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Inside this Issue

More Corn Capital Days fun – A5 & A8

Photos by Scott Tedrick

Nothing but beautiful, sunny Corn Capital Days

The 2023 Corn Capital Days Celebration is in the books and was greeted with beautiful weather for each major event. The whole town got into the fun as evidenced by Mailman Todd Howard, who wore multiple corn hats throughout the week long celebration. See more pics of Corn Capital Days activities on pages A5 & A8.

Plenty to see in 2023

County Fair arrives Aug. 9-11 bringing something for everyone

By Scott Tedrick
Editor

The Renville County Fair arrives next week and by all accounts this year's theme encapsulates the incredible list of offerings awaiting fair-goers "Plenty to See in 2023."

"There is so much going on that I've lost track myself of everything that's happening," mused Brent Dahl, Renville County Fair Board Secretary.

The week features three full days of entertainment catered to all ages. Wednesday kicks things off with several FFA events which now include, in addition to animal shows and judging, an FFA Car Show at 4 p.m. and Barn Dance set for 8:30 p.m.

Said Dahl, "The FFA really outshined itself this year."

Other notable Wednesday events are the Kids Tractor Pull at 1 p.m., Sweet Corn Eating Contest at 5:30 p.m. and ATV Barrel Racing at 7 p.m. Dahl also says the RLZ Report comedian is not to be missed when he takes the stage at 8:45 p.m. A raffle drawing and fireworks closes the night.

Thursday brings more animal judging and continues with the assortment of entertainers from Magic Joe and The Bubbler to Freddie and his Crazy Contests. At 2, 4:30 and 7 p.m. fair-goers can see All-Star Barn Yard Pig Races. Come 7 p.m. there will be bull-riding followed by two back-to-back musical entertainers, Matthew James and Little Texas at 7:30 and 9 p.m. Thereafter, another round of fireworks and a drawing wraps the evening.

Friday, many of the above-mentioned acts and entertainment continue alongside special events. These include Century Farm Presentation at 2 p.m., Cereal Eating Contest at 4:30 p.m. and fan favorites, The Demo Derby at 7 p.m. and Jake Nelson Band at 8 p.m.

All day everyday there is also a petting zoo, inflatables, yard games, vendor booths, the tech room and more.

"The fair is the time we come together as a community to build strong ties with each other and our fellow [illegible]ers," said Dahl. "Our job on the fair board is to provide people a space to shrug off their problems, have fun, relax and enjoy not only their family but everyone else around them."

Renville County Walk in the Park reaches 25th year

More birthdays, less cancer this Friday at Olivia's Nester Park

By Ross Okins
Staff Writer

More Birthdays, Less Cancer is the theme for Renville County Walk in the Park's 25th Birthday event. The celebration will take place from 4:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Aug. 4 at Nester Park in Olivia. An annual gathering for Renville County, the Walk in the Park event brings area communities together to honor cancer survivors, build connections with families impacted by cancer, and remember loved ones who have passed.

This year's event consists of ten individual teams who have dedicated their collective efforts to raise funds for cancer research, as well as 'Bags of Blessings' care packages, which are given to those recently diagnosed with the disease. A survivors' registration will begin at 4 and will be followed immediately by a community supper. The evening's program will officially begin at 6:30 p.m. and will feature a recognition of all the cancer survivors, a Lap of Hope, a live performance from the Custom Made band, and a brief thank you from University of Minnesota Environmental Health Sciences professor Dr. Silvia Balbo, inflatables, and family activities.

"Along with our amazing business partners, who have supported us throughout the years, we can't thank the teams and team captains enough for their year-round fundraising," Program Executive Director Sara Maher said. "They have dedicated countless hours to help our survivors in Renville County," Maher noted. "Everyone who purchases luminaries year after year to help support their friends and family make this event possible."

Walk in the Park
Turn to page A2

University of Minnesota Environmental Health Sciences professor Dr. Silvia Balbo (center) poses with her team of researchers in Memorial Park during their visit to the 2022 Renville County Walk in the Park event.

