

# Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Nov. 13, 2020  
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## Town Crier

### Holiday market is canceled

The Sartell Historical Society has cancelled its Holiday Market, originally scheduled Nov. 14, due to COVID concerns. Select items from the sale will be available for cash and carry starting the week of Nov. 23 through mid-December. Stop by the Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S., during normal hours, to view and purchase what items are available.

### Help thank veterans, service members

United Way of Central Minnesota invites you to help celebrate Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving and the upcoming holiday season with those service members near and far. Through November, please take a moment to write a thank you note, share a story, or simply express your gratitude for veterans and service members by leaving a message. These messages will be distributed locally as well as mailed to our deployed troops. Thank you for sharing your support and appreciation with our community! Visit <https://www.unitedwayhelps.org/> to complete your online card today! Contact Mary, United Way of Central Minnesota, at [mkrippner@unitedwayhelps.org](mailto:mkrippner@unitedwayhelps.org).

### Stearns County parks seek ski patrols

The Stearns County Park Department is seeking people to do ski patrol. All volunteers receive a short orientation. Four Stearns County parks have groomed cross country trails and need ski patrol volunteers: Kraemer Lake - Wildwood County Park; Mississippi County park; Warner Lake; and Quarry Park. Ski patrol season begins Dec. 1 and goes through Feb. 28. Sign-up now. For more information, visit [stearnscountymn.gov/368/Ski-Patrol](http://stearnscountymn.gov/368/Ski-Patrol), call 320-255-6172 or email [parkinfo@co.stearns.mn.us](mailto:parkinfo@co.stearns.mn.us).

**INSERT:**  
**Country Manor Senior Housing**



photo by Heidi L. Everett

**Making the most of warm weather**  
**Jacob Zetah, St. Joseph, and his son, Xander, almost 2, head home after spending the morning playing at Northland Park Nov. 7 before the forecasted snow. He said, "We are trying to get outside as much as we can."**

## Schultz, Loso, Beniek among local wins

by Mike Knaak  
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St. Joseph voters re-elected Rick Schultz as mayor. He gathered 1,825 votes compared with challenger Anne Buckvold's 1,276 votes. Schultz was first elected mayor in 2010. He was re-elected in 2018 without opposition. Buckvold is a current city council member.

One newcomer will join longtime member Bob Loso for two seats on the City Council. Kelly Beniek received 1,025 votes and

Loso received 1,084. Other candidates on the ballot were Mike Osterman, 934; Paul Orvis, 801; Carmie Mick, 739; and incumbent Troy Goracke, 609.

The mayor serves a two-year



Schultz



Loso



Beniek

term and council members are elected for four years.

Seven candidates were on the ballot for four St. Cloud school board seats. Voters returned in-

cumbents Shannon Haws, Monica Segura-Schwartz and Al Dahlgren to the board along with Scott Andreasen.

### The results:

Shannon Haws 24,351.  
Scott Andreasen, 21,837.  
Monica Segura-Schwartz 20,180.  
Al Dahlgren 19,219.  
Andrea Preppernau 17,658.  
Hani Omar-Jacobson 12,953.  
Omar Abdullahi Podi 9,795.  
School board members serve four-year terms.

**Election • page 2**

## Bringing joy to the world, one scoop at a time

by Heidi L. Everett  
[news@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:news@thenewsleaders.com)

What's your favorite ice cream?

That's often one of the first questions David Boyer asks people he meets. Boyer is owner of Jupiter Moon Ice Cream, a new small business in downtown St. Joseph that specializes in hand-crafted, small-batch ice cream.

Boyer asks because he appreciates how people light up when they think of their favorite flavor.

"A smile happens," Boyer said, "because ice cream is joyful."

That's why Boyer turned his ice-cream-making hobby into a

business.

Boyer started distributing Jupiter Moon Ice Cream in 2019 through home delivery service, local establishments and a whimsical bicycle at events. On Oct. 19, 2020, the physical ice cream shop opened.

"We wanted to create a sense of space that is blissful and joyful, a place you want to go and be and hang out," Boyer said.

On Nov. 1, Claire Lentsch, Farmington, was one of the people hanging out at Jupiter Moon and enjoying ice cream on an afternoon with friends she was visiting from Sartell. "We saw something on social media and thought this place looked awesome," Lentsch

**Scoop • page 5**



photo by Heidi L. Everett

**Friends enjoy Jupiter Moon Ice Cream Nov. 1. They are (left to right) Claire Lentsch, of Farmington; Mady Bertsch, 15, and Adam Bertsch, 12, both of Sartell.**





Demuth

Howe

# Election

from front page

Voters re-elected by wide margins two Republicans to the Minnesota Senate and House.

In Senate District 13, Republican Jeff Howe won a second term with 32,623, or 69 percent, of the votes over DFL challenger Michael Willemsen, who finished with 14,326 votes. District 13 wraps around the city of St. Cloud and covers most of eastern Stearns County from Sartell to Paynesville to Lynden Township and Sauk Rapids in Benton County.

Lisa Demuth won a second term in the house with 16,056 votes, or 71 percent, over DFL challenger Katy Westlund, who finished with 6,610 votes. House District 13A runs from St. Joseph west to Paynesville and south to Kimball and Lynden Township.

State senators serve four-year terms and representatives serve two-year terms.

In an uncontested race in Stearns County Commissioner District 2, Joe Perske was re-elected with 98 percent of the votes.

In the presidential race, St. Joseph voters preferred Donald Trump by a 52 percent to 48 percent margin. Trump received 1,724 votes compared with 1,602 for Joe Biden.

Vote totals are unofficial tallies from the Minnesota Secretary of State.



Atkins

**Annette Atkins**, professor emerita at College of St. Benedict and St. John's University, was named a historian laureate by the Stearns County Board of Commissioners at its Nov. 3 meeting. The honor recognizes her professionalism, zest for history, and more than 30 years of service promoting the rich history of Stearns County and Central Minnesota.

A historian laureate promotes the history of a region and its citizens by documenting, researching, interpreting, and speaking about the people, places and events that have created the fabric of an area.

Atkins' advocacy for local history is unparalleled. She supports the representation of all people through programs, exhibits and research at the Museum and throughout the community. She most recently led "Missing Pieces," a walking tour of St. Cloud, which explored the influence of race on the city and the state of Minnesota.

