

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, March 19, 2021
Volume 26, Issue 6
Est. 1995

Town Crier

Registration opens for fastpitch softball

The Sartell Swarm 2021 summer softball season registration is open March 10-26 (10U-18U) and May 15 (6U-8U). Fastpitch softball teams for athletes pre-K through 18 will be formed by grade for school year 2020-2021. For more information or to register, visit sartellfastpitch.com or contact Daryl Scholz at daryl@sartellfastpitch.com.

Sartell Summer Baseball registration now open

The 2021 Summer Sartell Baseball registration is open. Please go to <http://SartellBaseball.com> to register. Find more information by following us on Facebook.

SFX fish fry set March 26

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church has scheduled a drive-through-only fish fry from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Friday, March 26, outside the school at 308 Second St. N., Sartell. Menu consists of fish, beans, coleslaw, chips and dinner roll. Only 500 meals will be available. All proceeds benefit the children and youth of St. Francis Xavier community. Tickets may be purchased online at stfrancis-sartell.org (click the donate button to order tickets), at the door or by calling the parish office at (320) 252-1363.

Around Cloud tutors sought

Around Cloud Tutors is a partnership mission of United Way of Central Minnesota/PFSS and Greater St. Cloud Development Corp. with the goal of providing equitable educational opportunities for all through free digital K-12 tutoring. Tutors will support the educational needs of students by serving as an online tutor, reading helper or post-secondary advisor. Volunteers will help students' complete homework by being a present resource, dependable, punctual and must have technology equipped with a video camera and working knowledge of Zoom and Google Meets. All tutors must complete a training session and complete a background check. Visit aroundcloudtutors.org to sign up or email aroundcloudtutors@gmail.com for more information.

INSERT:
City of St. Stephen
April newsletter



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Lucky day for Pot-o-Gold event

A group of co-workers from Encore Capital Group walk the Annual Country Financial Pot-o-Gold 5K together March 13 on a beautiful 45-degree morning in Sartell. They are (left to right) Christy Biss, of St. Cloud; Becky Wallin, of St. Cloud; Sue Baker, of Sartell; Justina Gomes, of Sartell; Russ Overman, of Cold Spring; and Denise Condon, of Sauk Rapids.

Ridlehoover excited to hit ground running

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

Excited. Chat with Jeff Ridlehoover for even a few minutes and that's the word you'll hear most often.

Whether the topic is equity, welcoming students back to school after COVID-19 or building a strategic plan, Ridlehoover, who will be the Sartell-St. Stephen school district's

superintendent on July 1, exudes excitement.

"I'm an absolute optimist," Ridlehoover said.

Ridlehoover, who currently is the assistant superintendent in the Mounds View school district, was chosen by the school board after candidate interviews concluded March 11. Eighteen people applied for the position, and the board initially interviewed a slate of six can-

didates before conducting more intensive interviews with three finalists. The board approved his contract on March 15.

Three tasks will be at the top of his to-do list. First, in the next few weeks, the board expects to receive a report on the equity audit, an initiative started after students and parents raised issues of racial, religious and social-economic fairness. Although the issue had been

discussed for years, it became most urgent after the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis last summer. Second, as the COVID-19 pandemic slowly ends, educators are concerned about what experiences students have lost in the past year. Finally, the board delayed updating its strategic plan until a new superintendent was hired.

Ridlehoover said he's "excit-

Ridlehoover • page 2

St. Stephen sportsmen to give out birdhouse kits

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

A perennially popular family activity – birdhouse building – will again take place in St. Stephen this year, but this time by "distance."

From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sun-

day, March 21, the St. Stephen Sportsmen's Club will hand out bird-building kits in what's dubbed as a "Birdhouse Giveaway" in a drive-by at St. Stephen City Hall. In previous years, parents and children loved coming to city hall to pitch in and help one another

build the birdhouses, with pre-cut wood pieces and tools supplied by Sportsmen's Club members and other contributors and volunteers.

But, alas, along came the COVID-19 pandemic, and so this year, to be on the safe side, the club decided to make the

kits available via drive-by. Each kit contains enough wood pieces and directions for each family to build one bluebird house. People who drive up can stay inside their cars, and volunteers will put the kits in their trunks.

There is no charge for the bluebird-house kits.

Regional Park biking trail comes into focus

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

At long last, an extensive bike-trails plan is taking shape for Sartell's Sauk River Regional Park, and construction might begin as early as this fall.

The trail system will involve a paved trail from the park's parking lot to a swimming beach at the Sauk River, as well as many other interconnected trails designed for various skill levels of bikers – beginner, intermediate, advanced. It is estimated to cost about \$500,000,

of which \$452,000 would be grant money already secured.

Sartell City Engineer Jon Halter presented a detailed overview of the plan at the city council's last meeting. About eight years ago, Sartell received approximately \$1 million in grant-funding, some of which was used to construct a parking lot at Sauk River Regional Park, a large tract of wooded land east of the diamond interchange at Highway 15 and CR 120. Halter noted about \$500,000 of that money was used to build a trail along CR

1. There is still \$452,000 left from a Department of Resources Legacy Grant to Sartell. Last summer, the city council considered a huge "laundry list" of proposed ideas for Sauk River Regional Park improvements, and of all those ideas a bike-trail system seemed to find the most favorable responses.

Since then, the city contracted with a bike-design company of Madison, Wisconsin, known as IMBA, to do design work for the trail system. Meantime, the city's engineering firm of Short Elliot Hendrickson is

also working on plans for the paved-trail portion of the trail system.

The park, half of which is in St. Cloud, is divided by the meandering Sauk River – thus its name.