Join us for the

BIG THINGS TO SEE IN 2023

RENVILLE COUNTY FAIR

BIRD ISLAND, MN

AUGUST 9,10,11, 2023

SEE THIS WEEKEND'S SHOPPER FOR A FULL LIST OF EVENTS.

Nightly
$500 Cash Drawings

Wednesday
ATV Barrel Races
Fireworks

Pig Races
Eating Contests

The Bubbler
Magic Joe

Thursday
Bull Riding
Matthew James
Little Texas

Friday
Demo Derby
Jake Nelson

Two men injured by fall at Southern Minn. Sugar Beet Cooperative

Two workers sustained serious injuries after falling from scaffolding at the Southern Minnesota Sugar Beet Coop.

As reported by Deputy Luke Jacques from the Renville County Sheriff's Office, emergency services responded to a call about the incident involving two men who had fallen inside a storage tank located in the 83000 block of Renville County Road 21, approximately two miles northeast of Renville.

Upon arrival, responders found Chance Anderson, 22, from Adams, and Tedrick Coleman, 30, from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, who had plummeted about three to four stories to the ground.

Rescue crews quickly evacuated the men from the storage tank and provided immediate medical care. Coleman was airlifted to CentraCare — St. Cloud Hospital with suspected serious injuries.

Anderson was transported by Olivia Ambulance to the Olivia airport, where Life-Link III subsequently flew him to St. Cloud Hospital, also with suspected serious injuries.

Deputy Jacques indicated that preliminary investigations suggest both men were working on top of the scaffolding when it tipped over as co-workers attempted to reposition it, resulting in their fall from a height of approximately 35 to 40 feet.

The investigation into the incident is ongoing. Neither of the two men were employees

Assisting at the scene were the Renville Fire Department, Granite Falls Ambulance, Olivia Ambulance Service, and Life Link III.

Pulscher: New position reflects performance Continued from A1

Olivia Hospital & Clinic
HealthPartners

"Having worked with Nathan in his role at Olivia Hospital & Clinic, we've seen firsthand his dedication, vision and commitment to expanding comprehensive care across our region," said Hutchinson Health Board Chair Scott Staples. "We're confident his leadership will continue to drive Hutchinson Health toward new growth and innovations that improve the health and well-being of our community."

Pulscher says he's excited to continue his leadership within the organization.

"It's been an honor to work with my colleagues and community in Olivia. I'm looking forward to continuing our work together as I step into the role of president of Hutchinson Health," he said. "Having been close partners for the past two years, I've seen the dedication and passion the Hutchinson team has for our patients and their families. I'm eager to work alongside this talented team to continue delivering exceptional care to our region."

Pulscher has a master's degree in strategic leadership from Black Hills State University and a bachelor's degree in microbiology from South Dakota State University.

Jennifer Macik, vice president of patient care services and chief nursing officer for Olivia Hospital & Clinic, will serve as site administrator for Olivia during the transition. Macik has more than 23 years of nursing leadership and currently oversees nursing operations, ambulatory services and initiatives to enhance patient care quality and safety.

Spotlight on Education

Winning the race before it begins

Gratitude for community Marathon support overflows

Tracy Bertrand Sigurdson

St. Mary's

When you hear the word Marathon a person immediately thinks running a race. *St. Mary's Catholic School is once again preparing for our annual Marathon but the only race we will be doing is racing around the community to give back to all who are so good to us.* Our Marathon is set to take place on October 19th. "The mission of the Minnesota Marathon for Nonpublic Education Inc in cooperation with the Minnesota Knights of Columbus, is to raise public awareness of nonpublic education by promoting fundraising initiatives. Since 1974, Marathon events have given students, schools, family and faculty members, an opportunity to show school pride while generating important financial support for school programs. With fun events and service projects, the Marathon has served communities while supporting nonpublic education. In 1975, the State Council of the Knights of Columbus joined the efforts. Since then, the Knights have provided financial support for Marathon events across the state. The Minnesota Marathon for Nonpublic Education has been successful in raising nearly $106,000.00 for nonpublic schools." (htttp://mnknights.org). In 2018, registered schools reported raising $2.3 million! This Marathon raises statewide awareness of the *importance of nonpublic education in Minnesota.*

The Marathon is also an extremely important event for St. Mary's School. Our students and staff work to generate pledges, reach out to alumni, contacting friends, family, those within our AFC and even going door-to-door. With a school goal of $55,000.00, the Marathon is one of the major fundraisers of the year. It is also another example of how St. Mary's could not continue to carry its mission without the generosity of so many benefactors.

