

# Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Dec. 27, 2019  
Volume 24, Issue 25  
Est. 1995

## Town Crier

### Winter gear needed for kids

Winter gear is needed for kindergarten through eighth-grade students. All gently used and new winter clothing accepted. Suggested items include hats, waterproof gloves, snow pants, coats/jackets, boots and warm socks. Drop off donations between 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. at United Way of Central Minnesota, 921 First St. N., St. Cloud. Contact Mary Krippner, United Way volunteer engagement manager, at 320-223-7991 or mkrippner@unitedwayhelps.org.

### This is Life: The Cost of Community simulation

This is Life: The Cost of Community Crisis scheduled for 8:45-11 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 9 at Capital One. This event is an interactive immersion experience that depicts real-life scenarios faced by many of the families living in Central Minnesota who are sometimes one paycheck away from homelessness or crisis. During this experience, you will take on an identity. You and your family will work together to sustain yourself as you live a month in crisis. Visit [unitedwayhelps.org](http://unitedwayhelps.org) to register.

### Christmas tree drop-off

Sartell residents can drop-off Christmas trees from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Sartell compost site, 520 30th Ave. N. The service is free, however, city officials are asking for a food- shelf donation.

### Delivery driver wanted

The Newsleaders is immediately hiring a driver for every other Thursday from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Must have clean driving record and a Minnesota license. Contact Janelle at [janellev@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:janellev@thenewsleaders.com) or call 320-363-7741 Option 1.

### Submissions policy

Deadline for news and letters to the editor is 10 days prior to the Friday publication date. Each submission must include a name, address and telephone number or it will not be published. All submissions can be emailed to [news@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:news@thenewsleaders.com). Deadline for ad copy is 3 p.m. Mondays for Friday's issue.

## Pine Meadow drop-off route changed

by Mike Knaak  
[editor@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:editor@thenewsleaders.com)

A new traffic pattern for dropping off students at Pine Meadow Elementary School will begin on Thursday, Jan. 2.

Drivers will no longer be allowed to turn left from Fifth Street North into the parking lot and barriers will placed in the middle of Fifth Street to block the entrance.

The change is needed, school and city officials said, because traffic is backing up on Pine Cone Road as far south as City Hall around the 7:50 a.m. drop-off time. Officials are worried about traffic congestion and potential rear-end collisions, especially during bad weather.

Instead of turning left from Fifth Street into the school parking lot, drivers will head to the east end of Fifth Street, make

a U-turn and line up for drop off facing west. In addition, the drop-off time will be extended by five minutes. Students will be allowed to enter the building at 7:45 a.m. and sit inside by the entrance until 7:50 a.m. when they will go to class.

The one-lane road between the tennis court and Pine Meadow may only be used by buses from 7:30-8:30 a.m. and 2:30-3:30 p.m. Buses will be travel-

ing both ways on this road.

School officials sent letters home with students explaining the plan in detail.

Superintendent Jeff Schwiebert explained the plan at the Dec. 16 school board meeting.

Schwiebert encouraged students to ride the bus and for parents to prepare students for a quick drop off. He said the drop-off process should be "quick, efficient and safe."



photos by Mike Knaak

### This month's community meal adds holiday cheer

First United Methodist Choir members sing during the congregation's community meal on Dec. 21. The singers are (from left) Jim Davis, Rick Lorenz, Carol Miller, Tom Sibley and Michelle Hedgren. Tess Kasling plays the piano.



(Left) People line up for serving. The congregation serves an average of 75 people on the third Saturday of each month. Church members have been serving the meal since 1991. (Above) The meal featured meatball soup.

## Council considers dropping dog licenses

by Dennis Dalman  
[news@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:news@thenewsleaders.com)

The city of Sartell is considering dropping the requirement for dog licenses, and that proposal – along with some other proposed changes to the city's animal ordinance – will be the topic of a public hearing at the Jan. 13 Sartell City Council meeting.

In a memo to the city council, city staff stated, "The city will

lose license revenue but will also reduce costs by eliminating the licensing process, and it will be fairer to residents since we have far more dogs in the city than the number being licensed."

Most of the provisions regarding dogs and cats in the city's animal ordinance will remain in place, such as the provision that residents in single-family homes may own on their premises no more than two dogs over six

months old.

There is, however, a provision that allows people to keep more than two dogs if they had met requirements prior to the enactment of the two-limit dog provision of the animal ordinance.

The council, at the Jan. 13 public hearing, will also address provisions for service dogs for those who need them, as suggested by council member Mike Chisum.

Other provisions of the ordinance that may be discussed at the public hearing cover such topics as fostering animals; fines for people who allow their animals to run at large; immunization (rabies) requirements for dogs and cats; registration requirements; impoundment of animals; and commercial kennels.

The Monday, Jan. 13, city council meeting will begin at 6 p.m.



— PUBLIC NOTICE —

**CITY OF ST. STEPHEN**  
**NOTICE: CHANGE IN MEET-**  
**ING DATE**

The City of St. Stephen City Council will hold its business meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2020 due to the Jan. 1 holiday. The meeting will begin at its regular time of 6:30 p.m.

