

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Dec. 10, 2021
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Town Crier

Amadeus Chamber Symphony to hold Christmas concert

After being part of Christmas at St. John's for the past 32 years, this year the Amadeus Chamber Symphony will perform its "first ever" free holiday concert at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 10 at Atonement Lutheran Church, 1144 29th Ave. N., St. Cloud. Donations welcome. To learn more visit AmadeusChamberSymphony.org or contact atheimer@csbsju.edu.

Youth Chorale offers holiday concert Dec. 12

"All is Well," a holiday concert featuring the Youth Chorale of Central Minnesota and the St. Cloud String Quartet, in person at 4 and 7 p.m. (and livestreamed online at 7 p.m. only) Sunday, Dec. 12, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 4310 County Road 137, St. Cloud. Tickets available at the door or by website at youthchorale.org.

St. John's Boys' Choir returns with 'A Ceremony of Carols'

This annual treasure returns with two performances on Saturday, Dec. 18 with concerts at 2 and 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Cathedral, downtown St. Cloud. Join the Choirboys in celebrating the season with Christmas music, audience carols and the SJBC Orchestra. To order tickets and learn more, visit sjbchoir.org or call 320-363-2558.

Virtual visitors sought at Country Manor

Develop a special friendship with a resident of Country Manor by visiting with them regularly. At this time we are accepting VIRTUAL friendly visitors to do video calls with residents. The residents have very interesting stories and insights to share about their lives. Please take some time to listen to a piece of their history and life experiences. Some residents also enjoy being read to during visits. Contact Inga, Country Manor volunteer coordinator at 1-320-258-8936 or igerads@countrymanor.org.

Brr...collect winter gear for all ages!

Collect winter gear to help families this winter. All gently used and new winter clothing of all sizes accepted. Items include hats, waterproof gloves, snow pants, coats/jackets, boots, socks, hooded sweatshirts and undies. Contact Mary Krippner at 320-223-7991.

Plans finally locked in for Sauk River Regional Park

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

The Sauk River Regional Park in Sartell will have most of its long-awaited amenities completed by next summer.

Located across from the Epic Center shopping area in south Sartell, Sauk River Regional Park opened about 10 years ago. It is a wooded park with the Sauk River running through it.

At the Nov. 22 city-council meeting, the council unanimously approved a bid of \$109,980 to create a mountain-bike trail in the park. The low bid was submitted by Rock-

solid Trail Contracting of Copper Harbor, Mich. The council also agreed to an altered design for the park's shelter building, which will be smaller and with a regular roof rather than a vented one. Those changes will save \$12,250 so the total costs of the amenities will not exceed the \$450,000 that remain of a state grant that was given for Sauk River Regional Park years ago.

The concrete slab for the shelter has already been poured. The shelter itself will be 20 feet by 22 feet rather than the 24 feet by 48 feet in the original proposal.

Park • page 2



contributed photo

This family is having a fine time on a mountain-bike trail. The photo is from the website of Rocksolid Trail Contracting of Copper Harbor, Mich., the company that received a contract from Sartell to design a similar mountain-bike trail in Sartell's Sauk River Regional Park.

Impaired waters list includes Watab, Mississippi

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

Minnesota's list of impaired waters includes the Mississippi and Watab rivers as they run through Sartell.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency compiles a draft list every two years of waters that fail to meet standards. A public comment period follows.

Tests of the Mississippi Riv-

er found mercury in fish tissue and listed it as impaired for aquatic consumption.

The study found Watab River was impaired for aquatic life and aquatic recreation.

The agency delisted the Mississippi from the Watab to the Sauk River and determined water quality standards for recreation have been met. That portion of the Mississippi River was added to the list in 2012.

The 2022 list added 305 water bodies with 417 new impairments. There are now 2,904 water bodies with 6,168 impairments in Minnesota.

Common impairments include mercury levels that lead to limits on fish consumption, nutrients that grow algae, sediment that clouds water, bacteria that can make water unsafe for swimming and unhealthy conditions for fish and bugs.

The Minnesota Pollution

Control Agency has created an interactive map to check all Minnesota's waters. Use it at www.pca.state.mn.us/water/impaired-waters-viewer-iwav.

The agency will conduct public meetings on the list. The Central Minnesota online meeting is at 2 p.m. Monday, Dec. 20. Instructions are near the bottom of this web page: www.pca.state.mn.us/water/minnesotas-impaired-waters-list.

Major organizations offer Christmas cheer

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Despite an ongoing pandemic and its negative effects on so many families, this Christmas season has a good chance of being a bright and merry one for people thanks to the generosity and volunteer efforts of caring residents.

The Salvation Army and Catholic Charities are just two of the major regional organizations that will help bring holiday cheer. It's important to remember that giving cannot be accomplished without receiving and therefore anybody should contribute money, toys or food if they can possibly afford to do so.

Salvation Army

There is a need for volunteer kettle bell ringers for Salvation Army efforts to raise funds for its community-connective services.

