

# Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, July 23, 2021  
Volume 26, Issue 15  
Est. 1995

## Town Crier

**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.united-wayhelps.org/events/school-supply-drive> for more information or contact Mary Krippner, director of volunteer engagement, at 320-223-7991 or [mkrippner@united-wayhelps.org](mailto:mkrippner@united-wayhelps.org).

**Do you like to mow?**  
Anna Marie's Alliance is looking for a seasonal volunteer lawn mower. Hours vary and would work in coordination with another one of their experienced volunteers. Must pass a background check and sign a pledge of confidentiality. Applications can be found on their website [www.annamaries.org](http://www.annamaries.org). Contact Casaundra Heinen, Anna Marie's Alliance volunteer coordinator, at (320) 251-7203 Ext 252 or [CasaundraH@annamaries.org](mailto:CasaundraH@annamaries.org)

**Care for shelter animals**  
Shelter Animal Care Providers help keep a clean atmosphere for the animals and visitors at the Tri-County Humane Society as well as provide attention to the animals while they are waiting to be adopted. Volunteers keep cages and animal areas clean, socialize the animals, assist customers with viewing animals and take shelter dogs for walks. Customer-service skills are important for this position. Volunteer shifts are generally a minimum of two hours per week and needed early/mid-day weekday shifts. For more information, contact Kate Kompas, TCHS volunteer/humane education coordinator, at (320) 252-0896, ext. 27, or [volunteer@tricityhumanesociety.org](mailto:volunteer@tricityhumanesociety.org).

**List your event in our calendar**  
If your group or organization is active again after being idle because of coronavirus, send us your event information for our calendar. Send information including time, date, place and a short explanation to [news@the-newsleaders.com](mailto:news@the-newsleaders.com).

**INSERT:  
City of St. Stephen newsletter**

## Equity audit draws crowd to school board meeting



photo by Mike Knaak

**Emily Larson was one of 18 people who spoke about the equity audit during the Sartell-St. Stephen school board's open forum period on July 19.**

**by Mike Knaak**  
[news@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:news@thenewsleaders.com)  
About 20 people showed up for the July 19 Sartell-St. Stephen school board meeting wearing blue shirts with the message Kids Over Politics. But

that message was soon lost as the national debate about critical race theory dominated the meeting's open forum period. A crowd of about 125 packed the old elementary school gymnasium after the meeting was moved from its announced lo-

cation in the District Service Center board room down the hall. Typically, few people attend school board meetings and the board room is adequate. Most came to voice their concerns about the district's equity audit report. Eighteen peo-

ple spoke during the open forum period, which allows each speaker up to three minutes to address the board. During this time, the board listens but doesn't respond. While the speakers were

**Audit • page 3**

## Perske shares county needs at nation's capital

**by Dennis Dalman**  
[news@thenewsleaders.com](mailto:news@thenewsleaders.com)  
Stearns County Commissioner Joe Perske recently returned from what he described as an "effective" four-day trip to the annual convention of the National Association of Counties. The event took place mainly at the Gaylord Center in Prince

George's County, Maryland, just south of Washington, D.C. A total of 1,500 county commissioners from all 50 states took part in the convention events, in person and via zoom meetings. Minnesota has 87 counties. Along with Perske was another Stearns County commissioner, Tarryl Clark, as well as Stearns County Administrator

Mike Williams. Perske has been to the nation's capital on business many times, both as former Sartell City Council member and as former Sartell mayor. These conference sessions, he said, were the most productive of all the meetings he's attended there. "There was a wealth of information presented at the confer-

ence," he said. "And it was the most effective of my many visits in so far as speaking with them (national officials). Sharing information is so important." Although many people might think county decision-making is far from high-and-mighty federal governance, there is an important and very direct connection,

**Perske • page 2**



photo by Leanne Loy

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

## A 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 is 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 au-

**Teacher • page 5**





photo by Mike Knaak

### Dry summer drains rivers

The low water level on the Mississippi River exposes the rocks on the bank and the Watab River bottom. Since May 1, rainfall is 4.26 inches below normal and the National Weather Service says the area is in a severe drought. It's the driest summer since 1988.



contributed photo

At the nation's Capitol in Washington, D.C., a contingent from Stearns County met with Minnesota Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith to discuss the need for national funding to help realize county priorities. This photo was taken on the balcony of Sen. Chuck Schumer's office. From left to right are Mike Williams, Stearns County administrator; Tarryl Clark, Stearns County commissioner, Sen. Klobuchar and Joe Perske, Stearns County commissioner.

## Perske

from front page

Perske noted. That is because so much federal funding to states, such as from the Health and Human Services Department, is distributed through the counties of each and every state.

Perske and others who attended listened to in-person talks by Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Marcia Fudge and Speaker

of the U.S. House Nancy Pelosi. The Stearns County contingent also talked via telephone with Minnesota Sen. Tina Smith and in person at a conference room in the Capitol building with Sen. Amy Klobuchar and her staff.

The four Stearns County priority issues Perske and the others shared with others were the following:

One: Funding for projects to maximize energy savings in county buildings, as well as help to create a network of electric-vehicle charging stations.

**Perske • page 15**

# Customer Appreciation Sale



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# Speaker suggests symbols to identify race theorists, vaccinated people

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

A Sartell resident, Peter Wilson, addressed the Sartell City Council at its July 12 meeting to thank local police and to suggest that people who teach “Critical Race Theory” and those who get vaccinated should be clearly and visibly identifiable.

Wilson spoke during the Open Forum time at the council, during which people can share complaints, concerns or suggestions for a maximum time of three minutes each.

Wilson thanked the Sartell police for doing a good job to maintain local safety. A local police force, he said, is far superior to the national police forces of other countries where Wilson has lived.

Those who teach or take training in Critical Race Theory are promoting racism. Wilson used the example of the League of Minnesota Cities, which he claimed gave similar racist training to city personnel a couple of years ago.

Critical Race Theory, currently a very controversial topic, is an overall name for a movement of legal and academic studies that explore social, cultural and legal factors and how they interact to impact racial realities, including systemic racism.

Referring to Nathaniel Hawthorne’s classic 1950 novel, “The Scarlet Letter,”

## Pain-management center to host open house

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

The brand-new Center for Pain Management in Sartell will host an open house from 4:30-7:30 p.m. Monday, July 26, and all area residents are welcome to attend.

