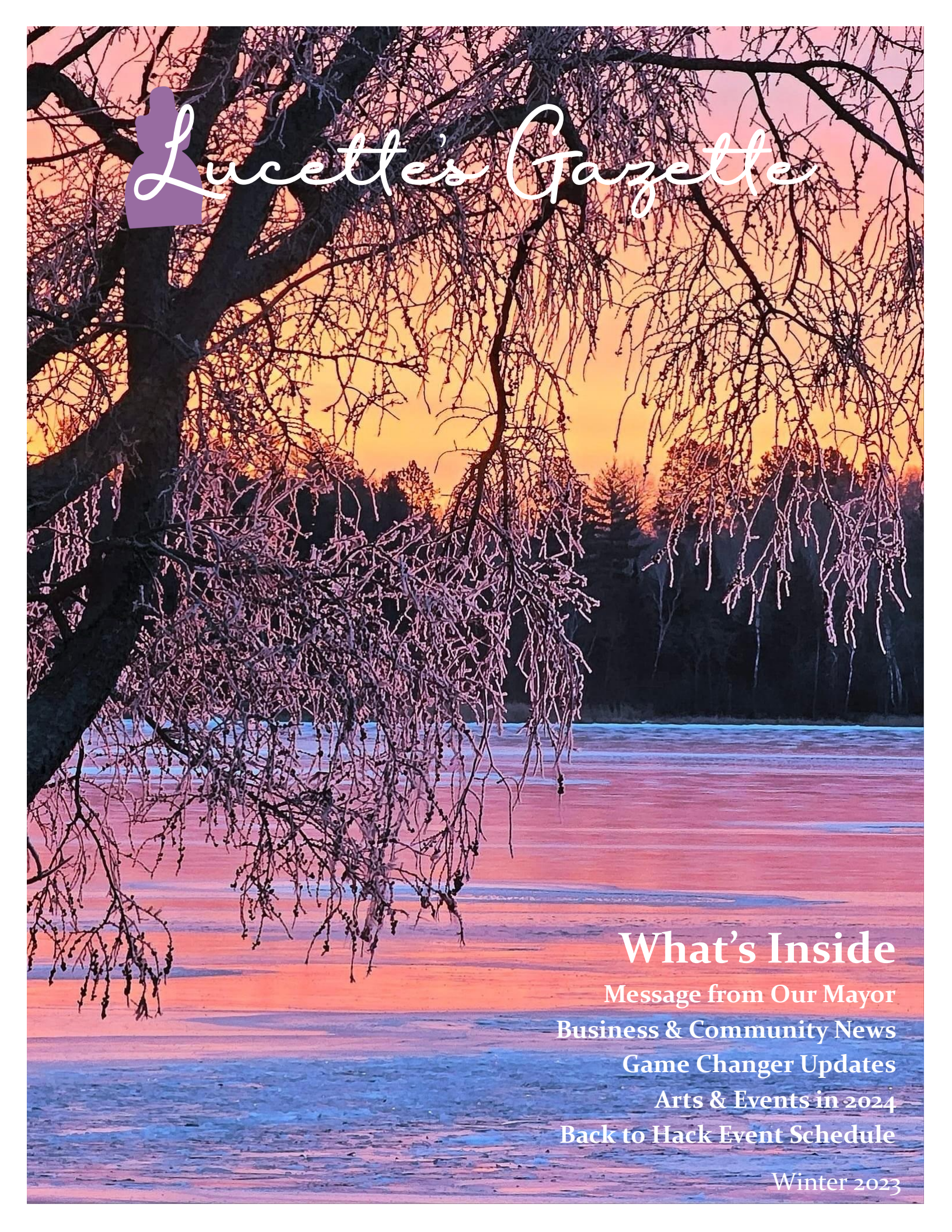




Lucette's Gazette

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Winter 2023



Message from Our Mayor

Merry Christmas, Hackensack!

I hope you have been able to stroll First Street and check out the snowflake and banner decorations. This can be a stressful time of year; please reach out to family, friends, or your local church for help if you find things overwhelming.

Many things are happening in Hackensack. We were awarded 1.4 million dollars from the State of Minnesota for **water main extension and looping** that should start in 2024. We have applied for a grant of up to 1.5 million dollars for **side street and alley improvements** to support changes that will occur with the State Highway 371 roadwork in 2025.

