

Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleader

Friday, March 23, 2018
Volume 23, Issue 12
Est. 1995

Town Crier

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

CentraCare needs transport, escort volunteers

CentraCare Health is looking for volunteers to complete errands and deliver flowers, mail and packages to patients at St. Cloud Hospital. Volunteers enhance a positive patient care environment and help provide a superior patient experience. For more information, visit thenewsleaders.com and click on March 23 Criers.

Mentor as a family

A Big Family involves an entire family meeting with a Little at Big Brothers Big Sisters. This is an opportunity for a family to volunteer together. The family provides friendship, emotional support and hope to the young person with whom they are matched. The family will meet with their Little three to four times a month for 12 months. For more information, visit thenewsleaders.com and click on March 23 Criers.

Caring adults needed for children

Hands Across the World provides the first learning opportunity to newly arrived immigrants who do not have language or living skills necessary to thrive in our community. They are seeking caring adults who are willing to watch babies and toddlers while mothers are in class. Must be age 18 and older. For more information, visit thenewsleaders.com and click on March 23 Criers.

Serving those who served

Volunteers are needed at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System for numerous assignments throughout the health-care system to meet a growing demand. Volunteer service offers flexible scheduling, assignment specific training and a commitment to excellence for all customers. Day, evening and weekend opportunities are available. For more information, visit thenewsleaders.com and click on March 23 Criers.

INSERTS:

Bentrud for Sheriff
Country Manor
Senior Housing
The Waters Church

Math Night counts as fun at Pine Meadow

by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

Parents and students gathered Friday, March 16 at Pine Meadow Elementary School for the first Math Night.

The event, sponsored by the school's Parent/Teacher Organization and Mathnasium, aimed to show math can be fun.

"We want to help encourage STEM skills and community outreach to get kids excited about math," said Julie Schmidt, PTO president.

Students played a variety of games that helped them practice math skills.

When it was time for a break from the games, families shared pizza and bottled water.



photos by Mike Knaak

Pine Meadow Elementary School Principal Sara Nelson passes out pizza.



First-grader Lindsey Norton shakes the dice for a game that teaches adding and subtracting.

Sartell March for Our Lives planned for Saturday

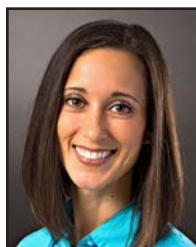
by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

A march is planned in Sartell for Saturday, March 24, as part of the national March for Our Lives movement.

The Sartell march will start at 10 a.m. at Sartell City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road N., and end at First United Methodist Church.

Sartell resident Angie Trulson organized the event.

"I heard some people were going to the march in the metro area. I realized there



Trulson

was no Sibling March in central Minnesota and I felt there was a gap," said Trulson, who is the program coordinator at St. Cloud's Whitney Senior Center.

"It's a personal issue for me," she said. "Less than a year ago my brother was murdered by a disgruntled employee with a gun. That made me passionate about

the issue."

The march is one of hundreds happening around the country planned by students and survivors of gun violence. The national day of action will focus on calling for lawmakers to make students' lives and safety a priority and to pass common-sense gun-safety legislation.

The movement started in response to the Feb. 14 high-school shooting in Parkland, Fla., where 17 died.

"This is not an anti-gun protest, it's an

end-gun-violence peace rally," Trulson aid.

"My desire in organizing this event is to promote not just gun safety in school but everywhere," she said. "There's strength and healing power by gathering together with other people who have been touched by gun violence or by anyone wondering if they are going to be safe at work, a movie theater or at school. We're promoting peace and safe public spaces for all."

Event registration is at tinyurl.com/MFOLsartell.

Drawdown to affect Sartell river-lot owners

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

A lake and river drawdown meeting that will affect hundreds of Sartell residents will be the topic of a public meeting scheduled from 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, March 28 at the Old Village Hall on Rice's main street.

About 850 residential river lots north of the Sartell dam will be affected to some degree by the drawdown, which will begin Aug. 1 and continue until Sept. 15.

The project has provoked opposition by many along the river concerned about the six-week loss of some recreational uses on the water and skepticism about whether the plan will actually work as proposed. Others, however, including most along the lake and some along the river are very much in favor of the project, believing it will definitely improve water quality.

A Department of Natural Resources official, Eric Al-



Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources

Throughout the years, Little Rock Lake became the repository of many nutrients that caused algae growth detrimental to water quality and some species of fish.

Blotter

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.tricounty-crimestoppers.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.

March 7

1:48 a.m. Traffic stop. 21 CR 120. While traveling west on Heritage Drive, an officer observed a vehicle traveling directly in front of him. The officer noticed the vehicle didn't have a working license-plate light. After running a license-plate check on the vehicle, the officer learned the registered owner had a daytime driving restriction. The officer observed the driver matched the description of the registered owner so he stopped the vehicle as it pulled into Walmart. While speaking with the driver, the officer noticed an open beer bottle in the cup holder of the driver's door. The man was the registered owner and he said he had no proof of insurance. When asked why he was driving at night the man stated he was taking a woman to the hospital. The officer spoke with the woman and learned she wished to be taken to the hospital but didn't want to be transported in an ambulance. The driver was run through field sobriety testing which he was able to

pass. The driver was released after being cited for driving without proof of insurance. The vehicle was left in the Walmart parking lot and a friend of the pair was called to transport the man and woman.

