

Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleader

Friday, May 18, 2018
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Town Crier

Pinecone Road closure on Saturday, May 26

Pinecone Road from Seventh Street to 40th Street will be completely closed to traffic from 8:30-10:30 a.m. Saturday, May 26 for the Sartell Apple Duathlon. Avoid travel or be prepared to stop on Seventh Street N. and on 2-½ Street between Pinecone and Second Avenue because of cyclists and runners. The Apple Duathlon is a local, nonprofit race whose proceeds are returned to the community through donations to local service agencies and, this year, to Dan Amberg, a Minnesota paraplegic in need of a hand-crank bike. Come out and cheer on the racers!

Volunteers needed for Apple Duathlon

Support the local race and your community by volunteering to help with the Sartell Apple Duathlon kids' race on Friday evening, May 25, and with the adult race on Saturday morning, May 26. We need people to staff registration and manage packet pickup, staff food tents and water stations, supervise parking, direct racers and more. Organizations who provide at least eight volunteers may earn \$100 for your organization. All volunteers receive a 2018 Apple Duathlon T-shirt. Bring a friend. Contact volunteer@appleduathlon.com to sign up.

Metro Bus offers free youth passes

Metro Bus is offering free youth passes for children 17 and younger for unlimited rides on all Metro Bus fixed routes from June 1 to Aug. 31. Passes may be picked up in St. Cloud at the Metro Bus Transit Center, 510 First St. S. or the Mobility Training Center, 700 St. Germain St., Suite 100.

Veterans protocol team seeks new members

The Stearns County Veterans Protocol Team is recruiting new members. The Veterans Protocol is a treatment-focused program for military veterans who are charged in court with a mental health or substance-related offense.

Mentors need no legal background or experience, just a desire to help a fellow veteran. Mentors are expected to make weekly contact with assigned veterans through a phone call or an in-person meeting.

For more information on becoming a mentor, contact Cory Vaske, Stearns County Veteran Service Officer, at 320-656-6176.

INSERT:
Culligan



contributed photo

An artist's illustration of the planned Sartell public-safety building was shown to City Council members May 14.

Funds for combined police/fire building approved

by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

The Sartell City Council unanimously approved at its May 14 meeting spending up to \$13.12 million for a new public-safety building

after getting a look at design plans.

The new building will house the fire and police departments, combining all emergency operations in one building with space to grow.

Both departments will share training and conference rooms as

well as a common lobby.

Plans call for the 45,000-square-foot building to be on the west side of Pinecone Road north of CR 133/ Sixth Street S.

Following the council approval, HMA Architects and Strack Con-

struction will go ahead with final plans leading to possible construction next spring and completion in 2020.

For a look at the interior plans, go to this story at thenewsleaders.com.

Fitzthum announces candidacy for mayor

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Sartell City Council member Ryan Fitzthum announced May 15 he will seek the position of mayor.

The current mayor, Sarah Jane Nicoll, announced recently she will not file for re-election. Another contender for the mayor's position is David Peterson, also a member of the council.

Fitzthum is now serving his second year on the council. He is a graduate of Sartell High School, a parent, an employer and a firefighter. He is also now in his fifth year on the Sartell/Le Sauk Joint Planning Commission.

Previously, he served six years on the Sartell Planning Commission. Now in his 10th year as a firefighter, he serves as a captain.



Fitzthum

Among the committees he served on are the United Way Campaign Committee and the Sartell Schools Facilities Committee.

After Nicoll chose not to file for re-election, Fitzthum began to ponder a run, but he said it was a tough decision, partly because his wife gave birth to a third

daughter last December, and the family leads such a busy life.

However, he decided to toss his hat in the ring after many Sartell residents urged him to run.

"At the end of the day," Fitzthum said in his announcement, "we reflected back on why we and so many others have decided to call Sartell home. With those reasons in mind, the decision was simple. I needed to put all the effort possible into ensuring Sartell's success and do the best I could do as mayor."

Fitzthum is manager of the Sartell office of CH Robinson, a Fortune 200 company that provides third-party logistics and consulting services worldwide.

The Sartell office employs 97 people.

Fitzthum said that as mayor he would remain committed to the success of the city and its sustainability and that his years of community service and public-service qualifications would be good attributes for mayor.

"The future council and mayor," he said, "will be faced with making significant decisions which will impact current and future residents for decades to come."

For that reason, Fitzthum said it is vital to engage all Sartell residents in the city-planning process.

Years of foster care started with a baby girl

by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

It all started with a baby girl, 16 years ago. The last of Sue and Ron Wochnick's four children was a teenager and soon they would be empty nesters.

The Sartell residents had considered opening their home as a foster family but had never quite gotten around to it.

Then when Fingerhut shut down and the couple's jobs ended, they made the move.