There will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony and hors d’oeuvres served throughout the event. The new building, built by Nor-Son Construction, is located at 804 23rd St. S. just off Pinecone Road S. and near the Sta-Fit gym. For several years, the Center for Pain Management was located on Connecticut Avenue within the Sartell Medical Campus area.

There are also branch clinics of Center for Pain Management in Alexandria, Baxter and Bemidji.

The Center provides in-

terventional treatment for acute and chronic pain of all kinds, including cancer pain. Its mission is to minimize pain and suffering while improving the quality of life, increasing in function and helping people regain control over their lives.

All treatments are planned with scrupulous attention to the unique needs and goals of each client. The staff includes four physicians and five physician assistants and nurse practitioners. Some of the kinds of pain they treat are headaches, whiplash injuries, diabetic neuropathy, herniated discs, shingles and spinal fractures.

The staff of the Center also provides pain treatments for several hospitals, including the St. Cloud Hospital.



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

**Catch of the day**  
**Meghan Corbett, 17, laughs July 19 with Jacob Laubach, 9, about catching the tiniest fish in Celebration’s Pond with a sliver of ham. Both are from Sartell.**

## Audit

from front page

split between those who supported and opposed the audit, the speakers criticizing the audit received the loudest, longest applause. Speakers criticized the choice of Equity Alliance MN to conduct the audit, the audit’s survey questions and data as well as the need for the effort.

Some of the same comments were made at the June 21 open forum before Equity Alliance presented the audit findings. That meeting too drew a large crowd and it was conducted in the high school’s Performing Arts Center. At that meeting, Equity Alliance staff outlined findings of their study that included reviewing data, focus groups with students, staff and community members, and observations of the district’s schools. The district’s equity effort, which promises that each student, particularity students of color, receive the support needed to be successful in school, picked up support following last summer’s killing of George Floyd. During a listening session in June 2020, students and parents shared stories of racism and hurtful comments about religion and gender.

At the July 19 meeting, several speakers questioned how the survey’s data was gathered and interpreted, including David Switzer, an economics professor, who called the data

“flawed” and “laughable.” Other speakers repeated requests to see the raw data and actual survey questions.

Several speakers linked the district’s equity effort to the current national debate about critical race theory, which has surfaced as the latest cultural flashpoint. It’s become a catch-all phrase to criticize a range of teaching practices addressing race. The theory developed decades ago and, through the study of law and U.S. history, attempts to reveal how racial oppression shaped the legal fabric of the United States.

Speaker Steve Kron tied critical race theory to the equity effort, saying critical race theory “undermines western society.” He called it “cultural Marxism.” Another speaker, Peter Wilson, took his criticism a bit farther and questioned why Equity Alliance was chosen for the study. He asserted Equity Alliance has ties to other national social movements and said Black Lives Matter “is a communist, terrorist group.”

Students, parents and community members who spoke in favor of the continued equity effort focused on racism but also

how the district needs to address bullying, mental health, religious, LGBTQ and economic issues that divide students.

High school student Josh Nguyen shared his reaction to the report’s comments. He said he reacted with shame, embarrassment and rage when reading the report. “It was humiliating that none of my experiences with racism are real.” Turning the equity effort to politics, “redirects away from real issues,” he said. “That Sartell is equitable is absurd.”

In response to critical-race-theory concerns, parent Tina Schmidt said “no one is asking your children to apologize for being white.”

The delivery of the equity audit report is not the end of the process. The board plans to review the issues raised and develop a plan, along with teachers, students, parents and the community, to address priorities.

“I know there is frustration,” Superintendent Jeff Ridlehoover said. The audit report is “in need of refinement and clarity. We are going to go slow and get it right. We want to get this right for our kids.”





## Blotter

*If you have a tip concerning a crime, call the Sartell Police Department at 320-251-8186 or Tri-County Crime Stoppers at 320-255-1301, or access its tip site at [tricitycrimestoppers.org](http://tricitycrimestoppers.org). Crime Stoppers offers rewards up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for a crime.*

### July 6

6:19 p.m. Traffic stop. CR 1. While an officer was on routine traffic patrol the officer noticed an individual driving a car that was suspected in an Order for Protection Violation. The officer radioed the other officer working the case, that officer confirmed they had probable cause to arrest the individual. The officer conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle and detained the driver without issue. The party was transported to the Stearns County Jail without issue.

### July 7

7:38 a.m. Alarm. 21st Avenue N. Stearns County dispatch was notified of a res-

idential alarm by an alarm company. Dispatch relayed this information to the responding officer. The officer was informed the trip was in the living room. Dispatch reached the key holder, and the key holder requested an officer to respond. The officer arrived on scene and everything appeared in order. The home was secured, and everything appeared in order. The officer located a camper on the property and confirmed it was unoccupied. The homeowner was notified of the officers' findings.

### July 8

2:49 p.m. Counterfeit. Pinecone Road S. While a Sartell officer was at the business a manager walked up to him and handed him a \$10 bill that appeared to be counterfeit. The manager stated it was passed on June 13 at Little Dukes. The manager didn't have a suspect or any video. The officer came back to the police department and completed the proper steps to logging the counterfeit bill.

### July 9

6:21 a.m. Agency assist. River Oaks Lane. Dispatch requested an officer assist Stearns County Sheriff's Department in possibly recovering a stolen vehicle that had been taken a year ago. When officers arrived on scene the complainant was not at the location, and no stolen vehicles were on the property. The people at the property did not know the

complainant or what he had been talking about. Officers cleared the scene.

### July 10

11:18 p.m. Assist person. First Avenue N. An officer was approached in the River-view School parking lot by a female. The female asked the officer to follow her home as she felt like she was being followed by another vehicle. The officer escorted the female to her residence and ensured she got inside safely.

### July 11

12:27 a.m. Foot patrol. Pinecone Road N. An officer did foot patrol in these areas because of recent property-damage complaints. The officer also utilized the NOPTIC camera, which is mounted on the squad car. It is a thermal imaging camera.

### July 12

5:01 p.m. Intoxicated person. Seventh St. N. Officers were dispatched to an intoxicated person yelling profanities and walking in the middle of the street. Earlier in the day officers had a similar call and dealt with the male at the time. The officers arrived in the area of the call and could not locate the suspect. The officers drove past the suspect's home and they saw him on his property, sitting on the deck. The officers did not make contact since he was on his property not causing problems at the time.

