

Friday, Dec. 24, 2021
Volume 33, Issue 24
Est. 1989

Town Crier

Donate blood
this holiday season!

Blood donated through the American Red Cross helps patients of all ages including cancer and sickle cell patients, trauma and burn patients, and patients with chronic diseases. Minimum requirements for whole-blood donation include donation frequency of every 56 days, must be in good health and feeling well, at least age 16 and weigh at least 110 pounds. Visit www.redcross.org for more information. A one-time blood donation can save up to three lives! Schedule an appointment to give blood today! Visit <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive>.

Food shelf
asks for donations

Catholic Charities Emergency Services food shelf is looking for donations of peanut butter, canned meats such as tuna and chicken, vegetable oil, oil spray, flour, sugar, pancake mix and syrup, and seasonings. While cash donations stretch the farthest, donations provide a respectful variety for clients to choose from. Donations are accepted from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Mondays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Wednesdays and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Fridays. Donations can be delivered to donation door D (door closest to Ten Voorde Ford). Please do not leave donations outside their doors. Donations must be collected and weighed by Catholic Charities staff to ensure food safety standards and inventory tracking. Outside of these times, please call 320-229-4560 to coordinate another drop off time.

Meals on Wheels
seeks drivers

Meals on Wheels Drivers provide nutritious noon meals and social interaction to homebound seniors in and around the greater St. Cloud area. Meals are delivered Monday and Wednesday with the exception of holidays. Approximately one hour per week, starting at 10:30 a.m. Driver's license, personal vehicle and current insurance is required. Meals are picked up at Whitney Senior Center in St. Cloud. Please call Annie Hendriksen at Catholic Charities at 320-229-4590.

MERRY
CHRISTMAS
& HAPPY NEW YEAR

Family blessed with Tristalyn home for Christmas

by Dennis Dalman

news@thenewsleaders.com

The Tracy and Timm Smith family of St. Joseph have endured constant worries, setbacks and anxieties during the past two months, but despite all of that, they are counting their Christmas blessings.

Their biggest blessing is that their little daughter, Tristalyn is home for Christmas after being very ill for three weeks at Children's Hospital in Minneapolis.

The Smiths are the owners of the Daisy A Day floral shop in St. Joseph.

Tracy Smith described her

daughter's long battle with pain and all the setbacks associated with her illness. Three months ago, Tristalyn began feeling excruciating pains that kept getting worse and worse. In the seven weeks before being admitted to the hospital, she was in the emergency room three times. Her body had started to shut down physically and emotionally.

The pain seemed to be coming from her intestine on the right side. She had to undergo procedures that included an endoscopy and a colonoscopy. She also underwent diagnostic tests that



contributed photo

Tristalyn Smith is fourth from the left in this photo, taken in 2020, of St. Joseph Catholic School second-graders celebrating Spirit Day. From left to right are Wylie Schmitz, Peyton Weber, Logan Nolan, Tristalyn, Claire Beirne and Jasmine Smoley.

included MRIs, an MRA and an EEG scan of her brain. This was followed by ultrasounds, CT scans, and blood

having to be drawn every six hours since doctors were monitoring her kidneys, which were

Home • page 2

2021 Year in Review

Re-emerging to a new normal in 2021

Jan. 8 edition

A stolen St. Cloud police car was left abandoned at Millstream Park in St. Joseph Jan. 7. The suspect fled on foot and was later arrested hiding at a nearby home. On Jan. 7, St. Cloud police were called to Kwik Trip at 6250 CR 120 in reference to a suspicious person. According to the report, an officer located the man in the parking lot and identified him as 25-year-old Alexander James Butcher. Butcher was cooperative and nothing criminal had occurred, so he was not in custody. The officer who had been speaking with Butcher outside the store stepped inside the store to speak with

an employee. At that time, approximately 7:30 p.m., Butcher entered and stole the squad car. Stearns County Dispatch Center was able to track the squad car GPS. The report notes the vehicle at times was traveling at a high rate of speed on Veterans Drive, then South on Highway 15, and then west on Third Street. The vehicle went through Waite Park and then toward St. Joseph where it eventually stopped in the Millstream Park area at 725 CR 75.

On Dec. 22, Murray Allen Dirks, 44, of St. Joseph, was convicted of a felony and sentenced to more than 11 years in prison for disseminating pornographic work. This was his

fifth conviction.

Jan. 22 edition

A free, online tutoring service is here to help students make the grade as distance learning during the pandemic has exacerbated trying to understand daily lessons and homework. Around Cloud Tutors, which launched Jan. 11, is an online service to provide tutoring to St. Cloud area students at no charge. Tutoring is available in three languages – English, Somali and Spanish – including for students with special needs or those needing post-secondary advising.

After weeks of uncertainty, the St. Joseph Food Shelf will

open its doors in a new location Feb. 8. "This community has been unbelievable for us in the 11th hour," said Julie Gravgaard, co-coordinator of the St. Joseph Food Shelf, as she shared the new address at 18 Birch St. E. With the sale of the former Kennedy building in December, the St. Joseph Food Shelf needed to find a new home.