Plans from the IMBA design company will be presented to the council within the next month or two, Halter noted.

Bids would be advertised this summer, and construction of the trail system could begin this fall, with completion anticipated by spring of 2022.

Ridlehoover

from front page

ed to engage and see the results of the audit.”

“Everyone is on their own equity journey,” he said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

CITY OF ST. STEPHEN ADVERTISEMENT OF BIDS: PARKS LAWN MOWING

The City of St. Stephen is now accepting bids for the mowing of its parks for the year 2021. The City will accept bids from today until 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 31, 2021.

The following information should be included in the bid: Company name, address, phone number and proof of insurance.

Mowing, trimming and blowing of grass is required at all sites. Mowing will be timed so the length of the grass is maintained at a height of approximately 2-1/2 inches to 5 inches, but under no circumstances will mowing occur more than six (6) times in a calendar month, unless prior authorization is granted by the Mayor or a designated Council member. In addition to mowing, please include pricing for fertilizing the Smoley ball fields along with spraying the fence lines of the ball fields.

The following properties are to be maintained:

“When you think about lived experience, that’s what makes everybody who they are. I’ve been in a number of places with a high level of diversity. I’ve formed great relationships with families. It’s about how we treat other people, help them feel safe and that they be-

Ponds Edge Park: Fifth Avenue SE
Hlebain Park: 504 First St. SE
Parkway Park: 606 First St. NE
Smoley Fields (Upper & Lower): 25 Fifth St. NE
City Hall: 2 Sixth Ave. SE
City Garage: 14th Avenue SE
(This is NOT to be mowed weekly. A monthly/bi-monthly per cut amount can be prepared)

Please provide a per cut amount for each property listed above.

Please submit a bid sheet to: City of St. Stephen, ATTN: CITY CLERK, 2 Sixth Ave. SE, St. Stephen, MN 56375. Please mark your envelope: Lawn Mowing Bid 2021.

Bids will be opened during the April City Council Meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 1, 2021.

/s/ Julie Jacobs, City Clerk

Dated: March 19, 2021

Publish: March 19, 2021

long. It encompasses all types, what every student and family needs. What are their unique gifts and chances for growth? How can we help each family be successful?”

In-person learning is now available to all Sartell-St. Stephen school district students, but some have opted for distance learning as public health concerns continue.

Looking ahead to next fall, Ridlehoover said “when we welcome kids back not to overwhelm them with testing. Those things will be fine. We need to welcome our kids back as human beings first. Put our arms around them. Make them feel comfortable. Start with loving them. We need to take care of them from the social and emotional perspective. There’s more to it than tests and homework. Build the foundation first.”

When working with the board on a strategic plan, he stressed not only setting a long-term vision but also setting checkpoints along the way and being ready to update and adapt. He cited COVID-19 as a situation that requires “agility” to make adjustments.

During two interviews, board members covered a variety of topics including leadership, communication and educational philosophy including personalized learning.

He said introducing that approach begins with professional development for teachers and then crafting learning experiences that are meaningful to students that might include small groups or individual ex-



photo by Mike Knaak

Jeff Ridlehoover answered questions from the Sartell-St. Stephen school board on March 8.

periences.

Ridlehoover “has done a strategic plan that looks like what we want, has done equity work and put that plan into place,” said board member Matt Moehrle. “He has seen the work we need to do over the next few years. He could navigate us through what we are going to face.”

Ridlehoover has been assistant superintendent in the Mounds View school district, which serves almost 12,000 students with two high schools, since 2017.

Ridlehoover earned a Doctor of Education degree from Hamline University. He earned his Master of Arts degree in education from the University of St. Thomas and a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from the University of Minnesota. In addition to serving as assistant superintendent, Ridlehoover is an adjunct professor at Hamline University. He has held principal positions in Mounds View,

Wayzata and Anoka-Hennepin school districts. Earlier he taught chemistry at Champlin Park High School. He started his career as a science teacher in Lakeville.

Ridlehoover will replace current superintendent Jeff Schwiebert, who announced in December that he plans to retire on June 30 after serving the district for seven years. Ridlehoover’s three-year contract starts at \$185,000 per year.

In the next three months, Ridlehoover said as time allows, he plans to “visit and listen.” He needs to close out his current job but also wants to become more familiar with the Sartell-St. Stephen district.

He said there are high expectations for students in Sartell-St. Stephen schools and there’s also “a high level of community involvement and support. I’m used to that,” Ridlehoover said.

“I want to hit the ground running,” he said. “I can’t wait to get started.”

Blotter

March 1

11 a.m. Medical. Sartell. Officers and Mayo medics were dispatched to a residence for an elderly individual experiencing a weak hand, facial changes and difficulty speaking. Mayo medics transported the individual to St. Cloud Hospital for further medical assistance.

March 3

6:23 p.m. No pay. Pinecone Road S. An officer was dispatched to a call of a no pay for gas. The officer contacted the registered owner of the vehicle and the owner admitted she had forgotten to pay for the gas after going in for groceries. The owner was on her way back to the store to pay for the gas.

March 5

3:09 p.m. Noise. Hi Vue Drive. An officer was called to an individual

making a lot of noise, screaming and slamming doors. When the officer arrived on scene, he found a male working on a vehicle in the driveway. The male stated he was working on the truck and was getting frustrated; his frustrations were not directed to anyone other than the truck. Male was asked to keep his comments and noise level down.

March 6

11:38 p.m. DWI. 2nd Street S. Officers were dispatched to a possible intoxicated driver. Officers contacted the driver, who showed signs of impairment. An officer working a “Toward Zero Deaths” shift performed field sobriety testing and administered a preliminary breath test, ultimately the driver was booked into the Stearns County Jail for Driving While Intoxicated.

