

Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleader

Friday, Jan. 12, 2018
Volume 23, Issue 2
Est. 1995

Town Crier

Library sponsors winter reading program
Young people are reading up a storm during “Read on the Wild Side,” a winter reading program for teens and adults sponsored by the Great River Regional Library system. The program, which started last week and will end Feb. 28, encourages young people to read at least five books during that time frame. Those who do are eligible for prizes provided by the St. Cloud Friends of the Library organization. Participants must be in sixth grade or older. To register for the reading program, go to any GRRL branch library or register online at griver.org and then check griver.org/events to see what kinds of programs and activities are happening at a library near you.

Water line freeze
While the City of Sartell is not experiencing any frozen water lines at this time, the city engineer would like to remind residents to be mindful of long periods of extreme cold weather and the impact to service lines. If the temperatures becomes extreme, residents are encouraged to run a stream of water about as thick as a pencil. The city will make every effort to notify residents via the website, cable access and local newspapers should there be a threat of service lines freezing.

Snowmobile safety course set Jan. 28 in Foley
A Youth Snowmobile Safety Course for students interested in earning their snowmobile safety certification, sponsored by the Benton County Sheriff’s Office, will be held Sunday, Jan. 28 at the Benton County Courts Facility in Foley. Registration begins at 12:30 p.m. and training/testing will start at 1 p.m. To be eligible for this day of training, students must be at least 11 years old by Jan. 28, and must have completed the online portion of the class at home prior to the testing day. To register for this class (25-student limit), please send the student’s name, date of birth and contact information to snowmobilesafety@co.benton.mn.us. Advance registration is required; no walk-ins will be accepted. You can take the at-home portion online at the Minnesota DNR website www.dnr.state.mn.us. You may also contact Sgt. J. Dingmann of the Benton County Sheriff’s Office for more info at 320-968-7201.

For additional criers, visit www.thenewsleaders.com and click on Criers.

INSERT:
PineCone Vision Center

Bertsch honored with ‘2 Under 20’

by Dennis Dalman
editor@thenewsleaders.com
Young entrepreneur and visionary Alex Bertsch of Sartell is being honored as one of the two winners in the third annual “2 Under 20” awards by the *St. Cloud Times*.

Bertsch, the son of Carolyn and Matt Bertsch, is a senior at Sartell High School. The other winner is Georgina Simon, a student at St. Cloud Tech High School. Another Sartell High School senior, Aidan Speckhard, was named one of the three runners-up for the award. Those three will also be feted at the Jan. 23 awards, along with Bertsch and Simon. The other runners-up are Anna Panek, 17, of Avon, who is a senior at Albany High School; and An-

thony Kampa, a senior at St. Cloud Cathedral High School. Previous “2 Under 20” honorees included Sartell students Gopi Ramanathan and Nicole Yang in 2015 and in 2016 one of the winners was Josh Maricle-Roberts, who lives between Sartell and St. Joseph. The “2 Under 20” awards are given to youth who show leadership skills, passionate commitment to their work and to others, and an eagerness to make the world a better place. For tickets to the awards banquet, go online to <https://tickets.sctimes.com>.

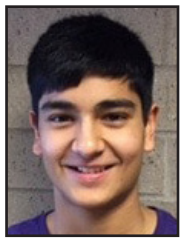
Bertsch
Alex Bertsch has been an imaginative, self-styled entrepreneur because of a hobby he developed when he was
Bertsch • back page



contributed photo
Bertsch is visited by his grandfather, Ken Persons, of St. Cloud at the Sauk Rapids Farmers’ Market.

Hindka aces ACT test – a perfect 36

by Dennis Dalman
editor@thenewsleaders.com
For 3.5 hours, Yash Hindka demonstrated grace-under-pressure as the test asked him question after question.



Hindka

“I was nervous,” he acknowledged later. But despite the jitters, he had an innate sense of confidence.

His grace-under-pressure, reinforced by his all-around intelligence, paid off, resulting in a perfect score on the American College Testing test – a solid composite score of 36. Now Hindka is in an honored group, among only 2,760 high-school students of the more than two million students who take the ACT annually. In other words, he is among one-tenth of one percent of students who achieve perfect scores on the test. The ACT is comprised of

four categories: English, math, reading, science. Each is scored from 0-36. A student’s composite score is the average of the scores on all four categories. Last September, Hindka took the ACT and scored 35, one point less than perfect. He determined to take it again and first did four or five practice tests. His persistence, obviously, paid off. On the night of Dec. 20, Hindka knew the test results would be avail-

able online shortly after midnight. He intended to stay awake to find out how he’d done, but he fell asleep and didn’t see the good news until 3 a.m. “I was very excited to learn the news,” he told the *Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleader*. “It was too early in the morning to wake up my parents, so I waited to tell them, and they were excited and proud of me.” The ACT is a curriculum-based achievement
Hindka • page 7

Year in review Part 2: 2017 – the year the Sartell Center finally opened

by Dennis Dalman
editor@thenewsleaders.com
The year 2017 in Sartell could well be known as the year a Sartell Community Center was finally built and opened for residents. For two decades – at least – residents and city officials had wanted a city center. At long last, revenue from the regional half-cent sales tax made the center a possibility. The \$11-million facility in south Sartell opened to the public in late fall. It has three gyms, an elevated walking
YIR • page 4



photo by Carolyn Bertsch
Friends Genna Kelash, 5, (left) and Andrea Wills, 11, both of Sartell, work together to build a sand castle during the June 29 Sartell Police Athletic League, also known as P.A.L. Sartell’s P.A.L. is free of charge and meets every Tuesday and Thursday at Val Smith Park in Sartell until July 20.

In Business

Builders association donates to area high school tech programs

Central Minnesota Builders Association has seen an amplified level of interest by technology instructors to participate in *Tools for Schools*, an educational project developed in 2004 by the CMBA to increase the skills of students and promote the benefits of working in the building industry as a career.

