

# Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, July 23, 2021  
Volume 33, Issue 15  
Est. 1989

## Town Crier

### Watering ban starts today

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has determined the state is now in a drought warning phase. With this designation, the City of St. Joseph is implementing a watering ban on lawn irrigation as recommended by the MNDNR effective Friday, July 23 until further notice. The City of Joseph will continue to receive guidance from the MNDNR throughout the remainder of this drought.

The watering of flowers, gardens and newly planted trees is still allowed but must adhere to the odd/even day schedule. Properties that have new sod or seed and those with a private well may water provided they obtain a watering permit from the City of St. Joseph. To obtain a watering permit, please contact the St. Joseph Government Center at 320-363-7201.

The city asks for your full cooperation in this watering ban. Violators will be issued a citation.

### Help kids succeed in school

United Way is collecting school supplies for our students this fall. There are three ways for you to help. Run a school supply drive, purchase school kits through our partnership with Impacks or make an online donation to be used to purchase bulk school supplies. Visit <https://www.unitedwayhelps.org/events/school-supply-drive> for more information or contact Mary Krippner, director of volunteer engagement, at 320-223-7991 or [mkrippner@unitedwayhelps.org](mailto:mkrippner@unitedwayhelps.org).

### Help with homemaking

Bring back the sparkle into someone's home today. Homemaking Volunteers are needed at Assumption Faith in Action. Show the world how neat you really are! Volunteers are needed to complete light housekeeping, routine cleaning and other light chores for older adults so they can remain living independently in their homes. Tasks may include cleaning the kitchen, mopping floors, dusting and vacuuming. Volunteer once a week or once a month, or whatever fits your schedule! Contact Linda at 320-348-2316 or [Hemmesch.Linda@Assumptionhome.com](mailto:Hemmesch.Linda@Assumptionhome.com).

**INSERT:**  
**Sliced**  
**on College Avenue**

## Traut breaks ground in St. Joseph

by Leanne Loy  
[editor@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:editor@thenewsleaders.com)

After shovels were passed around, the Traut family officially broke ground July 15 for construction of their company's St. Joseph location.

Traut Companies, formerly known as Traut Wells, Inc. is a leader in the water industry. They offer a range of services including water well drilling, lawn irrigation, farm irrigation, water treatment, dual rotary, sonic and geothermal well drilling.

"My dad and his twin brother, Marvin and Melvin, started Traut in 1959," said Mark Traut.

He said he never could have foreseen what this company was going to grow into.

"Looking back, Dave and I will often just think, how did this happen?"



photo by Leanne Loy

**Dirt is thrown to commence the official ground-breaking ceremony.**

Mark and cousin Dave came into ownership in 1982. Currently the company sits on five acres that it has out-

grown. The new site will be on 13 acres with plenty of room to grow. The building itself will be about 24,000

square feet, compared to its current 13,000 square feet.

Traut said more people may

**Traut • page 3**

## Gjermes will debut talents in 'Cinderella' musical

by Leanne Loy  
[editor@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:editor@thenewsleaders.com)

Sitarah and Kristopher Gjermes of St. Joseph are starring in GREAT Theater's musical production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella." The musical will be presented at the new Ledge Amphitheater in Waite Park. Kristopher plays a knight

and a lord, and Sitarah plays Maria, the fairy godmother.

To meet Sitarah and Kristopher is to meet true humanitarians. Their story is inspirational and one all can learn from.

"Neither of us have ever been in a play before," said Kristopher, "and now [Sitarah] is one of the main characters."

When asked what sparked

their interest to audition, Kristopher said, "I personally have always had an interest but have never done anything. It was Sitarah who actually got us to do this. She saw the ad and thought it would be something cool to do together, as a family."

Sitarah added to that sentiment, saying, "This past year I felt like I lost my voice and

through this I literally was able to find it again."

Not many good things have come from the COVID-19 pandemic, but between the isolation and just needing to be part of a community again the Gjermes decided to pursue the opportunity.

"It's been a crazy year and we have had to stick together

**Debut • page 7**

## Teacher inside and out of the classroom

by Leanne Loy  
[editor@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:editor@thenewsleaders.com)

Luke Miller of St. Joseph is not only a respected teacher at the Sartell Riverview Intermediate School but is also owner and operator of Quicky Trees LLC, a tree farm on the outskirts of St. Joseph.

Driving down the hilly dirt road that leads to his farm, one is graced with a path that feels like driving underneath nature's canopy. The first thing one might notice are the rows upon rows of fruit-bearing trees that invite you to walk among them, 10 acres to be exact, with room to grow.

