

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Aug. 21, 2020
Volume 25, Issue 17
Est. 1995

Town Crier

United Way Days of Caring are Sept. 14-17

United Way of Central Minnesota will host Days of Caring on Sept. 14-17. Days of Caring brings people together to volunteer on community projects and to increase awareness of community needs. Projects include in-person and remote opportunities such as painting, packaging food, fall clean up, building projects and collection drives. Volunteers will receive a free T-shirt and a Coborn's food voucher. Visit unitedwayhelps.org or contact Mary Krippner at 320-223-7991 or mkrippner@unitedwayhelps.org.

School supplies needed

During August, help United Way collect the most-needed school supplies. There are three ways to help. Run a school supply drive, purchase school kits through United Way's partnership with Impacks or make an online donation to be used to purchase bulk school supplies. Items needed are the following: pencils, notebooks, folders, pencil boxes, crayons, color pencils, markers, glue sticks, scissors, rulers, pencil sharpeners, dice, decks of cards, loose-leaf paper, youth/adult masks and hand sanitizer. Visit www.unitedwayhelps.org for more information or contact Mary Krippner, director of Volunteer Engagement, at 320-223-7991 mkrippner@unitedwayhelps.org.

Emergency Services food donations needed

Nonperishable food items needed include the following: peanut butter, canned meat, canned fruit/vegetables, dried fruit, juice, oil, flour, sugar, spices/seasonings, dressing, rice, pasta, whole-grain cereal, and formula, baby food and baby cereal. Toiletries needed are toothpaste and brushes, razors, shampoo, feminine-hygiene products, deodorant, bar soap, combs, toilet paper, dish and laundry detergent. Drop off donations on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 12:30-1:30 p.m. at the loading area, 157 Roosevelt Road, St. Cloud, Door D. Outside of this time, contact info@ccstcloud.org or 320-229-4560 to coordinate another drop-off time.

Schools plan in-person, hybrid mix

by Mike Knaak
editor@ethenewsleaders.com

Sartell-St. Stephen schools will open the year with a mix of in-person and hybrid learning, unless updated numbers available on Aug. 27 show a drop in Covid-19 cases.

As of now, pre-kindergarten through fifth grade will open the year with in-person education while sixth- through 12th-graders will follow a hybrid schedule.

The decision is based on state rules for the number of Covid-19 cases in Stearns County. To provide in-person instruction for all students, the case rate must be nine or fewer cases per 10,000 people over the past 14 days. Currently, Stearns County is at 11.54 cases.

The plan could change before schools open on Sept. 8 if the Stearns County rate continues to drop. The district could switch to all in-person

classes, Superintendent Jeff Schwiebert said. On Aug. 27, new numbers will be available. That number will set the model for the first two weeks of school.

For hybrid learning grades, students will be divided into two groups. One group will meet in school Monday and Tuesday and use distance learning on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The second group will use distance learning on Monday, Tuesday

and Friday and meet in school on Wednesday and Thursday.

In-person classes will be limited to 50 percent capacity, but that shouldn't be a problem because most classrooms have a capacity of 33-34 students, Schwiebert said.

The school board approved the plan at its Aug. 17 meeting and also authorized Schwiebert in consultation with board chair Jeremy Snoberger to change plans if the health

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photo by Mike Knaak

School leaders answer school-opening questions online

Sartell-St. Stephen school district administrators and building principals gather Aug. 10 for an online question-and-answer session about how schools will reopen during the Covid-19 pandemic. Updated back-to-school details are available online at www.sartell.k12.mn.us/backtoschool2020.

Speakers criticize equity audit decision

by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

Six people spoke during the open forum portion of the Aug. 17 Sartell-St. Stephen school board meeting criticizing the board's failure to support an equity audit.

The six speakers includ-

ed students, parents and community members. High school student Eva Hess described her reaction to the decision as "disappointed and frustrated," opinions voiced by the other speakers.

During the open forum, speakers are allowed up to three minutes. The board lis-

tens but doesn't offer comments or answer questions.

The idea for the equity audit developed this summer when the board focused on racist and other discriminatory issues. During a listening session on June 24, students, teachers and community members shared stories

of racism, insensitive, hurtful comments about religion and failed attempts to correct the problems.

The board heard a proposal on July 20 from the executive director of Equity Alliance MN to conduct the audit and develop a plan for

Criticize • page 2

Ritter defends plans for athletic complex

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Feedback by some Sartell residents about the city helping fund the Scheels Athletic Complex is unfair and unfounded, said Chad Ritter, president of the Sartell Youth Recreation Center.

Ritter spoke to the Sartell City Council meeting during the public forum portion of the

Aug. 10 meeting.

Some critics of the city-private funding plan to build the complex have said it is not a good idea to use so much city money to benefit mainly just the sport of hockey. In addition, the critics have said it would be unwise for the city to enter into a loan agreement that could, they said, put the city in financial jeopardy.

Ritter told the City Coun-

cil there are many recreation/sports facilities in Sartell, many paid for directly or indirectly with tax money via the city and school district. He listed the amenities: 16 indoor basketball courts, two large pools, 11 youth and adult soccer fields, 10 youth and adult baseball fields, seven youth and adult softball fields and places designated for wrestling, gymnastics and weight training.

And yet there is only one hockey rink (Bernick's Arena), Ritter said.

He said critics of the athletic complex neglect to mention the complex will be a venue for other sports and events. Eight months of the year, the new complex can be used for other sports, including football, because it will be an enclosed space with artificial turf.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

SCHOOL BOARD CLOSED SESSION
SARTELL-ST. STEPHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 748
JULY 20, 2020
DISTRICT SERVICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
VIA TELECONFERENCE

The closed-work session of Independent School District 748 convened at 5 p.m. in the District Service Center Boardroom via teleconference. Members present via teleconference: Jeremy Snoberger, chair; Jason Nies, vice chair; Amanda Byrd, clerk; Patrick Marushin, treasurer; Lesa Kramer, director; Pamela Raden, director; and Jeff Schwiebert, superintendent.

The closed-work session was held under Minnesota Statute section 13D.03 for discussion of negotiations strategy.

Being there no further business Chair Snoberger declared the closed-work session adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Publish: Aug. 21, 2020

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Schools

from front page

situation changes. Once school starts, every two weeks the administration will decide the model for the next two weeks. Families can expect a communication every other Thursday, beginning Sept. 17, for the anticipated learning model for the following two weeks. If a

more urgent need arises, the school district will promptly shift to a more restrictive model.

The guidelines for returning to school were set by the Departments of Health and Education. School districts can choose stricter options but not less restrictive plans than determined by case numbers.

Families also have the option of participating in a distance-learning-format. Schwiebert

told the board about 8 percent of parents want full-time distance learning for their students, according to surveys sent to parents.

An outline of these models can be found in the district's Safe Learning Plan at www.sartell.k12.mn.us/safelearningplan.

Masks will be required in schools, district buildings and buses for students, staff and visitors.

Criticize

from front page

training and policies. A plan to pay the Woodbury-based consultants \$80,000 to conduct the audit and develop followup actions failed on a 3-3 vote at an Aug. 5 meeting. Board members Jeremy Snoberger, Jason Nies and Patrick Marushin voted in favor of the plan while board members Pam Raden, Lesa Kramer and Amanda Byrd opposed the measure.

The board members who opposed the plan questioned moving ahead because of the expense, disruptions and

distractions to teachers and students because of Covid-19 changes and if Equity Alliance was the best choice to help the district.

Nies argued at the Aug. 5 meeting against delaying action because of Covid-19 disruptions.

“Covid is not going to go away,” he said. “I don’t want to lose the momentum we have in the community around this issue.”

Kramer suggested before going forward, a multicultural committee that was set up a few years ago needs to be involved. Several members suggested a board member participate in that committee.

“I want to make sure what we are doing with the study is giving our community and the voices (who) want to be heard what they need,” Kremer said.

“We should focus on Covid,” Raden said. “Look at this in two weeks. I’m worried about how fast we’re going on this contract.”

At the Aug. 17 meeting, board chair Jeremy Snoberger said the administration is forming a committee that includes community members and teachers for additional audit discussions.

Administrators will be meeting with another potential consultant, Rochester-based Diversity Council.

Ritter

from front page

Fifteen years ago, when the Bernick’s Arena was built via a financial city/private partnership, “detractors,” said Ritter were critical of it, and they are mostly the same detractors now criticizing the athletic complex plan, he added.

