

## BRIEFS

### Weekend fire causes \$150k in home damage

**MANKATO** — A Sunday evening fire in Mankato caused an estimated \$150,000 in damage to a home.

Six occupants escaped without injuries from the fire at 100 Spyglass Drive, according to a release from the city. Investigators reportedly suspect an improperly discarded cigarette caused the fire.

"Please use a metal can filled with water or sand to extinguish smoking materials," the release states.

A bystander, who knocked on the door and alerted the occupants, was the first to notice the fire at about 9 p.m. The home's front entrance and garage were on fire when the emergency crews arrived.

### Mankato speller out of national competition

Mankato's Elijah Elledge, a 12-year-old sixth grader from Immanuel Lutheran School, made it to the 2024 Scripps National Spelling Bee this week in Washington, D.C., but has been eliminated.



Elijah Elledge

Elledge was eliminated during the first round of competition Tuesday. He misspelled the word "Aitutakian," his mother Beki Elledge said.

Nine Minnesota participants made it to the bee, which began with 245 spellers competing.

The Elledge family took Elijah to Topgolf in National Harbor and on The Capital Wheel, an enclosed Ferris wheel, near the water to celebrate his achievement, his mother said.

They're also enjoying the "Bee Week experience," she said, noting they're participating in fun activities such as trolley tours of D.C., a Bee Week Bash on Friday, and a Memorial Day picnic at Audi Field, which was complete with food, games and jugglers.

### Last Revel, Bad Bad Hats perform Aug. 23

**MANKATO** — The Last Revel, Bad Bad Hats and Clare Doyle will perform at the Vetter Stone Amphitheater Aug. 23.

Tickets — \$33.50 for a limited number of reserved seats and \$25.50 for general admission — are on sale now at ticketmaster.com.

The Last Revel, a four-piece Minneapolis-based band with Mankato ties, is known for its Americana sound and vocal harmonies. Bad Bad Hats, another Minneapolis band, features Kerry Alexander and Chris Hoge. The band's latest album came out last month. Clare Doyle of St. Paul was named an Emerging Artist for 2024 by the Music in Minnesota digital magazine.

The Free Press

# High school students earning college credit rising

By Holly Marie Moore

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## NORTH MANKATO

For Mankato West High School juniors Jacob Goblirsch and Luke Haggerty, taking Post-secondary Enrollment Options at South Central College made sense.

"I figured that would save some money if I were to go to college

later on. I wouldn't have to pay for those classes, and I would be a little ahead of some other students," Goblirsch said.

The program allows high school students to earn college credits by taking college courses while still in high school.

Goblirsch and Haggerty are both pursuing their associate of arts

degrees and expect to graduate from SCC and Mankato West at the same time.

"Once I got to South Central, I realized I could get my associate degree. I figured that'd be really helpful if I graduated with that and my high school diploma," Goblirsch said.

He plans on transferring to Minnesota State

University after graduating from SCC to pursue a master's degree in computer science.

Haggerty said he first heard about the option about taking college classes while in high school from friends at school.

"It immediately stood out to me because it seems like it gives me a lot of free time.

It's more of a college schedule compared to a high school schedule," he said, adding the extra time gives him the opportunity to work a job, for example.

"I can also work toward earning a degree, earning college credit while getting my high school credit. It's saving

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# MARKER MISSION

## Civil War headstone projects continue



File photo  
Julie Schrader and Bryce Stenzel stand near the Boy in Blue War memorial in 2018 at Mankato's Lincoln Park. Schrader's longtime interest in Minnesotans who served on the side of the Union in the Civil War includes her continuing search for gravesites in Blue Earth County.

## Effort made to reset sunken grave markers

Eddie Schmierbach

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Minnesotans who visit any cemetery in the state are likely to come upon a marker at gravesite for a veteran who died 100 or more years ago. Some graves hold the remains of soldiers who died during the Civil War, and others are the burial spots for people who died decades after being discharged from the military.

Why are so many veterans who were born in Eastern states and who fought a war that took place mostly "down South" — buried in the Upper Midwest?

Many former soldiers moved to Minnesota to cash in on a promise of land in the new state, said Gary Carlberg, a member of Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, Col. William Colvill Camp 56.

The U.S. Homestead Act of 1868 allowed — for a small registration fee — settlers the right to claim up to 160 acres. If these homesteaders improved the land and stayed on it for five years, they could "prove-up" their claim and take full ownership.

"Veterans only had to live on their land for a few years before it was free," Carlberg said, referring to a government policy that allowed Union soldiers to deduct the time they had served from the government's land requirements.

