



Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Sept. 18, 2020
Volume 25, Issue 19
Est. 1995

Town Crier

Candidate forum set Sept. 30 for council

The League of Women Voters, St. Cloud Area, will conduct a video-recorded forum on Sept. 30, featuring candidates for Sartell City Council. Due to pandemic constraints, there will not be an in-person audience. The forum will be recorded and uploaded for later public viewing. Sartell residents are invited to email questions to lwvstcloud@lwvmn.org no later than midnight on Sept. 28. Questions should be brief and relate to issues Sartell City Council members would customarily address. The four following candidates have filed for two open seats: Mike Chisum, Aaron Johnson, Alex Lewandowski and Jill Smith.

Millstream Arts Fest online next weekend

Millstream Arts Festival is online this year Sept. 25-27 featuring an Artist Showcase! See our advertisement on Page 12 or on our website or Facebook page for more information and the artist schedule. millstreamartsfestival.org.

Personal products, gift cards needed

Promise Neighborhood is in need of feminine hygiene products, gift cards for gas, Walmart, Cashwise or Coborn's, toothpaste, toothbrushes, cleaning and sanitizing supplies, educational games and unopened food items. Contact Promise Neighborhood for available times to donate at 320-251-0571 or sheenapromise-neighborhood@gmail.com

Big Brothers Big Sisters mentors needed

Big Brothers Big Sisters offers virtual matching by attending an interview via Zoom. This is a one-on-one volunteer opportunity to provide friendship and guidance to a child in Central Minnesota. Visit www.BigDefenders.org and click on Be a Big or call Brenda at 320-258-4534.

Sexual assault advocates sought

Volunteers at Central Minnesota Sexual Assault Center provide services for sexual assault victims at medical facilities, law enforcement centers, and during court and legal proceedings. Volunteer advocates also answer phone calls on their 24-hour crisis line and provide crisis intervention, information, referral and guidance to victims of sexual assault in the evening and on weekends. Visit www.cmsac.org or call 320-251-4357 to learn more.

Council approves deal for sports complex

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

A former plan to secure a loan with the city's help to build a sports complex in Sartell has been abandoned, and the funds to build it have been secured by the Sartell Youth Hockey Association via private financing with city involvement, according to Sartell City Administrator Anna Gruber.

Even though the City Council voted 4-1 several months ago to approve the city-private loan application (known as the "conduit" method) concerns had been raised by some that a financial agreement with the city's help could perhaps make

the city and taxpayers financially liable if the \$5-million loan went into default.

Meantime, at the Sept. 14 Sartell City Council meeting, the five council members voted unanimously to approve an amended lease agreement with the Sartell Youth Recreation Association for the expanded hockey/athletic complex. The original lease was signed by the city and the SYRA in 2003 when the Bernick's Hockey Arena was built.

The terms of the lease specify the city of Sartell will provide a substantial amount of funds for the expansion project – an enclosed extra arena to the south of the current one that

can be used for hockey, plus other sports, and a variety of private and civic events during the nonhockey seasons. The expanded project, estimated to cost about \$6 million, will be known as the Scheels Sports Complex after a major donor.

Ground was broken for the project about two weeks ago just south of the Bernick's Arena in Pinecone Regional Park. Preparations for construction are underway.

In June, the City Council agreed to help fund the private-public partnership project for nearly \$1.5 million in the following ways: \$450,000 of up-front regional half-cent sales-tax revenue and about

\$482,000 total during a 10-year period from leasing funds the city charges for land used by a private golf course. The city will also waive the following: \$62,000 in building permit fees, \$205,000 in sewer and water access charges; \$11,000 annually in utility bills; an estimated \$72,000 in costs of city demolition of the expansion site (including an outdoor ice arena and warming house); and dirt-and-utility installation work, about \$72,000.

Many private fundraisers have raised several millions of dollars in cash and long-term pledges for the athletic complex.



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Mississippi River boat parade

The first of more than 100 boats makes their way down the Mississippi River in Sartell Sept. 5 while bystanders cheer along the road during the Trump Patriotic Boat Parade.

Sartell City Council election

Editor's note: Four candidates are running for two four-year terms.

Chisum: Growth depends on precise questions

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Sartell City Council candidate, incumbent Mike Chisum, said that Sartell's future growth cannot be successfully realized until many questions are asked and answered.

All of those questions im-



Chisum

Chisum • page 3

Johnson: 'I want to serve, I love this city'

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Aaron Johnson said his reason for deciding to compete for a City Council seat is a simple one: "I want to serve because I love this city," he said.

Johnson is one of four candidates vying for two open



Johnson

Johnson • page 4

Lewandowski: Rigorous planning is key to growth

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Alex Lewandowski, a candidate for Sartell City Council, said that heedless, unplanned growth in the city could cause the economy and infrastructure to suffer adverse effects.

"That is why there needs



Lewandowski

Lewandowski • page 2

Smith: Grow tax base to support future

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Sartell City Council candidate Jill Smith said she believes one of the city's biggest challenges is to grow the tax base commensurate with the needs of current and future residents and the city's "top-rated" school district.



Smith

Smith • back page

Lewandowski

from front page

to be a plan,” he said. “If we grow too fast, fatal development decisions will be made.”

Lewandowski, 30, is one of four candidates vying for two

open seats on the council, the two now held by Mike Chisum and Brady Andel, who chose not to file for re-election. The other candidates in the race are incumbent Chisum and new contenders Aaron Johnson and Jill Smith.

Lewandowski is the human resources manager for Dis-

tinctive Cabinet Design in Foley and is also on that company’s management team. He is married and has four children – ages 6, 4, 2 and 3 months.

A 2008 graduate of Sauk Rapids-Rice High School, Lewandowski earned a bachelor’s degree in human resources management from St. Cloud State University in 2011. After a brief stint with US Bank, he has been with Distinctive Cabinet Design ever since.

