care field and was pretty anxious about having a career change," she said, "but I often think about how happy I am that I took the leap."

Originally from the Egan/Rosemount area, Erika now calls Crookston home, where she lives with her husband, their three cats and two dogs.

About receiving the award, she said, "I feel so honored and blessed to be chosen. I am so fortunate to have found a job I was able to adjust to so quickly, and to be a part of a fun and supportive team."



Erika Goodrie

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Minnesota Crookston women's tennis team falls in NSIC semifinal

The University of Minnesota Crookston women's tennis team played in its first-ever NSIC semifinal match Saturday, April 25, taking on the number-one seed Augustana University Vikings.

The Vikings have won the NSIC Championship every year since 2010, aside from 2020 when the season was suspended. This was bound to be tough for the Golden Eagles, but this is a season to be extremely proud of as the team battled back from a 3-8 record and won their first ever NSIC Tournament match, but they fell in the

semifinal by a score of 4-0.

In doubles, Nadia Cases Mundet (Jr., Barcelona, Spain) and Kavya Singh (Sr., Agra, India) fell 6-2, Daniela de Lucas Rivera (Jr., Madrid, Spain) and Terez Drasilova (Fr., Naples, Fla.) lost 6-3, and Ariadna Solis Guals (Jr., Santpedor, Spain) and Asli Oktay (So., Istanbul, Turkey) were trailing 5-2 when their match was called due to the results of the other two matches' results. The Golden Eagles made things competitive despite the scores, but the Vikings had the Golden Eagles in a tough position, forcing them to need four of

the six singles matches.

The singles results were not much different: de Lucas Rivera lost 6-0 and was down 5-2 when the match was called, Cases Mundet lost 6-0 and was trailing 5-0 when the match was called, Oktay lost 6-0 and was down 4-1 when the match was called, Drasilova lost in two sets, both 6-0, Solis Guals also lost both sets by scores of 6-0, and Singh lost 6-0 and 6-2.

The Golden Eagles season now comes to an end, but it was nothing short of amazing. The Golden Eagles started out 3-8 before going on a tear, winning eight

straight including their NSIC Quarterfinal match against the University of Mary. The Golden Eagles will take this experience and apply it when they return in the spring of 2027. This also marks the end of the college career of Kavya Singh, who was a key contributor to getting the Golden Eagles to where they are now.

Golden Eagles pick up first NSIC Tournament win in program history

Golden Eagle Tennis kicked off the NSIC Tournament Friday, April 24 with their match against the University of Mary Marauders.

The Golden Eagles won 4-0, finishing only three singles matches due to it being out of reach for the Marauders. It goes down as the first NSIC Tournament win in the program's history.

The Golden Eagles earned the doubles point to start off the day, with Nadia Cases Mundet (Jr., Barcelona, Spain) and Kavya Singh (Sr., Agra, India) winning 6-2, Ariadna Solis Guals (Jr., Santpedor, Spain) and Asli Oktay (So., Istanbul, Turkey) falling 6-4, and Daniela de Lucas Rivera (Jr., Madrid, Spain) and Terez Drasilova

(Fr., Naples, Fla.) winning an extremely intense match 7-6 in extra sets.

In singles, de Lucas Rivera dominated both sets with 6-0 wins, Oktay won set one 6-2 and slammed the door shut on the Marauders by winning the second set 6-1, Cases Mundet lost set one 7-5 and did not need to finish her second set, Drasilova fell 6-2 in set one and did not need to finish set two, Solis Guals won 6-3 and did not need to play a second set, Singh cruised to a win in two sets, taking the first 6-1 and the second 6-0.

Golden Bears defeat Golden Eagles

Minnesota Crookston Softball closed out their home conference slate for the season Sunday as they welcomed in Concordia-St. Paul. The Golden Bears made some big plays Sunday to improve their position in the NSIC standings, moving to 15-11 and sweeping the Golden Eagles with wins of 7-0 and 5-1.

The Golden Eagles fall to 14-37 overall.

Game one

The first inning was a quick one, with the Golden Bears getting two hits with five batters, and the Golden Eagles having one hit with four batters. Neither team scored.

The second inning saw the first scoring plays of the day, as Nora Brandt scored on an Emmy Bowne single down the right line. Lily Burke was next at bat and she hit a sin-

gle into center field, driving Gabby Martinez home to put the Golden Bears ahead 2-0.

The Golden Bears extended their lead to 4-0 in the second inning, thanks to Martinez hitting a sacrifice fly that sent Ashlyn Peterson home and Katie Klotz scoring on a wild pitch.