This year 17 area schools including Sartell, Sauk Rapids, Cathedral, St. Cloud’s Apollo and Tech, Albany, ALC McKinley, Becker, Eden Valley-Watkins, Foley, Kimball, Little Falls, Melrose, Princeton, Rocori, Swanville, and Upsala submitted requests indicting their schools were underfunded and could use some more tools for the interested students. The schools were presented \$18,000 at a recent CMBA meeting, giving the passionate and grateful instructor’s a platform to share their trials and successes in each program with CMBA members. They told stories of students learning building trade skills and showed appreciation for the chance to teach with more and safer tools. In addition to the presentation of donation checks, a Tool Drive was held to fill a shortage of simple tools. Donations of tools and money will be matched in 2017 up to \$20,000 thanks to a newly formed CMBA Tools for Schools Presidents Foundation.

CMBA members support this

program in a big way and invite the public to do the same. The Tools for Schools program supports teaching basic skills in the technology fields, from construction to car care and electronics to robotics. It provides resources to instructors who strive to ensure enough safe tools for growing class sizes, trips to Minnesota manufacturing businesses and funds to send the most skilled students to SkillsUSA competitions.

The ultimate goal for CMBA is to help address the building industry’s labor shortages, by having contributed more than \$92,000 to area high schools during the past 14 years.

If you would like to support your local schools by make a tax deductible donation go to cmba-online.org/careers-education/tools-schools/

CMBA is a non-profit professional association, with over 75,000 employees in the member companies representing all phases of the building industry. The CMBA strives to improve the Central Minnesota community and grow its membership base by promoting the association to the public, educating the community about building industry best practices, and advocating for the building industry at the local, state and national level.

Sartell council votes to stop stench

by Dennis Dalman
editor@thenewsleaders.com

An intolerable stench in the vicinity of Sartell’s sanitary-sewer system’s lift station 1 just might be solved, at long last – or so the city council and others, with noses pinched, are hoping.

At a recent meeting, the council approved two proposals that might bring a fix. One is to install aerators at lift stations 4 and 9; the other is to add chemicals (hydrogen peroxide, primarily) into both lift station 4 and the olfactory-offender lift station 1.

The council approved those measures unanimously, 5-5.

A lift station is a collection area in which wastewater is pumped from a lower to a higher elevation so it can continue to flow to its destination via gravity.

Station 1 is located between the Walmart area and the Sauk River in south Sartell. All of Sartell’s gravity sewer lines and lift stations direct sewage and other wastes to station 1 from which point it flows to the St. Cloud Wastewater Plant for treatment. Sartell and other area cities contract with St. Cloud for treating wastewater.

The chemical addition will take place on a one-month

trial basis when the weather warms up in spring or early summer at a time when the odors are most offensive. A neighbor who lives near station 1 has said repeatedly he cannot even have guests outside in the warm months because of the stench.

The aerators in two of the lift stations can be installed soon. It’s hoped the effect of the aerators will help reduce – or better yet, eliminate – the noxious smells as the effluent arrives at station 1 and then flows south.

A long-term solution for the aeration/chemical additions could cost anywhere from \$35,000 to \$82,000 per year.

Sartell City Public Works Director John Kothenbeutel gave a summary of the station-1 stench to the council members. In 2006, the “old” lift-station 1 was moved about a quarter mile north. Odor problems began from the get-go. The Sartell Public Works Department checked other cities in the state, such as Bloomington, where a carbon-filtering method seemed to work well. The method was tried in station 1. Didn’t work. More carbon attempts were tried. Nope.

Then, plastic covers and sandbags were tried. That

worked. For about five or six years that seemed to work. No complaints. Then the horrendous stench began again.

Permanent covers were built over the top of the station. More problems, more smells. In 2016, Sartell tried using a bio-filter like St. Cloud did. Nope. Didn’t work.

The old covers were placed back over station 1.

“We worked very hard,” Kothenbeutel said. “There’s no one simple answer, I believe.”

Through station 1, about 1.2-million gallons of wastewater flow daily on the way to St. Cloud, Kothenbeutel noted.

A big reason for the problem, he explained, is Sartell’s wastewater disposal system runs form north to south and all of its pipes and lift stations channel the liquid gunk to station 1, then to St. Cloud. Some cities have multiple-pipe systems, but Sartell has just one last conduit (station 1) where all of the nasty water (and odors) make their stinky journey to the treatment plant.

Council members are hoping the new proposals will work, but they are open to considering structural changes to at least part of the city’s wastewater infrastructure system if these latest efforts fail.

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We, the editors of this 2017 Area's Best Business Review offer this suggestion to the people in our area: So, whether or not you need a big grocery shopping trip, get your tire changed or pick-up a prescription, do what smart shoppers do...make WARMART your one-stop shopping headquarters for the best products, the largest selection and the ultimate in everyday bargains!

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The Newsleaders



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Saturday, Jan. 20 • 10 a.m.

*\$5 class fee includes training for any two permits. Groups of two is \$70 Beginners welcome. Handgun rentals available if needed.

Call Ryan at 320-247-2877 to reserve your spot.

News Tips?

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Robotics teams gear up at state tournament



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

“Thumbs-up” are given by two teams competing Jan. 6 during the state robotics tournament at the Sartell Middle School. From left to right are Brady Lorette, 12; Branton Larson, 13; Ben Thompson, 12; all members of the Sartell Middle School Kikbots team, and Jalon Bengston, 13; and Adi Jordan, 11; of South Junior High School, St. Cloud.



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Avid fans sit at the edge of their front-row seats Jan. 6 in the gymnasium of the Sartell Middle School to watch and discuss each round of the state robotics tournament. They are (left to right) Blake Swenson, 9; Bennett Moe, 8; and Sam Thompson, 9; all of Sartell.

