

Big Lake News

Santa tours Big Lake in BLFD Parade

By Katherine Cantin
Staff Writer

Santa Claus has teamed up with the Big Lake Fire Department for a "just-in-time" parade in Big Lake.

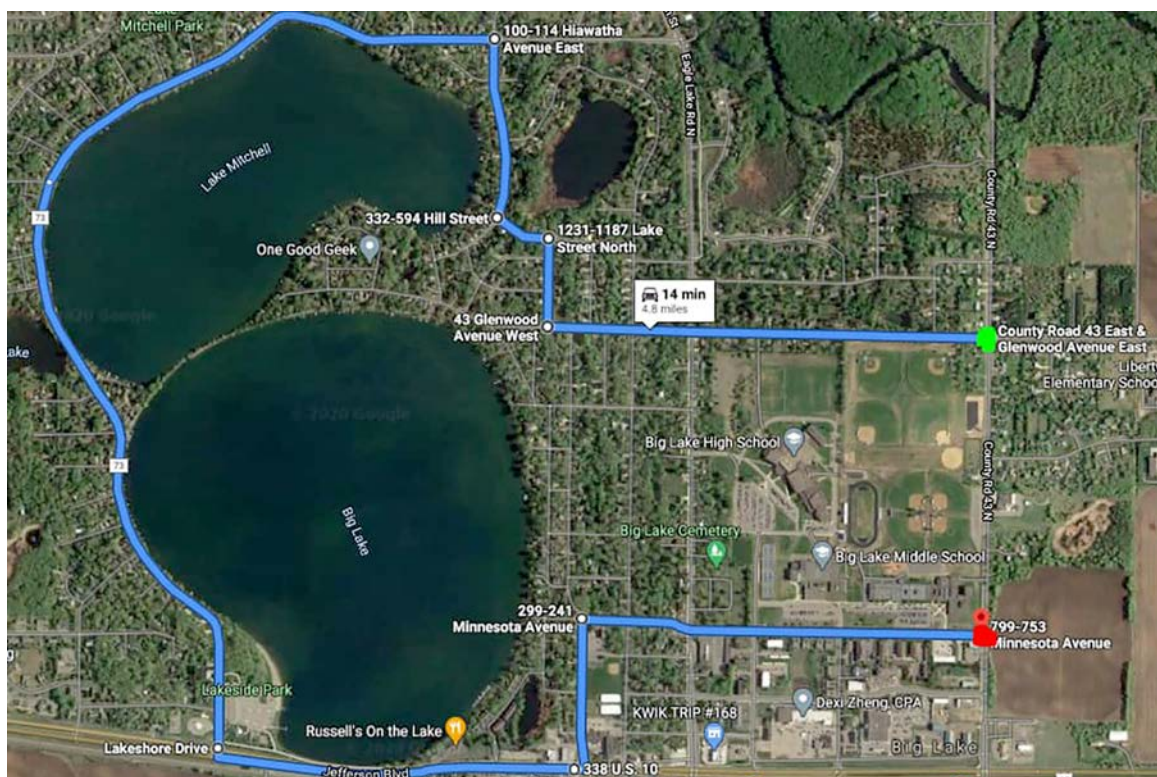
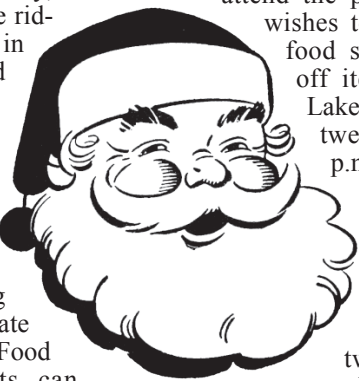
Today (Saturday, Dec. 19) Santa will be riding in a firetruck in a parade around the city of Big Lake, along with a police escort. Santa's helpers will be collecting non-perishable food items along the route to donate to the Big Lake Food Shelf. Residents can simply leave food items by the street as the parade goes by.

The parade will begin at 1 p.m. Santa will head east from the fire station on Glenwood Ave., up Lake St. and Hill St. to Hiawatha Ave., around the lakes

to Jefferson Blvd., then north on Lake St. to Minnesota Ave., and ending at the fire station again. Parade attendees who do not live along the route may want to view the parade from Lakeside Park.

Any person who cannot attend the parade, but still wishes to donate to the food shelf, may drop off items at the Big Lake Fire Station between noon and 2 p.m.

The parade was organized by the Big Lake Fire Department. They will also be helping two families in need by providing food for the holiday season. Families who applied were entered into a drawing in the beginning of November.



THE PARADE ROUTE will begin and end at the firehall, making a loop around the lakes. (Photo taken from Big Lake Fire Auxiliary Facebook page.)

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Big Lake Happenings

Big Lake Mayor Mike Wallen retires

By Katherine Cantlin
Staff Writer

Mike Wallen lost his reelection bid as mayor after Paul Knier won the election this fall. Wallen served on the Big Lake City Council for 10 years, and as mayor for two.

Serving as Mayor

When the former mayor Raeanne Danielowski was elected to the Sherburne County Board of Commissioners two years ago, Wallen stepped in to finish out her mayoral term. At the time, the other board members were either inexperienced or uninterested in the position.

"I wasn't looking to be the mayor at that time," Wallen said.

But he ended up enjoying the job enough to run for reelection.

Wallen said the best part about serving as mayor was working with the people, and being a part of something bigger than himself.

Decreasing Debt

Wallen said his biggest accomplishment while in office was decreasing the debt load from \$76 million to \$20 million, which would have been difficult for any representative to handle. When he was first elected to the council 10 years ago, the city was in a horrible financial state. The city had been borrowing money from its own enterprise fund in an effort to avoid raising taxes. Wallen, and the rest of the council at the time, realized something had to change. They had to raise the tax levy in order to dig themselves out of the giant mess.

This was very difficult, because this happened just after the housing bubble of 2008, and citizens were already having a hard time, but it needed to be done. In the years before this decision, the city's levy had either gone down or stayed the same, all while the city continued to borrow itself into a hole.

Hiring New Staff

Another accomplish-



MAYOR MIKE WALLEN (LEFT) AND COUNCIL MEMBER SCOTT ZETTERVALL (RIGHT) posed with a retirement cake before their final city council meeting. (Photo by Bill Morgan.)

ment Wallen had while in office was hiring almost every city staff member still working today, with the exception of Gina Wolbeck, city clerk.

"I can't take credit for hiring everyone," Wallen admitted, "But I was involved with the process and I had the brains to know how to help pick the best people for the job."

Wallen raves about the city staff, and how they've all gone above and beyond to make the city a better place.

For example, he spoke about a brilliant idea from Finance Director Deb Wegeleben. Most cities receive funding from the state as local government aid. Most cities budget for this funding and depend on it. But one year the state decided to withhold the funding, throwing many local governments through a loop. Wegeleben had the idea to not budget for the funding any longer. This way, if the state decides to withhold the funding again in the future, the city will not be unable to make ends meet. But when they do get the funding, they can save it in the bank and budget the money in the future.

Wallen says Wegeleben's idea has paid off in spades, and it sets up future

councils for success.

Improving Quality of Life

Wallen also enjoyed implementing new cultural projects, such as the music in the park night every week in the summertime at Lakeside Park, and improving the trails systems.

"Everything I did while in office, I did it in the interest of improving public safety or quality of life," Wallen stated. He's certain the council will continue to make their decisions this way.

Wallen said his father always told him that when he borrowed something, he always had to bring it back in better condition. Wallen feels sure he's been able to do so.

Retirement

Wallen will not be seeking office again. As sad as he is to go, he said he will not miss the stress that came with the job. And he's looking forward to staying out of the spotlight, at least for a little while.

Now, he'll spend his time working on vehicles with his car club. He'll also be starting a rock band with some of his buddies. He and his wife are debating whether he should grow his hair out to a ponytail like a true rock legend.

"I cannot thank you

enough for putting up with me," Wallen said to the staff and council members he'll be leaving behind.

Mike Wallen has promised an exclusive interview with the *Patriot* once his music career takes off.

WALLEN hugged City Clerk Gina Wolbeck as he bid goodbye to council. (Submitted Photo)



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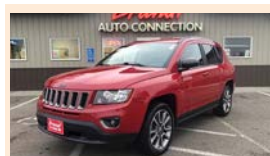
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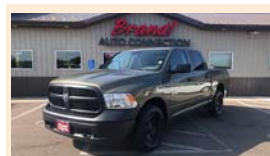
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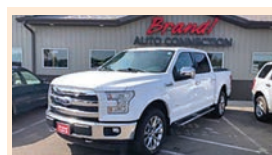
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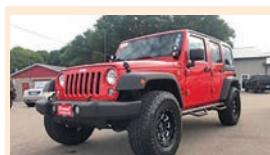
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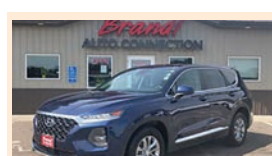
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Hedstrom, Brenteson sworn in to BL Twp. board

By Katherine Cantin,
Staff Writer

During the Big Lake Twp. Board meeting last week, the board said goodbye to temporary member Scott Sanford, and Mark Hedstrom was sworn in for the first time. Dean Brenteson, who won his campaign for reelection, was also sworn-in.

BLFD Update

Just before being sworn-in, Mark Hedstrom gave a report on the Big Lake Fire Department. In November, the department had 20 calls overall, bringing the year-to-date total to 352. A few of those calls were made in response to car accidents in the township. Hedstrom wished to remind residents that the roads can be slick right away in the morning, even if there is no snow, and drivers should be careful as they are heading to work.

COVID-19 had a large impact on the department recently, with 11 firefighters being out sick at one time. The department is working hard to make sure everyone wears their masks and that the trucks are sanitized regularly in order to prevent a similar situation. They are also using old gear whenever they can, so they can avoid a situation where they wear their newest gear but haven't had it sanitized yet.

Township to Vacate



DEAN BRENTESON (LEFT) AND MARK HEDSTROM (RIGHT) were both sworn in to the Big Lake Town Board at last week's meeting. (Photos by Katherine Cantin.)

Section of 211th Ave.

One citizen has asked the board to vacate a section of 211th Ave. which is no longer a road. The eastern section of 211th used to connect directly to Co. Rd. 15, but now can be accessed only via Co. Rd. 79. The township still technically owns the parcel of land where the road would connect, but it has not been used as a road in quite a long time.

A public hearing will be held on Jan. 13 at approximately 6 p.m. regarding the vacation.

Cable Ordinances

The board reviewed the cable ordinances (ordinances 1010 and 1012) as per request of Midco. Midco asked that they be allowed 30 days to bury cable, rather than the 15 that the township allowed.

There was some discussion among the board members about whether that was pushing it a bit too long, but ultimately voted unanimously to allow the change.

Midco also requested that the board allow for larger cable equipment, as their smallest cable boxes were too large, according to the township ordinance. The board complied with this request as well.

While on the subject, board member Larry Alfords asked if the board would consider adding a "removal clause" to township language, meaning cable companies, and other companies that installed equipment in the ground under township roads, would need to remove the equipment after it became obsolete. Currently, old equipment, plumbing, and

gas lines simply remain buried under the road, which can cause difficulties when doing road construction.

A while back, there was one such incident in which the city (not the township) was doing some construction on Co. Rd. 81 and that construction was complicated by the presence of a gas line. Workers did not know whether the gas line was still in use, and could not continue their job until the owner of the line confirmed that

it was, in fact, a dead line. This situation caused a big mess, with traffic being re-directed around the hole in the asphalt and the work taking much longer than necessary.

The other board members were hesitant about adding such a clause, however, as they did not want to discourage companies from coming to the area to serve the residents. Board member Brenteson suggested looking into residents' interest in adding such a clause.

Sign Inventory

The state mandates that townships take an inventory of street signs, to make sure they are still in decent condition. The township will be hiring their own engineer to take on the task, at a bid of \$9,500.

The board agreed winter was the best time for this project, as other projects are put on hold until spring. They also considered using the winter months to ask for bids for road work and repairs. The township isn't looking to spend money right away, but hopes to have some extra time to review bids and budget for the work.

Food Shelf Distribution at Lions Park

Lately, the township has been offering the distribution of food shelf items at Lions Park. The distribution is zero-contact, with volunteers loading supplies into the trunks of cars. Anyone is welcome to come pick up food, without needing proof of residency or of need. Brenda Kimberly-Maas, town clerk, says the previous distributions have gone very well. The Lions Club is looking for volunteers to help at the next distribution on Dec. 21. The distribution will take place from 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Jan. 13 at 6 p.m. It will be the annual reorganizational meeting.



MARK HEDSTROM AND BRENDA KIMBERLY-MAAS did an "elbow-bump" in lieu of a handshake after clerk Kimberly-Maas swore Hedstrom in to the town board. (Photo by Katherine Cantin.)

Lupulin Wins at US Open Beer Championship

Submitted Article

Lupulin took home three wins in the 2020 U.S. Open Beer Championship, one of the top three beer competitions in the USA. Breweries from Luxembourg to Louisiana sent in more than 6,000 beers representing over 140 different styles for the 2020 U.S. Open Beer Championship. This competition is the only one to include beers from professional breweries and beers from gold medal winners from the National American Homebrewers Association Homebrew Competition.

Lupulin Brewing was recognized with a Gold Medal in the Bock beer-style category for its Doppelbock, a big, malty, German-style Doppelbock that has a caramel brown color and flavor.

Lupulin's Doppelbock beer also won a Bronze Medal at the Great American Beer Festival in 2020.

Lupulin Brewing was also recognized with a Bronze Medal in the Peanut Butter beer style category for CPB, a Chocolate Peanut Porter which



is a core beer at Lupulin Brewing.

Lastly, Lupulin Brewing was recognized with a Bronze Medal in the Barrel-Aged Fruit Beer style category for Rubuscubus, an 11% ABV Imperial Sweet Stout with Raspberries, Tahitian Vanilla

Beans & Lactose, aged for 15 months in Woodford Reserve Double Oaked Bourbon Barrels. This desert-in-a-bottle was a collaboration with Bottle Logic Brewing out of Anaheim California

"It's always an honor being recognized among the best breweries in the industry. Our team works very hard every day to make the best beer possible for our fans. It feels good when all of that hard work gets recognized by awards like this. We are truly grateful, and will continue to work hard to bring our fans our best," said Matt Schiller, VP of Operations & Co-Founder.

"It's extremely humbling to be recognized with these awards. We couldn't do any of it without the dedication and hardwork of our entire team or the incredible support of the beer drinking community," said Aaron Zierdt, Head Innova-

tion Brewer.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, judging was held in both the U.S. and Canada, at locations including Atlanta, GA; Oxford, Ohio; and Welland, Ontario. Judging in the U.S. Open Beer Championships is blind; judges know only the categories, not the names or locations of beers being judged.

NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY IS QUICKLY EVOLVING

According to data from the Newspaper Association of America (NAA), trends reflect that the print industry is evolving its business model in significant ways. Some of these ways include connecting with developments in technology, tapping into consumer behavior, understanding advertiser interest, and more in order to grow audiences and diversify its revenue stream.

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Big Lake News

Supporting local grocers facing COVID-19

By Katherine Cantin
Staff Writer

COVID-19 has changed a lot about the way people live their daily lives. One industry that has been impacted greatly are the local grocery stores. Local grocers may not be able to match the prices and contactless ease of the larger chain stores, but they are important businesses in the community, often being an anchor for other businesses.