The Marathon is an amazing way that we at St. Mary's School can also thank the community for being so supportive and generous to us. A four years ago we made some changes to how we visibly share with the community that as a school we are grateful for all the community support. Instead of walking throughout the town we wanted to embrace a new meaning to the word "Marathon". We didn't want this to just be an ordinary marathon but one that we as students, staff, family and friends would be able to give back to the community to show our gratefulness and thank all who support us. Our way of doing this is by volunteering our services to do yard work for anyone who is in need of help, ditch cleaning, cleaning up around the local ball park and BOLD playground. We have found this service to be beyond rewarding in so *many ways. The students are learning the importance of giving back to the community, helping those who may need help, and above all just being a good steward.* We believe that we are teaching our students the importance of being Christ-centered disciples, active learners, responsible citizens and effective communicators which someday soon will be our leaders of the world we live in. We have found the yard work to be very rewarding based upon the many smiles and notes of thank that we have received. Those smiles and kind words our worth millions on our hearts and minds.

For St. Mary's School and for so many other nonpublic schools, the Marathon is not only an important fundraiser, it is a tangible example of value that so many place on private education, especially education that is embraced with faith. Although Thank You seems like it is not enough, we are blessed to have so many financially support us now and throughout the year. We honestly can not be a thriving, vital school without your support and belief in our students, staff We are forever filled with gratitude for everyone's amazing attitude in supporting our marathon.

B&D Market
LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED
1002 W. Lincoln Ave, Olivia, MN
Mon-Sat: 8am-8pm; Sun: 8am-6pm
125 W. Main St Bird Island, MN
Mon-Sat: 7am-7pm; Sun: 9am-5pm

Sheehan's Gas Company
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RPI
Bird Island, Olivia, Danube, Renville, Morton and Sacred Heart

Cancer research: Passions persist together Continued from A1

Dr. Balbo (right) poses with Renville County survivor Todd "Howie" Howard at Walk in the park.

Dr. Balbo studies the interaction between DNA and chemicals to investigate how lifestyle and environmental exposures cause disease. A key part of Dr. Balbo's research deals with something called biomarkers—signs and signals in the human body that alert doctors to the presence of a disease, infection, or environmental exposure. Dr. Balbo and her team are focused on studying how to find more of these biomarkers to detect cancer in humans before it becomes advanced, as well as to identify groups of people who may be at higher risk for particular types of cancers.

This research resonated deeply with a group of volunteers and cancer support advocates located in Renville County, Minnesota, about two hours west of the Twin Cities. The group, known as The Renville County Walk in the Park, has been raising funds on their own for years to support newly-diagnosed cancer patients in their community by providing "bags of blessing" filled with thoughtful gifts to aid their newly diagnosed neighbors along their cancer journey.

These bags consist of a journal, seat belt comfort pad, tea, snacks, toiletries, coloring book, pencils, socks, soothing lavender pillow, homemade quilt from local quilters, and other items. The group also assists survivors in Renville County by reimbursing some of their medical expenses and helping with gas and hotel stays for those who need to travel for their care.

Looking to pair their support for patient care with support for cancer research, the group was connected to Dr. Balbo and her team, who were kicking off some research projects on lung and colon cancer—two cancers that have greatly impacted Renville County, made up of the communities of Bird Island, Buffalo Lake, Danube, Fairfax, Franklin, Hector, Morton, Olivia, Renville, and Sacred Heart.

Since they first connected, Walk In the Park's relationship with Dr. Balbo and her team has grown exponentially, complete with regular visits from Dr. Balbo's team to Walk In the Park community events. As the relationship blossomed, so too did Walk In the Park's desire to support more of Dr. Balbo's research.