Julie Schrader is a member of Friends of the Boy in Blue, a group that began as an effort to preserve the Blue Earth County Civil War Veterans Memorial in Mankato's historic Lincoln Park.

Carlberg and Schrader's volunteer groups recently began working together making sure the public can find the burial sites of state residents who fought for the North in the bloody 1861-65 war that ended slavery and kept the states together as one country. The organizations' partnership also is dedicated to making sure every Union soldier's grave has a headstone.

As a member of Camp 56, Carlberg and others in his group work with cemetery boards and other organizations throughout the state. Schrader's group is primarily interested in Union soldiers who'd called Blue Earth County home.

To date, in its mission to



Courtesy Julie Schrader  
A new headstone for James Poole, a Civil War soldier buried in Glenwood Cemetery, was dedicated in June 2023.

preserve Civil War era history, Friends of the Boy in Blue members have located 12 unmarked Civil War veterans' graves.

"Our cemetery project continues its work in Glenwood Cemetery this year. We've made progress, but there are still some Civil War veterans gravestones to clean or to lift

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# Summer grocery access offered

By Holly Marie Moore

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**MANKATO** — A new federal summer program will provide eligible families with school-aged children access to grocery assistance starting in the next couple of weeks.

Mankato school district Nutrition Services Director Darcy Stueber said the new electronic benefit transfer, or EBT, card program fills a gap now that a similar pandemic-era program has ended.

"It's for families to again bridge that gap to buy groceries when the students are home over the summer," Stueber said.

The program will provide qualified households \$40 per child per month, \$120 total, on an EBT card.

Benefits can be used at retailers such as grocery stores and farmers markets to purchase healthy food such as fruits, vegetables, meats, whole grains and dairy.

Most qualified families will get these benefits automatically, but some parents will need to apply, according to the Minnesota Department of Human Services website.

Qualification for the program is linked to eligibility for educational benefits, formerly known as free and reduced meals, according to the Mankato district, and families already approved for those benefits will automatically benefit from the summer program.

Students also can receive summer EBT benefits if they are directly certified through programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Minnesota Family Investment Program, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, Foster Care or Medicaid.

Anybody who's currently qualified will start seeing that money in June, Stueber said.

If they are not qualified and want to get onto the program, they would see that money later in the summer.

Households will need to contact their school or school district to get an application if they are not automatically enrolled, according to the state.

The program is in ad-

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## OBITUARIES

## Ryan Osborn



Ryan Osborn, age 38 of Easton, passed away Sunday, May 26, 2024.

Visitation will be held from 4:00-7:00pm, Friday, May 31, 2024, at Northview - North Mankato Mortuary. Memorial service will begin at 11:00am, Saturday, June 1, 2024 at Crossview Covenant Church, North Mankato with visitation one hour prior to the service. Livestream of the service will

be available at [www.mankatomortuary.com](http://www.mankatomortuary.com).

Ryan Osborn was born August 15, 1985, to Mark and Janelle Osborn. He was raised in the Lake Crystal area and attended Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial High School. In 2016 he was united in marriage to Ashley Ann Clyne in Mankato. They made their home in Easton, Minnesota. During his career as a truck driver, Ryan worked for, Kevin Pearson Trucking and Double B. Trucking. Ryan enjoyed camping and performing music, most importantly, he enjoyed spending time with his family.

Left to remember Ryan are his wife, Ashley; children Ella and Layla Osborn, Brea Davis, and Braden Wendt; mother Janelle (Virgil) Truebenbach; paternal grandmother Lois Osborn; siblings: Skyler (Liza) Nick (Ashley); Nieces: Oaklyn, Zaylee and Zoey; and other step siblings, relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by, his father, Mark Osborn; paternal grandfather, Walt Osborn; maternal grandparents, John and Shirley Peterson

## About Obituaries

Personalized obituaries and standard death notices published for a fee can be submitted online at [obituaries.mankatofreepress.com](http://obituaries.mankatofreepress.com). For assistance, please call 507-344-6375, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday - Friday, and 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Early deadlines may be in effect for holidays.

## CREDITS: Partnerships with area school districts

Continued from Page B1

money in the future and having an easier high school experience," he said.

Haggerty plans to go into an engineering-related field in the future.

The number of high school students enrolled in PSEO courses has increased, South Central College said.

SCC Vice President of Academic Affairs Laura Attenberger said taking these courses has a couple of benefits for the students who choose that option.

"It's an opportunity for them to be able to earn college credit while they're still in high school, but it's also tuition-free credit as well, so it can give them an opportunity to earn these college credits without accumulating debt," she said.

