

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Sept. 4, 2020
Volume 32, Issue 18
Est. 1989

Town Crier

Farmers' Market open Labor Day

The Sartell Farmers' Market will be open from 3-6 p.m. Labor Day Monday at Bernick's Ice Arena. The season is in full swing and you will find great vegetables including corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, winter squash and much more. In addition to the vegetables you will find salsa, caramel corn, fudges, honey and much more. We are open each Monday until mid October.

UW Days of Caring are Sept. 14-17

United Way of Central Minnesota will host Days of Caring on Sept. 14-17. Volunteers work on projects 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.

Kids Fighting Hunger kicks off Sept. 16

Kids Fighting Hunger Food Packaging kicks off with an event at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 16, at C4 Welding, 11 Industrial Blvd., Sauk Rapids. Social distancing will be ensured while packaging. Families may pack at one packaging station. Masks must be worn. The warehouse is empty and many partners need food for a variety of reasons including Covid-19. Visit unitedwayhelps.org to register or contact Mary Krippner at 320-223-7991 mkrippner@unitedwayhelps.org or Cathy Wogen, Kids Fighting Hunger, at cathy.wogen@gmail.com.

List your event in our calendar

If your group or organization is active again after being idle because of coronavirus, send us your event information for our calendar. Send information including time, date, place and a short explanation to news@thenewsleaders.com.

Newsleaders seeks GoFundMe donations

During these turbulent times, advertising support has dwindled. The Newsleaders wants to continue providing up-to-the-minute local coverage both on our website and in print. Please help support the Newsleaders by viewing/contributing to our GoFundMe page on Facebook. Thank you to our recent contributors! Any amount is greatly appreciated.

Council approves downtown streetscape plan

by Mike Knaak
editor@thenewsleaders.com

A proposal to improve the look of downtown St. Joseph moved ahead when the City Council approved the final plan and bidding for the streetscape project.

The improvements include repairs to the existing streetscape on the south side of Minnesota Street from Chapel Lane to First Avenue NE. The work includes replacing pavers, tree planters, benches and garbage receptacles and reconstruction

of existing pedestrian ramps to meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

The council voted to go ahead after no one rose to speak at a public hearing on the project at the Sept. 1 meeting.

Some work will begin this fall. Public Works Director Terry Thene said trees will be removed and the holes filled. The rest of the work would begin in the spring. The streetscape should be done one week prior to July 3, 2021, in time for the traditional Fourth of July festivities.

In answer to a question from council member Bob Loso, Thene said 34 trees will be removed and replaced with 24 trees.

The search for a new city administrator to replace Kris Ambuehl is down to one candidate. After receiving 16 applications, the search was narrowed to four candidates for interviews with the City Council and discussions with city staff. The field was cut to two finalists, Jessica Beise, administrative services director for the city of Corcoran, and Margaret McCallum, city administrator for the city of Mayer. MaCallum has withdrawn her application.

In other action at the Sept. 1 meeting, the council approved hiring an additional police officer. With the approval of the 2020 Cops Grant, St. Joseph opened up police officer applications and received 25 applications. The top eight candidates were interviewed by Interim Administrator Therese Haffner, Police Sgts. Dan Magaard and Matt Johnson and Chief Dwight Pfannenstien. The committee

Council • page 2



photo by Mike Knaak

St. Joseph city staff talked with the four final candidates for city administrator. Sixteen people applied for the job. The City Council narrowed the field to two finalists.

St. Cloud school board election

Editor's note: Seven people have filed for four seats on the St. Cloud school board. Two of those candidates are profiled in this edition. The other candidates will be featured in future editions.

Dahlgren: Finance skills a boost for school board challenges

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Al Dahlgren of St. Joseph is gratified his extensive knowledge of business and accounting can help the St. Cloud school board "unravel the incredibly complex business of school finance."

Dahlgren, 61, is treasurer of the school board and is vying for re-election, competing with six other candidates, including two other incumbents. There are four seats open on the school board for the Nov. 3 general election. Incumbent Jeff Pollreis did not file for re-election.

Dahlgren is currently serv-

ing his second term on the board and was its chair for two consecutive years. He has also served on its finance committee.



Dahlgren

"I am proud to say we maintained a balanced budget and a healthy balance every year," he said. "All while building two new schools, relocating the district office and twice rebuilding schools after fires."

Dahlgren, the father of four children (all of whom attended St. Cloud public schools) is the self-employed owner of Once Upon a Child retail store in Waite Park.

He graduated from Mounds View High School and earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural business from the University

Dahlgren • page 3

Andreasen: Reading mastery is the key to all students' success

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Even though his 2016 bid for a seat on the St. Cloud school board failed, Scott Andreasen of St. Joseph remains active in the school district. He is one of seven candidates, three of them incumbents, competing for four open seats on the board.

Andreasen is a community member of the district's board finance committee and also on the community education advisory committee.

"As a community member of the finance committee, I am familiar with the budgeting and auditing process," he said. "I have spent hours reviewing

change orders for the construction of Tech High School, making sure we got the best bang for the buck. I know the issues and the players. I am fiscally responsible. And as a member of the advisory committee, I am familiar with class offerings and how they educate the community."

Andreasen, 71, is the owner of Scott Investigation for which he serves as a licensed private detective, in business for 25 years. He is the father of six children, all graduates of Apollo High School.

