

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

 Friday, Jan. 10, 2020
 Volume 25, Issue 1
 Est. 1995

Town Crier

Knights' free-throw set Saturday, Jan. 18

All girls and boys ages 9-14 in the Sartell/St. Stephen community are invited to the local level of competition for the 2020 Knights of Columbus Free-Throw Championship. The local competition will be at 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18, in St. Francis Xavier School, 219 Second St. N. This event is sponsored annually by the Knights of Columbus with winners from the local level advancing to district, region and state competitions. All contestants from the local level are recognized for their participation in the event and the winners at each level receive a trophy. Participants register at the event and must have written consent and age verification from a parent or guardian. Contact Jake Schneider at 320-761-7143 with any questions.

Sexual assault advocate volunteers needed

Volunteers at Central Minnesota Sexual Assault Center provide services for sexual assault victims at medical facilities, law-enforcement centers and during court and legal proceedings. Volunteers also answer phones, provide crisis intervention, information, referral and guidance to victims. Volunteers must be 18 or older, complete the state-mandated 40-hour training, sign up for a minimum of two crisis-line shifts a month and attend monthly advocate meetings as part of continuing education. Contact Bree, 320-251-4357.

Be a coffee buddy

Coffee buddies provide one-to-one social time with WACOSA clients. They will introduce you to clients that share your common interests and hobbies. Typical activities include putting a puzzle together, participating in arts and crafts, chatting about a favorite sports team or discussing weekends. Volunteer opportunities are available Monday through Friday at all their sites. Contact Lyn, at 320-257-5188 or lwelle@wacosa.org.

Drivers needed

The Assumption Community Faith in Action program covers most of Stearns County as well as the St. Cloud Metro area. Volunteers are essential to the program and provide such services as driving to appointments, light house-keeping and/or cooking, and friendly visiting. They are currently in need of drivers. Contact Assumption Faith in Action at 320-348-2316.

INSERTS:

 Country Manor
 Senior Housing

PineCone Vision Center

Donor offers matching funds for Riverview

 by Mike Knaak
 editor@thenewsleaders.com

Thanks to a donor who has pledged up to \$100,000 in matching funds, the Sartell-St. Stephen Education Foundation launched a campaign to fund cutting-edge equipment and materials for Riverview Intermediate School.

The effort is the group's largest fundraising campaign and the first to target specific programs that will serve third-, fourth- and fifth-graders in the district's remodeled intermediate

school when it opens next fall. The donor is longtime Sartell resident, foundation supporter and former City Council member Pat Lynch, Granite Logistics.

A team of administrators and teachers studied high-performing and newly designed schools and suggested three areas where the foundation's money could support programs beyond what was in the district budget, according to foundation board member Amy Trombley.

The money will support a STEAM (science, technology,

engineering, arts and math) lab in what is now the current shop space.

The swimming pool will be filled in and the space converted for learning that includes lots of physical activities.

Two classrooms will be converted to create a larger multi-media library.

The plan, Trombley said, is to "create key opportunities and experiences that parents look for for their children at a critical age."

When school opens next fall, third- through fifth-graders will

move to Riverview Intermediate, the renamed and remodeled middle school, while middle school students will attend the old high school.

While the district funds the building remodeling, the foundation's grants will equip the spaces and provide teacher-development training about how to use the spaces and materials.

STEAM lab

The converted shop space will feature career exploration tools. Equipment could include

Donor • page 2

Lions' tree collection continues spirit of giving

 by Carolyn Bertsch
 news@thenewsleaders.com

On a brisk, sunny Saturday morning, Jan. 4, Le Sauk Lions Club members drove up and down Sartell streets in four trucks with trailers to collect dry, brittle, expired Christmas trees to deliver to the city's compost site.

The trees were gathered from driveways in several neighborhoods in exchange for a minimum \$7 donation and a nonperishable food item.

"This year the club expects to exceed 130 trees," said Mark Herron, who headed up the project for the 2020 collection.

The club has been doing the fundraiser for about a decade, each year choosing a new local cause for the funds. Most years the tree collection activity makes about \$900, but this year's event did exceptionally well. The club is excited that a donation of \$1,770 is earmarked to benefit the family of Noah Fleish-



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

LeSauk Lions Club members load a Christmas tree onto their trailer in the Celebration neighborhood of Sartell Jan. 4. They are (left to right) Steven Walters, Jason Primus and Wayne Schreiner.

hacker, 14, of Sartell, who was diagnosed Dec. 12 with Burkitt lymphoma. Despite the cold air, the club members were in warm spirits

as they drove up and down neighborhood streets seeking discarded Christmas trees. One third of the way into the pick-up route, club member

Wayne Schreiner turned and smiled.

