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## Message from the Chairman

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As I write this I am getting ready for the Nowthen Threshing Show and then the state fair. Where did the summer go?

In June, FoMB had a very interesting coffee chat at Iron Shoe Farm near Princeton, owned by Carla and David Mertz. There was a good turnout on a rainy Sunday afternoon. The showers let up while we there allowing people to walk around the farm and check things out. They are working toward being certified as an organic farm. Carla told the group how she increases her profitability by marketing directly to restaurants in the area. They raise chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, beef cattle, and pigs. They also grow micro greens and David is in the process of converting their 2-car garage into a growing facility as sales expand. They are hoping to remodel the barn and make improvements to accommodate weddings and other gatherings in the future. Carla said they are privileged to know the three families who have lived on the farmstead and to have an insight into its history. Thanks for your hospitality Carla and David. I found out later that FoMB member and contractor Jay Schmidt put the new metal roof and resided the barn for the previous owner.

In July, a coffee chat was held at the site of the Frederick Norenberg Estate. It was a very hot and humid day! The estate of the Grain Belt Brewery founder consisted of an 8 bedroom Queen Anne Mansion built in the late 1800s, a boat house/gazebo and the extensive flower gardens on the south side of the road. On the north side, there was the barn, gardener's house,

water tower and various other buildings, Tom Jahnke conducted this part of the tour and is very knowledgeable of the property having worked there for many years. The estate consisted of 74 acres and nearly 8,500 feet of shoreline on Lake Minnetonka on Crystal Bay. The house was razed after the death of their daughter Lora Noerenberg Hoppe as per her will. It was also stated in the will that the gardens on the south side would remain for the public to enjoy and she left a trust to fund it going forward. The barn, water tower and another building are listed on the historic record. The "T" shaped two-story barn was resided with cedar bevel siding in the 1990s with mitered corners to match the original construction. There is a very large overhead door on the main floor facing the road that is constructed of 3" thick material. This door was used to bring in carriages, wagons and other large equipment. There was also a workshop and feed room. Hay was stored in the third floor loft. It is truly a high quality barn constructed by a wealthy gentleman farmer but used in the practice of operating a small farm that supplied food for the family and a staff of 17.

**Keep Sunday September 29<sup>th</sup> open for the fall barn tour! This is always a great day featuring 5 barns this year and it is always interesting to see the variety of barns. See more information on page 2.**

**There is another coffee chat coming up Sunday October 20<sup>th</sup>. See details on page 3.**

*Bill Bruentrup, Chairman*

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## Fall Barn Tour Time!!

### **2019 Fall Barn Tour** **Sunday, September 29, 2019** **9:00 a.m.** **\* RSVP Required \***

Each year, Friends of MN Barns, hosts a tour of barns in different parts of the state. This year's tour will highlight 5 barns in Lake Elmo and Stillwater.



We will meet at 9:00 am at the first barn, owned by Danny and Danielle Hecker (11658 50<sup>th</sup> Street N, Lake Elmo). Since we are meeting at a private residence, please arrive as close to 9:00 as possible. Be sure to dress for the weather!



We will visit 2 barns in Lake Elmo in the morning, then have lunch at a park and visit 3 barns in the afternoon. Snacks and water will be provided on the tour.



The cost is \$15 for FoMB members, \$20 for non-members, payable to FoMB.



A box lunch is available to purchase for \$9 (or you can bring your own).  
Sandwich choices: club with pepper jack, ham and swiss, turkey and cheddar, roast beef and colby or vegetarian.  
Bread choices: croissant, marble rye, white, wheat or hoagie bun.  
Chips, hand fruit and cookie included in box lunch.  
You **MUST PRE-ORDER** your lunch by September 21. Kim Halek is the contact person to order your box lunch.

**To RSVP to the tour and order lunch contact Kim at**  
**ksmhalek@gmail.com or 763-331-1187**



## Upcoming Coffee Chat

### The Historic Eidem Farm

**Where: 4345 101st Avenue North  
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443**

**When: Sunday, October 20, 2019 at 1:00 pm**



*Photos courtesy of the Eidem Farm and Brooklyns Historical Society*

**Cost: Free for FoMB members  
\$5 for non-members/guests**

Please join FoMB for a Coffee Chat tour and overview of this historic farm.

