

Zumbrota Entreprenurial spirit brings microgreens to local dinner plates

By Holly Galbus

ZUMBROTA – They’re crunchy, sweet, and spicy little nutrient-packed powerhouses of flavor. And although they have been popular on both the east and west coasts since the 1980s, microgreens have just recently found their way to southeast Minnesota grocery stores, restaurants, and co-ops. And they are finding favor with Minnesotans’ palates in a pretty big way.

That’s in no small part due to the efforts of Dean and Jayne Bredlau of Zumbrota, who in the span of just a few years, have grown their business, “My Sweet Greens MN,” from three flats and one grow light to an operation that now produces and sells 150 pounds of microgreens each month. They also provide four area restaurants with the microgreens.

It all began three years ago when Dean, who grew up on a dairy farm in central Wisconsin, had a desire to get back into gardening. Not wanting to dig up the front yard for garden space, a friend offered part of his land for Dean to use. After watching that first season’s bounty get eaten by voracious gophers, Dean knew

he needed another plan. Copious online research kept pointing him to the idea of growing microgreens, young vegetable shoots that could be grown quite quickly (about seven days) in very little space, are nutrient dense, and which can be used in a variety of salads, soups, entrees, and side dishes.

Dean got to work, ordered seeds, growing flats, and soil, and set up a hoop house greenhouse in the front yard. He and Jayne began experimenting with seeding protocols, lighting, and temperatures. She gave some samples of their initial product to an executive chef, who became a vital supporter of their early forays into growing microgreens.

That first summer, Dean said, there was a lot of trial and error as they learned how best to grow the microgreens. The hoop house, which gets exceedingly warm in the summer sun, is no longer used in the growing process. Rather, the flats of planted seeds (which are under grow lights) are on shelves lining the back wall of the Bredlau garage. In there, Dean can easily control the temperature and perform the twice weekly harvesting of the greens, placing

them in nearby refrigeration.

In March of 2018, the Bredlaus brought the microgreens to an indoor farmers market in Faribault and customers purchased everything in their stock. That summer, My Sweet Greens MN were regular vendors at four farmers markets, including Zumbrota, Rochester, Minneapolis, and Northfield. The greens were a hit and, at the end of the season customers asked the Bredlaus how they could continue to purchase the microgreens through the winter months.

That was when Jayne, who has professional experience in print and digital advertising and hospitality event planning and catering, reached out to Just Food Co-op in Northfield to inquire about their selling the microgreens year-round. They were delighted to do so, making Just Food the first retail store to sell the product. Jayne reached out to produce managers at grocery stores, who sampled the greens, and made the decision to stock My Sweet Greens MN in their stores. Jayne has demonstrated the greens at stores, providing samples and recipes customers can try at



Photo by Holly Galbus

Jayne and Dean Bredlau of Zumbrota grow 14 different varieties of microgreens that are custom blended into five core products under the brand “My Sweet Greens MN.” The microgreens are sold at area grocery stores, farmers markets, and food co-ops.

home. She said she thoroughly enjoys building collaborative partnerships with the store dietitians, and hopes to eventually teach a community education course about adding microgreens to the diet. As the business has grown—My Sweet Greens MN is now available in both the Owatonna and Faribault Hy-vee stores as well as other local co-ops — Jayne was able recently to leave her full-time job and concentrate her efforts on the family’s business venture.

Currently, they grow 14 different kinds of microgreens, including several varieties of mustard, cabbage, broccoli, kale, sunflower, arugula, pea, radish, and kohlerabi. These are combined into five custom blends and packaged in two-inch clamshells, which can be found in the refrigerated sec-

tion of some grocery stores or co-ops. They can be added to a variety of dishes to enhance the taste, appearance, and nutritional quality of foods. Microgreens have been found on average to contain four to six times more nutrient density than the mature plant. Consult nutritionfacts.org or agresearchmag.ars.usda.gov for additional nutrition facts.

The Bredlaus are excited about the growth of My Sweet Greens MN and have plans to expand into growing and selling baby greens sometime this year and root vegetables next year.

For more information, visit mysweetgreensmn.com or visit with Jayne and Dean at the Zumbrota Farmer’s Market this summer and sample some of the many microgreens they grow.



Dean Bredlau harvests kohlrabi microgreens at his home in Zumbrota. Dean and his wife Jayne are the creators of “My Sweet Greens MN,” a business that grows and sells microgreens at area grocery stores, food co-ops, and farmers markets.