"Someone just gave us \$100," he said. "People are generous."

Pine Meadow student drop-off change delayed

 by Mike Knaak
 editor@thenewsleaders.com

The change to student drop-off traffic at Pine Meadow Elementary School planned for Jan. 2 has been delayed until signage can be printed.

No date has been set for the change that would block left turns into the school from Fifth Street N.

The change is needed, school and city officials said,

because traffic is backing up on Pinecone 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.

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

Drop-off • page 2



photo by Mike Knaak

Traffic lines up on Fifth Street N. as parents turn left to drop off their children at Pine Meadow Elementary School.

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Donor

from front page

engineering kits, drones, coding, robots and agriculture projects. The "Art" element recognizes there's a creative design component to science and technology.

Flexible activity space

Students will be able to use the activity space for lessons that "connect the mind and the body," Trombley said. Equipment could include a climbing wall and yoga mats as well as more space to move. Trombley offered an example of timing students as they run and then teaching them how to calculate median times.

The goal, according to the foundation, is to engage 8- to 11-year-olds' minds and bodies in a safe, positive and fun environment. Those activities propel students "to learn in new ways, promote healthy lifestyles and engage in teamwork and community building."

Multi-media library

Since it opened 50 years ago, the building's library continued to shrink as the space was converted to classrooms. With the remodeling, that lost space will be reclaimed.

"The media center will be moving to the heart of the school," said Zachery Dingmann, current middle school assistant principal who will be Riverview's principal. In addition to books, the multi-media

library will have space for student collaboration and producing videos, Dingmann said.

The foundation's materials describe the space as having "flexible seating, media displays, markerspace and age-appropriate shelving for books" that will again make the media center the heart of the school.

Research for the new spaces began two years ago as Dingmann and a rotating team of 15 teachers visited nine schools.

Dingmann described a visit to Five Hawks Elementary School in Prior Lake as "eye opening." The school incorporates an environmental focus and hands-on learning in everything from the classroom and cafeteria to the school's clubs and activities.

After the visits, the team compiled suggestions that offered the best opportunities while "staying true to who we are," Dingmann said. The staff then worked with the foundation to come up with a plan tied to the district's values of communication, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking.

The new opportunities planned for next fall extend outside the school as well, Dingmann said.

Working with the Department of Natural Resources, students will study the 60 acres of woods and prairie to the west of the school.

As the students and staff become comfortable with their "new" school, Dingmann looks forward to community part-

nerships and service-learning communities to give back to the community.

How to donate

To turn the plans for the new spaces into reality, the foundation is looking for contributions. To donate, go to www.ssef.net and click on the Riverview Campaign tab at the top of the page.

Dingmann said the district would not be able to offer these cutting-edge opportunities without the foundation.

"We are grateful for the Sartell-St. Stephen Foundation. We wouldn't be able to do it without them," Dingmann said.

"This is what keeps us a premier district in the state," Trombley said. "We have a supportive community, caring staff and experiences we can provide our kids."

Drop-off

from front page

block the entrance.

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.

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www.thenewsleaders.com

Published each Friday by Von Meyer Publishing Inc.

Publisher/Owner
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mailing address: 1622 11th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ST. JOSEPH NEWSLEADER, 1622 11th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304.

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. Crime Stoppers offers rewards up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for a crime.

Dec. 18
2 p.m. Collision. Pinecone Road S. and Heritage Drive. Two vehicles collided and there were no injuries. Both parties involved were able to leave the scene of the accident in their vehicles.

Dec. 19
8 p.m. Welfare check. Hwy. 15 and CR 1. A 911 caller reported a person lying on a snowbank at the corner of the intersection. An officer contacted the individual who stated they are diabetic. The officer transported the individual to St. Cloud Hospital.

Dec. 20
9 p.m. Traffic stop. Fourth Avenue S. An officer witnessed a vehicle speeding. The officer made contact with the individual and cited the driver.

Dec. 21
11:30 p.m. Attempted entry. Riverside Avenue S. An officer was dispatched to a residence regarding a possible break-in. The individual inside the residence heard noises and noticed the door handle moving. The individual stated they were not expecting anyone.