Andreasen graduated from Mankato State University with a degree for teaching social studies and a minor in business administration. He worked



Andreasen

Andreasen • page 3

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1. The assumed name under which the business is or will be conducted is: Farmer Bob's Fertilizer.
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3. The name and street address of all persons conducting business under the above assumed name including any corporations that may be conducting this business: Curt Smallbrock, 2085 Sixth St. S., Sartell, MN 56377 and Brandy Smallbrock, 2085 Sixth St. S., Sartell, MN 56377.
4. I certify I am authorized to sign this certificate and I further certify I understand by signing this certificate, I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Minnesota Statutes section 609.48 as if I had signed this certificate under oath.

Dated: May 15, 2020

Filed: May 15, 2020

/s/ Curt Smallbrock

Publish: Aug. 21 & Sept. 4, 2020

Correction

The terms for city council and mayor were incorrectly reported in the Aug. 21 edition. The mayor serves two years and council members serve four years.

Council
from front page

unanimously selected Eric Brutger. Brutger will be sworn in at the Sept. 8 City Council meeting.

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

July 30
3:25 p.m. Collision. CR 75 and Eighth Avenue NE. The first driver stopped in the left lane of CR 75. The driver of the second vehicle stopped short of striking the first vehicle. The driver of the third vehicle stopped short of the second vehicle but was stuck by a fourth vehicle and pushed into the back of the second vehicle. The driver of the third vehicle was treated by Mayo Ambulance personnel and the fourth vehicle needed to be towed.

Aug. 1
6:32 p.m. Collision. College Avenue N./CR 2 and CR 75. Two vehicles collided in the intersection. The driver of one vehicle told officers he ran the

Finance Director Lori Bartlett advised the council that now would be a good time to refinance two outstanding bonds to save interest costs. The two bonds were issued in 2013 and 2014. Bartlett said interest savings would total approximately \$225,000 over the remaining

red light and he could not see it because of the setting sun. He was cited for the violation. The other vehicle was towed.

Aug. 3
3:14 p.m. Collision. CR 75 and Eighth Avenue NE. The first driver was moving forward and then stopped for traffic. The second driver thought the first vehicle was still moving and rear-ended it. There were no injuries

Aug. 12
4:47 p.m. Collision. 200 Second Ave. NW. The first driver was backing out of a parking spot and collided with a second vehicle leaving the parking lot. The rear of the first vehicle stuck the front passenger side of the second vehicle. There were no injuries.

Aug. 16
4:24 p.m. Collision. 611 Hackberry Drive. A vehicle hauling a futon with the tailgate down backed out of a driveway. The tailgate collided with a vehicle parked across the street, causing moderate damage to the rear passenger side. No one was in the second vehicle.

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life of the bonds. The 2013 bonds would see about a 7-8 percent savings and the 2014 bonds about a 6 percent savings.

Council members agreed to take up the issue at the Sept. 21 meeting when a wider bond discussion is planned.

Aug. 20
3 a.m. Attempted entry. First Avenue NW. The officer did not find the man described in the report. The officer checked and all the doors were secure. A man working in the area described the people he saw but they did not match the timeline or the description of the suspicious person.

Aug. 21
12:27 a.m. Loud party. First Avenue NE. Officers heard loud music coming from a garage. The renter was told about the complaint and informed this was his first and only warning and a citation would be issued for future ordinance violations.

Aug. 23
1:43 p.m. Collision. CR 75 and CR 133. A driver heading west on CR 75 ran a red light and broad-sided another vehicle that was heading east and making a left turn onto CR 133. The turning driver had a green turn arrow.

Aug. 25
11:04 a.m. Fire. Mullen Road. The fire department was on the scene and there was no need for traffic control.

Aug. 27
4:28 p.m. Pedestrian struck. A pedestrian was crossing the street in an unprotected area when she was struck by a vehicle. The pedestrian suffered bruises and abrasions and was taken to St. Cloud Hospital by a private party.

Sartell-St. Stephen • St. Joseph

Reaching Everybody!

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Publisher/Owner
Janelle Von Pinnon

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Nina Henne

Editor
Mike Knaak

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Carolyn Bertsch

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1608 11th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304
mailing address: 1622 11th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304
Phone: (320) 363-7741 • E-mail: news@thenewsleaders.com
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Dahlgren

from front page

of Minnesota. He worked in retail management with J.C. Penney for 20 years and was transferred to the St. Cloud store in 1991. He opened Once Upon a Child in 1993 and five years later also worked for Winmark Corp. as a regional manger and small-business consultant for 15 years. In 2018, he was the recipient of the Optimist Achievement Award in Education.

Dahlgren gave his responses to the following questions for the St. Joseph Newsleader:

How can you help ensure every child has full access to the best education so no child is left behind?

Dahlgren said each student must be viewed as a unique individual because each one learns at a different pace, requires different supports and needs change over time. Each student must be helped to achieve maximum growth and achievements.

“Those who struggle may need additional individualized

support to lift them higher and faster,” he said, “and those who are exceptional learners deserve advanced placement and curriculum that challenges them every day.”

How can you help guarantee a zero-tolerance policy against teasing, taunting and bullying is not only emphasized but consistently enforced?

A lot of ongoing work on those issues has been done by the school board, he said.

“We have made great progress, but we can never stop trying to improve,” he added. Social media and cyber-bullying pose difficult challenges, and the board has re-written and strengthened polices regarding such incidents. There is also an anti-bullying curriculum and pro-active lessons about social-skills development. In addition there are safe zones, building report procedures and staff development to recognize signs of bullying.

