

*Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish
A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

~ September 2021 ~

Pastor, Rev. Luther Mathsen

Email: lmmathsen@gmail.com

Church Phone: (507) 864-2731

Lisa Chiglo, Parish Secretary/Administrator ~ Email: highlandprairie_elstad@ymail.com

Worship Notes:

On Sunday, September 5th, worship times at both congregations will switch. Worship at Highland Prairie will begin at 9:00 a.m. Worship time at Elstad will begin at 10:30 a.m.

On Sunday, September 12th, there will be one joint outdoor service, 10:30 a.m., at Highland Prairie. It is the final parish outdoor service of 2021. Worship will be in the bowl. It is also Rally Day, the day that marks the return of Sunday school learning. Therefore, Sunday school youth of both congregations will kick off the year together in a learning session held in the Highland Prairie Park at 9:30 a.m. As always, all worshippers are encouraged to bring their own lawn chair. Lunch will be served following worship.

September Worship Schedule

15 Pentecost, Sunday, September 5th

Highland Prairie-9:00 a.m.

Elstad-10:30 a.m.

Isaiah 35.4-7a

Psalm 146

James 2.1-17

Mark 7.24-37

17 Pentecost, September 19th

Highland Prairie-9:00 a.m.

Elstad-10:30 a.m.

Jeremiah 11.18-20

Psalm 54

James 3.13 – 4.3, 7-8a

Mark 9.30-37

16 Pentecost, Sunday, September 12th

Joint worship

Highland Prairie Bowl-10:30 a.m.

Isaiah 50.4-9a

Psalm 116.1-9

James 3.1-12

Mark 8.27-38

18 Pentecost, Sunday, September 26th

Highland Prairie-9:00 a.m.

Elstad-10:30 a.m.

Numbers 11.4-6, 10-16, 24-29

Psalm 19.7-14

James 5.13-20

Mark 9.38-50

+++

Pastor's Page
September 2021

In the thirty-second chapter of Genesis we read about Jacob who found himself in a wrestling match with "a man". He and "the man" wrestled all night long---"until the break of day". "When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him." As morning broke, "the man", desiring for the night-long tussle to come to an end, said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." Jacob, however, refused to relent until he received "the man's" blessing. "The man," countered with a (gracious) request of his own. He asked to know the identity of his opponent, saying, "*What is your name?*" To which Jacob obliged. (Note. Jacob did not hesitate to respond to the (gracious) overture, nor did he ask to know why. The next time someone asks for your name, think about what that means....what it opens up to.)

When did Jacob receive "the man's" blessing he had requested? He received it even before knowing it. The evidence of it came as he turned to "the man" and uttered his question (a plea evidencing the creation of faith) to "the man", "*Please tell me your name?*"

Yes, the blessing came to Jacob in "the man's" giving of his name revealing himself as the One who would come to him---enter the fray of his life (Jacob fears for his life at the hands of Esau)--- and contend with him and bless him so that his life would never be the same again. The text ends like this: So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered. The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip."

The short-story writer, Flannery O'Connor, it is told, had given a lecture at Emory University in 1961. After the lecture, Ms. O'Connor was approached by Alfred Corn, a shy freshmen student, who, called as a young man to Christian ministry, was troubled by doubts that his college courses had raised about the concerns of his faith. He even considered that he may well have lost his faith. Ms. O'Connor responded to Mr. Corn by a letter in which she insisted that Christian faith is never to be taken for granted. It is something that cannot just be assumed as if it were "the wallpaper of one's life, the religious equivalent of background music." It is never without the challenges it encounters in life in this world. It is always under assault by the devil, the world, and our sinful selves. It is always in need of renewal as "(we) cannot by our own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ (our) Lord or come to him." It is always in need of the help of the Holy Spirit who "calls (us) through the gospel, enlightens (us) with his gifts, and sanctifies and keep(s) us in true faith."