He currently serves on Sartell’s Economic Development Commission on which he said he learned a lot about how the city operates and what it can do to truly prosper.

“That experience,” he said, “allows me to bring a new voice to the council while still having the exposure necessary for the city to strive forward.”

The Newsleader asked Lewandowski and the other candidates to comment on a variety of issues: challenges for Sartell, the city’s strengths and weaknesses, how to develop river’s-edge amenities, a place for a history museum

and other ways to enhance quality of life for all Sartell residents.

Lewandowski said when he thinks about growth in Sartell, two things come to mind: that growth needs to be steady and manageable, and that there needs to be a plan.

“For example, if there is an apartment moratorium enforced, there needs to be an explanation of why that is happening and how that supports the multi-family to single-family ratio/percentage the city seeks,” he said. “The strengths of growth are rather clear. If you establish a well-thought-out plan, you can build a thriving community that supports its citizens, businesses and economy that creates a culture of prosperity, growth and belonging.”

There are creative places to enhance use of the Mississippi River in Sartell, according to Lewandowski: at the bridge where the Watab River runs into the Mississippi, at Rotary Park and at the former paper mill site.

There are frequently people fishing from the Watab bridge, he noted, adding that area could be enhanced for safety and fixed as a vantage point for people to enjoy the view. It could also tie into the planned developments for Watab Park, he said.

The paper mill site could have amenities like look-outs, piers, an extended trail system, a park or two and more. A mix of commercial uses and recreational amenities could

work well there, although the presence of the railroad track would limit some plans.

Lewandowski said Rotary Park is under-used and many residents seem to be unaware of it. More amenities could be added, such as picnic tables, grills, park equipment and more.

A history museum could be developed within the Sartell Community Center, an ideal place for it because of people coming and going for events/meetings, Lewandowski said. A stand-alone museum building, he added, might become a burden on the city if donations could not keep it self-supporting.

The slogan for Lewandowski’s campaign is “Building a Strong Community.” The key to that is wise planning, he said.

“If action doesn’t start now, opportunities will pass us by, and we will be watching other cities thrive. Our citizens want us to move forward and we have the space to do it, but it can’t be individual acts that aren’t part of a greater plan.”

An example, he said, is the city’s backing of the Bernick’s Arena expansion.

“It’s true the city will lose money on it if we don’t continue to take steps forward so it brings more people to Sartell. We need to make sure they shop, eat and sleep here.”

For more about Lewandowski and his campaign, see “Alex Lewandowski for City Council” on Facebook.

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Chisum

from front page

pinge upon residents deciding upon an identity for the city. For examples: “What amenities are needed?” “Do we really want an aquatic center?” “Should Sartell focus on being a bedroom community?”

Chisum is vying for one of two open positions on the council – the seat he now occupies and a seat that will be vacated by Brady Andel, who chose not to file for re-election. The other candidates for the Nov. 3 election are Aaron Johnson, Alex Lewandowski and Jill Smith.

Chisum, 57, is assistant attorney for Morrison County and prosecutes cases involving narcotics felonies, gross misdemeanors and child-support enforcement. He and wife JoAnn have lived in Sartell for 12 years and have three children – Kyla, Josh and Haley – all graduates of Sartell High School. Chisum, serving his first term on the city council, was elected in 2016.

In 1985, he graduated from Florida Southern College and in 1990 from the Hamline University School of Law. He has been active in politics since the early 1980s.

His time on the Sartell council, he said, gave him a thorough knowledge of the city: infrastructure, public-safety needs, finance monitoring and the need to be responsible with taxpayers’ money.

“I’ve really enjoyed helping individuals who have issues or concerns with the city,” he said. “I know how our city government works and can work with our policies and procedures.”

The Newsleader asked Chisum and the other candidates to comment on a variety of issues: challenges for Sartell, the city’s strengths and weaknesses, how to develop river’s-edge amenities, a place for a history museum and other ways to enhance quality of life for all Sartell residents.

The city has many strengths, he said: great location, its people, the schools, potential for growth, good infrastructure, a new public safety building, excellent police officers and firefighters.

One challenge, however, he noted, is a lack of affordable single-family homes. Affordable housing is vital to attract young couples (perhaps with a child and student-loan debt). Most recent graduates, he said, cannot afford a \$300,000 house.

Chisum said he would like to explore a potential partnership with developers through which the city would make concessions in exchange for developers’ commitment to build houses in the \$200,000 to \$250,000 price range. Apartments must also be considered.

As the city grows, traffic and infrastructure concerns must also be dealt with, he added.

The pandemic is also a worry.

“Covid-19 has wreaked havoc on the economy,” he said. “We need to keep a very close eye on city spending and debt and ensure the city remains fiscally responsible.”

City identity is crucial, he said, because Sartell does not have one that is clearly defined.

“Our community must address the question of who we are and who we want to be,” he said. “Our comprehensive plan should be re-evaluated on a regular basis. Sartell needs to do scientifically reliable surveying to learn what is critically important in the eyes of our citizens.”

Then, Chisum posed a series of questions: “How fast should Sartell grow and how big should it get?” “Is it time to scrap the Town Square project (a ‘downtown’ proposal)?” “What are residents’ thoughts on roads, infrastructure and economic development?” “What types of businesses and economic development are desired? “What makes people want to live here?”

Those, he said, are critical questions that must be answered as elected officials and staff manage growth during the next decade.

Chisum favors riverside developments, such as a trail for people to walk or bike next to the river, but the city will have to work closely with the Department of Natural Resources for any projects, as well as working with people with homes along the river. He would also like to see more fishing piers and benches along the river. Chisum said he foresees more access to the river as Sauk River Regional Park becomes more developed.

As for the paper mill site, he noted, development decisions cannot be made by the city because it’s up to the owners of that property to either redevelop it or sell it to someone with a workable plan.