### July 13

2:05 p.m. Parking violation. Whippoorwill Way. The Sartell Police Department received a complaint of an RV parked in the roadway causing a hazard. An officer went to check on the RV; the RV was parked near the curb and not a hazard. The officer noticed the owner of the RV and spoke to the owner about Sartell City Ordinances. The owner told the officer they would not violate any of them. While the officer was there, a nearby neighbor came to the officer's squad window to explain he gave the owner permission to park it there and the RV was OK. The officer informed the neighbor there was a complaint, and it was his duty to check it out and make contact with the owner.

### July 14

2:18 p.m. No pay. Pinecone Road S. A Sartell officer was dispatched to a No Pay. The officer was given a license plate, which registered to an address in Sartell. The officer made contact with the owner of the vehicle and was informed their daughter was driving the car. The officer spoke to the daughter who didn't realize she had forgotten to pay. The daughter returned to the store and paid for the fuel.

### July 15

10:59 p.m. Stolen vehicle recovery. CR 120. The Sartell Police Department was notified by an off-duty officer from another jurisdiction they thought they had followed a stolen vehicle into the parking lot. Sartell officers responded to the area and found the vehicle parked in the parking lot unoccupied. Dispatch confirmed the vehicle was stolen out of Wright County. Wright County was contacted, and they requested the vehicle be towed to the Sartell Police Department and a Wright County Investigator would respond in the morning. The vehicle was placed in a locked stall and the vehicle was sealed until Wright County could arrive to process the car.

### July 16

1:54 a.m. Burglary. Antler Creek. Officers were dispatched to a burglary in progress. The caller reported she heard someone in her house. While officers were responding the caller found it was her 3-year-old daughter, and she had gotten out of her crib. Officers were cleared by dispatch.

### July 17

11:53 p.m. Open door. Scout Drive. While officers were in the area checking buildings, the officer found an open door to a building. Officers cleared the building; as they entered the building the alarm went off. The officers did not find anything out of the ordinary during the building search. Officers were able to secure the building on their way out; no key holder was responding.

### July 18

6:05 p.m. Stolen vehicle. Brookwood Lane. Officers were dispatched to a stolen vehicle report. While enroute officers were informed the complainant's car had been stolen earlier this morning. The complainant and his friends had stopped by his house, he went inside and when he came back out the car and friends were gone. Officers were also advised by dispatch the complainant had a felony warrant out of Stearns County. When the officers arrived, they spoke to the complainant, and he was placed under arrest for the warrant. While on scene the complainant received a phone call from his friends stating they were on their way back with his vehicle and they thought they had permission to use it.

### July 19

12:40 p.m. Motorist assist. CR 120. An officer was dispatched to assist a motorist within city limits to unlock their vehicle doors at a business. The officer arrived and was able to successfully unlock the vehicle.

## — PUBLIC NOTICE —

### CITY OF ST. STEPHEN BUDGET PLANNING MEETING

The City of St. Stephen City Council will hold its 2022 Budget Planning Meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 24, 2021. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m.

/s/ Julie Jacobs  
St. Stephen City Clerk

Dated: July 15, 2021

Publish: July 23, 2021

**CRAFT-VENDOR  
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*"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

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People

**Eleven Sartell students** have earned the distinction of being named to the dean’s list for the 2021 spring semester at the College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph.

They are the following: **Elizabeth Hamak**, child of Bridget and Scott Hamak, a first-year communication and political science double-major; **Allison Hess**, child of Kim and Bob Hess, a sophomore nursing major; **Lindsey Hoeschen**, child of Sondra and Steve Hoeschen, a senior computer science major; **Alexandra Lamont**, child of Carey and Jared Lamont, a junior nursing major; **Emma Larson**, child of Chandra and Rick Larson, a junior nursing major; **Laura Leonard**, child of Diane and Kevin Leonard, a senior nursing major; **Haven Licht**, child of Amy and Eric Licht, a senior nursing major; **Emma Lundgren**, child of Becky and Dan Lundgren, a junior biology major; **Samantha Lundgren**, child of Becky and Dan Lundgren, a junior Hispanic studies major; **Alexia Magedanz**, child of Christina and Patrick Taufen, a first-year biology major; and **Morgan Van Beck**, child of Diane and Joe Van Beck, a sophomore Hispanic studies major.

To be included on the dean’s list, students must have a semester grade-point average of at least 3.80.

**Seven Sartell students** were recently named to the spring dean’s list at St. John’s University, Collegeville.

They are the following: **Ethan Berndt**, child of Jodi and Michael Berndt, a junior accounting major; **Elliot Edeburn**, child of AnnElise Edeburn and Patrick Edeburn, a senior Hispanic studies and political science double-major; **Benjamin Hoeschen**, child of Sondra and Steve Hoeschen, a junior computer science major; **Brandon Kramer**, child of Lesa and Dan Kramer, a senior accounting and economics

double-major; **Adam Magarian**, child of Diana Fenton and Tim Magarian, a sophomore communications major; **Spencer Pierskalla**, child of Joni and Sam Pierskalla, a junior biology major; and **Carter Potthoff**, child of Chris Potthoff, a first-year biology and Hispanic studies double-major.

To be included on the dean’s list, students must have a semester grade-point average of at least 3.80.

**Forty-one Sartell students** were recently named to the spring president’s list for a grade-point average of 4.0 from St. Cloud Technical & Community College. St. Cloud Technical & Community College congratulates the following students for their academic achievement Spring 2021. They have earned recognition on the President’s List for a grade point average of 4.0 or the Dean’s list for a grade point average of 3.5 to 3.99.

They are the following: **Timothy Andrewsen, Muhammad Bilal, Bethany Blackmer, Tyler Cavanaugh, Molly Christen, Samantha Clark, Madeline Davis, Connor DeMorett, Dylan Gerdes, Zoe Goetz, Mollie Gunderson, Jason Harris, Skylar Hennen, Jean Hopkins, Mekhi Kigozi, Yassin Kolley, William Lenneman, Mark Leyk, Rachel Lindmeier, Zachary Lindstrom, Sydney Lloyd, Morgan Madsen, Alex Maier, Alexis Mehr, Logan Milisits, Megan Nelson, Kaden Nordby, Cody Oachs, Evan Olson, Logan Ostendorf, Paige Parvey, Isabella Randolph, Ava Scheffler, Hailey Sell, Bouahom Sithamat, Megan Springsteen, Hunter Tidd, Michala Vanheel, Dylan Vedder, Viggo Weeks** and Maya Workman.