Isn't it true that the life we live always requires we contend for it? The God-given gift of faith is always requiring constant wrestling and striving for greater clarity and conviction through persistent probing of the mysterious depths of God. And so we often find ourselves grappling with God amidst his inscrutable ways of being and living in this perilous life....much like Jacob in Genesis 32.

An excerpt of O'Connor's written response to Mr. Corn is instructive:

I think that this experience you are having of losing your faith, or as you think, of having lost it, is an experience that in the long run belongs to faith....I don't know how the kind of faith required of a Christian living in the 20th century can be at all if it is not grounded on this experience that you are having right now of unbelief. This may be the case always and not just in the 20th century. (As the father of the epileptic son in Mark's gospel said, "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief." It is the most natural and most human and most agonizing prayer in the gospels, and I think it is the foundational prayer of faith...")

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

The life of the Christian faith is engendered and sustained by *the daily, weekly, Sunday after Sunday, hearing of the promises of God in Christ in the community created and sustained by the Holy Spirit. How else is a Christian to carry on the life into which he/she has been baptized---a life embodied in a bold entrustment of will and heart and mind to Christ? In and with Christ, in the community of believers, we may enter into life in this world with power from on high to boldly engage with the brutal realities of this sin-sick world by giving living testimony to God's drastic alternative life and alternative world ----a life and a world transformed in Christ---a world and life to en-joy and love.*

Do you find yourself doubtful? fearful? disbelieving? unsure about your readiness to wrestle... contend...exert...make faith's case...in and for the world? Are you unsure about the truth revealed in Jesus Christ and fearful of giving testimony to Him...the Way, the Truth, and the Life?

Welcome to the night of the supreme wrestling match that is the Christian life this side of heaven. You are not alone. But God in Christ has entered the wrestling ring of our life and in him you and I have been met by a God willing to "go at it with you/me and *for you/me*"....who, rather than being our opponent, turns out to be the one who will grant us His victory....a surprise that comes in the morning.

The new day that God gave to Jacob is the new day he has given to you and me in Christ. We, like Jacob, have been touched by God in a surprising encounter. Jacob left limping because of his hip. You and I continue to bear a blessed scar/mark on our foreheads. And life has, is, and never will be the same.

So, again. Now what? I'll let the preacher Paul provide the answer to the freedom and promise of the new day he gives.

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against the flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of god, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes on your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I my declare it boldly, as I ought to speak" (Ephesians 6.10-20).

Your brother in Christ and fellow pilgrim in the Way, the Truth, and the Life,

Prayer Corner

Scripture tells us to pray without ceasing. Let's be known as a praying congregation. Please keep Deb Topness, Thora Lombard, Wendy Will, Karen Bakken, the victims of natures wrath across the globe, all refugees, those persecuted for their faith in Christ, and all others who are ill or in need of our prayers.

Elstad Budget for July2021

May	\$ 7033.58
Received	\$ 3458.00
Under	\$ 3575.58
Eldtad budget YTD	\$ 49235.06
Received YTD	\$ 43643.00
Over YTD	\$ 5592.06

Highland Prairie Financial for July 2021

YTD Income	\$ 50,409
YTD Expenses	\$ 46,387
Expenses exceed Income	\$ 4,022
YTD Budget	\$ 55,825
YTD Income	\$ 50,409
YTD Under	\$ 5,416

Mission Table

The devastation that has occurred in the lives of brothers and sisters who have experience the wraths of nature in wind, rain, flood waters, fire and earthquakes are in great need. You are encouraged to make help through the ELCA's Disaster Relief Fund. Also, the ELCA World Hunger Appeal continues to provide much needed support to those of meager means. Through our financial support, we can help make a difference in the lives of those in need. Designated donations to these causes can be placed in the offering plate of your congregation. Make your checks out to your congregation and write either ELCA Disaster Relief Fund or ELCA World Hunger Appeal on the MEMO line.

