

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

Friday, March 25, 2022
Volume 27, Issue 6
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Town Crier

Newsleaders print March 25 & April 1

After a much-needed vacation March 7-11, the Newsleaders will resume 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.

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.

Sartell Fastpitch Softball now open for registration

Sartell Fastpitch Softball Registration NOW OPEN for players 6U-8U! Please visit www.sartell-fastpitch.com for more information and to register for the 2022 summer season.

Historical society seeks prom memories

Sartell Historical Society wants your prom photos from the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, 00s, 10s! The Sartell Community Center is hosting the Sartell High School prom on Saturday, May 21 and we'd like to have a display of prom throughout the years. Drop off pictures with Ann; please no originals. Sartell Senior Connection, 850 19th Street South, 828 First St. N., Sartell.

Fundraising underway for inclusive playground

Members of the Sartell, St. Stephen and LeSauk Lions Clubs are teaming up to build an inclusive playground at Sartell's Lions Park. "Inclusive playgrounds are open and safe spaces, carefully designed to promote play among children of differing abilities, ages and communities. It gives children with and without any disability the same platform to play, while breaking down barriers, both physically and socially. The aim of inclusive play is to address the needs of the whole child." The Lions hope to receive a matching grant of \$100,000 and will do fundraising to raise the \$400,000 needed for the project. Questions: Contact Stu Giffin at 651-261-4272 or Phil Ringstrom at 320-247-2416.

INSERTS:
City of St. Stephen
Country Manor Campus

School board approves teacher contract

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

The Sartell-St. Stephen school board approved a two-year contract with its teachers at the board's March 21 meeting.

The deal adds 3 percent to the salary schedule for 2021-22 and 3.5 percent to the

salary schedule for 2022-23. The total cost increase to the district is 12.09 percent.

Other financial changes include increased health insurance contributions for 2022-23 of \$900 for single coverage and \$2,400 for family coverage.

Superintendent Jeff Ridlehoover described the negotia-

tions with the teachers' union as "collaborative."

The settlement was reached just before the negotiations were set to go to mediation, said Joe Prom, director of Business Services. He described the final deal as "fair" in remarks to the school board, which approved it unanimously.

Pay for extra-curricular po-

sitions increased 3 percent the first contract year and 3.5 percent the second year.

The average increase of the four previous two-years contracts was 8.48 percent compared with this contract's total cost of 12.09 percent. The contract covers about 295 teachers.

Contract • page 5

Food Trucks roll out creative dishes for challenge

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

During two days, 15 teams of culinary students cooked dishes for sampling by judges who stopped by their "food trucks" set up in the school's cooking classroom at Sartell High School.

The Food Truck Challenge judging wrapped up a project that began weeks ago. First students dreamed up a concept, menu and logo. They analyzed the concept's strengths and weaknesses and created a marketing plan. Recipes were tested and food costs analyzed.

Students completed the project with a menu design and name. Some trucks' names clearly identified the menu such as the Smoothie Shack or Cookie Caboose. But other trucks enticed eaters with more enigmatic names such as The Food Fellas, Hibachi Hits the Highway or Flamin & Grillin.

The offerings ranged from cookies to waffles, smoothies to enchiladas. Judges, who probably should have skipped lunch,



photo by Mike Knaak

Teacher and challenge judge Greg Henning stops by to sample cookies made by (from left) Sierra Fath, Megan Driste and Reese Kloetzer at their food truck, Cookie Caboose.

sampled each dish, completed an evaluation form and voted for their winning choices.

"You can be a great chef, but if you don't have the busi-

ness skills, you go broke fast," teacher Joey Vanek said about the class, which covers more than just cooking.

The first Food Truck Chal-

lenge took place in 2020 but the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted before the foods could be judged.

Mobile-home residents again share concerns

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Once again, some members of a mobile-home park association in Sartell addressed the city council, asking for city support in an effort to hold accountable the Colorado-based company that owns that park.

And once again, Sartell Mayor Ryan Fitzthum thanked those residents for sharing their concerns but explained the city has no legal jurisdiction over that park.

"We do sympathize with you," Fitzthum said, "but we have no authority to take action

tonight . . . We appreciate your concerns and the chance to make (your) issues public."

It is Stearns County, not Sartell, that licenses mobile-home parks, Fitzthum noted. He then noted the presence of Stearns County Commissioner Joe Perske, former Sartell mayor, sitting in the council audience. Fitzthum suggested residents should share their concerns with Perske and the county board.

It was at least the third time residents have addressed the council in the past 18 months or so. The park in question is the

Residents • page 5



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Book lovers unite

St. Francis Xavier school teacher Jenna Courrier, St. Cloud, reads a book to her students on "Black and White Day" March 10. They are (left to right) Tristan Albers, 6, of Sauk Rapids; Tommy Martin, 6, of Sartell; Eddie Swanson, 6, of St. Augusta and Mila Kunz, 6, of Sartell. See story and more photos on page 8.

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

Fish fry, 5-7:30 p.m., Immaculate Conception Church, 145 Second Ave. NE, Rice. Fish fry serving fried fish, baked potato, coleslaw, baked beans, dinner rolls and beverages. Adults and children prices; children under 4 years old: free. Takeouts available, please order ahead by calling 320-393-3560; call between 4:30-7 p.m. if ordering ahead.

"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.

Monday, March 28

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

Tuesday, March 29

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.

Calendar • page 6

Building, real-world projects leads to skills for Sabre Manufacturing students

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

Real-world projects, created with real-world skills leads to real-world jobs. That's the lesson learned in Nick Phillips' Sabre Manufacturing class. The students' latest product is a snowmobile lift for the home mechanic.

The students started work on the project around Thanksgiving with design and 3-D modeling. Then they built a jig to hold the metal parts for assembly and welding. Last week, the class displayed two completed lifts near the high school's Learning Stairs so other students could see their work.

Now that the design and testing work is done, junior James Blenkush says a lift can be built during one week of class time.

Students' other projects included a rustic coffee table, stools for the middle school



photo by Mike Knaak

James Blenkush, 17, of St. Stephen, cranks up the snowmobile lift designed and built by Sabre Manufacturing students at Sartell High School.

and a boat dock.

Phillips says students take the class for many reasons. Some enjoy making things while others prepare for jobs after high school or more education to prepare for manufacturing careers such as welding

or mechanical engineering.

"Their skills are valuable. Some students already have part-time jobs after school," Phillips said. Students can make \$45,000 a year right out of high school he said. "The need is great."

Historic choice: 1 president for 2 colleges

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

For the first time, the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University will share a president – the newly hired Brian Bruess.

He will begin his presidency July 1.