She's also authored several articles and books, including "Creating Minnesota: A History from the Inside Out, an innovative

state history, and Challenging Women Since 1913," a history of the College of St. Benedict and women's higher education.

Atkins' professional goal is to create a sense of connection between contemporary individuals and their history. Atkins has been on the Stearns History Museum's board of directors for more than 14 years and also served as its interim director for one year.

Legionnaire **Othmar Schmitz**, a veteran of the Korean War, was presented a certificate for 70 consecutive years of active service in Legion Post 328, St Joseph, issued by the National Legion commander James Oxford. The certificate was awarded at the regular Post meeting on Oct. 27 by Post Commander Chuck Kern.

St. Joseph resident **Jenny Jacobs** of Weichert Realtors-Tower Properties in Waite Park recently earned the Graduate REALTOR® Institute (GRI) designation, as she joined some of the nation's top REALTORS® in the industry who hold the highly-acclaimed designation. The institute is designed to educate practitioners about local, state and national real estate practices.

To earn her GRI designation, Jacobs attended a series of intensive classroom instruction that covered a wide range of subjects, including professional standards, legal issues, sales, marketing, finance, risk reduction, technology and social media.

**Charity Hunter and Frances Nelson** of the St. Joseph Women of Today were both honored with a Presidential Pin at the Minnesota Women of Today Fall State Convention held recently in Baxter. The Presidential Pin is designed to recognize a member's commitment to her local chapter. It exemplifies dedication and belief in the Women of Today



contributed photo

**Legionnaire Othmar Schmitz (left), a Korean War veteran, was recongized for 70 consecutive years of active service in Legion Post 328, St Joseph, The certificate was awarded at the regular Post meeting Oct. 27 by Post Commander Chuck Kern.**

creed that emphasizes service to the community, personal growth, and friendship. State President Illeana Miller personally selected Hunter and Nelson for this award.

Hunter is currently serving as secretary, and Nelson is the membership vice president for the chapter this year. The St. Joseph chapter of the Minnesota Women of Today is a community service and leadership training organization.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Minnesota recognized **Geri Bechtold**, of St. Joseph, for 30 years of service to youth at the organization. The organization noted, "Geri truly is the heart and soul of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Minnesota. She has been with the organization since she started as a volunteer more than 30 years ago. She had planned on going into education, but the Boys & Girls Club grabbed a hold of her heart and never let go."

Bechtold is committed to providing quality programs and services to youth who may not have access to these opportunities without the support of the Boys & Girls Club.

She became the program manager of Boys & Girls Club's Kennedy KIDSTOP program for K-6th graders in the 1990s. Then, she developed a strong Junior Volunteer program to give teens leadership opportunities. Bechtold also launched the St. Joseph Community Evening Outreach Program.

Bechtold was asked to oversee all Boys & Girls Club's K-6 school-based KIDSTOP sites. Although it was hard for her to leave her home site of Kennedy and the many kids she loved, she knew she could make an impact on thousands of youth across the St. Cloud metro area by sharing her best practices with other program managers, training and mentoring other youth development professionals and strengthening relationships with schools.

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# ‘New’ council to include incumbent, newcomer

by **Dennis Dalman**  
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The “new” St. Joseph City Council will have two recently elected members starting next year – a long-term incumbent and a newcomer.

Incumbent Bob Loso and newcomer Kelly Beniek won the election over four other candidates for the two seats on the council. Those contenders were incumbent Troy Goracke, Carmie Mick, Paul Orvis and Mike Osterman.

**Beniek**

Kelly Beniek, retired, is a wife, mother of three children and grandmother of two.

“Not to lie, I must say I was a little shocked when I learned that I won,” Beniek said. “But shocked in a good way. I didn’t think I’d win because I’m not a political person. Just a people person.”

Beniek said her first order of business will be to become comfortable – getting to know fellow council members and the mayor. She has already

scheduled a meeting with the mayor, so she can start learning more about what it takes to be a good council member.

She also plans to start learning more about the city issues the council deals with all year long. Then she intends to brush up on city policies, guidelines and the parliamentary procedure used at council meetings.

“I’m nervous,” she said, “but that’s OK. I’d be concerned if I wasn’t nervous.”

**Loso**

“It feels good to win again,” Loso said. “Especially since I didn’t campaign.”

Re-elected many times to the council, Loso, a retired instrumentation technician, has more than 35 years of experience with city-related service.

Loso said his number-one priority is to revisit the topic of a proposed community-center now that the state legislature has granted St. Joseph \$4 million to build one. Loso is not in favor of a center. About five

years ago, a community center plan had a price tag on it of \$12 million, Loso said. Many people have no idea that the cost of a community center would be far more than just building one. Other costs, ongoing ones, would include staffing, maintenance, operational expenses and other related costs, he said.

“I want to see an accurate number,” he said. “I’m a numbers man. And I always say, ‘Be careful what you wish for because you just might get it.’”

## Families

**from front page**

they are fed,” she said.

With Isaac moving to distance learning, the days are going to get complicated.

“That’s a whole different story,” Zabinski said. “Even though Charlie is 13, he can’t babysit. He needs to be in class.”

On election day, classes weren’t in session, so Zabinski got a test run of what it would be like to have all three boys at home.

“I went to work in the morning and had two phone calls by 7:30 a.m.,” she said.

a Google Meet all day – is antsy and needs to move around. Caleb is shy and reserved, so he’s loving distance learning, but he needs socialization.”

Then there’s Isaac. “He hates it,” Zabinski said. “He likes going to school and is a much better person when he goes there.”

“Isaac is active. He makes a lot of noise,” she said. “I don’t get much work done when he’s around, but I don’t want to stick him on a device all day to keep him busy.”

Isaac also doesn’t listen to his mother as well as he listens to his teachers regarding assignments, she said. Because of this, Zabinski said she worries about his grades.

ing 12-hour days, five days a week. “He’s usually pretty tired,” she said.

On top of that, they are expecting their third child in early 2021.

DeWenter’s job responsibilities don’t permit her to work from home. “My husband is the money maker, so it makes sense for me to have to stay home,” she said. “My hours will be drastically cut back at work to be home with the kids.”