There wasn't always this much room. The tree farm started 12 years ago at his place in Sauk Rapids until they outgrew that space. Back then he called it his "tree garden." Miller, his wife and three kids moved out to St. Joseph permanently about two

years ago after having purchased the 60 acres of land a few years before that.

Miller's knowledge of growing, harvesting and grafting trees is apparent as he talks about how his interest started back in high school, but as a teacher at Sartell's intermediate school, it's obvious his knowledge doesn't end there.

Miller is a robotics-competition team coach for the nearly 40 students who create and compete with their robots each year, as well as an automation robotics teacher for eighth-graders, in which they learn about programming, coding and mechanics.

Some of his students from Sartell come out to Quicky Trees LLC in the summer to help around the farm as their summer jobs.

"They learn a lot from just being

**Teacher • page 9**



photo by Leanne Loy

**Luke Miller shows off one of his apple trees at Quicky Trees in St. Joseph.**



# St. Joseph images, feelings still inspire Heymans' art

by Dennis Dalman

news@thenewsleaders.com

Three years ago Sophia Heymans moved to Brooklyn, New York, but she is still tethered heart-and-soul, in her mind and in her imagination, to the place where she grew up – St. Joseph.

Heymans, a widely admired artist, will be the focus of an art exhibition called “Afterimage” that opened July 22 at “The Whitney,” a new art gallery in downtown St. Cloud. The free show featuring 16 of her paintings, will stay open through Aug. 13. Gallery viewing hours for the

public are from 4-9 p.m. daily.

A reception, with Heymans as guest of honor, will take place from 7-9 p.m. opening night, Saturday, July 24.

The Whitney (also dubbed the “Whit Gallery”) is located in the historic brick Whitney building at 505 St. Germain Street W.

Heymans' works are mysterious and dreamlike evocations, mainly of landscapes, that combine images of the natural world with almost ghostly traces of the human presence.

Born in Minneapolis, Sophia, daughter of Annie and Tim Heymans, moved to St. Joseph when she was 5. The move was a “natural” because her mother, born in St. Cloud, had lots of aunts and uncles in the St. Joseph area, including her maternal grandparents, Juliana and Jerry Howard, who still live there.

Sophia and her sister, Chloe, who is also a painter, were homeschooled by their mother, who was also a tennis coach. Their father works for the Minnesota Department of Health helping trace down sexually-transmitted



contributed photo

**Sophia Heymans daubs some finishing touches on her massive, mysterious painting entitled “The Quarries.” The bird’s-eye view can leave some viewers feeling woozy as if they are floating far above the scene and about to fall into it.**

diseases so people can be notified to get tested and/or seek treatment. Sophia's parents still live in St. Joseph.

Sophia and her husband, Paul Spring, originally of St. Cloud, moved to Brooklyn three years ago to become closer to its thriving arts-and-music scene. Spring,

who used to do a lot of landscaping work, is a guitarist and part-time music-studio engineer in Brooklyn.

Both Paul and Sophia went to St. John's Prep School at the same time and both have had connections through family and friends with the two colleges

– St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict. After graduation, Paul studied at a Texas college and Sophia earned a bachelor of fine arts degree at the Rhode Island School of Design.

After reuniting in Minnesota, Sophia and Paul moved to Minneapolis, then back to St. Joseph.

During a long-distance interview with the Sartell Newsleader, Heymans, in Brooklyn, waxed

**Art • page 4**

## — People —

**Eighteen St. Joseph students** were recently named to the spring president's list for a grade-point average of 4.0 from St. Cloud Technical & Community College.

They are the following: Nimo Abdi, Justice Allen, Osamah Alsharmani, Nicholas Andringa, Kelsey Athmann, Fatha Dadow, Kayli Fetterman, Ethan Gohmann, Andrea Huichapa, Kari Kissinger, Harris Lahti, Andrea Laudénbach, Iqra Mohamud, Alanna Schmatz, Cheyenne Schmitz, Kelley Shaddrick, Grace Stang and Dexter Williams.

**Eight St. Joseph students** were recently named to the spring dean's list for a grade-point average of 3.5 to 3.99 from St. Cloud Technical & Community College.

They are the following: Lily Burrett, Carter Douvier, Bailey Florek, Isabelle Hoeschen, Maya Peterson, Rose Philipp, Hunter Smith and Jack Taufen.