March 8

5:04 p.m. Medical. 21 CR 120. An officer was dispatched to Walmart for a report of a 62-year-old man who had collapsed. The officer found the man in the pharmacy. The man was responsive, he stated to the officer that he had passed out. He explained he had a history of high blood pressure and congestive heart failure. The officer provided oxygen and monitored the man's condition until Gold Cross Ambulance arrived. Gold Cross conducted an assessment found nothing concerning. The man didn't wish to be transported to the hospital so he was left in the care of Walmart staff who assisted him in finishing his shopping.

March 9

2:10 p.m. Vehicle crash. 24th Street N. and Pinecone Road N. Officers were dispatched for a report of a young man who had rolled a four-wheeler in the ditch. Officers found the 19-year-old man conscious and breathing. Officers observed blood coming from the man's mouth, but no other observable injuries. The man said he was driving south in the ditch when

he hit an uneven spot causing the four-wheeler to leave the ground. He fell off after striking his face on the handle bars. Gold Cross took him to St. Cloud Hospital. He was warned for driving an all-terrain vehicle without a safety certificate. A friend of the man took possession of the all-terrain vehicle.

March 10

8:24 p.m. Assault. Heritage Drive. Officers were dispatched for an assault involving injuries. Officers spoke with two men and multiple witnesses. Officers arrested a man and he could be charged with fifth-degree assault and possession of marijuana. Gold Cross arrived evaluated the injuries on the man but he was not transported. Officers also made a second arrest when they learned another man who was not involved in the fight had a warrant out for his arrest. Both men were taken to Stearns County Jail.

March 11

5:21 p.m. Traffic stop. Pinecone Road N. and First Street N. An officer ran a plate check on a vehicle while patrolling Second Street S. The officer observed the registered owner of the vehicle had no valid license and only had an ID. The driver matched the description of the registered owner so the officer conducted a stop on the vehicle. The driver was stopped and admitted to having no license. The driver was

issued a citation for the violation.

March 12

9:24 a.m. Traffic stop. Riverside Avenue S. While parked and monitoring traffic in the 300 block of Riverside Avenue S., an officer observed a vehicle approach at a high rate of speed. A radar reading indicated the vehicle was traveling 47 mph in a 30-mph zone. The officer stopped the vehicle. The driver admitted she was speeding but didn't know how fast. The driver was cited for speeding.

March 13

7:50 p.m. Warrant arrest. Killdeer Avenue S. Officers received anonymous information that a wanted woman was present at a residence. The woman had an active warrant for domestic assault. An officer observed the woman sitting in the driver's seat of a vehicle stuck in the driveway. The officer knew the woman from previous contacts and when asked for identification the woman provided a false name and date of birth. The woman was arrested for her warrant and also could be charged with giving false information to a police officer. She was taken to Stearns County Jail. handle bars. Gold Cross took him to St. Cloud Hospital. He was warned for driving an all-terrain vehicle without a safety certificate. A friend of the man took possession of the all-terrain vehicle.

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In Business

DeZURIK Inc., valve manufacturer in the municipal and industrial markets, announced plans to expand production at its Sartell headquarters and open a new rapid fulfillment facility near Houston, Texas. Production will gradually be phased out of the company's Schaumburg, Ill., location. Roughly two-thirds of the volume will be moved to the company's headquarters in Sar-

tell, which specializes in custom manufacturing for complex customer requirements. The company expects to hire approximately 30 highly skilled employees and make capital investments to its Sartell facility to expand production. The remaining volume will move to the new location near Houston. The target date for completion of the transition is March of 2019.

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River

from front page

tena, will be at the public meeting to explain details of the drawdown and how it will – or will not – affect recreational uses of the Mississippi River north of Sartell and at Little Rock Lake southeast of Rice.

Altena, a DNR Fisheries supervisor based in Little Falls, has been spearheading the drawdown project for several years and has led many public meetings about the project.

Altena explained Little Rock Lake used to be a wet-

land basin before it became a larger watery area – a lake.

“That change (from water basin to lake),” Altena said, “caused the lake to absorb significant nutrients over time. A drawdown – lowering of water – can help to retain some of that plant material while allowing some of the nutrients to be processed. The intent is to improve water quality, shoreland stability and increase fish and wildlife habitat. Drawdowns have been done throughout the country and Minnesota with impressive success.”

The drawdown, Altena said, will involve opening the Sartell dam to lower the

river and lake level by about three feet. The drawdown is expected to improve water quality in the lake and, to some degree, in the river.

The project cost is estimated at \$235,000.