Currently there are bell ringers at 20 locations in the St. Cloud area, including St. Joseph, Sartell and Sauk Rapids. But due to a shortage of vol-

unteers, the SA has been paying some ringers, thus cutting into donation funds. There are now about 15 paid bell ringers. The bell-ringing efforts raise an average of \$190,000 per year, which is about a third of the SA's annual income for programs, according to Laura Douvier, SA volunteer coordinator.

Those who would like to ring bells can do so only one time or as many times as they like. If interested or to learn more, call Laura at 320-257-7437. To become a bell ringer or to donate, go to registertoring.com.

Other holiday-related SA programs:

- The SA Toy Shop lets children and adults/guardians choose free toys at the SA building. There are also no-cost lunches and worship services.
- The SA Food Shelf is open the fourth Monday of every month from 4-6 p.m.; and from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. and 1-3:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

To learn more about the programs above and others, visit the SA website

Cheer • page 6



contributed photo

The "Cowboy Santa Bell Ringer" delights shoppers in the St. Cloud area wherever he rings his Salvation Army kettle bell. His name is Bruce Hillier, and he volunteers 40 hours per week ringing the bell to help make people's Christmas times merrier.

Central Minnesota nice! Park

by Carolyn Bertsch
news@thenewsleaders.com

There's Minnesota Nice and then there's Central Minnesota Nice – an even nicer brand of nice!

When Laura Wolfram and Kayla Adams, owners of Korppi Coffee and Bakeshop in Sartell, announced on social media they would be closed Dec. 5 due to a staffing shortage, David Boyer, owner of Jupiter Moon Ice Cream in St. Joseph sprang into action, calling to ask what it would take for the coffee shop to open its doors as scheduled.

The Korppi Coffee owners were surprised by the offer of the ice cream shop. "We were just shocked at the generosity he showed us. He really went above and beyond," Wolfram said.

Boyer and Jupiter Moon employee, Maliah Nemeth, quickly went to work as baristas for the day. Another friend, Boupha Richards, stepped forward to wash all



photos by Carolyn Bertsch

Kayla Adams of Korppi Coffee creates a beautiful design on a latte with cream.

the dishes.

"We are so incredibly lucky to have such a supportive community surrounding us," Wolfram said.

Between the five of them, there was enough hands-on-deck to keep customers happily caffeinated, well-fed and



David Boyer, owner of Jupiter Moon Ice Cream in St. Joseph, takes a customer's order Dec. 5 at Korppi Coffee and Bakeshop in Sartell.

to save the coffee shop from having to close for the day.

Korppi Coffee and Bakeshop is located at 71 County Road 120, Suite 400, in the former Dunn Bros. location.

Jupiter Moon Ice Cream is located at 15 E. Minnesota St., Suite 108, St. Joseph.

from front page

City Engineer April Ryan presented an outline of the park plans to the council.

There will be two trails in the park – a regular paved trail from the parking lot to the shelter/plaza by the river and a specialized mountain-bike trail with features that will challenge the skills of people riding mountain bikes. Mountain bikes are designed and built for use on off-road riding, such as in rough or difficult (often steep and rocky) terrain. Rocksolid Trail Contracting will design and build that trail. It will be designed with challenging "features" on the trail made of wood, steel and rock. Various biking skills, from beginner to expert, are needed to maneuver over and past the trail features.

The cities of Sartell and St. Cloud previously agreed to a land swap that would allow Sartell to own land on the part of which the mountain-bike trail will be located. Sartell was given a 10.75-acre parcel of

land that had been part of St. Cloud's Whitney Park next to the Sauk River. In the land-swap, St. Cloud was given by Sartell a 13.8-acre of land on the south side of the Sauk River.

Previously, the bid for the other park trail (the regular, smooth, paved biking trail) was granted to Landwehr Construction of St. Cloud. Landwehr will also build the shelter project and plaza area next to the shelter and the Sauk River, which runs through the park.

All told, the total cost for the project is estimated to be about \$466,000. That includes the two trails, the plaza area, the shelter, signage design and installation and design/construction costs.

Plans for Sauk River Regional Park have been years in the making. At times it was a frustrating process because throughout the years, council members and others could not fully agree on which amenities the park should contain and which ones it should not. In the past year or two, council consensus coalesced around the current projects.

Tanner's Team Foundation holds virtual Christmas concert fundraiser

by Darren Diekmann
news@thenewsleaders.com

Tanner's Team Foundation, a local charity, is presenting a free virtual Christmas concert at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 15 for anyone with access to an internet connection and an inclination to watch. The pre-recorded performances will include local and national acts.

The purpose of the event, entitled Fa La La For Families Virtual Christmas Concert, and the foundation's mission, is to raise money for families of children with life-threatening illnesses. John and Cindy Fuls formed it 10 years ago after their son Tanner died of an infection from a bone marrow transplant to treat a type of pre-leukemia.

The concert will present more than a dozen performers.

"We are super excited about the lineup of performers," said foundation board member and concert organizer Mary Swingle of Sartell. "Many of them are connected to the Fuls in one way or another."