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*Reaching Everybody!*  
**Newsleaders**

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Holiday  
Kay's Kitchen  
Kwik Trip / Truck Stop

Local Blend  
St. Joseph Meat Market  
Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict  
Sliced on College Ave.  
Speedway  
Newsleader Office

**www.thenewsleaders.com**

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**Publisher/Owner**  
Janelle Von Pinnon

**Editor**  
Leanne Loy

**Assignment Editor**  
Carolyn Bertsch

**Assistant Manager**  
Rajahna Schneekloth

**Designer**  
Isabella Pemberton

*Newsleader staff members have the responsibility to report news fairly and accurately and are accountable to the public. Readers who feel we've fallen short of these standards are urged to call the Newsleader office at 320-363-7741. If matters cannot be resolved locally, readers are encouraged to take complaints to the Minnesota News Council, an independent agency designed to improve relationships between the public and the media and resolve conflicts. The council office may be reached at 612-341-9357.*

1608 11th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304

mailing address: 1622 11th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304

Phone: (320) 363-7741 • E-mail: news@thenewsleaders.com

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# Traut

## from front page

be hired at the new place. “We have 60 employees now and working in this industry,” he said. “They are amazing, every one of them. I wouldn’t replace any of them.”

When asked what his favorite memory is, Traut had this to say: “On our 35th anniversary our bookkeeper did a little skit for us. I ran a drill rig in 1981 and Dave fixed pumps. We knew nothing about running a business. So all we could do was look at the past business numbers. So our first meeting we said we are not gonna have any uncontrolled growth, we’re only gonna own one drill rig and our accounts receivable is never gonna get over \$40,000.”

Traut currently owns 10



photo by Leanne Loy

**Mark Traut has some fun shoveling dirt at the official ground-breaking ceremony.**

drill rigs and has a total of 80 fleet vehicles, attachments and trailers.

“It was a fun memory looking back to how naïve we were to what the possibilities were,” Traut said.

The company has purchased 40 acres of land, which will ensure that if the need arises, its employees will have the room they need to expand again.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME STATE OF MINNESOTA

Pursuant to Chapter 333, Minnesota Statutes, the undersigned, who is or will be conducting or transacting a commercial business in the State of Minnesota under an assumed name, hereby certifies:

1. The assumed name under which the business is or will be conducted is: Z.A.M. Properties LLC dba Hilson Properties.

2. The stated address of the principal place of business is or will be: 1525 Sixth Ave. N., Sartell, MN 56377.

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: Kenneth J. Hill, 1525 Sixth Ave. N., Sartell, MN 56377 and Philip R. Morrison, 517 Via Amalfi, Irving, Texas 75039.

4. By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. 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: July 19, 2021

Filed: July 19, 2021

/s/ Philip R. Morrison

Publish: July 23 & Aug. 6, 2021

## Monday, July 26

**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 18 Birch St. E, St. Joseph.

**Millstream Night Market**, 5-9 p.m. Monday evenings June 21-Aug. 30. Good food, great music, fine art and hands-on arts activities! Downtown St. Joseph.

## Thursday, July 29

**Coffee and Conversation**, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Pre-register to attend in-person, call Anna at 320-258-7324.

**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 18 Birch St. E, St. Joseph.



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**Saturday, Aug. 14**  
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Outside Bernick's Pepsi Arena  
1109 First St. S., Sartell

# Calendar

## Friday, July 30

**The Wizard of Oz**, Thursday-Saturday performances at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets available at [www.gntcl.com](http://www.gntcl.com). Rocori High School, 534 5th Ave N, Cold Spring.

**Burger and Brat Sale**, sponsored by St. Joseph Y2K Lions, 9-5 p.m., 26 1st Ave NW, St. Joseph Meat Market.

## Monday, Aug. 2

**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 18 Birch St. E, St. Joseph.

**Millstream Night Market**, 5-9 p.m. Monday evenings June 21-Aug. 30. Good food, great music, fine art and hands-on

arts activities! Downtown St. Joseph.

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

## Tuesday, Aug. 3

**St. Joseph Lions Club**, 7 p.m., Millstream Park Pavilion 101 Fifth Ave. NW., St Joseph.

## Thursday, Aug. 5

**Coffee and Conversation**, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Pre-register to attend in-person, call Anna at 320-258-7324.

**St. Joseph Food Shelf**, open 1-3 p.m., 18 Birch St. E, St. Joseph.

## 2021 Cold Spring HOMETOWN PRIDE DAYS

**THURSDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY • JULY 29, 30 & 31**

All Day Communitywide Garage Sales & Downtown Sidewalk Sales  
Friday and Saturday Beer Garden, Music, Food and Kids' Activities

### THURSDAY, JULY 29

Cold Spring Friends of the Library  
Book Sale & Mini Golf

### FRIDAY, JULY 30

- 94.9 Get Up & Go Show – Live Radio
- Chamber Community Breakfast
- Painting Pals Art Show
- Historical Society Museum Open House
- Friends of the Library Book Sale
- Geocache Medallion Hunt
- 40 & 8 Train Rides
- Remote control cars demo derby
- HomePride Lions BINGO Tent
- Bean Bag Tournament
- Kiddie Parade - 6 p.m.
- Pedal Tractor Pull
- Belt Sander Races

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**Friday: FREE Street Dance  
Music by Bird Dogs Band**

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Friday 2-8 p.m. **KIDS' ZONE** Saturday Noon-6 p.m.  
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Inflatables

### SATURDAY, JULY 31

- 41st Annual Cars By The Creek Show
- 43rd Annual Red River Run
- Hometown Pride Market Place
- Friends of the Library Book Sale
- Turtle Races • 40 & 8 Train Rides
- Third Street Brewhouse Tours
- Bean Bag Tournament
- CSAHS Bingo 2-5 p.m.