Members of both congregations are encouraged to continue supporting the local food shelves. Our area SEMCAC food shelves' addresses are: Rushford (113 East Jessie St.) and Preston (515 Washington Street, NW).

Support for our Haitian brothers and sisters

Pr. Marie Anderson has sent word regarding Pr. Mioche and the people of his congregation in Haiti. Haiti has suffered political instability and a devastating earthquake which was followed by hurricane conditions. She indicates ways that we can help address the pressing needs of our sisters and brothers at present.

School supplies are needed. Also, monetary gifts would be very helpful. Pr. Mioche is determined to provide a meal for the 250+ students each day because it may be the only meal many students will have in a day. Also, teachers' salaries have to be met.

Supplies needed: backpacks, pencils, erasers, markers, crayons, small jars of peanut butter, construction paper, spiral notebooks, blue and red ink pens, protractors and compasses, colored underwear and socks for children of all ages, chalk and chalk erasers for teachers, and reams of printer paper.

A plan for our parish participation

You are invited to bring items from the supply list above to either Elstad or Highland Prairie from now until Sunday, September 19th at which time we plan to send them according to Pr. Marie's instructions. Monetary gifts are encouraged. Make your check out to your congregation and write **Haiti Support** on the MEMO line.

A further note: Pr. Mioche hopes to be in MN in November barring Covid19 issues. Pr. Marie will send further word with details regarding his visit.

Youth Ministry

Sunday school for both congregations will begin on Rally Day, Sunday, September 12th, 9:30 a.m., in the Highland Prairie Park. This joint initial session will include a brief learning session with some fun and games as well. Both Highland Prairie and Elstad continue to seek adults who will serve as teachers and helpers.

Confirmation ministry for grades 7 and 8 will begin on Wednesday, September 8th, 6:30 p.m., at Highland Prairie. Registration mailings have been sent to all known parish parents of confirmation youth. If you did not receive the registration letter, please inform Pr. Mathsen.

More Youth Ministry

Junior and Senior High Parish youth: The postponed July cookout and fun on the Highland Prairie ballfield has been rescheduled for Sunday, September 19th, 5:00 p.m. Hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, and beverage will be provided for a small fee of \$2.00 per person. A new game called "9 Square in the Air", an awesome group game, has arrived and waits to be unpacked, assembled, and played. The game has elements of volleyball and 4-Square, but expands the court to 9 squares and raises it off the ground. The game in a nutshell: The player in the center square serves the ball to any other square. The player receiving the ball must hit the ball out the top of their square and into another square. And so it goes until the ball drops to the ground in a player's square and player rotation occurs. Email Pr. Mathsen and let him know that you plan to attend (Immathsen@gmail.com). Parental presence and help would be much appreciated.

Adult Christian Education

On Thursday, September 16th, 10:00 a.m., we will commence a 3-week study of one of the most disturbing persons who have ever lived, one of the prophets of God, by the name of Amos. He is counted among those men whose inspiration helped bring the Bible into being---whose image is our refuge in distress, and whose voice and vision help to sustain us in faith. We will study his prophetic words and seek his wisdom in these days of our life. Please let Pr. Luther know if you are interested in participating in the study.

Parish Life

Many thanks to all the servant folk who helped make the Stringwood Music Camp concert at Elstad on Friday, August 20th, an evening of supreme enjoyment. It was a great opportunity to support this group of gifted young people and share gracious hospitality with them and all the assembly.

Elstad Maintenance Items 2021

A sheet listing Elstad further church building needs is posted on the bulletin board in the back of the nave. Donations to the building and repair fund are appreciated. Should you desire to assist with a donation, or give of your time and skill, see council president, Dick Haight, or treasurer, Jennifer Nepstad.

