

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

 Friday, Feb. 21, 2020
 Volume 25, Issue 4
 Est. 1995

Town Crier

SYHA Raffle:

\$41,000 in prizes

Sartell Youth Hockey is now conducting its annual Scheels raffle with a grand prize of \$1,499.99; 100 prizes in total; 1:20 odds. Winners can choose the awarded firearm, with proper credentials, or a gift card for the awarded value. The gift card is redeemable for any merchandise in the St. Cloud store. Tickets may be purchased at both Blue Line Bar & Grill locations, the Firing Line Indoor Range & Gun Shop, during varsity hockey games at Bernick's Arena or from SYHA members. For more information, visit sartellhockeyraffle.com.

K of C breakfast set March 1 for Pregnancy Resource Center

Knights of Columbus Council #7057 St. Joseph has scheduled a monthly breakfast from 8:30 a.m. to noon Sunday, March 1, at Heritage Hall, Church of St. Joseph, 12 W. Minnesota St., St. Joseph. Proceeds will help purchase two new ultrasound machines for the Pregnancy Resource Center. Come and help us support this very worthy cause while enjoying a homemade breakfast of Pep's pork sausage, St. Joseph Meat Market sausage, pancakes, hash browns, fruit, fresh scrambled eggs, caramel and cinnamon rolls, and beverages. Sunday Mass will be at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

Sartell weather website now online

A website focusing on Sartell weather has been launched by a local weather enthusiast. Sartell East Weather features up-to-the-minute reports on current weather conditions, live radar and satellite imagery, forecasts, maps and other information. The free site is operated as a hobby by Bill Turgeon of Sartell, who owns a personal weather station and submits weather data to several weather networks in the United States and abroad. The site's online address is www.sartelleastweather.com.

Sartell Summer Baseball registration now open

The 2020 Summer Sartell Baseball Registration is open. Please go to SartellBaseball.com to register. Find more information by following us on Facebook.

Sartell Swarm seeks participants

The Sartell Swarm 2020 summer season registration is open now through March 15 (10U-18U) and May 15 (8U and 10U). Fast-pitch softball teams for girls ages preK-18 will be formed by grade for school year 2019-2020. For more information or to register, visit sartellfastpitch.com or contact Greg Gack at greg@sartellfastpitch.com.

Splash pad approved for Watab Park

 by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Sartell's Watab Park will boast a state-of-the-art splash pad this coming summer now the City Council has approved a final design and cost for the amenity.

The council voted to approve a design by the Vortex company, an international leader in water-related projects for recreation. The splash pad will cost \$173,500, slightly under a previously estimated cost of \$175,000.

Vortex, headquartered in Pointe-Claire, Quebec (Canada), has created more than 8,000 water-related amenities in 50 countries, including many varieties of splash pads.

The size of the figure-8-shaped pad will be 2,204 square feet. The water spray functions will cover about half that area, with the rest of the pad being splash-free but with other dry play functions featured.



Artist's conception courtesy of Vortex

The splash pad approved for Watab Park in Sartell will look similar to this Vortex artist's conception.

At the splash pad, water will spew, mist or flow from many whimsical cartoon-like structures. For examples, some of Vortex splash pads feature structures such as a fish, a sailboat, a foaming geyser, a sea serpent and water bug.

The pad is designed for people of all ages to enjoy, including

people who are physically challenged. With water conservation in mind, its water is recirculated via a purification system.

Construction of the pad will be done this spring. It will take the place of a wading pool that had provided water fun to children for several decades in Watab Park. That pool and its

pool house were recently demolished because they had become too expensive to maintain. A new poolhouse will be built in conjunction with the splash pad, just two of the new features and improvements in the ambitious Watab Park renewal project. Other amenities will include resurfacing of the tennis courts and a playground.

The costs will be borne by a grant of \$141,000 from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, as well as money from the Sartell Parks Fund and some revenue from the city's share of the regional half-cent sales tax.

The council's next item for action on the Watab Park renewal project is to consider price quotes at a future council meeting. The city will also maintain a budgeted amount for finishing touches at the park, such as sidewalk connections, for example.

Scouts tie blankets for medical team trip

 by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

It may be cookie season, but Sartell's Girl Scout Troop 123 is more focused on blankets and Beanie Babies than Peanut Butter Patties.

The girls are making fleece blankets and collecting Beanie Babies to send along with a Sartell area medical team headed to Guatemala next month.

