



Brinn Kuechle – Page 8

EDEN VALLEY

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VALLEY DAZE

Geislingers serving as 2025 grand marshals

Birdie and Diane Geislinger have been instrumental at Hawks’ stand

By Julie Haag Bulau

The annual Valley Daze parade will be held on Saturday, June 29, starting at 7 p.m. This year, Bob “Birdie” and Diane Geislinger, longtime stalwarts for the Eden Valley Hawks, including their famous Hawks hamburger stand during Valley Daze, will serve as grand marshals.

Names: Bob “Birdie” and Diane Geislinger

Family: Both Birdie and Diane graduated from Eden Valley High School in 1967 and were married in 1972. They are parents of four children – Todd (Kathy), Chuck (Jeanne), Tom “Honker” (Deb), and Kim (Jake Merton). They also have 11 grandchildren – Tyler, Alex, Madeline, Jackson, Shelby, Riley, Macy, Reed, Rayna, Ryker, and Ruby – and three great-grandchildren Audrey, Luca, and Aurora.

Background: The son of Ed and Marcella Geislinger, Birdie grew up on a farm between Eden Valley and Watkins with brothers Elmer, Irv, Larry, Vic, and Mike and sisters Arlene and Diane.

Diane, meanwhile, grew up in Eden Valley, the daughter of Ed and Millie Madden. She

GEISLINGERS – Page 3



Bob “Birdie” and Diane Geislinger, the longtime Hawks manager and a joint force behind the Hawks hamburger stand at Valley Daze since 1982, will serve as Valley Daze grand marshals.

Photo Courtesy of Deb Geislinger

EVW SCHOOLS

Mark Messman retiring as superintendent

Medford native worked 38 years in education, with 13 years at EV-W

By Megan Blonigen

After 13 years in the EV-W School District, superintendent Mark Messman is retiring from his position at the end of the 2024-25 school year, ending his 38 years in education. His last official day will be Monday, June 30, with his retirement starting on Tuesday, July 1.

Before Messman started at EV-W in July 2012, he worked in the Holdingford School District for more than 20 years as a teacher, coach, and administrator.

He graduated from Medford High School and attended University of Sioux Falls, graduating in 1986 with degrees in health and physical education, social studies, and coaching. First, he taught social studies at the Cromwell School District, where he also coached football and junior high basketball.

In 1991, he moved to Holdingford, where he taught health, physical education, and civics for seven years. He was then hired as activities director, a position he held until 2005, when he was hired as elementary school principal in Holdingford. Messman served as head football coach from 1991, when he was first hired in Holdingford to 2012, when he left the district for EV-W. He led the Huskers to three state tournament berths (1996, 1999, and 2000).

Messman said his pursuit of a superintendent position



Photo Courtesy of EV-W School District

After 38 years in education, including the past 13 years as the EV-W superintendent, Mark Messman is retiring at the end of the 2024-25 school year – officially as of Monday, June 30.

in 2012 was “a natural progression in leadership,” and EV-W was the only school district where he pursued a job as one. “EV-W has a solid reputation for success, high student outcomes, and is highly regarded in the education network,” Messman explained.

Messman’s time at EV-W had its challenges. “At times, it can be a bit of an isolated position, requiring oversight and accountability for others’ actions,” he said of serving as superintendent.

Messman also said it was difficult to manage the district

with constant state and federal changes to education policy. “Attempting to build budgets, implement strategic initiatives, and make projections based on state and federal government uncertainty and chaos” is difficult, he said.

State-level decisions around education – especially the “archaic” formula used to distribute funding to Minnesota school districts — is more of a challenge for a rural school like EV-W, Messman said. “The biggest challenge for EV-W and other rural schools is the inequity

that results from the state using an archaic funding formula solely based on property values,” Messman explained. “Rural schools are typically sparsely populated and have limited commercial, industrial, and business properties that help off-set the tax impact necessary to provide a quality education system.”

With state funding falling behind, school districts now rely more heavily than ever on operating levies, which are harder to pass in rural districts without a large commercial or industrial tax base.

One of his most difficult hurdles as superintendent, though, was the COVID-19 pandemic. “The COVID pandemic was obviously a difficult challenge for all of us,” he said. “Dealing with the uncertainty of the virus, impacts on vulnerable students, staff, and community members, and the social media and political division that followed.”

When navigating these challenges, Messman’s main goal as superintendent was clear. “That’s an easy question to answer,” he said. “Do what is in the best interest of educating students, and when in doubt, err on the side of caution.”

After a long tenure with EV-W – 13 years – Messman said he has “mixed emotions” about leaving. “The EV-W board, admin team, and staff have been a pleasure to work with, and I’ve always felt like we were on the ‘same page’ and working toward the same outcomes,” he said. “I will cherish the students and staff at EV-W. We have such an amazing staff, and the students have always been top notch hard working, and respectful.”

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Valley Daze 2025 Schedule

All activities in downtown Eden Valley unless noted.

