



This photograph taken March 30 of Minnesota Department of Transportation doing preparation work on North Highway 75 ahead of the major reconstruction project.

Highway 75 closes for major reconstruction

Road closes April 15 for major project that continues through September. Main Street is a detour and off limits for community parades and celebrations

Luverne alumni who return to their hometown this spring and summer will be greeted by complications of the Highway 75 road closure and subsequent effects of the Main Street detour.

Luverne Chamber staff and local officials have been working closely with state and local highway planners to maintain plans for summer festivals, parades and celebrations, which will all be affected by the Highway 75 construction and Main Street detour.

Among the affected events are graduation events in May, Buffalo Days weekend during the first week of June, Hot Dog Night and



The Minnesota Department of Transportation hosted an open house Tuesday, March 24, at Generations to share updates about the Highway 75 reconstruction project.

HIGHWAY 75 CONSTRUCTION/SEE PAGE 11

Honor Roll of Alumni News contributors

Compiled by Johnna Ahrendt

During this past quarter ending March 31, 2026, the Alumni News received money in the form of memorials, and gifts totaling \$1,785. 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 2026, for additional names of Alumni News contributors.

Memorials and contributions may be sent to:

Alumni News
709 N. Kniss Avenue
Luverne, Minnesota 56156

Financial summary

Balance 12/31/25 \$75,875
Donations: \$1,785.00
Interest & Dividends: 261.83

Expenses:

Postage 2,847.76
Printing 962.39
Labels 901.96
Paypal Fees 18.09

Balance: 3/31/26 \$73,192.43

Memorials

Mary Ann (McDowell) Davis '46
Betsy Fisher

Sally (Olson) Hemenway '56
Class of 1956

Wanda (Lafrenz) Kafka '58
James '59 & Gloria
(Aanenson) '63 Rolfs
Stanley Bagbey '58

Sharon (Toms) Rypkema '59
Stanley Bagbey '58

Virgil VanBatavia '60
Gordon (Sam) '65 &
Joycelyn (Aanenson) '65 Hansen
Hal '60 & Donna Paulson

Loren Forrest '62
Dale '60 & Lorna (Forrest)
'61 Hansen
Darlene Forrest '58
Hal '60 & Donna Paulson

Marlene (Kindt) Mann '64
Gene Salzman '54

Diane (Heckt) Carlson '63
Sam '65 & Joycelyn
(Aanenson) '65 Hansen

David Rogness '66
Class of 1966

Judy (Mann) Gort '66
Gene Salzman '54

Mike Mulligan '66
Class of 1966

Robert Iverson '67
Linda (Ossenfort) Molden '67

**Pat (Hamann) Mann -
Jasper Class of '70**
Gene Salzman '54

Eunice Bartels - Friend
Joyce (Turner) Sexton '53

**George & Gladys "June"
Mann**
Gene Salzman '54

Contributions

Elaine Harms - Teacher

Jim Sanden - Teacher

Kathy (Juhl) Heeren '61

Melinda (Blashill) Ohlenkamp '96

Merlyn Groth '58

Susan (Wethor) Wineland '95

Thank you for your support

There are expenses incurred with printing, mailing and database support, and these costs are paid for with generous contributions from our alumni and readers.

Luverne Dollars for Scholars ... Did you know?

DFS has awarded \$7.7 million in scholarships to 2,294 LHS graduates since its inception in 1983

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 \$7,700,975 to 2,294 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 323 perpetual scholarships with a total endowment of almost \$9.9 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 principal 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 contact:

Luverne Dollars for Scholars

PO Box 822

Luverne, MN 56156

Email: luvernedfs@gmail.com

Call: 507-227-4030 (Johnna Ahrendt)

Or visit: www.luverne.dollarsforscholars.org

Are you getting more than one (1) Alumni News at your house?

*If so, please call Patti Pierson at 507-669-2371 or email her at piersonprp@alliancecom.net with the correct postal and email address of your children.
Thank you*

Attention snowbirds:

If you are not going to be at the address that you got your July issue during the months of October, January, April issue if you could email me your alternative address I would appreciate it and will change it back and forth according to what month you will be gone so that we can save some money on the "temporary away" returns....thank you...

Patti Pierson piersonprp@alliancecom.net,
1-507-920-5186

or 1562 201st ST Hardwick MN 56134

Remembering our classmates

Compiled by Carol Schumacher Serie

1930 – 1939

Arthur “Tim” Tangeman '38 died on February 20, 2026, in Shermansdale, PA, at the age of 105. Tim enlisted in the U.S. Army National Guard and was called to active duty during WWII with the Army Signal Corps as a cryptologist. He was deployed for 14 months to Kodiak, AK. Tim's expertise was noted and he was directed to report to the State Department in Washington, D.C. He personally transmitted the telegraph to the commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, informing him that Japan was willing to accept unconditional surrender. Tim continued his role with the State Department until his retirement in 1975. He spent his retirement in south-central Pennsylvania. Tim was an active member of New Bloomfield VFW.