“It is critical for learning to occur . . . that no student or teacher should ever feel bullied,” he said.

Discipline policies, including

suspension or expulsion, are in place, he said, and mandatory reporting is required, including documented paper trails detailing every incident and all actions taken.

Some say there is too much emphasis on written tests to measure students’ progress. How do you feel about testing?

Dahlgren said he strongly favors testing for educational goals, but he vigorously opposes using test results to compare school districts because such comparisons are totally unfair for a number of reasons. That, he explained, is because of the disparities between wealthy and impoverished districts.

“Challenges that involve demographics, feelings of safety, self esteem, education level of parents, poverty and transiency play a large part in average proficiency of students,” he said. “Wealthy districts have low levels of those challenges, and most students in wealthy districts come to school prepared to learn.”

In some urban areas, he said, students often struggle with many of the basic physical and emotional needs of

life. The St. Cloud district has some of those challenges, but it compares very favorably to surrounding and comparable districts, Dahlgren said, adding that “this is never published or reported.”

The internal use of test scores and staff’s ability to challenge students individually is “key,” he said, to making sure ever student advances to full potential each school year right up to graduation.

Please address two or three school issues you care most about and what you would like to do to make changes (if any) regarding those issues?

Issue One: The biggest challenge, he said, is special-education funding – the shortfall of state and federal funding for mandatory special-education services. In St. Cloud, those services cost \$39 million, but the district receives only \$28 million in funding – something known as “cross subsidy.” The shortfall must be made up with general-education funds and reductions in other spending. Dahlgren has testified at state legislative hearings about funding inequities and will do so

again.

“St. Cloud has high special-education levels, and we are impacted severely by the failure of our state legislature to fund what they require,” he said.

Issue Two: Partnerships with local employers and more expansion of career- and technical-training programs should be emphasized, he said.

“Creating strong feeder programs for technical college and engaging young adults in real-life, skill-building curriculum they can use is important whether they go on to college or directly to work,” he said, adding the new Tech High School has good, strengthened programs along those lines.

Other comments?

“I am grateful to the community for trusting me as I have served eight years on the school board,” he said. “I am the only board member with a strong business/finance background. I have no personal agenda other than to improve the educational experience and outcomes for students in District 742. I would appreciate your vote on Nov. 3.”

Andreasen

from front page

for the Hennepin County welfare department for years, from which he said he gained understanding about what it is like to be poor. He has also worked as an insurance adjustor, helping people in trouble. As owner of Scott Investigation, Andreasen said he developed a keen understanding of business and the law. He is a member of the board of the Minnesota Association of Private Investigators.

Andreasen gave his responses to the following questions for the St. Joseph Newsleader:

How can you help ensure every child has full access to the best education so no child is left behind?

Culturally diverse people need to develop a similar frame of reference, and reading is the key, Andreasen said he believes. Reading develops in students language comprehension, word recognition and vocabulary building, all vital tools for learning and communication, he noted.

“Somali culture respects education,” he said. “Charter schools have shown things run much more smoothly with Somali males as para-professionals to back up female teachers and enforce harmony between races.”

How can you help guarantee a zero-tolerance policy against teasing, taunting and bullying is not only emphasized but consistently enforced?

Bullying, Andreasen said, is an “everlasting problem.” The St. Cloud school district has

a “pyramid” program. At the lower level, a teacher handles the problem. At mid-level, an office referral occurs. At a higher level, there is involvement by a school psychologist, a social worker and a probation officer.

Some say there is too much emphasis on written tests to measure students’ progress. How do you feel about testing?

Testing is a “snapshot in time,” said Andreasen and tells where a student is at in the learning process. Both the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment test and the “Star” tests are given to monitor progress, in addition to periodic teacher quizzes.

Using MCA tests to compare school districts is wrong, he said, because some districts are more diverse than others so many students have not mastered English. Two-thirds of the children in the St. Cloud district receive free or reduced-price lunches, he noted.

The “Star” tests, he said, indicate students of color are advancing rapidly at more than one grade level per year. It takes time, but team teaching has done wonders, he noted.

“Our special education is the best around,” Andreasen said. “Surrounding districts know this and send their toughest kids our way.”

Please address two or three school issues you care most about and what you would like to do to make changes (if any) regarding those issues?

Equity between high schools must be dealt with.

“The new Tech High School is fabulous,” he said. “Apollo High School is 50 years old and in need of remodeling. That can be done at one third the cost of

building new. I have actively supported bond issues in the past and will do so again.”

Another issue, he noted, is COVID-19.

“Our mission is to educate, but the safety of our students and staff is paramount. Striking a proper balance is difficult. Department of Education guidelines are helpful, but the final decision lies with the superintendent and school board. I will do my best to make the right call.”

People

Ethan Novacinski of St. Joseph recently graduated summa cum laude from St. John’s University. He was also named to the spring semester dean’s list at SJU.



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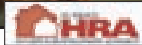
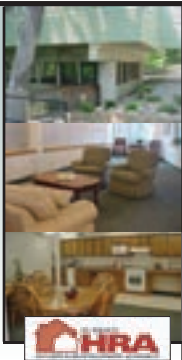
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Boxes raise flowers, produce

by Julianne O'Connell
news@thenewsleaders.com

St. Joseph's Woodcrest Country Manor residents spend their days enjoying their beautiful grounds filled with flowers, blooming trees, songbirds and a bustling duck pond. This summer raised-garden beds have been added for residents who are interested in getting back to gardening.