"It was something we had talked about for years since we were married," Sue said.

Sue and Ron completed the foster

family application and licensing.

"It was a long process," Sue said. "The paperwork overwhelmed me. We put it away for a month or two. It kept nagging at me. We should be doing it."

The family was approved and they welcomed the little 9-month-old girl.

"After her we were in it," Sue said. "We fell in love with her. It was hard to let her go."

She was the first of 78 foster children Sue and Ron have cared for. They eventually adopted three foster children over the years to join their family of two sons and two daughters.



photo by Mike Knaak

Ron and Sue Wochnick care for foster children in their Sartell home.

Another season, another fishing opener



photo by Dave DeMars

Dennis Mosbrucker enjoys fishing from the bridge that spans Watab Creek in Sartell. It’s a good place to fish, but a person usually has to get there early to get a piece of prime real estate. Mosbrucker said he has been going fishing all of his life but he especially likes to fish early in the season – mostly for small-mouth bass though he has nothing against a walleye or two.

Foster

from front page

Jennifer Thelen would like to find more families like the Wochnicks. Thelen is a Stearns County Human Services social worker. She is looking for more Stearns County families to open their homes for children needing foster care.

Although recruiting and licensing foster-care families is a year-round job, Thelen is trying to get the word out during May, Foster Care Appreciation Month, about the need for families to care for children.

Currently, 68 families provide foster care for about 160 children ranging from infants to age 17.

Foster parents are as diverse as the children they care for. Some are married; some are single; some are grandparents; some are parents with young children, adolescents or grown children; some hope to eventually adopt children. The characteristics foster parents have in common

are love for children, an ability to commit to challenges and a desire to make a difference in the lives of children, Thelen said.

Families interested in foster care should contact human services at 320-656-6000 and ask for the coverage licensing social worker. The county conducts a no-commitment orientation about every two months. The session lasts about two-and-a-half hours.

Sue offered this advice for families considering foster care.

“If your heart’s in it, if you feel that drive, do it,” she said. “Fill out the paperwork. Start out slow. There’s such a great need. Once you get going, you can say I’m not ready for three, but just take one child.”

The Wochnicks have had as many as six foster children in their five-bedroom home. Right now, they are caring for four girls.

Even in early spring, the Wochnick’s park-like yard offers peaceful spots surrounding their large home. As Sue and Ron chat with a visitor, a girl looks for a place to sit and read on the family’s spacious deck.

by **Dave DeMars**
news@thenewsleaders.com

It’s Saturday morning of opening fishing and it’s 50 degrees with a light breeze from the north, which follows the Mississippi River down through Sartell. It’s pretty good weather for an opener. At least it isn’t snowing or raining like it has been some past years.

Tanner Brugh and his buddy Dominic Castellano picked their way nonchalantly among the sharp granite rip-rap down to the banks of the Mississippi River just below the old paper mill dam in Sartell. This was their second trip back to the site today. They were here earlier to watch a cloudy sunrise over the

the old mill site, then left about 8:30 to take a buddy to work.

“It’s a pretty good spot to fish,” Castellano said, “besides the snags.”

He chuckled a bit as Brugh struggled with a snag. He was using a plastic spinner bait.

Earlier, before a nosy news reporter interrupted fishing, Castellano had pulled in a nice small-mouth bass – well almost.

“Yeah, it was a nice small-mouth, but when I got him up to pull him in, my line snapped. I got my feet wet and he got away,” Castellano said with a grin.

Occasionally they fish above the dam, but right here just below the dam, where the Watab Creek empties into the Mis-

issippi, the fish seem to feed heavily. Finding a good spot to wet a line is usually at a premium, but for the time being, there’s a bit of a lull.

Up above, fishing off the bridge that spans the Watab is Dennis Mosbrucker. He’s been there about 25 minutes he said. This is one of his favorite fishing spots. Mosbrucker is bobber fishing at the moment.

“I’ve fished here on and off for the last six or seven years,” he said.

Mosbrucker is not native born to Sartell having moved here from Dickinson, N.D., about seven years ago after retiring to be closer to the grandkids.

“I do quite a bit of fishing

Fishing • page 7

People



Carolynn “Reanee” Swiger of St. Joseph was recently named a Queen of the Road for 2018 by “The Real Women in Trucking.” She has been driving for Brenny Specialized Inc. in St. Joseph since 2012. These women are recognized for their hard work and their compassion for helping others.

In Business



Jon Gordon with Opportunity Matters leadership team members **Rhonda Sargeant** (center), **Regan Stommes** and **Sam Pierskalla**.

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The **Opportunity Matters** leadership team recently attended a presentation by the international bestseller Jon Gordon for his new book, “Power of Positive Leadership.” In 2013, Opportunity Matters began integrating the philosophy of positivity inspired by Gordon’s best-selling book, “The Energy Bus,” throughout the organization’s culture and core values. The leadership team plans to implement additional concepts from Gordon’s new book into the organization’s work environment.

