



MC Mid-County Messenger Fall

YOU'RE IN
Mid-County
Country

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Fall 2023 • Vol. 43

www.midcountycoop.com

Annual meeting on December 15th!



Bill Reimers
General Manager
(952) 466-3721
billr@midcountycoop.com

Fall 2023

Our fiscal year ended August 31st, our auditors have completed our annual audit, and we experienced a very favorable year financially. Hopefully you are able

to attend our annual meeting on December 15th to see the full report.

Many of you may have received an equity payout check this past August. This represents the purchases you made from 1995 to 2001. Your Board of Directors has been very diligent in making these retirements, along with our continued goal to retire a patron's equity at age 75.

Make sure your address and birthdate are always current with us, in the event we need to contact you.

For many years we have discussed the future of Anhydrous Ammonia, and recently we decided to no longer offer it as a Nitrogen product. The biggest factor in our deci-

sion was the lesser demand each year from our customers. Once your volume gets to a low enough level, it no longer becomes economically viable. We were faced with a large investment in equipment and facilities to continue, which would make the economics worse. For several years now, Urea has become our major nitrogen source.

Other factors included the huge cost of maintenance to stay in compliance with state and federal authorities. Probably the biggest issue is having the staff to do the loading, delivery and application in a very compressed time frame in the fall.

We have made several investments in recent years to accommodate the increased Urea usage in facilities, application equipment and delivery trucks.

If you are a propane user, you are enjoying lower costs this year. Last year US inventories were at a 5-year low, and now they are on the high side of the chart. This too can change very rapidly. There are always new projects to export propane, so if the prices abroad are higher than ours, they can quickly lower inventories. Like all energies, the daily variability in prices makes it hard to

“buy at the bottom”. We suggest a good solid contracting program for propane and fuels to protect yourself for extreme jumps in the markets. In Mid-October you may have noticed a very extreme rise in diesel fuel prices in a very short period of time. On the wholesale level, we experienced an increase of \$1.15 in 10 days. Fortunately, we had inventory in our bulk plants to stave off such large increases to our customers, but nonetheless, we still have to buy fuel on a regular basis and try to keep the average price at a level you can afford.

Starting last spring, we transitioned from Auto & Truck Repair, to Truck only. The lack of qualified Auto Technicians available was the one of the main drivers to our decision. We did our best to help our customers find other qualified shops to get their auto repair completed. Now we are focusing on truck repair, and our group in the shop has done a great job maintaining a high level of service.

As always, I appreciate your comments to improve your coop.

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801 Pacific Ave., Waverly, MN 55395
(763) 658-4662

(952) 466-3700 • 888-466-3700 • 700 Lake Street West, P.O. Box 177, Cologne



Mid-County Premium Diesel: Winter Fuels

Our Mid-County Premium Winter Fuel additives are specifically formulated for use in all types of diesel including biodiesel blends. Our combination of WASA, Cold Flow Improvers and De-icer added to our premium fuel package will provide cold weather protection without sacrificing fuel economy.

WASA-Wax Anti-Settling Agent

- Wax modifier inhibits the attachment of wax molecules to each other, preventing the formation of larger wax compounds that can plug fuel filters
- WASA helps keep the wax crystals small and suspended so that they flow through the fuel system rather than plugging filters

Cold Flow Improvers

- Mid-County Winter Fuels will improve operability of fuel to 20 degrees below the cloud point

De-Icer

- Prevents water in fuel from forming ice crystals which leads to plugged fuel filters
- Mid-County Winter Fuel is glycol based, performs the same as jet fuel de-icer, and contains no alcohol

Detergency

- Reduces or delays thermal oxidation, the leading cause of black filters which can lead to filter plugging
- Mid-County Winter Fuel provides the detergency needed to achieve a "clean up" rating in the DW10 Standard Injector Coking Test
- Keeps injectors clean and maintains proper fuel spray pattern to avoid incomplete combustion

Stability

- Improves storage life by 2-3 times as long without additives by preventing the formation of gums
- Reduces or delays thermal oxidation to prevent filter plugging

Emissions

- Reduces black smoke by up to 93%, decreases NOx, HC, CO, and PM

Corrosion/Rust Inhibition

- Prolongs fuel system life by preventing corrosion and rust of fuel injectors and fuel tanks

Lubricity

- Exceeds lubricity standard in ASTM D975 and EMA premium diesel requirement

At our convenience stores, Beginning December 1st, our winter fuel additives and blending are as follows:

Cologne Holiday:

- High Speed Diesel - dispensers 9,10,11
- 100% #2 Diesel with Winter Additive good to +10 F
- Regular Speed Diesel - dispensers 12 & 13
- 60% #2 Diesel & 40% #1 with Winter Additive good to -30 F

Waverly Holiday:

- 60% #2 Diesel & 40% #1 with Winter Additive good to -30 F

When we deliver bulk fuels, we have a more tailored program to meet your needs. We can offer straight #2 fuels, straight #1 fuels or blends. When winter is in full swing, we typically will blend 60% #2 and 40% #1 with an additive to easily achieve a fuel that will flow under -30 below. There are other factors to consider with winter fuels:

Bio Diesel – What do I do if I still have B20 left in my tank?

Tank Filters & What Micron to use – How often should I change filters on my storage tank & equipment?

Water in Tanks – How do I know if I have water in my tanks or equipment?

Answers to these questions are different for everyone and there is no "one size fits all" answer.

Please call us at 952-466-3720 with any questions relating to your energy needs.



AGRONOMY

From dairy farming to artisanal cheese: the inspiring journey of Christine Leonard, sixth-generation farmer and founder of The Grater Good LLC

By Ben Ernhart
Correspondant

When Christine Leonard went off to college at the University of Wisconsin-Stout she thought her future career was in education, despite wanting to be a dairy farmer like the generations of family members before her.

“When I went off to school it kind of felt like dairy farming wasn’t going to be something I’d be able to do, so education was the track I was on,” she said.

However, the sixth generation dairy farmer from Norwood quickly realized that a career where the majority of your time is spent inside was not for her.

Interested in a career in food, she switched her major to Food Technology with an emphasis in communication, hoping that one day she’d have a job helping the public gain a better understanding of the agricultural and scientific processes that go into food making.

“I switched to food science because I knew what food looked like raw when it left our farm and I knew what it looked like on the processed side when you pick it up at the grocery store, and really wanted to know what happened in between,” Leonard said.

Upon graduation, Leonard begged her parents, Amy and Tim, to let her come back home and work on the family’s 200 acre dairy farm. Her parents weren’t too keen on that idea; however, and urged her to do something else, explaining that small dairy farms were beginning to be a thing of the past, the profit margins were simply too small for the amount of work that is required.

So after graduation, Christine took a job at Redhead Creamery in Brooten, where she worked as an assistant cheesemaker for a year before eventually convincing her parents to let her come home to the farm in 2018. She knew that she would have to find a niche to supplement her income, and originally thought that would be on-farm processing, but the startup costs and barrier to entry was simply too high.

Then in 2019, Christine got an idea. She thought it would be fun to make custom cheese platters for family and friends. She posted one of the platters she created on her Instagram account, and a commenter asked if she could buy one from her.

Christine said she made about \$6 off that first cheese platter, but her custom cheese platters quickly gained popularity, prompting her to install a commercial kitchen at the farm and start her own business, The Grater Good LLC.



Today, The Grater Good creates custom cheese platters and charcuterie boards sourced from small farms and creameries throughout the Midwest, but primarily those located in Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin. Christine also operates in an educator role as well, offering private cheese classes at wineries, breweries, coffee shops, and people’s homes.

Despite her business’s success, Christine’s full time job is still as a dairy farmer, managing the farm’s 45 registered Holsteins with her mom and dad. High input costs are among the toughest challenges small dairy farms face today, but luckily the Leonards are able to manage costs by utilizing a plethora of goods and services offered by Mid-County.

“It makes it fast and simple to get all our supplies from one local source,” said Tim.

From seed and fertilizer to chemicals and agronomy services, the Leonards take full advantage of Mid-County’s offerings.

“There’s new technology and new science coming out all the time about growing crops, and to have somebody like Mid-County to consult with that has knowledge of all facets of the crops we’re growing really helps us make the most of the acres we have,” said Christine.

More information about The Grater Good’s cheese platters and private cheese classes is available on its website at <https://thegratergood-mn.com>.



Submitted Photo

Examples of The Grater Goods cheese platters.



Photo by Ben Ernhart

Christine along with your parents Amy and Tim Leonard at the family farm.



Photo by Marie Claire Photography

Christine showing how the cheese cutting process takes place.



Submitted Photo

Examples of The Grater Goods cheese boxes.