We are working towards **increased housing** in Hackensack. (See rendering below.) Local developers are building a fourplex and working on a larger 30-unit apartment complex. We conducted a Hackensack area housing study that further supported the Cass County housing study. We need more housing to accommodate workers who already work in Hackensack but can't live closer. We also have older local citizens who want to stay in the Hackensack area but need a smaller place.

We want Hackensack to be a fun place to live and visit. We're fundraising for several amenities in Hackensack. One of those projects is a **disc golf course** (9 holes) called Lucette's Links utilizing the existing walking paths at Bonna Paulson Park. It's a rustic course that maintains the natural beauty of the area while introducing people to the sport and the nature housed there.

Another project is the **resurfacing and redesign of the tennis courts** to house both tennis and more pickleball courts. We're looking for interested partnerships to help make this happen. City funds alone aren't enough to make these projects a reality.

Another project of interest is the **ice rink located behind the water tower**.

You may have heard that we are not going to flood and maintain the ice rink this year. While that is true, what is not true is that we have abandoned the idea of the ice rink. It is simply not safe to maintain this year. We need new lights and the hockey rink needs new boards. The old Zamboni is no longer operational. This year, we will be plowing an area on Birch Lake for ice skating to occur. We are gathering estimates for the work to be done at the ice rink. We may need financial partners and hands-on community efforts to fix the rink up and get it ready for next year. Please bear with us and offer your assistance as we make this transition.

Hackensack has such great people. A small town like ours can't afford all the amenities that people living in and around Hackensack desire. We appreciate your help. Maybe that comes from local charitable organizations, private donations, and from the hands and feet of our neighbors. We are building Hackensack together. Please help us continue to make Hackensack the place we all want to live, learn, work, and play together.



Have a Happy Holiday season! – Bill



Hackensack Gets AmeriCorps Service Member - Meet your new Community Stewardship Facilitator. Rashelle Brown is an AmeriCorps member serving the city of Hackensack for the 2023 – 2024 service year. In this role, she will connect with community members to provide outreach and education and facilitate community projects aimed at keeping our local air, water, and soil clean. She is eager to engage with community members who have ideas, issues, or questions about anything related to our local environment and natural resources. Her first community event will be a **Smart Salting Workshop at the Hackensack HUB on January 10th, from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.** This free event will share with residents and business owners how to keep their sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots ice-free and safe in the winter, while keeping salt and other harmful de-icing chemicals out of our waterways. If you have ideas for other events, would like to RSVP for this one, or want to chat about something else, please contact her at: climate@cityofhackensackmn.gov.

Winter Rendezvous *January 20, 2024*

Bring your family, bring a date, bring your friends - it's good fun for everyone!

Deep Portage's Annual Winter Rendezvous is just around the corner! On Saturday, January 20th, we invite folks out to enjoy a day of outdoor winter fun. Participants spend the day in friendly competition trying out activities such as **axe throwing, snow snakes, spear throwing, and more**. High scorers in all age classes even bring home an award! If you are less athletically-inclined, have no fear - you even get points for eating some hot-off-the-griddle johnny cakes. A tasty hot lunch inside our gorgeous dining hall during the event is sure to warm you on even the coldest days. Bring your family, bring a date, bring your friends - it's good fun for everyone! Stay tuned for more details on our Deep Portage Learning Center [social media](#), [newsletter](#), and [website](#) - *Lindsay Bjorklund*



Hackensack Lending Library Placed on the National Register of Historic Places



On October 26, 2023, Hackensack Lending Library was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The log cabin was initially identified as the Hackensack Conservation Building when it was constructed in 1936 by the four Holmberg brothers working for the WPA (Works Progress Administration). The Holmbergs were highly respected log cabin builders and stone masons as evidenced by the floor to ceiling split rock fireplace in the log cabin. Its initial construction was intended to serve the many visitors to the lakes area. Since then, the building has housed two

teachers, a dentist, the local American Red Cross during World War II and, for the last 21 years, a lending library where you don't need a library card to check out a book. Through grants from the Minnesota Historical Society, extensive historical research was conducted. The Cass County Historical Museum and interviews with one of the Holmbergs' daughters provided additional valuable information. The Lending Library is open 6 days a week from 10:00-2:00, June 1 through August 30 and on Saturdays in September. Stop by next summer for a walk through history and find a summer read from the library's extensive collection of books. - *Maggie McGill*