The officer searched the area on foot and used the night vision camera. The officer found no signs of activity.

Dec. 22
Midnight. Juvenile party. Blackberry Court. A person reported a party involving underage drinking. Officers went to the residence and found roughly 20 minors consuming alcohol. The individuals were cited for the infractions.

Dec. 23
10 a.m. Escort. Second Street S. An officer escorted a funeral procession.

Dec. 24
11:30 a.m. Suspicious vehicle. 23rd Avenue N. Complainant called regarding a vehicle stopping at all surrounding mailboxes. The vehicle was unmarked, and the complainant was unsure if it was a legitimate mail carrier. An officer located the vehicle and verified it was a legitimate delivery service.

Dec. 25
10:30 p.m. Welfare check. Hi Vue Drive. A caller was concerned for the safety of children who were believed to be at the residence. The officer checked the residence and surroundings but found no sign of the parties believed to be involved. No further action was taken.

Dec. 26
3:30 a.m. Intoxicated person. 11th Street S. A caller reported a relative left a residence

on foot while very intoxicated. The officer located the individual and offered assistance. The individual refused help and returned to the residence. No further action was taken.

Dec. 27
6:30 a.m. Assist person. Sundance Road. Caller was in a mobility scooter and got stuck on ice for approximately 30 minutes. The officer assisted the individual by getting them safely to their vehicle.

Dec. 28
1 a.m. Agency assist. Zakrabshek Court. An officer assisted another agency in the city of Sartell. An individual fled from a vehicle upon officers initiating a traffic stop. The individual was found to be extremely intoxicated. An officer transported the individual to St. Cloud Hospital.

Dec. 29
5:15 p.m. Disorderly person. Twin Rivers Court. An employee at a business called in a disorderly customer. The customer was threatening staff after claiming they gave back counterfeit money. The officer arrived after the disorderly customer left the business. The officer worked with staff to get video footage for further action.

Dec. 30
9 p.m. Traffic stop. River Oaks Lane. An officer recognized a vehicle from previous traffic stops with the known registered owner being revoked. The officer made contact with

the driver who then admitted to being revoked. The individual was cited for the infraction.

Dec. 31
3 a.m. Fire alarm. 15th Street S. An officer was dispatched to a residence. An individual fell asleep with a lit cigarette that then started a couch on fire. The officer noticed smoke but no flames remaining. Sartell Fire Department arrived and ventilated the area.

Jan. 1
8 a.m. Collision. Fourth Avenue and Second Street N. There was a collision involving two vehicles. The officer assessed the individuals involved and noticed no signs of injury. Both vehicles were safe to drive. The officer advised the individuals to exchange information.

Jan. 2
8 p.m. Welfare check. CR 1. A 911 caller reported a person stumbling around who appeared to be intoxicated and wet. An officer searched the area for a person matching the description but did not locate anyone.

Jan. 3
7 p.m. No-contact-order violation. Seventh Street N. An officer was dispatched to a residence because a person feared another individual was violating their Domestic Abuse No-Contact Order. The person said they were receiving text messages from an individual,

which violated the order. An assisting agency arrested the individual who sent the text messages and transported them to Stearns County Jail.

Jan. 4
8:30 a.m. Hit-and-run. CR 120. A local business reported a possible hit-and-run. The officer found there were no suspects or cameras on site. The complainant stated they needed a report for insurance purposes. The officer assisted with a report.

Jan. 5
8 p.m. Argument. Roberts Road. Officers were dispatched to an apartment complex for a verbal dispute that could become physical. Officers spoke to the individuals and determined no crimes were committed but advised the individuals to leave the complex. The officers advised the complainant to call if further issues came up.

Jan. 6
6:30 p.m. Traffic stop. Pinecone Road and Seventh Street N. An officer witnessed a vehicle speeding. The officer stopped the vehicle and the driver was cited.

Jan. 7
11 a.m. Fraud. Pine Siskin Avenue. Complainant attempted to mail a check to the city of Sartell. The bank called to verify information. It was found an individual attempted to cash the check in Minneapolis. Follow-up is in progress.

People

Three Sartell students graduated on Dec. 14 from Minnesota State University, Mankato. A previous news release by the university included incorrect information.