NEW  
INFLATABLES

**Saturday:  
Music by Matthew Lease  
11 a.m.-2 p.m.  
FREE Street Dance  
Music by Levi Pelzer  
8-11 p.m.**

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# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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## EYECARE

### Russell Eyecare & Associates

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Call the **St. Joseph Newsleader** at 320-363-7741

if you would like your business included. Check out the online Business Directory at [thenewsleaders.com](http://thenewsleaders.com) which hyperlinks to each business' website.

# ADOPT A PET



Curtis has been in the shelter waiting patiently for a home for almost a month! Curtis is a neutered 7-year-old cat who has lived with other cats in the past and did well; he's scared of dogs, however, so he would like a canine-free home. He's all about the snuggling! His hobbies include looking out windows and basking in the sunlight. Curtis' adoption fee is only \$5!

*"Helping one animal won't change the world ... but it will change the world for that one animal!"*

26:Dogs – 1:Puppies---28:Cats – 64:Kitten–3:rabbit  
Total = 122

Hours: Monday-Thursday Noon-6 p.m., Friday Noon-8 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m.-5 p.m. & Sunday Noon-5 p.m.



## Tri-County Humane Society

735 8th St. NE • PO Box 701  
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# WE KNOW WATER



<b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b> <b>CITY OF SAINT JOSEPH, MINNESOTA</b> <b>ANNUAL DISCLOSURE OF TAX INCREMENT DISTRICTS FOR THE</b> <b>YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020</b> <b>(Minnesota Statutes, Section 469.175(5))</b>						
	TIF 1-4	TIF 2-1	TIF 2-2	TIF 2-3	TIF 3-1	TIF 4-1
	St. Joe Development LLC	Millstream Project	St. Joseph Meat Market	Bayou Blues	Central MN Credit Union	Fortitude Senior Housing
Current Net Tax Capacity	\$0	\$43.049	\$11.078	\$12.143	\$42.090	\$41.251
Original Net Tax Capacity	\$0	\$4.790	\$7.626	\$1.167	\$7.460	\$958
Captured Net Tax Capacity	\$0	\$38.259	\$3.452	\$10.976	\$34.630	\$40.293
Principal and Interest Payments Due in 2021	\$0	\$36.653	\$4.356	\$12.891	\$0	\$50.908
Tax Increment Received in 2020	\$0	\$41.605	\$4.377	\$14.123	\$45.195	\$56.829
Tax increment Expended in 2020	\$0	\$38.673	\$4.255	\$13.961	\$48.369	\$52.055
Month / Year First Tax Incr. Receipt	May 2004	July 2009	July 2013	July 2017	June 2017	June 2018
Date of Required Decertification	12/31/12	12/31/34	12/31/21	12/31/42	12/31/25	12/31/43
<p>Additional information regarding each district may be obtained from:</p> <p>Lori Bartlett, Finance Director  City of Saint Joseph  75 Callway Street E.  Saint Joseph, MN 56374  320-363-7201</p> <p>Publish: St. Joseph Newsleader, July 23, 2021</p>						



# Become a Groomer

If you’re looking to work with pets on a daily basis, becoming a groomer might be for you.

In general, people are spending more on their pets than ever. In 2020 alone, pet owners spent \$103.6 billion, according to the American Pet Products Association.

This means all kinds of jobs in the animal care field are in demand.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics said in 2019 that employment for animal care and service workers was projected to grow 22 percent through 2029, adding more than 75,000 jobs, which is much faster growth than the average for all occupations.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Most groomers have a high school diploma or equivalent. They may learn the trade on the job, under the guidance of an experienced groomer or attend a grooming school, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Experience with animals is preferred.

The National Dog Groomers Association of America certifies groomers as “master groomers” after they complete written and hands-on testing in grooming various classes of dogs.

### WHERE THEY WORK

Groomers may own their

own grooming shop or work in an existing shop with other groomers. Another option that has been increasing in popularity is to operate a mobile grooming van, which goes to customers to provide grooming services on-site. Start-up capital can be expensive for this type of business, as you

will need a specialized van outfitted with equipment needed to wash, dry, trim and otherwise accommodate dogs.