Returning this year are the Killer Vees, a home-grown band, with a national profile. The band is made up of the sons of legend Bobby Vee. They also run Rockhouse Productions, a recording studio in St. Joseph.

Another performer, Kat Perkins, is also known nationally. She reached the semi-final round on season six of the NBC reality series The Voice. Before that she fronted for Scarlet Haze, a Twin Cities band that opened for Bon Jovi.

Heather Novak of St. Joseph sang "Oh Holy Night" at last year's concert. This year the song

she chose to sing will be a "surprise."

Novak decided to get involved after Mary Swingle, a friend and former co-worker, asked if she would sing. She readily agreed.

"I have watched Tanner's Team as a spectator for years," said Novak, adding she has been impressed with the positive impact it has had locally and throughout the state.

"So as soon as Mary asked me to do the concert, that was a no-brainer."

Swingle said she presented the idea of a virtual concert at a foundation board meeting last year as a way of compensating for the cancellation of its other fundraising events because of the pandemic.

This year, organizers expect the concert to generate about \$30,000 in donations. Last year, it brought in about \$18,000, with 7,000 individual views. They can get a headcount of viewers from all over the world when viewers click to register for free tickets.

"There can be more than one person watching per view. Multiply that 7,000 by two or three and you can know about how many people you actually have," Swingle said.

One of the sponsors, St. Cloud Financial Credit Union, will match donations up to \$5,000.

When the foundation started, it helped mostly local families, Fuls said. Then its area of impact continued to grow until today it reaches 48 Minnesota counties encompassing more than a 60-mile radius.

"The purpose of the concert is not just to raise money," Swingle said. "We also want to raise awareness so families in need

know about Tanner's Team Foundation and can apply for the grants."

In addition to the music, the show will feature the experiences of some of the grant recipients.

Maddie Reitz is one of those who received a grant.

Reitz, who is now 20, has suffered from Crohn's disease since she was 7. Crohn's affects the gastrointestinal tract. The illness made it necessary for her to be homeschooled and then attend Sartell High School online.

"I was so sick I didn't have the energy or stamina to be at school," Reitz said. "I had gone through pretty much every medication and had tons of surgeries."

The last option, a bone-marrow transplant two years ago, finally cured the illness.

"They say, 'cured', but sometimes people's Crohn's disease will come back later in life, but it is typically more mild," Reitz said.

Before the procedure, chemotherapy treatments damaged her reproductive system. The grant helped pay for unexpected and costly fertility treatments.

"My mom didn't work for six months during my bone-marrow transplant so it made a big difference for our family," Reitz said.

She is now a first-year student at St. Cloud State University. Her long ordeal made her stronger and inspired her to study nursing.

John and Cindy Fuls became aware of Tanner's illness when he was 11. In July 2010 he hit his arm on the counter at their cabin and an unusually large bruise developed.

Doctors became concerned after a blood test.



contributed photo

This is the last picture of Tanner and the Fuls family: John, Tanner, Cindy and Maddie, taken shortly before his death in November 2010.

"They saw things in his blood that didn't look right," John said.

A trip to Children's Minnesota Hospital and a bone-marrow biopsy led doctors to believe Tanner had a form of leukemia. Eventually, he was diagnosed with MDS, Myelodysplastic Syndrome, a type of pre-leukemia.

Tanner endured two rounds of chemotherapy and a radiation treatment in preparation for a bone-marrow transplant he underwent Nov. 8.

"The following weekend he developed an infection that he could not fight off," John said. "He ended up in the intensive-care unit and passed away on Nov. 27."

John and Cindy's response was to move forward.

"We just needed a way to give back to the families who helped us when we were in need. We

wanted to do something to pay it forward," John said.

They began raising money with a 5K walk/run in conjunction with Rapids River Days Festival. They added other fundraising events in the following years.

"And we do celebrate Tanner's birthday in March each year, that is a major fundraiser," John said.

The foundation awards grants that average about \$1,000 to applicants for anything from car payments to medical procedures. To date it has awarded more than \$450,000 to more than 450 recipients.

To watch the concert, go directly to Tanner's Team Foundation YouTube channel or Tanner's Team Foundation Facebook page. The home page of their website also has links to the concert and a way to donate. www.tannersteam.org/donate.

Calendar

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

Friday, Dec. 10
The Nutcracker Ballet, 7 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W Saint Germain, St. Cloud. Visit paramountarts.org for more information.
Amadeus Chamber Symphony's Holiday Concert, 7:30 p.m. Atonement Lutheran Church, 1144 29th Ave N, St. Cloud. Admission is free but donations are welcome. Visit www.AmadeusChamberSymphony.org for more information.

Saturday, Dec. 11
Craft-Vendor Bake Sale, 9-3 p.m. St. Cloud Athlos Academy. Free admission, \$1 chance prize drawings and food, 3701 33rd St. S., St. Cloud.

The Nutcracker Ballet, 2 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W Saint Germain, St. Cloud. Visit paramountarts.org for more information.

Monday, Dec. 13
Fare For All, 3:30-5:30 p.m. Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 CR 2, St. Joseph.

