

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, Feb. 4, 2022
Volume 27, Issue 3
Est. 1995

Town Crier

Tails on Trails to take place Feb. 27

Tails on Trails for dog owners, dog lovers, family and friends will be held from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 27 at Millstream Park, 725 CR 75 W., St Joseph. Take a walk on the trails while playing “Clue” Covid edition, ride on a dogsled, watch Solid Results trainers work their dogs, talk with Sgt. Hoffman about police K9 units, visit Rescues about adopting a dog or cat, try some “Doga” (bring your yoga gear), take a photo with your pup, learn about agility training, purchase doggie treats from Brayden’s Pawfect treats and visit with Petsmart about what they have to offer. Come enjoy the outdoors!

Sartell Summer Baseball registration now open

The 2022 Summer Sartell Baseball Registration is open. Please go to SartellBaseball.com to register. Find more information by following us on Facebook.

Assist with TriCAP’s free tax program!

Tax volunteers are needed to assist with TriCAP’s free tax-prep program. Volunteers will enable them to provide accessible tax services that put 100 percent of refunds into taxpayers’ pockets, often helping them meet basic needs and save for the future. This experience is rewarding and you will gain lots of practical knowledge. You will be working with local professionals as well as building a great resume. Training is provided and volunteers become IRS-tax certified. They are looking for volunteers in all capacities for their sites. Visit www.tricap.org to learn more. Contact the Tax Program Manager at tricaptaxes@tricap.org or 320-251-1612.

Central MN Arts grant deadline is March 31

The Central Minnesota Community Foundation has opened its annual Central Minnesota Arts Grant round. The purpose of the grant is to support small- to medium-sized arts organizations that make arts more accessible to area residents. The application deadline is March 31.

Focus areas include visual art and performing arts, including dance, music and drama. Eligible organizations must be 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations, schools or governmental entities. For more information about the grant round and specific criteria for each grant round, visit www.communitygiving.org/grants.

INSERT: Minnesota Street Market

Educational job needs crippling across state

by Hayley Olson
news@thenewsleaders.com

Across the nation we are seeing a shortage of educators; teachers, paraprofessionals, nurses, teacher’s aids, social workers, counselors, food staff, bus drivers and more.

When school started in September of 2021, there was a major district in Minnesota that started the year with more than 100 openings. The number of openings in districts across the state has continued to fluctuate.

Around the St. Cloud metro area, there are districts and buildings in dire need of staff, who are calling on retired teachers and community members to step in. Sartell-St. Stephen school district has 30 staff vacancies, Sauk Rapids-Rice has 35 staff vacancies, Little Falls has 11 openings and the St. Cloud school district currently has more than 100 staff vacancies. In these vacancies there is a need even at Kennedy Community School where they are seeking a paraprofessional.

Speaking with staff from districts in the area, it’s evident how much of an impact the staffing shortage has on teachers, kids and schools. Staff who are not based in

classrooms are being pulled from their jobs to teach in classrooms, sometimes for the entire day.

Due to this, students who need intervention, social work minutes

or time with support staff are not getting what they need. One educator from the St. Cloud school district called it chaotic.

Jobs • page 6



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Whoodle enjoys pup cup

Caleb Schneider, 15, of Sartell, serves Amy Brinkerhoff’s whoodle, a wheaten terrier-poodle mix named Duke, a cup of whipped cream Jan. 31 from the drive-through window. Brinkerhoff is also of Sartell. Second Street Coffeehouse owner Meghan Kelsey says, “Our staff loves it when dogs visit our drive through!” See article on page 5.

‘Grandpa Kevin’ loves Pine Meadow students, teachers

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

After five years of volunteering as a “Foster Grandparent” at Pine Meadow Elementary School in Sartell, Kevin McCarthy is loved by the students, who call him “Grandpa Kevin,” and he loves them all (and the

teachers) just as much.

During an interview with the Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleader, McCarthy, 74, who lives in St. Joseph, offered big bouquets of praise.

“I just love it,” he said. “The kids love it when they get to come and talk to me. They just love to talk with me. I’m

amazed how much those kids learn even in the first grade. They are almost always happy and everybody’s always in a good mood. I treat them like my own kids. Each kid is completely different. Like snowflakes, no two are exactly alike.”

The students, he said, seem to thrive on the one-on-one con-

tacts they have with “Grandpa McCarthy” – the kind of contact busy teachers cannot always provide.

In McCarthy’s opinion, teachers are overworked and underpaid.

“All the work they do – most people have no idea,” he said.

Grandpa • page 6



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Slip, slidin’ away

Jenn Shellinger, of Sartell, pulls a small train of children across the ice on Brian’s Lake Jan. 30. They are (center) her son Nathan Shellinger, 1 1/2, and friend Drew Percuoco, 5, also of Sartell.

Next year’s school calendar set

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

Students and parents in the Sartell-St. Stephen school district who like to plan ahead can start marking up their calendars. The school board at its Jan. 24 meeting approved the calendar for the 2022-23 school year and approved a provisional calendar for 2023-24.

Next fall, school will start on Tuesday, Sept. 6, for sixth- and ninth-graders. Prekindergarten through grade five will have open houses and conferences. On Wednesday, Sept. 7, remaining middle school and high school stu-

dents will report. Sept. 7 will be another prekindergarten through grade five open house and conference day. Thursday, Sept. 8, will be the first day of school for prekindergarten through grade five.

The last day of class will be Friday, June 2, 2023. In between there will be 170 class days and 9.5 days set aside for professional development.

Spring break will be Monday-Friday, March 27-31, 2023. Seniors will graduate on Saturday, June 3. If needed, weather-related makeup days will be Monday, Jan. 16, for the first semester and

School • page 3

People

Sydney Tchida recently graduated with a degree in child care services and early childhood education from Northwood Technical College in Rice Lake, Wis.

Phuong Tran recently graduated with a doctorate in microbiology from the University of Iowa, Iowa City.

Forty-six Sartell students were recently name to the fall semester dean's list at St. Cloud State University.

They and their majors are as follows: **Sohaib Akram**, pre-medicine; **Jessica Andrews**, management; **Osama**

Ayyub, mechanical engineering; **Kendra Bokelman**, life science/general science education grades 5-12; **Maren Buss**, nursing; **Nicole Christiansen**, professional communication; **Caleb Clemens**, biomedical sciences; **Sydney Davidson**, psychology; **Karen Estep**, accounting; **Triumph Femi Jegede**, medical laboratory science; **Beau Garman**, computer science; **Chase Gertken**, medical laboratory science; **Abigail Haehn**, elementary/K-6 education; **Bryant Hanna**, finance; **Kyle Harthan**, accounting; **Taylor Kalthoff**, graphic design; **Samuel Larson**, criminal justice studies; **Anna Lehto**,

Spanish; **Cody Lendt**, communication studies; **Charles Lockridge**, liberal studies; **Jordan Mareck**, psychology; **Taylor Markgraf**, pre-physical therapy; **Kayleen Martins**, mechanical engineering; **Elizabeth McGee**, PSEO; **Nicole Mohs**, elementary/K-6 education; **Najat Niniche**, nursing; **Courtney Olund**, early childhood education; **Tiana Parks**, biomedical sciences; **Logan Payne**, technology education; **Cera Perrault**, social work; **Isabella Randolph**, nursing; **Amanda Reiners**, liberal studies; **Rianna Runge**, PSEO; **Breanna Sattler**, management; **Gabrielle Schlagheck**, accounting;

Nathan Schmidt, history; **Taylor Sidla**, PSEO; **Aaron Soderholm**, social studies education; **Alexis Streit**, early childhood education; **Jaymie Swenson**, accounting; **Muhammad Tabish**, cybersecurity; **Rachel Trost**, nursing; **Hannah Welsh**, community psychology; **Lincoln Wojcik**, computer science; **Morgan Zakrajshek**, criminal justice studies; and **Lidiah Zipp**, communication arts and literature.