The final runs of the first game came in the fourth inning. Riley Rosenthal grounded out, allowing Alexis Monty to score, Klotz reached on an error that brought Ava Blake into home, and Nora Brandt lined out to Chayse Doering (So., OF, Shakopee) in centerfield, which brought in Danni Sharum to go ahead 7-0.

The Golden Eagles had four hits in this game: Valerie VanZant (Fr., MIF, Salina, KS), Megan Surgenor (Fr., RHP/3B, Andover), Chayse Doering, and Made-

line Murray (So., C/3B, Abilene, KS) each registered one hit.

Game two

The second game of the day also saw a scoreless first inning.

In the second inning, Tatum Dunlavy hit a double to bring Bryleigh Dana home for the 1-0 lead. The Golden Eagles registered one hit in the inning, but could not score.

The Golden Bears extended their lead in the third inning when Sharum hit a homerun with two runners on base, giving the Golden Bears a 4-0 lead. The Golden Eagles registered another hit but could not bring in a run.

The Golden Eagles did get on the scoreboard in game two today when Emily Kalina (Fr., CF/LHP, Rice Lake, Wis.) hit a sacrifice fly to centerfield, driving home

Rayna French (Jr., C, La Salle, Manitoba) for the first score of the afternoon.

There were no other scores for either team until the seventh inning when Martinez hit a second home run for Concordia-St. Paul to regain the four run lead. The Golden Eagles would fall 5-1.

The Golden Eagles registered four hits in the game, Doering hit two, French hit one, and Murray hit one.

What's next?

The Golden Eagles have one weekend left this season and will start off in Mankato to take on Minnesota State University, Mankato on Saturday at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. before they head to Winona and wrap up their season against Winona State University on Sunday at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Girls Golf Crookston girls finish eighth at Bemidji Invite

The Crookston girls golf team shot 374 and finished eighth in the 17-team Bemidji Girls Invite held Friday, April 24 at the Bemidji Town and Country Club.

Minnewaska Area claimed the team championship with 342 strokes – finishing five better than runner-up and host Bemidji, which shot 347.

Ava Kollman of Minnewaska Area was the tournament medalist with a six-over par round of 78.

Top finishers for the Pirates were seniors Ava Martin and Halle Nicholas, who finished 20th and 27th with rounds of 90 and 91, respec-

tively.

Results

■ Team Scores - 1. Minnewaska Area 342; 2. Bemidji 347; 3. Rock Ridge 348; 4. Roseau 349; 5. Pequot Lakes 354; 6. Fergus Falls 363; 7. East Grand Forks 366; 8. Crookston 374; 9. Bemidji-2 377; 9. Badger/Greenbush-Middle River 377; 11. Grand Rapids 389; 12. Bemidji 405; 13. Staples-Motley 416; 13. Thief River Falls 416; 15. Perham 417; Incomplete - Minnewaska-2, Wadena-Deer Creek.

■ Medalist - 1. Ava Kollman, Minnewaska Area, 78; 2. Madison Fingeroos, Rock Ridge, 82; 3. Addi Blumh, Bemidji, 84.

■ Crookston scores - 20. Ava Martin 90; 27. Halle Nicholas 91; 34. Makenna Peterson 93; 56. Emelia Hoerner 100; 72. Taylor Wieland 107; 79. Elsie Mathews 110.

Boys Tennis Pirates pick up wins over Lakers, Spuds

The Crookston boys tennis team extended its winning streak to five matches with dual meet wins over Detroit Lakes and Moorhead.

The Pirates defeated the Lakers 6-1 at home Friday afternoon and put together a

similarly dominant performance at home against the Spuds on Tuesday afternoon.

The Pirates swept singles play against the Lakers Friday, with Reggie Winjum, Grant Funk, Gunnar Groven and Ean Deleon winning in

spots one through four. In doubles action, Colton Osborn and Sawyer Anderson picked up a win in the number two spot, and Alex Zammert and Jacob Halvorson came away with wins in the number three spot.

The Lakers' lone win came in the number one doubles match, with Max Splonskowski and Damarion Moss defeating Sam Widseth and Hudson Rick 6-4, 7-6.

The Pirates used the same lineup Monday and came away with similar results in a 6-1 win over the Spuds.

Winjum, Funk, Groven and Deleon won singles matches and Osborn/Anderson were victorious in doubles matches.

The Pirates improved to 5-1 with the wins.