COVID-19's Impact on Small Stores

Many local stores reported that business was booming right after the pandemic hit. Kathy Woolard, manager of the Santiago Country Store, said that customers were scared early in the year, driving them to stock up on extra supplies, and shop locally, where they knew the staff personally. Debbie Knutson, manager at Food Pride in Becker, noted that customers started to move more quickly through the store, wanting to limit their exposure as much as possible. Owner of the Briggs Lake General Store, Jen Wipper, said that it was difficult to keep the shelves stocked, as distributors ran short on items, and she had to source them herself.

Now that people have adjusted to the restrictions from COVID-19, all three of these stores reported that business has settled back to a more typical level. People are beginning to feel more comfortable returning to the big chain stores,

and are drawn in by special COVID-19 services, like curbside pickup.

COVID-19's Impact on Coborn's

Coborn's may be larger than the other local stores highlighted in this article, but they have become the go-to store in Big Lake, Clearwater, and other surrounding areas. Being a larger store with more resources, Coborn's is able to provide some much-needed resources to customers impacted by COVID-19, such as curbside pick-up.

One anonymous shopper decided to try the curbside pick-up service when she was sick with COVID-19.

"I used to think it was really lazy to have someone bring your food to you," she said. "But when I was sick it was great. I popped open my trunk and waited. They had my food out within minutes. And everything was fresh. It was clear the employees took the time to look over the produce and pick out good-quality items."

Dennis Host, media representative for Coborn's, said that the curbside pick-up service is a great way to add an extra layer of security to the shopping experience, and is available at all the Coborn's locations.

Coborn's is also making sure to sanitize their stores and shopping carts on a regular basis. They make sure all their patrons have masks while shopping. And they've provided signage on their floors direct-

ing customers to remain six feet apart.

Host says that the pandemic has really changed the way management communicates.

"We started holding daily meetings for the senior executives," Host said. "Now we are holding those meetings twice daily, just trying to keep up with all the changes."

He also said that demand for products is way up, as people choose to cook their meals at home instead of going out, kids are at home for lunch rather than at school, and customers experiment with baking and cooking to fill their free time.

The Importance of Local Grocery Stores

"Local grocery stores are the backbone of the community," said Julie Tesch, CEO of the research organization Center for Rural Policy and Development. Local stores do a lot to support their community. Residents tend to feel safer when they know who is stocking the shelves, the aisles serve as impromptu gathering places between neighbors, and many grocery stores contribute to the good of the community by sponsoring youth activities and town events. Local shops are also important for members of the community who don't have the means to travel to the larger department stores — they rely on local places to get their food and other necessities. "Having a grocery store is the sign of the thriving

community," Tesch stated.

Community Support

All five stores wished to extend a big thank you to their customers who continue to support them. Wipper noted that many customers didn't realize the Briggs Lake General Store had essential items, like bread and milk. She said she's grateful when people choose to buy these items locally.

Knutson said that she would like Food Pride customers to know that the staff is doing the best they can to mask up and ask other customers to wear masks in order to keep the shopping experience safe for everyone.

Woolard stated that she is incredibly thankful for the loyal customers who always support the Santiago Country Store.

Host, from Coborn's, encourages patrons to make use of the curbside services if they are feeling sick, to avoid spreading illness to the staff.

Whether one chooses to support the mom-and-pop shop on the corner, or makes use of Coborn's extra safety precautions, shopping local can have an awesome impact on the community during this difficult time. That money will channelled back into the community, and can help neighbors who have lost jobs or are stuck at home with an illness.

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Nineteen year-old dies in Mississippi River car accident

Submitted article

A 19-year-old man died early Sunday morning after a single-vehicle crash that caused the vehicle to leave the road and crash into the Mississippi River in Big Lake Township, according to Sherburne County Sheriff Joel Brott.

At around 1:40 a.m., driver Dashon James Rodriguez, 19, and passenger Devin Michael Moksnes, 22, were driving and missed a 90-degree curve as Rodriguez was going at a high rate of speed west-

bound in the 15500 block of Sherburne County Road 30, said Brott.

The vehicle went down an embankment and into the Mississippi River. Moksnes was able to survive and swim to shore. He went to a nearby house for help, but by the time deputies were able to locate the vehicle in 11 feet of water, Rodriguez was still inside and pronounced dead, said the sheriff.

Moksnes sustained minor injuries in the crash.

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Clear Lake Area News

Clear Lake Twp. to explore teleconferencing

By Mark Kolbinger
Contributing Writer

The Clear Lake Twp. Board met Tuesday in its final meeting of 2020, and supervisors discussed several items which will have an impact on residents for the upcoming year.

Deputy Clerk Gary Anderson presented the board with a pair of options for bringing the township up to date with teleconferencing capabilities for its meetings.

Zoom and *Webex* were the two platforms reviewed and they both offer similar capabilities and pay structures. With the new town hall and its upgraded electronics package and high speed internet, Anderson reported that the township is positioned favorably to be able to have a seamless transition to offering remote capabilities as needed.

Board Chair Gary Gray and Supervisor Bud Stimmmer voted to have Anderson make the final decision between the companies (less than \$20 difference in cost for the year) based on ease of use for the host, as well as the participants of the meeting. The financial impact will be less than \$200 for the year regardless of the platform. Supervisor Ross Imholte was unable to attend the meeting.

Gray reviewed the Sheriff's Report for the month which indicated 54 calls for service, seven each for medical and traffic stops.

Stimmmer updated the board on the parks and trail report, noting the lack of snow is allowing for continued use of the property by area residents.

"There's a lot of people walking on the trails," said Stimmmer. "There's been a lot of activity down here."

He also reported on a website inquiry the township received from resident James Kaye, who relayed concerns about some of the things going on at the park property.

Kaye reported that there had been issues with noise and disturbances, sometimes

after dark, which are violations of the township's ordinances on park operations. In addition, there were concerns about the dog park and loud barking coming from unattended dogs.

Stimmmer detailed plans for additional signage in the area and a complete review of the park's rules. Signs will be ordered to display that the trails are not to be used by motorized vehicles, including golf carts. With the sheriff's office satellite station coming soon to the building, Stimmmer further believes this will have an impact on people complying with the rules.

Engineer's Report

Twp. Engineer T. "Eyk" Vander Eyk presented several items to the board, including a resolution to finalize the title issues on Long Lake Lane. Eyk has been working on the situation for several months and spent time reviewing legal descriptions and right of way issues to ensure a comprehensive package that will settle the issue. As a result, several quitclaim deeds will be issued to area homeowners, while still ensuring there was still plenty of right of way available to the township for future roadway needs.

Eyk also reported on the water permits he had applied for over the past summer to install culverts to solve a water issue between several wetlands and Crescent Lake. After six months of review, the DNR finally emailed Eyk back and informed him the township doesn't need a permit to install the culverts, which he designed to allow for water management at the high water mark near 92nd Ave. and 97th St.

Gray indicated that the project will be reviewed next year for available funds after other roadway projects are completed in the spring.

The board next moved to approve Eyk's suggestion of having an as-built survey done for the town hall site to identify locations of electrical, sewer and internet infrastructure. Once the survey is complete, a drawing will be completed and this will be a

key piece of information to have in the future for items such as parking lot lighting installation.

Sherwood Shores

Chairman Gray then updated the board about the plans for public meetings to be held in early 2021 regarding the Sherwood Shores reclaim and re-surface project. Because of the scope of the project, which Gray called the biggest roadway improvements since he has been on the board, the township wants to present a plan for maximum transparency to the Clear Lake residents of the development. Letters will go out within the next several weeks to affected homeowners, who will be invited to a public meeting to ask questions or receive information about the project.

"We want people to be able to ask questions and understand what we are doing before equipment starts rolling in," said Gray.

Bids are expected to be let in early March and the township will decide upon the scope of the project and a timeline based on their available funds.

In other business, the board:

- Passed a resolution to identify the town hall as the polling location for the 2021 election;

- Discussed a plan to finalize details governing the use of teleconferencing for meetings, including public participation, in the first months of 2021;

- Approved a donation to the Sherburne History Center in the amount of \$500, as has been done in the past.

Palmer township requests speed study

By Mark Kolbinger
Contributing Writer

The Palmer Twp. Board met Monday evening and discussed several roadway concerns, including vehicle speeds near Palmer Park.

Chairman Mike Ganz reported that he has been working with County Administrator Bruce Messelt on a few transportation related issues within the township and as a result he was bringing forward a request for a speed study on Co. Rd. 6.

Currently, the speed limit is lowered after people pass the park and are already into town, whereas the consensus of the board is to have it lower before

LED stop signs.

Next, township resident John Schnell appeared before the board, asking for some additional maintenance on 109th Street. With the construction of a new home in the area, the truck traffic has created some ruts in a low spot of the roadway. The board responded that it does plan to address the area and it will most likely include raising the roadway and installing a ditch area for the water to collect. Supervisor Steve Demeules pointed out that the township included those findings when it commented on the original permit application.

Several culvert locations in the township were discussed and Supervisor Richard Larson will work with the township contractor to ensure that these are reviewed in the spring of the year with asphalt most likely being placed over them.

Larson also joked that he has not had any complaints yet this year regarding snow plowing, an obvious reference to the lack of snowfall.

Sheriff's/Fire Report

Ganz reviewed the activity report for the month of November, which reflected 52 calls for service, a decrease of 13 from a year ago. Traffic complaints continued to lead the pack in numbers of calls, as the report was sprinkled with suspicious activity, an ATV complaint and one report of unapproved parking. In a positive note, there were no reports of personal injuries, burglaries or thefts.

Fire Chief Ron Koren updated the board on his department's activity which included four medical calls within the township.

In addition, four new ice rescue suits were brought into service by the department as the current ones were getting old and

one had to be discarded. The board mused that despite their wishes to the contrary, the suits could soon be needed if people continue to try and use the thin ice for recreational activities.

In personnel news, Koren indicated that two new firefighters, one for each station, had been hired and will start after the first of the year.

Parks and Lakes

The board reviewed a list of the rules that govern activities at Palmer Park and discussed reviewing them at a future meeting to assess the need for potential local ordinances that could be easier to enforce. This will be an agenda item for an upcoming meeting.

Demeules explained to the board that there was no lake association meeting this month, but the privately run *Train on the Chain* was again a success.

Final Actions

In their final actions of 2020, the board designated members for the County's Planning Advisory Board and also set the polling location for 2021.

Ganz nominated Demeules to continue as the planning board representative and Demeules in turn nominated Ganz to be the alternate. The motion passed unanimously.

Clerk Kelly McCann then asked the board to consider a resolution naming the town hall as the polling location for all 2021 elections. The state now requires each unit of local government to designate polling places on a yearly basis. The board concurred with McCann and passed a motion reflecting her wishes before adjourning their final meeting of 2020.



people arrive to the entrance to the park.

To that end, the board unanimously approved resolution 20-25 which requests a formal speed study by Sherburne County with the hope that it will meet MnDOT criteria to extend the lower speed limit in the area of 47-1/2 St. to 42nd St.

Ganz then reported that he has been working with commissioner Felix Schmiesing to propose safety enhancements for the CSAH 20 and CSAH 3 intersection, and he is hopeful for a favorable resolution in the near future that may include the installation of

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See more
Editorials / Opinions
on page 11

Editorials/Opinions

Palmer Family Blesses Others

“In darkness God’s truth shines most clear.”
- Corrie Ten Boom

2020 has been a taxing year. I have made a point to try and find the good among the negativity that has plagued us since the onset of COVID.

Some days, it’s a stretch for me to remain upbeat. I lost my brother Roger (Erickson) in August at age 67 after a long health battle. I lost my uncle Wally (Erickson) unexpectedly at age 89 to COVID in October. Wally was 89, yet he was vibrant and full of life. He was like a second father to me after I lost my dad 22 years ago to leukemia at age 29. Wally walked me down the aisle when I got married at 44. Wally was the person who was always helping at church and taking people to doctor appointments. He had an extremely contagious and hearty laugh and did so easily and often. Despite being raised in Sherburne County during the great Depression and experiencing a very challenging childhood, Wally always kept a positive outlook. Wally inspired me to remain hopeful.

Despite the dark cloud that has loomed over much of 2020, I am still counting my blessings.

2020 has taught me to cherish my loved ones. Despite being a year filled with grief upon grief for my family, I am encouraged by the fact that God knows our needs. My faith in God is the reason I have been able to carry on.

One local family has gone out of their way to encourage others this Christmas. The Kuphals (Jenny, Tom, Aiden, Cade and Sage) are in their second year of assembling and selling bird seed wreaths. They sell for \$10. The Kuphal family went above and beyond by delivering the wreaths, as well!

The Kuphal’s live near



*By Mary Nehring,
Contributing Writer*

Palmer and they love birds. The kids’ grandmother feeds the birds all year and they love trying to attract different birds to their home on Briggs Lake.

Jenny explained how the idea to make the wreaths came to fruition. Jenny homeschools her boys and wanted to teach the children about cost and profit.

Jenny shared: “Our family really loves making the wreaths together, and



UNIQUE WREATH MAKING. Aiden (12), Cade (5) and Sage (9) Kuphal have enjoyed assembling bird seed wreaths at their home on Briggs Lake in the weeks leading up to Christmas. The family was inundated with orders for the creations. (Submitted photo.)

delivering them has been a fun way to meet our neighbors in the process!”

The family used Facebook to get the word out and anticipated they may get 5 or 10 orders. They were shocked at how many people responded wanting wreaths.

Local residents’ support of the family wreath

business last Christmas allowed the children to open their own bank accounts and start saving money.

The family also decided to give a portion of their profits to a family friend in need of a medical alert dog to help with a seizure disorder.

I am touched by this family’s gesture to help a family friend by sharing some of their profits.

I think one silver lining of COVID is that it has brought families together. People are home more and enjoying projects that had fallen by the wayside due to busy schedules. The spike in family activities conjures up fond memories of how we took more time doing simple things while growing up. It has forced us to slow down. Maybe that’s not such a bad thing. A jeweler friend of mine told me he has been very busy this Christmas season. Ralph Stuart shared these thoughts: “I have noticed this year that rather than buying new jewelry, more people are repurposing old family heirlooms. Possibly because finances are tight, but also because more people are looking inward than in previous years.”

I know I am looking inward more than in previous Christmas seasons. I am making an effort to be the reason someone believes in good people.

Personally, I find doing a good deed not only blesses the recipient; it also blesses me.

There are plenty of ways people can give back in our communities. We can donate to Toys For Tots or the local food shelf. We can ring the bell for the Salvation Army. Sign up at: registertoring.com.

Even holding the door for someone can brighten someone’s day.

I plan to be on the lookout for how I can bless someone this holiday season. Will you join me?

Senate Republicans Approve Bipartisan COVID Emergency Relief Package



*By Mary Kiffmeyer
State Senator*

to apply. Assistance will be broken down as follows:

- Businesses that are down 30% in revenue and have 0-20 employees will receive a \$15k check
- Businesses with 21-100 employees will receive \$25k
- Businesses with 101-300 employees will receive \$35k
- Business with more than 300 employees will receive \$45k
- Business grants:**

\$14 million is approved for business relief grants available through DEED. These grants are aimed at businesses like movie theaters and convention centers.

County-distributed relief: \$114.8 million in relief grants will be distributed to counties based on a per capita formula. Counties will then allocate that money to businesses that were directly or indirectly impacted by the executive order. Counties will have

wide latitude, but funding must be distributed by March 15.

All relief funds must be used to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility bills, and other similar expenses that occur in the regular course of business.

The bill also extends existing unemployment insurance benefits for an additional 13 weeks.