To be eligible for the honor, students must earn a grade-point average of 3.75 or higher.

Rachel Eisenschenk, a senior, was recently named to the

fall dean's list at University of Minnesota Duluth.

Nine Sartell students were recently named to the fall dean's honor list at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

They are as follows: **Brandan Carlson** and **Isabella Crane**, both from the College of Engineering; **Patrick Eichler**, **Yash Hindka**, **Paige Mackenthun**, **Ella Plamann**, **Olivia Plamann**, **Carter Schumacher** and **Daniel Ufearo**, all from the College of Letters and Science.

To be eligible for the dean's list, students must complete a minimum of 12 graded degree credits in that semester.

Blotter

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

Jan. 10

11:30 a.m. Theft from vehicle. Fourth Avenue S. An officer met with a student regarding her school issued MacBook being stolen from her vehicle while being parked at an apartment building. The student reported it happened sometime between 1/7/22 and 1/8/22. The student stated there was issues with one of the vehicle doors securing and that may have been how the suspect gained entry. Dispatch entered the MacBook serial number in as stolen. The student stated the theft would be reported to their vehicle insurance.

Jan. 11

9:07 a.m. Suspicious item. Val Smith Park. An officer was notified of a possible hatchet laying in the snow near a walking path. The officer responded to the area and walked the walking path. The officer located a hatchet laying in the snow just off the path in front of the sledding hill. There were several red droplets in the snow near the hatchet. The officer followed the droplets, but the droplets eventually stopped. The officer returned to the hatchet to take pictures and realized it was a plastic toy hatchet. The hatchet was collected and destroyed at the police department.

Jan. 12

12:25 a.m. Warrant. Lowell Circle A male party called into dispatch on behalf of his friend, that his friend had a warrant and wanted to turn himself in. Both parties agreed to be cooperative with law enforcement when they arrived. A Sartell officer arrived on scene and both parties cooperated with the

officer. A Stearns County Sheriff's Deputy requested to handle the call for training purposes for a new hire. Sartell officer stood by for officer safety and cleared when the deputies had the male detained.

Jan. 13

12:43 p.m. Found property. CR 120. While an officer was at a business for a different matter, a found wallet was given to the officer. The officer identified the owner of the wallet and the owner soon arrived and took possession of the wallet.

Jan. 14

1:10 p.m. Crash with injuries. Highway 15. Dispatch informed officers of a crash with possible injuries involving a small white car and semi-truck. Sartell officers responded until state patrol arrived on scene. Officers assisted with blocking traffic and aided the drivers. Sartell Fire Department was also called to assist with possible injuries, extraction and blocking traffic. Sartell officers noted two vehicles passed with the roads blocked. State patrol wrote citations to those vehicles. Officers cleared once advised by state patrol they could.

Jan. 15

4:47 p.m. Suspicious vehicle. 15th Street N. An officer was dispatched to a suspicious vehicle complaint that was parked in front of the caller's address. Caller reported it was unoccupied and had been there since the previous night. The officer found it to be legally parked. Nothing suspicious within plain view. Nothing further by the officer.

Jan. 16

9:22 a.m. Assist agency. Seventh Street N. St. Cloud Police Department requested Sartell Police Department assist with a call locating an owner of a vehicle. The vehicle was found with the doors open and windows smashed out in St. Cloud. St. Cloud Police requested Sartell officer make contact with the owner and ask if he knew the location of the vehicle. When the officer arrived at the owner's address, no one was home; the officer was able to make contact by phone. The owner stated he loaned it to a friend a couple days ago to pull his fish house with it. The owner said to give his phone number to the St. Cloud officer, and they could contact him. Information was passed on; nothing further by the officer.

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Oak Ridge Early Learning Center

Kindergarten Information Night:

6-7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7
Oak Ridge Early Learning Center gymnasium
Parents/guardians are invited to this overview of Kindergarten for the 2022-23 school year. Individuals will also have the opportunity to talk with staff, tour our classrooms, meet with members of the Boys & Girls Club about our before- and after-school KIDSTOP program and leave with information necessary to enroll your child in the Sartell-St. Stephen school district.
***Please note: this event is for adults only.**

Sartell.k12.mn.us/orelc
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56377 320.258.3693

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.

Saturday, Feb. 5
Diabetes Prevention Program, free workshop, meets in-person and on zoom, Whitney Senior Center, 1527 Northway Drive, St. Cloud. Workshop dates include: 9-10 a.m. Saturdays, Feb. 5-May 21; 9-10 a.m. Tuesdays, April 12-July 26; and 11:15-12:15 p.m. Thursdays, May 5-Aug. 18. This program is designed for people with pre-diabetes. 320-650-3082, whitney-seniorcenter@ci.stcloud.mn.us.
Sartell Winter Market, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S.Shop local! This indoor market features homemade food items, crafts, jewelry and more.

Monday, Feb. 7
Blood Drive, 1-7 p.m., sponsored by Avon Women of Today and American Red Cross, Avon Community Church, 204 Avon Ave. N. For information or to make an appointment to donate, call 1-800-733-2767 or sign up online at redcrossblood.org with sponsor code:
Cancer: Thriving & Sur-

viving, 1:30-4 p.m. This free workshop meets via zoom each Monday from Feb. 7-March 21. 320-650-3082, whitney-seniorcenter@ci.stcloud.mn.us.
ORELC Kindergarten Information Night, 6-7 p.m. Oak Ridge Early Learning Center gymnasium, 1111 27th St. N., Sartell. Parents/guardians are invited to this meeting to preview early childhood offerings for the 2022-2023 school year. Talk with staff, tour classrooms, meet with Boys and Girls Club members and KIDSTART members.
Sartell Lions Club, 6:30 p.m., contact Stewart Giffin at 651-261-4272 regarding meeting details.

Tuesday, Feb. 8
Sartell Chamber of Commerce, 11:30 a.m., Waters Church, 1227 Pinecone Road N., Sartell.

Wednesday, Feb. 9
Men’s Health Series, this free workshop meets in-person and via zoom from 9-10 a.m. Wednesdays, Feb. 9, March 9, April 6, May 11 and June 8. For more information contact 320-650-3082 or email whitney-seniorcenter@ci.stcloud.mn.us. Whitney Senior Center, 1527 Northway Dr, St. Cloud.
Walk With Ease, this free workshop meets in-person from 10-11 a.m., Wednesdays through Feb. 23, Whitney Senior Center, 1527 Northway Drive, St. Cloud.

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School

from front page

Monday, Feb. 20, for the second semester.
The 2023-24 schedule follows a similar plan with Tuesday, Sept. 5, set for the first day of school. The last day of school will be Thursday, May 30, 2024, with graduation set for Saturday, June 1.
There are 170 class days and 9.5 teacher development days. Spring break is set for Monday-Friday, March 25-29, 2024.
One student contact day was removed for the next two years and teacher de-

velopment time added. The state requires at least 165 days. The Sartell-St. Stephen calendar, with 170 days, compares with 170 in the Sauk Rapids-Rice district and 169 days in the St. Cloud district.
When he presented the calendars at the board’s Jan.

3 meeting, Superintendent Jeff Riddlehoover said the calendars provide time for more teacher collaboration and preparation for personalized learning. Teachers from every building helped set the calendars, he said.