Thanks to the combined efforts of St. Joseph's Knights of Columbus, American Legion, Lions Club, and Rod/Gun Club, who donated their time and carpentry skills to construct eight, heavy duty, wooden beds, a group of residents, calling themselves The Gardening Group, have planted summer veggies and seasonal flowers.

In a field once slated for a traditional vegetable garden, the raised beds are the perfect height to make gardening easier and less strenuous on the body.



contributed photo

The new raised-garden beds.

"All tenants have a kitchenette in their homes and there are plenty of vegetables for everyone," said Emily Frericks the Manor's director of public

relations. Frericks added there are more than enough vegetables for residents, so a basket is out in the lobby for staff and visitors to help themselves.

Cultural Connections:

For Sister Jui-Chiao Hu a journey of miles, spirituality

by Renée Domeier, OSB

Some years ago, I read an article titled "From Buddhist to Benedictine" about our Sister Telan Hu, born in 1932 into a devout Buddhist family in Taipei, Taiwan, as Jui-Chiao Hu. Her journey from Buddhism to her entry, not only to Catholicism, but to the United States and into our monastery was a journey of thousands of miles and the discovery that monastic spirituality superseded Buddhist traditions. She has been a sister for 65 years, speaks Taiwanese, Chinese, English and Japanese.

Prior to being hired by the College of St. Benedict, she taught English and biology at St. Boniface High School in Cold Spring. Then she returned to Taiwan for eight years where she taught English at three different universities. Her enthusi-



contributed photo

Sister Telan Hu (left) with Sister Renée Domeier.

asm for teaching young people never dimmed: "Students keep me young and give me energy. I'm happy when I see them learning," she said.

In 1968 when funds from the Hill Foundation facilitated the establishment of our

Tri-college East Asian Studies program (CSB, SJU, SCSU), Telan was hired to teach Chinese, a position she kept for 35 years.

In 2001, when a scholarship was established in her honor by a group of faculty involved in the Asian Studies program, it was stated: "Sister Telan developed our Chinese language, literature, and academic skills courses and makes exceptional contributions to the community through a wide range of service activities," not least of which was her teaching classes in Chinese cooking to students as well as adults, at a time when the indispensable wok was not readily available in the United States.

She is now retired, but as she recalls the past, her words are deeply moving: "My conversion from Buddhism to Catholicism and my entering Benedictine life is only by the mysterious ways in which God chooses and calls us to follow Him. For the rest of my life, I can only praise and thank God for His infinite compassion, mercy, goodness and love."

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contributed photo

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

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 soci-

ety’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-designed, 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

Humane • page 7

Visit with Mayor Rick Schultz in person:

- Friday, Sept. 11
- Bad Habit Brewing: 4-5:30 p.m.
- I’ll probably be on the patio



- Saturday, Sept. 19
- Minnesota Street Market: 9:30-11 a.m.
- In the back meeting area



I will have the following open office hours at City Hall:

- Tuesday, Sept. 8
- Friday, Sept. 11

- Monday, Sept. 14
- Tuesday, Sept. 15
- Friday, Sept. 18

Come in and let’s talk!



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Online Silent Auction

This year we are hosting our silent auction online through 32Auctions. We are currently accepting completed baskets or large items that are new or like new for the auction.

The auction will go live Friday, September 11th at 5:00 pm and end at noon Sunday, September 20th.

Contact:

Bonnie Nies
320-252-7838, bonnienies@yahoo.com

Candice Koopmeiners
320-654-1350, candicesews@hotmail.com

Big Ticket Raffle

We hope to do our best this year to make the raffle successful. In order to do that, we need you to pick your tickets up from the gathering space starting the weekend of August 21st.

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I am running for re-election as your St. Joseph Mayor



Being mayor of St. Joseph is profoundly enjoyable and engaging, while at the same time, one of the most difficult and sometimes frustrating positions I have ever held. I have done my best to listen, engage and prioritize the needs and wants of our community.

I have no intention of using this mayoral platform as a stepping stone to other political aspirations. For the past 40 years, I have been heavily invested and totally committed to the St. Joseph community. I am wholeheartedly devoted to St. Joseph and see nothing but a bright and better future for us.

You will get my best, at every turn, with every decision, with the entire community in mind.

Opinion

Our View Does racial injustice happen here?

Could it happen here? That's the question civic and law enforcement leaders have heard from citizens since George Floyd's killing and the protests that followed.

The question brought new attention to how Central Minnesota's police and sheriff's departments operate so incidents of racial injustice don't happen here.

The Central Minnesota NAACP chapter organized a Zoom discussion on Aug. 1 with top law enforcement officers and about 50 other participants to build relationships between police and community.

Discussion revealed citizens' concerns, but the event was also a chance for law enforcement to share perspectives on policies and programs.

The event was a good start. While in-person meetings are out of the question now, more virtual and later face-to-face engagements should continue. Unfortunately, the Zoom session conflicted with Muslim prayer time so people of that community could not participate.

Chiefs and sheriffs talked about how much community support they've received this summer – at least a small sign some members of the community trust them.

Actions and observations from our area police and sheriffs show they are taking racial injustice seriously.