Little Rock Lake is actually a backwater area created when the Sartell dam was built in 1907, backing up water that flowed into lower land, resulting in a shallow “lake” of sorts. Throughout the years, the lake became the repository of many nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorous, that caused algae growth detrimental to water quality and some species of fish. In recent years, the preponderance of the

blue-green algae caused the lake to be closed to swimmers and led to the death of fish and even to the death of dogs who would walk into the lake. Little Rock is considered among the top 4 percent of unhealthy lakes in the state.

The drawdown is expected to expose areas near the shore to air and sunlight, which will kill noxious lake weeds, promote the growth of good vegetation and ultimately improve water clarity – vital for lake health. The same benefits are expected to happen along the river’s edge, according to the DNR.



REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING SARTELL-ST. STEPHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 748

FEB. 26, 2018

DISTRICT SERVICE CENTER BOARD ROOM

The regular school board meeting of Independent School District 748 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Jason Nies. Members present: Nies; Pamela Raden, clerk; Jeremy Snoberger, treasurer; Mary McCabe, director; Lesa Kramer, director; Patrick Marushin, director; and Jeff Schwiebert, superintendent. Members absent: None.

A motion was made by Raden and seconded by Marushin to APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Snoberger to APPROVE CONSENT ITEMS A-D AS PRESENTED BELOW. All in favor. Motion carried.

a. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on Jan. 22, 2018

Minutes of the board work session held on Feb. 21, 2018

b. Checks in the amount of \$2,475,706.05 as presented:

General Fund	1,947,855.53
Food Service Fund	168,777.08
Transportation Fund	241,778.69
Community Service Fund	37,598.22
Capital Expenditure Fund	59,843.93
Summer Rec Agency Fund	19,852.60

Check numbers 170661 - 171095

Receipts in the amount of \$3,563,750.74 as presented:

General Fund	2,512,912.73
Food Service Fund	259,389.22
Transportation Fund	41,656.86
Community Service Fund	134,533.39
Building Fund	22,739.42
Debt Service Fund	37,098.72

Receipts 44194 - 44304

Wire transfers in the amount of \$581,535.34 as presented:

General Fund	138,543.80
Food Service Fund	5,546.18
Community Service Fund	2,445.36
Debt Service Fund	435,000.00

Wire transfers 201700057-201700065

Building Fund Checks in the amount of \$2,584,749.30 as presented:

Building Fund	2,584,749.30
---------------	--------------

Check numbers 600198 to 600211

c. Accept the resignation of Doris Nathe, PME, paraprofessional, 5/31/18; Amber Rohlik, SHS, cashier, 3/2/18; Joseph Zimmerman, SMS, custodian, 2/15/18. Release from Employment Ty Rassier, SHS, food service worker, 2/9/18.

d. Approval of Memorandums of Understanding; D.1 – MOU with Sartell Education Association; D.2 – MOU with Sartell – St. Stephen Principals Association.

Student Representative Report: Nicholas Juntunen, student representative

Juntunen reported on happenings around the district. At Oak Ridge and Pine Meadow, spring picture days will be on the first

Monday and Tuesday of March. At the Middle School the Math Counts team took third in the region, three students participated in the regional spelling bee, eighth-grade students had the opportunity to participate with Kids Connecting with the Community and the Theatre will present The Lion King in March. At the High School, the Winter Wonderland dance and conferences concluded last week, NHS hosted its talent show, Student Council had its Make-A-Wish reveal ceremony, Sabres Vs Cancer raised close to \$2,400 and the winter sports are starting their playoff competitions.

Student Council Report:

Student Council members: Nicholas Juntunen, Janagan Ramanathan, Colin Nord, Lauren Lindmeier, Amber Pietrowski, Sarah Ufearo, Samuel Brandt and Elaine Lo presented the benefits of allowing the Sartell High School to host the 2020 State Student Council Convention.

Construction Manager Report on Building Process:

Project Manager Lee Gruen reported air handlers for the new high school will arrive the week of March 12 and be installed the week of March 19. Structural steel and the learning neighborhoods are ongoing as scheduled. The pool area has heating as of last week. The budget is on track and an updated schedule will be completed next week.

Superintendent Report: Jeff Schwiebert, superintendent

Schwiebert reported during his meeting with the City of Sartell, the Economic Development Committee covered upcoming housing projects and commented on how the school district has been a cornerstone of the city’s growth. The growing community is a reminder the district buildings have something going on every day, which makes efficiencies in buildings and grounds that much more important. The Operations Committee recently met discussing those efficiencies.

School Board Committee Report:

Director Snoberger reported on the Curriculum and Instruc-

tion Advisory meeting he attended.

Director Kramer reported on the Community Education Advisory meeting she attended.

Director McCabe reported on the most recent Policy Committee meeting.

Enrollment Report:

Superintendent Schwiebert reported on the current enrollment numbers for each school.

MN Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System Report (SLEDs):

District Assessment Coordinator Marie Pangerl and High School Counselor Noel Meyer presented information from the Minnesota Statewide Longitudinal Education System.