On a recent Thursday night, the girls gathered around a table at the Community Center, carefully cutting the material for fleece blankets. The goal: 25 blankets to be used to comfort adults and children after surgery or other medical procedures. The troop is buying 25

Blankets • page 2



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Girl Scout members work together to make blankets Feb. 6 at the Sartell Community Center. They are (left to right) Mallory Thueringer, 11, of Rice; Jenna Navratil, 11, of Sartell; Janel Bitzan, of Sartell; Ruby Carlson, 11, of Rice and Kelsey Kinville, 14, of Sartell. Bitzan is one of the troop leaders.

Voting options for presidential primary

 by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

10 a.m.-3 p.m. Feb. 29; and
 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m. March 2.

Stearns County has two locations for in-person absentee voting:

Stearns County Administration Center
Auditor Office, Room 148
705 Courthouse Square
St. Cloud
8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Stearns County Service Center License Center West
3301 CR 138
Waite Park
8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

Voters may apply for an absentee ballot online at mn.votes.org and a ballot will be mailed.

To have an absentee ballot mailed to you or return a Presidential Primary Absentee Application by mail, fax or email to:
Stearns County Service Center
Attn: Elections

3301 County Road 138
Waite Park MN 56387
Phone: 320-656-3920
Fax: 320-203-6960

Email: elections@co.stearns.mn.us

To find your election day polling place, go to <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>

The presidential primary is new this year. In the past, the political parties selected presidential candidates at precinct

Voting • page 2

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Blankets

from front page

more blankets to donate.

Blankets for younger patients are decorated with monkeys, puppies and unicorns while adults will receive more age-appropriate patterns.

"I like that we get to help people," Ruby Carlson, 11, said.

Mallory Thueringer, says making a blanket takes her about half an hour. "I take a lot of breaks," the 11-year-old said.

Ruby's older sister, Ava,

would like to join the team and see the treatments, which include burns and cleft palates. The girls' grandmother told them about the trip after she saw a presentation at church.

"I'm adopted from Guatemala, so it's neat to do something to help people from Guatemala," Ava said.

The Beanie Babies are being collected in a box in the Community Center lobby and donations are appreciated. The troop hopes to collect 100.

"After kids get surgery, they need something to snuggle or hug. Something to distract

them when they are going in," Ava said.

The girls are also buying coloring books and Crayons and assembling them to give to children while they are waiting for their parents to be treated.

The other troop members are Kelsey Kinville and Jenna Navratil. The girls are students at Sartell High School and Sartell Middle School.

Cookies are still on the troop's agenda. They have a series of sales planned, including Feb. 23, March 8 and 15 from 1-8 p.m. at Parkwood Cinema in Waite Park

Voting

from front page

caucuses. Voters will find some new procedures when they vote.

When the voter checks in at the polling place, an election official will ask for a party preference. Voters must select either the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party or the Republican Party. The two other major parties, the Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis Party and the Legal Marijuana Now Party, are not participating

in the primary.

The political parties provided the list of candidates. Of the 15 candidates listed on the DFL ballot, seven have dropped out since the list was submitted. Only Donald Trump's name appears on the Republican ballot.

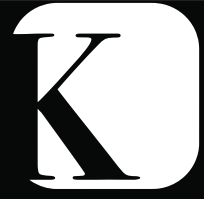
A voter's choice of party ballot will be recorded and is private data. However, a list of who voted in a presidential nomination primary and the political party each voter selected will be provided to the chair of each major political party. How a voter voted on the ballot will

be secret.

Precinct caucuses will still take place on Feb. 25, one week before the primary. While not selecting presidential candidates, caucus participants will vote on party policies and endorse candidates for state offices and U.S. Senate.

The Minnesota Secretary of State has an online precinct caucus finder at <https://caucus-finder.sos.state.mn.us/>

The primary election to narrow the field for other local and state offices is Aug. 11 and the general election is Nov. 3.



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www.thenewsleaders.com

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Newsleader staff members have the responsibility to report news fairly and accurately and are accountable to the public. Readers who feel we've fallen short of these standards are urged to call the Newsleader office at 320-363-7741. If matters cannot be resolved locally, readers are encouraged to take complaints to the Minnesota News Council, an independent agency designed to improve relationships between the public and the media and resolve conflicts. The council office may be reached at 612-341-9357.

1608 11th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304

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Phone: (320) 363-7741 • E-mail: news@thenewsleaders.com

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.