Tim is survived by his nieces and nephews: Tim Tangeman of Wisconsin, CA; Marc Tangeman of Seattle, WA; Fran Davis of Scranton, PA; Dan (Leslie) Tangeman of San Clemente, CA; Dean Tangeman of Charlotte, MI; Pat (Bill) Dombroski of DeWitt, MI; and many other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Violet Litz; his partner, Lorraine Sholley; his brothers, **Robert '41** and Andrew; and his nephew, Brad Tangeman.

1940 – 1949

Lorna (Erickson) Lorenzen '46 died on February 27, 2026, in Loveland, CO. In 1947, Lorna became employed at Tri-State Insurance in Luverne. She was united in marriage to Verdell Lorenzen in June of 1947 in Luverne. In 1972 Lorna went to work as a cook for Luverne High School, greeting, meeting, and feeding teenagers until her retirement in 1989. Lorna moved to Loveland, CO, to be near her sons and their families, and her sister, **Cleo '56 (Art)** in 2015.

Lorna is survived by three sons: Dean (Debbie) of Loveland, **Rodney '74** (Nancy) of Corryton, TN, and **Brian '78** (Beth) of Loveland; daughter-in-law Char Lorenzen of Dewey, AZ; sister **Cleo '56** Bloemendaal of Loveland; 9

grandchildren; and 8 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Verdell; son, **Darrell '68**; sister, **Beverly '49** Woodley; brother, **Roger '51**; sister-in-law, **Marlene '67** Erickson; and brother-in-law, Art Bloemendaal.

Betty (Hansen) Luethje '50 died on February 14, 2026, in Sierra, AZ. Betty graduated from Nettleton Business College, Sioux Falls, with a business degree. She was united in marriage to **Keith '49** Luethje in Long Beach, CA, where they both worked for aircraft factories. Betty was an executive secretary for North American Downey. They moved back to Luverne where they bought a service station. She put her talents as a seamstress to good use making custom drapes for Smith's Furniture in Luverne, along with doing custom tailoring. Betty went to work in the late 1960's for a real estate firm and obtained her broker's license. She bought the business and ran it for the next 25 years. Keith joined her in the last 12 years of business.

Betty was very active in her church and served on five mission trips with Keith. She also was on the Sanford Luverne Hospital board, the Sanford Luverne Hospital Foundation board, was part of planning and fundraising for the present Sanford Luverne Hospice Cottage, and on the Luverne Planning and Zoning Board.

Betty is survived by her husband, **Keith**; three children, **Deborah '71** Luethje Mariya and Sam Tangredi of Coronado Island, CA, **Dean '74** (DJ) Luethje of Luverne, and **Hope '77** (Donald) Hoffman of Sierra Vista, AZ; 11 grandchildren; and 23 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her brother, **Gordon '44** Hansen and one great-granddaughter, Joanna Jenise Bullerman.

Oltman “Okie” Honken '54 died on February 27, 2026, in Sioux Falls. Okie worked for Lampert Lumber for three years and enlisted in the Army National Guard in 1957. After basic training he worked for Frakes Construction for 18

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Remembering our classmates/continued from page 4

years. He started his own business, Okie Honken Construction in 1978, doing residential, concrete, and commercial projects in the three-state area. On October 19, 1963, he was united in marriage to Cleone Swenson in Luverne. The couple later moved to Touchmark at All Saints in Sioux Falls. Okie was a member of the Luverne Community Hospital Board and was a charter member of the Hospital Foundation.

Okie is survived by his wife, Cleone; two sons, **Ronald '83 (Cathy '79)** of Leota, and **Randall '87** (Carmen) of Sartell; 5 grandchildren; and a brother, **Robert '56 (Sandy '57)** of Laramie, WY.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Elaine Torvelese.

Arland "Swede" Anderson '54 of Bloomington, MN, died February 5, 2026.

Arland is survived by daughter Jane Bechtle, Winona, son David Anderson, Mesa, AZ, son Steven (Lisa), Shakopee, son Bruce (Lynn), Farmington; many grandchildren; 2 great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, Cousin Arvin Roen, CO, and sister-in-law Lora Lee Ruthenbeck, Mankato.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Peggy.

Vercella "Sally" (Olson) Hemenway '56, of the Rochester area, died January 12, 2026. Sally attended Mankato State University where she met her husband of 65 years, George Hemenway. For 39 years she served many children, teaching kindergarten through second grade in the school districts of Long Prairie, Mound, Kasson, and Stewartville. Alongside George, she traveled the world, exploring new cultures and landscapes. She was an active member of her church and a proud member of Alpha Delta Kappa, the international honorary organization for women educators.