A motion was made by McCabe and seconded by Raden to APPROVE #1-14:

New Employees/Changes:

Kacey Dougherty, Transportation, van driver, \$20.04/hour, Type III, Year 1, 3.75 hours/day, replacing Jeannie Klehr, 2/1/2018; Jayme Ericson, DSC, director of food service, \$74,000, .9 FTE, replacing Brenda Braulick, 7/1/2018; Elisa Gaetz, SMS, para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 1.25 hours/day, new position, 2/5/2018; Angela McSorley, SMS, assistant track coach, \$3,560 (9.5 percent), BA, 0 (\$37,473), replacing Jarek Kunz, 3/12/2018; Nikita Mortezaee, Transportation, bus monitor, \$15.92/hour, 3.75 hours/day, additional assignment – replacing Kacey Dougherty, 2/5/2018; Kathy Mugg, Early Childhood/ DSC, para, \$17.68/hour, R IV, S2, 2.83 hours/day, new position – additional assignment, 1/31/2018; Shaina Poepping, PME, student supervisor, \$13.87/hour, R1, S1, 2 hours/day, replacing Jessica Roske, 1/30/2018; Greg Roring, SMS, eighth-grade softball, \$1,686 (4.5 percent), BA, 0 (\$37,473), replacing Steve Mackenthun, 3/12/2018; Holli Sauerer, SHS, color guard instructor, \$1,255 (9.5 percent), BA, 0 (\$37,473), replacing Angela Kroska, 4/3/2018; Jody Schave, SMS, custodian, \$18.71/hour, RIII, S3, 8 hours/day, replacing Joe Zimmerman, 2/16/2018; Theresa Sievers, Early Childhood/ DSC, ECSE teacher, \$34.16/hour, BA 30, 0,

new position, 1/25/2018; Brock Swanson, SHS, assistant golf coach, \$3,387 (7.35 percent), BA, H (\$46,084), replacing Jason Huschle, 3/19/2018; Miranda Theisen, Early Childhood/ DSC, 1:1 para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 2 hours/Fridays, new position, 2/23/2018.

Leaves of Absence:

Mike Lashinski, SMS, custodian, LOA, 3/14/18 – 5/9/18.

All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Snoberger and seconded by Marushin to APPROVE RESOLUTION FOR MSHSL APPLICATION FOR DISSOLUTION OF COOPERATIVE SPONSORSHIP. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Raden and seconded by Marushin to APPROVE ST. MARY’S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA OFF-CAMPUS SERVICES AGREEMENT. All in favor. Motion carried.

Schedule Work Session and Committee Meetings:

Future Board Meeting - 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 19 at St. Stephen City Hall.

Official Review of Policies:

The Board completed official review of policies 301, 302, 304, 305, 403, 410, 506, 514, 522, 524 and 806.

The Board had the official first reading of revision of policies 303, 306, 401, 402, 405, 406, 407, 413, 414, 415, 417 and 616.

The Board had the official first reading of proposed policy 423.

Committees

Committee assignments for 2018 were reviewed.

A motion to ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:07 p.m. was made by McCabe and seconded by Marushin. All in favor. Motion carried.

/s/Pamela Raden, clerk

Publish: March 23, 2018

Luck of the Irish tested during Sartell scavenger hunt



photos by Vicki Ikeogu

Adam Sweeney (left) of Sartell and his kids, Rian, 11, Kenzie, 13, and Joe, 6, spot a clue at Cornerstone Buffet & Restaurant while competing in the Sartell scavenger hunt.

G r a c i e Panek, 6, of Sartell gets a green streak in her hair by Country Financial employee Debbie Ferguson of Sauk Rapids at the Pot O' Gold 5K event in Sartell.



by Vicki Ikeogu
news@thenewsleaders.com

The ultimate prize might not have been a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. But for the hundreds of participants in Sartell's first city-wide scavenger hunt, a family getaway to Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center in Alexandria was just what the leprechaun ordered.

Coinciding with the Bernick's Family Fitness Series' Pot O' Gold 5K run, the Sartell Hospitality and Visitor Service, Conway, Deuth & Schmiesing PLLP and Country Financial sent racers around the city in a quest for answers.

"The primary responsibility of HVS is to bring visitors to Sartell and help ensure they spend money in the area," said Nikki Sweeter, Sartell's HVS executive director.

Sweeter said around January Country Financial officials, a major sponsor of the Pot O' Gold 5K run, had approached HVS about the possibility of doing a scavenger hunt to encourage race participants to explore – and possibly visit – local Sartell businesses.

"(Country Financial) said they would sponsor it, but we would have to run with it," Sweeter said.

Working with St. Cloud-based

digital marketing firm DAYTA Marketing, Sweeter said HVS developed a text messaging service that would help participants access the clues that would send participants to seven Sartell businesses – Bella Soleil Tanning Spa, Cornerstone Buffet & Restaurant, Edgewood Senior Living, Kwik Trip, Liquid Assets, Stā-Fit and Upper Deck Sports Bar & Grill.

"Some clues were geared more toward adults," Sweeter said. "While each stop did have kid-friendly 'on-site' clues where they may need to count something or find something inside the business, we really wanted to capitalize on the people coming to Sartell for the run. We wanted to showcase our city."

