

# Reaching Everybody!

# Newsleaders

Friday, Aug. 7, 2020  
Volume 32, Issue 16  
Est. 1989

## Town Crier

### Farmers' Market going strong

The Sartell Farmers' Market is going strong from 3-6 p.m. Mondays at Bernick's Arena, 1109 First St. S., Sartell. Summer is in full swing and so are the vegetables. Corn, tomatoes, beans and much more are now in season. In addition to all the great vegetables you will find honey, caramel corn, salsa, canned goods, and great candies and snacks.

### New polling place for Aug. 11 election

The polling place for voters in St. Joseph Precinct 1 has changed. Voters living west of College Avenue will vote at Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 CR 2. Voters living east of College Avenue will vote at the Government Center, 75 Callaway St. E. Primary election day is Aug. 11 with polls open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

### Garage sale fundraiser set Aug. 12, 13

A garage sale fundraiser, sponsored by the Sartell Senior Connection and Sartell Historical Society, will be from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 12 and 13, at the Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Masks are required to enter the sale and social distancing will be enforced. Donations for the sale will be accepted from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 10 and 11, at the community center. Book sale: Large selection of new and used, adult and children's books for sale. No clothing please! All items become property of SSC and SHS upon acceptance. All items left at end of sale will be donated to charity. Proceeds will be split between the groups.

### Sauk Rapids WOT to host pet photo shoot

A pet photo shoot, sponsored by the Sauk Rapids Women of Today, will be held from 1-8 p.m. Monday, Aug. 17, in the Sauk Rapids Municipal Park (look for signage). Up to four subjects total will be allowed in the photo. A \$25 donation is requested. Proceeds benefit the Tri-County Humane Society and other community organizations. Social distancing practices will be adhered. To set an appointment, call Sandy at 320-224-4229 or Marsha at 320-291-2161.

### Rock painting for children

St. Joseph Women of Today are sponsoring rock painting 4:30-7:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 17, at Melody Park in Pleasant Acres. The free event is part of the group's celebration of children, Aug. 16-22.

## City departments add supervisors

by Mike Knaak  
editor@thenewsleaders.com

The St. Joseph City Council approved supervision positions in two departments to increase accountability, transparency and leadership.

During a work session July 27, Police Chief Dwight Pfannenstien told council members he wants to add a second sergeant to his department and Public Works Director Terry Thene proposed a supervisor. The council approved the two

positions at its Aug. 3 meeting.

In addition to better supervision of officers, Pfannenstien cited a continued increase in calls as a reason for restructuring his department. Calls for service jumped from about 2,500 in 2015 to about 4,000 projected by the end of this year. In the new structure, the two sergeants would report to the chief and each would be responsible for a team of officers. Right now the only sergeant regularly supervises one officer and fills an afternoon/evening

patrol shift.

On July 6th, the council approved the promotion of Officer Matt Johnson to sergeant. On Aug. 3, the council approved Pfannenstien's request to also promote Officer Dan Magaard. Magaard's promotion will cost \$2,600 for the rest of this year and \$6,050 in 2021.

Mayor Rick Schultz and City Administrator Kris Ambuehl said they've received calls from the public asking if what happened in Minneapolis with the killing of George Floyd could

happen in St. Joseph. Ambuehl said a lack of a supervisor on that scene contributed to the death.

The additional sergeant would also supervise reserve officers, a program the chief said has "fallen by the wayside." Pfannenstien's goal is to recruit nine reserves who accompany officers on patrol and provide help with traffic and crowd control at special events.

The city recently received a federal COPS grant to hire an  
**Council • page 2**

## Safety issues addressed, third craft event OK'd

by Mike Knaak  
editor@thenewsleaders.com

A third craft event will go ahead, although not as big as originally planned, after the event organizer satisfied a majority of St. Joseph City Council members that it will be conducted safely.

The event is planned for Saturday, Sept. 19, on land just east of the Government Center, the location of two earlier events on June 27 and Aug. 1.

At its July 20 meeting, council members asked event organizer Carl Berg to come up with a more detailed plan for a smaller event than he originally proposed and to show the council his Covid-19 preparedness plan.

