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Burton scores 25 in basketball win
SMHS speech team starts competition
Cardinal Showcase - Community Education for adults
CLC honors list



Contending with weather

Wind gusts reported at 40 miles per hour blew snow across the region Jan. 22, causing visibility issues for travelers. Pictured above, the snow blows from the north along 2nd Ave. NW and Highway 10 in Staples. Temperatures dipped to near 30 degrees below zero that day. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)

SMHS 2026 Snodaze candidates announced

Snodaze Week will be held February 2-7, 2026 at Staples-Motley High School. It will be a busy week filled with activities and several home sporting events. The 2026 SnoDaze Court was announced last week.

Senior Royalty:

Eli Greenwaldt, Gabe Kroll, Peyton Jares, Eli Rutten, Avandre Brandt, Adrian Gomez

Sadye Anderson, Ava Birkholtz, Raina Mikhaeil, Cecily Moe, Pam Lawrence,

Abby Brichacek.

Underclassmen Attendants:

Juniors - Tyson Turner and Paige Warren

Sophomores - Roman Engebretson and Addison Potter

Freshmen - John Schotzko and Kaylee Perius.

Coronation will be held Weds., Feb. 4 at 9:15 a.m. at Centennial Auditorium. The Royalty Tour will begin at 11:00 a.m.



With temperatures well below zero, Staples Police and Lakewood Ambulance crews help a patient who fell ill at the Staples Community Center on Jan. 22. (Staples World photo by Mark Anderson)

Staples-Motley High School students recognized by MSHSL



Madison Perius

Tyson Turner

Isabelle Dobson

Noah Larson

Four high school students at Staples-Motley were nominated for the ExCEL (Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership) Award, and the Triple 'A' (Academics, Arts, and Athletics) Award which are sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL).

Madison Perius and Tyson Turner, juniors at SMHS, were selected as the school's ExCEL Award winners for 2025-2026. Sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League, The ExCEL Award - Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership - is a unique recognition program designed exclusively for Minnesota high school juniors who are active in school activities, leaders in their schools, and who demonstrate a strong commitment to community service.

Perius and Turner will represent Staples-Motley at the state level for this prestigious award.

Isabelle Dobson and Noah Larson, seniors at SMHS, were selected as the school's 2025-2026 Triple 'A' Award winners. Sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League, AAA is a recognition program designed for Minnesota high school seniors. Students who are active in fine arts, athletics, who show leadership qualities, who are model citizens in their community, and excel with their academics are eligible for the award.

Dobson and Larson will represent Staples-Motley as they move on to the second round of selections at the state level.

Below is a description of each of the award winners.

Madison Perius

Madison Perius, the daughter of Chris and Jill Perius, participates in a variety of activities at SMHS. In the area of sports, Madison is active in softball and tennis, having served as a captain in the

latter. She credits all of her coaches for having helped her achieve athletic goals. Madison also gave a shout-out to her seventh grade tennis coach Justin Edin, for helping her as she started out in the sport.

In the area of fine arts, Madison plays clarinet in the Cardinal band, serving as section leader this year.

Scholastically, Madison has a 4.0 grade point average and is on the Honor Roll. In addition to her regular classes at SMHS, Madison is involved in the PSEO (Post Secondary Enrollment Options) program, hoping to earn her Associate of Arts (AA) degree by the time she graduates from high school. She would like to go into dental hygiene, Madison said, adding that it's something she's been interested in for many years.

Madison enjoys giving back to her community. A member at Sacred Heart Church in Staples, she has helped out at both youth group and other church events, including Feed My

Starving Children. She's been a volunteer at the Staples Lions Easter Egg-stravaganza event, and has enjoyed being a 'good neighbor' to a senior citizen who needed assistance when he was recovering from an injury. She's a member of the Student Council at school, and has served as a Special Olympics Unified Partner in the past.

Outside of school events and her volunteer work, Madison enjoys doing puzzles, and spending time with her family. "My family loves the outdoors," she shared, going on to say that they do a lot of winter activities together as well, including ice fishing, snowmobiling and skiing. "I like winter," Madison added.

Tyson Turner

Tyson Turner, the son of Valerie Turner and Brian Turner, participates in a number of activities at SMHS, including sports and music.