St. Joseph Chief Dwight Pfannenstien said people want police to be transparent and accountable. That need led his department to add a second sergeant. Would George Floyd be dead if there was a senior supervisor on the scene to provide leadership? His officers will soon be wearing body cameras, which can exonerate officers but also expose bad work.

Sartell Chief Jim Hughes recounted the community policing programs his department offers, including sports and games for young people and another program aimed at older citizens.

When it's time to hire new officers, he'd like to recruit the city's young people to "come back and work with us in the future."

Hiring the right people to uphold the law requires more than looking at a resume, Hughes said. Sometimes deep background checks reveal issues references won't talk about, such as Fourth Amendment violations.

Hughes and other leaders talked about the larger role of police. "People think we are the answer to every situation (such as mental health). We know that is not the case." Waite Park Chief Dave Benrud added "cities need to come together to help the revolving door of people with mental-health issues."

When there's trouble, police get called first because people don't know who else to call and there aren't resources to deal with what are mental health or social issues, not crimes.

Stearns County Sheriff Steve Soyka outlined a number of his department's community outreach programs including one that helps people who are now in jail but who will soon be out in the community. The program works with social services to prepare prisoners for housing and jobs, so they become good members of society when they are released.

St. Cloud Police Chief Blair Anderson talked about bias and how officers need to deal with a person's behavior and not race or ethnicity. Deadly force should be used only when all other options have been exhausted. "Whenever force is used, it's not going to be pretty, no matter how minimal," Anderson said.

These frank exchanges should continue. When there's a chance for in-person engagement, the entire community needs to take part. The law enforcement leaders showed they welcome the discussion and are ready to act. Other Zoom participants included St. Cloud Mayor Dave Kleis, Sherburne County Sheriff Joel Brott, Wright County Sheriff Sean Deringer and State Patrol Capt. Brad Quart.

Benton County Sheriff Troy Heck zeroed in on the solution. "We need to sit down and listen, break down barriers, instead of yelling at each other."

Even presidential elections are local

We've heard for years that "all politics is local" – a phrase attributed to former Speaker of the House of Representatives Tip O'Neill.

This year, we also need to remember that all elections are local. General election day is Nov. 3, the day the entire country votes for a president as well as a long ballot of other federal, state and yes, local officials.

But there's not one national ballot, set of rules or vote count. The final result for president lies in the hands of tens of thousands of state and local election workers – professionals and paid volunteers – who actually carry out the election.

States set the rules such as voting hours and registration requirements and maintain voter rolls while county and city officials pick polling places and ensure each eligible voter can cast a secure secret ballot.

When you hear debate about election security, keep in mind those local individuals and the election judges at thousands of polling places actually make sure there's a free and fair election.

Election judges swear an oath to "perform the duties of election judge according to law and the best of my ability and will diligently endeavor to prevent fraud, deceit and abuse in conducting this election. I will perform my duties in a fair and impartial manner and not attempt to create an advantage for my party or for any candidate."

Judges take that oath seriously so every eligible voter who is entitled to a ballot gets one. Voting and tabulation take place in secret so no one knows how a

Mike Knaak
Editor



person voted.

In Minnesota, there's a paper trail for the entire process. Every ballot needs to be backed up by a receipt the voter signs. On election night, the number of voters and the numbers of ballots must match. A machine scans the ballot and kicks out totals, but behind that count is a paper trail that can be verified. Paper ballots and vote totals are reviewed by city, county and state election officials several times before an election is ultimately certified by the state canvassing board. Voter rolls track who votes where to block people from voting in more than one place or a person pretending to be someone else.

A similar process is followed for absentee or mail-in ballots. Your ballot goes in an unmarked envelope that you seal. Then that's placed in another envelope marked with your registration information that you sign. Both those envelopes go into a third envelope that's mailed or dropped off with election officials.

As the election season heats up, politicians talk about voter suppression – acts that discourage people from exercising their right to vote. Those efforts include raising false claims of voter fraud and threats to intimidate people at the polls. Minnesota's laws are very clear about who is allowed in polling places. Donald Trump stirred up the debate when he

said, "We're going to have sheriffs, and we're going to have law enforcement, and we're going to have, hopefully, U.S. attorneys, and we're going to have everybody, and attorney generals."

That won't happen. Trump has no authority to order sheriffs or anybody else into polling places.

Minnesota does not allow "poll watchers." Challengers are allowed but their actions are narrowly limited. Each party may appoint one challenger and the only action a challenger may take is to contest a voter's eligibility, if they have personal knowledge of that voter's ineligibility. Suspicion is not a basis for making a challenge. The challenger can't confront the voter and the challenge must be made in writing to an election judge. The challenger can't keep lists of who is voting.

An election judge can call a law-enforcement officer to remove a disorderly person.

Trump may have gotten his inspiration from previous Republican Party efforts to intimidate voters. In the 1981 New Jersey gubernatorial race, a Republican Party program that sent off-duty police officers to patrol polling places in heavily Black and Latino neighborhoods triggered accusations of voter intimidation, resulting in a federal agreement that restricted for decades how the national GOP could observe voting.

For more information about how you can vote and what rules must be followed, go to mnvotes.org. You don't have to wait until Nov. 3. Right now, you can request a mail-in ballot and early in-person voting begins in just two weeks on Sept. 18.