Sally is survived by her husband, George Hemenway; her son, Paul (Jessica); and two grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her sisters, Norma Olson and Ardis Thorogood.

Wanda (Lafrenz) Kafka '58 died January 13, 2026, in Sioux Falls, SD. Wanda Married LaVern Kafka on April 5, 1959, in Luverne. Wanda worked at the Rock County Courthouse as a secretary in the DMV for over thirty years, retiring in 2009. She volunteered at her church and enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Wanda is survived by her two daughters, **Cindy '79** (Ken) Deters, Luverne; and **Connie '83** Kafka, Luverne; two granddaughters; seven great-grandchildren; and a sister-in-law, Lois Lafrenz, George, IA.

She was preceded in death by her husband, LaVern, in 2012; and two brothers, Jimmie and **Maynard '63** Lafrenz.

1960 – 1969

Virgil Van Batavia '60 died on January 18, 2026, in St. Cloud, MN. Virgil served his country in the U.S. National Guard. He married **Anna '60** DeGroot on November 2, 1962; they later divorced. He married Susan Young on April 9, 2009, in Duluth. Virgil worked at IBP in Luverne and left to start his cabinet making career with his brother **Roger '63** at Country Cupboards in Luverne. Later he worked for Design Line Cabinets and Crystal Cabinets in Sauk Rapids until his retirement.

Virgil is survived by his wife, Susan Young, of Foley; daughters, **Tammy '81 (Tom '80)** Johnson, and **Debbie Pantekoek**; 7 grandchildren; 8 great grandchildren and one on the way; siblings (twin brother) **Verlyn '60 (Susie'62)**, **Roger '63** (Barb) and **Ruth '63** (Mark) Wallig; sister-in-law, Karen Young, brother-in-law Peter (Kristen) Young; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by brother-in-law William Young.

Loren Forrest '62 died at his home farm on February 10, 2026. Loren attended Worthington Junior College for one year before he started farming and began a lifelong job with Luverne Farm Store and Gas Company. He was united in marriage to **Joyce '62** Raschke in 1963. Foremost,

REMEMBERING OUR CLASSMATES/SEE PAGE 6

he was a farmer, but he also was an entrepreneur and a dreamer, always working on “the next project.”

Loren is survived by his wife, **Joyce '62**, Luverne; son, **Russell '00 (Katie '02)**, Luverne; 2 grandchildren; sister, **Darlene '58** Forrest; twin sister, **Lorna '61 (Dale '60)** Hansen; and many extended family members.

He was preceded in death by his sister, **Audrey '64** Piepgras.

Joanne “Puddy” (Kruger) Maras '66 died March 10, 2026, in Luverne. Puddy married Louis (Jack) Maras in 1970. They moved to George, IA, where they purchased a meat locker where they both worked for over 10 years. After moving back to Luverne, they opened Grandma’s Grill on highway 75. Puddy worked at Mary Jane Brown Good Samaritan Home and later at the Minnesota Veterans Nursing Home as an aide until she retired. She was a member of Living Rock Church, Ladies Auxiliary, and the Eagles Club in Luverne.

Joanne is survived by her three daughters, **Alisa '88 “Jo” Buss**, Luverne, **Rebecca '90** (Craig) Gonnerman, Luverne, **Paula '98 (Michael '92)** Gonnerman, Luverne; 6 grandchildren; 5 great-grandchildren; and 4 siblings, Dennis (Rita) Kruger, Luverne; Donald (Deb) Kruger, Luverne, **Sheri '80** (Robin) Stratton, Luverne, and Sam (Deb) Kruger, Beaver Creek.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Jack, sister Diane, an infant brother Dean, two granddaughters and a nephew.

James Dahlberg '68 of Morehead, KY, died on December 28, 2025, from complications of Parkinson’s Disease. Jamie attended Antioch College in Yellow Springs, OH, and graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1979. During college, he went to Oxford, MS, where he became involved in civil rights. He spent several years working with Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and other prominent organizations. He continued his legal career in Morehead working at the Northeast Kentucky Legal Services and the Public

Defender’s Office, and taught government and paralegal studies at Morehead State University. In 1976, he married Nancy Henly. They lived in Washington, D.C., Minneapolis, and New Orleans before settling in Morehead. Jamie was a lover of the arts and photography. He was also a man of very strong opinion, as he would want you to vote out fascists and get yourself and your children vaccinated.