Sartell City Council, 6 p.m., City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road N.

George Maurer Group, 7:30 p.m. Holiday jazz tradition. Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W Saint Germain, St. Cloud. Visit paramountarts.org for more information.

Tuesday, Dec. 14
Sartell Chamber of Commerce, 11:30 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S., Sartell.

Thursday, Dec. 16
Sartell American Legion, open to all veterans young and old, 6 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.

Saturday, Dec. 18
Christmas Community Meal, 11-12:30 p.m. Take-out and delivery meals. Requests for delivery can be made by calling the church office at 320-363-4232. Resurrection Lutheran Church, 610 CR 2,

St. Joseph.

Community Meal, 11:30-12:45, drive by and pick up style, First United Methodist Church, 1107 Pinecone Road S, Sartell.

"A Ceremony of Carols," presented by The St. John's Boys Choir, performances begin at 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. St.

Mary's Cathedral, 25 8th Ave S, St. Cloud.

Historic Salem Church Christmas Program, 3-4:15 p.m. Horse-drawn wagon rides, 4:30 p.m. Old-fashioned Christmas program. 28547 220th St, Paynesville.



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Santa Helpers seek donations to brighten kids’ holiday

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

Sartell city staff, along with members of the city council, will join Santa Claus to deliver gifts to families and hospital patients Dec. 22, the same day as the city’s “Santa Tour.”

The Santa Helpers program, a joint effort of the city and the chamber of commerce, is requesting donations to make the gift-delivery a big success. The deadline for donations of cash, checks, gifts or gift cards

is Thursday, Dec. 16.

The gifts will be delivered to CentraCare’s St. Cloud Hospital – its neo-natal intensive care unit, its pediatrics ward and also to Clara’s House. The latter, operated by CentraCare, is a partial hospitalization program for children and adolescents ages 5-18 who may be having emotional, behavioral or psychiatric difficulties.

The goal of the Santa Helpers program is to allow children who are hospitalized a bit of holiday cheer since

they cannot be in their homes during the Christmas season.

Those who want to donate gifts, books or other holiday items should contact Nikki Sweeter, Sartell’s engagement director. Her email is nikki.sweeter@sartellmn.com. Sweeter will send a list of what kinds of items are needed – gift cards, cash, checks. Those items can be delivered to city hall’s lobby walk-up window on either Dec. 15 or Dec. 16. Sweeter will use the gift cards to purchase the

gifts, or they can be assigned to families depending on their needs.

If people wish to sponsor an entire family, Sweeter said she has lists for the kinds of gifts on each family’s Christmas wish list. If some people wish instead to donate to the CentraCare kids’ program, Sweeter can send them a list of the kinds of gifts – mainly arts-and-crafts supplies.

The Santa Tour is a city initiative with help from the Sartell Fire Department. The

tour involves Santa being driven around in Sartell so he can wave to children in front of their houses. It starts on Dec. 22 at the Sartell Public Safety building (fire-and-police departments) on Pinecone Road. The time of the tour and its route have not been released yet. They will be announced on the Sartell City Facebook page well before Dec. 22 so anyone interested should keep checking the Sartell Facebook page as the event approaches.

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 tri-countycrimestoppers.org. Crime Stoppers offers rewards up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for a crime.

Nov. 23

9:45 a.m. Theft. St. John’s Court
An officer was requested to call a business owner in regard to a theft. The owner informed the officer, person(s)

unknown took some items off the construction site sometime overnight. The owner stated a shoe print was located, and photos were taken of it. The officer had the owner fill out a theft form; total loss was \$205.

Nov. 24

10:58 p.m. Intoxicated person. Second Street S. Officers were dispatched to a business that needed assistance with an intoxicated person being disorderly. When officers arrived, the male was in the entryway of the business and had

calmed down some. The male told the officer another male had touched his girlfriend, he was upset and intoxicated. The officer waited for a sober driver to arrive and then cleared.

Nov. 25

9:16 a.m. Suspicious person. 12th Avenue S. Officers were notified of a suspicious person near a wooded area and a sidewalk. The officer was informed the male had been walking in and out of the woods with a box for 30 minutes. The male would walk up to a

motorcycle parked on the sidewalk then back to the woods. The officer located the male who informed the officers he was trying to find a location to take pictures and film a large bird, possibly an eagle, flying in and out of a nest. He also informed the officer the cardboard box was garbage he found in the woods. The wooded area belongs to an apartment complex and the male resided at the apartment. The male was allowed to carry on, and the complainant was informed of what was going on.

Nov. 26

8:35 p.m. Verbal. Fourth Avenue S. Officers were notified of a verbal occurring in a nearby apartment. Officers responded and spoke to the residents who had been arguing but nothing physical had occurred. Officers discussed how both people had residence and placing property in the hallway was not OK. Both parties agreed to be civil for the evening.

More blotter available online at the-newsleaders.com

Happy Holidays

Wishing everyone a safe & happy holiday season!

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Students will start winter break one day early

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

Students in the Sartell-St. Stephen school district will start their winter break one day early.