In the area of sports, Tyson's been a member of

See **MSHSL** on page 10a

Weather

2026

This Week's Forecast

	High	Low	Cond.
Jan. 28	6	-12	Sunny
Jan. 29	8	-13	P. Sunny
Jan. 30	8	-10	Sunny
Jan. 31	15	8	M. Sunny
Feb. 1	25	17	Cloudy
Feb. 2	27	18	Cloudy
Feb. 3	26	16	M. Cloudy

Last Year, 2025

	High	Low	Cond.
Jan. 28	40°	22	Sunny
Jan. 29	35	25	M. Cloudy
Jan. 30	46	18	Sunny
Jan. 31	31	21	Sunny
Feb. 1	32	20	Cloudy
Feb. 2	21	17	Cloudy
Feb. 3	13	4	Snow

Average Temps:
H = 22° Low = 3°

Compiled by
Dale Hausmann,
WCCO's Staples area
Weatherwatcher

Public Notices

Becker Township 9A

Leader Hall Board 9A

Staples Township 9A

Meadowbrook Township 9A

Villard Township 9A

Todd Planning 9A

Todd Commissioners 9A, 6A

Staples-Motley enrollment increasing

Staples-Motley Business Manager Ellie Hill told the board that enrollment is up 15 students from where the school ended last year. At the latest count, they have 946 students and Hill said they are planning on possibly going up to 968 by next year. After that, a smaller kindergarten class might limit the school's growth.

Hill said most of the gains have been at the elementary school and they have added an extra elementary school teacher to fit the numbers. Hill said the high school numbers are different, with some students taking PSEO college classes, which affects the school enrollment count.

Hill said "We have a large share of kids who graduate with their AA degree," which completes their first two years of college.

Superintendent Shane Tappe said since March of last year, the school has had 90 inquiries about students enrolling at Staples-Motley, with 30 of them looking into the early childhood program. He said they are estimating future numbers and are aware of reports that the Sacred Heart Area School may be closing next year and some families will be looking for a new school.

"It is up to the individuals to make those decisions," said Tappe. "We would welcome them with open arms."

Staples-Motley Elementary Principal Ryan Koenigs said "We are trying to be compassionate with what they are going through. We will not make assumptions, if any families would like to join us, we would welcome them."

Health services

School nurse Cindy Denning gave a presentation about the school's health services. She and Alisha Pesola are the two school nurses and they both work all buildings.

She said there are a lot of special needs students that the nurses help on a daily basis. "Some students need medications, we have sick kids, seizure kids and diabetic kids," said Denning. "We monitor them very

Cindy Denning

closely, look at their behavioral needs and work with social services."

When students report themselves to the nurses' office, Denning said the

See **SCHOOL** on page 3a



There’s more than one way to deal with the cold...



Escaping the cold

Two Staples couples picked a good week to head out of town, when temperatures plummeted to nearly 30 degrees below zero the weekend of Jan. 24. Pictured from left at St. Maarten, a Caribbean Island, are

Brad and Bobbe Anderson, and Brian and Amy Winkels. Bobbe Odden reported that the day they arrived they experienced a 95 degree temperature change. (Submitted photo)



Bundled up for a walk

Marlon Johnson of Staples walked along 7th St. NE in Staples Jan. 22, braving temps nearing 25 below, and wind gusts reported at 40 mph. Johnson said he wears five or six layers of clothing when walking outside in extreme cold and is sure to keep his mouth covered. “People who know me probably like that,” he joked. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



A stop at the Spot

Jeff and Peg Winkelman of Little Falls stopped at the Spot Cafe in Staples Jan. 22, on their way to Crookston. Before heading back on the road, they shared some thoughts about the cold front sweeping the region. Jeff said he actually likes cold weather and doesn’t let below zero temps stop him from enjoying outdoor sports such as skiing, ice skating and snowshoeing. He recalled skiing in Vermont one year and when he reached the top of the ski lift, someone had written in chalk that the windchill was 110 degrees below zero that day. Peg said she preferred to experience extreme cold by watching it from the window. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)

Speech season starts at Cass Lake-Bena tourney

Saturday, January 17, the Staples-Motley Speech Team competed in the Cass Lake-Bena Early Speech Extravaganza, the first tournament of the season. This tournament doesn’t do team rankings, but many individual Staples-Motley competitors were recognized.