Vehicle fire causes road closure

by Dennis Dalman
editor@thenewsleaders.com

A flaming vehicle caused a 90-minute closing of 30th Avenue N. in LeSauk Township north of Sartell on the morning of Jan. 5.

A vehicle with smoke billowing from it was reported at 6:19 a.m. near 17th Street N. and 30th Avenue N. The driver of the vehicle, a 2001 Dodge Caravan, was Joseph Sowada, 48, of Albany. He told those at the scene the vehicle had backfired many

times and then began smoking. When he stopped the vehicle, he noticed a small engine fire that quickly grew into a large fire. Sowada was the sole occupant of the vehicle; he was not injured.

The Sartell Fire Department doused the fire, although the vehicle was totally destroyed by the flames and smoke.

Officials kept 30th Avenue closed because of possible danger to other motorists keeping the road open to emergency vehicles only.

If you have a tip concerning a crime, call the Sartell Police Department at 320-251-8186 or Tri-County Crime Stoppers at 320-255-1301, or access its tip site at www.tricountycrimestoppers.org. Crime Stoppers offers rewards up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for a crime. This information is submitted by the Sartell Police Department; for additional entries, visit thenewsleaders.com.

Dec. 20
12:31 a.m. Traffic stop. Sixth Avenue S./Second Street S. While on routine patrol, an officer observed a black passenger car traveling west on Second Street S. The car’s windshield appeared to be fogged or frosted over, obstructing the driver’s view. The officer decided to initiate a traffic stop on the vehicle for the violation. As the car was pulling to a stop, the officer could see the passenger reaching in the back seat and moving his arm quickly. The officer also observed the passenger lean forward as if to hide contraband or a weapon. The officer approached the vehicle with caution and told the driver why he was stopped. The driver stated his windshield wipers didn’t work and the windshield was obstructed by salt residue from the roads. The officer asked the passenger what he was reaching for in the back seat. The passenger asked what the officer meant and then reached under his seat. The officer advised the passenger to keep his hands in the officer’s view. Upon further questioning, the passenger came clean and told the officer he had hid marijuana and a pipe. In the back seat the officer located a large jar full of what appeared to be marijuana, a pipe and a grinder. The green leafy substance was field tested and tested positive for marijuana. All illegal items were seized and destroyed. The passenger was cited for possession of a controlled substance and released. The driver was verbally warned for not having a clear windshield.

Blotter
Dec. 21
8:37 a.m. DWI. 19 Street S./Connecticut Avenue S. An officer was dispatched to a report of a person passed out in a vehicle. The officer arrived on scene and located the vehicle running in the parking lot. The officer observed a male in the driver’s seat slumped over, banged on the window with no response then opened the driver’s door and shook the male to wake him. The officer observed a strong odor of alcoholic beverages and blood-shot eyes. The male failed field sobriety testing. A preliminary breath test indicated the male was twice the legal limit. The male was placed under arrest and charged with third-degree DWI. The male was transported to the Stearns County Jail without incident.
4:50 p.m. Vehicle accident with injuries. Hwy. 15/CR a. Officers were dispatched to first respond for a vehicle crash. Upon arrival, officers provided medical attention to the injured party. The female complained of neck pain and had passed out. Officers placed a C-collar on the female and provided oxygen. Gold Cross Ambulance arrived on scene and provided further medical attention. The female was transported to the St. Cloud Hospital by Gold Cross. State patrol arrived on scene and wrote the report. Officers conducted traffic control until the scene was clear.
Dec. 22
7:57 a.m. Medical. 627 Third Ave. N. Offices were dispatched to the Sartell Middle School for a report of an epileptic student seizing in the commons. Officers arrived on scene and located a female juvenile that was full-body seizing. The child seized for approximately three to five minutes and then was postictal. Gold Cross arrived on scene and checked the child’s vitals. The child’s mother arrived on scene and denied transport. She stated she would follow up with the girl’s primary doctor.
Dec. 23
10:13 p.m. Domestic. 1700 Amber Ave. S. Officers were dispatched to an apartment complex for a report of a domestic in progress. The female caller was reporting she had been hit in the face by a male party. Officers arrived on scene and made contact with both parties involved. Officers placed the male under arrest and charged him with domestic assault. The male was transported to the Stearns County Jail and booked on charges.
Dec. 24
4:17 p.m. Shoplifting. 21 CR 120. Officers were dispatched to Walmart for a report of an adult female who was cooperative and in custody for shoplifting. Officers arrived on scene and met with the female in the loss prevention office. The female admitted to taking merchandise without paying for it in the amount of \$92.60. The female was cited and released. Officers were also advised of a male party who was with the female. The male had stolen a laptop. Later in the day, officers were dispatched to a medical at McDonald’s. The same female was located passed out in a booth. As officers tended to the female a male party arrived on scene. This male matched the description of the male who had stolen the computer. Officers detained the male and questioned him about the computer. The male came clean and was cited for the theft.
Dec. 25
12:51 a.m. Verbal. Fifth Avenue E. Officers were dispatched to a possible verbal. Officer arrived and stood outside the door and could hear some arguing from inside. Officers made contact with the occupants inside the apartment and spoke with them separately. Both stated nothing happened and they were just arguing. No injuries were observed on either individual. The inside of the apartment appeared to be normal. No further action was taken.

In Business

New permit approved for hauling road-construction materials

A new increased weight-limit special permit for road construction materials is now available for use on Stearns County roads. Companies and persons hauling road-construction materials such as asphalt, concrete, aggregates and recycled

road materials will now be able to haul up to 90,000 pounds gross vehicle weight on six or more axles and up to 97,000 pounds GVWR on seven or more axles. Currently, the GVWR limit for vehicles operating without an overweight permit is 80,000

pounds. Vehicles operating under this permit are required to comply with individual and group axle-weight limits and gross-weight-vehicle limits set by the permit. For more information, visit thenewsleaders.com and click on Jan. 12 People.