Community Teams

Branding & Marketing

Dog Park

Signage

Clean Energy Team

Community Garden

Beautification
(including Neighbor Helping Neighbor Spring Cleanup)

Resilient Housing

Children's Fishing Contest

Child Care

Disc Golf



The Hackensack Game Changers support the City of Hackensack by sponsoring Team Projects that enhance the City and surrounding area. We received our 501c3 nonprofit status on December 3, 2020 and are celebrating our three-year anniversary! We are a very active nonprofit with ten community teams under our umbrella including branding/marketing, dog park, signage, clean energy team, community garden, beautification including Neighbor Helping Neighbor Spring Cleanup, resilient housing, children's fishing contest, childcare, and disc golf! In this edition of the Gazette you will see reports from resilient housing, childcare and clean energy team. Each of the upcoming editions of the Gazette will have a report by one or more of our teams.

If you have an idea for a team that fits into our purpose (or want to join an existing team!), you're invited to submit your plan to the Game Changers Board and we will help you bring it to fruition! The Board will be hosting a summer get-together to update the public on the progress being made by our teams and invite you to join us in making our City and surrounding area a great place to live, learn, work, and play. - *Linnea Dietrich, Board Chair*

Resilient Housing Team - After four years of effort our Resilient Housing Game Changer Team has some really good news to report! We have a plan and a direction to construct a 30-unit apartment building here in Hackensack. Many people and organizations have been instrumental in helping to make this happen - to name a few: the Hackensack City Council, Region Five Development Commission, Minnesota Housing Partnership, Cass County Commissioners, Cass County Economic Development Corporation, Cass County HRA, Central MN Housing Partnership, Mann Lake Bee & Ag Supply and the neighboring Township Boards of Birch Lake, Hiram and Woodrow. Little did our Game Changer Team, made up of Larry Refsland, Kris Biessener, Steve Erickson and myself, realize the complexity of this project.

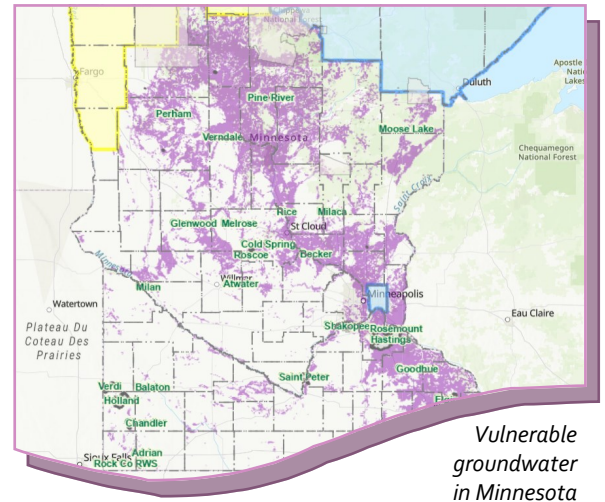
The housing project was in response to the need that was identified as a part of the Community Comprehensive Plan. Community and stakeholder meetings were held over the past year to further discussions. This past June, a market study report was presented by Maxfield Research. The cost was underwritten by Minnesota Housing Partnership and Mann Lake Bee & Ag Supply, with no cost to the City. This report helped determine more specifically the type of housing and the amount of housing demand. Over the past three months, Cass County Commissioners have agreed to set up a revolving loan fund for workforce housing in Cass County. Our community has been the first to apply for that funding and we are hopeful will be the first applicants to receive their loan funds. We are in contact with the State Agency Minnesota Housing and are well positioned for the Small City Workforce Housing Grant expected to be issued in December. We will be keeping people informed as this project continues to move forward.

