

## Pandemic closes schools, alters plans for 150th

*Luverne School District, along with schools around the world, closed mid-March and likely won't be in session for the remainder of the school year. While students are still learning online, the effect of the pandemic on district families — especially those with graduating seniors — will be felt for a lifetime as the community shelters in place and waits for danger to pass.*

*Meanwhile, students and parents are seeking meaningful ways to observe the special year, and community leaders are making efforts to reach out in positive ways that still allow for the required social distancing.*

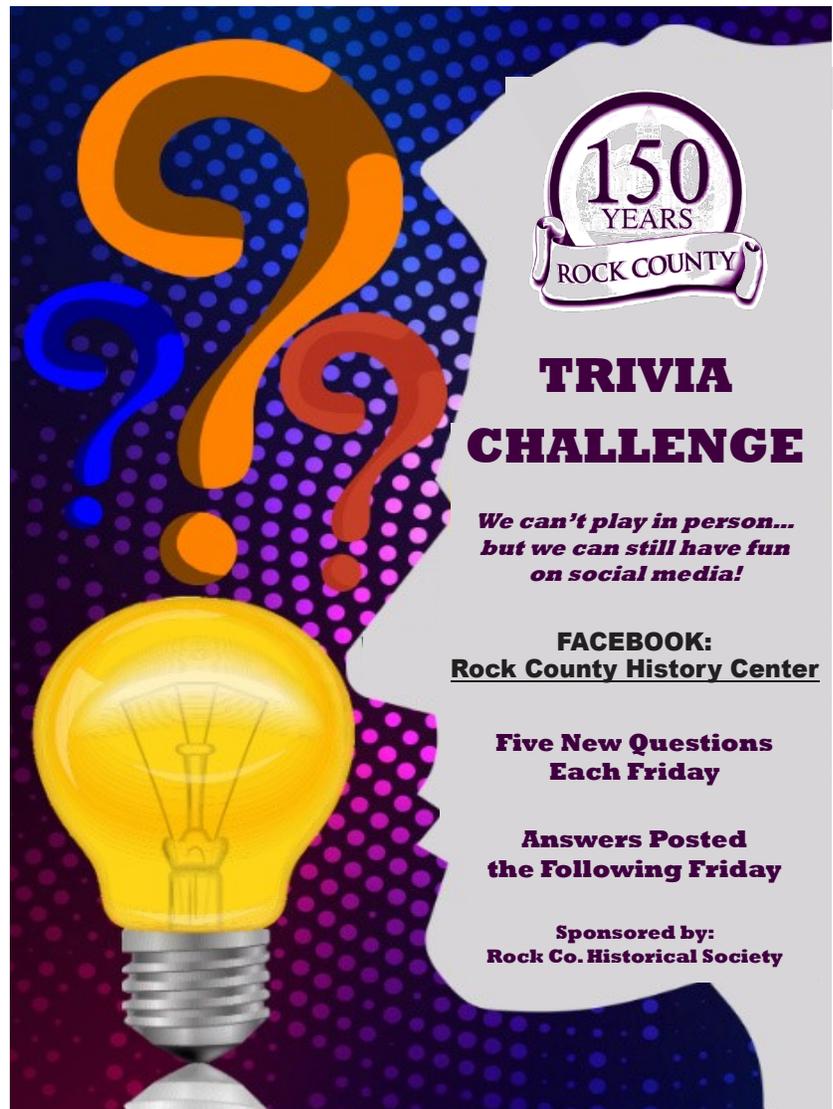
*For example, Jane Wildung Lanphere at the Luverne Chamber Office is adapting this year's celebration plans for Rock County's 150th anniversary. Read on:*

### **ROCK COUNTY TRIVIA**

The Rock County Historical Society provides wonderful resources for people interested in uncovering stories of the past. The Rock County Historical Society is currently partnering with Take 16 Brewing Company to host a series of Thursday night Trivia Contests (now on hiatus due to COVID19) in celebration of Rock County's 150th. The contest will pick up where it left off following the "shelter in place" orders.

The RCHS thought that alumni far & near may want to test their knowledge so have provided this to the readers of Alumni News.

The following questions were from a Rock County Historical Quiz that was printed in the Rock County Star Herald more than 70 years ago. See if you can answer the questions before you find the answers also listed in this edition.



**150 YEARS**  
**ROCK COUNTY**

**TRIVIA CHALLENGE**

*We can't play in person...  
but we can still have fun  
on social media!*

**FACEBOOK:**  
**Rock County History Center**

**Five New Questions  
Each Friday**

**Answers Posted  
the Following Friday**

**Sponsored by:**  
**Rock Co. Historical Society**

- When did the Democrats enter county politics?
- Who was the first white child born in Rock County?
- What is the second oldest town in Rock County?
- Which of Rock County's 12 townships was the last to organize?
- What was the Half Way House?

- Was Rock County ever the property of France?
- Who was Inkapaduta and how did he affect the settlement of Rock County?
- When was the official first census of Rock County taken?
- What are the dimensions of Rock County in miles?
- What is the oldest place name in Rock County?

# Honor Roll of Alumni News contributors

Compiled by Johnna Ahrendt

During this past quarter ending March 31, 2020, the Alumni News received money in the form of memorials, and gifts totaling \$1,990. In the memorial section below, the individual being memorialized is printed in bold print, followed by the individual or individuals who made the gift. Contributions given by graduates and friends follow the list of memorials. THANK YOU, READERS!

## NOTE:

If you have recently made a contribution to the Alumni News and your name does not appear on this page, please let the staff know. Chances are your contribution was received after this page was compiled. Please watch for the next issue, July 2020, for additional names of Alumni News contributors.