/s/ Cris Draiss  
City of St. Stephen City Clerk

Publish: Dec. 27, 2019

# Videos encourage ‘Shop Sartell’

# ConneX

# service

# hours cut

by **Dennis Dalman**  
news@thenewsleaders.com

A series of six videos has been posted on the Sartell Facebook page featuring businesses in the city, all of them with the hopes that people will shop locally – not just during holidays but all-year ‘round.

The Shop Local, Shop Sar-

tell effort is going well, according to Sartell Mayor Ryan Fitzthum, who told the Sartell City Council at its last meeting that the first four videos have been well received, with many people viewing them on the city’s website.

The businesses featured so far are Hardware Hank, Daylily Spa and Salon, The Pantry, Near and North, and Great River Bowl & Partners Pub.

Fitzthum is the subject of a video that introduces Facebook viewers to the business videos.

Recorded at the Sartell Community Center, Fitzthum urges viewers to “rally round and support the local businesses in Sartell.” Those businesses, he said, support local residents in many ways and help the city thrive. Spending dollars locally is an ideal way

to make Sartell stronger, Fitzthum notes in the video.

Studies have shown that supporting local businesses is a win-win for everyone in a city because those businesses provide jobs, strengthen the tax base, bring a vibrant sense of commerce and “culture” to the area and host or fund many forms of “give backs” to the community, such as supporting local sports teams, which Fitzthum pointed out in his video.

As of Dec. 17, four of the videos have been created and posted on the Sartell Facebook. More will follow. The videos feature comments by business owners and the kinds of goods and services their businesses offer.

Shopping local is a good way of “supporting your neighbors,” Fitzthum said.

The ConneX on-demand bus service in Sartell will continue for another year, but with reduced hours and an expanded service area.

The extension through Dec. 31, 2020, will provide Metro Bus staff an opportunity to gather information about the performance of the service.

Service times will change starting Sunday, Feb. 2. Weekday service will be from 6:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday service will be from 10:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. with no service from 2-3 p.m.; and Sunday service will be from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. with no service from 11 a.m.-noon.

“The reduced hours are based on ridership data showing significantly reduced passengers per hour at certain times of the day,” according to a statement from Metro Bus. “The goal of the changes is to provide quality service to as many residents as possible within a constrained budget framework.”

The service area will expand to include the east side of Sartell northwest of Hwy. 15.



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St. Joseph • Sartell-St. Stephen

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# IT contract with school district works well, city says

by Dennis Dalman

news@thenewsleaders.com

The city of Sartell has been contracting for information-technology expertise from the Sartell-St. Stephen school district to the tune of \$1,250 per month.

The contract is more than paying for itself, according to infor-

mation provided to the Sartell City Council from city staff. The cost savings comes from a wide variety of services – a huge gamut that ranges from recommending (and adopting) copier contract changes to eliminating most outside vendor expenses.

The contract, which was signed June 1, 2019, involves a close

networking between the city and school district so services can be dovetailed and streamlined without redundancies or an over-reliance on outside-the-city consultants and vendors. It is, in fact, a form of partnership between the city and school district. At the time the contract was signed, the city council requested an update

after six months – thus, the report delivered to the council recently. After receiving the report, the council recommended the contract continue.

In 2019, there were four major areas scrutinized thanks to the IT contract with the school district.

The review included needs at the new Public Safety Facility,

high-speed fiber installation, consultant contracts and when to use outside consultants.

Among the partnership’s many plans, is one for a three-year technology planning program. Another plan involves documentation that will examine all data bases and designate an employee who will be responsible for each one.

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# YEAR IN Review 2019

## 2019 Year in Review

# School levy, new high school, city growth top 2019 headlines

### Jan. 11 edition

In November, Brady Andel lost his bid for election to the Sartell City Council, but as of Jan. 14 he will take a place on the council, anyway.

That's because at a special Jan. 7 city-council meeting, members agreed to appoint Andel to fill a vacancy on the council rather than conduct another election. Andel received the third highest number of votes in the Nov. 6 election among the four candidates who were competing for two open seats. The two council seat winners were Tim Elness and Jeff Kolb. Besides Andel, Barika Davis also vied for a council seat.

### Jan. 25 edition

An ordering of bids was approved by the Sartell City Council at its last meeting for safety improvements in the Celebration neighborhood of Sartell. The estimated cost of the project is about \$500,000 for the actual construction, with an additional \$125,000 to cover soft costs, such as design. Bids will be opened sometime in February.

### Feb. 8 edition

Despite vigorous opposition from Sartell City Council member Mike Chisum, the council voted 4-1 to authorize soil testing for a possible bridge to be constructed at Sauk River Regional Park in southwest Sartell. The soil testing authorization was one of the items in the Consent Agenda at the Jan. 28 council meeting, but Chisum asked it be removed from the agenda for discussion, which the council agreed to do.

### Feb. 22 edition

The growing popularity of the library lockers at Sartell's Community Center has created challenges for readers as well as library staff. Book orders outpace the number of available lockers, so readers have to wait longer than they'd like to receive books. The program, launched in October 2017, allows readers to place online orders for books from any of the Great River Regional Library's 32 brick-and-mortar libraries. Library staff deliver the books on Tuesdays and Fridays for patron pickup. Demand for books is so great that the 44 lockers are constantly full.

### March 8 edition

Plans for the Watab Park wading pool have hit a snag, although the snag might just morph into an opportunity, depending on what Sartell residents decide they want. The Sartell City Council wrestled with new details about the plans at its Feb. 25 meeting.