Crookston, def. James Rothberger, Moorhead, 7-5, 6-2; No. 2 - Grant Funk, Crookston, def. Will Hazeldine, Moorhead, 6-1, 6-1; No. 3 - Gunnar Groven, Crookston, def. Sam Dehmer, Moorhead, 6-3, 6-2; No. 4 - Ean Deleon, Crookston, def. Rylan Ste Marie, Moorhead, 6-1, 6-2.

Doubles: No. 1 - Drew Hancock/Jasper Etter, Moorhead, def. Sam Widseth/Hudson Rick, Crookston, 4-6, 2-6; No. 2 - Colton Osborn/Sawyer Anderson, Crookston, def. Luke Pettys/Nathan Doan, Moorhead, 6-2, 6-3; No. 3 - Alex Zammert/Jacob Halvorson, Crookston, def. Jackson Lewis/Abdulazeez Abdulhafedh, Moorhead 7-5, 6-1.

Pirates hand 5-2 loss to Prowlers

Crookston won three of four singles matches and two of three doubles matches in a 5-2 boys tennis dual meet win over Thief River Falls Thursday afternoon at the Crookston High School Tennis Courts.

The Pirates got singles wins in spots two, three and four, with Grant Funk defeating Kaleb Funk in the number four spot.

Thief River Falls' lone doubles win came in the number one spot, with Jett Cornelius defeating Reggie Winjum in straight sets.

The Pirates claimed the number one and two doubles matches, with the team of Sam Widseth and Hudson Rick defeating Andy Dagg and Nathan Dearth in three sets in the number one spot, and the team of Colton Os-

born and Sawyer Anderson defeating Carter Svendsgaard and Kameron Price in the two spot.

The Prowlers took the number three doubles match, with team of Adam Walker/Cooper Sabo defeating Jacob Halvorson and Marshall Hanson in three sets.

Crookston 5, Thief River Falls 2

Singles: No. 1 - Jett Cornelius, Thief River Falls, def. Reggie Winjum, Crookston, 6-2, 6-3; No. 2 - Grant Funk, Crookston, def. Kaleb Funk, Thief River Falls, 6-4, 6-1; No. 3 - Gunnar Groven, Crookston, def. Anthony Larson, Thief River Falls, 6-1, 6-0; No. 4 - Ean Deleon, Crookston, def. Jaxen Larson, Thief River Falls, 6-0, 6-1.

Doubles: No. 1 - Sam Widseth/Hudson Rick, Crookston, def. Andy Dagg/Nathan Dearth, Thief River Falls, 4-6, 6-1, 10-8; No. 2 - Colton Osborn/Sawyer Anderson, Crookston, def. Carter Svendsgaard/Kameron Price, Thief River Falls, 6-3, 6-1; No. 3 - Adam Walker/Cooper Sabo, Thief River Falls, def. Jacob Halvorson, Marshall Hanson, Crookston, 7-6 (9), 3-6, 10-8.

Crookston 6, Detroit Lakes 1

Singles: No. 1 - Reggie Winjum, Crookston, def. Max Mercil, Detroit Lakes, 6-3, 6-2; No. 2 - Grant Funk, Crookston, def. Jude Houglum, Detroit Lakes, 6-2, 6-2; No. 3 - Gunnar Groven, Crookston, def. Tristan Bristol, Detroit Lakes, 6-4, 6-0; No. 4 - Ean Deleon, Crookston, def. Beau Carlson, Detroit Lakes, 6-1, 6-4.

Doubles - No. 1 - Max Splonskowski/Damarion Moss, Detroit Lakes, def. Sam Widseth/Hudson Rick, Crookston, 4-6, 6-7 (37); No. 2 - Colton Osborn/Sawyer Anderson, Crookston, def. James LaChapelle/Owen Lipton, Detroit Lakes, 6-2, 6-0; No. 3 - Alex Zammert/Jacob Halvorson, Crookston, def. Zac Westholter/Hank Zima, Detroit Lakes, 6-2, 6-3.

Crookston 6, Moorhead 1

Singles: No. 1 - Reggie Winjum,

Crookston JV girls golf finishes second at home meet April 24

The Crookston junior varsity girls golf team finished second in a three-team meet at Minakwa Golf Club on Friday, April 24. East Grand Forks junior Emma Hallin was the tournament medalist with an 18-hole score of 118. Crookston freshman Anna Heldstab was runner-up with 120.

Results

■ Team Scores - 1. East Grand Forks 482; 2. Crookston 522; 3. Thief River Falls 544.