Wednesday, Dec. 22, will be a day off for students but teachers will work either in-person or remotely, the school board decided at a Dec. 3 special meeting.

“Teachers are pretty taxed and need to get things done” to prepare for the new year, Superintendent Jeff Riddlehoover said. “Kids will have time to spend with their families and friends.”

Students will return to class on Monday, Jan. 3.

All students who want a breakfast and lunch for Dec. 22 will be able to pick one up when they leave school on Tuesday, Dec. 21.

Kidstop will operate on Dec. 22 following a plan similar to a snow day.

In other action at the special meeting, the board approved a temporary

pay increase for substitutes.

“We need to be competitive with surrounding districts to ensure we have subs in place,” Riddlehoover said.

Here are the current and new pay schedules:

Position	Current	New
Substitute teacher	\$130/day	\$150/day
	\$65/half day	\$75/half day
Retired district teacher	\$140/day	\$200/day
	\$70/half day	\$100/half day
Paraprofessional	\$15.50/hour	\$16/hour
Food service	\$14/hour	\$15/hour
Cleaner	\$14/hour	\$15/hour
Bus monitor	\$14/hour	\$15/hour
Clerical	\$14/hour	\$15/hour
Seasonal grounds	\$14/hour	\$15/hour
Seasonal grounds (wCDL)	\$17.50/hour	\$18/hour

Information and application forms for district jobs are available online at www.sartell.k12.mn.us/employment.

Cheer

from front page

by googling St. Cloud Salvation or by calling SA at 320-252-4552.

Catholic Charities

Frozen meals will again be delivered in central Minnesota to people seniors 60 and older. There is no cost for the meals though donations are welcome. The frozen meals come in quantities of 10. They are pre-packaged

in containers safe for use in ovens or microwaves.

Of the 25 pick-up locations, there is a St. Cloud one at the Catholic Charities building from 1-3 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 14, located at 157 Roosevelt Road, St. Cloud; and there is a Sartell pick-up site from 8-10:30 a.m. Monday, Dec. 27 at Celebration Lutheran Church, 1500 Pinecone Road N. For updated information, visit ccstcloud.org/events

To learn more about Catholic Charities, its food swheel or other programs/ services or to donate, call the organization at 320-650-1550.

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Sartell Soccer Association
2022 Spring/Summer Travel Season

All soccer players born 2003-2014, come join us!
Registration is open now and will close Dec. 31
Register early to guarantee a spot on the team

Don't miss out!
Winter training to begin Jan. 9

For more information, visit
www.sartellsoccer.org



For Pets and their Humans

Don't forget our feathered and four-legged friends this holiday season — and their humans.

If you want to impress a pet-loving person, turn up with a great gift for their animals. A great way to start is by making a trip to the local pet store and ask for some advice. Or you can start with these ideas.

GIFTS FOR PUPS

Treats. Lots of treats. Some local bakeries may make special pup cakes and cookies just for doggies, and a selection of those will make any pup happy. While you're at the pet store, look for other things like pet outfits, collars, harnesses and leashes. If your friend's dog is particularly fuzzy, pick up some grooming supplies like brushes, combs and shedding spray. Food and water dishes are another excellent idea, and you can find a variety of bowls in different materials and styles to suit every decor.

GIFTS FOR CATS

With the kitties, start with toys. Anything that sparks a cat's instinct to hunt is a great toy. Keep an eye out for small balls and crinkly toys, feathers and wands they can chase, scratchers and, for the advanced cat owner, interactive cat toys. Laser pointers are another popular option.



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Cat furniture is a great gift, like scratching poles or loungers, but make sure their person has plenty of room for it.

GIFTS FOR BIRDS

Another pet that loves a toy is a bird. Look for toys that are appropriate to the type of bird

your friend has; you may want to look for toys that help keep their birds' beaks and claws properly maintained. Other ideas are dried fruits and seeds appropriate for your favorite bird's diet, nesting boxes, perches and cage accessories.

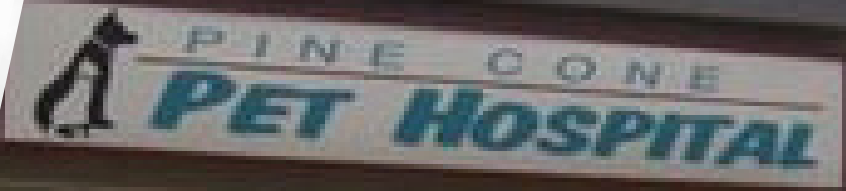
FINS, FUR AND MORE

You're going to see some common refrains for these uncommon pets. Treats and toys are great ideas no matter what pet you're buying for. Just make sure with the experts at the pet store that the ones you've picked out

are appropriate for the pet you're buying for. Many pet stores also offer things like outfits, even for our scaly friends, and grooming tools for all kinds of pets. Ask the experts in the store to help you put together a show-stopping gift.

Pine Cone Pet Hospital

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



DENTAL CARE | PANDEMIC

Dental Care and COVID-19

The need for good oral health practices didn't take a break for the COVID-19 pandemic.