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YIR

from front page

track, a senior center, a books-and-learning area, a kids' play center, locker rooms, kitchen facilities and public-meeting rooms.

The following are just some of the highlights of the year as culled from the 50 issues of the *Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleader* during the past year.

(*The Year in Review: Part 1* covering January-June was featured in the Jan. 5 edition of the Newsleader and may be read in its entirety by visiting thenewsleaders.com.)

July

Kelly McCarney, head coach of the Sartell Sabres Dance Team, is named Coach of the Year in the annual *St. Cloud Times* Sports Media Awards. McCarney has led the Sabres to many state competition honors throughout the years, including many first-place awards in the high-kick and jazz categories. Other Sartell residents honored are Mitchell Dockendorf, swimmer; Bria Ferns, soccer; Shelby Hall, track-and-field; Rylee Molitor, wrestler; and Sloan Schwarzentraub, Sabre dancer. Allie Dolan, all-around athlete at Tech High School, was given the Tom Bearson Spirit Award, named after Tom Bearson of Sartell, who was murdered in the Fargo-Moorhead area shortly after beginning college.

A photo by Chris Sigurdson wins the City of Sartell's *I Love Sartell* photo contest. The photo, entitled *The Giving Rink*, is of a neighborhood skating rink as seen at sunset.

Mick Benson, a Sartell painter, wins a Gold award in the Red River Watercolor Society's National Exhibition in Fargo, N.D. Benson's painting, entitled *The Borglum Windmill*, is of an old windmill he saw during a trip to

Denmark.

The perennially popular St. Stephen Classic Car Show takes place in that city with lots of visitors admiring the cool, swanky cars from the past.

Ginny Anderson, a nurse at Oak Ridge Elementary School, has made two trips to Haiti, and the second time she brought along more than 200 dresses and 30 skirts sewn for girls in poverty-stricken Haiti. Anderson's mother, Joyce Stock of St. Joseph and Joyce's sister, Janice of St. Cloud, sewed the clothing.

August

The school district hires a new communications specialist, Sarah Kleppe. Born in Minnetonka, Kleppe's parents were both teachers. "I love this job so far," Kleppe told the *Newsleader*. "There are so many great people here."

Many residents in Sartell and St. Stephen host National Night Out neighborhood events Aug. 1, with neighbors and police personnel interacting, having fun and sharing safety-related information.

Jim Michaud is named as interim activities director for the school district. A long-time teacher and coach at Cathedral High School and Apollo High School, he will fill in the position recently vacated by John Ross.

The Sartell Muskies baseball team takes the regional championship at Hinckley. Since July, the team won 14 consecutive games.

Sartell resident Mary Lou Westra, at age 88, is featured in a human-interest story in the *Newsleader*. The key to longevity, she said, is to work hard, connect positively with other people (especially children) and not moping about disappointments.

A Sartell girl, Amaa Wijetunga, at the tender age of 6, has read 2,000 storybooks – part of a reading challenge sponsored by the St. Cloud Public Library. Amaa's mother read aloud the first 1,000



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

These friends from the Sartell Middle School choir take a break from singing to visit and share a few laughs during the Dec. 11 Winter Wonderland event at Pine Meadow Elementary school. The friends are (left to right) Taya Lewandowski, 13; Briehyn Lewandowski, 12; Hannah Spoden, 13; and Libby Nelson, 13.

or so storybooks, but Amaa read the other thousand by herself with very little help. She is the daughter of Gayathri and Mevan Wijetunga.

Sartell students once again excel in the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment test, averaging about 15 points above their statewide peers in reading, math and science.

September

The Sartell-St. Stephen School Board chooses Jeremy Snoberger as the new school-board member to replace Michelle Meyer, who resigned earlier this year because she and her family are moving from the area. Snoberger has extensive experience in working on school-related issues and activities.

The annual Cookout with Cops event is a record "best-ever" success as senior citizens, police officers and other public servants gather to share food, fun and information. Sponsored by the Sartell Police Department, the get-together takes place, once again, at St. Francis Xavier Church's social space.

The city council approves an \$8.5-million bond sale to pay for a number of city projects, including street reconstruction, park improvements and needful things at the about-to-open community center.

Thousands of people gather for the St. Stephen Catholic Parish Labor Day Fall Festival. They enjoy

bingo, kiddie games, inflatables, chicken-and-ham dinner, home-made pies, an auction and many other fun things.

The city council pitches in \$30,000 for ball-field improvements at Pinecone Central Park.

A sudden wind storm on Labor Day downs trees in the Sartell and surrounding area.

During a peaceful demonstration, Sartell High School students rally in support of DACA "Dreamers" throughout the nation. "Dreamers," as they're dubbed, are those young people who were brought to the United States by their undocumented parent or parents. Because of a decision by President Donald Trump, up to 800,000 of them could be deported unless Congress passes a law allowing them to stay. DACA, initiated by President Barack Obama, stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

Six people are honored by the Sartell Police Department with Life-Saving Awards. They are officers Curt Grosz and Jake Walters, Sartell firefighters Dennis Ertl and Adam Imholte, and two young women, Madison DeMarais and Abigail Trelfa. The latter two helped saved the life of a friend who was electrocuted while climbing on the "Old Bridge" in Sartell.

Lori Dornburg is named Middle School Educator of the Year by the Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest organization. Dornburg teaches family- and

consumer-science classes at Sartell Middle School and is also the academics extension coordinator. She has taught at the school for 23 years.

Many Sartell residents of all ages participate in doing good deeds during the United Way Day of Caring. The central Minnesota event involved people doing everything from making tie blankets for a women's shelter to helping landscape a garden at the Boy Scouts building in Sartell, from painting the walls of the Central Minnesota Council on Aging to playing games with residents of Sartell's Country Manor.