■ Medalist - 1. Emma Hallin, East Grand Forks, 118; 2. Anna Heldstab, 120; 2. Sophie Pecka, East Grand Forks, 120.

■ Crookston scores - 2. Anna Heldstab 120; 7. Laine Wagner 129; 10. Lillianna Bridgeford, Crookston 133; 13. Haddie Halland 142; 11. Ruby Martin 140.

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Spring Home & Garden

Choosing the best foods for backyard birds

Feeding wild birds can be a popular and rewarding hobby. Such a hobby facilitates a connection with nature and helps to ensure local wildlife gets the sustenance it needs to survive.

According to estimates from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, around 50 million Americans engage in bird feeding each year. When feeding birds, it's important to choose quality foods to ensure health and survival, particularly during months when the weather is harsh. Here are some factors to consider when setting out food for birds.

Choose wisely
When selecting bird feed, homeowners should look for feed that is high in fat and protein. Black oil sunflower seeds (BOSS) are a popular

choice because they offer high caloric value and are easily opened by the greatest variety of species. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology reports that BOSS, which are small, thin-shelled seeds, attract more than 40 types of North American birds, making it the most universally accepted food.

For smaller birds, like goldfinches and pine siskins, nyjer (thistle) seed is an ideal choice.

Offer essential fats
It's key for birds in colder climates to maintain significant fat reserves to achieve the correct body temperature. Suet cakes, which are rendered beef fat mixed with seeds or fruit, can be the meal birds need. Suet provides essential calories for birds like woodpeckers, nuthatches and chickadees when insects are scarce. Homeowners should choose commercially produced suet cakes or raw suet, as homemade varieties made from cooking grease might melt and mat birds' feathers, affecting their insulation.

Shelled peanuts and crushed nut meats, which are the kernel of nuts, can offer high-energy fats for tit-

mice and jays.

Avoid certain foods
Although we've all seen people casting bread out to wild birds, bread products are particularly discouraged as bird food. They fill birds' stomachs without providing necessary nutrients. Table scraps containing excessive salt or sugar also should be avoided.

Maintain avian hygiene
Bird feeders can concentrate flocks, which can be fun to watch. But it also increases the risk of disease transmission among birds. The Audubon Society and similar conservation groups emphasize that studies show poor feeder hygiene can in-

crease rates of disease like salmonellosis. Feeders should be cleaned weekly with a mild bleach solution (one part bleach to nine parts water) and completely dried before refilling. Hosing off the area to wash away bird droppings also can keep feeders and surrounding areas sanitary.

Choosing nutrient-dense, high-quality seeds and fats and maintaining a clean feeding station can ensure that a backyard remains a haven for wild birds. Those with additional questions about what to feed birds should consult with a wild bird food retailer.



About 50 million Americans engage in bird feeding each year. It's important to choose quality foods to ensure health and survival when feeding birds. (Photo courtesy of Metro Creative Connection)

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Landscape lighting is growing in popularity. It increases security and draws attention to various landscaping features. (Photo courtesy of Metro Creative Connection)

Landscape lighting options to brighten up a property at night

Landscape lighting has been growing in popularity, and industry experts anticipate that growth will continue for years to come.

Homeowners considering adding landscape lighting to their properties may be overwhelmed by the options at their disposal. Indeed, there are many ways for homeowners to accentuate landscape features and create a stunning nighttime look. The following rundown of landscape lighting options can illuminate the many different ways homeowners can use light to make their properties more appealing at night.

- **Spotlights:** Spotlights are among the more popular landscape lighting options. Spotlights are used by fans of uplighting, which places the light beneath a particular feature and then aims light upward to draw attention to it. Many homeowners utilize spotlights and uplighting to illuminate statues and trees.

- **Step lights:** Step lights

help to make moving around a property at night more safe. Step lights are installed on the vertical face of the step or along the sides of each step. Homeowners who have a deck may find step lights particularly useful, especially if the deck is multi-level and/or attached to a staircase that leads down into a yard.

- **Flood lights:** Flood lights are a type of spotlight that are generally used to illuminate large areas, such as a driveway or a deck. Flood lights illuminate from above, so these typically are best for lighting up man-made portions of a home's exterior rather than natural features like trees or gardens.

- **Garden lights:** Garden lights direct light downward toward a garden. These provide a soft light that can draw attention to plants at dusk and throughout the night. Many homeowners like the sense of serenity garden lights help to create during twilight and evening

hours.