Assuming that happens someday, Chisum would like the site to become a retail/café area with outdoor seating options by the river, similar to the Stillwater Riverwalk. Chisum can also envision the site becoming a light industrial worksite/factory.

“Either outcome,” he said, “would bring jobs and new revenue to Sartell.”

Chisum has pondered how to preserve Sartell’s history. A museum, at least for now, seems unfeasible financially. And if a facility is obtained, would the historical society be able to operate it financially? He said in the meantime, historical artifacts should be displayed in the Community Center. Someday, too, Chisum hopes there is a small museum at a river walk

by the paper mill site to help memorialize for future generations the city’s history and its 100-year-plus mill site.

Chisum said he is proud of his accomplishments as a council member and wants to bring that same energy and hard work to the city again, if re-elected.

Chisum said he promised four years ago to focus on public safety and infrastruc-

ture while being responsible with tax money, adding that he voted against projects when he felt they were not a good use of funds.

“When I make a financial decision, I always consider how the spending benefits the community as a whole,” he said.

He is proud of his and the council helping design the new Public Safety Facility, which came in under budget. He also

made sure the East Side Street Project was not pushed back.

“Those roads are a big improvement,” he said.

Chisum said he has genuinely enjoyed working with citizens when they were faced with a particular problem in order to find a solution.

Chisum’s campaign website can be found on Facebook at “Mike Chisum for Sartell City Council.”



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Johnson

from front page

seats on the council, the two now held by Mike Chisum and Brady Anel, who chose not to file for re-election. The other candidates in the race are incumbent Chisum and new contenders Alex Lewandowski and Jill Smith.

Johnson, 52, is employed by ATS Logistics (Anderson Trucking) in St. Cloud. He formerly spent two years with Nestle USA in a sales/route capacity and 15 years near the Twin Cities working as a technician for Comcast/Time Warner after which he moved back to Sartell. Johnson grew up in Little Falls and in his younger years, in the 1990s, he had lived in Sartell for a few years.

He said he was so happy to move back to Sartell after so many years away. His wife, Jerrielynn Martinez-Johnson, has been a Sartell resident since 2005. They have six grown children and three grandchildren.

The Newsleader asked Johnson and the other candidates to comment on a variety of issues: challenges for Sartell, the city’s strengths and weaknesses, how to develop river’s-edge

amenities, a place for a history museum and other ways to enhance quality of life for all Sartell residents.

Sartell, Johnson said, is an attractive suburban destination with a great atmosphere in which to raise a family and also a good place to retire.

“I see our strengths as being a city government that should continue to be pro-active in expanding housing but at the same time being careful not to let the growth outrun the infrastructure of our streets,” he said.

Attracting both large and small businesses is paramount to continued success, he said, adding that those decisions must be prudent ones, demanding both research and working hand-in-hand with one another for the best interest of all citizens.

The abandoned site of the longtime paper mill would make a good site for a park, a gathering place or even an amphitheater if that proves to be viable and affordable.

Riverside developments, he said, including use of the paper-mill site, would be a “terrific way to promote community togetherness – more so after the pandemic has passed, of course.”

Sartell’s rich history, he

said, should be honored and preserved – perhaps in a renovated older home that could serve as a museum of sorts. “There are lots of options (for a museum) worth exploring,” Johnson said.

Johnson expounded on his reason for wanting to serve on the City Council, his love of Sartell.

“I want all to have the opportunity to experience why we live here, raise our children here, walk the trails here and frequent our businesses, especially in the simpler times before Covid-19. But that, too, will pass. And we will be able to get back to a new normal and be able to fully enjoy being the envy of the area with our beautiful town.

“I want us as a community to accept everyone regardless of race, financial standing, religion or who you love,” he said. “After all, ultimately we all want a safe, welcoming place to call home. And Sartell fits the bill. I look forward to walking the neighborhoods and meeting you all in a socially-distant way and saying hello.”

Johnson can be found on Facebook. Google a search for “Aaron Johnson for Sartell City Council.” He can be emailed at skye3838@yahoo.com.

Blotter

Sept. 1
1 p.m. Special detail. St. Cloud Hospital. A Sartell officer is a part of the St. Cloud Car Seat Collaborative and assisted in creating a car-seat safety film in Somali for St. Cloud Hospital.

Sept. 2
7 a.m. Hazard. Riverside Avenue S. and CR 78. A caller reported three dogs running on the road. An officer checked the area but did not find any dogs.

Sept. 3
10 a.m. Park patrol. Sauk River Regional Park. A community service officer walked the trails in Sauk River Regional Park to ensure everything was in order.

Sept. 4
12:30 p.m. Theft. 23rd Street S. A business reported a suspected theft that was believed to have taken place on Sept. 3. A student noticed a credit card and cash had been taken from her purse. The officer viewed camera footage and found a suspect. Charges had been made on the stolen card at Walmart. The officer then went to Walmart to request video footage. The video footage was uploaded to iCrime. No further action can be taken at this time.

Sept. 5
9 a.m. Agency assist. Fourth Avenue E. Officers assisted St. Cloud Police Department in meeting with a suspect after they received a report that a man had propositioned a woman at a local hotel earlier that day. Officers met with the man matching the description given by the complainant. While officers were talking with the suspect, he admitted to propositioning the woman for \$40. The

woman wanted the man spoken to about his actions.

Sept. 6
6 a.m. Traffic stop. Hwy. 15 and CR 29. An officer observed a vehicle with a broken taillight. The officer contacted the driver and notified them of the issue. The driver was warned about the infraction.

Sept. 7
6 p.m. Welfare check. Second Street S. A caller reported a man apparently under the influence had been in a store for almost two hours. When officers contacted the man, they found he was the subject of an arrest warrant for a probation violation in reference to drug crimes. Officers contacted Stearns County Jail, but the jail would not take him because of Covid-19 restrictions. Officers spoke with employees who said no crime was committed and they were concerned for his wellbeing. No further action was taken.