They are the following: **Hannah Lakmann**, bachelor's degree; **Kristen Manning**, bachelor's degree, cum laude; **McKenzie Specht**, bachelor's degree, summa cum laude.

Central Minnesota Arts Board awarded \$119,388 in sup-

port of 19 regional arts projects. The grants included **Central Minnesota Youth Orchestra**, \$7,000, World's Fair: Pictures at an Exhibition performance inspired by visual and performing arts through the eyes of a World's Fair experience April 4 at First United Methodist Church in Sartell.

Criteria used in evaluating applications include the following: artistic quality and merit, demonstrated need, outcomes and evaluation, and ability to

complete the proposal.

Meghan Hicks of St. Stephen was named to the fall dean's list at Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa. The list honors students who earn a grade-point average of at least 3.5.

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Little Sabres Preschool Open House

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Students must be 3 or 4 by Sept. 1, 2020.

5:30-7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 27

Stop in for a tour, meet staff and pick up registration paperwork.

Registration starts Monday, Feb. 10.

 Little Sabres Preschool

Oak Ridge Elementary School
1111 27th St. N., Sartell





Midnight Dispatcher Position Available!

The Department of Life Safety at Saint John's University is looking for a new Midnight Dispatcher to join the team.

The primary work shift is
Monday-Friday, Midnight- 8 a.m.

For further information and to apply online, please visit our employment opportunities webpage at:
<http://employment.csbsju.edu> or email employment@csbsju.edu with questions.

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PET CARE GUIDE | HEALTH CONDITIONS

Diabetic Pets

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, diabetes is most common in older pets but still occurs in younger and pregnant animals. Much like when the disease is found in people, early detection makes it more manageable. Learn the warning signs and how to care for your pet suffering from diabetes.

A common form of the disease found in dogs is deemed Type I. It is typically caused when the pancreas is unable to produce efficient levels of insulin. Pups who suffer from this disorder will require special therapy treatments to survive. Cats will more commonly experience Type II, which is the lack of normal response to insulin.

Diabetic pets can live long and healthy lives with proper treatment. However, if left untreated, there may be life-threatening consequences.

SYMPTOMS

It is sometimes easy to notice the symptoms and bring it to the attention of your veterinarian. Here are a few things to look for if you see your pet isn't acting like themselves, per the AVMA.

- Excessive water drinking and increased urination.
- Decreased appetite and cloudy eyes.
- Chronic or recurring infections such as skin and urinary issues.

RISK FACTORS

While our beloved pets can be affected by diabetes at any age, the AVMA reports dogs are usually diagnosed around the age of seven, whereas diabetic cats are usually older than six.

It is also reported female dogs are at double the risk of male dogs, and certain canine breeds are predisposed to the condition. A study performed by the National Institutes of Health revealed pugs, toy poodles, miniature schnauzers and miniature poodles are at a high risk of developing diabetes.



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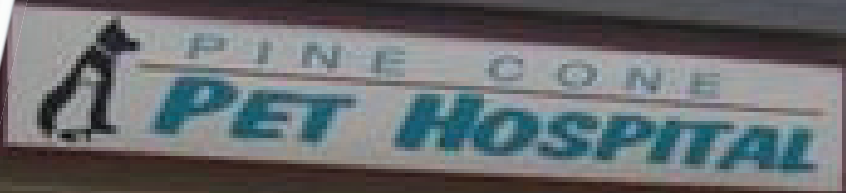
Once it is discovered that your pet is diabetic, your vet will discuss their treatment plan.

Typically, a dog or cat will need life-long insulin injections, frequent examinations and blood and urine tests. A veterinarian will show you

how to give the insulin shot. Be honest with your vet if you don't feel the condition is getting better as dosages may require an adjustment.

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Organize your Finances

Your debts don't disappear at the time of death. In many cases, your family may be held responsible for any outstanding obligations. When planning your estate, spend time organizing your finances to ensure an executor knows what you owe and how to make the payments.

A life insurance policy means more than leaving something behind for your loved ones, it should also cover funeral expenses and fund your financial responsibilities. Determine the amount you owe and adjust your plan with an insurance agent.

Your family members will be dealing with grief at the time of your death, what you do to ease the stress before the fact, can make it easier for them to adjust.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

You should print out clear documentation of life insurance policies and retirement plans, including pensions and annuities. Keep them in a safe place and disclose the location with loved ones. At the time of death, they will require these forms to ensure your contribution is dispersed to the right person, rather than going unclaimed and ending up with the state.