**Twenty-nine Sartell 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: Nimo Abdi, Kristina Block, Benjamin Brandt, Savannah Brookins, Ashtin Christian, Kelly Decker, Dane Denbrook, Manuel Figallo, Celestial Garcia, Chantal Hartneck, Brandon Hejhal, Peyton Herges, Nathan Kieffer, Cobi Kiffmeyer, Maimuna Kolley, Kelly Jo McCarty, Monica McCoy, Susannah O’Donoghue, Yeli Ouattara, Cooper Peterson, Jacob Pfau, Cody Prasnicky, Claire Ramler, Martin Schendel, Brett Sedahl, Isaac Udovich, Mercedes Wilson, Myles Wochnick and Dylan Zulkosky.

**Sartell High School** recently named their **Top 10** students. They are the following: **Callahan Mechelke**, valedictorian; **Alice Colatrella**, salutatorian; and **Ingrid Buiceag-Arama, Beau Garman, Hannah Hackenmueller, Madison Loberg, Courtney Snoberger, Nora Steil, Deborah Ufearo and Bella Zerafa.**

**Karen Johnson**, of Sartell, recently graduated with high honors with an associate’s degree in dental hygiene from Normandale Community College, Bloomington.

**Emma Larson**, child of Chandra and Rick Larson of Sartell, has earned the distinction of being named to the dean’s list for the 2021 spring semester at the College of St. Benedict. Larson is a junior nursing major at CSB.

**Haley Fournier**, St. Stephen, was recently named to the spring president’s list for a grade-point average of 4.0 from St. Cloud Technical & Community.

**Allison Fournier**, St. Stephen was 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.

Scheels arena offers open-skate times

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

Open skating for one and all is now available at Scheels Athletic Complex in Sartell.

The cost is \$3 per skater, with an option for skate rentals.

The first open-skate session was held in mid-July. The next two for July are from 1-2:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 27 and from noon-1:30 p.m. Thursday, July 29.

Open-skate sessions will be extended into August, and the

upcoming times and dates will be announced later.

The Scheels Athletic Complex, next to the Bernick’s Arena, recently opened for play. It is a covered arena that will offer hockey games and skating as well as a venue for many other sports that can be played on its artificial turf.

A time and date for a public grand opening at Scheels Athletic Complex will be announced in the near future.

Teacher

from front page

tomation 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 out here two to three days a week," he said. "It teaches them how to grow something and could maybe even spark an interest for them later on in life.”

The students help with watering, planting and even weeding the trees.

“This opens their eyes to a whole new world,” Miller said.

Lessons in the classroom can be demonstrated in nature, a passion that shows strongly in Miller’s convictions.

Miller is a natural teacher. Whether he’s talking about robotics or explaining the grafting process he uses on his farm, it’s easy to see that teaching is just part of who he is. He cares about what his students are learning not only in the classroom but out in the orchard as well.

“I think everyone should have a garden," he said. "No doubt about it.”

It’s important to Miller that people learn how to sustain food for themselves but also have the experience of producing something with their own hands.

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 that 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

Teacher • page 12

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# 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 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 nostalgic about St. Joseph and the surrounding area.

“We – my sister Chloe and

I – could play outside without permission. We'd bike into town by ourselves, and we'd bike to Loso's (grocery) store to buy candy. We loved to eat Italian ice at the Meeting Grounds coffee shop. Then, a lot of times we'd bike to the beach at St. John's University and take walks to the chapel out there.”

Those happy childhood memories and that love of being in – and at one with – nature are the main inspirations of Heymans' paintings.

As children, those early St. Joseph experiences unleashed Sophia's and Chloe's free-spirit imaginations. And they still do – as vital memories. Such images of the past (prairie land, deep woods, lakes, vast skies, hills, swimming quarries) frequently drift into Sophia's reflections and dreams, compelling her to paint those “afterimages” – thus the name of her art show.

It was the granite swimming quarries in Waite Park that inspired one of Heymans' largest and most intriguing works, “The Quarries,” which is showcased prominently at The Whitney exhibit.

Measuring 60 inches by 90 inches, “The Quarries” is a bird's-eye view of water pools and surrounding heaps of granite blocks and chips. On the right are three large birch trees. A mother and her two daughters can be seen walking on a path in one part of the picture. The painting is highly detailed and “realistic” and yet stylized and abstract, evoking a kind of whimsical, mysterious dreamy quality – a hallmark of many of Heymans' paintings.

“I tried to paint ‘The Quarries’ as more how I feel about it than how it looks,” she said. “I always felt about the quarries that they are kind of scary and mysterious.”

Heymans went through what she called her “post-human” subject matter in painting, doing landscapes bereft of human beings. Later, she worked hard with ways of bringing people back into landscapes as part of nature but never in a dominating way.

One of her paintings depicts an abstract frenzied flurry of ocean waves, and the waves are actually a commotion of squiggles and wiggling that resemble human fingers all a-flutter.

Heymans often uses non-paint objects in her pictures, such as floor-mop strings and dryer lint, to name just two. When she was a girl, her mother kept wondering why the kitchen mop seemed to keep losing its strings, getting skimpier every week. Well, one day, she happened to catch Sophia in the act, cutting off mop strings for her art. Mop strings, placed just so on a canvas, make for perfect tree branches, she said. Dryer lint glued to canvas

can create uniquely subtle colorations. Once the under-objects are affixed, Heymans always uses oil paint to paint over them. But the objects underneath the paint give the picture's surface an intriguing texture that helps draw viewers almost head-first right into the paintings.

In an essay she wrote, Heymans had this to say about her art:

“For the last three years I've been living in New York City (the borough of Brooklyn), but all these paintings are rooted in memories of central Minnesota. They are afterimages, like the brightness left on your sight after looking into the sun. They are nostalgic for this place but mostly for a sense of belonging. I wanted to make permanent those fleeting feelings of connection.”

Art • page 15



contributed photo

**In her Brooklyn apartment, Sophia Heymans uses half a bedroom for her art studio. The painting next to her is a snowscape that intertwines forms of nature with human elements (note the finger-like shapes).**

## Jeub opens art gallery to welcome all

by **Leanne Loy**

editor@thenewsleaders.com

In April of this year the downtown St. Cloud area welcomed Heidi Jeub, a St. Joseph resident and a Sartell high school graduate, as a new business owner whose focus is on the arts.

As an artist herself, Heidi is no stranger to the visual arts scene, so when the opportunity arose for her to showcase local artists in the area, the answer was easy.

It all started when Jeub was in search of some storage space for her own artwork. In February of this year Jeub started asking around about storage spaces and what they might look like.