Highland Prairie Maintenance Items 2021

The church parking lot repair, seal-coating, and parking line painting is now complete. The sidewalks around the church have been power-washed (Thanks, David Markegard!) Also, the restraining of the bowl platform and fence is complete (Thanks, Steve Howe!) and general bowl grounds clean-up is well underway, but there is work yet to be done before our last outdoor service (September 12th) and the Rislove/Culhane wedding in October. Also, you may have noticed that painting of the block support structure at the top of the steps leading into the park has been begun (Thanks, Mary Gudmundson!). Completion of the project is desired. Perhaps someone who is willing to paint the upper portion of structure will come forward. Overhead painting from a ladder is the scenario. Gratitude is extended to all who have provided financial contributions to the building fund. See council president Gordon if you have questions.

Provisional Concerns of Congregational Life

Your continuing consideration of your offerings that help the church meet its financial commitments is most appreciated. If you do not attend communal worship, you are encouraged to mail your offering to: Jennifer Nepstad (Elstad Treasurer), 20707 Co. 21, Lanesboro, MN 55949, or Karen Bakken (Highland Prairie, Treasurer), 713 Johnson Court, Rushford, MN. 55971 or Highland Prairie Church, 43267 Bowl Drive, Peterson, MN 55962,

Pastoral Care

Pr. Mathsen is making in-person home and nursing home visits. If you, or anyone you know, is in need of pastoral care or a pastoral visit, please let him know.

Highland Prairie Lutheran Church Council Meeting

August 08, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President Gordon Johnson.

Council Members present were Robert Anfinson, Karen Bakken, Joyce Dahl, Mary Gudmundson, Gordon Johnson, Lyle Meldahl, Steve Howe and David Markegard; Lyle Meldahl, Chris Hoiland and Tim Stensgard were absent.

A quorum was determined and a motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by David Markegard, Joyce Dahl seconded. Motion carried.

Gerald Hallum was in attendance to discuss his request to step down from his volunteer position in the funeral process.

Devotions were given by Pastor Luther.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Karen Bakken. Year to date information provided are income \$50,409.00 expenses \$46,387.00; income exceeded expenses by \$4,022.00. A motion to approve as presented was made by Joyce Dahl, Steve Howe, seconded. Motion carried.

The President's Report: None

Pastor's Report: Pastor Luther reported weekly worship continues with 30 to 35 attending. Discussion followed of ideas to encourage attendance. September 5th services switch again with HP at 9:00 and Elstad at 10:30. Rally Day will be September 12th. Sunday School teachers needed for the upcoming year and a curriculum needs to be chosen. Confirmation begins Sept 8th with 13 students. Sept 16th Bible study on Book of Amos begins at Elstad. Update on Haiti Mission and school supplies may be provided as well as funds.

Correspondence received: August 15th program at Bethlehem Lutheran for Doctors without Borders fund raiser. ELCA World Hunger funds request.

Committee Reports: Staining done, pressure washing in progress. Postponed youth events are being rescheduled for September 12th.

Old Business: Parking lot seal coating will be completed yet this fall at the previous stated price. Bowl clean-up progresses and needs to be completed prior to worship services.

New Business: Pastor's vacation

Membership Roll updates needed prior to scheduling directory photo appointments for October 28th, 29th and 30th.

Masking needs with recent increases in COVID cases need to be kept in mind and will be discussed at the next meeting unless needed prior.

The Secretary's report was read and a motion to approve was made by Steve Howe, David Markegard seconded. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn at 7:05 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer by Pastor Luther was made by David Markegard, Steve Howe seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Gudmundson

Next meeting will be on September 12th at 7:30 pm at Highland Prairie.

SCHOOL KITS for Lutheran World Relief

WELCA members please be thinking of your Lutheran World Relief kits in the coming weeks. Our Thank Offering service will be on October 4th this year.

The following items are included in each school kit that we assemble and send to LWR:

* Four 70-sheet notebooks of wide or college-ruled paper (no loose leaf paper)

• Five ballpoint pens, black or blue ink only (no gel ink)

• Five unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers

• One pencil sharpener

• One eraser, approximately 2- 1/2" long

• One box of 16 or 24 crayons

• One 30-centimeter ruler (or with centimeters on one side and inches on the other)

* One blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)

Imagine having to choose between a meal or purchasing a notebook. Project Promise School Kits are sent to places where even the few required school supplies may be more than a family can afford.

