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Your Weather



Friday - April 26
59 / 44



Saturday - April 27
47 / 32



Sunday - April 28
52 / 36



A special hi, hello & how are you doing to our

Subscriber of the week:
Marcia Johnson
Hallock, MN

In this Issue:



FOOD & HEALTH: Severe weather preparation **PG. 6**



EDUCATION: DPS Chess Club **PG. 11**



REGION: International tourism summit scheduled **PG. 2**

Index:	
Region	p. 2
Agriculture	p. 3
Opinion	p. 4
Community	p. 5
Food & Health	p. 6
Public Notices	p. 7
Church	p. 8
Education	p. 9
Sports & News	p. 10



Photo by Christine Jensen

SKJEBERG LUTHERAN CHURCH HOLDS QUILT DEDICATION SERVICE

By Christine Jensen

On Sunday, April 21, Skjeberg Lutheran Church held their quilt dedication service where they honor and bless the more than 180 quilts as well as hats, wheelchair, catheter, and walker bags made by women of Skjeberg Lutheran Church

Their mission statement stems from 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."



Tami VanCamp, Greg Osowski, and Trish Trousil generously donated sewing machines and fabric previously owned by their late mother. Photo by Christine Jensen.



Moments that take your breath away

Drayton resident Bob Merrill is an inspiration

By Christine Jensen

Inspiration often comes in the form of people who overcome the greatest struggles in their lives. It is the strength, resilience, and courage of someone's tenacity to keep going, even when the battle is long and arduous, that defines the legacy of a life.

Robert "Bob" Merrill who grew up in the Black Hills of South Dakota, is a long time resident of Drayton. He moved to the area in 1968 and was married in 1970. He spent three decades teaching at Drayton Public School, beginning his teaching duties in the fall of 1968. His favorite part about teaching was his 6th grade assignment.

"That was fun," Merrill said. "I particularly liked science and arts and crafts type things."

At one point, students were studying bions and Merrill brought in a small pool and put plants in it. It was equipped with a waterfall so students could study botany. He was a hands on teacher and went out of his way to bring nature into the classroom.

Merrill also spent eight summers in Alaska serving as a maintenance man at a government facility called Little Fort Walter, a fish research center. He did whatever they asked him to do during that time and said the experiences he had there he will never forget.

In 2014, Merrill went along with a group called Trails for Transport which was a trail ride that went from Mandan to the Cheyenne Indian Reservation in Montana. Merrill said he met some incredible people on that excursion. Funds raised during the ride went to the Gift of Life House in Rochester, Minn.

"I would go ahead of the group and make sure wherever we camped would have the right set up," Merrill said. "I slept in my pick up for 24 days. It was a great trip."

He has had so many experiences and at the age of 82, Merrill is still going strong. Along with friends Ron and

Marlys Boll of Drayton, he has land near Lake Bronson, Minnesota. With the help of some volunteers, they built a small cabin on the property which was finished in 2023.

Merrill's beloved wife Linda passed away after her own battle with cancer two years ago and he has a special spot in his house dedicated to her. She loved Iris flowers and so her urn is adorned with an Iris and is surrounded by a few of her favorite things.

His background is one of resilience especially when people learn he has been battling cancer, Multiple Myeloma, since September of 2014. He started treatment ten years ago and has continued to this day.

"My doctor got me started on a program in December of that year and I have been taking treatments ever since," Merrill stated.

He was 73 years old when he first traveled to Rochester. Doctors felt he was in such good shape they would be able to use his own cells for treatment. Now he drives to Grand Forks for treatments every other week on Thursdays and Fridays. Merrill said he has a great rapport with the nurses at the Cancer Center where he receives his treatments.

Occasionally after he receives treatment, Merrill said he gets a heavy chest and after battling a recent cold which didn't allow him to get his treatments as usual, he said he will be back at it next week. He has never stopped planning and doing



Photo by Christine Jensen

things because he said he knows no other way.

"I don't know anything more," Merrill said. "I get up in the morning and I'm ready to go. I just don't like to sit around."

He said he had a few setbacks in 2023. He had two fractured vertebrae in his back and there is a tumor that sits on that spot which causes a great deal of pain. The cancerous lesions are eating away at the bone and yet