Some groomers cater to the dog show circuit, which requires a lot of travel.

### TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

The BLS lists the following

qualities that will make someone well suited for animal care jobs.

- Compassion and patience when dealing with animals and their owners.
- Customer service skills to help pet owners meet their pet’s needs.
- Attention to detail for

maintaining records and monitoring changes in animals’ behavior.

- Physical stamina. Grooming is a physical job which requires kneeling, lifting and bending.
- Reliability to care for animals on schedule and in a timely manner.



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## Pine Cone Pet Hospital

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





## SENIOR LIVING | EXERCISE

# Get Active

There are a lot of preventive measures you can take to stay healthy as you get older. One of those is staying active as you get older.

Here are some tips from health.gov to keep you moving and active.

## BEFORE YOU START

Physical activity is great for people of all ages. But, before you start, there are some things you should know. If you have a health problem such as diabetes, heart disease or obesity, talk to your doctor before getting out and getting active. Your doctor should help you determine what exercises and activities would be a good starting point.

## START SLOW

If you have never been very physically active and are looking to begin, there are some steps you should take to ease yourself into being active. Begin by aiming for two-and-a-half hours of moderate activity a week. See how working out fits into your weekly schedule and what you can take. You can always add more time of exercise a day as your body adjusts to the workouts.

Choose aerobic activities such as walking fast, dancing, swimming or raking leaves outside. What matters is doing activities that will make your

heart beat faster. Talk to your doctor if you have shortness of breath, chest pain or unplanned weight loss.

## ANYTHING IS A WORKOUT

Working out doesn't necessarily have to be running or

lifting weights. Household chores can be a good workout for you. Raking leaves, cleaning the house or even doing some simple balance exercises can be a good workout for you. As long as it gets your body moving and active.

A good workout can be as

simple as tossing the ball around with grandchildren or swimming in a pool.

Health.gov does recommend doing muscle-strengthening activities at least two days a week.

These kinds of workouts can be anything such as using

bands or hand weights. If you don't have bands or weights available, you can also use bottles of water or food as weights.

You can find some inexpensive weights at local outdoor stores or even your local grocery store.



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- Improve your flexibility, strength, and stamina
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- Increase balance

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Email: [whitneyseniorcenter@stcloud.mn.us](mailto:whitneyseniorcenter@stcloud.mn.us)  
Phone Number: 320-650-3082



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OLDER AMERICANS ACT THROUGH THE CENTRAL MN  
COUNCIL ON AGING



## Moving out of your home may not be your only choice.

Before you move into an assisted living setting, learn more about your options. Can the services you need be brought into your home instead? Could you hang onto your resources longer if you stay in your own home?

Call Senior LinkAge Line  
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SENIOR LINKAGE LINE

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For information, visit our website at:  
[chambermusicstcloud.org](http://chambermusicstcloud.org)



# Debut

from front page

throughout this,” Sitarah said. It’s just been awesome doing something as a family. It is so unifying.”

Kristopher has been a St. Joseph resident for the past four years while Sitarah moved in with him two years ago when they were married. Before then, Sitarah moved around quite a bit. Her parents are missionaries, so she has been blessed to be able to live in several cities. So far, of all those cities, she said St. Joseph is her favorite.

“St. Joseph highlights a lot of their local businesses and [it] has just grown,” Sitarah said.

The Gjermes said they love being a part of their community and listening to others’ stories, but the past year was rough not being able to be with that community because of the lock down.

As a stay-at-home mom, the effects of being quarantined can make a person feel even more alone.

“We both went through hard mental-health struggles, but I think the biggest thing that gave us an anchor was digging back into our faith,” Sitarah said. “It gave us the courage to do something like this and audition. I know not everyone shares the same faith, but that’s our story. That’s what got us here.”



photos by Leanne Loy

Sitarah Gjermes (center) rehearses her choreography.

Being able to rehearse in person with the cast has brought back that sense of community that was missing during the past year.

“That was one of the hopes that would come out of this,” Kristopher said.

They are both so aware of the struggles everyone has faced throughout the year because they felt it too, but their outlook on the situation is inspirational to many.

“Always be seeking,” Kristopher said. “That’s how you grow as a person.”

And it’s visible when watching these two tell their story that they not only speak this truth, but they live it. You can see Sitarah and Kristopher perform at the Ledge, the new Amphitheater in Waite Park, from July 22-24.



Kristopher Gjermes rehearses the end of credits bow.



Kristopher and “Fairy Godmother” Sitarah Gjermes with their son pose for a quick picture before rehearsal.