The Eidem homestead was established in the 1850's and bought by John Jr. and Electa Eidem in 1894. The Eidem family raised crops until the 1950's and the farm was bought by the City of Brooklyn Park in 1976. Today, the site consists of two combined farmsteads on 19 acres and includes a house, barn, and outbuildings.

The mission of the Historic Eidem Farm is to preserve this example of a 20<sup>th</sup> century farmstead and educate and engage visitors with what farm life was like through a living history experience. The city of Brooklyn Park recently completed an \$8 million, ten-year master plan for the Farm.

**Must RSVP by Friday, October 4 to  
Kim Halek (ksmhalek@gmail.com)**

#### General driving directions:

- The Farm is located in Brooklyn Park, a northwest suburb of Hennepin County
- Using downtown Minneapolis as a starting reference point, take I-94 West
- Stay in the right lanes of I-94 through Brooklyn Center and as I-694 is approached, it will become North Hwy 252 after passing beneath I-694 (watch the signs)
- Continue north on Hwy 252 towards Hwy 610 West (it is a left-hand exit from North Hwy 252 to Hwy 610 West)
- Travel west on Hwy 610 to Noble Parkway (it is the first possible exit from Hwy 610 W)
- Exit and turn right/north onto Noble Parkway
- The Farm is about one mile north at the intersection of 101<sup>st</sup> Ave. N. and Noble Parkway
- Turn right/east on 101<sup>st</sup> Ave. N. at the Athlos Leadership Academy school; the farm is on the right

For more information about the Farm's history, visit the website: <https://www.brooklynpark.org/recreation-and-parks/history-of-eidem-homestead>



## Barn Beauty

By Dee Goerge (Living the Country Life 2009)



Judy Parker does her book work in calving pens, sends guests to the hayloft, and serves breakfast over a horse stall wall.

Yes, she lives in a barn.

Both rustic and modern, Judy's barn home near Geddes, South Dakota, has amenities such as a whirlpool tub, but it maintains the look of a circa 1924 barn. It took 10 years of hard work, but Judy, a retired teacher, says remodeling the barn was the right choice. Judy, her extended family, and a passel of friends did most of the work.

The first thing they did was brace the sidewalls and put a cable in the rafters to straighten the barn. Then they moved the barn from its original location across a pasture to a heated cement slab where water and electricity access were better. Once they started moving it, "The whole town came out to watch," Judy laughs. With a crew walking inside and outside the barn, the driver drove on the slab and lowered the barn onto sill insulation. "It fit perfectly," Judy says.

Then the real work began. She power-washed the barn, starting with the rafters and working her way down to the main floor with its horse and cow stalls and granary. Stalls were removed, except for one dividing the kitchen from the living room.

"You can see where the horses chewed on the beams," she says, pointing to a gnawed area under her wall phone. She wanted to keep as much barn wood as possible, but realized the house would be too dark, even with 25 windows. She compromised, leaving some of the granary structure, floor joists, and beams exposed, but insulating and drywalling the walls. A contractor also sprayed the inside of the barn ceiling with an insulating sealant.

The plan was to finish the main floor first then work on the hayloft to make rooms for bed-and- breakfast guests. "The upstairs ended up getting done first," Judy laughs, because there was a demand from out-of-state pheasant hunters. Four rooms fill half the loft space. Each has an exposed ceiling beam or two and a wall of old granary siding. The loft floor is made of planed pine boards. Each room has its own bathroom, complete with a tub and shower. "People don't like to be rustic in a bathroom," Judy says.



Because the barn is 35 feet tall, there is space for a third floor. It sleeps up to eight and has a kitchenette, pool table, and plenty of tables and chairs.



Judy Parker and her family did much of the labor to move this old barn and then to remodel it into a home and bed-and-breakfast. Total cost of the project was about \$200,000 (2009)

## Simply Shrimp: Blomkest farmer raises saltwater shrimp in former dairy calving barn

By: Shelby Lindrud (West Central Tribune, August 14, 2017)



When the Damhof family of Blomkest retired from the dairy business after 50 years of milking cows earlier this year, they didn't retire from raising livestock completely. Today, instead of Holstein dairy cows filling the barns, there are now tens of thousands of Pacific white shrimp being raised in what was once a calving barn.