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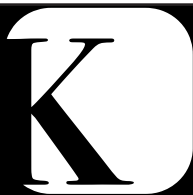
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"On behalf of LPL, I congratulate James on reaching this milestone in his professional career," said Angela Xavier, LPL executive vice president, Independent Advisor Services. "Business owners, American investors and industries at large faced extraordinary challenges throughout 2020. In the advisor-mediated financial advice market, investors showed how much value they place on a trusting relationship with a financial advisor. We applaud James for his commitment to clients and resiliency as a business owner, and we are inspired by his dedication to making a meaningful impact in the lives of his clients. It is an honor to support James and we wish him and his entire team continued success."

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Obituary

**Gerald 'Jerry' E. Fritz, 89
Sartell**

April 24, 1932-Jan. 23, 2022

Gerald "Jerry" E. Fritz died Jan. 23 at St. Benedict's Senior Community in St. Cloud. In accordance with his wishes and for the safety of others, there will be no services at this time. Arrangements have been entrusted to Williams Dingmann Family Funeral



Fritz

Home in Sauk Rapids.

Gerald Eugene Fritz was born April 24, 1932 in Clara City to Marvin and Rose (Coleman) Fritz. He graduated from Clara City High School in 1950 and he went on to join the Navy in 1952. He served his country during the Korean War and was on the USS Bennington. He was stationed in New York City and was very active in the USO where he met many life-long friends. After his service, he attended college and graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1959 with a bachelor's degree. He married Rosalyn Rogers on Oct. 21, 1961.

The couple moved to Royalton in 1965 where Fritz coached junior high sports and taught high school industrial arts. In 1969, they moved to Sartell where Fritz taught industrial arts and drivers' training. He worked in education for 27 years and retired in 1991. After retirement, he enjoyed many hunting and fishing trips with his friends and relatives. He also enjoyed golfing and gardening.

Survivors include the following: his wife of 60 years, Rosalyn of Sartell; his only daughter Tammy (Leroy) Kraemer of Kimball; and his beloved granddaughter, Kate Kraemer of whom he was so proud of; sister, Sandy (Larry) Asche; sister-in-law, Eileen; and many nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Ron; and sister and brother-in-law, Marlene and Bob Torney.

Fritz's family would like to express their thanks and gratitude to all the neighbors and friends who have helped him these past years; and to the St. Cloud VA Hospital for their compassionate care.

Obituary and guest book available online: www.williamsdingmann.com.

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Janel.Heinen@lssmn.org for more information and to make an impact in your community!!



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Mitch Gwost Earns CPA Designation



Mitch Gwost recently earned his Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation from the Minnesota State Board of Accountancy. He joined CDS in 2019 as a Staff Accountant. Mitch graduated from St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, MN with a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting. His focus areas are on tax preparation, bookkeeping, and retirement plan auditing.

Mitch is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), Minnesota Society of Certified Public Accountants (MNCPA), and the Sartell Chamber of Commerce. He is participating in the St. Cloud Area Leadership program and volunteers for the Sartell Adopt-a-Street program.

Mitch resides in Waite Park, MN.

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New coffeehouse caters to all tastes, special needs

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

Meghan Kelsey admits she was very scared as she pondered whether or not to open a coffee shop in Sartell. She'd had no experience in such a venture, but an inner voice kept telling her to go for it.

And she did. In early January, Second Street Coffeehouse opened at the location of what had been for many years the Liquid Assets coffee shop at 1901 Second St.

On opening day, nearly 250 people showed up, and business has been thriving ever since, day and night. Kelsey's earlier fears dissipated, leaving her elated at how so many support her venture.

"The support from this community has been awesome," she said during an interview with the Sartell-St. Stephen Newsleader. "It can be a stressful job but at the same time so much fun. We meet so many good, fun people, and I think the long social isolation of the pandemic has caused people to crave social interactions again."

There are 28 employees at Second Street Coffeehouse, 18 of them high-school students for which Kelsey has the highest praise.

"They are all amazing," she said. "Amazing! They more than pull their weight, and I can't say enough about them."

Kelsey leases the building from its owners, Bob and Linda Feuling. It has been entirely remodeled for a new look that is sleek, streamlined, modernistic.

The menu includes the following: varieties of fresh-brewed

coffee, of course; fresh-made sandwiches, soups and salads; a healthy plant-based energy drink called "Lotus"; and pastries from the Backwards Bread Co. in St. Cloud.

The coffee beans come from "The Reality" a company in St. Cloud and are ground daily at Second Street Coffeehouse. The shop also sells bags of Black Rifle Coffee, distributed from a Utah-based company owned by military veterans. Proceeds from sales go to help the families of law-enforcement personnel, as well as veterans.

"The menu here is small," said Kelsey, "but it's covers lots of tastes."

Second Street is unique in its variety of interior areas that cater to various age groups and their needs. There is a children's area with small tables and coloring books where kids can become absorbed while being relatively quiet. There are spaces where high-school students can do their homework. And, most unusual, a former meeting room was redesigned as a safe place where people suffering from various forms of dementia, along with their loved ones, can feel secure. The floor is slip-proof, any sharp corners (such as table edges) have been rounded off; the lighting is bright with no shadows.

Kelsey is all too sadly aware of such fears and dangers to people dealing with dementia. Her mother, Colleen, suffered for years with Alzheimer's disease, with its first symptoms noticeable in her 50s and becoming steadily worse until her death in April 2016, when she

was in her 60s. Kelsey was one of her mother's caretakers through the long struggle.

"I remember my mother couldn't go hardly anywhere," she said. "There was always that fear of falling and many things that would frighten her – even shadows."

The safe room at Second Street Coffeeshop is named in honor of Kelsey's mother: Colleen's Room.

So many customers who visit with family members/caretakers have forms of dementia in one stage or another, Kelsey noted.

"It makes me sad there are so many people who have it it," she said. "But it's also rewarding to know they have this safe place to come to where they can be safe and comfortable."

Kelsey again praised her high-school student employees. They eagerly agreed to participate in training that would help them learn about dementia and the very special needs of such people. The employees learned how to recognize those people when they enter the coffeehouse and how to accommodate them, even cutting up their food if they need that."

The charge to rent Colleen's Room for meetings is \$25. Proceed go to the Alzheimer's Association.

Kelsy has lived in Sartell for five years. For 17 years, she worked as a hair stylist, but the pandemic that reared its ugly head two years ago put an economic and social squeeze on salon businesses. That is when Kelsey, a single mother of three, knew a career change was on the horizon. She decided to



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Hannah Welch, of Sartell, creates a Second Street Coffeehouse specialty called a "banana boat" Jan. 31. It is a sliced banana topped with whipped cream, mixed berries and chocolate syrup.

explore the option of opening her own business.

Kelsey's children are twins Quinton and Isaac, 11; and Addison Rose, 7. The children come to the shop every day and love being there, helping out in any way they

can and enjoying the company of the employees, who dote on them.

Second Street Coffeehouse is open seven days a week, from 6 a.m.-8 p.m. weekdays and from 6 a.m.-2 p.m. weekends.

One of Newsleaders' own wins award

by **Leanne Loy**
editor@thenewsleaders.com

We here at the Newleaders would like to congratulate our very own Carolyn Bertsch on her recent award. Bertsch won first place for one of her photographs from the 2022 Better Newspapers Contest from the Minnesota Newspaper Association!

The winning photo was taken on Dec. 15, 2020, when most of the world was still in lockdown due to the

pandemic. The photo shows Santa visiting a resident, Kay Peterson, of Edgewood Senior Living in Sartell from outside her window. The picture is both heartbreaking and beautiful.

Bertsch has been with the Newsleaders since 2017 as the Assignment Editor and 2015 as a freelance photographer.

We are all very proud of her for winning this prestigious award. Congratulations Carolyn! The Newsleaders is lucky to have you!



