

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Dec. 11, 2020
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Est. 1989

Town Crier

Fare for All set Dec. 14
Fare for All's next drive-through distribution will be from 2:30-5:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 14 at Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 CR 2, St. Joseph. Fare for All is a budget-stretching program that allows people to save up to 40 percent off fresh fruits, vegetables and frozen meats. Holiday packs, which include a turkey, chicken tenderloins, bacon-wrapped pork tenderloin, meatballs (beef and pork), sweet corn and a chocolate mint cheesecake, are available. Fare for All has no income requirements and is open to everyone who wants to stretch their grocery dollar. Cash, credit, debit cards and EBT cards are accepted. For more information, please visit our website at fareforall.org, find us on Facebook or call 800-582-4291.

Santa, Mrs. Claus to visit area senior living facilities
Santa, Mrs. Claus and helpers will stop by outside senior living facilities including Edgewood and Chateau Waters on Dec. 14 and 15. This is in lieu of the 2020 Dinner with Santa, a holiday meal event held for local senior citizens every December, which was canceled due to the pandemic. Dinner with Santa looks forward to safely resuming in 2021. For more information, contact Magelssen at 320-251-1038 or Jill.Magelssen@Expresspros.com.

Homeless Helping Homeless seeks volunteers
Homeless Helping Homeless members help each other find resources for food, clothing, transportation, housing and employment. Members depend mostly on in-kind donations of rides, household items, furniture and gift cards. They have a variety of volunteer needs such as driving, fundraising, writing grants, moving furniture, organizing donations and more! Visit www.HomelessHelpingHomeless.com to volunteer.

Ring bells for Salvation Army
Ring a bell at one of their iconic red kettles now through Dec. 24 to raise funds that change lives all year long. Volunteers are the difference between an empty kettle and one that raises about \$30 per hour – enough to provide a family with two bags of groceries. Call Laura at 320-257-7437 or visit <https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/northern/stcloud/volunteer/> to schedule a time to ring bells.



photo by Mike Knaak

Christmas lights brighten downtown
St. Joseph's Winter Walk kicked off Dec. 4 with the lighting of the city Christmas tree and a visit by Santa, who rode around the city on a vintage automobile. Decorated trees lined downtown streets, thanks to the St. Joseph Y2K Lions and the city.

St. Joseph man pleads guilty to murder of two

by Heidi L. Everett
news@thenewsleaders.com

On Dec. 1, James Joseph Robert Wood of St. Joseph pleaded guilty to the murder of two children, one in 2015 and one in 2018.

Wood submitted an Alford Plea, which is a guilty plea of a defendant who claims to be innocent but admits that the



Wood

prosecution has enough evidence to prove that he is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. Typically, it results in a guilty plea of a lesser crime. In this case, Wood has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder without intent.

In Sherburne County, Wood pleaded guilty to the killing of 2-year-old Billy Chapman in 2015 in St. Cloud. Wood was watching Chapman and two brothers while their mother worked.

In Benton County, Wood pleaded guilty to the killing of

has been identified, and we must provide alternate instruction," Keranen said.

Currently, the district screens all students in kindergarten through tenth grade three times per year using the STAR reading assessment system. Students who test in the 40th percentile or higher are not considered at risk.

"Students scoring 40 percent or higher will likely meet the performance goals defined by state and local standards," Keranen said, based on research data.

In fall 2020, many students were assessed with STAR; however, not everyone was assessed due to alternative learning models resulting from COVID-19.

Of those tested, the majority of students in elementary, mid-

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Channel your creativity for local seniors

by Heidi L. Everett
news@thenewsleaders.com

Cards, concerts and conversations were once a seasonal staple to connect with seniors during the holidays. COVID-19 has changed that.

"We've been really blessed," said Emily Frericks, director of marketing and public relations with Country Manor in Sartell and Woodcrest of Country Manor in St. Joseph. "Over the years, we've received thousands of cards, which has been wonderful."

At this time, though, they can't distribute mail. As a precautionary measure, mail from non-family is quarantined in a storage room and goes through a rigorous process before it can be shared.

And like so many other gathering spaces today, many of the residents are in isolation or restricted to a small community of residents to interact with at six feet apart and with masks on.

Country Manor and Woodcrest of

Country Manor serve between 500 and 700 people a day between their assisted and independent living facilities as well as inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation.

Activities directors have been tapping into their creative sides to maintain that spirit of the season in a time of COVID-19, Frericks said. For example, Woodcrest held its annual holiday door-decorating contest the first week of December. Because residents couldn't go door to door to cast their votes, all doors were photographed and put on Facebook for residents, family and friends to vote.

"We're trying to create programs, so everyone can participate," Frericks said.

Country Manor and Woodcrest also have an internal television channel which originally started to share programming with those who were bedridden.

"This was a new way to bring socializing to our community," Frericks said. "People can tune into this channel and

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contributed photo

Residents at Country Manor live stream to celebrate with family and friends during COVID-19.
(Left to right) Brady Johnson, Ansie Sperl and Jennifer Jankowski.

District

from front page

dle, junior and high school did not make the 40th percentile or higher cut score (see chart).

In the middle school and junior high reading assessment data, 157 of the 180 students at Kennedy were assessed; of those tested, 48 percent were below the cut score. At North, 606 of 726 students were assessed; of those tested, 67% were below the cut score. At South, 815 of 1,045 students were assessed; of those tested, 59% were below the cut score.