Brynn Bestland received a first place medal in; Storytelling and Drama. Triston Rendon earned a first place medal in Prose. Walker Johnson and Maddock Harvey earned blue ribbons in Creative Expression and both brought home additional blue ribbons in their respective categories of

Extemporaneous Reading and Storytelling. Additional Blue Ribbon winners included; Raina Mikhaeil, Addie Brenny and Lexi Ann in respective categories of; Drama, Poetry and Prose. Red Ribbon winners; Bella Hines Discussion, Tristan Rendon and Raina Mikhaeil, Great Speeches and Caleb Bestland and Landon Zeigler, Humor. Black ribbon winners; Hailey Richardt, Original Oratory, Jackson Alexander and Caleb Bestland, Prose and Sadye Anderson in Poetry.



Speech team at Cass Lake-Bena

The Staples-Motley speech team competed at their first season tournament, front row left to right: Raina Mikhaeil, Brynn Bestland, Walker Johnson, Addie Potter, Hayden Anderson, Angie Paklonsky, Kai Bestland. Second row: Bella Hines, Charlotte Aldrich, Sadye Anderson, Annabella Hurtig, Ava Davis, Lexa Graves. Third row: Lexi Ann, Nadia Santos, Hailey Richardt, Joshua Cushing, Jackson Alexander, Maddock Harvey, Addie Brenny. Back row: Alex Tkalcich, Matthew Jewison, Caleb

Bestland, Christopher Mikhaeil, Lydia Tkalcich, Jackson Bitzer, Landon Zeigler, Meredith Hoemberg, Molly Hoemberg, Tristan Rendon. (Submitted photo)

One-vehicle rollover southeast of Motley

The Morrison County Sheriff’s Office reports that on Jan. 21, at approximately 8 p.m., their office received a report of a one-vehicle rollover near the intersection of Dove Rd., north of 330th St., approximately seven miles southeast of Motley, in Scandia Valley Township. According to the sheriff’s office, 31-year-old Alissa Collison of Pillager was traveling north on Dove Rd. Collison was going around a

curve and she lost control of her vehicle on the icy road surface. The vehicle went in the ditch, rolled onto its side and came to rest against a power pole. Collision was treated at the scene by North Ambulance for minor injuries and released. The Morrison County Sheriff’s Office was assisted at the scene by the MN State Patrol, Scandia Valley Fire and Rescue, and North Ambulance.

Recent reports from the Motley Police Dept. (MPD) and Morrison County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO) included the following:

Jan. 16 - Motley Police issued a citation to Paul Anthony Blomquist, 39, for driving after revocation.

Jan. 16 - Motley Police issued a speeding citation to Amber Ann Mielke, 37.

Jan. 20 - Morrison County deputies arrested Gregory Thomas Brunner,



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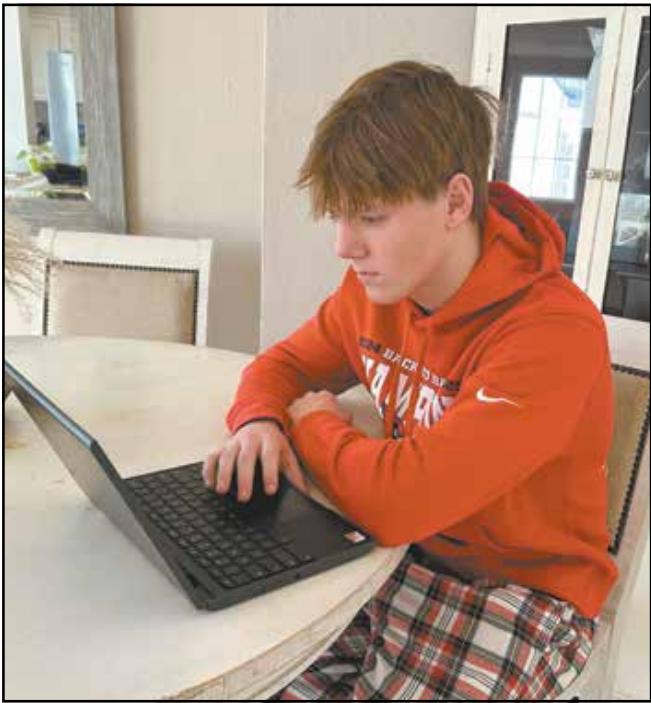
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E-learning school day