Feb. 4

12:20 a.m. Traffic stop. Victory Avenue. An officer witnessed a driver fail to stop at a stop sign. The officer made contact with the driver. The driver was given a verbal warning.

Feb. 5

5:30 p.m. Suspicious vehicle. Centerville Road. A complainant called 911 regarding a suspicious vehicle following a mail carrier that could potentially be stealing packages. No license plate was given. The officer followed up with the complainant but without a license plate there was nothing they could do because no crime had been committed.

Feb. 6

7:45 p.m. Community policing. Pinecone Road N. An officer went to a Sartell basketball game to engage with the community.

Feb. 7

7:30 p.m. CO Alarm. Seventh Street N. Police and fire were dispatched to a carbon monoxide alarm. The complainant was not ill. Police and fire assisted in turning the alarms off and

contacted Xcel.

Feb. 8

8:30 a.m. Fraud. CR 120. A person reported the attempted use of their stolen credit card at a business. Officers got surveillance video that showed a suspect attempting to use the card. Officers worked with the business to track down the individual.

Feb. 9

6:30 p.m. Traffic stop. Second Avenue S. and Eighth Avenue S. An officer stopped a vehicle for loud exhaust and a suspended object. The officer gave the driver a verbal warning for the two infractions.

Feb. 10

8:15 a.m. Collision. CR 120. An officer was dispatched to a two-vehicle collision. The officer noticed no injuries of the parties involved. One vehicle was towed and the other was drivable. The officer assisted in the exchange of both parties' information.

Feb. 11

9 a.m. Welfare check. Riverside Avenue S. An officer was dispatched to a residence after a probation officer requested a welfare check on an individual who could potentially be using controlled substances. The officer saw no signs of activity and was unable to make contact with the individual.

Feb. 12

5:30 a.m. Traffic stop. Hwy. 15 and CR 120. An officer witnessed a car travel-

ing at a high rate of speed through the diverging diamond. The officer gave the driver a verbal warning.

Feb. 14

8:15 a.m. Protection order violation. Seventh Street N. An officer met with an individual who had proof of their ex-significant other violating the Domestic Assault No Contact Order and the Order for Protection they have in place. Officers put out an attempt to locate notice on the man.

Feb. 15

11:30 p.m. Intoxicated disorderly person. Clubhouse Road. Officers were dispatched to a drunken disorderly person at a business. The manager was shoved to the ground and hit their head. The suspect was arrested and transported to Stearns County Jail without incident. The suspect was booked and released for fifth-degree assault.

Feb. 16

11 a.m. Foot patrol. Pinecone Road S. An officer conducted foot patrol at the new Sartell police department building. No issues noted.

Feb. 17

2 p.m. Found property. Fourth Avenue N. A complainant called to report a bag that was left near their driveway. Complainant requested an officer pick up the property. The bag was placed in the found property room at police department.

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#LiveBetter

People



contributed photo

Receiving the food safety award are Shelby Rachel, assistant Food Service director; Middle School Head Cook Janice Sweetser; and Jayme Steinbach, director of Food Service for the Sartell-St. Stephen school district.

Sartell Middle School was one of two establishments selected by Stearns County's Environmental Services Department that have consistently demonstrated outstanding achievement in food safety. Nominees are submitted for consideration by the assigned health inspector, with review of past and present health reports and testimony of their findings at each inspection.

Rachel Schatz of Sartell has been named to the fall semester dean's list at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. To be named to the dean's list, a student must earn a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher. She is a sophomore.

Megan Mechelke of Sartell, has been named to the dean's

list for fall semester at the University of Iowa, Iowa City. Mechelke's major is English and creative writing. Students on the dean's list maintain a grade-point average of 3.50 or higher.

Thomas Connolly of Sartell was named to the fall semester dean's list at Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington. Students must earn a 3.5 to 3.84 grade-point average to be listed.

Four Sartell students earned bachelor's degrees in nursing from Western Governors University, Salt Lake City, Utah. The students are Amanda Tillman, Jessica Schmitt, Jessica Hamlet and Peter Barrett.

Ashley Gertken of Sartell graduated with a master's in education Dec. 14 from the College of St. Scholastica.

Four Sartell students were named to the first semester dean's honors list at Concordia College, Moorhead. The students are Maiah Cameron, Amanda Flemming, Miranda Garman and Hannah Kosloski. To qualify, students must carry a minimum of 12 semester credits and have a grade-point average of at least a 3.7 on a 4.0 scale.