Each team that participated in the free event received a goodie bag filled with St. Patrick's Day items. And all teams that completed the scavenger hunt were entered into a drawing for prizes including the Arrowwood Resort getaway.

"We had tons of prizes," Sweeter said, "watches from J.F. Kruse Jewelers, golfing, tanning, bowling passes. We really tried to mix it up with the prizes."

In addition to the scavenger hunt that kicked off after the 5K race, HVS along with Country Financial, local Girl Scout troops, Country Financial, CDS, Bernick's and the St. Cloud Area Family YMCA transformed the gym at Pine Meadow Elementary School (the start of the race) into a kid-friendly activity zone.

"We have wacky hair and face painting," Sweeter said, "and inflatable bowling and an obstacle course. We have a lot of young families in Sartell and this gives everybody something fun to do."

Sweeter said she hopes to build on the success of this year's scavenger hunt and kid's activities for future St. Patrick's Day races.

"The plan is to grow it," she said. "We really want to make a St. Patrick's Day festival with possibly a parade and other family fun things. We want to give the community something to do in the winter and keep our area lively as we move into spring."



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People



contributed photo

The fifth-grade boys SABYA boys basketball team, coached by Dave Kruse and Todd Frieler, finished third at the Mora Mustangs Invitation tournament on Feb. 18. The boys ended their season with four third-place finishes. Team members include (front row, left to right) Jackson Scheffler, Levi Frieler and Leo Kruse; (back row) Mason Wiechmann, Brayden Simones, Logan Liveringhouse, Owen Vinje, Wiljo Tuomi IV and Ben Lawson.



contributed photo

The 12U Blue Junior Olympic Volleyball team took home the championship at their own hometown Sartell Impact Winter Classic 2018 Tournament. Team members (front row, left to right) Michayla Nordlund, Aubrey Flynn, Grace Ritter and Abby Haus; (back row) Megan Hess, Izzy Nygaard, Lydia Holmgren, Kaia Gack, Jocelyn Simones and Brenna McClure.



contributed photo

Middle school Student Council officer Carter Bright presents a \$632 check to Summer Hagy of the American Heart Association. During the month of February, the Sartell Middle School Student Council sold heart grams as a fundraiser for the American Heart Association.

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Celebrate Easter Triduum

Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper
March 29, 7:30 p.m.
Food shelf donations are encouraged

Good Friday Service
March 30, 2:30 p.m.

EASTER VIGIL AND EASTER SUNDAY

Service of Light and Liturgy of the Word
Saturday, March 31, 8 p.m.

Night Watches continue through the night.

Liturgy of Baptism and Eucharist
Sunday, April 1, 6 a.m.

Easter Monday Eucharist, April 2, 11:30 a.m.

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Opinion

Our View

Government operates best in sunshine, not darkness

Every March, journalists celebrate Sunshine Week.

It's not about a Florida vacation but more importantly about the public's right to know about what our government is doing in our name.

Government works best for all of us when it operates in sunshine, not darkness.

Journalists constantly challenge government officials for access to documents and meetings. But this effort is not about special access for journalists. All citizens have the same rights to examine the details of how government works, attend meetings and read documents.

The Minnesota Legislature is considering several bills that address open government issues and deserve your attention

More and more government business takes place via email. If HF 1185 passes it would require emails and letters be retained for three years. Three years may not be long enough for issues that develop over five or 10 years. But a consistent, three-year retention law is a good place to start.

A second bill hits closer to home. A St. Paul senator, Richard Cohen, has taken up the cause of the Wetterling family's legal battle to keep certain investigation records private. His bill would restrict access to the types of records that have been public for decades.

The presumption of openness is the hallmark of the Data Practices Act. Unless there's a clear and specific reason to withhold public data, it's presumed to be open.

Under the bill, people involved in criminal investigations could request information about them be kept private if it's irrelevant to the preparation or prosecution of the case. Cohen's measure states inactive investigative data would be private if the person who is the subject of the data requests it, and if certain conditions are met. Currently, when an investigation is closed, the investigative file becomes public. Law enforcement would determine the relevance and weigh that request against the value of public disclosure, or decide whether releasing the information was an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

The Wetterlings want to block 168 pages of about 56,000 pages of documents about the 27-year investigation of the abduction and murder of their son. Meanwhile, there's a court battle over opening the entire file. With expected appeals, that fight could drag on a year or more.

Opponents of the bill argue open investigative files are needed to provide oversight, evaluation and accountability of law enforcement.

Indeed, in the Wetterling case, they are many questions about how the sheriff's office and other law enforcement agencies pursued suspects and leads in the case.

Mark Anfinson is a lawyer representing media organizations and others pushing for public access to the Wetterling records. He told the *StarTribune* he has worked with Cohen in the past and said "the goal here is entirely legitimate." But Anfinson and other open-records advocates worry unless the language is narrowly defined, law enforcement will define irrelevant information broadly and could protect info that could be important.