Bruess was chosen as president after a nationwide search. The boards of trustees of both universities agreed to hire him. He will replace two presidents: Laurie Hamen, who was temporary president at CSB; and James Mullen, temporary SJU president.

"I am deeply humbled to be entrusted with this momentous and consequential opportunity," Bruess stated in a press release. "For nearly 30 years I have studied and admired St. Ben's and St. John's."

Since 2017, Bruess has been president of St. Norbert College, a Catholic school in De Pere, a city in eastern



Bruess

Wisconsin. During his tenure, that school was named one of the "Best in Nation" by The Princeton Review's "Best 366 Colleges in 2020." Bruess was cited for helping the school achieve record enrollment and the most diverse students in the school's history.

Bruess also led the "Support What Matters" fundraising campaign, which doubled the size of the school's endowment fund, an increase of 85 percent in funds since Bruess assumed the presidency there.

Before his presidential term at St. Norbert College, Bruess was employed for 21 years at St. Catherine University in St. Paul. His jobs included three years as executive vice president and as the school's chief operating officer.

A native of Monroe, Wis., Bruess graduated from St. Norbert College in 1990 with degrees in sociology and psychology. He then earned a master's degree and doctoral degree from Ohio University. He served there in several leadership roles before he was hired by St. Catherine University.

"We are excited about the future of our two institutions under the leadership of President Bruess," said Terry Dolan, former chair of the CSB Board of Trustees. "He is aspirational, with a bold vision and has an incredible passion for the liberal arts, (for) students and (for) our Catholic and Benedictine mission."

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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. 22

4:46 a.m. Assist person. Sundance Road. A plow driver called dispatch for an elderly man having trouble getting inside a building. An officer responded and the man informed the officer he had forgotten his key to get into the building. The officer assisted the man with getting through the vestibule doors and into the building. The maln had the key to his apartment door. Nothing further by the officer.

Feb. 23

3:52 p.m. Assist business. Le Sauk Drive. An officer received a call from a business requesting a vehicle be checked on; they had some concerns it may be stolen. The officer arrived on scene and ran the vehicle's information, the vehicle was not stolen and there were no flags on it. The officer informed the complainant of such.

Feb. 24

1:37 a.m. Unknown. Knickerbocker Court. Dispatch received an unknown call at a residence. Dispatch stated they got an automated

message saying someone needed help. Dispatch called the number back and got a child on the phone. The child told dispatch their dog ran away and their mom was at work. When the officers arrived on scene, they found the child had taken the phone from a sleeping adult in the home. The adult didn't know the child was up. The officers spoke to the adult and the child about proper use of 911.

Feb. 25

12:21 a.m. Citizen contact. Roberts Road. While an officer was on routine patrol, they witnessed a person park their vehicle on the roadway. It was noticed the vehicle was parked facing the wrong direction, in a turn lane and would soon be in violation of winter parking. The officer made contact with the driver. The driver stated they would move the car.

Feb. 26

2:01 a.m. Assist agency. River Vista Lane. A Sartell officer was requested to first respond to a suspicious vehicle call. The officer arrived and found a vehicle to be parked between two houses on what would have been the owner's lawn. The officer noted no one was in the vehicle and shoe prints in the snow went both directions. The officer and deputy checked the area. The caller informed the officer they think the driver was picked up prior to law enforcement's arrival. Stea-

rns County had the vehicle towed and Sartell cleared the scene.

Feb. 27

10 a.m. Slump. CR 120. Dispatch received a call on a woman slumped over in her vehicle. When the officer arrived, the woman lifted her head and looked at him. The officer made contact with the woman who stated she was taking a nap before going into the store. The woman stated she has a heart condition, and it was not uncommon for her to take naps during the day. The officer asked her if she was on medications for her condition, which she stated she was. The driver denied using any other kind of chemicals. While the officer was speaking to the woman, he requested dispatch to run the woman's name. The officer was informed the woman had a felony warrant out of Benton County for fifth-degree controlled substance. The officer took the woman into custody without any problems and transported her to the Benton County Jail.

Feb. 28

9:26 a.m. Fraud. 17th Street N. An officer was requested to call the complainant about a fraud. The officer learned the family had filed

Blotter • page 4

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People

Twenty Sartell 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: **Mohannad Alkhatib**, senior, biological sciences; **Samuel Brandt**, junior, engineering; **Caroline Gruebele**, junior, liberal arts; **Isabel Gugger**, senior, engineering; **Allison Koopman**, senior, liberal arts; **Kirsten Koskinen**, senior, liberal arts; **Piper Lang**, junior, liberal arts; **Elaine Lo**, junior, liberal arts; **Rebecca Loberg**, sophomore, biological sciences; **Gia Ly**, sophomore, biological sciences;

Julianna Moore, sophomore, liberal arts; **Tristen Nies**, senior, engineering; **Jialong Ren**, senior, engineering; **Will Schiffler**, sophomore, education and human development; **Jared Schlageck**, freshman, engineering; **Calvin Smith**, senior, liberal arts; **Megan Stark**, sophomore, education and human development; **Zayda Thalacker**, freshman, liberal arts; **Molly Voigt**, senior, education and human development; and **Matthew Weno**, senior, biological sciences.

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

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Blotter

from page 3

their taxes the week prior and were just informed someone unknown to them had used their 6-year-old child's social security number for tax purposes. The parent said it will not affect their taxes and the person who used their daughter's social security number will get theirs kicked back. They however wanted it re-

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March 1
6:19 p.m. Found property. 19th Avenue N. An officer was dispatched for found property. A male stated he had found keys in a snow-bank and stated they appeared to have been there awhile. The officer went to the man's home and retrieved the keys. The officer noted the key fob was for a Hyundai and a house key. The officer placed the keys in found property at the police department.

March 2
11:29 p.m. Information. Pinecone Road S. An officer was dispatched to a business for a report of a man who was trying to flag people down. The caller was a passerby who did not stop. While the officer was in the area, the man flagged him down. The man explained he had run out of gas and coasted into the parking lot next to the pumps. Neither the man or the woman had a credit card to pay at the pumps and only had cash, but the gas station was closed. The officer offered to drive the man to a nearby gas station since the man had a gas can. Once the man got gas, the officer drove him back to the vehicle. Nothing further.

March 3
4:40 p.m. Driving complaint. Hwy 15/CR 120. The officer was

dispatched to look for a possible intoxicated driver traveling north on Leander. The registered owner's address was nearby, where the caller advised the last location, they saw the vehicle was turning. The officer arrived in the area and found the vehicle parked outside the registered owner's address. The officer buzzed the registered owner's apartment but got no response. The officer was unable to contact anyone.

