

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, March 25, 2022
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Est. 1989

Town Crier

Newsleaders print March 25 & April 1

After a much-needed vacation March 7-11, the Newsleaders resumed with back-to-back publications March 25 and April 1. The remainder of the year, we will again publish every other Friday starting with the April 1 editions.

Lions fish fry, meat raffle set April 15 at Sal's

The annual fish fry and meat raffle, sponsored by the St. Joseph Lions Club, will be held from 4:30-7:30 p.m. Friday, April 15 in Sal's Bar & Grill, 109 W. Minnesota St. St. Joseph. All proceeds benefit Lions endeavors.

Attention parents of 2022 graduates

Parents of 2022 grads and home-schooled students are encouraged to submit their graduate's name, parents' names, school they're graduating from and future plans to be included in the May 27 edition of the St. Joseph Newsleader. If your student attends Apollo, Albany, Cathedral, Cold Spring, Holdingford, St. Cloud Technical, St. John's Prep or Sauk Rapids-Rice high schools, the schools provide us with names of graduates. Deadline is Friday, May 13. Visit <https://thenewsleaders.com/about-us/> to submit your student's information.

True Friends seek Leaders in Training

True Friends provide life-changing experiences that enhance independence and self-esteem for children and adults with disabilities. They are looking for Leaders in Training for summer 2022. If you are ages 14-17 and planning ahead, this opportunity is for you! No prior experience necessary and must be able to commit to one week of residential camp from Saturday-Friday, June through mid-August. Training, food and lodging provided. Volunteers will help with mealtimes, activities and basic safety of campers. Visit www.truefriends.org to learn more!

Red Cross seeks blood donor ambassadors

At the American Red Cross we are in great need of Blood Donor Ambassadors in your area! This is an essential job and the need for blood is crucial during this time. We need your help at blood drives by greeting and checking in donors! Eligible for age 16 and older. If interested please call Zack at (612) 463-6587 or visit <https://volunteerconnection.red-cross.org/?nd=lead&a=20886&h=210&p=206780>.

INSERT: Country Manor Campus

In midst of invasion, St. Joseph man helps refugees



contributed photo

Ted Bechtold of St. Joseph sits on a wall in Sveti Stefan, Montenegro. Bechtold has been instrumental in finding ways to help his students and other fleeing refugees in Ukraine since Russia's invasion.

Prep students to perform 'James and Giant Peach'

by Leanne Loy
editor@thenewsleaders.com

Starting Friday, March 25 at the Paramount Center for the Arts, Roald Dahl's famous story, "James and the Giant Peach" is being brought to the stage by students and staff of St. John's Preparatory School.

They have been working on the play since January of this year and all their hard work will be shown to audiences starting tonight and going through Sunday, March 27.

The story itself is timeless and St. John's Prep theater teacher and the play's director Brandon Anderson has put in a lot of time, thought and creative ideas to portray a version of the play with a few surprises.

It's common for there to be a giant peach on the stage in most productions, but Anderson noticed how that limits an actor's ability to move about stage as they must be on the peach at all times and that can take a good amount of action away.

"We didn't want to have a peach," Anderson said, "We wanted the chance to explore movement with the actors."

In place of the peach? Ander-

son and his students use technology. Getting the students involved with all aspects of the production is something that St. John's Prep is known for and creating the visual effects for the play has been an amazing opportunity for them to do just that.

Anderson said on top of creating some animations that students are also involved with running the lights which also involves two projects for the silhouette images and conducting sound cues from the booth as well.

The story is about a young boy who is forced to live with his terrible aunts after the death of his parents. When he is put in charge of chopping down an old fruit tree that has become the home of some "bugs and pests" that's when the magic happens. He embarks on an adventure of a lifetime that teaches him what being a part of a true family means.

This storyline means something to Anderson and it's this thoughtful analysis of the play that helps bring the setting to life.

"Everyone is trying to confine [James] or limit him in

Perform • page 5

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Some might say Ted Bechtold of St. Joseph was in the right place at the wrong time – teaching in Ukraine when the Russian invasion began in February.

Others, however, might say he was in the right place at the right time because it gave him a chance to help so many fleeing refugees.