- *Gary Dietrich, Resilient Housing*

Great Start Family Child Care - We are delighted to announce the opening of the Hackensack Great Start Family Child Care. Director Ashley Hunter is in the final stages of having her services licensed by Cass County. It is expected that the child care will be open in January. When Ashley receives licensure she will begin to advertise availability. This project began as a Hackensack Game Changers Team and has now advanced to become it's own 501C3. Ashley will operate the Great Start Family Child Care as an independent business. We are very excited to support her as a new important business in our community. The child care will operate under a special "POD" licensure and will be able to have 10-12 children enrolled. Renovation of the lower level of the UCC Church on East Lake Avenue will be the home for the business. Extensive renovation was conducted to accommodate the repurposed area through the gracious support of the Cass County Commissioners. Special thanks to Jeff Peterson our local District Commissioner for his efforts to make this happen. Child care is such a critical need in our community. Thanks go out to all of the people and organizations that have helped to make this happen.

Business & Community

Water Is Life - The big news currently is the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy has helped a coalition of groups successfully petition the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reprimand state agencies on their failure to protect drinking water in the karst region of Minnesota. The karst region waters are very susceptible to pollution from farm chemicals and there have been huge problems with lack of appropriate regulation. The state's Departments of Agriculture, Health, and Pollution Control Agency were directly called to task by the EPA. This development will have bearing on the same farm chemical problems in the sensitive waters of the Pineland Sands area in our neighborhood west of Hackensack, as well as the Central Sands area of middle Minnesota. One has to wonder why similar action hasn't happened in the neighboring state of Iowa, which is very heavily affected by farm chemical contamination.



Vulnerable groundwater in Minnesota

In other action, State of Minnesota v. Enbridge Energy (Case No. 15-CR-22-532) has seen testimony for significant impacts of Line 3 on public waters. Many of the impact reports came after White Earth-sponsored thermal imaging of Line 3 which was done by aerial drone. This imaging showed that previously undisclosed aquifer breaches in 40-50 different sites are creating destabilizing situations for both the pipeline corridor and the surrounding aquifers. Both the karst area and Line 3 histories are examples that ongoing "regulatory capture" (i.e. regulators being influenced by the groups they are supposed to regulate). This conflict of interest must be addressed if public assets such as groundwater, lakes, and streams are to be preserved. - Mike Tauber

Essentia Health Hackensack Clinic is right at our fingertips! The clinic is located next to Birchview Gardens Senior Living at 110 3rd St. S. The phone number is 218-675-5044. Essentia Health provides Family Medicine. You can establish care and receive urgent care. Jennifer Dalgarno, PA is the main clinician. The hours are Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday - 8:00-4:30 pm. Jennifer is also able to do Department of Transportation physicals. Immunizations can be administered. If further care or referrals are needed, you can get referrals to the many networks within Essentia Health, for example, Brainerd, Pine River, Fargo, or Duluth. Orthopedic appointments can be made and set up with the orthopedic specialist who comes twice a month. The clinic is able to do X-rays, and has a lab and pharmacy for filling prescriptions onsite. So when you're seeking a physical or medical care - such as primary care for all ages - or to discuss new or ongoing health concerns, remember Essentia Health is right here in Hackensack able to meet your needs! - Jeannie Blomme



Hacksgiving Fundraiser Silent Auction Update - We at Hackensack Lakes Area Community Foundation want to thank everyone who donated to our silent auction. **We had over 100 donations which raised over \$7,000** to help make the Hackensack Lakes Area an even better place to call home. We also want to thank everyone who bid online and helped make the auction a success. Since our founding in 2019, we have given out over \$15,000 in Community Impact Grants

to 18 nonprofits that service the 9 townships surrounding Hackensack and Backus. These include Game Changers, Faith in Action, Birch Lake Association, Leech Lake Legacy, Northwoods Arts Council, Lakeside Concert Series, Foothills Christian Academy, WHA School District, SNIP, Spay and Neuter, Paws and Claws, Pine Mountain Senior Center, Hackensack Community Garden, & Neighbor Helping Neighbor cleanup event. During the height of the pandemic, we also had an Emergency Relief Fund that raised over \$12,000 which was directly distributed to 7 business owners and 6 nonprofits in the community. These donations touched the lives of many during a difficult time. - Susan Kostka, Board Chair