March 7

7:50 p.m. Unwanted. CR 120. An officer was dispatched to a fast-food chain to assist with getting two customers to leave. The manager explained they were not able to honor three coupons toward the food ordered by the couple in the drive through. The couple became upset and refused to leave the drive through. The couple eventually left the area before the officer arrived on scene.

March 8

8:43 a.m. Bike stolen. Victory Avenue. An officer was dispatched to a report of a theft of a men’s bike from an apartment building garage. The officer reviewed video with apartment staff and was unable to identify the individual. The suspect road the bike out of the garage, and the camera lost view of him.

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Walgreens

www.thenewsleaders.com

Clear thinking, quick reactions lead Mock Trial team to state tournament

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

Clear thinking, confidence, quick reactions. Sartell High School’s Mock Trial team put these skills to the test as they competed in the state tournament March 3 and 4.

To prepare for the tournament, team members read and memorized a 90-page document outlining a case based on actual civil or criminal court action. This year’s case involved a civil lawsuit after a wedding venue canceled a couple’s event because of COVID-19 restrictions. The couple sued to get their deposit refunded.

Because of continuing COVID-19 restrictions, this year’s 16-team contest took

place via Zoom instead of in a courtroom. But real judges still presided. Team members fill the roles of attorneys and witnesses on both sides of the case.

The final state tournament rankings have not been announced, but the team won one and lost two with losses to last year’s champion and this year’s champion. Madison Benson was selected as an All-State Attorney and Camryn Sharpe was selected All-State Witness.

“Mock trial is a good experience to work on public speaking and get to know people,” team member Kristi Ross said. Ross, a junior, said because of the Mock Trial experience, she’s more “comfortable in front of adults and peers.”

Junior Emma Arneson said

“thinking on your feet is the skill you need.” Added Ross, you have “to react on the spot.”

In addition to developing those skills, Arneson described the team as a “close-knit family of positive people.” She hopes the contacts she made will lead to internships while Ross said the mock trial experience “is the reason I’ve thought about government administration and politics.”

Sartell’s team went to the state tournament three of the past five years.

The team’s advisor is Nate Dahl, an attorney with Meshbesh & Spence.

Arneson is the daughter of Elizabeth and Mike Arneson. Ross is the daughter of Otgontuya and John Ross.



photo by Mike Knaak

Sartell Mock Trial team members include the following: (front, from left) Nathan Ramberg, Emma Newman, Lydia Wilson and Camryn Sharpe; (back) Meti Negewo, Emma Arneson, Taylor Chaika, Matthew Dietz, Kristi Ross and Ellena Ashby. Not pictured: Alyssa Stuckey, Madison Benson and Coach Nate Dahl.

People

St. Cloud Financial Credit Union announced **St. Stephen resident Theresa Tschumperlin**, chief operations officer, was selected to participate in a two-year innovation leadership program and will partake in a cohort with the Filene i3 program. This prestigious program is focused on innovation and equipping top credit union professionals with the mindset, tools and network to lead and shape the credit union of the 21st century. Along with 23 credit union leaders, Tschumperlin will begin work on the biggest issues facing the credit union industry

The **Sartell Chamber of Commerce** recently welcomed three new board members: **Kelly Corbett**, Gabriel Media; **Tina Hengel**, Premier Real Estate;



Tschumperlin

and **Leslie Lane**, Central Minnesota Credit Union.

Reese Nordin recently graduated with a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice studies and a certificate in forensic psychology from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

PGA Professional **Brock Swanson** from **Blackberry Ridge Golf Club** in Sartell was recently selected as one of four national award winners for the TaylorMade staff Rising Star Award. This prestigious award was created to recognize those staff members who joined the TaylorMade team within the last two years and are already top commercial performers – a true business partner

People • page 4



Swanson

Brent Ascheman Earns Certified Valuation Analyst (CVA) Certification



Brent Ascheman
CPA, CVA
Senior Accountant

Brent Ascheman has successfully completed the certification process with the National Association of Certified Valuators and Analysts™ (NACVA®) to earn the Certified Valuation Analyst® (CVA®) credential. The CVA credential is granted only to qualified individuals with considerable professional experience in the field of business valuation.

Brent joined CDS in 2013 as a Staff Accountant. He graduated from St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, MN with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management. In 2018, Brent was promoted to Senior Accountant. He received his CPA certification from the Minnesota Board of Accountancy in 2017. His focus areas are tax preparation, financial statements, business consulting, business valuations, bookkeeping, and the petroleum industry.

Brent is a member of the AICPA, the MNCPA, and the NACVA®. He is a member of the Central Minnesota Networking group, the Sartell Chamber of Commerce, and the St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce. He is involved with the Central Minnesota Builders Association. Brent is a 2019 graduate from the St. Cloud Chamber's Leadership program.

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7:30PM**
youthchorale.org
voting begins March 20

"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."

People

from page 3

ner at every level and exemplary performance.

Four St. Stephen students earned fall academic honors. They are the following: **Allison Fournier** and **Haley Fournier**, St. Cloud Technical & Community College, president’s list for a GPA of 4.0. **Caleb Skold**, St. Cloud Technical & Community College, dean’s list for a GPA of 3.5 to 3.99. **Sammy Quaal**, North Dakota State University, dean’s list for a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

WhiteBox Marketing, owned by **Carrie Karki** of Sartell, took home five awards in the 2021 American Advertising Awards competition at the local level, including a Gold Addy for the “Keep the Lights On St. Cloud” campaign that helped promote the support of local area small businesses. The awards were given based on professional work that was done during 2020. Other awards were won in categories for branding, video and self-promotion. The WhiteBox building itself won an award – intentionally branded inside

and out with WhiteBox Marketing colors and style—as did their internal mural that reads “The Best Way to Predict the Future is to Create It.”