"It has been very rewarding, very successful," said Paul Damhof, who founded and is running Simply Shrimp LLC. Assisting him are members of his close-knit family.

When Damhof's parents, Phillip and Jane Damhof, decided to close the dairy, the family started looking for a new way to make a living on the farm.

It was Jane Damhof who first found the article about raising saltwater shrimp in the Midwest - hundreds of miles from the nearest ocean. The family started researching the idea last year, while Paul Damhof was still growing his row crops. He figured he would research the shrimp idea for at least a year before making any final decisions.

Then the rains and hail came last summer. With the crop ruined, Damhof turned to shrimp full-time.

"We needed to generate income here. It was time to go," Damhof said.

"It was God's way of closing the door and getting Paul started," Phillip Damhof said.

To start a shrimp farm is not easy. You have to either build or remodel a facility, create the perfect water mixture and apply for all the permits, and there are a lot of them.

"Every shrimp I get, I need to get a permit," Paul Damhof said. He ends up working with the state Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and other organizations to make it all happen. Damhof said he is only the fourth licensed shrimp grower in the state of Minnesota.

Of course, there is no ocean water in west central Minnesota, and Damhof has to make his own. He started with Blomkest well water, directly from the family farm. He then added salt directly from the sea.

"We get a special ocean sea salt. We want to match the ocean environment to the best of our ability," Damhof said.

Damhof also adds beneficial bacteria into the water, which in turn eat the waste from the shrimp. The added bacteria leaves the water a muddy color, but Damhof said the water is clean.

"There is zero waste in the pools," Damhof said.



## Simply Shrimp, continued

The shrimp are shipped to Minnesota from Florida. There are 33,000 baby shrimp in one shipment, and Damhof can fit most of them in the palms of his hands.

"They are the size of an eyelash," Damhof said.

They are so tiny that when he finally puts them in the pools, the shrimp are invisible. For the first few days he really has no idea if the shrimp have survived.

"You feed by faith, that everything is going well," Damhof said.

After a few weeks, the shrimp are split into different pools and left to grow. As they increase in size, their diet changes. They start on a liquid diet and gradually move to larger and larger sizes of solid granules.

"It is about five different feeds throughout the grow cycle," Damhof said. The shrimp are fed by an automatic feeder, which both Paul Damhof and Phillip Damhof keep filled.

At about 120 days old, the shrimp are ready to be sold. Customers come directly to the Damhof farm where they can purchase shrimp for \$20 per pound.

"You cannot get any fresher than what we've got here. We can provide whatever size shrimp the customers wants. That is what we are here for," Paul Damhof said.

While raising and selling saltwater shrimp isn't for everybody, it has so far been a good business decision for the Damhofs. They have been able to find a new way to diversify in agriculture and keep the family on the family farm.

"We were born and raised in agriculture," Damhof said.

While the hard labor is significantly less when raising shrimp in comparison to milking cows, there is still plenty of work.

"Everyday when I walk in, it's what challenges am I going to face today. This is what I enjoy," Damhof said, adding the work is more mental than physical.

Damhof hopes to have shrimp available for purchase year-round, for special occasions, holidays or any day.

"We get shrimp every month. I want a steady flow of shrimp coming out of here," Damhof said.



*Paul Damhof measures out the feed for his thousands of shrimp*



## June and July Coffee Chat Pictures

*More details on both coffee chats can be found in Bill's "Message from the Chairman" on the front page.*

**Thank you to hosts David and Carla Mertz from Iron Shoe Farm in Princeton for hosting the June coffee chat on your beautiful property. We are grateful for your hospitality!**



Owners David and Carla

### **The Norenberg Barn and Garden was the site of the July coffee chat.**

Gentleman Farms were popular among the wealthy, including those around Lake Minnetonka, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Because their owners were affluent, the farm structures had a strong emphasis on aesthetics unlike the utilitarian buildings built by farmers who relied on their land to make a living. Norenberg's farm was no exception. The beauty and craftsmanship of the barn, which was built around 1912, helped get it registered in the National Register of Historic Places.





