



Hastings business features fun with heavy machinery — B3

## BRIEFS

### Two pedestrians hit by vehicle

**MANKATO** — Two pedestrians were struck by a vehicle as they were crossing a Mankato street Thursday night.

Police officers responded to a call about 11:20 p.m. to the intersection of Riverfront Drive and Rock Street.

Driver Mitchell Lee Wallerstedt, 30, of Mankato applied the brakes of the 2006 Chrysler he was driving but was unable to stop, Mankato police said. The pedestrians did not see Wallerstedt and he did not see the pedestrians.

The pedestrians, Jill Anderson, 45, of Lake Crystal and Mitchell Barker, 47, of Lake Crystal were treated for minor injuries at Mayo Health System in Mankato and later released.

No charges are being requested at this time.

### Big Wiff tourney Saturday canceled

**NORTH MANKATO** — The BIG WIFF wiffle ball fundraiser for Miracle League of Minnesota has been canceled.

The games were set to be played at Caswell Park Saturday morning but were canceled due to lack of participation.

Miracle League is a nonprofit organization that aims to provide every kid with special needs an opportunity to play baseball as a team member in an organized league.

*Free Press staff*

### Dozens of pigs killed in barn fire

**LISMORE** — About 150 pigs have been killed in a barn fire in Nobles County.

The barn near Lismore housed about 600 pigs weighing 100 to 150 pounds each. Fire officials say those that survived the fire Thursday were found underneath the collapsed roof, protected by the steel gates from their pens.

The Worthington Daily Globe says firefighters used an excavator to pull the ceiling tin off the hogs. Fire crews sprayed the swine to cool them down.

### Tanker truck tips in Hibbing

**HIBBING** — A tanker truck carrying 40,000 pounds of an explosive material overturned in Hibbing on Friday.

Authorities say none of the ammonium nitrate spilled from the tanker outside Hibbing Taconite. The chemical is used in the blasting process at the site.

Cliff Natural Resources owns Hibbing Taconite. Cliff says the driver of the truck has been taken to a local hospital with minor injuries.

Local authorities closed a portion of Highway 5 near the plant entrance. A small amount of fuel spilled from the truck.

*The Associated Press*

## Care-A-Vanners make habit of Helping Habitat



John Cross photos

Habitat Care-A-Vanner volunteer Dori Peters of Sun City, Ariz., makes cuts with a power miter saw at a home construction site on Rogers Street near Sibley Park.

### Traveling volunteers building local houses

By Edie Schmierbach  
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Rob and Ronni Silver have been on the road most of the past 15 years. The native New Yorkers call their motor home “home” as they travel throughout the country helping construct others’ dwellings.

The Silvers are among the group of RV Care-A-Vanners volunteers who arrived in Mankato this week to don hard hats, wear heavy gloves and provide eight pairs of helping hands to construct four new residences in west Mankato.

When all the tidy houses with two-car garages are completed next spring, the families for whom they were built will move in. But what do the Care-A-Vanners get back from their two-week experience here?

“Oh, my gosh, you can’t put a price tag on it,” said Ronni Silver. “It’s so satisfying. You feel warm inside knowing you have helped someone. It’s worth it just to see the looks on the faces of the new homeowners.”

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, Christian housing ministry dedicated to building affordable homes with and for families in need.

The RV Care-A-Vanners program is coordinated through Habitat headquarters in Americus, Ga. Volunteers who travel in recreational vehicles are matched with local Habitat affiliates in need of volunteer support. Care-A-Van volunteers have been converging at Habitat sites in the Mankato area



John Cross

Habitat Care-A-Vanners team members hoist trusses into position on a home under construction on Rogers Street near Sibley Park.

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RONNI SILVER

for about 10 years.

Care-A-Vanners pay their own travel expenses to get to and from the organized Habitat building projects. The city has waived lodging fees for the volunteers while they camp at Land of Memories, and local restaurants and churches have been providing their meals.

Each day on the project at Mound Avenue and Rogers Street begins with devotions before the

volunteers pick up their hammers and start on a building, said Julie Schmillen, executive director for Habitat for Humanity of South Central Minnesota.

Construction site supervisor Ben Schmillen oversees the group as they frame, shingle and side each home. He is Julie Schmillen’s son.

Ben Schmillen has been in “the trades” for about 15 years. This summer, he is overseer for sites in St. Peter, New Prague and Le Sueur as well as on Rogers Street.

“It’s a different pace. You never know what you are going to encounter or who you are going to meet,” he said. “It’s rewarding working with the the families.”

His Mankato crew started at 8 a.m. Wednesday and expected to be on site seven hours that day and are to be in Mankato for two weeks. Homeowners-to-be and

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## Extra DWI patrols run through Labor Day

By Tim Krohn  
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**MANKATO** — Extra law enforcement will be out through Labor Day as part of the annual DWI enforcement campaign dubbed Toward Zero Deaths.

“This is going to be a renewed push by law enforcement to drive sober,” said Sgt. Adam Gray of the Mankato Department of Public Safety.

Blue Earth County, which once ranked 13th in the state for the number of alcohol-related fatalities, had dropped to the 30s in the ranking but has moved up to 25th, Gray said.

That top 25 designation will bring more federal funds to pay for additional DWI patrols throughout the year.

Starting Friday night, at least one extra officer will be on DWI patrol from each of 13 area agencies, with Blue Earth County adding four additional deputies and

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## Video’s debut closes out training camp

**MANKATO** — A new video has been produced to show Mankato and North Mankato’s continues support of the Minnesota Vikings after the team has left Verizon Vikings Training Camp.

A YouTube video debuted Friday featuring hundreds of people from around the community. Dubbed “Kato-Wide Party,” a parodied version of the hit country song, “Parking Lot Party” by Lee Brice, the video shows community members showing their support of the Minnesota Vikings.

More than 30 organizations, businesses and colleges are represented in “Kato-Wide Party.” Producer Jeff Hendrix has been filming the video since the start of the Vikings training camp in mid-July. Hendrix is the social media director at Radio Mankato.

Visit Mankato coordinated the different organizations, people and places to film. Minnesota State University, which hosts the training camp, also contributed to the video, including the access to camp.

## YOUR WEEKEND

**Buttered Corn Days Parade** — 6 p.m. today, Sleepy Eye.

**Le Sueur County Fair** — today and Sunday, Le Center; visit [www.lesueurcountyfair.org](http://www.lesueurcountyfair.org).

**Fly-In Breakfast** — 7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Sunday, Mankato Regional

Airport; \$7 adults.

**Drum Corps Expo** — 7 p.m. today, St. Peter High School Stadium; equipment parade 2:15 p.m. both days \$8 at door for over age 12.

**Threshermen’s Steam and Gas Engine Show** — today and Sunday,

rural Butterfield at Voss Park; \$8 for adults.

**Henderson Hummingbird Hurrah** — 9-5 p.m. Sunday, Henderson; for more information, go to: [www.hendersonhummingbirdhurrah.com](http://www.hendersonhummingbirdhurrah.com).

**Children’s Story Time** — 11 a.m. today, Barnes

and Nobles, 1850 Adams St.; for ages 2-8.

**Children’s Spanish Story Time** — 11:30 a.m., Barnes and Noble.

**30th annual Woodcarvers and Quilt Expo** — 10 a.m.-5 p.m. today and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, Unity Hall, Blue

Earth Area High School; \$4 adults.

**Magic Medicine Show** — 1-4 p.m. today, lawn of the Historic R.D. Hubbard House, 606 S. Broad St.; free.

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