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Music therapy isn't what you think it is

We sat in a circle and were each given a drum. There were tentative glances all around, mild taps searching out to see how the drums worked. No, this wasn't some crazy hippy drum circle (I'm not that kind of liberal), but a music therapy session with coworkers.

Music therapy sounds like it should be some sort of fake pseudo-science, like phrenology or flat Earth, but it's actually completely rooted in clinical evidence. According to the American Music Therapy Association, music therapy is defined as the use of music within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive and social needs.

Music therapy is not just rockin'

out to your favorite band, though. Instead, music therapy involves creating music, moving to music and even listening to music in a therapeutic context.

As we sat in our little circle, my coworkers and I glanced a little nervously at each other. We are a new team; the most senior of us has only been here for a year, the least only a few months. We are a mix of ages; our youngest a scant 23 (a prime of life for you math nerds), our oldest in his 60s. None of us knew really what to expect.

Our music therapist is a student working on her thesis for her master's in music therapy. She starts us off each playing with the drums to just get a feel for the kind of

Patric Lewandowski

Guest Writer



sounds they can make. Very quickly we realize as individuals, we're all musicians (two of us in band, two choir singers), and we naturally fall into a group tempo. Our rhythms weave in and out of each other. Inadvertently, we are making music.

After a few minutes of play, our therapist gives us a little rundown about music therapy. Each music therapy session should have goals. Our goal is just to communicate anything that is giving us some anxiety at the moment. We each vo-

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 tricontyncrimestoppers.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.

May 2

12:39 a.m. Traffic Stop. Second Street S. and CR 78. While patrolling on Riverside Avenue S., an officer ran a license-plate check on a vehicle. The officer found the registered owner of the vehicle had a cancelled driver's license. The officer conducted a stop on the vehicle. The vehicle was slow to stop but finally came to a stop in the Kwik-Trip parking lot. The officer identified the driver as the registered owner. The driver was unable to present the officer with current proof of insurance. The driver was released after being cited for

driving after cancellation and no proof of insurance. The vehicle was parked.

May 3

8:40 p.m. Shoplifter. 1725 Pinecone Road S. Officers were dispatched to a report of shoplifting in progress at Coborn's. A woman was reported to have tried to leave the store without paying for her groceries. When stopped by staff, the woman put up a struggle and left the area in a vehicle. Officers located the vehicle on Pinecone Road near Second Street S. Officers stopped the vehicle and identified two female occupants. The driver stated she stole the groceries because she was tired of not having any food in the house. Both women were arrested and charged with gross misdemeanor theft. The driver was also charged with driving after revocation, no insurance and possession of drug paraphernalia. The passenger was also booked on possession of fifth-degree controlled substance. Both were transported to Stearns County Jail.

May 4

3 p.m. Medical. Sartell. Officers were dispatched for a report of a 69-year-old man who had fallen in the shower and was conscious but had back pain. An officer found the man in the shower. He stated he knew he had fallen and was down for approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Gold Cross Ambulance arrived and officers assisted. The man was taken to the St. Cloud Hospital.

May 5

2:42 a.m. DWI. 21 CR 120. Officers were dispatched to Walmart for a report of a possible verbal altercation between a man and woman. Officers located both parties who had run from their vehicle. Officers observed the vehicle had heavy damage that appeared to have happened recently. Through further investigation, officers learned the vehicle had hit a mailbox and a utility pole within the city. The woman was found to be the driver and failed field sobriety testing.

She was arrested and could be charged with fourth-degree DWI and leaving the scene of an accident.

May 6

7:54 p.m. Medical. Sartell. Officers were dispatched for a seizing 12-year-old girl. The man who made the report, said his daughter was barely breathing. Officers found the child conscious and breathing but confused and disoriented. She was monitored while health history was gathered and details of the seizure. Gold Cross arrived and took over care. Officers were advised they could clear because the child was stable.

May 7

5:41 p.m. Crash. 12 Street N. and Riverside Avenue. N. Officers were dispatched for a report of a crash involving three cars that was blocking traffic. Officers arrived and ensured there were no injuries. One officer conducted traffic control while a second officer completed a crash investigation. Offi-

cally state our anxieties, and then, one by one, we are to play on our drums what our anxiety feels or sounds like.

It's fascinating.

For some, the sound of their anxiety is a steady, pounding, threatening boom. For others, it is light taps you can barely hear, but always present. As we play, the physicality of the drum helps work out some of the tension. It's a distraction that allows us to perhaps be more open than we are naturally inclined to be as stoic Midwesterners.