During the 2022-23 school year, 352 high school students took one or more PSEO courses, according to an SCC news release. During the current 2023-24 school year, the number jumped to 489 students, marking a 39% increase.

The college also said the number of PSEO students graduating from SCC with a credential or degree is rising.

During the 2022-23 school year, 23 high school students graduated from SCC. During the 2023-24 school year, the number jumped to 44 students.

Attenberger said a few factors have led to growth in these courses.

"I do think there's increased awareness. As I talked about there is some increased access as well. We also need the support of our partner districts. The school districts need to sign off on each student participating in this program. We've seen an increase in districts who are willing to allow their students to be able

to participate in the program," she said.

"Then with the increase of online courses, we have seen students participate in our PSEO program from districts that are much further away."

Attenberger said that students can start taking one technical course as early as 10th grade as long as they meet or exceed the eighth grade reading MCA test.

Other local colleges also have weighed in on the number of students taking PSEO classes.

According to Minnesota State University's PSEO Office Director Michael Altomari, between the 2021-22 school year through this spring semester, students have earned 24.8% more credits in traditional PSEO.

That's with students taking courses either on the Mankato campus or taught by university faculty.

The university also has seen a 52% increase in earned credits through concurrent enrollment, or courses taught in high schools, by university-approved high school instructors.

According to Gustavus Adolphus College, data from this year shows the college has three PSEO students; two of them are full time and one is part time.

For the academic year beginning this fall, they'll have eight PSEO students; four will be full time and the other half will be part time.

Students can enroll in PSEO courses in the fall and spring.

Attenberger said some districts have a deadline of May 31 for when students need to inform their district that they will be participating in PSEO in the fall.

However, she said they will honor districts that allow their students to notify them after that date.

also have sites open for meals for breakfast and lunch this summer Monday through Friday," Stueber said, adding the district will share more information about that program soon.

## EBT: School meals also available

Continued from Page B1

dition to summer meals that the district provides.

"This is a benefit for them to use at home. The school district will

# Ruddy, producer of 'The Godfather,' dies

The Associated Press

**NEW YORK** — Albert S. Ruddy, a colorful, Canadian-born producer and writer who won Oscars for "The Godfather" and "Million Dollar Baby," developed the raucous prison-sports comedy "The Longest Yard" and helped create the hit sitcom "Hogan's Heroes," has died at age 94.

Ruddy died "peacefully" Saturday at the UCLA Medical Center, according to a spokesperson, who added that among his final words were, "The game is over, but we won the game."

Tall and muscular, with a raspy voice and a city kid's swagger, Ruddy produced more than 30 movies and was on hand for the very top and very bottom, from the "Godfather" and "Million Dollar Baby" to "Cannonball Run II" and "Megaforce," nominees for Golden Raspberry awards for worst movie of the year.

Otherwise, he had a mix of successes such as "The Longest Yard," which he produced and created the story for, and such flops as the Arnold Schwarzenegger thriller "Sabotage." He worked often with Burt Reynolds, starting with "The Longest Yard" and continuing with two "Cannonball Run" comedies and "Cloud Nine." Besides "Hogan's Heroes," his television credits include the movies "Married to a Stranger" and "Running Mates."

Nothing looks better on your resume than "The Godfather," but producing it endangered Ruddy's job, reputation and his very life. Frank Sinatra and other Italian Americans were infuriated by the project, which they feared would harden stereotypes of Italians as criminals, and real-life mobsters let Ruddy know he was being watched. One night he heard gunfire outside his home and the sound of his car's windows being shot out.

On his dashboard was a warning that he should close the production, immediately.

Ruddy saved himself, and the film, through diplomacy; he met with crime boss Joseph Colombo and a couple of henchmen to discuss the script.

"Joe sits opposite me, one guy's on the couch,



Producers Albert S. Ruddy, left, and Tom Rosenberg accept their Oscars after the film "Million Dollar Baby" won for best motion picture of the year at the 77th Academy Awards, Feb. 27, 2005, in Los Angeles. The Canadian-born producer and writer who won Oscars for "The Godfather" and "Million Dollar Baby," died Saturday, at age 94.

and one guy's sitting in the window," Ruddy told Vanity Fair in 2009. "He puts on his little Ben Franklin glasses, looks at it (the script) for about two minutes. What does this mean 'fade in?'" he asked."

Ruddy agreed to remove a single, gratuitous mention of the word "mafia" and to make a donation to the Italian American Civil Rights League. Colombo was so pleased that he urged Ruddy to appear with him at a press conference announcing his approval of the movie, a gathering that led to Ruddy's being photographed alongside members of organized crime.