It's a good idea to give copies to your estate planner, attorney or even in a safe-deposit box. These documents should be easily accessible when they are needed.

GATHERING DEBTS

Another set of documents you will need to disclose with your estate executor is a list of your financial responsibilities. These include mortgages, vehi-



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cle commitments and credit card debts. Keep your account information in a secure and organized portfolio to make payments easier.

Don't forget to update balances regularly to keep numbers accurate.

A great expert to have when gathering your debts is a financial advisor. Together, you can set up beneficiaries for retirement plans, allow family to access accounts and even create savings strategies for your surviving family and finances.

LEAVE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS

Modern technology makes bill paying easy with services like autopay. Make sure your loved ones know how and what comes out of your bank account.

It's easy to forget small charges like subscriptions and utilities.

They should know how to opt out of these fees as every dollar can be crucial when meeting final financial obligations.

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Opinion

Our View

Road money unites Republicans, Democrats

What does it take to get six Democrats and three Republicans to work on the same goal?

The answer: When Minnesota needs federal money to rebuild roads, bridges and highway interchanges.

Most of Minnesota's congressional delegation wrote to Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao asking why the state didn't get any funding through the Department of Transportation's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development grant program this year.

Sixth District Rep. Tom Emmer joined with his Republican colleagues, First District Rep. Jim Hagedorn and Eighth District Rep. Pete Stauber as well as Democrats Angie Craig, who represents the Second District, Third District Rep. Dean Phillips, Fifth District Rep. Ilhan Omar and Seventh District Rep. Collin Peterson. Minnesota's two Democratic senators, Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith, signed on too.

The Minnesota crew's letter asked: "To provide clarity to the many competitive applicants from our state, we ask DOT provide insight into the grant-selection process. Since the inception of the Transportation Investment Generating Economy Recovery program in 2010, discretionary federal transportation funding from TIGER, and now BUILD, has played an integral role in improving the safety of Minnesota's transportation infrastructure, including funding for rebuilding bridges, roads and highway interchanges. Throughout the years, the state of Minnesota, its counties, and cities have submitted competitive grant applications to address critical transportation needs in the state and have been awarded these funds.

"While DOT awarded \$900 million in BUILD grants this fiscal year, Minnesota did not receive any funding while other states received up to three grants. As a result, Minnesota communities were deprived of a key opportunity to improve the safety and efficiency of transportation networks across our state as well as the economic benefits of direct investments in reliable infrastructure."

The letter concluded with a typical Minnesota nice passive/aggressive paragraph: "We respectfully request you share with us the determination behind the merits and compared benefits of projects against Minnesota applications. As you consider award funding for next year's BUILD grant program, we urge you to provide clarity to applicants about their projects to improve Minnesota's transportation infrastructure."

Emmer was more blunt in a statement accompanying the letter. "Minnesota received zero federal funding for one of the largest transportation and infrastructure grant programs. This is absolutely unacceptable."

Despite the partisan passions on Capitol Hill, our representatives still do work together. Elected officials from different parties usually reach consensus on infrastructure projects. Roads, bridges, railways and airports benefit everyone. There are no Republican roads or Democratic bridges.

The argument is usually over how and who pays for the projects.

Perhaps Emmer can round up his Minnesota colleagues to speak with one voice on other pressing issues that need action. Maybe this group could agree on climate-change legislation. How about affordable health care or immigration?

When legislators come out of their corners and peel off their labels, action results.

Let's hear from all our representatives about how they've worked together to create solutions.

SCSU dropped the ball on gender equity

When St. Cloud State University announced last month it was dropping football, fans, students, athletes and alumni debated the wisdom of that move as a strategy to save money and work toward gender equity in sports.

Many universities tie their branding to high-profile, successful teams, but the debate over football misses a more important point: the university has failed miserably to offer equal opportunities, treatment and benefits to its female athletes.

Last summer, a federal judge ruled the university must take immediate steps to bring gender equity to its athletic programs as required by Title IX, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in programs that receive federal funds. The university will eliminate football as well as men's and women's golf in moves intended to ease financial pressures and comply with federal rules balancing men's and women's athletics. The university said it would also add men's soccer, which is much cheaper than football.

