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INSIDE



The lightning and thunder that postponed Somerset's home opener until Friday seemed to be a message from the late Bruce Larson. **Page B1**



"Best in show" at Plein Air Hudson was awarded to "Where Silas Sleeps" by Naomi Tiry Salgado. **Page A8**



Some of the top-ranked cowboys and cowgirls in the Midwest came to New Richmond last week to compete in the St. Croix Valley Rodeo. **Page A10**

OBITUARIES PAGE B7

Pamela Salisbury
Bryan Selbrede
Howard F. Smeby



RIVER FALLS

River Falls racetrack plans scuttled

Developer shifts to building housing development

BY SAM FRISTED
Staff Writer

The proposed development of a racetrack in River Falls has been canceled, according to Community Development Director Amy Peterson. Instead of using the land to build a racetrack, the developer will look to use the land for a housing development.

City Council member Diane Odeen posted on Aug. 19 about Neal Krzyzaniak's plans to pull the plug on the project. She said her post is information received from Peterson.

"Update on the proposed auto racetrack: the developer has confirmed to city staff that he is no longer considering that development, because it is clear the community does

not want it. Instead, he will be considering a housing development for the property," Odeen's post read.

The racetrack idea was proposed by Neal Krzyzaniak of the Kinnik Development Group. The project was met with opposition from residents who were concerned about the effects a racetrack would have on the city.

Odeen's post came one day before a rally was planned to oppose the racetrack. The rally still took place on Aug. 20 at Veterans Park.

The Kinni Corridor Collaborative organized the event. People could show up to sign a petition advocating against the proposed racetrack.

See Racetrack Page A9

PEPPER FEST



HANNAH COYLE/STAR OBSERVER PHOTOS

Success! The 2022 royal court finishes their hefty plates of spaghetti.

Spaghetti eating CONTEST

Pepper Fest royalty show they are best

BY HANNAH COYLE
Staff Writer

What a weekend for Pepper Fest. Between the parade, the spaghetti eating contests, endless amounts of Italian cuisine, the dunk tank and the royalty coronation, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

Although the weather was looking dim earlier in the week, it cleared up for the opening of the gates on Friday and stayed hot and sunny for the rest of the weekend, Aug. 19-21.

On Saturday, following the parade, the visiting royalty gathered at the main Pepper Fest stage to stuff their faces



River Falls Ambassador Elena Lester gave it her all at the royalty spaghetti eating contest.

See Contest Page A12

BUSINESS

Hudson firm laying off nearly 100

BY HANNAH COYLE
Staff Writer

Phillips-Medisize laid off nearly 100 employees on July 12 after a "major customer" informed the company it would "immediately and substantially reduce the production of its products," at its Hudson location, according to the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) the company submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

The company is a front-end design, development and manufacturing company for highly regulated industries, such as pharmaceutical and med tech.

Phillips would not identify the customer referenced in the letter, as the company has a policy not to disclose customer information, according to Sally Hoffman, a marketing communication representative at Phillips.

The Star Tribune, however, spoke to one of Phillips' customers: Juul, an e-cigarette producer.

"A spokesman for Juul Labs confirmed that it is the company referenced in the letter. The Washington, D.C.-based firm previously acknowledged that it contracts with Phillips-Medisize to make e-cigarette components," the Star Tribune reported.

Earlier this summer, the Food and Drug Administration instructed Juul to cease sales of its e-cigarettes in the U.S.

See Layoffs Page A13

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