Mid-County Coop Board Member Shawn Eastman enhances Marsh Lake Hunting Club's season for a unique experience

By Ben Ernhart
Correspondant

As temperatures and leaves continue to fall, hunting action across the country continues to ramp up, and Mid-County Coop board member Shawn Eastman is right in the middle of it, ensuring members of the Marsh Lake Hunting Club (MLHC) are having the best hunting experience possible this season.

"Despite it being pretty warm these first couple months, we've still done pretty well to start the season," Eastman said.

Located in rolling hills just south of Victoria, the Marsh Lake Hunting Club has been offering quality waterfowl, and upland bird hunts since 1969. With a relatively small membership of 160 individuals and five different areas to hunt on one 400-acre parcel of private land, members don't have to worry about bumping into other hunters, and get to enjoy a unique hunting experience.

"We're really fortunate that we have a lot of natural barriers between our hunting areas, it really keeps the area separated." Eastman said. "It also helps deliver on the experience we're trying to provide of 'hunting the family farm.'"

Operating as MLHC's general manager, Eastman admitted that this wasn't the career path he envisioned for himself when he graduated high school, in fact, he didn't know this type of career existed. However, while he was attending the University of Minnesota Crookston, Eastman was offered an internship with the club, and hasn't looked back since, working his way up to assistant manager, and eventually general manager in 2000.

"It was never a long-term goal, but as I was working here I found out I really enjoyed it, and I just kept moving forward. It can be a lot of work, and long hours, but it's been great."

There's no such thing as a "typical" work day as a hunting club manager, and Eastman stays busy year round at Marsh Lake. The season begins September 15 each year, and from then until April 15, Eastman's day-to-day tasks are primarily planning the logistics for each member's hunt.

Apart from member hunts, during the season Eastman also helps plan several hunting and target shooting events for organizations like the Wounded Warrior Project, Ducks Unlimited, and Pheasants Forever.

The work doesn't slow down in the off-season, and as soon as the hunting season closes, the Marsh Lake crew wastes no time getting ready for the next season. In addition to training dogs, and maintaining Marsh Lake's buildings and equipment, Eastman spends a majority of the off-season improving the property's habitat, ensuring the birds have adequate food and cover come fall.

As Mid-County's Secretary Treasurer, Eastman ensures the co-op is making fiscally responsible decisions, but as the MLHC general manager, and a Mid-County customer, he also understands just how important Mid-County's products and services are to the club's success each season.

"Mid-County has been a great help to Marsh Lake," Eastman said. "I've been so impressed with their services over the years. They do whatever they can to help, and whenever I call, they're here right away."

While MLHC doesn't harvest crops, about 20 percent of the 400 acres is farmed for corn and sorghum that are planted with Mid-County seed. The club also has about 40 acres of native grasslands, primarily switchgrass, which is also supplied through Mid-County.

Eastman said that in addition to seed, Mid-County also supplies the MLHC with fertilizer and crop protection chemicals, as well as fuel for their equipment and propane for the five propane tanks on the club's property. During the planting and growing season, Eastman is in constant contact with a Mid-County agronomist, gaining insight on appropriate planting times, and weed control methods.

Whether it's a phone call from an agronomist in the spring telling him the conditions are right and it's time to plant, or late-night fuel delivery from one of the co-ops drivers, after being a Mid-County customer for almost 30 years, Eastman has seen first hand how much Mid-County cares and values its customers.

"The big thing with them is their customer service," Eastman said. "With some of the bigger co-ops you tend to lose that. From what I've seen as a board member and a customer, I think Mid-County really shines in helping local farmers. They really cater to the smaller farms that still exist in the area."

A testament to the quality of the hunting experience Marsh Lake provides, membership

is currently full with a two year wait list. Those interested in joining the club can still schedule a tour of the property and fill out a membership application to get on the waitlist.

More information about the Marsh Lake Hunting Club is available on its website at <https://marshlakehuntingclub.com>.





HOLIDAY COLOGNE

Hwy 212 & 284, Cologne, MN • (952) 466-5657



Tony Hallum
Manager
(952) 466-5657

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The touch free car wash at Holiday of Cologne accommodates larger vehicles and you can pay with a credit card as you enter the wash.

We are offering Holiday Stationstores Car Wash Club, UNLIMITED WASH PASS PROGRAM that can be used at most Holiday stores. You pay one low monthly fee, then wash your car as many times as you like each month!