Berg showed the council members a layout for the event, which was generally the same as the Aug. 1 fair. It showed how Berg planned to control one-way foot traffic, space out vendor booths and positions of hand-washing sta-



photo by Mike Knaak

**People browse the arts and crafts offered by vendors on Aug. 1. Another event is planned for Saturday, Sept. 19.**

tions. Vendors and participants must maintain social distancing and will be encouraged to wear masks.

Mayor Rick Schultz suggested for the Sept. 19 event, vendor stands should be set up with more space between

them. About 145 people attended the Aug. 1 event, Berg said.

"I don't want this to become another Effie rodeo," Schutlz said, referring to a three-day rodeo in that city where the crowd size exceeded public

health guidelines, there was no social distancing and people weren't wearing masks.

Schultz read a letter he received from Millstream Arts Festival organizers opposing the craft event. Millstream or-  
**Craft • page 2**

## St. Cloud schools to begin year with hybrid plan

by Mike Knaak  
editor@thenewsleaders.com

St. Cloud school district schools will begin the year in a hybrid learning model, Superintendent Will Jett announced at the school board's Aug. 5 meeting.

The hybrid plan is one of three scenarios that school districts planned for at the direction of the Department of Education.

Based on grade level, students will be assigned to attend on Monday and Wednesday or

Tuesday and Thursday.

Kindergarten through second-grade students, and some students receiving special education and English language instruction, will attend school in-person, four days each week with the safety protocols and social distancing required under the state's hybrid model.

All students will have distance learning on Fridays.

St. Joseph area students generally attend the St. Cloud district's Kennedy Community School in St. Joseph for kinder-

garent through eighth grade and high school students attend Apollo in St. Cloud

Jett made the decision to align with Gov. Tim Walz's Safe Learning Plan, current local health data and feedback gathered from staff, families and students.

Students also have the opportunity to enroll in the St. Cloud Area Schools Distance Learning Academy, a year-long distance learning option

The superintendent said the district will review community

health data provided by the state every two weeks to ensure meeting the state guidelines

If community health data requires it, the district will switch to a more restrictive learning plan.

All three learning models – in-person, hybrid, and distance learning – will provide academic rigor and routines, and opportunities for meaningful social-emotional connections, the district said in a statement released after the school board meeting.



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Equal Housing Opportunity

# Council

## from front page

additional officer. With the new hire funded by the COPS grant, the department will have 10 full-time officers and one part-time officer.

Thene proposed a similar plan for Public Works. He said he's nearing retirement and now would be a good time to appoint a supervisor to help handle projects and staff.

Ambuehl said it's a good idea to start training a person who might replace Thene and to have a succession plan for the department.

At the Aug. 3 meeting, the council approved hiring a Public Works superintendent. The budget impact is \$1,400 this year and \$6,700 next year.

## City to buy used snowplow

Public Works will be getting an additional snowplow. The council approved buying a used plow truck for \$40,748 dollars. The city has contracted for snow removal in the most recently annexed portion of St. Joseph at an average cost of \$35,000 a year.

Buying the truck will save the city more than \$120,000 over five years.

## Work starts on 2021 budget

Finance Director Lori Bartlett has begun drafting the 2021 city budget. Her draft included the two proposed supervisor positions. The draft shows a 3.5 percent increase in general fund expenses bringing expenses to about \$5 million. But the impact on individual property taxes won't be known until assessed market values and the city's taxable property base is calculated. City leaders are planning to adopt the preliminary budget in September.

## Parklet, street plans move along

The council turned down a request to move the planned parklet farther to the east on Minnesota Street. The council decided the location will remain in front of Minnesota Market. A parklet is an extension of the sidewalk into parking spaces that provides amenities such as seating.

The city is also moving ahead with plans to improve and repair the streetscape on the south side of Minnesota Street from Chapel Lane to First Avenue SE. Once bids are received and approved, some work could begin this summer with the goal of having the project completed before next year's July Fourth celebration.