Using a rented car, Bechtold has been running errands for people in need, most of them who were getting ready to flee or in the process of fleeing Ukraine. So far, there are more than two million refugees in countries to the west of Ukraine, including Poland and Romania. The Russian invasion, including the purposeful targeting of civilians, began in early February. Russian leader Vladimir Putin has vowed to annex Ukraine to

Russia, even though Ukraine has been a fledgling Western-style democracy since the dissolution of the Soviet empire in 1989.

Bechtold is the son of Bruce and Pat Bechtold of St. Joseph. Bruce was interviewed by the St. Joseph Newsleader in early March.

Ted Bechtold, 27, a long-time world-travelling adventurer, has been teaching English since August in Ukraine's capital city of Kyiv. (Kyiv is pronounced "Keeve" in Ukrainian and "Kee-ehv" in Russian), Bruce Bechtold noted.

Bechtold was teaching English to Ukrainian business people and their employees so they can better communicate with their American and British customers and counterparts.

In early February, the American Embassy urged all Americans to leave Ukraine

Invasion • page 3



photo by Leanne Loy

At rehearsals for "James and the Giant Peach" March 18, St. John's Prep sophomore Liz Komaguum, of Kampala, Uganda (left) and ninth-grader, Annika Dauer, of Cold Spring, step up to the spotlight as they practice their choreography.



contributed photo
Posing with Opus car, Hope Rassier (left), a local friend of the family, and Jack Skahen, son of Sean Skahen.



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if you would like your business included. Check out the online Business Directory at thenewsleaders.com which hyperlinks to each business' website.

Father-son team start electric car company

by **Laura Ritsche**
news@thenewsleaders.com

It won't be long and the city of St. Joseph will start seeing these little cars cruising around Minnesota Street.

This summer nine Opus Motor Cars, a low-speed electric vehicle made for driving around town, will be available for purchase.

Father/son duo Sean and Tom Skahen, owners of Sunset Manufacturing, located in St. Joseph, decided to look into the idea of selling these environmentally conscious vehicles.

With the impact of the pandemic affecting their family business they both knew it was smart to keep their options open for any opportunities that

might come their way.

When his son Tom brought the idea of the little cars to his attention in 2020, Sean told him, "I hate it! Tell me more."

Now, they are the proud owners of Opus Motor Car, and the future is looking bright.

The vehicles seat up to three passengers and the speed ranges between 20-30 miles per hour; perfect for running errands or heading to a community event in town.

They can be ordered in white or black and accessories include AM/FM radio with Bluetooth, a rearview camera, moonroof, electric windows, remote locks and heater.

The cars are similar to an off-road vehicle such as a golf cart, ATV or side by side with a

couple extra bells and whistles. Priced at just \$7,500 they won't be too hard on your pocketbook either.

Currently, Opus cars are primarily manufactured overseas but it sounds like that could change soon too.

"We're excited to expand our operations stateside," Tom said, something his current business space could help support.

No special charging hardware is needed to operate the cars. They can be plugged into a simple 110V or 220V socket with its charge holding for up to 25 miles. At current costs, Opus cars operate at three cents per mile.

"Nowadays, there is a lot of interest in alternative transpor-

Electric • page 3

People

Ten St. Joseph students were recently named to the fall semester dean's list at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

They and their majors are as follows: **Logan Bakken**, senior, management; **William Clark**, senior, continuing and professional studies; **Bailey Dumonceaux**, senior, College of biological sciences; **Garrett**

Gaarder, senior, liberal arts; **Cooper Gerads**, senior, liberal arts; **Dexter Heinen**, freshman, liberal arts; **Benjamin Meyer**, junior, engineering; **Jordyn Patrick**, junior, liberal arts; **Nicole Shimak**, senior, biological sciences; and **Kelli Spaniol**, senior, design.

To qualify for this honor, a student must attaining a minimum 3.66 grade-point

average.

Elizabeth Wolff, St. Joseph, a cinema and media arts major was recently named to the fall dean's list for academic excellence at Biola University, La Mirada, California.

To earn this honor students must attain a 3.6 or higher grade-point average.

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, March 25

"James and the Giant Peach," presented by St. John's Prep, 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday, Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W. St. Germain, St. Cloud. paramountarts.org.