Since the Bernick’s Arena was built, it has been so successful it has never needed any sort of bailout from the city, Ritter said.

“We’ve proven to be financially stable and feasible,” he told the council.

For years, the city, school district and other entities, including the SYRC, have established partnerships for recreation and for the economic benefit of the city, he pointed out.

On June 8, the Sartell City Council voted 4-1, with council member Mike Chisum voting no, to help fund the proposed Scheels Athletic Complex in the amount of about \$1.5 million. In addition, later the City Council, at its July 13 meeting, agreed on a 4-1 vote (Chisum voting no) to help the SYRC obtain a low-interest \$5 million loan through an agreement known as a conduit-lease. The city’s excellent credit rating would make the low-interest private loan possible. That plan also drew criticism from some city residents, who fear if the SYRC could not make repayments throughout the next 20 years, the city would then become financially liable.

That agreement, however, is expected to be reconsidered at an upcoming public hearing. The council might, for example, agree to a conduit-bond,

which – unlike a conduit-lease arrangement – would carry a higher interest rate but would not place the city in financial jeopardy in case of a loan default.

The new arena, to be built just south of the current one in Pinecone Regional Park, would be an enclosed structure with fabric roof and artificial turf. Supporters of the complex, including Ritter, have emphasized it could be used in the nonwinter months for any number of sports, as well as for community events such as concerts or trade shows.

The cost of the Scheels Sports Complex is estimated at about \$6.2 million. The arena planners said they have raised a lion’s share of the amount through corporate, business and individual donations and long-term pledges.

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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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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.

Aug. 4

4 p.m. Noise. Third Street N. A caller reported a neighbor was blasting “Let It Go” from the “Frozen” movie soundtrack for the past two days. The complainant’s neighbor was upset about a repair made to complainant’s existing fence that butted up to the neighbor’s fence. An officer could hear the song loud and clear from a few houses down. The song remained playing on a loop. The officer told the neighbor that the music needed to be turned down or shut off.

Aug. 5

2:30 a.m. Traffic stop. Riverside Avenue S. and Edgewater Lane. An officer witnessed a vehicle speeding. The officer warned them about their driving conduct.

Aug. 6

6:30 p.m. Stalled vehicle. Pinecone Road N. and 12th Street N. A stalled vehicle with mechanical issues was causing a traffic hazard. The vehicle was eventually able to start and get out of the traffic lane.

Aug. 7

10:30 a.m. Park Patrol. Pinecone Central Park. An officer on patrol performed park patrol. No issues.

Aug. 8

9:15 p.m. Traffic stop. Hwy. 10 and Benton Drive. An officer working a Toward Zero Deaths shift observed a vehicle speeding. The driver was given a citation for speed. Toward Zero Deaths is a program through the state of Minnesota with the goal of cutting down on hazardous driving.

Aug. 9

6 p.m. DWI. Hwy. 15 and CR 1. A driving complaint was reported that originated in Sauk Rapids but the vehicle came into Sartell. The vehicle was located at the registered owner’s address along with the driver. The driver was arrested for second-degree DWI, forfeited the vehicle and was transported to Stearns County Jail.

Aug. 10

11:30 a.m. Alarm. 10th Avenue N. An officer was dispatched to a residential burglar alarm. The officer saw an Erkens Water truck in the driveway. The officer spoke with the employee who was delivering salt and had already spoken with the homeowner regarding entry. The employee was ID’d.

Aug. 11

Noon. Extra patrol. Evergreen Drive. A man reported his business vehicle, propane tanks, dumpster and more were being tampered with at night.

Aug. 12

7 p.m. Threat. Fifth Avenue E. A person reported a threat made by another tenant in the building. The individual accused the complainant of stalking and threatening to beat him. The complainant stated the individual making threats showed signs of being under the influence. The complainant requested officers document the incident.

Aug. 13

4 p.m. Custody. Third Street S. A 911 caller was concerned about her children. Her ex has a history of domestic violence. One of their children stated they did not want to go to their father’s house out of fear the father will spank them. Officers contacted both parties and both stated they have/will be contacting human services.

Aug. 14

3:30 p.m. Indecent exposure. CR 120. A woman reported a man exposed himself in front

Blotter • page 5



Wear a mask
in public spaces.



Get tested if you
have any symptoms.



Answer if your health
department calls.

mn MINNESOTA

STAY SAFE MN



St. Stephen Parish Festival

St. Stephen, MN

Monday, Sept. 7, 2020

Online Grand Raffle Drawing at 5:30 p.m.

Website: churchofststephen.org

Facebook: St. Stephen Church

Grand Raffle Tickets

\$5.00 a ticket/10 tickets per book

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People



contributed photo

Receiving the check from the Slovenian Catholic Union are the following: (from row, left to right) The Rev. Ron Weyrens, Liz Legatt, Carol Hlebain, Joanna Pucel, Marge Pryately; (middle row) Ann Soderholm, Carol Spychala; and (back row) Jeff Soderholm, Betty Pogatshnik, Chuck Spychala, Danna Gasperlin, Mike Retka and Jim Bisek.

The American Slovenian Catholic Union presented a check for \$600 to the **Vibrancy Committee of St. Stephen Church** to support the parish's 150th celebration April

24-25, 2021. The parish is planning a full weekend of events including two polka masses by the Singing Slovenes of Duluth and a Slovenian crepe breakfast co-hosted by Slo-

venian group and the St. Stephen Lions Club. The Slovenian General Consul from Cleveland and the Minnesota Honorary Consul from St. Paul are also expected to attend.

Two Sartell students received degrees from the University of Wisconsin, Madison during an online commencement ceremony on May 9. **Ethan Hanson** was awarded a bachelor’s degree in biology and **Grant Olson** earned a bachelor’s degree in finance, investment and banking.

Two Sartell students recently graduated from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. **Christen Neil** graduated with a certificate. **Katelyn Stalboerger** graduated with cum laude honors and earned bachelor of arts degree and a bachelor’s degree in business administration.

Seven Sartell students were named to the spring semester dean’s list for achieving at least a 3.80 grade-point average at St. John’s University. The students are **Ethan Berndt, Elliot Edeburn, Benjamin Hoeschen, Matthew Immelman, Brandon Kramer, Matthew Michaud** and **Spencer Pierskalla**.

Five Sartell students graduated spring semester from the College of St. Scholastica. The students are **Benjamin Fern, Ethan Kiffmeyer, Rebecca Myrum**, Sister Beverly Raway Scholar, and **Jack Verkuilen**, all with bachelor’s degrees in nursing; and **Mark Loscheider**, doctorate in physical therapy.

Sarah Corrieri of Sartell earned a Certificate in Teaching from the College of St. Scholastica.

Caleb Skold of St. Stephen was named to the spring semester dean’s list at St. Cloud Technical and Community College for earning a grade-point average of 3.5 to 3.99.

Seven Sartell students have been named to the spring semester dean’s list for achieving at least a 3.80 grade-point average at the College of St. Benedict. The students are **Bethany Bierscheid, Shelby Hall, Breanna Hess, Lindsey Hoeschen, Haven Licht, Molly Mahowald** and **Hannah Wohletz**.

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.

Monday, Aug. 24
Sartell Farmers’ Market, 3-6 p.m., Bernick’s Arena.
Sartell City Council, 6 p.m., City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road N.

Tuesday, Aug. 25
Le Sauk Township Board, 7 p.m. Meeting held via teleconference, <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/996267573>.

Monday, Aug. 31
Sartell Farmers’ Market, 3-6 p.m., Bernick’s Arena.

