

## Montevideo resident developing skills for her future while helping Project SEARCH with a test run

By **Jeremy Jones**  
STAFF WRITER



**Project SEARCH helps students with disabilities, such as Marie Nelson of Montevideo, enter the workforce by providing internships and helping them learn hard and soft skills needed for their careers. (Submitted photos)**

Everyone is looking for an edge in the job market these days, and sometimes that edge can be hard to find. Experience through an internship is valuable, but that means you'll be working for little or no pay in many cases. Specific job skills are valuable, but trying to acquire them can result in the cycle of needing the job to learn the skills, but not being able to get a job because you don't have them. Then, there is the term that workforce centers and businesses are throwing around more and more these days: soft skills. Soft skills — skills such as communication, social grace, friendliness and teamwork that are often associated with emotional intelligence — are what employers are telling workforce centers they really need.

Project SEARCH Minnesota focuses on providing internships and teaching skills and soft skills to students with disabilities.

Project SEARCH started in Ohio, before moving to the Twin Cities, Sioux Falls, S.D. and Brookings S.D. This year, another program was started up at the Avera Marshall Regional Medical Center. While the program gets established, they're starting their first year with just six students (out of a maximum of 12) from around the area.

Marie Nelson, 19, was referred to the program by the Montevideo School District. Nelson, who has been diagnosed with ADHD and depression, has a pretty straightforward goal with Project SEARCH. "I just want a job," she said.

She travels to Marshall five days a week, with transportation provided for her. For an hour every day, she attends an internship. Currently, she is taking a dietary food and nutrition internship, and has already finished a housekeeping internship, and a human resources internship, which taught office skills such as machine operation and filing.

After the first hour, Nelson spends another five hours volunteering. Her internships have had her helping out around the community by setting tables for residents in assisted living facilities, helping in the salad bar at the hospital, doing dishes for the hospital, and assisting the cook.

"I like them all. It's fun. I get to see a lot of people,"

Nelson said.

She said that the small group size, and the structure of the day, is tailored well to her ADHD, and she is able to follow along and learn without much difficulty. At first she wasn't sure she would like the human resources internship, but quickly learned to like it. Housekeeping wasn't her cup of tea, but she said that the dietary classes have really caught her attention. One goal of the program is to allow students to learn what they do and don't like.

Each internship is followed up by an interview, in which the students practice applying for a job in the field they've learned about. "There is one for each (internship) ... they're a little hard for me, I'm shy," Nelson said.

The longer she's been in the program, the more she's found she is up for doing more and more, though. In her dietary aid internship, she's found she is getting trusted with more responsibilities.

"We are very pleased that Marie is one of our interns in our first year of Project SEARCH Southwest Minnesota," said Catherine



**Nelson has access to a variety of internships and community service at Project SEARCH.**

Schlagel, a teacher with Project SEARCH. "From the beginning, she challenged her perceptions of herself as a worker and through the program and with the help of her Avera Hospital co-workers she has developed skills that will make her a great employee."

## Area News in Brief

### Granite Falls

#### Worry over Prairie Plan eased at YMC Board

Back in January an article in the Advocate Tribune detailing the state of Minnesota's Prairie Conservation Plan was reported by Yellow Medicine County Board members to have drawn a strong reaction from some landowners fearful that the state's 25-year, \$3.6 billion plan to acquire and protect 2.2 million acres of contiguous native and restored prairies, wetlands and grasslands might result in the loss of productive ag-lands across the county as well as associated tax base.

This past Tuesday, Pheasants Forever Coordinating Wildlife Biologist Emilee Nelson was in attendance to allay those fears as well as provide clarification and further insight into why and how the state and an unprecedented collaboration of 10-leading conservation groups hope to save an ecosystem on the brink of collapse.

Said Nelson, "The Prairie Landscape is the most endangered ecosystem in the world."

At one point the 10,000 year old ecosystem blanketed 2/3 of the state, but today, after just 150 years of instituting land alteration practices only around 230,000 acres, or less than one percent remain.

According to State DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr, the wholesale destruction of the prairie has happened so fast and with so little reflection that a majority of Minnesota residents, locally and otherwise, are unaware of the value that a healthy native prairie ecosystem offers in terms of aesthetics and wildlife.