The following students from Sartell earned fall 2020 academic honors at their respective schools:

Allison Bunkers, dean’s list for a grade-point average of 3.6 or higher at Bethel University.

Joshua Maricle-Roberts, dean’s list for GPA of 3.7 or higher at Concordia College.

Hunter Boelz, president’s academic honors list for a GPA of 3.5 or higher at Dakota State University.

Dean’s list for students who earned a 3.7 grade-point average or higher at Gustavus Adolphus College: **Hannah Congdon**, **Alexandru Florea**, **Kristin Martens**, **Laura Schwichtenberg** and **Maia Trombley**.

Taylor Buske and **Anna Ellis** for earning a GPA of at least 3.50 Iowa State University.

Chelsey Sorvig, dean’s list for GPA of 3.5 or higher at Mayville State University.

Jessica Jahr, president’s list for GPA of 3.5 or higher at Minnesota State College Southeast.

Dean’s list for earning a GPA of 3.5 or higher at North Dakota State University: **Shane Corbett**, **Jessica Deters**, **Ryan Fernholz**, **Morgan Grasswick**, **Kyle Heying**, **Kaylan Kremer**, **Elizabeth Kucala**, **Jodi Lipp**, **Riley O’Connell**, **Mitchell Rolek**, **Anna Schmitz**, **Chloe Spoden**, **Aria Staiger**, **Rhett Staiger**, **Benjamin Yelle** and **Lauren Yelle**.

Dean’s list for GPA of 3.75 or higher at St. Cloud State University: **Osama Ayyub**, **Tara Berger**, **Riley Buck**, **Dane Cagle**, **Brennan Cantu**, **Katherine Cashman**, **Kyle Cielinski**, **Justin Clauson**, **Tyler Cronquist**, **Lauren Ditmarson**, **Kelly Duong**, **Kyle Harthan**, **Megan Huddle**, **Alyssa Johnson**, **Audrey Kotaska**, **Marena Kouba**, **Rachel Kugler**, **Samuel Larson**, **Christopher Leach**, **Anna Lehto**, **Michael Lindstrom**, **Kayleen Martins**, **Spencer Meier**, **Morgan Muehlbauer**, **Katherine Muntifering**, **Courtney Olund**, **Tiana Parks**, **Logan Payne**, **Cera Perrault**, **Rachana Pokhrel**, **Gregory Renner**, **Laurie Robles Ramirez**, **Skylar Rychner**, **Gabrielle Schlagheck**, **Melvin Schmid**, **Nathan Schmidt**, **Brendan Schwartz**, **Aaron Soderholm**, **Alexis Stanoch**, **Addison Stavos**, **Samantha Styrbicky**, **Chloe Thomas**, **Jarron Walther**, **Hannah Welsh**, **Morgan Zakrajshek** and **Lidia Zipp**,

President’s list for a GPA of 4.0 at St. Cloud Technical & Community College: **Istahil Ahmed**, **Timothy Andrews**, **Muhammad Bilal**, **Bethany Blackmer**, **Brigid Brew**, **Emily Brew**, **Haley Craven**, **Madeline Davis**, **Connor DeMorett**, **Alex Dusha**, **Megan Hall**, **Jean Hopkins**, **Avery Jones**, **Mekhi Kigozi**, **William Lenneman**, **Sydney Lloyd**, **Morgan Madsen**, **Alex Maier**, **Kelly Jo McCarty**, **Monica McCoy**, **Madison Mollner**, **Megan Nelson**, **Evan Olson**, **Paige Parvey**, **Isabella Randolph**, **Ava Scheffler** and **Austin Schreiner**.

Dean’s list for a GPA of 3.5 to 3.99 at St. Cloud Technical & Community College: **Alicia Anderson**, **Benjamin Brandt**, **Lori Eischens**, **Jadyn Hanson**, **Riley Hauck**, **Brandon Hejhal**, **Daniel Jurek**, **Nathan Kieffer**, **Austin Leibel**, **Rachel Lindmeier**, **Logan Milisits**, **Kaden Nordby**, **Janey Peterson**, **Jacob Pfau**, **Javada Ringwelski**, **Gabriella Sanchez**, **Martin Schendel**, **Maddison Schulte**, **Brett Sedahl**, **Kacie Thompson**, **Michala Vanheel**, **Lexi Warnke**, **Viggo Weeks**, **Jacob Weyer**, **Mercedes Wilson**, **Amanda Woods** and **Dylan Zukosky**.

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Manage Emotional Stress

Selling your home can be stressful, especially if you have an emotional connection to a property.

When the process begins to affect your mental well-being, it's critical to take a step back and manage your feelings. Rushing through a transaction to get it over with can lead to negative financial results or regret. Before hiring an expert to list your home, make sure you're emotionally ready, and the decision is right.

If you're hesitant, draft a list of the reasons you plan to sell and the advantages you may acquire by staying. If you find more things you like about living in the property, consider forgetting the idea and re-evaluating it in a few months. However, if you're committed to selling, consider these tips to control your emotions.

YOUR HOME IS A PRODUCT

Regardless of the memories you created within the property, to a potential buyer, it's a home where they will lay their roots. Showcase the house in its best light while avoiding the feelings that may arise. If you painted your walls with bright and vibrant colors, consider repainting them with more neutral tones that speak to a broader audience. It's also an excellent idea to



© ADOBE STOCK

hire a professional cleaning service before going to market. They can remove unnecessary clutter, clean the carpets and polish parts of your home that are often forgotten.