“I started asking questions,” Jeub said. “Can I have people in here? Can I have a key so I can turn on the lights regularly? I'm the type of person, give me an inch I'll ask for a yard.”

That's when Jeub was advised to speak to an investor; they hit it off right away. When they got to the end of their conversation, Jeub was invited to look at a space in downtown St. Cloud. Little did she know at that time it was to become the future space of the Whit Gallery.

When she showed up, the space had been newly remodeled, and the conversation turned to the idea of not just storing and showcasing her work, but the work of other artists as well.

“To be honest, I thought they were going to take my ideas and give the space to someone else,” Jeub said. “I had no idea it would turn into this. She remembers times in the past as an artist when that was the case. It's not unusual to have your ideas taken and then given to someone else.”

“Of course this would be a great gallery,” Jeub said. “And of course this would be won-



photo by Leanne Loy

**Heidi Jeub, a St. Joseph resident and Sartell high school graduate, stands outside her gallery that opened in downtown St. Cloud in April 2021.**

derfully managed by someone like me.”

Jeub wasn't the only one who felt that way.

Now those ideas are starting to come to life. To Jeub, showcasing art is about inclusion, and she gets to offer that to the community. What she wants people to understand the most, she says, is that this gallery is for everyone to enjoy. She remembers a time when even as an artist herself she didn't feel comfortable in an art gallery.

“I'm not the only person who was not raised in this kind of place and didn't feel like they could be here,” Jeub said. “So when I get a chance to bring someone in here who has never been in a space like this before, it's really fun because they have to realize that I wasn't always comfortable here either.”

Jeub knows that art can and should be appreciated by all. The gallery she has provided shows that inclusion, as well as Jeub herself.

“A person can come in here and just walk around and be by themselves with [the art],” Jeub said. “Being able to just walk in, look around and ask questions is really the whole point”

This is just the start for the Whit Gallery. Jeub has plans to showcase not just visual arts but local musicians and the spoken word as well. She has a vision where artists and businesses will collaborate to offer something different and special. Her hope is she has created a space where all will feel welcomed.

The Whit Gallery is open from 4-9 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays.



# 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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# Kowalkowski’s roller-coaster ride reaches new heights

by Dennis Dalman  
news@thenewsleaders.com

Seventeen-year-old Kristoff Kowalkowski of Sartell said he feels like he’s been on a roller-coaster ride all of his young life.

“And I can’t wait to see what comes next,” he added. “I’ve had so many great opportunities and learning experiences. I’m looking forward to new ones.”

A superb lifelong football player (quarterback), Kowalkowski started early in the Sartell-St. Stephen School District but transferred to Totino-Grace High School, Fridley, in his sophomore year in order to play on the that school’s Eagles football team.

“I had to commute to school from Sartell every day, but I loved it,” he said.

During his years at Totino-Grace, he was ranked for two consecutive years as the number-one high-school quarterback in the state by the “247” ranking system. During his senior year, he broke the Eagles team record for number of yards passed, for touchdowns and for passes completed.

Kowalkowski not only excelled in football but also in academic pursuits. This spring

he graduated with a 4.0 grade-point average. He is fluent in Mandarin Chinese, having studied that language since he was in kindergarten.

Although he has received two tempting offers by big, prestigious universities, including Columbia and Cornell, Kowalkowski will study and play football at the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, in order to be closer to home and his family – parents Stacy and Thomas and siblings Sophia, Tristan, Gloria, Victor and Nikolai.

Brother Tristan, now a seventh-grader, is showing the same love and aptitude for football as Kristoff did at that age. He recently completed, with great success, the same training camp in Georgia his brother did five years ago.

“It will be awesome that Tristan and I will get to share the same experiences,” he said.

At the College of St. Thomas, Kowalkowski will major in biology and continue to his hone his mastery of Mandarin Chinese, not to mention his mastery of football.

“I want to be a doctor, like my dad,” he said. His father, Dr. Thomas Kowalkowski, who also played football as a student at St. John’s Univer-

sity, is the medical director at the Interventional Pain and Physical Medicine Clinic in Sartell. Kristoff’s mother, Stacy, is the administrator for that clinic.

The “roller-coaster ride” Kowalkowski has taken throughout his entire young life wasn’t always exhilarating; there were “lows” as well as “highs.” One of the “lows” was a challenge called COVID-19. Because of the shutdowns during the pandemic, football training and practice opportunities were scarce to non-existent. Those sessions had always been crucial for Kowalkowski, who since the age of 12 has undergone rigorous training and competitive playing every summer at camps sponsored by the Offense-Defense Football Camp Association. During his high-school years, he was able to train and to compete at camps offered by various colleges and universities.

In the dearth of training opportunities last year, Kowalkowski had to adapt. He decided to do his own kind of improvisatory training at his father’s pain clinic, which has a physical-therapy department, a pool, a sauna and a gym.

After he arrives at the Col-



contributed photo  
“Like Father, Like Sons” could be the motto for this photograph of Dr. Thomas Kowalkowski and two of his sons – Tristan (middle) and Kristoff (right). Thomas played football during his years of study at St. John’s University; Kristoff, is about to play football for the College of St. Thomas; and Tristan, a seventh-grader, has performed exceedingly well at a summer training camp in Georgia, just as brother Kristoff did five years ago.

lege of St. Thomas in August, Kowalkowski will train some more before college starts in September. He will even spend his birthday on football training. He will turn 18 on Aug. 9, the second day of training.

Kowalkowski first played football when he was in third grade, and he loved the sport

so much his dream was to become an NFL quarterback someday. Now, nearly 18 years old, at 6-feet-3-inches and 215 pounds and with a long-time and extensive record of successes, his childhood dream may just come true on the roller-coaster ride of his life.



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# 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



© ADOBE STOCK

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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A photograph of two elderly people, a man and a woman, walking outdoors. The man is wearing a white shirt and the woman is wearing a blue shirt. They are both smiling and appear to be in good health.

THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED IN PART THROUGH THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT THROUGH THE CENTRAL MN. COUNCIL ON AGING.

Whitney

A photograph of a woman sitting on a porch, looking at a laptop. She is wearing a white shirt and a yellow cardigan. The porch has a white railing and a small house in the background.

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

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A photograph of a string quartet performing. There are four people: a man in a suit playing the violin, a woman in a pink dress playing the violin, a man in a suit playing the violin, and a man in a suit playing the cello.

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Destiney, and her brother, Eli, work at their homemade stand July 8 on First Avenue NW in St. Joseph.