The path to becoming a licensed music therapist is as rigorous as any other therapist. Not only does the music therapist need to be a proficient musician with several instru-

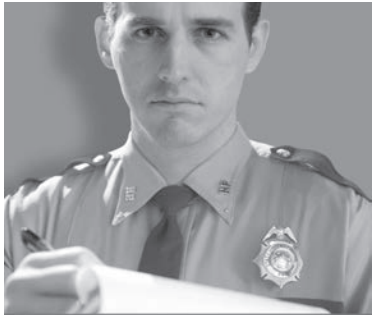
ments (a degree in and of itself), but also needs to complete coursework in psychology, biology, counseling and behavioral sciences. There is also a certification exam and 1,200 clinic hours. Frankly, it sounds really hard to a guy who spends his days drawing dumb comics.

As our time came to a close, everyone felt a little calmer. Even though we didn't really talk about things, the act of coming together and fitting our own beats in with each other, layering our anxieties on top of each other, seemed to be effective. As a team-building exercise, our new team came together a bit better than before.


Sadly, we didn't get to keep the drums.

May 8

4:16 p.m. Stall. Pinecone Road N. 2 1/2 Street N. An officer came upon a vehicle with a flat tire in the northbound lane of Pinecone Road. The officer stopped and spoke with the driver who stated he had a tow on the way. The officer provided emergency lighting until the vehicle was removed from the roadway due to the heavy traffic volume.



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Lions Park Bike-to-School event dodges raindrops



photos by Carolyn Bertsch

Lochlan Bain, 2, of Sartell, cruises into the Lions Park parking lot May 9 on his little red Radio Flyer while taking in the many Bike-to-School festivities with discerning eyes. More than 300 people participated in the event.



Friends play badminton May 9 at the Bike-to-School event at Lions Park. They are (left to right) Zinnia Listug-Lunde, 9; Sabrina Dahlin, 9; and Ziva Dahlin, 7, all of Sartell.



Amyiah Davis, 9, of Sartell, enjoys a hotdog, chips and juice with Harper Bragelman, 2, and Harper's mother Andrea Honer-Bragelman, also of Sartell, at the May 9 Bike-to-School Event at Lions Park in Sartell.

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photo by Mike Knaak
With work underway on CR29, eastbound traffic uses the one open lane while westbound traffic is detoured.

CR 29 road project begins, Pinecone Road next

by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

The first of two major road construction projects planned for this summer has started in Sartell.

On May 14, First Street NE/Benton CR 29 was reduced to one lane from Benton Drive to just west of Hwy. 15 and closed to westbound traffic. The one-lane closure is expected to last most of the summer. Access to homes and local businesses will be open during the road closure.

On the west side of the city, the Pinecone Road project will begin June 4, according to Jon Halter, city engineer.

Motorists will see some miscellaneous construction before June 4 when Phase 1, which runs through Labor Day, begins. Phase 2 of the project will take place in the fall.

The CR 29 project includes replacement and upgrade of util-

ities and reconstruction of the road.

Improvements are needed to replace failing pavement and install a left-turn lane to reduce congestion.

The Pinecone Road project is designed to accommodate traffic growth and increase safety.

More than 5,000 vehicles travel on Pinecone Road N. every day. The road will be widened and a walking path will be added.

Two new roundabouts will create easier access for buses and drivers heading to the new high school opening in fall 2019. There will be new lighting and school flashers installed surrounding pedestrian crossings.

During Phase 1, Pinecone Road from 15th Street to 27th Street and from 35th to 40th Street will be closed. Riverside Avenue and 12th Street N. will be the best route for drivers

on the south end of the detour.

After that work is done, 27th Street to 35th Street will close.

At its May 14 meeting, the City Council approved a low bid of \$5.8 million from J.R. Ferche of Rice for the project.

A special website has been created for updates on the Pinecone Road project at <http://detour.sartellmn.com/>. The site features a map showing the project with detour routes as well as a form to submit questions.

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Opinion

Never miss a chance to celebrate Statehood Day

Our View

Election filings kick off official campaign season

Now it gets real.

Although many candidates running for election this fall have been campaigning for months, Tuesday, May 22, marks the official beginning of the election season.

On that day, candidates can begin filing with the secretary of state or local officials for positions up for election this fall.

The early filing period, which ends June 5, is for races that conduct primaries if necessary. Primary election day is Aug. 14. A later filing period opens July 31 for city offices, such as Sartell City Council and mayor, which don't conduct primaries.

With the election almost six months away, it may be hard to focus on voting. But voters should start examining candidates now.

Midterm elections usually suffer from lower voter turnout than when the presidency is on the ballot. In Minnesota, however, the non-presidential years can be just as significant because state offices such as governor are on the ballot. In 2018, this is even truer than usual.