### March 22 edition

Yearnings for spring and for "Play ball!" surfaced at the Sartell City Council meeting Feb. 25 when Jason Mathiasen updated the council about improvements to athletic fields in the city. Mathiasen, a member of the Pinecone Central Park Association, has been working nonstop with others to get the biggest bang for the buck in improving the city's fields and athletic amenities so they can be ready for use this spring. Miller Architects was the main contractor.

### April 5 edition

Sartell hockey boosters fell short in a national contest to win \$150,000 in rink upgrades for Bernick's Arena. When on-line voting ended March 31 in the national Kraft Hockeyville USA contest, Calumet Colosseum in Calumet, Michigan, captured the prize. Sartell was one of four finalists in the annual competition sponsored by Kraft Foods, the National Hockey League and the NHL Players' Association.

### April 18 edition

The Sartell-St. Stephen school board approved April 15 a list of budget cuts and revenue increases that fully fund the Academic Extensions program but increases fourth-grade class sizes. The nearly \$1 million in budget cuts and fee increases were needed after district voters defeated an operating levy last November.

### May 3 edition

A long-anticipated dream – a second large ice sheet by Bernick's Arena – will now come true, thanks largely to a corporate donation from Scheels All Sports. The announcement of Scheels' lead gift was made by the Sartell Youth Recreation Center, which has been raising funds for a second ice sheet since 2017. The substantial gift from Scheels means the SYRC now has enough to start building the year-round amenity.

The latest four-year high school graduation rate data shows Sartell High School outperforming districts statewide as well as surrounding schools. Sartell's 2018 graduation rate of 98.2 percent improved slightly from 96.6 percent in 2017. The Minnesota Department of Education released numbers for all schools on April 23. The statewide rate of 83.2 percent was the highest on record.

### May 17 edition

After five years of long-distance dating and then two years of a long-distance marriage, now is the time for Matt and Anita Archambeau to be together – at home in Tennessee. For nearly 20 years, Anita has

been the Sartell City planner/developer and assistant administrator, and she presided over the city's phenomenal growing pains during that time.

It's bye-bye wading pool, hello splash pad. At its May 13 meeting, the Sartell City Council decided on plans for a variety of Watab Park improvements, among them a splash pad instead of the wading pool, which will be removed after so many summers of happy use. Instead, a splash pad will be created at the site in the park.

### May 31 edition

The Sartell-St. Stephen school district selected Laura Arndt as the new Sartell Middle School principal beginning in the 2019-20 school year. Arndt served as an assistant principal at Sartell Middle School this past year and previously served as an instructional coach for three years at Oak Ridge Elementary School.

### June 14 edition

There's good news for bus riders in Sartell. A pilot service dubbed ConneX, has been extended through the rest of this year, to Dec. 31, 2019. It is an on-demand ride service introduced to Sartell in January by the St. Cloud-based Metro Bus. Metro Bus Chief Executive Officer Ryan Daniel said the service has been steadily gaining ridership since its inception six months ago.

Sartell is now officially a Bicycle Friendly Community, one of only 29 cities in Minnesota to be so honored and one of 464 in the nation. At the June 10 city council meeting, the city was honored with a Bicycle-Friendly Community certificate (bronze level) by Dorian Grilley, executive director of the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota.

### June 28 edition

Toppan Merrill announced plans June 25 for a 70,000-square-foot expansion to its Sartell facility. The announcement followed unanimous approval of a business subsidy by the Sartell City Council members at their June 24 meeting. Toppan Merrill is a specialty digital-printing company (formerly Merrill Corp.) that opened in St. Cloud in 1994 and some years later a branch of the company (fulfillment order center) in Sartell. The expansion will allow Toppan Merrill to increase efficiency and capacity to support an expanding customer base and add additional jobs in the community.

The Sartell Baseball Association and Pinecone Central Park Association on June 11 dedicated new and improved baseball fields. A double-header at St. Cloud Orthopedics Field (for-

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merly Champion Field) highlighted the event that capped two years of a fundraising campaign; a ceremony was held between the games officially dedicating St. Cloud Orthopedics and Gilleland Chevrolet Field. The capital campaign of \$1.3 million was made possible with more than half the money privately raised and the city of Sartell contributing the balance of the funds.

**July 12 edition**  
Kelly Hanson, communications specialist for the Sartell Police Department, was the recipient of two awards for excellence at the July 8 City Council meeting. The honors were presented by Sartell Police Chief Jim Hughes, who delivered bouquets of praise for Hanson’s longtime work for the department. One award, the “Circle of Excellence,” is from the Professional Law Enforcement Assistants’ Association, which promotes high degrees of skill and efficiency for staff members who support law-enforcement agencies. The other award, the Meritorious Service Award, was from Hughes on behalf of the Sartell Police Department.

A \$10,000 check for rink upgrades at Bernick’s Arena will be presented Tuesday, July 16, after Sartell’s runner-up finish in the Kraft Hockeyville competition. Bernick’s Arena was the only Minnesota arena to advance as a finalist. To thank the community for support in the contest, there will be free pizza, hot dogs, chips and beverage.

**July 26 edition**  
Sartell-St. Stephen school district voters will be asked a second time to approve an operating levy. The measure will be put to voters in a special election on Nov. 5, 2019. If approved, it would raise \$1.77 million a year for 10 years. Last fall, voters turned down a similar proposal. That outcome resulted in cutbacks that affected class size, staffing and delaying or canceling proposed instructional and program plans.