Kay Hanson Lane, Eden Valley, chats with Eli and Destiney July 8 as she chooses between a variety of cookies, muffins, iced-coffee, tea and lemonade.



photos by Carolyn Bertsch

**Doggone delicious!**  
Siblings Destiney Parrow, 13, and Eli Karpinske, 11, created a homemade lemonade stand, which sells everything from muffins to iced-coffee. Destiney would like to donate some of the proceeds to an animal shelter.



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# Sartell resident says ‘racism is not inherited it’s learned’

by Zurya Anjum  
Guest Writer

The Sartell school board listened to the results of the Equity audit done by Equity Alliance on June 21. In the early part of the meeting a lot of members from Sartell community spoke for or against the Equity audit and the school boards plans to implement changes based on recommendations from the audit.

I am a strong supporter for the effort for working on equity issues not just in our school but also in our community and have been for years. I do want to answer some questions raised by community members at the meeting.

After the listening session last year where students, teachers and parents spoke about their personal stories, I am astonished that people in our community still think we do not have a problem in our schools related to equity. Kids as young as in elementary school notice differences in kids in their class. They notice differences in skin and hair color and the way they speak. I volunteered in both my kids’ elementary classes and young kids would ask questions about where I was from frequently. One of the first things we teach our kids are numbers and colors, so how is it possible they do not notice it in human beings? The only

difference is how we respond to them when they ask us why someone looks different. They ask innocently and pick up on our biases as we answer them.

To people who say teaching about racism makes kids think they are divided into the oppressor and oppressed, here is my answer. We teach our kids about telling the truth, not stealing, abiding the law among other things. Are we teaching them to become liars, thieves or criminals? No, we are teaching them the difference between the two opposite sides of the principle to show the distinction between them. Similarly, we need to teach them the difference between being racist and being accepting of all.

Martin Luther King said in his famous speech that he dreamed of a day where his kids were not judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. He was very well aware how African Americans were treated at that time based on their skin color. We have come a long way but our journey is not done. It will only be complete when everyone is judged by their character and not skin color, religion or sexual orientation. We are sadly a long way away from that dream.

Marginalized communities are judged every day based on their ancestry, language, culture, sexual identity and eco-

nomie status. I see this every day in my life even though I am protected to some extent by my education and socioeconomic status. I am treated differently if I walk in a store, go to the airport or a restaurant, dressed in semi formal work clothes or when I identify as a physician. However, even at work I have heard many patients ask office staff, “did she go to medical school? Can she speak English? What qualifications does she have?”

This is despite the fact I passed the same examinations medical students in the United States take during medical college. I had to essentially repeat my medical college education even though in my country I was working on my post graduate medical degree. Coming from a developing country and competing against U.S. medical graduates is not an easy task but I did accomplish it as did thousands of foreign medical graduates.

There is clear data that without the foreign medical graduates working in the United States, especially in the rural areas, the medical services would collapse. According to data from October 2020, 25 percent of physicians working in the United States are foreign medical graduates. Immigrants work in all areas of the workforce and contribute to them and without them the supply of

all services will be significantly affected.

Education, employment, housing, medical opportunities for marginalized communities are significantly different. This has clearly been proven in this past year of the global pandemic. There is clear data the pandemic affected the marginalized communities significantly more than the general population. The value of a grocery worker or a laborer is the same as a CEO or head of a company. Why are they treated differently if all human beings are equal based on our constitution?

Wise nations learn from their past mistakes whereas foolish ones hide their past mistakes. Teaching children about how the land we all call home was taken from the Native Americans who were the original owners, how we as human beings made mistakes about slavery, segregation, the holocaust and internment camps is an investment to make sure we learn from our mistakes and hopefully never make them again. If we do not teach them, we may repeat those awful parts of our history.

Racism is not inherited it is learned. Children learn it from their family and friends. Too many times we may not be aware of how kids are absorbing our attitudes and beliefs from conversations that are happening around them. If

they hear someone they love and trust use racial slurs they believe they are appropriate words for them to use. They are mouthing what they hear from people who they look up too. We must remember though, “sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can last forever.”

Lastly, I just want to say that talking about racism does not mean all Caucasians are racists. That would be like saying all Muslims are terrorists. Both those statements are ridiculous. Racism is not linked to color of skin any more than terrorism is linked to a religion. That is the thought process that is being fed to us to create a wrong narrative. There is a segment of people who are using this to make people think the goal is to create good and bad people. Obviously, that is not the goal.

Please educate yourself on these issues and do not speak what other people are saying. Keep an open mind and remember; whether you are Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh or any other faith, none of them teach racism. In fact, they all focus on tolerance and acceptance of differences. They all teach to judge people by their deeds and not by their socioeconomic status, race, gender or sexual identity. Let’s work together to make our schools and community a welcoming place for all.

## Teacher

from front page

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.



photos by Leanne Loy

Some trees are already bearing fruit.



These trees will be used to aid in the grafting process to help grow future trees.



PUBLIC NOITICE

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING • SARTELL-ST. STEPHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 748  
JUNE 21, 2021 • SARTELL HIGH SCHOOL

The regular school board meeting of Independent School District 748 was called to order at 5 p.m. by Chair Jeremy Snoberger. Members present: Snoberger; 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 Marushin to APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. All in favor. Motion carried.

During the public comment opportunity 12 members of the community addressed the school board. Steven Kron, 412 Pheasant Drive, spoke as a concerned parent; Chris Yasgar, 39522 115th Ave., spoke on the topic of the equity survey; Troy Molitor, 721 Starlight Drive, spoke on the topic of the equity survey; Kassa Wagner, 815 10th Ave. N., spoke on the topic of the equity meeting; Emily Larson, 810 Northstar Drive, spoke on the topic of the equity audit; Meghan Kelsey, 632 Brianna Drive, spoke on the topic of school concerns; Mammarie Kai & Momodou Saine, 1733 Blackberry Circle, spoke on the topic of equality; Katy Stark read a statement on behalf of Rochelle Dyer on the topic of equality versus equity; Patrick Torgrimson, 2987 Winnebago Road, spoke on the topic of systemic issues; Kim Nies, read a statement on behalf of Zurya Anjum, on the topic of the equity audit; Joe Perske, 509 North 10th St., spoke on the topic of the equity study; Kim Tjaden, 1490 Riverside Ave. N., spoke in support of the equity audit.

A motion was made by Moehrle and seconded by Meling to APPROVE CONSENT ITEMS A.4.a – A.4.k AS PRESENTED BELOW. All in favor. Motion carried.