City of Zumbrota annexes 20 acres of land

By Holly Galbus

ZUMBROTA—A brief public hearing was held at the beginning of the June 6 Zumbrota City Council meeting regarding the annexation of 20 acres to the city. The annexation was approved at the meeting.

In a memo written to Mayor Brad Drenckhahn and the council, city administrator Neil Jensen explained that the owners of the 20-acre parcel, Tom and Mary Henderson, requested to annex the land into the city for Christ Lutheran Church.

This land abuts the city limits to the southeast along 190th Avenue and 460th Street. The intention is to build a church school on the property in the near future. There were no questions or concerns during the public hearing except one, when it was asked whether this request would “snowball” into more requests for annexation.

Drenckhahn said he did not know whether this would happen, but that these types of requests originate with the property owner. Following the close of the public hearing, the council

approved Resolution 2019-01 annexing the 20 acres to the city of Zumbrota.

Wobig annexation

The council approved the date and time—July 11 at 6:05 p.m.—for a public hearing regarding the annexation of approximately 10 acres owned by Joe Wobig. Wobig purchased the 10 acres by the water reservoir (north of 190th Avenue and to the south and west of Trelstad 1st Addition) to develop it into residential housing. He would like to zone it into a Planned Unit Development, which would be a mix of housing units.

Tree removal

The council approved a bid of \$4200 from Heartland Trees for the removal and stump grinding of six trees in East Park. Jensen said it is time to remove the trees as they are starting to die back. Replacements are already in the nursery and will be planted in the gaps left by the felled trees.

Other business

Police chief Patrick Callahan spoke to the council about the possibility of passing an ordi-

nance to prohibit the sales of electronic or “e-cigarettes.” He noted that other cities are passing ordinances to that effect, and wanted to begin the conversation about the City of Zumbrota doing so as well. His concern, he said, is for the youth of the community, as they are the target of e-cigarette sales.

A permit was approved for fireworks during this year’s Covered Bridge Festival. A 20-minute fireworks display provided by J & M Displays will take place in the Covered Bridge Park beginning at 10 p.m. on June 15. Hanson Communications provided the funding for the fireworks display.

Zumbrota Public Library Director James Hill introduced the new youth services librarian, Paula Steigerwald. Formerly from the Sparta, Wisconsin, area, Steigerwald is looking forward to working with youth in the Zumbrota area, helping them with their library needs.

The next meeting of the Zumbrota City Council is scheduled for June 20.

County

County board approves feedlot-farmyard split

By Rachel Fergus

RED WING – Three conditional-use permits were granted at the Goodhue County Board of Commissioners meeting on June 4, including one request for a feedlot-farmyard split. Farming finances can be tight, especially when it comes to property acquisition. The board took action Tuesday that may make it easier for one area family to sell their homestead and hog operation.

Edward and Tammy Fletcher requested a conditional-use permit to allow their existing rural Kenyon feedlot of 450 swine to be split from the farmyard and house, creating a feedlot outside of a farmyard.

The four-member board granted approval, in addition to approving two other feedlot CUP requests.

Lisa Hanni, the county’s land-use manager, explained to the board that it can be difficult to sell a lot that contains both a house and a feedlot.

“It’s, you know, unfortunate but banking has really determined a lot of our zoning. People can’t get a reasonable mortgage on any property that has a dwelling and feedlots on it, so that is why they are splitting it,” she said.

Tammy Fletcher echoed this, stating that she and her husband have been trying to sell this property since last fall. There have been young families interested in the property,

but they can’t afford it due to the mortgage rates. When the county’s Planning Commission considered this CUP, the vote was 6-3 to deny the applicant’s request due to the Fletchers not having a variance that would allow the feedlot to be split from the home. A variance was later granted on May 20.

Commissioner Barney Nesseth, who represents the district in which the property is located, reported that there was some concern from Holden Township because individuals want feedlots to be part of the farmstead.

Barbara St. John, the town clerk, explained that the township left the decision to the county. In her comments on the application, she noted: “Holden Township Board feels any variance of CUP request will be the responsibility of the new owner.”

Though this CUP means that the two properties could be owned by two parties, Fletcher told the board that everyone she has talked to is interested in buying both the dwelling and farmyard and the feedlot. This may change, but there are incentives for potential and future buyers to possess both properties.