On Monday, I also voted once again to end the governor’s emergency powers. At the beginning of the outbreak, emergency powers were necessary to prepare Minnesota for a pandemic outbreak we knew nothing about. But he has used those powers to arbitrarily exercise control over the state and our economy, choosing which businesses must close and which must open; choosing which activities you can participate in and which you can’t; even choosing how many family members you can have over at your house. The founders never intended for one man to have so much control. It is time for him to give up his powers and begin working with the legislature on how best to manage the state’s response to the pandemic.

If you have any questions or feedback, please reach out to me any time at sen.mary.kiffmeyer@senate.mn.

It is a privilege to serve as your state Senator!

Minnesota House Send Business Relief Bill to Governor’s Desk



*By Rep. 30A
Paul Novotny*

The Minnesota House of Representatives approved a \$216 million business relief package late Monday evening, sending to the Governor’s desk a bill to help small businesses and workers impacted by Governor Walz’s latest restrictions on businesses. Walz has twice delayed an announcement on whether the restrictions first announced on November 18th will continue past their December 18 expiration.

“This bill will help businesses in our community stay afloat and keep our neighbors employed,” said Rep. Paul Novotny, R-Elk River. “The package is designed to get dollars to struggling businesses as quickly as possible and includes money to counties who can target the relief at those who need it most. However, this legislation is not a silver bullet and will not cover all the losses that our local economy has suffered because of Governor Walz’s shutdowns.

That’s why I will continue to advocate for an end to the peacetime emergency and restore the legislature’s constitutionally designated role as a coequal branch of government.”

The business relief package includes direct grants to businesses, license and other fee relief, and a 13 week extension of unemployment insurance for workers. The grants are broken into three categories aimed at prioritizing speed;

The first category will be \$88 million in grants administered automatically by

the Department of Revenue (DOR) to restaurants, bars, gyms, bowling alleys, and other businesses who have seen losses of more than 30% compared to last year.

The second category is approximately \$14 million administered by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) for movie theaters and large convention centers, and

The third is \$112 million in grants that will be administered at the county level. The county-based grants are intended to help additional businesses impacted by the recent closures that do not qualify for the first two grant categories, however businesses who receive grants from the DOR are not precluded from receiving county-based grants.

Gov. Walz announced the current restrictions on November 18th, which kicked in just two days later.

Government Shutdown Imminent

Last week, I wrote about the state of our federal government’s funding. While Congress advanced another week of funding and additional coronavirus aid is still being negotiated, we are still heading towards a government shutdown on December 18.

Instead of coming together to produce a non-partisan deal that provides our nation with the support it needs – for our small businesses, those out of work due to the virus, and those most in need of assistance – Speaker Nancy Pelosi continues to play politics with aid that is sorely needed by millions of Americans.

I will continue to keep you all updated on the progress. As a Representative in Congress, your feedback is critical to my votes and actions. Please let me know your thoughts on government funding, and the importance of additional coronavirus aid.

Drug Free Communities

Wright County received some outstanding news last week: a \$125,000 investment in the Mentor-



*By Congressman
Tom Emmer*

ship, Education, and Drug Awareness (MEADA) Coalition of Wright County. The coalition will use the funds to assist in their mission to conduct local efforts to combat drug abuse.

With the grant funding, the coalition will engage young adults in sixth through 12th grade with community engagement and events. I am grateful the administration invested this money in our community. By ensuring our youth are drug free, we can be certain the future of our nation is strong.

In order for these young Minnesotans to thrive, it’s our responsibility to guarantee a safe and

healthy environment for them.

Jim Ramstad

This year, we lost a giant in Minnesota politics. A public servant who was an outstanding husband, father, mental health advocate, friend, and legislator. Rep. Jim Ramstad was a man that I looked up to, and wanted my own service in Congress to reflect. I was saddened to hear of his passing, and continue to pray for his loved ones as they mourn his loss.

As a delegation, my colleagues and I joined together to introduce legislation that would rename the Wayzata Post Office after Jim. Renaming the Wayzata post office for Rep. Ramstad will continue to secure his rightful place in Minnesota history. To me, Jim was a friend, a role model, and an incredible advocate for Minnesotans. I model my work today after his work on mental health care.

National Guard

I am saying a heartfelt “thank you” to our Minnesota National Guard this year. This past Sunday was the National Guard’s 384th


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Letters to the editor and editorials are an important part of the *PATRIOT Newspaper*. Our readers share a wide range of perspectives on current issues.

Letters that are well-written, have a clear opinion and responsive to current events are more likely to be chosen for publication. The *PATRIOT* also seeks to publish letters from a range of readers of diverse backgrounds.

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Columns are typically written by *PATRIOT* staffers and/or seated politicians who have stakes in the communities of the *PATRIOT* readership.



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1			3			5	8	9
						1		
9				2	3			
				5		2		4
				6			5	
		3			4	8	9	
	2		6					
4		7						3
	5	9			8			2

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

2	4	7	8	6	1	6	9	9
8	8	9	9	6	2	4	1	7
9	1	6	4	7	9	8	2	8
1	6	8	7	2	4	8	9	9
8	9	4	1	9	8	7	6	2
7	9	2	8	9	6	1	7	8
4	7	8	2	1	9	9	8	6
9	2	1	6	8	7	9	8	1
6	8	9	9	7	4	2	7	1

ANSWER:

This Weeks Calendar Events:

- Sun. - Dec. 20, 2020:**
- American Poet Laureate Establishment: 35th Anniversary
- Mon. - Dec. 21, 2020:**
- Winter Begins (12/21/2020-3-20/2021)
 - First Crossword Puzzle: Anniversary, 1913
 - Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs Film Premiere: Anniversary, 1937
- Tues. - Dec. 22, 2020:**
- Capricorn, The Goat (12/22/2020-01/19/2021)
- Wed. - Dec. 23, 2020:**
- Festivus
 - First Non Stop Flight Around the World without Refueling: Anniversary, 1987
 - Metric Conversion Act: Anniversary, 1975
 - Transistor Unveiled: Anniversary, 1947
- Thurs. - Dec. 24, 2020:**
- Christmas Eve
 - National Eggnog Day
- Fri. - Dec. 25, 2020:**
- Christmas
- Sat. - Dec. 26, 2020:**
- Boxing Day (Canada & UK)
 - Kwanzaa (12/26/2020-01/01/2021)



RSVP / The Volunteer Bridge
Greeter at Sherburne Government Center
Individuals are still in need of services at the Government Center, especially given the times we are in. Help give back to your community in a big way by volunteering at the front desk of the Sherburne Government Center. Duties include answering the phone, directing patrons on where to go, and answering questions. What a fantastic way to help your local government!
Support CAER Food Shelf from Your Home!
If you have extra time on your hands and want to give back from the safety of your home, then we have the opportunity for you! Help the food shelf in Elk River by sewing masks, collecting empty egg carts to donate, or be an online ambassador and spread CAER's mission to others. Many options are still available among these times.
Food Rescue Volunteer with the Big Lake Community Food Shelf
Grocery stores in our community are so generous and have been donating food items that are no longer able to be sold to the Big Lake Community Food Shelf (BLCFS). Be part of the team that helps get food items from local retailers such as Osego Target and Monticello Cub Foods and deliver the food to the BLCFS so people in need have meals. Ability to drive the BLCFS cargo van is necessary.
If you are interested in volunteering in these or other opportunities, please contact:
AmeriCorps RSVP
Heather Brooks
763-635-4505
Heather.Brooks@ci.stcloud.mn.us

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Becker American Legion Auxiliary

Meetings are held the second Tues. of every month at the old fire hall in Becker, 7 pm. Paula Hinds 763-262-6679.

Becker American Legion

Becker Legion meets the second Tues. of every month at 7 pm at Becker Legion (old fire hall).

Becker AA Meeting

Area 35 Alcoholics Anonymous District 5 meets Thurs. at 8 pm at Church of Mary of the Visitation, 12100 Sherburne Ave., Becker. Steve 612-889-1000.

Becker Boy Scout Pack 92 Cardboard, Paper & Aluminum

Bring your aluminum cans to the trailer located near Becker True Value & paper & cardboard recyclables to the dumpsters near the same location the first Sat. of every month. There will be a Scout there to help unload between 9 am-12 pm.

Becker Evangelical Ministries

Every Wed., 6-7:30 pm at Becker Middle School. GYM 45 - growing young men. HIS KIDZ - K-3rd grade. G.I.R.L.S. GROUP - 4th & 5th grade girls. Becker Free Church (763) 261-4125 or register online at WWW.BECKER-FREECHURCH.ORG (under Youth Connection click "Event Registration").

Becker Food Shelf

Open Tues., 9-11 am & Thurs. 4-6 pm. The food shelf is located 12060 Sherburne Ave. in City Hall. 763-261-4612.

Becker Lions Club

Meetings are held the second Mon. each month at 7 pm at Pebble Creek Bar & Grill. Dale Seavert 320-290-5342.

Becker Lions Collecting Items To Recycle

Items are: eye glasses, hearing aids, cell phones & printer ink cartridges. Collection boxes are located at the Becker Community Center (entryway) & Insight Eye care.

Becker Sons of the American Legion Squadron 193

Meets the third Tues. of each month at 7 pm at Becker Legion (old fire hall). Looking for new members. Commander John Fischbach 320-249-0579.

Becker Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Meeting

The monthly meetings are held 6 pm the third Thurs. of the month at Becker City Hall. 320-980-2752 or see the state website at www.beyondtheyellowribbon.org.

Big Lake OPEN AA Meetings

Mon., 7pm at the Church of Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church, Big Lake. Big Book Study, Handicap Accessible. Questions? Contact: Rob, 763-218-5328.

Big Lake Al-Anon

Meetings held Mon., 7pm

at the Church of Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church, 440 Lake Street N, Big Lake. (church basement). Contact Laurie, 763-218-5330.

The Big Lake American Legion Auxiliary

Meets the first Tues. of each month at 6:30 pm. in the Senior Citizen Center at Big Lake City Hall. Please contact Kathy at 763-263-6093 for membership information.

Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon

The Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon meets at 6:30pm on the third Mon., of each month in the Community Room adjacent to the Big Lake Police Dept. & the Big Lake Library.

Big Lake Community Food Shelf

The Big Lake Community Food Shelf hours of service are Mon. & Thurs. 5:30-7:30 pm & Wed. 9-11 am. We also serve clients every "Freebie Friday" from 10:30-11:30 am., providing produce, dairy, & bakery goods. To volunteer call 763-263-2432 or www.blcfs.org.

The Big Lake Lions

Looking for community minded people to join our organization. If interested in getting involved with our organization, please contact any Lion member or send a note to P.O. Box 128, Big Lake, MN 55309 or 763-263-2218.

Big Lake Lioness

If you are interested in joining an organization dedicated to service within their community, come visit us the second Mon. of every month at the Lions Park on CR 5 in Big Lake. Social starts at 6:30 pm & the meeting begins at 7pm. All are welcome to attend.

Big Lake Lioness MITTEN TREE

The Big Lake Lioness Club would like to remind everyone of the MITTEN TREE at Riverwood Bank in Big Lake. Donations of hats, mittens, and scarves will be accepted until December 31st at which time the donations will be collected and distributed to all elementary schools in Big Lake and Becker.

These donated items will help keep children who don't have warm weather items this winter, warmer during our cold winter months. Your generosity during this time is greatly appreciated. We look forward to better serving our community in 2021. **WISHING ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND SAFE NEW YEAR!**

The Big Lake Woman of Today

Hold a monthly general meeting at Senior Activity Center located in the Big Lake City Office Building on the 3rd Thurs. of the month @ 7pm. Contact Natalie @ 612-518-3504 or find us at FaceBook or www.biglakewomenof today.webs.com.

Clear Lake Legion

Meets the second Tues. of the month at Palmer Twp. Hall. The Legion will meet at 7 pm. New members are al-

ways welcome. Bud Stimmeler at 320-761-5793.

Clearwater AA/Alanon

Meeting is at 7 pm, Sun. night at Clearwater United Methodist Church, 405 Main St. Clearwater. 320-310-1399 AA or 320-558-6613 for Al-Anon.

Clearwater AA Meeting

Mon. nights, 7 pm at Church of St. Luke, 17545 Huber Ave. NW, Clearwater. 320-558-2124.

Clearwater Legion

Clearwater Legion meetings are held the second Thurs. of the month. Auxiliary 6:30 pm, S.A.L. at 7 pm, Legion 7:30 pm. Senior Lunch first Thurs. of the month at noon at Clearwater Legion, Clearwater.

Clearwater-Clear Lake Food Shelf

Open Mon. 5:30-7 pm, Tues. 9-11 am & 6-8 pm, Wed. 3-5 pm & in the brown Lions Community Building beneath the water tower in Clearwater. We service residents of Clearwater & Clear Lake.

Clearwater Narcotics Anonymous

Meetings are at 7 pm, Wed. night at Clearwater United Methodist Church, 405 Main St. Clearwater. 612-607-4484.

Dementia Support Group

The fourth Wed. of each month at 10-11 am, Room 19 at Becker Community Center, 11500 Sherburne Ave. No cost to join. Tami Kolbinger at 612-590-2449 or email tkolbinger@gmail.com.

FREE - Advocates for Independence

First & third Wed. of the month 2-4 pm at Independent Lifestyles, 215 North Benton Drive, Sauk Rapids. Make a difference in your community for people w/disabilities. Michele Pelka 320-281-2042. All abilities are welcome to attend.

Free Grace Recovery

Sun. 6-8 pm at Clear Lake Town Hall, 7684 1st Ave. W. Clear Lake. A light meal will be served at 6 pm. Everyone is welcome. Justin or Renee at 612-384-9069.

FREE - The Saint Cloud Area Parkinson's Disease

(PD) Support Group invites you to "Coffee & Conversation" the last Wed. monthly at 10 am at Edgewood Living 677 Brianna Drive, Sartell. Meetings are open to those diagnosed w/ PD, their families, caregivers, & the general public. Group provides support, education, & awareness about the disease. Bobbi 320-281-3343.

God's Grub Community Meal

Second Sun. of every month, 4:30-6:30 pm. Saron Lutheran, Big Lake, 311 Lake Street South. Served curbside, ready to go.

Live Nativity at Tri-County Alliance Church, Clearwater

Sun., Dec. 20 at 5 pm. Listen inside your car on the radio or socially distance outside.

Special reading, live animals, stable, characters, music, & lighting. Event will be video recorded & made available at teachurch.com. Tri-County Alliance Church, 8464 160th Street, Clearwater.

Living with Parkinson's Under The Age of 60

We meet the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30-8pm at Saron Lutheran Church, 311 Lake Street So., Big Lake, MN 55309.

Any questions, please call Camille Johnson at 763-350-7401.

Mental Health Discussion Group

Meets Mon., 6-7 pm at Independent Lifestyles, 215 N. Benton Dr., Sauk Rapids. This is a free group, everyone is welcome. Ricky 320-281-2025.

Parkinson's Disease Support Group

Meets third Mon. of the month, from 1-2:30 pm at IL-ICIL Independent Lifestyles, 215 N. Benton Dr., Sauk Rapids. This free group provides support, education, & awareness about the disease. Independent Lifestyles at 320-529-9000.

Rivers of Hope

Advocates for ending family violence, is a non-profit community based agency offering advocacy, support, education & referral services for victims of family violence. Working in partnerships w/ schools, law enforcement, social service agencies & the court system in Sherburne & Wright Co. 763-295-3433 or 1-800-439-2642 or info@riversofhope.org. Free & confidential. Phones answered 24/7.

Snake River Free Mission Church Upcoming Events

Hymn sings are held every other month on the second Sun. at 4:30 pm. Check Snake River Church FaceBook page for updates.