At long last, the Little Rock Lake and Mississippi River drawdown project is about to begin – on Thursday, Aug. 1. On that day, the Sartell dam will be opened to decrease lake and river water levels by three feet, a process that will take about 30 hours. The levels will remain low for about six weeks, to mid-September.

**Aug. 9 edition**  
The Jake and Stefanie Rothstein family learned together that small everyday actions can add up to big results. The couple and their two children were recently honored as one of five winners in the Clean Water Bingo effort. It is a program created by the Central Minnesota Water Education Alliance, of which many cities are members, including Sartell. The focus of the alliance is to provide educational outreach to promote water-quality stewardship.

## For additional news highlights from 2019, go to [www.thenewsleaders.com](http://www.thenewsleaders.com).

**Aug. 23 edition**  
Amazing. That’s a word commonly heard from students and teachers when they talk about the new Sartell High School. The \$89.5-million high school at 3101 Pinecone opens on Sept. 3. When students start classes, they’ll experience the results of four years of planning and design that will offer a drastically different educational experience. A vision for the school started before the district asked voters to approve a building bond and detailed planning started within weeks of voter approval in May 2016.

**Sept. 6 edition**  
The latest statewide school test scores showed students in the Sartell-St. Stephen district continue to exceed state averages and overall show a high level of performance. The state Department of Education released on Aug. 28 the latest performance scores based on five indicators – achievement and progress on state reading and math tests over time, progress toward English language proficiency, graduation rates and consistent attendance.

**Sept. 20 edition**  
Riverview will be the name of Sartell-St. Stephen’s intermediate school when it opens next fall to serve students in grades three through five. The name was revealed Sept. 16 at Sabre Stadium with games that slowly uncovered the letters spelling out the name.

The six-week drawdown project on the river north of Sartell and on Little Rock Lake is now over. Did it produce good results? Time will tell.

**Oct. 6 edition**  
After months of work, the Sartell city staff and the City Council presented a preliminary budget and levy for 2020, and the council approved it unanimously at its Sept. 23 meeting. The good news is the tax rate will decrease by about 0.60 percent from this year’s rate. The city’s general fund budget would increase by 2.5 percent to a total of \$5,174,069.

**Oct. 18 edition**  
Nate Keller, Sartell’s city planner, has resigned to take another job. The Sartell City Council accepted his resignation at the Oct. 14 council meeting and thanked him for his years of service to the city. Keller began his job for Sartell in 2014. He is the second employee of the city’s planning department to resign in recent months. Anita Archambeau, who worked for two decades as city planner and development director, resigned a few months ago to move to Tennessee.

**Nov. 1 edition**  
Remodeling the old Sartell high school for use by middle school students in grades six

through eight is on schedule, school board members were told at their Oct. 21 meeting. Interior demolition is complete and framing has begun in what was the media center. Concrete is being poured in what will be science rooms below the old media center.

**Nov. 15 edition**  
Clear communication about the plan and more robust community support apparently turned around last year’s rejection of a school district operating levy into an approval in a Nov. 5 special election. Sartell-St. Stephen school district’s voters approved an operating levy that will raise \$1.77 million for 10 years. There were 3,047 yes votes and 2,276 no votes – a 57 percent approval. A similar measure failed a year ago with 60 percent of voters rejecting the levy.

**Nov. 29 edition**  
High school and community skiers now have a new cross country trail in Sartell thanks to a joint effort by the school district, Nordic Ski Club of Central Minnesota and the city of Sartell. The trail officially opened Nov. 18 after volunteers spent the summer clearing brush and the fall making snow on the 1/2K trail between the old Sartell high school and soccer fields. The 60 members of the Sartell/Cathedral nordic ski team will use the trail for practices, coach Joe Teff said. Skiers from Tech and Apollo high schools are also expected to use it, as well as community members.

**Dec. 13 edition**  
Sartell’s population will grow to more than 25,000 people by 2025, a 37-percent increase since 2018, Mayor Ryan Fitzthum told Chamber of Commerce members Tuesday. The projection was part of Fitzthum’s state-of-city update that touched on growth and development issues as well as recent successes.

The Sartell-St. Stephen school board approved on Dec. 6 its contract with the district’s more than 280 teachers. Total package cost to the district for the two-year deal is 8.66 percent. The contract covers July 2019 through June 2021 and teachers will receive back pay. The average cost of the three previous settlements was an 8.42 percent increase. The most recent contract, for 2017-19, cost 8.67 percent.

At its Dec. 9 meeting, the Sartell City Council gave final approval to a 2020 budget/levy that was described as “balanced, sufficient, yet frugal” by the city’s financial director, Heidi Ostlie. The budget, she noted, will result in a slight tax decrease overall.

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# Opinion

## Our View Volunteer, vote instead of checking out

In case you hadn't noticed, 2020 will be an election year.

Enough Democrats to populate two volleyball teams have been campaigning for a year for an election that's still 11 months away. Donald Trump started campaigning for re-election the day after he was sworn in.

Analysts tell us most voters are alienated and unmoored, and that electoral politics are far removed from many people's priorities.

Although the presidential race dominates the news, there are many ways for voters to have a voice and make a difference on issues that matter.

