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# PRICE COUNTY REVIEW

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THURSDAY, MAY 26, 2022

## Park Falls youth reaches Miss Wisconsin Teen semi finals

BY **TOM LAVENTURE**  
tlaventure@pricecountyreview.com

**PARK FALLS** — A Park Falls teen recently reached the semifinals of the Miss Wisconsin Teen USA 2022 contest held in Middleton earlier this month.

Olivia Negri, 15, said she was still recovering from knee surgery and got her application in just two weeks to the deadline. The pageant selects contestants based on the application and pageant resume.

SEE NEGRI PAGE A8



SUBMITTED PHOTO BY SARA HUGGARD  
**Olivia Negri, a 15-year-old Park Falls youth who recently reached the semifinals of the Miss Wisconsin Teen USA 2022 pageant.**

MAILING LABEL ONLY

## Oxbo kicks off summer with 41st Tick Races

BY **TOM LAVENTURE**  
tlaventure@pricecountyreview.com

**OXBO** — The Oxbo Wood Tick Races tradition was kept alive and was bigger than ever, according to regulars who attended the 41st annual event at Oxbo Resort on May 27. The race is always the Saturday of the week before the Memorial Day Weekend.

For resort owners Jason and Niki Gerwing, and Adam Kedrowski, it is one of the more important events of the year in many ways for the resort but also for the community and participants who come from all over the region. It is a significant event this year as The Oxbo Resort turned 100 years old.

The magic of the tick races has a lot to do with the time of the year, said Niki Gerwing. People are itching to get out and do something before summer events start to take over the weekend schedule.

“You’re not yet committed to all the summertime plans, the vacations, the yard work,” she said. “The winter time is over, the trails are open, and it’s just a good time to get out, meet your friends to hang out and to have a reason to do so.”

The temperatures were mild but it was sunny and dry. The event drew just over 90 people last year but more than 140 were signed up to compete on Saturday, with even more there to watch and have fun, said Jerry Gerwing.

“It’s a reason to get outside in the springtime,” he said. “We started the live music at noon this year rather than at 5 p.m., and we used two race tracks again which speeds things along.”

Gerard and Lisa Fisher, performing as G-man and Lisa of Marshfield. They’ve been playing off-and-on at the event for over 20 years and said the “classic resort”



TOM LAVENTURE / PCR

**Helen Melendez watches from left as Dave Shanks, center, of Loretta, prepares his wood tick, “Tick Tack,” in first race of the 41st Wood Tick Races tournament against Matthew Renken, of Merrill, and his tick, “Woody Johnson” at Oxbo Resort on May 21. Woody won the race and Tick Tack fell to the ceremonial hammer.**

atmosphere of the space and the event is what brings them back.

“It’s a very upbeat event,” Gerard Fisher said. “There is a lot of enthusiasm.”

The race has two opponents place their wood ticks in the center of a 14 inch circle, and the first tick to make its way to the edge in any direction wins. The loser finds itself on the unforgiving end of a ceremonial hammer — which was also the eventual fate of the winner, “Buster,” the wood tick of proud owner Hunter Kieser of Janesville Illinois, via Milton, Wisconsin, who won a trophy, cash and bragging rights.

The first tick of the first race to get bopped with the hammer was “Tick Tack,” who belonged to Dave Shanks, of Loretta. He lost to “Woody Johnson,” who belonged to Matthew Renken, of Merrill.

SEE OXBO PAGE A8



TOM LAVENTURE / PCR

**Blake Schmidt, 6, and his sister Layla, 9, sell wood ticks that they collected to participants of the Wood Tick Races on May 21 at Oxbo Resort, with the funds going to support the event. The two are children of Jason and Monica Schmidt of Park Falls.**

## Repurposed church is now a funeral home

BY **TOM LAVENTURE**  
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**PHILLIPS** — Heindl-Nimsgern Funeral and Cremation Services will hold an open house for its new Phillips facility from noon until 5 p.m. on May 27. The event is to showcase the renovation and repurposing of the former St. Patrick’s Catholic Church at 284 Chestnut St.

The building is a commitment to the community in continuing quality services with a state of the art funeral home, according to Jamie Nimsgern, who with his wife, Geralyn, bought the Heindl Funeral Home business in May 2020. The couple will continue to operate the original Woodruff facility and have hired local staff to run the Phillips location.