Wednesday, Sept. 2
Sartell-St. Stephen school district work session, 6:30 p.m., District Service Center, 212 Third Ave. N.
St. Stephen City Council, 6:30 p.m., St. Stephen City Hall, 2 Sixth Ave SE.

| City of Sartell | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Annual Disclosure of Tax Increment Districts for the Year Ended Dec. 31, 2019 | | | |
| TIF District Name: | TIF District 5-2 Pheasant Crest | TIF District 5-4 Grandview South | TIF District 5-5 Burl Oaks |
| Current net tax capacity | 22,680 | 86,675 | 24,484 |
| Original net tax capacity | 535 | 2,059 | 1,197 |
| Captured net tax capacity | 22,145 | 84,616 | 23,287 |
| Principal and interest payments due during current year | 21,688 | 64,834 | 29,012 |
| Tax increment received | 24,517 | 112,886 | 30,928 |
| Tax increment expended | 22,514 | 137,868 | 29,135 |
| Month and year of first tax increment receipt | July 2005 | July 2014 | June 2014 |
| Date of required decertification | 12-31-2030 | 12-31-2022 | 12-31-2039 |
| Additional information regarding each district may be obtained from: Rob Voshell, finance director 125 Pinecone Road, Sartell, MN 56377 (320) 258-7318 rob.voshell@sartellmn.com Publish: Aug. 21, 2020 | | | |

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Produce stand offers free fresh vegetables

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Free fresh vegetables are being offered for people in need, thanks to a partnership between the Sartell Community Garden members and the Celebration Lutheran Church’s Free Community Store.

Gardeners are donating fresh-harvested vegetables to the church, which places them on a display stand on the church grounds at 1500 Pinecone Road N. People who need fresh vegetables can drive up, take what they like and, leave other food items or comfort items if they happen to have

any to spare. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, produce can be brought to the church from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

The produce stand will be open from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays, now through September.

Others who garden in the area are also encouraged to bring washed excess produce to Celebration for the produce stand. The produce includes zucchini, cucumbers, summer squash, pepper and some beets. Cooler-weather crops – pumpkins, potatoes and more – will start showing up as fall approaches.

In addition to the pro-

duce stand, there is also the CLC Free Community Store stand set up on church property. It offers free baby-care items, personal-care items, non-perishable foods and cleaning supplies. That stand is restocked daily and is available 24-7, weather permitting.

Anyone who wants to donate items or monetary donations can do so by either bringing them to the church or sending a check to Celebration Lutheran Church, 1500 Pinecone Road N, Sartell, MN 56377. Please write “Free Store” on the check’s memo line.



contributed photo

Zucchini and cucumbers – lots of cucumbers – fill the free produce stand at Celebration Lutheran Church. The twice-weekly offering of free fresh veggies is possible due to a partnership between Sartell Community Gardens and Celebration’s Free Store program to help those in need due to repercussions from the virus pandemic.

Four file for three school board seats

by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

Four people have filed for three seats on the Sartell-St. Stephen school board.

Taryn Gentile, Patricia Meling and Matthew Moehrle will

join incumbent Jason Nies on the Nov. 3 ballot.

Two incumbents whose terms are expiring, Lesa Kremer and Pam Raden, did not file for re-election.

Board members serve four-year terms.

Blotter

from page 3

of her and her children. Officers contacted the man and explained that exposing himself in public is illegal. He stated he “did not recall if he did or did not.” Officers contacted the city attorney and decided the man will be cited and will need to appear in court.

Aug. 15

8 p.m. Traffic stop. Division Street W. and Hwy. 15. An officer working a Toward Zero Deaths shift observed a vehicle with expired registration. The officer instructed the driver to update the registration.

Aug. 16

1:45 p.m. Stall. First Street NE and Third Avenue E. Officers were notified of a stalled ve-

hicle that was not a hazard to other drivers but would take a few hours to remove.

Aug. 17

10 p.m. Alarm. Second Street S. Officers were dispatched to business alarm. Officers made sure the business was secure. The owner was contacted and made aware of what happened.

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.



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Teach Good Money Habits

Money is a fact of life — one that kids should know about and understand early. According to a KeyBank report, 76 percent of current college students wish they'd had more help to prepare for their financial futures.

This underscores how important a financial education is for your child. Yet seminars, workshops and classes on personal finance are not typically included in primary and secondary education.

This puts the pressure and responsibility on adults outside of schools — parents and other family members — to teach children about the value of a dollar.

Here are just a few ways to educate your kids about money at any age.

Create a savings jar. Have your children add in money they earn or receive as gifts. It is best to use a clear vessel, such as a glass jar, so they can see the money grow. Encourage them to take the coins and bills out every day and count them. They will quickly grasp the diligence it takes to save and the excitement of seeing their savings grow.

Show them the value of a

dollar. When you take your kids to the store and they point out a toy, show them the price tag. Teach them what the numbers mean and how many dollars something costs. Children are incredibly tactile, so take extra cash with you to the store and count out

the money together. If you choose to purchase the item, let your child hand the money to the cashier.

Teach them about opportunity cost. Kids, especially older children, tend to pick up this lesson quickly. Essentially opportunity cost is

about weighing purchasing decisions. Talk your children through the multiple spending options for their money and let them make the final decision.

Teach them about investment cost. Think of the neighborhood lemonade

stand. If your children make \$10 selling lemonade during your yard sale, have them pay you for the cost of the lemons and sugar. You could also charge them a small rental fee for using the front yard. This will help them understand profit.



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Create a Routine

The routine your children had during school slowly faded during the summer break. Now that physically attending school is questionable due to COVID-19 your children must spend time to create and get into a school routine that will allow them to get work done while learning from home.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Attending school from home can feel like an extended vacation for your children. It's easy to be distracted by television, being at home and siblings. It's important that your student does well while attending online school from home so that they are not behind when school and life return to normal.

Time management when attending online school from home is crucial. Create a schedule for your kids to follow that will allow them to wake up at an appropriate time, attend online school and complete homework.

Plan lunch breaks and breaks for your children to relax a bit during school hours. It's important to make sure your kids stay in a school mindset.



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your child with homework. If your student is struggling at home, contact his teacher about online tutoring or work that can help your child sharpen their weaknesses.

SLEEPING BETTER

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services advises children to get plentiful sleep each night. Sleeping is not only about the number of hours you sleep, but more about the quality of sleep that is gained each night.

Placing yourself and your children on a sleep schedule will make it easier for your body to get good quality sleep. Here is a list of the recommended hours of sleep various age groups should get each night, according to the HHS:

- Most adults need seven to eight hours of good quality sleep on a regular schedule each night.
- Preschoolers need to sleep between 10 and 13 hours a day, including naps.
- School-aged children need nine to 12 hours of sleep each night.
- Teens need eight to 10 hours of sleep each night.

Staying on a consistent sleeping schedule can benefit the body in a variety of ways. Good quality sleep reduces stress, can help you maintain a healthy weight, think more clearly and do better in school and at work. Sleep can also lower your risk for serious health problems such as diabetes and heart disease.

Remember that it is OK to be flexible with the hours. Giving your children a little more time to relax or sleep is OK as long as they are getting their work done.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HOMEWORK

Creating a time at home to get work done can help your children stay on track during this difficult period. The U.S. Department of Education says homework can help children develop strong study habits and positive attitudes. According to ed.gov, home-

work helps students:

- Review and practice what they have covered in class.
- Prepare for class the next day.
- Learn to use resources, such as libraries, reference materials and websites.
- Explore subjects more fully than classroom time permits.
- Extend learning by applying skills they already have to new situations.
- Integrate their learning by applying different skills to a single task, such as book reports or science projects.

- Learn to manage time and meet deadlines.

HELP WITH HOMEWORK

Parents can help their children with homework by setting a regular time and place for it that removes distractions that may interfere with their progress. The U.S. Department of Education advises parents to provide supplies, identify resources and show interest in what your child is learning.

Remember that communication with teachers and counselors at their school is very important for helping



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Back to
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Wishes!

BACK TO SCHOOL | SOCIAL SKILLS

Making New Friends

Making friends in school is every bit as important as getting good grades but can be a nerve-racking experience for some children. Here are some tips and ways that you can build your child’s confidence to make friends.

WATCHING YOUR KIDS

Watching how your child socializes will help you find the root of what is keeping him from making friends. Your child may have anxiety in large groups of people or have a tough time thinking of how to initiate a conversation with other children.

Take your child to a park, a school activity or sport and watch how your child interacts with other children. Being a “fly on the wall” can help you see what skills your child lacks and what he may be doing wrong. This could be the best way to diagnose the problem and know what skills your child will need help building.

ROLE PLAY AT HOME

Your child might find it difficult starting a conversation with other children. They may be overthinking how to start the conversation. Role playing at home can help your child with initiating conversations. Sit down with your child



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and discuss topics that interest them and would like to start a conversation with. Practice initiating the conversation and discussing the topics until your child feels comfortable.