St. Joseph City Council approved preliminary and final plats for the St. Joseph City Hall addition Jan. 19. The resolutions approved splitting existing parcels adjacent to the former Kennedy building and city hall into three separate parcels. City

Review • page 4

Resurrection Lutheran
food drive soars

by Leanne Loy

editor@thenewsleaders.com

Throughout the month of November members of Resurrection Lutheran Church set a goal to collect 500 food items for the St. Joseph Community food shelf. It was a project near and dear to the RLC member's hearts.

Not only was that goal met but they were also the recipients of a match provided by a challenge organized by Thrivent. The challenge through Thrivent was called "Give Thanks Give Back." The goal was to collect at least 500 items for the food shelf in the month of November for a

chance to be presented with a \$500 match. Any groups in the community that were able to collect 500 items or more where eligible to receive that match.

Thrilled that they won, the members of RLC were further surprised when Thrivent doubled that amount making the total \$1,000!

Furthermore, the \$1,000 was matched again by a current grant that the food shelf was able to access. In the end RLC was able to donate 500+ food and items and \$2,000 to the St. Joseph Community Food Shelf.



contributed photo

In the month of November Resurrection Lutheran Church collected 500+ items to donate to the local food shelf. RLC members (from left to right) are Lori Schneider, Tina Hasselbring, Elizabeth Libbey and Chloe and Tristan (front) Hasselbring. The group was also the recipient of a monetary match for \$1,000 from Thrivent.

Home

from front page

in decline.

As if all of that suffering were not enough, she now has pediatric chronic pain syndrome. Children’s Hospital, thankfully, does have an outpatient program for those suffering from the syndrome. If Tristalyn’s condition at home does not improve enough for the outpatient treatments, her parents will probably have to have her admitted to a hospital outside the state as there are no services for that condition in Minnesota for someone as young as Tristalyn. She would likely be in that hospital for four weeks at least.

“We are doing everything we can to get her healthy enough to start that treatment,” Tracy said, adding that the thought of her not getting better is almost unbearable because there are three young boys in the family, busy days at Daisy A Day and a grandmother who is ill and needs help from Tracy.

“We are hoping and praying Tristalyn makes big strides in the next couple of weeks,” she said.

There is a GoFundMe page for the Smiths that was posted by well-wisher Melissa Legatt of Rice. On that page, Tracy wrote this: Thank you all for praying, thinking of our family, making meals for the boys, helping us in the flower shop, sending cards, texts and gifts for Tristalyn and supporting us through such difficult times. I cannot even begin to tell you all how blessed we are to have you in our lives. I’ve been talking to Tristalyn and sharing all the love you have for her. She has big plans for spring to give back to our community, just wait and see!!”

It’s been a very rough, nerve-racking journey for the entire Smith family. Tracy has had to close her business on many days in order to be with her daughter at Children’s Hospital. The father, Timm, is a teacher in Foley and has been taking care of the three boys and traveling back and forth to the hospital to see his daughter and his wife.

Legatt, the GoFundMe page organizer, described the Smiths as “some of the most generous people when it comes to supporting others and that Daisy A Day often donates and supports events in the com-

munity.

“It’s our turn to help them (the Smiths) while they care for Tristalyn and bring her back to her charismatic, energetic self.”

Legatt noted, Tristalyn’s horrible pains were caused by a blockage in the upper intestine. The ordeal has exhausted Tristalyn and drained her of energy. But bravely, she battles on.

In the meantime, Tristalyn is doing the best she can while back home for Christmas, even though she has to rely on a feeding tube and is unable to sit up or move around. She cannot eat or drink

and hardly talks at all. She will start home health care and physical/occupational therapy at home.

“We know this will take time,” Tracy said. “We are waiting for some results from Mayo (clinic).”

“This is absolutely heartbreaking.” But Tracy, her husband and sons, and Tristalyn are determined to defeat the worries and heart-break, with so much help from those who know and love them.

The GoFundMe page for the Smiths can be found here:
www.gofundme.com/f/s89d8-support-the-smith-family

Calendar

Arts, 913 W. St. Germain St., St. Cloud. Free cake and coffee. paramountarts.org.

Worship, 3 and 5:30 p.m., Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 N. CR 2, St. Joseph.

Holiday Mass, 4 and 9 p.m., Church of St. Joseph, 12 W Minnesota St., St. Joseph.

Christmas Mass, 5 p.m., St. John’s Abbey, 2900 Abbey Plaza, Collegeville.

Christmas at St. Benedict’s Monastery, 8 p.m., Sacred Heart Chapel, 104 Chapel Lane, St. Joseph.

Saturday, Dec. 25
Holiday Mass, 8:30 a.m., Church of St. Joseph, 12 W Minnesota St. Joseph.

Christmas at St. Benedict’s Monastery, 10:30 a.m, Sacred Heart Chapel, 104 Chapel Lane, St. Joseph.