Jamie is survived by his wife, Dr. Nancy Henly; his daughter, Molly (Travis); his son Tommy (Sarah); 2 grandchildren; siblings **Scott '66** (Laurie), **Tom '69** (Helen), and **Mary** (Tom); the Henly siblings John (Nadia), Liz, Jim (Constance) Anne (Howard), and Julie (Bernd); many nieces and nephews; and his beloved caretaker and friend Ashley Nicole Watson.

He was preceded in death by his brother-in-law, Tom Evered.

Barton Jessen '69 died February 18, 2026, in Sioux Falls, SD. Barton attended Southwest Minnesota Vocational School, graduating in 1970. He married Beth Kruisselbrink on July 13, 1973, in Edgerton. Barton worked at a fertilizer plant and dairy farmed alongside his father-in-law for 25 years. After retirement he continued his love for farming by maintaining a hobby farm. Along with Beth, the couple raised bulldogs for many years. Barton was on the boards of Land O’ Lakes and the Edgerton Elevator. He enjoyed traveling, golfing, bean bags, canasta and spending time with family.

Barton is survived by his wife, Beth of Brandon; children, Stacy Van’t Hof of Edgerton, Kevin (Heather) of Garretson, SD, Kelly (**Mike '96**) Buss of Brandon, SD, and Rebecca (Bryan) Nash of Mankato; 14 grandchildren; 2 great-grandchildren; siblings, **Carlene '65 (Larry '65)** Boll, Sheila (Jerry) Schneekloth, **Barb '71 (Bill '74)** Weber, **Bev '71** (Marv) Hoogland, all of Luverne, and **Peter '79** (Kristie) Jessen of Jasper; and step-mother, Erna Jessen of Luverne.

He was preceded in death by his parents and in-laws.

REMEMBERING OUR CLASSMATES/SEE PAGE 7

1970 – 1979

Robert “Bob” Heitman ’70 died February 17, 2026. Bob earned an associate’s degree in electronics and, shortly after, began serving his country of joining the U.S. Navy. He proudly served for 22 years, retiring with honor as a Vietnam Veteran. Bob embraced life wholeheartedly. He had a deep love for motorcycles and enjoyed riding the open road. He cherished time with his family, took pride in his yard work, and loved tinkering in his garage, always fixing, building, or improving something.

Bob is survived by his wife, Jennifer; children Shane, **Robert ’98** (Katie), **Sarah ’00** (partner, Gilbert); 7 grandchildren; brothers Bill (Betty) Heitman and **Bruce ’74** (Sharon) Heitman; and brother-in-law Robert Gundlach.

He was preceded in death by his sister, **Patricia ’61** Gundlach.

Richard “Rick” Wenzel ’72 died January 15, 2026. Rick married Deb Stewart, and they had one son; they later divorced. He met his life partner, Deb DeYoung. Rick enlisted and served in the South Dakota Air National Guard for 36 years, retiring as a Master Sergeant. After retiring, Rick continued working for several contractors in the Sioux Falls area. Rick was also a proud member of the Civil Air Patrol out of Pipestone, purchasing a crop-dusting plane, which he used to support the agricultural community.

Rick is survived by his life partner, Deb DeYoung; son, Joseph (Randi) Wenzel; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild; siblings Dean (Linda) Wenzel, David Swenson, and **Paulette ’82 (Randy ’82)** Richters; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Robert Wenzel; and sister, **Patti ’74** Swenson.

Randy Cragoe ’76 died February 23, 2026, at his home in Ottumwa, IA. Randy attended farm management school in Faribault, MN, and community college in Worthington, MN. He spent close to 40 years in multiple sales and leadership positions promoting animal health technologies

for biotechnology companies. During his career, he earned a MiniMBA with his study based in Ireland. On July 9, 2014, Randy married Kameo Kay Keltner. Their combined families gave Randy an endless sense of pride and purpose. Self-employed and semi-retired for the final five years of his life, Randy took up world travel with Kameo, going on numerous trips across the U.S., the Caribbean, Europe, and Asia. He took up many projects at home, all abiding by his motto to “leave it better than I found it.”

Randy is survived by his wife, Kameo; son Austin (Jill) Cragoe of Sioux Falls; daughter Kylee (Jacob) Stinson of Ottumwa; 4 grandchildren; sisters **Pamela ’77** (Doug) Miller of Sioux Falls, **Peggy ’81** (Scott) Adams of Luverne, and **Wendy ’85** (Kent) Klemme of Apex, NC; two brothers-in-law, Kyle (Jennifer) Keltner of Chicago, IL and Kasey(Jennifer) Keltner of Columbus Junction, IA.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

2000 – 2009

Heather Kruger ’06 died January 31, 2026, at her home in Alma, GA. After graduation, Heather moved to Hobbs, NM, and subsequently to Sioux Falls and back to Alma with her family.

Heather is survived by her two sons, Michael and Kayzer, parents Marten and Betty Kruger, brother **Johnathan ’10** (Alyssa) and **Matthew ’14** (Mary) and sister Rebecca Valdez.