Sept 8
9 a.m. School patrol. Fifth Street N. An officer did a walk-through of the school. Everything was in order.

Sept. 9
11:30 a.m. Assist person. Hi Vue Drive. An officer assisted an individual with gathering their personal belongings from a residence. The complainant had a one-time pick up with an officer standby.

Sept. 10
3:15 p.m. Speed trailer. Pinecone Road N. A Community Service Officer spoke with a concerned resident about a lot of cars speeding near the high school. The CSO

set up the speed trailer to remind drivers to follow the posted speed limits.

Sept. 11
7:15 a.m. Traffic. Seventh Street N. The Sartell-St. Stephen school district created a new drop-off procedure, preventing left turns. An officer stayed in the area to monitor traffic flow and safety of motorists and pedestrians.

Sept. 12
9 a.m. Welfare check. Amber Avenue S. An officer was dispatched to a welfare check after a complainant called about an individual who had been oddly quiet. The residence showed minimal change for a period of time. The individual’s dog was barking but no other sound was coming from the residence. An officer eventually made contact with the individual and the officer learned the person had the flu.

Sept. 13
9:30 p.m. Unwanted person. Second Street N. The individual was not a resident and was not wanted there. The individual had caused issues in the past and again on this date. Officers suggested an alternative place to go. The individual was trespassed from the property and an officer transported the individual to A Place of Hope in St. Cloud to spend the night.

Sept. 14
4:15 a.m. Lift assist. Sundance Road. An officer went to a residence where an individual had fallen out of a wheelchair. The officer arrived assisted the individual back into their chair. No injuries or medical attention required.

Time to Set Goals

Financial goals inspire, motivate and mobilize us into action. They keep us on track during the tough months and help us avoid unnecessary impulse spending that can have a negative impact on our finances.

And setting a goal is the easy part. Sticking to that goal is where the challenge begins. Unforeseen expenses, untimely bills and material temptations are part of daily life. Only those who are serious about overcoming these roadblocks are truly ready to achieve their financial objectives.

HOW TO SET A GOAL

Don't wait until your New Year's resolution to set your new financial goals. Grab your past few bank statements, a piece of paper and a pencil, and get busy. Write down where every one of your pennies went during the past couple of months and organize them into sections like "necessary bills," "entertainment" and "eating out." Determine which one of these segments has some wiggle room and set a goal to decrease similar spending next month.

DEFINE YOUR GOALS

When it comes to finances, you should have short-term and long-term goals. A short-term goal may be a plan to pay off a credit card or save enough to put a down payment on a new house. What types of purchases or payoffs are you looking to accomplish in the next six to 12 months? Put them down on paper and keep track of monthly progress toward your goal. And stay dedicated. Even an extra \$20 saved from eating in on a Friday night can go a long way toward

achieving your goal and building your confidence in your ability to save.

BE REALISTIC

If you earn \$3,000 month, it probably isn't a realistic goal to shove \$2,000 of your income into savings every 30 days. Be honest with yourself and

choose a number that you can achieve within your short- or long-term target.

If you have more than one financial goal, it is probably best to choose a primary one that receives most of your attention. This will help keep you focused on where to most effectively distribute your income.

And remember to think about the long term. Growing your savings can seem like a sacrifice in the short term, but the more you sacrifice now, the more wealth you'll be able to achieve. You'll be living a much more secure, financially rewarding life in the future if you take the right steps today.



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PET CARE GUIDE | BY THE NUMBERS

Animal Cruelty Statistics

An animal is being abused, neglected or forced to fight every minute — even as you read this.

One of the first steps in creating positive change for these animals is understanding and recognizing the cruelty they face on a daily basis.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has made this its mission and works tirelessly to rescue animals, pass humane laws, share resources and raise awareness across the nation. Here are just a few relevant statistics on animal cruelty.

STAY INFORMED

- On average, there are 2,000 cases of animal abuse or cruelty reported in the media each year.

- 60 percent of these cases involve dogs.

- These numbers are considered very low and inaccurate, because many states do not include livestock in their cruelty laws.

- The most common types of reported animal abuse involve neglect, shooting and poisoning.

- Dog fighting, cockfighting and other forms of organized animal cruelty are closely tied to other violent crimes across the United States.

- According to Canine Journal, 66,000 dogs and 21,000 cats are subjected to

testing every year.

- In addition, 100 million animals — including mice, rats, dogs, cats, rabbits, monkeys and others — are killed in U.S. laboratories each year.

- According to the ASPCA, more than 250,000 animals fall victim to hoarding each

year. This is when there are too many animals in unsanitary conditions.

- Florida is the worst offending state for animal cruelty, according to Pet Abuse's 2008 report. The state ranks the highest for the number of dog-fighting cases

under investigation, highest for the number of dog beatings, highest for the number of cases involving neglect or abandonment of animals, and highest for animal drowning, choking and suffocation.

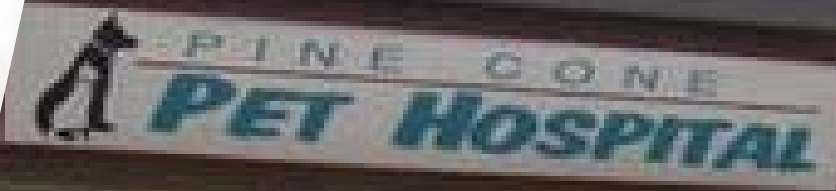
- The connection between

animal and human violence is well documented. A survey of the 50 largest shelters for battered women in the United States found that 85 percent of women and 63 percent of children entering shelters discussed incidences of pet abuse in the family.