"Our community has been comforted by Dr. Balbo and her team's dedication," says Sara Maher, executive director of the Renville County Walk in the Park. "Their committed relationship to us has brought forth an incredible education for us both. We are learning so much from each other."

Sara adds: "Dr. Balbo and her team commute through over 100 miles of cornfields to meet and talk with our survivors, teams, and donors. In turn, our survivors and donors are given the opportunity to tour the lab and have one-on-one time with her and ask some hard questions. Dr. Balbo continues to update us about the research she and her team are doing, and the papers she has published within the cancer community. Our donors, in our small county of 14,723 people, are making a difference in cancer research globally, and right here at home."

As of September 2024, the group has provided a whopping $150,000 in donations to Dr. Balbo's research! "This funding that they have generously provided for me and my team has allowed us to be very flexible and to bring in new technology that we could not access before," says Dr. Balbo.

Dr. Balbo adds: "Using the financial support they have provided, we have purchased new equipment that the University never had before, which gave us so much critical, new data that helped further our research."

The new data coming from this technology supported the connection of Dr. Balbo and team with the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), part of the World Health Organization (W.H.O.). From there, the team's discoveries on the role of inflammation in lung carcinogenesis, will help inform lung cancer prevention and early detection efforts across the globe. And it all started with a small Minnesota community's generosity!

In their early research in collaboration with Dr. Balskus's research team at Harvard, Dr. Balbo and her lab had discovered a biomarker from mutated E. coli that has been associated with colon cancer. This early research was conducted in animal models, leaving Dr. Balbo and her team curious about whether this same biomarker would also be associated with colon cancer in humans.

Thanks to the generous support of Renville County Walk in the Park, Dr. Balbo's team was able to look through biosamples collected in collaboration with MCC researcher Alexander Khoruts, a gastrointestinal specialist in the U of M Medical School. Together, they were able to find evidence of this same biomarker in humans, potentially pinpointing a new diagnostic tool for colon cancer.

"We are proud to be part of a cancer center that is really speeding up the time it takes to get new research from what we call the bench, or the laboratory, to the bedside—to patients," says Dr. Balbo. She adds, "The work we do in the lab connects with the work our doctors are doing in cancer clinics in a very effective way, not just with clinical trials but also with this discovery piece. There are not many places like the Masonic Cancer Center where a collaborative environment ensures that lab-based research can immediately connect with clinical research to have a positive impact on patients."

Even though Dr. Balbo and team don't yet have all the answers, they now have the right tools to dive deeper in their research on this area of colon cancer detection, thanks in large part to the generosity of Renville County Walk in the Park.

As Dr. Balbo says: "There's so much that can be done with a gift of any size to bring in innovation, and the impact on communities is priceless."

Dr. Balbo (front row, left, wearing white pants) and team stand in front of the corn cob monument in Olivia in 2022 holding Goldy Gopher noise makers.

Bird Island United Methodist Church
Corner of Birch and 8th in Bird Isla
Pastor: Rev. Joseph Carpenter
Pastor's cell: 320-295-9870
Email: jocar330@yahoo.com
Sundays
9:30am Worship
10:30 am Sunday School

Church of St. Mary
220 Tenth St. S., Bird Island
320-365-3593
www.ofcheartofjesus.org/SM
Fathers Joe Steinbeisser & Ge
Schmit, Senior Associate
Sunday, Oct. 27
10 am Confession
10:30 am Mass
Wednesday, Oct. 3
8:30 am School Mass
Thursday, Oct. 31
8:30 am Mass

Cross of Calvar Lutheran Chur
1103 W. Chestnut Ave., Oliv
320-523-1574
www.crossofcalvary.net
Rev. Matt Hausken; Sarah
Youth Director; Skye Hebri
Church services are aire
Visit the website for mo
Sundays
9 am Sunday Worship
Mondays
6:30 & 7 am Men's B
Wednesdays
8:15 am Women's Bib

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