Due to the severe cold Jan. 23, students at Staples-Motley public schools had an e-learning day from home, with computers supplied by the school district. Pictured above, studying math in Aaron Carter’s class is Beau Carlson, 10th grade. Below is Maxx Carlson, 8th grade, in Lisa Koenigs’ class. The Carlson brothers live in Staples. (Submitted photos)



Looking back

75 YEARS Ago - 1951

• Jan. 25, 1951 - Three persons were killed instantly Saturday afternoon at 12:10 o'clock when their automobile and a Northern Pacific light engine collided at the Jefferson Street crossing in the Wadena village limits. The victims were Darrell Meader, 22; his wife, 21; and her brother, Marvin Wilson, 20, all of Nimrod. Meader formerly lived at Luverne, N.D. The locomotive, operated by Frank Clausen as engineer and M. A. DeWald as fireman, was enroute west to Dilworth to pick up a troop train. Police at Wadena stated

Compiled by Dawn Timbs



Mystery photo

Hello readers. This week's archive photo is from 1967. Do you know who these people are and perhaps the context of the photo? Do you have a memory to share? Email your answers and where

you're from to dtimbs@staplesworld.com by Friday, or call 218-894-1112. The answers will be published in next week's paper, as well as a new mystery photo.

frosted windows on the car apparently prevented the driver from seeing the oncoming locomotive. The car was crushed on the front of the locomotive, trapping the victims. The locomotive traveled about a half mile before coming to a stop. Triple funeral services were held at the Oylen church with the Rev. Raymond Ewing, pastor of the Staples Congregational church, officiated at the services. Burial was made in the Poplar cemetery. Mrs. Meader and Marvin Wilson are a daughter and son of Mr. and Mrs. Gene Wilson, farmers north of Oylen. Mr. and Mrs. Meader were married last fall. • Jan. 25, 1951 - The first meeting of the West Central Telephone Association held in Staples on Jan. 18, was a success from all standpoints, according to officials of the association. Between 80 and 90 people attended the meeting at the city hall in Staples to hear about the proposed organization of a cooperative rural telephone association for the people of this area. Fred Allison, area supervisor for the REA was the main speaker. • Jan. 25, 1951 - Darrell Denny, 4-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Denny of Staples, returned Friday morning from the University Hospital in Minneapolis, where he had been a patient since October. He sustained a broken leg when he was running and fell. The break was just above the knee. • Jan. 25, 1951 - James Randgaard, owner of the Staples theatre, has enlarged his theatre holdings by the purchase of the

Lyric theatre at Watertown, S.D., the transaction to become effective on March first of this year. Charles Brauch, who has been in the Staples Theatre for a number of years will be transferred to Watertown. Hjalmer Randgaard, who has been managing a theatre at Ely for some time will become the new manager of the Staples theatre.

50 YEARS Ago - 1976

• Jan. 22, 1976 - Approximately 300 wrestling fans jammed the Staples High School cafeteria last Thursday evening to give recognition to Don Dravis, who that evening had just won his 100th dual meet victory as wrestling coach. The celebration was arranged by the Staples Quarterbacks club. Brief talks were given by Larry Kern, representing the former wrestlers of Coach Dravis; Paul Van Buren, representing parents in the community; and Norm Card from the coaching staff of SHS. This year's team captains, Tony Van Buren, Steve O'Keefe, Dave Sowers and Jim Johnson, then presented Coach Dravis with a leisure suit on behalf of the Cardinal wrestling squad as a token of appreciation for is outstanding efforts to promote wrestling at SHS

and the tremendous record and reputation that he has brought to the entire Staples community. Dravis and his pretty wife, Mary, moved to Staples in 1963 and Dravis has been the head wrestling coach of the Cardinals since that date. They have five children, Paula, Greg, Blaine, Jeff and Mary Jo. • Jan. 22, 1976 - Mrs. Rena Underhill, kindergarten teacher at Motley Public School, has been named teacher of the year by the Motley Education Association.