- **Path lights:** Similar to step lights, path lights typically are installed as a safety feature. But path lights still boast aesthetic appeal, as they help to light up walkways and driveways without providing a burst of light that can feel overwhelming for residents and visitors. Path lights come in a variety of styles and sizes, so homeowners can experiment with their options to find the one that best suits their needs.

- **Ground lighting:** Ground lighting is like recessed lighting inside a home, only these lights are placed in the ground and send light upward rather than downward from a ceiling. Ground lighting fixtures are often installed in gardens, directing light upward toward shrubs or trees.

Homeowners can illuminate their home exteriors in numerous ways, each of which can add to a property's aesthetic appeal at night

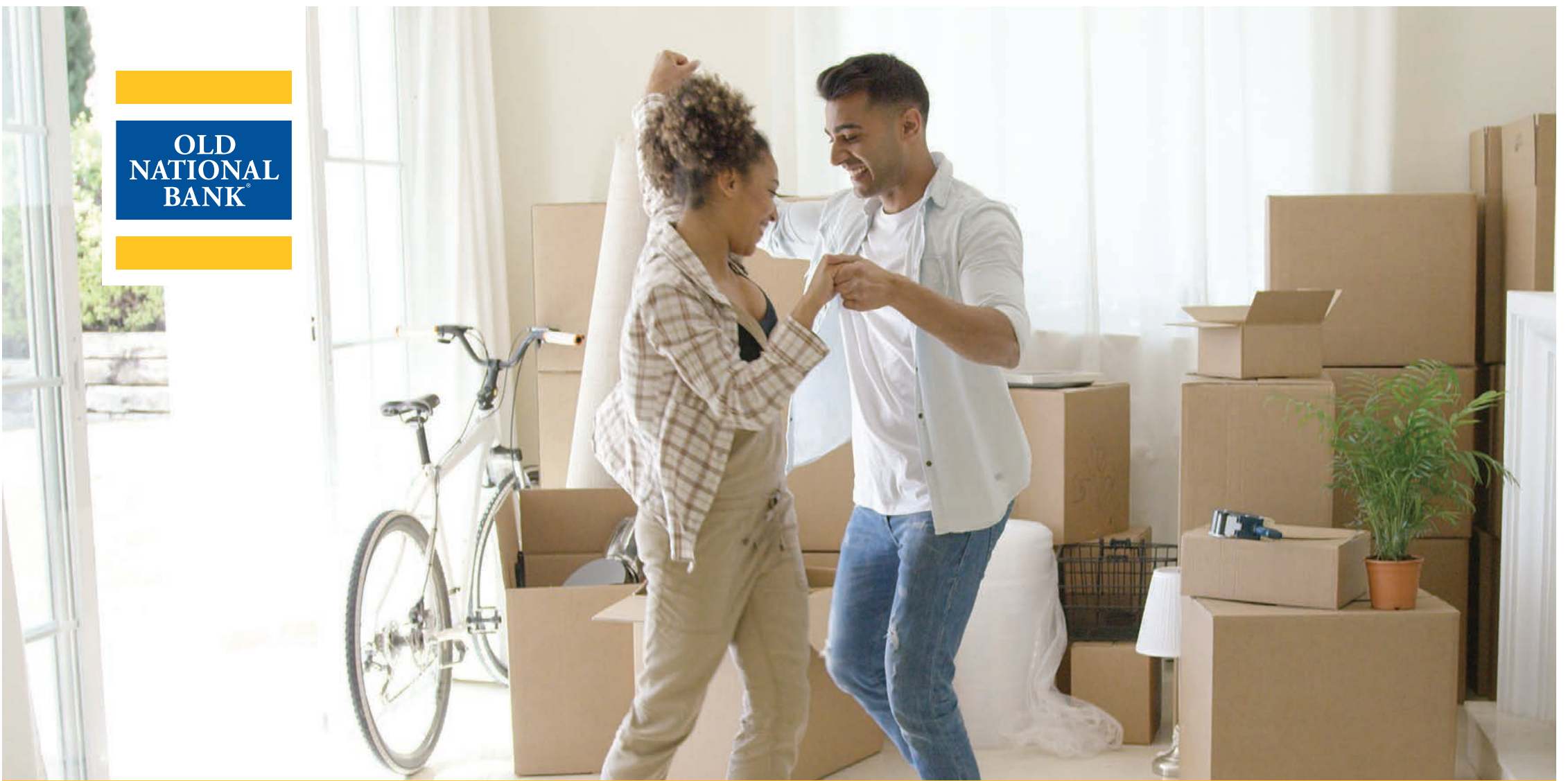
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Flower gardens are one way to add beauty to a property. Gardening centers can provide various tips to those starting a flower garden or a vegetable garden. (Photo courtesy of Metro Creative Connection)

Signs an exterior update is needed

Renovations are a great way for homeowners to reshape their homes. Regardless of why a homeowner chooses to renovate, the need to do so is often evident to the naked eye, especially when the time comes to update home exteriors.