She’s worried this reduction in hours will hurt their plans for maternity leave.

were in person.

“The schools are really doing their best,” DeWenter said. “I truly believe they are doing the best they can.”

“I know it’s putting a big strain on the teachers also,” Zabinski said.

The school district will continue to provide free meals to all students via neighborhood drop locations. This practice was started in September 2020 with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s extension of the Summer Food Service Program.

**District 742 moves all grades online**

With COVID-19 cases on the rise, St. Cloud Area School District announced it will move to distance learning Nov. 30 for pre-school and elementary students.

According to its COVID-19 dashboard, the district had 26 active COVID cases among students and staff Nov. 5. In addition, 424 students and staff were in quarantine for exposure, symptoms or positive test results.

Zabinski works for the Veterans Administration in medical records. The VA has been flexible, allowing some employees to telework if it aligns with job function or to work split shifts in the mornings and evenings to be home more during the day.

Zabinski’s husband, Lee, works for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and farms part time. While he can be home occasionally, he is in the field, literally, for work.

She’s concerned about all of the boys’ personal growth too.

“It’s a lot of together time. We are all here,” she said. “They don’t have their own life right now – their friends, their people. When they went to school, they were their own person. They are missing out on that.”

If that weren’t enough, Stella has dyslexia. “The teachers are rock stars, but online learning for elementary kids is tough, especially with learning disabilities,” DeWenter said. Her daughter’s tutoring services and schooling will both be distance.

“I’m taking it day by day. You just have to laugh sometimes,” DeWenter said. “I’m a little nervous about how it’s going to change with all of us being home. I’m only one person.”

To let kids be kids in a social environment, a virtual pet show was held online for middle school students recently, facilitated by a school counselor. Kids logged in to a private event on Google Meets, shared their pets with attendees, talked about the quirks of their pets, and explained what was needed to care for the pets.

“Kids are so resilient,” said Anna Wilhite, principal at Kennedy Community School. “I’m so impressed.”

At the start of the school year, all students were in a hybrid learning model, which provides a combination of in-person and distance learning. Students attend school in-person two days weekly and three days online. Students were assigned Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday to allow for reduced capacity and social distancing on busses and in the schools. Grades six through 12 started distance learning in mid-October.

**To each his own**

Zabinski knows her three boys are each unique and respond to distance learning differently.

“No kids are the same,” she said. “Charlie – after sitting in

**What works for some doesn’t work for others**

In another household, Malorie DeWenter says she shares many of Zabinski’s concerns and a host of others.

DeWenter’s children are Hudson, a first-grader at Kennedy, and Stella, a second-grader. DeWenter works at a credit union. Her husband delivers fuel, work-

**School district trying to ease burden**

Zabinski and DeWenter both acknowledge that District 742 has made distance learning much more engaging since schools first went online in March. Students have live learning online all day and have a schedule that mirrors what they would have if they

Following the Nov. 4 Board of Education meeting, the transition schedule was announced:

Nov. 23-25: No school for preschool and elementary students as staff prepare for distance learning.

Nov. 30: All students begin distance learning.

The intent is for preschool and elementary students to return to the hybrid learning model after winter break Jan. 4.



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# Sister Mara helped shape book on Sinclair Lewis

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

A new book about famed Sauk Centre-born author Sinclair Lewis was published just in time for the centenary celebration of his 1920 blockbuster novel, “Main Street.”

The book, “Becoming Sinclair Lewis,” was written mostly by Sauk Centre resident David Allen Simpkins, but his sudden death two years ago put a halt to the project. At that point, friends and fellow Lewis aficionados came to the rescue, pulling together to finish the book. One of them was Sister Mara Faulkner, of St. Joseph, a member of the Order of St. Benedict.

Faulkner is a retired professor of English and literature at the College of St Benedict and St. John’s University. She

is also a published poet, academic writer and author of a memoir titled “Going Blind,” which was a finalist for the 2010 Minnesota Book Award. Currently, Faulkner teaches writing workshops at the Spirituality Center’s Studium at St. Benedict’s Monastery, where she lives.

One day years ago, Faulkner received a call about whether she would be willing to do some work as a writing mentor for a Sauk Centre writer struggling with a book about Sinclair Lewis. She agreed and soon met Simpkins. Then, usually once a month over the course of several years, they would meet, sometimes up to three hours, at the Spirituality Center where they would ponder the sprawling notes and partially written manuscript of the Lewis book.

“We had great conversations,” Faulkner said. “Dave was a stickler for facts. I loved that about him. He was one of the best researchers I ever met in my life. He would travel, dig through archives, interview people.”

More than 10 years ago, Simpkins, a long-time Lewis scholar and artifact collector, had been given a photocopy of a boyhood diary written by Lewis in the early years of the 20th Century. The journal was given to him by a Lewis biographer, Richard Lingeman. That diary sparked Simpkins’ passion to write a book about how, in the words of Lingeman, a “skinny, voluble, dreamy, acne-complexioned, paprika-haired, Yale-educated country doctor’s son named Harry Lewis from Sauk Centre, Minnesota, became the world-class American author Sinclair Lewis?”

The diary entries piqued Simpkins’ interest at every turn, practically nagging at his brain, causing him to travel far and wide to do research and seek out, like a detective, every trace of Lewis’s early life. It was a race with time because Simpkins, as a long-time journalist and publisher of the “Sauk Centre Herald” newspaper, was a very busy man.

At the mentoring meetings with Faulkner, Simpkins would bring his laptop and out of it would tumble scads of Simpkins’ latest treasures – detailed results of his wide-ranging research.

But, in a way, that was the trouble. Simpkins was taken by so many details, even the most trivial, that he was trying to cram all of it – every little iota – into his ever-growing book.

It became Faulkner’s duty as a writing mentor many times to tell Simpkins’ “Whoa!” in order to keep non-essential minutiae out of the book, so readers would be able to follow the narrative trail.

“He wanted to cram all that stuff into the book, and I would tell him often that he’d have to ‘kill his little darlings,’” Faulkner said. “I helped him find a central direction for the book and for each chapter. To do that, he had to pare out big chunks that he just loved.”

At the time, Faulkner was not all that aware of Lewis’s life and works, although she’d read “Main Street” many years before. That lack of Lewis awareness actually worked to the benefit of the book because Faulkner could relate to the difficulties of following the strands of the book by “average” readers unfamiliar with every nook and cranny of the famed author’s life.