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**Memorials and contributions may be sent to:**  
*Alumni News*  
**709 N. Kniss Avenue**  
**Luverne, Minnesota 56156**

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Balance 12/31/19 \$460.16

Donations: 1,990.00

DFS Support: 1,500.00

### Expenses:

Printing: 919.08

Postage: 1,779.39

Labels: 746.40

Database: 65.00

Office Supplies: 10.00

Paypal Fees: 2.78

Balance 3/31/20 \$427.51

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## Memorials

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### **Charles Hansen '41**

Audrene Hansen - Friend

### **Audrey (Luethje) Gabrielson '43**

Eva Lou (Beers) Aanenson '43  
Keith '49 & Betty (Hansen) '50  
Luethje

### **Barbara (Jensen) Winter '46**

Mary Ann (McDowell) Davis '46

### **Edward Woodley '49**

Gary '69 & Janine (Jordahl) '69  
Papik  
Jeanne Woodley  
Keith '49 & Betty (Hansen) '50  
Luethje  
Marlyn '63 & Karen Roberts  
Sonny & Connie (Rusche) '58  
Wieneke

### **Martha (Sellen) Nuffer '53**

Frederick Nuffer

### **Helen (Stroh) Biren '54**

Anonymous

### **David Stroh '56**

Anonymous

### **Dennis Mahoney '59**

Anonymous

### **Rodney Stroh '59**

Anonymous

### **Donna (Oye) Stoterau '60**

Dale Stoterau '56

### **JoAnn (Thompson) Swanson '60**

Delores (Madison) Walters '58  
Lorraine (Dreessen) Crouch '55  
Wayne & Carolyn (Thompson)  
'58 Holbert

### **Richard Smook '60**

Anna (DeGroot) VanBatavia '60  
Hal '60 & Donna Paulson  
Joe Rowe '63  
Rita Smook

### **Ardell Bowman '62**

Roy '58 & Linda (Bowman) '62  
Moeller

### **Dianne (Dreessen) Thompson '63**

Wayne & Carolyn (Thompson)  
'58 Holbert

### **Gary Petersen '65**

Bruce '67 & Karen (Pedersen)  
'76 Peterson

### **Linda (Greve) Jordon '70**

Class of 1970

Rick '70 & Carol (Schumacher)  
'70 Serie

### **James Mohr '78**

Jack & Felicia (Mohr) '81  
Hanson

### **Brooke Thompson '15**

Susan Spartz '85

### **Alyce Nelson**

Elaine Harms - Teacher

### **George J. & Gladys "June" Mann**

Gene Salzman '54

### **Henrietta Elbers**

Elaine Harms - Teacher

## Contributions

Anonymous

David Garcia '57

Keith Loger '69

Marilyn Bloemendaal - Friend

Mavis (Winge) Amundson '50

Patrick Pelstring '72

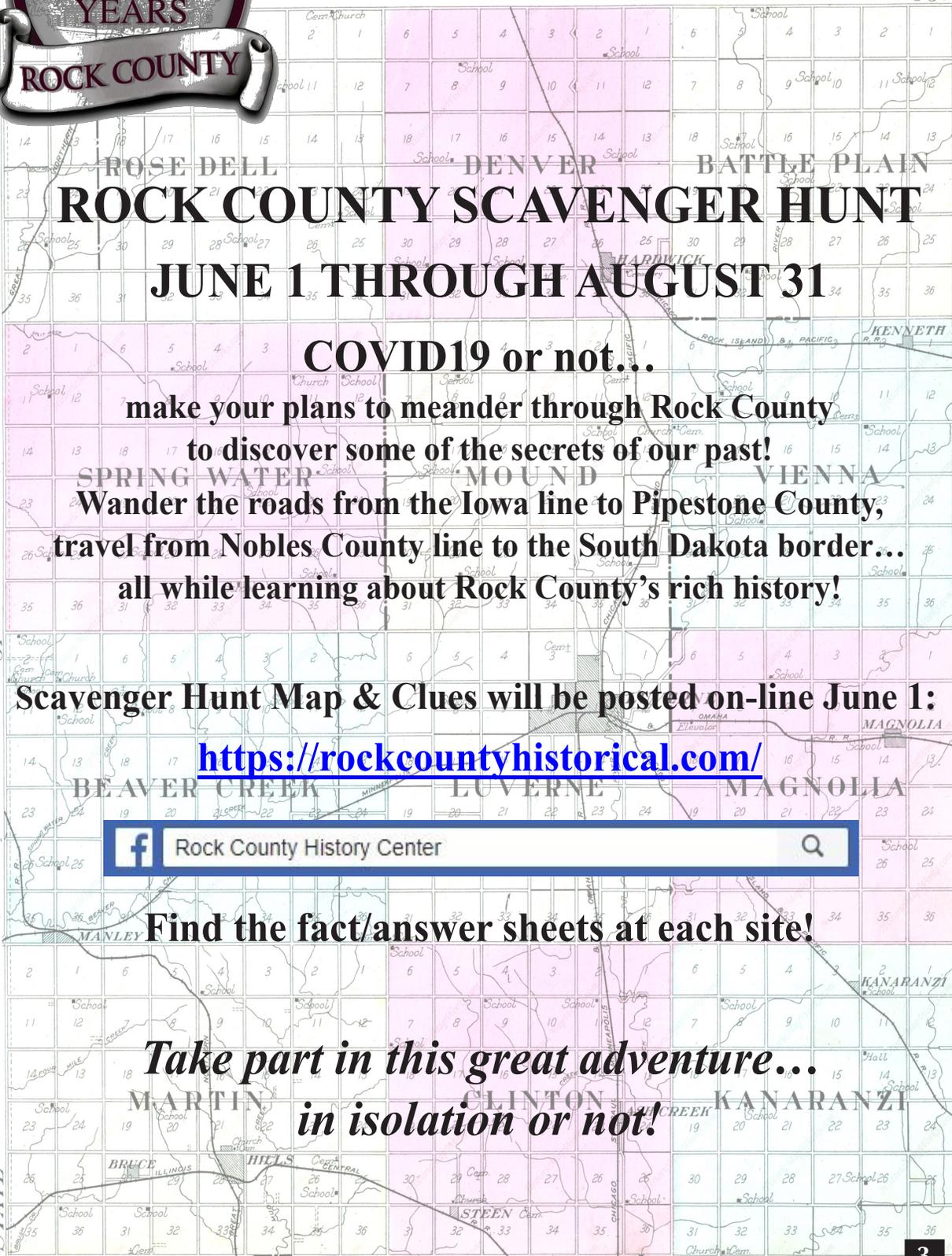
Susan (Wethor) Wineland '95

Tanya Wenzel '88

OUTLINE MAP OF  
**ROCK COUNTY**  
MINNESOTA



W. R. 45 W. R. 44 W. CO.



**ROCK COUNTY SCAVENGER HUNT**  
**JUNE 1 THROUGH AUGUST 31**

**COVID19 or not...**  
make your plans to meander through Rock County  
to discover some of the secrets of our past!  
Wander the roads from the Iowa line to Pipestone County,  
travel from Nobles County line to the South Dakota border...  
all while learning about Rock County's rich history!