Bill and Dave Heindl had operated the Heindl business as third generation funeral directors until retiring and selling to Nimsgern. The Heindl family had operated the business for around 90 years at 304 North Avon



TOM LAVENTURE / PCR

**Amy Casey, right, managing funeral director, and Megan Drexler, funeral director apprentice, show the coffee lounge that also serves as an overflow room for viewings with a television monitor that also can be used for slideshows at the new Phillips facility of Heindl-Nimsgern Funeral and Cremation Services.**

Ave., in Phillips, and at 761 South St., in Prentice.

Nimsgern opted for purchasing and remodeling the former St. Patrick’s Catholic Church to provide a larger fellowship area and with the updated audio-video technologies that are available as “something new for the community.”

“We purchased St. Patrick’s Catholic Church and have been remodeling it into a new funeral home chapel, with a preparation room, garage, large chapel, handicapped accessible bathrooms and a coffee lounge, Nimsgern said.

SEE CHURCH PAGE A9

## Freemasons donate life-saving equipment

BY **TOM LAVENTURE**  
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**PHILLIPS** — Having to fund-raise for equipment amidst tight budgets, members of the Phillips Fire Department were present May 19 to show appreciation for a donation of life-saving equipment courtesy of the Free and Accepted Masons Phillips Lodge 225.

A one-time use Fire Suppression Tool made by Fire Suppression Solutions, LTD of Mequon, Wisconsin, allows first responders to deploy an electronically ignited aerosol mist that reduces heat and flame within a structure of up to 5,300 cubic feet, allowing personnel to retrieve people or to conduct timely suppression efforts.

SEE DONATION PAGE A8

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» **NEGRI**  
FROM PAGE A1

The pageant included a People's Choice online competition that collected votes for fan favorite contestants in both the Miss USA and Miss Teen USA divisions. The People's Choice winners were guaranteed a semi-finalist spot in the pageant finals.

Sage Gundelley of Milwaukee, won the Miss Wisconsin Teen USA 2022. She will go on to represent Wisconsin in the Miss Teen USA competition. There were four runner-up positions in addition to Negri among the 10 semi-finalists.

Placing and winning in pageants can mean scholarships and other opportunities that are "definitely a big plus," she said. But it's as much about having fun, improving herself and having a growing experience with like-minded girls who are competitive but also supportive.

"I just want to enjoy the experience," Negri said. "This is something that I've always liked doing."

She is proud of Park Falls and enjoys being an ambassador through her pageant roles. It makes her feel good that her outreach may in some way help bring more families and businesses to the city.

"I like being able to represent our area," Negri said.

The pageants that Negri chooses to compete in are less focused on beauty than they are on the ability of contestants to convey who they truly are, she said. For her age group the contestants wore activewear rather than swimwear

along with a formal gown she brought from J.P. Togs Prom & Formal in Abbotsford, which has a selection of Jovani gowns.

Preparing for competitions and for the unexpected during them only helps her to improve as a contestant, but also as a person and a student, she said. The interview portion of the pageant starts with a judge's introduction, but once onstage it's less about answering questions correctly than it is about how you answer them and how you present yourself, she said.

They might ask something like, "what's your favorite sea animal?" The judges just want to see where the contestant can take a broad question.

This was her first year running through the Miss Wisconsin USA program. This is a pageant for the experienced as it is a nice program but with many different rules, she said.

Negri also has to support herself for her competitions. She meets with owners and managers of local businesses to sponsor her pageants. This helps to pay for professional portraits, registration, hotels and travel.

Making friends who can reconnect on the pageant circuit is a real plus to the pressure, she said. Some friendships grow strong and is another reason she enjoys competing.

"I like meeting all the new people and seeing how they do their pageant," she said. "I like to see how they walk, how they talk, what their dresses look like, and where they came from. I like knowing about their

background too."

Negri started in pageants by winning Little Miss Flambo Rama 2016. The Park Falls summer festival has a Princess pageant as well as a tiny, preteen, junior and Miss Flambo Rama princesses.