March 4
1:52 p.m. Vehicle tampering. Amber Avenue S. A woman came to the Sartell Police Department and requested to speak to an officer about a vehicle that was being tampered with. The woman told the officer rubber trim on the bottom of the vehicle window appears someone had been using a knife to cut into it. The woman did not have any suspects and didn't think anyone was mad at her. The woman stated she spoke to management and the events were not on camera. No further action unless more information is received.

March 5
6:44 p.m. Shoplifting. CR 120. An officer was dispatched to respond to a business for a cooperative woman shoplifter. The officer arrived and met with the woman and loss prevention in the loss-prevention office. The woman told

the officer she was sleep deprived and did not mean to under ring the merchandise. The theft total was \$66.08. The officer issued the woman a citation and explained it to her. The officer received store video and report and entered them into evidence. The woman was allowed to leave once the business had completed their paperwork.

March 6
3:28 p.m. Information. Ridge Road. Dispatch sent an officer to a complaint of a suspicious smell. The officer was informed by the caller they thought maybe a vehicle was leaking gas. The officer arrived on scene and could faintly smell a gasoline odor. The officer checked the vehicle and there was no gas leaking. The officer could see there was a gas or oily type of film on the water that was pooling outside the driveway. The officer could see discoloration on the street where the substance had flowed down the road. The officer was unable to determine the cause. The officer informed the caller they would have the fire chief follow up. Fire chief monitored the area but was unable to detect any gas smells.

March 7
1:36 p.m. Warrant. Seventh Street N. While an officer was on routine patrol, he recognized a vehicle outside a residence he knew belonged to a person with an active felony warrant. The officer approached the vehicle and the people around the vehicle in the parking spot. The officer gave loud and clear verbal commands to the man to step away from the vehicle and get on the ground. The man complied and the officer was able to

handcuff the man behind his back without issue. The officer directed the other two persons with the man to stay within view and they complied. The man was transported to the Stearns County Jail to be booked and held for court.

March 8
12:01 a.m. Noise. Seventh Avenue S. Officers were dispatched to a noise complaint. The caller reported the neighbors were stomping and moving furniture and that it was an ongoing problem. The officer spoke to the renter, and he stated he had been walking around and took a shower. The officer had noted when they arrived, they heard no noise. The man stated he had given his number to the downstairs neighbor trying to be considerate, if there was a noise problem. The officer spoke to the caller, and she stated she would work with management.

March 9
11:51 p.m. Verbal dispute. Seventh Avenue S. Officers responded for a man, who was disorderly inside a residence. Dispatch informed officers they could hear yelling in the background. The man told officers he was upset at his girlfriend and her sister for bringing up his past. The officers found the man did have residency at the address. The man requested a ride to his sister's house in St. Cloud. The on-duty supervisor approved the transport as there were no other options at the time and this would help defuse the situation.

March 10
9:26 a.m. Stolen vehicle. Pinecone Road S. Dispatch requested

Weekly Lenten **Fish Fry**

March 4, 11, 18 & 25 and April 1 & 8

Fish fry serving:

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Country Store & Pharmacy
Holiday on 7th
Holiday - Riverside
House of Pizza
Kwik Trip

Little Dukes - Pinecone
Quik Stop - Cenex
Sartell City Hall
Sartell Community Center
School District Offices
Walgreens
The Newsleaders office

www.thenewsleaders.com

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Residents

from front page

one located on Second Avenue S., which was known for years as Hi-Vue trailer court. Several years ago, the park was purchased by Impact Communities of Cedaredge, Colorado. Since then, residents have compiled a list of grievances that include rapidly rising lot rents (now \$500 per month), ever-increasing fees for other services (water and garage pick-up, for examples), water-and-sewer pipe leaks, poorly maintained infrastructures, street and snow-plowing issues, some faulty water meters, lack of an adequate storm shelter (fixed last year but with no bathrooms) and many more issues and concerns.

Impact Communities disputes the validity of many of the conclusions made by the residents' association. (See paragraph at end of this story.)

About a dozen park residents attended the March 14 council meeting. They are among the members of a residents' organization founded by John L. Wood. Before the council meeting, those members and others held a "Walk for Justice" in the mobile-home park.

Wood was the first to address the council. He had high praise for the Sartell police and ambulance personnel who rushed to his mobile home one afternoon (March 10) when his wife, Fran, died unexpectedly at home.

Choking back tears at one point, Wood said. "She was the love of my life, and I didn't have a chance to say goodbye."

Less than half an hour after that tragedy, a neighbor found a letter in a bag hanging on Wood's front door. Later, Wood opened the bag and found the letter. It was a notice from park management that he must pay

\$54.83 in back fees within 10 days or face eviction. Wood said he had, in fact, paid the lot rent and fees for March.

"I'm the fourth one this (eviction threat based on no good reason) has happened to," Wood told the council. "All we're asking for is support for issues like this. I want to thank you. God bless, and I pray to God this doesn't happen to anybody else."

The other residents/speakers were Michael Chirhart and Pablo Tapia. Chirhart said despite the city's lack of legal jurisdiction over the park, he asked council members to at least "acknowledge there are problems at the park and advocate on behalf of residents."

"We are in touch with the (state) Attorney General's Office," he said. "Your verbal support would help us. Come to our meetings and listen. Stand behind us."

Tapia told the council problems in the park are going from bad to worse.

"We are waiting for someone to give us support," he said. "You can take action. You can call the one who owns the park. You can ask him to sit down with our residents' association."

Tapia distributed flyers to the council members containing information on how to contact the owners, Impact Communities.

Last summer, Wood received a letter from Shannon Smith, North Regional vice president for Impact Communities. In her letter, Smith stated the following: "Rent increases are the only way to continue to do the improvements necessary, sustain increases in taxes, insurance, payroll, improvements, etc. Yearly rent increases are not just affecting Sartell but every industry and community around the (United States). Even on private land there (are) increase(s) in utilities, taxes, insurance, etc. year over year."

City hall struggles to fix phone problems

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

The telephone system at Sartell City Hall has been working erratically for the past two months, making communications with many residents difficult if not nearly impossible.

City Administrator Anna Gruber addressed that problem at the March 14 city-council meeting.

She called the ongoing problem "beyond frustrating." Recently, a major piece of equipment was replaced, and the Marco phone-system company is continuing to try to fix the prob-

lem, which might be caused by some kind of outdated equipment.

Gruber said until the problem is fixed for good, residents should email city hall at info@sartellmn.com and leave a message. City staff all have cell phones and can and do reply to residents' online questions and concerns.