Rena has been teaching 25 years of which the past eight have been at Motley. Before coming to Motley she taught at Pillager and in rural schools of Cass and Morrison counties. Mrs. Underhill graduated from Motley High school as Rena Orvis and completed her teaching preparation as a graduate of St. Cloud State University. • Jan. 22, 1976 - Sports headlines: "Cardinals stop Lakers 64-57, lose to Park Rapids quint" (boys basketball); "Sauer basket sinks Verndale, Staples downed then by C-I" (girls basketball); "Card swimmers claim victory"; "Cardinal wrestlers remain undefeated with 46-15 win." • Jan. 22, 1976 - The Staples Varsity Swim team, coached by Jerry Deming, chalked up a 103-49 victory over Fergus Falls Jan. 13. Two new records were set by the Varsity Cardinals, Rich Kaste in the 200 free style with a time of 2:15.7, and Paul Drake in the 50 free style at 26.8.

25 YEARS Ago - 2001

• Jan. 25, 2001 - Amy Peterson and Shawn Miles were crowned 2001 Sno Daze Queen and King at Staples Motley High School Monday night. Amy is the daughter of Julie and Leroy Peterson and Shawn is the son of Kathy and Roy Miles. They will reign over the festivities this week, which includes a Sno Daze dance Saturday night at the Central Lakes College campus in Staples. Other queen candidates included Tina Blake, Amanda Hofer, Erin Belanger, Brigitte Koppes and Lyndsey Williams. King candidates included Mike Schafer, Chad Willette, Tom Craft, Martin Brenny and Justin Kolling. • Jan. 25, 2001 - Fifty years ago this month, life changed very quickly for a group of young men from Staples. Their National Guard unit, the Brainerd Headquarters Company of the 194th Tank Battalion, was called up in mid-January for active duty during the Korean War. That call-up included close to 20 young men from Staples, Motley and surrounding areas. For at least five of the Guardsmen, the activation of their unit meant they were not going to graduate with their class of 1951.

• Jan. 25, 2001 - Staples Motley's boys improved to 12-2 for the season last week with three wins, including an impressive 69-66 win over Crookston Saturday night. • Jan. 25, 2001 - The Cardinal girls finally won a close win last week. They suffered two losses, but beat Crookston 59-58 Saturday night. Top scorers included Rachel Landecker and Stephanie Rice. • Jan. 25, 2001 - The Staples Elementary Spelling bee was held Jan. 18 with the winners headed to the district wide spelling contest. The top fifth grade spellers were Ann Motl, first; Jacob Denning, second; Alyssa Jordan, third.

10 YEARS Ago - 2016

• Jan. 28, 2016 - A total of 14,040 meals were packed for the "Kids Against Hunger" non-profit organization Jan. 20, at the Staples Church of Christ. Forty-three volunteers of all ages participated in the event, which included filling bags with rice, soy and dried vegetables. • Jan. 28, 2016 - Hazel Dell Library in Leader will be featured on a few upcoming episodes of Lake-land Public Television's "Common Ground." The show features interviews with Leader residents Sue Lund and Ruth Boldan, both volunteers at the library.



Past mystery solved

Eleanor (Scott) Hanson of New Brighton called to say she just got the previous week's newspaper and recognized all the women in it, front, Georgene Falldorf and Ardy Colianni. Back: LaDonna Peterson, Barbara Martin and Mary Jane Friedli. "I graduated with LaDonna and bowled with Mary Jane," said Hanson. "I remember all of them."

SCHOOL continued from page 1a

main goal is to keep them in school if possible. "We don't want sick kids in school but we do work hard to get them back in class if they are not sick," said Denning. Other duties of the nurses include working with emergency response teams and giving students dental and vision screenings. Denning said this year they found five students who didn't know they were color blind. School nurses also do scoliosis screening and work on hand washing skills. They help with changing body education for 4th grade girls and 5th grade boys. Denning said they have identified around 40 to 50 students who seem to come in more frequently. She said those kids can now log themselves in and can access a cough drop or ice pack. Denning said this will be her last year as school nurse. "I have loved my job here," said Denning. Superintendent Tappe thanked her for her work. "You have done

an exceptional job working with our cabinet," said Tappe, "we will appreciate everything you've done." In other news, the board • Accepted retirements of teachers Laurie Paskewitz and Laurie Trout, both at the end of the school year. Paskewitz had taught 25 years at the district, Trout has been here 11 years. • Heard from Tappe about working to create cashless options for students to make purchases, since students mainly use their cell phones to purchase things. • Approved contract lane change requests from Heather Wiegand, Staci Schultz, Jake Kuehl, Rebeka Kappedal, Emily Benson, Selket Jewett, Kasey Odden and Dawn Weite. • Approved resignations of Melissa Richards, food service and Avery Amerud, paraprofessional. • Approved hire of Trevor Wentworth and Kevin Trerweiler as junior high boys basketball coaches.