Scavenger Hunt Map & Clues will be posted on-line June 1:

<https://rockcountyhistorical.com/>



Find the fact/answer sheets at each site!

*Take part in this great adventure...*  
*in isolation or not!*

# Rock County Trivia questions answered here

## •When did the Democrats enter county politics?

For the first time in the county's history, in 1888, the Democrats as a party decided to enter the field of local politics.

A convention was held in Luverne on October 19 and it was decided not to place a Democratic ticket (labeled as such) in the field.

They decided to join the voters who were opposed to the controlling power in the Republican Party and hold an anti-ring convention.

This was done, and on October 25, a county ticket, labeled "People's Party" was put in nomination. In the election which followed, the Republicans were entirely successful. The total vote was 824.

## •Who was the first white child born in Rock County?

The first birth in Rock County occurred late in the month of March, 1869. It was a daughter, Effie Ferguson, born to Mr. and Mrs. John H. Ferguson, at the home of Mrs. Deborah Estey, Mrs. Ferguson's mother. Second child was Laurena Bradford; third was Carrie Hawes; and the fourth (first boy) was Charles Shoemaker.

## •What is the second oldest town in Rock County?

Beaver Creek has the honor of being Rock County's second oldest municipality.

Founded during the closing days of the great grasshopper devastation, it rapidly grew to a place of importance in Rock County's early history. Before long, it was competing with Luverne for county seat honors. For a dozen years after its founding, Beaver Creek continued to prosper.

Then came a bad fire followed by the lean years of the early 1890's. This was a time when the town took a step backwards. It recovered, however, and it still one of the county's leading villages.

## •Which of Rock County's 12 townships was the last to organize?

Denver Township, on August 12, 1878. Lars G. Kartrude headed the list of petitioners.

## •What was the Half Way House?

Half-Way House was the name given to a cabin used as a stopping place for the stage between Blue Earth and Yankton in 1868.

John Lietz and family maintained the house, a half cabin, half cave – located near the present site of the Luverne Public Works Building. Philo Hawes located there the following spring and the Lietz family moved back to Blue Earth.

## •Was Rock County ever the property of France?

Rock County was once owned by the French government. As a matter of fact, the area comprising the county was formed a part of three different nations, six different territories and three different counties in Minnesota.

## •Who was Inkpaduta and how did he affect the settlement of Rock County?

It was claimed a part of France first, by the right of discovery and exploration.

In 1763, humbled by wars in Europe and America, France was forced to relinquish her province known as the Louisiana Territory.

All her possessions west of the Mississippi were ceded to Spain. In 1800, Spain ceded Louisiana Territory back to France, and on April 30, 1803, by virtue of the Louisiana Purchase, Rock County became part of the United States.

At first it was the Missouri Territory and remained as such until 1820 when Missouri became a state.

For a while, this area was without organized government.

In 1834, it was made a part of the Michigan Territory, and two years later was transferred from

Michigan to Wisconsin. It became part of the Iowa Territory in 1838, remaining as such until 1846 when it became part of the Minnesota Territory.

Rock County was part of Dakota County (Minnesota) until 1853. Then it became a part of Blue Earth County, and later a part of Pipestone County until 1861 when it was reduced to its present area.

Inkapaduta was a Sioux Indian described as one of the most ruthless and treacherous characters in tribe history.

In 1857, shortly after the settlement of the whites in Spirit Lake, Iowa and Jackson, Minnesota, Inkpaduta went on the warpath.

He murdered every man, woman and child in the Okoboji Lake settlement near Spirit Lake and killed seven in the Jackson settlement.

The pioneers fled for their lives. Historians have stated that if it had not been for these two incidents, Rock County would have most likely been settled 10 years earlier.

## •When was the official first census of Rock County taken?

The first official census of Rock County was taken in the summer of 1870. It was disclosed that there were 138 inhabitants.

## •What are the dimensions of Rock County in miles?

Rock County is rectangular in form; 20 and 1/8 miles in width and 24 miles north & south.

## •What is the oldest place name in Rock County?

Kanaranzi is the oldest name in Rock County.

The name appears on Joseph N. Nicollet's map of 1843 as the name of the creek, flowing through the eastern and southern part of what is now Kanaranzi Township.

Historians think the name is of Indian origin. On the map, however, it was spelled "Kananzi".



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ROCK COUNTY PIONEERS  
WERE CIVIL WAR VETERANS**

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August 13, 2020  
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enjoyment & education...  
Rock County Historical Society  
& Sponsors**



## 1940 – 1949

**Robert Brandenburg '46** died February 4, 2020, in Dixon, IL. Bob was a veteran of the Korean War, serving in the US Army. He married Arlene Maxey on July 20, 1953, in Austin, MN. Bob worked as a commission man at the Chicago Stock Yards, was a cattle buyer and then worked for the Illinois Dept. of Agriculture for 13 years prior to his retirement in 1991. He was an ordained Deacon in the Catholic Diocese of Rockford, IL.

Bob is survived by four sons, John (Robyn), Daniel (Julie), Matthew (Doris), and Timothy (Cindy); two daughters, Carol (Stanley) Gooding, and Catherine (Randy) Roux; daughter-in-law, Kim Brandenburg; 18 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; five great-great grandchildren; one brother, Bill (Sharon) and sister-in-law, Rita Brandenburg.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Arlene; son, Michael; great-grandson, Braiden; and brothers, Donald and Vernon.

**Marvin Kindt '46** died on March 27, 2020, in Pipestone, MN. Marvin was united in marriage to Beverly Lauck in Luverne on January 20, 1951. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and served as a medical equipment specialist stationed in Japan during the Korean Conflict.

He earned the rank of corporal and was discharged in 1953. Marvin and Beverly made their home on a farm near Hardwick. The couple relocated to Jasper after selling their farm in 1968. Marvin retired in 1998.

Marvin is survived by his wife, Beverly of Jasper; children, Dennis (Rosie) Kindt, Sioux Falls, Sandra (Roger) Wittrock, Savage, and Garry Kindt, Maple Grove; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and siblings **Elaine '43** Hamann and **Marlene '64 (Gary '63)** Mann.

He was preceded in death by a brother-in-law, Merle Hamann.

**Edward R. Woodley '49** died January 24, 2020, in Luverne. Ed attended Worthington Junior College after high school. He married **Beverly '49** Erickson on September 30, 1951. They had four children. He married Jeanne (Rust) Bittner on October 2, 1976 and became stepfather

to three children. Ed worked for A.R. Wood, Merrill Shoe Store, Nelson, Bros., U.S. Postal Service, Woodley Auto Service, Jubilee Foods, Glen's Food Center, Frakes Water Treatment and Bomgaars.