October

Some students in the Sartell-St. Stephen School District are brainstorming to help design the spaces within the new high school, now under construction. The classrooms will no longer be boring "box" rooms but interconnected in a way that will promote interactions, teamwork, openness and flexibility, which are all hallmarks of the modern learning methods.

The *Newsleader* and two dozen local businesses present a double-page spread in the Oct. 6 *Newsleader* to salute and honor all the members of the Sartell and St. Stephen fire departments. Both departments host open houses during National Firefighters Week.

Once again, Sartell students excel on the American College Testing tests, scoring above state and national averages.

The Sartell Community Center has its unofficial opening the morning of Oct. 4 with many senior citizens gathering to enjoy their new Senior Connection center within the facility. Other people that day played pickle ball in the three gymnasiums as work crews were busy putting finishing touches to the center. All who commented to the *Newsleader* about it were effusive in their praise.

The library locker system in

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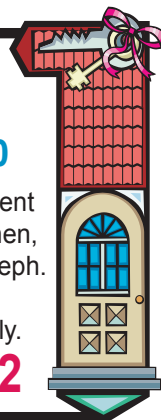
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Opinion

Our View

We can all help in fight against global warming

The recent blast of below-zero weather in the nation has been miserable but educational.

Many ask, “How can there be global warming when it’s so cold?”

Most people seem to be learning the difference between weather and climate, thanks to such excellent, factual information in the media during this recent cold snap.

Here are some of those facts:

- Climate is a global occurrence, with all its variations. Weather is a combination of several factors in a given region (temperature, humidity, wind and so forth).

- Colder-than-normal temperatures in one part of the planet, such as the cold blast in the East, does not invalidate global warming. On the contrary, global warming can change climate patterns that make one region on Earth much colder but much hotter in other regions. As of last year, the Earth had warmed up by about 2 degrees F. since 1880 when records began to be kept. That may sound like a piddling number, but it is actually very high – high enough to cause land ice to melt and oceans to rise.

- Green-house gas emissions, almost entirely human-made, have increased by 43 percent since pre-industrial times in the 1800s. Radioactivity is used to distinguish industrial emissions from natural emissions (such as forest fires). Yes, carbon-dioxide levels have increased and declined over thousands of years, but the studies show humans have been pumping green-house gas into the atmosphere at a hugely faster rate than the “natural” rate.

- In the next three decades, global warming is expected to cause more extreme weather. The signs are already here, such as coral reefs dying. Long-term effects of catastrophic global warming (and resulting weather changes) will cause more severe storms (as has already been seen), waves of refugees fleeing areas too hot or too wet for crop productions, extinctions of plants and animals and massive, irreversible flooding of coastal cities.

- Is there hope? Yes, but the hour is getting late. What is needed are clean-energy alternatives (wind, solar, hydro-electric), stricter fuel-efficiency standards, emissions limits for power plants. There have been some great advances toward those goals, thanks to new technologies and increasing awareness.

We can all help by becoming very conscious of the ways we use energy. For example, insulating homes to prevent heat loss; turning off lights when not needed; eating less meat; driving fewer miles; walking, biking or taking public transportation; spurning plastic packaging; supporting companies that make production changes that favor green-energy methods. Doing such simple but collectively effective lifestyle changes can do wonders to reduce green-house emissions and to raise awareness of what a fragile planet we live on – and share.

Ghosts whisper at Beaver Lake cabins

One of the pleasures of interviewing people for stories are the “small-world” coincidences that pop up during the conversation.

I have often said most people do not really know one another very well, that some relationships are filled with really nifty blind connections that remain invisible.

There’s a name for this mysterious phenomenon. It’s called “six degrees of separation,” which means all people in the world are six or seven “links” away from one another and that somewhere along that “chain,” people can be connected in one way in just six or less connections. The links can be people they know or are related to paths they’ve crossed, places they’ve been, cities they’d lived in and so forth.

We reporters are highly aware of that phenomenon for the simple fact we ask lots and lots of questions when we interview people. Where were you born? Where did you grow up? Which schools did you attend? How did you meet your wife? What was her maiden name?

In decades of reporting, it’s always astonished me how many people I have interviewed, including people not living in this area, who grew up in St. Cloud – often in south St. Cloud, my boyhood neighborhood – and people who attended Tech High School or St. Cloud State University – some of them at the same time I did. Or people who grew up not far from Grandpa’s farm near Benson, where Mom was raised. So many people I’ve met who had Benson connections knew my aunts and uncles and cousins.

“What a small world it is,” they’d marvel when we’d learn of those coincidental links, popping up like ping-pong balls in

Dennis Dalman

Editor



our talk.

If I had not asked so many questions, we never would have discovered those fun-to-ponder small-world coincidences.

Most recently, that happened when I was interviewing Bonnie Nies of Sartell for a story about her neighborhood’s annual tradition of Luminary Night.

It was a lot of fun to interview Bonnie because she is bright, lively and kind, with a keen sense of humor. How we got on the subject I cannot recall, but one of us, while meandering verbally down Memory Lane, mentioned Beaver Lake near Luxemburg.

“We used to spend a week every summer at Beaver Lake,” I said, “and those were some of the happiest times of my childhood.”

“You did?!” Bonnie gasped. “So did we!”

And then the flood gates of reminiscence burst open.

“Oh yes,” I said, teasing. “You must have been that sun-tanning beauty who was always lounging on the beach and wearing that skimpy yellow polka-dot bikini.”

She hooted with laughter.

“No, that would not have been me,” she said.

“Do you remember how parents wouldn’t let us swim until an hour after we ate?” I asked.

“Oh, my, do I ever,” she said, laughing.