With the stock of parent company Gulf & Western dropping fast, Paramount fired Ruddy, only to have director Francis Coppola object and get him rehired. In the end, mobsters were cast as extras and openly consulted with cast members. Ruddy himself made a cameo as a Hollywood studio guard.

"It was like one happy family," Ruddy told Vanity Fair. "All these guys loved the underworld characters, and obviously the underworld guys loved Hollywood."

With a cast including Marlon Brando, Al Pacino and Robert Duvall, "The Godfather" was a critical and commercial sensation and remains among the most beloved and quoted movies in history. When Ruddy was named winner of

the best picture Oscar at the 1973 ceremony, the presenter was Clint Eastwood, with whom he would produce "Million Dollar Baby," the best picture winner in 2005. Upon the 50th anniversary of "The Godfather," in 2022, Ruddy himself became a character. Miles Teller played him in "The Offer," a Paramount+ miniseries about the making of the movie, based on Ruddy's experiences.

"Al Ruddy was absolutely beautiful to me the whole time on 'The Godfather'; even when they didn't want me, he wanted me," Pacino said in a statement. "He gave me the gift of encouragement when I needed it most and I'll never forget it."

Ruddy was married to Wanda McDaniel, a sales executive and liaison for Giorgio Armani who helped make the brand omnipresent in Hollywood, whether in movies or at promotional events. They had two children.

Born in Montreal in 1930, Albert Stotland Ruddy moved to the U.S. as a child and was raised in New York City. After graduating from the University of Southern California, he was working as an architect when he met TV actor Bernard Fein in the early 1960s. Ruddy had tired of his career, and he and Fein decided to develop a TV series, even though neither had done any writing.

Their original idea was a comedy set in an

American prison, but they soon changed their minds.

"We read in the paper that ... (a) network was doing a sitcom set in an Italian prisoner of war camp and we thought, 'Perfect,'" Ruddy later explained. "We rewrote our script and set it in a German POW camp in about two days."

Starring Bob Crane as the wily Col. Hogan, "Hogan's Heroes" ran from 1965-71 on CBS but was criticized for trivializing World War II and turning the Nazis into lovable cartoons. Ruddy remembered network head William Paley calling the show's concept "reprehensible," but softening after Ruddy "literally acted out an episode," complete with barking dogs and other sound effects.

While Fein continued with "Hogan's Heroes," Ruddy turned to film, overseeing the low-budget "Wild Seed" for Brando's production company. His reputation for managing costs proved most useful when Paramount Pictures head Robert Evans acquired rights to Mario Puzo's bestselling novel "The Godfather" and sought a producer for what was supposed to be a minor, profit-taking gangster film.

"I got a call on a Sunday. 'Do you want to do The Godfather?'" Ruddy told Vanity Fair. "I thought they were kidding me, right? I said, 'Yes, of course, I love that book' — which I had never read."

## GRAVES: Identifying each county's longest-serving veteran

Continued from Page B1

and reset this summer," she said.

Mankato's oldest cemetery, Glenwood, was founded in 1869. Many Civil War veterans were laid to rest within the large burial grounds.

"Once our work in Glenwood is complete, we will move on to other cemeteries in the county with Civil War headstones that need cleaning, restoration or replacing."

Friends of the Boy in Blue has shared its database of information with the Camp 56 group. "We are doing a coun-

ty-by-county search to find where Union soldiers are buried," Carlberg said.

Along with its Operation Headstone, Camp 56 members are working on a project to determine who was each county's longest surviving Union veteran and to honor that soldier. So far, the group has held 20 Last Union Veteran ceremonies.

Blue Earth County's honoree has not yet been documented.

Both organizations regularly file applications with the Department of Veterans Affairs to get new headstones

for the graves of Civil War vets. The VA will cover the cost of documented headstones; however, installation expenses are not covered by the government, Schrader said.

When a Civil War veteran's grave is found and there's an original headstone that's sunk into the ground, The Friends of the Boy in Blue has it lifted and reset.

The group is seeking donors to help pay the \$250-\$300 cost per headstone. Donations may be sent to: Boy in Blue, 247 Norton St., Mankato, MN 56001. For more

information, email a request to: [contact@boyinblue.org](mailto:contact@boyinblue.org).

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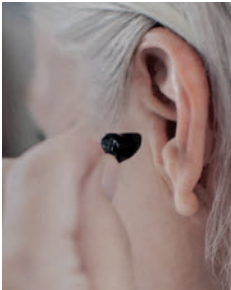
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