Pencils and paper can help write a positive future.

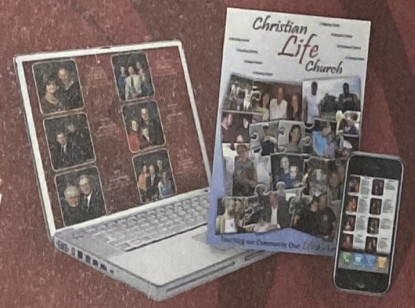
If you wish to contribute to this WELCA project by purchasing items for the school kits, please take advantage of the back-to-school sales.

There is a basket in the narthex for donations of LWR School Kit supplies.

THANK YOU!

Lists of items for the other Lutheran World Relief kits (Personal Care, Baby Care, Fabric) are on the website: lwr.org

Dear Church *family,*
It's time for a New Directory!



*Celebrating faith.
Connecting families.
Sharing hope.*

When people enter the doors of our church they are looking for a place to belong. Our directory brings us together to develop new relationships, connect with our own families and reconnect with those we haven't seen in a while. Join us for this "Connections Event" and be part of what God is doing right here at our church!

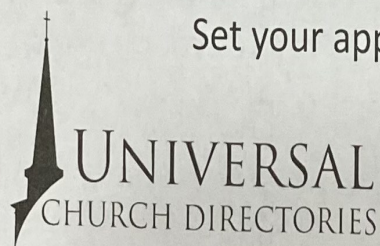
Directory Committee

Connections Event

Our church directory will not be complete without you. Join us to celebrate faith and family with our new church family album.

- Schedule your professional photography session when you stop by the sign-up table at church or simply go online and follow the instructions below. If we don't see your name on our list of appointments, you will receive a phone call inviting you to participate.
- Everyone who is photographed by Universal will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a directory!
- Universal provides a complete professional portrait studio right here at our church! You'll enjoy a variety of poses, backgrounds, portrait sizes, finish and framing options AND have the opportunity to purchase portraits to give to family and friends.

Set your appointment with Universal today!



*Gathering families,
Connecting generations.*



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES!

All Birthdays & Anniversaries are listed according to the information on file. If you see an error please contact Lisa Chiglo ~ Email: highlandprairie_elstad@ymail.com



1~ Kendra Hageman
2~ Norma Halverson
4~ Naomi Wangen
5~ Aubrey Wiley
~ Teigen Johnson
6~ Brenda Markegard
~ Shannon Rislov
~ Gabriel Becker
~ Kenzie Woxland
7~ Gordon Johnson
~ Todd James
~ Sara Johnson
~ Kayla Rislov
~ Kaleb Kendhammer
8~ Carl Lawstuen
~ Richard Koop
9~ Maynard Rustad
~ Mark Lee
~ Trenten Chiglo
10~ Dennis Knutson
~ John Rein
11~ Susan Lind
~ Troy Storhoff
12~ Curtis Wangen
~ Larissa Ryan
13~ Tonya Mensink
~ Kristina Stensgard
14~ Kristin Overland
~ Ryan Feine
~ Parker Root

15~ Gordon Gulbranson
~ Tyler Drinkall
16~ Lori Hundorf
17~ Lucas Gravos
~ Elizabeth Hageman
18~ Marion Dahl
~ Michele Thompson
~ Hale Stensgard
19~ Cayden Lea
20~ Andrew Kelly
~ Aubrey Daniels
21~ Marcia Randall
~ Gabriel Dybing
~ Hailey Paulson
~ Brogan Lee
23~ Doreen Semmen
~ Bonnie Hallum
~ Carol Dybing
~ Bobbi Mathsen
~ Mitchell Paulson
~ Jacob Paulson
24~ John Overland
~ Ryan Jacobson
26~ Derek Dahl
~ Kayla Bakkum
~ Jordan Markegard
27~ Lyle Meldahl
~ Dick Lawstuen
28~ Gene Wangen
~ Pastor Luther Mathsen
~ Jamie Wiley
~ Emma Eide