At Apollo High School 425 of 674 ninth and 10th graders were assessed; of those tested, 62% were below the cut score. At Tech High School, 605 of 799

Elementary	Clearview	Discovery	Lincoln	Kennedy	Madison	Oak Hill	Talahi	Westwood
Total students	377	488	383	469	625	736	457	379
Students tested	247	266	305	310	388	461	135	247
% of students tested below cut score	42%	70%	78%	48%	62%	54%	56%	53%

District 742 elementary student reading assessment data from fall 2020.

ninth and 10th graders were assessed; of those tested, 58% were below the cut score.

The STAR assessment is one of several screening steps the district has to determine if a student has dyslexia. Parents, teachers and staff can

also make referrals. In addition, the district has checklists for screening.

According to the International Dyslexia Association, dyslexia is a specific learning disability characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. Not everyone who has difficulty reading is dyslexic, however; and not everyone who is dyslexic qualifies for special services to assist. These are two points outlined on the district's dyslexia services web page.

"Each school has a support system that serves as a problem-solving team to determine which steps would be most appropriate to support the student," Keranen said.

These supports might be social, emotional, behavioral or academic based on student need and building resources, Keranen said.

Regardless of a diagnosis, reading proficiency is essential to success.

As school board member Natalie Ringsmuth said, "It's life changing. If you can't read, of course you're going to have behavior problems, you're not go-

ing to want to come to school, and you're not going to graduate."

In 2018, St. Cloud schools began a pilot program training teachers to use the Sonday System, a structured, systematic, multisensory reading program for readers at the beginning stages of reading.

"We've seen nice gains," said Katie Schnider, dyslexia specialist at North Junior High.

Since 2018, the program has been implemented in all first-grade classrooms, some second-grade classrooms, and in small group programs throughout the district, including special education and English language learning.

Schnider shared a chart showing the trajectory of the program.

"This chart gives me goosebumps because in the pilot year we were able to support 141 students. And I'm just going to skip to this year because now we are supporting 1,114 students," she said.

Moreover, 11 teachers were trained in 2018, and the District is up to 96 teachers trained on the Sonday System, Schnider said, "which is exciting to report on, and we hope to continue to grow," she said.

"We understand there are a lot of students who fall in the 39th percentile and below, so we need to dig deeper,"

Schnider said. "And we need to truly understand each student individually."

Schnider said the next steps in the plan consider funding resources, expansion of programs, data collection, tracking and reporting, and additional staffing to continue to meet updated legislation.

"It can take time," Schnider said. "We want to make sure students if they're able to start something great and it's working for them we want to make sure we can continue giving them that opportunity."

She shared her own teaching experience with the reading program in which students were able to make three years progress in one academic year. "They were eager to learn," she said.

Board members and the superintendent praised the work being done, but many again expressed concern about another unfunded mandate by the state.

"Every time we put another program in front of us, we shouldn't have to choose what we'll have to take away," school board member Al Dahlgren said. "Those other programs benefit students also."

"Find the money to keep this together," said school board member Les Green.

"This is very important in every student's life," said school board member Jeff Pollreis. "Find some money in our budget because this is where it needs to be spent."



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Seniors

from front page

see what is happening.” Residents have already been doing Facetime and video calls. “They are so proud of their families, and while they can’t be face to face or in person, video calling has helped,” she said. “It’s so sweet when we hear, ‘Tommy wants to sing a song for you, grandma and grandpa.’ We want everyone to experience this.”

Share your videos

The internal television channel is where Frericks hopes people will share videos this holiday season, even if you don’t have a family member there. “More often than not, everybody has a connection. Somebody knows somebody,” she said. “This channel allows people to interact with us without having to leave their homes to do it.” “If you are driving around looking at holiday lights, capture it and send it in,” Frericks said. “Are you having a mini concert at home or building a gingerbread house? Send it in.” The channel is available to Country Manor and Woodcrest 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so they have ample broadcast time to share videos. (See the “Video Instructions” sidebar for details.) Frericks also encourages people to follow their social media. “If people want to tune in to our Facebook page, we are working to increase our online interaction, like Woodcrest did with the door decorating contest,” she said. They can be found on Facebook at countrymanorcampus.

Share your support of staff

Currently, Country Manor and Woodcrest do not have a shortage of supplies, but they are always accepting encouragement for the staff. “Our staff has been incredible. It’s been a long nine months,” Frericks said. “What we see all day every day is very heavy. We are covered in full PPE with masks, face shields, goggles and heavy equipment. It’s hot and

sweaty. Everyone still smiles, checks in and makes sure everyone is OK.” “We are battle-weary,” she said, “but staff are rallying to make people feel loved and celebrated. It’s something special to see.” Cards of thanks to staff and treats are welcome. “A candy bar can really make someone’s day,” Frericks said. Donations to staff at Country Manor Sartell can be dropped off at Door #1. Call 320-253-1920 in advance, so they can plan for appropriate staffing to meet you outside. Donations to staff at Woodcrest in St. Joseph can be dropped off at the Main Entrance. Call 320-271-1200 in advance, so they can plan for appropriate staffing to meet you outside.

Video Instructions

The link for video submissions can be found on the top of the Country Manor homepage: www.countrymanorcampus.org

Possible video content includes:

- Music, singing, playing an instrument
- Theater or dance performances
- Cooking or baking demonstrations
- Craft demonstrations (how to) for tenants to follow along with
- Art projects like painting, woodworking or drawing
- Trivia with answers
- Pets doing tricks or just cute pets
- Science projects
- Family holiday traditions
- Messages of support, love and joy for residents, patients, tenants and staff
- Take us on a tour with you on a hike, ice-fishing, hunting to find the perfect Christmas tree, to see Santa. Go Pro videos welcome.
- Share jokes (appropriate ones, of course)
- Gratitude or reflection

Country Manor families of residents, patients, tenants and staff are also encouraged to share messages to surprise loved ones, like “We can’t wait to see you, Grandma! We love you!” or “Thank you for being our personal hero, mom! We love you!”