Ed is survived by his wife, Jeanne, Luverne; sons **Keith (Laura '72)**, **Bruce '77** (Wanda), Mark (Shelly) Bittner; daughters **Nancy '76** (Paul) Wurpts, **Sheila '79** Rust, **Debra '80** Raymond and Carol (Dan) Oren; 18 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; sister and in-laws **Mary Ann '58** Hustad, Bud (Gloria) Rust, Don (Alisa) Rust, Colleen (Gene) Cragoe, Karen Rust, **Lorna '46** Lorenzen, **Cleo '56** (Art) Bloemendaal, **Roger '51** (Marlene) Erickson; and many other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, **Beverly '49**, infant sister, and grandson Shawn Bittner.

## 1950 - 1959

**Elizabeth (Johnson) Pitlick '52** died January 16, 2020, in New Brighton, MN, where she was a longtime resident.

Elizabeth is survived by her husband, George; sons, Kevin (Jan) and Kerry; daughter Holly (Troy); six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and a sister, **Naida '60** Johnson.

She was preceded in death by a sister, Dorothy.

**Arlene (Hemme) Monahan '54** died January 7, 2020, in Baxter, MN. On December 27, 1958, Arlene married Robert Monahan in Hardwick.

The couple made a few moves for Robert's work before settling in Owatonna, MN. Arlene was the bookkeeper for Cedarview Nursing Home for over 20 years. Arlene and Robert moved to Nisswa in 2013.

She is survived by her daughter, Nancy (Mark) Mukomela, Lakeville; her son, Michael (Shari) Monahan, Breezy Point; two grandchildren; and nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, brothers **Arlo '53** Hemme and **Gene '62** Hemme, and an infant daughter.

## Remembering our classmates/continued from page 6

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**Fredrick Strassburg '55** passed away on July 15, 2019. He retired after a very long career with AT&T in Reno, NV.

Fred is survived by a daughter, Robin Gallagher and a brother, George. He was preceded in death by his sister, Jean.

**Carol Ann (Kasemodel) Sels '57** died March 5, 2020, in Sioux Falls, SD. She married Derrick Sels on February 22, 1959, and they made their home in Sioux Falls. Carol worked for UPS and retired in April 2001.

Carol is survived by two daughters, Diane Meyer, Sioux Falls, and Audra Heidelberger (Mike Newman), Lennox, SD; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a sister, Lucille Gangestad, Hills; brothers Robert Kasemodel, Escanaba, MI, and Albert (Marge) Kasemodel, Renner, SD.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Derrick; and seven siblings.

### 1960 - 1969

**Richard "Dick" Smook '60** passed away February 15, 2020, in Luverne. Dick served in the U.S. Navy and was honorably discharged in 1969. He married his wife, Rita, on November 2, 1973, in Luverne. Dick worked for Terrace Park Dairy, Land 'O Lakes and LOL Creamery until retiring in 1996. As a member of St. Catherine's Catholic Church, Dick was very involved, receiving The Bishops Medal on October 7, 2018. He was also very active serving others in the Luverne community.

Dick is survived by his wife, Rita, Luverne; four children, Sharon Smook, Adrian, Suzanne Ness, Monroe, SD, **Jeff '87** (Virginia) Smook, Sioux Falls, and **Tony '94 (Marie '95)** Smook, Muskego, WI; fourteen grandchildren; several great-grandchildren; and a brother, **Ron '61** (Lois) Smook, Mankato.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Mary Courtney.

**JoAnn (Thompson) Swanson '60** passed away January 22, 2020, in her home. She was employed at A.R. Wood Mfg. Co., Luverne. JoAnn married Glen Swanson on January 1, 1966, in Luverne. The couple made their home on the Swanson family farm, rural Worthington.

JoAnn is survived by her husband, Glen; daughter Kristi, Round Lake; son

Kevin (Dana White), Worthington, daughter Melanie Holmlund (Ross), White Bear Lake; three grandchildren; one great grandchild; three brothers and two sisters: **Carolyn '58** (Wayne) Holbert, Santee, SC, **LeRoy '61** Thompson, Sioux Falls, SD, **Martin '63** (Anita) Thompson, Chanhassen, **Howard '64** (Elaine) Thompson, Ham Lake, and Diane (Jim) Hickman, New Braunfels, TX.

**Gary Petersen '65** died March 5, 2020, in Rochester, MN. Gary graduated from Valparaiso University in 1969, served in the Peace Corps in Kenya from 1969 to 1971 and returned to graduate from Valparaiso University School of Law in 1974. On May 18, 1974, Gary married Elizabeth Hunsberger. They lived in Oregon and Boston, returning to Luverne in 1990. He was the Director of the Family Farm Law Project which served 33 counties in southern Minnesota. In 2003, they moved to North Mankato and in 2013, Gary retired.

Gary is survived by his wife, Elizabeth; sons **Andrew '97** (Christina) and **Michael '00** (Erin); three grandchildren; his mother, **Dorothy '45** Petersen, Luverne; brothers **Bruce '67** (Karen), **Mark '69**, **Kevin '71 (Martha '71)**, **Lyle '73**, **Daniel '76 (Dawn '78)**, **Brad '86 (Amy '88)** and sisters **Kate '74 (John '71)** Thomas and **Ellie '79 (Bryce '77)** Oldre.

Gary was preceded in death by his father, Kurt Petersen.

**David Jauert '67** died December 14, 2019, in Duluth, MN. Dave attended the University of Minnesota Duluth. He worked as a carpenter and then owned and operated the Eagles Nest Resort from 1986 to 2014.

Dave is survived by his wife, Jolene; children Wes (Lynn) Jauert, Lindsay (Chris) Tritabaugh and Jason (Katie) Jauert; five grandchildren; siblings **Lorna '61** Schoeneman, **Lynette '77** Jauert, **Darwin '66** (Marge) Jauert and **Lowell '71 (Diane '72)** Jauert; stepchildren Dave Hedin, Layton (Ashley) Cadence, Lydia; nieces and nephews; and other family and friends.

### 1970 – 1979

**Linda (Greve) Jordan '70** died in Sioux Falls, SD, on March 10, 2020. Linda lived her

## Remembering our Classmates/continued from page 7

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entire life in Luverne. She worked at QSP from the late 1970's through the mid 1990's as a product assembler.

