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**GOVERNMENT & NONPROFIT-
 Electronic Edition**

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Economic Development



Detroit Lakes City Hall Renovation Project

is not just about chasing smokestacks.

IT'S ABOUT CREATING THE MOST DESIRABLE PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE!

As the last remnants of ice around Detroit Lakes' shores melt away, the days stretch longer, and palpable energy builds along the lakeshore. This lake community, known for its vibrant summertime activities, is on the verge of awakening from the cold winter months. Boaters, anglers, dog walkers, cyclists, shoppers, and those seeking a delicious lakeside dinner eagerly await their turn to gather along the lakeshore.


View from West Lake Drive



continued on next page

Source: Kelcey Klemm, Detroit Lakes City Administrator; City of Detroit Lakes Website

Author: Mary Phillipe, LCSC's Communications Generalist

A photograph of Kelcey Klemm, a middle-aged man with light brown hair, wearing a white dress shirt and a dark tie, sitting in a dark grey armchair and smiling at the camera.

Kelcey Klemm

Detroit Lakes
City Administrator

“We talk so much about economic development; it’s not about chasing smoke stacks anymore. It’s about creating the most desirable place for people to live.”

-Kelcey Klemm

Kelcey Klemm, the Detroit Lakes City Administrator for nearly eight years, said Detroit Lakes is the city he has always wanted to work for.

“

Detroit Lakes invests back into the community, making it a great place to live.”

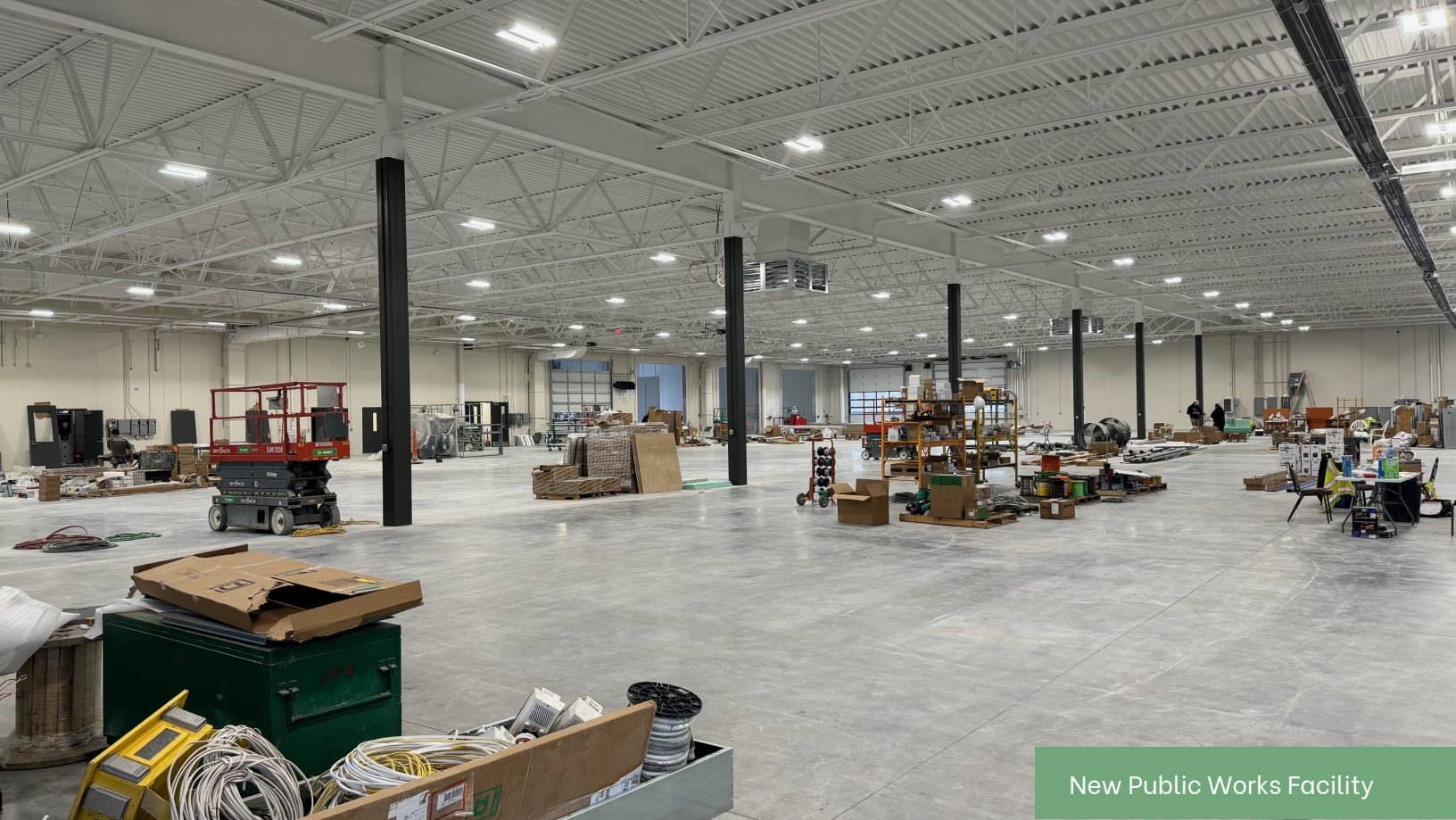
He grew up in nearby Frazee and returned to the area after college, working briefly at the state capitol. Klemm and his wife Amanda decided to move back to the area where they grew up after accepting an offer for the role of the City Clerk in Frazee. They were looking forward to having a shorter commute to work after leaving the busy metro area. Amanda's roots in the Underwood community also influenced their decision to return.