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

This award-winning photograph earned Newsleader photographer Carolyn Bertsch first-place in the 2022 Better Newspaper Contest, sponsored by the Minnesota Newspaper Association. The cutline under the photo from December 2020 reads as follows: Kay Peterson, a resident of Edgewood Senior Living, Sartell, holds a framed photo to her window Dec. 15, when Santa asks, "How long has it been since we last saw each other, Kay?"

Calendar

from page 3

320-650-3082, email whitneyse-niorcenter@ci.stcloud.mn.us.

"Voter Suppression," presented by the St. Cloud Area League of Women Voters. 1 p.m. via Zoom. For more information visit www.lwvsca.org.

Thursday, Feb. 10
Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850

19th St. S. Topic: Home Care 101 presented by Austin Eastwood of Knute Nelson Home Health and Hospice. Learn how home healthcare can benefit you.

Health Coaches for Hypertension Control, free workshop, meets 1-2:30 p.m. Thursdays through April 7 via Zoom or in-person, Whitney Senior Center, 1527 Northway Drive, St. Cloud. 320-650-3082, whitneyse-niorcenter@ci.stcloud.mn.us.

Friday, Feb. 11
Chris Koza: Singer-Songwriter. 7:30 p.m., Paramount

Center for the Arts, 913 W. St. Germain, St. Cloud. Born out of folk, country, storytelling and rock 'n roll, Koza both honors and builds on Americana traditions by incorporating a unique pop-music sensibility and imaginative production choices. paramountarts.org.

Saturday, Feb. 12
Doktor-Kaboom: Wheel of Science Show. 3 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W. St.Germain, St. Cloud. This family fun event features optical illusions, chemical reac-

tions, homemade hovercrafts and more! For children aged 7+. paramountarts.org.

Monday, Feb. 14
Sartell City Council, 6 p.m., City Hall, 125 Pinecone Road N.

Thursday, Feb. 17
Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Topic: Cyber Security.

Saturday, Feb. 19
Community Meal, 11:30

a.m.-12:45 p.m., drive by and pickup style, First United Methodist Church, 1107 Pinecone Road S., Sartell.

Ice Fishing Contest, sponsored by the St. Joseph Rod and Gun Club, noon-2:30 p.m., Kraemer Lake, St. Joseph. 28th annual ice fishing contest. Tickets: \$15 advanced (until 6 p.m. Friday, Feb. 18), \$20 at the lake, \$10 kids (15 & under) advanced and at the lake. More than \$4,000 in prizes! Lunch and refreshments available for purchase. 320-251-2881.

Be Respectful Family Night planned for Feb. 10

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

A family night for Sartell-St. Stephen Early Childhood and Early Childhood Family Education students and parents is planned for 5:30-6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10 at Oak Ridge

Grandpa

from front page

“Besides their classroom teaching, they have a lot of meetings to attend. They work so hard, and the (other) staff and aides do too. Some teachers use their own money to buy supplies, like ones for art projects.”

McCarthy works with the first-grade students four days a week with 11 classrooms of students, spending a half hour in each one, usually in the hallway helping with two or three students at a time – sometimes more. He has lunch with the teachers. Class sizes per room are anywhere from 20 to 25 children.

“I do whatever teachers need me to do,” he said. “Helping children with reading or math or helping them with homework. And I go to different areas of the school to help with art and science. I spend one day a week in the library.”

McCarthy is a member of the Foster Grandparent program of Catholic Charities.

In 2017, his wife, Linda, died of a heart attack. Feeling devastated, lonely and restless, McCarthy was searching for some kind of social connection.

“I was retired and kind of drifting,” he said. “I mean how often can you go fishing or play golf?”

One day he was paging through a magazine in a clinic while waiting for the doctor when he saw an ad for the Foster Grandparent program. It piqued his interest instantly, partly because in the early 1990s, he’d been a substitute teacher and helped fill in, getting calls for his service from a wide area.

He applied for the Foster Grandparent program and after a background check and training, he found himself helping happily at Pine Meadow.

Jobs

from front page

“Personally, it’s left me without my support,” she said. “I’m not able to provide all of my students the support and individual attention they need and deserve.”

Staff are also being affected by this change. Teachers are working to support more than just the students in their classrooms, taking

Early Learning Center.

Be Respectful is the theme for the Feb. 10 event, which is the second of three family nights planned for this school year.

Activities will emphasize respectful behavior such as learning to take turns and

Raised in Albany, McCarthy studied economics at St. Cloud State University. He worked for the Social Security Administration, then in the St. Cloud Fingerhut maintenance department. He also served in the U.S. Navy for four years, stationed near Turkey and then in Italy.

He has two sons, Gary and Brian, a daughter Megan, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. His oldest daughter, Tiffany, died four years ago at age 42 due to a condition that caused her organs to shut down.

Tragedies and setbacks instilled in McCarthy expansive compassion, especially for children. Divorce, for example, can cause such sadness in children when they do not understand why, when one week they are living with their father, the next week with their mother. He said he vividly remembers a boy whose family moved to Sartell from Minneapolis. He had a hard time adjusting and could barely recite the alphabet. Together, he and the child worked an hour a day on reading, and by the time winter approached, the proud boy could read very well.

“At the end of a day I might be tired,” McCarthy said, “but I feel good, knowing I helped the kids and the teachers. They have such a tough job, and they work hard – really hard – teaching, plus getting kids to socialize, to accept discipline, to keep them on track. I wish there were more senior citizens volunteering as foster grandparents. They are so needed.”

The program

Like McCarthy, Sara Heurung also wishes there were more volunteers. Heurung is the Catholic Charities supervisor for eastern Stearns and western Benton counties.

Currently, in a 16-county area of central Minnesota, there are 172 volunteer foster grandpar-

making cards. Games will help the young students learn to recognize shapes and letters and tackle some problem-solving.

The gym will be open for exercise and games.

The first Family Night’s theme was Be Safe. The third

ents. Some schools have none.

“We’d like to have 172 more,” Heurung said.

Volunteers must be 55 or older, pass background checks and complete a basic-training program. There are tax-free money stipends for seniors who qualify due to financial need.

Volunteers work with children at more than 200 sites: in schools, after-school programs, the Reach Up Head Start program, non-profit childcare centers and the “YES Network,” which provides lunches to kids

event’s theme, scheduled for Thursday, May 12 is Be Engaged.

There are about 145 students, ages 3-4, in the early childhood programs at Oak Ridge. The school also serves about 285 kindergartners.

“The evening is a great op-

portunity for kids to interact and build social skills with other kids their age,” said Principal Jason Mielke. “The value of this event is getting to learn in a collaborative environment as a family and get children familiar with the building and staff.”

“So many intergenerational contacts form,” Heurung said. “And the volunteers help take a load off of the teachers too.”

Heurung often visits those sites to see first-hand what a difference foster grandparents make for students and teachers.

She is hoping senior citizens will sign up for the program so they will be trained and ready later or for next year. They can choose their sites and be assigned to just the schools or

programs dove-tailed to their own skills, talents and comfort levels. In some places, they can work with teenaged students, too.

The Foster Grandparent program began nationally and locally in 1965 as one part of President Lyndon Johnson’s massive War on Poverty initiative.

To find out more about the program, visit the Catholic Charities website at ccstcloud.org and click on “Community Services.”



contributed photo

On last year’s Veterans Day, St. Joseph resident Kevin “Grandpa” McCarthy shared with children his memories of being in the U.S. Navy. The children are students at Sartell’s Pine Meadow Elementary School where McCarthy has volunteered for five years as a member of the “Foster Grandparent” program. The program is seeking more volunteers.

sionals are shifted around, leaving some students or classrooms without support. Paraprofessionals are an integral part of educational staff, and more paraprofessionals are needed. They are vital to education, providing necessary services to all students, especially those in special education programming. Paraprofessionals are the key to success for many students.

