

## Veteran fulfills hospice wish to share Vietnam experience with students

(Continued from Page 1) were getting into," said sister Sheila lhde, sitting by his bedside.

Suffering from PTSD, Rodenberg found not-so-healthy ways to cope when he returned.

Eventually, said lhde, "he got his life together."

Now, noted St. Croix Hospice social worker Jackie McGeough, "he's pretty open about it, to remind others they have a chance. PTSD is something that never goes away, but he's learned how to cope with it."

"He's always said, when there's something wrong in your life, there's always something better. Search for that good," McGeough continued.

That's one reason Rodenberg wanted to speak with and give back to students. It was also to assure the Vietnam War, and those served in it, were not forgotten.

"I thought it was my duty," Rodenberg said.

A former MFL Mar-Mac employee and mom of MFL MarMac students,

McGeough reached out to high school social studies teacher Megan Schellhorn late last fall. Would Schellhorn welcome Rodenberg speaking to one of her classes?

Schellhorn jumped at the opportunity. Her Modern American History class was preparing to study the Vietnam War.

"The timing was impeccable. I still get goosebumps," Schellhorn said. "We did a Zoom in a matter of days."

Students admittedly knew little about Vietnam, inside or outside class, before speaking with Rodenberg.

"I feel like we don't really talk about it because it's kind of a tough subject for a lot of people," said Kashton Decker.

"It's one of those topics we never cover in any classes. It's kind of skipped over," added Alexa McElwaine. "That's why it was good to hear his story. Even my grandpa was in Vietnam, but he doesn't tell his story much."

Before the Zoom,

Schellhorn encouraged her students to ask questions while remaining sensitive.

McElwaine said many were curious about when and where Rodenberg served. They wanted to know what he did both on and off duty.

"He said most of the fighting was at night, so what they did during the day and trying to keep normal life when he was over there," explained student Jacob Schellhorn.

"Some of the stories were really in depth, and he had a lot to say about people he met along the way," McElwaine noted.

Decker found Rodenberg's stories interesting, but also eye opening. "I couldn't even imagine being this age and going to a totally different place and having to be in that situation," he reflected.

The students admired Rodenberg's honesty. He didn't shy away from speaking about what it was like to point a weapon at someone or his later struggles with PTSD.

"He talked about alcoholism and falling into that," McElwaine said. "How they were treated when they came home. I'd never heard of how soldiers were treated until he talked about it. I thought that was crazy."

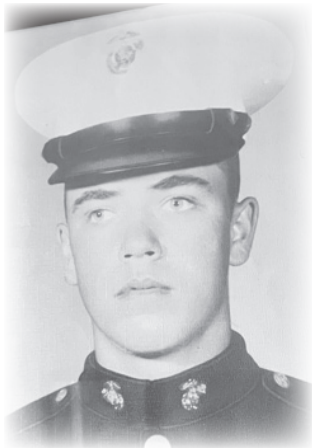
In response to a question, Rodenberg encouraged one student not to be afraid to join the military.

That continued pride in the armed forces — specifically the Marines — was evident to McElwaine.

"One of the biggest things he brought up was he'd still do it today. He said, 'For you guys, I would do it again.' That was something that stuck with me," she said.

Hearing from Rodenberg, as well as former teacher and coach Ron Vick, made the students grateful for those who served and continue to serve. They sent thank you cards to Rodenberg, and followed up with more greetings at Christmas.

Rodenberg treasured



A Guttenberg native, Rodney Rodenberg enlisted in the Marines in 1968, at age 17.

the mementos until the end. And while he helped the students better understand Vietnam and reflect on their own lives, they are proud to have helped a veteran too.

"I think it's really cool we had the opportunity to do it and make somebody else feel better about what they did for the country. People care about what they did. To hear that from a younger generation is pretty cool," Jacob Schellhorn said.

"I thought it was really cool we got to fulfill one of his wishes he always wanted to do," Decker added.

McElwaine equated the experience to closure. "I think they need to get that story out. Everyone does—they need to talk about stuff," she said. "Now, that story travels on. His story is something I think I'm always going to have with me. You're going to remember these people who gave their lives who are now gone, who fought for you, who fought for everything we have. He's an inspiration."

These are lessons Megan Schellhorn said she, and other teachers, can't ever teach through a book. "It was an opportunity for students to see the reality," she shared. "I'm grateful we have really respectful kids here and had the opportunity to help somebody move forward and have closure. And I'm thankful for what he did."

Marines fight until the end.

## BOS selects new contractor for rural garbage collection

(Continued from Page 1) this service and at which locations, and to verify that only rural residents are using this service. The county will also use this system to determine the feasibility of each site and may choose to alter sites after the first year of the contract.

BOS chair Doug Reimer said this does not mean the county will eliminate rural garbage collection.

"We've listened to concerns. The first time we did it, we didn't do it right. When we got rid of it, we didn't think it would be a big deal. I admit to that," he said. Now, "we're going to look into it and make sure each one is feasible."

