

## **Rochester Post Bulletin**

### **Local News**

#### **Kasson woman wins award for trying to save school**

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KASSON -- A Kasson woman is among those being honored by the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota.

Diane O'Brien-Berge was awarded the advocacy award by the alliance for her efforts to save the former Kasson Elementary School from demolition. The nonprofit presented the awards this week during the National Preservation Conference.

O'Brien-Berge helped form the group Kasson Alliance for Restoration, or KARE, to save the school. The city had planned to demolish the building to construct a new facility that could house a library and government offices. The move came after voters rejected a \$3.9 million proposal in November to renovate the existing building. KARE took the city to court in June in an effort to save the building from the wrecking ball. A temporary injunction was granted and a hearing in Dodge District Court is scheduled in February.

The alliance notes O'Brien-Berge's efforts to preserve Kasson's history, which have included restoring the old Kasson City Hall and helping save the Kasson Water Tower, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The old elementary school was also placed on the alliance's 2007 Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties under the category of historic schools.

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