The Dingmann Family, Sartell, MN

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# Millstream Night Market to Feature Somali Music & Dance

by Jeffrey Velline

With no shortage of “pandemic” free time this past year for musicians, one of the many things I dipped my toe into has been Cultural Bridges here in St Joseph, a group started several years ago as a collaboration between St. Joseph’s Catholic and Resurrection Lutheran churches to showcase diversity and promote a welcoming environment for ALL in our little town. This quickly led to a new friendship with a Somali family in the area and time spent figuring out ways to bring people together.

In due time, curiosity and a general interest in other cultures led me to the Somali Museum of Minnesota

in South Minneapolis. Here, not only did I begin to get an understanding of Somali culture and the incredible struggles that forced many to flee their country, I met Mohamoud Mohamed, outreach coordinator and director of the Somali Museum Dance Troupe. About this time, a Somali performer by the name of Dalmar Yare also came up on my radar. Impressed by his talent and substantial social media following, I proceeded to reach out, only to find that he lives right here in central Minnesota! It started to feel like something was happening for a reason and I needed to figure that out.

Along came my friends from Millstream Arts and

Krewe Restaurant with an idea for a small weekly New Orleans inspired “Night Market” in lieu of the much larger annual Millstream Festival since nobody knew for sure how COVID-19 would affect summer events. Like flipping a light switch, I immediately knew this would be a space where ALL could converge and share not only art, music, and food, but a vibrant culture that is also a part of this great community.

When our family moved to the area from Los Angeles in 1981, my folks (Karen & Bobby Vee) started an event called, “Rock Around the Clock,” first and foremost to bring ALL people together, in addition to raising funds for the Catholic schools.

Later, we relocated to St. Joseph and opened up Rockhouse Productions and did the same with Joetown Rocks in 2006 and again with Rock for Alzheimer’s several years later. All of this was built on the ethic that a vibrant and welcoming community is one of our most important resources, and we can come together not only for fun, but for a higher purpose. The return on this in-



contributed photo

## Somali Dancers

vestment in togetherness, joy, and memories alone is immeasurable.

Thus far, the Night Market events have proven to bring that same magic to our community so desperately needed after a hard year of isolation and separation from people; from gathering and celebrat-

ing each other. Monday, Aug. 2, the Millstream Night Market will present Dalmar and the Somali Museum of Minnesota Dancers at the sixth of our 10 weekly events and we welcome ALL people in our community to join together for an amazing night of art, music, food, AND culture!

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St. Stephen, MN

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Teacher • page 11

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# Opinion

## Our View

### Bridging cultural gap through storytelling

The United States has often been branded the mixing pot of cultures. All are welcome here, or so one is made to believe. But is that really true? Our cities are becoming more and more diverse but in some cases our minds, ideals and comforts are not. There is still an abundance of fear and lack of understanding of one another.

One thing humans are really good at is telling stories. You may not be a poet or a writer, but at some point in your life you've told a story. Whether it was the gigantic fish you caught that one time on Mille Lacs Lake, or the scary car accident you almost got into driving home from the cabin, storytelling comes to us more naturally than we might think. But what you might not realize is when you're telling these stories you're making connections and relating to those around you.

Now think about this when it comes to strangers, or to those who are of different religions, races or cultures. What if we all stopped and took the time to hear each other's stories? Everyone has something to share as everyone has lived a life filled with experiences, heartaches, pain and joy. It is within these histories we find connections to one another.

When the word racism comes up the first thing that comes to mind is fear and the second is misunderstanding. But when we know even a little bit about one another, that bridge between fear and understanding starts to form. We start to get answers about why someone might have moved here, or why they pray the way they pray, or dress the way they dress. We learn a truth rather than making assumptions that only create more division. We start to learn their history and when that happens it becomes clear the differences we once thought were so vast between each other, substantially shrink in size.

It's not always easy to find opportunities to learn about each other and it's almost certainly not at the top of our to-do lists either, but maybe it should be. Building communities with diversity is a beautiful thing. In learning about other cultures, races and religions, we slowly start to pick away at that fear and replace it with acceptance.

Talk to your neighbors, get to know their stories. You might be surprised to learn you are not that different after all.

### Letters policy

Letters to the editor may be sent to news@thenewsleaders.com or mailed to 1622 11th Ave. S.E., St. Cloud, MN 56304. 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 or to not publish.

## What we can learn from animals

I had a beagle named Marvin. He used to join in singing Happy Birthday and Old MacDonald any chance he got. He pursed his lips, threw back his head and let out that classic beagle howl. He even knew which parts were his and which were mine. We found out early on with him that he was also a beer thief. If you didn't guard your beer carefully around Marvin, it wouldn't take him long to sneak in and tip it over so he could lap it up. He could even maneuver a can out of those mesh cup holders you find in a lawn chair. Like I said, a filthy thief.