“For instance,” Fletcher said, “the well is on the farmyard property. The hog barns can’t operate without the well.”

After approving the permit request, the board also approved a CUP for an estimated 300-animal unit expansion of an existing 444-unit beef cattle feedlot and the construction of an animal waste storage pit in Vasa Township.

The third CUP, to establish a hog finishing feedlot for up

to 720 animals and an animal waste storage pit in Pine Island Township, also passed.

Second Edward Jones office opens in Zumbrota

By Marilyn Anderson

ZUMBROTA – On May 1, Jana Scholl, a financial advisor with 11 years of experience in the financial services industry, opened the second Edward Jones office in downtown Zumbrota. The new office is located at 80 West 4th Street.

The first Zumbrota Edward Jones office opened more than 25 years ago by Scholl’s father, Mark Behrends. Scholl joined him at the Main Street office prior to Behrends’ retirement.

Financial advisor Kaye Anderson, who joined Scholl at the other Edward Jones office three years ago, continues serving clients at the office located at 395 South Main Street.

Scholl said, “When Kaye joined my office, the goal was to help me provide the level of service investors have come to expect from Edward Jones while extending our services to additional investors. Kaye has proved herself more than capable of doing so. I’m going to enjoy watching her build a successful business of her own.”

When asked why Zumbrota has two offices, Scholl explained it is “the unique business model of Edward Jones as we expand in each community. The company chooses to do this as a better way to serve clients.” She added that Edward Jones is the largest financial services firm in the nation in terms of offices, but maintains

its commitment to individuals in doing so.

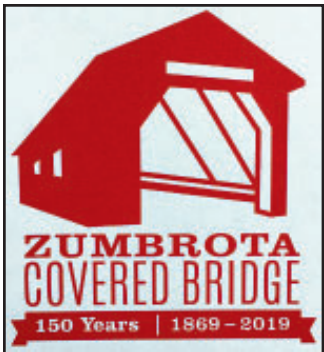
Anderson began her career with Edward Jones in 2016 after spending 28 years in corporate America working in the medical device industry. Having grown up on a farm in northeast Iowa, Anderson feels at home in the Zumbrota area and is getting to know the people in the surrounding communities. “I enjoy focusing on individual clients, tailoring strategies to reach their long-term goals,” she said.

Karen Nord, a Zumbrota native, is the branch office administrator working with Anderson at the Main Street office. The phone number for that office is 732-4212.

Working with Scholl on West 4th Street are senior branch office administrators Carol Anderson and Anna Jensen. The phone number at their West 4th Street office is 732-5499.

Edward Jones is a Fortune 500 company headquartered in St. Louis, providing financial services in the U.S. and, through its affiliates, in Canada. The firm’s 17,000-plus financial advisors serve more than 7 million clients.

Areas of financial planning provided at the Zumbrota offices include retirement savings strategies, retirement income strategies, estate and legacy strategies, intergenerational planning, insurance and annuities, and college savings.



This artwork will be on the wine and beer glasses available for sale this year.

in Minnesota.

The festival will present an opportunity to purchase a Covered Bridge Sesquicentennial celebration button. Only 500 will be sold. Each button has been numbered. Those purchasing buttons will be eligible for cash prize drawings to be held

at the bridge’s 150th birthday party on Saturday, August 3. Cash prizes will be \$1000 for first place, \$500 for second place, and there will be five third place prizes of \$100 each. Buttons are also available for purchase at city hall and at several Zumbrota businesses.

The task force carries out ongoing efforts to promote, protect, and preserve the historic bridge. Its booth will have information about the bridge and also a variety of Covered Bridge memorabilia for sale. New this year are stem-less wine glasses and pilsner beer glasses.

The task force booth will be located next to the Zumbrota Area Historical Society’s booth at Covered Bridge Park Saturday and Sunday, making for an opportunity to learn about the historical roots of the area and the Covered Bridge.



A second Edward Jones office opened May 1 at 80 West 4th Street. Making the move from the Main Street office were financial advisor Jana Scholl (center) and senior branch office administrators Carol Anderson (left) and Anna Jensen (right).



Financial advisor Kaye Anderson, left, and branch office administrator Karen Nord are located at the Edward Jones office at 395 South Main Street in downtown Zumbrota.

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