“I told Dave he would have to make his book clear to me as it would be for others,” she said. “I was a Lewis outsider, an outside reader.”

As a result, Faulkner now thinks she helped make the book clearer, more focused.

“It was hard work, but I liked it,” she said, adding that the work sessions were often so much fun because of Simpkins’ almost giddy excitement about anything to do with Lewis and small-town life.

During her work and friendship with Simpkins, Faulkner learned so much about the author Sinclair Lewis.

“As a person, I have lots of arguments about the man,” she said. “He was a bad husband and father. A man without a home. But I began to see

the relevance of his books.”

Lewis’ irony, often pointed and comical, is “wonderful,” she added.

“I think my favorite part of the book is how he headed off to Yale and tried to fit in, joining all the clubs,” Faulkner said. “He was a young man from a small Minnesota town, and he just didn’t fit in at Yale. He was rejected. But he wasn’t willing to conform to the others (students of the wealthy), even though he was very lonely at Yale. He did make some lifelong friends with teachers there, but his Yale experiences caused him to turn to the people he knew best, like the farmers he would visit in Sauk Centre with his doctor dad. At Yale, he began to realize what his real (writing) subjects would become.”

Like so many people, Faulkner was deeply saddened when she heard Simpkins had collapsed suddenly and died at age 70 while paying a visit to his boyhood farm near Vining. Later, Faulkner was happy to hear long-time Simpkins’ friend Jim Umhoefer, also of Sauk Centre, was determined to find a way to finish Simpkins’ project. Umhoefer, a freelance travel/outdoor writer and photographer, contacted many Lewis enthusiasts who knew and admired Simpkins. One of them is Sally E. Parry, English professor at Illinois State University, academic author and editor of the “Sinclair Lewis Society Newsletter,” which has subscribers throughout the world.

Umhoefer wrote the missing first chapter of the book. Parry did extensive double-checking of all sources and facts in the manuscript and wrote the final missing chapter.

## Simpkins’ book

“Becoming Sinclair Lewis” is a vivid account of small-town Sauk Centre at the turn of the 20th Century and of a boy who lived there and then went on to become one of the most celebrated novelists of all time.

Lewis was born in 1885, the youngest of three sons of E.J. and Emma Lewis. His mother died when he was 6, and his father later married a woman named Isabel Warner, whom Sinclair came to love and ad-

mire.

As a boy, Harry “Red” Sinclair Lewis was a tall, gangly, awkward outsider, though he did have several good friends. He was extremely intelligent, a quick learner, a keen and shrewd observer, infinitely curious with boundless physical energy and a voracious reader. Simpkins’ text and his use of quotes from the boyhood journal bring the young Lewis alive on the page. When he was in his teens, Lewis was for a brief time an untrained reporter for the “Sauk Centre Herald,” many decades before Simpkins took ownership of it.

“Becoming Sinclair Lewis” describes Lewis the boy becoming Lewis the man: a string of major novels through the 1920s, honoree of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1930, two marriages, alcoholism, restless wanderlust and inability to settle down, the death of a son in World War II, and Lewis’ death in Rome in 1951, at age 65. He was cremated and buried in Sauk Centre’s Greenwood Cemetery.

The latter chapters in the book recount the man’s first book-writing efforts, the publication of a few early books and then one of the publishing sensations of the century – “Main Street.” Published in autumn 1920, the novel sold two million copies in three years. It was even a hit in countries so far from small-town Gopher Prairie, Minnesota. Readers everywhere identified with the book’s themes: stultifying provincialism, resistance to change, self-righteous piety, suspicion or fear of outside influences, hypocrisies, pressures of conformity and the suppression of women as full-value human beings.

## Main Street

Lewis’ first great success, “Main Street,” is a novel about Carol Milford, a highly educated librarian, who marries medical doctor Will Kennicott and moves from St. Paul to his small Minnesota town of Gopher Prairie (based on Sauk Centre).

She is struck by the town’s ramshackle shabbiness and what she believes are the drab, limited, unfulfilled lives of many of its residents. With the

Book • page 9

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contributed photo

Before opening the ice cream shop in St. Joseph, Jupiter Moon Ice Cream was “pedaled” at local events.

# Scoop

from front page

said, “so we had to check it out. We’re future ice cream connoisseurs.”

## Here’s the scoop

While Jupiter Moon offers traditional ice cream flavors, the playful names of novelty flavors will bring joy even before the first bite, like the flavor Purple Reign.

Then there’s Dark Side of the Moon. This delight features four different variations of chocolate in every scoop.

Saturday Morning Cartoon? “It’s an ode to childhood,” Boyer said. This flavor features cereal marshmallows and French vanilla. Boyer likens the flavor to the milk left in a bowl after the cereal is gone.

Jupiter Moon also offers vegan ice cream that is made with coconut milk and includes coconut as part of the flavor profile. Vegan flavors include Pina Colada, Key Lime Coconut, Choco Coconut and Spicy Mango Coconut.

What is Boyer’s favorite ice cream?

“I often crave Lemon Poppy Seed because it’s subtle and refreshing,” he said.



photo by Heidi L. Everett

Scooper Anna Nation perfects a photo bomb Nov. 1 as David Boyer, owner of Jupiter Moon Ice Cream in downtown St. Joseph, looks on.

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- Representative Lisa Demuth





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# Watching Your Back

**E**ver feel like you're the only one looking out for your money? Well, before you decide to bury your savings in the yard or hide it under your pillows, consider the network of bureaus and organizations fighting for your financial freedom on a daily basis.

These agencies were built in an effort to uncover fraud, enforce stringent regulations and protect you, the consumer.

Reach out to any of the following organizations for more information and tips on financial security. Their websites offer free resources and links to like-minded organizations – all designed to help keep your assets safe.

## CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

This relatively new organization was founded in 2011 as a gatekeeper of consumer protection regarding financial products and services in the United States.

It was designed and implemented in response to the passing of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

Its jurisdiction spans banks, credit unions, foreclosure-relief services and other financial companies. Find out more about its services and learn how to get assistance at [ConsumerFinance.gov](http://ConsumerFinance.gov).

