

The buzz on beekeeping

by MEAGAN DOLL
Sun Intern

Agriculture in the Midwest is not uncommon, but one man in Osceola is raising something a little different from dairy cattle. For 40 years, Richard Kretzschmar has raised honeybees.

Kretzschmar grew up in Michigan, but moved often with his job as a college campus pastor.

While working at Central Missouri State University, Kretzschmar was introduced to beekeeping by a business professor. Since then, his hobby has grown to a current four hives with approximately 140,000 bees.

Beekeeping requires less



Richard Kretzschmar of Osceola uses a smoke tool to calm bees before harvesting honey. The beekeeper has been raising honey bees for forty years. Photo by Meagan Doll

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The two sides of mining

District 28 candidates weigh in on mining in Wisconsin

by PHILLIP BOCK
Editor



Adam Bever

With explosive growth in Wisconsin frac sand mining, and a State Senate committee forming to resurrect a mining bill that missed passing by one vote last year, the issue of mining has once again moved into the limelight — yet politicians and citizens are divided on the issue.

In Assembly District 28, incumbent Erik Severson will be running against Adam Bever, and the two are divided on what to do about mining in Wisconsin. Both told The Sun that they believe mines are important to the economy, but their views differ on how to the companies building the mines should be left to operate.



Erik Severson

“It has become an incredibly valuable material to the economy,” Severson said of frac sand. “Ten years ago they said there were no new natural gas deposits left in the world. Then they invented frac sand mining, and now there are near unlimited amounts of natural gas deposits they can get to. This increases our energy output of this whole country.”

Frac sand mines in Wisconsin have doubled in the past year, the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism found, which potentially means a boon for business and job growth. Both Burnett and Polk County are rich in frac sand, though no mines have been built in Polk County.

Bever said that puts the county and the state in the unique position of developing legislation prior to construction of mines.

“My whole thing is that we have to prepare for that. I’m not against frac sand mining, but if we let them buy the farm and don’t have controls on it saying how we will be reimbursed for our roads and for the sand being taken out, then they are making big money on that,” Bever said. “Where’s our piece of the pie?”

The explosive growth of mines, however, has had some unintended consequences. Both Severson and Bever pointed out that the mines are often built in rural areas where the roads are not designed to handle the heavy traffic imposed on them, though the candidates differed on how to address the problem.

“The townships and the counties get stuck with a lot of expense to repair these roads to bring them up to grade,”

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Pickard Trucking does its “fair” share

by JASON DEMOE
Contributing Writer

Every year at the Polk County Fair, over 100 milk cows are on display. Over a five day period, those cows produce anywhere from 16,000 to 20,000 pounds of milk.

The fairgrounds do not have the storage capacity to handle that much dairy product. That’s where Pickard Trucking comes in.

“For as long as any of us can remember, we have hauled milk for the Polk County Fair,” Mike Pickard said. “We provide our services at the fair free of charge and are very happy to give back to the farming community.”

Pickard Trucking, Inc. began hauling milk in the 1960s. Eugene Pickard



Pickard Trucking has been hauling milk for the Polk County Fair for several years. Pictured, from left to right, is Matt Pickard, Jim Pickard, Mike Pickard, Katie Elmer and Bill Elmer. Submitted photo

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Distracted driving ruled cause of tragic I-94 crash

by PHILLIP BOCK
Editor

A State Patrol investigation into an Interstate 94 crash that killed three revealed that distracted driving was a “significant contributing factor.”

“The teens, who were returning to New Richmond from Woodbury, were trying to get the attention of another driver who had passed them,” the report said. “In an attempt to find

paper, the rear seat passenger, Jordan Johnson, unfastened his seat belt while at the same time the driver searched the center console. These distracted actions resulted in the Durango striking the rear of the stopped semitrailer at highway speeds.”

The crash occurred Monday, July 30, when the Durango, driven by Zachary Zajec, 17, of New Richmond rear-ended a semi

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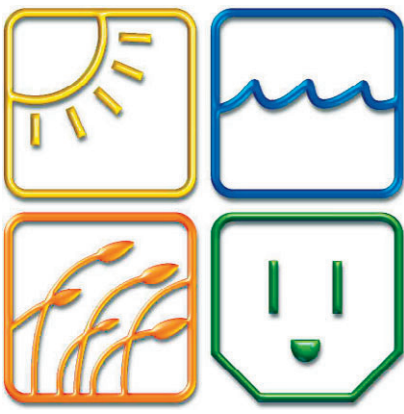
Polk County Energy Fair offers opportunities to learn

by PHILLIP BOCK
Editor

People looking to get outside for the last few weeks of summer can recharge their batteries at the Polk County Energy Fair, a third annual event with a focus on sustainability. The fair kicks off this weekend at the Polk County Fairgrounds in St. Croix Falls.

The energy fair will focus on renewable energy displays, activities, programs, guest speakers, and presentations aimed toward educating fairgoers on the benefits of sustainability.

Initially spawned from a blueprint borrowed from the



Midwest Renewable Energy Association’s Fair, the Polk County Energy Fair had its beginnings in a somewhat unlikely place: a kitchen table. Darrell and Rosalie Kittleson provided the location and the furniture, as well as some great ideas on how to get the fair off the ground. Now in its third year, the goal of the fair is to put on an event that, while focused on renewable energy, provides an opportunity to discuss and learn about other aspects of sustainability.

“It’s about sustainability and being locally self reliant,” organizer Jeff Peterson said. “We can be locally self reliant depending on our resources.”

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