Todd Cty. court report Jan. 21

Long Prairie Police

Edinson Medina Matos, Long Prairie. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. Isaura Margarita Turbi Perez, Long Prairie. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.

MN State Patrol

Stephan Alexander Cooper, Staples. Driver fails to stop for STOP Sign. Fine 50. Fee \$85. Caleb Stephen Arcdneau, Belgrade. Speed 88/70. Fine \$60. Fee \$85. William Kenneth Birrenkott, Alexandria. Speed 80/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Karrie Marie Cropper, Osakis. Speed 69/60. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Samuel William Dehn, Little Falls. Fail to Yield right of way. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Colby Edmondson, Marysville, WA. Duty to drive with care. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Isabella Georgene Essen, Moorhead. Speed 80/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Wyatt Joseph Klimek, Nelson. Hands free law. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Zaal Makhatadze, Brooklyn, NY. Hands free law. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Melissa Carroll Mhanna, Fargo, ND. Speed 88/70. Fine \$60. Fee \$85. Renette Alana Nordloef, Williston, SD. Speed 80/70. Fine 80/70. Fine \$40. Davis Shawn Olson, Sauk Centre. Speed 65/60, Fine \$40 Fee \$85. Victoria Lynn Reinartz, Fargo, ND. Speed 80/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Omar Alexander Reyes, Long Prairie. Window restrictions. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Bryan Sanchez, Sauk Centre. Speed 80/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Timothy Jesse Sotebeer, New Prague. Speed 75/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Tanner Preston Stacy, Kendallville, IN. Speed 89/70. Fine \$60. Fee \$85.

Jordan Mae Thein, Prinsburg. Speed 79/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Austin Andrew Zeyon, Fargo, ND. No MN Driver's License. Fine \$215. No MN registration. Fine \$100. Johnnathen Jovon Bennett, Alexandria. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85.

Todd County Sheriff's Office

Zachary James Ademek-Lyon, Bertha. Driver must carry proof of insurance when operating vehicle. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Julio Antonio Botello Hurtado, Grey Eagle. Dogs-prohibited. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Nikko Michael Donovan, Eagle Bend. Liquor consumption by persons under 21. Fine \$100. Fee \$85. Ryan Allan Driehorst, Wadena. Speed 77/60. Fine \$60. Fee \$85. Santo Domingo Este, Staples. Driver must carry proof of insurance when operating vehicle. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Kyalee Marie Fritz-Ashwood, Baxter. Liquor consumption by persons under 21. Fine \$100. Fee \$85. Mason Thomas Gorghuber, Garfield. Speed 65/55. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Anevia Ann Hanks, Morton. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100. Fee \$85. Speed 65/55. Fine \$50. The following cases were heard before Judge Gail T. Kulick in Seventh District Court in Todd County January 8, 2026. Natasha Paige Myers, Staples. Financial exploitation-vulnerable adult. Dismissed. Misusing credit card to secure services. Sentenced. Local confinement (90 days, stay 90 days for 1 yr). Unsupervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$50. Restitution \$6,400. Fee \$125. The following cases were heard before Judge Daniel A. Benson in Seventh District Court in Todd County January 13, 2026. Kaelyn Breann Holmquist, Clarissa. DWI-operate motor vehicle under influence of alcohol. Dismissed. Careless driving-operate any vehicle carelessly on street or hwy. Local confinement (90 days, stay 90 days for 1 yr credit for time served: 0 days). Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$400. Fine \$75. Taylor John Huston, Grey Eagle. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. Christopher Orozco Juarez, Long Prairie. Instructional permit violation-persons 18 years or older. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Jose Guadalupe Paramo Hernandez, Long Prairie. Driving after suspension. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. Unlawful passing. Fine \$50. Matthew Dylan Pugsley, Wadena. Speed greater than reasonable. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Kathryn Ann Sjerven, Eagle Bend. Speed 75/55. Fine \$70. Fee \$155. Jessica Maria Villavicencio Soto, Browerville. Driver must carry proof of insurance when operating vehicle. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200.