Traditionally, school spirit and emotion played big parts in college football's 150-year history. A successful sports program brings the entire university national attention. We don't need to look far for examples. How many people outside of Minnesota would know about St. John's University without its 60-year history of national championship play? Until St. Cloud State entered Division I hockey and achieved top rankings year after year, excellence in Minnesota hockey equaled Gophers, not Huskies. Minnesota's football bowl victory over Auburn, watched by a national television audience, delivered marketing worth millions of dollars.

As important as sports are to a university's brand, its values are more

**Mike
Knaak**
Editor



important. I'm a graduate of St. Cloud State, I was an adjunct faculty member for many years and I've reported about the university since my days on the campus newspaper. Because of my history with the university, I was truly embarrassed when I read the federal court ruling.

Trial testimony uncovered many failures going back years. The evidence not only showed the university failed to provide equity, but administrators tried to game the system by directing coaches to cut or increase rosters to meet equity goals.

Why did anybody think these actions were good ideas?

- Basketball Coach Lori fish testified her ideal roster was 13 players, but she was told to list 18. She testified she typically plays eight athletes and with a roster of 18, not everyone will get playing time.

- Baseball Coach Pat Dolan said he dropped early season nonconference games to delay the date of the first competition (when roster numbers are set) to give him more time to pare down his roster to the 37-player limit.

- Meanwhile, Softball Coach Paula U'Ren was told to do the opposite by Holly Schreiner, St. Cloud State's assistant athletic director for compliance and student services. When the team ended up with fewer athletes than the minimum, Schreiner directed U'Ren to try out more players and cut them later.

- Schreiner told the coach of St. Cloud State's national champion wres-

ting team, Steve Costanza, that he could add players after she filed her compliance reports and those new players would not count against the roster cap.

- During home games, the women's basketball team uses public restrooms near the gym because the ones in the locker room are on another floor and too far away. Players and coaches line up with spectators to use the facilities.

- At Selke Field, U'Ren was told to use a fire hose to water the grass. Prior to bringing in recruits, U'Ren weeds the infield.

- Although male and female athletes are served by the same training staff, the trainers have offices in the men's locker room.

- St. Cloud State did not conduct formal interviews with students, coaches or administrators from 1984 to the present and the university did not research high school, community or amateur participation in sports. Heather Weems, who has been athletics director since 2012, did not have any knowledge about any unmet interest and abilities of female students.

These examples and additional findings in the ruling document is why Judge John Tunheim ordered the university to take immediate action.

While St. Cloud State's enrollment dropped from 12,050 in 2011 to 8,506 in 2017, Tunheim wrote that financial challenges are not reasons for exceptions to Title IX.

St. Cloud State's leaders, past and present have repeatedly dropped the ball on issues of gender equity in sports. Allowing years of unequal treatment of female athletes and then gaming the system to show compliance is a far bigger fumble than ending football.

Is climate change coming? It's here!

Sometimes, when I hear the words "climate change," I laugh. I laugh not because climate change is funny; it's the unfunniest topic of all.

I laugh because some people choose to ignore what's happening right in front of their noses. That is part of the humor in a true story brother-in-law Kurt told me years ago.

One scorching summer afternoon, Kurt was sitting sipping a beer at Rumor's Bar south of Rice. The others at the bar were tossing off remarks about the blistering weather.

"I bet we're gonna get a drought," said one.

"Oh yeah, you can say that again," said another. "Hasn't been this hot and dry in a long time. Remember the drought of '86, or was it '87? Terrible."

That conversation went on and on, Kurt recalled. Sure enough, drought's a-comin'!

Meantime, Kurt was staring at the large window. It was being virtually sandblasted by furious dust-filled gusts of dry wind. Bits of dry sticks and dead brush like tumbleweeds were being whipped against the windows, like a scene from a desert cowboy movie.

"Yep, we're headin' for a drought" someone repeated.

Finally, an exasperated Kurt blurted

**Dennis
Dalman**
Reporter



out loudly to the dire forecasters.

"Drought?" Kurt asked. "You say we're headin' for a drought?"

Sudsy nods all around. Kurt extended his right arm, pointing to the windows. "Look!" he said.

Nursing their beers, they raised their heads, turning wide-eyed to the window.

"Drought coming, you say?!" Kurt shouted. "Duh! We're IN it!"

During that same week, there were burning bans, heat advisories and reports of drooping cattle, wilting crops. Those people were not paying attention, oblivious to the drought already surrounding them.