Politicians need to cross divide

In recent weeks, much talk has centered around the Republican tax bill that was passed into law last year. Will it lower my taxes or not? Will it spur investment and economic growth? How much does it increase the deficit? These are all questions that have flown around as the country waits to see how things will be affected.

The finger-pointing is already flying around at usual pace, with the Democrats accusing Republicans of giving a cash boon to the rich and corporations while adding another trillion-and-a-half dollars to the deficit over 10 years. Republicans dismiss these claims and contend lowering corporate and individual tax rates will result in more spending and job creation.

In the midst of all of these arguments, it appears both sides of the aisle are living in different worlds. When Republicans were elected into the presidency and majorities in the House and Senate in 2016, they received a mandate from the voters to enact their policies. The House of Representatives has been very quick in moving on several pieces of legislation, but the real hold-up happens in the Senate. There, where the Republicans now hold 51 out of 100 seats, the threat of opposition filibusters causes bills to need 60, rather than just a simple majority (51) of votes to pass.

It would make sense then that this would result in some sort of compromise deals. But that would be wrong. Two things are preventing this from happening – the intransigence of even moderate Democratic senators to play ball with the

Connor Kockler

Guest Writer



Republicans and the existence of a rule called budget reconciliation

You would think some Democratic senators, especially those in states Trump and Republicans won by large margins in 2016, would be willing to get on board with tax cuts and propose some of their own ideas to their Republican colleagues. Instead, under the strong direction of the Democratic leadership, all Democratic senators in December voted against a bill to lower taxes for many Americans.

This disappoints me, especially with our Minnesota senators, as now due to their insistence on “resisting” the Republicans rather than trying to tone down unfavored parts of the bill, Minnesotans could now suffer from being unable to deduct all of their state and local taxes above the new \$10,000 limit on their federal filing forms. Republicans certainly deserve blame, but so do our Democratic senators for not speaking up for our interests and offering their votes in exchange for changes that would be better for our state.

Another much criticized part of the tax bill, the “sunsetting” of the individual tax cuts in eight years, could have also been avoided by bipartisan work. Under the budget reconciliation rule I mentioned ear-

“They were sure we’d get a cramp and go right to the bottom.”

Then we shared memories of the little resort-bar just up from the beach, the married couple who owned it and how adults would sit there in its dim interior drinking beer, shooting the breeze, exchanging wisecracks. Meantime, we kids would be on the hot sand beach, sipping Coca-Cola from green-glass bottles, eating Switzer’s licorice, slurping on Popsicles, munching potato chips.

We Dalmans and our good neighbors, the Fahnhorsts, would spend a week in the cabins there every summer in the late 1950s, early 1960s.

“Have you seen those cabins now?” I asked Bonnie.

“Oh yes,” she said. “How sad they look. Really nothing left of them.”

Those five or six old small rustic wooden cabins, once so rough-hewn homely but cozy (especially in a thunder storm), are now sagging, rotting ruins, hunched over, boards loose or broken, gaping holes here and there. They now stand in lapping waves at the lake’s edge, next to the roadway. Now and then, when I’d go to Kimball, past Luxemburg, in recent years, I would park at the edge of the road and just stand there and ponder those forlorn cabins so ruined by time and erosive desolation. From their wreckage, memories of happy summers past would rise up, whispering to me like lake waves. Ah, the ghosts.

Bonnie and I both sighed about time, about life, about loss.

“Those were the days,” she said.

“Yes, they sure were,” I agreed. “It seems as if everybody was so happy back then.”

lier, bills can be passed with only 51 votes, but only if they do not increase the deficit in the time period affected. If Democrats had come on board to support the bill and bring it to 60 votes, these tax cuts could have been made permanent.

Once again, our Democratic elected representatives did not step in to fight for us, preferring rather to criticize and hope to score political points to win the 2018 elections. While probably the best political strategy, the people who suffer are everyday folks who just want stuff to get done rather than all of this partisan sniping.

If we’re not careful, this situation risks turning into the way Obamacare ended up. Like this tax bill, Obamacare ended up being pushed through Congress by only one party under huge resistance by the other. Rather than attempting to find some common ground on the bill, Republicans decided to run as hard against it as they could. While they won the 2010 elections, Obamacare had some large problems we’re still dealing with today.

While you could say what’s good for the goose is good for the gander, this kind of behavior is completely unproductive for our nation. Our political parties are too busy fighting each other to fix urgent problems and needs in our nation. It takes only a few people of goodwill to change the culture and cross the divide. Otherwise, nothing will ever get better.

Kockler is a Sauk Rapids-Rice High School student. He enjoys writing, politics and news, among other interests.

Sartell-St. Stephen • St. Joseph

Newsleaders

Reaching EVERYbody!

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Hindka

from front page

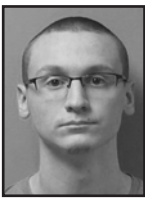
exam that measures what students have learned in school. Students who earn a 36 composite score have likely mastered all of the skills and knowledge they will need to succeed in first-year college courses in the core subject areas. ACT scores are accepted by all major four-year colleges and universities across the United States. Hindka, a senior at Sartell High School, is the son of Chanchal and Dinesh Hindka. In early December he took the test at this year’s testing site – St. Cloud’s Tech High School. In a letter to Hindka, ACT Chief Executive Officer Marten Roorda wrote the following: “Your achievement in the ACT is significant and rare. While test scores are just one of multiple crite-

ria most colleges consider when making admission decisions, your exceptional ACT composite score should prove helpful as you pursue your education and career goals.” Sartell High School Principal Brenda Steve also praised Hindka. “Yash is a hard-working and talented student, and I am extremely proud of his accomplishment,” she said. Hindka is now the second Sartell High School student to receive a perfect 36 on the ACT. In 2014, that honor was achieved by Gopi Ramanathan, who happens to be a friend of Hindka. Not sure of which college he will attend, Hindka said he will probably study aerospace engineering. His favorite school subjects are math and science, but he also enjoys Knowledge Bowl, Math League, tennis and playing classical piano.

