



*Now open on Main Street*



## Restaurant breathes new life into old building

**By Lori Sorenson**

Sterling's Café and Grille opened this month in Luverne's historic arcade building across from the Palace Theatre.

Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner, the business has created a renewed buzz in Luverne's downtown, with people coming and going, stopping in shops on their way to and

from the restaurant.

Diners can be seen through the 14-foot-high plate glass arched windows in what owner Brian Sterling calls "a high-end atmosphere in a casual setting. You can enjoy formal dining without having to dress up."

**Sterling's Cafe and Grille/see page 10**

# Honor Roll of Alumni News Contributors

Compiled by  
Johnna Bowron Ahrendt

During this past quarter, the Alumni News received money in the form of memorials and gifts totalling \$3,319. 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 for your support!**

## Memorials

**Karen (Schmuck) Widboom '70**  
Lona (Gabrielson) Klosterbuer '70  
Rick '70 & Carol  
(Schumacher) '70 Serie  
Class of 1970

**Jeff Menage '82**  
D.J. Cross '82

**Gerald "Jerry" V. Wethor - friend**  
Timothy Wethor '81  
Stephen Wethor '84  
Kathleen (Wethor) Bluhm '86  
Robert Wethor '92  
Susan (Wethor) Wineland '95  
Mary Odland - friend

**Joyce Matthiesen - friend**  
John '45 & Imogene (Lemke) '47 Krogmann

**Sondra (Anderson) Membrez '54**  
Gail Drue (Gilbertson)  
Denham '54

**Randy Ripley '67**  
Judy (Steiner) Top '67  
Sally Ripley '73

**Henry Kelderman '67**  
Judy (Steiner) Top '67

**Frank Kadinger '50**  
Helen (Kadinger) Dukelow '51

**Paulette (Ripley) Brunner '68**  
Dawn Maxwell '73  
Sally Ripley '73

**Beverly (Bell) Haraldson '58**  
Beverly (Christensen)  
Kloostra '57

**Deborah Rinkel '73**  
Robert Rinkel '68

**Gordon Backer '47**  
Keith '49 & Betty (Hansen) '50 Luethje  
Doris Schoon '47

**George "Tussy" Ringen '49**  
Keith '49 & Betty (Hansen) '50 Luethje

**Paul Gabrielson '70**  
Lona (Gabrielson) Klosterbuer '70  
Rick '70 & Carol  
(Schumacher) '70 Serie  
Class of 1970

**1964 Deceased Classmates**  
Class of 1964

**Russell Ripley '45**  
Sally Ripley '73

**Robert N. Main '32**  
Sally (Main) Adrian - friend

**1957 Deceased Classmates**  
David Garcia '57

**1959 Deceased Classmates**  
Vance Dykhouse '59

Curtis Dooyema '59

**Garnett (Ahrendt) Williamson '59**  
Thomas Getman '59

**Dr. Albert C. Martin – friend**  
Tim '67 & Connie (Vegge) '68  
Connell

**Martha Wiggins '47**  
Doris Schoon '47

**Allen Holling '59**  
Denice (Pierson) Seeley '61  
Ruth (VanBatavia) Wallig '63

**Brad Stepp '74**  
Jono Bot '74

**Elmer Moeller '52**  
Arlen '53 & Martha Olson

## Contributions

Amy Boyenga - friend  
Marilyn (Hatting) Holland '55  
Joel Green '54  
Harold "Jet" Jetter '41  
Dolly Talbert – teacher  
James Nelson '62  
Mary Ann (Oeding) Scheffert '61  
Norman & Joyce (Reemts) '47  
Wessels  
Sandra Hitch '63

### 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. The chances are your contribution was received after this page was compiled on Dec. 31. Please watch for the next issue in April 2015 for additional names of *Alumni News* contributors.**

## Alumni News Financial Summary

Balance 9/30/14	\$755.70
Donations	\$3,319.00
Expenses	
Printing	\$982.26
Database	\$147.00
Postage	\$1,607.49
Labels	\$201.39
Office supplies	\$51.73
Balance 12/31/14	\$1,084.83

# What We've Heard . . . Compiled by Jane Wildung Lanphere

Alumni News was honored to receive this update from LHS 1941 graduate, **H. M. "Jet" JETTER:**

"A Fantastic Life" are the words that H. M. "Jet" Jetter uses to describe his life. Jet has enjoyed every moment of the last 93 years. Enlisting at the age of 15 as a private in the Air Force and serving 26 years, Jet retired as a lieutenant colonel.

During his military career he served in WWII in the submarine patrol, B-24 and B-52 bombing missions in Korea and SAC (B-29 and B-52) during the Cold War. Jet also served as an airline captain for the US Atomic Energy Commission for 15 years before his retirement.

Through his career, Jetter flew 23 different aircraft, primarily B-24, C-54, C-47, B-29, KC-97, DC-9 and B-52. In his 42 year flying career he logged over 20,000 hours of flight time. "Jet" thanks the good Lord for His guidance. He is extremely grateful for his 60 years with his faithful and every loving wife, Alice and their 5 wonderful children. "My career in the aviation field and the U.S. Air Force was superb."

**MARILYN C. (Hatting) HOLLAND (LHS 1955)** sends greetings to all readers

**Let's Hear from YOU!**  
Let us know what you are doing and we'll pass it on to other alumni. Complete and then place this form in an envelope and mail to:



**Alumni News**  
**709 N. Kniss Avenue,**  
**Luverne, MN 56156 or email: [luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us](mailto:luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Check here  if you wish to have your e-mail address included in the directory.

Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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of the **Alumni News**. From her home in Tempe, AZ she writes: "My sis, **PAT (Hatting) PHILLIPS (LHS 1959)**, lives just 5 blocks from me. We both love reading about "home!" Keep up the good work. "**Go Cardinals**" – *Luverne & Arizona!*

**ARLENE (Veldkamp) HAAK (LHS 1964)** writes

from her home in Oakes, ND: "I enjoy getting the Luverne Alumni News! My husband and I celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on September 23, 2014. We farm outside Oakes, ND."

**Check out the photo on page 14 of the great looking Luverne Alumni who celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion this summer. Go LHS 1954!**

Luverne Alumni – fellow alumni **Sally Ripley** would love to read some stories about fun at "Ripco's." If you have some memories to share, please forward them to the Luverne Area Chamber for inclusion in the next edition of Alumni News!

# Remembering our Classmates ... compiled by Carol McDonald

## 1940-1949

**Clarence Benjamin Stavenger '40** died on November 4, 1997 in Pipestone, MN.

After graduation he was employed by the A&P Food Grocery Store Company, working in several locations in Minnesota. On June 24, 1946 he married Lavonne Jones.

Following their marriage, they resided in Pipestone where he owned and operated the Eagle Café with his brother John. In 1954 they moved to Luverne where he worked at the Rock County Bank. In 1955 they returned to Pipestone where he worked at First National Bank for 27 years. In 1979 he retired from the bank as a Vice President.

He enjoyed playing golf, he was an avid football fan and loved woodworking as a hobby. He is survived by his wife, Lavonne Stavenger, four children, Dave (Heidi) Stavenger, Tom (Ruth) Stavenger, Jim (Carolyn) Stavenger and Mary (Harlan) Zeinstra, 11 grandchildren and one brother.

**Frederick B Wiggins '44** died November 14, 2014 in Rochester Hill, MI. After graduation he enlisted in the Navy as a Seabee, and after boot camp and other technical training, traveled by ship to Guam where he repaired heavy diesel equipment.

He went on to earn a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Indiana Technical College in 1951 and a master's degree in automotive engineering from Chrysler Institute of Engineering in 1953.

After graduating, Fred worked as an engineer at Chrysler developing automatic transmissions and later designing rear axles.

He was an accomplished engineer and inventor who received several U.S. Patents. In 1969, Fred became the resident engineer and manager of quality control for the Chrysler Detroit Axel Plant. In 1988, he retired from Chrysler after 37 years of service.

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He worked as a consultant for Chrysler until 1994. In his

spare time, he was an accomplished car restorer, stain glass craftsman and volunteer at Angel's Place.

Fred is survived by his wife Gloria, his children, Jean Lewis, Tim (Debbie), Chris (Ann Marie), Dennis (Carrie) Nina Walters (Bob), Maria Mularoni (Dave), Mike (Kim), Margaret Fabeck (John), Marianne Peck (Jim), Linda Ingraham (Blair), and Rob McEachern (Laura), grandchildren, and great grandchildren, a brother **James '42** and brother-in-law, Dean Thul.

**Gordon Backer '47** died October 2, 2014 at his home in Wausau, WI of complications from Parkinson's disease.

After graduation he attended Macalester College in St. Paul and then medical school at the University of Minnesota. He married Arlene Isaacson in March of 1954 in Litchfield.

He was a medical intern in Seattle, Washington, and then served as a Navy flight surgeon in Pensacola, Florida. After his military service, he was a family physician in Little Falls.

In 1960 he began an ophthalmology residency in Rochester. Following completion of his residency in 1963, he and Arlene moved to Wausau where he joined ophthalmology practitioner Dr. Otis Wilson.

In 1965 Gordon and his brother, Bill Backer, formed the Backer Eye Clinic and he practiced at the Eye Clinic until his retirement in 1995.

Gordon was well known for his passion for improving the quality of life and economic vitality of the Wausau area.

He is survived by his wife, Arlene; and four sons, Carl Backer, Eric Backer, Tom Backer, and Paul (Gus) Backer

**George Ringen '49** died September 25, 2014 in Sioux Falls, SD.

George enlisted in the United States army in 1950, and fought in the Korean War, he was honorably discharged in 1952.

George married Pat Lewis August

1, 1954. He started at KELO-TV in 1955, where he retired as News Director in 1977.

George and Pat moved to Ft. Pierre, SD in 1977 and owned and then retired from Carl's Bait Shop.

They moved to Sioux Falls in 2011, where they made their home at Washington Crossings.

He was an outdoorsman, an El Riad Shriner, Shriners Children's Hospital Volunteer along with being a Shrine Clown. George is survived by his wife, Patricia, son Bill (Kim) Ringen, one granddaughter and 2 great-grandsons and many, many friends.

## 1950-1959

**Joan Houser Hagedorn '51** of Tuxedo Park N.Y passed away on May 7, 2014 peacefully in her sleep.

She married Jerry Deane Houser in 1965 and they lived in many places until finally setting up home in Kansas City, MO.

Joan was a devoted mother, and had many jobs in the insurance field. Her passion was reading and she loved spy thrillers.

She is survived by her son J. Deane Houser, and three grandchildren.

**Sondra Anderson McCune Membrez '54** died in her home in Lake Elmo, MN on June 24, 2014.

She survived polio in 1948, but was haunted by its effects her entire life.

She married Bob McCune and moved to Stillwater where she raised her family. In 1980 she and George Membrez were married.