In that sense, they remind me of the deniers of climate-change/global warming. We're in it, but some don't see it. Unlike those bar patrons who at least predicted drought, the climate deniers, blind to the future, refuse to see disaster coming. Global warming, they scowl, is an old hippy notion; it's a socialist/communist plot against Ameri-

can capitalism; it's a hoax concocted by that liberal-radical Al Gore who made a movie about it just to scare people and make money; and, "By the way," they often crow, "If the planet is warming up, how come it was 40 below the other day?"

Among the naysayers are those blinded by their wealth, including carbon-fuel tycoons, who think oh well, if doom's on the way, we'll build our fortresses on mountain sides or live in air-conditioned Manhattan towers far above the soggy strife. The Big Apple will become a neo-Venice where the tower residents can be rowed in spiffy gondolas from place to place. Floating restaurants? And if worse comes to worse, they can always buy tickets to another planet. Ah, such a comforting fantasy.

Meantime, back here down on earth, back on Planet Reality, climate warming is an ugly fact glaring us in the face. Glaciers are melting rapidly; animal species are slipping into extinction (human species not far behind), record storms and rampant fires are becoming more destructive, the Amazon forest is burning constantly, droughts and/or floods are causing losses in food production and resultant starvation. It's

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from page 6

already happening; we're in it. Alas, there are none so blind as they who will not see.

The future is terrifying because as we know (or should know), climate change can cause and/or make worse overcrowding, land disputes, famines, unemployment, waves of displaced people, dictatorships, hatreds, deepening prejudices and wars.

We need an American leader who understands what is happening and who can inspire and motivate all of us, everywhere, to help restore this planet's health – that is, if the damage is even reversible. That leader is obviously not the Denier-in-Chief who now occupies the White House.

There is that awful, nagging question: Is it too late? Precious time is ticking away, options running out. Join the fight against global warming. A vital part of that fight is never ever to vote for any political ostrich who is a climate-change denier.

Letter to the editor

Embrace a plant-based diet for the new year

Serge Nesbitt, Sartell

The end-of-year/New Year holidays seem to whiplash us from one extreme to the other: eat, drink and be merry versus the customary New Year's resolutions: reduce social media, reduce weight and embrace a plant-based diet!

One third of consumers already report reducing their consumption of animal foods. Hundreds of

school, college, hospital, and corporate cafeterias have embraced Meatless Monday. Even fast-food chains Chipotle, Denny's, Panera, Subway, Taco Bell, White Castle are rolling out plant-based options.

A dozen start-ups, led by Beyond Meat and Impossible Foods, are creating healthy, eco-friendly, compassionate, convenient, delicious plant-based meat and dairy alternatives. Meat-industry giants Tyson Foods, Cargill and Canada's Maple Leaf Foods have invested heavily in plant-based meat development. So have a number of Microsoft, Google, Twitter and

PayPal pioneers.

According to Plant-Based Foods Association, plant-based food sales have grown by 20 percent in recent years, 10 times the growth rate of all foods. Sales of plant-based cheeses, creamers, butter, yogurts and ice creams are exploding at a 50-percent growth rate. Plant-based milks now account for 15 percent of the milk market.

The plant-based New Year's resolution requires no sweat or deprivation – just some fun exploration of your favorite supermarket, restaurants and food websites.

Is your event listed? Send your information to: Newsleader Calendar, 1622 11th Ave. SE., St. Cloud, MN 56304., e-mail it to news@thenewsleaders.com. Most events are listed at no cost. Those events are typically free or of minimal charge for people to attend. Some events, which have paid advertising in the Newsleaders, are also listed in the calendar and may charge more.

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

Monday, Jan. 13
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhistory.org.
Sartell City Council, 6 p.m., City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road N.

Tuesday, Jan. 14
Sartell Chamber of Commerce, 11:30 a.m., Waters Church, 1227 Pinecone Road. 320-258.6061. info@sartell-chamber.com.

Le Sauk Township Board, 7 p.m., Township Hall, 220 Fourth Ave. S., Sartell.
Holistic Moms Network, 7-8:30 p.m., Good Earth Co-op, 2010 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud. 320-252-2489.
National Alliance on Mental Health, 7-8:30 p.m., Calvary Community Church, 1200 Roosevelt Road, St. Cloud. The group helps parents raising a child with mental illness learn coping skills and develop problem-solving skills. 320-654-1259.