Play dates are another way your child can get practice socializing. Set up play dates with children your child is comfortable around to practice the conversation topics you role played at home. Watch how your child socializes and focus on whether the other child is having fun with

your child. Discuss what you saw with your child after the play date and how they felt discussing the topics he created.

BE A SOCIAL COACH

When an athlete in a sport finds a task, position or skill difficult, they don’t push the problem to the side or avoid it. The athlete continues to practice the skill until they get it right and it comes naturally. Help your child see socializing the same way an athlete sees that skill, and help your child

build and strengthen that skill.

Do not avoid the problem because your child is having a difficult time. Help them understand that it is important to know how to build relationships. Learning to build friendships when they are young will help them down the road.

BE SUPPORTIVE AND OFFER PRAISE

Your child may find making friends to be scary and nerve-racking. Making friends is not easy for everyone.

Do not compare your child to siblings that may find making friends and socializing easy. Your child may be looking for a couple of really good friendships rather than having many casual friends. Everyone is different. Remember that your child may have different social limits than their siblings.

Their happiness is what’s most important. Praise and support your child for every accomplishment they make and make sure they know that you are there to help them.

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BACK TO SCHOOL | THE DISEASE

Identifying COVID-19

With the uncertainty during the global COVID-19 pandemic comes the possibility for children to catch the disease from people they encounter, even if they are taking classes at home.

COVID-19 can spread quickly if you do not know how to identify the symptoms, when to seek help and how to care for others if they have contracted the disease. It is important to teach your family how to identify the symptoms for the novel coronavirus.

COVID-19 has a wide variety of symptoms ranging from mild to severe illness. It is important to know that anyone can have symptoms or can carry COVID-19 without even realizing they have it. Symptoms may appear two to 14 days after exposure.

Here are symptoms people with COVID-19 may have, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell.

The CDC reports that these are not all the possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal



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effects such as nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease or diabetes are at higher risk for developing

more serious complications.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If you suspect that you, your child or another family member has COVID-19, the CDC encourages you keep track of

the symptoms and look for emergency signs. If someone is showing emergency signs, seek emergency medical care. Here are those emergency signs, according to the CDC: trouble breathing, persistent

pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, and bluish lips or face.

If you or your child shows any emergency signs or symptoms, call 911 or call your local emergency facility immediately.

STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK

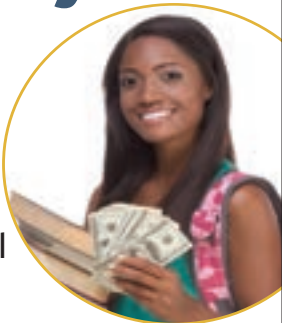
If someone in your family has contracted COVID-19, there are precautions you will need to take to protect your family and others from the spread of germs. The CDC shares a list of precautionary steps to take:

- Continue to practice everyday preventive actions.
- Keep the ill person in a room away from the rest of the household members, follow recommended precautions and monitor your own health.
- Keep surfaces disinfected.
- Avoid sharing personal items with the ill person.
- If you become sick, stay in contact with others by phone or email.
- Stay informed about the local outbreak situation.
- Contact your child's school to let them know that you or a family member has contracted COVID-19.

These are all preventative, cautionary steps to take that will prevent the spread of germs. If you or your family member contracts COVID-19, all members of the family should enter a quarantine period of 14 days, the CDC recommends.

Teach Your Teen About Money

Start the year off right — teach your teen about money by encouraging them to open an account at your local community bank.



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Starting the New Year Right

Back to school after a summer away can be a nerve-racking experience for some students.

For some it may be a new school, a new grade or new state altogether. There are ways, despite uncertainty, to make back to school a positive and exciting experience.

A FIRST DAY OUTFIT

Looking and feeling your best can also help you do your best. Taking your student to the store and allowing him or her to pick out their first day outfit can help them look forward to their first day of the new school year. It's important that you allow your students to buy the clothes they feel help express themselves the best.

Many stores have back-to-school specials that would make picking out the first-day look easy and affordable. There are other ways your child can express themselves and make a great first impression on the first day of school such as a new haircut, new shoes or a new backpack.

MAKE A SCHOOL RESOLUTION

Although people mostly make resolutions at the beginning of each calendar year, it can be a good idea to create a resolution before each school semester or school year.

Knowing your goal is half the battle of achieving your goal. Creating school resolutions can become a family tradition in your household. Here are a few ideas for school resolutions you can talk to your children about:

- Eat healthier.
- Make 5 new friends.

- Smile more and say hello more often.
- Create better study habits.
- Stop procrastinating.
- Complete assignments on time.
- Create a daily planner and keep up with the planner.

PREPPING FOR CLASSES

Most students know what classes they will have on the first day of school. Have your children look into their classes ahead of time.

They will walk in prepared and more confident after knowing what to expect. Getting to know their teachers or professors is also a good way to prepare for the class.

Contacting their teacher or professor to talk about the class and what his expectations are will help your children be prepared for what is to come once school starts again.

FIRST-DAY PICTURE

An inexpensive and fun way to celebrate the school year starting again with the whole family is to create picture frames for first-day pictures. Picture frame crafts can be purchased at any store that sells arts and crafts items. Your children can create different themes for the frames each year and frames that express who they are.

Creating picture frames with your family can create many memories year in and year out. Creating frames together also shows your children that you support them and enjoy creating memories and fun.



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Spaying and Neutering

A pet that has been spayed or neutered will gain many medical and behavioral benefits. It also is a way to do your part in lowering the pet homelessness crisis. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals reports there are millions of healthy cats and dogs euthanized each year due to not finding homes.

It is recommended to spay or neuter your pet at an early age, before potentially negative behavioral habits can be established.

It may seem overwhelming to put your pet through a major surgery at such a young age, but you actually will be providing it with a path to live a longer, healthier life.

BENEFITS

Spaying or neutering can lessen risks of common diseases in your pet. According to the ASPCA, cases of breast tumors are cancerous in 50 percent of female dogs and 90 percent of female cats. Spaying before your pet's first round of heat occurs provides a huge advantage in protection of these diseases.

A neutered male pet will be less likely to feel the need to mark his territory than a non-neutered male. This will lessen the risk of messes on your furniture and other household items.

Additionally, your male pet also will be less likely to try to wander off from his home. If your male pet has not been neutered, he will likely try all he can to find a mate. This puts him at risk of traffic injuries and fights with other animals.

MYTHS

There are a lot of misconceptions around about spaying or neutering your pet. Here are some of the most common myths:

- Your pet will become overweight. The truth is your pet will become overweight by overfeeding and lack of exercise, not neutering.
- Surgery is risky. Of course,

anytime anesthesia is required, there is a slight chance of things going the wrong way. However, neutering is one of the most common procedures performed by veterinarians.

- It's too expensive. While the initial procedure may seem expensive, there are many low- or no-cost spay or neuter clinics. Visit the ASPCA's website to locate clinics in your area.



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Humane Society's new home is the cat's meow

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Its first home was a repurposed old gas station that sometimes flooded with rain. But now – nearly a half century later – the Tri-County Humane Society has just moved into its third home – a brand-new, state-of-the-art facility.

The old gas-station locale, on Lincoln Avenue in east St. Cloud, was just a stone's throw to the west of the new building.

The new Tri-County Humane Society shelter's open-for-business day will be Wednesday,

Aug. 26. A public open house, perhaps a “virtual” one, will be announced later.

Humane society staff members and volunteers have been busy recently, moving stuff into the new building, which is just west of the current shelter at Eighth Street NE, St. Cloud. That building, the society's second home, was built in 1989 and expanded and altered throughout the years until it was virtually bursting at the seams with overcrowded functions and activities.

Although the moving process is a happy one for staff excited about working in a custom-de-



contributed photo

Close to a half century ago, this old remodeled gas station was the first “home” of the Tri-County Humane Society. It was on Lincoln Avenue in east St. Cloud.

signed, spacious home, the process has also been bittersweet.

“We are leaving behind a building chock-full of memories for not only us but the community,” said TCHS Executive Director Vicki Davis, who has been with the nonprofit organization since 1984. “This shelter has served us well for the past 30 years, but we never imagined how we’d grow and how animal welfare – and this organization – would change during that time.”

In the early days, the 1980s, the staff had a skinflint budget of only \$40,000 per year.

“We kept the animals clean, fed and loved,” said Davis. “That’s about all we could do with the budget we had to work with.”