Busing among businesses rerouted by pandemic

by Heidi L. Everett
news@thenewsleaders.com

In St. Stephen, 80 of the 100 buses in the Trobec’s Bus Service fleet are parked. Students are distance learning. Athletic events are cancelled. After-school activities aren’t happening. The buses are parked. “They are parked for the foreseeable future,” said Bethany Schubert, vice president of Trobec’s, which serves the 4,100 students of Sartell-St. Stephen School District and 9,900 students of St. Cloud Area School District. St. Cloud also contracts with Palmer Bus Co., Spanier Bus Service and Voigt Bus Ser-

vice. Like so many businesses being trounced in the COVID-19 pandemic, bus companies and their drivers are trying to navigate the deep potholes, speed bumps and wash outs that come with safety requirements to slow the spread of COVID-19. “In August, we said the theme of this year is flexibility. No two days will be the same,” Schubert said. “We have a great team holding this thing together.” In the fleet, 14 buses are still driving Monday through Friday, twice a day, to drop off breakfast and lunches to students in the St. Cloud district, but each district operates differently. “While both school districts used to make decisions in tandem,” Schubert said, “the size of the St. Cloud school district is larger, so extra precautions are taken sooner.” Their needs are also different. Schubert said the company committed to guaranteed pay for their drivers this school year, even if the routes weren’t running and even if they were unsure where the money was coming from. “This was an easy decision for us to make,” Schubert said. “We can’t just pull a driver off the street. We want drivers here. We

Busing • page 7

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Wrapping for a good paws

Tri-County Humane Society is “Wrapping for a Good Paws” at Crossroads Center daily through Thursday Dec. 24. Volunteers wrap presents for people who give a free-will donation to Tri-County Humane Society during the mall’s open hours. Due to COVID-19 social distancing guidelines, all volunteers must wear masks. Sanitation and cleaning supplies will be supplied. Kids over 12 years are welcome, but an adult must be present with them. Sign up at <https://tricityhumanesociety.org/how-to-help/fundraisers/wrapping-for-a-good-paws.html> or contact Angela at 320-252-0896 ext. 14.

Deliver meals for Meals on Wheels

Catholic Charities Senior Dining program is seeking volunteers at many locations to support kitchen staff, deliver Meals on Wheels to homes during the lunch hour and serve on planning committees. For more information, and a volunteer registration form, contact Senior Dining at 320-229-4583.

Weekend cooks needed at Anna Marie’s Alliance

Anna Marie’s Alliance works to provide a safe place for victims of domestic abuse, and they are looking for weekend cooks. This position serves to prepare meals for and interact with women and children residing at the shelter. This allows their advocates to better assist those experiencing domestic violence within the shelter and their community. Shift times are 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 3-6 p.m. Contact Casaundra at 320-253-6900 to learn more.

Volunteer readers sought

Central Minnesota Audio Newspapers is looking for volunteers to read area newspapers aloud each day. This is a resource for the blind and print disabled. Volunteers can read once a month, every week or whatever works in their schedule. The time commitment is up to two hours between 4 and 8 p.m. Volunteers will read at the KVSC studio on the campus of St. Cloud State University. Call Rita at 320-293-2273 to learn more.



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Emee Jagielski will of St. Joseph will perform in Gustavus Adolphus College’s annual Christmas in Christ Chapel worship service virtually this year. The service, which was recorded in late October, will premiere on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 7:30 p.m. CST. Following the debut of the video, it will be available on-demand. Visit gustavus.edu/ccs to watch the livestream.

Huskies Scholarships awarded 962 **St. Cloud State University students** with scholarships totaling more than \$1.3 million for the 2020-2021 academic year so far, including these St. Joseph residents: **Amanda Burton** was awarded the College of Science and Engineering Scholarship and the Strive Thrive Succeed Scholarship. **Abigail Notsch** was awarded the Dr. Carolyn Ruth Armstrong Williams Family Scholarship and the Strive Thrive Succeed Scholarship.

Retirement Investment Ideas

It's never too early to get on top of your finances or plan for retirement. With a proper strategy, you can build your savings account or have a steady flow of income after you step away from a career.

According to the Harvard Business Review, Americans between 40 and 45 have an average of \$14,500 in their retirement account – that's less than four percent of what is needed to retire. Consider investing in your future with one of these practical ventures.

REAL ESTATE
A recent survey from the U.S. Census Bureau reveals Americans paid an average monthly cost of \$981 for rent in 2016. Becoming a landlord comes with many difficulties but, if done properly, has big advantages.

Some concerns to weigh are unforeseen expenses like negligent renters, vacancy and property maintenance. Over time, a rental can be very profitable, just make sure to have an emergency fund to cover unexpected fees.
A quicker way to fill a retirement fund with profits earned through real estate is flipping properties.



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Howard 'receives' poems in corner room, east window

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Juliana Howard of St. Joseph, who is the author of a just-published book of poems titled "Love Will Lead You Home" doesn't have to stray too far to find inspiration.

She finds it daily, right at home, which happens to be on the third floor of Serenity Place, an assisted-living facility in St. Joseph and a stone's throw from Klinefelter Park.