She then worked at Luverne Truck in Brandon, SD, until her retirement in April 2014. After retiring, she went to work for McDonald's until two months of her passing.

Linda is survived by her daughter, **Lisa '93 (Bryce '89)** Stoltenberg, Luverne, two grandchildren; siblings **Curtis '69 (Georgia '77)** Greve, Luverne, **Marlene '63** Nytes, New Prague, MN, and **Wesley '60** (Nancy) Greve, Hutchinson, MN; and many more relatives and friends, including her dog, Buddy.

She was preceded in death by her sister, Sharon Greve; brother-in-law, Charles Nytes; and nephew Chris Greve.

**Gregg M. Nath '77** passed away March 28, 2020, in Luverne. Gregg farmed with his father and brothers and then moved to South Carolina where he worked for Walmart. He moved back to the Midwest in 1989 and worked at Sam's Club until he was no longer healthy enough to work.

Gregg is survived by his mother, Corrine Nath, Luverne; step-mother, Mary Jo Nath, Luverne; three brothers, **Michael '68** (Janet) Nath, Luverne; **Steve '70** (Wendy), Luverne; and **Thomas '85** (Lisa) Nath, Luverne; two sisters, **Pamela '80 (Michael '80)** Welch, Yankton, SD; and **Joni '83 (Kraig '82)** Keck, Sioux Falls; step brother, **Kevin '79** (Karen) Brandenburg, Burnsville; step sister, **Susan '81 (Randy '82)** Schneckloth, Luverne; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his brother, **Joel '72** Nath.

**Jamie A. Mohr '78** died January 14, 2020, in Sioux Falls, SD. Following graduation, Jamie began his over 42-year career working for MidAmerican Energy Company, Sioux Falls. On June 19, 1993, Jamie married Theresa Kafka-Button and her nine-year-old son, Jacob, in Yankton, SD. They lived in Luverne until 2004, when they moved to Sioux Falls.

Jamie is survived by his wife, Theresa Mohr, Sioux Falls; one son, Jacob Button, Kansas City, MO; his mother, Phyllis Mohr, Luverne; two sisters, **Valerie '75** (Clayton) Klumper, Pipestone, and **Felicia '81** (Jack) Hanson, Luverne; his mother-in-law, Delores Kafka, Yankton, SD; many nieces, nephews and friends.

Jamie was preceded in death by his father, Robert; his father-in-law, William T. Kafka; and his grandparents.

### 1990 – 1999

**Ryan A. Tofteland '98** passed away at home in Orono, MN, on February 28, 2020, after more than three and a half years with ALS. He was surrounded by family. At the peak of his career in software development, Ryan launched Toftware Consulting. In 2016, he joined a team at General Mills.

Ryan is survived by his wife, Martha; son, Finn (8); daughter, Liv (5); parents, **Steven '67** and Julie Tofteland, Luverne; siblings, **Jason '00** (Kate), **Rachel '03** (Brandon) and **John '05**; grandmother, Marguerite Johnson; and many more relatives and friends.

### *Let's Hear from YOU!*

Let us know what you are doing and we'll pass it on to other alumni. Include your **name, year of graduation, address, phone number and email** (also let us know if you would like your email in our directory of alumni).

Send your news to:

**Alumni News**  
**709 N. Kniss Avenue**  
**Luverne, Minnesota 56156**

Or email [luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us](mailto:luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us)

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### Online Alumni News

Have you checked out the Luverne Alumni News at [www.alumninews.info](http://www.alumninews.info) lately?

You are able to read your Alumni News online. It is available to all those that have internet, let us know you would like to discontinue the hard copy to go green (save postal expenses and a tree). Email Patti Pierson [piersonprp@alliancecom.net](mailto:piersonprp@alliancecom.net).

# Luverne Dollars for Scholars

## ... Did you know?

The Luverne Dollars for Scholars Chapter is a non-profit organization involving local volunteers who are interested in providing local students with financial assistance to pursue higher education. All of the funds raised by Luverne Dollars for Scholars remain in the community and are awarded to Luverne High School graduates.

The purpose of the program is to raise money for a permanent endowment fund and to annually disperse its income in the form of scholarships to Luverne High School graduates. Since its origin in 1983, Luverne Dollars for Scholars has awarded a total of \$4,609,225 to 1,875 LHS graduates.

It is not just the big donors who are the heart and soul of this organization. It's the countless individuals, including LHS Alumni, who have given donations ranging from \$5 to \$50,000 who have filled the organizations coffers.

Since its inception, the Luverne Dollars for Scholars program has been the benefactor of 269 perpetual scholarships with a total endowment of over \$9.0 million. The uniqueness of an endowment gift is that it allows a scholarship to be given each year and

every year, forever, to a fresh qualifying LHS graduate.

Gifts of \$249 or less are placed into the general fund. No designation is made on a scholarship. Gifts that are greater than \$249, but less than \$2,000, are also placed into the general fund. With this type of gift, the principle amount is dispersed as a one-time scholarship, and the name requested by the donor is attached to such a scholarship. A gift of \$2,000 or more becomes a perpetual scholarship. With a perpetual scholarship, only the earnings during a one-year period of time are awarded each and every year thereafter to a most recent LHS qualifying graduate. Incidentally, additional amounts may be added to a perpetual scholarship at any time.

If you would like to contribute to, or receive more information, please write:

Luverne Dollars for Scholars  
PO Box 822  
Luverne, MN 56156

Email: [luvernedfs@gmail.com](mailto:luvernedfs@gmail.com)

Call: 507-227-4030 (Johnna Ahrendt)

Or visit: [www.luverne.dollarsforscholars.org](http://www.luverne.dollarsforscholars.org)

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## *Help us keep a good thing going; Alumni News is a worthwhile cause to support*

The Alumni News is published by volunteers as a free gift for Luverne High School alumni who enjoy the quarterly updates on classmates and their hometown. This publication is the envy of school districts everywhere, as it also maintains a priceless database of our alumni dating back to classes that graduated decades ago. There are expenses incurred with printing, mailing and database support, and these costs are paid for with generous contributions from our alumni and readers.

Today, it's easier than ever to support our efforts with your donations.

Memorials and contributions may be sent to:

**Alumni News, 709 N. Kniss Avenue, Luverne, Minnesota 56156.**

OR donate online, **[www.alumninews.info](http://www.alumninews.info)** and click on the **DONATE** button.