At the national level, the president, all 435 members of the House and a third of senators, including Minnesota's Tina Smith, will be up for election.

In Minnesota, all legislative seats, 67 in the Senate and 134 in the House, will be up. Statewide offices, such as governor, are not on the ballot in 2020.

Locally, voters will elect school boards, city councils, mayors and county commissioners and those local officials decide issues about taxes, schools, roads and local growth that touch us all.

Citizens' most important responsibility is voting. There will be three elections in Minnesota this year. The state's new presidential primary will take place on March 3, although Trump has blocked all names but his on the Republican ballot. The usual primary election to select other candidates will take place on Aug. 11 and the general election is Nov. 3.

The parties will still conduct caucuses on Feb. 25 to nominate candidates for other offices and debate party issues.

Minnesotans lead the nation with more than 70 percent of eligible voters going to the polls. Our goal should be to not only lead the nation but turn out more than 70 percent.

If you're passionate about government, consider running for office. Robust debate results when there are competitive races for school boards, city councils and county commissioners. The community is not well-served when incumbents run unopposed or when there's only one name on the ballot.

Citizens have other options in addition to filing for office. Campaigns need volunteers to contact voters, raise money, host parties and pass out literature. Volunteering is a great way to support issues important to you and to make new friends at the same time.

Government also needs volunteers for boards and commissions. Cities and counties have a number of boards and commissions that shape local policy. Park boards, planning commissions, human rights commissions and economic development commissions need people with an interest and curiosity about local issues. Those positions are typically nominated or approved by mayors, councils or school boards.

There's one way to cure frustration or alienation from government. The answer is not to check out by not voting or not looking for every chance to participate.

The answer is to volunteer and to vote.

Every person makes a difference. Trump is president because one or two voters in each precinct in three states decided not to vote in 2016.

Let's not let that happen in 2020.

## After chaos, 'competent' looks appealing

**Mike Knaak**

*Editor*



When it's time for your annual job review at work and your boss rates you "competent" that's not a time for celebration. A "competent" rating means you won't be fired, but you probably won't be getting a raise or promotion either.

A competent performance is indeed a low bar...everywhere but in politics where it appears beyond reach. No wonder only about 25 percent of voters think government can solve problems.

As we approach another election year, demonstrating to voters that you are at least competent to govern will be a challenge.

Thanks to Donald Trump, chaos replaced competence and nonsense drowned out common sense. Disinformation and distrust locked up the levers of power.

Government failed the competency standard by failing to fix roads and bridges (remember how many times Trump proclaimed Infrastructure Week), improve health care instead of dismantling it, act on climate change instead of ignoring it and crafting a serious, comprehensive immigration plan.

Jon Tester is a three-term senator from Montana. He's a Democrat in a state Trump won by 20 percentage points. Last week he addressed competence.

"The American people expect their government to work," said Tester, a farmer and former music teacher. "There's a pile of bills that have come through the House that are piling up in the Senate. We could have been doing a lot of these bipartisan bills...no brainers. But we haven't. McConnell hasn't brought them up. Let's do a little deliberating and let's do a little debating. Why is he holding them up? You got me."

He's talking about some 400 bills,

275 of them nonpartisan, passed by the Democrat-controlled House that are piled on Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's desk while he's busy getting marginally competent, right-wing federal judges confirmed.

A competent leader needs more than a catchy slogan.

Trump won the White House by riling up voters' fear, anger and sense of grievance with effective marketing. Thanks to catchy slogans, he captured just enough electoral votes.

"Build the Wall," is not an immigration strategy. Instead of a plan, Trump offered technology that became obsolete in the 16th century to solve a 21st century problem.

"Drain the Swamp" doesn't mean appointing, and then firing, a record number of ethically challenged officials.

He's staked his re-election on a robust economy. But while overall growth has been solid, the areas of weakness have come precisely in those things Trump tried to stimulate. Trump's only major legislative accomplishment was a huge tax cut for corporations that was supposed to lead to a surge in investment. Instead, corporations pocketed the money, and business investment fell. His trade war was supposed to shrink the trade deficit and revive U.S. manufacturing. But the trade deficit widened and manufacturing shrank.

Trump's challengers aren't doing much better. Medicare for All, Free College Tui-

tion and College Loan Forgiveness are not policies to meet the low bar of competent government.

Presidential candidate Sen. Amy Klobuchar argued in last month's debate against these attractive promises.

"I'm not going to go for things just because they sound good on a bumper sticker and then throw in a free car," she said.

If elected, can she govern? Here's the record: Klobuchar passed more legislation than any other senator by the end of the 114th Congress in late 2016. As of Dec. 16, 2018, she had sponsored or co-sponsored 111 pieces of legislation that became law.

Joe Biden continues to lead other Democrats for the nomination. Former Time magazine editor Nancy Gibbs writes in the Washington Post that Biden's slogan appears to be "Pick me and I'll leave you alone while I fix stuff."

That's a nice way of saying let's have competence over chaos.

Along with Klobuchar, another so-called second-tier candidate is Colorado Sen. Mike Bennet. Bennet is a former Denver school superintendent who grew enrollment, decreased dropout rates, and improved graduation rates and college enrollment.

Conservative columnist George Will credited him with "the most charming, the most adult campaign promise this season."

"If you elect me president, I promise you won't have to think about me for two weeks at a time," Bennet said.