Every morning, Howard sits in a corner room with its big window facing east. There, on any given morning, she opens her mind to whatever she glimpses as she gazes out of her window on the world: the ever-shifting sky, birds, a sunrise, swirls of snow, pelting rain, trees and leaves. Images and words appear, sometimes slowly, sometimes in a flash. And then she uses them to create her haiku poems, at least one each day. Sometimes

the words just "drop in," like welcomed guests.

The stringent minimalism of haiku poetry began in Japan at least 800 years ago. A haiku poem consists of only 17 syllables and three lines – five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, another five in the final line. A haiku poem could be described as extremely condensed brevity – less is more.

One morning, Howard was sitting in that east-facing room

and was pondering how simple and uncluttered her life had become, living in the pared-down apartment space with few possessions and only one closet. Then the following haiku poem just suddenly seemed to bloom in her mind:

*"Down to one closet
And seventeen syllables.
It's a simple life."*

In that lean little poem, Howard managed to merge her simplified life (down to one closet) with the minimal rigor of the haiku form itself (only seventeen syllables).

In her book, there are 57 haiku poems. The book's cover is an illustration by Howard's niece, artist Sophia Heymans, who lives in New York.

Like so many others these days during the virus pandemic, Howard is in lock-down mode, along with her husband, Jerry, a retired English teacher. Despite the isolation, Howard, friends and fans enjoyed a celebration of her book's publication via a Zoom ceremony with 42 people tuned in. One of those friends was Tracy Rittmueller of Sauk Rapids, who convinced Howard her haiku poems were eminently worthy of publication. Rittmueller, an award-winning poet herself, is the founder and artistic director of a local website called "Lyricality" that features the works of area poets, prose writers and songwriters. The site fosters fellowship and communication among members of the central Minnesota arts community.

Rittmueller selected the 57 poems for the book.

Here is another of Howard's poems:



Juliana Howard

*"Sit now facing east.
Stay until you do not know.
Ready then to love."*

And another:

"RX for wisdom:

One per week for one full year.

Chew, swallow slowly."

That poem, like many others of Howard's, reveals her subtle, often gently sly-and-playful humor.

Howard does not consider herself a poet – rather a vessel who receives inspiration.

"God works through me," she said.

One of her major inspirations is Julian of Norwich, a mystic and visionary in Fourteenth Century England, who wrote "Revelations of Divine Love," the first known book written in English by a woman.

Howard said that book's message is to find the divine light within oneself before finding it in a church or book or in one's own head.

"Love must come from the heart, where love resides," she said, echoing the title of her haiku collection: "Love Will Lead You Home."

Poems • page 9

BENEDICTINE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF SAINT JOSEPH & SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

CELEBRATE WITH US!



Christmas Mass Schedule Christmas Eve

3:00 pm Saint John the Baptist Parish

We encourage those with access to YouTube, to participate in the Mass virtually. For those without internet access, a radio transmission of the Mass will be available in the Saint John the Baptist Parking Lot.

All are invited to come to the parking lot to receive Communion after Mass until 4:30 p.m.

Christmas Day

8:30 am Church of Saint Joseph

Mass will only be available via YouTube.

You are invited to come to church and receive Communion after Mass until 10:30 a.m.

For full details, visit our websites and YouTube Pages:

Church of St. Joseph

www.churchstjoseph.org

YouTube: Church of St Joseph St Joseph

Minnesota

Saint John the Baptist Parish

www.stjohnthebaptistparish.org

YouTube: St. John the Baptist Collegeville

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This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Central MN Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Our season partners:

Busing

from page 3

want them on our team.”

Becoming a driver takes weeks of training to become licensed with background checks and other on-boarding requirements.

“Bus drivers are the backbone of getting our kids back into the schools,” Schubert said.

Usually Trobec’s has 120 drivers, but they have 70 this year. Schubert said it’s because the demographic is older. Many drivers still want to work, but they won’t until after COVID-19 is contained.

“They need to protect themselves,” she said.

Toys for tots seeks donations

Deliver new, unwrapped toys to any of the Toys for Tots Marine drop boxes located throughout the community. Catholic Charities Emergency Services is also accepting toy donations during limited hours through a drop-off model on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 12:30-1:30 p.m. at the loading area of 157 Roosevelt Road, St. Cloud, Door

Lynda Shepard is in her third year at Trobec’s, and she’s remained on board during the pandemic. For 20 years, she was a foster care provider. Then she retired.

“I missed having the children around,” she said. Her sister was a bus driver in Kentucky. “She said this would be perfect for me. And she was right.”

Shepard drives a special education bus. She said she’s missed seeing the smiles behind the masks students were wearing, but the bigger challenge was helping students understand why they needed to keep their masks on.

“They are constantly wanting to take their masks down,” Shepard said. “We want to keep

D. Suggested donations: new toys, teen gifts, Bluetooth speakers, electronics, butterfly chairs, men’s slippers, nail polish, jewelry, personal care items, children’s coats and boots, adult coats (XL, XXL, XXXL) new socks and underwear (all ages). Outside this time, contact info@ccstcloud.org or 32-229-4560 to coordinate another drop-off time.



contributed photo

Starting Nov. 20, more than 80 of Trobec’s 100 buses are parked and waiting for students to return to school buildings.

you safe and healthy, so masks on. Keep yourself safe, and it will help keep others safe. I do repeat that a lot.”

Shepard said students don’t understand what “flatten the curve means, so we need to communicate in a way that doesn’t cause fear.”

When the announcements come that students are moving to distance learning, Shepard feels it.