Tuesday, March 29

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

Spring Decluttering and Organizing Informational Event, 6-7 p.m., Church of St. Joseph

Heritage Hall, 12 W. Minnesota St., St. Joseph. Julie Braun and Meg Sobieck from Smart Organizing Solutions will share their expertise on right sizing, decluttering and organizing. Community members who have gone through the process of right sizing will share their experiences and words of advice. Free.

Thursday, March 31

Coffee and Conversation, a senior discussion group, 9 a.m., Sartell Community Center, 850 19th St. S. Topic: Conversation Day.

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

Friday, April 1

Century Celebration, 8 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W. St. Germain, St. Cloud. Celebrate the Paramount Theatre's 100th anniversary. Century Celebration will commemorate the theater's rich and col-

orful past and enthusiastically imagine the future. We're opening up the theater, art studios and newly renovated Gallery St. Germain to engage all your senses. Special performance by the jazz collective, The New Standards. Come, celebrate and raise a toast to 100 years of the Paramount Theatre, "the crown jewel of Central Minnesota." paramountarts.org.

Saturday, April 2

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.

"Fairytale on Ice," 3-5 p.m., Paramount Center for the Arts, 913 W. St. Germain, St. Cloud. Welcome lots of familiar characters! Rapunzel and Pinocchio, Aladdin and Tinker Bell, The Little Mermaid and more! Featuring over-the-top magical illusions, special effects, and award-winning soundtracks – all on ice!

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

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Electric

from page 2

tation” Skahen says. “We want to have the ability to fulfill orders from basically anywhere in the (United States).”

Opus Motor Cars company will be at a few different events coming up to spread the word and give people an opportunity to test drive an Opus.



contributed photo
Tom (left) and Sean Skahen, father-son creators of the opus electric car.

From 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, April 30, you can find them at the Recharge St. Cloud event at Lake Georg. And then again at the Twin Cities Auto Show held May 14-22.

Keep your eyes peeled for information on these little wonder cars as new information comes out throughout this summer.

You can continue to get updates at Facebook Opus Motor Car Co. and Instagram page @opuslittlecars.

Invasion

from front page

due to imminent danger of a Russian invasion. Bechtold then traveled to Montenegro, a country northwest of Greece. From there, for a time he continued his English lessons remotely via Zoom for his students.

Bechtold kept feeling restless, knowing he had to somehow help the people who were suffering because of the brutal Russian assaults against them. His urgent need to help was inspired by two factors: his love for the Ukrainian people and his Christian faith.

He decided to board a bus bound for Belgrade in Serbia, then took another bus to a city in east Serbia. From there he took a cab to the Romanian border with Ukraine. His cab driver did not have Covid clearance to enter Romania so Bechtold had to walk all night to the border. The guards there at first denied him entry but then sensing his good intentions they relented and let him in. Another border guard

arranged for him to ride with a trucker to the Romanian city of Kluj. There he hired a cab driver to take him to yet another city, Suceava, where there is a very large refugee camp about 30 miles from the Romanian-Ukrainian border. In Suceava, to accommodate the tired and hungry refugees, a five-star hotel was partly converted into a refugee center with mattresses and blankets covering its huge lobby.

Bechtold rented a car and began helping transport fleeing Ukrainians from the border area to the refugee camp. He also ran many errands in town for refugee needs – to stores for vital items, to ATM machines and so forth.

He also spent his own money, wiring funds to students to help them leave the country on trains. He even helped some refugees apply at the embassy to get permits to live abroad, including a very old and desperate grandmother.

Two friends of Bechtold, one from Ireland, the other from England, flew to Romania to help Bechtold with his humanitarian efforts. He

Invasion • page 7

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Alban L. Mohs, 82

**St. Joseph
April 19, 1939-March 15, 2022**

Alban L. Mohs, 82, of St. Joseph, died March 15 at the St. Cloud V.A. Medical Center. His funeral was held March 18 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in St. Joseph. The Rev. Blane Wasnie, OSB, officiated. Inurnment, with full military honors, was in the Minnesota State Veteran's Cemetery in Little Falls.