When you grow up on a farm and spend the majority of your day with animals, you learn quite a few things. The most valuable lesson I took away from those years is if an animal doesn't trust you, neither will I. Animals know people. They can tell if you're nervous, angry, happy or sad and they respond to those emotions accordingly.

Like Marvin, animals don't hide their true natures. What you see is what you get. Now Marvin might have been a sneaky, little devil, but at least we all knew what his intentions were. He didn't have any hidden agendas, he never pretended to be anyone but himself. He had a horrible singing voice, but he didn't care. Singing gave him joy so he didn't hold back. He knew he wasn't supposed to have beer because it's bad for him, but he also knew that to indulge yourself once

**Leanne Loy**  
*Editor*



in a while was all a part of living. And he understood there could be consequences from that indulging. Like the time he stole one too many and spent the following day hung over on the couch, grumpy as could be. But he accepted that too, as graceful as a beagle could be expected to.

I despise hearing the phrase, "you're acting like an animal." This phrase is used as an insult when it should be a compliment. Most animals, dogs especially, are loyal. They follow their true nature and live their lives to be of service to others. It's instinctual to animals to help those in need. I think people have forgotten this somewhere along the way. We've become more and more focused on the "self" than those around us. In fact, when you walk into a bookstore or library there are shelves upon shelves of self-help books. And our ads are covered with how to do "self-care." But how many of those books have a chapter on helping others? How many of those ads show us how we can support those in our communities?

I think what we need to discover is in helping others we inadvertently help ourselves. I have an anxiety disorder. Most

days it's bearable and I can find my own way. But a few years back I went through a very difficult time and for weeks felt very alone. My sister-in-law noticed something was off. She understood it because she had been there at some point in her life as well. The conversation that followed normalized what I was going through and gave me comfort. I never asked her personally if helping me helped her, but that conversation led to me sharing my story in front of about a hundred strangers at a conference.

When I was done speaking, a line of people formed to talk to me individually. Each person shared a bit of their story and how it was so refreshing to hear they weren't alone in their struggles. Each story offered me a bit of my own healing.

Marvin the beagle understood this. When he made us laugh or performed a trick, it almost always ended in us giving him a treat or a pat on the head. He most likely didn't enjoy balancing on his hind legs and spinning in circles like a ballerina; and as an introvert, I didn't particularly enjoy speaking in front of a hundred people, but in doing so we both ended up providing that much needed "self-care" we hear so much about these days. So the next time you find yourself feeling sad, anxious or stressed out try acting like a loyal, selfless animal and see how it inadvertently helps you too.

## A new day dawns as storm clouds gather

A new bright day has dawned after a long slog through darkness and isolation. At long last, after nearly 17 months, there is a light at the end of the Covid-19 tunnel.

We shouldn't rush to celebrate just yet, however; the Delta virus variant is making headway, partly because too many people have refused to get vaccinated. Still, all in all, the near future looks a lot brighter than it did just months ago, even though there lingers the haunting sadness of a half million deaths.

The pandemic revealed, at times so starkly, the inequities in society, as well as the good and the bad of human behavior.

Inequities? Workers living a paycheck or two from disaster; a lack of affordable daycare for many desperate families; people who had no choice but to go to work, virus or not, if they wanted to put food on the table and survive.

The bad? The virus crisis exacerbating the political polarization in this country; maskers vs. no-maskers, including some cases of cold-blooded murder when no-maskers shot to death clerks or assaulted airplane attendants; vaxxers vs. anti-vaxxers; some people dismissing the crisis as a politically-induced hoax; eruptions of anger or blame against virus scientists.

The good? Fortunately, the good outweighs the bad. The following list is just a partial one:

Courageous medical personnel often under agonizing stress (doctors, nurses, aides, technicians, receptionists) risking their lives 'round the clock to keep people alive.

People, even total strangers, helping

**Dennis Dalman**  
*Reporter*



others, including the sewing of homemade masks, donations of food and money, help with chores and giving rides to appointments.

Parents and children, teachers and school staff, school bus drivers and other school personnel bravely adapting to a "new normal" with astonishing flexibility, adaptability, ingenious make-do-ism, last-minute improvisations, schedule rearrangements and new ways of learning. Virtually all aspects of their lives were affected, turned topsy-turvy, and yet they managed to endure and even thrive with grace-under-pressure. It's almost certain the stresses and struggles made all of them stronger.