“I was sad when I realized

I don’t have as much time to prepare for this as I thought,” she said.

She hopes students are able to go back to school and looks forward to seeing them first thing in the morning and at the end of their day.

“This is our normal lives right now,” Shepard said. “We have to decide how we are going to let this affect our daily lives, our work, our family and our kids. It’s hard.”

For Schubert’s part in these uncertain times, she’s still recruiting drivers. Right now if everyone was back in school on a regular schedule, she wouldn’t have enough drivers to cover the routes. And, Trobec’s is willing to pay for it “from day one starting with training,” she said.

“We weathered the storm in the spring,” she said. “We need to hunker down, and we’ll come through on the right side in 2021.”

A little change helps organizations power through

by Heidi L. Everett

news@thenewsleaders.com

Several local organizations are powering through and meeting needs thanks to a little extra change.

Stearns Electric Association’s Operation Round Up® Program contributed \$74,100 to 66 area organizations in November, including the St. Joseph Community and St. Stephen food shelves, the City of St. Stephen, Sartell Historical Society, and American Legion Post 221 of St. Stephen.

Through the Operation Round Up® program, Stearns Electric Association gives its members the opportunity to give back to the community by rounding up their electric bill to the nearest dollar. The rounded-up funds, no more than \$11.88 per year, per member, are placed in a trust fund that is administered by the Stearns Electric Association Trust Board.

This year, grants ranged between \$250 to \$2,000.

The City of St. Stephen will be using its grant to replace a pole and light for the city’s ice skat-

ing rink. The Sartell Historical Society will purchase a display cabinet for exhibits in the Sartell Community Center. American Legion Post 221 of St. Stephen will upgrade and provide uniforms for Legion members who are in the color guard.

Finally, grants to the St. Joseph Community Food Shelf and St. Stephen Food Shelf will be

used for food and supplies.

“Central Minnesota is lucky to have so many organizations and groups that are willing to donate time, money and efforts to better our local communities,” said Whitney Ditlevson, communication and marketing supervisor at Stearns Electric. “Through the Operation Round Up program, we are able to collect many small

donations ... and provide larger grants to worthy causes throughout our service territory. This small change really does make a big difference.”

Since the program’s inception in 1993, more than \$2.5 million has been awarded to 4,890 local non-profit organizations and community service programs.



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Caring for pets while earning a living at the same time? That's a win-win. If you are passionate about pets, starting a pet-sitting business may be right for you.

Pet owners — especially those who like to travel — are always looking for the most convenient care for their pets while they are away. While most veterinarians offer great boarding services for pets, many owners decide the home environment leads to a much more relaxed experience for both owner and pet.

That's where you come in. Pet-sitting businesses have expanded in recent years and are being started at a fast pace. Starting one is easy and requires very little initial investment. The marketing to get the word out on your business is the extent of your expenses, especially considering you don't need an expensive storefront or costly equipment to get started. You literally only need an open schedule and a love for animals to launch your business.

WHAT DO PET-SITTERS DO?

Pet-sitters handle a wide range of responsibilities for their pet-owner clients. This can include feeding, walking,

training, playing, bathing, brushing and administering medication. Cleaning up accidents and changing litter boxes can also be part of the job description, as can checking the mail, watering plants and general house upkeep.

You may work out an agreement to either spend the night at your clients' homes or just perform general check-ins throughout the day or night, so you have to be prepared to go with the flow.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU EARN?

As with any entrepreneurial job, you can earn as much as the market bears for your services. You can either charge by the hour or by the day, depending on what makes the most sense for your bottom line.

The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters reports the national average for this type of role is \$16 per visit. Depending on how many clients you can line up during a day, this can lead to a nice payday.



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Poems

from page 6

After Howard writes a haiku poem, she sends it out to 26 people, many of them nuns, including one in Belgium. Those fans of hers find wisdom, serenity and beauty emanating from such short, pared-down poems. In fact, Howard calls her poems “wisdom haikus.”

Yet another poem:
“Pause and look around.
See the sparrow do the same.
Know serenity.”

Howard is a strong believer in “synchronicity,” which is the simultaneous occurrence of events that appear related but have no discernible causal connection. For example, one day she and her husband ate a Chinese dinner at home and then Howard opened the fortune cookie that came with the meal. The cookie’s thin-paper message stated, “Those who face the east will have good fortune.”

The Howards smiled, nodding, chuckling and thinking of how Juliana sits every morning in front of the east-facing window at Serenity Place.

Life as journey

The Howards’ life together is a long journey filled with hard work, accomplishments, family and friends. They have five children – four boys and one daughter, Annie Heymans, who lives just six blocks from the Howards’ apartment.

The Howards have 10 grandchildren.

Howard was born in Dickenson, S.D. She met Jerry while attending Carleton College in Northfield, Minn., where she studied English.

“I met him at Danny’s Bar,” she said.

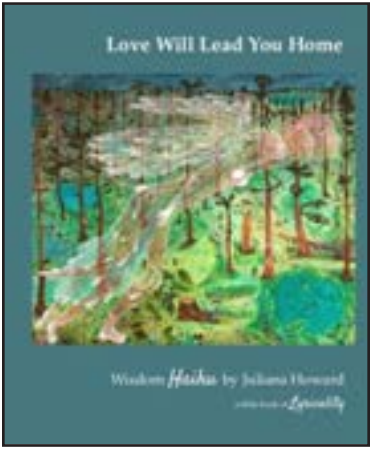
For 50 years, the couple and their children lived in St. Cloud. Then, later, Jerry and Juliana moved to Wisconsin, their summer place. They wintered in Arizona.