Klemm worked as the City Clerk in Frazee for four and a half years before he took up the position of City Manager in Perham, where he worked for eight years. After that, he got the opportunity to become the City Administrator in Detroit Lakes, where he has happily remained.

According to Klemm, the city continues to experience fast growth and has had some real success stories over the past 20 years.

He shared that Detroit Lakes has changed from when he graduated from Frazee High School in 1998. The Highway 10 realignment brought new life into the downtown area, and local leaders have made major community investments in Detroit Mountain, the Detroit Lakes Community and Cultural Center (DLCCC), the new hotel, and other businesses along the Mile Long Beach continue to make it the “place to be” in the summer.

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New Public Works Facility

Detroit Mountain and the DLCCC were anchor amenities that drew the Klemm family to Detroit Lakes. Since then, additional amenities have been added to the community, such as the new Boys and Girls Club facility and the new Becker County Museum. Many of the projects receive funding from state and local government, but local philanthropy plays a large part in the development and support of the amenities in the community.

Since Klemm's arrival, Detroit Lakes has seen a series of transformative projects. The city employees, who have been operating from the former police station for months, eagerly anticipate moving to the newly renovated offices. The nearly completed Detroit Lakes City Hall, acquired in the late 1970s, once served as a bottling plant, and the lower level was used as the former municipal liquor store. The remodel includes a new front entrance and parking on Frazee Street, a larger council chamber, updated office spaces, and a public meeting room.

Prior to Klemm's employment in Detroit Lakes, the previous administration initiated a facilities assessment to determine how best to provide space for city hall and the police department.

One option was to combine both into one building. Still, ultimately, the council decided to build a new police department funded through a sales tax referendum and then remodel the existing city hall, now using both building levels to house the administrative office.

In addition to this significant undertaking, Klemm has been involved with completing several other large infrastructure projects, including:

- a new wastewater treatment plant - \$32 million
- expansion of the airport runway to 5,200 feet - \$25 million
- a new Public Works facility - \$11.5 million

“We were able to accomplish all these projects while maintaining one of the lowest tax rates in the area. This happened with a combination of good financial planning, growth in the tax base, and City Council support and staff commitment,” said Klemm.

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DETROIT LAKES CITY HALL RENOVATION PHOTOS

When asked about future city projects, Klemm said, “That’s what I am excited about. In the next five years, we have plans to improve the beachfront, build a new pavilion, and renovate Washington Ball Park.” The City is seeking State bond funding to renovate the historic Washington Park Ball Field, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2008.

The Minnesota Legislature approved the city to proceed with a bond referendum in November 2024. If successful, this funding will be utilized to replace the existing pavilion and to make many improvements to the City Park. The existing pavilion, constructed in 1915, is a seasonal structure with no heating or air conditioning to meet the year-round space requirements the community and private events need and demand. “The pavilion has a lot of sentimental value to many of our residents who remember the big bands and ballroom dances that made the facility iconic. It’s a fabric of our history and part of what Detroit Lakes is known for. It has served the city well for 100 years,” said Klemm. The city also plans to improve the lakefront over the next five years. The beachfront from the American Legion to Washington Avenue will receive updates in road surfacing, new lights, signs, and trail improvements.