# Craft

## from front page

ganizers canceled their event, scheduled for late September, over Covid-19 concerns and the letter expressed their "concern and frustration" about the council's approval of the craft event.

Schultz also read his reply to the Millstream organizers, pointing out they did not come to the council for approval and advice.

"The city doesn't pick winners," Schultz said. "If Millstream would have come to the council, they would have been treated the same way."

Berg said the only issue with the Aug. 1 event was there was a wasp nest found in playground equipment near where the crafters were set up.

Schultz raised some questions about parking space, traffic flow and congestion.

Council Member Anne Buckvold said she was worried one infected person might come to the event without a mask and spread the virus and she was worried about an outbreak in St. Joseph right before school starts. She said she was "reluctant" to support the event.

The council approved Berg's plan on a 4-1 vote with Buckvold voting no.

## Blotter

If you have a tip concerning a crime, call the St. Joseph Police Department at 320-363-8250 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.

### July 17

10:49 a.m. Theft. Minnesota Street W. A man reported his bicycle was stolen from behind the building overnight. It's a blue and silver Fuji Crosstown worth about \$300.

### July 18

5:46 p.m. Drug citation. 20th Avenue SE. An officer stopped a vehicle with expired registration. The officer smelled marijuana while interviewing the driver. A vehicle search turned up more than 1.4 grams of marijuana, a grinder and a glass pipe. The items were seized. The woman was cited for possession of marijuana in a motor vehicle and possession of drug paraphernalia.

### July 25

1:38 p.m. Collision. College Avenue N. and Ash Street. The first vehicle was stopped on Ash Street E to take a left turn heading south on College Avenue N. The second vehicle was parked on College Avenue N. facing south. As the first vehicle turned, the second vehicle pulled out of its parking spot and the vehicles collided. The collision pushed the first vehicle into a third vehicle, which was unoccupied. There were no injuries. The first vehicle and the third vehicle were towed.

### July 27

7:34 a.m. Theft. Minnesota Street E. A woman reported two Plasma Car ride-on toys taken from the back of her apartment entrance. The items are valued at \$70 each.



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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.

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# CARES money will be spent for safety, health needs

by Mike Knaak  
editor@thenewsleaders.com

St. Joseph’s \$551,340 share of CARES Act federal funding will be split between public safety and public health needs, the City Council decided Aug. 3.

Congress passed the measure in the spring with the money distributed by the states to each locality based on popu-

lation. The money can only be used for expenses related to the coronavirus pandemic.

The public safety expenses of \$227,235 includes radios for police and firefighters, police department computer equipment, election equipment and plexiglass barriers.

Public health needs include office spacing in several departments, heating and air conditioning updates in the Govern-

ment Center, wash stations in the parks, electronic and computer equipment and a pickup for Public Works.

A committee of City Administrator Kris Ambuehl, Finance Director Lori Bartlett, Mayor Rick Schutlz and Council Member Bob Loso put together the recommended expenses.

St. Joseph also set aside

\$56,250 of the CARES Act money for business assistance in partnership with Stearns County. If the money is not used by Sept. 15, the committee suggested buying a second Public Works vehicle.

The balance of \$12,000 was set aside for unknown costs that may come up. Additional equipment and business assis-

tance grants can be added if there are unused funds before Nov. 15.

The council also approved an application for a separate Federal Emergency Management Agency grant of \$78,000.

Minnesota received \$2 billion of the \$150 billion set aside for states. St. Joseph received \$75.34 for each citizen.

## Obituary

**Maurice J. ‘Mauri’ Loso, 90**  
**Aug. 14, 1929-July 21, 2020**  
**Apopka, Florida**  
**formerly of St. Joseph**

Maurice J. "Mauri" Loso, 90, LCDR, USN, Ret., “Mauri” (90) died July 21 after a long battle with cancer.

His funeral was held on July 30 at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Apopka, Florida. The Rev. Stephen Baumann officiated. Interment was beside his wife Ginny at Highland Memory Gardens, Apopka.

Mauri was born Aug. 14, 1929 in St. Joseph. At age 21, he enlisted in the U.S.