Business owners having to endure total shut-downs, partial shut-downs, closings (some permanent) after working so long and hard to make their businesses successful. They had no choice but to lay off many employees, who in turn suffered in a sudden world of economic anxiety and frightening uncertainties. But through it all, business owners and employees (those laid off and not laid off), adapted in remarkable ways, and most of them managed to squeak through the dark tunnel to these brighter, better times.

Front-line workers, like those in grocery

stores, also performed courageously and deserve our deepest gratitude.

Last but not least, at the very top of the "Good List" are those virologists and lab technicians. Their persistent, challenging explorations of virus components and the cells of the human body made possible the vaccines that brought us to this point, to this exhilarating rush of hope and gladness.

Hopefully, viruses old and new will forever be vanquished or quickly kept in check. But, in the meantime, there is another worrisome "virus" of sorts that has reared its ugly head. That contagion is the constant assault on our democracy. It is fueled by outrageous lies, conspiracy theories, divisive tactics, pseudo-populist bluster and, last but not least, by widespread legislative schemes to suppress our free and fair voting tradition, the very bedrock of this democracy, the "we" in "We the People."

The vicious mob insurrection Jan. 6 at our nation's Capitol is – or should have been – a dire warning of just how fragile a democratic nation can become when people prefer preposterous lies over facts and truths. This is a frightening time, in some ways scarier than the virus that stalked us for so long.

Hope springs eternal. All of the qualities listed above in this column (those all-American virtues of compromise, adaptation, kindness, practicality, innovation, respect for science and facts) will hopefully come together to lead us out of this dangerous darkness into a brighter future.

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





photo by Leanne Loy  
Some trees are already bearing fruit.

VISIT

MAYOR

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IN PERSON



July 30 | 4:30-5:30p.m.

Bad Habit Brewing (Patio)

July 31 | 9:30-10:30a.m.

Minnesota Street Market (Meeting Area)

July 27 | July 30 | Aug. 2

Mayors Office at City Hall

COME IN AND LET'S TALK

# Teacher

from page 9

But his plans don’t stop with just the four to five students who come out to work with him each summer.

“My next push is to hopefully get something at the schools, even if I have to donate a bunch of trees to help get something set up,” he said. “We have a hillside there by Riverview so it would be great for those kids to start growing trees on

their own.”

Miller envisions possibly a green house in the future where the junior-high students can plant, water and enjoy what their hard work produces.

His success hasn’t always been easy.

“I failed a lot before I was successful,” Miller admits.

He spent countless hours reading and researching his craft and it’s paid off. But that’s not to say there haven’t been struggles along the way. To Miller, though, that’s what hard work

is all about. There are many plans for his future as his business continues to grow. He will add a “you pick orchard” in the next couple of years as well as making this his full-time gig sometime down the road.

Any student of Miller’s is lucky to have him, whether in the classroom or out on a farm. He sees the importance for all types of education, not just the academic kind. In a world where people don’t often see the value of hard-labor jobs, Miller is bringing this ideal back to our kids, one tree at a time.



August Fest



August 5th - 8th 2021

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Very juicy. Firm flesh and almost fuzzless.





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# A Cash-Only Mindset

Incorporating a cash-only mindset into various aspects of your personal economy can limit your reliance on credit cards or high-interest loans.

A cash-only lifestyle means you refuse to buy things that you can't afford without physically having the funds. By spending conscientiously, you avoid lavish spending on extravagant items that you don't actually need. It's also an excellent mindset to help

you become better at saving money, as you must strive to save enough to pay for the asking price. Check out a few small steps to work this habit into your lifestyle and watch your debt shrink.

**WINE AND DINE**

Before hitting the town for a fancy dinner, stop at the ATM to withdraw the amount of money you can comfortably pay. This will help you and guests be more mindful of what is ordered and spend accordingly. Make sure to leave your credit and debit cards at home to resist the urge to impulse buy. The same tactic should be instilled during grocery shopping trips. Each

week, make a list, calculate the estimated cost, and avoid buying items that aren't documented. You can find accurate pricing by visiting your local store's website and looking for deals within their weekly advertisements. Try to buy the food and drinks that will last you until the next shopping trip. Sometimes, stopping by a convenience store on the way to work to grab a coffee will lead to other purchases that are more expensive than those at your regular grocery outlet.

**ENTERTAINMENT**

If you are planning a weekend getaway to visit a sporting game, concert or another type of event, it's good prac-

tice to develop a spending plan. Try to bring along enough funding so your excitement won't be hindered but be diligent to avoid buying souvenirs, merchandise or food that's not in the budget.

**AVOID ONLINE SHOPPING**

For many, the conveniences of online shopping are too great to resist. When you can stock up on clothing, gadgets and even food from the comfort of the couch, it can be challenging to limit your purchases. Rather than entering your credit card into numerous online databases, commit to shopping locally and only buying things you can afford.



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