Making a significant change in the State Data Practices Act based on one case is a bad idea. While we are sympathetic to the Wetterlings' privacy and the family's tragedy, this law should not be passed unless the standard for what can be blocked is specific and set very high.

Sartell-St. Stephen • St. Joseph

Newsleaders

Reaching EVERYbody!

The ideas expressed in the letters to the editor and of the guest columnists do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Newsleaders*.

Letters to the editor may be sent to news@thenewsleaders.com or P.O. Box 324, St. Joseph, MN 56374. Deadline is noon Monday. Please include your full name for publication (and address and phone number for verification only.) Letters must be 350 words or less. We reserve the right to edit for space.

Morals, sex used to matter in politics

Poor old Nelson Rockefeller. I've been thinking of him lately.

Here's why.

My interest in politics and political journalism dates to the mid 1960s. In September 1968, Rockefeller visited St. Cloud, making him the first national politician I saw in person.

In those days, the St. Cloud airport was on the north side. Now its former hangers house the Whitney Recreation Center.

When I heard Rockefeller's plane was going to land there, I rode my bike the few blocks from my house near St. Cloud Hospital so I could see him.

A crowd of about 200 waited to greet Rockefeller and a news story from the event described his welcome as appropriate for a presidential candidate.

But Rockefeller wasn't running for president. He was here to campaign for Rep. John Zwack, an unremarkable Republican with a farming background. He represented the Sixth District, which in the 1960s was primarily a farming district running from St. Cloud southwest to Marshall and the South Dakota border.

Rockefeller might have been a presidential candidate, or even president. In 1964, as leader of the Republican's "Eastern Establishment," he was the front-runner for the nomination. But a recent divorce ended Rockefeller's campaign and Sen. Barry Goldwater won the Republican nomination. President Lyndon Johnson clobbered Goldwater, partly by painting Goldwater as an extreme conservative ready to start a nu-

Letters to the editor

Student opposes glass walls in new high school

Adam Bromenschenkel, St. Stephen

I am a current student at Sartell High School. I am in 10th grade and have attended the Sartell school district my entire life. I've always loved the Sartell school district and have always recommended it to anybody moving and looking for a school to pick.

In Sartell the teachers are awesome, and they are also very nice. In all my years of being in the Sartell school district I've never had a teacher (who) made me dread going to his/her class. Long story short, I love being in the Sartell school district and it has made me actually like school.

But lately, a problem has been popping up that's making the teachers and students concerned. That involves the new high school the Sartell school district is building and I don't think the school district is telling taxpayers and parents this big problem and there's a reason. It's because it's a VERY big problem. The problem is the new high school being built right now, is set to have partial glass walls throughout basically every class room. This seems hard to believe for many reasons but, I assure you this is true.

I have been told this by many teachers and many students. In fact currently,

Sartell resident urges legislators to stick to

Margaret Starry, Sartell

Are senators Jim Abler, Carla Nelson and Jerry Relph, along with House members Nels Pierson and Tama Theis trying to buy votes with an \$18-million Somali Pilot Grant Program? Minnesota has more than 100 Legacy Funds that have been marked for Somali-only specific projects since 2010. The amount in other state and federal grants has yet to be determined, but when it is, it will be huge. According

Mike Knaak

Editor



clear war.

Rockefeller tried again in 1968, but his record as the liberal Republican governor of New York didn't stand up to Richard Nixon's law-and-order pitch.

During a speech before some 1,500 people at Cathedral High School, Rockefeller promoted Nixon's candidacy as well as Zwack's by speculating that Nixon might carry Minnesota. (He didn't. Minnesota's former Sen. Hubert Humphrey won the state with 54 percent of the vote.)

So a divorce changed presidential politics and perhaps history. How would the world be different without the presidencies of Johnson and Nixon?

Rockefeller returned to St. Cloud in November 1975 and by this time I was a working journalist. I covered his appearance at the state Republican Convention, including protestors opposed to his pro-choice politics. Rockefeller was now Gerald Ford's vice president, a largely ceremonial role that didn't exploit his considerable talents.

Twenty years after Rockefeller's first St. Cloud appearance, Sen. Gary Hart, a Democrat from Colorado, dropped out of the presidential race. Like Rockefeller, he was the front-runner for his party's nomi-

in the current high school's library, the school is building a life-size model of what a wall of a classroom would look like. In the library you can clearly see they are planning on having a glass, wall, glass, wall, pattern. It goes by having about one foot of brick wall, then one foot of glass walls (and so on and so fourth). This has students and teachers concerned, I have gotten information from an inside source (a teacher who wishes to have there name stay classified) (who) has told me the majority of the teachers at the current high school have told the school board this is a bad idea, and many students have said it as well, but still the school district won't listen.

In fact (more than) 75 Sartell High School students staged a walk-out on March 14 for 17 minutes to show respect for the 17 deaths from Florida, stand up for gun control and also to show the school we want change but, again, nothing.