She was preceded in death by her biological mother.

2010 – 2019

Colton Arends ’15 died at his home on January 21, 2026. Colton attended South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD, and graduated with a degree in Ag Business in 2019. He returned to the family farming operation, working alongside his dad. Colton was passionate about racing and as a stock car driver, he earned the top spot as the Rapid Speedway Point Champion three seasons in a row. He met Anna there in July 2020 and they were blessed with a son, Knox. Colton was also

REMEMBERING OUR CLASSMATES/SEE PAGE 13

Towering trees removed along North Highway 75 ahead of construction

Luverne alumni returning to the community this summer will notice not only the major road construction on Highway 75, but also the suddenly bare boulevards where towering old trees once stood. The trees (31 of them) whose trunks and root systems were deemed to be problematic for road work and underground infrastructure replacement were removed in March. Following is Star Herald story that was published March 5 ahead of that process.

By Lori Sorenson

The maple tree at the corner of Dodge Street and Highway 75 in Luverne is at least the age of the stately three-story home on the property — more than 100 years old.

Dave and Linda Iverson moved into their home 53 years ago, a year after Dave started as a veterinarian at Rock Vet Clinic. Their maple tree was large and mature at that time.

The house was built around 1918 or 1920, and they estimate it may have been planted when the house and neighborhood was established.

Today the thick, sturdy trunk wears a ribbon marking it among 30 others along North Highway 75 that must be removed ahead of the street reconstruction project this spring and summer.

“You hate to see a beautiful tree go,” Dave said.

“But this is progress, and we don’t want to stand in the way of progress.”

While some of the trees marked for removal are in the Highway 75 boulevard, the Iversons’ maple tree is on their front lawn.

“We sold that corner to the state for the development,” Dave said about the Dodge Street intersection at the highway.

“They’re expanding that lane, and it will be safer. ... The semis have to get way in the other lane of traffic to make the corner, and this will be better.”

While they’re happy to accommodate progress, the Iversons admit they’ll miss their tree.

“We’ve lost a lot of trees over the years in storms — elms, box elders, ash, maples and ever-



Lori Sorenson photo/0305 highway 75 trees iversons

Dave and Linda Iverson moved into their home at Dodge Street and Kniss Avenue 54 years ago when Dave started as a veterinarian at Rock Vet Clinic, and their maple tree was large and mature at that time. In March the 100-year-old tree came down along with 30 others along North Highway 75 ahead of the road construction project.

greens — but that one always hung on,” Dave said.

Linda recalled the straight-line winds of August 2004 that wreaked havoc in Luverne.

“It was like a war zone in town,” she said. “There were trees down everywhere.”

The Iversons lost several large trees in that storm, one narrowly missing coming through their dining room.

When the dust settled and other downed trees were cleared, the Iverson maple proudly stood intact.

Linda said they have appreciated its shade through the years, and they have faithfully cleared its fallen leaves every October.

“I remember one night raking at 11 p.m. ahead of the final city leaf pickup the next morning,” Linda said.

TREES ON HIGHWAY 75/CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

AMERICA



ROCK COUNTY MN and the ROCK COUNTY FAIR

FAIR EVENTS DAILY

**EVENT
DATES**
THURSDAY - SUNDAY
JULY 30 - AUGUST 2

LUVERNE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Reception & Tours
Saturday, August 1: 9 - 11 AM
Hosted by Luverne Education Legacy Fund

BOOK RELEASE CELEBRATION LUVERNE'S A TO Z BOOK

During the Fair
Rock County Fairgrounds

ROCK COUNTY HISTORY CENTER

Thursday thru Saturday, 10 AM - 4 PM
Special Exhibits:
75th Tri-State Band Festival

AMERICA 250 CLASSIC CRUISE IN

Friday, July 31, 5:30 - 9 PM
All Vehicles Welcome – Free Registration
Live Music – Beer Garden – Food
Rock County Fairgrounds

ROCK COUNTY HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

Sunday, August 2
Ceremony at 1:30 PM – Generations
Unveiling & Reception at 2:45 PM – History Center



MILITARY VEHICLE ROLL-IN

Honoring America's Service Members
Saturday, August 1, 11 AM - 3 PM
Live Musical Entertainment
With Bill Johnson as "Bob Hope"
Free Event - At Cedar & Fletcher



FUN DUELING PIANOS

Fun entertainment for the whole family
Saturday, August 1, 7:30 - 10:30 PM
Free Admission – Fairgrounds
Sponsor: Rock County Community Foundation



First Annual

FRIDAY: JULY 31, 2026

Free Registration - Corral Parking - Sunshine Foods Pork Feed

LIVE MUSIC: Kayla Daniels & Blue Dirt Road Band



5:30-9 pm

ROCK

**COUNTY
FAIR**

CRUISE IN

500 South Freeman

BY THE BEER GARDEN

Luverne MN 56156

Highway 75 reconstruction project and detours/continued from page 1

affiliated events in mid-July, the Rock County Fair in late July and Tri-State Band Festival in September

Also affected will be a summer long lineup of America 250 celebrations, summer class reunions and other events that will need to work around detours and delays.