Davis compared the long evolution of the TCHS to a journey, quoting a Chinese proverb: “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

The first step in the early mid-1970s was the efforts of volun-

teers to take care of animals in their homes. Then, in 1976, two years after the TCHS was formed, the old leaky gas station was another step. All it had was a dozen kennels, some puppy cages and a dozen cat cages. The next step on the journey, the second building, was like a dream come true. And now, this third, larger home is like an answered prayer; it’s the cat’s meow.

“We can now celebrate a milestone of many steps which have taken us from basic to better,” said Davis, “and now we step from better into a best-practice animal shelter.”

The new \$4-million headquarters/shelter was created by HMA Architects and BCI Construction with partnership from Falcon National Bank. The facility contains twice the amount of space of the current – soon to be former – building. Ground was broken last fall for the structure.

So far, volunteers have raised about \$2 million toward the



contributed photo

Angela Mundis, special-events coordinator, moves items into a storage room at the new facility of the Tri-County Humane Society.

\$4-million cost of the facility. Fundraising efforts will continue to pay off the debt load.

Since its beginnings, with its measly annual \$40,000 budget, the TCHS has grown by leaps and bounds every year and now has an annual budget of about \$1 million. In its early years, the TCHS had a full-time staff of three people, five-part timers and 60 volunteers. Now there are 11 full-time staff, 21 part-time and up to 200 volunteers before the pandemic diminished that number due to exposure concerns. Last year, volunteers contributed

Humane • back page



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CMCU offers high-tech options

by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

Central Minnesota Credit Union's new Sartell branch features first-of-its kind technology that gives customers more options for managing their money.

The branch's lobby features two large digital kiosks that provide information about the credit union's services. A few feet away, an interactive ATM does more than just pump out cash.

If you leave your debit card at home, you can still log in using your eyes. There's a biometric iris scanner at each of the two stations. Customers can also log in with their debit card and PIN or by scanning a driver's license and entering a password. Available transactions include withdrawing cash, making deposits, paying loans and credit card bills, transferring funds and checking balances.

The Sartell branch's technology is a first for the credit union, which has 21 locations throughout Minnesota, stretching from Brooklyn Center to Moorhead.

There's more new technology outside. At the drive-thru stations, customers can interact face-to-face with a teller thanks



photo by Mike Knaak

Tami Mesker, branch manager of Sartell's Central Minnesota Credit Union location, demonstrates the Next interactive ATM.

to a video screen. The drive-thru ATMs are available 24 hours a day and the video service is available 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m.-noon Saturday.

“The technology allows us to serve members the way they want to be served,” Branch Manager Tami Mesker said. “Members have the options of self-service, assisted service or full service.” Members entering a lobby are greeted by a consultant who can handle their transactions or direct them to the appropriate services.

The Sartell branch at 300 Pinecone Road S. opened in late June. There are 66 credit union employees at the Sartell Financial Center. Of the 66 employees, 15 of them work directly with members and the others in operations.

Before the Sartell branch opened, the St. Joseph branch was the closest office for the credit union's 3,600 members in the Sartell area.

Central Minnesota Credit Union started in 1939 in Melrose with the philosophy of “people helping people.”

Public notice

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
SARTELL-ST. STEPHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 748
JULY 20, 2020
DISTRICT SERVICE CENTER BOARD ROOM VIA TELECON-
FERENCE

The regular school board meeting of Independent School District 748 was called to order at 5:19 p.m. by Chair Jeremy Snoberger. Members present via teleconference: Snoberger, chair; Jason Nies, vice chair; Amanda Byrd, clerk; Patrick Marushin, treasurer; Lesa Kramer, director; Pamela Raden, director; and Jeff Schwiebert, super-intendent. Members absent: none.

A motion was made by Nies and seconded by Kramer to APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Kramer, Raden, Nies, Marushin and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Byrd and seconded by Marushin to APPROVE CONSENT ITEMS A.4.a – A.4.d AS PRESENTED BELOW. On a roll call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Kramer, Raden, Nies, Marushin and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

- A.4.a. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on June 15, 2020
- Minutes of the board listening-session meeting held on June 24, 2020
- Minutes of the closed-work session held on July 8, 2020

A.4.b Checks in the amount of \$1,871,333.37 as presented:

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| General Fund | 1,612,286.42 |
| Food Service Fund | 41,777.05 |
| Transportation Fund | 29,948.11 |
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| Capital Expenditure Fund | 164,224.24 |
| Internal Service Fund | 2,310.45 |
| Check numbers 178830 – 179033 | |

| | |
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| ACHs in the amount of \$334.30 as presented: | |
| Food Service Fund | 334.30 |
| ACH numbers 202000001-202000002 | |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Receipts in the amount of \$5,229,943.10 as presented: | |
| General Fund | 3,162,865.18 |
| Food Service Fund | 132,684.75 |
| Community Service Fund | 154,332.14 |
| Building Fund | 1,144.64 |
| Debt Service Fund | 1,762,294.90 |
| Activity Accounts | 8,331.81 |
| Internal Service Fund | 8,289.68 |
| Receipts 47720 - 47803 | |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Wire transfers in the amount of \$3,500,249.46 as presented: | |
| General Fund | 451,244.37 |
| Food Service Fund | 1,854.83 |
| Transportation Fund | 75.58 |
| Community Service Fund | 2,567.50 |
| Capital Expenditure Fund | 846,633.49 |
| Building Fund | 12,097.41 |
| Debt Service Fund | 1,843,630.00 |
| Internal Service Fund | 342,146.28 |
| Wire transfers 201900972-201901039 & 202000001-202000031 | |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Building Fund Checks in the amount of \$1,245,146.59 as presented: | |
| Building Fund | 1,245,146.59 |
| Check numbers 601023 to 601056 | |

A.4.c Accept the following donations:
Oak Ridge Elementary PTO, ISD #748, \$7,500, PMP playground equipment; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$7,500, PMP playground equipment; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$1,206.36, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$74, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$538, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$130, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$105.20, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$516.20, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO

Elementary, ISD #748, \$749.75, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$121.11, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$105.20, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$7,380.20, projectors; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$392, classroom supplies; Pine Meadow PTO Elementary, ISD #748, \$653.20, food service accounts; Manufacturing Fund of Central Minnesota, Sabre Manufacturing-SHS, \$6,000, advancement of Sabre manufacturing.

A.4.d Accept the resignation of Renee Zieglmeier, SMS, para, 7/13/20.

Construction Manager Report on Building Process:

Project Engineer Eric Johnson reported on the renovations project at Riverview Intermediate School. Demolition work in the pier, STEAM rooms and media rooms are nearing completion. Some masonry work, light flooring and painting still need to be completed. The flooring in the pier will take a considerable amount of time to complete. Bathroom tile has been upgraded and complete along with fixtures being hung. The gymnastics area exterior has been enclosed with the gymnastics pit still progressing. Overall the project is going well.

Superintendent Report: Jeff Schwiebert, superintendent

Schwiebert reported on the passing of Bill Galarneault and reflected on the more than 40 years of direct impact he had on the entire district including being a driving force in the founding of the district, serving as business manager and serving as a member of the school board until 2009. Brenda Steve was recently recognized as Principal of the Year by the State Student Council Association. The association also postponed the state convention the High School was set to host last. Now the high school will have the opportunity to host in 2020-2021. Director of Business Services Joe Prom will present a finance report monthly to the board starting in August. MSBA is in process of releasing a policy that would suspend certain policies due to the pandemic and emergency orders. Lastly, the administrative team is working on COVID planning for all three scenarios for returning to school. Each principal will meet with their staff starting tomorrow to discuss how each scenario would work. The return to school plans, in con-

junction with the governor's pending orders, will then be presented to the board at the work session on Aug. 5. A letter, along with a survey, will be sent out to parents to gauge how many parents will or will not send their children back in scenario one.

Equity Audit Presentation:

Executive Director of Equity Alliance Minnesota Sebastian Witherspoon presented the process of an equity audit.

Activities and COVID-19 Report:

Activities Director Ryan Hauge reported on summer activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

School Board Committee Report:

No reports.