These glass walls are just plain stupid for many reasons. First the less serious ones, the fact students are still teenagers. Having glass being 50 percent of the walls in classrooms will distract students by seeing other students in the hallway. I've also been told the glass will be regular glass, not non-transparent glass. Also the

'founding principles'

to Joel Alter of the Legislative Auditors Office, "it's too hard" to determine refugee costs and he thinks "it's OK." (*St Cloud Times*, March 10, "Refugee resettlement costs are hard to gather"). Well, that's a new one coming from an auditor!

Now these lawmakers are supporting a bill in the Senate (SF 1722) and in the House of Representatives (HF 1946) asking for \$18 million for a Somali Pilot Grant Program. Isn't this program antithetical to our country's

nation until photos turned up of him with a girlfriend aboard a yacht unfortunately named "Monkey Business." His campaign was scuttled when he wouldn't answer a question about committing adultery.

Again, sex and politics didn't mix well. But then things changed.

Bill Clinton dodged a string of claims about affairs and managed to get elected in 1992. After his relationship with an intern, an encounter that would get pretty much any manager at any company in America fired, the House of Representatives impeached him. Most people didn't seem to care. He left office with an approval rating of 65 percent, the highest for a departing president since Harry Truman.

Martin Luther King Jr. is credited with this quote that originated with Unitarian minister Theodore Parker: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.

I'd like to amend that a bit to "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward sleaziness."

We now have a president with more divorces than Rockefeller, more girlfriends than Hart and who has denied having sex with more women than Clinton. And he's bragged about being a serial sexual assaulter.

We've come a long way since 1968. Today the words of a porn star are more credible than those of the leader of the free world.

Poor old Nelson Rockefeller. Fifty years later, he could have been a contender.

fact we are still teenagers which means the glass WILL be broken within the first year. There are plenty of, um, "non-adult like students" in the high school, which means there will be "stuff" drawn on the glass and things thrown at the glass.

Secondly the more serious problem, school shooters/invasers. The way it is right now, I can come to school an hour late, push the button at the door, not look at the camera on the door (so they don't know who I am) and I'm able to just walk right in. That is extremely concerning to know we don't even have a first line of defense to try to make sure the intruder doesn't get in. Then add on top of that, the new high school's inside classroom walls will be 50-percent glass, which means you can see through it and look into the classroom, and then break the glass. This basically gives students nowhere to run or hide in case of a school shooter. I and basically all other students are very concerned about this and we have voiced our opinion but they don't care. They figure the young teenage students don't know what there talking about but, I think they forget WE are the ones who will have to go to that school five days of the week, eight hours a day. And our parents are the ones who are paying for the school. Our concerns should be taken seriously.

founding? At its founding, Americans relied on themselves, not their government, for solutions to their problems and for ways to achieve their dreams. Limited government is what made our country great and free. Americans have never held up a specific ethnic group for special treatment or for extra tax dollars, nor have they engineered enclaves because those ideas were never part of our founding principles. Let's signal our elected officials to stick to America's founding principles.

New county tax in effect ‘Birthday’ woman gives police \$10,000

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Since Jan. 1, some people have noticed they are paying a slightly higher sales tax when doing business with or in Stearns County.

The tax, one-fourth of a cent, is called the “transit sales and use tax.” The tax is expected to bring in about \$4.6 million per year or a total of about \$23 million in a five-year period, Stearns County Engineer Jodi Teich said.

Approved by the Stearns County Board of Commissioners last July, the tax is administered via the Minnesota Department of Revenue. The tax funds will be used to pay for 15 road projects in the county during the next five years, after which time the tax is expected to expire.

The fourth-cent tax is in addition to the 6.875 percent sales tax, bringing the current tax to 7.125 percent.

Teich said the tax will allow the county to move up other road projects on the work

schedule, ones that won’t have to be done using that particular tax revenue.

She said the tax will also generate revenue from the many people who live outside Stearns County but who visit the county often on one form of business or another.

The county board was reluctant to impose a county transit-and-use tax, but most of its members felt they had no choice because of the long-delayed road and bridge projects on their five-year construction schedule.

One of the projects, a resurfacing of Highway 75 (Division Street) from I-94 to Parkwood 18 will start in June. Another project, slated for 2020, is the resurfacing of CR 133 between Sartell and St. Joseph.

Other projects involve adding turn lanes, resurfacing, fixing drainage problems and installing safety features. Several of the projects are in the western part of Stearns County, and others are near the cities of Holdingford, Fairhaven, Kimball, Cold Spring and Melrose.

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

The Sartell Police Department received a nice big birthday present March 12 even though it wasn’t the department’s birthday.

The gift, a check for more than \$10,000, was given by Sonia Nordmann of Sartell. When she was about to turn 40, she decided to organize a fundraising party not for herself but for the police department. And that is what she did with the help of so many generous sponsors and organizers – individuals, businesses and organizations.

The event at the Sartell Community Center was dubbed “Paint the Town Red for Our Blue” – “blue” short for the police.

At the March 12 Sartell City Council meeting, Nordmann presented the check to Sartell Police Chief Jim Hughes – a check for \$10,101.47, to be exact, with another \$500 forthcoming.

