



Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Nov. 13, 2020
Volume 25, Issue 22
Est. 1995

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/volunteer> to complete your online card today! Contact Mary, United Way of Central Minnesota, at 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, call 320-255-6172 or email parkinfo@co.stearns.mn.us.

INSERT:
Country Manor
Senior Housing



photo by Heidi L. Everett

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

Write-in candidate wins mayor of St. Stephen

by Heidi L. Everett
news@thenewsleaders.com

Used to be that several people vied to be mayor of St. Stephen. In 2020, not so. Long-time resident Lisa Marvin won an election in which nobody even put their name on the ballot. Marvin received 48 of the 185 write-in votes that were cast on election day. The second largest number of write-in votes for one candidate was 17. "We had more than 100 ballots with 100 different names

on them," said Julie Jacobs, St. Stephen city clerk and election judge. Marvin has lived in St. Stephen for 26 years and has served on the city's planning commission. She will succeed Jeff Blenkush. "We have one of the most quaint cities. I love being able to come home to this sanctuary," Marvin said. "I want to continue the incredible work that is being done to keep this the beautiful community it is." In 2008 and 2012, two res-

idents competed for the non-partisan position, which presides over the city council. The mayor does not directly appoint or remove officials, and lacks veto power over council votes. Instead, the mayor has equal voting power to fulfill city duties as council members do. "You are also the point of contact on all projects," said Jeff Blenkush, current mayor. Blenkush, who was elected to the city council in 2012



Lisa Marvin, St. Stephen mayor elect

Smith, Lewandowski elected to City Council

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

Incumbent Mike Chisum lost his re-election bid in a four-way race for two Sartell City Council seats. Voters elected Jill Smith and Alex Lewandowski. Smith received 5,437 votes. Lewandowski received 5,011 votes, ahead of Chisum with 3,424 votes. Aaron Johnson had 1,627 votes. Council members serve four-year terms. 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 32,621 votes, or 69

percent, over DFL challenger Michael Willemssen, who finished with 14,306 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. Incumbent Tim O'Driscoll won a sixth term with 16,522 votes, or 68 percent, over DFL challenger Benjamin Carollo,



Lewandowski



Smith

who received 7,684 votes. District 13B covers the northeastern corner of Stearns County including the cities of Holdingford, St. Stephen and Sartell and Sauk Rapids in Benton County. State senators serve four-year terms and representatives serve two-year terms. St. Stephen City Council members Steve Trobec and Tom Vouk were re-elected without opposition. Trobec received 365

votes and Vouk received 351 votes. No one filed for mayor. Write-in candidates received a total of 185 votes. Lisa Marvin received 47 votes and Ed Peter-nell received 17 votes. 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 in Sartell, Donald Trump received 5,854 votes compared with 4,375 votes for Joe Biden, giving Trump a 57 percent to 43 percent advantage. Vote totals are unofficial tallies from the Minnesota Secretary of State.

District moves all students to distance learning

by Mike Knaak
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All Sartell-St. Stephen schools will switch to distance learning starting Monday, Nov. 16, the district announced. Distance learning will continue until at least Dec. 4, said Krista Durrwachter, director of human resources. Students in grades three through 12 will be off on Friday, Nov. 13, so teachers can plan for the transition. Pre-kindergarten through second-graders are already in distance learning mode. When classes move to distance learning, high school activities and athletics will continue in person. Spectators will not be allowed beginning Monday, Nov. 16. In-person Middle School activities will stop. Increased community spread of Covid-19 forced the move.

Distance • page 2

Distance Mayor

from front page

“It’s so rampant in our community,” Durrwachter said.

The district is facing staff shortages because of quarantine due to close contact or infections.

“We are at a tipping point where community spread is rampant,” Durrwachter said. “Even though we continue to see low transmission rates in our students, there is a surge in community transmission rates. We believe moving to distance learning is the safest decision for our students and staff.”

According to a Covid-19 dashboard posted on the district’s website, there have been 22 student cases and 12 staff cases during the last 14 days.

Public health and school leaders hope during the distance learning period, community spread will slow. Community spread, case rates and the number of people quarantined among staff will continue to be monitored to inform a decision about what happens after Dec. 4

“Maybe this can stop that upward trend and get our kids back to school,” Durrwachter said. “We want them in school, but it’s unsustainable to staff buildings. We worry about the safety of our staff.”