Meanwhile, there is an online computer screen system set up in city hall's lobby, making it much easier this year to apply for and receive permits to use the city's compost site, Gruber noted.

Contract

from front page

In other staffing news, newly appointed high school Principal Shayne Kusler spoke briefly to the board. Kusler has served as the principal of Foley High School since 2014 and will begin work July 1. Current interim activities director Nick Peterson will return next year to his former role as assistant principal at the high school. Riddlehoover said the district plans to hire a new activities director after spring break, which starts Monday, March 28.



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Sartell-St. Stephen • St. Joseph

Reaching Everybody! Newsleaders

School administrator honored by statewide group

by Mike Knaak
news@thenewsleaders.com

A Sartell-St. Stephen school district administrator has been honored by a statewide education group.

Kay Nelson, assistant superintendent, received the 2022 Outstanding Central Office Leader Award from the Minnesota Association of School Administrators during the group’s spring conference March 10-11.

“Kay is a leader in Sartell-St. Stephen schools, across cen-

tral Minnesota and beyond,” Kyle Breitkreutz, the district’s director of Technology, said in a statement. “Her involvement within the district and with MASA are clear examples of her dedication to help others in education through mentoring and leading by example. Kay’s professional



Nelson

leadership, inspiring commitment to education, and courageous personality make her a perfect recipient for this award.”

A week after receiving the award, Nelson was named the assistant superintendent for secondary education in the St. Cloud school district. Nelson begins her St. Cloud job on July 1. Nelson was one of three finalists when the Sartell-St. Stephen school board selected a new superintendent in 2021.

Nelson began her 30-year career in the district as a vocal

and classroom teacher and then director of Learning Services. She has been assistant superintendent since 2013.

According to a statement from the district, Nelson has been a leader in curriculum and staff development with a particular focus on art and technology at all grade levels. She played a key role within the district’s grade-level reconfiguration and the related building and remodeling projects.

Nelson earned a master’s degree in curriculum and instruc-

tion from St. Cloud State University and a bachelor’s degree in music education from Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall. She received a master’s degree in educational administration from St. Mary’s University of Minnesota, Winona.

MASA is a professional organization of Minnesota’s school leaders, including superintendents and other central office administrators, as well as state department administrators, college and university professors.

Borg to lead one of eight LyricaliTea Circles

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Nicole Borg of Sartell carries within her many places – her early years in North Dakota, the high-plains country of south central Colorado, her time in California and the four-season places of central Minnesota.

Her keen awareness of those places, those landscapes that she interiorized all of her life inform her passion as a teacher. Borg teaches composition, American literature and creative writing at Sauk Rapids-Rice High School. Her students are juniors and seniors.

As of mid-February, Borg began teaching writing at the Minnesota Street Market in downtown St. Joseph (27 Minnesota St. E.) Any adult, no matter their writing-skills level, can join the group. The free ongoing workshop will meet from 10 a.m.-11:30 p.m. every third Saturday of each month through July.

The name of her workshop is “Poetry of Place.” It’s just one of eight workshops involving writing, art and conversations that have already begun or will begin in the greater St. Cloud area. Each workshop (called a circle) is part of a series called “LyricaliTea,” a program formed by “Lyricality,” a group of many area writers founded several years ago by Tracy Rittmueller, an award-winning poet who lives in Sauk Rapids.

During a Feb. 5 interview with the Newsleader, Borg said she is so happy to be a part of one of the LyricaliTea circles.

“We (workshop participants) will first read from local writers,” she said. “When we moved here from Colorado, I was just amazed to discover the quality of local

writers living here.”

The circle’s participants will then begin to write whatever they wish: poetry, prose, fiction, non-fiction. “Playing with language,” Borg calls it.

“We all carry where we’re from inside of us,” she said. “We carry it with us, that rich history of places. The ‘place’ of childhood is so powerful. When we walk those roads again, we can better understand ourselves and connect with others.”

Borg is confident the “places within” will inspire workshop participants to do some very fine writing.

Borg was born in Jamestown, N.D. but spent most of her growing-up years on Colorado’s high plains. She graduated from Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado and began her teaching career in California. Her husband, Glen Irvin, taught Spanish for 20 years and is now a technology integrationist for Sauk Rapids-Rice High School. The couple has two sons: Lyzander, a freshman at Sartell High School; and Lynx, who attends Riverview Intermediate School.

LyricaliTea Circles

Tracy Rittmueller, the founder of the Lyricality writers’ organization, said the eight workshops (Circles) of LyricaliTea were inspired by a letter-to-the-editor.

The letter, published in the St. Cloud Times on April 11, 2021, was signed by 70 local civic leaders who called for people and organizations to foster diversity and interpersonal kindness by creating “safe spaces for brave conversations.”

Rittmueller and others thought writing/art workshops do just that, and so they decided to start



contributed photo

Nicole Borg, of Sartell, teaches one of her writing workshops. Borg, who recently began leading a writing workshop in St. Joseph, is a teacher of language arts at Sauk Rapids-Rice High School.

ongoing workshops for a variety of age groups for people of diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The Circles are designed to nurture creativity and empathy among central Minnesota participants.

The “tea” in LyricaliTea is an homage to the fact that tea is a symbol of hospitality in many cultures that promotes connection, mindfulness and presence.

A grant from the Central Minnesota Arts Board paid for the founding of the LyricaliTea Circles program.

“Circle Keepers (as the workshop leaders are known) have been trained to create a culture of connection, mindfulness and

presence,” Rittmueller wrote. “Research has shown this method of connecting to self, others and nature through writing is a healing modality that helps people find meaning in life. It is highly effective in guiding us forward through difficult circumstances. After LyricaliTea members become comfortable meeting in their own communities, Lyricality plans to bring its Circles together for intercultural celebrations where participants can appreciate one another’s way of life and socio-cultural identity.”

Lyricality Circles will meet for about 90 minutes on one day each month – some in person, some via Zoom and others with a vari-

Borg • page 11

Blotter

from page 4

officers respond to a suspicious vehicle at a business. The officer arrived on scene and noted the vehicle was oddly parked and had no license plates. Further investigation revealed the vehicle’s VIN number was covered, it had been spray-painted black and the passenger side window was broken out. The car had food, garbage, steak knife and the keys were left in the ignition in the on position. The officers found an insurance card in the vehicle and ran the VIN on the card. It came back as a stolen vehicle out of Anoka on Feb. 9. The business was reviewing video to try and get a description of the person who left the vehicle there. An investigator responded to the location to swab the vehicle for evidence. The owner of the vehicle was notified, and the vehicle was towed to a nearby tow lot.