Nordmann told the council what motivated her kind deed. She has been a proud Sartell resident for 20 years, she said, and one of the best things about living in the city is that it is so safe. And so, as

her birthday approached, she decided to raise money for the police department to show its personnel how much she and others appreciate them.

In accepting the check, Hughes thanked her for her “outstanding” contribution and said the money would be used to purchase training equipment.

Then Hughes quipped: “On behalf of myself and the police department, I’d like to thank you, Sonia, for turning 40.”

On behalf of the council, acting mayor Pat Lynch also thanked Nordmann for her “absolutely fantastic” thoughtfulness.

Raffle supports Sartell youth hockey

volunteer.

On April 15 at 6 p.m., 100 winning tickets will be drawn at Blue Line Sports Bar & Grill, 1101 Second St. S.

The grand prize is worth \$2,699.99 for a Benelli 828 12-gauge. Winners will be given a voucher that can be used to purchase the awarded firearm or a gift card will be issued by

Scheels. The gift card can be used as store credit for any item.

The value of prizes gradually decreases from the grand prize to prize 100 worth \$219.99.

Sartell Youth Hockey members are selling tickets. The complete list of where to buy tickets is at sartellhockeyraffle.com.

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, March 23
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhis-

tory.org.
Les Miserables, presented by St. John’s Prep, 7 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 St. Germain St., St. Cloud. 320-259-5463.

Saturday, March 24
Easter Egg Hunt, hosted by Grace United Methodist Church, 10 a.m.-noon, 2615 Clearwater Road, St. Cloud. 320-252-2153 or email mygracechurch@gmail.com.
Central Minnesota Credit Union annual meeting, 10 a.m., Melrose High School Auditorium, 546 Fifth Ave. NE., Melrose. 888-330-8482.
March for Our Lives, 10 a.m., Sartell City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road

N.
Move the Mall Walk for Volunteerism, hosted by Catholic Charities, 8-10 a.m., Crossroads Center, 4101 Division St. W., St. Cloud, 320-229-4589.
Les Miserables, presented by St. John’s Prep, 7 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 St. Germain St., St. Cloud. 320-259-5463.

Sunday, March 25
Les Miserables, presented by St. John’s Prep, 2 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 St. Germain St., St. Cloud. 320-259-5463.

Monday, March 26
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.
Sartell City Council, 6 p.m., Sartell City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road N. 320-253-2171.

Tuesday, March 27
Red Cross Blood Drive, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., St. Cloud VA Health Care System, CD135 Volunteer Services. redcrossblood.org or call 800-733-2767.

Thursday, March 29
Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group featuring Hellen Lotara who is the founder of Mama Hellen Lotara School in South Sudan, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.
Great River Regional Coin Club, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Miller Auto Marine Sports Plaza, 2930 Second St. S., St. Cloud. 320-241-9229.

Friday, March 30
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhistory.org.

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Families gather for birdhouse building

by Dennis Dalman

news@thenewsleaders.com

Electric drills whirred loudly and the city council chambers smelled of fresh-cut wood during Birdhouse Building Day March 18 at St. Stephen City Hall.

Sponsored by the St. Stephen Sportsmen's Club, the annual activity is always popular with children, parents and grandparents.

"I like building a birdhouse," said Aiden Schmitz, 5, of St. Stephen. "I did this before. I think it was two years ago with my dad. It's fun to put them together. My dad (Lloyd) always helps me. We're going to put this in our front yard."

Aiden and his father were just one family "team" who collected a small stack of pre-cut wood pieces and then proceeded to the long tables in the city council room. There, using drills provided, they put screws into pre-drilled holes in the wood until – presto! – a birdhouse appeared.

The kinds of houses made included homes for bluebirds and those for wood ducks.

Mindful of safety, parents, grandparents or older siblings helped the younger children hold and use the electric drills.

Also helping were members of the sportsmen's club – Mike Legatt, Beverly Supan and Dan Justin.

The birdhouse building day started in 1985, Supan said, and the sportsmen's club has sponsored it for the past five years. All of the wood is donated, much of it from local trees that had to be cut down for one reason or another. Then, the sportsmen or other volunteers use patterns to cut the wood into birdhouse pieces with pre-drilled holes, making assembly quite simple.

Since the activity began, 1,000 wood-duck houses and 2,000 bluebird houses have been assembled, Supan noted.

Last year, families put together about 70 houses, and there was a long waiting line at one point. This year, the sportsmen made sure there was enough wood for 100 houses.

Shawn Vouk of St. Stephen and his children, Catherine and Joseph, enjoyed working closely together to make two bluebird houses. When they were completed, the children happily showed them off.

"We really like putting these birdhouses together," said Shawn, smiling. "The birds like them too."



photos by Dennis Dalman

Shawn Vouk of St. Stephen and his children, Catherine and Joseph, put together birdhouses during the annual St. Stephen Sportsment's Birdhouse Building Day March 18 in St. Stephen.



Aiden Schmitz, 5, of St. Stephen, puts together a bluebird house with the help of his father, Lloyd. The birdhouse-building activity took place March 18 at St. Stephen City Hall.

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