Klemm acknowledged that many people can work remotely in today's world. To attract people to the community, it is essential to provide services and amenities that will keep them from choosing other communities that offer the amenities they want. “We talk so much about economic development; it’s not about chasing smoke stacks anymore. It’s about creating the most desirable place for people to live,” said Klemm.

When asked where he sees himself in the next ten years, Klemm said, “It’s been a heck of a ride for eight years, but we have much more to do!” If you want to learn more about the City of Detroit Lakes and their continued plan for growth. Contact Kelcey Klemm at kklemm@cityofdetroitlakes.com.





OTTER TAIL COUNTY - MINNESOTA WORKFORCE SUMMIT

APRIL 24, 2024 | THUMPER POND RESORT



Opportunities, Training & Connections in Otter Tail County

Otter Tail County invites you to join us for the Workforce Summit on Wednesday, April 24!

The Workforce Summit will share the intentional efforts of the OTC Works workforce strategy and how partners can continue working together.

WHEN: Wednesday, April 24, from 8:30 am–3:30 pm

WHERE: Thumper Pond Resort, 300 Thumper Lodge Rd, Ottertail, MN

WHO: Employers, school and education partners, local government officials, workforce partner agencies, and anyone else who is impacted by the workforce challenge and involved in workforce development

REGISTER NOW

Attendees of the Workforce Summit will LEARN about the current workforce environment, ENGAGE with presenters and attendees, and be ACTIVATED for where we are going together on workforce development.

Speakers will discuss:

- Current workforce environment and resources
- Resident recruitment efforts to bring needed workforce to the county
- Efforts to build the future workforce by engaging with students
- Creating a welcoming workplace
- More to be announced!



LAKE REGION ARTS COUNCIL is excited to announce this year's participants in our FY24 Arts Mentorship Program:

- **Aurora Armstrong** – Visual Art/Fergus Falls/Otter Tail County
- **Jocelyn Beaudoin** – Voice/Barnesville/Clay County
- **Leah Christiansen** – Visual Art/Detroit Lakes/Becker County
- **Daisy Holl** – Visual Art/Dent/Otter Tail County
- **Hattie Jackson** – Visual Art/Hawley/Clay County
- **Anna Jepson** – Theater/Frazee/Becker County
- **Drac Kramer** – Visual Art/Carlos/Douglas County
- **Kendall Krueger-Pierce** – Visual Art/Pelican Rapids/Otter Tail County
- **Emma Lyman** – Voice/Barnesville/Clay County
- **Laykin Martodam** – Theater/Hawley/Clay County
- **Kara Morales** – Visual Art/Fergus Falls/Otter Tail County
- **Anja Nelson** – Dance/Dilworth/Clay County
- **Kaiya Novotny** – Visual Art/New York Mills/Otter Tail County
- **Wesley Richards** – Piano/Morris/Stevens County
- **Maria Ricks** – Visual Art/Fergus Falls/Otter Tail County
- **Maeve Rogers** – Literature/Fergus Falls/Otter Tail County
- **Emma Sannes** – Architecture/Detroit Lakes/Becker County
- **Anna Schroeder** – Visual Art/Fergus Falls/Otter Tail County
- **Sheariah Sheppard** – Visual Art/Fergus Falls/Otter Tail County
- **Kelly Wagenman** – Visual Art/Dent/Otter Tail County

Arts Mentorship Program scholarships are awarded to students in grades 8 through 12.

Activities include fifteen hours of summer lessons with a college/university professor or a working professional artist and the opportunity to perform or exhibit their work at the Arts Mentorship Program Showcase held every October at A Center for the Arts in Fergus Falls.

The goal of mentorship is to enhance the student's artistic creativity and skill and to promote personal growth. The program also helps qualified artists by employing them as mentors.

The voters of Minnesota made this activity possible through funding from the Lake Region Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage fund.

The Lake Region Arts Council (LRAC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to encourage and support the vitality of the arts. We accomplish this through providing grants to community organizations and individual artists in the region, providing a monthly ArtsNews newsletter, workshops, and technical assistance. The counties LRAC serves are Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin in West Central Minnesota.

From the Executive Director

"We Advocate for Strong Communities
through Service and Leadership."