March 11

1:30 p.m. Verbal dispute. Amber Avenue S. Officers were dispatched to a verbal dispute and the parties were currently separated. The officer met the woman at a nearby location where she told the officer she and a man had been arguing all day. She went to leave, and the man took her purse and keys; she had a spare set of keys and still left. The woman told the officer nothing physical happened, but she wanted help getting her property back. While speaking to the officer the man texted the woman stating he was sorry, and that she should come and get her purse. The officer told the woman they would escort her to get the property. The officer had both parties ran through dispatch and it was found the man had three warrants for his arrest. When they arrived at the apartment the man was still there, and officers advised him of his warrants. The man was detained. After being cleared by medical staff, the man was brought to the Stearns County Jail and booked for his warrants.

March 12

1:29 a.m. Assist agency. Benton Drive. Two Sartell officers were requested to assist Sauk Rapids Police Department with a possible burglary. A male suspect with a warrant was believed to be the suspect and a window was broken out on the house. The Sartell officers assisted with perimeter while other officers searched the home. The home was found to be empty; and Sartell officers were cleared.

Calendar

from page 2

Friday, April 1

Fish fry, 5-7:30 p.m., Immaculate Conception Church, 145 Second Ave. NE, Rice. Fish fry serving fried fish, baked potato, coleslaw, baked beans, dinner rolls and beverages. Adults and children prices; children under

4 years old: free. Takeouts available, please order ahead by calling 320-393-3560; call between 4:30-7 p.m. if ordering ahead.

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 colorful 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 lo-

cal! This indoor market features homemade food items, crafts, jewelry and more.

“Fairytales 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!

2022 VARSITY SABRES SPRING SPORTS

BASEBALL

4/7/22	5 p.m.	Moorhead	Home
4/12/22	5 p.m.	Willmar	Away
4/14/22	5 p.m.	Sauk Rapids-Rice	Home
4/19/22	5 p.m.	Brainerd	Home
4/21/22	5 p.m.	Fergus Falls	Home
4/22/22	5 p.m.	Bemidji	Away
4/26/22	4 p.m.	Alexandria	Away
4/28/22	5 p.m.	Rocori	Home
5/2/22	7 p.m.	Champlin Park	Away
5/3/22	5 p.m.	Willmar	Home
5/5/22	5 p.m.	Sauk Rapids-Rice	Away
5/10/22	5 p.m.	Brainerd	Away
5/12/22	4 p.m.	St. Cloud Crush	Home
5/17/22	5 p.m.	Becker	Home
5/19/22	5 p.m.	Rocori	Away
5/20/22	5 p.m.	St. Michael-Albertville	Home
5/23/22	4:30 p.m.	Rogers	Away
5/24/22	5 p.m.	Buffalo	Home

BOYS LACROSSE

4/19/22	6 p.m.	Rocori	Home
4/21/22	6 p.m.	Brainerd	Away
4/23/22	1 p.m.	Park Center	Home
4/25/22	6 p.m.	St. Cloud Crush	Home
4/28/22	6 p.m.	Rocori	Away
5/2/22	5 p.m.	Big Lake	Away
5/3/22	6:30 p.m.	Moorhead	Away
5/5/22	6 p.m.	Saint Michael-Albertville	Home
5/9/22	6 p.m.	Brainerd	Home
5/12/22	6 p.m.	St. Cloud Crush	Away
5/16/22	6 p.m.	Chisago Lakes	Home
5/19/22	6 p.m.	Becker	Home
5/24/22	6 p.m.	Monticello	Away

BOYS GOLF

4/12/22	3:30 p.m.	Geneva Golf Club	Away
4/14/22	11 a.m.	Pebble Lake Golf Course	Away
4/18/22	3:30 p.m.	Rich-Spring Golf Course	Away
4/25/22	3:30 p.m.	Pebble Lake Golf Course	Away
4/28/22	3:30 p.m.	St. Cloud Country Club	Away
4/29/22	10 a.m.	Little Crow Golf Course	Away
4/30/22	10 a.m.	Eagle Creek Golf Course	Away
5/2/22	4 p.m.	Territory Golf Club	Away
5/6/22	9 a.m.	Park Rapids	Away
5/9/22	4 p.m.	Legacy Golf Course	Away

SOFTBALL

4/12/22	4 p.m.	Moorhead	Away
4/14/22	4 p.m.	St. Cloud Crush	Home
4/19/22	4 p.m.	Sauk Rapids-Rice	Away
4/21/22	4 p.m.	Bemidji	Home
4/26/22	5 p.m.	Buffalo	Home
4/28/22	4 p.m.	Rocori	Away
4/29/22	5 p.m.	Cambridge-Isanti	Home
5/3/22	4:30 p.m.	Fergus Falls	Away
5/5/22	4:30 p.m.	Willmar	Home
5/10/22	4 p.m.	Brainerd	Away
5/12/22	4:30 p.m.	Alexandria	Home

GIRLS LACROSSE

4/21/22	6 p.m.	Brainerd	Home
4/26/22	6 p.m.	Moorhead	Home
4/28/22	6 p.m.	Rocori	Home
5/3/22	6 p.m.	Big Lake	Home
5/5/22	6 p.m.	Monticello	Home
5/12/22	6 a.m.	St. Cloud Tech	Home
5/13/22	6 p.m.	Grand Rapids	Home
5/24/22	7 p.m.	Rocori	Away

BOYS TENNIS

4/12/22	4:30 p.m.	Fergus Falls	Home
4/14/22	4:30 p.m.	Willmar	Away
4/19/22	4:30 p.m.	Alexandria	Home
4/21/22	4:30 p.m.	Brainerd	Away
4/22/22	4:30 p.m.	Litchfield	Away
4/25/22	4 p.m.	Hutchinson	Away
4/26/22	4:30 p.m.	St. Cloud Crush	Away
4/28/22	4:30 p.m.	Fergus Falls	Away
5/2/22	4:30 p.m.	St. John's Prep	Home
5/3/22	4:30 p.m.	Willmar	Home
5/5/22	4:30 p.m.	Alexandria	Away
5/6/22	5:30 p.m.	Bemidji	Away
5/10/22	4:30 p.m.	Brainerd	Home
5/12/22	4:30 p.m.	St. Cloud Crush	Home

GIRLS GOLF

4/11/22	3:30 p.m.	Rich-Spring Golf Course	Away
4/14/22	3:30 p.m.	Alexandria Golf Club	Away
4/19/22	3:30 p.m.	Territory Golf Club	Away
5/2/22	4 p.m.	Maddens Resort	Away
5/9/22	4 p.m.	Blackberry Ridge Golf Course	Home
5/12/22	9 a.m.	Country Club	Away
5/16/22	4 p.m.	Pebble Lake Golf Course	Away
5/17/22	4 p.m.	Eagle Creek Golf Course	Away
5/28/22	9 a.m.	Brainerd	Home