There may be few things, however, that are different as your oral health professionals take precautions against the pandemic.

BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT

The American Dental Association's guidelines help dentists and other oral health professionals control infections both amongst their staff and their patients. And it's working. A June 2021 study showed monthly infection rates for dentists were as low as 0.2%.

To help make sure their patients are healthy, your dentist may call and ask you some questions before your appointment. These will cover your general health and possibly your vaccination status. You may also be asked to limit the number of people you bring with you to your appointment, meaning your children may have to stay at home or wait in the car.

AT YOUR APPOINTMENT

Bring a mask to your appointment, especially if your state or local government is requiring people to wear masks in public. Some areas are only requiring it for medical practices and, in other



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places, each business – and your dentist's office is a business – has their own requirements. It's best to be prepared.

You may be asked to wait outside or in your car until the staff is ready for you, reducing the number of people in the office and the time that you're close to other people.

You may have your temperature taken and you may be offered hand sanitizer or the opportunity to wash your hands. You may also notice staff cleaning and wiping down surfaces more than usual, and there could be more protective equipment present. Some dental instruments may be

switched to disposable items that can be thrown away instead of reused.

AFTER YOUR APPOINTMENT

The staff will thoroughly clean areas to prepare for the next patient. They may start doing this while you're still

waiting to leave or check out. If you start feeling ill or test positive for COVID-19 after your appointment, call the dental office even if you've been vaccinated. You may have been carrying the virus when you visited, so anyone you came in contact with should be notified.

We are currently accepting new patients!

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Opinion

Our View

More than one solution to stop terror

Not everyone will be able to celebrate the holidays with their loved ones this year and it has nothing to do with COVID. Four families will be mourning the loss of their children. As the news slowly fades around yet another school shooting and as the statistics just blend in with the rest, families and friends of the four victims will have to endure the pain of these losses for the rest of their lives. The saddest part is that this all could have been prevented.

On Nov. 30, yet another school shooting happened in our country. This time, the warning signs were as plain as day and yet we as a society still failed to protect our children.

There is not just one thing that is needed to end these senseless acts. Those who say it's the parents who need to be held responsible are correct. Those who say we need stricter gun laws are correct. Those who say we need to pay more attention to mental health are correct.

The discipline and education must start at home. In this most recent shooting, the mother of the shooter was said to have sent a text to her son after a teacher became disturbed by the student's researching gun bullets on his iPhone. The boy texted his mother about the teacher's concern. The mother responded with, "LOL. I'm not mad at you, you have to learn how not to get caught." Later, she texted her son again, "Ethan, don't do it." She didn't know her son's shooting rampage had already begun at the school. We are becoming a society in which parents want to be "friends" with their children. This does not teach them valuable lessons or support a healthy upbringing. Parents, we need to do better.

Demanding stricter gun laws does not mean taking away the Second Amendment, as some falsely claim. Some people fear stricter laws mean they can't have their guns, which apparently is more important to them than keeping kids safe. But that is not true. All it would do is give greater punishments to those who choose to use their weapons illegally. Furthermore, there is simply no reason for a civilian to be carrying around military-grade weapons. Those weapons are created to kill, nothing else. Government, you need to do better.

Mental health plays a huge role in all of this too. An urge to kill others does not come from a healthy mind. Therapy shouldn't be given to just those who can afford it. Insurance companies need to step up and realize mental health is just as important, if not more important, than physical health. Seeing a therapist frequently should be just as common as your yearly physical check-ups. Health providers, you need to do better.

Parents should not have to wonder if they will see their children again as they send them off to school. Our kids shouldn't have to worry about how to hide properly under a desk to protect themselves. It's absurd an editorial like this even needs to be written after yet another horrific school shooting. Society, we can do better.

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.

Hurrah! The ‘cavalry’ gallops to the rescue

In old Western movies, there was often a scene in which a bugle blared as the cavalry soldiers on horseback galloped to a crisis and saved the day. We popcorn munchers would cheer.

That's how I felt on the morning of Nov. 30 when I heard the good news. It was like a blaring bugle announcing that a medical-response team from the U.S. Air Force had arrived at the St. Cloud Hospital. The 23 team members are there to provide hands-on help, assisting overwhelmed nurses, doctors and other employees who are exhausted physically and emotionally because of the increase in patients, the over-crowding, the ever-increasing work loads.

Like health facilities throughout the nation and the world, the St. Cloud Hospital is filled to capacity because of these recurrent surges of the COVID virus and its variants. Sad to say, the biggest cause of the influx of seriously ill patients is due to so many people who refuse to get vaccinated. They have chosen to get terribly sick or even die because of "hoax" theories, jeopardizing not only themselves but others. Many of those people actually believe their antagonism to vaccinations and other health-protection measures is a patriotic duty, a way of proving how "free" they are.

What's worse is throughout the nation some of them have insulted, threatened and in some cases even physically assaulted nurses, doctors, flight attendants, school-board mem-

Dennis Dalman

Reporter



bers, legislators or anyone else who dares to request and/or to mandate they wear a mask or get vaccinated. In at least one case, a woman clerk told a man he must wear a mask to be in the store. He walked away, then came back and shot her to death.