Mohs was born April 19,



Mohs

1939 to Alois and Genevieve (Fruth) Mohs in St. Cloud. He honorably served his country in the United States Marine Corps from 1956 until 1959, attaining the rank of Lance Corporal. He was united in marriage to Rolandine "Rolle" Pietron on Sept. 7, 1964 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in St. Joseph. Al worked for the St. Cloud V.A. Medical Center as a nursing assistant, retiring in December of 1987 after 25 years of service. He was a member of the American Legion #328 of St. Joseph, Catholic United Financial and St. Joseph's Catholic Church in St. Joseph.

Mohs was a loving husband, father, grandfather and

great-grandfather who enjoyed spending time with his family and friends. He enjoyed his time with his children and grandsons, but he had a special place in his heart for his great-grandsons. In his retirement, Mohs enjoyed snowmobiling during the winter, fishing in the summer and wood working in between. He also enjoyed camping, traveling with his family and friends, his annual Canadian fishing trips and his daily meetings (having a beer) at the American Legion Post #328 of St. Joseph.

Survivors include the following: his loving wife of 57 years, Rollee; daughters, Kam Mohs and Shannon (Brad) Hemme; two grandsons, Cole

(Tristin) and Chase Hemme; two great-grandsons, Tucker and Tanner Hemme; brother, Harvey; sisters, Sadie Kunkel, Eileen (Donnie) Roeder and Dodie Ruegemer; brother-in-law, Jim Ryczky; and many nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents; brothers, William (Phyllis) and Gordon; sisters, Delores (Virgil) Winter, and Carol Ryczky; sister-in-law, Mary Jo Mohs; and brother-in-law, Al Kunkel.

A special thank you to the staff of the St. Cloud V.A. Medical Center, especially Building 51-1, for their outstanding and compassionate care of Mohs.

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photos by Carolyn Bertsch

Chas Scepaniak, St. Joseph, builds birdhouses March 21 with his children Chloe, 3, and Crosby, 7, at the St. Joseph Rod and Gun Club's 28th annual birdhouse-building event at the American Legion in St. Joseph. The birdhouses were pre-cut by retired carpenters and St. Joseph Rod & Gun members Ron Rennie, Peter Giroux, Erv Eiyneck, Dick Taufen, Marvin Bierschbach, Al Kalla and John Theisen. Supplies were donated by Ace Hardware of St. Joseph and Manion's of St. Cloud. All wood was donated by St. Joseph Rod & Gun Club.



St. Joseph Rod and Gun Club member Ray Bechtold, St. Joseph, builds a birdhouse March 21 with his grandson, Brandon Zimmer, also of St. Joseph. The two have enjoyed their annual birdhouse-building tradition for more than a decade.

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

Feb. 25

2:42 p.m. Harassment. Northland Drive. St. Joseph Police received a call from a woman regarding a harassment complaint. She said in October 2021, a man was hired at her work. Employees found out about the man's background that should have disquali-

fied him from working there. This man found out about it and had the woman's car vandalized at work. Due to continuing issues with this man following employees, the complainant quit her job. Today she received calls from her work, but no voice was heard. She called her employer back who denied calling her. The employer is not supposed to have contact with her due to an investigation by equal opportunity employer agency. The complainant is worried it is the man from her former job. She wanted the incident documented. Police advised her of the HRO process and to call if the man shows up.

Feb. 26

11:02 a.m. Public concern. Elm Street E. An officer was dispatched to a matter of information at Coborn's. The complainant said there was a 25-foot motorhome going on a 20-foot trailer and did not think it was safe. The officer made contact with another officer who advised the trailer was rated to haul the camper. They also had required flags and lighting needed.

Feb. 27

12:39 a.m. Unwanted person. Ash Street W. Officers were dispatched to an intoxicated person. They found the man sitting on the back step of a residence. He was barely able to speak and did not know his address or where he was. He was not able to provide a PBT sample. Due to his level of intoxication, he was transported to the St. Cloud Hospital by a Mayo ambulance. The man called back later to ask where his identification was. The officer had given the paramedics the man's ID and bag the previous night. This information

Blotter • page 7

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Perform

from front page

some way,” Anderson said pointing out the cardboard boxes that make an arch over the stage. “This is him breaking out

of those boxes, the mold that he’s been placed inside of.” Those interested in catching one of the three performances this weekend can go to the Paramount’s website to order tickets at: https://paramountarts.org/event/jgp_2022/



photo by Leanne Loy
St. John’s Prep theater teacher Brandon Anderson of St. Joseph directs ninth-grader Elizabeth St. Hilare of St. Cloud as they add the finishing touches at “James and the Giant Peach” rehearsals March. 18.



photos by Leanne Loy
St. John’s Prep Junior Luke Christoffersen of Cold Spring and eighth-grader Cecelia Weldon of St. Joseph practice a scene with a life-sized grasshopper puppet at “James and the Giant Peach” rehearsals March 18.