INVOLVE YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS
The stress of being left out of the loop during a real

estate transaction can be challenging to manage. Be honest with your real estate agent and explain that you wish to be involved in the process. It's essential to find a balance between remaining active and being intrusive to your agent. While you shouldn't get in the way while they work, it's beneficial to

respond to feedback, keep the home tidy between showings and ask your expert for updates.

TURN TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY
Sometimes taking a step back from the sale can provide stress relief. Rather than worry yourself about the

transaction, try to find time to connect with friends and family. Discuss your concerns with them about the home sale for a different perspective. Perhaps they have gone through the same emotional struggles that come with selling your property and will provide you with honest advice.

Land

Great for horses. Mostly open with some woods. **(ONE LEFT)** Two 39-acre tracts on 260th Street in Collegeville Twp. \$280,000 each. MLS #5632458

Privacy. 80 acres includes woods, open fields and a part of natural environment Mud Lake. Driveway is ½-mile lane from 260th Street. Wakefield Twp. \$576,000
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"There are lots of buyers and we need listings!"

Opinion

Our view

Be intentional returning to a new normal

The stories and columns in this edition speak to what the next phase of coming out of a pandemic might look like.

Readers will find school districts planning for a return to normal in the next academic year. Throughout the next few months, educators will likely be discussing how to make up for what's been lost in the past year from educational and extracurricular experiences as well as social and emotional support. Districts received and will get more federal and state money to cover COVID-related expenses to help students. They will have to determine the best ways to invest that money to bring students who may have fallen behind up to standards but also to push ahead top achievers.

One of our columnists encourages all levels of government to learn from what we've experienced and build contingency plans while this is fresh in our minds, so we may adapt quickly and efficiently for whatever comes next.

From the headlines earlier this week, the hospitality, sports and entertainment industries are navigating the latest COVID-related "dial turns" announced by Gov. Tim Walz that went into effect March 15. And businesses are examining what staffing and safety protocols look like as more of them consider a return to business as usual.

In our passionate pursuit of returning to "normal," let's not miss an opportunity to define a "new normal."

For our schools, it could be easy to fall back into the daily lesson plans, assessing state standards and trying to fit everything in each term. We also should focus on the social and emotional engagement that has been stunted for too long for too many and carve out time to connect on a deeper level.

For businesses, now is an ideal time to re-evaluate flexible work conditions that fit. While your workforce may have gone completely remote during the pandemic, does it need to come back fully in the office? Can team members work two days from home each week for better work-life balance?

Closer to home, families had more time to take walks, play board games, plan meals and simply be. While that, too, became overwhelming at times, let's not rush back into the daily grind where we are all too busy to have meaningful time together.

As we return to a new normal, what will you keep from the past year?

Letters policy

Letters to the editor may be sent to news@thenewsleaders.com. Deadline is noon Monday. Please include your full name for publication (and address and phone number for verification only.) Letters must be 350 words or less. We reserve the right to edit for space.

A year of COVID, a year of lessons learned

During a recent Sunday student mass at St. John's University, I was reminded of an important fact. It has now been more than a year since college students were sent home in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic that has swept the world. As we look forward to an eventual end to this crisis, I wanted to reflect on what a year of COVID-19 has done. It has shown us the worst of what can happen, but it also has shown us the best of what people can do in the face of adversity. While I look forward to putting this episode behind us, I know I have certainly learned lessons from it, and I hope our society as a whole does as well.

This year has felt like an eternity. The week that we were sent home, I clearly remember daily activities and events going on as usual. While COVID was on the radar of an avid newswatcher, it was only a passing topic of conversation for most college students. On the night of Wednesday, March 11, there was news that universities were starting to cancel classes and send students home. Then the basketball game my roommate and I sat down to watch that night was postponed. And the next day we were being told we would need to start leaving campus on Friday.

In a whirlwind week, I had gone from having the sophomore college experience to being back at home and taking classes online to finish out the spring semester. It felt like

Connor Kockler
Guest Writer



being back in high school again, having my class schedule, family activities and then doing homework at the same desk where I'd done so for all my classes years ago. Mask wearing, social distancing, virtual meetings, the horrific daily numbers of infected and dead showing up on screens all gradually became the norm for us over time. I made the best of it, interning online during the summer, doing virtual networking and staying productive in online classes. Despite all the complexities of this past year, I feel like it will make me a stronger student and worker in the future because of how we've all had to adapt.

While I have learned my own personal lessons from this, I would expect as a nation we have also learned lessons that can prevent something like this from happening again. After more than 500,000 dead and millions infected, we can no longer treat the threat of pandemics as something that can be ignored or neglected in government preparedness. The rapid spread of the disease across the country despite pleadings by health officials to follow basic safety precautions like wearing masks and distancing

shows just how much pain we could have been saved just by being more thoughtful and careful. Just how fragile our economy is that tens of millions were put out of work, and trillions of dollars in aid needed to be passed just to keep families afloat during this crisis shows we should take steps to create a stronger social safety net.

The efforts of all of the healthcare workers, scientists and government officials who have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to ensure people receive proper treatment, and coordinate the distribution of supplies and vaccines should also be highly celebrated. Despite a rising case count and their advice often unheeded, they have shown up to work every day to keep us safe. Going forward, we should recognize these efforts, especially by signing up for a vaccination when we are eligible, to protect ourselves and everyone around us.

While this has been a tough year, I hope it has shown us a way forward to prevent future pandemics from doing as much damage as COVID-19 has. Overall, we should know now without a doubt that we are all in this together. The actions we take strongly affect the people around us. Moving forward, we should be sure to keep that front of mind.