Jeremy Kovash
Executive Director



Hello and Happy Spring!

I hope you are all thawing out after a long winter and ready for the growth of the summer. As LCSC continues to grow, I wanted to share a story that reminded me of the importance of listening to one another. Last week, as I participated in interviews at Lakes Country, I was struck by the story a candidate shared in response to one of our questions. They referenced the Ted Talk by Ernesto Sirolli, who shared a story about aid workers on the African continent learning an important lesson about listening to locals.

A group of aid workers in Zambia faced an unexpected challenge when intending to fill a perceived need in the community, they presented a project to plant tomatoes in the rich soil along the river. The community did not seem to support the work, some even seeming to scoff at the idea. The humanitarian workers were astonished as they were there to set up tomato farms as part of an effort to provide food and promote sustainable agriculture in the region.

The aid workers moved forward, tilling fields and planting tomatoes in the rich soil, producing a bumper crop. However, once the tomatoes ripened a group of hippos emerged from the river and stomped through the crops, causing significant damage and consuming most of the tomatoes. When the aid workers exclaimed about the damage and asked why the locals didn't say something, they replied "you never asked."

The workers had great intentions, but this story reveals the importance of listening.

Sirolli's Ted Talk tells the story more eloquently.

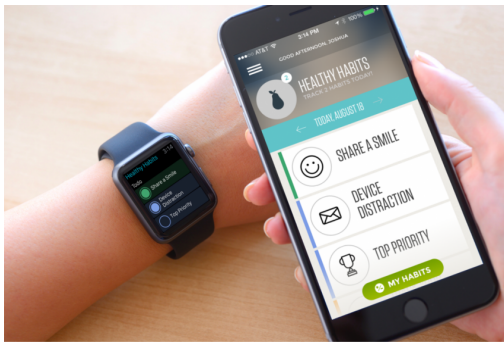


I hope that you enjoy this issue of The Communicator and thank you for your partnership with Lakes Country Service Cooperative.



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LCSC's MEMBERS CityConnect

2024
LCSC
CITY NETWORKING
Luncheon

17 MAY
11:30AM - 1PM

Share ideas, best practices
and gain new perspectives that
may help you as a leader!

**DISCUSSIONS
AND INSIGHTS**

REGISTRATION
Contact Mary Phillippe
218-737-6549

1001 E Mount Faith Fergus Falls, MN 56537

You are cordially invited to a networking luncheon on
Friday, May 17, 2024, from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Lakes
Country Service Cooperative. You will have the opportunity to
network and discuss current and relevant topics with fellow City
Clerks, Deputy Clerks, City Administrators, and City Managers
working in Lakes Country Service Cooperatives' nine-county
region.

Do you have items/topics you would like the group to discuss
during this session? Let us know what you are interested in
discussing, and we will do our best to get your topic on the agenda.
You can attend in person or virtually.



We look forward to seeing you at
Lakes Country Service Cooperative!
Together We Achieve...

MAXINE ADAMS

“I still love
*every
minute
of it!*”

Maxine Adams, Executive Director of the Lake Region Arts Council, exclaimed, "I was absolutely right! This job has been perfect for me. I still love every minute of it." Adams has provided quality arts opportunities and programming to a nine-county region in West Central Minnesota for over 20 years. However, she is now preparing to transition to the next chapter of her life, although she is still determining where she will choose to live out that next chapter.

Continued on next page

Maxine Adams

**Lake Region Arts Council
Executive Director**



“I was the weird little kid who grew up way out in the country in Montana. My mom belonged to the RCA Record of the Month club, and I was always asking for records with operas, and I wanted to go to the art museums.”

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"Confession I"
by Naomi Schliesman
on display at LRAC



In 1982, when her father purchased a farm south of Clitherall, Minnesota, Maxine decided to be closer to her father and moved to Fergus Falls. From here, she began a career working in the nonprofit world, helping to improve lives locally through health and human service programs.

Adams started her career by enrolling in a chemical dependency counseling training program provided by the State Hospital in Fergus Falls. After completing the program, she worked as a Chemical Dependency Counselor in Detroit Lakes, where she served in an outpatient program. Following her time as a counselor, Adams continued working in non-profit organizations. She worked for the Displaced Homemakers Program, Parent's Anonymous, and the American Cancer Society. While at the Displaced Homemakers Program, Adams shared space at Fergus Falls City Hall with the then-director of Lake Region Arts Council (LRAC), Sonja Peterson. Adams admitted that she felt Sonja's role as the executive director was the perfect job and told Peterson that she would want to apply for that position if she ever retired.