She went on to compete in the National American Miss Pageants and won the Miss Photogenic titles in 2019 and 2020. She was recently nominated for the teen level of the Miss Earth Pageant in Illinois, where one contestant from each state must be nominated by a former contestant.

"It's a pretty big pageant," she said. "It's bigger than Miss Teen USA. You get to represent your state there."

Negri would also like to compete in the Miss High School America Pageant at some point.

As a Chequamegon High School student, Negri participates in FBLA along with basketball, softball and figure skating. She enjoys answering questions about the pageant experience to other students and teachers at school. It helps to reinforce her drive to continue.

"I was a very shy kid and I wasn't able to talk very well," she said. "But with these pageants it is definitely 100% helping my communication skills."

As a sophomore next year, Negri plans to start volunteering for credits that will aid pageant as well as college applications.

"I want to go to college and become a pediatric doctor," she said. "I'm not sure what profession yet inside of the field, but I know that's something I want to go for."

Negri has an 11 year old brother, Preston, who she said is her biggest supporter. Her parents, Missy and Jeremy Negri have also been a source of strength.

"My whole family is and I love it," she said.



TOM LAVENTURE / PCR

**Phillips Fire Chief David Lontcoski receives a Fire Suppression Tool apparatus from Worshipful Master Frank Dennee of the Free and Accepted Masons Phillips Lodge 225 on May 19 at the fire station. Present for the photo, from left, are firefighters Joe Thomas, Nimrod Alexander, Lt. Frank Schoenborn, Austin Mindock, firefighter-paramedic John Kaliska, Capt. Mike Przybylski, firefighter Tony Vlach, Assistant Fire Chief Travis Abraham, Freemason Chaplain Tony Budaj, firefighter Joe Perkins; Fire Chief David Lontcoski, firefighter Nathan Nicholls, Phillips Mayor Charles Peterson, Freemasons Worshipful Master Frank Dennee, Freemason Andy Gruber, Fire Safety Officer Teresa Przybylski, Freemason J.D. Stephen Woolridge, and Raemie Runnheim, firefighter in training. Not pictured are EMT Bonnie Dennee and firefighter Parker Reinke.**

» **DONATION**  
FROM PAGE A1

"It's a tool that is designed to break the bond between the oxygen and the fire, and it is completely safe for humans and pets," said Worshipful Master Frank Dennee of the Phillips Lodge 225. "In the explanations that we've seen, they've had video where the fire was in a room with a thermal camera in excess of 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit. They three this into that room and within 20 seconds it was down below 200 degrees."

This is a one-time use type of equipment and so it will be used when there is a life-or-death situation, perhaps to get in somewhere quick to help get somebody out who is trapped, said Phillips Fire Chief David Lontcoski said the equipment is simple to use and would like eventually see one at every fire department and in every sheriff's office vehicle as they are often the first on the scene of a fire and could potentially use it to save a life.

The equipment is

non-pressurized and is deployed by pulling two pins that start an electronic ignition system that releases aerosol mist after eight seconds that can fill a space up to 5,300 cubic feet for approximately 35 seconds, interrupting the bond between the heat and oxygen molecules thus suppressing the flames and heat of up to 1,000 degrees.

This can help prevent flash-over and back-draft without removing oxygen from the building, he said.

The important thing is that it's non-toxic and environmentally safe, Dennee said. The chemical is labeled as a powdered Aerosol A, which is listed on the Halon Alternatives SNAP list of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The funds became available through the Masonic Service Association, via the Wisconsin Grand Lodge, he said. There was a total of \$50,000 available for Wisconsin chapters and Phillips was one of 20 lodges to receive a grant. When it's possible

the association makes funds available to state organizations for public safety, fire and other community projects.


The Phillips Freemasons also fundraise locally to provide \$1,000 college scholarships to graduating high school students in the county.

Phillips Mayor Charles Peterson, who was present at the event, said the city does what it can, and praised the fire department for its fundraising events and raffles all year. The private donations really make a difference and he wanted to be present to acknowledge the Freemasons for their efforts.

"It's an every day deal," Peterson said of fundraising.

The city is trying to find government money to build a new fire station, in order to save money later on, he said. The department has had to special order trucks that will fit in the dimensions of the current parking bays, when ordering standard trucks would be less expensive, he said.