2022 St. Joseph Joes Baseball Fundraiser



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Opinion

Our View

Spring, a fresh start for some, not all

The first day of Spring always seems to come with a feeling of renewal, a fresh start. With the nice weather we've been having it's hard to not feel a sense of hope and excitement for the upcoming days as winter leaves.

The people who suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder should be starting to feel better soon if they're not already. SAD is a kind of depression that happens in those long, dark winter months where it's hard to find the motivation to even get up in the morning. Sometimes the simplest of tasks can seem impossible to complete, much like depression itself.

It's exciting to see the snow melt and to get back outside for a nature walk and yes, for many people this is all they need to get back to feeling like themselves again. But we should keep in mind not everyone's depression is seasonal, and even for those who have SAD, everyone comes out of it at their own time.

While trying to give well-meaning advice about getting outside, doing some yard work or getting on that nature walk seems like a productive or positive thing to say to people who have depression, remember, if it's hard for them to get out of bed, think about what going on a walk must sound like to them.

But that doesn't mean you should stop being encouraging and supportive. People with depression oftentimes feel like a burden on their families; they might just get up and go on that walk with you if they think it will make you feel better. They might slap on that smile and happy façade because they know that's what their family wants to see.

Oftentimes, well-meaning friends and family get frustrated with their loved ones who suffer from a mental health disorder, and that frustration is most definitely felt by those who are depressed. It is hard on both ends. But the best thing to remember is to be there for them even in their sadness and let them know that they don't have to pretend with you.

So, invite that friend out who you know suffers with mental health, even if you're certain they're gonna cancel on you at the last minute. And when they do, accept it wholeheartedly, no guilt and no strings attached.

And when you start thinking that bringing them on a walk in this beautiful spring weather is a great idea and will make them feel better and then it doesn't, or they decline to go with at all, accept that too. They just might need a hug, or someone to sit with them in silence to remind them they don't have to smile or pretend to be happy to be loved.

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.

Delusional Putin mourns 'glorious' Soviet Union

Russian butchery continues in Ukraine because the criminally deluded Vladimir Putin cannot yet get it into his head that his beloved Soviet Union is gone. Kaput! Finito! Good riddance!

Like most authoritarians/dictators, Putin is corrupted by nostalgia for a glory that was anything but glorious. The Soviet Union was not the "Workers' Paradise" it claimed to be for seven decades. Far from it. Despite some technological achievements, it was, in fact, mostly a vast cruel system of so-called "republics" ruled by a series of tyrants who bolstered their powers through propaganda, prisons, torture, murder, slave-labor camps, purposeful mass starvations (as in Ukraine, 1932-33), media suppression and the use of secret police and spies. Under the long reign of the paranoiac Josef Stalin, millions suffered, starved, were convicted falsely at "show trials" and were executed, imprisoned or exiled to labor camps.

Putin did have some successes in boosting economic output and did gain some popularity. He was elected to several terms as president, a total of 18 years. A "constitutional" referendum, self-promoted of course, could allow him to serve many more terms – a possible lifetime presidency.

Putin had also been a top official in the Soviet KGB, serving in East Germany. The KGB was an intelligence-gathering agency and a secret-police force feared for its use of fiendish torture.

When the Soviet Union, like a big fat Humpty Dumpty, fell to pieces in 1989, Putin was devastated, grieving the loss of his beloved paradise and vowing to

Dennis Dalman
Reporter



restore its full glory somehow, someday. His grief, however, did not hinder his efforts to extract billions of rubles from the Russian economy. He and his kleptocratic cronies are dubbed the "Russian Mafia."