Loso

Navy. He received the wings of a Naval aviator and was commission as ensign in 1953. He married his wife Virginia “Ginny” Viglianti on Sept. 22, 1956. He retired from the Navy in 1971. He then worked for the U.S. Post Office until 1991. Loso was a past grand knight and past faithful navigator in the Knights of Columbus and a charter member and past commander of VFW Post 10147.

Survivors include a sister, Yvette Warnert of St Cloud; two sons, Brian Chuluota and his wife Donna and grandson Adam, and Frank Sanford and his wife Susan and grandsons John and Christopher, all of Florida.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 56 years Ginny and his companion of six years Ramona Pusich.

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## St. Stephen Parish Festival

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Website: churchofststephen.org  
Facebook: St. Stephen Church

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Deadline for tickets-by-mail: Aug. 31, 2020

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## People



contributed photo

Several children, who were unable to make their First Communion April 19 because of Covid-19, made their First Communion on July 12 during an outdoor Catholic Mass at St. John the Baptist in Collegeville. These children included (front row, left to right) Tucker Burg, Lars Lyndgaard, Adelyn Eiyneck, Noah Eisenschenk, Griffin Loso, Kyla Schrom and Jake Theisen. The Rev. Jerome Tupa (back) officiated at the Mass.

**Brenny Specialized Inc.** of St. Joseph was presented a platinum award by Great West Casualty Co. as part of Great West's annual National Safety Awards program. The National Safety Awards program recognizes motor carriers in similar operations with awards based on their year-end preventable crash results. Carriers are eligible to receive a platinum, gold, silver or participatory award.

**Amber Klein** of St. Joseph graduated from the College of St. Benedict. Klein is a candidate to receive a bachelor's degree

in communication. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, a commencement ceremony was not held this year. At this point, the college is looking at a spring 2021 date for the ceremony, subject to the approval of government agencies and health officials.

**Twelve St. Joseph students** graduated spring semester from St. Cloud State University. The students are **Anna Emerson**, bachelor's degree in sociology, summa cum laude; **Brooks Imdieke**, bachelor's degree in mass communications; **Mathew Kestner**, bachelor's degree in

computer science; **Brett Kirchner**, associate's degree in liberal arts and sciences, cum laude; **Jenna Klein**, bachelor's degree in nursing, cum laude; **Kaylee Lodermeier**, bachelor's degree in art education, summa cum laude; **Adam Schleicher**, bachelor's degree in athletic training; **MaKalla Schmitz**, bachelor's degree in graphic design, magna cum laude; **Shannon Sharp**, bachelor's degree in theater; **Kaitlin Sletta**, associate's degree in liberal arts and sciences, cum laude; **Elizabeth Solarz**, bachelor's degree in athletic training; and **McKayla Walz**, bachelor's degree in elementary/K-6 education, summa cum laude.

**Fourteen St. Joseph students** were named to the spring semester dean's list for achieving a grade-point average of 3.75 or higher at St. Cloud State University. The students are **Muataz Alkhawaher**, **Kayla Bedel**, **Anna Emerson**, **Adam Fettig**, **Andrea Francis**, **Ashley Grise**, **Olivia Hoeschen**, **Lynnsey Hoffmann**, **Jenna Klein**, **Karissa Muehring**, **Hunter O'Hotto**, **MaKalla Schmitz**, **McKayla Walz** and **Lilian Zack**.

**Peter Nelson** and **Rachel Zimmer** of St. Joseph have been named to the spring semester president's list for achieving a perfect 4.0 grade-point average at Bemidji State University.

## Community Calendar

**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, Aug. 7

**St. Joseph Farmers' Market**, 3-6 p.m., Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 CR 2, St. Joseph.

### Sunday, Aug. 9

**Explorer's Program Informational Meeting**, 6 p.m., Stearns County Law Enforcement Center, 807 Courthouse Square, St. Cloud.