Durrwachter asked people to wear masks and practice social distancing.

from front page

and 2016, became mayor in a 2018 special election after the then-current mayor moved. He was born and raised in St. Stephen and has served on the fire department for more than 20 years. In addition to working full-time, he has a family.

His “plate is full,” he said. That’s why he didn’t seek re-election. “I’m busy with family duties and have a lot going on. It’s time to bring in a new voice.”

Blenkush knows the number of people who file for office has gone down.

“I would not say it is overly time consuming, but it is a commitment. To do it right, you need to be committed,” Blenkush said. “We have good people in the community who are qualified and who already have a full schedule.”

The mayor position provides a monthly salary to cover time in meetings, but “it is not intended to be a full-time job,” Blenkush said. “Nor is it.”

During his term, the council updated city ordinances to reflect the current day. One of those ordinances, for example, addressed out-buildings and accessories because people have a lot more personal property than they

used to have, Blenkush said. The main road through the city also was completely reconstructed.

“That was a huge project for a city of our size,” Blenkush said.

“Jeff has been wonderful,” said Marvin, mayor-elect. She found out he wasn’t seeking another term three weeks before election night. More importantly, she learned nobody else had filed to run for mayor. After her husband encouraged her to run, she reached out to the city council to let them know.

“Then I called a few friends and asked them to write my name in,” Marvin said. “That was my campaign.”

While she has served on the planning commission for St. Stephen, she’s excited to work in this new role.

“We have a great council that works as a team,” she said. “I love the history many of them bring. They have incredible love for this community.”

Marvin has spent 30 years in property management as a licensed broker and teacher in that industry. In addition, Marvin serves on the board of Anna Marie’s Alliance and the Minnesota Multi Housing Association. She is busy too, but she said she is now an “empty nester,” which helps.

She said, “If you want change and you want to keep your community beautiful, you need to get involved.”

Education equity plan moves ahead as committee takes shape

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

With a meeting on Nov. 4, Sartell-St. Stephen school district’s long-debated equity audit is now taking shape.

About 30 people attended the meeting where Equity Alliance Minnesota Executive Director Sebastian Witherspoon outlined plans and a timeline for the effort, aimed at identifying concerns and suggesting solutions to race and other education equity issues.

The group will meet on the first Tuesday of every month. Superintendent Jeff Schwiebert said the group discussed its role in the audit process and the consensus was that it should promote things happening in the community, identify topics and provide speakers. Schwiebert said he expects the group to pick a leader or chair at its next meeting.

The Nov. 4 meeting included six students as well as community members. School board members Amanda Byrd and Jeremy Snoberger attended.

Meanwhile, plans for conducting the audit’s surveys are moving ahead. The surveys of students, staff and community members will be administered through the district’s email system and online.

Schwiebert said Witherspoon explained what questions will be asked so that they are not shaped by pre-conceived notions. “We

want to let the survey determine the issues” not the other way around, Schwiebert said. “What are our issues and then how do we respond?”

The surveys will probably start in December, and Schwiebert said the school board will review community questions before those are sent out.

The equity-audit idea arose last summer after the killing of George Floyd in Minnesota and a renewed interest in systemic racism. On June 24, students, teachers and community members shared stories of racism, insensitive, hurtful comments about religion and failed attempts to correct the problems.

Equity Alliance will complete the audit by looking at school data, policies, surveys, focus groups and classroom observations

During January, researchers will visit classrooms if COVID-19 precautions allow. Focus groups with students, staff and community members will take place either in person or online. Equity Alliance plans to use data and feedback from surveys to form focus group questions.

In late winter, the findings will be compiled into a report and recommendations will be presented to the school board in April. Schwiebert said the board will discuss the findings and come up with an action plan for the 2021-2022 school year.

The audit will cost about \$80,000.



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Published every other Friday by Von Meyer Publishing Inc.

The Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleaders is the legal newspaper for the Sartell-St. Stephen school district and city of St. Stephen

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ST. JOSEPH NEWSLEADER, 1622 11th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304.

Nies, Meling, Moehrle elected to school board

by Mike Knaak
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A longtime board member and two newcomers were elected to the Sartell-St. Stephen school board at a time when the district confronts twin challenges of how to deal with a pandemic and how to ensure educational equity for all its students.