They lived in Stillwater, MN, Hemet, CA and Prescott, AZ. Sondi returned to Minnesota in the late 1990s and lived near her children in Lake Elmo.

Sondi was eccentric by most standards and made many generations of family and friends laugh at her antics. She loved her kids unconditionally and probably loved her cats as much. She enjoyed being in the kitchen and could be found, at midnight when she had insomnia, making a batch of soup to feed an

## Remembering our classmates/continued from page 4

army. Gardening of both flowers and vegetables was passion and she could barely wait each spring to get her fingernails dirty. She treasured her family and friends and always had "the more the merrier" attitude at holiday dinners.

She is survived by her children, Shelly McCune (Pete Dupuis), Wes McCune (Allie), Dawn McCune, and step children, Greg Membrez (Anna Ferreira), James Membrez (Danica), Michelle Membrez, and Georgene Membrez, 14 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren along with her half siblings, Janice Arnold, Garth MacDonald and Keivar MacDonald.

### 1960-1969

**James O Skyberg '66** died November 13, 2014 in Sioux Falls South Dakota.

On December 6, 1969 he married Gayle Aleck in Luverne. They made their home in Luverne and later moved to South St. Paul where he worked at St. Paul Dressed Beef packing plant. James then moved back to Luverne where he worked in construction.

He later moved to Dell Rapids and worked for John Morrell Company for several years until his recent retirement. James enjoyed classic cars, and working on cars, woodworking, electronics and exploring new ideas on the internet.

He is survived by his daughter Tracy (Doug) Boneson, two granddaughters, nine siblings, **Eunice '60** (Donald) Wynn, **Edith '60** (Clarence) Else, David (Beverly) Skyberg, Steven ( Deborah) Skyberg, **Dale Skyberg '70, Donna '72** ( John) O'Donnell, **Janice '75** Otterson, **Greg '80** (Debrah) Skyberg, and **Kent '82** (Jennifer) Skyberg, a sister-in-law Patricia Skyberg; and many relatives and friends.

### 1970-1979

**Paul Gabrielson '70** died Dec. 7, 2014.

After graduation he worked for his dad in the family business, Gabrielson Cattle Corporation, as part owner. In 1988 Paul moved to Askov, and in 1989 he married Dina Beavens in Pine City. He enjoyed four-wheeling and helping his family and friends.

Paul is survived by his wife, Dina; his two daughters, **Amanda Gabrielson '93, Kirsten '92** (Damon) Eisma, **John '99** (Molly) Gabrielson, three sisters, **Joan Hurtig '59, Penny Gabrielson '68** and Mary (Richard) Harldson, a brother **Gary '66** (Marsha) Gabrielson; nine grandchildren; an uncle Arnold Gabrielson; his father-in-law, Bud (Leon) Beavens; several sisters and brothers-in-law; several nieces and nephews; and many friends.

**Karen Schmuck Widboom'70** died October 25, 2014, at the New Richland Care Center.

After graduation Karen attended Southwest State University for two years. From there she began working several secretarial positions in Pipestone and Slayton.

She married Pat Widboom in Luverne on December 27, 1975. They began their life together on Pat's farm north of Slayton. She worked at the Slayton International farm equipment company and later at the ASCA office. She also began selling Tupperware and Avon during this time. Her love of Avon continued through August of this year-almost 40 years.

In 1984 they moved to Redding, CA, but moved back to St. Cloud in December of 1985 so Pat could begin working on his teaching degree. Teaching took them to several places ending up in Waseca, MN where they have been since 1997. Karen worked as a paraprofessional in the Moorhead, Waseca and NRHEG school districts. She enjoyed sewing, craft projects, canoeing and camping in state parks.

Karen is survived by her Husband, Patrick Widboom; a son Michael (Jen) Widboom and a granddaughter; a brother, Allen (Jan) Schmuck and a nephew, Andrew (Nicolette) Schmuck.

## *PayPal is here!!!!*

Have you ever wished it were more convenient to give a donation to the Alumni News? We are pleased to announce a PayPal account has now been set up to accept online donations.

Visit **www.alumninews.info**  
and click on the **DONATE** button. It's easy.

Thank you for your support.

# Herman Jochims' New Palace Theatre



Photo 1915-1920

Main Street paving began fall 1920

## Thanks for the Memories

*Luverne Alumni asked to share memories of Luverne's Historic Palace Theatre, which celebrates 100 years in 2015*

Alumni News will be featuring a series of articles in 2015 about the Historic Palace Theatre. The Palace will celebrate its 100th anniversary next year. Alumni are invited to share photos, stories, articles and other memories about the Palace Theatre. Please send your contributions by email to [luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us](mailto:luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us), call Jane at 507 283-4061 or mail them to the Luverne Area Chamber, 213 East Luverne Street, Luverne, MN 56156.

The southeast corner of Main Street and Freeman Avenue has always been an important part of the history of Luverne and Rock County.