**HACKENSACK
LAKES AREA
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Chainsaw Recap 2023

The annual Chainsaw Event in Hackensack, held on September 22nd through the 24th, was a record-breaking event in more ways than one! Over 1,500 wristbands were sold, each of which allowed attendees to enjoy 3 days of the wood-carving extravaganza. The crowd enjoyed watching the progress as carvers utilized their artistic insight and creativity to make beautiful sculptures from logs. The top carver of the event is selected based on the best auction sales. This year it was Chad Danczyk from Eagle River, Wisconsin. The Chainsaw Committee was very pleased with the success of the auctions. Proceeds are divided between the carvers and the non-profits who put on the event: Hackensack Lions, Hackensack American Legion, the City of Hackensack, and the Hackensack Chamber of Commerce. These proceeds are then used to support other community projects.

It was great to have local schools bring students in to watch the All-American Lumberjack show on Friday morning. Other shows throughout the weekend were well attended, and the crowds were entertained. The Hackensack American Legion Auxiliary Lucette's Kids games were enjoyed by many youngsters who were determined to have fun despite the brief rain showers. The weather cooperated for the most part, with only slight drizzles and no big winds. As part of the event, there were food vendors and numerous booths featuring the work of several Minnesota artisans.

The sponsoring groups would like to thank everyone who attended this year's event and the many volunteers who helped to make it happen. Next year is the 20th anniversary of the Hackensack Chainsaw Event and promises to be an even bigger celebration! We hope to see you next year, September 27-29, 2024. Visit the [Hackensack Chamber website](#) for more information or call (218) 675-6135 or (800)279-6932. - Bonnie Dupre



Northwoods Arts Council 2024 Line Up



Another Successful Year for Northwoods Arts Council! The **Northwoods Arts Council** (NAC) continues to make a significant impact in promoting and enriching the cultural scene in Hackensack and its surrounding communities. Sharing literature, music, art and poetry is a wonderful way to foster creativity and community engagement, which was indisputable throughout the 2023 Summer Season.

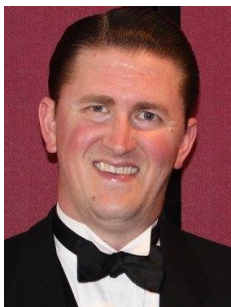
The 2024 events begin in the Hackensack Community Building on **Wednesday, June 12th, 1:00 PM, with acclaimed author, William Kent Krueger**, as he shares his insightful journey and thoughts on his latest literary masterpiece. This FREE event is a unique opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the creative process and the inspiration behind his work.

Lakeside Concerts will be starting on Friday, June 14, 5 PM-7 PM in the park next to beautiful Birch Lake. Music lifts the spirit and these free concerts are a great way for everyone to begin a summer weekend in the north woods. Whether someone attends alone to make new friends or comes with family, it is an inclusive and relaxed environment.

World renowned percussionist, **Josh Duffee returns on July 12-13** for another fabulous, big band music festival in the Community Building. The theme "Drummer's Delight" will celebrate the centennial of Louis Bellson, plus the genius of Buddy Rich and Gene Krupa.

The season will peak with the **29th Annual Northwoods Art and Book Festival on Saturday, August 10**, for the highly anticipated day of the longest running art and literature event in Minnesota.

Mark your calendars and plan your upcoming summer so you don't miss an event. It's such a great time to be in Hackensack. Come and contribute to the enthusiastic energy that our town is experiencing. See you next summer! - Lynn VanAllen



From the Editors

Congratulations go to **Debbie Center of Nevis**, the winner of this edition's photo contest! I'm sure you will agree that this winning photo (see front cover) is absolutely stunning! Debbie has won a \$25 gift card for Rendezvous Brewing, good for purchase of either beverages or merchandise. There are a couple of other good photos submitted by others in this edition as well. We love having these locally submitted photos to display to our community. Thank you to everyone who submitted photos for our winter-themed contest!

Several people have asked us, as editors, how did the Gazette get started and who is involved with this publication? Well, the idea was initiated by Jim Schneider (current City Council Member) about four years ago. The City wanted to provide better information about our community, our progress in renewal, and our future plans. Our community is made up of many groups of people; full time residents, part time summer residents, people that have weekend cabins and vacationers. Hackensack has a rich tradition to many people including some that may not even live or visit here anymore. The community is much more than the area within the city limits. We are the primary hub for many people that live, learn, work and play in a ten-mile radius including 127 lakes, nine townships, and the City of Backus.