*There was nothing more widely talked about in the United States and throughout the world than the influenza pandemic in 1918-1919. One of the most horrific results of WWI was how quickly the “Spanish flu” spread throughout the world. When our brave soldiers returned from the Great War in 1918, they brought this disease with them. From 1918 through 1919, historians estimate that between 20-40 million people died from the disease.*

History repeats itself ...

## Coronavirus of 2020 recalls Spanish Influenza of 1918-1919

**I**n 1918 and 1919, the world, the nation, the state and Rock County endured waves of flu that left more than weakness in their wake.

When Spanish influenza hit homes 100 years ago, it often developed into pneumonia and killed thousands of people. The young and vigorous were particularly vulnerable.

Spread globally through the trenches of war, Spanish influenza seemed to strike the whole world simultaneously.

The first cases of flu in the United States were reported in mid-September at Camp Devens, located about 30 miles west of Boston. The same day, the same influenza struck in Bombay, India.

In nine months the epidemic would claim at least 550,000 American lives.

In Minnesota an estimated 140,000 cases were reported, and more than 10,000 people died.

Before it had run its course the Spanish influenza took 20 million lives — as many as the war had claimed in four years. In the United States the death toll from influenza was five times the country’s death toll from the war.

Cemeteries and grave-diggers were swamped with bodies and funerals.

Although no one knows exactly where the virus came from, it seemed to spread as the Great War ended.

*Before it had run its course the Spanish influenza took 20 million lives — as many as the war had claimed in four years. In the United States the death toll from influenza was five times the country’s death toll from the war.*

*Cemeteries and grave-diggers were swamped with bodies and funerals.*

The fact that World War I, for the first time, drew soldiers from almost every country in the world to the European Theatre contributed to the universal spread of the flu.

### Rock County’s experiences with the flu epidemic

According to the Rock County Herald, right about the time the county rejoiced over the end of World War I, reports of deaths from flu began to accumulate.

Soldiers and nurses died of flu as well as wounds. It was as if the young people who survived the war were being tested even further.

According to “The History of Rock County in the World War,” 24 people were listed among the honored dead in service to their country during World War I. Of those, 12 died of pneumonia or influenza, one died of tubercular meningitis and one died of pulmonary tuberculosis, meaning 10 actually died of wounds or in action.

The burial records at Maplewood Cemetery in 1918 are sketchy, but at a cursory glance, at least 20 people buried there are listed as having died from flu and pneumonia during November and December 1918. The names of others who died from flu, according to the Herald, brings the total to epidemic proportions.

As was true around the world, the people who died were not old. They were people in their 20s and 30s. A whole generation was decimated by war and illness.

In the Oct. 1 issue of the Herald, George A. Snover, 23, of Kanaranzi Township was listed as the first Rock County man to die in the country’s service outside of members of Company A. He died of Spanish influenza at Ft. Snelling Hospital following a brief illness.

According to the Hills Crescent, the first soldier from the Hills community to die in the war was Milo Rollert, 22, who died of Spanish influenza on Oct. 14, 1918. His body was taken from the train directly to the

History repeats ... Spanish Influenza 1918-19/see page 11

## History repeats ... Spanish Influenza of 1919-19 /continued from page 11

cemetery where a short service was held. The practice was to become common as people tried to avoid potentially contagious crowds.

By the Oct. 18 issue of the Herald, all public schools, bowling halls, churches, theaters and pool halls in Luverne were closed to prevent the spread of influenza. Churches canceled services, following the lead of area towns such as Worthington, Rushmore and Adrian.

By Nov. 1, news of Miss Fyvie Horne's death reached Luverne. Two weeks before her death she had left Luverne for Fort Riley, Kan., to serve her country as an Army nurse. She was a graduate of Luverne High School and the University of Minnesota. Services for Miss Horne were conducted on the front lawn of the Horne home.

J.W. Gerber, an important Luverne businessman, died of apoplexy during the same time period. The Nov. 1 Herald said people who attended his services conducted on the front lawn of his home on West Main Street were instructed to stay in their "conveyances" for the ceremony.

The Herald reported when 14-year-old George H. Karlson died of influenza, no church service was allowed. Only a graveside service for the family was permitted at Maplewood. Karlson had left to join the circus in May and died when he was in Chicago. In subsequent weeks, the practice of outdoor funerals continued. Rites were conducted at the cemeteries, not in homes or churches.

At Pipestone, all public meetings of every kind including those of churches, lodges and schools had been prohibited. The Pipestone Star reported 200 cases of influenza.

As the stories of deaths from flu disseminated, fear and panic grew in the minds of survivors.

published symptoms and treatments for flu. Various advertisements claimed products would help prevent and treat flu.

Vicks Vaporub was advertised in the Crescent.

Dr. Pierce's Golden Medica Discovery anuric tablets

would help when combined with drinking broths, milk, buttermilk and eating ice cream. People were advised to "bathe foreheads, arms, and hands in tepid water in which one tablespoon of saleratus has been dissolved."

The list of deaths continued to grow on the pages of the Herald.

But the six-week ban on public gatherings was lifted on Dec. 2.

Editor Moreaux hastened to assure readers the life of the community was rapidly returning to normal.

Other people weren't so sure. Only about two-thirds of the pupils were in attendance at the school. "The large number of absentees is thought to be due more to fear of the

epidemic on the part of the parents, however, than to any great number of influenza cases among the children ... Every precaution is being exercised to prevent infection in the schools, and no further difficulty is expected."

He spoke too soon, however. A hundred years later, one wonders if pressures from businesses being hurt by the pre-Christmas closings might have affected the decision to lift the ban.

On Dec. 13, headlines in the Herald said, "Influenza Epidemic Becoming Serious. The Conditions in Rock County are Growing Bad."

In the Hills Crescent of Dec. 18, 1918, Miss Tilla Rossum who went to serve as a Red Cross nurse in Camp Custer, Mich., wrote back to her local paper.

"I reached here the same time as the Spanish influenza epidemic, so got in on the excitement proper.