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by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Sartell Mayor Ryan Fitzthum

The council is currently deliberating about whether to approve dramatic changes in the Sartell zoning amendment after a zoning moratorium on planned-unit-development zones was imposed in November of last year by the council. The council was seeking a more comprehensive, streamlined, efficient way of zoning regulations that would benefit residents,

The new zoning-plan proposal would eliminate PUDs and replace them with one or more of a mixture of the following: R-1 (single-family residential), R-2 (two-family residential), R-3 (multiple-family residential such

The speakers told the City Council that Huntington and adjacent areas should remain residential but not with so many new large apartment complexes.

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com



A graduate of Sartell High School, O'Driscoll earned a degree from St. Cloud State University, having majored in business education and real-estate planning and development. He worked as a training manager for a securities broker/dealer, as well as real-estate broker and salesperson. He is also currently a

Students need to return to
O'Driscoll • page 11

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com



He also said he strongly believes in these difficult and contentious times, Minnesotans must recommit to neighborly

Carollo commented on the following issues for the News-

“We must restore to them real representation in the Legislature and real improvements in their conditions of living, such that working people have a substantial voice in their political system and the means by

Carollo • page 11



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Opinion

Our View The emergency is not over

How many deaths can we tolerate?

Minnesota’s Covid-19 death toll will soon pass 2,000. Nationwide, we’ve tolerated 200,000 deaths and about 1,000 Americans continue to die each day.

Imagine if a tornado wiped out one of the Minnesota cities with about 2,000 residents such as Nisswa, Hinckley or Aitkin. How would we react? Since the pandemic set in, an average of 11 Minnesotans have died each day.

Daily reports of new deaths often mention the majority of Covid-19 fatalities – about 73 percent – are residents of long-term care or assisted living facilities. More than 85 percent of deaths are people age 65 or older. Highlighting these statistics implies the deaths of older, sicker people are less of a concern than young people. Gen Xers mockingly call the pandemic the “boomer remover.”

States and cities that ignored science and rushed to open too soon paid with rising case counts, deaths and a return to even more restrictive measures. Minnesota didn’t follow that politically driven path. Our Covid-19 deaths have leveled off with deaths in the single digits. Apparently that’s how many deaths we can tolerate.

Minnesota Republicans ARE ready to tolerate more. They have criticized the state’s enforcement of rules for bars and restaurants and continually vote to end the governor’s emergency powers, claiming the emergency is over.

Last week, state inspectors visited 167 bars and restaurants in southern Minnesota and found nearly half were out of compliance with safety requirements such as staff not wearing masks or tables too close to allow for social distancing.

Investigations linked about 1,200 infections to identified outbreaks in bars and restaurants.

Educating noncompliant owners and patrons is the state’s goal, though officials have the added incentive of enforcement actions and financial penalties, said Booker Hodges, assistant commissioner for public safety, according to a StarTribune report.

“When we go out to bars and restaurants to observe, our goal isn’t to hammer people,” Hodges said.

Republican legislators, though, see the effort differently. In a statement last week a number of legislators called the state’s efforts “heavy-handed.”

The statement continued, “We are troubled by the threatening tone of the letter when considering the administration’s previously stated goal that compliance checks would be ‘educational’ in nature and not punitive. Instead, you are weaponizing state agencies and threatening businesses with fines, closures and investigations at a time when so many are struggling just to keep their doors open. Since the onset of the pandemic, businesses have been doing their best to comply with your administration’s complicated, burdensome, and ever-changing executive orders and mandates.”

The Republicans’ stand does not match the facts and the inspections need to continue. Several Central Minnesota establishments are openly defying the rules and others have been tagged by the state.

Here’s what you can do to help:

- Follow the rules. Inspectors observed in some situations, businesses were making efforts to follow guidance requirements, but customers were not doing their part to protect worker safety and public health. Customers who refuse to wear masks and ignore social distancing guidelines by moving tables and chairs to accommodate larger groups jeopardize the operations of these businesses.
- If you visit a bar or restaurant and you don’t feel safe because staff and patrons are not following the rules, leave. On your way out, tell a manager why you’re leaving.
- When you get home, tell your friends. Share your experience on social media.
- Visit the state’s Covid-19 website, staysafe.mn.gov and report the offenders.
- Republican politicians that with hundreds of people getting sick each day and people dying, the emergency is not over.

“Give me liberty AND give me death” is not a winning slogan.

Mayors: It’s never been about the pay

Why do people want these jobs? We’ll soon be voting for a long list of candidates, with the presidency at the top of the ballot. Our elected leaders have tough jobs – especially now with a raging pandemic, a sinking economy, renewed attention to systemic racism, the West Coast in flames and hurricanes threatening the Gulf Coast. The biggest threat of all – climate change – hardly rates a headline. And as we were reminded last week on the anniversary of 9/11, there are still people in the world who hate Americans.

When we prepare to vote, let’s focus some attention and respect on the offices on the bottom of the ballot – the mayors, city council members, county commissioners and school board members.

Unlike their counterparts in Washington or St. Paul, these officials conduct the public’s business part time and their pay comes nowhere close to covering the time they actually spend. Yet the issues are just as challenging. This summer I’ve watched school board members debate how to balance safely opening school with the economic struggles of parents who can’t work at home. After the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, citizens asked their mayors and city councils what’s happening with racial justice in their cities to prevent such a tragedy here. With tax revenues sinking at the same time as more people need the government’s support, these local leaders need to figure out how to pay for the ongoing costs of public safety, roads and teachers while unexpected pandemic expenses pile up.

These public servants don’t do it for the money. While members of the U.S. Senate and House are paid \$174,000 a year...a check most of us could survive on...our

Two young men sat in the auditorium and snickered as they exchanged a series of nasty jibes against Blacks, peppering their remarks with the “n” word.

They were students in the Alexandria Technical College Law Enforcement program. On that day, nearly four decades ago, they were there in a class to learn how to be sensitive toward people of color.

I was there as a reporter, sitting in the same row. I was hoping they’d flunk because that law enforcement program was – and still is – considered one of the finest in the nation. To this day, every time there is police violence against Blacks, I think of those two snide students.