### Monday, Aug. 10

**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph

### Tuesday, Aug. 11

**St. Joseph Fire board**, 530 p.m., Fire Station, 323 Fourth Ave. NE.

### Thursday, Aug. 13

**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph.

### Friday, Aug. 14

**St. Joseph Farmers' Market**, 3-6 p.m., Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 CR 2, St. Joseph.

### Monday, Aug. 17

**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph.

**Rock Painting for Children**, 4:30-7:30 p.m., Melody Park Pavilion in Pleasant Acres. The free event is sponsored by the St. Joseph Chapter of Women of Today.

**St. Joseph City Council**, 6 p.m., Government Center, 75 Callaway St. E.

### Tuesday, Aug. 18

**St. Joseph Economic Development Authority**, noon, St. Joseph Government Center, 75 Callaway St. E.

### Wednesday, Aug. 19

**St. Cloud school board**, 6:30 p.m., City Council Chambers, 400 Second St. S., St. Cloud.

### Thursday, Aug. 20

**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph.

### Sunday, Aug. 23

**JoeTown Table**, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., American Legion, 101 W. Minnesota St., St. Joseph. Free community meal.

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## Sartell Soccer

### Recreation Soccer

Early bird registration ends Sunday, Aug. 9  
Season Starts Tuesday, Aug 18.

Go to  
[sartellsoccer.org](http://sartellsoccer.org)

for more information.





# Cultural connections: Embracing cultural differences

*Tani waa kuu muhiim adi-ga. Fadlan aqri. Ogeysiis! Importante para Usted, por favor léalo. Please read!*

*Announcements brought to you by Cultural Bridges of St. Joseph, a committee of Central Minnesota Community Empowerment Organization. We are dedicated to ease your transition into our community.*

...

by Juliana Howard

In his book, "Africans and Americans: Embracing Cultural Differences," Joseph Mbele gives a glimpse of the African culture from an insider's point of view.

Mbele, a citizen of Tanzania, is an associate professor of English and folklore at St. Olaf College, Northfield. He is committed to international education and enjoys teaching outside the classroom through speaking engagements and study guides.

Knowing some of these cultural traits can help us better understand and appreciate our neighbors who come from

Africa. Here are a few cultural traits that Mbele mentions in his book:

1) It is necessary to have family and friends close by; it is what gives life meaning.

2) You do not need an invitation to visit. Just drop in and you will be welcomed and fed.

3) When you go to the market, bargaining is expected because the interchange between customer and shopkeeper is more important than the price.

4) It is our responsibility to care for our elders. We do not house them in separate facilities.

5) Your status in society does not necessarily depend on how much money you have.

6) Dogs are considered unclean and would never be allowed in the house or car.

7) Direct eye contact is generally inappropriate, especially toward the opposite sex.

8) An ample body denotes beauty, happiness and success in life. If you are thin, you probably are sick or miserable in life.



Joseph Mbele

9) Wealthy people are expected to share with those who need it.

10) If you drop by for a visit, expect to be fed. Refusing food or drink is inappropriate and hurtful.

11) If you call on the phone, don't ask if it's a good time to talk. It is always a good time!

Learn more about Mbele at his website at [www.africonexion.com](http://www.africonexion.com). The book is available on Amazon.

...

If you have any questions, contact Juliana Howard at 715-791-8976 or Jamal Elmi at 320-310-2351.

News Tips? Call the Newsleader at 363-7741

St. James Parish  
Jacobs Prairie



**Sweet Corn Sale**

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8805 Ridgewood Court, St. Joseph  
[beelineservice.com](http://beelineservice.com)

## EMERALD ASH BORER

### **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)**

EAB is an invasive pest from Asia and threatens the ash tree population in the United States. In Michigan alone it has killed over 20 million trees since its discovery in 2002. Through a combination of natural spread and human activity it is now found in Ohio, Maryland, Illinois, Indiana, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Arizona, Kentucky, Kansas, Colorado, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin, placing millions of additional ash trees at risk. It will continue to spread and is probably a permanent member of our insect population.



