

REVVING UP FOR WATER CARNIVAL

Hutchinson's summer celebration
plans triumphant 2021 return / B1



HELPING LOCAL BUSINESSES

County looking for economic
development director / A2

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Hitting trails and empowering women

Local chapters of She
Ascends help women
connect through hiking
and wellness events

BY KAY JOHNSON
johnson@hutchinsonleader.com

If you like the idea of a women-only group with the mission to “Strengthen bodies. Feed minds. Calm souls,” you can’t go wrong with She Ascends.

The Minnesota-based hiking and wellness nonprofit organization was first established in 2019 in Stearns County. From there, chapters were launched across the state including in McLeod and Meeker counties earlier this year.

Jamie Broll of Hutchinson is the McLeod County chapter leader. She is part of several Minnesota hiking groups on Facebook when she learned of She Ascends. Broll liked that the organization brought women together who love nature, the outdoors and is based on wellness.

“It’s not just about hiking,” she said. “It’s for all levels, even for people who go for walks. It’s very inclusive. It’s geared toward all types of women.”

Broll and her husband, Steven, are avid hikers, but she was looking for an opportunity to connect with other women who enjoy hiking. While She Ascends had chapters in a number of Minnesota counties, there wasn’t anything in McLeod County. She also liked the idea of starting something new in this area that hadn’t been done before.

One of the advantages Broll said of being part of a statewide organization is that marketing is in place and it’s a nonprofit organization. So far, the McLeod County chapter has three official members and at least 10 women who have signed up for hikes. It also has more than 50 women who have joined the McLeod County private Facebook group.

“We’ve had a lot of interest,” said Noelle Meyer, chapter leader for She Ascends Meeker County. “Our Facebook group is about 70 members, with eight to 10 regular people who come on the hikes. We’re always looking for more women age 18 or older.”



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A group of women with the local chapter of She Ascends hiked Woodland County Park in Dassel during Earth Day. She Ascends is a Minnesota-based hiking and wellness nonprofit organization for women. Pictured are, from left, front row, Kari Graupmann and Jamie Broll; back row, Beth Stuckey, Barb Penk, Stephanie Troyer, Amy Chellin, Candace Hoversten and Sierra Weber.

Hiking to A2 ➤

Half a century of safe sledding

Bill Arndt was recently
recognized for his 50 years
of snowmobile training

BY JEREMY JONES
jones@hutchinsonleader.com

When Bill Arndt was in his early 30s, it was the heyday of snowmobiling.

“Sleds were coming out like crazy,” he said. “At one time there were 73 manufacturers of snowmobiles. People bought into it. They were fairly cheap at the time, from \$550 to \$800 a sled. Now you put another zero on that, plus (more).”

Arndt, who is now 85 years old, was among the early adopters, starting with a Sno-Jet before adding other models to his collection.

“Winter activities were not too much at the time,” he said. “Snowmobiling seemed fun. Every evening you’d go out for a ride. Down by the river was tremendous to drive, from Hutch to Cedar Mills.”

Arndt’s appreciation of the hobby quickly led him to step into the role of an advocate. He helped start a local club — the Hutchinson Drift Riders — and later became regional director of Minnesota United Snowmobilers. When he became a state safety director, it was a con-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Bill Arndt (right) received a 50-year service award from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources this past month for teaching snowmobile safety. The award was delivered by conservation officer Zach Larson.

Arndt to A4 ➤

Council votes ‘nay’ on mask resolution

The vote followed a
complaint that two
council members
violated city policy

BY JEREMY JONES
jones@hutchinsonleader.com

In a split vote April 27, Hutchinson City Council declined a resolution requiring all council members wear masks at council functions.

The resolution failed by a 3-2 vote, with Council Members Chad Czmowski and Mary Christensen voting in favor, while Council Members Dave Sebesta and Brandon Begnaud, and Mayor Gary Forcier, opposed the resolution.

According to Czmowski, the goal of the resolution was to emphasize that council members must be wearing masks or attending council functions virtually until

Masks to A4 ➤