Jim said, "How about a free newsletter that would report on key events, activities and plans?" Gary Dietrich immediately said, "Great idea. Who can we get to do that?" He said "How about you?" After careful consideration, Gary agreed, then asked Linda Ottman to join. She said YES! Gary contacted a good friend who is a writer and publisher, asking if she would join the team. She said YES. We asked Sourcewell in Staples to underwrite 50% of the cost the first year; they said YES.



This edition represents the 15th quarterly edition. Our distribution is 300 - 400 hardcopies distributed in the community and about 2,500 electronic copies sent out. The City underwrites the cost, which is very affordable since our writers, editors, and photographers are all volunteers. If you enjoy the publication please let us know via the city website.

For *Lucette's Gazette* Spring 2024 photo contest, please submit high resolution, JPEG-formatted photos in portrait orientation. Include where the photo was taken, contact information, and mailing address in the event you are the winner. Email photos to howdy1953@gmail.com. One winner per newsletter. The contest winner receives a \$25 Rendezvous Brewing gift certificate. All submissions become

the property of the City of Hackensack and may be used for other purposes.

Stay warm, and stay connected! Things slow down and get quieter over the winter, which is a wonderful thing, but there is usually something fun and energetic going on too. See you at Back to Hack in mid-January!



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Lucette's Gazette is a quarterly
community newsletter covering
news, updates, and happenings in
our Hackensack Lakes Area.

BACK TO HACK EVENT SCHEDULE

JANUARY 11TH - 14TH



THURSDAY, JANUARY 11TH

- 10:00 am Medallion Hunt Clue #1
- 6:00 pm Meat Raffle at the Legion

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12TH

- 10:00 am Medallion Hunt Clue #2
- Noon "Jump in the Lake" Beer Release at Rendezvous Brewing
- 2:00 - 4:00 pm "Snow-Pen House" at Faith In Action - Hot Cocoa & a Snack
- 6:00 pm Trivia at Rendezvous Brewing
- 7:00 pm Music Bingo at Birchwood Char House & Bar

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13TH

- 10:00 am Medallion Hunt Final Clue
- 10:00 am - 1:00 pm Family Ice Fishing Contest ON Birch Lake
- 10:30 am Frostbite Ur Fanny 2.5 mile Fun Run/Walk
- 11:00 - 2:00 pm Walley Birchwinkel's 3rd Annual Snow Golf Contest
- "S'mores" Specials all day at Birchwood Char House & Bar
- Noon Chili Cook-Off & Feed at the Hackensack American Legion
- 12:00 - 3:00 pm Chamber's Silent Auction Fundraiser at the Legion
- Noon Auxiliary Bake Sale at the Legion
- 1:00 - 2:00 pm Penguin Plunge into Birch Lake
- 1:00 - 2:00 pm Kid's "Happy Walleye Art Contest" at the Visitor's Center hosted by The Clean Energy Team
- Open Skating at the Ice Rink on Birch Lake
- 2:00 pm Free Winter Carnival Kids Games
- 2:00 pm Cuddle & Smooch with favorites from Paws+Claws at Faith In Action (116 1st Street S)
- 3:00 pm Awards Ceremony at Rendezvous Brewing
- 4:00 - 7:00 pm Fish Fry sponsored by HF&RD at the Fire Hall
- 5:30 pm Community Bonfire in the City Park
- 6:00 pm Fabulous Fireworks OVER Birch Lake
- 7:00 pm Electronic Horse & Pig Racing at the Legion



Snow Sculpting Contest

The contest is open to anyone and must be built within city limits.

Spots at the park can be reserved.

To enter and for more info email
lindsay@upnorthplumbingheating.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14TH

- Noon "Back to Hack - It's A Wrap"
at Birchwood Char House & Bar
Raffle Drawing & Snow Sculpture winners announced
 - 1:00 pm - Bargo/Bingo at Birchwood
- OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING ON TO SNOW AND ICE CONDITIONS.
STAY UP-TO-DATE BY FOLLOWING THE HACKENSACK VISITOR'S CENTER ON FACEBOOK.