To Putin's grief was added a pervasive paranoia when several countries, former Soviet Union members (including Ukraine), formed fledgling Western-style democracies. Some expressed interest in joining the Western North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a European/American defense pact.

Putin's hopes were buoyed when Donald Trump was elected president. In Europe for a NATO conference, Trump strutted in a big hall, aloof among the other NATO members. Head held high, jaw jutting out, he sneered at all of them in dismissive condescension.

Meanwhile, in Russia, a gleeful Putin was happy, his hopes confirmed that Trump would seriously weaken NATO. His glee increased when social/political divisions erupted in the United States, causing doubts about the electoral process and democracy itself. Dictators are true believers of that ancient dictum: Divide and Conquer. But they are most fearful of two things that threaten their power: free and fair elections, and freedom of the press.

Before and after the invasion of Ukraine, Putin and cronies loudly blamed NATO countries. They even resorted to the old-style Soviet tactic of propaganda churned out by state-controlled media. The Russian people were advised never to believe anything they might hear from Western news sources. That's all fake news, they were told. Sound familiar?

Shakespeare's kings are often brought low by "hubris," the name for self-delusional pride. "King" Putin seems to be strutting on that stage, close to the edge, ready for a tumble.

One would think he'd have learned from the Soviet Union's humiliating defeat in Afghanistan in the 1980s. He didn't. Before his murderous attacks in Ukraine, he must have imagined the Russian people would rejoice, hailing him as a hero for restoring Soviet status.

Most in the world, thankfully, loudly condemn Putin's actions. America and other countries imposed rigorous sanctions. The Ukrainians are courageously resisting the invasion. Can it be long before the Russians rise up against their wannabe hero and force him from power?

Putin will be brought low one way or another, sooner or later. His hubris, his delusions, make that fate all but certain. He has already placed himself in the ranks of the murderous scoundrels of history.

Someday, oh let us hope, Putin will become as kaput as his dearly departed Soviet Union.

Long live a free Ukraine!

It's OK to like what makes you happy

I grew up on a small hobby farm on the outskirts of St. Cloud, right between city and country. I was 4 years old when we moved there and unlike some of my older siblings who didn't want to leave their friends to go live on a farm, I was ecstatic! I mean, what kid wouldn't love growing up on a farm?

However, as I grew from toddler to teenager, I started to become ashamed of where I lived. None of my friends lived in the country, they all lived in neighborhoods. Some of them were even neighbors with each other and got to play in the streets every day, riding their bikes and having water balloon fights at a moments notice. I never had that.

What made it worse is I later discovered there was an assumption that if you lived on a farm, you were dirty. I didn't know that when I was a kid. I didn't know that until someone else told me, and it made me more self-conscious than I like to admit.

I started to focus my thoughts on what other people my age had and what I didn't have. That way of thinking quickly stole my happiness and it made me forget I could have an opinion of my own. I was beginning to believe I was somehow less than the rest of them because I lived in the country. I couldn't just walk down the street and knock on my friend's

Leanne Loy
Editor



door. I didn't have a neighborhood full of friends to play with whenever I wanted, and I certainly wasn't staying up until the streetlights came on to play night games, at least not at the end of a cul de sac.

It took me some time to realize what I did have and how incredibly special it was. Every spring I'm reminded of the beauty of life on a farm. Ours was merely a hobby farm but for a while we had chickens, and in the spring, I could be found sitting in the hay under a heat lamp holding little baby chicks. Otherwise, I would be in the barn, up in the hayloft, where I was sure to find some kittens hissing at me with eyes still closed. On occasion, in another building or shed somewhere, I might even discover one of our dogs had had a litter of puppies.

Not many kids can say they grew up learning how to drive a tractor or a four-wheeler at a young age. My cousin lived only a field away from me and I drove that four-wheeler through the ditch to her house almost anytime I wanted to. I probably went

too fast over that grassy bump in the middle of the ditch because I remember catching some air and landing pretty hard, but I never fell off. To this day, I can still feel that adrenaline rush every time I think about it.

The funny thing is, later on in high school when I became brave enough to bring friends over to my house, it was them wanting what I had. When I put them all on a four-wheeler and took them out to the woods, it was the first time they'd ever seen anything like that. And I feel guilty saying it now, but it gave me a sense of pride. I feel guilty because I should have had that pride without their recognition. It should have been something I was happy with before someone else told me it was OK to be happy with it.