Minnesotans will elect a new governor and lieutenant governor. Other constitutional officers, such as auditor and secretary of state are also on the ballot.

Both U.S. Senators, Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith, and all eight of the House of Representatives seats will be up as well. Unexpected events put more offices in play this year. Al Franken's resignation forced an election for his Senate seat, which wouldn't have been up for a vote until 2020. Rep. Tim Walz is running for governor so his First District seat, covering southern Minnesota, will be open. In northeastern Minnesota, Eighth District Rep. Rick Nolen is retiring. Both men are Democrats.

Closer to home, Rep. Tom Emmer, a Republican, is being challenged by Democrat Ian Todd.

In the Minnesota Legislature, no state Senate seats are up for election this year. All House seats will stand for election. In District 13B, Democrat Heidi Everett is challenging incumbent Republican Tim O'Driscoll.

In Stearns County, we'll be electing a new sheriff for the first time in 16 years. Three men have announced plans to run, which means there will be a primary. Other countywide officials, such as attorney, auditor-treasurer and recorder, are on the ballot. Second District Commissioner Joe Perske's seat is not up this year.

In Sartell, Mayor Sarah Jane Nicoll says she won't seek another term and two City Council seats are up.

The Sartell-St. Stephen school district has races for board members.

That's a lot to keep track of for the next few months but it's important work.

In the 2016 presidential election, 129 million votes were cast. If 36,000 Donald Trump voters instead voted for Hillary Clinton, a different person would be in the White House today. That breaks down to less than three voters in each precinct across Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania switching sides.

Every vote counts and elections have consequences.

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.

So how did you celebrate Minnesota Statehood Day? Did you bake a Minnesota-shaped cake or do something more appropriate such as cooking wild rice soup?

May 11 marked the 160th anniversary of Minnesota's entry into the union as the 32nd state.

Our family celebrated by participating in two uniquely Minnesotan experiences.


Last week, our younger daughter returned home for a short vacation. She's lived in the United Kingdom, Boston and now Washington, D.C., for the past five years.

After getting over reverse sticker shock – "Things are SO cheap here" – she suggested two activities she would enjoy and she could share with her East Coast friends who have difficulty understanding flyover country.

The good people of Boston struggle to imagine Stearns County is larger than the state of Rhode Island. When Bostonians plan the 51-mile drive to Providence, you'd think they are packing for a trip to the moon. And her Washington co-workers wonder how we cope with winter when even the forecast of snow totally shuts down the nation's capital.

On Minnesota Statehood Day Eve, we traveled south to Minneapolis for Guthrie Theater's production of "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner." The play, based on the 1967 movie,

Mike Knaak
Editor



raises issues that are still relevant 50 years later about interracial marriage, "the other" and our inherent biases.

The plot centers on how a liberal white couple reacts when their daughter surprises them with news she plans to marry a prominent doctor who just happens to be black.

The Guthrie is a truly unique Minnesota treasure. It's part of Minnesota's rich arts and cultural scene that includes the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Minnesota Orchestra. New York is the only city with more theater seats per capita than the Twin Cities, tourism promoters are happy to tell you.

On Statehood Day, we traveled north to the headwaters of the Mississippi River in Itasca State Park between Park Rapids and Bemidji.

I have to admit, I'm not a very good Minnesotan. I don't hunt or fish and I'd rather vacation in the Big City than the Big Woods. My two daughters share my tilt toward urban rather than natural adventures. Nature's great as long as you can experience it with indoor plumbing.

Grads: your vote may make the difference


Last week, I was able to have an experience I've been waiting to have for a good portion of my life; that is, to vote. Walking up to my local precinct to cast a ballot in the Sauk Rapids-Rice school district referendum, it occurred to me what a simple, yet powerful act this really is. I was in and out in minutes, but was satisfied I had been able to have my voice in affairs for the first time. Unfortunately, this is something many people my age don't appreciate until much later on.

Turning 18 is a momentous occasion in one's life, and it's easy to be overwhelmed with everything that goes on. There's graduation and choosing colleges, proms and finals. It's easy to forget another milestone is achieved at this important age, the right to vote. Though you may not think voting is that important or that your one vote won't make a difference as a young person, I beg to differ.

Voting is such an important and amazing thing because it's one of the major reasons why the United States is so special. In a democratic country, we choose our leaders by turning out to cast ballots every two to four years to elect many offices. Everything from the local school board to the president of the United States is determined by the votes of everyday people.

That is why I think it's such an alarming statistic that young people are one of the least active voter blocs

Connor Kockler
Guest Writer



in the country. With rising college costs, a changing job market and increasing health-care costs, there are plenty of issues that affect us, yet only 49.4 percent of 18-to 35 year-olds went to the ballot box nationwide in 2016 according to the Pew Research Center. This is despite the 18-35 age group approaching the mark of being the largest group of voters in the country. If you think about your vote as being part of millions across the nation, you can see just how much potential influence is being wasted.