Free Christmas Day Dinner,

sponsored by the East Side VFW, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Join for an in-person dining experience or order to go! All are welcome. Turkey, ham, vegetarian dishes, dessert and more! Contact 320-217-5839 or agapewarriorsministry@gmail.com for more information.

Sunday, Dec. 26
Worship, 9 a.m., Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 N. CR 2, St. Joseph.

Skating rink now open! 25 5th St. NE, located off of CR 2 and Fifth St. NE. The skating rink is now open with lights until 10 p.m. at Smoley Fields.

Monday, Dec. 27
Frozen Meal Distribution – Catholic Charities, 8-10:30 a.m., Celebration Lutheran Church, 1500 Pinecone Road N., Sartell. Participants must be age 60 or older. For information, call 320-

229-4584.

Tuesday, Dec. 28
St. Joseph Food Shelf, 1-3 p.m., 18 Birch St. E, St. Joseph. Visit Facebook page for schedule changes and updates.

The Texas Tenors’ Deep in the Heart of Christmas. Show times: 1:30 and 7:30 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W. St. Germain St., St. Cloud. paramountarts.org.

Thursday, Dec. 30
Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Topic: A Year in Review.

St. Joseph Food Shelf, 1-3 p.m., 18 Birch St. E, St. Joseph. Visit Facebook page for schedule changes and updates.

The Nights Before Christmas Tour: Shaun Johnson + The Big Band Experience, Evolution of big band music, 7:30 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W. St. Germain St., St. Cloud. paramountarts.org.

Friday, Dec. 31
Tonic Sol Fa, a cappella quartet, 7:30 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W. St. Germain St., St. Cloud. paramountarts.org.

Monday, Jan. 3
St. Joseph City Council, 6 p.m., Government Center, 75 Callaway St. E.

Tuesday, Jan. 4
St. Joseph Food Shelf, 1-3 p.m., 18 Birch St. E, St. Joseph. Visit Facebook page for schedule changes and updates.

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

Thursday, Jan. 6
Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Topic: Chief Jim Hughes, “A Day in the Life of a Police Officer.”

St. Joseph Food Shelf, 1-3 p.m., 18 Birch St. E, St. Joseph. Visit Facebook page for schedule changes and updates.

St. Joseph • Sartell-St. Stephen

Reaching Everybody!

Newsleaders

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**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: Great River Bowl.

2. The stated address of the principal place of business is or will be: 208 Second St. S., P.O. Box 339, Sartell, Minnesota 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: Pins and Pints LLC, 208 Second St. S., P.O. Box 339, Sartell, Minnesota 56377.

4. 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: Dec. 16, 2021

Filed: Dec. 16, 2021

/s/ Jason M. Mathiasen, president

Publish: Dec. 24, 2021 & Jan. 7, 2022

**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: Partners Pub.

2. The stated address of the principal place of business is or will be: 208 Second St. S., P.O. Box 339, Sartell, Minnesota 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: Pins and Pints LLC, 208 Second St. S., P.O. Box 339, Sartell, Minnesota 56377.

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Dated: Dec. 16, 2021

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/s/ Jason M. Mathiasen, president

Publish: Dec. 24, 2021 & Jan. 7, 2022

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The St. Joseph Fire Department
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*Glory to God in the Highest
& Peace to God's People*
Christmas Eve Worship:

Friday, Dec. 24
3 & 5:30 p.m.

No Worship on Christmas Day
Sunday, Dec. 26
9 a.m.



**Resurrection Lutheran Church • 610 N. County Road 2
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If you have a tip concerning a crime, call the St. Joseph Police Department at 320-363-8250 or Tri-County Crime Stoppers at 320-255-1301 or access its tip site at tricountycrimestoppers.org. Crime Stoppers offers rewards up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for a crime.

Nov. 2

2:30 p.m. Road rage. CR 75/20th Avenue SE. An unidentified caller reported a male in a white truck looked angry and was in a verbal argument with a female in a red truck with reddish hair. Officer responded and spoke with female driver who had red hair in red truck on the south side of Kwik Trip. She said she was driving on Ridgewood Road, and a male in a white truck was tailgating her. She stated he then passed her on the right and slammed on his brakes causing her to slam on her brakes near Ridgewood Court. She stated they both ended up at Kwik Trip where the male and female got into a verbal only. Female admitted she yelled at male as he yelled at her. Officer obtained plate info. on white truck and identified driver; officer said he would speak with driver regarding incident.

3:19 p.m. Traffic hazard. Ridgewood Road/ CR 75. Officer was approached by a city maintenance employee who said a dump truck dumped gravel at

this intersection which may cause a traffic hazard. Officer responded and located the gravel in the turn lane off Ridgewood Road to go westbound on CR 75. The gravel was approximately 3-4 inches thick and was approximately 4 feet wide. Officer called Stearns County Highway Department and told them of the hazard. County said they would pass the info on to a supervisor. No further action.