Leap into Savings Sale!

Friday, Feb. 28 • 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 29 • 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday, March 1 • 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

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Stick to a Budget

When it comes to building and managing your budget, there are some basic steps to make sure you're setting yourself up for success.

Whether you decide to tackle budgeting on your own or with a trusted professional, the keys to healthy life finances come down to two fundamentals: Earning and spending.

Sound simple? With factors like pop-up expenses, changes in employment and the rising costs of daily living, it can sometimes feel anything but.

It's easy to count on tax refunds and bonus checks for big discretionary purchases, but solid planning and discipline would help put more of that money away for a rainy day. Read on for ways to improve your budgeting habits today so you can enjoy your tomorrow.

MAKE STRATEGIC CUTS

A budget is only as good as its execution. Add up your monthly cash flow and expenses. You need to make sure you're spending less than you're earning. If you're not, you need to make some adjustments in your lifestyle, and fast.

Eating out, coffee runs or entertainment costs are referred to as discretionary,



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and these are the best places to start when trying to get your budget back under control. Then, look to your household bills and see if you can save on utilities, or adjust plans for things like cell phones and the Internet.

Saving up for a big purchase? Set reasonable spending and saving goals. You'll be surprised at the impact a few cuts here and there can have on your overall financial well-being. If you're tempted to overspend, think how nice

it will be to pay for that vacation, new vehicle, new home, or whatever your purchase is.

STAY CONSISTENT

It's OK to review and revise your budget, as long as you're sticking to the goals you set in

the beginning. Continue tracking your expenses on an ongoing basis to make sure you're keeping spending under control. Talk to your local bank about apps or other financial management tools they have that can keep you on track.



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Opinion

Our View

Presidential primary comes with some election surprises

Minnesota's March 3 Presidential Nomination Primary will be a new experience for the state's voters with rules and procedures unlike other elections.

The presidential primary essentially replaces a portion of the political parties' precinct caucuses, where among other decisions, participants selected presidential candidates. Caucuses will still take place on Feb. 25, one week before the primary, so the parties can conduct other business including taking stands on issues and endorsing legislative and U.S. Senate candidates. Local and state nominating conventions will still take place to conduct party business.

To be prepared for a smoother primary election day, voters should understand what's new and different from other elections.

Although the primary will be run by state and local election officials, its essential function is to choose a party's presidential candidate.

Unlike many states, Minnesotans don't declare a party when registering to vote. To vote in the new presidential primary, voters have to declare a party. After arriving at the polling place and checking in, voters will be asked to select a political party because there's a separate ballot for each party. Only the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party and the Republican Party have submitted candidates. Two other major parties, the Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis Party and the Legal Marijuana Now Party will not be participating. If a voter refuses to select a party, they will not be able to vote in the Presidential Nomination Primary.

A voter's choice of party ballot will be recorded and is private data. However, a list of who voted in a Presidential Nomination Primary and the political party each voter selected will be provided to the chair of each major political party. How a voter voted on the ballot will be secret.

Before voters are handed a ballot, they also must sign an oath saying they are eligible to vote and affirming their identity. That's the standard oath, but for the primary, there's an additional sentence. Voters will be required to swear they support the policies and positions of the party they've selected. Violation of the oath could result in a fine up to \$10,000, up to five years in jail or both.

The political parties provided the secretary of state with a list of candidates. Seven of the 15 candidates on the DFL ballot have dropped out since the party turned in its list on Dec. 17. Minnesota is one of 12 states where Donald Trump blocked challengers' names from the Republican ballot, so Soviet-style, Republicans will have only one choice.

If you are not registered, you can register at the polling place.

The presidential primary results must bind the election of delegates in each party.

Minnesota will conduct the usual primary election to narrow the field for offices such as state legislator. That primary will be Aug. 11. The general election is Nov. 3.

When you head to the polls on March 3, or before for direct or absentee voting, be prepared for these changes and be ready to cast your vote.

No stars in dreary government buildings

The third-graders lay flat on the floor, looking up at the dome, 160 feet above.

What did they see, the tour guide asked?

"Stars" the children said as they examined the inner dome of the Michigan State Capitol in Lansing. The star-filled dome represents the vastness of the universe, encouraging us all to "reach for our stars," the guide suggested.