Man charged with assaulting 5-month boy

by Dennis Dalman
editor@thenewsleaders.com

A Sartell man has been accused of third-degree physical assault against a 5-month-old boy. The incident allegedly happened Dec. 29



Roske

According to the complaint, Brandon Taylor Roske, 22, first told investigators he had placed the child on a marble countertop in the

home so he could change the boy’s diapers. Roske then said when he reached for towels he heard a loud “thud” sound and figured the boy had “headbutted” himself on the countertop. A doctor disputed that version, saying there was redness and bruises on the boy’s temple and left eye and they were likely caused by a blow to the face or head by a hand, not a “headbutt.” After the doctor’s report, the Stearns County Child Protection team filed a child-maltreatment

report, and that result caused the arrest of Roske. Roske’s next court appearance is set for Feb. 12. He was arrested Jan. 3 and was released after a Jan. 4 court appearance with restrictive conditions that include not visiting the victim’s residence or having any contact with the victim. Bail was set at \$10,000. Third-degree physical assault against a victim under 4-years old is punishable by five years in prison and/or a \$10,000 fine.

St. Stephen man charged with sexual assaults

by Dennis Dalman
editor@thenewsleaders.com

A St. Stephen man has been charged with sexually assaulting a young girl at least three times in the past three years.



Smith

Dale David Smith, 67, allegedly abused the daughter of his girlfriend in fall 2014, according to a report from the girl, who is now

14. She said Smith also sexually abused her in the spring and winter of 2015. She then said Smith probably assaulted her at other times when she was sleeping because she would often wake up naked and sore. The mother of the girl reported she believes Smith tried to grab her daughter’s breast and also saw Smith in the girl’s bed with part of his derriere exposed through the bed covers. After further investigation, fur-

ther questioning, Smith did admit he had performed oral sex on the girl and also admitted doing another sexual act. The girl reported the alleged offenses during a Dec. 29 call to the Stearns County Sheriff’s Department. Smith is charged with first-degree criminal sexual conduct, sex with a minor under 16 and multiple acts of a sexual nature within a significant relationship.

Community Calendar

Is your event listed? Send your information to: Newsleader Calendar, P.O. Box 324, St. Joseph, Minn. 56374; fax it to 320-363-4195; or, e-mail it to news@thenewsleaders.com. Most events are listed at no cost. Those events are typically free or of minimal charge for people to attend. Some events, which have paid advertising in the Newsleaders, are also listed in the calendar and may charge more.

Friday, Jan. 12
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhistory.org.

Saturday, Jan. 13

St. Joseph Farmers’ Market, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Resurrection Lutheran Church 610 CR 2.
Central Minnesota Chapter of the Federation of the Blind of Minnesota, 12:30 p.m., American Legion, 17 Second Ave. N., Waite Park.

Sunday, Jan. 14
Non-football Game Day, 1 p.m., Sartell Senior Center, Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.

Monday, Jan. 15
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhistory.org.

Lunch and cards, sponsored by Helping Hands Outreach, noon-2

p.m., Trobec’s Bar & Grill, 1 Central Ave. S., St. Stephen.

Tuesday, Jan. 16
Community Lunch and Entertainment, sponsored by Helping Hands Outreach, noon-2 p.m., St. Stephen Parish Hall, 103 CR 2 S. 320-746-9960.

Discussion group, Sartell Senior Connection, 1-2:30 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.
St. Cloud Area Genealogists meeting, 7 p.m., Stearns History Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S., St. Cloud. stearns-museum.org

Wednesday, Jan. 17
American Red Cross Blood Drive, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Roco-

ri High School, Fifth Ave. N., Cold Spring, 1-800-733-2767.

S.A.L.T. (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together), 9 a.m., Sartell Police Department, 310 Second St. S., Sartell.

Book study on *Life Strategies: Doing What Works, Doing What Matters* by Dr. Phil McGraw, Sartell Senior Connection, 10:45 a.m.-noon today, Feb. 17 and 21, Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.

Thursday, Jan. 18
Coffee and Conversation, featuring cancer survivor Kelly Orndorff, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.
American Legion-Sartell, open to all veterans young and old, 6 p.m.,

Liquid Assets, 1091 Second St. S. #600, Sartell. john.denney@charter.net.

Friday, Jan. 19
Chicken and ham dinner, meat raffle and silent auction, sponsored by St. Joseph Lions Club, 4:30-7:30 p.m., Sal’s Bar & Grill, 109 W. Minnesota St., St Joseph.

St. Cloud Singles Club Dance, 8 p.m.-midnight, American Legion, 17 Second Ave. S., Waite Park. 320-339-4533. stcloudsingles.net

Saturday, Jan. 20
Jigsaw Puzzle Contest and Puzzle Exchange, Sartell Senior Connection, 10 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.

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Bertsch

from front page

only 10 – gardening on his grandfather’s farm near Milaca. That hobby soon turned into a business. He started an organic garden in his own backyard in Sartell and then on the land of a friend of his father. Bertsch also grows highly nutritious micro-greens indoors.

He sells salad ingredients and microgreens through his business, which he calls Epic by Nature. He makes the sales in person at local venues and online.

As a high-school senior, Bertsch is also involved in track, in a program called Supermileage, which involved racing a fuel-efficient car and in Envirothon that involves the issues of ecology, forestry and wildlife.

Bertsch has also become an accomplished, confident public speaker and shares his wealth of gardening knowledge with many people, including the ones he loves to meet and converse with at farmers’ markets.