Voters re-elected Jason Nies to his third term with 6,688 votes and chose Matt Moehrle, who received 5,095 votes, and Patricia Meling, who received 4,761 votes, over fourth-place finisher Taryn Gentile, who received 4,338 votes.

All three supported the district's decision to hire an outside consultant to conduct an equity audit of the district's schools. The issue arose last summer after the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and a renewed interest in systemic racism. During a listening session, students, teachers and community members shared stories of racism, insensitive, hurtful comments about reli-

gion and failed attempts to correct the problems.

With Covid-19 cases rising, the board continues to set policy to safely operate schools, balancing the urge to open schools while keeping students and staff safe.

The new members will take their seats in January.

All three newly elected members have children in the district's schools.

Meling and her husband have four children attending four different schools as well as a 2-year-old at home.

"I'm excited to come together and give the mom perspective," Meling said. "I want to see our schools continue to flourish and do whatever I can go to make that happen."

Moehrle says he's looking forward to serving the community, but he was reluctant to



Meling



Moehrle



Nies

offer details until he actually joins the board. During the campaign he said he also supported the district's equity audit effort. Moehrle, a lawyer, brings an understanding of civil law and finances to the board. He and his wife have two young children in the school district.

Nies said he "appreciates the community having trust and faith in me for the last eight years and let(ing) me continue for another four years. That means a lot. The community sees the work and wants to continue in that same direction."

Nies graduated from Sartell High School and St. Cloud State

University. He is a senior solutions architect for ePlus Technology. He and his wife have four children – two who are Sartell graduates and two still in school.

Before the pandemic hit, the district completed a multi-year plan that including building a new high school, remodeling two other buildings and reconfiguring grades and schools. Nies said he ran for re-election because "I want to see us through Covid and its financial implications. The equity audit is near and dear to me. I want the district to take full advantage of all the space we've created."

Board members will learn the results and recommendations of the equity audit next spring. Meling said she "knows Sartell and what works and doesn't work. We will take what they say and make it work for us in our schools."

All district students will be distance learning starting Monday, Nov. 16, through at least Dec. 4.

"I want for my kids to be in school," she said. "But it's all about safety. We need to keep our adults and kids safe and healthy." But she acknowledged the strain distance learning places on parents, especially those who have to work outside the home. "What can we do as a community to help parents get together?" she asked.

Nies, Moehrle and Meling join Amanda Byrd, Patrick Marushin and Jeremy Snoberger on the board. Current board members Lesa Kramer and Pam Raden did not run for re-election.

When asked to offer advice to his new colleagues, Nies suggested being willing to listen, being open-minded and being willing to learn.

"People come to us all the time with their concerns and issues," Nies said. "They want to let us know their opinion."

Distance learning teaches self-reliance to students

by Heidi L. Everett
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In the Braegelmann household, four boys camp out around the house as each tackles distance learning in Sartell.

Tyler, 17, is a senior, and Riley, 15, is a sophomore at Sartell High School. Calvin, 13, is an eighth grader at Sartell Middle School. Kolby, the fifth grader, attends St. Francis Xavier.

"We are blessed," said Natalie Braegelmann, their mom. "The boys are able to spread out and be in their individual classes without disturbing others."

All Sartell-St. Stephen schools will switch to all distance learning starting Monday, Nov.16, the district announced. Distance learning will continue until at least Dec. 4.

At St. Francis Xavier, the entire school hasn't been shut down, Braegelmann said. Instead, individual classrooms are sent home if a COVID exposure has happened.

Braegelmann is a substitute teacher and paraprofessional at St. Francis Xavier. Her husband, Chad, is a volleyball coach at St. Cloud State University.

They appreciate the "awe-

some work" the teachers are doing. "The classes and the rigor have been good," Braegelmann said.

Her older kids, though, are missing out on the hands-on opportunities, like mechanics and welding. In her oldest son's small-engine class, for example, the teacher provided videos online and then students would go into their own garage and try to replicate a lesson.

"It's just not the same as working on a small machine with the teacher right next to you," Braegelmann said. "It's not ideal but the teachers have done an amazing job trying to get the best experience that they can."

One benefit of distance learning has been the boys' ability to become self-reliant.

"Sometimes we do too much for our kids," Braegelmann said, "So this gives them the opportunity to know they can rely on each other and be responsible for their own learning."