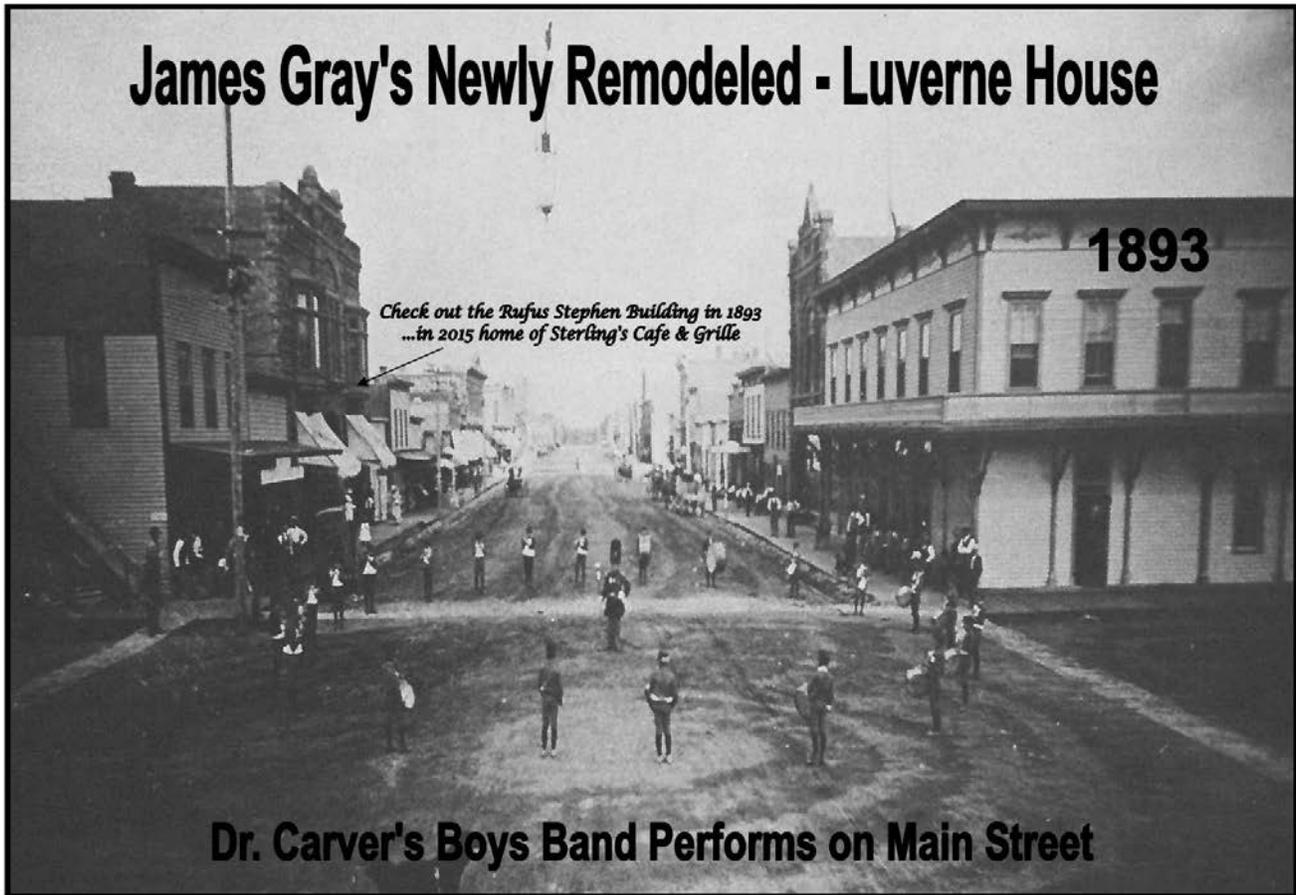
Today, this corner is home to the Historic Palace Theatre. As this theatre celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, we thought it is fitting that history and memories are shared and retold.

In this edition of **Alumni News** we invite

you to read the history of the building's birth and construction. Over the course of the year, additional information will be shared. If you have a story, photo or memory of the Palace Theatre to share, please send the information to:

**Luverne Area Chamber -**  
**213 East Luverne Street - Luverne, MN 56156 or**  
**[luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us](mailto:luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us)**

# James Gray's Newly Remodeled - Luverne House



## OUR HISTORIC PALACE THEATRE

In the early 1870's, B.S. Wold built a general merchandise store and residence on the southwest corner of Main and Oakley. (Many of us might fondly remember that building with a different business venture, Leo's Grocery.) With the growth of Luverne, Wold made the bold step to move "uptown" and build a new store on the southeast corner of Main Street and Freeman Avenue in the late 1870's. By 1883, with partners A. J. Warren (grain merchandiser) and Daniel Stone (grocer), Wold enlarged and improved his building which became known as the Union Block.

By 1886, the building also housed the Commercial Hotel operated by Mike McCarthy which became the Hotel Luverne operated by Joles and Johnson. In 1892, the hotel was purchased by James Gray and remodeled. It was renamed the Luverne House.

The July 17, 1914 **Rock County Herald** printed a story that was probably the most significant transaction that ever happened to that property:

**"Luverne To Have New Opera House Big Brick Block To Go Up"**

**"Iowa Man Buys Union Block and Will Build Brick Structure to Cover Entire Property - Ground Floor to be Used for Mercantile Establishments and Second Floor for Opera House."**

"Union Block, as the property is commonly called, was sold yesterday by John Brewer to Herman

Jochims of Schleswig, IA for \$12,000. The property has a frontage of 75 feet on Main Street and 136 feet on Freeman Avenue, and the building there-on is one of the old landmarks of the city. According to the present plans of the new owner, this old land mark is soon to be razed and a brick building to cover the entire property to be erected thereon."

"Mr. Jochims, who is said to be a man of large means, stated yesterday that he had purchased the property for the purpose of erecting a fine opera house thereon, and that his plans are to fit the ground floor for mercantile establishments and the second floor for an opera house. The store buildings will be leased, but Mr. Jochims and his son will themselves conduct the opera house."