In honoring Bertsch, the *St. Cloud Times* and others offered high praise for him and his approach to work and daily living. They all agreed he demonstrates passionate commitment, a topnotch work ethic and an eagerness to share his knowledge with other people far and



contributed photo

Bertsch speaks with a guest about growing organic foods from his booth at River’s Edge Convention Center during the 2017 Innovation Summit by the Greater St. Cloud Development Corp.

wide. He is a born teacher, and some of his network contacts are worldwide, living in places as far flung as New Zealand, England and Jamaica.

Bertsch is a long-time believer and practitioner of organic farming and sustainability. However, he is a down-to-earth realist, not a starry-eyed dreamer, when it comes to those topics.

Changes toward sustainability, Bertsch said he believes, will come from more entrepreneur projects that will involve developing innovative technologies, architecture, land use and landscaping design. Those things will have to become profitable for the people and companies that introduce sustainability methods, Bertsch said.

Bertsch is considering two

paths of study – either business management and marketing at St. Cloud State University; or perhaps the electrician program at St. Cloud Technical and Community College.

Speckhard

Aidan Speckhard, son of Maureen Putnam and Thomas Speckhard, has been his class president for four years. He is also a member of the National Honor Society, a ping-pong club he founded and a participant in



Speckhard

Sabre Splash. Splash is a mentorship program to encourage diversity, understanding and

inclusiveness at Sartell High School.

Speckhard, a soccer player, has performed in GREAT theater productions and in the orchestra for school stage productions. He has been an accomplished drummer since age 9; volunteers at his church, leading a youth band for its contemporary-music services; and he’s also a member of the Youth Chorale of Central Minnesota.

Speckhard and other students partner with the Make-a-Wish Foundation to help raise funds for children – the latest for a Sartell girl’s wish to go to Disney World in Florida.

His current goal is to partner with the Yes Network in creating a diversity club at Sartell High School, a club that now has 25 members. Last fall, Speckhard and about a dozen other students staged a school walkout to bring attention to the 800,000 or so “Dreamers,” people who came as children to the United States from other countries who had been granted provisional citizenship status under President Barack Obama’s Deferred Action for Children Arrivals program, DACA for short. DACA is now in jeopardy and could be revoked unless the U.S Congress re-approves it.

Speckhard and the other demonstrators want to bring awareness to that program and the “Dreamers” to the people in

the Sartell area.

Although he has not chosen a specific college yet, Speckhard plans to do a double major – neuroscience and music.

Simon

Georgina Simon is, along with Bertsch, one of the two top winners of “2 Under 20.”

The daughter of Akim and Anona Akway, she graduated from Tech High School and is now a first-year student at the University of Minnesota.

She was extremely active in high school – in speech, choir, theater, the International Club and as a volunteer for many causes, including helping lower the racial tensions that had surfaced a couple of years ago at Tech.

She was also active in sports – volleyball, basketball and track.

Simon came to the United States nearly 20 years ago with her parents, who were originally from South Sudan, an African country torn by violent conflicts. The Akways fled to a refugee camp in nearby Ethiopia and eventually were allowed to come to the United States via the immigration lottery program.

Simon’s goal is to become a clinical psychologist and perhaps work in underdeveloped countries to help lower stigmas against mental illness and help people suffering from mental anxieties.



beer of the month

16⁹⁸
Coors Light & Miller Lite
24 Pack 12 Oz. Cans

17⁹⁸
Budweiser, Bud Light & Michelob Golden Draft Light
24 Pack 16 Oz. Cans

12⁹⁸
Miller High Life
24 Pack 12 Oz. Cans Or Bottles Regular Or Light

12⁹⁸
Summit Craft Beers
12 Pack Bottles Or Cans All Available Types

12⁹⁸
Stella Artois & Stella Cidre
12 Pack Bottles

10⁹⁸
Michelob Ultra, AmberBock, Bud Light Platinum & Bud Light Lime
12 Pack 12 Oz. Bottles Or Cans All Available Types



14⁹⁸
Windsor Canadian
1.75 Liter

18⁹⁸
Evan Williams Bourbon
1.75 Liter

13⁹⁸
Jagermeister
750ml

21⁹⁸
Chivas Regal Scotch
750ml

14⁹⁸
Christian Brothers Brandy
1.75 Liter

9⁹⁸
Karkov Vodka
1.75 Liter
3.98 1.75 Liter Mr & Mrs T Bloody Mary Mix

15⁹⁸
Old Tom Horan Irish Whisky
750ml

17⁹⁸
Budweiser, Bud Light & Michelob Golden Draft Light
24 Pack 16 Oz. Cans

12⁹⁸
Miller High Life
24 Pack 12 Oz. Cans Or Bottles Regular Or Light

12⁹⁸
Summit Craft Beers
12 Pack Bottles Or Cans All Available Types

12⁹⁸
Stella Artois & Stella Cidre
12 Pack Bottles

10⁹⁸
Michelob Ultra, AmberBock, Bud Light Platinum & Bud Light Lime
12 Pack 12 Oz. Bottles Or Cans All Available Types

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wine of the month

13⁹⁸
Black Box
3 Liter All Available Types

7⁹⁸
Cupcake
750ml
Moscato d'Asti, Prosecco & Butterkissed
\$6.98 Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, Cabernet, Red Velvet & Black Forest

9⁹⁸
Kendall Jackson
750ml
Vintners Reserve Chardonnay, Vintners Reserve Pinot Gris, Avant Chardonnay
\$12.98 Vintners Reserve Pinot Noir
\$14.98 Grand Reserve Chardonnay

8⁹⁸
Bonterra
750ml Chardonnay
\$10.98 Cabernet & Merlot

13⁹⁸
Herald
750ml
Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
\$11.98 Russian River Chardonnay & Alexander Valley Zinfandel

3⁹⁸
Frontera
750ml All Available Types

11⁹⁸
Fish Eye
3 Liter All Available Types

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