"Is it perfect? No!" Braegelmann admitted. "I could have an ideal plan for what to eat, and they find a bag of chips. I



contributed photos

The Braegelmann boys camp out around the house as each tackles distance learning in Sartell. They are (left to right) Tyler, 17; Riley, 15; Calvin, 13; and Kolby, 11.

try to shove as many vegetables in as I can at dinner. It's one of those battles you can only fight for so long."

To minimize the spread of COVID, the Braegelmann's are "not extending the bubble too far." They spend time with family that lives local. The boys also connect with friends through devices.

"They are on their phones

or playing games with friends almost every night," she said. "We've been way more lenient than we would be in normal times. Socialization is important, so we're giving more screen time than before. Abnormal time calls for abnormal measures."

Although the district hopes to have students back in school buildings Dec. 4, the pandemic

calls the shots. The Braegelmanns understand that.

"As a mom, I want my kids in school," she said. "If it goes one week to the next, I want them in school. Anytime they can get in school, the better. But, I understand the logistics of that is not always possible."

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Creekside Buffet opens in Riverside Plaza

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

The Creekside Buffet and Restaurant opened on Election Day in Sartell’s Riverside Plaza, and its owner, Chad Gross of St. Cloud, said his business has received “overwhelmingly positive” comments from the community.

Creekside is at 101 Seventh Ave. N. in the same building where the Cornerstone Restaurant and Buffet once did business.

Starting a new restaurant is not without its glitches and “hiccups,” as Gross dubbed them. Last Sunday, for example, there was the weekly breakfast buffet. A total of 30 people showed up throughout the morning, keeping

Creekside's small staff busy feeding that many people in a limited time, Gross said. The good news is he and his staff received excellent comments on the food and service.

“You can’t please everybody, though,” he said. “Two or three people had complaints. One woman said her bacon wasn’t cooked crisp enough. If she’d told us right away, we could have made it crispier just for her.”

Gross has chef experience at Timberland in St. Cloud, at The Waterfront in Annandale and briefly at Anton’s in Waite Park.

The Creekside staff is strict about following Covid-19 policies and procedures. Staff wear plastic gloves and sanitize surfaces constantly. Due

to the pandemic, seating is limited to 15. Take-out and pick-up orders are available. Gross said there have been many such orders called in since the business opened.

One of its most popular dinner entrees is the classic chicken dinner, with chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy and corn. Another hit that has garnered raves is the prime-rib dinner, Gross noted.

The dinner buffet changes daily, according to themes: Taco Tuesday; Wednesday Pasta, Pizza, Wings; Thursday Stir Fry; Friday Surf and Turf; and Saturday Barbecued Ribs. Every Sunday is a breakfast buffet.

Creekside also offers a full menu of appetizers, soups, chicken, sandwiches, salads,

beverages, full dinners and special-priced options for senior citizens.

Business hours are from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sundays. It is closed Mondays.



contributed photo
Creekside Buffet

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People



Spencer Meier, Sartell, has been named Huskies’ team captain for the 2020-21 season

Spencer Meier, Sartell, has been named Huskies' team captain for the upcoming 2020-21 season of St. Cloud State University men's hockey. A 6-4, 212-pound junior defenseman, Meier begins his third season on the Huskies' blue line in 2020-21. Meier played prep hockey at Sartell High School and junior hockey with Fargo in the USHL. A two-time Academic All-NCHC award recipient, Meier posted four goals and six assists in

2019-20. In 72 career games played at SCSU, Meier has charted five goals, 15 assists and 20 points along with 68 blocked shots.

Dr. Cody Wendlandt, founder and medical director of Sartell Family Medicine, received one of The Greater St. Cloud Development Corp.'s 2020 Innovation Awards Nov. 5 in the for-profit category for their unique implementation of direct primary care.. Sartell

Family Medicine, founded in 2018, is one of Minnesota's first clinics to offer solely direct primary care, meaning they do not take insurance in any form. Instead, the clinic contracts with patients and businesses directly, allowing unlimited access to their medical providers at an affordable monthly rate. Sartell Family Medicine also offers many medications, laboratory studies and procedures at minimal cost.

Morgan recalls vivid glimpses from personal history

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

Professor, historian, raconteur, author and Sartell resident Bill Morgan has been intriguing and entertaining his listeners and readers for decades.

The name of one of his talks is Boy at Home: Civilian Life During World War II. Now 86, Morgan is considered by many to be a local treasure trove – a veritable repository of vivid historical/personal details that helps illuminate the present by shining light on it from the past.