And there are certainly reasons for this low participation. As more young people leave for college after high school, they may be living in different states or jurisdictions and confused about how and where to vote. Additionally, the chaotic final weeks of high school and adjusting to what's happening next in life often leaves voting on the back burner.

This is a problem because not voting now can be a start to never doing it at all. Voting is a habit like brushing your teeth. The more you do it, the more automatic and natural it becomes. If young people don't start voting now, we risk giving up

Statehood Day was a good day for a visit to the park. The mosquitoes and tourists hadn't arrived yet, although we did encounter a couple of ticks.

I happily found the gift shop near the parking lot hadn't opened for the season, so we began our 900-foot hike to the headwaters without shopping.

On the way, we met two men wearing, appropriately enough, Gopher hockey sweatshirts, and a skipping little girl.

We were alone when we reached the headwaters, which is marked by a rocky rapids as Lake Itasca becomes the 2,300-mile long Mississippi. Visiting the headwaters includes the tradition of walking across the wet, slippery rocks so the tourist can proclaim "I walked across the Mississippi River."

Soon an older couple joined us and found a spot on a bench to enjoy the view. The couple shared they had visited the spot many times and chided us for never making the trip.

Don't wait for next year's Statehood Day to celebrate all of Minnesota's riches, east to west, north to south. Whether you're looking for outdoor recreation, professional sports, arts, history or unique food and drink, an adventure is just a few hours away. Just don't tell the folks on the East Coast. We don't like crowds.

one of our major tools to influence public affairs in a time period that is critical to the rest of our lives. Public officials and officeholders respond to participation and activism, and so we should make our voices heard.

If you're wondering where to begin, or are still confused about how exactly to vote in the first place, the state of Minnesota has many great options available. A great resource is the Minnesota Secretary of State website, where you can register to vote with your address and ID such as a driver's license in minutes. If you're going out of town for college, you can register at your home address and submit an absentee ballot either in person or by mail. And, if you really forget until the last minute, Minnesota also has same-day voter registration.

So there, we have no excuse not to vote, and it's not just young people. When 56 percent of registered voters turn out nationwide in 2016, and 75 percent in Minnesota, there is plenty of room for improvement for all ages. Voting takes minutes, and only takes place once or twice a year depending on where you live. So be sure to get out to vote in November and whenever the polls are open. Our democracy and country will be all the better for it.

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

Newsleader letters to editor policy

The Newsleader welcomes letters to the editor on current topics of local interest.

Writers are limited to one letter every three months.

Letters must be signed and include contact information, such as an email or

phone number, for verification, but that information will not be published.

During election campaigns, letters will be chosen to present a variety of opinions.

Letters that do not run in print will appear on our website, www.thenewsleaders.com.

To be considered for publication, letters must be exclusive to the Newsleader.

Letters to the editor may be sent to news@thenewsleaders.com or P.O. Box 324, St. Joseph, MN 56374. Deadline is noon Monday. Letters must be 350 words or less.



photo by Dave DeMars

While most Minnesotans ooooh and ahhh over walleyes, Sumo Woodson likes to fish for catfish. Here he patiently waits for a nibble. Woodson says he manages to get out fishing two or three times a week.

Fishing

from front page

mainly in the spring,” he said. “I fish mainly for bass because (it’s) hard(er) to catch the wall-eyes. I usually fish off the 10th Avenue bridge. That’s where I catch most of my fish.”

Mosbrucker was going to tell me a bit more about his move to the St. Cloud area when he spotted a fisherman downstream reeling in a fish.

“Look at that lucky stiff – he caught a really nice fish – yeah, look at that fish,” he said a bit wistfully. “But I think he’ll have to throw it back because only walleye season is open.“

He talked a bit about fishing in North Dakota. Lake Sakakawea is one of the premier fishing lakes in North Dakota, he tells me.

“Oh, crap,” he muttered. “I missed that one. I’ll bet he took my minnow.”

I apologized for disturbing his fishing, but Mosbrucker is a forgiving fisherman and he picks another minnow out of

his bait bucket. He talks as he rigs the hook. “The better places to fish are down in the rocks among the rip-rap. You have to get there early on most days to get the best spots.

“I don’t like crawling around down in the rocks,” he said. “It’s so dangerous, so I try not to fish down there too much. If I do, I put a life jacket on. I don’t go out where those guys are. With my luck I would fall.”

Looking across to the other side of the river, Mosbrucker said he wishes he could fish on the other side of the river where the mill used to stand. He thinks there would be good fishing over there. He said one of the “new guys running for office” had proposed that something be done with the old mill site.

“I wish they would develop that and allow some public fishing over there and make a pier over there.”