Separate to collection at remote sites, the contractor will provide daily (Monday through Saturday) disposal of trash/recycling for Clayton County rural residents at the county shop in Elkader. That will include having a trash compactor, cardboard compactor and commingle recycling roll-off, which would all be dumped as needed.

A third item on the RFP asked contractors to propose pricing to dispose of construction debris and bulk items by a roll-off container at the Elkader County Shop site. Clayton County charges residents a fee to dispose of special items at the roll-off container located in Elkader, and these fees are retained by the county.

Clayton County requested a three-year contract for the rural sites and five years for the Elkader site.

Hawkeye Sanitation said varying lengths of contracts and uncertainty surrounding the remote sites was reflected in its higher bid.

"The reason for the increased bid this time from our first time is because this is essentially a one-year contract. We're not guaranteed anything after one year. They could cut down the sites to one site and that's what we would be left with," said Hawkeye representative Julian Merritt. "There's a lot of caveats

and unknowns."

At the April 22 meeting, Hawkeye said it would be willing to honor its previous bid of five years, with services starting at \$20,000 per month the first year and increasing to \$28,879 by the final year. The current bid put them at \$32,500 per month for rural sites.

Residents who have been pleased with Hawkeye's service over the years also asked the BOS to reconsider, or even table a decision to investigate the matter further.

"This is not a one-year contract," responded Reimer. "We're trying to figure out if there's anything better than what we're doing. We want the board to have better insight into what's happening and do what's best for Clayton County. We put out what we wanted for bids. They could have put that number on here. All vendors got sent the same thing."

Reimer said the BOS has been reviewing rural trash and recycling collection for around a year. He, Peterson and the other supervisor, Steve Doeppke, were ready to move forward.

"It's time. We're going to make a decision today. We've done what we're supposed to do. It's our fiduciary responsibility to take care of this," he said.

The new contract with Kluesner is anticipated to start June 1. A representative from the company said they will make sure there's no interruption of services for residents. Kluesner will also review how services are provided.

"Just because this is the way we've done things for 20 years doesn't mean it's the best option. We're going to start with this. After the three-year contract is up, we'll know how many people use each site, possibly merge two close sites to one to possibly save taxpayers money and figure out a more efficient way to haul the trash from Clayton County up to Winneshiek County. This is a good basis to start," he said.

Local businesses, non-profits urged to participate

## Sign up now to become a RAGBRAI vendor in July

There is still time to sign up as a vendor to sell food or other items when the Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) comes to Guttenberg in July.

June 1 is the deadline for vendors to register with the local Guttenberg RAGBRAI committee.

Local churches, civic groups, organizations and local establishments are strongly encouraged to participate.

Vendors offering both food and non-food items will be located in the south park and south marina on arrival day July 26. Most of the 12,000-18,000 riders, support crew, families meeting riders, etc., will be passing right by your

booth.

Vendors set their own prices. Vendors, offerings, and their locations and hours will be included on the Guttenberg RAGBRAI website and on the RAGBRAI town map that will be delivered to Oelwein the night prior. Vendors will need to be set up by 7 a.m. and vehicles cleared from the River Park Drive area.

To apply to become an official vendor there is an online application available at [www.guttenberg-ragbrai.com](http://www.guttenberg-ragbrai.com). Click the Forms menu at the top of the page and scroll to the bottom of the page. To ask for additional information, send an email to [vendors@guttenberg-ragbrai.com](mailto:vendors@guttenberg-ragbrai.com).

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## Lockmasters House Heritage Museum opens for the season May 22

(Continued from Page 1) its impact on the region's development.

For more information, please contact the Guttenberg Heritage Society at [guttheritage@gmail.com](mailto:guttheritage@gmail.com) or visit their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/guttheritage](http://www.facebook.com/guttheritage).

**Volunteers needed**  
Volunteers are needed

to greet visitors to the museum. Volunteering can be a rewarding experience that offers the chance to meet interesting people and to serve the community. You can volunteer on a regular basis or asked to be placed on the list of substitutes. For more information, use the contact information listed above.

## Umbrella Arts 2025 theme

"Our River and What It Means to Me/You" is the theme of this year's art project sponsored by Umbrella Arts of Guttenberg.

All ages are invited to share what the river means to them in any creative way. Entries should be of any material that can be viewed locally, outdoors, in a business window, public place, published or performed.

"It has been our practice to tie each year's art theme with something important that is happening in our community," said UA project chair Juanita Loven. This year's theme was prompted by the completion of the Alluring Wa-

ters art project at Schiller Street and Highway 52, a project spearheaded by UA. The project will draw attention to the gateway to the Mississippi River and the historic business district.

"With RAGBRAI LII also announcing that Guttenberg will be the final destination this year, please feel free to include bicycles in your entries; after all, the river is the reason for this honor!" said Loven.

Entries will be due by June 30. A photo, description of the entry and location should be emailed to: [lovenrj@alpinecom.net](mailto:lovenrj@alpinecom.net).

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