A.4.a.	Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on May 17, 2021
	Minutes of the school board work session held on June 2, 2021
A.4.b	Checks in the amount of \$851,088.13 as presented:
	General Fund 454,528.28
	Food Service Fund 96,781.56
	Transportation Fund 201,691.96
	Community Service Fund 3,411.05
	Capital Expenditure Fund 84,127.27
	Activity Accounts 8,701.18
	Internal Service Fund 1,846.83
	Check numbers 181193 – 181480

ACHs in the amount of \$7,241.19 as presented:	
General Fund	4,748.57
Food Service Fund	294.00
Community Service Fund	218.46
Activity Accounts	1,980.16
ACH numbers 202000133-20200163	

Receipts in the amount of \$7,503,964.11 as presented:	
General Fund	5,320,674.39
Food Service Fund	260,151.80
Transportation Fund	19,034.69
Community Service Fund	166,484.94
Building Fund	71.01
Debt Service Fund	1,708,461.78
Activity Accounts	8,619.46
Internal Service Fund	10,466.04
Receipts 48860 - 48987	

Wire transfers in the amount of \$2,029,188.94 as presented:	
General Fund	1,239,330.21
Food Service Fund	45,996.66
Transportation Fund	19,402.37
Community Service Fund	26,328.15
Capital Expenditure Fund	2,310.61
Activity Accounts	300.00
Internal Service Fund	695,520.94
Wire transfers 202000640-202000734	

Building Fund Checks in the amount of \$7,252.00 as presented:	
Building Fund	7,252.00
Check number 601210 - 601211	

A.4.c.1 Approve resolution accepting the following donations: RBC Foundation, ISD #748, \$500, donation supporting equity works; SSEF, Sartell High School, \$100, donation for Senior Awards Night; Sartell-St. Stephen Pre K-5 PTO, Pine Meadow Primary, \$2,750, donation for book vending machine; Sartell Wal-Mart, ISD #748, hand sanitizer, cleaning wipes and soap, donation of cleaning materials; Elle Plamann, ISD #748 Food Service, \$256.15, donation to food service “Have a Heart Fund.”

A.4.c.2 Approve resolution accepting the following activity account 2020-2021 End-of-Year donations: Tech Club, 9/18/2020, \$1,000, Gene Haas Foundation; Tech Club, 9/11/2020, \$500, Brett and Nancy Avery; Nordic Ski, 1/8/2021, \$300, anonymous parent; Baseball, 12/2/2020, \$500, St. Cloud Optimist Club; Baseball, 1/8/2021, \$750, St. Cloud Optimist Club; Boys Basketball, 11/12/2020,

\$500, SAYBA; Boys Basketball, 1/25/2021, \$500, St. Cloud Optimist Club; Boys Basketball, 1/25/2021, \$75, anonymous parent; Boys Basketball, 1/25/2021, \$25, anonymous parent; Football, 12/23/2020, \$750, Knife River; Football, 12/23/2020, \$750, Kevin Gross; Girls Basketball, 8/20/2020, \$2,500, SAYBA; Girls Basketball, 1/25/2021,\$500, SAYBA; Softball, 10/30/2020, \$1,000, Booster Club; Trap Team, 5/21/2021, \$500, St. Stephen Sportsmen Club; Trap Team, 5/21/2021, \$500, St. Cloud Moose Lodge No 1400; Nordic Ski, 4/16/2021, \$695, anonymous parents for state; Girls Basketball, 5/28/2021, \$2,042.71, SAYBA; Drama Club, 5/3/2021, \$2,500,MDO Periodontics PA.

A.4.d Accept the resignation of Lauren Cruze, ORELCL, para, 5/31/21; Autumn Fosteson, SHS, para, 6/8/21; Jan Gronseth, SMS, food service worker, 6/3/21; Kaylee Johnson, ORELCL, para, 6/2/21; Abbey Kajer, ORELCL, para, 6/3/21; Jeannie Klehr, SMS, cashier, 6/2/21; Rachel Miller, SMS, music teacher, 6/30/21; Mary Okakpu, District, sign language interpreter, 6/5/21; Deborah Raveling, SMS, cashier, 6/3/21; Katy Vinje Stark, PMPS/RIS, ESL teacher, 6/9/21. Release from employment of Nicole Ackerman, ORELCL, para, 6/21/21; Shelby Burg, ORELCL, para, 6/21/21; Maria Davis, RIS, para, 6/21/21; Alisha Frey, RIS, para, 6/21/21; Maya Murphy, PMPS, para, 6/21/21; Jennifer Philbrick, SMS, para, 6/21/21; Christine Ravenberg, ORELCL, para, 6/21/21; Isaiah Wallace, SMS, para, 6/21/21. Accept Retirement of Rosie Warzecha, PMPS, head custodian, 10/29/21.

A.4.e Approve Long-Term Facility Maintenance Expenditure Application

A.4.f Approve 2021-2022 SEE Membership Renewal

A.4.g Approve 2021-2022 Minnesota School Boards Association Membership

A.4.h Approve MSHSL Membership for 2021-2022

A.4.i Approve 2021-2022 Resource Training and Solutions Associate Membership

A.4.j Approve Renewal of Kemps Dairy for Milk and Dairy Products for the 2021-2022

A.4.k Approve Student Teacher Agreement with Minnesota State of South Dakota

Educational Equity Audit Report:

Members of the EA-MN team presented the findings from the educational equity audit.

Superintendent Report: Jeff Schwiebert

Schwiebert started his report by thanking all those who participated in the board meeting and encouraged them to continue to be involved. In alluding it is his last meeting he reminded the board to ask, “How can we support our kids?” The pandemic, he said, has added more stress, and mental health issues are even worse. He encouraged the district to continue partnerships with organizations

and the City of Sartell. One example being Habitat for Humanity will be presenting to the board next month. In closing his final meeting, he thanked the school board, staff and community members for everything throughout the past seven years.

Budget Reports:  
Joe Prom, director of business services, presented the revised 2020-21 and preliminary 2021-22 budgets.

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

Enrollment Report: Jeff Schwiebert  
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.

Treasurer Moehrle reported on the legislative update he received from SEE.