A few years ago, Jerry, who is 86, and Juliana, 84, moved into the assisted-living apartment partly because Jerry suffers constant chronic pain from severe arthritis.

Juliana was a teacher at Sts. Peter, Paul and Michael Middle School in St. Cloud, a school where she also served as a liturgy coordinator. In addition to writing poems, Howard has also written songs, many of them liturgical and spiritual works for children. Since 1986, six of her song collections were published by World Library Publications. She has also been the director of “The Crayons,” a St. Cloud Catholic schools’ children’s performing and recording group.

She has created music for psalms, such as her collection “150 Psalms for Singing,” based on “Psalms for Praying,” written by Nan C. Merrill.

A member of Benedictines for Peace and Justice, Howard is a volunteer at the St. Benedict Monastery and was honored as a Benedictine oblate. An oblate is one who associates with a Benedictine community in order to enrich



contributed photo

The cover of “Love Will Lead You Home,” a just-published collection of haiku poetry by Juliana Howard of St. Joseph.

a Christian way of life.

She is a member of “Cultural Bridges,” which promotes understanding among people of all races and cultures, and she volunteers on behalf of immigrants in the St. Cloud area. Those efforts are often the topics of Julian Howard’s regularly featured guest column called “Cultural Connections” in the St. Joseph Newsleader.

The following are the opening lines from Howard’s song, “I See a New World.”

“I see a new world coming soon where people share their pain.

“I feel a new world coming soon where peace and justice reign.

“I hear a new world coming soon where people dare to care.”

Howard’s “Love Will Lead You Home” is available at Minnesota Street Market in St. Joseph, Books Revisited in St. Cloud and via Amazon.com.

Cultural connections:

'I am just your ordinary neighbor'

I am new to St. Joseph and though not an immigrant or refugee, I do come from a different culture...the South.

I was born in Mississippi, and until moving North at age 10, I never knew any White people. I did not know anything about being judged by one’s skin color because all of my friends and family are Black.

We lived with my mother’s parents on a large rural parcel of land owned by my grandparents. In one small house there resided my grandparents, mother, four aunts and six children.

We are a very tight-knit family, and when my grandparents moved to Milwaukee, we all followed! We lived in a very large house in a Black neighborhood, and I was bused to school. It was there I had my first experience of feeling different and less than.

My cousin and I were the only two Black children in the elementary school. I remember



Haynes

my mother telling me to always be respectful. Now I understand she was gently giving me fair warning: Because of your skin color, more will be expected of you than of your classmates. Be extra good!

All of my teachers were White. I remember an incident that confused me at the time. My classmate and I were going over some school work with the teacher. My classmate said, “I think I get the hang of it.” I piped in, “Well, I already have the hang of it!” My teacher got very upset, telling me I should never, ever say “the hang of it.” She was furious, and I was shaken and confused because she hadn’t corrected my White classmate. I didn’t know how to feel, and I never told my

mom.

I now understand what bothered her was the word hang, which might trigger memories of lynching. Because my mom and grandmother were such strong role models, I never got blown away by these subtle examples of racism, but they still occur today, and they still sting.

Today, I live with my husband and three children and work at Serenity Place as a home-care assistant.

I am hard-working, kind and resourceful. I am a good spouse, good mother, good daughter and a great cook.

I am Black, and I am proud! Let’s see past my skin color. I am just your ordinary neighbor.

Respectfully,
Allair Haynes

...

If you have any questions, contact Juliana Howard at 715-791-8976 or Jamal Elmi at 320-310-2351.

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Opinion

And just like that. It happened to us. COVID-19.

**Heidi L.
Everett**
Editor



My husband and I opted to hunker down on Thanksgiving with our one remaining child at home. No more immediate family. No extended family.

We were doing our part as a precautionary measure to slow the spread of COVID-19 locally.

We informed Goopa that he wouldn't see the grandkids face to face. Told the nieces and siblings no feisty games of 500 or Hand and Foot this year.

FaceTime worked for two of our adult children.

Another met me on the Wobegone Trail for a socially distanced walk.

Then out of nowhere, my husband went down. In bed. High fever. Aches. Pains. Headache.

For 13 days.

At the time of this writing, we are nearly three weeks in, and he is finally moving around but still has no sense of smell or taste. And, he said he feels like his head is underwater. He can't drive or have the TV on because it overloads his senses.

We were stunned how COVID-19 hit him because the guy is pretty healthy and prior to COVID-19 was playing hockey three nights a week in his late 40s. We are also not sure how he got it because we've been pretty good about keeping to ourselves, masking up and sanitizing.

The 11-year-old munchkin got it within days and had a deep, painful cough for one day and then was fine.

I was knocked out for 24 hours and then popped out of bed like nothing happened. Again, we were stunned because I rarely make the healthiest of choices, and COVID-19 was mild for me.

And the guy we avoided?

My dad – an 80-year-old with diabetes and heart disease – tested positive this week. It's been brutal with the fevers and labored breathing. He is staying with my sister right now, so we can keep an eye on him and measure his oxygen levels. I lay awake at night staring at my phone, so I don't miss a call saying we have to bring him to an emergency room. Sometimes I cry, worrying that there won't be an emergency bed for him.

During the holidays, COVID-19 exploded in our circle of friends and family. We went from only knowing a few people who had confirmed cases to dozens of people who had confirmed cases.

I'm grateful to the fabulous medical team at CentraCare-Melrose Clinic for the drive-through COVID-19 testing. (And, I'm publicly apologizing for grabbing your arm and flinching when you came at me with the throat swab! Involuntary reflex.)