'MERRILL' CON'T PAGE 5

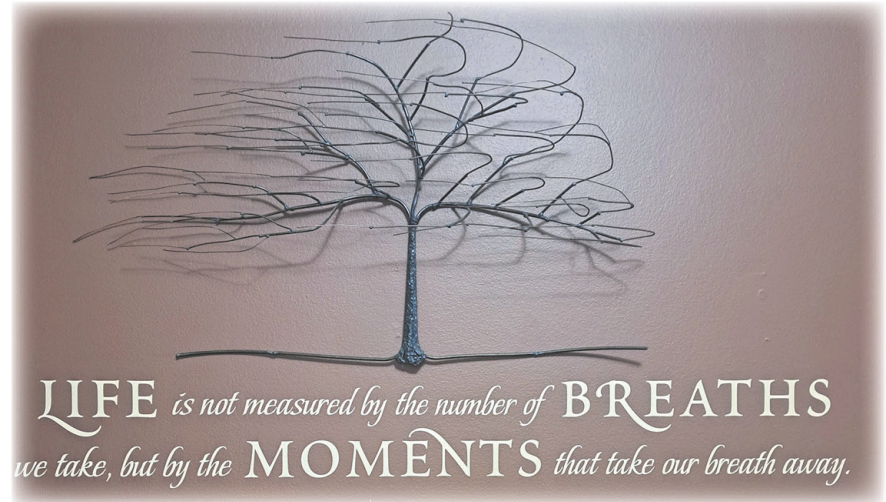


Photo by Christine Jensen

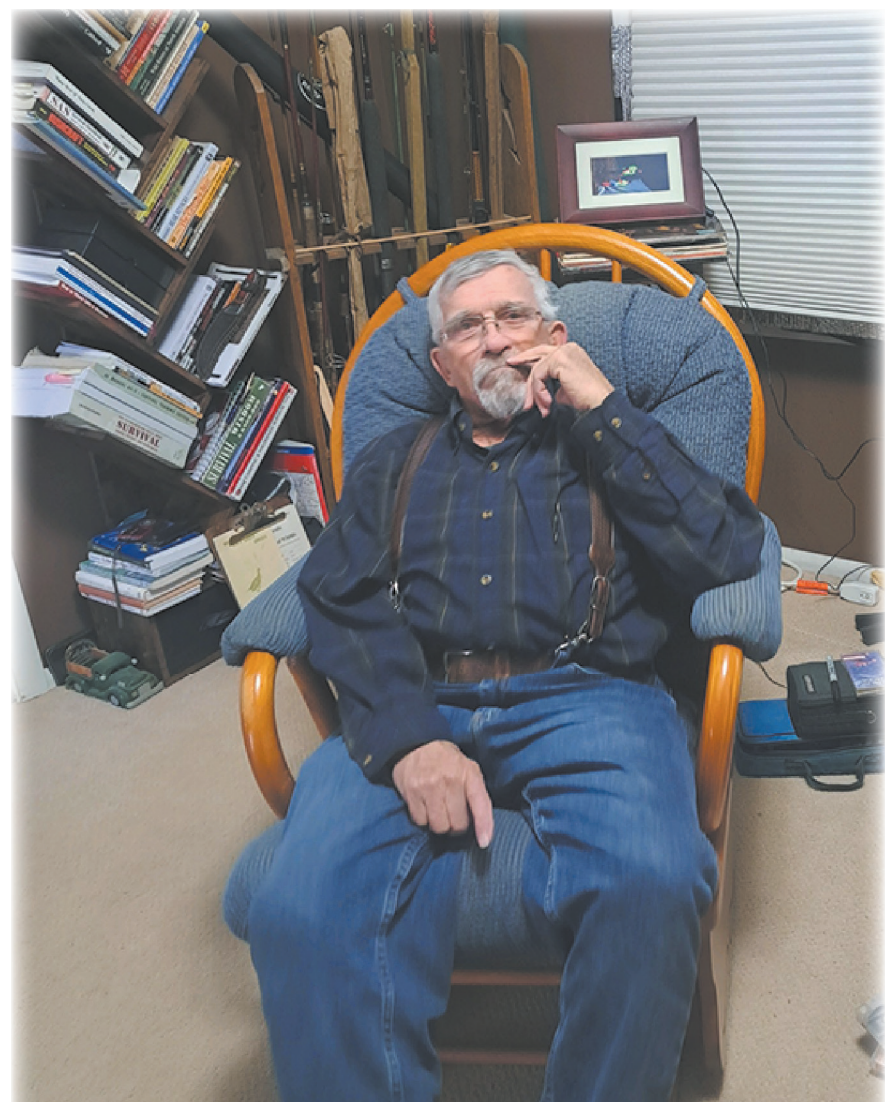


Photo by Christine Jensen

Former Drayton school board member sentenced

Aasand pleads guilty to lesser charge

By Mike Alan Steinfeldt

Former Drayton School board member Jessica Dawn Aasand was sentenced in Northeast District Court in Cavalier for the Class A Misdemeanor charge of misapplication of entrusted property recently in Northeast District Court in Cavalier.

Aasand, 46, of Drayton was charged in July of 2023 with Misapplication of Entrusted Property between \$1,000 and \$10,000, a Class C Felony.

In her latest court appearance, Aasand pled guilty to the lesser charge of misapplication of entrusted property between \$500 and \$1,000.

Judge Kari Agotness sentenced Aasand to 360 days. That sentence is suspended if she first serves 30 days of electric home monitoring.

Aasand is required to pay back the \$5,312.53 in restitution in addition to \$525 in court fees.

As a condition of her release, Aasand was sentenced to two years of unsupervised probation and must violate no criminal laws during that time.

According to the original criminal complaint in the case,"between the dates of March 2021 and March 2022, Aasand, disposed of, used or transferred any interest in property that had been entrusted to her... in a manner that she knew was not authorized and that she knew involved a risk of loss or detriment to the owner of the property or to the government or other person for whose benefit the property was entrusted."

Aasand was accused of misusing a total of \$5,312.53 of Drayton Public School hockey funds in that time period, using the money to cover a portion of youth hockey raffle earnings and purchasing T-shirts for an unrelated fundraiser.

'AASAND' CON'T PAGE 7