Education, as an institution and a functioning place of learning, cannot continue without staff in

the buildings. Around the country there are states that have changed their requirements for teachers; New Mexico going as far as to call in the National Guard. Some states are now requiring only a high school diploma to be a teacher. The Minnesota Department of Education requires a four-year degree in education, a student teaching program, and passing scores on board certification to be a teacher. In Minnesota, those aiming to be substitute teachers need a four-year degree of any kind.

Educators are bending over backwards to meet the needs of students and families. Educators across the state are stepping into a world outside their normal jobs to ensure students are getting what they need in and out of school. If you have the time, please reach out to your local district, and see how you can support them. If you want to join any of these fabulous teams please reach out to St. Cloud school district’s human resources at isd742.org.

Why Hire a Professional?

Hiring a professional tax preparer to do your taxes can be a smart financial decision.

These professionals stay up to date on the newest tax laws and filing requirements, and you may find that being sure your taxes are done well is worth the cost.

According to the IRS, in 2020, about 80.6 million people e-filed their returns themselves, versus 72.2 million people who self prepared and e-filed.

CONSIDERATIONS

Here are some things to consider when deciding on hiring a professional.

Time. Filing your own taxes can be a time-intensive endeavor. If you own a small business, you could spend as much as 20 hours gathering receipts and other documentation and entering the information into an online platform. If you could use that time for something more important or valuable to you, choose a paid preparer.

Money. The National Society of Tax Professionals says the average fee for preparing Form 1040 is \$203, and preparers who charge by the hour typically charge \$138 per hour. What you get in exchange for the money you spend on your return is the next item on our list.

Peace of mind. When you

pay someone to prepare your taxes, you are responsible for providing accurate information. Your preparer will do the work of checking for deductions, credits and other tax programs you might qualify for, as well as filing your taxes properly and timely. If you're afraid you will second-guess the accuracy of your filing if you do it yourself, it might be worth the money to hire a pro. Some

paid services even offer help if you're audited or otherwise contacted by the IRS about your return.

Complexity. If you are a high earner, have multiple sources of income, investments, charitable contributions and other complicated tax situations, hiring a professional might be a good idea. Knowing the specifics of the tax law is critical in filing a complex return.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Business Insider suggests hiring a tax attorney, a certified public account or an IRS enrolled agent to prepare your returns.

Visit the National Association of Tax Professionals' website at www.natptax.com to find a qualified preparer.

You can also visit the Directory of Federal Tax Return Preparers with

Credentials and Select Qualifications at irs.treasury.gov/rpo/rpo.jsf.

The IRS recommends making sure your preparer has a Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) issued by the agency.

These are the only professionals who can represent you in front of the IRS if you are audited, or have issues with payments or collections.



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SALES REPRESENTATIVE

The *Newsleaders* of St. Joseph and Sartell-St. Stephen are looking for a creative, outgoing and motivated individual to manage the Sales Department. Must have strong communication and organizational skills. Previous experience in sales is desired but not required.

Please email resume and a cover letter to billing@thenewsleaders.com.

Job description is available at thenewsleaders.com or by applying through Indeed.com



A 3-Course Chocolate Meal

Chocolate is king at Valentine’s Day, but it’s way more than just truffles and candies.

You can make a whole meal flavored with chocolate. Let’s get started.

FIRST COURSE Eggplant Caponata

Recipe is from Saveur. Serves 6-8.

- Ingredients**
- 3 cups olive oil
 - 2 pounds Eggplant, cut into 1-inch cubes
 - 1 large yellow onion, chopped
 - 1 rib celery, roughly chopped
 - Kosher salt and black pepper to taste
 - 3 tablespoons tomato paste, thinned with ¼ cup water
 - 1 cup crushed canned tomatoes
 - 6 ounces green olives, pitted and roughly chopped
 - ½ cup white wine vinegar
 - ½ cup golden raisins
 - ¼ cup salt-packed capers, rinsed and drained
 - 3 tablespoons sugar
 - 2 tablespoons finely grated unsweetened chocolate
 - ½ cup finely shredded basil
 - 2 tablespoons pine nuts

- Directions**
- Heat oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, fry eggplant until browned, about 3-4 minutes. Transfer eggplant to a large bowl and set aside.
 - Pour off all but 1/4 cup oil and return skillet to heat. Add the



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- onions and celery, season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring often, until beginning to brown or about 10 minutes. Turn heat to medium.
- Add tomato paste and stir until caramelized and almost evaporated, 1-2 minutes. Add the crushed tomatoes and cook for 10 minutes. Stir in olives, vinegar, raisins, capers, sugar and chocolate and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 15 minutes.
- Transfer to the bowl with eggplant and mix together. Check and adjust seasonings and let cool to room temperature before serving with toast points.

SECOND COURSE Steak au Poivre

Recipe is from Taste of Home. Serves 2.

- Ingredients**
- 2 5-ounce Beef tenderloin steaks, about an inch thick
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
 - 1 tablespoon whole white or black peppercorns, crushed
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
 - 1 tablespoon finely chopped shallot
 - ¼ cup port wine
 - 1 tablespoon Balsamic vinegar
 - ¼ cup condensed beef consommé, undiluted

- 1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary or ¼ teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
 - ½ ounce bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- Directions**
- Rub steaks with a tablespoon of oil and sprinkle with peppercorns and salt. Heat 2 teaspoons of oil over medium heat. Add steaks and cook 5-7 minutes on each side or until desired doneness. Remove and keep warm.
 - In the same pan, heat the rest of the oil over medium-high heat. Add the shallot and cook and stir for 1 minute or until tender. Add the

wine and vinegar, stirring to loosen browned bits from the pan. Bring to a boil and cook 2-3 minutes or until slightly thickened.

3. Stir in consommé and rosemary, bring back to a boil. Add chocolate and stir until melted and sauce is thickened. Serve with steaks.

THIRD COURSE Chocolate Pots de Crème

Recipe is from the Food Network. Serves 6-8.

- Ingredients**
- 9 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
 - 1 ½ cups whole milk
 - 1 ½ cups heavy cream
 - 6 large egg yolks
 - 5 tablespoons granulated sugar
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
 - 1 tablespoon confectioners’ sugar

- Directions**
- Place the chocolate in a blender.
 - Whisk the milk, 1 cup cream, egg yolks, granulated sugar and salt in a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture is thick enough to coat the spatula or spoon and almost boiling, about 5-6 minutes.
 - Pour the milk mixture over the chocolate in the blender. Cover and hold the lid with a thick towel and blend until combined and smooth, stopping to scrape the sides as needed. Divide the chocolate mixture among ramekins or small cups and refrigerate until set, about 2 hours.
 - Whip the remaining ½ cup cream and the confectioners’ sugar with a mixer or blender until soft peaks form. Top the chilled pots de crème with whipped cream.



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PUBLIC NOITICE

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING • SARTELL-ST. STEPHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 748
DEC. 20, 2021 • SARTELL HIGH SCHOOL

The Truth in Taxation public hearing for the proposed 2021 payable 2022 levy started at 6 p.m. called by Chair Jeremy Snoberger.

Business Manager Joseph Prom reviewed the 2021 payable 2022 levy materials including the 2021-2022 budget, types of levies, and property tax calculations.

The regular school board meeting of Independent School District 748 was called to order at 6:20 p.m. by Snoberger. Members present: Snoberger; Jason Nies, vice chair; Amanda Byrd, clerk; Matt Moehrle, treasurer; Patrick Marushin, director; Tricia Meling, director; and Dr. Jeff Ridlehoover, superintendent. Members absent: none.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Nies to APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. All in favor. Motion carried.