A motion was made by Nies and seconded by Marushin to APPROVE #1-15 DENY #16:

New Employees/Changes:

Aaron Athas, SMS/SHS, ITS, \$56,725, MA, Step E, new position, 8/26/2020; Daniel Bauer, RIS, custodian, \$17.61/hour, RIII, S1, 8 hours/day, 260 days/year, replacing Meghan Hennagir, 7/20/2020; Gretchen Grunzke, SMS, fall play director, \$1,890 (4.5 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Rick Cicharz, 8/17/2020; Breanna Heichert, SMS, junior high girls' tennis, \$1,890 (4.5 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Joy Bemboom, 8/31/2020; Ryan Hiltner, SHS, PAC manager, \$6,090 (14.5 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), new position, 9/1/2020; Amanda Holstrom, SMS/District, ITS, \$61,424, MA10, Step G, new position, 8/31/2020; Mitchell Keeler, SHS, ninth-grade football, \$4,410 (10.5 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Luke Rude, 9/17/2020; Eric Koplitz, SHS, assistant boys soccer, \$4,184 (9.5 percent), BA, C (\$44,045), replacing Jacob Hemmesch, 9/17/2020; Sarah Lauer, SMS, seventh-grade math, \$43,024, BA, Step B, replacing Christian Pekarek, 8/26/2020; Rachel Miller, SMS, PAC manager, \$3,990 (9.5 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), new position, 9/1/2020; Russell Tiernan, SHS, AM lead custodian, \$18.96/hour, RIV, Step 1, 8 hours/day, 260 day/year, replacing Brian Larson, 7/22/2020; Kimberly Zipp, SHS, counseling secretary, \$21.40/hour, RV, Step 1, 8 hours/day, 202 days/year, replacing Stacy Clitty, 7/13/2020.

New Employees – Pending Licensure:

Jacob Hennigs, ORE, Music, \$10,500.50, BA, Step A, .25 FTE, new position, 8/26/2020; Steven Prigge, SHS, Family and Consumer Science, \$44,044, BA, Step C, replacing Joey Vanek, 8/26/2020.

Leaves of Absence:

Madison Rosenow, PMP, para, LOA, 10/1/20-1/4/21; Rochelle Dyer, SMS, teacher, LOA, 20-21 school year.

On a roll call vote, the following voted in favor: Kramer, Marushin, Nies, Byrd, Raden and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Byrd TO RENEW RESOURCE TRAINING AND SOLUTIONS MEMBERSHIP FOR 2020-2021.

Following discussion on the motion Marushin offered an amendment to the original motion which was seconded by Nies TO NOT RENEW RESOURCE TRAINING AND SOLUTIONS MEMBERSHIP FOR 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR.

On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Kramer, Marushin, Nies, Raden and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Kramer and seconded by Marushin TO APPROVE RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE ELECTION OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS AND CALLING THE SCHOOL DISTRICT GENERAL ELECTION.

On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Kramer, Marushin, Nies, Raden and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Raden and seconded by Byrd TO APPROVE DISTRICT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK REVISIONS AND COACHES/ADVISORS HANDBOOKS AS PRESENTED.

On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Nies, Kramer, Byrd, Raden, Marushin and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Nies TO APPROVE PINE MEADOW PRIMARY, OAK RIDGE EARLY LEARNING CENTER, RIV-
Minutes • back page

Opinion

Our View Prepare now for Nov. 3 vote

In last week’s primary election, Minnesota voters and election officials experienced what voting looks like amid a pandemic.

The primary was a good trial run to prepare for the Nov. 3 general election. Voters can act now to ensure everyone votes and every vote counts in November.

Just like stores and restaurants, polling places instituted health and safety measures. Voting required wearing a mask, election judges worked behind plastic barriers and voters were asked to socially distance. Workers constantly disinfected surfaces such as voting booths and door handles and sanitized pens. These practices slowed things down a bit. In the primary, about 27 percent of registered voters voted with a higher percentage than usual using early and absentee voting. More about those options later. Minnesotans usually lead the nation in voter turnout with more than 70 percent participation so a few easy steps will make voting easier and faster for the much larger turnout expected on Nov. 3.

First, make sure you are registered. Go to MNvotes.org and click on the Register to Vote link. On the website, you can check to see if you are registered as well as view a sample ballot. You can register at the polls, but that takes more time than if you are already registered. Also take time to check your polling place. Because of Covid-19 restrictions in schools and other typical polling locations, your polling place may have moved.

You don’t have to wait until election day to vote. There are several options for early voting. Beginning on Friday, Sept. 18, you can vote early in person at the county election office. That option continues through Monday, Nov. 2. Absentee voting locations must be open during normal business hours and must be open the last Saturday before the election from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The last week before the election, in-person early voting also takes place at your local city hall or at the Stearns County License Center or Courthouse.

Donald Trump has created much confusion and conflict about the safety and security of voting by mail. However, assertions of widespread voter fraud can’t be backed up by facts. In data collected in three vote-by-mail states, the Electronic Registration Information Center found officials identified just 372 possible cases of double voting or voting on behalf of deceased people out of about 14.6 million votes cast by mail in the 2016 and 2018 general elections, or 0.0025 percent.

Voting by mail is not a new idea. Oregonians have voted by mail for more than 20 years. Colorado, Hawaii, Utah and Washington conduct all elections entirely by mail. Right here in Stearns County, 12 small cities and 19 township precincts conduct their elections by mail.

For these elections, all registered voters receive a ballot in the mail. The voter marks the ballot, puts it in a secrecy envelope or sleeve and then into a separate mailing envelope, signs an affidavit on the exterior of the mailing envelope and returns the package via mail or by dropping it off.

Trump has wrongly confused absentee voting with voting by mail, not surprising because he and his family vote absentee. In Minnesota, the process to handle the ballots and count the votes is the same for voting early in person or requesting an absentee ballot and returning it by mail. Any voter in Minnesota can vote early by absentee ballot, regardless of whether they will be home on Election Day.

To request a ballot so you can vote early by mail, go to MNvotes.org and click on the Other Ways to Vote.

With rising concern about the Postal Service’s ability to deliver the mail in a timely manner, you can return your completed ballot in person to the county election offices. You may not drop off your ballot at your polling place on election day.

If you decide to return your ballot by mail, it must be postmarked on or before Election Day (Nov. 3) and received by your county within the next seven calendar days (Nov. 10). You may also send your ballot via a package delivery service such as FedEx or UPS.

You can track the progress of your ballot at MNvotes.org as well.

Laws passed by the Minnesota Legislature and procedures set up by the Minnesota Secretary of State assure voting is easy and secure for every eligible Minnesotan to vote, even during a public health crisis.

Will we elect an ‘angry, nasty’ woman?

In late summer, the Democratic nominee for president selected a woman, who was a member of Congress, as the party’s vice-presidential candidate. The presidential candidate, himself a former vice president, knew exactly what type of person he wanted for his running mate in an election to unseat a Republican incumbent. His own service as vice president set the standard for the modern relationship between the president and vice president.

The year was 1984. Walter Mondale, Jimmy Carter’s vice president and a former Minnesota senator, asked Rep. Geraldine Ferraro of New York City to join him and make history by being the first woman on a major party ticket. Mondale introduced Ferraro in the House chamber in the Minnesota Capitol in St. Paul. Ferraro served three terms in the U.S. House representing Queens, a district that served as the location of the popular television show of that era, “All in the Family.” The district was known for its ethnic composition and conservative views. During the campaign, opponents attacked Ferraro’s family finances.

The Mondale/Ferraro team lost to Reagan/Bush, 60-40 percent.

Twenty-four years later in St. Paul, another presidential candidate introduced a woman as his running mate. During the 2008 Republican National Convention, Sen. John McCain choose Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin in his contest against Barack Obama and Joe Biden. McCain’s choice was intended to energize his campaign and broaden the party’s ap-

Mike Knaak
Editor



peal beyond white men. After making a big splash in St. Paul, closer scrutiny revealed a candidate ill-prepared for the nation’s second-highest office and in no way ready for grueling national politics. However, Palin did provide the raw material to help Tina Fey earn an Emmy for mocking Palin on SNL.

The ticket, with a female vice president lost again, with 46 percent of the vote.

Democrats picked Hillary Clinton to run in 2016 and we know how that turned out. Clinton, on paper the most prepared and qualified candidate since George H.W. Bush, lost to Donald Trump, who was and is totally unprepared and unfit for any elective office.

Were American voters ready to vote for women in those three races? Would a man have done better? Probably not. Reagan’s job approval rating was 62 percent by election day, after climbing through the 50s all summer. McCain and Palin faced a once-in-a-generation candidate whose words promised hope and change and whose election would be historic.