Following is the latest update on roadwork that appeared in the April 2 edition of the Rock County Star Herald:

MnDOT hosts public meeting for Highway 75 project

By Lori Sorenson

More than 100 people attended the March 24 Minnesota Department of Transportation open house to learn about the Highway 75 reconstruction project that starts April 15.

The meeting at Generations Tuesday, March 24, was hosted by MnDOT officials and representatives from Henning Construction, Adrian, which is the contractor for the project.

In the center of the room was a long poster-size aerial image of the Highway 75 showing affected intersections. The poster was stretched across several tables connected end to end.

The setup allowed officials to show community members exactly which areas of the highway would be affected during specific time frames.

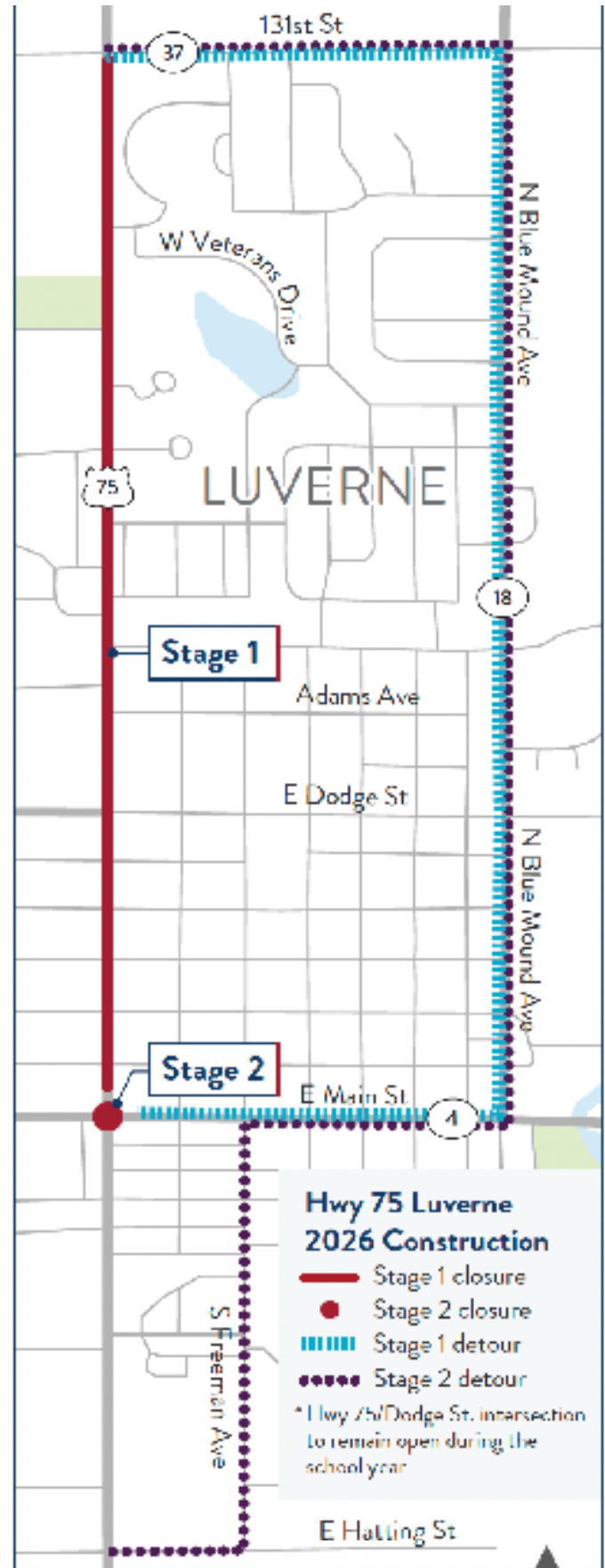
For example, Phase 1 will involve the area just north of Main Street to just south of Dodge Street.

That will be finished between April 15 and May 29 to keep construction clear of the school zone while classes are still in session.

The Main Street intersection will be closed from Aug. 4 to Sept. 6 when the detour will involve Freeman and Hatting streets.

During all phases of the project, Highway 75 will be closed to traffic, but accessibility to the school, churches, businesses and residences will be maintained.