## Nowthen Threshing Show Recap

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The Nowthen Threshing show is held on the third weekend of August each year and runs Friday-Sunday. It features vintage machinery from the days of the family farm. Each year a brand of tractor is featured and this year it was Massey Harris/Massey Ferguson. There are all brands of tractors, steam engines, trucks and a few vintage riding lawn mowers in the tractor parade as well. There are many demonstrations: an old sawmill, a shingle saw, rock crusher, threshing machine, silo filler, hit and miss engines, gasoline powered wash machines and many other displays. The evening entertainment features vintage tractor pulls.

For the past 5 or 6 years, FoMB has had an exhibit to raise awareness of our organization. Last year and this year, in addition to the vintage tool and photo display, the model barn was erected. It attracts attention, as people are curious to see how the old timber frame barns were built. We also had some old tools used in timber framing from FoMB member and third generation barn builder, Pete Pinske. The pike pole has a sharpened metal spike that would be used to help erect the bents, which had been assembled on the barn floor. This pole had a ironwood handle about 10' long but others would have longer poles. Many would be used along with ropes to assist in the lifting of the bent. There was also the peg shaper described in an earlier issue of the Barn Door along with chisels, drills and other tools used in the construction. Thanks to the FoMB members who helped at the event. It is good to have members there to help and talk to people about barns and the FoMB organization.

There are many threshing shows in late summer and early fall. They all have many interesting displays and demonstrations so get out and enjoy the shows!





## Barn Again — *When Building New Just Won't Do*

By Richard Siemers (The Land, August 15, 2014)

Gary and Marj Becker had their eye on four acres of land in the middle of Marshall. It was what remained of the Neuse farm. Mr. and Mrs. Neuse sold the land around them for development, but continued to live on the building site, which had a block chicken house and a wooden barn along with the house. Even after her husband's death, Mrs. Neuse continued to make it her home until she moved to be closer to family in 2003. When it came up for sale, the Beckers purchased it. And then we said, "Now what are we going to do?" said Marj Becker. They had not intended to live there, but subdividing it into lots did not seem to work. "It took on a life of its own when we saw the barn," she said, "and Gary needed a shop." The Beckers owned Becker Iron and Metal and were anticipating retirement. Gary was doing woodworking in a small workshop in a one-car garage, rather cramped for building cabinets and furniture and the things he liked to do.



One thought led to another with the result that they sold the Neuse house and had it moved off, built a new house, turned the chicken house into a potting shed, and went to work on the barn. "There are four acres, so we thought leaving the barn wouldn't be a problem," Marj said. Many of the homeowners around their property are retired farmers, so they were happy to see the barn stay, according to Gary. "I knew what the purpose was going to be, so we set it up with that purpose in mind," Gary said. That purpose was to make it his woodworking shop.

What they didn't know was what a great challenge it would be. "When the cows walked out for the last time, the Neuse family just shut the doors," Marj said. "There was still hay in the hayloft." Unused, the building began to deteriorate. It sat on an old stone foundation. The roof of the lean-to had fallen in and a tree was growing up inside. They hired Aaron Barritt of Barn Doctors, Inc. to do the restoration. The idea was to save as much of the old building as possible, which did not turn out to be much. "The entire barn was actually rebuilt," Gary said. "It has new siding all the way around." Barritt's crew started in November of 2004, and fortunately it was an open winter. They jacked up the barn, took out the stones and boulders, and replaced them with a concrete foundation. The exterior was returned to its original look, with new siding, a restored (but inoperable) loft door, and other doors built to copy the originals. Barritt also found matches for the original hardware. The Beckers made one exception to the original. They put on a metal roof because they did not want to be reroofing. The interior was redone with an office, and an expansive shop where Gary has plenty of room to work. He even used wood from the old stanchions and beams to make a table for the house. The rebuilt lean-to houses his lumber.



Becker Barn, Marshall, MN

In 2009, Friends of Minnesota Barns, an organization that encourages barn preservation, chose the Beckers' barn as runner-up for Barn of the Year in the Non-Farm Use Category. It was the barn that brought the Beckers to this property that they had not intended to live on. "We like what we got," Gary added. The same year that the Becker barn was named runner-up by Friends of Minnesota Barns, the organization awarded its top recognition to the barn on the acreage of Dave and Marlyce Logan. Sitting on a hill back from Hwy 75 north of Pipestone, the "barn with the star" is an area landmark. Dave Logan has heard people use it in giving directions. The Logans took possession of the property in January 2008.