After Peterson retired, Maxine applied for the executive director position but was unfortunately not offered the job. Fortunately, the position became available again due to a vacancy shortly after, and Maxine applied again and was successfully hired in 2003. When Adams joined the organization, Sonja Peterson had already been in the position for 18 years and had established a well-managed and high-quality organization. Maxine's goal is to pass on the same kind of organization to the next executive director.

LRAC has been operating in Fergus Falls for more than 47 years, and their mission is to encourage and support the arts in nine counties in West Central Minnesota.

"The LRAC space at the River Inn in Fergus Falls is a lovely, artistic, and comfortable location along the river. During the pandemic, when we needed to work from home, I missed being in this space," said Adams.

Adams shared that she spent a significant amount of time and effort toward the passing of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Legacy Amendment in 2008.

According to Adams, "This amendment revolutionized the arts funding landscape in Minnesota and helped increase funding for artists and artistic activities in the rural community. It put us in a whole new dimension and tripled our funding."

Minnesota has 11 regional arts councils. All councils are separate 501c3s, and each has its opportunity to tailor its work to the region's needs. In the mid-2000s, LRAC coordinated a series of Arts Resource Fairs that provided the opportunity for regional artists to make in-person connections with arts opportunities based in the Twin Cities. One hundred artists were able to connect with over 35 organizations.

Adams prioritizes equitable access to LRAC funding for artists in their nine-county service area. She mentioned that of the 11 regional arts councils, LRAC was the first organization to have its application available entirely online, making it easier for artists to access the funding they need to continue their creative work. Adams has found that one size does not fit all. Each year, LRAC sends out a survey and completes a needs assessment to ensure that the grant application is accessible to everyone and meets the needs of the applicants. "We must ensure we are good stewards of the public dollars," said Adams.

Continued on next page



She also acknowledged a new emphasis on supporting arts programs for at-risk youth, and they are currently working on developing funding for that population segment.

Adams has been working at LRAC for the last 20 years and has seen a significant increase in the level of support for local artists and programming during this time. Adams mentioned the need to create awareness about the good being done through the Legacy Funds among people not heavily involved in the arts. She emphasized the importance of helping them understand how their support through tax dollars could impact someone they may know or love. For instance, their tax dollars might be supporting an art activity for a loved one in a nursing home. They may also be helping provide an arts mentorship scholarship for their niece or nephew during the summer.

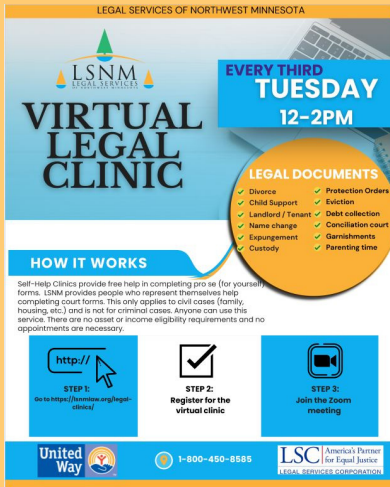
Recently, a new initiative called the Artists on Mainstreet program was launched in collaboration with West Central Initiative and Springboard for the Arts. This program aims to help small cities with populations of less than 5,000 revitalize their downtown areas. The City of Hawley was awarded \$14,000 in financial support through this partnership to support revitalizing its downtown area.

Adams shared, “I am often asked to be part of the planning phases for many community arts projects. During these discussions, you can see people around the table getting excited about the opportunities and the possibilities. Then, the conversation comes around to “How will we pay for this?” It is gratifying to be the representative from the LRAC board at the table who can say, “I think we can help you with that.”

On July 1, 2024, Maxine Adams will step down from her role as the Executive Director of LRAC. However, she intends to help transition the newly selected director and assist in onboarding. Maxine is committed to ensuring that LRAC remains a strong organization, and she wants to provide a seamless transition to avoid disruption of services. All of us at Lakes Country Service Cooperative wish her well.