Curb appeal is often discussed in regard to the effects it can have when selling a home. But curb appeal is equally important for homeowners who aren't putting their homes on the market. Here are some signs that it's time to update their home exteriors.

Curling shingles: The roof may not be the first thing people think of when pondering curb appeal, but a damaged roof can contribute to problems that ultimately affect the exterior and interior of the home. Multiple curling shingles indicate it's time to replace the roof. The sight of curling shingles is not pretty, but the larger issue in such instances is the potential for costly water damage when water gets in through the affected shingles.

Dated entry door: Many home improvement experts insist they can determine when a home was built or most recently renovated simply by looking at the front door. Steel and glass doors are popular in modern homes, so homeowners with front doors with ornate de-

signs and oval glass inserts can likely benefit from an upgrade to their entryway. A modern front door can make a statement and real estate experts note how popular updated front doors are among buyers.

Unsightly landscaping: It's not only the physical components of the home that may suggest an update is necessary. Homeowners without a green thumb may have exterior landscaping that has seen better days. If a spring or summer day spent tending to your landscaping is not your ideal weekend pastime, then consider replacing unsightly landscaping with low-maintenance plants or hardscaping. These alternatives to more needy plants can create curb appeal without requiring any extra work for homeowners.

Cracked driveways/walkways: If the driveway looks like a busy road at the end of snow plowing season, chances are that's adversely affecting the impression people have of your home. In addition, cracked walkways indicate a need for renovations, as these areas are front and center when welcoming guests.

Updating a home's exterior can restore curb appeal and help homeowners feel better about their properties.

Six ways to make your garden more successful

Homeowners enjoy gardening for many different reasons. In addition to adding beauty to a property, gardens can offset grocery costs by yielding tasty produce. They also offer important habitats and food sources for both insects and animals.

While growing a vegetable or flower garden can turn into a rewarding hobby, or even a passion, gardening also can be overwhelming - particularly when the results are less than stellar. Novice gardeners have scores of resources at their disposal, including the advice of gardeners who have made mistakes and learned from them. The following guidance can make home gardens that much more successful.

1. Start small. You may have visions of an expansive garden growing rows of crops or acres of flowers. But

it is smart to start small and build on what you find successful, which includes plants that thrive in your lawn and garden.

This also is beneficial if you are unsure of vegetable yields. Several blooming plants producing bushels of crops can be overwhelming, especially if you can't get to harvesting or cooking them in a timely fashion.

2. Assess the soil. Plants need nutrient-rich soil to encourage extensive root systems and produce strong, hardy plants, according to the gardening resource GrowVeg. Nourish soil with organic matter, such as manure, compost, shredded leaves, and natural mulch. Add this organic matter in the off-season to give it enough time to be incorporated into the ground before spring. You can have your soil tested for pH and other characteristics that make it

friendly or averse to plants at a local garden center.

3. Arm yourself with knowledge. Do you know how deeply to plant seeds and how far apart to space plants? Are you aware of the sunlight needs of certain flowers or plants? If not, read the packaging and do your research so your plants have the best chance of not only sprouting, but also surviving. Many people prefer to start seedlings indoors in late winter and then transplants outdoors when they are stronger and more established.

4. Sit in your yard and observe. Watch the way the sunlight dances over areas of your landscape. Take note of which areas get the most sun and shade. This will help you plan what to plant and where to plant it. Vegetable gardens tend to need ample sunlight to bear pick-worthy produce. You can

give plants a leg up by growing them in optimal conditions.

5. Choose hardy varieties. Certain plants have been bred to thrive in your climate, including heat-tolerant plants for climates with sweltering summer sun. Consult with a local gardening center to figure out which plant zone you are in and which plants will do best within that zone.

6. Use rainwater. Rainwater contains fewer contaminants and additives than tap water, which can benefit garden plants. Collect rainwater in rain barrels and use irrigation systems to deliver it to the garden.

Home gardens can yield many gifts, from flowers to fruit. Beginners can utilize some time-tested strategies to increase their chances of planting a successful garden.



A new entry door is one way to increase curb appeal. (Photo courtesy of Metro Creative Connection)



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