

2018

The Year in Review

\$8 million from State tops Wabasha's, and Herald's, year

by Michael Smith

We teased you a bit last week about what our Top News Story of 2018 was going to be.

Well, this week you're finding out. And while we weren't 100% certain a week ago, we probably had a pretty good idea—like 99.9% certain—of what it was going to be. Certainly more than we let on!

And if you read the headline, you already know which story we selected as 2018's Top Story: The State Legislature awarded Wabasha \$8.1 million in funding under the bonding proposal signed last Wednesday by Governor Mark Dayton to support a major expansion of the National Eagle Center to provide additional space for live eagles and accommodate demand for its hallmark educational programs, as well as the riverfront and Big Jo Alley improvements.

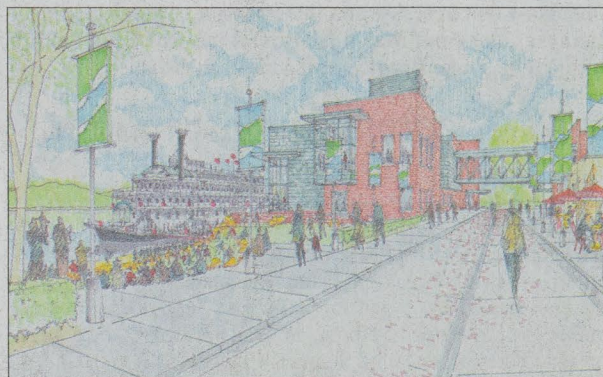
That, friends, could well be Webster's Dictionary's definition of a big news story...in a small town like ours. If matching funds from the City can be obtained and everything falls into place, this money will almost certainly help to further revitalize Wabasha's downtown area and serve the Eagle Center and the City well economically for years to come.

And, as we wrote in June when news of this "gift" came to us and was reported on Page 1, after reflecting on the many good things that have happened here over the years, "And now there's this: Eight million dollars will be coming to this community from the State, to, simply, make it a better place for all of us. We will have a much more usable, more beautiful riverfront, and an Eagle Center that will be able to meet the demands of its tens of thousands of yearly visitors, for decades to come, as it continues to be the world-class exhibit facility that it already is, only updated, with its array of needs being met."

Yes, after months of waiting and hoping, we got the good news that we wanted.

But that wasn't all. The year now wrapping up was full of good news and good times. SeptOberfest seems to get bigger and better each year; flags, hundreds of U. S. flags, adorned the City in July; parades were held from February and into

*Turn to 2018 Page 6



The Year's Most Memorable Photos...

No more memorable illustration or photo could there be in 2018 than this one (top) of the proposed Wabasha Riverfront if \$16 million in improvements are completed. And the photo of Sophia Toal-Schulte with the dragon from W-K's Spring Musical "Shrek" was very memorable!

Top 10 News Stories of 2018

1. \$8 MILLION FROM THE STATE. After months of eager anticipation, a visit to the State Capitol, and in late May, the State Legislature, with approval from Governor Mark Dayton, awarded this \$8.1 bonding money to the City. The bonding provision will benefit the Eagle Center and the City's riverfront development.

2. SCHEEL'S SUPERVALU SOLD. Longtime owners Bob and Diane Scheel sold the grocery store that had been in the Scheel family for over 40 years in September, a significant "changing of the guard" here. The new owner Doug Rinehart has named the store "Dick's Fresh Market," one of five stores so named that he owns and operates.

3. EMILY DURAND ELECTED MAYOR. What's the big deal, right? Women can run businesses and cities as well as men can, right? Of course. But Ms. Durand is the *first* woman to be elected Mayor of Wabasha in its long and glorious history...and that, friends, is quite significant.

4. PROPOSED BARGE TERMINAL. In February it was announced that a \$455,000 grant was awarded to the City by MnDOT that may give the City of Wabasha a good option for dredge material storage AND provide income for the PA to use for future local projects. As 2019 approaches... it is still in "the pipeline."

5. PEPIN MAN DROWNS SAILBOATING. Tragedy befell the area in late April as 61-year-old David Sheridan of Pepin drowned while sailboating in Lake Pepin after having apparently fallen overboard. His body wasn't recovered until July.

6. FLAGS OF VALOR. The Wabasha American Legion Club and several volunteers spearheaded an effort to have over 300 U. S. Flags displayed in the City over the July 4th weekend, each dedicated to or in memory of a loved one. The effort was a HUGE success.

7. MAIN STREET PROGRAM. The reborn Main Street Program did wonders for the City this past year, after Wabasha was so designated as a Main Street Community in

*Turn to TOP 10 Page 3



Wishing you and yours a very Happy New Year!

Top Ten

(Continued from Page 1)

May.

8. FIRST STATE BANK/ABBOTT F. H. SOLD. These other two longtime locally-owned businesses were also sold this past year, first the bank by John Doffing, and then Abbott's. Both have been in their family name for decades.

9. LIBRARY MARKS 150th ANNIVERSARY. What the Wabasha Library has meant to this community through the decades is immeasurable, and it continues to thrive and educate and entertain people of all generations in the 21st Century.

10. SKIER DIES IN COFFEE MILL ACCIDENT. Tragedy struck Coffee Mill Ski and Snowboard area in January when a 19-year-old novice skier from Cochrane crashed after inadvertently getting onto an advanced run.

Other stories in final consideration for Top 10: School District Drainage Issue (11), Ash Tree Infestation (12), Mike Weinandt Retires (13), St. Elizabeth's Additions (14) and Man Dies in Nelson House Fire (15).

Turn to Page 7 for the top stories from each weekly issue of the Herald, from January through May. To be continued.