Law enforcement agencies must weed out blatant racists. Just about every time an officer murders a Black man or woman, there’s been a history of complaints of him of using excessive force. They should be removed before their attitudes escalate into murder. Too often, histories of excessive force are ignored or hushed up. It is no wonder the Black Lives Matter movement has such urgency these days, thankfully with the approval of many whites.

Meantime, we should all learn more about race issues, a first step toward human harmony. That is what I’ve been doing for the past couple of years. I grew up in all-white St. Cloud, utterly unaware of racial issues in my younger years. In college, I took a course called “Black Literature.” It was enlightening, but I realized then there was more to learn. Now’s the time.

Some things I’ve been learning:

Mike
Knaak
Editor



local leaders make far less.

Last week, St. Joseph’s city staff proposed a new pay structure for that city’s mayor and council members. St. Joseph is the only area city that pays a salary, plus a stipend for attending meetings. To simplify things, the staff proposed a small pay increase and eliminating the stipend. Staff research included what area cities pay their mayors and council members and it’s not much.

St. Joseph’s new pay structure raised the mayor’s monthly pay to \$650 and the council members’ pay to \$435 with no meeting stipend. Mayor salaries in nearby cities are \$600 in Waite Park, \$665 in Sauk Rapids and \$675 in Sartell. Cold Spring currently pays its mayor \$450 but a pay raise to \$475 has been proposed. Council members in area cities are paid \$300 in Waite Park, \$433.33 in Sartell and \$475 in Sauk Rapids. Cold Spring proposed raising council members pay from \$300 to \$325.

I wanted to calculate how much that works out to an hour, so I asked Sartell Mayor Ryan Fitzthum and long-time St. Joseph Mayor Rick Schultz about their work weeks. (City Council member Anne Buckvold is challenging Schultz in the Nov. 3 election.)

Both men attend city council and other meetings such as the Area Planning Organization, city boards and commissions. Outside those set duties, there are emails,

phone calls, lobbying at the Legislature, representing the city at events and meeting with constituents and local business owners.

“Being mayor is NOT a turn-it-on, turn-it-off kind of position, like a job,” Schultz told me. “Of course, there are official duties, but you are always mayor, you can’t disappear from being mayor and people recognize you as mayor. The hours never end when you’re in public.”

Fitzthum says he’s at City Hall two to three times a week, answers a dozen or more emails a day as well as returning phone calls.

“I am half-way through my first term as mayor,” Fitzthum said. “I never expected the role would be this time consuming, yet I also never expected it would be nearly as rewarding. I have absolutely loved the community engagement aspect of the job. The mayor could not lead a community without a strong and functioning City Council. While their time commitment is very different of that as the mayor, their importance is equal.”

Shultz didn’t offer a number of hours spent on city business, but Fitzthum estimated about 25 hours a week. So to make the arithmetic easy, let’s go with 20 hours a week. That’s 80 hours a month for an hourly rate of just more than \$8. If it’s just about the money, Target’s \$15 per hour starting pay would be a better choice.

Shultz made the case for public service and local elected office.

“It’s one of the most enjoyable positions I’ve ever had – knowing I serve something larger. You really have to put your own goals and feelings aside for that of something larger. It’s never been about the pay.”

ings were actually considered appropriate punishments for “uppity” Blacks.

Monstrous Jim Crow laws doomed Blacks to be property, things, beasts of burden – just as they had been “nothings” as ripped-apart slave families on auction blocks for more than 200 years.

Lincoln freed the slaves, but they were virtually re-enslaved within the Jim Crow nightmare. It was so depraved that the Nazis studied that caste system and then adapted it to de-humanize the Jews in the years just before the widespread butchery of the Holocaust.

I hope others do some reading, learning, sharing. I highly recommend the following books: “Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom” by David W. Blight (biography of the towering 19th Century runaway slave, orator and visionary); “The Warmth of Other Suns” by Isabel Wilkerson (heartbreaking history about Blacks fleeing the South and seeking freedom elsewhere, only to be humiliated and stymied by systemic racism at every turn), “Caste,” just published, also by Isabel Wilkerson (about how a caste system was concocted to keep Blacks as brutalized underdogs), and “Humane Policing” by Darron Spencer (insightful account by a Colorado police officer on how he learned to empathize on his beat with people in crises, including Blacks, and the strategies he brought to bear to de-escalate dangerous encounters).

A warning: Those first three books contain unspeakably horrific accounts of unspeakable mental and physical *cruelties*.

Dennis
Dalman
Reporter



There has always been bristling mistrust between Blacks and whites; we are all likely “racist” to some degree. Racism not only causes the arbitrary killings of Black people, it can lead to inequities in housing, health care, education, jobs, wages and more. There is also a “silent” racism in which many, if not all, whites and Blacks tend to harbor a socially conditioned fear of one another. Negative notions scurry across the mind; baseless assumptions skitter to the surface; stereotypes abound.

That psychological divide began with the separation (physical, psychological) of whites and Blacks throughout centuries of slavery. Thus, they (we) did not get a chance to know one another as full-fledged human beings, all deserving of respect.

Post Civil War, that segregation was re-enforced by a perverse socio-economic structure called (by whites, of course) “separate but equal.” Such a convenient legal delusion stemmed from a Supreme Court decision of 1896, Plessy vs. Ferguson, an appalling decision that legally enabled Southern states to re-impose a caste system dubbed “Jim Crow” (so-named after a vicious “entertainment” caricature of a Black man). That system was so atrocious that torture, mutilations and lynch-

O’Driscoll

from page 9

school, said O’Driscoll, because if they don’t, they will miss out not just on in-school learning but also on the social interaction and benefits of working on problem-solving with their peers, which is a great lifelong skill, he added.

Job losses

O’Driscoll said he is optimistic job losses will decrease and employment will increase as pandemic issues and fears subside.