This illness is fast spreading. It's radically inconsistent in its effect on people. And, it's debilitating and deadly for too many.

We were careful and still got COVID-19. Everyone will likely get COVID-19. The key is to slow the spread, so we can care for those who need it.

Please. Please. Please. Wear your masks. Keep your distance. Wash your hands. Connect with those you love on digital platforms, so you'll be able to hug them when we get through this.

Our view: Commit to fact-finding

In September, the World Health Organization and eight other organizations issued a statement about the infodemic (not the pandemic).

What is an infodemic? An overabundance of information that includes deliberate attempts to share wrong information, to polarize perspective and to advance alternative agendas, among other things.

The statement noted, "the technology we rely on to keep connected and informed is enabling and amplifying an infodemic."

One way technology amplifies the infodemic is through algorithms, a set of instructions technology is programmed to follow to achieve a certain result. For example, if you are online shopping and place an item in your cart, the retailer might have an algorithm that suggests other products. You may see, "People who purchased this item also considered these items."

This example really isn't much different than a server asking if you'd like "fries with that." It's upselling to achieve the goal of more sales.

Upselling also works to advance

ideologies and misinformation. For example, if you are on social media, and you like, comment or share a post that includes something racist, sexist, that is a conspiracy theory or that touts fiction as fact, then algorithms will continue to show you similar content to achieve the goal of more activity. In other words, "People who liked this post also engaged with these other posts." Why? Activity is the basis for advertising revenue.

While you may think the content you are seeing on digital platforms is random, it's not. Every search, swipe and share makes the algorithms you encounter smarter.

The infodemic isn't new to the internet. Similar conversations may have happened with the invention of the printing press and the publishing of the penny press, when news and information of the day could easily be made available to the masses and not rely on oral tradition or the wealthy who could afford to print or purchase books and newspapers.

In the 1980s, another monumental shift occurred when cable television

and the 24-hour news cycle forever changed the way news was presented and consumed. This in turn, led to the repeal of the Fairness Doctrine, which had required media outlets to present unbiased, fair coverage of key news. The repeal was made because people could seek out multiple perspectives from many media outlets, rather than just the big three that had been around for decades.

Furthermore, local news stations are being purchased by large businesses. Sinclair Media Group is one that owns nearly 300 television stations, or more than 70 percent of local news stations, across the country. Sinclair pushes a specific agenda through what is still largely the most trusted news source: local news. Sinclair anchors are told what to say and who to interview.

The bottom line is this: much like the pandemic, we have to take responsibility for our mental and intellectual health in the infodemic. We must commit to seeking out a variety of sources from the right, left, center and non-partisan to determine fact from fiction.

Let's begin the National Restoration

Let's make America good again; let's begin the National Restoration. It's time to restore the forces of goodness, decency and democracy. It's a tall order, but it can happen if we all work hard together to make it so.

Let's restore the checks and balances that help maintain a distribution of power among the three branches of government – executive, legislative, judicial. Founding Father James Madison's checks-and-balances concept is the crucial safeguard against the lopsided misuse of power, against the tentacles of tyranny.

Let's restore policies and enact iron-clad laws to limit presidential power. The dangerous drift toward an "Imperial Presidency" must be stopped because we have seen all too well how the autocratic, reckless exercise of power can veer alarmingly close to tyranny.

Let's restore every word, comma and period of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which was unwisely weakened by a U.S. Supreme Court decision seven years ago.

Let's further restore election confidence by illegalizing voter-suppression schemes, which have increased drastically in recent years. They include consolidating polling places or moving them to far-flung places, limiting early-voting days and placing hurdles in the way of voters trying to register. Those partisan schemes were and are aimed at limiting voting among targeted demographic groups – mainly Blacks.

Let's restore and/or create national standards for all elections. Wobbly variations of voting processes not only cause intolerable situations such as people having to stand in line all day

**Dennis
Dalman**
Reporter



to vote, but they also undermine the cherished right that every voter, every vote should count. Local jurisdictions would still conduct their own elections, but they would have to adhere to uniform standards.

Let's restore and strengthen the concept of one person-one vote by abolishing the cockeyed electoral-college system. Yes, it's in the U.S. Constitution, but it's one of those ideas whose time has come – to go!

Let's restore the integrity of voting by abolishing the practice of gerrymandering – the skewed partisan re-drawing of U.S. House legislative boundary lines every 10 years based on U.S. Census results. Let's end it. Instead, bipartisan or nonpartisan committees working with precise, objective computer data should determine the boundaries.

Let's further restore election confidence by forming a permanent federal agency to root out and to combat efforts by foreign countries to meddle in democratic processes. That insidious cyber war can undermine our trust in the voting process and faith in our democracy.

Let's restore, tighten and enforce campaign-finance laws so corporations and the wealthiest cannot dictate, through their congressional puppets, the direction and circumstances of everybody's daily lives.

Let's restore confidence in our institutions, forbidding the politicizing or weaponizing of them. We have seen with creeping dread how they can be manipulated by the impulsive whims of corrupt movers and shakers.

Let's restore all laws and regulations that protect our environment, and let's rejoin the Paris Climate Accords so all countries can work together fast and furious to slow and stop apocalyptic climate change.

Let's restore our mutual alliances with friendly countries.

Let's restore detailed plans for comprehensive immigration reform and reunite children who were viciously snatched from parents at the U.S.-Mexican border. And fully reinstate the "Dreamers" Act.