*Miss Tilla Rossum who went to serve as a Red Cross nurse in Camp Custer, Mich., wrote back to her local paper. "I reached here the same time as the Spanish influenza epidemic, so got in on the excitement proper. It broke out Friday and by Sunday, it was going full blast. Patients were hauled in by the hundreds and the receiving station was a sight to behold filled to its utmost capacity, each one awaiting his turn to be assigned to a ward."*

*She reported every nurse had 75 to 100 patients to care for, and they worked 15- to 18-hour shifts. "I could write a volume on the sadness and horrors of it all ... but anyone who has witnessed such an epidemic will have a horror of the mere mention of the word ever afterwards," she wrote.*

## History repeats ... Spanish Influenza of 1819-19 /continued from page 11

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“I could write a volume on the sadness and horrors of it all ... but anyone who has witnessed such an epidemic will have a horror of the mere mention of the word ever afterwards,” she wrote.

As whole families were struck with flu, people were afraid to help one another.

The Herald said, “One of the worst features of the situation is the inability to secure nurses or aid of any kind in caring for the sick.

Physicians state that not only among the people generally is there a lack of cooperative spirit in extending aid, but that in many instances, persons competent to serve as nurses and who ordinarily act as nurses are refusing to go out. Owing to the large amount of sickness and the condition of the roads, the physicians are absolutely unable to cope with the situation without the fullest cooperation of those competent to serve as nurses and the people in general.”

But it was understandable. In many instances, those who went to care for sick family members died in their efforts to help.

Both William and Ida Lukowski, brother and sister, ages 34 and 30 respectively, died of flu. Ida Black, age 23, nursed her husband Jesse Black, 29, and they both died of flu, leaving three small sons as orphans. Both Mr. and Mrs. John Thompson of Sherman, S. D., died of the disease.

The Red Cross worked to create a hospital in Luverne. The O.A Shelby residence on the corner of Crawford and E. Park was converted into a hospital.

District court term was curtailed.

Christmas programs in area churches were

restricted, and the traditional New Year’s Fireman’s Ball was canceled for the first time in 32 years because of flu.

While Luverne appeared to weather the worst of the epidemic by the end of the year, the rural areas of Rock County continued to suffer.

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The Jan. 3, 1919, Herald reported “Death Takes Heavy Toll Around Kenneth.” Mrs. A.G. (Nellie) Knowlton, wife of a county commissioner, died. Subsequent issues listed the obituaries of those who died of flu. Postmaster A.G. Solem died of flu.

In the January 17, 1919, Herald, headlines read, “Influenza epidemic found many victims. Incomplete reports show there were 412 cases in city during October, November and December.” The paper reported 33 pneumonia cases with 13 deaths.

City Health Officer S.L. Sherman said more than 600 cases of influenza developed

in Luverne during the last three months of 1918.

The writer of the news article fine-tuned his statistics by saying if a person counted flu deaths, there were none. However, if one counted the flu that developed into pneumonia, it was another story. He wrote, “The large percentage of deaths clearly indicates that influenza-pneumonia is much more fatal than any other form of pneumonia.

“The number of cases of influenza in the county, outside of Luverne, during the three-month period cannot be estimated, as there are no reports upon which an estimate can be based,” he wrote.

In April 1919 the school board discovered only nine teachers decided to return to teach in the Luverne public schools.

They had 17 positions to fill. They also decided to continue classes for the current term until June 13, 1919, so that they could make up four of the six weeks of school lost because of the flu.

**The following appeared in the Rock County Herald on October 18, 1918:**

## INFLUENZA CLOSES ALL PUBLIC PLACES

### Luverne Schools, Churches, Theatres and Pool Halls are Closed as Measures of Prevention

*ONLY FEW CASES HAVE DEVELOPED IN LUVERNE*

Rapid spread of Dread Disease is, However, Feared—School Teachers Deputized Police officers

**A**t a meeting of the board of education held yesterday morning the Luverne schools were ordered closed at noon.

All theatres, billiard halls, bowling alleys, dance halls, and other purely amusement places in Luverne were closed last night under an order issued by Dr. C.L. Sherman, as chairman of the city board of health.

This action was taken as a preventive against the possible spread of the influenza epidemic which is sweeping over the country, and which has manifested itself in Luverne and other sections of the county.

In connection with the closing of the schools Mayor C.O. Wright has conferred deputy police power on all the instructors and teachers with authority to keep the school children from congregating on the streets or elsewhere, and the teachers will put in their time discharging this duty.

Parents are requested to co-operate to the fullest extent with the authorities in seeing that the children observe every precaution against being exposed to the disease.

While there are not a great many cases of influenza in Luverne or the surrounding country, and few if any of them are regarded as especially serious, the closing of Luverne's amusement places was deemed advisable because of the fact that practically all surrounding towns of similar population had already taken like action.

This action was further considered necessary owing to the ideal weather conditions, coupled with the excellent roads, which appeared to be making Luverne especially popular with pleasure seekers from the towns on which the lid had been clamped, as this would ordinarily serve to spread the disease. For instance, motorists from many of the surrounding county seat towns were here for the Fiske O'Hara entertainment Wednesday evening.

Worthington, Rushmore and Adrian had put a ban on all amusement places the first of the week, and

the public schools of Worthington and Adrian have been closed. Conditions in these towns were reported Wednesday evening as being highly satisfactory, however, and every precaution was being taken to prevent the spread of the disease.

At Pipestone all public meetings of every kind, including those of churches, lodges and schools, had been prohibited, amusement places closed, and school children required to remain at home at all times.

Tuesday's Star announced that there were two hundred cases of influenza in that city, but that the situation was considered quite favorable as no new cases had developed within the previous twenty-four hours.

Sioux Falls had clamped the lid on equally tight, but at Rock Rapids it had not been deemed necessary to close the public places or the schools up to Wednesday night. It was said that there were only a few cases of influenza there, but three recent deaths in one family there were attributed to this affliction.

In keeping with the trend of public sentiment in regard to the matter a number of the pastors of the Luverne churches met yesterday morning and decided to issue the following notice to members of their congregations:

As a precautionary measure against the spread of the Spanish influenza in the city, the following churches will be closed for two weeks or until further notice from the board of health:

Synod Lutheran  
German Evangelical  
United Norwegian  
Trinity Episcopal  
Methodist Episcopal  
Baptist  
St. Catherine's  
Presbyterian

## Fear of influenza drove mother to kill her children

Everyone in America was worried about influenza and concerned it could happen to them.

Mrs. Clara Hanson, wife of Harold Hanson, of Sherman, S.D., was no different. Although all the members of her family had been unusually free from illness and even colds during the fall and winter of 1918-1919, Mrs. Hanson had never ceased to worry since the influenza epidemic set in. In letters to her mother, Clara wrote how fortunate they were to escape illness so far, and in fact that whole families residing in and around Sherman had been afflicted with the disease at virtually the same time, with deaths not infrequent, had made a deep impression upon Ms. Hanson, and served to magnify her fear for her own family's welfare.