Historically, architects designed government buildings to be inspirational and aspirational – to capture a country's legacy and ideals.

Michigan's leaders decided in the 1990s to restore the state's 140-year-old Capitol to its original glory, much like the project Minnesota completed in St. Paul three years ago. Stearns County's leaders took a similar path when they decided to restore, rather than remodel or tear down, the gold-domed courthouse built in 1921. Michigan's project reversed years of unfortunate alterations and aging.

My spouse and I toured Michigan's Capitol while visiting one of our daughters, who is working on a doctorate at Michigan State. We joined an already scheduled tour of third-graders from Ann Arbor. With them, we learned about the history and art that creates an inspiring setting for the state's political leaders.

While on the tour, I recalled that Donald Trump is considering an executive order that would overhaul

Mike Knaak
Editor



the guidelines for federal buildings to discourage modern design and ensure that classical architectural style, inspired by Greek and Roman construction, be the preferred style for future federal buildings.

I disagree with just about every Trump policy, but this time he's got it right. Trump's one true talent is branding.

Visitors to Washington, D.C., are familiar with the White House, Capitol and perhaps the Supreme Court and Library of Congress. These are grand, beautiful buildings. In the federal triangle bounded by Pennsylvania and Constitution avenues, visitors find more classic buildings housing Treasury, Justice, Commerce and other federal departments and agencies. From the mid 1880s to the early 20th century, the U.S. government managed to design and erect these buildings despite the Civil War, World War I and the Great Depression.

Walking a few blocks south, beyond the Smithsonian museums and across the mall, a visitor finds a totally different world.

Instead of pillars, art and statues, massive concrete boxes house government agencies. Erected in the 1960s

and 1970s to house newer or expanding federal agencies, the boring boxes are home to the departments of Energy, Education, and Health and Human Services. Perhaps if these buildings were not so oppressive and dreary, those agencies would produce more innovative policies.

When the story about Trump's draft executive order appeared, "Making Federal Buildings Beautiful Again" (yes that's really the title), critics pushed back, complaining it would stifle innovation and architectural experimentation. Perhaps, but Trump's plan may also derail more ugly square boxes.

The principles that guide the design of federal buildings, written by future senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan in 1962 when he was serving in President John F. Kennedy's administration, mandate architecture that gives visual testimony to "the dignity, enterprise, vigor and stability of the American government." Moynihan emphasized that "an official style must be avoided. Design must flow from the architectural profession to the government and not vice versa."

I'd prefer that future designs focus on the first part of that policy – dignity, enterprise, vigor and stability.

When future generations of third-graders tour our government buildings they will still be inspired to reach for the stars.

Primary endangers voter privacy, participation

With the New Hampshire primary and the Iowa caucuses finally counted, the 2020 presidential primary season is in full swing. The Democratic front-runners look to be Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and former South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg. Following closely behind is our state's own Sen. Amy Klobuchar. Elizabeth Warren and Joe Biden trail farther behind.

Donald Trump, with no major Republican opposition, is all but assured to be the GOP nominee. Minnesota is set to make its choice in these races on March 3, when we hold our presidential primary.

This is different than the previous years where we have had caucuses. However, the way the primary will be run this year is dangerous for voter privacy.

First off, many people may wonder, what is the difference between a primary and a caucus? The easy explanation is in a caucus, those wishing to express their preference for a candidate must go to the event, sit in a room and then have their vote counted after some debate.

A primary is essentially like a regular election. Voters go into a polling place, cast their ballot and then go home. After the 2016 Minnesota caucuses experienced high turnout, resulting in confusion and delays, Minnesota decided to switch over to a primary for 2020.

While this sounds like a more efficient improvement, there is a crucial

Connor Kockler
Guest Writer



issue with how the primary will be conducted. Unlike a regular election, where once you sign the electoral register the election judge hands you a ballot, instead you will have to ask for the ballot of the political party you want to vote for.

Exchanging this information in public is highly concerning for the privacy of a voter.

Even more concerning, once the primary is over and all of the ballots for each party are distributed, a list of the names of each person requesting the ballot of that particular political party will be sent to that respective party chair. This information then would have no limitation for what it could be used for and who it could be shared with.

This is an alarming prospect. Not everyone wants others to know which party they support. This is especially bad for people who desire to maintain an image of impartiality, like judges, educators and journalists. For someone who doesn't want this information out in public, they might just even refuse to participate in the primary all together.