It's not a great bumper sticker. But Bennet, along with Tester, Klobuchar and Biden, know that governing is not about red hats and red-meat slogans.

## Holidays remind what unites us

**Connor Kockler**

*Guest Writer*



As we enter the holiday season once again, it can be easy to think we're in troubled times for our country. The impeachment process involving President Trump rages on, and the 2020 election looms on the horizon as another episode of fractious debate. It may seem like there's not much any of us can agree on, or that things are destined to get worse in the new year. However, the holiday season has arrived just in time to remind us of what really matters.

With the cold winter arriving here early in Minnesota this year, it almost seemed to exacerbate the chilly effects of what had already been building throughout the year. Following the midterm elections last year, open conflict between the Democratic House and Republican Senate has been all over the news. The Mueller investigation into President Trump concluded, and another investigation, resulting in impeachment proceedings, is currently underway.

As if that wasn't divisive enough, another election is coming up quickly. Many of us can clearly remember the 2016 election and the intense debates that raged as Clinton and Trump supporters argued on TV and across dinner tables. It looks to be more of the same as many Democratic candidates look to be the nominee to face off with the president in 2020.

Through all of this debate and blus-

ter it's sometimes tough to see what our country has in common. Not just in politics, it feels like we know our neighbors less and aren't as knowledgeable about our communities as a whole. It's easy to feel that way when it doesn't look like there's a solution in sight. Entering the holidays though, I think the messages we share throughout this time are things that can help us throughout the year.

Once the Thanksgiving turkey has been eaten and the Christmas and holiday season comes upon us, the festive atmosphere quickly takes over. Shopping deals for presents are advertised everywhere. The radio and music services turn into a compilation of songs old and new that we only roll out for this time of year. There's snow on the ground, and lights strung across houses.

These changes in appearance reflect the changes in attitude and outlook the holiday season brings. It's a time for giving, sharing, being with family and friends. Along with the new year, it's a chance to reflect on how the year went for us, enjoy what we have, and decide what we want to do next. In our fast-paced, modern world, it should be a

welcome break to be able to slow down a bit and really have quality time.

It's almost like the world becomes a little bit of a nicer place too. Like one of those Hallmark holiday movies, people go that extra mile to show they care and appreciate people. Holiday parties and gift exchanges provide a chance for co-workers to connect and bell ringers fill the air with music for a good cause. You hear people say "Happy Holidays" and "Merry Christmas" with a cheer. It's an infectious energy for feeling good and bringing people together.

These feelings aren't just something we should leave for the holidays. We should take them with us and remember them as we move into 2020. The values of giving, generosity and family have the power to unite across all sorts of divisions. The holidays ultimately help us to remember we are all here together, and show us how much we all really have in common.

So stay connected with family, even if they're far away, greet your co-workers or classmates with a smile, get involved and give back to your community around you. If we make all of the year a little bit more like the holiday season, the world will certainly be a better place.

*Connor Kockler is a student at St. John's University. He enjoys writing, politics and news, among other interests.*



PUBLIC NOTICE

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
SARTELL-ST. STEPHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 748  
NOV. 18, 2019  
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, chair; Jeremy Snoberger, vice chair; Pamela Raden, clerk; Amanda Byrd, treasurer; Lesa Kramer, director; Patrick Marushin, director; and Jeff Schwiebert, superintendent. Members absent: none.

A motion was made by Raden and seconded by Snoberger to APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS: change report order moving Construction Report to the second report. All in favor. Motion carried.

During the public comment opportunity, Mike Bastos, 1513 Lavender Ave. spoke on the topics of sports, safety, marching band uniforms and parking at the new high school. Doug Schueller, 2300 Wyoming Court, spoke on the topic of open enrollment for families with a Sartell address.

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

a. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on Oct. 21, 2019

Minutes of the special meeting and work session held on Nov. 6, 2019

Minutes of the special canvass meeting held on Nov. 8, 2019

b. Checks in the amount of \$1,826,461.33 as presented:

General Fund	1,444,858.36
Food Service Fund	120,163.71
Transportation Fund	163,241.16
Community Service Fund	41,102.22
Capital Expenditure Fund	52,731.42
Summer Rec Agency Fund	984.73
Custodial Fund	3,379.73
Check numbers 176703 – 177018	

ACHs in the amount of \$5,202.55 as presented:	
General Fund	4,756.60
Food Service Fund	32.29
Community Service Fund	413.66
ACH numbers 192000064-192000092	

Receipts in the amount of \$5,452,069.81 as presented:	
General Fund	3,165,708.24
Food Service Fund	272,809.37
Transportation Fund	1,193.95
Community Service Fund	202,571.55
Capital Expenditure Fund	17,126.22
Building Fund	2,107.60
Debt Service Fund	1,790,553.48
Receipts 46634 - 46824	

Wire transfers in the amount of \$257,825.66 as presented:	
General Fund	227,283.75
Food Service Fund	3,493.16
Capital Expenditure Fund	29.25
Building Fund	27,019.50
Wire transfers 201900252-201900319	

Building Fund Checks in the amount of \$1,230,701.72 as presented:	
Building Fund	1,230,701.72
Check numbers 600764 to 600795	

c. Accept the following donations:

Tony and Elise Dingmann Fund of Central Minnesota Community Foundation, High School Band Program, \$2,458.08, donation for the Band Program; LeSauk Lion Club, Substance-free Coalition, \$100, donation for printing banners.

d. Accept the resignation of Nicholas Hemmesch, SMS, student supervisor, 10/4/19; Sarah Lukken, SHS, media aid, 11/20/19; Nikki Mortezaee, ORE, para, 10/24/19; Marina Schroeder, DSC-Early Childhood, child care attendant, 11/6/19; Rebecca Simonsen, DSC-Early Childhood, child care attendant, 11/7/19.

e. Approve 2019-2020 District 748 Sartell-St. Stephen Professional Development and Continuous Goals.

f. Approve Combined Polling Places Resolution

Student Representative Report:

Student Representative Sam Brandt reported on happenings around the district. Pine Meadow will host a Thinking it Through presentation in the PAC at the High School tomorrow night. Oak Ridge dressed in 1950’s attire to engage students in learning about life during that decade. Both elementary schools hosted Viktor the Viking for bullying awareness last week. At Sartell Middle school the popular ski club will return this year and musical tryouts will be starting. Student Council is making blankets for service members serving overseas. Sartell High School students are working on “turkey in a bag” a community service project. The goal this year is having more than 75 families being served. The girls swim team went to state this past weekend and winter sports are off to a great start. Student Council will host a “Toys for Tots” drive the first week of December. Students are settling into the new High School as earlier concerns have now waned.

Construction Manager Report on Building Process:

Construction Manager Lee Gruen reported the new roof install on the old High School is going very well. The media center framing is done with drywall starting then paint and electrical work. The old music wing is being transitioned to a theater area, plumbing work is in progress in the science area, the old auto shop area is being transformed into a music area and demolition is completed in the administrative offices. The project is going very well with no huge surprises and the schedule remains on pace.

Audit Report:

Nancy Schulzetenberg, from BerganKDV presented the 2018-2019 audit results.

Superintendent Report: Jeff Schwiebert, Superintendent

Schwiebert reported he attended a dedication event earlier today with 50 other guests for the new nordic ski trails located behind the old high school. Congratulations to Brandon Nordhues and Joana Richards who were recently recognized by ACDA of Minnesota. The ACT results were recently released showing the High School with a composite score of 24.4, which is a direct reflection of building students, teachers and administration. A meeting was held with Mary Degiovanni from the City of

Sartell to discuss Community Education’s role with the Community Center, which has been going well, and the trail along Pinecone Road. Finally we passed the levy on Election Day with many thanks to the community.

District 748 2019-2020 World's Best Workforce Summary and Strategic Plan Report: Kay Nelson, assistant superintendent, Marie Pangerl, district assessment coordinator, and Principals Laura Arndt, Jason Mielke, Sara Nelson and Brenda Steve reported on the 2019-2020 District World’s Best Workforce Strategic Plan as well as reporting on results from the 2018-2019 World’s Best Workforce Strategic Plan.

Calendar Report: Superintendent Schwiebert reported on the draft of the 2020-2021 school year calendar.

Enrollment Report: Superintendent Schwiebert reported on the current 2019-2020 enrollment numbers for each school.

School Board Committee Report: No reports.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Snoberger to APPROVE #1-17:

New Employees/Changes: Brian Bluhm, DSC -Early Childhood, ECSE para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 3 hours/day (M-F), new position, 11/18/2019; Kirby Daubanton, SMS, para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 7 hours/day, new position, 11/5/2019; Amanda Hanson-Semega, SMS, student supervisor, \$13.87/hour, RI, S1, 2.25 hours/day, replacing Nicholas Hemmesch, 10/30/2019; Brooklyn Harren, DSC-Early Childhood, ECSE para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 3 hours/day (M,T,TH), replacing Molly Butkowski, 10/15/2019; Kimberly Helde, ORE, para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 6.25 hours/day, replacing Joy Shea, 11/7/2019; Jordyn Kruse, PME, para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 6.25 hours/day, new position, 10/29/2019; Rachel Miller, SHS, assistant robotics, \$908 (2.25 percent), BA, Step A (\$40,371), replacing Noah Schmelzer, 1/5/2020; Christian Pekarek, SHS, ninth-grade boys basketball, \$4,033 (10.5 percent), BA, Step 0 (\$38,410), replacing Raleigh Woodruff, 11/19/2019; Nick Peterson, SHS, weight training consultant, \$7,365, outside funded, n/a, 19-20 school year; Marina Schroeder, SHS, para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 7 hours/day, replacing Christina Studanski, 11/7/2019; Rebecca Simonsen, ORE, para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 6.25 hours/day, replacing Nikki Mortezaee, 11/1/2019; Tom Steve, SMS, sixth-grade science substitute, \$191.45/day, replacing Gary Rosin, 11/18/2019; Heather Yelle, SHS,

assistant nordic, \$1,824 (9.5 percent), BA, Step 0 (\$38,410), 50-percent contract, replacing Anna Lindell, 11/14/2019.

Leaves of Absence: Alicia Fosso, SMS, para, LOA, 1/2/20-6/2/20; Aubri Hill, DSC-Early Childhood, child care attendant, LOA, 11/7/19-12/9/19; Rachel Rhines, SMS, para, LOA, 11/12/19-11/27/19; Carmen Peterson, SMS, teacher, LOA, 11/14/19-3/1/20.