## FTC BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

Similarly named, this Federal Trade Commission agency is focused on preventing fraud, deception and unfair business practices. Its three-pronged approach, according to its website, [FTC.gov/bcp](http://FTC.gov/bcp) includes:

- Enhancing consumer confidence by enforcing federal protection laws
- Empowering consumers with free information
- Capturing feedback and insights from consumers

## LOCAL AGENCIES

There is likely a consumer protection agency or two right in your own backyard. Track them down online or in the yellow pages to learn more about their services.

Using local organizations to file complaints on deceptive business practices can sometimes be the most effective way to stop them.

Local groups, like the aforementioned federal ones, will also have tips on preventing identity theft, understanding credit, filing official consumer complaints and more.



© FOTOLIA / AP

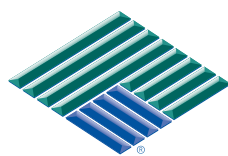
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SMALL BUSINESS APPRECIATION | DO YOUR PART

# Benefits of Shopping Local

There are far-reaching benefits to supporting local businesses in your community.

Not only do local small businesses increase the value of your shopping experience by providing unique goods and services, but your patronage makes a valuable contribution to supporting your local economy. Here are some other benefits of supporting local businesses.

SUPPORT

By frequently shopping at or using services provided by locally owned small businesses, the money you spend stays in your community. Local sales taxes from these businesses go to support important community services such as police and fire protection, education, parks and recreation, and other services and publicly funded initiatives. According to studies, as much as two-thirds of every dollar you spend will wind up reinvested in your community.

JOBS

This is simple: Small businesses make up the majority of employment in the United States and also account for the bulk of new jobs. Supporting local small business means you support local job creation.

EXPERIENCE

Nothing beats in-person



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that bring those with like interests together.

PRODUCTS

Small businesses are known for providing a variety of special or unique products and services not found anywhere else. From gift shops to hair salons, clothing boutiques to diners, you'll escape the norm of mass-produced goods found at big stores and often impersonal service from chain outlets. Local small businesses take pride in providing products with an exceptional level of quality.

ENVIRONMENT

If you have concerns about the environment and your carbon footprint, shopping at local small businesses in your neighborhood can mean lessening the impact. You'll drive less, maybe even walk or take public transportation, which will in turn bring down noise and pollution by decreasing traffic.

INSPIRATION

Every small business owner got into business to bring a dream to life. They spend extraordinary amounts of time and effort into making that business a success, which translates into the often superior customer experience you'll encounter when you walk through the door. By supporting local small businesses, you're supporting someone's dream. Perhaps it might prove so inspiring you'll be moved to open your own business.

shopping, and local small businesses are renowned for offering special value to customers by providing unique experiences, personal service and treatment you can't find online. Increasingly, many small, locally owned small businesses are now finding a home in malls as chain stores

COMMUNITY

move out. And you're just as likely to find a local business adjacent to any big box retailer. From the coffee shop you frequent to the yard maintenance firm you use to the local restaurant you dine at, spend-

ing at small businesses in your area creates a sense of community. These relationships form bonds between a business and its customers that form character and encourage community involvement. Gathering spots such as pubs, record, book and art supply stores often act as event hubs



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contributed photos

No injuries were reported in the grass fire that started from the burning of a residential brush pile between County Road 2 and Jenny Lane in St. Wendel Township.



For five hours Nov. 6, local fire departments battled a grass fire in St. Wendel Township. The St. Joseph Fire Department, Stearns County Sheriff's Office, Avon Fire Department, Sartell Fire Department, St. Stephen Fire Department and the Minnesota DNR all responded.

# Local fire teams battle grass fire

by Heidi L. Everett  
news@thenewsleaders.com

Shortly after noon Nov. 6, the St. Joseph Fire Department was called to a grass fire in St. Wendel Township between County Road 2 and Jenny Lane. The Stearns County Sheriff's Office, Avon Fire Department, Sartell Fire Department, St. Stephen Fire Department and the Minnesota DNR also responded.

According to reports, Brent Simon, St. Joseph, had burned some brush on the evening of Nov. 5. He put the fire out at approximately 10:30 p.m. The following morning, Simon checked the fire remnants and noticed a little smoke coming from the brush pile. He put additional water on the pile and left for work. Around noon, the brush pile had started the wetland area on fire.



Helicopters were used to access and put out the fire Nov. 6.

Fire crews spent approximately five hours at the scene. No injuries were reported. In terms of personal property, two deer stands were destroyed in the blaze.

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photos by Carolyn Bertsch

Cozy blankets for cancer center

(At left) Linda Ritzenthaler of St. Cloud adds a newly finished tie-blanket to a stack Nov. 9. The St. Joseph Women of Today made more than a dozen blankets that evening. (Top right) Charity Hunter, St. Joseph, and her daughter Lexi, 9, create a tie-blanket out of pink fleece Nov. 9. The mother-daughter team joined 11 other Women of Today members to make blankets for the CentraCare Coborn Cancer Center. (Bottom right) Dorothy Eckland (left), St. Cloud, and Connie Roberts, St. Joseph, tie the corners of a fleece blanket together at the St. Joseph Community Fire Hall.



Book

from page 4

zeal of a crusader, Carol tries to introduce lifestyle changes, cultural influences, art, intellectual stimulations, new ways of thinking and living from the wider, modern world. But, with few exceptions, the townspeople regard her as a meddling busy-body with highfalutin’ notions, rejecting her efforts and scoffing behind her back. She would be better and happier, they think, if she would just have babies and then settle down as a good, contented wife like the others. Some of Carol’s “notions” are, in fact, a bit silly, pretentious and/or impractical, as Lewis slyly lets the reader know. Some of her ideas for change are trendy, based on a kind of chic-bohemianism popular during that time. Finally dejected, exhausted, feeling defeated, Carol moves to Washington, D.C. to do administrative work for a year

during World War I. Eventually, she has a change of heart and moves back to her husband, daughter and life in Gopher Prairie. Toward the end of the novel, Carol muses: “I may not have fought the good fight, but I have kept the faith.” After “Main Street,” Lewis wrote many more novels, most of them in a vein of acidic social satire. Among the most notable: “Babbitt” (1922, pursuit of materialism, middle-class conformity, good ol’ boy boosterism); “Arrowsmith” (1925, modern medicine and pioneering doctor battling a Caribbean virus plague); “Elmer Gantry” (1927, scathing depiction of a womanizing, huckstering circuit preacher), “Dodsworth” (portrait of a marriage on the rocks), “It Can’t Happen Here” (1935, dystopian nightmare of how fascism takes root in America); and “Kingsblood Royal” (1937, the social panic and commotion when a white man discovers he has some black blood in his veins).