During the public comment opportunity four members of the community addressed the school board. Peter Joseph Wilson, 1108 Celebration Drive, spoke on the topics of curriculum and training of teachers and students; Kara Zdan, 257 Sunburst Ave., spoke on the topic of security theater; Chris Yasgar, 39522 115th Ave., spoke on the topic of district policy regarding signage; Steve Kron, 412 Pheasant Drive, thanked the school board and administration for assisting with opt-out curriculum and upcoming tough decisions.

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

- B.4.a. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on Nov. 15, 2021
Minutes of the school board work session held on Dec. 1, 2021
Minutes of the special school board meeting held on Dec. 3, 2021

B.4.b Checks in the amount of \$1,007,303.29 as presented:

General Fund	579,944.79
Food Service Fund	169,684.52
Transportation Fund	193,456.94
Community Service Fund	11,773.01
Capital Expenditure Fund	46,105.72
Activity Accounts	4,502.50
Internal Service Fund	1,835.81
Check numbers 182526 – 182768	

ACHs in the amount of \$3,773.09 as presented:

General Fund	3,322.97
Food Service Fund	161.66
Community Service Fund	140.30
Activity Accounts	148.16
ACH numbers 212200071-212200102	

Receipts in the amount of \$4,629,755.50 as presented:

General Fund	2,657,900.06
Food Service Fund	319,673.26
Community Service Fund	93,423.17
Building Fund	45.13
Debt Service Fund	1,542,435.48
Activity Accounts	4,374.00
Internal Service Fund	11,904.40
Receipts 49571 - 49727	

Wire transfers in the amount of \$1,565,716.16 as presented:

General Fund	1,038,498.95
Food Service Fund	50,755.81
Transportation Fund	18,888.42
Community Service Fund	29,003.10
Capital Expenditure Fund	1,616.90
Internal Service Fund	417,801.98
Wire transfers 202122331 – 202122404	

Building Fund Checks in the amount of \$61,872.00 as presented:

Building Fund	61,872.00
Check number 601225	

B.4.c Approve resolution accepting the following donations; Lynn Quinn, Sartell High School-Tech Ed, \$3,000, Habitat for Humanity build; Rasmussen University, Sartell High School, 43 Wacom tablets, donation for the Sartell High School Art Department; Sartell-St. Stephen Pre-K-5 PTO, ISD #748, \$10,000, RIS playground; Sartell-St. Stephen Education Foundation, ISD #748, \$24,760, 2021-2022 SSEF grants; United Way of Central Minnesota, ISD #748, \$500, school supplies to be distributed to student with needs; Wal-Mart, Sartell Middle School, 12 cases of glue sticks, general donation.

B.4.d Accept the resignation of Brenda Koltes, ORELCL, para, 12/10/21; Serena Nebel, SMS, SPED, 6/7/22; Cholena Schmid, SHS, food service worker, 11/23/21; Alyssa Zirbes, RIS, para, 11/22/21. Accept the retirement of Anastasia Clitty, SHS, receptionist, 2/1/22.

B.4.e Approve Combined Polling Place Resolution

B.4.f Approve Renewal of the Community Education and City of Sartell Partnership Agreement

B.4.g Approve Pro Fields Service Agreement

Superintendent Report:
Superintendent Ridlehoover reported on happenings around the district. In an incredible act of goodwill, Ryan and Bethany Cross of BCI Construction donated land to Habitat for Humanity toward the Sartell High School build project. School winter concerts have been a success and the district is going full in winter sports. Students at the high school continue work on the “Bandana Project” to promote mental health awareness and suicide prevention. The state’s budget forecast shows a surplus of \$7.7 billion as recently reported during a recent MASA finance committee meeting. Community Education staffing is functioning well with the additional hours to part-time staff. The calendar committee has continued to meet and will have draft calendars for review and approval at the regular January meeting. There has been a lot of activity within social media regarding threats to school districts. This is deeply concerning and troublesome and the district will remain in connection with local law enforcement. ALICE training has continued, with a public thank you to the Sartell Police Department and Stearns County Sheriff’s Office for the increased visibility. Recommendation on adjusting masking for after the end of the school day to be, masks are strongly recommended instead of required. Board members discussion was encouraged on the recommended change. District enrollment is at 4,078 K-12 students. Ridlehoover presented a certificate from MSBA to Chairman Snoberger for completion on the four phases of leadership.

Student Representative Report:
Student Representative Kate Ellis reported Oak Ridge has finished their ECFE classes and will begin new classes in February. Kindergarten students had gingerbread house and door-decorating contests. Pine Meadow continued Sabre Strong activities, which included the use of the building’s new book vending machine, thanks to PTO and SSEF. Students have earned a building BINGO contest tomorrow. Riverview Intermediate staff had a great staff development day, including work on PLTW. The Minnesota DNR recently awarded a grant for archery within the school. Sartell Middle School has band, choir and orchestra concerts being performed this month. DCD students held its annual Holiday Café and the building will have a Snowflake Shuffle tomorrow. Sartell High School students had parent teacher conferences over Zoom and will be registering for classes for next year. Winter sports are all up and running, with the winter band concert being held tonight. The Mill store has been very popular with students and Winter Wonderland is currently being planned.

Educational Equity and Student Experience Committee Report:
Superintendent Ridlehoover provided an update on the committee’s progress.

District Finance Report:
Director of Business Services Joe

Prom provided an update on district finances.

COVID-19 Report:
Director of Human Resources Krista Durrwachter provided an update regarding COVID-19.

School Board Committee Report:
Byrd reported on the recent Curriculum, Instruction and Advisory Committee. Topics included an AIPAC update and High School course changes. Meling reported on the Sartell Senior Connection meeting she attended. The group is excited to present about their membership at a School Board meeting. Snoberger gave a negotiations update. Negotiations with the Sartell Education Association will continue with the tentative agreement being voted down by the group’s membership.

A motion was made by Moehrle and seconded by Marushin to APPROVE #1-34:

New Employees/Changes:
Abigail Baker, PMPS, para, \$16.75/hour, RIV, S1, 3.25 hours/day, replacing Michala VanHeel-reduction in hours, 12/13/2021; Karen Butler, RIS, para, \$22.31/hour, RIV, S6, 7 hours/day, correction in wage, 10/15/2021; Carey Carstensen, ORELCL, para, \$16.75/hour, RIV, S1, 6.5 hours/day, replacing Brenda Koltes, 12/13/2021; Sarah Corrieri, ORELCL, kindergarten-LTS, \$23,640, BA, Step A (\$42,002), .5628 FTE, replacing Molly Meier, 1/3/2022; Robert Dyer, ORELCL, para, \$18.89/hour, RIV, S3, 6.5 hours/day, replacing Jody Navratil, 1/3/2022; Debra Edelbrock, ORELCL, cafeteria worker, \$16.20/hour, RI, S1, 2.75 hours, increased need, 11/23/2021; David Gasperlin, RIS, custodian, \$17.97, RIII, S1, 8 hours/day, 260 days/year, replacing Lori Tchida, 1/3/2022; Mallory Johnson, SMS, Knowledge Bowl, \$945 (2.25 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing David Thompson, 12/1/2021; Anne Marie Kimble, SHS, assistant Nordic ski, \$2,660 (9.5 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), 66-percent contract, new position, 12/7/2021; Sarah Lauer, SMS, Knowledge Bowl, \$945 (2.25 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), Replacing Nicole Schmitt, 12/1/2021; Allison Ley, SHS, Jr Class Advisor, \$1,407 (3.35%), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Kelsey Box, 12/1/2021; Sydney Musatov, SHS, assistant dance coach-outside funded, \$2,205 (10.5 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), 50-percent contract, replacing Alexia Mackendanz, 11/8/2021; Brandon Nordhues, SHS, spring musical pit conductor, \$2,629 (5.35 percent), BA, H (\$49,145), new position, 4/4/2022; Mathew Oleson, SMS, junior high boys swim, \$2,667 (6.35 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Josiah Torvik, 12/1/2021; Paul Plombon, SMS, junior high wrestling-outside funded, \$2,667 (6.35 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Mitchell Keeler, 11/22/2021; Faith Schlecht, ORELCL, early childhood, \$21,803, BA, Step A (\$42,002), .5191 FTE, replacing Leslie Yasgar, 11/29/2021; Cholena Schmid, SHS, food service worker, \$16.20/hour, RI, S1, 3 hours/day, replacing Christine DuinincK, 11/19/2021; Erin Stone, ORELCL, kindergarten-LTS, \$20,427, BA, Step A (\$42,002), .4863 FTE, replacing Crista Walz, 1/24/2022; Lori