Nov. 3

7:37 a.m. Vehicle/deer crash.. CR 3. Stearns County sheriff's department asked for agency assist of a motor vehicle vs. deer crash near 12814 CR 3 in St. Wendel township. Officer made contact with driver who said he was southbound on CR 3 when a deer jumped out of the west ditch in front of him. Driver attempted to slam on his brakes but still hit the deer with the front of his vehicle. Moderate damage to the front. Pictures taken. No apparent injury. The deer was not located, however, officer observed deer hair was stuck between the bumper and front license plate. Officer provided accident info to driver.

Nov. 7

10:06 a.m. Hit and run. College Avenue S. Complainant stated she parked at St. Joseph Township Hall at 935 College Ave. S. shortly before 10 p.m. last night, because she was staying

Nov. 8

1:12 p.m. Cow on loose. Jasmine Lane E. Someone reported a calf had gotten out of the fence on the north side of Jasmine Lane E. Officer was able to find the calf and attempt contact with the owners who were not around. Officer put calf back in the fence without incident. It should be noted, the calf's mother was nearby and took custody of the calf.






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Review

2021

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Review

from front page

Hall will have 1.3 acres, Little Saints Academy, the new owner of the Kennedy building, will have a 4.3-acre parcel. The remaining 8.3 acres are reserved for a park and community center.

Feb. 5 edition

At the Jan. 19 St. Joseph City Council meeting, Police Chief Dwight Pfannenstein reported officers were dispatched to 3,826 calls in 2020, an increase of 16 percent from the previous year. Pfannenstein noted this was the first time in his 20 years of service that bars and restaurants were shut down, schools were on remote learning and large outdoor events and parades were cancelled due to restrictions to slow the spread of COVID-19. “While some would think this would result in peace and quiet in the world of the police, we saw quite the opposite,” he said. When asked about the types of incidents that may have led to the increase of 523 more calls, Pfannenstein said he couldn’t be sure, but he hopes to know by the end of February, or March at the latest. The record-keeping system currently used is outdated.

Feb. 19 edition

Melted cheese oozes over crisp crust and down the wall at Sliced on College Avenue in St. Joseph from a new mural painted by local artists Austin Saatzer, Grace Kuebelbeck and Adam Spaeth in February.

St. Cloud school district students in grades six through 12 return to in-person learning full time March 10. When the announcement was made at the Feb. 3 school board meeting, Superintendent Willie Jett noted the historic moment. “Our secondary schools have not been in person like this since last March,” he said.

March 5 edition

A warm-weather meltdown followed by a sprinkling of snow were a nice mix for St. Joseph’s first Snowfest. The week kicked off with a medallion hunt. By the fifth daily clue, the medallion was found by Bruno, Ann and Ruben Theisen. Approximately a dozen people showed up for what turned out to be a moonlight hike through Millstream Park Feb. 27. Two days of above-40 temperatures eliminated the need for snowshoes, but the campfire raged on. Then, the overnight snow gave a fresh coat of powder for an afternoon of sled-ding at Memorial Park Feb. 28.

Those 60 and older in St. Joseph are welcome to pick up free frozen meals at Resurrection Lutheran Church, enough meals to last seniors one month. This is an ongoing program, set for every month. The frozen meals distribution is a program made possible by Catholic Charities. It is partially funded via a contract with the Central Minnesota Council on Aging as part of the national Older Americans Act.

Kevin Kluesner was sworn in March 1 as the newest member of the St. Joseph City Council. He was appointed following interviews Feb. 18 with eight candidates vying for an open seat following the resignation of council member Anne Buckvold in January.

March 19 edition

St. Joseph has some serious street cred when it comes to food and beverage in the United States. Two local establishments have been recognized on a national stage for being the best. Krewe walked away with Midwest Living magazine’s Best New Restaurant 2021. Milk & Honey Ciders was among the finalists in USA Today’s Readers’ Choice 2021 for best cidery.

At the Feb. 17 St. Cloud school board meeting, the 2021-22 academic calendar was approved with staggered start dates, new distance-learning days and the end of what many Minnesotans have known as “snow day” make-up days.

In August 2020, Rebecca Grosz was named the first female sergeant of the Waite Park Police Department. A little over six months into her new role, this St. Joseph native shared a bit about her work, including how effective communication skills are more valuable than use of force in her line of work.

April 16 edition

For the second year in a row, the streets of St. Joseph will be quieter July 3. JoeTown Rocks has been cancelled again as a COVID-19 safety precaution.

Members of the St. Joseph Parish Quilt Group gathered at Heritage Hall Monday to put the finishing touches on their masterpiece, the “Bad Habit Brewing” quilt.

All things considered in a pandemic, St. Joseph is doing OK. In an interview prior to Mayor Rick Schultz’ annual state of the city address to the St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce April 14, he talked about how COVID-19 impacted this small town.

April 30 edition

The sidewalks of St. Joseph are typically lined with lawn chairs and blankets every July 4 as thousands of local residents and out-of-towners make their way to Minnesota Street for the annual parade. This year, a decision will be made on whether or not the parade marches on by May 15.