So many historical events impinged – sometimes tragically – on the life of young Morgan and his family, events that included the American Civil War, the Great Depression, World War II and the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1933, who took office one month before Morgan was born and who served almost four terms in the White House, helping guide Americans through the dislocations and hunger caused by a bleak economy and the world war that followed.

“I was 12 when he (Roosevelt) died in office,” said



contributed photo

Dr. Bill Morgan of Sartell is a treasure trove of historic knowledge that he loves to share with listeners and readers.

Morgan. “My mother and I thought he was a king.”

Morgan and his wife, Judy, have lived in Sartell for 20 years. He grew up in Pipestone, in southwest Minnesota, and he has often said that two events defined his childhood. One was his father's death at age 49 three months

before he was born. The vice president of a Pipestone bank, William T. Morgan Sr. grew up on a farm near Pipestone. One day in 1932, while hunting, he cut himself on a barbed-wire fence. The wound, untreated, led to his death of spinal meningitis

CPR/AED session set for Dec. 12

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

Knowing how to administer CPR is important because it can keep people experiencing cardiac arrest alive until they receive help to start their hearts again. A free CPR course is being offered from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 12 at the Sartell Community Center (Liberty Room).

The course also will include an introduction to using an AED station.

Many cities and rural areas now have AED stations along roadways or population areas. At those stations, AED machines can deliver a shock to restart the heart after a cardiac arrest. Sartell has two AED stations, one in Lions Park across from Sartell City Hall and one in Pine Point.

The introductory lesson will be taught by Todd Wis-

trom, Sartell, who, along with his wife, Susan, owns and operates Specialized Health and Safety. The Wistroms are certified and licensed by the American Heart Association to teach courses in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and AED (automatic external defibrillation).

“It's important for people to know this class is not for certification,” said Todd Wistrom. “It's just an orientation so people will feel comfortable doing CPR or using an AED.”

At the session, mannequins will be provided on which to practice. All participants must wear masks, and social distancing will be observed. Each participant will be provided separate practice equipment.

To register for the session, call 320-267-0606 or email todd@specializedhealthandsafety.com

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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.

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 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.



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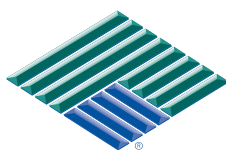
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SUPPORT

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



© ADOBE STOCK

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

move out. And you're just as likely to find a local business adjacent to any big box retailer.

COMMUNITY

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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Steinkopf finds new passion – mural painting

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

One July day, Jen Steinkopf, of Sartell, was up on a scaffold painting a giant butterfly on a brick building in downtown St. Cloud when she felt as if someone was staring at her.

From her height on the scaffold, she looked east and west up and down the narrow alley. Nobody there. Then she looked down behind her.

There stood a woman, maybe in her 60s, with a cane and wearing big sunglasses. Looking again, Steinkopf noticed tears were trickling down the woman’s face.

“What is wrong?” Steinkopf shouted down to her. “Can I help you?”

Staring up at the big butterfly, the woman said, “That is the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen.”

Tears of happiness, Steinkopf realized with a sense of instant relief.

The woman told the artist that she had just gotten out of the Anna Marie’s shelter for abused women, a survivor of domestic abuse. Butterflies, she said, had always been her symbols of hope, freedom, happiness.

Steinkopf realized her art had deeply touched that woman. She thanked the woman for her kind words, and then she too started to shed tears.

Raised in Sartell, Steinkopf is a 1996 graduate of Sartell High School. She is the owner of her in-home business, Savvy Signs & Designs, and she creates customized logos, business cards, greeting cards, holiday cards, wall décor and interior design, among many other creative projects, including wall murals.

When she was in kindergarten, she was asked what she wanted to be when she grew up.

“I want to be an artist,” she told the teacher.

She vividly remembers saying that and the teacher writing it on a piece of paper, which Steinkopf’s mother kept.

She recalls painting a mural on her girlhood bedroom wall, with her mother’s permission, of course.

“Some dreams do come true,” she said, although her road to a dream was sometimes a meandering one. She attended St. Cloud State University with the intention of becoming an art teacher, but then reality hit – the “reality” that there is a low to non-existent demand for high-school art teachers and those who do have that job tend to keep it for many years.

For many years, she was a server and bartender.

“I’d just bought a house,” she said. “I had to pay the bills.”