GIRLS TRACK & FIELD

4/8/22	4 p.m.	Sauk Rapids-Rice	Away
5/5/22	4 p.m.	Riverview Intermediate School	Home
5/17/22	4 p.m.	Alexandria	Away
5/24/22	3 p.m.	St. Cloud Tech	Away

BOYS TRACK & FIELD

4/8/22	4 p.m.	Sauk Rapids-Rice	Away
4/21/22	4 p.m.	Riverview Intermediate School	Home
5/5/22	4 p.m.	Riverview Stadium	Home
5/27/22	4 p.m.	Alexandria	Away
5/25/22	3 p.m.	St. Cloud Tech	Away

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St. Francis Xavier holds fun fest for readers of ‘Bat’ book

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Students, parents, teachers and guests enjoyed a fun fest at St. Francis Xavier School March 10 at the conclusion of the “One School One Book” program.

The program involves all students in the area’s Catholic elementary schools reading the same book during evenings with their families. The story-book is “A Boy Called Bat” by Elena K. Arnold.

It’s a story of a boy nicknamed “Bat” whose life tends to be full of unexpected surprises, including a little skunk his veterinarian mother brings home one day to be cared for until it can be given to an animal shelter. But “Bat” loves the skunk at first sight and begins

to prove to his mother how it would make a perfect and well-loved at-home pet.

The book won praise from critics, one of whom called it a “sweet, thoughtful, powerful story.”

SFX Principal Heidi Schloe explained how the “One School One Book” program worked. During the weeks of the program, parents and other family members could read the book aloud to one another, or they could watch via YouTube a school-staff member reading the book to a family. Each day there would be trivia quizzes based on the book.

One of the characters in the book is a skunk. And that is why so many participants at the March 10 event were sporting outfits predominating in black-and-white.



photos by Carolyn Bertsch

Students line up in the St. Francis Xavier school cafeteria March 10 and show off their “One School One Book” spirit on Black and White Day. They are (left to right) Max DeVos, Malachi Mack, Zoey Woodruff and Lila Kunz, all 6 and of Sartell. The colors they wear signify a favorite book character, a skunk.

Tickets available for ‘SFX Rocks’ concert

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

St. Francis Xavier Elementary School is gearing up for a May 7 musical-fundraising night dubbed “SFX Rocks” with guest band “Maiden Dixie.”

Ticket sales will start April 1. Proceeds will be used for playground and recess equipment, said Heide Schloe, SFX principal. Any leftover funds will be put into the school’s general fund.

SFX Rocks will take place from 6-11 p.m. Saturday, May 7. At this point, it has not yet been decided whether the event will take place indoors or outdoors, Schloe noted. Social hour is from 6-7 p.m. The band begins to play at 7 p.m.

One of the band’s members, Alex Maiers, happens to be the son of the school’s main cook, Amy Maiers. Alex is a singer and guitarist for Maiden Dixie, a country-rock band based in Minneapolis.

The event, which includes food and beverages, is for adults ages 21 and over. There will be a silent auction, gift baskets and other features.

SFX’s elementary school is



photo by Carolyn Bertsch

Maiden Dixie singer and guitarist Alex Maiers, of St. Paul, helps his mother, Amy Maiers, of St. Cloud, March 10 in the St. Francis Xavier School kitchen.

for students pre-school through sixth grade. There are currently 275 children enrolled in the school.

Pre-event tickets are \$10 per

person less if purchased before April 29. To order tickets, check “SFX Rocks” on the parish website in early April. The site is stfrancissartell.org.

Watab Park to close this spring, summer

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Sartell’s Watab Park will be closed – perhaps all summer long – because of the ambitious reconstruction project for CR 1 (Riverside Avenue) just east of the park.

The closure will be necessary because that park will become a temporary storage and staging area for the heavy

equipment required for the project.

The closing or partial closings of Watab Park could last as long as April right through late fall.

The project, which involves Stearns County also, is a reconstruction of CR 1 from Sartell Street to 12th Street N. The many inter-related improvements include sanitary sewer, water main, storm sew-

er, sidewalks, trails, lighting, riverbank restorations, a river look-out area and additions to Watab Park and Veterans Park (across the street from Watab Park).

At the March 14 city-council meeting, it was noted the closure date will be announced in the near future. During construction, there will also be some disruptions to traffic flow.



Friends visit and enjoy lunch March 10 during St. Francis Xavier’s “Black and White Day.” They are Paetyn Leite (left) and Hallee Dingmann, both 8 and of Sartell.



Maiden Dixie singer and guitarist Alex Maiers of St. Paul hands Elise Omann, 9, of Sartell, an oreo to eat with her lunch March 10. Oreos were given to the St. Francis Xavier School children to celebrate the school’s “Black and White Day” and the ending of “I Love to Read Month.” A favorite book character was a black-and-white skunk.

PUBLIC NOITICE

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING • SARTELL-ST. STEPHEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO 748
FEB. 28, 2022 • DISTRICT SERVICE CENTER BOARDROOM

The regular school board meeting of Independent School District 748 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Patrick Marushin. Members present: Marushin; Matt Moehrle, vice chair; Tricia Meling, treasurer; Amanda Byrd, director; Jason Nies, director; and Dr. Jeff Ridlehoover, superintendent. Due to a work-related function Jeremy Snoberger, clerk, attended the meeting virtually via interactive technology from the location, Marriott River Center (Business Center Room) - 101 Bowie St., San Antonio, Texas 78205. Members absent: none.

A motion was made by Meling and seconded by Byrd to APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Nies, Marushin, Meling, Moehrle and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

During the public comment opportunity, five members of the community addressed the school board. Jen Smith spoke on concerns with the district; Shawn Oglesby spoke on the future intent of soccer fields at Sartell High School; Peter J. Wilson spoke on the topics of equity, reparations, COVID along with teacher and administrator training; Kassa Wagner, spoke on the topic of equity; Emily Larson spoke on the topics of bullying, equity committee and the public divide.