Wednesday, Jan 15
SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together), 9 a.m., Sartell Police Department, 310 Second St. S., Sartell.
Advocates for Independence, 2-4 p.m., Independent Lifestyles, 215 Benton Drive N., Sauk Rapids. 320-529-9000.
Brockway Township Board, 7:30 p.m., Township Hall, 43710 85th Ave. N.

Thursday, Jan. 16
Coffee and Conversation, a senior

discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Speaker: Jayme Steinbach, Sartell-St. Stephen school district food service director. Topic: History of School Lunch.
American Legion-Sartell, open to all veterans young and old, 6 p.m., Sartell Community Center., 850 19th St. S. john.denney@charter.net.
MOPS, Mothers of Preschoolers monthly social, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Celebration Lutheran Church, 1500 Pinecone Road N., Sartell.

Friday, Jan. 17
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, 8:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m., American Legion, 17 Second Ave. S., Waite Park. 320-339-4533. stcloudsingles.net.

Saturday, Jan. 18
Community Meal, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 1107 Pinecone Road S., Sartell. Free.

Sunday, Jan. 19
Best Omelette in Town, 8 a.m.-noon, American Legion, 17 Second Ave. N, Waite Park. Nominal fee Includes hash browns, toast, coffee, juice and water.

Monday, Jan. 20
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhistory.org.
St. Cloud Area Parkinson's Disease Support Group, 1-2:30 p.m., Independent Lifestyles, 215 Benton Drive N., Sauk Rapids.

St. Joseph Rod and Gun Club, 7 p.m., American Legion, 101 W Minnesota St., St. Joseph.

Tuesday, Jan. 21
Sartell Economic Development Commission, noon, Government Center, 75 Callaway St. E.
Memory Writers group develops topics and turns in stories. 10 a.m., Stearns History Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S, St Cloud.

Mobile office hours, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Sartell City Hall. A caseworker from Rep. Tom Emmer's office will be available to handle issues with federal government services.
Dementia Friends information session, 1-2 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Learn what dementia is, what it's like to live with the disease and communicate with people who have dementia.
St. Cloud Area Genealogists, 7 p.m., Stearns History Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S., St. Cloud. stearns-museum.org.

Thursday, Jan. 23
Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Puzzle day.

Friday, Jan. 24
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mnbentonhistory.org.



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photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Sabres flex at Vex

Sartell's Raging Bulls Team gives "thumbs up" to compete against Ramsey's Team Furious George Jan. 4 at the Vex EDR Tournament which took place at the Sartell Middle School. Thirty teams from seven middle schools competed in the all-day event and three Sartell teams, including Raging Bulls, qualified for the state tournament. Pictured are (left to right) Justin Hunt, 12; Grant Privratsky, 12; Domanick Gehrking, 14; Dylan Weakly, 14; and Danny Rosenthal, 13.

New guidelines set for roadside memorials

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

It's one of the saddest sights along roadways: crosses, flowers and memorabilia "planted" in a ditch where a loved one died in an accident.

However, such memorials are also a cause for public safety. That is why the Sartell City Council passed an ordinance at its Dec. 9 meeting regarding roadside memorials.

In a memo to the council, city staff stated the following: "The city of Sartell understands the pain caused by these events (deaths and injuries from accidents), and the city recognizes that some people's grieving could include the placement of memorials near the site. The city of Sartell will be understanding and compassionate since this is a sensitive issue and it (the city) will encourage other ways to memorialize the person(s) rather than a marker along the roadway since the main concern is safety."

The memo lists many potential safety hazards of roadside memorials. Then it details the newly adopted city guidelines regarding such memorials.

Temporary memorial markers may be placed along city roads and remain for an appropriate time, not to exceed six months.

Memorial markers will be removed if they do not meet safety criteria that include negatively impacting the free flow of traffic; located outside the clear zone but constitute a hazard if hit by either on- or off-roadway vehicles; they interfere with routine maintenance operations.

Any memorial markers removed by city workers will be stored at the public works shop for a maximum of 30 days, during which time they may be retrieved. If not reclaimed in that time, they will be disposed of. The guidelines went into effect Dec. 9 right after the City Council approved them.



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We hope you will be able to join us at this fun annual event!
See our website for all the information: riveroflifeag.org

River of Life Church: 22881 178th Ave, Cold Spring
Feel free to contact us if you have any further questions at 320.597.7777

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