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» **OXBO**  
FROM PAGE A1

It was a long way since his first race 12 years ago,

Renken said.

"This (event) is a lot bigger than it was 12 years ago," Renken said. "My first tick, "Spot," did

not make it that far."

Most people are just here to have fun but some people take their fun seriously, Jerry Gerwing said. There are some who have tick farms and training systems.

"Everybody has their own little tricks to coax them along," he said. "Some people yell at them, some people keep them warm. I'm not sure what works."

For people who show up without a wood tick there were Blake Schmidt, 6, and his sister Layla, 9, there to sell their ticks for \$1, with funds going to support the event. The two children of Jason and Monica Schmidt of Park Falls, use a blanket to capture wood ticks by dragging it over tall grass.

Jerry Gerwing said the ATV trails opened in mid May and Trail 36 brings a lot of early club rides to the event,

Gary Revak, Phillips, said he hasn't been to the resort since the remodel and never has attended a tick race until now. The ATV club decided on the 23 mile ride to the resort for the first club ride of

the season.

"This is basically our spring ride for the club," Revak said. "It's probably going to be part of the ride from now on."

Betty Wiater and her grandson, Aaron Wiater, came all the way from Wisconsin Rapids to attend the races. She was raised in Fifield, and her father once ran the nearby Nine Mile Tavern for a short time.

Betty said she moved away after school having never actually attended the Wood Tick races. She began to hear about the growth of the event in recent years.

"I always wanted to come, but didn't think to do it until Aaron came along," she said. "I never thought it would be like this with all of those little vehicles (ATVs). I would never have believed there would be this many people here."

As the fifth owner of Oxbo Resort, Niki Gerwing said there have been gap years where the resort wasn't open. The wood tick event was so important that other resorts picked up the slack with the agreement that it would return to Oxbo with each new owner.

"This was an important event for the community and nobody really wanted to see it go down by the wayside, and so they held the torch," she said. "This is an event that a lot of people look forward to every year."

There are some people who make wood tick earrings and pins, along with some crafters, she said. It would be great to see people wearing costumes.

**PARK theatre**  
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We would like to say **Thank You** to the Butternut Fire Department, along with the Fifield, Park Falls, and Glidden trucks that helped at our recent house fire March 1. This also includes the First Responders that assisted also. We want to also thank the people, local and out of town, for the donations of clothing, food, household items, and money. It is much appreciated and needed as we lost everything. Lastly, we want to thank our family and friends for providing support through this trying time for us. We are slowly picking up the pieces of our lives, but it gets hard at times.  
**Barb and Dan Koch Jr and Family**

## Man convicted of killing couple, leaving bodies at arboretum

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A man has been found guilty of fatally shooting a University of Wisconsin physician and her husband, who were the parents of his girlfriend, and leaving their bodies at the school's arboretum.

Jurors in Dane County on Monday convicted 20-year-old Khari Sanford of two counts of first-degree intentional homicide for the March 2020 shooting deaths of Dr. Beth Potter and Robin Carre.

Testimony during the trial and the criminal complaint pointed to friction among the couple, their daughter Miriam Carre and Sanford over coronavirus restrictions Potter wanted them to follow in their home in the early days of the pandemic, as well as Sanford's feelings that his girlfriend's parents didn't respect him.

"They were living in fear of COVID," Dane County Assistant District Attorney Tim Verhoff told jurors during closing arguments. "They should have been living in fear of Khari Sanford."

Sanford's public defender, Crystal Vera, rejected that characterization and said there was no evidence that anyone perceived Sanford as dangerous, the Wisconsin State Journal reported.

## CSD Summer Food Service Program

The Chequamegon School District will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program with both campus locations serving free meals Monday through Friday from June 6 to June 24. The purpose is to ensure that children receive nutritious meals during the summer months.

"This program fills a void created when school lunches are not available," said Ray Schulte, school district administrator. "Helping parents meet the nutritional needs of their children is the strength of this program."

The Summer Food Service Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The program provides nutritious meals to children during the summer, when free and reduced-price school meals are typically unavailable.

Free meals will be made available to children 18 years of age and under. Persons over 18 years of age who are determined by a state or local public educational agency to be mentally or physically disabled and who also participate in a public or private non-profit school program during the regular school year may receive free meals as well.