**EMERALD ASH BORER:** It has killed MILLIONS of ash trees in North America. It's now present in central Minnesota, and when your ash tree becomes infected **IT WILL DIE!** **Schwegel's Landscaping and Tree Service** has a GUARANTEED method for treating emerald ash borer. They can help you save your mature ash trees. But the treatment period for 2020 has nearly ended. If you have ash trees on your property CALL TODAY! **Schwegel's Landscaping and Tree Service. 320-293-4438** is a LOCAL licensed and bonded company.



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# Opinion

## Our View

### Data dictates virus solutions

We can't escape numbers. Usually, this time of year, we keep an eye on baseball batting averages, win/loss records and how many days the temperature reaches 90 degrees.

But since spring, watching a new set of numbers took over our attention – the Department of Health's daily posting of how many Minnesotans tested positive for Covid-19, how many have died and how many are in the hospital. We can track these numbers down to the county level on the department's dashboard.

Now there's a new dashboard and a new set of numbers. The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Foundation launched what it calls an Economic Dashboard for Minnesota's Recovery.

Both dashboards should help decide how government responds to the pandemic but – more importantly – Minnesotans should focus on how the numbers affect their lives.

The health department focuses on public health and the Chamber of Commerce focuses on economic health, these are not dueling dashboards. By safely and successfully taking action and setting policy decisions, we balance economic and health data. There will not be full economic recovery while cases, the percentage of positive tests and hospitalizations rise.

Watching the health numbers will be crucial during the next few weeks as school boards decide how to open schools based on local conditions.

The economic numbers displayed on the Chamber's dashboard reveal the current state of Minnesota's economy. Graphics show state and county employment trends compared with national data. The details also track jobs by occupation and numbers that reveal whether the economy is improving such as job postings, bankruptcies, home sales and new business filings.

The Chamber explains the lag in standard economic data collected by state and federal agencies typically looks backward. The Minnesota Chamber Foundation launched the dashboard to track changes in both traditional economic measurements such as unemployment and job growth as well as alternative, short-term changes to provide a real-time look at economic behavior that has implications for future economic outcomes.

Sean O'Neil, the director of the Chamber Foundation's Center for Economic Research, writes Minnesota's economic recovery is well underway. His findings:

After suffering unprecedented job losses in March and April, Minnesota's unemployment dropped to 8.5 percent after peaking at 9.9 percent in May, and total employment rose for a second straight month. The state's overall unemployment rate remains well below the U.S. rate of 11.1 percent. "Minnesota's diverse economy and concentration of jobs in sectors relatively less impacted by Covid-19 are likely a contributing factor," O'Neil writes.

Some caution remains. While hourly work levels rose in June – aligning with recent employment data – they have since flattened, pointing to a potential softening in Minnesota's recovery.

O'Neil writes that "Minnesota's employment is disproportionately concentrated in health care, manufacturing, corporate headquarters, and finance and insurance. Health care saw the biggest one-month rebound in employment of Minnesota's four most concentrated sectors, as voluntary procedures came back online."

The report concludes: Several indicators of economic recovery should be watched closely in coming months. New business filings increased in June to 6,530 from a low point in May of 5,681. And while home sales are down 12 percent compared with last year, web visits to Zillow have increased significantly this spring and summer. This could indicate interest in future home buying and selling, O'Neil writes.

You can view the Chamber dashboard here: [www.mnchamber.com/blog/economic-dashboard-minnesota-recovery](http://www.mnchamber.com/blog/economic-dashboard-minnesota-recovery).

The latest state health numbers, updated daily at 11 a.m., are here: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/situation.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/situation.html)

Every day we see national numbers that report millions of cases and tragically the death of one American every minute. These resources share what's happening right here, right now in Minnesota.

We need to balance both sets of numbers as we make personal as well as community choices to survive until there's a vaccine.

## Discover the people behind the beer

Mike  
Knaak  
*Editor*



Beer drinkers in Central Minnesota, like most of the rest of America, enjoy a wide selection of beers, thanks to the recent popularity of small craft breweries.

Today's local craft brewers, such as St. Joseph's Bad Habit, can trace their heritage back more than 150 years. That lineage is the subject of a new book, "Central Minnesota Beer – A History," written by Jacob Laxen.