Tchida, Trans, bus driver, \$25.55, 5 hours/day, school year, replacing Diane Amundson, 9/7/2021;

Lori Tchida, RIS, custodian, \$22.68, RIII, S5, 3 hours/day SY, 8 hours/day NSY, new position, 9/7/2021; Felicia Thoemke, RIS, para-LTS, \$16.75/hour, RIV, S1, 7 hours/day, replacing Kristina Peterson, 11/29/2021; Joey Vanek, SHS, junior class advisor, \$1,407 (3.35 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Anne Zidon, 12/1/2021; Isaiah Wallace, SMS, junior high boys swim, \$2,667 (6.35 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), eplacing Lyndsey Welch, 11/29/2021; Tracey Watkin, SHS, one-act play technical director, \$1,680 (3.35 percent), BA, I (\$50,164), new position, 12/1/2021; Natalie Westergren, SHS, para-LTS, \$16.75/hour, RIV, S1, 7 hours/day, new position, 12/20/2021.

Leaves of Absence:
Robert Graham, SHS, custodian, LOA, 12/3/21-12/31/21; Kelly Haws, RIS, SPED, LOA, 12/22/21-1/21/22; Kathy Mugg, ORELCL, para, LOA, 1/3/22-6/3/22; Nancy Nieters, PMPS, para, LOA, 12/9/21-1/31/22; Kimberly Nistler, SHS, counseling secretary, LOA, 4/29/22-6/3/22; Rick Primus, SHS, custodian, LOA, 12/9/21-2/15/22; Laura Sobania, SHS, food service worker, LOA, 11/22/21-1/14/22; Carol Williamson, SMS, cook, LOA, 11/30/21-12/31/21; Leslie Yasgar, ORELCL, early childhood, LOA, 11/24/21-6/7/22.

All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Nies and seconded by Byrd TO APPROVE CLERICAL, PARAPROFESSIONAL, 284 MULTI-UNIT, CERTIFIED STAFF & ECFE SENIORITY LISTS. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Meling and seconded by Moehrle TO APPROVE THE CERTIFICATION OF THE 2021 PAYABLE 2022 PROPERTY TAX LEVY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,068,898.65.

A motion was made by Marushin and seconded by Byrd TO APPROVE ADOPTION OF POLICY 908. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Moehrle and seconded by Meling TO APPROVE ISD 748 2021-2022 WORLD’S BEST WORKFORCE STRATEGIC PLAN. All in favor. Motion carried.

Schedule Work Session and Committee Meetings:

Organizational Meeting – Monday, Jan. 3 @ District Service Center – 6:30 p.m.

Future Board Work Session – Wednesday, Jan. 5 @ District Service Center - 6:30 p.m.

Policy Committee Meeting – Wednesday, Jan. 5 @ District Service Center - 4 p.m.

Future Regular Board Meeting – Time/Location to be Determined at the Organizational Meeting

Correspondence
MSBA/Letter – Jeremy Snoberger

A motion to ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:29 pm. was made by Nies and seconded by Marushin. All in favor. Motion carried.

/s/ Amanda Byrd, clerk

Publish: Feb. 4, 2022

Opinion

Our View

Teachers’ value should not be easily dismissed

Our schools have been mostly back in person with a few virtual learning days here and there. However, other states are only now easing back into classrooms. This should be an exciting time for not just the students but the teachers as well. However, the comments people are leaving on social media pages would make any teacher, no matter how dedicated they are, want to throw their hands in the air and say, “I give up.”

Comments like,
“Good, it’s about time teachers go back to work.”
“Finally, teachers will actually have to work for their paychecks.”
“I guess the break is over for teachers.”

For the last two years we have been in the midst of this horrible pandemic and our teachers have really gotten a bad rap. Comments about how nice it must be for them to be able to work from home are not only hurtful, but ignorant.

You would think after two years of this people would finally see how valuable our teachers are. They do not want to teach from their homes. Ask almost any teacher and they will tell you in-class learning is much more valuable. The only reason they accept working from home in these times is to keep themselves and their families safe and protected. Who wouldn’t want that?

The adjustments they have had to make during the last two years have also added stress and uncertainty in their lives. Having to create online lesson plans at the drop of a hat when they are surprised with an unexpected virtual learning day, knowing a lot of their students don’t do well with at-home lessons and trying to accommodate for each individual student does not sound like a no-stress situation. But they do it. They show up each and every day because they didn’t take this job for the money, they took this job because, regardless of what people might think, they do care deeply for their students and want to see them succeed.

Teachers are some of the hardest working, passionate human beings we have and yet it has become so easy for people to dismiss them and make ignorant comments about how they get too much vacation and are paid too much. Those teachers deserve and need those summers off, most of them are still doing lesson plans and getting their rooms ready for the next year during that “vacation.”

The job has changed quite a lot throughout the years; maybe people don’t realize that. It would be surprising, though, if that’s the case considering we parents were home with our children for nearly an entire year. That alone should have been eye-opening to us.

We need to remember teachers are human beings and much like our heroes in the medical field, they need our praise and patience too. But more than that, they need our support. Just imagine how it would change our kids’ lives if we actually gave our teachers the support and patience they need, instead of putting them down in these difficult times.

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.

Two DINOs helped throttle voting access

We often hear about RINOs (Republicans in Name Only). How about DINOs (Democrats in Name Only)? They, too, exist, like those two book-end obstructionists Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona.

On Jan. 22, that duo had the brazen gall to vote against the Freedom to Vote Act, along with all 50 Senate Republicans. Oh sure, Sinema and Manchin claimed (most unconvincingly) they were only voting to protect the Senate filibuster. But of course they knew their votes for filibuster would sink the voting-rights bill – at least for now.

The filibuster requires a majority of 60 senators (not 51 of 100) to pass legislation. The filibuster, which is not even mentioned in the U.S. Constitution, was cooked up years ago, used as a way to block or kill legislation, especially during the Civil Rights Era. In recent years, the filibuster has become a tactic by which a minority party can prevent landmark bills from being approved.

What happened on Jan. 22 is this: There was a proposal to drop the filibuster temporarily, dubbed a “carve-out,” just so the Freedom to Vote Act would have a chance of passing. That could have occurred if those devious spoilsports, Manchin and Sinema, had voted to drop the filibuster. The Senate would have split 50-50 strictly along party lines, and Vice President Kamala Harris would have cast the deciding vote, making the tally 51-50 for a squeak-through victory.

Wordle entertainment is for everyone

A few weeks ago, I started noticing an interesting trend on social media. People were posting a grid of squares, colored green, yellow and gray. I was intrigued; I knew it was some kind of word game, but I wasn’t exactly sure how it worked. Finally, after seeing this for a couple weeks, I decided to try it myself, and I was hooked. This was, of course, the word game that has been taking the world by storm, Wordle.

So what is this game, and why has it become so popular? Wordle is essentially a word-guessing game. Every day there is a new word to guess, and no matter where you are in the world everyone is attempting to guess the same one. That’s what makes sharing and talking about it so fun. And with only one word per day, you have to keep coming back to keep playing.