School board winners react to win

by Dennis Dalman  
news@thenewsleaders.com

Candidates elected to the St. Cloud School Board are all happy they won and upbeat about serving on the board starting in 2021. The winners include two St. Joseph residents – Scott Andreasen and re-elected incumbent Al Dahlgren. Two other incumbents, Shannon Haws and Monica Segura-Schwartz, were selected by voters from a slate of seven candidates. Andreasen Scott Andreasen said he has taken an active interest in the St. Cloud School Board for many years. He lost a bid for election to the board four years ago and will now get the chance to serve. Previously, he has served on several school-related committees such as the Finance Board. “We bought Tech and Quarryview schools on time and

under budget,” he said. “We bought the district out of bankruptcy at a great price. I look forward to serving on the board and doing my best for the St. Cloud Area School District.” Dahlgren “I am very proud and happy to be elected for another term on the school board,” Dahlgren said. “It means a lot when the community reaffirms trust in my representation through re-election.” Dahlgren will focus on helping navigate the district through the pandemic and getting kids back into the classrooms where the “most effective learning and teaching take place.” Improving the school district’s image is important, he said, because the district is demographically challenged with much higher numbers of students in English language courses, special education, the area learning center and even some families experiencing

homelessness. Those students, he said, generally don’t score as high as they could in testing. “But if you compare demographically similar groups from district to district, St. Cloud 742 scores very well,” he added. He also wants to improve the look and feel of all school properties as part of image-improvement. Dahlgren said Apollo High School needs upgrades with flexible designs and learning equipment to fit with new teaching-learning models. That would include classroom laboratories. The state legislature, he said, must start ending budget shortfalls for special-education programs and English language courses. The state, he said, must fully fund programs it mandates. “We should not have to take from general-education funding to cover that shortfall,” Dahlgren said. “It puts us at a disadvantage.”

Winners • page 11



# Opinion

Our View

Mask up.  
Shop now.

In the midst of a recession in 2010, American Express created Small Business Saturday® on the Saturday after Thanksgiving to encourage people to bring more holiday shopping to small businesses. A year later, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution in support of the day.

Here we are again, just days away from the holiday triumvirate that has so often been a savior or a boon to the business bottom line: Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday.

And, here we are again: we're hurting.

Measures to slow the spread of COVID-19, while absolutely necessary, have been projected to spur the worst economic contraction and unemployment since the Great Depression and the last crisis. Small businesses are feeling it.

According to the Brookings Institution, small business revenue is down 20 percent since January, with severe hits to leisure and hospitality, education, health services, retail and transportation. Many of these sectors have employees who cannot work remotely or businesses that are not deemed essential to be open. Moreover, small businesses saw significant declines in employment, exacerbating local economies. A recent report by Yelp shows nearly 100,000 businesses that were temporarily closed during the pandemic have permanently shut down.

This year, Small Business Saturday is Nov. 28. If you are in need of trade services, reach out to our local small businesses for an estimate. Order and pick up food or a beverage from a local establishment. Buy flowers to brighten someone's day. Seek out arts and crafts for unique holiday gifts. Put a mask on and visit a local store.

For every dollar spent at a small business, approximately 67 cents stays local based on data reported in the 2018 Small Business Economic Impact Study.

Shop small. Shop safe.

We're in this together. We'll get out of it together.

**Letters policy**

Letters to the editor may be sent to news@thenewsleaders.com or mailed to 1622 11th Ave. SE., St. Cloud, MN 56304. Deadline is noon Monday. Please include your full name for publication (and address and phone number for verification only.) During election campaigns, letters will be chosen to present a variety of opinions. Letters that do not run in print will appear on our website, www.thenewsleaders.com. Letters must be 350 words or less. We reserve the right to edit for space.

## One of us? Fearmongering not MN nice

Stoking fear of others was rampant in Minnesota's Congressional campaigns this year.

On Sept. 11, 2020, then-candidate Michelle Fischbach launched her campaign's latest 30-second commercial to promote her bid for Minnesota's 7th Congressional District.

The storyboard

The commercial opens with images of the World Trade Center Towers burning on 9/11. This is immediately followed by video footage of Minnesota Congresswoman Ilhan Omar out of context in which it appears she is flipantly referring to the terrorist attacks that forever changed our country. The remaining commercial includes unflattering images of Omar and misleading information about Omar attacking the police and wanting to release murderers and rapists from prison.

What's interesting about this commercial, first and foremost, is that Fischbach wasn't even running against Omar. She was running against Congressman Collin Peterson, who'd been serving the 7th Congressional District since 1991. Oddly, Omar is referenced and shown more than Peterson in this commercial. When Peterson is mentioned, it is simply to say that he supports or votes with Omar.

Heidi L. Everett  
*Editor*

In the final seconds of the commercial, the voice over says, "Michelle Fischbach will oppose Omar's agenda." The closing line is, "She's one of us."

One of us?

This fearmongering about a non-white, non-Christian Minnesotan certainly was not unique this election cycle. Jason Lewis and Tyler Kistner (who both failed in their attempts to unseat incumbent U.S. Sen. Tina Smith and U.S. Congresswoman Angie Craig) linked Omar's name and image to civil unrest and chaos in their campaign commercials.

Fischbach's disdain for Omar, however, was the most egregious and unacceptable.

For her campaign, Fischbach had plenty of party ideology to resonate with voters on gun ownership, women's reproductive health and the role of government. Sadly, she chose to hitch her caboose to one of the ugliest cars on the Trump Train. Even as



Trump was wrapping up his final 2020 campaign stops in Michigan the night before the election, he was attacking Omar, as he had done throughout his presidency.

We should demand higher expectations of human decency in our elected officials, and of ourselves. One of us?

Unfortunately, our neighbors on the Northwest side of Minnesota chose Fischbach to represent them in Washington, D.C.