Clinton lost for a number of reasons. Voters didn’t much like her or Trump and took a chance on the new guy. Too

whistling Dixie, he skips on to his own deluded version of reality. When he’s caught in his own trap, he distracts attention and blames anybody and anything – Obama, Hillary, China, left-wing radicals, anarchists, the weather. Anything at all.

When the virus appeared, Trump opened his tattered playbook. The virus, he promised, will disappear, like a miracle. When warm April arrives, the virus will die. Maybe injecting bleach will stop the infection? But wait, there’s more! What about hydroxychloroquine? Oh yeah, that’ll do the job. Order before midnight, folks! Very often, after bragging and/or telling a lie, Trump asks, “Can you believe it?” The answer is no.

And what’s this mask nonsense? Masks are for sissies and alarmists who think the virus is just a hoax. As the death toll rose by thousands upon thousands, Trump’s obsessive focus was to re-open businesses. Those deaths are almost all caused by the plain old flu bug or by old age. The Democrats and the media are playing up death to win the next election. Schools better re-open – or there’ll be hell to pay. And enough testing! Testing causes more infections; if we stop testing, the virus will vanish.

It’s time to Make America Sane Again

Why are so many people surprised by President Donald Trump’s abysmal lack of leadership during this Covid-19 crisis?


Even some of his worshippers are souring on his utter lack of coherent leadership.

No one should be surprised. Not at all. If they’d paid attention during the past three years, they would know by now that Trump’s mishandling of the virus crisis was just another page – the bleakest page – torn from his ragged playbook.

From the get-go, anything Trump did not like, did not agree with or that proved him wrong he merely dismissed with a snort and a sneer as fake news. After 20,000-plus lies, he is still lying. His inauguration ceremony drew the biggest crowds in history. His trillion-dollar-plus tax cut was going to help the little guy the most. Intelligence agencies, spurred on by vicious Democrats, spied on him, invented the Russia collusion story and caused innocent chums to be charged with cooked-up crimes and Trump’s impeachment. When it was revealed that Russia was paying the Taliban to kill American troops in Afghanistan, Trump scoffed: fake news. Later, he said, the issue did not cross his desk in an intelligence briefing. How would he know? He is notorious for not reading those briefings, for not reading anything.

From the very start, Trump has played denial ostrich, concocting lies and dismissing all facts, science and other pesky information as fake. Then,

Dennis Dalman
Reporter



many Democrats stayed home. If 37,000 votes would have flipped in three states, we’d only be seeing Trump on FOX’s late-night Saturday lineup.

Now Biden has made history again after serving two terms as vice president to the country’s first Black president. Sen. Kamala Harris would be the nation’s first Black vice president and first woman elected to that post.

Are voters ready for a woman this time? Is she too ambitious? Please make a list of the vice presidents who have not been ambitious. Start with the most recent VPs: Pence, Biden, Cheney, Gore, even Quayle, Bush 41, Mondale, Rockefeller, Ford, Agnew (ambitious and a crook). Can you claim any of them were not ambitious? OK time to move on.

Harris faces not only sexist but also racist attacks from Trump and his crew. He’s rolled out the “nasty” label again that he reserves for any woman – politician or journalist – who gets under his skin. Because she’s not white, there’s also room for racism casting her as an “angry Black woman.” It’s not surprising conservatives also question whether Harris, born in Oakland, California, is really an American and eligible to be vice president. Where have we seen this movie before?

While Trump is appealing to “suburban housewives” with racist messages, will 2020, the 100th anniversary of women gaining the vote, be the year when a candidate is judged by her ability, ideas and character?

As Trump sinks in the polls, as he digs his hole deeper, a flailing panic is setting in, causing him to become even more unstable, more paranoid, even more narcissistic.

“I alone can fix it!” he has often crowed. But can he fix himself, even with the help of his hand-picked fixer, Attorney General William Barr?

Like Humpty Dumpty who fell off his wall, Trump is broken, and all of his horses and all of his men can’t put Trumpty together again. Meantime, before the defeat he senses with quivering dread, he is already predicting a rigged election. He ought to know; he’s doing it by sabotaging the Postal Service. Remember how it was voting fraud that gave Hillary Clinton three million more popular votes? Hey, why have an election at all? Call it off. Aw shucks, just let King Donald reign for four more years.

So, again, why be surprised? For the last three-and-a-half years, it’s always been about Himself and his Gigantic Ego, about him keeping power in his just-pretend presidency, about the pomp and pageantry befitting a king. What is so ironic, perhaps so “fitting,” is he did it all to himself, and boomerang justice just might soon hit him right over the head.

How the mighty fall. Many kings throughout history have ended up as blustering, sputtering has-beens wringing their hands during self-pity trips in the wee lonely hours.

Time to pay attention: Make America Sane Again.

Letters to the editor

Education equity advocates offer suggestions for school change

Members of Envisioned Equity For All, Sartell

A number of members of our group, Envisioned Equity For All (EEFA), were present at the board meeting on Aug 5. While we were initially encouraged by the equity audit proposal being present on the agenda, we were dismayed and discouraged by the “No” votes cast, resulting in the motion’s failure.

At the July 8 work session, we had observed a strong positive response from the board to move in a direction to support this endeavor. The reasons given for the “No” votes surprised us on multiple levels, especially when it was cited that more research needed to be done, despite having approximately one month between the two work sessions. We also were surprised to hear there were “others who did not want this” and that the cost was cited multiple times.

Our members, as well as other students and parents present at the meeting, clearly supported this effort and were disappointed to hear these statements from the board. At the June listening session, students and parents bravely came forward to speak on their experiences within the district, and this line of reasoning discounted those experiences as not being worth the potential expenditure.

While we can appreciate there is a cost involved in completing an audit of this type and magnitude, the board cannot ignore the issues presented and must reconsider the equity audit proposal. While we wait for the board to take action, students facing inequities in our school and community continue to suffer.

We are confident the board can and will take appropriate action to ensure equity in our schools. As a group, EEFA is requesting the board consider the following items for action and implementation to not only show a good-faith effort toward encouraging equity in our district, but also to show our students the issue of equity is important to the Board and that their voices are heard and valued.

Complete an equity audit

Engage an equity audit provider before the end of the first semester to complete an equity audit for the district.

Publish the full results and recommendations of the equity audit on the district website so all district students and their

parents as well as Sartell-St. Stephen residents have the opportunity to learn about and address any potential issues and/or concerns addressed in the Audit.

Develop a plan for implementation of the recommendations of the audit and communicate this plan to the public.

Engage an equity coordinator to ensure the recommendations of the audit are implemented.

Utilize board committees and engage public voices

Resurrect the multi-cultural subcommittee and ensure the membership includes not only board members and administration, but also students, parents and community members.

Utilize the multi-cultural subcommittee to engage with groups such as EEFA and Student Advocates for Equity to obtain commentary and feedback on current issues that remain within the district.

Provide regular listening sessions on topics of equity, including, but not limited to, issues of race, sexuality, gender, religion and/or any other topic where equity is lacking.

Provide opportunities for staff and students

Research opportunities for staff education on issues of equity and implement quality, on-going training.

Provide an opportunity for students to anonymously report observed or experienced equity issues via an online format. Utilize the current tip line/form for unsafe behavior and expand the reach to also include incidents of discrimination/equity issues.

Engage speakers and/or course work opportunities for students to enhance their knowledge and understanding regarding issues of equity.

Ongoing monitoring

Require each building to keep records of equity-related complaints from staff and students, including but not limited to, issues of race, sexuality, gender, religion and/or any other protected class. Records should be redacted for staff and/or student privacy and kept on file for a minimum of 36 months.

Equity-related complaints should be documented in a formal format which should include not only the type of complaint lodged but also an action plan to address the issues raised.

Annually, review the equity-related complaints to provide data to the district (e.g. number of equity complaints received, number of complaints related to race, number of complaints related to gender). This will not only allow the board to

have a visual representation of the number of complaints lodged but also to target and address areas where continued complaints exist – which also helps to show progress in Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports record-keeping.

Ensure action plans outlined have been completed.

We at EEFA hope you will seriously consider our suggestions and implement the action items listed above. We would be happy to help with these efforts in any way we can and to discuss with the board our ideas and suggestions. Thank you for your continued efforts.