Meantime, life (rational life) somehow manages to go on. Some weeks ago, the much-maligned but honorable Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz asked the federal government for emergency hospital staffing. The U.S. Department of Defense granted the request and sent the Air Force teams to the Hennepin County Medical Center and to the St. Cloud Hospital.

Like the cavalry in the movies, they arrived just in time, in the heat of the crisis. There is an 18 percent COVID-positivity rate in the St. Cloud area; at St. Cloud Hospital, 77 percent of patients in the intensive-care unit are there because of COVID infections and almost all of them were unvaccinated; during the virus surge of recent weeks, available intensive-care-unit beds at the hospital hover at or below 5 percent. Those dire factors are exacerbated by the influx of extremely ill COVID patients sent to the St. Cloud Hospital from other

rural hospitals that are filled to capacity or unable to handle the severity of the illnesses.

Because of the ongoing pandemic, hospitals have had to cancel or postpone some surgical procedures. They have also had to improvise and make-do, converting spaces to add more beds, to accommodate more and more patients.

In the meantime, hospital staff who have made heroic efforts to help patients for the past two years continue their struggle against burn-out. They are feeling overwhelmed as they endure exhausting work hours, but they forge on because they are so dedicated to helping save lives.

The 23 members of the Air Force Medical Response Team will help out in the intensive-care unit, the emergency room, the surgical department and other areas of the hospital. The team arrived in St. Cloud Nov. 26 and will stay for 30 days, although that time could be extended another two months.

And there's more good news. The St. Cloud Technical College is now giving nursing-assistant training to 13 members of the Minnesota National Guard. Once trained, they will help nursing staffs at health-care centers and long-term care facilities.

We would like to extend our thanks and undying gratitude to the staff of the St. Cloud Hospital, the Air Force team, the technical college and the Guard members. They all arrived in the nick of time to help save the day.

What to be thankful for this holiday season

Connor Kockler

Guest writer



at times, have been paying off. The fact we could have a relatively "normal" Thanksgiving dinner this year because of improvements that have been made in the situation like vaccines was very rewarding and made me hopeful things will continue to improve moving forward.

I am thankful even with all this uncertainty and change in the wider world, that I have still been lucky enough to have a college experience during this time filled with supportive friends and professors and staff who have made my time at St. John's University a great one, and that we have supported each other through all of this. I was unsure at the start of last year how college would go with COVID and with the increasing prospect of deciding on next steps after graduation. But looking back, I'm thankful for all of the people I met or reconnected with and all the experiences I had in that time that helped me learn even more and be confident I'm on the right path for the future.

Although senior year now has been a challenging one at times with

how busy everything is, this ground-work built up throughout the last few years has made what's really important come into focus and helped me truly appreciate what is going well even when some days may be tough ones to get through. Whenever I'm having a day that feels overwhelming, I'm grateful I can lean on my friends and resources and that together we can tackle a problem or just have fun and enjoy life when we need a break. There are so many people from my time here at CSB/SJU I know I'll enjoy being able to stay in contact with long after graduation.

Though this time has certainly been a stressful and challenging one in many ways, I think about how these kinds of experiences can be formative in the future. I hope in this holiday season we can all reflect on what has been hard and different this year, but then also what we're looking forward to and what we're thankful for. I wish us all a good holiday season and the holiday spirit of hope, renewal and reflection becomes a reality for us all as we move into the new year.

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

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

Choosing a Dentist

Visiting the dentist can be nerve wracking. A study published by the U.S. National Library of Medicine and National Institutes for Health found more than a third of Americans experience some kind of dental anxiety.

A case of the nerves shouldn't be a reason to skip the dentist's chair, though. "Your dental health is such a vital part of your overall health, so it's important for every patient to have a dental home," Dr. Cathy Taylor-Osborne, a dentist and director of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Bureau of Oral Health, told the American Dental Association. "That means there is always someone looking out for the best interest of you and your family."



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THINGS TO CONSIDER

You can battle dental anxiety by making sure you're comfortable with your dental practice. Some questions to consider when choosing a dentist include:

- Is the office easy to get to? Do they have convenient office hours?
- Is this dentist in your insurance network?
- Is the dentist a member of the ADA or any other professional organizations?

TOOLS FOR YOUR SEARCH

The ADA has an online

Find-A-Dentist tool that allows you to search for a dentist by name, location and specialty.

Your local dental society can also give you recommendations, and, of course, you should ask your friends and relatives in the area. If you don't have dental benefits or can't afford dental services, your local health department or dental schools can help you find care, the ADA says. So

don't be afraid to reach out.

FINDING THE RIGHT DENTIST

Most dental offices allow you to schedule a consultation with the dentist before you have any work done. Make a list of questions to bring with you and bring your health records with you so the dentist can take a look at your history.

You should share any concerns or anxiety you have

about visiting the dentist. With so many Americans experiencing anxiety, chances are your dentist will have a way to help you cope.