5 mi. N of Hwy 10 on CR 11, 1.5 mi. E n CR4 & then L on 180th Ave (8940 180th Ave), Becker. Mary 612-219-8648.

Volunteer as a Foster Grandparent

Local schools & organizations need caring adults like you! Orientation, training & ongoing support are provided. Pat Braun 612-390-0617.

Wright County Community Action

You have been affected & are having or are anticipating having difficulty paying your mortgage, WCCA is here to help you navigate your options & keep your home. To speak with a homeownership advisor, call Wright County Community Action at 320-963-6500 ext. 238 today. Services are unbiased, confidential & free of charge.

Young @ Heart

Group meeting at Rejoice Lutheran Church in Clearwater, will be canceled until further notice. We will wait until the state allows churches & other gatherings to begin & then look at our group & make a decision.



Becker Public Library

Library Hours:
Current/2021
Mon 2-8pm/2-7pm
Tue 10am-6pm/10am-5pm
Wed 2-6pm/10am-5pm
Thur 2-8pm/2-7pm
Fri 2-5pm/2-5pm
Sat 10am-1pm/10am-1pm

Big Lake Public Library

Library Hours:
Current/2021
Mon 1-7pm/1-6pm
Tue 10am-1pm/10am-2pm
Wed 1-7pm/1-7pm
Thur 2-6pm/2-6pm
Fri 10am-5pm/10am-5pm
Sat 10am-1pm/10am-1pm

Clearwater Public Library

Library Hours:
Current
Mon 1-4pm
Tue 10am-1pm/3-6pm
Wed 3-8pm
Thur 10am-1pm
Fri 3-6pm
Sat 10-1pm

Becker Area Senior Center (BASC) Upcoming Events

The Becker Area Senior Center will soon be relocating to the Becker Community Center. We will be opening under COVID-19 regulations. **Watch this Patriot column or www.beckercommunitycenter.com for more information and EXACT OPENING DATE.**
BASC 763-528-0643
Email: basc.becker@gmail.com

January - Sherburne County Health & Human Services - Classes are as follows:

WIC (Women, Infants & Children) is for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, recently had a baby, infants and children to their 5th birthday. WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, healthy foods and referrals to health services/community resources. The service is free, and you or your children may be eligible. For more information, please call 763-765-4116 or 1-800-433-5239, or check out the website <http://www.co.sherburne.mn.us/hhs/wic.php>. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in the administration of its programs. WIC is an equal opportunity provider.
Immunization Tuesdays
Sherburne County's Immunization Clinic offers free or low cost immunizations for children 18 years of age or younger and uninsured or underinsured adults 19 years and older in Minnesota who meet eligibility guidelines on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call for an appointment or more information, 763-765-4000 or 1-800-433-5239.

Merry Christmas to my friends at BASC! Have a happy and healthy New Year!

— From Jan S.



Becker / Big Lake Meals on Wheels

CATHOLIC CHARITIES / MEALS ON WHEELS
DECEMBER 28 - JANUARY 1
During this COVID-19 pandemic
Mon-Fri meals are:
"What's on the Menu - Frozen Meals"
Frozen meals are available for weekends.
1% milk is served with every meal.
Menu subject to change.
Call 763-856-4082 for more information.
Suggested contribution for person 60+ & volunteers is \$4.25 - \$8.

Public Notices

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

Date: November 5, 2020

YOU ARE NOTIFIED THAT:

1. Default has occurred in the conditions of that certain mortgage that was executed by and among Elizabeth Nelson and Chad Nelson, as mortgagors, and Granite Community Bank, as mortgagee, which mortgage is dated May 15, 2019 and was recorded on May 16, 2019, as document number 871974, with the Office of the County Recorder in and for Sherburne County, Minnesota.

2. The mortgage has been assigned as follows: n/a

3. The original principal amount secured by the mortgage was: \$138,400.00.

4. No action or proceeding at law is now pending to recover the debt secured by the mortgage, or any part thereof.

5. The holder of the mortgage has complied with all conditions precedent to acceleration of the debt secured by the mortgage and foreclosure of the mortgage and all notice and other requirements of applicable statutes.

6. As of the date of this notice, the amount due on the mortgage, and taxes, if any, paid by the holder of the mortgage is: \$141,269.46.

7. Pursuant to the power of sale in the mortgage, the mortgage will be foreclosed on the land described as follows:

Lot 7, Block 2, Parkside, Sherburne County, Minnesota
Street Address: 7633 Church Street, Clear Lake, Minnesota 55319

Tax Parcel Identification Number: 70-415-0235

and will be sold by the Sheriff of Sherburne County, Minnesota at public auction on Thursday, December 31, 2020, at 10:00 o'clock a.m., at the Office of the Sherburne County Sheriff, Sherburne County Government Center, 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, Minnesota 55330.

8. The time allowed by law for redemption of mortgages or mortgagors' personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months after the date of sale.

9. The date on or before which the mortgagors must vacate the property if the mortgage is not reinstated under Minn. Stat. § 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under Minn. Stat. § 580.23 is July 1, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. If the foregoing date is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, then the date to vacate is the next business day at 11:59 p.m.

10. THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGORS OR THE MORTGAGORS' PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINN. STAT. § 582.032 DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Granite Community Bank, Mortgagee
LATHROP GPM LLP
By: /s/ Andrew J. Steil
Andrew J. Steil #387048
1010 West St. Germain Street
Suite 500
St. Cloud, MN 56301
(320) 252-4414

Attorneys for Granite Community Bank

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/14/20; 11/21/20; 11/28/20; 12/05/20; 12/12/20; 12/19/20.)

NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT LIEN FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION

THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that default has been made in the terms and conditions of the Declaration of Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., (hereinafter the "Declaration") recorded in the office of the County Recorder of Sherburne County, Minnesota on March 23, 2001, as Document No. 432039, which covers the following property:

Legal Description: Lot 36, Block 2, Norway Ridge, CIC No. 20, Sherburne County, Minnesota
Property Address: 12668 3rd Avenue North, Zimmerman, Minnesota 55398
PID: 95-446-0236

THAT pursuant to said Declaration, there is claimed to be due and owing as of October 27, 2020, from Deborah Ann Scully, title holder, to Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., a Minnesota non-profit corporation, the amount of \$17,271.26, plus additional assessments and other amounts that may have accrued since the date of this notice, including the costs of collection and foreclosure;

THAT prior to the commencement of this foreclosure proceeding, Lienor complied with all notice requirements as required by statute; that no action or proceeding has been instituted at law

or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said lien, or any part thereof;

THAT the owner has not been released from her financial obligation to pay said amount;

THAT pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 515B.3-116, said debt creates a lien upon said premises in favor of Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., as evidenced by a lien statement dated September 29, 2020, recorded on October 5, 2020, in the office of the Sherburne County Recorder as Document No. 901804;

THAT pursuant to the power of sale granted by the owners in taking title to the premises subject to said Declaration, said lien will be foreclosed by the sale of said property by the sheriff of said County at the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office, 13880 Business Center Drive NW, in the City of Elk River, County Sherburne, State of Minnesota, on January 6, 2021, at 10 a.m., at public auction to the highest bidder, for cash, to pay the amount then due. The time allowed by law for redemption by the unit owners, their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of said sale.

DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: The date on or before which the owner must vacate the property if the account is not brought current or the property redeemed under Minn. Stat. § 580.23 is July 6, 2021. If the foregoing date is a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, then the date to vacate is the next business day at 11:59 p.m.

REDEMPTION NOTICE

THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE OWNER, THE OWNER'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

NORWAY RIDGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC., Lienor

Dated: October 27, 2020
By /s/ Nigel H. Mendez
Nigel H. Mendez (0347917)
Carlson & Associates, Ltd.
1052 Centerville Circle
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127
(651) 287-8640

ATTORNEY FOR NORWAY RIDGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC.

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/21/20; 11/28/20; 12/05/20; 12/12/20; 12/19/20; 12/26/20.)

NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT LIEN FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION

THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that default has been made in the terms and conditions of the Declaration of Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., (hereinafter the "Declaration") recorded in the office of the County Recorder of Sherburne County, Minnesota on March 23, 2001, as Document No. 432039, which covers the following property:

Legal Description: Lot 59, Block 2, Norway Ridge, CIC No. 20, Sherburne County, Minnesota
Property Address: 26287 3rd Street West, Zimmerman, Minnesota 55398
PID: 95-446-0259

THAT pursuant to said Declaration, there is claimed to be due and owing as of October 27, 2020, from Sherry J. Johnson, title holder, to Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., a Minnesota non-profit corporation, the amount of \$18,335, plus additional assessments and other amounts that may have accrued since the date of this notice, including the costs of collection and foreclosure;

THAT prior to the commencement of this foreclosure proceeding, Lienor complied with all notice requirements as required by statute; that no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said lien, or any part thereof;

THAT the owner has not been released from her financial obligation to pay said amount;

THAT pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 515B.3-116, said debt creates a lien upon said premises in favor of Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., as evidenced by a lien statement dated September 29, 2020, recorded on October 5, 2020, in the office of the Sherburne County Recorder as Document No. 901796;

THAT pursuant to the power of sale granted by the owners in taking title to the premises subject to said Declaration, said lien will be foreclosed by the sale of said property by the sheriff of said County at the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office, 13880 Business Center Drive NW, in the City of Elk River, County Sherburne, State of Minnesota, on January 6, 2021, at 10 a.m., at public auction to the highest bidder, for cash, to pay the amount then due. The time

allowed by law for redemption by the unit owners, their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of said sale.

DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: The date on or before which the owner must vacate the property if the account is not brought current or the property redeemed under Minn. Stat. § 580.23 is July 6, 2021. If the foregoing date is a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, then the date to vacate is the next business day at 11:59 p.m.

REDEMPTION NOTICE

THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE OWNER, THE OWNER'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

NORWAY RIDGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC., Lienor

Dated: October 27, 2020
By /s/ Nigel H. Mendez
Nigel H. Mendez (0347917)
Carlson & Associates, Ltd.
1052 Centerville Circle
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127
(651) 287-8640

ATTORNEY FOR NORWAY RIDGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC.

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/21/20; 11/28/20; 12/05/20; 12/12/20; 12/19/20; 12/26/20.)

NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT LIEN FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION

THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that default has been made in the terms and conditions of the Declaration of Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., (hereinafter the "Declaration") recorded in the office of the County Recorder of Sherburne County, Minnesota on March 23, 2001, as Document No. 432039, which covers the following property:

Legal Description: Lot 2, Block 1, Norway Ridge Second Addition, CIC No. 20, Sherburne County, Minnesota

Property Address: 26284 2nd Street West, Zimmerman, Minnesota 55398
PID: 95-456-0104

THAT pursuant to said Declaration, there is claimed to be due and owing as of October 27, 2020, from Tamra L. Jacobson, title holder, to Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., a Minnesota non-profit corporation, the amount of \$20,785.89, plus additional assessments and other amounts that may have accrued since the date of this notice, including the costs of collection and foreclosure;

THAT prior to the commencement of this foreclosure proceeding, Lienor complied with all notice requirements as required by statute; that no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said lien, or any part thereof;

THAT the owner has not been released from her financial obligation to pay said amount;

THAT pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 515B.3-116, said debt creates a lien upon said premises in favor of Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., as evidenced by a lien statement dated September 29, 2020, recorded on October 5, 2020, in the office of the Sherburne County Recorder as Document No. 901787;

THAT pursuant to the power of sale granted by the owners in taking title to the premises subject to said Declaration, said lien will be foreclosed by the sale of said property by the sheriff of said County at the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office, 13880 Business Center Drive NW, in the City of Elk River, County Sherburne, State of Minnesota, on January 6, 2021, at 10 a.m., at public auction to the highest bidder, for cash, to pay the amount then due. The time allowed by law for redemption by the unit owners, their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of said sale.

DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: The date on or before which the owner must vacate the property if the account is not brought current or the property redeemed under Minn. Stat. § 580.23 is July 6, 2021. If the foregoing date is a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, then the date to vacate is the next business day at 11:59 p.m.

REDEMPTION NOTICE

THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE OWNER, THE OWNER'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL

DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

NORWAY RIDGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC., Lienor

Dated: October 27, 2020
By /s/ Nigel H. Mendez
Nigel H. Mendez (0347917)
Carlson & Associates, Ltd.
1052 Centerville Circle
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127
(651) 287-8640

ATTORNEY FOR NORWAY RIDGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC.

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/21/20; 11/28/20; 12/05/20; 12/12/20; 12/19/20; 12/26/20.)

NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT LIEN FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION

THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that default has been made in the terms and conditions of the Declaration of Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., (hereinafter the "Declaration") recorded in the office of the County Recorder of Sherburne County, Minnesota on March 23, 2001, as Document No. 432039, which covers the following property:

Legal Description: Lot 7, Block 2, Norway Ridge, Common Interest Community No. 20, Sherburne County, Minnesota
Property Address: 26268 3rd Street West, Zimmerman, Minnesota 55398
PID: 95-446-0207

THAT pursuant to said Declaration, there is claimed to be due and owing as of October 27, 2020, from David Greenlun and Melissa Greenlun, title holders, to Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., a Minnesota non-profit corporation, the amount of \$17,780.18, plus additional assessments and other amounts that may have accrued since the date of this notice, including the costs of collection and foreclosure;

THAT prior to the commencement of this foreclosure proceeding, Lienor complied with all notice requirements as required by statute; that no action or proceeding has been instituted at law or otherwise to recover the debt secured by said lien, or any part thereof;

THAT the owners have not been released from their financial obligation to pay said amount;

THAT pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 515B.3-116, said debt creates a lien upon said premises in favor of Norway Ridge Townhomes Association, Inc., as evidenced by a lien statement dated September 29, 2020, recorded on October 5, 2020, in the office of the Sherburne County Recorder as Document No. 901799;

THAT pursuant to the power of sale granted by the owners in taking title to the premises subject to said Declaration, said lien will be foreclosed by the sale of said property by the sheriff of said County at the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office, 13880 Business Center Drive NW, in the City of Elk River, County Sherburne, State of Minnesota, on January 6, 2021, at 10 a.m., at public auction to the highest bidder, for cash, to pay the amount then due. The time allowed by law for redemption by the unit owners, their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of said sale.

DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: The date on or before which the owner must vacate the property if the account is not brought current or the property redeemed under Minn. Stat. § 580.23 is July 6, 2021. If the foregoing date is a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, then the date to vacate is the next business day at 11:59 p.m.

REDEMPTION NOTICE

THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE OWNER, THE OWNER'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

NORWAY RIDGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC., Lienor

Dated: October 27, 2020
By /s/ Nigel H. Mendez
Nigel H. Mendez (0347917)
Carlson & Associates, Ltd.
1052 Centerville Circle
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127
(651) 287-8640

ATTORNEY FOR NORWAY RIDGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC.

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/21/20; 11/28/20; 12/05/20; 12/12/20; 12/19/20; 12/26/20.)

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

Date: November 23, 2020

YOU ARE NOTIFIED THAT:

1. Default has occurred in the

conditions of that certain mortgage that was executed by and between Paul J. McMahon, mortgagor, and Sherburne State Bank, 12500 Sherburne Avenue, P.O. Box 428, Becker, Minnesota 55308, mortgagee, dated July 13, 2016 and filed for record on July 15, 2016, as document number 823367, with the Office of the County Recorder in and for Sherburne County, Minnesota.