She also has been an executive assistant for the Community Foundation of St. Cloud and for a telephone company.

“When it comes to art, I’m kind of a chameleon,” she said. “I love to play with colors, and I can do just about anything.”

One of her projects was a mural on a wall inside of St. Francis Xavier Elementary School in Sartell, when both her children were students there. It was a painting done with inspirational words and sentences using various fonts and colors with the theme of “Be the nice kid.”

One day, Steinkopf was driving in her car with the radio on when she heard an announcement. Somebody wanted to paint murals and interested artists should submit design ideas.

“That was before the pandemic, before the world fell apart,” she said.

Steinkopf thought she wouldn’t win but toyed with the idea of submitting a design or two, just for the fun of it. She ran the idea past her friends, who heartily approved of her sketch for a mural of a stained-



contributed photo

A riot of radiant, pop-out, high-gloss colors stands out brightly from an old drab brick wall in downtown St. Cloud.



contributed photo

Jill Steinkopf meticulously applies paint, stroke by stroke, on “stained-glass butterfly” mural art work.

glass butterfly.

To her surprise, she was chosen for the mural job for a brick wall in the narrow alley behind Leighton Broadcasting, downtown St. Cloud.

She partnered with Sherwin Williams paint store in Sartell, which supplied all the paints – exterior gray concrete paint and a veritable rainbow of high-gloss colors so bright they seem to pop off the wall in 3-D.

The mural, about 20 feet by 20 feet is the huge butterfly surrounded by smaller butterflies flitting. Next to the stained-glass-style butterfly it states: “Be the Change You Want to See in the World.” That quote from great Indian civil-rights leader Mahatma Gandhi is one of Steinkopf’s favorites.

To fix the design on the wall before starting the actual painting, Steinkopf, with husband Tom’s help, visited the Kinko’s printing shop where a huge paper butterfly pattern was printed out. Then she and Tom taped the patterns on the wall and traced them on the



contributed photo

This is a previous mural that Jill Steinkopf painted on a hallway wall in St. Francis Xavier Elementary School, Sartell.

brickwork.

For the actual painting, which took many, many hours and days, Steinkopf used a ladder and a lift.

“Mural painting is my new passion,” she said. “I challenge

other cities to do murals too, and I would be glad to paint them.”

Tom Steinkopf is employed by Xcel Energy. They have two children, Gabbie, 12, and Remi, 10.

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History

from page 5

in January 1933. Morgan to this day believes a contributing factor to his father’s death was his deep concern and worries about bank closings that were happening all across the Midwest in those years of financial collapses. His father got up from his sick bed and made his way to the bank where he examined books, causing an emotional toll that weakened him along with the illness.

The Civil War also affected the family. Morgan’s mother’s father, Warrington Brown, at age 19, joined a Wisconsin regiment and marched off to war. A week before the war’s end, he was shot in the head while storming a site in the Petersburg battle trenches. A surgeon removed the metal ball and placed a silver plate on the bottom of the hole. Then he was told by the doctor “he would lose his mind by the time he was 40.” He didn’t. Back home, after he moved to Pipestone, he farmed and opened a John Deere dealership. Later he built a Victorian-style house with a wrap-around porch with stylish gingerbread trimmings.

“Some of my most cherished memories were forged within the walls of that wonderful house,” Morgan said. “The house I grew up in stood next door . . . Mother and I lived there alone until I left for college in 1951.”

At his recent talk at the Sartell Senior Center, Morgan regaled his audience with a nostalgic account – well seasoned with humor – of his time as a hometown “plane spotter” with his mother during World War II.

On Dec. 7, 1941, the Japanese bombed American ships, killing many American servicemen at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. That attack precipitated America’s entry into World War II, and it also started a plane-spotting pro-

gram, among other hometown war efforts, in cities across the nation.

Citizens volunteered as air-raid wardens and plane spotters, which involved the ability to detect enemy planes. The volunteers also canvassed neighborhoods to check if all residents, during mandated blackout periods, had shut their window curtains at night so enemy planes, if they should arrive, would not have easy targets to bomb.

“As an air-raid warden,” Morgan told the Sartell audience, “my mother was given the rank of lieutenant and her sister, Anne, a sergeant. Proudly, I walked beside mother, who let me wear her warden’s white hat and carry a flashlight and whistle.”