Voters should not have to choose between participating in our democra-

cy and choosing to protect the privacy of their voting affiliation.

The whole point of having a secret ballot in elections is that people can make the choice they want without fear of repercussions from their family, friends and co-workers.

This primary process takes away that protection, essentially setting the stage for Minnesota to become a party registration state if the collected information leaks out. This would be a terrible outcome. Being able to look up the party affiliation of people would only make our politics more polarized in an already divided time.

I appreciate the efforts being made at the time of writing by Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon and some state legislators to change the primary structure to allow for voters to request their information be kept private. The state legislature and Gov. Walz should move to pass these reforms quickly so they are ready in time for March 3.

Democracy and voting are supposed to be about allowing Minnesotans the ability to make choices about who is on their ballot without fear of their choices being exposed.

In the spirit of maintaining the spirit of free and fair elections, the Minnesota primary process should be immediately changed to stop the collection and sharing of voter data.

If left unchanged, it could deal a critical blow to Minnesota voters' participation in our elections.

Public meeting to explore Sartell Watershed strategies

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

People living in Sartell and the Sartell Watershed area are encouraged to attend a public input meeting from 4-7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at the Sartell Community Center.

The name of the meeting, which is sponsored by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy.

The Sartell Watershed, which is part of the Upper Mississippi River Basin, is within parts of these counties: Stearns, Ben-

ton, Morrison, Todd and Crow Wing. Some of the bigger cities in that area include Sartell, St. Stephen, Avon, Albany, Rice, Royalton, Holdingford, Little Falls and Pierz. The waterways of the watershed include Platte Lake, Platte River, Skunk River, Little Rock Creek, Little Rock Lake, Bunker Hill Creek, Watab River, Spunk Creek, Two Rivers Lake, Little Two River and, of course, the Mississippi River. All of those waterways are interconnected one way or another.

The MPCA wants input from residents of the watershed and

would like them to become aware of the problems and concerns about the watershed. The report to be presented at the public meeting will summarize watershed conditions, identify water-quality concerns, prioritize resource and establish key restoration and protection strategies for the area. The MPCA will also prepare a report of citizen concerns and suggestions offered at the public meeting.

Some of the major threats to the watershed include loss of shoreline buffers because of developments; large amounts of phosphorus, sediment and bac-

teria to surface waters; contamination by unwanted nutrients, including from stormwater runoff and loss of biodiversity due to competition from invasive species.

Just last year, a major draw-down project was completed at Little Rock Lake near Rice and the stretch of the Mississippi north of Sartell. Those waterways are connected, and the build-up of unwanted nutrients in the lake, mainly phosphorus, threatened the health of both the lake and that part of the river.

According to the MPCA, the

Sartell Watershed is unique in many respects. For instance, the elevation of the Mississippi River drops 6.5 feet per mile from Little Falls (just north of the watershed) to Royalton. The watershed is in the North Central Hardwood Forest eco-region of Minnesota. The area of the watershed is mainly agricultural, and about 96 percent of it is privately owned. Land uses include grass/pasture/hay (35 percent), row crops (29 percent), forest (19 percent) and wetlands (9 percent).

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. 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, Feb. 21**
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mn-bentonhistory.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.
- Monday, Feb. 24**
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mn-bentonhistory.org.
- Sartell City Council,** 6 p.m.,

- City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road N.
- Sartell-St. Stephen school board,** 6:30 p.m., District Service Center, 212 Third Ave. N.
- Tuesday, 25**
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.
- Le Sauk Township Board,** 7 p.m., Township Hall, 220 Fourth Ave. S., Sartell.
- Thursday Feb. 27**
Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Speaker: Tom Tingblad, How to Identify Birds by Sight and Sound and How to Attract Birds to your Feeding Station.
- Blood Drive,** 1-7 p.m., Avon Community Church, 204 Avon Ave. N. Visit www.redcross-blood.org or call 320-248-3375