2. The mortgage has been assigned as follows: n/a

3. The original principal amount secured by the mortgage was: \$25,000.00.

4. No action or proceeding at law is now pending to recover the debt secured by the mortgage, or any part thereof.

5. The holder of the mortgage has complied with all conditions precedent to acceleration of the debt secured by the mortgage and foreclosure of the mortgage and all notice and other requirements of applicable statutes.

6. As of the date of this notice, the amount due on the mortgage, and taxes, if any, paid by the holder of the mortgage is: \$25,845.51.

7. Pursuant to the power of sale in the mortgage, the mortgage will be foreclosed on the land described as follows:

Lots 13 and 14, Cedar Cove, Sherburne County, Minnesota.

Street Address: 7087 - 100th Avenue SE, Clear Lake, Minnesota 55319

Tax Parcel Identification Number: 20-403-0130

and will be sold by the Sheriff of Sherburne County, Minnesota at public auction on Thursday, January 14, 2021, at 10:00 o'clock a.m., at the Office of the Sherburne County Sheriff, Sherburne County Government Center, 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, Minnesota 55330.

8. The time allowed by law for redemption of mortgagor or mortgagor's personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months after the date of sale.

9. The date on or before which the mortgagor must vacate the property if the mortgage is not reinstated under Minn. Stat. § 580.30 or the property is not redeemed under Minn. Stat. § 580.23 is July 14, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. If the foregoing date is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, then the date to vacate is the next business day at 11:59 p.m.

10. THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR OR THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINN. STAT. § 582.032 DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Sherburne State Bank, Mortgagee
LATHROP GPM LLP
By: /s/ Andrew J. Steil
Andrew J. Steil #387048
1010 West St. Germain Street
Suite 500
St. Cloud, MN 56301
(320) 252-4414

Attorneys for Sherburne State Bank

(Published in the *Patriot*: 11/28/20; 12/05/20; 12/12/20; 12/19/20; 12/26/20; 01/02/21.)

STATE OF MINNESOTA DISTRICT COURT TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT SUMMONS

Case Type: Consumer Credit Contract
Court File No. - - - - -
WELLS FARGO BANK, NA Plaintiff
vs.
REBECCA A SCHEIBER
5111 RIDGE RD
BIG LAKE MN 55309-8957
Defendant

THIS SUMMONS IS DIRECTED TO EACH OF THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT.

1. **YOU ARE BEING SUED.** The Plaintiff has started a lawsuit against you. The Plaintiffs Complaint against you is attached to this Summons. Do not throw these papers away. They are official papers that affect your rights. You must respond to this lawsuit even though it may not yet be filed with the Court and there may be no court file number on this Summons.

2. **YOU MUST REPLY WITHIN 21 DAYS TO PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS.** You must give or mail to the person who signed this Summons a **written response** called an Answer within 21 days of the date on which you received this Summons. You must send a copy of your Answer to the person who signed this Summons located at: STEWART, ZLIMEN & JUNGERS, LTD.
2860 Patton Road
Roseville MN 55113
Phone 651 - 366-6380
Fax 651- 36 6-6381

3. **YOU MUST RESPOND TO EACH CLAIM.** The answer is your written response to the Plaintiffs Complaint. In your Answer you must state whether you agree or disagree with each paragraph of the Complaint. If you believe the Plaintiff should not be given everything asked for in the Complaint, you must say so in your Answer.

4. **YOU WILL LOSE YOUR CASE IF YOU DO NOT SEND A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THE COMPLAINT TO THE PERSON WHO SIGNED THIS SUMMONS.** If you do not Answer within 21 days, you will lose this case. You will not get to tell your side of the story, and the Court may decide against you and award the Plaintiff everything asked for in the Complaint.

If you do not want to contest the claims in the Complaint, you do not need to respond. A default judgment can then be entered against you for the relief requested in the Complaint.

5. **LEGAL ASSISTANCE.** You may wish to get legal help from a lawyer. If you do not have a lawyer, the Court Administrator may have information about places where you can get legal assistance. Even if you cannot get legal help, you must still provide a written Answer to protect your rights or you may lose the case.

6. **ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION.** The parties may agree to or be ordered to participate in an alternative dispute resolution process under Rule 114 of the Minnesota General rules of Practice. You must still send your written response to the Complaint, even if you expect to use alternative means of resolving this dispute.

Dated: 10/14/2020
STEWART, ZLIMEN & JUNGERS, LTD.

/s/ Kristine M Spiegelberg Nelson
Brad D Welp, #0344497
Michael P Arthur, #0397956
Kristine M Spiegelberg Nelson, #0308845
Attorneys for Plaintiff
Phone: 651- 366-6380
Email: szj@szjlaw.com
(Published in the *Patriot*: 12/05/20; 12/12/20; 12/19/20.)

STATE OF MINNESOTA TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COUNTY OF SHERBURNEDISTRICT COURT PROBATE DIVISION

Court File No. 71-PR-20-157

Estate of:

Steven Dale Bergquist a/k/a Steven D. Bergquist and Steven Bergquist, Decedant

NOTICE AND ORDER OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

It is Ordered and Notice is given that on 2/11/21, at 2:50 p.m., a hearing will be held in this Court at 13880 Business Center Drive, Elk River, MN 55330, Minnesota, for the formal probate of an instrument purporting to be the Will of the Decedent dated, November 4, 2014, and codicils to the will, dated September 26, 2019, and separate writings under Minnesota Statutes section 524.2-513 ("Will"), and for the appointment of Natalie J. Bergquist, whose address is 13334 44th Draw NE, St. Michael, MN 55376 as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent in UNSUPERVISED administration. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after this date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

Dated: 12/7/2020
/s/ Gina DeVilbissHendry,
Court Administrator Deputy
Attorney for Petitioner
Anton Cheskis
Huemoeller, Gontarek & Cheskis, PLC
16670 Franklin Trail SE
Suite 210
Prior Lake, MN 55372
Attorney License No: 0390001
Telephone: (952) 447-2131
FAX: (952) 447-5628
Email:ac@priorlak

(Published in the *Patriot*: 12/19/20.)

Editorials/Opinions

Letters To Editor

TO THE EDITOR:

Why has Tom Emmer decided to support Donald Trump's ongoing effort to overturn the certified results of the 2020 election? This action would discredit all elections. Who is to say his election was not fraudulent? He is baselessly attacking one of the core elements of democracy and, in doing so, defying the will of the people.

I do not know what is going on in Tom Emmer's head or why he is motivated to attack democracy in this way. Trump is openly attempting to recruit Republican legislators to reject the election results and install him as president, and Emmer has joined the effort. Political parties do not get to choose the winners. The People do that.

This scheme is sure to fail, but Trump is trying it anyway and Emmer, in direct defiance of his oath of office, is helping him. He is not fit to serve. Personally, I feel he is guilty of far worse than simply being unfit. He is aiding an attempt to subvert democracy.

Recounts in close elections, fine, but that work has been done under the direction of Republicans and Democrats alike. Legal challenges are appropriate, but virtually all of Trump's cases were dismissed for lack of merit. The results are now in and certified by the states. They are incontrovertible, Trump has lost. Emmer's duty is to compel Trump to concede and Trump's duty is to transfer power and move on. That is how democracy works. This election is no different.

Ron Thiessen
Clear Lake, MN

TO THE EDITOR:

As a rebuttal to Mr. Wittwer's letter last week!
Who are you calling an Idiot?

Your method of persuasion leaves much to be desired. If you think masks work to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and that these government lockdowns are legal/moral/effective, you should try and convince me instead of calling me names. Your way of persuasion only shows your level of education and disregard to the concepts/values that this Nation was built upon, which include free speech and liberty. Here, let me help you. On 11/20/20 the LA Times published the only recent study I can find where it was found that Covid-19 infection rates between mask wears and non-mask wears are essentially the same. Both the LA Times story and this referenced Danish study can be found online. You can also learn that these wonderful N-95 face-masks are made to filter out 95% of particles 0.3 micros and larger but your Covid-19 particle is only 0.1 micron.

Now in this country its citizens should be able to take this and all other information and come to their own conclusion on how to proceed and what the risk is to themselves and others may be, just like they do every day for every activity performed. See what I did here? I put out some arguments and I'm willing to let you decide what you personally want to do.

Bret R. Collier
Big Lake, MN

TO THE EDITOR:

Tom Emmer Commits Treasonous Act.

Tom Emmer voted to support an amicus brief to a specious lawsuit trying to overturn the November 3, 2020 election brought by Texas AG Ken Paxton to the United States Supreme Court.

It is treason to betray one's country by attempting the overthrow the elected government.

Tom doesn't represent the citizens of the 6th district he represents the cult of Trump, his own position and power and a dying Republican party.

Don't believe Tom when he says he wants transparency and state control of elections. He has lost his dedication to principle and country. He is afraid of Trump now and in the future. He is supporting extremist autocratic measures. He is working to create a permanent set of aggrieved Americans to try and save the out of touch, crumbling, Republican party. Winning at any cost is always dangerous.

You cannot, at the same time, love America and vote to destroy democracy.

Let's vote him out.

Jim Borer
Big Lake, MN

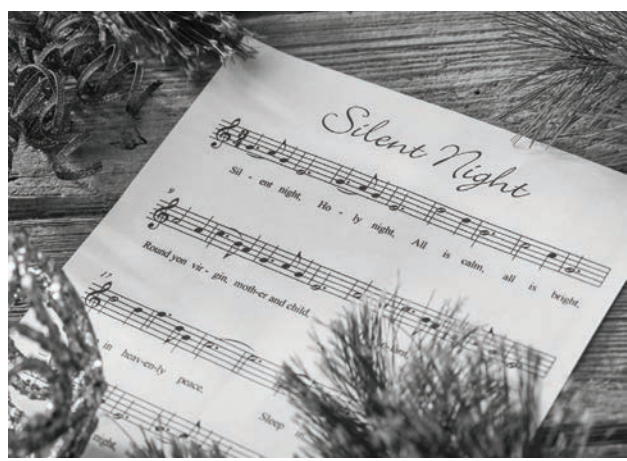
TO THE EDITOR:

I read Mr. Wittwer's letter in your December 12th issue and applaud him for stepping forward and saying what the majority of people are thinking. I for one do care about my health. When shopping locally, if I enter the store and see someone without a mask, I will leave! Business owners need to step up and enforce the mandate. Intelligent people realize these are difficult social and economical times for everyone. I think every business owner should post Mr. Wittwer's MASK REQUIRED FOR SERVICE in their windows as a reminder what is needed/required to shop. Just in case you didn't see it, here is a 'slim-down' version for you to post on your door.

- **This is not a hoax so do not pout, whine or argue**
- **Do not harass the employees**
- **Do not spout conspiracy theories or regurgitate misinformation from Facebook, Twitter or other social media sites.**
- **This is NOT a political or constitutional issue but rather a health and safety issue**

With the vaccine becoming available, by no means does this mean masks and social distancing will go away anytime soon. Lock-downs will hopefully become less as we follow the science and start acting like rational people who care about our friends, neighbors and community.

Judie A Zaske
Big Lake, MN



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Steve Fields
Minnesota Attorney

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EMMER from page 7

birthday and this year, we felt their impact at every level. From assisting with COVID-19 testing sites, to entering nursing homes to serve during the height of the pandemic, to mobilizing to end the civil unrest in the Twin Cities – our Guardsmen and Guardswomen were always there, ready to serve.

This group of volunteer heroes has shown up for their fellow Minnesotans in our times of need, and we have had many over the last year. I am grateful for their service, their sacrifice and for the important role they play in Minnesota.

Financial Services

As a member of the Financial Services Committee in the House of Representatives, and the ranking member of the Task Force on Financial Technology, I am committed to ensuring the United States can thrive in the emerging space of financial technologies, or fintech.

With that goal in mind, I sent a letter to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) urging them to address the issue of broker-dealer custody of digital securities. Regulations and agencies must keep up with the speed of innovation, and this letter urges them to learn about and understand the technologies, so that we can provide for investment in the United States, and not ship more innovations abroad for others to develop.

Earlier this year, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency Regulators took the lead by clarifying that national banks may provide custody services for crypto assets. By urging the SEC to issue similar clarification, we can provide for innovation in the United States. In my view, either way, the technologies will not wait for them to keep up.

Nature Smart

This winter has been a bit strange in the north-land where I reside. Not much snow but enough cold temperatures to start freezing the lakes. The small lakes and ponds freeze up tight right away, but the larger lakes have open water near the center or in the deeper areas. While out photographing the other day, I noticed something small, round and brown at the edge of the open water. A Muskrat (Ondatra zibethicus) had climbed out of the water and was enjoying the remaining sunlight of the day. I immediately thought how this is a critter that is overlooked in nature.

Despite their name, Muskrats are not rats. They are not even in the rat family. Instead, they are more closely related to voles and lemmings. They are a medium sized semiaquatic rodent that is native to North America, but they have been introduced to much of Europe, Russia, Asia and South America. The name Muskrat is believed to come from the Algonquian Indian language, "musascus", which means "it is red", apparently from the color of the fur. It is also believed that since this animal produces a musky smell that they use to mark its territory and it has a naked tail like a rat, the name was altered to musk-rat then formally changed to Muskrat.

I find that many people mistake the Muskrat with the Beaver because they share similar habitat. However, the Muskrat is a fraction of the size of the Beaver. The Muskrat is only about 16-25 inches in length with half of that as the tail. Beavers range from 35-49 inches long with their tail making up only about 12 inches. Muskrats weigh 2-4 pounds while beavers coming in between 30 to 70 pounds. That is huge difference. The fur of the Muskrat is short, thick and very soft. The fur has two layers, a short layer which provides warmth and waterproofness, and the longer hairs provide the shape, color, and protection from physical objects in the environment. The fur is why Muskrats can swim in nearly freezing cold water or stand around on the ice in winter and not be cold. They spend a lot of time grooming and taking care of their fur. Muskrats spend a lot of time in the water. They are well adapted for an aquatic lifestyle. Their hind feet are partly webbed, and the toes



*By Stan Tekiela,
Naturalist*

have a fringe of stiff hairs, all of which helps them when swimming. Their tail is naked, as are most of the animals in the vole family, but the Muskrat's tail is flattened on both sides (laterally compressed). No other animal in North America has this trait. It is believed the tail shape helps propel them when swimming.

These cool critters are active any time of the day or night. They live in small to medium sized groups, which are broken down into family units with one male and one female and their young. They feed mostly on aquatic vegetation, typically the lower quarter of a plant. About 95 percent of their diet is plants. But they also eat small animals such as crayfish, snails, frogs and fish.

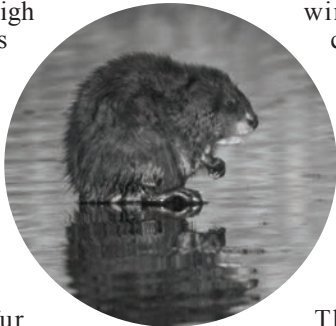
The preferred habitats are shallow lakes and ponds where the water is no more than four feet deep. They make homes, called lodges, from aquatic vegetation. It is easy to tell the difference between a Beaver lodge and a Muskrat lodge. The Beaver lodge is constructed of woody vegetation such as sticks and branches from trees. The Muskrat lodge is constructed of green or herbaceous plants such as cattails and bullrush.

The Muskrat lodge stands above the water but has an underwater entrance. The walls can be upwards of two feet thick and provide a warm and safe interior environment. Studies show that during winter, the interior of the lodge can be upwards of 30 degrees F warmer than the outside air temperatures.

Muskrats don't hibernate during winter. They remain active under the ice and inside their lodge. Unlike Beavers, they don't store food for winter. They continue to feed upon aquatic vegetation, sometimes eating the walls of their lodge. They make narrow channels through the cattail marsh which they use during winter when all the water is frozen.