Fortunately, the Pew Research Center reports 22 percent of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate are racial or ethnic minorities. In fact, each of the previous four Congresses before the 116th Congress broke the record set by the Congress before it for diversity. Moreover, the freshman class of 2021 will include the first gay black members of Congress.

Perhaps this is Fischbach's opportunity to meet and work alongside people who look different than her, embrace a different faith than her and love different than her. Perhaps this is Fischbach's opportunity to learn we can find common ground in our shared narrative as human beings living in this time.

Maybe, just maybe, Fischbach will then understand what it means to be "one of us:" Americans.

## He was an atheist; oh yes, he really was

The grave-tender assured me the buried writer really was an atheist.

It was a summer day about 30 years ago when I drove to Sauk Centre's Greenwood Cemetery to see the grave of novelist Sinclair Lewis.

Wandering in the cemetery row to row, I had no idea where to find the grave. Then, out of nowhere appeared an older man, a kind of skinflint geezer who might have been a groundskeeper. Yes, he was.

"Would you happen to know where Sinclair Lewis' grave is?" I asked.

He bristled, his mouth pinched into a sour frown, eyes squinting.

"He was an atheist," he said in a wheezy voice.

"No!," I exclaimed in mock shock. "You're kidding! An atheist? Awful. Are you sure?"

He seemed relieved by my response, as if I'd passed a graveyard test.

"Yes, you bet I'm sure," he said. "An atheist. He was an atheist. What d'ya wanna see his grave for?"

"Because he was a great writer," I said.

"Well, OK, follow me."

About 50 feet down a path, he stopped and pointed, saying, "There, it's over there."

Then he kind of skittered away like a two-legged spider, casting a nervous glance over his shoulder at me, as if lightning was about to strike from the blue summer sky and so he wanted to get out of the way – like quick.

I waved a thank you.

"Oh, my God," I thought to myself,

Dennis Dalman  
*Reporter*

grinning, happy. "Perfect. He's like a character right out of a Lewis novel."

I looked down at the small, gray-granite burial plaque: "Sinclair Lewis, 1885-1951. Author of Main Street"

At the grave side, memories surfaced:

His ashes were buried in that plot on my third birthday, Jan. 28, 1951 after he died at age 65 in Rome and was cremated. Many years later, I read old news clippings about it. It was a viciously cold day. One of the graveside speakers was Chuck Rathe, a Lewis friend, who lived just four houses up Fifth Avenue from my south St. Cloud boyhood home. Chuck's bright, vivacious daughter, Jane, was in some of my high-school classes.

Lewis' brother, Dr. Claude Lewis, lived in a house across from Barden Park just one block northeast of my childhood home. (I didn't know that until the mid-1960s).

One afternoon when I was a young teen, wonderful neighbor lady Alma Fahnhorst, who had grown up in the Melrose-Albany area, told me about a world-famous writer from Sauk Centre. I was so surprised. What?! A famous writer from this boring place? I was instantly curious.

Growing up not far from Sauk Centre, Alma had heard scuttlebutt stories



about how that author had written a novel called "Main Street." It was based on people he knew in Sauk Centre. Alma said the people in his hometown were ready to "tar and feather" him because they recognized themselves in the unlikable characters in the famous book. Lewis, she told me, was an atheist.

Days later, I checked out "Main Street" from the public library. I read it, liked it a lot. Throughout the years, I read most of his other novels – masterpieces of scalpel insights and comical social satire: Babbitt, Arrowsmith, Elmer Gantry, Dodsworth, Kingsblood Royal, and more.

What still amuses me is that people in so many small towns back in the 1920s insisted, with furious indignation, that Lewis had slandered them by presenting them as the characters in "Main Street." It just goes to show how universal, how relevant, how close-to-the bone that novel was and is in depicting narrow-minded snooty provincialism, then and now. People identified. Lewis defied Americans to confront our smug, arrogant, blind excesses. To this day, his five-alarm challenge is more urgent than ever.

"Main Street," that landmark novel, is now 100 years old. It still speaks to us.

Is Sinclair Lewis' atheist soul now in Hell? Or is it languishing in Purgatory, awaiting God's judgment? It's nice to think some good rebel angel sneaked him past the Pearly Gates right up into highest Heaven.

GOT AN  
OPINION?

The Newsleaders

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Please include your full name for publication (and address and phone number for verification only).



# Winners

from page 9

advantage in general-education funding.”

## Haws

“I am honored and look forward to serving another term,” Haws said.

Currently, Haws is focused on keeping staff and students safe while supporting families through the constant series of changes caused by COVID-19.

“The (school) district is currently challenged with staffing shortages and teachers pulled in multiple directions,” she said. “I am committed to listening to families and staff and challenging the administration to deliver the best possible education in these diffi-

cult times.”

Another of Haws’ priorities is to monitor closely finances in this year of non-traditional operations.

“I am dedicated to transparency and delivering a rigorous, equitable and engaging education for all students. As part of the governing board, I will encourage the administration to continue examining surveys from students, staff and families. We need to listen to

those voices who know first-hand our strengths and weaknesses.”

## Segura-Schwartz

“I just want to thank our district community for giving me the chance to serve in this role,” said Monica Segura-Schwartz, who was re-elected. “In terms of priorities, I will say getting over the pandemic, helping families and students to understand ex-

pectations and figure out what is our next step in this new learning system. Also, I want to continue my support for mental-health wellness for students and staff, which is very important right now, but also beyond Covid-19.”

Segura-Schwartz, a strong supporter of the arts, wants to keep promoting arts education and determining how arts fit within changing priorities and work.

## Cultural Connection:

# College scholarship applications open soon

By Tara Durheim

Amid the pandemic and the unique challenges it has presented to our area high school seniors, their teachers and their loved ones this year, planning for life after graduation is likely a daunting task. With the fluctuations between in-person, hybrid and remote learning models, it can be hard to think about what possibilities lie ahead.

However, if you or a high school senior you know is

thinking about pursuing a 2-year or 4-year college degree, now is the time to apply for scholarships that can help cover some of the costs that come with it.

Community Giving, an organization based in St. Cloud that connects partner foundations to local needs, has more than 100 scholarships available, and all area students are welcome to apply.