The point is, slowly as I grew up, I started to realize I didn't need someone else's permission to enjoy the things that made me happy, regardless of whether or not it made sense to others.

Nowadays I live in the city, at the end of a cul de sac. It's the kind of place I always thought I wanted. And while I do love our little neighborhood and completely enjoy being here, there is a part of me that will always love country living and the memories I created there, dirty kid or not.

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

Blotter

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was relayed to him, and he was provided a number to contact the Mayo ambulance.

1:08 a.m. DUI. College Avenue S and Minnesota Street. An officer was at the stop sign of the intersection. They were stopped and waiting for other traffic when a vehicle drove on the right side of the vehicle and turned. There are no turn lanes, it is a four-way intersection. The officer activated emergency lights and conducted a traffic stop. When they approached the vehicle there was a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage. The officer asked the driver if she had anything to drink and she said one. They then asked if they could check her eyes and she said yes. They had her step out and conduct a standard field sobriety test. After the test, the officer helped the driver move her vehicle to a parking lot. From there the officer brought her to the station for one more test. She was then es-

corted back to her home.

8:16 a.m. Verbal. 20th Avenue SE. An officer was dispatched to a verbal at the residence. Male complainant reported his sister was claiming he hit her. The officer arrived on the scene and met with the complainant’s sister. She reported her brother had left on foot. She reported they got into a verbal altercation, and he pushed her and left. She did not want anything done. She advised she had the keys, and he had no way back into the building. The officer attempted to call the complainant to verify his story. He did not answer.

Feb. 28

8:30 a.m. Speeding. CR 133 and Westwood Parkway. While on patrol travelling north on CR 133, an officer observed an orange car traveling south on CR 133 near Mullen Road. The vehicle appeared to be traveling at a high rate of speed. As it approached, the officer activated their radar (which was checked prior to shift and after stop and working properly). The radar held a steady tone, and displayed a target speed of 80 mph. The officer locked

that speed in and activated their lights. The vehicle pulled over, and the officer approached the driver and advised they had stopped him for the speed, to which he replied that he was running late for work. The officer identified the driver by his Minnesota driver’s license, issued a citation and got him on his way.

March 3

11:47 p.m. Public nuisance. College Avenue S. While on patrol an officer observed a parked vehicle in the township hall with the truck’s lights off. The officer made contact with the 19-year-old driver. A female passenger was identified as age 16. The officer observed no suspicious activity. Driver explained they were just hanging out. The officer told them they are not allowed in the township hall parking lot after 10 p.m. The officer cleared and left from the scene. The same officer had also stopped this driver for a traffic violation two hours prior.

March 5

9:21 a.m. Threats. 10th Avenue SE. An officer was dispatched to a threats complaint at the residence.

Complainant reported arguing with her ex-boyfriend and his dad and she was scared of him because he was being loud and waving his hands around. The officer arrived on the scene and met with all parties. It appeared to be a civil issue about cars and a car loan. They were advised to work it out in a civil matter or seek an attorney. Both advised they could work it out between the two of them as long as other parties were not involved. The officer advised them to do that then. The ex’s dad stepped out and they worked it out. The officer advised the ex to collect personal property and not show up unannounced as he does not live there anymore.

March 8

9:34 p.m. Vehicle in ditch. CR 133 and 320th Street. An officer observed a vehicle in the ditch at CR 133, south of 320th Street. They officer stopped and spoke with the driver. He was not injured, and the car did not appear damaged. He called for a ride and the car was to be towed. The officer had him sit in their car and stay warm to wait for his ride. The officer drove

back to the area later and noticed a passerby was trying to pull the vehicle out. The officer told them there was no way a normal vehicle would be able to get the car out. They allowed the officer to call for a tow and said they could now afford it. Towing company was called by dispatch.

March 12

1:34 p.m. Vehicle crash. CR 75 and CR 2. An officer was dispatched to a crash at CR 75. An officer arrived and found two vehicles involved. One driver was being tended to by two first responders on the scene. An officer checked on the other driver and passenger. They complained of head pain but refused treatment. The officer spoke to the driver of vehicle 1. She stated they were east bound stopping for a red light, when vehicle 2 was approaching behind them in same direction. Vehicle 2 must not have seen the red light and rear-ended vehicle 1 at what appeared to be full speed. No skid marks noticed on roadway until after impact. Driver of vehicle 2 was transported via Mayo ambulance to the St. Cloud Hospital emergency room.