Let's restore adherence to facts, evidence, truths and science while rejecting lunatic conspiracy theories and bloated lies that proliferate on social media.

With renewed commitment, let's restore five decades of civil-rights laws so they truly do, in fact, make possible equal opportunities for Blacks, who should not have to live in fear of hate crimes and white supremacists.

Finally, let's fully restore the Affordable Care Act and work hard to make it much better and more efficient for one and all.

If we Americans, through visionary leaders and our legislators (the ones who are true public servants), insist upon those restorations/reforms, we can help restore national unity and a renewed trust in our institutions so that ours will become a life-enhancing nation for all of us. And then, at long last, America will be restored as a major leader of *the Free World*.

Have an opinion? Share it: news@thenewsleaders.com

Letter to the editor

St. Joseph COVID-19 response

by Rick Schultz
St. Joseph mayor

I hope this message finds you all safe and healthy.

Our community is in the middle of an unprecedented time as we respond to the threat of COVID-19 here in Minnesota. I understand how stressful and sometimes scary this is for many of you and I share your same concerns. We are all taking important steps to protect ourselves and loved ones.

The City of St. Joseph continues to work with our area cities, Stearns County and the Minnesota Department of Health to monitor and update protocols to keep residents and staff safe as the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our area continue to rise. Slowing the spread of this virus is a serious matter that will require extraordinary efforts from us all.

What the city is doing

As a city, our actions in response to this crisis are thoughtful, prepared and applicable. We have made some difficult decisions to help protect our community. On Nov. 20, we

closed all city facilities and cancelled all city-sponsored events through Dec. 31. These decisions were made in response to the most recent set of orders issued by Gov. Tim Walz.

While our city facilities may be closed, we are committed to providing essential services, including public safety (police and fire) and utilities (sewer, water and streets). Administrative staff may be working remotely on a rotational basis. To contact staff, call or email St. Joseph City Hall at 320-363-7201 or cityoffices@cityofstjoseph.com.

As the events and information evolve, we continue to look at ways to keep you informed of city actions. We are committed to ensuring our city government can make decisions and provide for our residents and businesses. Even though your Government Center is closed, regular meetings are still being held. We will open the building for all meetings beginning in December. We do have virtual meeting capability should residents choose not to come in person to meetings.

What you can do

Each of us must accept our own responsibility to help get through COVID-19. I encourage you to follow the MDH’s recommendations and guidelines

which include physical (social) distancing if you must leave your home and shop smart by purchasing only your immediate needs.

Local businesses, especially our restaurants and bars, are also going to need our support. They are essential to St. Joseph and give our city an exclusive hometown feel which we love. I encourage you to purchase gift cards and/or use takeout or delivery options so our small business owners can survive this uncertain time. You can find a list of restaurants and bars on the Visit Joetown website – <https://www.joetownmn.com>.

Along with our local restaurants and bars, we have other small businesses that could use your support. Businesses that are offering curbside or home delivery of products, hardware, groceries, retail and more. Please seek them out and use our local businesses when you are able.

Lastly, take time to check on neighbors via email and phone, ensuring their well-being and that they have enough essential supplies.

Stay connected

Visit our website at cityofstjoseph.com (and the Newsleaders website at thenewsleaders.com) for the most recent information from the city. It is possible to

subscribe to receive updates from the city via email. It’s important that information gets out to all our residents. If you have contact information for your neighbors, please share this information with them and encourage them to get connected online or via email. The more we share and work together, the more all our residents can benefit.

Please feel free to reach out to me or our city administrator if you have observations, suggestions or questions. These next few weeks may upend us once again.

In these times of uncertainty, I want you to know we at the city are here to help you navigate through the coming weeks as best we can. Together, we each contribute a small part to the overall effort. This reminds me of a statement by Vince Lombardi: “Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”

I have faith in my city, doing what we can, helping each other!



Mayor Rick

PUBLIC NOTICE

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2. The stated address of the principal place of business is or will be: 2314 Heritage Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56301.
3. The name and street address of all persons conducting business under the above assumed name including any corporations that may be conducting this business: Matthew Steven Fuchs, 2314 Heritage Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56301.

4. I certify I am authorized to sign this certificate. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

Dated: Nov. 14, 2020

Filed: Nov. 14, 2020

/s/ Matthew Steven Fuchs

Publish: Nov. 27 & Dec. 11, 2020

Community Calendar

Is your event listed? Send your information to: Newsleader Calendar, 1622 11th Ave. SE., St. Cloud, MN 56304., e-mail it to news@thenewsleaders.com. Most events are listed at no cost. Those events are typically free or of minimal charge for people to attend. Some events, which have paid advertising in the Newsleaders, are also listed in the calendar and may

charge more.

Monday, Dec. 14
St. Joseph Food Shelf, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph.

Tuesday, Dec. 15
Memory Writers group develops topics and turns in stories, 10 a.m., Stearns History

Museum, 235 33rd Ave. S, St Cloud.

Holistic Moms Network, 7-8:30 p.m., Good Earth Co-op, 2010 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud. 320-252-2489.

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.

Thursday, Dec. 17
St. Joseph Food Shelf, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph.

Monday, Dec. 21
St. Joseph Food Shelf, open

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

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

Thursday, Dec. 24
St. Joseph Food Shelf, open 1-3 p.m., 124 First Ave. SE, St. Joseph.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
INVESTIGATE BEFORE YOU INVEST! Midwest Free Community Paper Association does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all classifieds and other ads which require an investment. (MCN)

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& a new year filled
with prosperity and success!*

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