Thursday, June 26

- Mural Unveiling (Eden Valley Community Center), 4 p.m.
- Music in the Park (Friederichs Park) – 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Friday, June 27

- Hawks’ Hamburger Stand (at Joanne’s Place) – opens at 10:30 a.m.
- Food Court – opens at 11 a.m.
- Dilly Bars (EVC4P) outside EV Community Center – 12 noon to 8 p.m.
- Silent Auction at Eden Valley Community Center – 12 noon to 8 p.m.
- Book Sale (at Eden Valley Library) – 1 to 5 p.m.
- Beer Garden (Eden Valley Fire Department) – 2 p.m. to 1 a.m.
- Sidewalk Chalk Art Contest (NW side of EV-W High School) – 4 to 6 p.m.
- Laser Tag and Paintball (in Water Tower Park) – 4 to 9 p.m.
- Kiddie Parade (Valley Victor 4-H Club) (Main Street) – 6 p.m.
- Escape Room (EV-W High School gym) – 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
- Kids Tractor Pull (next to Eden Valley Community Center) – 7 p.m.
- River Canyon Band – 7 to 9:30 p.m.
- Bingo (in food court) – 7:30 p.m.
- Fireworks (at Eden Valley Elementary) – 10 p.m.

Saturday, June 28

- 5K Run/Walk (at EV Elementary) – 8 a.m. (Registration starts at 7:15 a.m.)
- Coffee truck (on Cossairt Avenue by high school) – 8 a.m.
- Craft and Vendor Sale (on Cossairt Avenue by high school) – 8 a.m.
- Bake Sale (at Eden Valley Community Center) – 8 a.m. to 12 noon
- Book Sale (at library) – 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Car and Tractor Show (at Eden Valley Elementary) – 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Silent Auction (at Eden Valley Community Center) – 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Scavenger Hunt – starts at 9 a.m.
- Co-ed Volleyball Tourney (EV-W practice fields) – 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Medallion Coin Hunt (in F&M Bank parking lot) – 10 a.m.
- Youth Run/Walk (at Eden Valley Elementary) – 10 a.m.
- Hawks’ Hamburger Stand (at Joanne’s Place) – opens at 10:30 a.m.
- Food Court (downtown) – opens at 11 a.m.
- Beer Garden (Eden Valley Fire Department) (downtown) – 11 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- Pet Show (by the Valley Victors 4-H) (in Water Tower Park) – 11 a.m.
- Trent Bergeron Music (in food court) – 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Army Reserve Games (Cossairt Avenue West) – 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Caricaturist, Face Painter, Balloon Artist (at EV-W gym) – 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Corn Hole (in beer garden) – 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Bingo (Eden Valley Fire Department) (in food court) – 12 noon
- Kids Fest (on Cossairt Avenue) – 12 noon to 2 p.m.
- Dilly Bars (EVC4P) outside EV Community Center – 12 noon to 8 p.m.
- Laser Tag and Paintball (in Water Tower Park) – 12 noon to 9 p.m.
- Dr. Street ‘Magician’ – 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
- Church History Presentation (Assumption Catholic Church) – 4 p.m.
- Grand Parade – 6 p.m. (Line up at the elementary school at 4:30 p.m.)
- Music by Stifle Band of Brothers (downtown) – 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.
- Fire and Rescue Raffle (downtown) – 10 p.m.

Sunday, June 29

- Youth Fishing Tourney at Eden Valley Sportsman’s Club – Sunrise to 3:30 p.m.

LEGISLATURE 2025

Lawmakers grit teeth, pass budget bills in one-day special session

Crammed special session finished 2026-27 budgets

By Matthew Blake, MinnPost

An incensed Minnesotan took to the Minnesota House floor on Monday night, June 9, to rail against a bill to fund transportation. “I just kind of want to get this off my chest here a little bit first. This bill is a result of a broken deal.” Another speaker pointed out holes in legislation outlining spending for the environment and natural resources. “There is no happiness in this bill. It truly was a compromise bill, and as I like to tell my children, when you compromise that means everyone is unhappy.”

These dissenting voices were not irate members of the public or even renegade legis-

lators. Instead, they were, respectively, Rep. Kristi Pursell (DFL-Northfield) and Rep. Erin Koegel (DFL-Spring Lake Park), the co-authors – alongside two Republican House co-chairs – of the very bills they were railing against.

Like a college sophomore completing their tardy term papers in one night, the Minnesota Legislature met Monday, June 9, for a one-day only special session called by Gov. Tim Walz (DFL-Mankato).

Lawmakers grinded through 14 bills in nearly 16 hours that comprise about 90 percent of the state government’s \$67 billion two-year budget, the time spent on each bill dwindling into the night as legislators increasingly cleared their hoarse throats. (The legislature passed the other 10 percent of the budget before adjourning from their regular session on Monday, May 19.)

SPECIAL SESSION – 5

	
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