Now that's a saucy sandwich!

\$3.79



3 FOR \$7.50

12 OZ. RED BULL
ASSORTED VARIETIES • REGULAR RETAIL EACH



ANY
5-Hour Energy
3 FOR \$7.99



DELUXE Cinnamon Roll

Deluxe coffee combo.

Sweet & Savory NEW!

MAPLE Sausage Scrambler
spicy breakfast sausage, eggs and cheese in a maple pancake breading

2 for \$4

Reg. \$2.59 ea.

Mix & Match any Hot Snacks!



Visit midcountycoop.com to see all the great savings available at your local Holiday of Cologne and to print gas and car wash coupons!

CARWASH THE WORKS \$3 OFF

No other purchase required. Limit 1 coupon per wash. Not valid with any other offers or discount. Expires 2/29/24

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HOLIDAY OF WAVERLY

801 Pacific Ave, Waverly, MN • (763) 658-4662



Mid County's Holiday Store Manager Missie Beckmann awarded Pinnacle Club plaque

By Ben Ernhart
Correspondant

Holiday Stationstores, a Midwest based store/gas station chain, recently inducted Missie Beckmann, Store Manager of the Mid-County Holiday in Waverly into the organization's 2023 Pinnacle Club.

Each year, Holiday Stationstores inducts ten stores and store managers into the Pinnacle Club. The Pinnacle Club is reserved for those elite store managers and district managers of Holiday Stationstores who have consistently exceptional results in the areas of sales growth, expense control, age restricted sales compliance, and overall business efficiency.

Throughout the year, the organization sends in undercover individuals to evaluate each store on the aforementioned criteria and awards points quarterly based on its performance. This year, the Waverly Holiday finished eighth out of 101 franchises.

Beckmann, who has been the store manager

of the Waverly Holiday for the past four years, and has over two decades of experience in the convenience store industry, said that being inducted into the Pinnacle Club has been a dream come true.

"It's been one of my dreams to become a part of the Pinnacle Club," said Beckmann. "Honestly, I can't stop telling our customers about it, it's something that I've been striving for since Mid-County purchased the Waverly Holiday four years ago. I'm just extremely proud of my team for the excellent work that they do.

Senior Management honored the top ten franchises of 2023 with an induction ceremony that took place at Embassy Suites in Bloomington on October 17. During the event inductees received a Plaque of Achievement, a store Pinnacle Club Logo jacket, and a company gift to commemorate the event.

Attendees also got to enjoy a three night stay at the hotel, and were able to attend a comedy show from Minnesota-based comedian David



Photo by Ben Ernhart

Mid-County's Holiday Store Manager Missie Beckmann and Store Team Leader Stoney Johnson with the store's 2023 Pinnacle Club plaque.

Harris, and a performance at the Chanhassen Dinner Theater.



Visit holidaywaverlymn.com to see all the great savings available at your local Holiday of Waverly and to print gas and car wash coupons!

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AGRONOMY

Managing the surge in corn rootworms: critical tips and recommendations for the 2024 growing season



Ryan Pawelk
Sales Agronomist
(952) 466-3730

We need to keep corn rootworm management at the top of our priority list in 2024. Low frost depth in the winter and less rain in the spring at the time of egg hatch have allowed rootworm populations to explode. This has led to significant root and silk feeding damage in the corn again this year. The worst of it was contained to corn-on-corn fields, but some damage was also seen in adjacent fields that were rotated. Even with corn rootworm traits, there was lodging. This does not mean the traits failed. We need to remember that for the traits to work and kill the rootworm larvae, they need to bite into the root and ingest the proteins. However, when larvae populations are very high, so are the number of bites on the roots, thus leading to roots being chewed off, root rot diseases and eventually root lodging.

After root feeding, the ones that survived emerged as beetles and started feeding on the silks. Males emerged first and then females about a week later. Because some corn was planted late this year, the silks were not out yet when the beetles emerged. So, they either hung out on the

corn leaves waiting for the silks or they flew into adjacent corn fields that already had silks out. The pictures show silks clipped off and the resulting tip-back in a field that was soybeans in 2022. This field was across the road from a neighboring continuous corn field.