If one positive thing came out of the pandemic, it’s an appreciation for outdoor dining, and the city of St. Joseph is acknowledging that with a new temporary ordinance extending outdoor service for some businesses.

At the April 19 St. Joseph City Council meeting, the future Jacob Wetterling Recreation Center took a step toward becoming reality. The council approved a motion to seek proposals for design and construction services.

May 14 edition

St. Joseph Women of Today will hold a free kids’ bicycle and helmet safety event from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 15 in Melody Park off Ironwood Drive in Pleasant Acres

Following Gov. Tim Walz’s announced lifting of restrictions on outdoor gatherings beginning May 7 and indoor gatherings beginning May 28, St. Cloud school district released updated plans for end-of-year activities for Apollo High School. For prom Saturday, May 15, students are now allowed to have two spectators at the grand march at 7:30 p.m. Prom immediately follows the grand march and ends at 11 p.m.

June 11 edition

St. Joseph residents asked questions and expressed concern at the June 7 city council meeting during the public assessment hearing on 2021 street and utility improvements totaling more than \$3.5 million

St. Joseph Convention and Visitors Bureau has a new strategic plan to introduce more people to the small-town warmth and big city cool that is affectionately known as JoeTown.

Too much of a good thing? No way. The annual Millstream Arts Festival typically held in September is transitioning to a weekly event Mondays throughout the summer in St. Joseph.

June 25 edition

Members of the city council and the Jacob Wetterling Community Center focus group met June 16 to listen to four architectural firms propose their ideas for the much-anticipated community center.

The creators of Art and Science Kits for children are seeking donations to continue their enrichment programs throughout this summer.

A new women’s clothing and accessory boutique, Hudson & Company, opened June 18 in the beautifully restored corner building at College Avenue and Minnesota Street in St. Joseph.

July 9 edition

The decision of which architect firm is going to head the Jacob Wetterling Community Center is drawing to a close. At the July 6 council meeting it was announced the community center committee had made its final decision. However, there are still some concerns within the city council that need to be addressed.

Aug. 6 edition

At Monday night’s council meeting a decision was approved for which architect firm would head the Jacob Wetterling Community Center.

The St. Joseph City Council officially welcomed its newest council member Jon Hazen at Monday night’s council meeting. Hazen will replace Brian Theisen, who resigned earlier this summer for personal reasons.

On Aug. 26, lifelong St. Joseph resident Taylor Notsch showcased graphic design pieces and clay jewelry artwork at Millstream Night Market Mondays. Not only has Notsch lived her whole life in St. Joseph, she also attended the College of St. Benedict where she majored in communication.

Sept. 3 edition

On Aug. 18, St. Cloud school board voted six to one to mandate masks while inside district buildings and using district transportation. The mandate went into effect Aug. 23.

Sept. 17 edition

The St. Joseph Catholic School has a new principal. Sara Michaelson joined the faculty of the elementary school on Aug. 25. Michaelson has a background in education and leadership. Originally from Anchorage, Alaska, she graduated from East Anchorage High School.

Food trucks, shopping and music is what will greet you if you attend the second annual St. Joseph craft fair. St. Joseph residents Meghan and Carl Berg started the

Snapshots of 2021

While 2021 headlines tell of all we lost due to COVID-19, these snapshots tell all that we gained. Celebration and connection. Compassion. Resilience. Hope. We truly are in this together.



1.



2.



3.



4.

1. Jan. 22
photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Evelyn Warnert, 5, of St. Joseph, zooms down a hill Jan. 18 at Memorial Park in St. Joseph.

2. Feb. 5
photo by Heidi L. Everett

Family, friends and law enforcement were on hand for the remembrance and wreath-laying ceremony near the intersection of CRs 75 and 133 where St. Joseph Police Officer Brian Klinefelter was killed in 1996.

event last year when all their usual fairs had been canceled due to Covid.

During his student years at Concordia College in Moorhead, Chad Johnson, now a St. Joseph resident, developed a passion for “giving back” and helping others, especially through non-profit agencies.

Oct. 1 edition

When students returned to Kennedy Community School Sept. 9, fewer students were in the hallways due to lower enrollment this year.

An old house in St. Joseph once owned by Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict will become a new home for a family in need this summer.

Numerous people gathered to enjoy the German style festivities Sept. 25 at St. Joseph's Rocktoberfest. It wasn't unusual to see men wearing their traditional lederhosen while the women donned their dirndls. The crowd was lively while the Bavarian Musikmeisters kept the music going.

Oct. 29 edition

Kennedy Community School was the school in focus at the Oct. 20 St. Cloud school board meeting.

A press released recently stated the public is invited to visit the Southwest Beltline Corridor Study website to learn more about potential corridor alternatives. The study

3. May 14
photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Brynlee Ritter, 5, of St. Joseph, points to some art projects while touring a kindergarten classroom April 29 at Kennedy Community School's Kindergarten Welcome Night with her parents, John and Kelli. Brynlee's older sister, Brielle, is a second grader at the school.

website will have a narrated presentation available for review as well as the opportunity to complete a community survey and share comments on an interactive study map.