Plane spotters were expected to keep a keen eye out for foreign planes in the sky over Pipestone and report anything amiss to the U.S. air base in nearby Sioux Falls, S.D.

“For some reason,” Morgan recalled, “it didn’t seem ludicrous to think the Germans or the Japanese might actually bomb Pipestone or Sioux Falls.”

In fact, there was an airborne attack at Pipestone, `Morgan said, quickly adding the plane was American, not foreign.

“On Aug. 10, 1944, I was standing in front of the Orpheum Theater when my plane spotter’s eyes observed a twin-tailed P-38 diving with a window-rattling roar, seemingly about to strafe main street.”

Hearing the commotion, people began running out of houses and businesses, peering skyward with alarm.

Only later did they learn what happened, as reported by the Pipestone County Star: “Residents of Pipestone watched with interest an army plane as it circled low over the city several times. Later it was learned that flight officer Roger Dibble, stationed in Coffeyville, Kansas, was the pilot.”

His passes over Pipestone were meant to be a friendly greeting because he was a hometown boy, having graduated from Pipestone High School in 1944, son of a Chevrolet dealer. Dibble later died some months after the war ended when a plane he was flying crashed in Germany.

The war effort duties of those long-gone days included residents collecting every scrap they could find of metal, tin, rubber and other materials to build American ships, planes and tanks. In Pipestone, residents even gave up a cannon that had stood symbolic guard over the courthouse square for generations. They sold it at the scrap heap collection for \$21.

“As citizens, we Americans relished those (war effort) duties,” Morgan recalled.

He continued: “I am so glad I was alive during World War II. It was a great time for civilians (and in many cases for service men and women) to be alive. The war ended the darkness of the Great Depression by putting 16 million people to work, laying the foundation for a booming economy following the war. It was a great time to be alive.”

Morgan drew laughter from his audience when he commented on his own age, 86. He quoted famed American jazz/pop composer-musician Eubie Blake, who once delivered this nugget of humor (and wisdom), “If I’d known I’d live this long, I would have taken better care of myself.”

For 22 years, Morgan taught American Studies at St. Cloud State University, and for another eight years he served as an adjunct professor before retiring. He has been a history columnist for the St. Cloud Times and is the author of several books of local history. He and wife Judy have been very active in the Sartell Senior Connection group and in the Sartell Historical Society.

Place of Hope seeks holiday donations

Place of Hope helps so many people in our community. They are in need of the following items to help bring hope to families and individuals in needs. Suggested items: teen and parent gifts, backpacks, \$10 gift cards, food donations, diapers: all sizes, personal care items, \$10 food gift cards, winter coats/hats/mittens, wrapping paper and tape or sponsor a meal. Please call Place of Hope at 320-203-7881 to set up a drop-off time.

Sew masks

Thank you to everyone who continues to sew masks to help keep our community safe! Make and donate cloth masks for youth and adult members to keep our community safe. Completed masks can be dropped off at Coborn’s, 900 Cooper Ave. S., St. Cloud,

behind the service counter during store hours. Questions, contact Mary Krippner, director of volunteer engagement at 320-223-7991.

Package Food with Kids Fighting Hunger

Kids Fighting Hunger is excited to announce We Are Thankful, three months of thanks in 2020. Because of the COVID pandemic and in order to follow CDC guidelines, the format of their eighth annual We Are Thankful packaging event had to change. They will host 30 small packaging sessions at their center, with up to 25 people packaging per session. Their goal is to raise \$20,000 to package 134,000 meals. Contact Cathy for dates and times of the 30 events, sponsor and donation information. Help Kids Fighting Hunger help those in need! Contact Cathy at cathy.wogen@gmail.com.

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— PUBLIC NOTICE —

CITY OF ST. STEPHEN TRUTH IN TAXATION HEARING

The St. Stephen City Council will review the proposed 2021 budget at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2020 in the St. Stephen City Hall Council Chamber, 2 Sixth Ave. SE, St. Stephen.

The public is welcome to attend this public hearing.

/s/ Julie Jacobs
City of St. Stephen City Clerk

Dated: Nov. 10, 2020
Publish: Nov. 13, 2020

— PUBLIC NOTICE —

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF ST. STEPHEN CITY COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that a special public hearing of the St. Stephen City Council in and for the City of St Stephen, Stearns County, Minnesota is scheduled at 6:30 p.m. or as soon as possible thereafter on Monday, Nov. 23, 2020, in the Council room at 2 Sixth Ave. SE, St. Stephen, MN 56375 to consider the following:

A request by James and Marilyn Schumer to rezone their property located at 1213 CR 2 S., St. Stephen, MN 56375-9603 (Parcel No. 90.55915.0000) from R-1 (Single

Family Residential) to FR (Farm Residence).