Mystery solved

Last week's mystery photo published in the Feb. 14, 1980 edition of the Staples World featured members of the FHA Executive Committee at Motley High School (MHS). Front, from left: Roxann Holton, vice president; Jill McAllister, flower committee. Middle: Terri Gold, secretary; Susan Underhill, hostess; Shelly Geurts, president. Back: Darcee White, flower; Linda Zetah, reporter. Lorree (Farber) Shereck, 1985 MHS grad, and Shellie (Thorsett) Hobson, 1986 MHS grad, both of Motley, correctly identified all except for Susan Underhill, whom they thought might be a Swecker girl. Thanks for participating in our mystery photo.

StaplesWorld

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Regular advertising and copy
deadline is Friday, noon.
The office closes at noon on Friday.

Quote of the week

“If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: If we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.”
— Anne Bradstreet

Coming soon is the groundhog’s big day

Not everyone is good at remembering dates that should be important to them. Birthdays, for instance. But sometimes there are convenient tipoffs that make remembering easier. I have a close friend whose birthday is on Groundhog Day, February 2nd, a milestone that’s less than a week away. Thanks to this reminder, how can I forget.

This event, while not of monumental importance to most of the world, has become significant for the light-hearted celebration and publicity that surround it, eagerly awaited by winter-weary souls here and elsewhere in northern latitudes.

In Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, officials dressed in tuxedos, black ties, and stovepipe hats pluck from its confinement a furry mammal that bears the name of Punxsutawney Phil, and before a gathered crowd those officials will judge whether or not the cute little creature can see his shadow.

If Phil the groundhog has seen his shadow—if it’s sunny, in other words—then according to Groundhog Day lore we can expect six more weeks of winter. But if Phil does not see his shadow, we can supposedly expect an early spring. For the record, more times than not Phil sees his shadow, and thus—in theory—we may have to trudge through six more weeks of winter.

Depending on where in the U.S. you happen to live, six more weeks of winter can be viewed as either good news or bad. In places with more temperate winters than Minnesota’s, six more weeks of winter might seem like a lot. But here—in northern Minnesota, certainly—a winter that ends six weeks after Groundhog Day might seem like a pretty good deal. Despite the fact that winter 2025-26 will officially end on Friday,

March 20th, any long-time Minnesotan can tell you that the odds of spring being here to stay by that date are not odds on which to bet a paycheck.

Punxsutawney Phil the Groundhog Day mascot spends most of the year in a climate-controlled, man-made burrow attached to the Punxsutawney Memorial Library, cared for by the Inner Circle of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club. No hibernating needed for him.

If Phil was a truly wild groundhog—better known to Minnesotans as a woodchuck—he would be among our very few true hibernators, along with bears, and ground squirrels like our native, but misnamed, Minnesota “gopher.” It might seem a stretch to imagine that hand-sized creature and an eight pound woodchuck to be related, but they are. Both fall within the broad grouping of “ground squirrels,” rodent family members that burrow, and spend much of their life underground.

The woodchuck is renowned for its digging ability, using short, powerful legs and long claws to excavate tunnels and underground dens, which may differ between the warmer seasons and winter. Underground dens typically have several entrances, increasing the odds for survival when a woodchuck is pursued by such predators as a fox, coyote, bobcat, or bear. Hawks and owls prey on them, too.

It’s this exceptional digging ability that at times puts the woodchuck on a collision course with its human neighbors. Vegetable and flower gardens are magnets for woodchucks, and one can be decimated almost overnight. Their digging and tunneling have been known to undermine sidewalks, decks, and driveways, at times even gnawing through underground wires and irrigation lines.

In wilder places more remote from man, the woodchuck’s preferred habitat is meadows, fields, pastures, and the edges of small woodlots. There they consume grasses, wild flowering plants, dandelion, coltsfoot and clovers, bark and leaves. Unlike us, their

incisor teeth grow continuously—as much as 1/16th of an inch per week—and it’s only by prodigious eating that this dental equipment is kept worn down. Though they are more strictly vegetarian than some members of the ground squirrel family—eating up to a pound of vegetation daily—woodchucks are also opportunists, and will eat grubs, grasshoppers, snails, eggs, and even baby birds.