St. Cloud school district Superintendent Willie Jett announced he will not be seeking contract renewal when his current contract expires June 30, 2022.

Nov. 12 edition

Laurie Putnam has been named the new superintendent for St. Cloud school district, a role she will assume July 1, 2022, pending contract negotiations.

Plenty of fixings for a complete Thanksgiving family dinner will be available at a Fare for All distribution event from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 15, at Resurrection Lutheran Church in St. Joseph.

If you have yet to attend one of Mary Bruno's open houses at her studio, you may want to add it to your list of things to do. When you walk into the studio in St. Joseph the first thing you are greeted with is a welcoming smile and a “hey buddy.”

Nov. 26 edition

To meet Brother Paul-Vincent is to understand what it's like being in the presence of a kindred spirit. Brother Paul has been a Benedictine monk at the St. John's Abbey since 1993. In 1995, he started teaching

4. May 28
photo by Mike Knaak

Looking for the perfect fit Alejandro Padilla, 9, of St. Joseph tries on a new bike helmet during the St. Joseph Women of Today bike safety event May 15 at Melody Park. About 100 helmets, as well as gift cards and bicycles donated by local businesses were given away. Children could also bike around Pleasant Acres. Alejandro is the son of Vanessa and Miguel Padilla.

and directing theater at St. John's Preparatory School. Before that, he spent 13 years working in a circus. During that time, he did magic tricks, swallowed fire and was a puppet master, among several other job duties.

Thanks to generous contributions and lots of volunteers, the Faith Feeds program, based in St. Joseph, cooked more than 1,000 Thanksgiving dinners to serve to people in the area on Thanksgiving Day.

The holidays are here and as we begin to slowly emerge from the isolation that COVID 19 forced us into, some of our community traditions are starting to come back. On Friday and Saturday, Dec. 3 and 4, Winter-Walk will return to the St. Joseph area and this year you're not going to want to miss it.

Dec. 10 edition

What does rye whiskey have to do with kittens? Well, just go ask Jeremy Blankenship, a distiller of rye whiskey, who – with two partners – owns Stearns American Distillery in Avon. Blankenship is always eager to share facts and legends of the old days – especially the old “moonshine” days of the 1920s and 1930s in Stearns County.

The return of the St. Joseph WinterWalk brought out some of that Holiday cheer we may have been missing throughout the last year.

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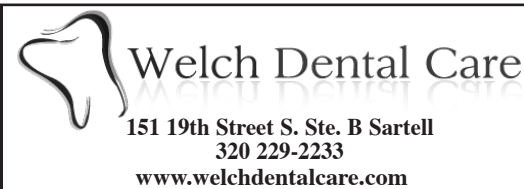
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10

YEARS IN BUSINESS



Kwik Trip stores to end a gas-pump option

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Starting Jan. 3, Kwik Trip gas stations/convenience stores will discontinue a gas-pump

option. Customers will have to pay at the pump with a card or pre-pay inside the stores before they put gas gasoline in their vehicles.

The one exception is for

side-diesel islands whose customers will still have the pay-inside option after pumping gas.

That policy change will be initiated at all local Kwik Trip stations. For people who typically pay right at the pump, there will be no change whatsoever.

The reason for the policy change? Too many drive-offs. Some motorists push the pay-in-store option on the gas pump, then pump their gas and drive off without paying.

A clerk at the Sartell location said that many gas stations/convenience stores in large cities throughout the country

have had a pre-pay policy for quite a few years. She said drive-offs are a real nuisance because it takes a lot of time for an employee to get information, such as license-plate numbers and then contact the police in an effort to track down the drive-off motorists.

Gas drive-offs happen quite often, even in times when gas prices go down.

When contacted via email by the Newsleader, Steven Wrobel, a spokesman for Kwik Trip, wrote back this: "We are moving to pre-pay to improve our guest service. Our co-workers must spend so much time watching the fuel islands for

drive-offs, they can't focus solely on the guests in the stores. Guests can still use cash or check, in addition to debit, credit and gift cards to pre-pay for fuel inside. Gift cards are a great way to pay for fuel as they avoid any pre-authorization fees and guests will be charged for the specific amount pumped right away."

The Kwik Trip chain of stores was founded in 1965 with locations in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The family-owned company, headquartered in La Crosse, also has stores under other names such as Kwik Star, Tobacco Outlet Plus, Hearty Platter and Stop-N-Go.

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'Vax-required' movies now an option

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Parkwood Cinema in Waite Park has begun to offer a limited number of movie showings for vaccinated people only.

All movie-goers for those showings, including children, must bring their vaccination cards, a photo of the cards and a photo I.D. to gain admission to the vax-required showings.

The proof-of-vaccination card

must show that the bearer of the card has received the second Pfizer/Moderna or the second Johnson & Johnson shots at least two weeks previously.