So, this winter, keep an eye out for a small round furball sitting on the edge of the open water. You might be seeing the incredible Muskrat. Until next time...

Stan Tekiela is an author/naturalist and wildlife photographer who travels the U.S. to study and capture images of wildlife. He can be followed on facebook.com and twitter.com. He can be contacted via his web page at www.naturesmart.com.



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Obituaries

LEROY LAWRENCE MOSS, AGE 82 BIG LAKE, MN JULY 9, 1938 – DECEMBER 10, 2020

LeRoy, loving husband, father and grandfather passed away at the age of 82 on December 10, 2020. He was born on July 9, 1938 in Webster, South Dakota. LeRoy loved his family and friends and will be greatly missed.

LeRoy is survived by his wife of 59 years, LaVonne; his sister, Diane Krueger; his children, Brian (Darcey), Dawn and Chad (Lisa); and 5 grandchildren, Paige, Jake, Caleb, Hannah and Joseph; and many nieces, nephews and extended family.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Alvina Anderson;

his father, Lawrence Moss and stepfather, Ernest Anderson; sisters, Delores Moss and Beverly Bentz; brother Jack Moss.

A memorial service was held Thursday, December 17 at 11am at Becker Baptist Church, 11951 Hancock St, Becker, with visitation starting at 10am.

LeRoy was laid to rest accompanied by his immediate family at the Becker Public Cemetery following the service.

Peterson-Grimsmo Chapel 763-295-2918 www.peterson-grims mochapel.com

NINA MOORE AGE 86 BIG LAKE, MN

Nina passed away on December 8, 2020.

She was preceded in death by her Husband, Roy; Son, Mark Peterson and Step - Son Ronald Moore. Survived by Daughter, Laurie Peterson; daughter - in - law, Denise Rogers; grandchildren, Jenny Peterson, Kelly Stone; step - Children, Richard (Joy)



Moore and Marsha Nelson; 6 Step - Grandchildren and 3 Great Grandchildren.

A graveside service was held Friday December 18, 2020 at 1pm at Greenwood Cemetery in Big Lake, MN. Arr. Peterson-Grimsmo Chapel 763-295-2918 www.peterson-grims mochapel.com

KATHRYN FERN PETERSON AGE 71 BIG LAKE, MN

Kathryn left this world for the next on December 10, 2020.

Kathryn was born in Mpls on June 1, 1949 and graduated from Big Lake High School in 1967.

She enjoyed gardening, raising orchids and watching birds and deer. Her spare time was spent quilting, reading mysteries and pursuing various artistic endeavors.

Preceded in death by parents, Del and Irene Hayes; brother, James (Charlene) Hayes; nephews, Andrew Hayes, Matthew Hayes and

Michael Hayes. Survived by sons, Christopher and Eric (Lori) Peterson; siblings, George (Audrey) Hayes, Thomas (Sandra) Hayes, Christine (Mauro) Perwin; grandchildren Ryan and Tara Peterson, and many nieces and nephews.

Memorial services were Wednesday, December 16th, 2020 at Saron Lutheran Church 311 Lake St. S. Big Lake, MN with private interment. Arr. Peterson-Grimsmo Chapel 763-295-29518 www.peterson-grims mochapel.com



MARY ANN BAKKEN, AGE 83 CLEAR LAKE, MN AUGUST 15, 1937 - DECEMBER 14, 2020

Funeral Services were Wednesday, December 16, 2020, at Glendorado Lutheran Church, Glendorado, MN, for Mary Ann Bakken, age 83 of Clear Lake, who passed away peacefully on December 14 at her home in Clear Lake. A private family visitation was held prior to the service. Pastor Shari Routh officiated. Burial will be in the Glendorado Lutheran Cemetery.

Mary Ann was born on August 15, 1937, in Princeton to the late Clifford and Selma (Johnson) Brabander. She attended Glendorado District School 13. Mary Ann married Gehard Bakken on October 13, 1956. She worked at Fingerhut, Nelson Tree Farm, and Santiago Bank, as well as

taught Sunday School, hauled her kids around, and farmed. Mary Ann was the treasurer for the Glendorado Church for many years. She enjoyed gardening, yard work, bowling, watching her kids play ball, and traveling the United States with Gerhard.

Mary Ann is survived by her sons, Steven of Princeton and Jeffrey (Rebecca) of Cambridge; daughters, Sandra Erickson of Becker and Sheila (David) Gronert of Becker; 12 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild. She is preceded in death by her parents; husband; and son-in-law, Roger.

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Becker News

Becker City Council holds final 2020 meeting

By Katherine Cantlin
Staff Writer

As per the motion to declare a city emergency made at the last meeting, the Becker city council met virtually over a Zoom call. This was the final meeting for the year of 2020.

City Fee Schedule Public Hearing

The council held a public hearing to determine the fee schedule. Some changes made included the termination of commercial compost cards (in order to avoid the spread of invasive species and to keep the amount of material down); an increase in the water and sewer installation inspection fee; a new home construction fee (which was split before between a building permit and the utilities bill, but will now be charged only to the building permit, to avoid confusion); and utility rates were increased by two percent.

No one from the public spoke at the hearing.

Revolving Capital Insurance Fund

The budget and fi-

nance committee for the city asked the council to approve the dollar amount to be kept in the Revolving Capital Insurance Fund account. This account covers insurance deductibles and covers costs until receipt of an insurance reimbursement. The committee recommended that one million dollars be kept in this account at all times. This is similar to an emergency fund, and will keep the city from going into debt in the event of the unforeseen.

Snuffy's Landing Trail

The city is continuing to pursue a grant opportunity to create a trail along Co. Rd. 53 leading to Snuffy's Landing. As part of the grant application process, the council was asked to show support for maintaining the trail.

The council was uncertain about whether they wanted the trail at all. The trail as it is proposed seems to go nowhere. Phil Knutson from the public services department assured the council that it was in the best interest to continue on

with the grant application. If the grant is approved, the council can decide at that time whether or not to go ahead with the project. In other words, there is nothing to lose.

Mayor Tracy Betram mused on possibly having the county or the township become involved with the project.

The reason the city is planning a "trail to nowhere" (in the mayor's words) is as a part of a larger planned trail system. Knutson said they had to start this proposed trail system somewhere, so while the Snuffy's Landing trail seems oddly placed, there is a larger end goal in mind, which has been years in the making.

The trail would likely be implemented in 2024. Council will know by sometime next year whether they have been awarded the grant.

Cedar Creek Agreement

The city is looking to enter into a contract with Cedar Creek Energy Solar Power Agreement. This

agreement would have the city use less energy from Xcel. Xcel has no issues with the proposal themselves. The use of the solar power array would save the city about \$400,000 over the next 25 years, though this is a conservative estimate. The city may also be able to purchase the panels at the end of the agreement, in which case they would only have to pay a small amount to maintain the panels, and get the energy very cheaply for a possible 10-15 more years.

Suspension of Signage Rules

There will be a continued suspension of rules regarding temporary signage, which was set to expire at the end of the month. This is due to the COVID-19 situation. The council also voted to continue to allow alcohol consumption on patio areas, though it's not likely many people will take advantage of this from now until March, when the extension ends.

Tree sale starts early January

Submitted Article

The Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District is holding its annual tree sale to encourage tree planting in Sherburne County.

Twenty-eight varieties of trees and shrubs will be offered by the SWCD. Bare root seedlings are easy to plant, grow quickly and come in bundles of 25.

Many of the species being offered provide food and shelter for birds and wildlife year round. Additionally, trees can increase the value of one's property and conserve energy by shading one's house in summer and sheltering it from cold

winds in winter.

Orders will be accepted starting Mon., Jan. 4. Due to COVID-19 safety guidelines, walk in orders will not be accepted.

Tree orders will be available for pick-up April 30 and May 1 at the SWCD Elk River office.

Pick-up information will be sent out the middle of April and posted on the SWCD website and Facebook page. More information on the tree sale can be found at www.sherburneswcd.org or by calling the SWCD office at 763-220-3434.

Quantities are limited, ordering early is encouraged!



Becker NHS students create tie blankets



NHS STUDENTS FROM BECKER HIGH SCHOOL posed with some of the 92 tie blankets they made to donate to Pathways 4 Youth. From left to right are students Riley Norberg, Makenna Thelan, Cade Stommes, Katelyn Nielsen, and NHS advisor Melissa Nicolas.

By Katherine Cantlin
Staff Writer

Cade Stommes and Makenna Thelan, two NHS (National Honor Society) students at Becker High School, led a "Winter Warm-Up" project. Stommes and Thelan (along with other students) made tie blankets to donate to Pathways 4 Youth in St. Cloud, a resource center for young

people who are experiencing homelessness.

The NHS project was inspired by the cold spell back in October. The students thought that those who were homeless were struggling at that point, and would continue to struggle throughout the winter months.

They had several area businesses sponsor the project, including Angells Construction, Hubbard

Electrical, Scheideman Chiropractic, Sherburne State Bank, H.O.P.E Stables, T.J. Potter Trucking, Northern Metals Recycling, Dr. Stephanie Gruenes Dentistry, and individuals in the Becker Community.

"This event was only able to be successful because of the donations from the Becker community and the NHS students who put in the time to make the blankets," Stommes said.

"We would like to extend a big thank-you to everyone who helped make this event a success!"

The students raised \$1,900 to use in purchasing materials for the blankets

The blankets were donated to Pathways 4 Youth last weekend. Students made the blankets at home, and 92 were ultimately donated.

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• **BECKER**

Grace Lutheran Church (LCMS)
Pastor: David M. Johnson, 763-262-7782, 11185 27th Ave SE. Services: Sun. Worship 9am, Sun. School 10:30am, Wed. J.U.M.P. 6pm.

Becker Baptist Church
Pastors: Nathan Bucher (Acting), Kevin Drehmel (Youth) & Amy Drehmel (Dir. Of Ministry), 763-261-4202, 11951 Hancock St. Services: Sun. Worship/Children 10:30am, Wed. Youth Group 6:30pm. www.beckerbaptist.org.

Becker Evangelical Free Church
Pastors: Patrick Drury (Senior), Chris Salvevold (Youth), 763-261-4125, Becker High School, Office: 11373 150th Ave SE. Services: Sun. Worship/Teaching/Fellowship 10am.

Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church
Father: Mike Kellogg, 763-447-3339, 12100 Sherburne Ave. Services: Sat. Mass 5pm, Sun. Mass 9:30am.

Faith (Becker) Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Pastor: Yolanda Denson-Byers, 763-261-5751, 11755 Sherburne Ave. Services: Sun. Worship 9:30 am, Sun. School 10am.

Oakwood Community Church Assemblies of God
Pastors: Gerry Bass & Sarah, 763-220-6004, 13140 1st St (SW Corner of Becker Furniture World). Services: Sun. Bible Study/Sun. School 9am, Sun. Worship 10am.

Snake River Free Church
Pastor: Steve Johnston, 612-219-8648, 180th St SE. Services: Sun. Worship/Sun. School 10:30am., Hymn Sing is second Sun. of every month.

Becker Christian Center & Abundant Grace Church
Pastor: Ken Hanson, 763-262-2177, 15455 59th St SE. Services: Sun. Praise & Worship 9:30am, Wed.

Family Fellowship 7pm.

Beacon House of Prayer
Pastors: Brian & Linda Holmes, 763-263-3771, 12264 Pleasant Ave. Services: Thurs. Worship 6:30pm.

Free Grace United
Pastor: Kevin Wilson, 763-245-0001, 14000 Clubhouse Ln. Services: Wed. Worship 6:30pm.

• **BIG LAKE**

Acts Seventh-Day Adventists Community Church
Pastor: Bill Nixon, 763-263-2287, 20455 187th Ave NW. Services: Sat. Worship 9am, Sat. Sabbath School 10:15am.

Bethany Bible Church
763-263-2167, 511 Eagle Lake Road. Services: Sun. School 9am, Sun. Worship 10am.

Bridgeview Assembly of God
Pastor: Steve Royalty, 763-263-6274, 20500 County Road 11. Services: Sun. Worship 10am, Wed. Service 6:30pm.

SVEA Hill Covenant Church
Pastor: Don Bellach, 763-263-6322, 16392 235th Ave NW. Services: Sun. Worship 10am.

Cornerstone Baptist Church
Pastor: Gordon Langdon, 763-263-7878, 15300 County Road 35.

Hope Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Orrock
763-263-7990. www.hopeintherefuge.weebly.com.

IFLESIA AMOR VIVIENTE Living Love Church
Pastores: Juan & Patricia Aguayo, 763-607-5403, 21 Lake St N. Services: Sat. 6pm.

Lord of Glory Lutheran Church
Pastor: Marty Mably, 763-263-3090, 15550 190th Ave NW. Services: Sun. 8am & 10am.

Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church
Father: Mike Kellogg, 763-447-3339, 440 Lake St N. Services: Mass temporarily at Becker location, Sat. Mass 5pm, Sun. Mass 9:30am.

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Riverside Church
Online: www.myriversidechurch.com, 763-263-2410, 2014 County Road 14. Services: Sun 8:45am, 10:30am & 12:05pm.

Saron Lutheran Church
Pastor: Kyle Sidlo, 763-263-2209, 311 Lake St. S. Services: Sun. Worship 9:30am, indoors or livestream.

• **SANTIAGO**

South Santiago Lutheran Church ELCA
Pastors: Daryl Thul and Angela LaMoore, 763-662-2048, 14675 37th St. Services: Sun. 8am drive-in Worship, Sanctuary Worship 9:30am.

Our Savior's Lutheran Church E.L.S. & Princeton Evangelical School
Pastor: Timothy Zenda, 763-662-2570, 18977 17th St. Services: Sun. School/Bible Class 10:30am, Divine Worship 9am.

Glendorado Lutheran (ELCA) Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Pastor: Shari Routh, 920-573-0193, 1100 186th Ave NE. Services: Sun Good Shepherd 9am, Sun. Glendorado 10:30am.

Gethsemane Church (ELCA) - Ronneby
Pastor: Barbara Peterson, 320-983-5002, 14478 78th St. NE. Services: Sun. Worship 10am.

Glendorado Evangelical Country Church
Pastor: Sam Alfano, 763-662-2244, 16999 Glendorado Road NE. Services: Sun. School 9:30am, Sun. Worship 10:30am.

• **CLEAR LAKE**

Living Waters Church
Pastor: Mark Stahl, 320-292-0250, 7830 Church St. Services: Sun. Worship 10am, Wed. Bible Study 6:30pm.

Trinity Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
Pastor: Josh Reber, 320-743-2919,

8641 Main Ave. Services: Sun. Worship 8:45am, Sun. School 9:45am.

St. Marcus Catholic Church
Father: Joseph Backowski, 320-743-2481, 8701 Main Ave. Services: Sat. Confessions 4:15pm, Sat. Mass 5pm, Sun. Jan-June 8am, July-Dec. 10am.

• **DUEL**

St. Lawrence Church
Father: Joseph Backowski, 320-968-7502 or 320-743-2481, 10915 Duellm Road NE. Services: Sun Mass -- Jan-June 10am, July-Dec. 8am.

• **CLEARWATER**

Clearwater United Methodist Church
Pastor: Alison Hendley, 320-558-2581, 405 Main St. Services: Sun. Worship 9:30am.

Freedom Bible Church
605 Lime St. (Old Clearwater Post Office). Services: Sun. Bible Study 9:30am & 6pm, Sun. Worship 10:45am, Wed. Bible Study 7pm.