Take safety seriously as schools return

I remember very clearly my last few days out at St. John's this past spring before Covid-19 sent us all home. Spring Break had just finished, and midterms and papers loomed large on the schedule. The clubs I'm involved with were planning our end-of-year celebrations, and enjoying our beautiful campus was starting to become more possible with the weather beginning to warm up. But the danger signs of the approaching pandemic became ever clearer on the horizon. Dominoes started to fall, as one university after another looked at the data and made the decision to close and reduce the spread of the disease. CSB/SJU followed suit, and we ended up being sent home not even a week after we returned from break. Now that I am back on campus, I am hopeful we will be able to resume in-person classes successfully. However, this isn't a time to return to a feeling of "normal." Our local area should note that across the country reopening schools in an irresponsible manner can cause even more problems than before, and be vigilant to keep those issues from happening.

Going back home and completing college classes online for the first time, I was unsure what exactly the future might bring. How long would this last? Would we be able to return to campus before May and finish off the school year in person? What would happen for the seniors preparing to have their ceremonies and receive their diplomas? All of these questions were answered in disappointing ways. The rest of the spring semester

Connor Kockler
Guest Writer



ended up being entirely online. Senior graduation ceremonies were canceled, and the Covid-19 pandemic continues to ravage our country, killing more than a thousand Americans per day. I never imagined back in March that this crisis might get this bad.

As my move-in day for Fall 2020 approached, I was both excited and concerned. I was excited to be back on campus, see friends and have classes in a physical room rather than through Zoom. I was concerned because of the trend of new Covid-19 cases staying consistent or even increasing in our country. This is despite the valiant efforts of healthcare workers and others doing their part to keep themselves and loved ones from being infected. Now that I'm here, I see the strong steps taken by the school administration, faculty and students to do their part to make sure this semester stays in person and not online.

We have seen exactly what can go wrong, as evidenced by multiple universities attempting to go back to in-person classes. Notre Dame suspended in-person classes after an outbreak of cases. The University of North Carolina had to take similar measures. Large groups of students congregating without masks

can quickly spread Covid-19, promptly driving up case numbers and putting in-person fall semesters in jeopardy. Far from being theoretical, not taking safety measures for Covid has real consequences. And if students are then sent home, it could create further outbreaks when they're back with relatives.

Colleges are the test run for how well schools can operate safely while under Covid restrictions, as K-12 schools have not yet opened in most of our state. In the next few weeks, we will see whether a global pandemic and college life can co-exist without mass infections. If they can, that is a good sign we might be able to turn a page in the fight against Covid-19. If cases shoot up and preventive measures don't have the desired effect, that should make us take a closer look before opening up schools further.

As much as I want to be able to go to class and have a "normal" college experience again, that experience isn't worth jeopardizing the safety of everyone in our schools, especially those students and staff who may be more vulnerable. And if colleges cannot open successfully, I can't imagine how we can make an argument for sending the youngest members of our communities in K-12 back to school. Reopening schools in person should not take priority over protecting people.

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

Humane

from page 5

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 volunteers 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 sec-

ond 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 \$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 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/place-ment 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.

To donate, to volunteer or to view animals online that are up for adoption, visit the TCHS website at www.tricountyhumanesociety.org

Letters to the editor

Kamala Harris fails the skin test

Bob Grise, St. Joseph

Elections are coming up so the St. Joseph NewsLeader has brought back the one note Sam-ba, Dennis Dalman, to smear President Trump. The insults come hard and fast in Dalman’s recent column. Dalman calls Trump abysmal, a mishandler, a liar, notorious, in denial, dismissive of all facts, deluded, a blamer, speaks nonsense, sinking in a hole he keeps digging deeper, in a flailing panic, unstable, a broken saboteur, trying to hold on to power in his “Pre-

tend Presidency.” Dennis, is that all you got? What happened to Trump’s a Russki, a baby killer and cheats at cards?

In the same edition Mike Knaak chimes in “Trump is totally unprepared and unfit for any elective office.” So a 74-year-old man who has 22,000 employees is unfit and unprepared, but Obama was and Harris is? That’s rich! Biden said he would pick a Black woman. Harris is a woman, but Black? If racism is about prejudice against dark-skinned people, Harris fails the test as her skin is as white as mine and I’m French and Danish! I don’t think anybody with dark brown skin is going to feel any affinity

with Harris, race-wise. Bad pick/poor judgment by Biden, but that’s how he rolls.

Dalman reminds us we don’t live in a perfect world, but constantly moving the goal posts on what it means to be a successful president while at the same time moving the goal posts the other way on what counts as a peaceful protest, (arson and looting) isn’t going to fly. We see the big cities run by Democrats being destroyed. Hence it’s a cinch Trump gets re-elected. Six Democrat mayors from Minnesota’s Iron Range have seen the light and have endorsed Trump. Maybe there is hope for Knaak and Dalman.

Local news is in crisis, keep it alive

Juliana Howard, St. Joseph

Did you know since 2004, 2,000 American newspapers have gone out of business? These days of COVID-19 are particularly difficult for local newspapers, such as The Newsleaders, which is distributed free of charge. I wonder if we really appreciate the importance of having a local paper that does such a good job of covering community events, bringing to our attention current issues, keeping us

educated on city government and building community in so many ways.

In a recent Fresh Air podcast on MPR which aired on Aug. 3, it was stated that “... the decline of local news is a crisis as serious as spreading disinformation on the internet.”