Many beetles were also found in adjacent soybean and alfalfa fields looking for a food source. Late August I observed adult rootworm beetles feeding on alfalfa leaves causing noticeable damage. In the inserted picture, the northern corn rootworm beetles are circled in red and are seen feeding on the alfalfa leaves. What's concerning with this is that it's very possible that the females laid eggs in these fields which now can be a problem if they are rotated to corn this coming year.

So here are some tips to help manage corn rootworms.

- Avoid planting corn-on-corn. Crop rotation is key to rootworm management.
- Know your neighbors crop rotation and practices. If they are planting corn-on-corn next to your fields, it will be important to scout and monitor rootworm populations in your field.
- If rotation is not an option, continue using rootworm traited corn. Use varieties that have multiple rootworm trait modes, know what proteins you have, and rotate them the following year. For example, if you used a SmartStax variety last year,

rotate to a variety that has Duracade this year, or vice versa.

• Its highly recommended to use an in-furrow insecticide at full rate in addition to using traited corn. The insecticide will help reduce the initial population and take pressure off of the seed traits.

• Take out volunteer corn which attracts beetles to move into soybean fields and lay eggs for the next year when its rotated back to corn. Another key point is that volunteer corn does not express the full amount of the rootworm traits. This allows rootworms to survive and develop resistance to the traits.

• Scout for emerging beetles at tassel to prevent silk feeding. Putting out sticky traps can help with this which we can provide you. If populations are high and silk feeding is expected, apply a foliar insecticide at full rate. Remember that the males emerge first and the females a week later. So scouting needs to be done a week after application. If female beetles are high and pollination is still ongoing, a second application will be needed.

• Scout for female beetles late summer and early fall. These are the ones that will lay eggs in the soil for the following year.

Contact us to further discuss how we can help you make the best decisions in managing corn rootworms.



NOTICE

Mid-County Coop Annual Meeting

Meeting will be at the Willkommen Park Pavilion
(21 Main St. East, Norwood Young America)

Friday, Dec. 15, 2023

Lunch at 12 noon • 1:00 pm Meeting

For more information, call our office - (952) 466-3700

Open to find out what your Coop is up to!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



John Morrison - Agronomy Sales

John Morrison recently celebrated his two-year work anniversary at Mid-County after joining the agronomy sales team in September 2021.

At Mid-County, John works tirelessly with customers to develop fertilizer, chemical, and seed plans that meet their specific needs. During the fall, he also helps run Mid-County's fertilizer

plant.

John spends most of his free time working at his farm in Belle Plaine where he raises Shorthorn and Simmental beef cattle. He also spends a lot of time showing and traveling to various cattle shows across the country.



Josh Way - Custom Applicator

Josh recently celebrated his five-year anniversary with Mid-County.

His experience with custom spraying and precision planter repair and modification lends well to his position.

He lives southwest of Cologne with his wife and two kids. He raises sheep and also runs a row crop operation together with his wife and parents.

At Mid-County, Josh enjoys the variety of work he gets involved in. Between making field applications, hauling fertilizer from the river, and helping the Energy and Shop Departments as needed, his work always stays interesting.



Becky Wetzel - Administrative Assistant

Becky Wetzel is approaching her one-year work anniversary at Mid-County after joining the team as an administrative assistant in February 2023.

At Mid-County, Becky's typical work day involves various tasks related to the co-op's accounts payable and accounts receivable.

When she's not working, Becky enjoys spending time at her home in Chaska, helping out at her parents' farm where they grow crops and raise Hereford beef cattle.



Mike Rolf - Petroleum Delivery

After spending thirty-three years working indoors at an office equipment business, Mike was ready for a change. He wanted a job where he could get outside on the road, a job that did not require wearing a "shirt and tie" everyday. He decided to pursue a Commercial Driver's License, and soon after discovered Mid-County Coop.

"I walked in the door and talked to Quay and Bill," Mike recalled. "They were friendly, and we had a great talk. They invited me back for an interview."

After accepting a position with Mid-County Energy in August of 2019, Mike was sent to St. Cloud for further training for propane delivery.

Mike and his wife Marlene have two children, Krista (37) and Dillon (27). Mike was born and raised on his family's farm near Bongards, an unincorporated community in Carver County. After his father passed away, and his mother moved into a senior living facility, Mike and Marlene acquired 8 acres of the original farmland, and live there today.

One of Mike's great passions is motorcycles. He owns two.

"I have probably driven two million miles in my life," Mike said. "I've been riding since I was ten years old."

Mike has retired from full-time delivery, but has come back to help during the busy seasons.

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