## Barn Again, continued



Logan barn

The barn became their first major project. Dave said the previous owners had used the barn as a garage. They had installed two white fiberglass overhead garage doors to replace the barn doors. The building was covered with metal siding and had asphalt shingles. “We decided we were going to restore it (to its original look),” Dave said. He hired Barn Doctors to do the work. When they took off the metal, the wooden siding underneath was rotting and the restoration became a major project. After some straightening, the barn received all new siding, windows and wooden barn shingles. The garage doors were replaced with sliding barn doors. The cupolas were in good shape and just needed repainting.

“The only thing that’s not authentic is the wood windows were replaced with vinyl clad windows,” Dave said. They also added three exterior doors into the horse bays. Other than that, the barn looks as it did after being rebuilt following a fire in 1931. Newspaper photos provided the needed information. The interior is open for storage. The horse bays are still there, but the stanchions and other interior features had been removed years before. The lean-to still is used as shelter for two horses. The story that Logan has heard about the big white star is that the owner who built the barn had some relationship with North Star Insurance, so he had it painted there.

Since there is no financial assistance for barn restoration in Minnesota, one needs to be willing and able to make a substantial financial investment. And it’s not just the initial investment. “You have to be willing to keep it in nice shape if you invest that much money,” Dave said. He has already had Barritt back once to do some straightening after the July 2011 storm shifted the building, and the south and west side should probably be painted again, he said. The Logans have been surprised to find a photo of their barn entered in a county fair, and he once saw it in the King of Trails magazine, which features sites and cities along U.S. Hwy 75. While many barns are disappearing from the countryside, these two couples have been willing and able to invest the money to restore two historic structures, the Logan barn built in 1931, and the Becker barn built in the early 1900s. Beckers could have just as easily put up a new building for Gary’s woodworking shop, but they knew it wouldn’t be the same. “You can build yourself something, but you won’t get the character of a barn,” Marj said.



Dave Logan of Pipestone, MN, had his barn restored to look as it did in 1931, other than a few modern upgrades



## Photo Calendar Contest



## Annual Barn Photography Contest

- Contest categories: Adult Open and Youth/Student Open. Photographs must include an identifiable part of a barn (inside or out).
- Photos may be taken with any type of camera, phone, tablet, etc. Filters and other camera accessories may be used. Photos need to be high resolution AND horizontal format.
- Photographs can be enhanced using computer software.
- By entering the contest, you allow the Friends of Minnesota Barns (FoMB) to use your photograph in the barn calendar as well as in other promotions, advertisements, products, websites, social media sites, and any other way the group sees fit. The photographer will be credited if the photograph is used.
- A photographer may enter three (3) unique photographs into the Adult Open category. Youth/students may submit photos to the “Adult” category. The same photograph may not be entered into multiple categories.
- A total of 12 winners will be selected and will receive a 2021 calendar.
- Winners will be announced in spring 2020 at the FoMB Annual Meeting.
- Judges will have the final decision on if a photograph meets the criteria.

Updates about the contest will be posted to our website and Facebook page.  
[www.friendsofminnesotabarns.org](http://www.friendsofminnesotabarns.org)

## Barn Photography Contest

### 2020 Contest Categories

1. Adult Open (up to 3 entries per person)
2. Youth/Student Open (16 years old and under)

**Entry Deadline:** Monday, February 3, 2020

**Entry Fee:** Free for youth/students and members of FoMB **or** \$25 yearly membership for adults. Yearly membership includes a quarterly newsletter, discounts on tours, barn coffee chat gatherings, great group of people to get to know and so much more!

### Submission Information to Include:

- |                  |                 |                      |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Name          | 3. Home Address | 5. Category Entering |
| 2. Email Address | 4. Phone Number |                      |

**Email:** .jpg digital image (high resolution) and horizontal format to: [redbenchvintage@hotmail.com](mailto:redbenchvintage@hotmail.com)

**Mail:** 8 x 10 printed photograph to: Clare Hoelderle, 19685 Oak Grove Avenue, Prior Lake, MN 55372.  
Must be postmarked by entry deadline.