The story of the heart-rending Hanson tragedy began like this: The husband and father, Harold Hanson, conducted a garage in the village of Sherman. He also operated the electric light plant, co-located in his garage. Following his usual custom, he arose in the morning at about 6 am. He went to his garage to switch on the electric current, it being the practice to shut off the light at 11 pm at night and to turn on the current again at 6 am.

Ordinarily, Mr. Hanson returned home in about twenty minutes, but Friday morning, when he left the garage, he met a fellow businessman and learning that the latter's daughter had died during the night from influenza, stopped to console him and attempt to lighten his grief.

While Mr. Hanson was talking to the bereaved father, another fellow citizen came up and asked Mr. Hanson to make an auto drive for him. Mr. Hanson stated that he did not feel justified in leaving his family for the length of time required for the drive, but volunteered to assist the man in finding someone else to make the drive, and in doing this he was delayed so that he did not return home until about 7 am.

Upon entering the house, Mr. Hanson went to the room occupied by Mrs. Hanson and Milo. Both were lying in their bed, and the baby greeted him with a smile, but upon coming closer to the child he discovered the ugly wound in his head, and gaining an inkling of what had taken place, ran out of doors to summon neighbors. Members of the family of Postmaster Brennan, who lived next door, accompanied Mr. Hanson back to his home. Investigation disclosed the four other children having occupied

rooms on the second floor and about fifteen minutes after Mr. Hanson had first returned home, the baby died.

**This is what had happened:** Mrs. Clara Hanson (age 35) shot and killed all five of her children and made an unsuccessful attempt to take her own life early Friday morning, January 24, 1919 at her home in Sherman, SD. The children were shot as they lay asleep in their beds, and death was instantaneous with all of them except the baby, who lived only a short time after.

Dead were DOROTHY—age 13; HAROLD—age 11; HAZEL—age 4; LORRAINE—age 3; and MILO—age 1. After shooting her children, Clara endeavored to send a bullet into her own brain, but the lead missile took a glancing course around the left side of her head to a point back of the ear, and did not enter the skull, although inflicted a severe scalp wound.

The deliberate and methodical manner in which the mother took the lives of her loved ones could only be accounted for by mental derangement brought on by the long and continuous period of magnified fear over the possibility of their death from the prevailing epidemic of influenza.

A 22 caliber, seven-shot revolver was used. Harold and Milo were each shot three times—through the temple, the heart and the forehead. The other three children were each shot twice—once through the temple and once through the heart. That the fear-racked mother shot herself only once is accounted for by the supposition that when the bullet struck her forehead she was stunned for a few moments, and before she fully regained consciousness she was found by Mr. Hanson. Thirteen shots were discharged which necessitated reloading the revolver, and there remained one unused shell in the chamber of the gun.

Mrs. Hanson later expressed fear that Mr. Hanson might be blamed for the crime, and accordingly insisted upon dictating and signing a statement in which she admitted that she had shot the children, and absolved the husband and father from all blame. She explained that she felt that the children and she would all be better off dead than to have to go through long periods of suffering with influenza. She has also since told how she went from one room to another and shot the children, that she shot the eldest son, Harold, first. After shooting him twice, she noticed he seemed to be struggling and accordingly shot him the third time to end his suffering.

# Reunions in the Making

Please send change of address to Alumni News or email: [piersonprp@alliancecom.net](mailto:piersonprp@alliancecom.net)

## CLASS OF 1965 55th Class Reunion June 5-7, 2020 BUFFALO DAYS WEEKEND

FRIDAY: Meet and celebrate at the Buffalo Days Cruise-In on Main Street

SATURDAY: Reunion Party at The Lake  
Meet at the Party Room for a casual catered supper & social starting at 4 pm  
\$15/PERSON—\$30/COUPLE

SUNDAY: Meet for coffee, juice & rolls  
(location TBD)

RSVP: MAY 15 DEADLINE  
Jeanne Bowron: [jrbowron@gmail.com](mailto:jrbowron@gmail.com)

## 20 Years Of Luverne Girls High School Hockey All Hockey Girls Plan on Attending!

June 6<sup>th</sup> 2020  
At Take 16 Brewing Co.

10am: Players Float for Parade

1-3pm: Skating at BMIA

5 pm: Supper for players  
(*& invite your parents please!*)

RSVP by May 1: \$10/person  
Meal by Bluestem Catering

RSVP or Info:  
Dave Siebenahler—507-290-1402  
[hockey2742@hotmail.com](mailto:hockey2742@hotmail.com)  
Dana Klay—[danaklay1@gmail.com](mailto:danaklay1@gmail.com)

## LUVERNE PUBLIC SCHOOL ALL SCHOOL REUNION



July 15—18, 2021

Kicking off with Luverne's  
59th Annual Hot Dog Nite!



Contact: [luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us](mailto:luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us)

## CLASS OF 1975—45th REUNION

With regret, the Class of '75 decided to POSTPONE  
our 45th Class Reunion to 2021.  
We just want everyone stay safe.  
Look for the upcoming details!

## CLASS OF 1958

62nd Informal Class Reunion  
Wednesday—April 1, 2020

11:30 am—Pizza Ranch—Luverne  
If any questions: Pat Ahrendt—507.283.8894

## CLASS OF 1970 50th Reunion POSTPONED!



Planning the celebration  
in 2021 during the  
ALL SCHOOL REUNION!

Monitor details on Facebook  
as they become available:  
**LHS 1970**

## CLASS OF 2010 10th Reunion

Sat: August 1, 2020  
At Take 16 Brewing Co.  
From 4 to 7 pm  
For more info email:  
[luverneclass10@gmail.com](mailto:luverneclass10@gmail.com)

**WHAT WE'VE HEARD:** Class of 1965 graduates Loree Unitiedt Davis, Jayona Collins Bowman, Virginia Oye Peters and Joe Kafka reminisced about old times during a get-together on a beautiful March day in sunny Arizona.

**Alumni News Staff:** Cindy Arends, Jane Wildung Lanphere, Carol Schumacher Serie,  
Johnna Ahrendt, Patti Kirby Pierson, Rock County Opportunities and Lori Sorenson.

**1304145**

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**Alumni News**  
709 North Kniss Avenue  
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**Luverne**  
*Love the life!*

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