Rejoice Lutheran Church - ELCA
Pastor: Jim Bump, 320-558-6851, 1155 County Road 75. Services: Sun. Worship 9:30am.

Church of St. Luke
Father: Dennis Backer, 320-558-2124, 17545 Huber Ave NW. Services: Sat. Mass 5pm, Sun. Mass 8am & 10am, Weekday Mass Tues.-Fri. 8am/Sat. 9am.

Tri-County Alliance Church
Pastor: David Fogal, 320-558-2750, 8464 160th St NW. Services: Sun. School 9am, Sun. Fellowship 10am, Sun. School 10:30am.

• **MAPLE LAKE**

Silver Creek Community Church
Pastor: Zach Pryor, 320-963-3957, 4282 114th St NW. Services: Sun. Worship 9am, Sun. Fellowship 10am, Sun. School 10:30am.

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Becker News

Marvel Nutrition hosts shop local event

Submitted Article

Several vendors were on hand for a Shop Local event held last Saturday, December 12 at Marvel Nutrition in Becker.

The sale will be held again today, December 19 from 1-4 p.m. at Marvel Nutrition and vendors with items for sale include: Marvel Nutrition, Color Street nail decals, Pink Zebra (soft soy wax home fragrances and essential oils), Steph's Salsa and Steph's Sweets and Treats, as well as Trudy's Kitchen.

TRUDY (PITTMAN) JOHNSON, featuring Trudy's Kitchen homemade jams, pickles, beets, homemade breads and Christmas cookies.



STEPHANIE HERINGLAKE and her daughter **ELIZABETH HERINGLAKE** were selling Steph's Home-made Sweets and Treats, as well as her homemade salsa, hot chocolate and espresso bombs and decadent cupcakes. (Photos by Mary Nehring).

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Out of all the options, direct mail inserts scored the highest with 81% of adults saying they acted in the past 30 days after seeing an ad. Seven out of 10 respondents also said they regularly perused newspapers and magazines to seek out inserts. Even consumers who considered themselves "non-readers" used newspapers to find and cut out coupons, compare prices, and seek out sales in their local stores.



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Voigt named Reserve Lieutenant for BPD



JENNA VOIGT, a 2019 BHS graduate, is part of the Becker PD Reserve Program while she pursues her master's degree at SCSU this upcoming spring year. (Photo by Chris Lommel).

*By Bill Morgan,
Staff Writer*

Jenna Voigt — a 2019 Becker High School graduate — was awarded a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice with a Minor in Political Science from St. Cloud State University December 18.

Voigt attended the St. Cloud State PSEO program earning an Associate of Arts Degree in May of 2019. She went on to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice which she completed in 16 months with the highest academic honors.

Voigt has been accepted and admitted into the Masters of Public Administration Program at St. Cloud State University for Spring Semester 2021.

Voigt currently works as a Reserve Officer for the Becker Police Dept. Her dedication to the role has led her to becoming the

first Reserve Lieutenant for the Becker Police Dept., a recipient of the "President's Volunteer Service Award," and a recipient of the Becker Police Department "Chief's Award."

The Becker Police Dept. Volunteer Reserve Officer Unit is comprised of approximately 10 men and women who assist the Police Dept. in numerous activities and functions. Their primary role is to assist officers and the department where needed which may include: traffic control at events such as 5K's within the city or at Freedom Days, ride-alongs, house checks, training, etc. These volunteers provide vital assistance to the police department and in 2016 donated in excess of 1,000 hours back to the City of Becker.

Jenna was part of the high school golf team at Becker and her parents are Lisa and Ron Voigt.

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Area News

SANTIAGO *from page 1*

American flag table that was donated by a local craftsman. It is being offered for sale with the proceeds helping to fund equipment purchases for Station 2.

It was also reported that the department had received the new rescue truck that was purchased from Zimmerman. However, there had been an error on the invoice resulting in an underpayment of \$2,000. The board approved using money from the Fire Truck Fund for this additional sum since the rest of the CARES Act money had been returned to Sherburne County.

All agreed that the truck was still a great addition to the department at a very reasonable cost, and it was the honorable thing to do to pay the rest of the amount since the price had been agreed upon.

As soon as the new rig

is equipped, striped and put into service, the current rescue truck, a 2002, will be made available to purchase. Because it has just 75,000 miles and is heavy duty in construction, the firefighters believe there will be a strong market for the extremely clean and well cared for truck.

In the building report, discussion was held regarding the installation of the new siding and the supervisors believe it should be accomplished in the next couple of weeks. This will secure the building for the winter months and it was noted that the dumpster location has been communicated to the contractor so it will not interfere with the department getting trucks in and out of the building.

County News

Clerk Kathy Wooldard reported that the board of equalization has been set for April 5, 2021 and it was

learned that the plan is for the county to do it virtually. More discussion will be coming after the first of the year as to the details for how this will work for any citizens interested in appealing their property valuation.

Woolard also announced that Jehoich's term on the Sherburne County planning board will expire at the end of the year. Since he was interested in continuing to serve, the board voted unanimously to reappoint Jehoich to a new three year term. Supervisor Jeff Pappenfus will again serve as the alternate.

The next meeting for Santiago will be January 13, at which time the board will carry out the business of reorganizing for 2021. As always, the meeting will be held at the township hall starting at 7 p.m.

BIDEN from page 1

string of unsuccessful legal challenges in several closely contested states that Biden purportedly won.

Biden, in remarks Monday evening in Wilmington, Del., pointed to his tally of 306 electoral votes, which was comparable to the president's victory in 2016.

“At the time, President Trump called his Electoral College tally a landslide,” Biden said. “By his own standards, these numbers represented a clear victory then, and I respectfully suggest they do so now.”

Attorney General William Barr, who submitted his resignation Monday ef-

fective Dec. 23, has said the Justice Department hasn't found evidence of widespread voter fraud.

The Electoral College meetings took less than an hour in most states, and there were no electors who didn't back the total-vote winner.

A circular portrait of Bill Clinton, showing him from the chest up, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a red tie with a small pattern. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera.

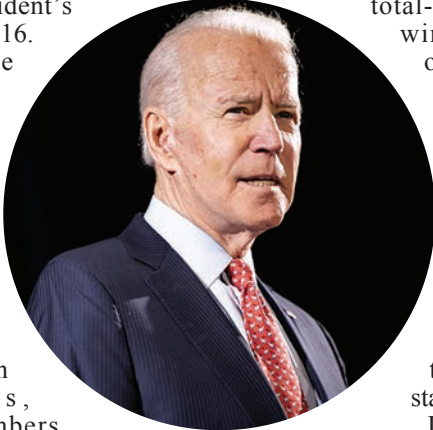
their
state.

Last Friday, the Supreme Court rejected a long-shot bid filed by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton to void 20 million votes in four other states. More than 100

House Republicans signed a brief in support of the lawsuit, which came after dozens of other failed efforts to overturn Mr. Biden's win.

On Monday, the Wisconsin Supreme Court rejected a campaign lawsuit that sought to invalidate the votes of 220,000 people, asking the court to throw out four broad categories of votes.

Trump aide Stephen Miller said Monday on Fox News that the campaign planned to keep contesting the result: "The only date in the Constitution is Jan. 20. So we have more than enough time to right the wrong of this fraudulent election result and certify Donald Trump as the winner of the election." The campaign declined to further explain its plans.



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A photograph of a middle-aged couple with grey hair, smiling warmly at the camera. They are sitting on a bed, and the man is holding a newspaper open, showing a map or a large photograph. The woman is resting her chin on her hands. They are both wearing light-colored, casual clothing. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting.

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Shop Local Continuation...

LOCAL from page 1

Check out their gift baskets for self love, manifestation, crystal healing, star beings, moon practice, divination and much more! Baskets start at \$40 and have a higher retail price.

Local artists' art is also available including paintings, prints, handmade metaphysical tools, blankets, crochet items, boxes, craft teas, journals and more! Prices start at \$8.

How about some stones and crystals for the healer and the collector? Or crystal skulls and other carving and crystal jewelry of all kinds, starting as low as 25¢. Or, pick up a book, Oracle and Tarot card sets, with prices starting at just \$10!

Majestic Creations – 15542 137th St, Becker – 763-261-2174

Majestic has loads of games including cribbage and baseball dice for \$20 on up. They also have pocket knives, grill utensils, cake pans and cutting boards for just \$20 on up (all customizable).

Majestic also has fantastic spirit gear for Big Lake and Becker including key chains, lanyards, power banks, hats and apparel for \$5 on up.

Maybe pick up a blanket for that special someone for just \$25+?

Oak Park Creamery – 16623 Ironwood Rd NE, Oak Park – 320-968-7864

Oak Park has great feeds including Hubbard, Heims, Purina and Oak Park brands. They also have complete feed for cattle, chicken, pigs and horses.

Oak Park also has low-carb horse feed, dog and cat food, corn & oats & custom-mixed rations, wood pellet shavings and more!

Food products include Bongards cheese & butter, Schwan's Ice Cream and treats, Heggie's Pizza and Hope Creamery butter.

Andra K. Salon – 615 Smith St, Clearwater – 320-558-6620

Andra K. has luxury

deep conditioning hair treatments from \$25 to \$50. They also have other hair care products including shampoos, conditioners and styling products for all hair types and needs for just \$25 to \$80!

How about a 30-minute, express facial for just \$50? Or, a spa manicure & pedicure service from \$35 to \$75?

Andra K. also has gift cards which make great stocking stuffers for prices ranging from \$10 on up!

Oodles of Doodles Pet Spa – 505 North Walnut St, Clearwater – 320-558-1134

Oodles of Doodles is a pet spa that takes care of and pampers one's pet. From baths to haircuts to teeth cleaning and nail trims, Oodles of Doodles does it all!

Pick up a gift certificate for that special friend or family member who also loves animals!

Clear Lake Farmer's Elevator – 7950 State St, Clear Lake – 320-743-2265

Your farmer's elevator has some of the best and unique gifts in the area. Stop in and find out for yourself!

They have bird feeders and bird seed, deerskin and goatskin-lined gloves, dog treats, dog bones and jackets, bird houses and tons of beekeeping supplies!

Jan's Christmas Trees – 12519 37th St SE, Clear Lake – 320-743-3327

Have you seen Jan's gift shop? Wow! What a feast for the eyes!

They have lighted pictures, snow globes, churches, cardinals and stars for \$10.99 to \$30! Jan's sells jellies, salsas, sweet & salty roasted nuts, caramel corn and gift packages for \$10.99 to \$21.99!

The store is jam-packed with greens including wreaths, swags, gnomes for outdoor settings or centerpieces for \$16 to \$30.



Need an ornament? Jan's has dozens from glittery to country flair, bells, stars, tins, babies first Christmas and more! \$4.99 on up!

Brigg's Lake General Store – 4258 105th Ave SE, Clear Lake – 320-743-2791

Stop by Brigg's Lake General Store for custom front porch signs in prices ranging from \$25 to \$55. Going fishing? Pick up a nice rod for ice fishing from \$18 to \$49.

Lots of kids craft ideas from \$5 to \$20 as well as puzzles from \$7 to \$16. Or, grab a Brigg's Lake General Store sweatshirt and show your support for local businesses for just \$32 to \$50!

Knitski's Grill & Bar – 4181 105th Ave SE, Clear Lake – 320-743-2147

When you are out-and-about, don't forget your appetite and stop in at Knitski's in Clear Lake for a bite or a drink! While you are there, pick up some gift certificates or a sweatshirt!

Bailey Ray's – 2120 165th Ave NE, Santiago – 763-856-8900

Bailey Ray's is another great stop for lunch or dinner and they also have gift certificates available in any amount desired. They are

open Thurs. thru Sat. from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from noon until 8 p.m.

Petersen Tree Farm – 6113 Co Rd 6, Clear Lake – 763-568-6942

Petersen Tree Farm has wreaths, swags, garland, spruce tops, tree stands and bags! They feature a country corner gift shop with tons of unique holiday gifts!

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Pizza Depot – 14281 Bank St, Becker – 763-262-2700

Pizza Depot in Becker and St. Cloud have gift certificates available in \$5 increments, good for stuffing those stockings on Christmas Eve! They also have beanies & sweatshirts as well as caps from \$10 to \$20!

Los Ortizes Mexican Restaurant – 14068 Bank St, Becker – 763-275-0270

Hungry? Stop by Los Ortizes for a delicious lunch while shopping but don't forget to check out their updated gift certificate promotions! If you purchase certificates totaling \$25, you will receive a \$5 certificate to treat yourself! For \$50 in certificates, get \$10 and for \$75, get \$15.

If you purchase \$100 in gift certificates, get a free logo t-shirt for yourself! These all make great gifts!

Becker McDonald's – 12945 Rolling Ridge Rd, Becker – 763-262-3838

How about giving joy and warmth to families at the Ronald McDonald House? Donations are needed to bring joy to a child and stock the House That Love Built.

McDonald's is looking for Legos, Magna-Tiles, Razr Scooters, Bike Helmets, Hand Sanitizer, Dryer Sheets, Paper Towels, Laundry Detergent, Restaurant Gift Cards, Amazon Gift Cards, Grocery Gift Cards and Gas Station Gift Cards.

Bring your unwrapped item to the Becker store on Sat., Dec. 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or on Dec. 22 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Marvel Nutrition – 14275 Bank St, Becker – 320-224-2426

Marvel Nutrition is holding a Home for the Holidays Shop Local event this Saturday, Dec. 19 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Protein balls, drink specials, hot cocoa bombs, fresh baked goods, delicious smells for your home and beautiful colors for your nails and more! Participants

include Pink Zebra, Color Street, Trudy's Kitchen, Steph's Sweets & Treats and, of course, Marvel Nutrition.

Thank you Patriot readers and Merry Christmas!

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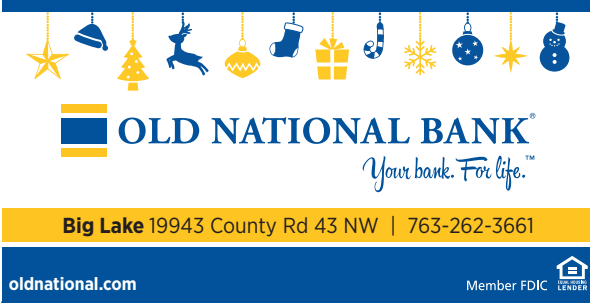
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Area News

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Dec. 25th Closed; Dec. 31st 9am-9pm; Jan. 1st 8am-9pm

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Dec. 25th 9am-5pm; Dec. 31 7am-10pm; Jan. 1st 7am-10pm

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Holiday Book Sale at Becker library thru Dec. 23

Submitted Article

While restrictions due to the COVID pandemic are preventing many libraries from having “in-person” Holiday sales this year, the Becker library is excited to announce that they are still hosting a Holiday Book Sale at the Becker Public Library now thru Dec. 23.

Even though the Becker Community Center is closed, the Becker Public Library is open for business as usual.

Becker’s library has curated a great selection of adult and children’s books, CDs, movies, and puzzles that are for sale at the entrance of the library. (Hardcover books are \$1, paperbacks 50¢, CDs and movies \$1, and puzzles \$1) The library even has “book bundles” - several books

by the same author or of a similar theme - packaged together for just \$5!

Books make great Christmas gifts, and all proceeds from the sale go directly to Friends of the Becker Public Library.

The money garnered is used to fund programming and purchase supplies at the library, so they can continue to serve the Becker Community. So when doing one’s Christmas shopping this year, skip the crowds and consider checking out the Friends of the Becker Library Holiday Sale.

Find something for yourself and a loved one and help out your local library...it’s like giving a gift twice!