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

What does winter injury look like on your lawn?

The snowmelt is on, and we are starting to see our lawns appear in Minnesota.

Lawns will start greening up as air and soil temperatures continue to rise during the next month. Impacts from winter stresses may become visible and there are a few general indicators to explain winter injury.

Snow mold looks like circular patches of matted, greyish grass that can be up to three feet in diameter. Several patches can come together to form an irregular pattern on the lawn. Close inspection can show white or pink fungal growth, called mycelium.

All Minnesota lawn grasses can be affected, although fine fescue grasses are less susceptible. Snow mold disease damages grass leaves but usually will not kill the entire plant. To promote recovery, lightly rake these areas to fluff up the matted leaves.

Salt damage from de-icing products applied to sidewalks over win-

Maggie Reiter

Guest Writer

ter months appears as straw-colored grass next to hardscapes like sidewalks, driveways and streets. Damage will appear as a gradient with more intense damage at the edge of the hardscape and lessening damage toward the center of the lawn.

Any vegetation can be injured by high salt loads. Research conducted on Minnesota roadsides has shown that establishing fine fescue areas will provide improved lawn quality under salt stress. Spring rains should help to leach salts from the soil. Next winter, consider using salt alternatives to minimize turf damage.

Some parts of your lawn will simply not green up, leaving dead grass

and bare spots. Winter stresses are not well understood and turf loss could be due to many factors, including those described above, plus desiccation and ice cover.

Winter injury problems are more likely to occur in areas that did not have consistent snow cover, areas with poor drainage or standing water, and areas that received foot and equipment traffic.

Repair these areas with seed or sod. We recommend fine fescues and tall fescues for lower-input lawns, and Kentucky bluegrass can be used for higher-maintenance lawns. Perennial ryegrass is often included in patch-and-repair mixtures but is not a good choice for Minnesota lawns because it is not winter hardy. Seed can be purchased from local and online retailers.

Maggie Reiter is an educator with the University of Minnesota Extension office.

**GOT AN
OPINION?**

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

Email: news@thenewsleaders.com

Public notice

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
SARTELL-ST. STEPHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 748
FEB. 22, 2021
SARTELL HIGH SCHOOL

The regular school board meeting of Independent School District 748 was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Jeremy Snoberger. Members present: Snoberger, chair; Jason Nies, vice chair; Amanda Byrd, clerk; Matt Moehrle, treasurer; Patrick Marushin, director; Tricia Meling, director; and Jeff Schwiebert, superintendent. Members absent: none.

A motion was made by Nies and seconded by Moehrle to APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS: add Action Item C2 – Approve MSHSL BYLAWS CONSTITUTION and move report B.5 – District Finance Report to follow B.1 School Board Student Representative Report. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Byrd to APPROVE CONSENT ITEMS A.4.a – A.4.d AS PRESENTED BELOW. All in favor. Motion carried.

A.4.a. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on Jan. 25, 2021

Minutes of the school board work session held on Feb. 3, 2021

A.4.b Checks in the amount of \$608,165.18 as presented:

General Fund	437,811.47
Food Service Fund	80,764.97
Transportation Fund	18,707.82
Community Service Fund	1,625.14
Capital Expenditure Fund	66,056.14
Activity Accounts	1,248.85
Internal Service Fund	1,950.79
Check numbers 180430 – 180609	
ACHs in the amount of \$3,025.64 as presented:	

General Fund	1,667.77
Food Service Fund	271.93
Activity Accounts	1,085.94
ACH numbers 202000080-202000093	

Receipts in the amount of \$3,966,818.84 as presented:	
General Fund	3,213,671.50
Food Service Fund	121,327.67
Transportation Fund	8,685.61
Community Service Fund	40,022.10
Capital Expenditure Fund	482,721.64
Building Fund	163.57
Debt Service Fund	80,932.29
Activity Accounts	6,290.00
Internal Service Fund	13,004.46
Receipts 48371 - 48477	

Wire transfers in the amount of \$1,508,354.92 as presented:	
General Fund	1,142,016.34
Food Service Fund	40,994.74
Transportation Fund	19,106.82
Community Service Fund	25,686.90
Capital Expenditure Fund	2,661.84
Building Fund	1,320.16
Activity Accounts	566.35
Internal Service Fund	276,001.77
Wire transfers 202000364-202000428	

Building Fund Checks in the amount of \$415.85 as presented:

Building Fund	415.85
Check number 601204	

A.4.c Accept the following donations: Sartell Sabre Dance Team Booster Club, ISD #748, \$11,020, donation for outside-funded coaches.

A.4.d Accept the resignation of Meghan Hennagir, RIS, custodian, 2/24/21; Sue Kloetzer, PMPS, cashier, 2/19/21; June Krone, RIS, food service worker, 2/22/21; Jeff Rutten, OREL, part-time cleaner, 3/19/21; Amanda Semega, SMS, student supervisor, 2/1/21. Release of Employment of McKenzie Lyon, OREL, para, 2/16/21. Accept the retirement of Elizabeth Anderson, PMPS,first grade, 6/4/21; Dave Olson, SHS, fifth grade, 2/16/21; Deb Rollings, SHS, art, 6/4/21.