"So much of your dental health can impact your overall health," Dr. Taylor-Osborne said. "Look for someone who can be a coach to motivate you, a trusted adviser to turn to when health issues arise and a partner to make dental care decisions with."



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Calendar

from page 3

Sunday, Dec. 19
Rock & Roll Christmas Spectacular. Show times: Dec 19 - 23 at 7:30 p.m. Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W Saint Germain, St. Cloud. Visit paramountarts.org for more information.

Monday, Dec. 20
Sartell-St. Stephen School Board, 6:30 p.m., District Service Center, 212 3rd Ave N. Sartell.

St. Joseph Rod & Gun Club, 7 p.m., American Legion, 101 W. Minnesota St., St. Joseph.

Thursday, Dec. 23
Christmas in The Barn, Dec. 23 & 24 at 7 p.m. Narration of the Christmas sto-

ry, hymns, hot cider and more! 26258 County Road 2 (between Cold Spring & St. Joseph) watch for a sign. Call 320-260-1606 or email crleither@gmail.com for more information.

Friday, Dec. 24
Paramount 100th Birthday Party, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W. St. Germain, St. Cloud. Free cake and coffee. paramountarts.org.

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

Give Kids a Smile

Give Kids a Smile is an American Dental Association program to give children who may not have access to dental care free oral health education, screenings, preventative care and treatment from volunteer dentists and other volunteer dental professionals.

More than 6 million children have received free services since Give Kids a Smile began in 2003.

HISTORY

Give Kids a Smile started in 2002, when Dr. Jeff Dalin and Dr. B. Ray Storm held the first event in a soon-to-be-demolished dental clinic in St. Louis. That event served 400 children. The ADA stepped in, recognizing the event’s potential to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. As the program grew, so did the need for leadership. In 2011, the Give Kids a Smile Community Leadership Development Institute was founded to give program coordinators across the country a platform to learn and share best practices.

FOR PARENTS

You can find more information about free and low-cost



BRENDAN JOHN/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

oral health services, such as the Give Kids a Smile Program, by calling (844) 490-GKAS or contacting your state dental association. The American Dental Association also suggests contacting local dental school clinics. CHIP, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, also provides free or low-cost health coverage for more than 7 million children up to age 19,

including eligible immigrants.

FOR DENTAL PROFESSIONALS

Give Kids a Smile is open to all dental professionals who want to participate. You can get a free toolkit from the American Dental Association that will help you plan and promote your Give Kids a Smile event, including legal forms

and guidance for offering these services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ADA can also help you reach out to organizations and groups that work with children and youth to help you identify children in need of oral health services.

Depending on the size and type of your event, you may also be eligible to receive edu-

cation, screening and product kits to help out. These kits include toothbrushes and toothpaste, health education cards, masks and more.

If you’re a dental professional and can’t host an event but still want to help out, the ADA will match you to local Give Kids a Chance events. Contact gkas@ada.org for more information.



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Sarah Welch, D.D.S.
Pediatric Dentist
Board Certified, American Board of Pediatric Dentistry Member, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry



Ashley Turritin, D.D.S.
Pediatric Dentist
Board Certified, American Board of Pediatric Dentistry Member, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

Common Credit Card Perks

More than a way to pay for unexpected expenses or rack up airline miles, many credit cards come with perks that you may not know about.



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Check your statement carefully or call your card issuer to ask for some of these common credit rewards.

CASH BACK

Many cards offer cash back for types of purchases or payments. There are, however, some pitfalls to be aware of. Some programs cap the cash back annually, cash back rewards and amounts can change on a regular basis or the cash back may depend on how quickly you pay off your balance.

DISCOUNTS OR GIFT CARDS

Another common inducement to

open a card is a free gift card for opening an account.

Also look to see if your card gives you discounts with certain merchants or on certain types of purchases. This is similar to cash back, so some of the same warnings apply here, too.

INSURANCE

Some credit cards offer insurance on rental cars if the card is used to book the rental. Others offer insurance that makes payments on behalf of the cardholder if they can't make their payments because of a loss in income. Buyer beware,

however. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has taken action against some of these policies for unethical practices in sales and distribution of these policies.

CELL PHONE PROTECTION

If you pay your cell phone bill with your credit card, that card issuer may offer cell phone protection plans to help offset the cost of repairing or replacing your phone. As with most perks, however, there is a but. Some cards cap their plans, so if you have the priciest new model, it may not be much help.

FREE SHIPPING

Online shoppers, take note. Some credit cards offer free ShopRunner access, giving you free two-day shipping with more than 100 online retailers.

Enroll for free with your eligible card and add to cart.

EVENT ACCESS

Always on the go? Your card may be able to help with that. Many credit card issuers will offer exclusive access to entertainment events, such as presale tickets, priority seating and complimentary access.



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*Cash rewards are deposited to account monthly. Earn up to \$500 per month. Pending and preauthorized debit card transactions do not earn cash rewards until the final transaction posts to the account. Cash rewards rate effective 5/24/2021 and subject to change at any time, including after account opening.