Anyone wishing to comment will be heard at the public hearing and written comments may be forwarded to the office of the City Clerk before the time of the public hearing.

CITY OF ST. STEPHEN

/s/ Julie Jacobs
City Clerk

Published: Nov. 13, 2020

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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?



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1622 11th Ave S.
St. Cloud, MN 56304

Email: news@thenewsleaders.com

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

Church Free Store plans holiday kits for people in need

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

For the upcoming holidays, Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Celebration Lutheran Church in Sartell plans to give meal kits and other forms of helpful kits to people in need.

Organizers of the relief program are requesting people donate items for the kits, which include meal kits, household cleaning kits, hygiene kits and baby-care kits.

“We are always looking for ways to share this outreach with the greater community so more families in need can receive our help, as well as reaching people who are willing and able to donate,” said Jessica Lundsetter, church member and

one of the founders and volunteers for the Celebration Lutheran Church Free Community Store. The store opened several months ago to help people adversely affected by the virus pandemic.

Those who need one or more of the kits should reach out for help. There are no qualifications and no questions asked to receive the kits. Those who need a kit or people who know of a family who might need one should contact Lundsetter at j.lundsetter@gmail.com.

For those who are able to donate kits, they can be dropped off, ready-made, at Celebration Lutheran Church during office hours, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and 9 a.m.-noon Fridays. Check donations

can be brought to or sent to Celebration Lutheran Church, with “Free Store” written on the check’s memo line. Send to the church at 1500 Pinecone Road, Sartell, MN 56377.

Lundsetter said the goal is to have ready 25 Thanksgiving kits by Nov. 11 to be distributed to families in need on Thanksgiving week.

To find out what to include in donated kits, go to the following church website: www.celebrationlutheranchurch.com. Scroll down to CLC Free Community Store and, to the right, click for “full kit shopping list.” The types of kits are Breakfast Kit for Kindness, Lunch Kit for Love, Suppertime Kit for Sharing, Snack Kit for Smiles, Pods for God Cleaning Kit, Personal

Care Kit for Comfort, Baby-Care Kit for Joy, and Gift Cards.

The following items comprise one Thanksgiving dinner kit:

Two frozen turkeys or one fully-cooked turkey breast, one packet of gravy, two cans of corn, two cans of green beans, one bag of marshmallows, a bag of brown sugar, one box of instant stuffing mix, can or carton of chicken broth, one can of dinner rolls or one box of cornbread mix, one non-perishable dessert (such as pumpkin-pie

filling, a pie crust, brownie mix, cookie mix, cake mix or other), one can of cranberry sauce, one beverage not requiring refrigeration.

Other options for giving are holiday plates and napkins, foil baking pans, and personal cards or notes.

The Free Store’s inspiration comes from The Bible, Matthew 23:35: “For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

Newsleaders seeks GoFundMe donations

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

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. 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.

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. 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.

Mobile office hours, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Sartell City Hall. A caseworker from Rep. Tom Emmer’s office will be available to handle issues with federal government services.

Dementia Friends information session, 1-2 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S., Sartell. Learn what dementia is, what it’s like to live with the disease and communicate with people who have dementia.

Wednesday, Nov. 18
SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together), 9 a.m., Sartell Police Department, 310 Second St. S., Sartell.

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

Thursday, Nov. 19
Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.

American Legion-Sartell, open to all veterans young and old, 6 p.m., Sartell Community Center., 850 19th St. S. john.denney@charter.net.

MOPS, Mothers of Preschoolers monthly social, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Celebration Lutheran Church, 1500 Pinecone Road N., Sartell.

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.

Saturday, Nov. 21
Community Meal, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 1107 Pinecone Road S., Sartell. Free.

Monday, Nov. 23
Sartell City Council, 6 p.m., City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road N.

Tuesday, Nov. 24
Mental Health/Depression Support Group, 6:30 p.m., St. Francis Xavier Church, 219 Second St. N., Sartell.

National Alliance on Mental Health, 7-8:30 p.m., Calvary Community 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.

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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