Student Representative Report:

Student Representative Kate Ellis reported on happenings around the district. Oak Ridge students participated in the global day of play on Feb. 3 and have been demonstrating good mask wearing and hand washing during in-person learning. Registration for next year’s kindergarten class is on-going with around 235 already registered. Pine Meadow and Riverview multilingual learners held a very successful fundraiser collecting more than 3,000 socks, hats and mittens. Music in our Schools will be occurring virtually in March this year. Middle School students have adjusted very well to the return of full in-person learning, with conferences being completed successfully via Zoom. Students are being recognized as Sabre Strong through the PBIS initiative. High School students have also adjusted well to the return to in-person learning and teachers have adjusted to offer support for students’ in-person and distance. Students had a successful registration for classes for the 2021-22 school year. The dance team won two conference championships this past weekend, the Math League team qualified for the state tournament and the Mock Trial team placed first at their recent virtual meet. The SAFES program placed posters around the building educating students about Black History Month. NHS raised more than \$300 with their Valentine’s Day fundraiser and Student Council will be holding a virtual talent show.

District Finance Report:

Director of Business Services Joe Prom provided an update on district finances.

Riverview New Learning Spaces Report:

Principal Zach Dingmann, Physical Education Teachers Rachel Breitreutz and Mitchell Keeler, STEM Education Teacher Brennan Rath and Instructional Technology Specialist Paul Moe reported on how the renovated areas have been transformed into dynamic teaching and learning spaces which have engaged students in new and exciting ways.

School Exec Connect Report:

Vice Chair Nies reported on the upcoming timeline for the Superintendent search.

Superintendent Report:

Superintendent Schwiebert thanked the custodial staff for helping keep the buildings and boilers operating during the extreme cold weather last week. Staffing is being discussed and planned for the 2021-22 school year. Kindergarten through eighth grade has been planned based on feedback from the board, with more focus on social emotional needs. Class sizes are being planned to return to pre-pandemic levels. The changes will result in an increase of about two-and-a-half FTEs. High School staffing will be forthcoming, as data will be collected from registration night to determine needs. There will be an Outreach Committee meeting with Sartell City Council after the March 15 regular school board meeting.

COVID-19 Report:

Superintendent Schwiebert and Director of Human Resources Krista Durrwachter provided an update on how the district is moving forward with COVID-19.

Enrollment Report:

Superintendent Schwiebert reported on the current enrollment numbers for each school.

School Board Committee Report:

Director Meling reported on the Curriculum, Instruction and Advisory committee meeting she attended.

Director Marushin reported the Special Education Advisory meeting is occurring during tonight’s meeting. He will receive and report a summary at the March regular school board meeting.

A motion was made by Nies and seconded by Marushin to APPROVE #1-14:

New Employees/Changes:

Molly Emslander, PMPS, AM cashier, \$19.09/hour, R1, S5, 1 hour/day, replacing Sue Kloetzer, 2/22/2021; Triscia Evenson, SMS, food service, \$15.89/hour, RI, S1, 3 hours/day, replacing Jodi Hennemann, 2/8/2021; Autumn Fosteson, SHS, para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 7 hours/day, new position, 2/11/2021; Mikayla Gessell, SHS, para, \$16.42/hour, RIV, S1, 7 hours/day, new position, 2/16/2021; Nicole Nieman, Transportation, bus driver, \$23.75/hour, 4.75 hours/day, replacing Richeal Deming, 2/8/2021; Amber Starr, RIS, food service,

\$15.89/hour, RI, S1, 3 hours/day, new position, 2/8/2021; Sarah Zehowski, PMPS, food service, \$15.89/hour, RI, S1, 3 hours/day, replacing Sue Kloetzer, 2/8/2021; Sarah Zehowski, PMPS, cashier, \$15.890/hour, R1, S1, 3 hours/day, replacing Sue Kloetzer, 2/22/2021.

Leaves of Absence:

Amanda Doll, SHS, teacher, LOA, 4/26/21-end of school year; Melissa Ferguson, SHS, teacher, LOA, 4/6/21-end of school year; Kaylee Johnson, OREL, para, LOA, 4/5/21-end of school year; Peggy Kourajian, SMS, accompanist, LOA, 2/8/21-3/5/21; Jody Schave, SHS, custodian, LOA, 2/8/21-3/8/21; Janice Sweetter, SMS, head cook, LOA, 3/11/21-5/6/21.

All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Moehrle and seconded by Meling TO APPROVE MSHSL BYLAW CONSTITUTION AS PRESENTED. All in favor. Motion carried.

Schedule Work Session and Committee Meetings:

Future Special Board Meeting – Monday, March 1, 2021 @ District Service Center - 6:30 p.m.

Future Regular Board Meeting – Monday, March 15, 2021 @ Sartell High School - 6:30 p.m.

Committee Assignments were reviewed.

Treasurer Moehrle reported on a recent bulletin from (SEE) Schools for Equity in Education.

A motion to ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:42 p.m. was made by Nies and seconded by Marushin. All in favor. Motion carried.

/s/ Amanda Byrd, clerk

Publish: March 19, 2021



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Beginner Investing Tips

If you're saving every extra penny that you accumulate, you may be hindering your financial security.

Making substantial investments is a great way to pad your retirement or sometimes become a full-time job. While the risks are real in the investment world, the rewards are greater once you understand the ropes.

Before committing to investing in property, stocks, or new opportunities, you can avoid monetary ruin by speaking with a financial advisor. An expert can guide you through the intricacies of investing and help measure the risks. Check out these other tips from financing experts to get the most value for your dollar.

TERMINOLOGY

To become more accustomed to the vocabulary you should expect as you begin investing, check out these standard terms as defined by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. The more you educate yourself, the more confidence you'll have in more effectively managing your money.

• **Accrued interest:** interest earned on a security but not yet paid to the investor. Compound Interest: Interest paid on principal and accumulated interest.

• **Conversion:** a feature some funds offer that allows inves-

tors to switch from one fund class to another automatically.