MnDOT project coordinator Robert Sneller was on hand Tuesday to visit with community members. "We encourage everyone to drive slow and safe and have patience," he said. "It will help us get in and get out as fast we can."

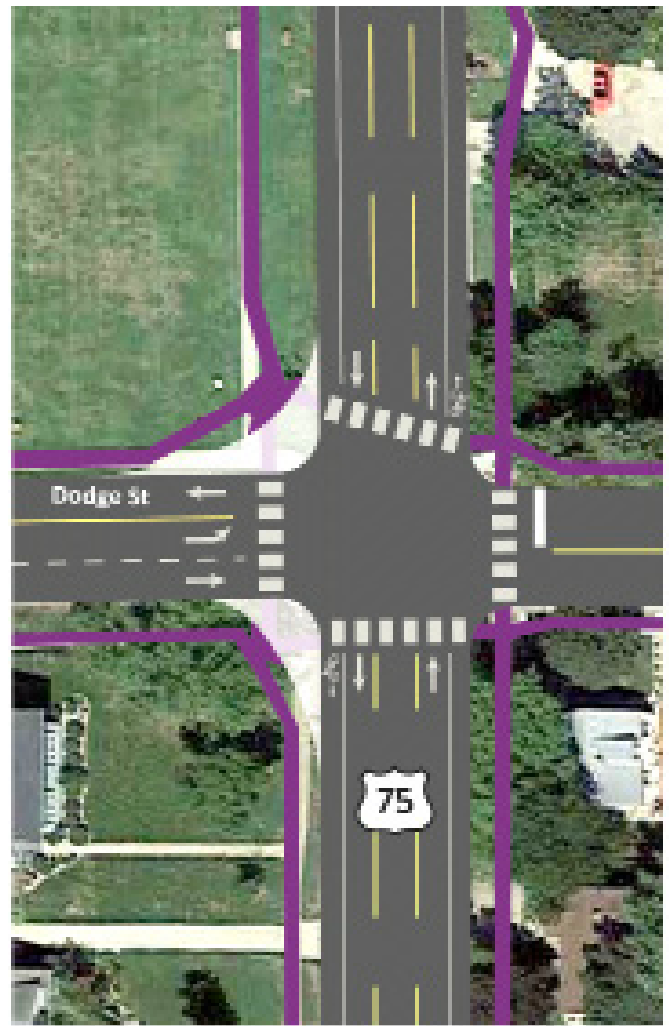


HIGHWAY 75 CONSTRUCTION/SEE PAGE 12

Main Street Intersection



Dodge Street Intersection



The three-lane configuration on Highway 75 will remain the same, with bike lanes and center left turn lanes. Main Street (left) and Dodge Street intersections will be modified to accommodate vehicles with wider turning radius and improve the pedestrian crossing systems. There will be designated left turn lanes and a new traffic signal system at Main Street, where the intersection will be closed Aug. 4-Sept. 6.

Highway 75 reconstruction project and detours/[continued from page 11](#)

The next MnDOT open house for Highway 75 updates will be from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 23, at Luverne Loop Trailhead building at the corner of East Main Street and North Blue Mound Avenue.

Project overview

Construction will affect a 1.16-mile stretch of Highway 75 from Main Street to Veterans Drive in Luverne.

The existing bituminous road will be replaced, and a new concrete road will be reconstructed.

This project will result in wider shoulders,

improved bicycle and pedestrian mobility and improved vehicle turning clearance at intersections.

The three-lane configuration will remain the same, with bike lanes and center left turn lanes.

Main Street and Dodge Street intersections will be modified to accommodate vehicles with wider turning radius and improve the pedestrian crossing systems.

There will be designated left turn lanes and a new traffic signal system at Main Street.

HIGHWAY 75 CONSTRUCTION/SEE PAGE 13

Remembering our classmates/*continued from page 7*

passionate about farming and had recently begun a baling business. He was a member of the Rock County Corn and Soybean Grower Association, serving on its board, and assisted with the Rock County Pork Producers. He loved golfing in the summer and riding snowmobiles in the winter. He loved his family and introducing Knox to the life of farming.

Colton is survived by his girlfriend, Anna McCarty, of Luverne; two children, Knox and

Wrenleigh; parents, **Paul '87** and **Teresa '88** of Luverne; sister, **Peyton '11** (Mike) Haburn of Beaver Creek; maternal Grandma, Ginny Menning of Luverne; paternal grandpa, **Tom '62** Arends, of Luverne; aunts and uncles, **Beth '90** and Kent Senf, **Jon '96** and Erika Menning, Cindy Menning; and numerous relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his maternal grandpa, Clyde Menning; paternal grandma, **Dixie '63** Arends; and uncle, **Tim '86** Menning.

Trees removed on Highway 75 ahead of construction/*continued from page 8*

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) marked 31 trees along north Highway 75 in Luverne to be removed ahead of the street reconstruction project.