29~ Terry Blagsvedt
~ Jason Yontz
~ Mabel Thomas
~ Miken Grabau
30~ Kendall Bakkum
~ Joel Hageman
~ Cory Woxland
~ Erika Wangen
~ Katherine Halverson
~ Andrew Hoiness

Happy Anniversary!

4~ Charles & Sharon Ehler
~ Dave & Debbie Lawstuen
5~ Darrel & Ellen Highum
8~ Gordon & Glee Claussen
10~ Nick & Sarah Wangen
14~ William & Doreen
Semmen
~ Tom & Carol Dybing
16~ Dick & Diane Haight
23~ Elvin & Marlys Paulson
~ Christopher & Ann
Hoiland
27~ Gene & Vicky Topness
30~ Val & Mary
Gudmundson

SEPTEMBER

2021

Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish
 Visit our websites at...
elstadlutheranchurch.org
highlandprairielutheranchurch.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 HP WELCA Bible Study 1:30 p.m.	2	3	4
5 9:00 a.m.—HP 10:30 a.m.—EL	6	7	8 Quilting @ HP 9:00 a.m. Bulletin Deadline	9	10	11
12 Parish Worship @ HP 10:30 a.m. Rally Sunday Council Meetings @ HP 5:30—Elstad 6:30—Parish 7:30—HP	13	14	15 Bulletin Deadline	16 Amos Bible study 10 a.m. @ HP	17 Newsletter Deadline	18
19 9:00 a.m.—HP 10:00 a.m.—SS 10:30 a.m.— EL 9:30 a.m.—SS Mid-school high school youth event 5:00 p.m. @ HP	20	21	22 Bulletin Deadline Bulletin Deadline	23 Amos Bible study 10 a.m. @ HP	24	25
26 9:00 a.m.—HP 10:00 a.m.—SS 10:30 a.m.— EL 9:30 a.m.—SS	27	28	29 Bulletin Deadline	30 Amos Bible study 10 a.m. @ HP		

*Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish
43267 Bowl Drive
Peterson, MN 55962*

Address Services Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Peterson, MN 55962
Permit No. #6



HIGHLAND PRAIRIE
ACOLYTES/READERS/GREETERS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2021

ACOLYTES: CHEYANNE DAHLE
READERS: LACI SIEVERS, ARLENE JOHNSON
GREETERS: LYLE & ANN MELDAHL

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2021-OUTDOOR WORSHIP

READERS: CADEN JOHNSON, SHARON EHLER
GREETERS: ALLAN SKALET & KAY EIKEN

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2021

ACOLYTES: GUS HOILAND, CREIGHTON HOINESS
READERS: LARISSA RYAN, SCOTT BESTUL
GREETERS: GORDON & ARLENE JOHNSON

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2021

ACOLYTES: GRANT DEGEORGE, CHASE HUMBLE
READERS: CHEYANNE DAHLE, LYNNETTE PEDERSON
GREETERS: ROGER & SARAH BEARBOWER

ELSTAD
ACOLYTES/READERS/USHERS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2021

ACOLYTE: THEA ARENDS
READERS: THEA ARENDS, JOHN ABRAHAMSON

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2021

OUTDOOR PARISH WORSHIP @ HP- 10:30 A.M.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2021

ACOLYTE: SARI REIN
READERS: PARKER STORHOFF, LORI BAKKE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2021

ACOLYTE: JENSYN STORHOFF
READERS: J.T. REIN, VICKY TOPNESS

USHERS: CAROL OVERLAND, JOHN OVERLAND,
JEFF FREESE, STEVE STORHOFF,
WAYNE FINNEGAN, TOM SMITH