**Would you like to send
Maxine Adams a farewell message or
learn more about LRAC and the
resources available?
Visit their website at lrac4.org**

Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota



VIRTUAL LEGAL CLINIC

We are thrilled to announce the launch of our groundbreaking Virtual Legal Self-Help Clinic, a cutting-edge initiative designed to provide free help in completing pro se (for yourself) forms. Our mission is to make legal information and assistance more accessible than ever, breaking down barriers and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to seek justice and understand their rights, regardless of their location or circumstances. This new clinic is available on the third Tuesday of each month from 12 pm to 2 pm. Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota (LSNM) provides self-represented people help completing the following types of forms:

- **marriage dissolution (divorce)**
- **child support**
- **landlord/tenant**
- **wage claims**
- **garnishment expungement**
- **custody/parenting time**
- **Order for Protection/Harassment Restraining Order**
- **eviction**
- **debt collection**
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Learn more about the special services that Hiller provides under the CPC contract



Learn more about CPC's contract with Hiller Commercial Floors





Otter Tail County and High School Welding Student

Collaborate to Create Culvert Cleaning Tool

Source/Author: Shannon Terry,
Otter Tail County Public Information Officer

The Otter Tail County Highway Department's Ditch and Drainage Inspector, Colby Palmersheim, joined forces with the Fergus Falls Kennedy High School (KHS) welding class. Together, they launched Otter Tail County's Culvert Grapple Hook innovation, a winch-powered tool to clean out culverts. With a grant from the University of Minnesota Local Operational Research Assistance (OPERA) Program, the County was able to purchase a winch to power the hook. This collaborative effort has resulted in an innovative solution that saves time, enhances worker safety, and highlights the talent of local youth.

Palmersheim's idea addressed the challenge of clearing clogged culverts, particularly those located beyond the reach of conventional equipment. The challenge of welding inspired a partnership with Mr. Dennis Wutzke, the welding teacher at Kennedy High School, who enlisted the talents of Micaiah Abramson, a sophomore student, to bring the concept to life. Abramson enthusiastically accepted the challenge and began working on the mockup.

Abramson reviewed Palmersheim's handwritten mock-up and used scrap pieces of metal from the KHS welding shop to weld the prototype. Once he was satisfied with the mockup, he began to create. Using advanced welding techniques, Abramson dedicated over 45 hours to meticulously crafting the Culvert Grapple Hook. The final product features a heavy-duty post with retractable fins that can be connected to a winch-powered mechanism used to clear culverts of various sizes.

Continued on next page



Reflecting on his experience, Abramson shared, “I had finished my project, and Mr. Wutzke asked if I would like to make a culvert cleaner tool for the County. I had to make a few adjustments, add to the post, and weld two hooks at the top of the design that weren’t included in the original design. It was a fun project.”

Palmersheim and Abramson recently tested the hook in a mock demonstration. Branches were stuffed into two different-sized culverts, and the hook was connected to the winch on a pickup truck. The hook pulled all the tightly packed branches out of the larger culvert. Before it is used this spring, a few minor adjustments will be made for smaller culverts. Overall, the Culvert Grapple Hook was a success.

“Working with the high school shows the talent that will be in the workforce soon, shows students what types of positions are offered in County employment, and what types of problems county workers solve every day,” remarked Inspector Palmersheim. “This project highlights our ability to tackle challenges, thanks to the ingenuity and dedication of our local talent.”

Students and employers are encouraged to use the K12 Navigator to make connections and partner on engaging career exploration experiences. More information is available at k12navigator.org. Otter Tail County also offers summer employment opportunities.

LCSC's NON PROFIT LEADERS

Networking Luncheon

LCSC MEMBERS'
**NONPROFIT
LEADERS
NETWORKING
LUNCHEON**

**14
JUNE**
11:30AM- 1PM

LAKES COUNTRY SERVICE COOPERATIVE
1001 E. Mount Faith, Fergus Falls, MN

Contact Us :

218-737-6549
contactus@lcsc.org
LCSC.org

Nonprofit Leaders are invited to a networking luncheon on Friday, June 14, 2024, from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Lakes Country Service Cooperative. You will have the opportunity to network and discuss current and relevant topics with fellow nonprofit leaders in Lakes Country Service Cooperative’s nine-county region.

Do you have items/topics you would like the group to discuss during this session? Let us know what you are interested in discussing, and we will do our best to get your topic on the agenda.

You can attend in person or virtually.



**We look forward to seeing you at
Lakes Country Service Cooperative!
Together We Achieve...**



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