The mature trees, mostly ash and maple, were marked for removal because they (and their root systems) will interfere with construction in the right-of-way. The road will be rebuilt from below the base to the surface, and there will be new sidewalks, curb and gutter.

MNDOT project supervisor Robert Sneller said stumps will be removed when the street and boulevard are torn up this spring and arrangements have been made to reimburse property owners who lost trees on their properties.

MNDOT has hosted several community information meetings about the upcoming Highway 75 construction project in Luverne.

For details and updates, visit dot.state.mn and search "District 7" and "Highway 75 Luverne."

Also, the Luverne Area Chamber (507-283-4061) or Luverne City Hall (507-449-2388) can answer questions about local impact.



This towering evergreen at the home of Tom and Melissa (Serie) Sterrett was among 30 trees removed on Highway 75 in March.

Highway 75 reconstruction project and detours/*continued from page 12*

Pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks will be improved to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for accessibility.

The city of Luverne will also replace water and sewer utilities in coordination with the project.

Mature trees that were marked for removal (31 of them) were cleared last week, and Highway 75 will be closed to through traffic starting April 15.

Traffic will be detoured down Main Street to

Blue Mound Avenue until the work is completed in September.

Henning Construction, Inc., Adrian, was awarded the project with a bid of \$13,598,341.93.

Visit dot.state.mn.us for more information and to sign up for email updates.

Check out the Star Media conversation about the Highway 75 reconstruction project at <http://tinyurl.com/hwy75luverne>.

PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT



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THURSDAY | APRIL 16, 2026

Performed by premier American political reenactor **JOE WEIGAND**
Portraying President Roosevelt for over 20 years throughout 50 States
Featured summers in Medora, ND | Home of TEDDY ROOSEVELT NATIONAL PARK

Enjoy a "FREE" Performance...all OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

HILLS-BEAVER CREEK SECONDARY: 10:30 AM
LIVERNE PUBLIC SCHOOLS PAC: 1:45 PM
HISTORIC PALACE THEATRE: 5:30 PM

WEATHER PERMITTING: Roosevelt to arrive by train at Luverne's Omaha Depot at 4:30 pm

Theodore Roosevelt is considered one of America's greatest presidents. Our youngest president ever, TR was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and the Congressional Medal of Honor. Our first conservation president, Theodore Roosevelt preserved two hundred and thirty million acres of parks, forests, national monuments, wildlife refuges, and game preserves. He led the nation to build the Panama Canal and sent the Great White Fleet steaming around the world. After his presidency, he hunted in Africa, toured Europe, ran as the Bull Moose Progressive, and explored the River of Doubt in the Amazon Jungle.

His was the strenuous life, the glory of work, and the joy of living.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:
JOE WEIGAND
GREG & DIANNA SPATH



REUNIONS IN THE MAKING



HARDWICK ALL-SCHOOL CELEBRATION

During Jubilee Days!

Saturday—June 27, 2026

Community Supper: 6 pm

Parade: 7 pm

WILDCAT HEADQUARTERS

Hardwick City Hall: 10 am to 6 pm

We could use your assistance with contacting our fellow HGS Wildcats! Please help us spread the word to siblings, classmates & old neighbors.

COMMITTEE: Colleen Obermoller Deutsch, Joleen Obermoller Hanson, Joni Petersen, Kristie Obermoller Weinkauf, Patti DeBates, Terri DeBates Siebenahler & Jake Bruynes

REACH OUT TO THE COMMITTEE IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS!

CLASS OF 1976—50th REUNION—SEPTEMBER 11 & 12, 2026

Friday Night—Informal Get-together at Take 16 Brewing Co.

Saturday Night Gathering—THE LAKE

MORE INFO & DETAILS TO COME! Contact: Deone Hemme (507.290.0267)

CLASS OF 1996—30th REUNION—JULY 10, 2026

Friday Night Reunion—at THE LAKE

MORE INFO & DETAILS TO COME! Contact: Nate Rust (507-920-6836)

CLASS OF 1971—55th REUNION—AUGUST 1 & 2, 2026

Watch the mail for your invite! More info & details to come!

Friday Night Cruise In at Fair & Saturday Dinner at Revel- 5:30 pm and cap the night with the live performance of "DUELING PIANOS" at the Fair

For more info: Jane Wildung Lanphere lanpherejane@gmail.com (507-920-5197)

Luverne Chamber | 213 E Luverne St. | Luverne MN 56156

louvernechamber@co.rock.mn.us | 507.283.4061

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Johnna Bowron Ahrendt, Patti Kirby Pierson and Rock County Opportunities

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Volume 36, Issue 3

Alumni News
709 North Kniss Avenue
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