Health care

A Republican-led insurance

measure allows individuals to purchase insurance in the private market, he said.

“That plan should be renewed as it has been remarkably successful and has proven to help keep insurance rates manageable for those seeking insurance in the individual market.”

Police brutality

Bipartisan legislation, he noted, was approved in both the State House and Senate in July that includes forming task forces to learn about improved options and better identifying areas of specific need for issues of police brutality.

Carollo

from page 9

review of police tactics and procedures. The commission would also assess records of departments and officers for patterns of racial bias.

Pandemic

It is a “difficult truth,” Carollo said, the nation missed a window of opportunity – a lock-down strategy that should have lasted six weeks from the start. What must be done now, he added, is to enact robust testing and contact tracing and an assurance any vaccine would be mandatory for public school attendance and free to the public.

School openings

Opening all schools now would be a “disaster,” Carollo said, adding children of working-class families should go to school for lunch programs and childcare provided by schools. Those families who can afford childcare or who can work from home should not send children to school. That way, there would be fewer students in schools and a strict control on class sizes could help ensure safety mitigation policies.

“Even if it means busing some kids between districts, we

Climate change

“Regardless of one’s opinion on climate change, there have been many laws passed over the years that are improving our environment and protecting our natural resources,” O’Driscoll said.

Bonding bill

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, he said, are optimistic there will still be time to approve a capital-investment proposal this year. The “good news,” he noted, are funds in the 2020 bill to make improvements at Linear Park on the Mississippi River at Sartell and also funds for road improvements in the medical campus

must keep the numbers down,” he said.

Health care

Carollo said there are really only two options: universal health care or letting people die who cannot afford care.

“I would fight to pass (State Senator) John Marty’s health-care plan,” he said. “I want to be clear that my goal is to catch up with every other industrialized nation in guaranteeing care to all people.”

Housing

One approach Carollo favors is to make revenue bonds available to finance groups of people who want to form a housing cooperative so people in need can create cooperative housing projects. That, he said, would eliminate government bureaucracy, reduce rents and give working families an “actual ownership stake in their conditions of living.”

Taxes

Local property taxes keep increasing, he said, due to the “cowardice of Republican leaders” in the House and Senate, who, he argued, “keep passing the buck and grandstanding on

area of Sartell.

“That is welcome news,” he said, “as it will increase access to the clinics in this area, as well as helping to make the area more attractive since we now know that HealthPartners plans to close their Sartell clinic.”

Taxes

“Taxes,” he said, “have not been increased in Minnesota, but the state is facing an ever-growing multi-billion-dollar shortfall. The sooner Gov. Walz makes recommendations on budget savings, the more time the Legislature will have to soften such budget impacts.”

the rhetoric of lowering taxes, all the while saddling their own communities with the most regressive and least-efficient taxes.”

That, he said, is the reason he favors statewide funding of schools so rural areas are not so tax-burdened with disproportionate school costs. He also supports a progressive taxation system for corporations based on the difference of pay between the highest- and lowest-paid employees. Such a method, he said, would incentivize higher wages, job creation and small-business investment.

Climate change

Carollo said bold steps must be taken to reduce carbon emissions and to develop renewable energy. That strategy, he said, would create thousands of jobs. Any losses to workers, farmers or others could be offset by an innovative insurance program to protect those people, he said.

Bonding bill

It’s time, he said, to quit playing hot potato concerning a crumbling infrastructure and using the old band-aid approach.

“I want every single road

In 2021, the state will have to face a significant deficit, he noted.

“Knowing many area residents are struggling financially due to the Covid-19 pandemic,” he said, “I will be looking for ways to balance our state’s budget without tax increases.”

O’Driscoll said he is proud of working on priorities for District 13B for the past 10 years – priorities such as middle-class tax relief, helping lower the costs of health care and delivering record levels of funding for road and bridge repairs without raising taxes or fees.

and bridge to be brought up to standards so everyone can sleep safely knowing their loved ones are safe on the road and that their homes are safe from flooding. One-hundred and forty-nine dams in the state are either in poor or unsatisfactory condition.”

Other comments

Minnesota has always been unified by neighborly values, said Carollo said, and even with the pandemic the state has been the strongest in the nation and a great state to raise a family. That health, he said, is largely due to labor unions, small businesses, commitment to trade schools and constant improvements it the education system.

“I believe we need a resurgence of our spirit of neighborliness and a recommitment to the values that made us what we are today,” Carollo said. “We must care for each other during these difficult times, and we must ensure all Minnesotans are brought into the fold because many marginalized people have been historically left out from our focus of building a safe and welcoming community, with real economic opportunities for all.”

Community Calendar

Saturday, Sept. 19

Sartell Lions Clean-up Fund-raiser, 8 a.m.-noon, Riverview Intermediate School, 748 Seventh St. N.

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

Monday, Sept. 21

Sartell Farmers' Market, 3-6 p.m., Bernick's Arena, 1109 First St.

Sartell-St. Stephen school board, 6:30 p.m., Riverview Intermediate School's Media Center, 748 Seventh St. N.

Brockway Township Board, 7:30 p.m., Township Hall, 85th

Avenue and 438th Street.

Tuesday, Sept. 22

Sartell City Council special meeting, 4:30 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. N.

Sartell City Council, 6 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. N.

Le Sauk Township Board, 7 p.m., Township Hall, 220 Fourth Ave. S. Face masks, social distancing required.

Monday, Sept. 28

Sartell Farmers' Market, 3-6 p.m., Bernick's Arena, 1109 First St.
Sartell City Council, 6 p.m.,

Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. N.

Thursday, Oct. 1

Coffee and Conversation, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. N, Sartell. Call 320-258-7324 to reserve a space.