A motion was made by Moehrle and seconded by Byrd to APPROVE CONSENT ITEMS A.4.a-A.4.d. with the additional retirement of Melinda Listerud, OREL, teacher, 10/26/22 and the resignation of Sarah Garrigan, OREL, teacher, end of school year, as distributed to the members at the meeting. On a roll- call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Nies, Marushin, Meling, Moehrle and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A.4.a. Minutes of the regular school board meeting held on Jan. 24, 2021	
A.4.b Checks in the amount of \$1,202,581.16 as presented:	
General Fund	583,372.87
Food Service Fund	121,677.26
Transportation Fund	342,971.05
Community Service Fund	3,927.37
Capital Expenditure Fund	135,035.71
Activity Accounts	12,303.37
Internal Service Fund	3,293.53
Check numbers 182983 – 183230	
ACHs in the amount of \$5,675.12 as presented:	
General Fund	4,089.83
Food Service Fund	106.54
Community Service Fund	183.64
Activity Accounts	1,295.11
ACH numbers 212200126-212200153	
Receipts in the amount of \$4,368,960.12 as presented:	
General Fund	3,528,341.11
Food Service Fund	257,025.46
Transportation Fund	57,330.68
Community Service Fund	49,884.01
Capital Expenditure Fund	421,869.07
Building Fund	43.82
Debt Service Fund	48,878.38
Activity Accounts	11,652.60
Internal Service Fund	11,904.40
Receipts 49868 - 50010	
Wire transfers in the amount of \$4,122,472.91 as presented:	
General Fund	1,177,964.79
Food Service Fund	49,372.38
Transportation Fund	22,817.79
Community Service Fund	26,253.69
Capital Expenditure Fund	8,321.39
Debt Service Fund	2,504,100.00
Activity Accounts	7,309.48
Internal Service Fund	326,333.39
Check numbers 202122489 – 202122583	

Building Fund Checks in the amount of \$16,919.73 as presented:	
Building Fund	16,919.73
Check number 601227	

A.4.c. Approve resolution accepting the following do-

nations; Central Minnesota Credit Union, Sartell Middle School, 150 pens/pencils, 50 stress relievers and five decks of playing cards, classroom donation; Coborn’s Inc, ISD #748, 10 cases of 200 Honeywell, N95 Masks, general donation; Sartell-St. Stephen Pre K-5 PTO, ISD #748, \$171.92, RIS/FSV popcorn.

A.4.d. Accept the resignations of Abigail Baker, PMPS, para, 1/24/22; Haley Robben, RIS, custodian, 2/4/22; Sarah Garrigan, OREL, teacher, end of school year. Accept the retirement of Monica Fritz, PMPS, teacher, end of school year; Melinda Listerud, OREL, teacher, 10/26/22.

Student Representative Report:

• Ridlehoover reported on happenings around the district.

It has been a busy month for the district with staffing within the five schools being discussed along with celebrating “I Love to Read Month” and Black History Month during the month of February. On Feb. 15, the mask requirement for students and staff was removed due to declining numbers. The CDC updated their guidance on masking on public transit; students and staff are no longer required to wear a mask while on a school bus. Thanks to all community members who have donated to the high school’s prom dress drive, more than 100 dresses were donated. The Sartell Policy Department’s Online Safety and Health Relationships event was postponed due to the weather on Feb. 21, but has been rescheduled for 7 p.m. March 22 at the Sartell High School. The first Coordinating Council meeting occurred this past month. The meeting went great and we are excited for the future for students and staff. The district hired Shayne Kusler as the new high school principal, having been the high school principal in Foley the past eight years.

Educational Equity and Student Experience Committee Report:

• Superintendent Ridlehoover provided an update on the committee’s progress and process the committee is going through.

American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC) Report:

• Principal Jason Mielke reported on the American Indian Parent Advisory Committee.

District Facilities Report:

• Superintendent Ridlehoover and Director of Business Services Joe Prom provided an update on the current state of district facilities and future planning. The presentation included a Sartell High School Facilities Review.

District Finance Report:

• Director of Business Services Joe Prom provided an update on district finances.

School Board Committee Report:

•Director Byrd reported on the Curriculum, Instruction and Advisory meeting she attended on Feb. 15. Highlights include a secondary visual arts presentation and a presentation from the American Indian Parent Advisory Committee.

•Vice Chair Moehrle reported on the SEE legislative update he received. Ridlehoover and Vice Chair Moehrle will attend a Zoom session with local legislators.

A motion was made by Moehrle and seconded by Meling to APPROVE #1-21:

New Employees/Changes:

Irma Aguero, OREL, Para (1:1), \$16.75/hour, RIV, S1, 6.5 hours/day, replacing Alisa Travaglio, 1/31/2022; Deb Edelbrock, OREL, food service worker, \$16.20/hour, RI, S1, 3 hours/day, replacing Danielle Morrison, 1/31/2022; Paul Dvorak, OREL, PT cleaner, \$16.20/hour, RI, S1, 4 hours/day, 185 days/year, replacing Roger Reder, 2/22/2022; Kate Ellis, SMS, spring musical choreographer, \$945 (2.25 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Kathryn Winzenburg, 1/20/2022; Craig Erickson, SHS, FIRST robotics, \$1,124 (5.35 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), 50-percent contract, replacing Joe Schulte, 1/3/2022; Mindy Huse, SHS, FIRST Robotics, \$1,124 (5.35 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), 50-percent contract, replacing Joe Schulte, 1/3/2022; Shayne Kusler, SHS, Principal, \$137,700, replacing Tim Wege, 7/1/2022; Amanda Lavan, SHS, custodian, \$17.97/hour, RIII, S1, 8 hours/day, 260 days/year, replacing Steve Kenne, 2/14/2022;

TarreAnna Mart-Fandel, PMPS, para, \$16.75/hour, RIV, S1, 6.5 hours/day, new position, 2/14/2022; Monique Neussendorfer, RIS, para, \$16.75/hour, RIV, S1, 7 hours/day, replacing Haley Schmit, 2/2/2022; Karlee Pfaff, SHS, Asst Softball, \$3,990 (9.5 percent), BA, A (\$42,002), replacing Amber Hedstrom, 3/14/2022; Roger Reder, RIS,

custodian, \$17.97/hour, RIII, S1, 8 hours/day, 260 days/year, replacing Haley Robben, 2/7/2022; Traci Schuneman, RIS, AM cashier, \$18.67/hour, R1, S4, 1 hour/day, replacing Ashley Preusser, 2/7/2022; Lori Tchida, SHS, custodian, \$22.68/hour, RIII, S5, 3 hours/day SY, reorganizing staffing, 1/24/2022; Rachael Zormeier, OREL, cafeteria worker, \$16.20/hour, RI, S1, 2.75 hours/day, replacing Deb Edelbrock, 2/23/2022.