The Holiday Sale is running now thru December 23. Cash sales only.



Wetland violation at Lynden Twp.

By Penny Leuthard, Contributing Writer

During their December meeting, the Lynden Township Board discussed a number of items, including a wetland violation, the Clearwater fire contract map, their recycling contract bid posting, and IT support proposal for equipment received under the CARES Act grant.

Wetland Violation
Jennifer Kaminsky from Stearns Co. Environmental Services confirmed the camper violation on Fairfax Road is occurring on wetland and could possible affect DNR

wetland property. A portion of the road and potential cul-de-sac is also where there is a parked trailer.

Enforcement will be done by SCES beginning with a letter instructing removal. Sewer and whether or not the camper is being used as a residence will also be reviewed.

IT Support
James Kantor reported he has all the serial numbers recorded for the township’s equipment received in October under the CARES Act grant. Return of inventory is pending as Treasurer Dan Torgersen will be keeping his laptop until after the March election, and Clerk Jenny Schmidt will be

keeping hers until everything has been transitioned over.

Chairman Dave Johnson requested assurance everything purchased is covered under the township’s property loss insurance policy.

Other business
A motion carried to submit the proposed Clearwater fire contract map indicating the area of land between Clearwater River and 27th is part of the City of Clearwater to the city as Exhibit B. An 11”x17” version of the map will be provided to the Lynden Board and the cities of Clearwater and Annandale.

The township posted their recycling contract bid request;

responses are due by Dec. 30, 2020 and quotes will be opened on Jan. 4, 2021.

Supervisor Dennis Niemi provided the board information on the Annandale Fire Dept.’s multi-use rescue truck, cost of \$575,000. Chairman Dave Johnson indicated he may contact Chief Haag for more information.

The township has received Pilgrim’s Pride’s hauling permit fee; signatures will be collected. The permit is valid through November 2021.

The next Lynden Twp meeting will be January 4 at 7 p.m.

Hanebuth expresses frustration at CW Twp. Board

By Penny Leuthard, Contributing Writer

During their December meeting, Brandon Hanebuth approached the Clearwater Twp. Board to express his disappointment with some of the things that have been occurring at the board level.

Hanebuth explained the residents are frustrated in regard to the annexation with the City of Clearwater and at the potential of a new township fire department, and are asking the board to make informed decisions for the betterment of the township and to be transparent to their constituents.

“We need to hear from residents if there’s that much concern,” said Supervisor Scott Miller. “We’ve got emails, phone numbers, and monthly meetings; we respond to questions and concerns. We’re not trying to hide anything.”

Miller explained the fire committee is moving slowly, and once they’ve finished, residents will be brought into the discussion. He reiterated that the townships don’t want to start their own fire department but are looking into it in case it becomes necessary in the future.

Hanebuth also expressed frustration with the issue of Shane Potter needing access to his property, which is currently landlocked and needs to be gained through Hanebuth’s property. He indicated he’d been told Potter had approval from the township board outside a meeting to begin removing trees at the access point, which he’s begun doing, even though he and Hanebuth haven’t come to an agreement concerning it yet.

Like they stated last month, the board said they didn’t feel this was a township issue and hoped the two could work together to come up with an agreement.

“I think you guys are doing a great job and appreciate all that you do,” said Hanebuth. “I just wanted to express my frustrations with a few things.”

Later in the meeting the township returned to the Shane Potter public hearing issue, discussing what Chairman Bill Langenbacher had discovered concerning the right-of-way. Hanebuth said his main concern with the access is that the county highway department wouldn’t approve it, however Miller explained



BRANDON HANEBUTH discusses some of his frustrations with the Clearwater Twp. Board at their December meeting. (Photo by Penny Leuthard)

that the county can’t landlock property, which it would be doing if approval wasn’t granted.

Hanebuth also explained he was concerned that he would be back in front of the board in the future when the

landowner wanted another access to the property. He was reminded that he can’t be forced to sell his property in order to grant it.

“This really isn’t the township’s jurisdiction,” Langenbacher restated. “The ball is in your court.”

Orderly Annexation
The township’s orderly annexation agreement with the City of Clearwater was again discussed. During their recent meeting, the city didn’t approve the agreement that had been put into place last year but never signed, instead stating they wanted to include a property that wasn’t in the original agreement. They believe they would have been able to get the property if the annexation had been signed and in place.

A discussion was held on zoning; the parcel isn’t being used as commercial property. Twp. Attorney Michael Couri recommended the township

turn down the new agreement because it doesn’t fit into the annexation.

The second agreement issue had to do with wording regarding parcels abutting sewer lines. The agreement last month stated parcels abutting sewer lines but not water lines when it should have been both. Couri recommended the township revoke their motion made at the November 2019 meeting and to sign the agreement with the correct wording. A motion passed to do so.

Other Business
The board approved a two-year assessment contract with Wright Co. In 2022 the cost will be \$14 per parcel, in 2023 it will be \$15.

The budget meeting was set for Dec. 28 at 6:30 p.m.

The next Clearwater Twp. Board meeting will be Jan. 4 at 7:30 p.m.



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County News

Sherburne commissioners ready for 2021

By Mark Kolbinger
Contributing Writer

The Sherburne County Board met Tuesday for the final time in 2020 and put the finishing touches on a few items before turning their attention to top priorities for 2021. Some of those priorities will be helping local businesses impacted by COVID, as well as ramping up efforts for distribution of the COVID vaccines.

The meeting started with County Administrator Bruce Messelt detailing honors for two individuals, County Attorney Kathleen Heaney and Board Chair Felix Schmiesing, who were both elected to their respective offices 16 years ago.

Heaney was recognized for receiving the MN County Attorney Association's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award. Messelt opined about her value as a leader in the county and also as a resource and friend for many other county attorneys across Minnesota who regularly seek her counsel.

Schmiesing was given an award recognizing his service this past year as board chair, where he was counted on to provide stability and leadership, both in the county and through his work with the AMC. Messelt commented that Schmiesing was an influential voice in helping counties across the state navigate the many unknowns of the COVID pandemic.

"I appreciate the award, but I just took my turn," said Schmiesing, referencing Sherburne's tradition of rotating the chairperson's duties.

"I couldn't be more proud of how we put aside the politics of the day and did what was best for our citizens."

Rail Authority

During the regular meeting, the commissioners took a temporary recess to hold the regional rail authority meeting where they received an update from Met Council staff regarding Northstar commuter rail.

Tony Hebert, Director of Commuter Rail and Ed Petrie, Director of Finance, joined the commissioners via Webex to provide an update on operations, as well as the 2021 proposed budget.

Because of COVID-19,

the men reported significant changes to the levels of service provided for commuter rail. Total trains trips decreased from a usual level of 72 per day to just 20, which also decreased staffing in several areas. For example, Metro Transit staff dedicated to Northstar were reassigned to help in other areas such as the Southwest Line, and the BNSF railroad crews were reduced from six to three.

While 2020 started with two months of the organization meeting its budget, ridership has plummeted nearly 95% as a whole since the start of the pandemic and there are projections for the slowdown to continue into next year. The budget proposed for 2021 also reflects this change, going from a current amount of \$22 million down to around \$11 million. This reduction will cut Sherburne's contribution for the operation of Northstar from nearly \$1.5 million in 2020 to less than half of that, or approximately \$690,000 in 2021. The county also will contribute roughly \$40,000 to the bus link service as it has in the past.

Schmiesing did ask one clarifying questions it relates to Transit Police and he sought reassurance that as ridership increases once again, the police staffing levels will be maintained for reasons of safety and security. Met Council staff assured him that it will be the case and police staffing levels will return to where they were pre-COVID.

Next, Public Works Director Andrew Witter presented figures as part of the Northstar master funding agreement, which the commissioners approved unanimously.

In a seemingly ironic move, they also voted to set the rail levy at \$0 for the upcoming year. However, this is possible because the county does not use property tax dollars to pay for transit related expenses.

Instead, the county uses its Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) of one-half cent to fund many of its transportation projects, including transit. According to Messelt, the vast majority of the LOST revenue goes towards local road and bridge maintenance, repair and replacement projects.

Commissioner Pay

Next on the agenda was a resolution setting the commissioner's pay for 2021. Several years ago, the county adopted a policy to set commissioner pay based on the median full-time worker salary in Sherburne County as reported each year by the census bureau and the American Community Survey data. However, as the commissioners learned a year ago, sometimes that data is not available in December when the salaries are statutorily required to be set.

Because of the unavailability of the data in 2019, the commissioners took a pay freeze for 2020 and kept their salary at \$51,978 per year. As was adopted in the restructuring in 2017, this amount represents their total pay as per diems are no longer collected.

This year, they were presented with several options since the data is available and reports the county median income as \$53,720. After discussion, the commissioners unanimously approved this to be the new salary for 2021. In addition, they adopted a clause moving forward to utilize data from the previous year so they don't run into the same situation by not having the needed information if the survey results are not yet published by their December meeting. In doing this, their salary recommendations will reflect the median county data from two years prior instead of a current average.

Budget

Assistant Administrator Dan Weber presented the 2021 proposed budget for adoption. It reflects approximately \$103 million in expenditures and roughly \$52 million for the county levy, a 3.41% increase over a year ago.

This figure represented a cut of about \$272,000 from the preliminary adoption in September as staff had done some additional trimming to decrease the levy by nearly one-half percent.

The budget passed unanimously.

COVID Update

HHS Director Amanda Larson shared a pandemic update with the board, including a summary of Sherburne's most up to date data. It included 7,111 confirmed cases as of Tuesday, with 266 requiring hospitalization and 51 deaths. She also noted that the county's cumulative case rate of 730 per 10,000 residents means that Sherburne has had a higher than the state average rate of infection with COVID.

Cases have recently been trending downward, but the current 14 day school formula

is at 134, still much higher than the rate of 50 which is one piece of data that officials use to recommend distance learning.

Sherburne's current positivity rate is 8.9%, a full percentage higher than the state's overall average.

In some positive news, Larson discussed the status of the vaccine and said she expects the county to start being involved after health care workers and long-term care residents have been vaccinated, as those groups are at the top of the list and being vaccinated by the state.

She next sought and received the board's permission to be ready with a staffing plan to turn the county's ten current part-time public health nurses into temporary full time workers as needed to meet the vaccination demands.

Larson used an analogy that the vaccine supply is going to start like a slow trickle out of a hose but quickly become a gushing fire hose as more and more becomes available. She vowed that her staff will be ready to execute their vaccination plans which is expected to start right at the beginning of the new year. She also noted that Sherburne County's supply is expected to be the Moderna vaccine if it gains approval, as the current Pfizer vaccine has different storage needs and is being used by larger systems such as the VA.

Business Relief

Weber ended the meeting by discussing the current status of the funds that had been approved by the legislature just the day before. He expects the county to receive approximately \$1.85 million in this round of funding and wanted to know some parameters from the commissioners for how it should be distributed to businesses.

There was a general consensus that the money should be distributed as quickly as possible and should be targeted towards the businesses that were forced to shut down with last month's executive order, including restaurants, and gyms.

The group also discussed some unknowns such as how the state was going to distribute funds directly to those same businesses.

Weber took the direction and stated that he will have the application process and some planning ready for review at the January 5 meeting.

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Area News

Local treasure hunt held Saturday

By Katherine Cantin
Staff Writer

Real Life Treasure Hunt LLC will be hosting a small-business treasure hunt in Becker, Big Lake, Buffalo, Elk River, and Monticello today (Dec. 19) starting at 10 a.m. It will be a scavenger hunt, with participants getting their first clue via the *Real Life Treasure Hunt LLC Facebook* page.

After receiving the first clue, participants will need to visit the small business hinted at in the clue, then make a purchase there. After making the purchase, the business will provide the clue to find the next prize. Prizes include free registration for another treasure hunt offered by the company, and real, pure silver.

The group/individual who solves all the clues will get to take home the prize cache, which will include 10 Troy ounces of silver.

The treasure hunt will lead sleuths around the area to different businesses which have been impacted by the COVID-19 pan-

demie. The hunt will begin in Buffalo and end in Elk River. At the end of the hunt, participants will find the owners of *Real Life Treasure Hunt LLC* guarding the cash. They will then present all the riddles they collected and all of the receipts from the purchases made in order to win the cache.

Jake Petersen and a friend started *Real Life Treasure Hunt* after trying to find treasure with metal detectors. They didn't find anything, and their kids got bored after a while. So they thought it would be fun to create a company that organized real treasure hunts with real silver treasure.

"This pandemic and its restrictions have caused a lot of local businesses... to really suffer," Petersen said.

So his wife came up with the idea to hold a treasure hunt to help support those businesses.

The event is open to everyone. To get the first clue, visit [Facebook.com/RealLifeTreasureHuntLLC](https://www.facebook.com/RealLifeTreasureHuntLLC).

Paid research study: Survey about Minnesota intersection

Submitted Article

Share your thoughts about Minnesota roadways!

University of Minnesota researchers are seeking volunteers to participate in an online research study about Minnesota roadway designs.

Share one's knowledge and perceptions of high-risk intersection roadway designs, and watch informational footage to learn how they work, and share one's feedback.

To be eligible, one must have a valid driver's license, regularly drive on Minnesota roadways, and have no hearing loss that inhibits everyday conversation.

If one completes the study, one will receive \$10 via mailed check. This study is expected to take 20 minutes to complete and can be found here: https://umn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_afaskqGC1im-vihD.

YOUR NEWS

Just the Way You Like It

Benton 4-Hers "light up" residents in Foley for Christmas

Submitted Article

The Benton County 4-H Ambassadors were super excited to make plans this winter to bring happiness to people in their communities.

The ambassadors decided that they would like to decorate the large courtyard at the Gardens in Foley with holiday lights. By decorating the center courtyard, residents with a courtyard view, those eating their meals and residents in the assisted living units are all able to view the lights.

"Decorating the nursing home was a good experience because even though we couldn't see the resident's reactions, we know that they truly appreciated it during these times," said 4-H Ambassador Travis Boyle of Foley.

"Decorating the nursing home was a good representation of what the Benton County Ambassadors are about and that's making the community a better place and more inviting. It is important to me, because I know that I did something to brightening up their experience there and made them feel like they matter to the community."

The youth worked hard to put lights on the trees, brought in several fake trees covered with lights, an inflatable snowman and even a giant heart against the bird feeder. The youth laughed as they fought to get the lights to "light up" and smiled as residents watched out the windows wondering what they were all up to.

The ambassadors plan to leave the lights shining bright through March.

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Weber heading to NDSU!



CONGRATULATIONS TO BRAYDEN WEBER as he signed his National Letter of Intent to play football at NDSU next year! His family and school are proud of all that Brayden has accomplished as a Becker Bulldog so far and wish him the best of luck next year. Above, Brayden (middle front) is seated with parents, grandparents and brother, (Submitted Photo).



BENTON COUNTY 4-H AMBASSADORS finished up decorating the courtyard at the Gardens in Foley for the nursing home residents. Front (L-R) Skylar Morris, Hailey Lesniak, Morgan Molitor and Austin Molitor. Back (L-R) Larkin Kleine, Ambassador Advisory Joyce Belanger, Marissa Kuklok, Alicia Belanger, Travis Boyle, Johnathon Mersinger, Kathrine Mersinger, 4-H Extension Educator- Ann Olson. (Submitted Photos).



4-H AMBASSADORS (L-R) Travis Boyle, Alicia Belanger and Hailey Lesniak working hard to put garland and lights up outside the dining area for the residents of the nursing home at the Gardens of Foley.

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We wish everyone a wonderful Holiday season. Despite all of our challenges, there is much to be thankful for!



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