To find out the names of the movies for which vaccinations are required, go to the Parkwood Cinema website and scroll down on the movie listings. It will state "Vax Required" to the right of the movie title and then the times of the movie showing. Example: Spider-Man: No Way Home (Vax

Required).

In addition to the movies advertised as vax-required at Parkwood Cinema, there will also be showings of those same movies where vaccinations will not be required.

Parkwood Cinema is one of many multiplex theaters owned by Marcus Theaters that recently initiated vax-required showings of some movies on afternoons and evenings.



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Opinion

Our View

A focus on student safety

Dec. 17 should have been a happy day for our school-aged kids as the last day of school before their winter break. Instead, parents all around the United States had to debate whether or not to allow their kids to even attend.

Another TikTok trend has hit our nation and this time the challenge is to shoot up your school. While the districts around the area didn't seem too concerned about the validity of this trend, the email that was sent out by superintendents didn't dampen the fear a lot of parents felt about this day.

Several families decided to keep their children home last Friday for fear there was some validity to the threats. The sad thing is that fear is not unrealistic. It wasn't that long ago that suspicions were valid but went unheard, and now four teens are being mourned.

We cannot blame our schools for this, even though that seems like the easiest route. The school districts can only do so much. That's why it's time for parents to step up and do what's right. Stop misplacing the blame. Only parents can control what their children do online, what social media outlets they are a part of and what kind of discipline happens at home.

Teachers are trained to teach our students, not raise them to be outstanding citizens, and yet it seems they are spending more time teaching manners, and what appropriate behavior is than focusing on student education.

There are schools in our area that received backlash from parents because classrooms were choosing to show movies in those last few days before breaks. Apparently, some parents did not think this was appropriate because showing movies is not educational. If we can raise a stink about something so inconsequential but allow these other trends to continue to happen, what is that saying for our community, for the adults who are raising our next generation? It might be time to focus our outrage on something more important, like our children's safety.

Parents, be more aware. Talk to your kids about what they are seeing and posting on social media. As of now, children are getting suspended and expelled for inappropriate behavior on social media when they are caught. But parents are starting to be held responsible for the actions of their kids; maybe that's the solution we need. We can learn a lot from our kids, or they can learn a lot from us.

If you're interested in knowing more about how you can keep your kids safe on social media, see TikTok's website at: <https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en/guardians-guide/> for guidance.

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 really matters at Christmas

Leanne Loy
Editor



of stress involved, she never let us know it.

She was an expert at stringing lights on the tree, a skill I fall terribly short on. The house always smelled like pine, cookies and peace, if peace has a smell. And our door was open to everyone. One year, my brother had a friend who had nowhere to go on Christmas Day and my mother couldn't have that. She opened our door to him and had even wrapped up a present so he had something to open with the rest of us. It was a box of tea, but it was a present and it made us all laugh.

Christmas Eve was exciting too. There were always visitors stopping in for some holiday cheer. The table was dressed with a holiday tablecloth, mixed nuts (the kind you need a nut cracker for) and of course a variety of homemade Christmas cookies. Godparents would come by and drop off gifts; cousins would come over to play. We could barely contain our excitement as we talked about Santa coming that night. We would be all dressed up in our best to attend midnight Mass and when we got home, one of us kids

was allowed to put the baby Jesus in the manger.

Every year I try to make my house feel the way my mother made our childhood home feel, to share that same joy with my own kids. We decorate, but the music is different, we bake but it somehow feels more rushed, we even go and cut down our own tree, a tradition I'm thrilled to share with my littles. Maybe it's because I can't see it through innocent eyes anymore, I know now what I didn't know then. There's work involved that I didn't understand as a kid, and there's stress to preparing everything on time. Maybe times really have changed and we've made ourselves so busy with mundane, but seemingly important tasks, that preparing for holidays seems more like a chore than something enjoyable. Or maybe I just miss my mom.

As I write this, though, I'm realizing more and more that my children are making memories. They won't be the same as mine because realistically that's just not possible. But when my teenaged son showed me a sign of giddiness for the arrival of Christmas even though he's known the truth about Santa for years now, I realized although I might be a little stressed and I might feel a little rushed, I'm still giving my kids memories, a joy they will take with them into their adult lives and really, what more could I ask for?

We're lucky despite weather extremes – so far, anyway

Dennis Dalman
Reporter



homa City not too far from Chickasha, where Jimmy, in the military, met and began dating Tina. When they'd visit St. Cloud, Tina would bring up the subject of tornadoes time and again with her voice quivering, her face turning pale.

Tornado-illiterates at that time, we would laugh at her. We'd toss off remarks such as, "Oh, c'mon Tina, tornadoes aren't that bad. Sure they're windy, but all you have to do if one's coming is get out of the way, go down in the basement."

One time Tina practically screamed at us, "What basement? We don't HAVE a basement!"