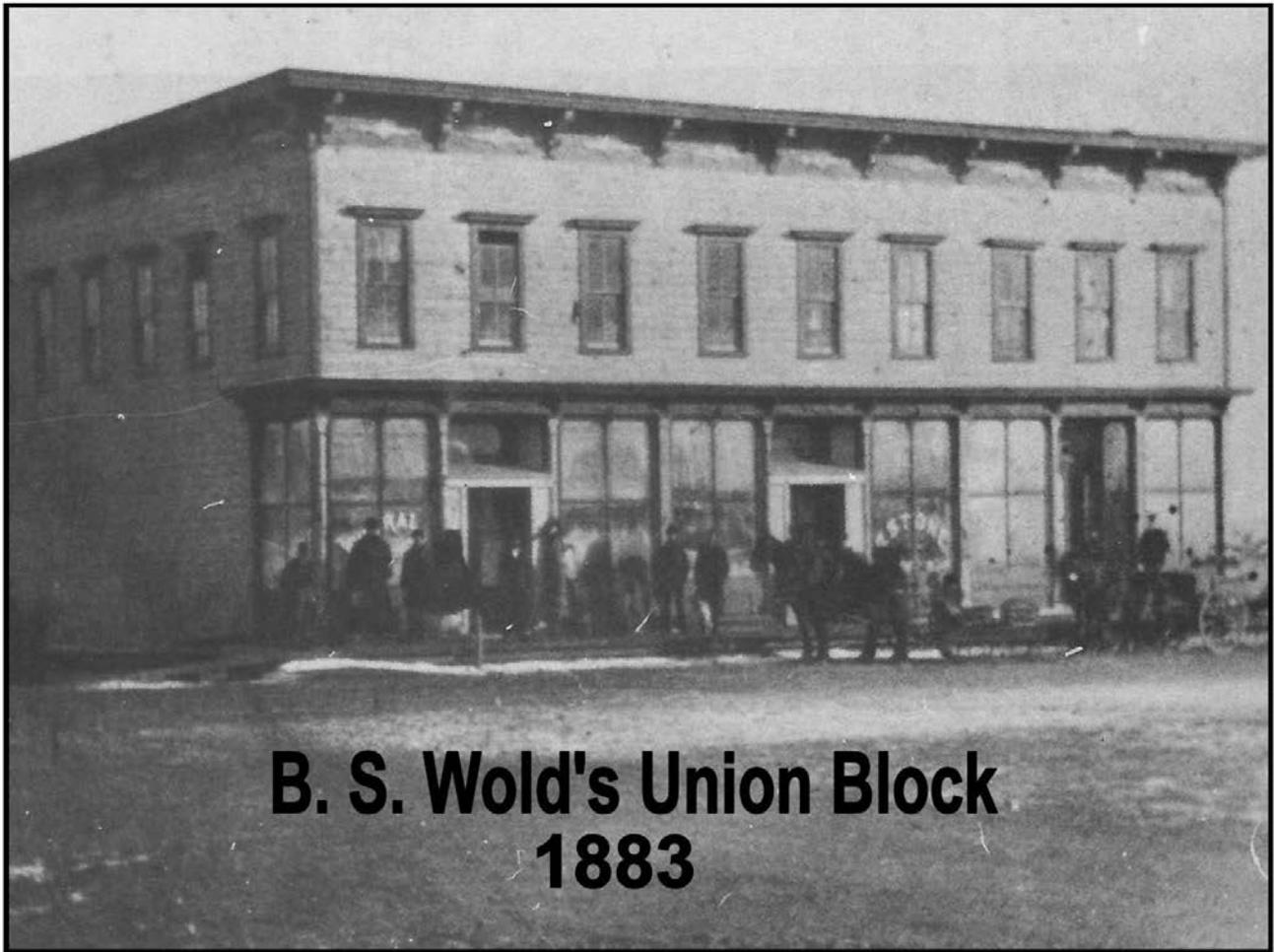
"The implement firm of Kartrude Brothers has a lease on part of the property which will not expire until the first of next January. As soon as this lease expires preparations for the construction of the new building will be started."

The following story appeared in the January 22, 1915 **Rock County Herald**:

**"Opera House To Be Built"**

**"Definite Assurance of Fine New Opera House"**

(Continued on page 8)



## B. S. Wold's Union Block 1883

***for Luverne is Given and Work Will Be Started Soon."***

*"Big Brick Structure on Union Block Corner"*

*"Thoroughly Modern Opera House, Two Store Rooms and Dance Hall will be Contained in New Building."*

*"Positive assurance that Luverne will this year secure a new, thoroughly modern opera house representing an investment of approximately \$40,000 was given this week by Herman Jochims of Schleswig, Iowa. He is the owner of the property known as Union Block and the new play house will occupy that site."*

*"Mr. Jochims arrived here Monday and remained here until Wednesday evening working out general plans for the new structure, which will be a brick building 63 feet by 135 feet in ground dimensions, and the two full stories high, that will be similar in architecture and interior arrangements to that of the Orpheum Theatre in Sioux Falls."*

*"The plans provide for two store rooms for rental purpose at the front of the building, with an entrance way 14 feet wide extending north and south through the center of the building to the opera house proper."*

*"The store on the east of the entrance will be 23 feet wide and extend 60 feet, and on the west side the store room will be 23 feet wide and 48 feet long."*

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*"The opera house or auditorium will be located at the south end of the structure, with the stage*

*adjoining the alley, and will occupy a space about 63 by 75 feet. At the rear of the auditorium will be a balcony and on each side two opera boxes. In the front end of the second floor, immediately over the entrance way and two store rooms, a dance hall will be provided with floor space 50 by 60 feet."*