All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Raden and seconded by Marushin to APPROVE THE 2018-19 DISTRICT 748 WORLD’S BEST WORKFORCE PLAN SUMMARY FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS OF MINNESOTA STATE STATUTE 120B.11: STRIVING FOR THE WORLD’S BEST WORKFORCE. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Kramer and seconded by Byrd to APPROVE THE 2019-20 ISD 748 DISTRICT PLAN FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS OF MINNESOTA STATE STATUTE 120B.11: STRIVING FOR THE WORLD’S BEST WORKFORCE . All in favor. Motion carried.

Schedule Work Session and Committee Meetings:

Steering Committee Meeting - Thursday, Dec. 5 - Sartell District Office @ 1 p.m.

Future Truth in Taxation Meeting - Monday, Dec. 16 - Sartell High School @ 6 p.m.

Future Board Meeting - Monday, Dec. 16 - Sartell High School @ 6:30 p.m.

Board Member Gathering - TBD  
Committee assignments were reviewed.

The Board took a five-minute recess at 8:10 p.m. The meeting resumed at 8:20 p.m. A motion was made by Snoberger and seconded by Marushin TO CLOSE THE MEETING FOR NEGOTIATIONS STRATEGY PURSUANT TO MINNESOTA STAT. 13D.03. All in favor. Motion carried. Business Services Director Joe Prom and Human Resources Director Bart Appleton were invited to join the discussion.

A motion was made by Raden and seconded by Marushin at 8:38 p.m. TO OPEN THE MEETING. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion to ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:39 p.m. was made by Snoberger and seconded by Byrd. All in favor. Motion carried.

/s/ Pamela Raden, clerk

Publish: Dec. 27, 2019





## Happy Holidays!

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Save the date for our  
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**Thursday, Jan. 16 | 3-7pm**

Sneak preview 1-3 pm for current patients.

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## Community Calendar

**Is your event listed?** Send your information to: Newsleader Calendar, 1622 11th Ave. SE., St. Cloud, MN 56304 or e-mail it to [news@thenewsleaders.com](mailto: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, Dec. 27

**Benton County Museum,** 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. [mnbentonhistory.org](http://mnbentonhistory.org).

### Monday, Dec. 30

**Benton County Museum,** 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. [mnbentonhistory.org](http://mnbentonhistory.org).

### Thursday, Jan. 2

**Coffee and Conversation,** a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.

**Great River Regional Coin Club,** 6:30 p.m., Miller Auto Marine Sports Plaza, 2930 Second St. S., St. Cloud.

### Friday, Jan. 3

**Benton County Museum,** 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. [mnbentonhistory.org](http://mnbentonhistory.org).

### Saturday, Jan. 4

**Christmas Tree Drop-Off,** 9

a.m.- 3 p.m., Sartell compost site. Free to residents with a a foodshelf donation.

**Sartell Winter Market,** 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Community Center, p.m., 850 19th St. S.

### Monday, Jan. 6

**Benton County Museum,** 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. [mnbentonhistory.org](http://mnbentonhistory.org).

**Sartell Lions Club,** 6:30 p.m., upstairs of Blue Line Sports Bar and Grill, 1101 Second St. S., Sartell. 320-267-2591.

### Tuesday, Jan. 7

**Memory Writers** group develops topics and turns in stories, 10 a.m., Stearns History Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S, St Cloud.

### Wednesday, Jan. 8

**Breakfast Club,** 9-10 a.m., Stearns History Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S. Free for members, nominal fee for nonmembers. 320-253-8424.

### Thursday, Jan. 9

**Coffee and Conversation,** a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.

### Friday, Jan. 10

**Benton County Museum,** 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. [mnbentonhistory.org](http://mnbentonhistory.org).

## 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 [tricountycrimestoppers.org](http://tricountycrimestoppers.org). Crime Stoppers offers rewards up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for a crime.*

### Dec. 11

9:30 a.m. Collision. CR 120. A crash involved two vehicles but there was no impairment or injury.

### Dec. 12

1:30 p.m. Welfare check. Fourth Street N. A person reported homeowners had not picked up their mail and snow had not been removed from the driveway. An officer contacted the residents and was assured everything was alright.

### Dec. 13

2 p.m. Unwanted person. Second Street S. A business reported an individual was making verbal threats to customers. The officer learned the person had a revoked license. The officer advised the individual not to drive. The individual left on foot and was trespassed from the business.

### Dec. 14

9:30 a.m. Suspicious person. First Street N and Fourth Avenue N. Officer was dispatched to a residence regarding an individual outside by their garbage bin. The officer contacted the individual. The individual was trying to stay warm while waiting for a taxi. No further action was taken.

### Dec. 15

1 a.m. Fight. Second Street S. An officer was dispatched to a residence regarding a fight. The officer spoke with both individuals and neither wanted to press charges. There were no injuries. All parties were advised to call if further issues occurred.

### Dec. 16

5 p.m. Assault. 10th Avenue N. An officer was dispatched to an assault at a residence. The individual was arrested for fifth-degree assault and transported to Stearns County Jail.

### Dec. 17

1:30 a.m. Loud music. Troop Drive. An officer was dispatched to a residence regarding loud music. The complainant stated the unit below them was playing loud music for more than an hour. The officer made contact with the individual and told them to turn down the music.

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