- to schedule an appointment.
- Mississippi River – Sartell Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy,** 4-7 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S., Sartell. Share concerns about watershed conditions and water quality with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.
- Friday, Feb. 28**
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mn-bentonhistory.org.
- Fish fry,** 5-7:30 p.m., Immaculate Conception Church, 145 Second Ave. NE., Rice.
- Monday, March 2**
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mn-bentonhistory.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, March 3**
Memory Writers group develops topics and turns in stories. 10 a.m., Stearns History Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S, St Cloud.
- Wednesday, March 4**
Advocates for Independence, 2-4 p.m., Independent Lifestyles, 215 Benton Drive N., Sauk Rapids. 320-529-9000.
- St. Stephen City Council,** 6:30 p.m., St. Stephen City Hall, 2 Sixth Ave SE.
- Sartell-St. Stephen school board work session,** 6:30 p.m., District Service Center, 212 Third Ave. N.
- Thursday, March 5**
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, March 6**
Benton County Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 218 First St. N., Sauk Rapids. 320-253-9614. mn-bentonhistory.org.
- World Day of Prayer,** 1 p.m., Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 4310 CR 137, St Cloud. Prayer service written by the women of Zimbabwe, “Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk.”
- Fish fry,** 4-7 p.m., St. Francis Xavier Parish, 219 Second St. N., Sartell.
- Fish fry,** 5-7:30 p.m., Immaculate Conception Church, 145 Second Ave. NE., Rice.
- Baked Fish Dinner,** 5-7 p.m., Church of St. Paul, 1125 11th Ave. N., St. Cloud.
- Saturday, March 7**
Sartell Community Show-case, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S., Sartell.
- Sartell Winter Market,** 10 a.m-1 p.m., Community Center, p.m., 850 19th St. S.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
GUN SHOW – FORT DODGE, IOWA. February 22 & 23, 2020. Sponsored by The Rifle & Pistol Club, Webster County Fair Grounds. Info contact Al Little @ 515-570-0827. (MCN)

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Four new welcome signs approved for city entrances

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Four new Sartell roadway welcome signs will be installed early this spring – three of them on roundabouts – as long as approval is granted where applicable by Benton and/or Stearns counties where city roads connect to county roads.

The City Council, at its Jan. 13 meeting, voted unanimously for the signs, including the fourth sign suggested at the meeting by Mayor Ryan Fitzthum. He said it would be good

to place a sign on the right side of CR 29 just at the point that road nears Benton County Drive and the entrance to the bridge. The sign would face traffic coming from the east. Other council members agreed a welcome sign on the east

side of Sartell would be a good thing. The other signs, as recommended by city staff, are planned for the following locations:

• On the roundabout at 19th Street and CR 133, sign facing

west.

• On the roundabout at Scout Drive and Pinecone Road, facing south.

west.

• On the roundabout at CR 1/Heritage Drive/Le Sauk Drive, facing southeast toward Hwy. 15.

• On the roundabout at Scout Drive and Pinecone Road, facing south.

Abduction Awareness 2020

Ways to Prevent Abductions

- 1) Make sure custody documents are in order.
- 2) Have ID-like photos taken of your kids every 6 months and have them fingerprinted. Many local police departments sponsor fingerprinting programs.
- 3) Keep your kids' medical and dental records up to date.
- 4) Make online safety a priority. The Internet is a great tool, but it's also a place for predators to stalk kids. Be aware of your kids' Internet activities and chat room "friends," and remind them never to give out personal information. Avoid posting identifying information or photos of your kids online.
- 5) Set boundaries about the places your kids go. Supervise them in places like malls, movie theaters, parks, public bathrooms, or while fundraising door to door.
- 6) Never leave kids alone in a car or stroller, even for a minute.
- 7) Choose caregivers — babysitters, childcare providers, and nannies — carefully and check their references. If you've arranged for someone to pick up your kids from school or daycare, discuss the arrangements beforehand with your kids and with the school or childcare center.
- 8) Avoid dressing your kids in clothing with their names on it — children tend to trust adults who know their names.

Talking to kids about strangers

- 1) Never accept candy or gifts from a stranger.
- 2) Never go anywhere with a stranger, even if it sounds like fun. Predators can lure kids with questions like "Can you help me find my lost puppy?" or "Do you want to see some cute kittens in my car?" Remind your kids that adults they don't know should never ask them to help or to do things for them.
- 3) Run away and scream if someone follows them or tries to force them into a car.
- 4) Say no to anyone who tries to make them do something you've said is wrong or touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- 5) Always tell you or another trusted adult if a stranger asks personal questions, exposes himself or herself, or otherwise makes them feel uneasy. Reassure kids that it's OK to tell you even if the person made them promise not to or threatened them in some way.
- 6) Always ask permission from a parent to leave the house, yard, or play area or to go into someone's home.

Tips provided by: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/abductions.html>



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