Leaves of Absence:

Shaina Ganz, PMPS, para, LOA, 1/24/22-3/24/22; Robert Graham, SHS, custodian, LOA, 2/14/22-3/11/22; Julie Hagen, RIS, MTSS interventionist, LOA, 1/26/22-6/7/22; Nancy Nieters, PMPS, para, LOA, 2/1/22-2/28/22; Paul Rolfzen, SMS, custodian, LOA, 7/1/22-7/29/22; Lindsey Trimbo, OREL, kindergarten, LOA, 4/13/22-6/6/22.

On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Nies, Marushin, Meling, Moehrle and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Nies and seconded by Byrd TO APPROVE REVISIONS TO POLICIES 413, 506, 524 AND 616 AS PRESENTED. On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Nies, Marushin, Meling, Moehrle and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

Schedule Work Session and Committee Meetings:

• Future Regular Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 21 @ District Service Center

Official Review of Policies: The board had the first reading of revision of policy: 503.

Committee Assignments were reviewed.

Chair Marushin reported on the Memorandum received on Feb. 24 from the MSHSL regarding code of conduct.

A motion to ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:53 pm. was made by Meling and seconded by Moehrle. On a roll-call vote, the following voted in favor: Byrd, Nies, Marushin, Meling, Moehrle and Snoberger. The following voted against: none. Motion carried 6-0.

/s/ Jeremy Snoberger, Clerk
Publish: March 25, 2022

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.

Fun ‘camping’ for all ages at community showcase



photos by Carolyn Bertsch
Above: Bryce Olson of Sartell, 10, uses a remote control to send smoke up through a pile of logs Feb. 26 at the annual Sartell Community Showcase event, sponsored by the Sartell Area Chamber of Commerce. At right: Anne Hershberger and daughter Ava, 9, of Sartell, play mini-golf Feb. 26 at the Sartell Community Center. This year’s theme was camping in style.



Jan Sorell of St. Cloud browses through items on display by the Sartell Historical Society Feb. 26 at the Sartell Community Showcase.



How to help Ukrainian people

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Many kind and generous people are contributing to help the people of Ukraine now under murderous assaults against civilian men, women and children by Russia’s military.

But sad to say, there are already reports that some of those kind and generous people are being “took” by scammers (crooks), with contributions being pocketed by scoundrels.

People who contribute should be careful and double-check to make sure their goods or money are going to legitimate helpers.

The following are just some of the reliable places. To check for others, google “Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance.”

UNICEF (to help children in Ukraine): www.unicefusa.org
Save The Children: www.savethechildren.org
Ukrainian Red Cross: www.redcross.org
Catholic Relief Services: <https://support.crs.org/donate/donate-ukraine>
Doctors Without Borders: doctorswithoutborders.org
World Central Kitchen: www.wck.org/donate
Humane Society International (animals are suffering and dying, too.) www.donate.hsi.org
wcco.helpukraine (Twin Cities Channel 4, WCCO-TV has set up a helping organization).

Time running out for SFX school to get matching grant

by Dennis Dalman
news@thenewsleaders.com

Time is of the essence, with only six days left to raise enough money that would clinch a \$25,000 matching grant for St. Francis Xavier Elementary School in Sartell.

Donations (a total of \$25,000 or more) must be received by the end of March or the school will not be eligible for the matching grant. Another stipulation is that

the donations must come from new donors, not those people or organizations that have donated to the school previously. Previous donors, however, can help if they donate an amount above and beyond what they have contributed previously.

To donate, go to the school’s website: stfrancissartellschool.org. There, a donation box will pop up that states “\$25,000 Challenge Grant.” Checks may also be dropped off in person at

the school at 308 Second St. N. in Sartell. Or checks can be mailed. Make out a check to “SFX School” and on the memo line write “Schulze Challenge Grant.” Send it to SFX; 308 Second St. N.; P.O. Box 150; Sartell, MN 56377.

St. Francis Xavier school’s principal Heidi Schloe explained how the matching-grant challenge came to be.

Richard M. Schulze of Minneapolis, the founder of the Best

Buy chain of stores, is a devout Catholic who wants to promote Catholic schools and so he set up a foundation to do just that. He hopes to widen awareness, increase enrollment and pique the interest of people who may not be aware of all the good things Catholic schools accomplish. To that end, he began the \$25,000 challenge at those schools.

Schulze worked closely with Catholic schools in the Twin

Cities area before expanding the grant program to other schools in outstate Minnesota.

Schloe said if the school succeeds in getting the necessary funds plus the matching grant, the money will be used to hire a math specialist and a teacher who specializes in helping gifted and talented students who excel in certain subjects, such as art.

For more information, call the school at 320-252-9940.

Borg

from page 6

ety of the two. The following is a list of the workshops, in addition to Nicole Berg’s “Poetry of Place” Circle, as detailed above.

Linguist, writer, poet, artist and teacher Anisa Hagi-Mohamed will lead Black/African women in how to explore grief and grieving in their communities. Every third Friday starting at 6:30 p.m. These

will be virtual (Zoom) meetings. For more information, go to circles@lyricality.org.

Artist Vatsalaa Jha will partner with Great River Regional Library to lead youngsters and adults on a journey to learn about teas throughout the world. During that journey, they will boost their creative talents. Last Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Children’s author/playwright Dr. Wendy Muhlhauser will host children grades K-5 who want to playfully explore kindness and

empathy. Her circle will meet at Art in Motion on the Wobegon Trail in Holdingford once the weather warms up.

Poet/writer and Lyricality Founder/Director Tracy Rittmueller will host adults 55-and-plus who want to deepen connections to themselves and others in order to foster empathy and healing. First Mondays at 2:30 p.m. at St. Cloud Whitney Center. A Zoom link is offered.

Poet Chenel Sanders will host Black children 13- to 17- years

old who want to gain trust in one another through sharing their words, thoughts and feelings. Last Thursdays at 6 p.m. Higher Ground Church, 402 Eighth Ave. S. in St. Cloud.

Poet/memoirist and elder Asian-American women’s leader Hedy Tripp will host a circle for BIPOC women poets, writers, artists, scripters and memoirists. First Tuesdays at 7 p.m. via Zoom. BIPOC is an acronym for “Black, Indigenous and People of Color.”

Poet and English-as-Sec-

ond-Language instructor Kelly Travis will lead first-generation adult immigrants who want to create collaborative poems. First Mondays at 2:30 p.m. LaCruz Community Center, 1546 Sixth Ave. S., Apt. 6, in St. Cloud.

To learn more about Lyricality-Tea Circles or to sign up for one of them, visit the following website: circles@lyricality.org.

Readers may also want to find out more about the overall Lyricality organization by visiting its website at lyricality.org.

Understanding Student Loans

You’ve worked hard, applied to the right schools, wrote your essays and you got in to your top choice.

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-



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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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