Across the bridge and down among the rocks, Sumo Woodson had found himself a nice comfortable spot to fish. It was out of the wind, quiet and he could gather what warmth he could from the sun.

He’s a regular along this stretch of the river he said. He fishes here about two or three times a week especially on Saturdays during the summer. He’s lived in Sartell about nine years, he said. Fishing gives him some alone time and a chance to relax.

He’s fishing for catfish this morning, but the water temperature is a bit cold and the fish are sluggish.

“They like the warmer water,” he said. “I have night crawlers and leeches, but they pretty much eat anything. It’s been a little cooler here the last couple of days.”

Fifteen minutes later he had moved his site half a mile farther up the river above the dam where the water ran calmer and there were fewer fishermen.

In Minnesota, it seems like the opening of fishing is a rite of passage. There is something mystical about it. Herbert Hoover got it about right.

“Fishing is much more than fish,” he said. “It is the great occasion when we may return to the fine simplicity of our forefathers.”

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, May 18
Community Wide Garage Sales, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., electronics, clothing, household items and more, Evergreen Village, 198 Evergreen Road, Sartell.
Benton County Museum, 10

a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhistory.org.

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

Saturday, May 19
Community Wide Garage Sales, 8 a.m.-noon., electronics, clothing, household items and more, Evergreen Village, 198 Evergreen Road, Sartell.
All-In-One Event, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., flea markets, garage salers, crafters, up-cyclers and vendors, Benton County Fairgrounds Sports Arena, 1410 Third Ave. S., Sauk Rapids.

Community Meal, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 1107 Pinecone Road S., Sartell.

Sunday, May 20
1k/5k Color Run hosted be Celebration Lutheran Church, noon-2 p.m., www.celebrationlutheran-church.com.

Monday, May 21
Lunch and cards, sponsored by Helping Hands Outreach, noon-2 p.m., Trobec’s Bar & Grill, 1 Central Ave. S., St. Stephen.

Market Monday, 3-6 p.m., Coborn’s Marketplace, Pinecone Road S.,

Sartell. marketmonday.org.

Tinville Lions Club, 7 p.m., Rolie’s Rednecks and Longnecks Bar, 940 35th Ave. NE., Sauk Rapids.

Wednesday, May 23
SabreStorm Youth Fishing Team, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Westre’s Marine, 1101 U.S. Hwy. 10, St. Cloud. Scott, 320-260-0326.

Thursday, May 24
CMMA Breakfast, featuring vice president of engineering at Park Industries Bob Monson, 7:15 a.m., Park Industries, 6301 Saukview Drive, St. Cloud.

Coffee and Conversation, a

senior discussion group featuring Blattner Energy and the Sartell solar project, 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.

Screening of ‘Going to War,’ a Twin Cities PBS documentary, 2 and 4 p.m., Camp Ripley Education Center, 15000 Hwy. 115, Little Falls.

Friday, May 25
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhistory.org.

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SMS Yes! team youngest, best in region

by Dennis Dalman

news@thenewsleaders.com

They're not only the youngest competitors in the region, but they are also the best – “they” being the 28 members of the Sartell Middle School's YES! waste-reduction team.

The winning seventh-grade science team will attend a Minnesota Twins game at Target Field May 20. There they will be honored, along with three other winning regional YES! teams, their team photos filling the giant screen in the baseball stadium.

YES! is short for “Youth Eco Solutions.” It's a program that focuses on the importance of a healthy, clean environment. The 28 seventh-graders, members of an SMS enriched-science class, are all in the YES! program, and their team won first-place honors for their project of Waste Reduction last week in the West Central Region competition. There are four YES! regions in Minnesota, with a total of 28 teams. The four winning teams were all automatically entered into a competition for statewide champion, and that winner will be announced during the May 20 Twins game.

On the afternoon of May 9, the SMS YES! team members were honored in the school. They were given a “surprise” check for \$500, presented by Ali Dahmes of Spicer, a regional coordinator for the YES! program. She, along with SMS YES! team coaches Gina

Anderson and Amanda Holstrom then enjoyed ice-cream bars and popsicles with the winners and some of their parents. Anderson is a seventh-grade SMS science teacher; Holstrom is an SMS technology specialist who helped the students create the YES! website.

The team was honored as tops by regional judges in three categories: goal setting/teamwork, community engagement and ecological impact.

At the honors ceremony, six members of the team took turns sharing with listeners what they had accomplished for the YES! competition.

There were many aspects to the team's Waste Reduction program, and all included education outreach, raising of awareness and specific actions. For example, the team started a paper-waste reduction program at SMS and made posters urging staff and students to reduce or recycle sheets of paper. They requested people put a mark on any sheet of paper that was saved or recycled. All told, in just one week's time, the YES! team concluded their efforts had resulted in keeping 15,000 sheets of paper out of the waste stream.