*"Entrance to the hall and to the balcony and opera boxes will be gained by stairways at the rear of the store room on the west wide of the entrance way, and immediately adjoining the stairways on the south will be the ticket office. The plans also call for another and smaller stairway leading to the dance hall and balcony at the rear of the store rooms on the east side, and provision is made for entrance to the opera boxes from the stage."*

*"Aisles at the center and extreme sides of the auditorium are provided for. They extend north and south, and side aisles lead onto the stage, connecting with the doors opening onto the alley."*

*"The seating capacity of the auditorium will be 520, that of the balcony 144 and each of the opera boxes will accommodate 4 people."*

*"These plans will at once be submitted to the state fire marshal and if they meet with this official's approval plans and specifications will be prepared and submitted to the common council. Mr. Jochims will return to Luverne the first part of February and expects to*

*(continued on page 9)*

## Palace Theatre/continued from page 8

start work on the new project March 1<sup>st</sup>.”

“Mr. Jochims has conducted the opera house at Schleswig, Iowa, for a number of years and is said to be not only thoroughly familiar with all the requirements of such a venture, but also has ample means to carry out the large project that he has undertaken here.”

“He recently disposed of his opera house at Schleswig, and gives possession February 1<sup>st</sup>.”

Luverne is “buzzing” with excitement on Friday, March 26, 1915 when the **Rock County Herald** penned the following story:

### **“New Opera House Contract Awarded”**

#### **“Greene and Jensen of this City, Secure Contract for building Luverne’s New \$40,000 Opera House”**

“The contract for the erection of Luverne’s new \$40,000 opera house, was awarded yesterday afternoon to Green and Jensen by Herman Jochims of Schleswig, IA, owner of Union Block, which will be the site of the new structure. There were three bidders for the contract, the other two being The Carlson Construction and Anderson & Whitson of Mankato.”

“The new playhouse will be a substantial structure 63 x 136 feet in ground dimensions, two stories high and not unlike the Orpheum Theatre in Sioux Falls. It will be constructed of yellow Luverne pressed brick, trimmed with Kasota stone. The plans and specifications provide for two store rooms at the front which will face Main Street. One of the store rooms, occupying a space 24 x 55 which will be at the northeast corner, has been leased to A. L. Vanderpoel of LeBon Marche, for a term of years, and the other at the northwest corner, with a floor space of 24 x 50 feet, will be utilized as a café. A fourteen foot entrance in the center of the building will lead to the opera house proper, which will have a seating capacity of 638. At the rear of the building, adjoining the alley, will be the stage.”

“On the second floor at the front end of the building provisions have been made for a dance hall 48 x 61 feet, with an eight foot balcony extending across the room and entrance to the floor will be gained by stairways leading from the general entrance way.”

“The work of wrecking Union hall will be started today and will be carried on as rapidly as possible.

While no specific time has been set for the completion of the new structure it is planned to have it finished by September 1<sup>st</sup>.”

With anticipation and excitement, the citizens of Luverne and Rock County waited for this historic grand opening which happened only one month later than originally projected. The following story appeared in the October 1, 1915 edition of the **Rock County Herald**:

### **“New Palace Theatre a Thing of Beauty”**

#### **“Formal Opening of Luverne’s \$50,000 Opera House Wednesday Eve a Happy Event”**

“The formal opening of the New Palace Theatre



**Pictured here** is a photo that appeared in a 1939 Star Herald: “Current was turned on Thursday night for the Palace theatre’s beautiful new neon sign, the erecting of which was completed Friday evening. The sign is one of the largest and most modern in this section of the country, and its purchase is in line with Manager Herman Jochim’s policy of providing his theatre with the most modern and best equipment.”

Wednesday eve was a particularly happy affair and one that will long be remembered by the people of Luverne. The opening attraction “The Prince of Tonight” was a delightful performance, but essentially the thing that gave the greatest joy to those in attendance was the splendid realization of a long desired object – a new theatre.”

“That’s Luverne’s need had been splendidly met in the building of the New Palace was well demonstrated, in part by the manner in which “The Prince of Tonight” was produced, showing as this did that leading

(continued on page 12)



Chantel Connell photo/1126 sterlings crane drops kithcn hood through roof

Traffic is rerouted on Main Street temporarily while a crane lowers the kitchen hood through the roof of Sterling's Café and Grille Friday morning, Nov. 20 .

## Sterling's opens in historic arcade building/from page 1



Lori Sorenson photo/1126 sterlings management

Pictured are restaurant owner Brian Sterling (center), executive chef Frank Hutchinson (left) and general manager Dustin Lybarger at Sterling's Cafe and Grille.

The original target date for opening was mid-July. Then, after construction began, more realistic expectations focused on November.

"With construction ending before Christmas, we decided to wait until after the first of the year," Sterling said.

The business finally opened Jan. 12.

For real.

Sterling said he knew it would take time to retrofit the 110-year-old building for a modern restaurant, but there have been unforeseen hurdles.

For example, the second floor apartments needed the same sprinkler system as the restaurant below, and that meant replacing the old cast iron pipes with newer, larger pipes.

And there were other setbacks along the way.

New underground connections

**Sterling's Cafe and Grille/see page 11**



This photograph is taken from the upper level, which seats 40 and is great for parties.

## **Sterling's opens in historic arcade building/from page 10**

meant digging up the new sidewalk — which had just been poured with decorative colored cement.

But restaurant general manager Dustin Lybarger said it's all been worth the wait.

### **'Comfort food with fine dining flair'**

According to Sterling's executive chef Frank Hutchinson, the menu features "comfort foods with a fine dining flair."