## In Remembrance - Christina Harrison (*Founding member of FoMB*)

**Inger Christina Gotesdotter Haglund Harrison**

**February 27, 1939 – June 27, 2019**

*My Mother loved Cookies*  
*A Remembrance by daughter Katrina Harrison*



I made a list of things my mother loved. It's just a partial list so this won't take long.

Yes, my mother loved cookies.

And the rough feeling of sun dried laundry.

She loved hedgehogs, and all animals, especially if they were weird, endangered, sweet, and/or vulnerable.

She loved Leonard Cohen, Audrey Hepburn, Anderson Cooper, Jane Goodall, Scott Joplin, Michelle Obama, and many others, of course.

She loved languages- and she knew a half dozen of them.

She loved birds and butterflies (and all pollinators), which represented to her this fragile earth and our duty to preserve it.

She loved barns, and worried so much about their disappearance from the Minnesota landscape that she was a founding member of Friends of Minnesota Barns. She was a passionate and compassionate supporter of small family owned businesses, local hardware stores, co-ops, and coffee shops.

She loved music, all kinds.

And also, silence-

She loved the sound of wind rushing through pine trees.

Soughing, the soughing of the pines.

She loved to cross country ski.

She loved libraries, museums, cathedrals, and the architecture, history, and ideas housed within them.

She loved traveling, and adventures. She grew up near the arctic circle and then married a man whose people came from Tasmania, near Antarctica, so you can understand how our family could be considered bipolar!

She loved her profession. Our family tree is full of storytellers. Most of us write our stories, but she unearthed them. Archaeology is a kind of time travel. Did you know that she was the first person in Minnesota to begin a private arch consulting firm? And she currently holds the record for the longest running practice in the state? For her, archaeology was so much more than a career, to her it was a cause, a calling to find and preserve the stories of those who are no longer here to tell them.

So, my mother really lived, and loved, so much in her 80 years. She died peacefully at home, surrounded by loved ones.



## Friends of Minnesota Barns

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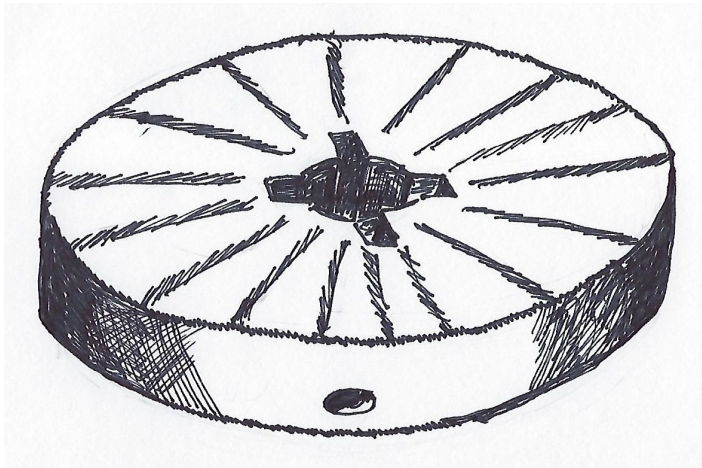
Our mission is to educate the public and raise awareness to the importance of historic barns and farmsteads in Minnesota, and to help advocate for barn preservation. We offer educational workshops and assist others in finding resources for preservation and/or restoration of historic barns and farmsteads.



Barn near Howard Lake, MN

*Photo credit: Byron Tilus*

## General Announcements



*Millstone drawing by LeRoy Kuta*

- \* Please note that our mailing address has changed to:  
10605 Joliet Avenue North, Stillwater, MN 55082
- \* The next Friends of MN Barns board meeting will be on October 28 at 6:30 p.m. at Davanni's in Eden Prairie. All are welcome to attend.
- \* We are always looking for barn articles, pictures and interesting facts to be used in upcoming newsletters. If you would like to contribute, please contact newsletter editor and board member, Clare Hoelderle at [redbenchvintage@hotmail.com](mailto:redbenchvintage@hotmail.com).