And that was a huge part of her fear: no basement. Many residents in Oklahoma do not have basements. Tina was constantly hounding Jimmy to dig some kind of underground shelter in their backyard. Jimmy, too, would dismiss her fears as over-reactions.

It wasn't until sometime in the late 1980s that Jimmy finally got around to having an underground shelter put in the backyard. After living in Oklahoma for 30 years with his wife and three kids, fearless Jimmy must have finally seen the light. It must have dawned on him that yup, Tina was right, tornadoes

are bad. Really bad. Duh!

Jimmy died of a heart attack at age 51 in 1990, but it's a good thing he had that shelter built. On May 3, 1999, a series of tornadoes with winds exceeding 300 mph, roared through Oklahoma. Forty-six people died, 800 were injured, more than 8,000 homes were destroyed.

One of the worst tornadoes ram-paged from Chickasha (Tina's hometown) to south Oklahoma City where Tina, her kids and some neighbors were stunned by terror. They crammed together in that backyard underground shelter as the tornado howled like 20 freight trains less than a mile from them. It took Tina the "storm paranoiac" almost 30 years to convince Jimmy to install that shelter. His family is forever grateful that he did. Finally.

Minnesota is not tornado-proof, obviously. I recall a vicious tornado that ripped through Fridley in 1965, killing 13 people. I remember rushing to Hoffman, west of Alexandria, to cover for the newspaper the aftermath of a tornado that had struck. The family members stood there, blank faces, looks of dazed disbelief. Up in a tree was a battered car. No deaths, thank goodness.

Climate change must be mediated; there is not a day to lose. Storms, fires, hurricanes get worse every season. Who knows but, God forbid, that Minnesota might someday, sooner than we like to think, become a northern extension of Tornado Alley.

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

PERSONAL FINANCE | IN A CRISIS

Pandemic Financial Resources

Given that they happen roughly once every 100 years, virtually no one was totally prepared for an economically devastating pandemic.

The financial fallout since the virus began ravaging the United States in March 2020 has left consumers scrambling to navigate myriad financial maneuvers, including mortgage forbearances, unemployment claims, retirement account loans or withdrawals, credit card and student loan payment arrangements and more.

If you've found yourself suddenly learning a new financial vocabulary and skill set, you're not alone. Here is a primer on how to get some key forms of financial relief.

MORTGAGE FORBEARANCE

The CARES Act enacted in 2020 to provide financial relief to consumers allowed a temporary suspension of mortgage payments for borrowers with federally insured loans. This includes loans backed by FHA, VA, USDA, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Loan services for privately backed mortgages may also offer some relief.

Forbearance does not erase any amount of money you owe your mortgage lender. It simply allows you to skip some payments for now. Typically



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those payments will be added onto the end of your loan term, or repaid over the course of several months. This all happens without any fees, penalties or interest, and without a hit to your credit score. Your servicer may even offer a restructuring of your loan with different terms and interest rate. All you need to do is tell your loan servicer that you are having pandemic-related financial challenges.

RETIREMENT ACCOUNT LOANS OR WITHDRAWALS

The CARES Act also estab-

lished temporary rules allowing for withdrawals from retirement accounts that would otherwise be prohibited. According to the Internal Revenue Service, you can withdraw up to \$100,000 from eligible retirement plans, including 401(k)s, 403(b)s and IRAs, without being subject to the usual 10% penalty. In addition, if you repay the distribution within three years, you will not owe income taxes on the withdrawal.

The Act also provides an increase in the amount of loans you can take against your account and more time to

repay loans.

In order to qualify for these benefits, you must prove that you have suffered financial harm due to the pandemic.

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Although credit card payment arrangements were not covered by the CARES Act, many card issuers are offering some type of relief to consumers. Contact your card issuer to find out what they offer and the guidelines for qualifying. This may include lowering or deferring your monthly payment, waiving or refunding

late fees, reducing your interest rate and establishing a payoff plan for existing balances, according to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Contact your credit card company in writing through their website or mobile app and explain how you've been affected by the pandemic. Then get a copy of your agreement in writing.

STUDENT LOAN ASSISTANCE

Principal and interest payments on federally held student loans were automatically suspended through Sept. 30, 2021, according to the CFPB. (Find a list of federal servicers at bit.ly/2YCG9JZ.) You did not need to contact your student loan servicer or take any action to receive this relief.

Many private lenders are also offering assistance to borrowers. As with a credit card arrangement, be sure to get everything in writing from your lender.

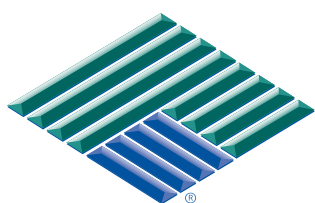
FUTURE PLANNING

If you are interested in being more financially prepared to weather a crisis in the future, check out George Washington University's Global Financial Literacy Excellence Centers website at gflec.org/education/financialresilience. It provides not only a list of government assistance programs but tips for budgeting during a pandemic, rebuilding your savings, managing debt, protecting your credit, avoiding fraud and more.

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