Delaying equity audit disappoints

Zurya Anjum, Sartell

I was very disappointed in the decision by the school board to not go ahead with the equity audit. As a person of color with two children in the school district who have faced discrimination for years, here is my response to the reasons stated at the meeting to not approve the audit:

1. Do we need an equity audit:

Not necessarily but even though this issue has been brought up too many times to the attention of school administration by students, parents and teachers for years, nothing has been done about it. Due to our reluctance to acknowledge this difficult issue we have ignored it for years. Can we still continue to ignore it now... no. And if we choose to Ignore it what does it say about us? We need an impartial review of our school system to identify what and how to improve things.

2. Not the right time:

If not now, when is the right time? The kids, teachers and parents spoke passionately and from their hearts at the listening session about years of discrimination. If the school board was not aware of them that is their failing. Now that they are aware, every day they do nothing about it and our children bear the scars, the responsibility of that is on them. There will never be a perfect time to do this. That is like saying to someone: you should learn to be a perfect parent before having kids. We learn as we grow with our kids, recognize our mistakes and correct them. No one is a perfect parent and there is never a perfect time to do anything.

2. It is too expensive:

This is an insult to the people who have asked for this for years, not just at the listening session now. We can commit to invest an insane amount (\$50,000 according to rumors) for rental cost that is currently

paid by the school district to the city of Sartell for renting space for ice hockey for a year but can not spend \$80,000 once to make a plan for 3-5 years to deal with these important issues that impact our children’s mental health. Shame on us for putting a price on that.

3. We haven’t explored other options than Equity alliance:

Mr. Witherspoon is one of two options available to us in our state. The other option was also explored and many people stated had a lot of problems.

Mr. Witherspoon is familiar with our school area having served in the St Cloud school district for many years as an equity coordinator. To be fair there may be better out-of-state options but they would definitely be more costly. Why should we not proceed with this one?

4. Covid 19 pandemic makes it difficult to do the audit:

That is true but this is not a situation that will change in months. It will take years. The audit company has expressed their flexibility about this. Do we have an option to delay this important work for years?

Finally, I urge all of you to think about how it would make you feel if your child/teenager came home and said he/she was called a terrorist/nigger/other names at school every day.

As a parent it breaks my heart and if there was anything I could do to save my child from this I would do it instantly. Unfortunately I can’t. They have to live in this world and make their life on their own. I cannot protect them from this despite my education or financial status. But you can at this time. Do not waste the opportunity to do the right thing.

We should all be ashamed of ourselves for ignoring this issue and strive to do everything in our power to try to change this systemic racism that is destroying our children’s mental health. Please do something now. If I or other parents, students, teachers can help you in any way please do not hesitate to ask us. I am sure we would all be more than happy to help you in any way we can.

Perske was wrong about ice arena

Ron Douglas, Sartell

Joe Perske was wrong regarding the Bernick’s Arena in 2003 and wrong again in 2020.

Joe Perske made a statement in 2003 that: “When Bernick’s Arena fails after three years, they will be coming to the city to bail them out.”

Wrong – this never happened!

Perske complains the Pinecone Regional Park is meant for

all people, not just hockey...

Let’s look at the uses of Bernick’s Arena and Pinecone Regional Park (throughout) the last 18 years:

- The park and athletic facility is open 12 months of the year. (I do not know of any park or facility that has done this, in Sartell)

- Minnesota Wild Youth hockey spotlight game.

- Wounded Warriors hockey game raised (more than) \$30,000 in one night for Wounded Warrior projects.

- Sartell gymnastics in the summer.

- Craft shows: 10 years
- Hairball concerts: 10 years
- Johnny Holm concerts
- Armadillos concerts
- Rock the Block Party fundraisers for the Sartell Fire Department

- March of Dimes fundraiser
- Train shows
- Gun shows
- Pro wrestling
- Mayor 5K Run
- Farmers’ Market
- Hosted church and wedding events

- (More than) 50 hours of open skating per year

- Learn to Skate programs
- Broomball
- Elementary school skate parties

- Men’s leagues
- Open skate for seniors

When it comes to hockey: Teams from all over the state have played hockey at Bernick’s, to the benefit of many businesses in Sartell.

Five kids have received scholarships to play Division I hockey.

Dozens of other kids have gone on to play small college hockey or Junior hockey.

I moved to Sartell 38 years ago and there was no park, athletic field or complex that in my opinion gets more use for all of the community: not baseball, football, track, soccer or others.

Why do we need a second ice rink? In 2003 we had 125 total skaters in all programs. In 2020 we had (more than) 200 skaters just in the mite programs. This does not include squirts, pee wee, bantams or high school.

We have run out of ice time and need a second ice sheet for continuous programs, growth in our community, new programs in figure skating and learn to skate – just to name a few.

I do wish to thank the mayors (past and present) along with the council members for their support of Bernick’s Arena and Scheels Athletic Complex.

Joe Perske has been opposed to the Bernick’s Arena since conception until now.

He was wrong in 2003 and wrong again in 2020.



photos by Mike Knaak

The Ice Cave provides an informal studying and gathering space.

Remodeled school ready for middle school students

The year-long remodeling of the former high school for Sartell Middle School students is done. The remodeled 1993 building will serve about 950 students in grades six through eight.

"We're excited to get everybody back in the building," Principal Laura Arndt said.

An in-person open house will be from noon-6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 2. Families will sign-up for an open-house time (similar to conferences) with the student's Student Advisory teacher only. All visitors are required to wear masks and are asked to maintain social distancing.



Theater students will use space converted from the former industrial education area.

Humane

from page 12

17,973 work hours – including caring for animals, walking dogs, office help and much more.

It is not unusual, said Davis, to house at any given time 150

animals, with more than 200 animals in foster-care homes.

The new building has spacious, airy rooms with plenty of natural light, and it even has a full veterinary suite. The sheltered animals should be much more comfortable and happier in the new spacious building as they wait for adoption.

"And the people – staff, volunteers, customers – will finally get a little breathing room and privacy," Davis added.

Throughout the years, there has been a steady flurry of innovations and adaptations at the TCHS facility: a training building for dog-obedience classes and other educational endeavors;

then, two years later, that building was turned into a surgery suite for spaying/neutering shelter animals; the start of a barn-cat program; education visits to schools; adoption programs at community venues; a one-stop cat adoption center in St. Cloud (also in a refurbished old gas station), and much more.

By 2012, the adoption/placement rate had risen to nearly 80 percent. That rate continued to rise consistently and steadily every year, with the latest adoption/placement rate at 95-plus percent.

Last year, the TCHS adopted or found places for 3,668 animals, fostered out to volunteers 1,161 animals, spayed and neutered 2,214 and performed 2,350 surgeries.

Because of the virus pandemic, the TCHS – for the time being at least – schedules viewing of its animals and adoption processes by appointment only. Visitors who make appointments must wear masks at the shelter, as do staff and volunteers. To make an appointment, call 252-0896.

Minutes

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ERVIEW INTERMEDIATE, SARTELL MIDDLE SCHOOL, SARTELL HIGH SCHOOL AND ACTIVITIES STUDENT HANDBOOKS AS PRESENTED.

On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Kramer, Byrd, Raden, Nies, Marushin and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Raden and seconded by Marushin TO APPROVE SUPERINTENDENT, JEFF SCHWIEBERT'S ANNUAL APPRAISAL.

On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Kramer, Raden, Marushin, Nies and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Nies and seconded by Byrd TO APPROVE SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT FOR 2020-2022 WITH JEFF SCHWIEBERT.

On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Kramer, Raden, Marushin, Raden and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Kramer and seconded by Nies TO APPROVE KEMP'S BID FOR MILK/DAIRY PRODUCTS FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR.

On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Kramer, Marushin, Nies, Raden and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

Schedule Work Session and Committee Meetings:

Special Meeting/Work Session – Wednesday, Aug. 5 – District Service Center @ 5:30 p.m.

Future Board Meeting – Monday, August. 17 – District Service Center @ 5 p.m.

Committee assignments were reviewed.

A motion to ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 6:51 p.m. was made by Nies and seconded by Raden. On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Kramer, Raden, Nies, Marushin and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

/s/ Amanda Byrd, clerk

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A young girl in a pink and blue dance outfit is jumping over a pink toy car. She has her arms raised in the air. The car is a small, pink, vintage-style car with black wheels.