The team also put up several recycle bins in the lunchroom to enhance the SMS food-compost program. Then they encouraged everyone to recycle their milk cartons – something that hadn't been possible before, but is now. The YES! team took that a step further, however. They are checking



photo by Dennis Dalman

The members of the award-winning YES! team are (front row, left to right) Noah Fleischhacker, Mackenzie Arnold, Briehyn Lewandowski, Carleena Byrd, Avery Levine, Charlie Lindell, Riley Hengel (second row) co-coach and science teacher Gina Anderson, Mia Fiedler, Nevaya Gurung, Trinity Madden Petersen, Molly Stein, Tory Lund, Jonathan Nemeth, Beau Supan, co-coach and technology specialist Amanda Holstrom; (third row) Elise Kruse, Madeline Deyo, Ellie Rengel, Emily Crandall, Taylor Chaika, Sam Frieler, Bailey Woods, Hailey Westrup, Haley Hennen; (fourth row) Aidan Woods, Gage Dyre, Tyler Clauson, Isaac Patton and Emma Yao.

into having milk dispensers in the lunch room for next year so students can get milk from the dispensers rather than individual milk cartons.

During the year, the YES! team hosted fundraisers to raise money for their projects.

One of those projects was the creation of a nifty website named A Culture of Waste. The site, with lots of links, is an educational tool that features statistics, trivia games, brief tests, charts, graphs, photos and graphics. The site is, in fact, a virtual textbook on the topic of waste and the options for

good waste-reduction projects.

According to information on the Culture of Waste website, the United States is No. 1 in the generation of wasted products – an estimated total of about 258 million tons per year. Second is China, followed by Brazil, Japan and Germany.

The percentages of waste generated are paper 26.6 percent; food waste 14.98 percent; yard trimmings 13.3 percent; plastic products 12.8 percent; metals 9 percent; rubber, leather, textiles 9.5 percent; wood products 6.2 percent; glass 4.4 percent; and

others 3.2 percent.

Where do those waste products end up? More than half of them, about 53 percent, are dumped in landfills, but the good news is 34.6 percent are recycled and/or composted and 12.8 percent are used for combustion/energy recovery programs.

And that is the aim of the award-winning YES! team – to educate and convince others to be less wasteful, to recycle or compost what they no longer need or want, and to promote all efforts to make possible a safer, healthier environment for all people.

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Coors Light & Coors Banquet
24 Pack 12 Oz. Cans
Save Even More With \$15 Mail In Rebate On 3 Case Purchase

16⁹⁸
Budweiser, Bud Light & Michelob Golden Draft Light
24 Pack 12 Oz. Cans
Save Even More With \$15 Mail In Rebate On 3 Case Purchase

13⁹⁸
Busch Light
24 Pack 12 Oz. Cans Regular Or Light

11⁹⁸
Samuel Adams & Angry Orchard
12 Pack Bottles All Available Types

10⁹⁸
Michelob Ultra, Bud Light Lime & Bud Light Orange
12 Pack 12 Oz. Bottles Or Cans

12⁹⁸
White Claw, Truly Or Spiked Seltzer Variety Pack
12 Pack Cans

11⁹⁸
Leinenkugel's Craft Beers
12 Pack Cans Or Bottles

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14⁹⁸
Northern Peak Vodka
1.75 Liter

14⁹⁸
Windsor Canadian
1.75 Liter
\$9.98 After Rebate

23⁹⁸
Jim Beam
1.75 Liter White Label Or Jim Beam Black

18⁹⁸
Jameson Irish Whiskey
750ml
\$12.32 After Rebate

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24⁹⁸
JJ Renfield 8 Yr Canadian
1.75 Liter

17⁹⁸
Bacardi Rum
1.75 Liter Superior, Black, Gold, Limon Or Oakheart Spiced

27⁹⁸
Absolut Vodka
1.75 Liter
\$21.32 After Rebate

16⁹⁸
Malibu Coconut Rum
1.75 Liter
\$10.32 After Rebate

14⁹⁸
Sauza Hornitos Plata or Reposado
750ml
\$9.98 After Rebate

wine of the month

9⁹⁸
Wente
750ml Morning Fog Chardonnay & Louis Mel Sauvignon Blanc
\$12.98 southern Hills Cabernet & Sandstone Merlot \$15.98 Riva Ranch Chardonnay

Final Week Of Our Spring Wine Sale!
Some Examples Include:

11⁹⁸
Rustenberg Rose
750ml

3⁹⁸
Barefoot & Barefoot Refresh
750ml All Available Types

12⁹⁸
Primarius
750ml Pinot Noir

7⁹⁸
19 Crimes
750ml Red, Uprising Red, Cabernet & Shiraz

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6⁹⁸
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