For example, he's proud of his certified Angus steak Marsala risotto, served with a lightly creamed rice.

"I really like to see people's positive reaction to my take on classic comfort dishes," he said, adding that chicken a la Rosa is another one of his favorites in this category.

When conditions allow, Hutchinson said he hopes to develop farm-to-table relationships with local growers to supply Sterling's vegetables, and possibly meats.

"I'm experienced with (those contracts) and I look forward to bringing that to the Luverne community," he said.

Hutchinson has 15 years of experience, and his résumé

touts restaurants like Minerva's and others in Sioux Falls, some of them opening under his management.

"All of this experience, and working with great chefs, gave me an opportunity to explore my own culinary talents," Hutchinson said.

Sterling's Café and Grille offers breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week and brunch on Sundays.

The restaurant offers fresh bakery items, such as cinnamon rolls and scones for sale, and any menu item can be ordered for takeout.

The menu includes seasonal features, pastas, steaks, fish, burgers, made-to-order breakfasts and more.

Sterling has secured a license to serve liquor, wine and beer, and live music is planned for weekends.

He said he also plans to work with local hockey fans and other sports associations to stream live playoff games through Sterling's big-screen TVs.

"We want to support the events that go on in the Luverne community and those who visit," Sterling said.

He said other restaurants he's managed have had

traveling theatrical companies hereafter can be brought to Luverne and give their performance in satisfactory and creditable manner, and in part by the beauty and comfort of the place in which such performers, as well as other entertainments will be presented.”

“In the matter of the size and equipment of the stage, as well as in arrangement size and equipment of the opera house proper, nothing is left to be desired. In the style of architecture, decorating, finishing, the New Palace is not surpassed by any opera house in the state outside of the three big cities, and the people of Luverne, as well as the New Palace owner, who spent \$50,000 in its construction, have every reason to be proud of it. It is a notable credit to Luverne and to Mr. Jochims, its public spirited owner, who has earned the gratitude of all the people of Luverne for his enterprise and accomplishment”

“Just before the curtain went up for the first act, city attorney C. H. Christopherson appeared before the foot light, at the request of manager Jochims to express Mr. Jochims’ appreciation of the patronage for the opening performance and to thank those whose efforts had contributed to the success of the opening event.

After discharging his duty Mr. Christopherson took advantage of the opportunity to bespeak the gratitude of the people of Luverne to Mr. Jochims for his efforts and success in giving the people of Luverne its handsome and substantial playhouse and to call attention to the credit and benefit the theatre will be to the people of Luverne for many years to come.”

“The presentation of “The Prince of Tonight” was very pleasing. Tom Arnold, in the title role, proved a strong character, and his support was excellent. The production was fully up to expectation and well received.”

“The next production will be “The Shepherd of the Hills” which will be presented with a strong cast next evening the 5<sup>th</sup>. A number of other excellent

*This little prairie town was changed overnight when the “opera house” opened. The New Palace Theatre was able to offer the finest in stage productions, vaudeville and music entertainment in the world.*

*Located only a few short blocks from the rail line, entertainers would be able to amble their way to the theatre for the night’s performance before making their way back to board the train for their next stop.*

attractions have been booked by Manager Jochims for the near future, but definite announcements cannot be made at this time.”

“On evenings when theatrical attractions are not booked the New Palace will be given over to moving picture shows. Manager Jochims has contracted with three film companies for service and he expected to give his first motion picture show last evening.”

In the same edition of the **Herald**, Jochims posted the following ad:

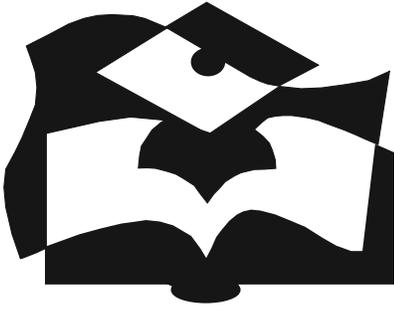
***“I wish to take this means of thanking my patrons and residents of Luverne for the support and patronage given in the opening of my theatre, the New Palace. I shall endeavor in the future in providing motion pictures and road attractions to serve you as to merit your patronage and continued good will, providing at all times the best attractions available.” Yours truly, Herman Jochims.”***

This little prairie town was changed overnight when the “opera house” opened. The New Palace Theatre was able to offer the finest in stage productions, vaudeville and music entertainment in the world. Located only a few short blocks from

the rail line, entertainers would be able to amble their way to the theatre for the night’s performance before making their way back to board the train for their next stop.

One hundred years later, Herman Jochims’ pledge to the citizens of Luverne and Rock County remains true due to the passion and administration of the Palace’s non-profit board of directors who give generously of their time, talent and creativity. The Blue Mound Area Theatre was formed on March 14, 1981 to preserve, manage and maintain the “New Palace.” Today, the board members are: Kevin Aaker, Dianne Ossenfort, LaDonna Van Aartsen, Heidi Sehr, Colleen Nath, Shirley Connor, Verlyn Van Batavia, Marc Boelman, Jim Juhl, Eugene Marshall, Louella Voigt, Tammy Makram and Mike Elbers. These Board Members and many other community volunteers keep this theatre alive without any full-time employees. They deserve our greatest thanks.

The BMAT Board has planned a year of celebration hosting the best in live theatre, musical performances and movies. Check out the major event schedule and plan to join in the celebration of our “Palace’s 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration” in 2015!