Among the vast list of options available to students on the Community Giving web-

site, there are scholarships specifically for students at each area high school (including St. Cloud Apollo), first generation college students (like many of our Somali neighbors) and more.

The criteria for each scholarship is unique so it’s important applicants review the information carefully before submitting the necessary application materials. Some scholarships listed on the website require students to go to their school guidance counselor for more informa-

tion, while some list the full requirements online.

According to the Community Giving website, online applications open on Dec. 1, but the application deadlines vary.

## New to the scholarship application process?

Here is a list of application materials students typically need to prepare:

- An essay and/or statement of need, usually specific to the prompts provided by the scholarship.

• Letters of recommendation from non-family members.

• Electronic transcript.  
To learn more about the scholarships available through Community Giving, visit [https://www.communitygiving.org/scholarship/high\\_school](https://www.communitygiving.org/scholarship/high_school) or get in touch with your school’s guidance counselor.

If you would like additional help in applying for these scholarships, contact Jeff Veline of Cultural Bridges at [jeffvee@rockhousepro.com](mailto:jeffvee@rockhousepro.com) or 320-493-9343.

## Letter to the editor

## Electoral College ensures fair representation

*Richard G. Schaefer Sartell*

In their wisdom, the United States Founders created the Electoral College to ensure the States were fairly represented.

Why should one or two densely populated areas speak for the whole nation?

There are 3,141 counties in the United States. [In the 2016 election], Trump won 3,084 of them. Clinton won 57. There are 62 counties in New York State. Trump won 46 of them, Clinton won 16. Clinton won

the popular vote by approximately 1.5 million votes. In the five counties that encompass New York City (Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Richmond and Queens), Clinton received well over two million more votes than Trump. (Clinton only won four of these counties; Trump won Richmond). Therefore,

these five counties alone more than accounted for Clinton winning the popular vote of the entire country. These five counties comprise 319 square miles. The United States is comprised of 3.797 million square miles. When you have a country that encompasses almost four million square miles of territory,

it would be ludicrous to even suggest the vote of those who inhabit a mere 319 square miles should dictate the outcome of a national election.

Large, densely Democratic cities (New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles and more) do not and should not speak for the rest of our country!

## 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](mailto:news@thenewsleaders.com). Most events are listed at no cost. Those events are typically free or of minimal charge for people to attend. Some events, which have paid advertising in the Newsleaders, are also listed in the calendar and may charge more.

**Monday, Nov. 16**  
**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph.

**St. Joseph Rod and Gun Club**, 7 p.m., American Legion, 101 W Minnesota St., St. Joseph.

**Tuesday, Nov. 17**  
**Memory Writers** group develops topics and turns in stories, 10 a.m., Stearns History Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S, St Cloud.

**St. Joseph Lions Club**, 7 p.m., Millstream Park Pavilion 101 Fifth Ave. NW., St Joseph. Joanne Bechtold, 320-363-4483.

**St. Cloud Area Genealogists**, 7 p.m., Stearns History Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S., St. Cloud.

stearns-museum.org. Meeting by Zoom. Brendon Duffy, 320-237-3723.

**Wednesday, Nov. 18**  
**Advocates for Independence**, 2-4 p.m., Independent Lifestyles, 215 Benton Drive N., Sauk Rapids. 320-529-9000.

**Thursday, Nov. 19**  
**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph.

**Friday, Nov. 20**  
**St. Cloud Singles Club Dance**, 8:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m., American Legion, 17 Second Ave. S., Waite Park. 320-339-4533. [stcloudsingles.net](http://stcloudsingles.net).

**Sunday, Nov. 22**  
**Joe Town Table**, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., American Legion, 101 W Minnesota St., St. Joseph. every fourth Sunday of the month. [centralmncw@gmail.com](mailto:centralmncw@gmail.com).

**Tuesday, Nov. 24**  
**National Alliance on Mental Health**, 7-8:30 p.m., Calvary Com-

munity Church, 1200 Roosevelt Road, St. Cloud. The group helps parents raising a child with mental illness learn coping skills and develop problem-solving skills. 320-654-1259.

**Thursday, Dec. 10**  
**Kids Can Blood Drive**, noon to 6 p.m., Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 CR 2, St. Joseph. Contact Tamara to schedule a time at 320-282-8266. Each donation saves three lives.

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Thanks to advances in care, pets are living longer than they ever have before. But as our pets age, they require extra care and oversight. (Extra cuddles don’t hurt, either.)

WHEN IS A PET SENIOR?

While it varies, cats and dogs are generally considered senior when they’ve reached seven years of age. Larger breeds of dogs do tend to have shorter life spans, however, and might be considered by your vet as senior at five or six.

CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR

Changes in your pet’s behavior might be your first sign that your pet isn’t feeling as young as it once did. Common behavioral changes include:

- Skittishness around loud noises;
- Increased anxiety or nervousness;
- Unexplained or unusual aggressive behavior;
- Acting confused or disoriented;
- Having “accidents” in the house;
- Not responding to commands; and
- Increased irritability.

CHANGES IN ACTIVITY

Your pet also will begin to change the way it plays, eats and sleeps.

Arthritis is a common problem as animals age. You might notice:

- Irritation when being touched or petted;
- Taking additional time or being reluctant to sit or lay down;
- Eating more slowly; and
- Avoidance of jumping up on things — such as a favorite piece of furniture or the bed.

CARING FOR YOUR SENIOR PET

There are things you can do to help your senior pet stay healthy and happy. Consider the following:

- Raise your pet’s food and water bowls, so it doesn’t need to kneel or bend over quite as far. This can be especially useful for larger dogs.

- Purchase an orthopedic bed or pad for your pet to lay on. This is easier on the joints and helps ease inflammation caused by arthritis.
- Make sure your pet has a private space in your home. This is especially important for dogs. Older animals can feel the need to be by themselves, or escape loud areas — especially if you have young children.
- Don’t pass on physical activity. You might feel the urge to limit your pet’s exercise, but don’t reduce it drastically. Physical play is good for both the body and mind. Remember, just because Fido might not be as fast as he once was doesn’t mean he doesn’t enjoy playtime; you just might consider trading in the Frisbee for a long walk in the park instead.

Pine Cone Pet Hospital

Drop-off appointments, extended evening & emergency appointments are available