Laxen and I worked together at the St. Cloud Times for five years, first when he was a sports reporter and a few years later when he established himself as the "beer beat" reporter. He's since moved on to Fort Collins, Colorado, where he's a digital managing editor for that region's Townsquare Media radio stations. He still has time for beer.

The book traces Central Minnesota's German immigrants who built a thriving brewing culture.

"History repeats itself," Laxen told me. "In the 1800s, a lot of towns had their own breweries, then consolidation took over. Now communities are getting their own taprooms again."

Laxen not only writes about the beers, but thanks to his talent for revealing personal stories, we can read about the characters behind the beers.

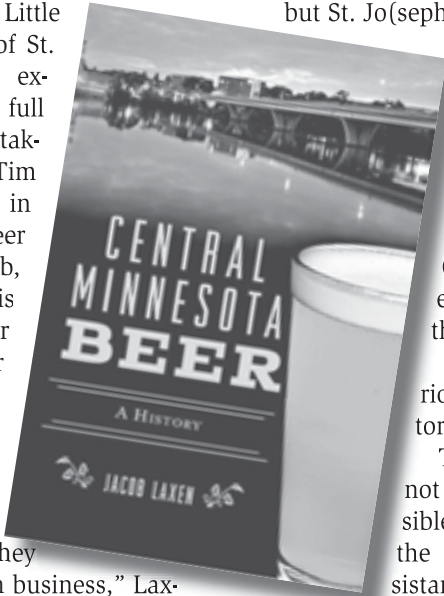
To find Laxen's favorite character, we head to New Munich, where the Froehler family hired Hungarian immigrant Mathew Pitzl in 1889. He transformed the brewery and eventually bought it in 1900 for \$5,000. Ten years later, it was Stearns County's largest brewery. During Prohibition, Pitzl kept brewing and discreetly selling beer. Eventually the feds caught on, raided the brewery

and destroyed the beer. Pitzl went down swinging, fracturing the skull of a federal agent.

Laxen credits Tim O'Hara for starting Central Minnesota's first craft brewery. Tim and his brother and co-owner, Mick, updated what began in the 1940s as Sid and Cecil's Little City on the west side of St. Cloud. The restaurant expanded and added a full liquor license. After taking sole ownership, Tim opened his brewery in 1996. O'Hara hired beer hobbyist Chris Laumb, who soon became his head brewer. Years later Laumb achieved beer fame at Beaver Island Brewing.

"Tim was way ahead of his time. If they would have started 10 years later, they would have still been in business," Laxen said of O'Haras.

Laxen devotes an entire chapter to St. Joseph, home of Bad Habit Brewing and Milk & Honey Ciders. Laxen tells the story of how Bad Habit found its name – a play on the traditional garb worn by nuns and how co-owner Aaron Rieland's



family described his brewing interest. The light humor continues with Bad Habit's slogan – "Be Good, Drink Bad."

Habitual IPA is Laxen's favorite Bad Habit brew. "I like the extreme hop flavor and bitterness," he said.

Milk & Honey Ciders is "incredibly unique," Laxen said. "There are not many cideries in Minnesota. The product is fantastic. It's not the cheap hard cider college kids drink. They bring a unique, high quality and a lot of care into their craft. It's an experience there you can't get anywhere else in Central Minnesota. You can't get it anywhere but St. Jo(seph)."

Laxen's interest in Stearns County beer began when his family would vacation in the area. They'd pass by the Cold Spring Brewery on the way to the campground.

"I was always curious about the history," he said.

The book would not have been possible, he said, without the archives and assistance of the staff at Stearns History Museum.

Childhood beer curiosity, the beer beat and finally a hobby that became an obsession led to a book that ties together the region's rich brewing history and stories of the brewers' fascinating personalities.

## Masks only work if everyone wears one

Connor  
Kockler  
*Guest Writer*



As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to sweep the nation, the numbers are simply horrendous. 4.6 million cases have been confirmed as of the time of writing in the United States, with more than 150,000 dead. Despite these statistics, it seems like a large chunk of people seem to be "over" Covid-19, not thinking it deserves concern. While I too am a bit tired of all the quarantine and lockdown measures we have had in place during the past few months, I know they serve a vital purpose. While it may not feel like there is much we can do, there is one small measure each of us can participate in to slow the spread of Covid-19 – wearing a mask in public places.