Breakfast will be served from 7:30 to 8 a.m., and lunch will be served from 11:30 a.m. to noon at Park Falls Elementary School, 380 9th St N.

Breakfast will be served from 7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m., and lunch will be served from 11 to 11:30 a.m. at Glidden Elementary School, 64 S Grant St.

Meals are provided to eligible children regardless of race, color, national origin, age, gender or disability and there will be no discrimination in the course of meal service.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT CALLS

### PARK FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Park Falls Police Department reported public calls from May 16-22, including delivering one affidavit to an area business, one possible theft of prescription medication complaint, one abandoned vehicle complaint, one welfare check, one verbal argument, two numerous dogs complaints — unfounded, one medical call, one deceased dog, one home security check, two lost or found property calls, one vehicle lockout, four assists to emergency medical services, one storm damage report, one unsecured building, and one traffic complaint.

Other calls included:

May 16  
• confronted juveniles who were subject of a complaint of youth shooting airsoft at Hines Park.

• arrested a male subject for violating terms of probation, following a report of a disturbance at an area motel.

• cited a juvenile in possession of a vaping device on the campus of Chequamegon High School.

• confiscated a vaping division belonging to a juvenile on the campus of Chequamegon High School.

• notified Price County Human Services after locating a young juvenile female walking alone on 3rd Avenue South. The mother of the child was also located.

• filed a report concerning a note that was placed on a vehicle in the parking lot of a local manufacturer.

May 17  
• issued dog barking ordinance violation warning to a resident with a dog that was barking outside for an excess of time without intervention of the owner.

• arrested a male individual on a bench warrant for violating the

terms of a temporary restraining order.

May 19  
• arrested a female driver for second OWI offense and for driving while license was under revocation, following a traffic stop for speeding and driving left of center on 9th Avenue South.

• Followed up on a gas station drive off complaint from a Phillips business, regarding a car registered to a Park Falls resident who left without paying.

May 20  
• arrested a male suspect for criminal trespass to a dwelling and bail jumping, following a complaint that the individual had entered the home, had fallen down the basement stairs.  
• cited a resident for noncompliance of the city dog ordinance for maintaining seven dogs at a residence. The citation followed a previous compliance warning.

May 21  
• arrested two male subjects following a complaint of an altercation. The first subject was arrested for a probation hold and bail jumping, and the second subject for bail jumping.

### PHILLIPS POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Phillips Police Department reported public calls from May 16-22, including two vehicle speed warnings, one vehicle lockout, two accidental 911 calls, two traffic warnings, two welfare checks, one report of a window damaged by county workers, one animal complaint, one traffic complaint, two extra patrol requests, death notification, two mental health checks, one lost or returned property, assisted county sheriff's office with K-9 search, one assist to emergency medical services, one keep the peace request, one business security alarm-false,

Other calls included:

For more information, visit [nimgsgernfuneral.com](http://nimgsgernfuneral.com).

May 16  
• 2 p.m., assisted Phillips School District students in the production of a public service announcement video regarding the dangers of texting and driving.

• 8:35 p.m., responded to a controlled fire at a Kimball Street residence during a posted high fire danger warning with burning prohibited. The officer remained on scene until the fire was extinguished.

May 17  
• 2:17 p.m., responded to a complaint of a discarded needle located in the yard of a Kimball Street residence. An Officer picked up the items for disposal.

May 18  
• 10:50 a.m., investigating a reported hit-and-run property damage crash on South Lake Avenue.

• 12:30 p.m., investigating a harassment complaint from staff regarding a resident at a health care facility on Peterson Avenue.

• 8:48 p.m., responded to a two vehicle crash without damage at North Lake Avenue and Fayette Street.

May 19  
• 4:20 p.m., met with a property manager regarding an unauthorized occupation of a unit on South Argyle Avenue. The resident had changed the locks and had personal belongings in the unit. The occupant was contacted and reportedly out of town. The officer transported the cats to Catkins Animal Rescue, and the owner will be charged with criminal trespass to a dwelling.

• 4:23 p.m., responded to a two vehicle crash in the parking lot of a South Lake Avenue business.