TIME IS MONEY

While it's never too late to begin investing, those with time on their side can find more success than someone who starts later. The benefit of compound interest can really

add up over time. For instance, a study by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis shows that a 25-year-old who invests \$5,000 per year by compounding interest at a rate of 8% will accumulate \$787,180 by age 65.

In contrast, a 35-year-old who invests the same amount

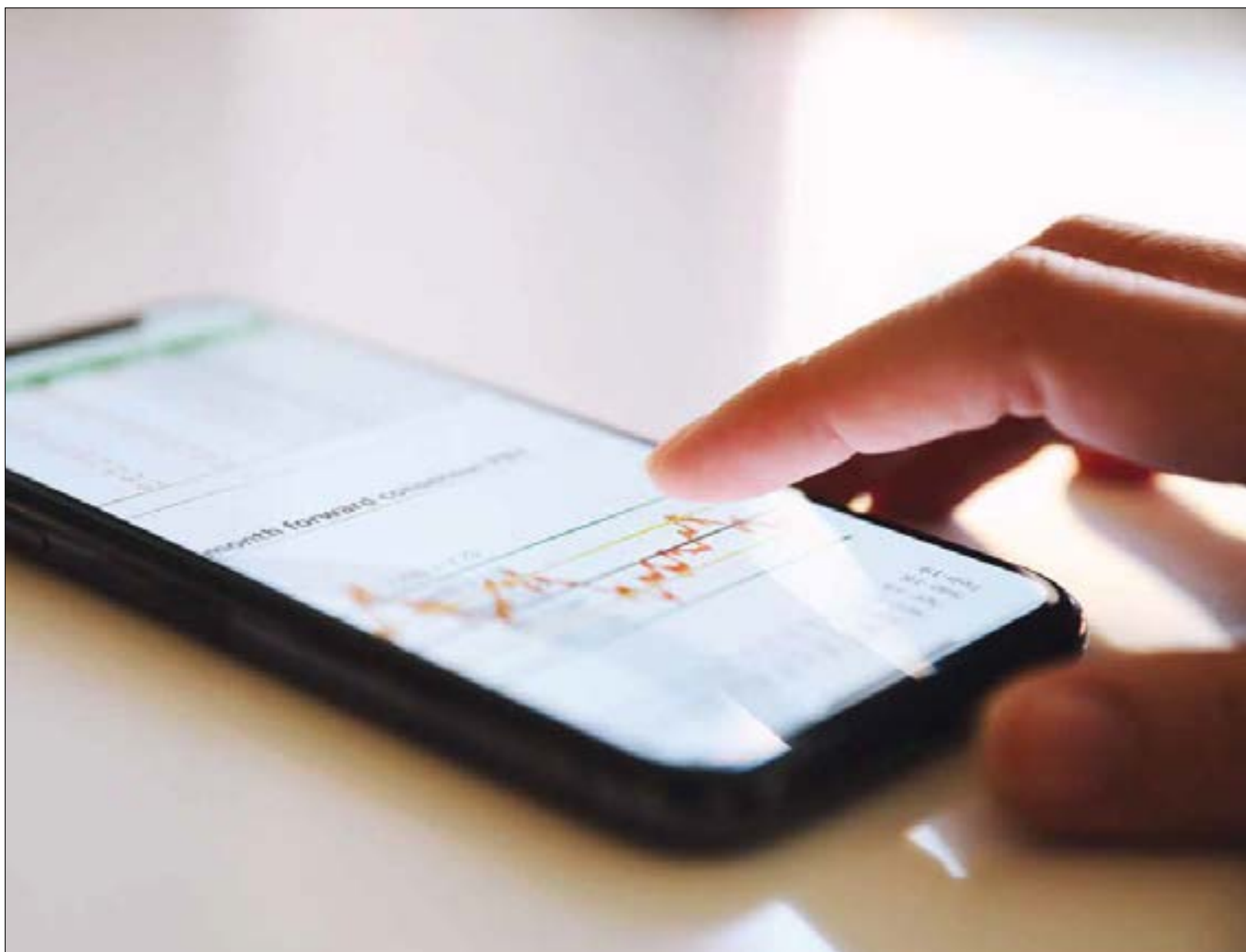
will gather \$611,730 in the same time frame under the 8% term.

SPREAD THE WEALTH

Don't limit yourself to investing in one market. It's easy to put your faith in an industry that proved to be successful but avoiding other high-paying

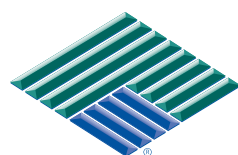
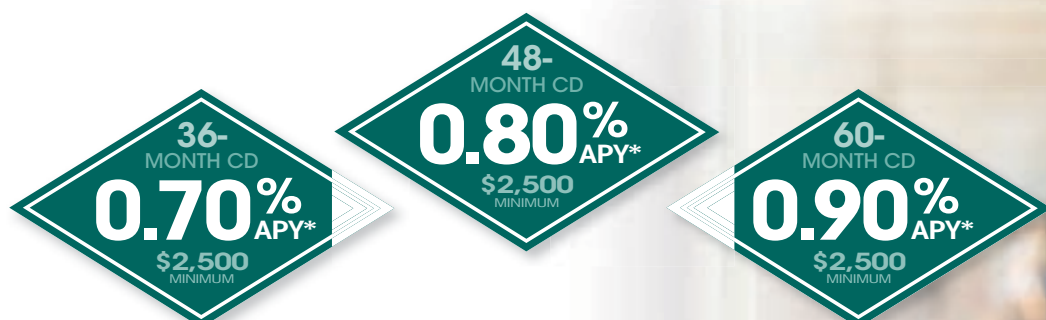
niches can inhibit your financial growth. Create a friendly banter with your financial adviser and be honest about your investing vision.

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