### Redwood Falls

#### RVHS robotics team ready to roll out

The old Mint Cafe is long gone but not forgotten. The name "Mint Cafe" is still etched in many memories. It was a landmark for many Redwood Falls High School alumni and other folks in town.

There is a lot of history concerning Redwood Falls most people don't know about, but a lot of old history can be found in old issues of The Redwood Gazette and other old town papers. Did you know Melges Barber Shop was located in the same building as the Mint Cafe? Did you even know there was a Melges Barber Shop? Julius H. Melges started this barber shop.

The Mint Cafe specialized in steaks, chow mein and home-made chili. A big baseball score board was displayed for many years in the front window of the cafe for the baseball fans. The Mint Cafe first opened its doors in May 1922 and kept them open until 1960, a span of 38 years.

Most newspaper in the area keep their archives available in the building, sometimes dating back to the 1800s.

## MV REMINDER

**The Annual Meeting of Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power Association Montevideo, Minnesota will be held on Saturday, March 22, 2014, at Prairie's Edge Casino Convention Center. Breakfast buffet and registration begin at 8:30 a.m. Meeting begins at 10:30 a.m.**

## Farmers Union Oil Co. Notice of Annual Meeting

The 2013 Annual Stockholders Meeting of Farmers Union Oil Company will be held on

**Thursday, March 20, 2014**

**at the Montevideo VFW**

Breakfast will be served by the

Post beginning at 8:00 am

Meeting will follow at 9:00 am

The business meeting will consist of the reading of the Financial and Operating Report, and election of one director. We will be handing out patronage checks.

Sincerely,  
Farmers Union Oil Co.  
David Kvam, Secretary



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### Health Talk with Jake

Chief Pharmacist, Jake Marz covers important health care topics with quality information on medication use and healthier ways of life.

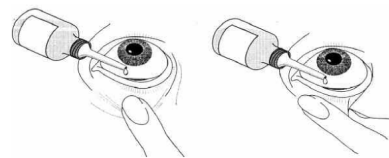


## How to Use Eye Medication

It's easy to take our eyesight for granted, but it is important to take care of our eyes and use eye drops and ointments correctly to get the most benefit from them. Proper use of eye meds will also help avoid or reduce side effects from these medications.

Follow these steps when using your eye drops or ointments:

- Wash your hands and the area around your eyes. Remove your contact lenses, unless you have been told it is okay to keep them in while using your eye meds.
- If the bottle says to shake well, gently roll the bottle in your hands for 30 seconds.
- Tilt your head back.
- Pull the lower lid away from your eye. This can be done by pulling it down with the index finger or by pinching it down with the thumb and index finger. This should make a little pocket in the lower lid. (For eye ointments, use the first method pictured.)
- Just before putting the drop or ointment in your eye, look up. For drops, squeeze the bottle gently and let the medicine fall from the bottle's dropper into your eye. Apply ointments (1/4 to 1/2 inch strip) inside the lower eyelid using a sweeping motion. Do not touch the dropper/tip of tube against the eye or anything else.
- After the drop or ointment is in your eye, release the lower lid. For drops, close your eyes gently for up to 5 minutes (but at least 1 minute) to let the medicine evenly cover your eye. For ointments, close the eye gently for 1 to 2 minutes. Do not rub your eyes.
- If extra medicine comes out of your eye, gently blot it with a tissue. After applying an ointment, your vision may be blurred temporarily.
- If the directions say to use 2 drops, wait 5 minutes before putting another drop in the same eye.
- Replace the bottle or tube cap immediately after use. This keeps the medication clean.
- Wash your hands.



As with all medicines, keep eye drops and ointments out of reach of children. The containers are not child-resistant.

If you need to use a suspension or gel forming eye drop and a solution eye drop at the same time, use the solution eye drop first. Wait 5 minutes and then use the suspension or gel forming eye drop. If you also need to use an eye ointment, you should use that last of all. Wait at least 10 minutes after applying your drops before using the ointment.

If you have trouble using eye drops, an eye drop guide (e.g., AutoDrop, EZY-Drop) may help.

Check with your pharmacist.

For more helpful Health Information find us on Facebook