Director Marushin reported on the finance and operations committee meeting along with the most recent policy committee meeting.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Nies to APPROVE #1-22:

New Employees/Changes:

Aaron Athas, SMS, PAC manager, \$3,990 (9.5%), BA, Step (\$42,002), replacing Rachel Miller, 9/4/2021; Lori Bell, PMPS, ESY SPED para, \$16.67/hour, 3.75 hours/day, 16 days, new position, 6/14/2021; Zach Brown, SHS, summer school teacher, \$32.50/hour, BA, Step A, 104 hours, new position, 6/7/2021; Brittany Goebel, ORELCL, ESY SPED para, \$16.67/hr, 3 hours/day, 16 days, new position, 6/14/2021;

Jacob Hennings, ORELCL/SMS, general music, \$42,002, BA, Step A, .33 FTE @ ORELCL, .67 FTE @ SMS, additional assignment – replacing Rachel Miller @SMS, 8/30/2021; Sylvia Kaare, SHS, summer marching band drumline, \$3,990, BA, Step A (\$42,002), replacing Andrew Guthmiller, 4/6/2021;

Abbey Kajer, ORELCL, early childhood, \$16,801, BA, Step A (\$42,002), .4 FTE, replacing Hannah Carey, 8/25/2021; Hailley Kurtz, PMPS, ESY SPED para, \$16.67/hour, 3.75 hours/day, 16 days, new position, 6/14/2021; Lucia Laituri, ORELCL, ESY SPED para, \$16.67/hr, 3 hours/day, 16 days, new position, 6/14/2021; Allison Ley, SHS, social studies, \$56,725, MA, Step E, new position, 8/25/2021;

Lisa McMullen, PMPS, ESY teacher, \$32.50/hour, 4 hours/day, 16 days, new position, 6/14/2021; Maureen Murphy, SHS, ESY SPED para, \$16.67/hour, 4 hours/day, 16 days, new

position, 6/14/2021; Joseph Nelson, ORELCL, physical education, \$13,861, BA, Step A (\$42,002), .33 FTE, replacing Melissa Ferguson, 8/25/2021; Paul Plombon, SMS, ESY teacher, \$32.50/hour, 4 hours/day, 16 days, new position, 6/14/2021; Haley Robben, RIS, custodian, \$17.61, RIII, S1, 8 hours/day 260 days/year, replacing Neil Andrson, 5/19/2021;

Sadie Rolfhus, PMPS, elementary education – second grade, \$43,024, BA, Step B, replacing Jennifer LaBonne, 8/25/2021; James Scheevel, SHS, special education, \$44,666, BA10, Step A, replacing Rebekah Arnold, 8/25/2021; Jessica Scheevel, SHS, special education/assessment coordinator, \$61,825, MA, Step J, replacing Aimee Gilmore, 8/25/2021;

Corey Schueller, SHS, summer school teacher, \$32.50/hour, 8 hours/day, 104 hours, new position, 6/7/2021; Chue (Cayden) Thao, PMPS, ESY SPED para, \$16.67/hour, 3.75 hours/day, 16 days, new position, 6/14/2021; Jen Wahl, PMPS, ESY SPED para, \$16.67/hour, 3.75 hours/day, 16 days, new position, 6/14/2021.

Leaves of Absence:  
Katie Martin, SMS, sixth grade, LOA, 8/30/21-10/1/21.  
All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Meling TO APPROVE 2020-2021 REVISED BUDGET.  
All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Nies and seconded by Byrd TO APPROVE PRELIMINARY 2021-2022 BUDGET. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Byrd TO AUTHORIZE THE DISTRICT TO SPEND UP TO \$1,000,000 ON BLEACHERS AND LIGHTS AT THE SARTELL HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC COMPLEX. All in favor. Motion carried.

Schedule Work Session and Committee Meetings:

Future Board Work Session – Monday, July 12, 2021 @ District Service Center - 7 p.m.

Future Regular Board Meeting – Monday, July 19, 2021 @ District Service Center - 5 p.m.

Committee Assignments were reviewed.

Chairman Snoberger made the following statement of gratitude from the School Board to Superintendent Jeff Schwiebert and thanked him for his years of service to the Sartell-St. Stephen School District.

A motion to ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:35 p.m. was made by Nies and seconded by Meling. All in favor. Motion carried.

/s/ Amanda Byrd, clerk

Publish: July 23, 2021



# 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**



# Art

from page 6

tion. The humans are psychologically intertwined with their environments, secure together in a strong knot. There is no (human) domination, no possession.”

# Perske

from page 2

Two: The need for funding to reconstruct CR 12 between Richmond and Melrose.

Three: A strengthened partnership against domestic violence, with more help to provide legal services in such cases, with particular emphasis on work done for survivors of domestic violence at Anna Marie’s (shelter) House in St. Cloud.

Four: Federal funds to purchase property adjacent to and just north of Mississippi River County Park north of Sartell. Development of that land, which abuts the river, would extend the county park for two miles more northwards of undisturbed river-front property. Two years ago, Stearns and Benton counties agreed to combine forces to someday make that area a regional park (to include as part of regional designation the Bend in the River Park on the Benton side of the river).

Other topics discussed at the convention were national broadband issues and planning, implementation of the American Rescue Plan Act, security and processes to strengthen local and national elections, the pending National Infrastructure Plan, and numerous topics regarding agriculture and transportation.

National and county officials plan to keep in touch about all of those topics as local and national actions are proposed and possibly enacted.



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.



## August Fest



August 5th - 8th 2021

El Rancho Manana Campground

Richmond, MN



### Sam Bush

#### Sideline

#### Special Consensus

Valerie Smith & Liberty Pike

Caleb Daugherty Band



Jim & Lynna Woolsey, The High 48's, Volo Bogtrotters, Bernie King & the Guilty Pleasures, New Riverside Ramblers, The Pale Ales, Wild Goose Chase Cloggers, Fish Heads, TrueGrass Trio, Bob Bovee and Pop Wagner and many more.....







### Tickets on sales now at [Minnesotabluegrass.org](https://minnesotabluegrass.org)

#### Live music

#### Camping

#### Family Area

#### Workshops

#### Food vendors







#### 4 Stages

#### Instuctional

#### Camps

#### Jamming

#### Dances



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## PEACH SEASON IS HERE!

*Tree-ripened, sweet-and-juicy peaches come direct from small orchard in Palisade, Colorado within days of being picked.*



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**Or call store: 320-363-7733**  
**First shipment: Thursday, Aug. 12. Suncrest (freestone).**  
**A drip-down-your-chin peach.**  
**Second shipment: Tuesday, Aug. 31. Crethaven (freestone).**  
**Very juicy. Firm flesh and almost fuzzless.**





© ADOBE STOCK

# 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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