**Memorials and  
contributions  
may be sent to:**

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**Alumni News  
709 N. Kniss Ave.  
Luverne, MN 56156**

There are two new Dollars for Scholars endowments to share this quarter, the Clausen Family Scholarship and the Bill and Mert Mohr Family Scholarship.

### **Clausen Family Scholarship**

The Clausen Family Scholarship was established as a memorial to David Clausen '74 who passed away July 19, 2014, at the age of fifty-eight. The scholarship was established by his wife, Bev (Rolfes) '75 and mother, Neva (Baustian) '45. Dave's siblings are all Luverne High School graduates – Pat '67, Shirley '69, Steve '70, Rod '72, Kathy '76 and Gary '85. Dave and Bev are parents of four children – Christy, Julie, Tommy and Michael. If possible, the recipient should be a student who is interested in pursuing an education in music.

### **Bill & Mert Mohr Family Scholarship**

Bill and Mert Mohr raised eleven children in Luverne and they realized the tremendous value of education beyond high school. Bill was a civil engineer and was the owner of an engineering firm in Luverne for many years. Mert was a stay at home mom who prompted and encouraged her children to seek post high school education. The recipient will be chosen by the Dollars for Scholars committee for post high school education. This scholarship was created in 2014 by Bill and Susan Reimer Mohr.

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### **Class of 1964 reports gathering; pledges a 55th**

The Luverne Class of 1964 celebrated their 50th class reunion this past September 26-28. It was a great gathering filled with lots of conversation about our high school years and the years in between. We want to acknowledge our classmates who are no longer with us: Paul Anderson, Bruce Bryan, Arlyn Jauert, Audrey Forrest Piepgras, Leon Reu, Dan Chapin, John Rodman, Ed Ketterling and Lyle Janssen. They are gone but not forgotten. During the reunion it was suggested that we start planning for the 55th. Get ready Class of 1964... we are not done!!

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### **Please help us cut down on postage and printing costs**

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Alumni News at your house?  
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tree). Please email Patti Pierson at  
piersonprp@frontiernet.net



**Luverne Alumni celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion this summer. Go LHS 1954!**

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## **Sterling's Cafe and Grille/continued from page 11**

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success coordinating webcast events with dinner specials, and he plans to coordinate similar promotions with Luverne's Take 16 Brewery and Palace Theatre.

The restaurant has a total seating capacity of 130 people in the dining and lounge area.

The restaurant, when fully staffed, will employ nearly 30 people from teens to senior citizens, including cooks, servers, bartenders, hosts and hostesses, dishwashers and more.

### **110-year-old building restored to historic glory**

Local investors have been funding the building renovations and will maintain ownership of the Sterling's property, which is leased to the restaurant and apartment tenants.

The building, known as

the "arcade building" is so named for its series of three arches across the exterior.

In architectural parlance, an arcade is a succession of arches supported by columns.

A "blind arcade" places an arch against a solid wall. The Luverne building has both features.

The street-level arches serve as an entryway and windows while the upper arch is decorative.

The building's earliest tenants were butcher R.J. Stephens, who ran a meat market in one side, and E.H. Canfield, an attorney considered at the time to be "among the most influential and prominent" in Rock County.

Known for years as the "Stephens-Canfield Block," the building has housed more than one meat market

through the years, in addition to jewelers and business offices.

The abandoned spaces of the east-side second and third floors (a third floor was added, since the original ceilings were so high) reveal remnants of former tenants.

For example, long commercial countertops of Northern States Laboratories were recently found on the north end, and an elevator shaft runs the full length of the 40-foot-tall building — including the full basement.

Decorative tin ceiling tiles remain on the top floor, and wide ornate woodwork — some painted and some original — trims the doorways and windows.

Sterling's menu and contact information can be found on their Facebook page, Sterlings-Café.

# Reunions in the Making

## Class of '60—55th Class Reunion

June 5-6, 2015

*Join us for a great celebration of our 55th Class Reunion  
on Buffalo Days Weekend!*

More information will be mailed out in January!!

Contact: Dave Smith  
405 S. Fairview Dr. Luverne, MN 56156

507-283-2877

Or email: [truffles@iw.net](mailto:truffles@iw.net)



## Class of '65—50th Class Reunion

September 25-26-27, 2015

*Save the weekend of Tri-State Band Festival to celebrate our  
50th Class Reunion.*

More information will follow!

Contacts:

Jeannie (Boone) Bowron 507-283-8136 or [jrbowron@gmail.com](mailto:jrbowron@gmail.com)  
Randa (Smith) Gangestad 507-283-8288 or  
[randagangestad@hotmail.com](mailto:randagangestad@hotmail.com)



## Class of '85—30th Class Reunion

June 5-6-7, 2015

*Join us for a great celebration of our 30th Class Reunion  
on Buffalo Days Weekend!*

Official Reunion Event—June 6th

Contact: Jeff Hicks ([Jeffrey.Hicks@ricoh-usa.com](mailto:Jeffrey.Hicks@ricoh-usa.com))

Check out the LHS Class of 1985 website!

<http://www.alumni-class.com/luverne/reunion-class-of-1985?r=79380>



Please notify the Luverne Area Chamber with your announcements and/or class reunion information to post it in the Alumni News. The Chamber also offers one FREE mailing for each class through the Convention & Visitors Bureau. Send your information to us and we will mail it out to your classmates FREE OF CHARGE. [luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us](mailto:luvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us) or 507 283-4061

**Alumni News Staff:** Cindy Arends, Gregg Gropel, Jane Wildung Lanphere, Jessica Mead, Carol McDonald, Patti Kirby Pierson, Rock County Opportunities and Lori Sorenson.

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