For context on the horrific numbers we have seen, 40,000 more Americans have now died from Covid-19 than died 100 years ago fighting in France during World War I. And it isn't over by a long shot. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates 20,000 more deaths will occur in the United States during just the next three weeks with current trends. That is more than the entire population of Sartell or my hometown of Sauk Rapids. These numbers should serve to show us all the threat of Covid-19 is real and dangerous. Even if you are younger and personally at less risk, think of parents, grandparents and people with vulnerable immune systems who you know who you could potentially infect.

Masks are vital to stopping this deadly infection because of the way Covid-19

spreads. The virus is most commonly spread through droplets that go into the air when people cough, sneeze or talk. Wearing a mask inhibits droplets from your nose or mouth from spreading through the air and being picked up by other people. This is why everyone wearing masks is so important. Wearing a mask protects other people more than it protects yourself. Thus, masks are only effective if everyone wears them.

State governments across the country have endorsed these scientific facts by mandating masks just as Gov. Tim Walz did here in Minnesota. Private companies like Walmart and Target have also introduced mask mandates in all of their locations regardless of whether states require them. Many local stores like Coborn's are doing the same. The level of communication and accommodation that is being conducted is admirable. Not only are companies telling customers in advance that they'll need masks, but they also are providing them at the door for people who forget them.

For those who might say wearing masks in public places is a violation of their rights, I would also say each business has the right to protect its employees and customers and keep people out who would endanger them. There are

numerous other things we do every day to keep ourselves and others safe, such as wearing seatbelts, obeying traffic signals and washing our hands. Wearing a mask is no less difficult than doing any of these.

What I especially abhor is the hate and abuse many store employees, including many of my friends, have endured at the hands of people who want to shame them for wearing masks. It is never OK to attack a store employee for doing their job, much less when they are simply wearing a mask to protect you and their fellow employees from getting sick with a deadly disease like Covid-19. That behavior needs to stop and I hope if any of us see it happening we will step in to defend those employees.

I know so many of us desperately want to get back to "normal," but the truth is Covid-19 will not go away unless we all work together to be responsible for the next few months until the growth in cases can be brought under control. Wearing a mask isn't fun I know, but I recognize if I want to go someplace in public I should be protecting the people who work there and my fellow patrons. If we don't all take measures to stop the spread of Covid-19, this lockdown, and the infections and deaths associated with it, won't end for a long time.

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







# Alleviate Credit Card Debt

According to a recent study from the Federal Reserve, the United States has surpassed one trillion dollars in credit card debt. This is the highest level it has been since the Great Recession.

Data released by Experian, a credit reporting agency, reveals that the average American faced a credit card balance of \$6,194 in 2019.

Here are some other sobering statistics discovered about credit card debt in the United States.

- 55 percent of Americans are carrying credit card balances.
- The average household carries \$6,849 in credit card debt.
- Credit card holders pay \$1,162 in interest every year.

If you are one of the millions of Americans struggling to make ends meet and catch up on your debt, there are ways to get your head above water.

## USE RESPONSIBLY

It can be tempting to make an impulse purchase. It's also easy to tell yourself you will pay it off before interest fees incur but find yourself only making minimum payments. Being a responsible credit card

holder requires diligence in making purchases not outside your means.

## ERASE CURRENT DEBT

While small balances which are easily managed can be beneficial to your overall credit, it's important to make payments on time and avoid carrying a large amount of debt. Here are some tips from the organization Consolidated Credit to lower your amount owed to a more manageable price point.

Avoid making minimum payments only. The suggested amount is not efficient to your goal of becoming debt free. Instead, plan a significant amount of extra cash to put down on your debts.

Pay attention to interest rates. Making minimum payments at 17 percent APR means one half of each payment merely covers accrued interest.

Meet with a financial adviser to create a goal for a pay-off date. They can guide you to how much your payments must be to become debt free.



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