We are indeed lucky to have such a fine local paper. Consider subscribing and/or making a contribution to keep it alive. It is a vital part of our community which is easy to take for granted.

Let’s make sure it doesn’t become a statistic.

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, Sept. 4

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

Monday, Sept. 7

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

Tuesday, Sept. 8

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

Wednesday, Sept. 9

Blood drive, noon-6 p.m., Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 CR 2. Call 800-733-2767 or redcross.org, sponsor code St Joseph to register.

Thursday, Sept. 10

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

Friday, Sept. 11

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

Monday, Sept. 14

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

Blood Drive, 1-6 p.m., American Legion, 17 Second Ave. N., Waite Park.

St. Joseph Planning Commission, 6 p.m., Government Center,

75 Callaway St. E.

St. Joseph Township board meeting, 7 p.m. Township meetings are conducted through teleconference.

Tuesday, Sept. 15

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

Wednesday, Sept. 16

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

Thursday, Sept. 17

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

Friday, Sept. 18

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

Saturday, Sept. 19

Sartell Lions Clean-up Fund-raiser, 8 a.m.-noon, Riverview Intermediate School, 627 Third Ave. N., Sartell.

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

<p>AUCTION WRIGHTZ AUCTION CO. RV, SPORT, REC & GUN CONSIGNMENT SALE, OCTOBER 3, 9 AM. Please Get Gun Permits To Buy, Prior To Sale. Consign By September 18 for Complete Advertising. 641-398-2218, Hwy 218, Floyd, IA, www.wrightzauction-co.com. (MCN)</p> <p>AUTOMOBILES DONATE YOUR CAR TO CHARITY. Receive maximum value of write off for your taxes. Running or not! All conditions accepted. Free pickup. Call for details. 855-752-6680 (MCN)</p> <p>DONATE YOUR CAR, TRUCK TO HERITAGE FOR THE BLIND. Free 3 Day Vacation, Tax Deductible, Free Towing, All Paperwork Taken Care Of. CALL 1-855-977-7030 (MCN)</p> <p>CASH FOR CARS: We Buy Any Condition Vehicle, 2002 and Newer. Competitive Offer! Nationwide FREE Pick Up! Call Now For a Free Quote! 888-366-5659(MCN)</p>	<p>CABLE/INTERNET BEST SATELLITE TV with 2 Year Price Guarantee! \$59.99/mo with 190 channels and 3 months free premium movie channels! Free next day installation! Call 855-824-1258. (MCN)</p> <p>Earthlink High Speed Internet. As Low As \$14.95/month (for the first 3 months.) Reliable High Speed. Fiber Optic Technology. Stream Videos, Music and More! Call Earthlink Today 1-855-679-7096 (MCN)</p> <p>High-Speed Internet. We instantly compare speed, pricing, availability to find the best service for your needs. Starting at \$39.99/month! Quickly compare offers from top providers. Call 1-855-399-9295 (MCN)</p> <p>DISH TV \$59.99 For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation, Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some restrictions apply. 1-844-316-8876. (MCN)</p> <p>FOR SALE</p>	<p>New Motorcycle pull behind cargo trailer, lined with carpet \$1,299.00; 101 X24 Show Car trailer was \$22,999.00 NOW \$19,500.00 Extra Nice: 100 X26 Electric tilt 14,000# with winch; 5X8 & 5X10 6,000# Dump trailers; For prices & info go to: www.FortDodgeTrailerWorld.com 515-972-4554. (MCN)</p> <p>HEALTH & MEDICAL Stay in your home longer with an American Standard Walk-In Bathtub. Receive up to \$1,500 off, including a free toilet, and a lifetime warranty on the tub and installation! Call us at 1-855-372-3080 or visit www.walkin-tubquote.com/midwest (MCN)</p> <p>DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 350 plus procedures. Real dental insurance – NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1-855-973-9175 www.dental50plus.com/midwest #6258. (MCN)</p>	<p>Portable Oxygen Concentrator May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 844-716-2411. (MCN)</p> <p>INCOME OPPORTUNITIES NEW AUTHORS WANTED! Page Publishing will help you self-publish your own book. FREE author submission kit! Limited offer! Why wait? Call now: 855-623-8796 (MCN)</p> <p>Become a published author! Publications sold at all major secular & specialty Christian bookstores. CALL Christian Faith Publishing for your FREE author submission kit. 1-888-981-5761. (MCN)</p> <p>MISCELLANEOUS BATHROOM RENOVATIONS. EASY, ONE DAY updates! We specialize in safe bathing. Grab bars, no slip flooring & seated showers. Call for a free in-home consultation: 855-836-</p>	<p>2250 (MCN)</p> <p>Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 15% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-855-577-1268. Promo Code 285. (MCN)</p> <p>PERSONALS Meet singles right now! No paid operators, just real people like you. Browse greetings, exchange messages and connect live. Try it free. Call now: 855-651-0114. (MCN)</p> <p>WANT TO BUY Need some cash! Sell us your unwanted gold, jewelry, watches & diamonds. Call GOLD GEEK 1-866-274-7898 or visit www.GetGoldGeek.com/midwest BBB A Plus Rated. Request your 100 Percent FREE, no risk, no strings attached appraisal kit. Call today! (MCN)</p>
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FINANCIAL PLANNING | FAMILY

Making Plans: New Parents

Parents with a baby born in 2020 will spend an average of \$234,000 to raise their little bundle of joy.