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Artist Spotlight Roster

ARTIST	MEDIUM	FRIDAY 25th
Kerry Kupferschmidt	Painting	Friday 5:00PM
David Barthel	Photography	Friday 5:30PM
JD Jorgenson	Ceramics	Friday 6:00PM
Megan Jorgenson	Ceramics	Friday 6:30PM
Sarah Drake	Author & Collage	Friday 7:00PM
Mary C Bruno	Printmaking	Friday 8:00PM
ARTIST	MEDIUM	SATURDAY 26th
Eve & Gary Wallinga	Painting	Saturday 11:00AM
Andrew and Katie Webster	Ceramics	Saturday 11:30PM
Aryn and Courtney Kern	Woodworking	Saturday 12:00PM
Natalie Ratha	Painting	Saturday 12:30PM
Julie Jensen	Jewelry	Saturday 1:00PM
Adam Spaeth	Mixed Media	Saturday 1:30PM
Anita Jacobson	Fiber Arts	Saturday 2:00PM
Bruce Jacobson	Wooden Jewelry/Sculpture	Saturday 2:30PM
Jake Jensen	Ceramics	Saturday 3:00PM
Shane Mahon	Sculpture	Saturday 3:30PM
Sandy Bot-Miller	Fiber Arts	Saturday 4:00PM
Zach Heilman	Painting	Saturday 4:30PM
ARTIST	MEDIUM	SUNDAY 27th
Matt Hebert	Oil Painting	Sunday 11:00AM
Peder Hegland	Ceramics	Sunday 11:30AM
Mary Gohman	Jewelry	Sunday 12:00PM
Linda Clayton	Painting	Sunday 12:30PM
Kat Patton	2-D Design	Sunday 1:00PM
David Glenn	Ceramics	Sunday 1:30PM
Laura Ruprecht	Mosaic	Sunday 2:00PM
Barb Kellogg	Photographer and Author	Sunday 2:30PM
Zapf Legacy	CanoesWood Craftsman	Sunday 3:00PM
Lou Lou	Painting	Sunday 3:30PM
Mary Opatz Herges	Painting	Sunday 4:00PM
Sam Spiczka	Sculpture	Sunday 4:30PM

Smith

from front page

Smith is one of four candidates vying for two open seats on the council, the two now held by Mike Chisum and Brady Anel, who chose not to file for re-election. The other candidates in the race are incumbent Chisum and new contenders Aaron Johnson and Alex Lewandowski.

Smith, 45, is the practice administrator for Sartell Pediatrics, which she opened with her husband almost nine years ago. Raised in White Bear Lake, she majored in computer science and psychology at the University of Notre Dame. Smith and her family have lived in Sartell since 2005. She and her husband have two sons, ages 15 and 16. Before opening Sartell Pediatrics, she worked as a consultant for a public accounting and consultancy firm.

Smith has been very involved in civic organizations and activities: March of Dimes Chefs’ Auction, chair (2014-2016); Catholic Charities Board of Directors (2015-2020, board chair in 1019); Sartell Youth Hockey Association Board of Directors (2019); chair of Sartell Youth Recreation Center Steering Committee and Marketing (2016-present).

The Newsleader asked Smith and the other candidates to comment on a variety of issues: challenges for Sartell, the city’s strengths and weaknesses, how to develop river’s-edge amenities,

a place for a history museum and other ways to enhance quality of life for all Sartell residents.

Business growth is important if Sartell plans to continue other forms of growth, she said.

“Our biggest challenge is ensuring the city’s economic base can support the needs/wants of current and future residents, as well as the top-rated school system the community has grown to expect,” she said. “As we look to the future, I suspect it is going to be difficult to continue improving upon our schools and city amenities at the same rate without broadening our tax base to include more businesses.”

Smith said it’s important businesses invest and interact with the community, and that is what Sartell Pediatrics and its staff have done for years.

“As local business owners, we are dedicated to the city and its growth,” she said. “In 2011 we purchased that land and building located just west of Verso Paper and next to the Sartell Post Office. In September we began our third building project in that location, with plans to add 9,000 square feet to our clinical space.”

Prior to opening the clinic, she and her husband checked into many options for renting or building. “But ultimately we decided to make an investment in our community (refurbishing that extant building, which had been a bar and a bank),” she said. “I feel strongly about businesses investing in their communities and hope as part of the

council we can encourage other businesses to do the same.”

The Mississippi River, Smith said, is a good focal point for Sartell.

“With the exception of the former paper mill site, I believe the majority of the Mississippi River shorelines in Sartell is zoned residential,” she said. “But with long-term planning and a shared vision, I do believe there is a tremendous opportunity to enhance the river as a focal point for the community.”

Smith said the abandoned paper mill site perhaps has potential to become a regional attraction for shopping, restaurants or even athletic fields.

“However, as I understand it, future land use requires extensive environmental testing and redevelopment,” she said. “I think the key will be identifying a private real estate redevelopment entity that shares our vision as a community.”

Sartell, Smith said, is defined largely through the preservation of its history.

“Understanding our roots and how the community has changed over time helps us define who we are today and what we aim for tomorrow,” she said. “This is especially important as we continue to create our identity as a community. As a member of the council, I would welcome the opportunity to learn more from those involved”

Smith said quality of life has been enhanced in Sartell in a variety of ways: the Community Center, Pinecone Regional Park, Pinecone Central Park and school district enhancements.

“I believe it should be the heart of the council’s mission to look for ways for the city to support its residents of all ages, with varied interests, passions and projects,” she said. “I welcome the opportunity to give back and invest in the city that’s given my family a great education, wonderful friends, our business and a place to call home.”

For more about Smith’s candidacy, visit her Facebook at: www.facebook.com/Smith4Sartell/

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Save the Dates:
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We're having a Virtual Festival!

Virtual Franny Flyer 5k

Registration and details can be found at www.stfrancissartell.org

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.

More information to be communicated through FlockNote Messaging.
Not on Flocknote yet? Need to update your contact info?
Go to www.stfrancissartell.org to sign up for eCommunications.

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