Invasion

from page 3

and the friends rent an apartment.

When Bechtold’s many worldwide friends learned of his refugee work, they donated money. In just one 24-hour period they wired him \$12,000, which Bechtold can now use to pay for his rented car, gasoline and other ways to help struggling refugees.

Bechtold and his acts of kindness have been featured in Central Minnesota Catholic magazine, on KARE-11 TV and on Minnesota Public Radio.

Ted Bechtold is one of four siblings (two sons, two daughters) born in St. Joseph. He attended the St. Jo-

seph Lab School, graduated from Cathedral High School in St. Cloud, then earned a degree in criminal justice (law enforcement) from St. Cloud State University. He then worked for the Stearns County Sheriff’s Office, like his father (recently retired) and for the security unit at St. Cloud Hospital. Then the travel bug bit Bechtold and he began to explore the world: traveling, meeting people, working jobs, constantly learning. There are very few countries Bechtold has not visited yet.

Long before the invasion, Bechtold’s parents had booked flights to Ukraine to visit Ted. They hope they will be able to see him in the near future. In the meantime, the parents are encouraging others to donate to the Ukraine humanitarian efforts

of Bechtold and his helpers.

There are three ways to contribute: a check can be made out to Ted Bechtold and brought to Magnifi Financial Credit Union in St. Joseph right at the west entrance road leading to Coborn’s store. Just hand the check to a bank teller and say it is for the account of Ted Bechtold. That bank was formerly known as Central Minnesota Credit Union. Contributors should write on their checks’ memo line, “Help Ukraine.”

People can also send contributions via Venmo @ Ted-Bechtold; or via PayPal at bechtoldted@yahoo.com

All contributed funds will be used for the refugee effort. Any that might be left over, whether or not the invasion continues, will be given to a Ukrainian charity.



contributed photo

In the lobby of a Romanian five-star hotel are mattresses and a constant flow of refugees fleeing Ukraine as the Russian military continues to bomb and shoot civilians as well as Ukrainian soldier defenders. This photo was provided by Ted Bechtold of St. Joseph, who is helping during the refugee crisis.

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Now, you've got to figure out how to pay for it. If you apply for financial aid, student loans may be a part of your plan. These loans are money you borrow and must pay back with interest.

WHAT ARE STUDENT LOANS?

StudentAid.gov points out that student loans can come from the federal government, private sources or from other groups. Federal student loans usually have more benefits than loans from banks or private sources, the website says.

There are different types of federal student loans available. Some of them are direct loans, including direct subsidized loans, direct unsubsidized loans, direct PLUS loans and direct consolidation loans.

Subsidized loans are made to eligible undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need. These loans help them cover the costs of higher education at a college or career school. Unsubsidized loans are made to eligible undergraduate, graduate and professional students, but eligibility is not based on financial need.

PLUS loans are made to graduate or professional stu-

dents and to the parents of undergraduate students to help pay for education expenses not covered by other financial need. A credit check is required and borrowers with an adverse credit history may need to meet additional requirements to qualify.

Direct consolidation loans allow you to combine all of

your eligible student loans into a single loan with just one loan servicer.

HOW MUCH CAN I BORROW?

Several factors determine how much you can borrow as a student, including your status as a student. If you're an undergraduate student, you

can borrow between \$5,000 and \$12,500 per year in direct subsidized and unsubsidized loans, depending on what year you are in school and your dependency status. Graduate and professional students can borrow up to \$20,500 each year in direct unsubsidized loans. Direct PLUS loans can also be used

as determined by your school.

Parents of undergraduate students can also take out direct PLUS loans to cover a child's college costs as determined by their school. You can borrow less than your school offers and request more loan funds later, if needed. Don't borrow more than you need.

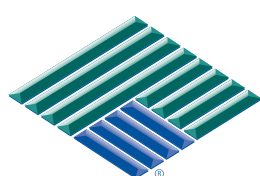


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