These latest statistics reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture don't even include the cost of college, which can quickly rack up tens of thousands per year in tuition costs.

The price tag on raising a child has been on a steady incline – a 24-percent increase since 1960, according to the USDA.

Taking on the increasing costs can be a challenge for many new parents. But with proper planning and realistic expectations, even newbies can come out ahead as their children grow.

HEALTH CARE

The USDA attributes the rise in child-raising to the cost of health care. With parents covering a larger proportion of children's costs with higher co-payments and premiums, expenditures can add up quickly.

When setting a budget and savings plan, make sure to apportion enough to health care costs, as well as unpredictable medical expenses that are sure to come up.

Start a small savings account for funds devoted to medical costs. This will keep you prepared for such occurrences instead of having to dip into your primary savings account for medical payments.

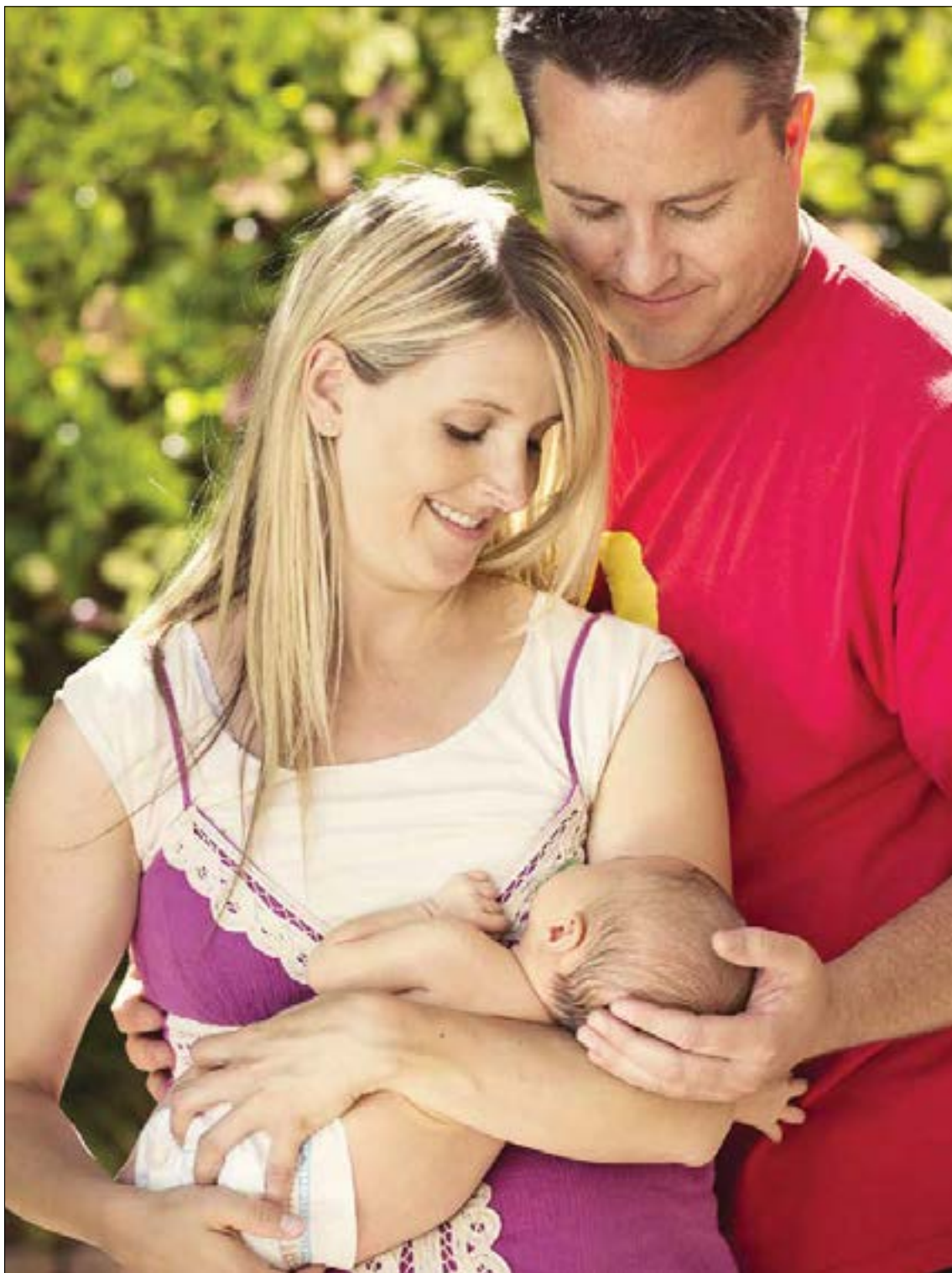
LONG-TERM PLANNING

New parents will find with the birth of their child comes the urge to protect him or her. This natural instinct includes the need to build a solid financial footing to be able to afford all of the necessities.

But lost in the everyday chaos of raising a new child are the long-term financial strategies that can make a huge difference.

If you're a new parent, consider preparing a will, an inventory of assets and debt, and a legal document naming a person to be the guardian should anything happen to you.

These can be uncomfortable topics to discuss, especially in the midst of newfound parenthood, but planning wisely now can pay off in the future.

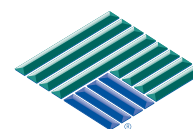


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determination and hard work.

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