Josh Wardle, a software engineer from Brooklyn, originally created the game as something for him and his domestic partner to play. However, once their relatives started to really enjoy playing it as well, he made it publicly available in October of last year. Later on, he added the feature where you can share your grid results, and the game became a viral phenomenon.

To play Wordle, you just need to utilize your knowledge of five-letter

Dennis Dalman
Reporter



The filibuster “rule” has been dropped many times for any number of reasons and/or excuses to approve this or that bill or confirmation. If Sinema and Manchin had truly believed strongly in the Freedom to Vote Act, they would have voted immediately to forego the filibuster, then vote for the bill. They ought to be ashamed because it certainly appears they used their dearly beloved filibuster as an excuse for putting the kibosh on voting rights. It was one of the most shameful days in Senate history and does not bode well for the future, when Senate minorities will block or kill important legislation favored by a majority of Americans, like the Freedom to Vote Act.

Our Democracy is in mortal danger. Just last year, 34 voting-suppression laws were approved by Republican legislatures in 19 states. Of course, they dare not call them suppression bills (oh no!); instead, they claim the laws will protect the integrity of the voting process by making “massive voter fraud” impossible – you know, the “massive voting fraud” they falsely, stubbornly keep claiming “stole” the election from Trump.

In fact, those new voting laws will limit, discourage or prevent access to

the polls by many Black Americans, Latinos and others – the ones who tend to favor Democrats. Those onerous laws are termites chewing away at the foundation of Democracy – that foundation being the right of every American citizen to cast a free and fair vote in an election.

These laws limit the time for early voting, move voting places far from minority neighborhoods, purge the names of voters from registration lists for flimsy reasons, limit or ban mail-in voting, greatly decrease or get rid of ballot drop boxes and even (in Georgia) make it illegal for someone to bring food or water to voters waiting in line for hours at voting places. Some states have even passed laws that give state officials authority over the procedures of county election workers.

Another scheme is to sway elections via gerrymandering, the unfair skewing of legislative-district borderlines to favor one political party over another.

The Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Act would stop the most blatant voting-suppression laws and set standards to ensure the flourishing of genuine free-and-fair Democracy. Who with a good patriotic conscience could oppose such protective bills?

Well, on Jan. 22, that is exactly what 50 Republicans and two rogue Democrats did. They used the filibuster rule as an excuse to keep themselves in perpetual power.

Connor Kockler
Guest writer



words. Wordle picks a word each day from a list of about 2,000 words out of the 12,000 five-letter words in the English language. When you start playing, you’re faced with an empty grid and a list of letters, giving you six tries to figure out the word of the day. Each time you guess a word, the game either makes letter tiles green, yellow or gray. A green tile means the letter guessed is in the correct word and in the correct spot. A yellow tile means the letter is in the word but in the wrong spot. And a gray tile means the letter is not in the word.

While you would think it would be easy to guess a five-letter word, especially with the game giving you hints with the tiles, it can actually turn out to be quite challenging. Sometimes you might guess several words without even finding one correct letter. Or you might get some green and yellow tiles but then have no idea how to put the whole word together. But after some thinking and troubleshooting, it’s really satisfying to get those five green tiles in a row, indicating you guessed the correct word.

The part of Wordle I find the most entertaining though is the social aspect. Once I started playing, I quickly introduced it to my sister, mom and dad, as well as my grandparents. We all enjoy playing Wordle at some free point during the day and letting everyone know how well we did. It can be a fun competition among us all to see how few tries each of us needed to figure out the word of the day. Especially when I’m at college, it’s a nice way to keep in touch with everyone and start up conversations.

So if you are looking for a fun way to challenge yourself and also build some more connection and competition with family and friends, I would recommend Wordle. You can find it at www.powerlanguage.co.uk/wordle. It just takes a few minutes a day, since you only have one word to guess, so it is great if you don’t have much time. The mental exercise of finding letters and figuring out how to put together the word is also very satisfying. Plus, having that sense of accomplishment about being the best in your group at that day’s word is a great boost for some bragging rights. So give it a try, just don’t say I didn’t warn you about it being addictive.

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

Adopting a Shelter Dog

Rescuing a dog from a local animal shelter is probably one of the most fulfilling things you can do.

There are some things to bear in mind, however, including local rules and ordinances, behavior and food problems, and health. Keep reading to learn more about adopting a shelter dog.

GET TO KNOW
YOUR SHELTER

Many local shelters have specific rules and policies about who can adopt from them and when. They may also have conditions regarding how the dog is kept. For instance, many shelters won't allow an adopted dog to live outside. They may also require vet checks, home visits and a fenced yard, among other things. Before you start perusing animals, make sure you know the shelter's policies so you aren't surprised.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Once you understand the shelter policies, it's time to prepare for bringing a new dog home. Find a place for your dog to call home base. It should be big enough for a bed or kennel, and you should have it set up before he comes home. Dog proof the area by removing anything the dog could chew on, removing breakable objects and setting up baby gates to help confine



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him to his new space. If you have other animals, this space should be one where you can easily confine the newcomer.

You also should have everything you're going to need for your new friend before you bring him home. Consider getting a collar and leash, along with an ID tag, bowls for food and water, a feeding

mat, toys, a bed and a kennel or crate.

COMING HOME

Now that you're all set up, it's time to bring home your new friend. Once you get the dog home, expect it to be nervous. Try to establish a routine and stick to it. This is important for helping your

dog settle into its new home. A shelter dog may not be housetrained or may have forgotten housetraining during his stay at the shelter, so be prepared to start housetraining as soon as you get home. Try to stay calm and quiet around the new dog and only give him attention for good behavior.

Remember, it's going to take several weeks for your shelter dog to open up. He may sleep a lot and may even act out as he settles in. Stay calm and consistent and stick to your routine as much as you can.

With a little patience and a lot of love, you'll have a new friend for life.

Pine Cone Pet Hospital

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



Taxation 101

We all know the saying frequently attributed to Benjamin Franklin: There are two constants in life — death and taxes.

Of these two, taxes are easily the most complicated and, if some people are to be believed, sometimes cause the death (usually by paperwork). Keep reading to learn more about taxes, who pays them and what they're used for.

TYPES OF TAXES

Taxes typically fall into one of three categories, the Tax Foundation says: taxes on what you earn, taxes on what you buy and taxes on what you own. All taxes start out as a dollar you've earned as income, but the difference is when you pay it.

TAXES ON WHAT YOU EARN

Income taxes are levied on the wages you or your household earn. Many income taxes are progressive, meaning tax rates increase as income increases.

Higher earners will then pay a larger share of income taxes than those who earn less. Corporate income taxes are levied on business profits, or a business's revenues minus the costs of doing business.

Payroll taxes are paid on the wages and salaries of

employees to finance social insurance programs, such as Social Security and Medicare.

TAXES ON WHAT YOU BUY

Sales taxes are levied on goods and services at the point of purchase. You've probably seen a sales tax tally on your receipt at the grocery

store. The United States., the Tax Foundation says, is one of the few industrialized countries that still relies on traditional sales taxes as a significant portion of state and local revenue.

TAXES ON WHAT YOU OWN

Property taxes are one of

the most common forms of taxation of things you own. They are levied on immovable property like land and buildings and are a key source of revenue for state and local governments, accounting for more than 30 percent of total local tax collections. Property tax revenue funds public services such as schools,

roads and public safety programs. Tangible personal property taxes are levied on things that can be moved or touched. Some of these things include business equipment, machinery, inventory, furniture and cars. These make up a small share of state and local tax collections, the Tax Foundation says.



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Explore new ideas and
discover uncharted paths.

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