May 22  
• 6:18 p.m., following an animal complaint, officers assisted a male adult by transporting an animal to a humane facility, with the assistance from the Price County Sheriff's Office.

# AUCTION

## CHRISTENSEN'S

**ON-SITE, REAL ESTATE AUCTION!!**  
**ON THURSDAY, JUNE 23RD, AT 12:00 NOON**  
**LOCATED AT: W4590 WONDER RD, PHILLIPS, WI. 54555**



**75ac farm with bldgs.**  
**(personal property auction starts at 11am)**

Directions: From intersection of State Hwy 13 & Hwy 8 near Prentice: 1 mile East on State Hwy 8 to Cty Trk A, then North 1 mile on Cty Trk A, to Cty Trk K, turn off to the right onto K, then follow K another 4-1/2 miles north to Wonder rd. Go east on Wonder rd (dead end) 3/4 mile to the end of road & sale site. Or from Phillips, go East 4-1/2 mi to the intersection of Cty Trk D & Cty Trk K, go 2-1/2 miles south on K, to Wonder rd, then 3/4 east on Wonder Rd (dead end) to the end of road, (follow signs).

Property consists of a 5 bedroom/1-1/2 bath, 2 story home, 34x94ft. barn, 40x96ft. steel machine shed with 30x30ft. enclosed heated/insulated shop area. 75 acres of land of which approximately 32 acres of farm land, 40 acres wooded and the balance is building site.

Open house: There will be open viewing on the property, Saturday, June 4th, 10:30 till noon, or by appointment if necessary.

Terms of Sale: Successful bidder will be required to deposit 10% earnest money (non-refundable), on sale date, and sign appropriate offer to purchase forms, indicating a cash sale. Closing to be within 45 days of auction date. All information set forth is believed to be accurate, however property is being offered "as is", with no implied warranties or guarantees by seller or sellers agents. All announcements on Auction day, will take precedence over previously advertised information.

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### » CHURCH

FROM PAGE A1

The cremations will still be conducted at the Woodruff facility. The basement of the St. Michaels building was finished to use for funeral lunches and receptions.

"Families will be able to have food catered, or bring in food and beverages of their choice," Nimgsgern said. "We do offer video tributes that will be shown on several TV's throughout the facility."

Amy Casey is available 24 hours, seven days a week as the managing funeral director of the Phillip and Prentice facilities, with help from Megan Drexler, her funeral director apprentice.

"We are looking forward to the open house as not only an opportunity to show our new space, but to also introduce ourselves," Casey said. "The Heindls' left big shoes to fill and we are doing our best to keep up."

Casey said there was concern from the community when the renovations required the razing of the adjacent school building. Due to extensive flood damage prior to the purchase, the school structure did not provide any realistic option to save the building, she said.

St. Michael's closed when the parishes of St. Patrick and St. Mary's merged into a single parish in 1991. The new parish had a new church, St. Therese of Lisieux

Catholic Church.

St. Michael's was used as a fitness center for a time and was unused for a few years before the Nimgsgern purchase. The renovations create a well-lit chapel and viewing area with plenty of room, Casey said.

The open house will be an opportunity for residents to hear a seminar on the benefits of pre-planning funerals from 11am until 12p.m. Staff will answer questions related to the funeral industry and provide a tour of the funeral home till 5:00 pm. Refresh-

ments will be provided.

There is much to learn about pre-planning funerals, he said. There are full service funerals followed by burial, full services followed by cremation, cremation with memorial services, urns, caskets, vaults and monuments, he said. The company's crematory is located at the Woodruff location.

The funeral home also assists veterans with military honors, gravemarkers, and other services with the help of the Price County Veteran Service officer.

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## Seeds of Hope Concert

**Free Admission**  
 Sunday, June 12th at 6pm

**Park Theatre 159 2nd Ave. N. Park Falls**

Come enjoy contemporary Christian Music

Featuring: the i.a.m group from St. Anthony's

Sponsored by Peace Lutheran Church



# DUE TO THE MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY, WE WILL HAVE EARLY DEADLINES FOR THE THURSDAY, JUNE 2 EDITION OF THE PRICE COUNTY REVIEW DISPLAY & CLASSIFIED ADS AND NEWS DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, MAY 27 AT 12:00 NOON