Woodchucks are not nocturnal, but are wary. They head for cover underground when danger is sensed, and as a result are not an especially common sight. I most often see them as roadkill, which is not surprising since they often inhabit areas near human development; places like agricultural fields, roadsides, and fencerows.

If one can believe Wikipedia, woodchuck hides were used to make moccasins by Native American tribes—particularly in the Eastern woodlands—due to the hide’s durability. Fly fishermen have found both the underfur and the longer guard hairs of woodchuck pelts to be useful in tying flies used for trout and smallmouth bass. The fur industry has also used woodchuck fur for trimming and other fur applications on less expensive garments. Poor man’s mink, you might say.

During hibernation woodchucks may lose up to half their body weight, relying on stored fat reserves to sustain them until vegetation is available to them in spring. So you could understand why a wild woodchuck might be eager to determine the progress of the transition from winter to spring, and poke its head out of its den occasionally to get a reading on things.

Woodchuck, or groundhog, take your pick. By either name the creature has become a symbol of the hopes of its human neighbors for an end to the season many of us find most challenging. Whether the Punxsutawney Phil ritual yields right or wrong predictions, who can say? It’s a distraction in the depths of winter, when we need one.

And a reminder of an important date for some of us.

Cardinal Showcase

Community Education has opportunities for adults

By Paige Ahrendt
Staples-Motley Community Education Director

January is a time when many of us reflect, reset, and look ahead. It’s a month that encourages us to grow—and that’s exactly what Community Education is all about. Community Education exists to serve learners of all ages, interests, and backgrounds, and right now our offerings reflect that mission more than ever.

Currently, our Community Education program is full of adult-focused opportunities. From fitness and wellness classes to lifelong learning, skill-building, and enrichment programs, there truly is something for everyone. Whether you are looking to try something new, meet others in the community, or simply carve out time for yourself, Community Education provides a welcoming place to do so. If you have ever thought, “I might be interested in that,” now is the perfect time to take the next step and sign up.

Participation is what keeps these programs strong. When community members

enroll, it allows us to continue offering a wide variety of classes and explore new ideas for future programming. Even trying just one class can make a meaningful difference—not only for you, but for the continued growth of Community Education in our area. If you are ever interested in instructing a class, or have ideas for classes you would like to see, please let us know.

In addition to adult programming, our youth activities are in full swing. Our youth sports programs are busy with practices, games, and tournaments, keeping students active, engaged, and learning valuable lessons beyond the playing field. These opportunities help build teamwork, confidence, and a strong sense of community among our young participants.

Community Education is about more than classes and activities—it’s about connection. It’s about creating spaces where people can learn together, stay active, and feel involved in their community. We encourage anyone who has been curious or hesitant to take that first step and get involved.

Rural areas suffering under new health care policies

By Heidi Kolbeck-Urlacher
Center For Rural Affairs

Individuals and health care providers face major challenges from a trio of policies set in motion by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA) and Congress’s failure thus far to extend expiring Affordable Care Act (ACA) subsidies. Without significant state and federal intervention, the country faces a growing crisis that could lead to rising numbers of uninsured Americans and the closure of numerous rural hospitals and health facilities.

Expiring subsidies and skyrocketing premiums will result in more uninsured Americans

Many Americans are grappling with rising health insurance premiums for health coverage through the ACA’s Marketplace. Because Congress allowed ACA enhanced premium tax credits (subsidies) to expire at the end of 2025, costs are expected to more than double. Currently, over 90% of ACA enrollees, or more than 22 million people, receive the subsidy.

According to the National Rural Health Association, 35% of rural workers are not offered health insurance by their employer, as rural people are more likely to be self-employed or work for small employers. As of August 2025, 2.8 million rural residents were enrolled in Marketplace health plans, with 80% receiving a zero-premium plan as a result of the subsidies.

With enhanced subsidies gone and premiums rising steeply, many people will likely forgo purchasing health insurance altogether. Reduced enrollment will create additional strain on medical facilities to provide care that may not be compensated, worsening the financial struggles many rural hospitals and clinics already face.

Cuts to Medicaid and

SNAP threaten individuals, hospitals, and local economies

The OBBA legislation signed into law in July 2025 ushered in major reforms set to cut \$911 billion in Medicaid spending over the next decade. Medicaid provides health coverage for low-income, pregnant, elderly, or disabled Americans, with more than 20% of the U.S. population, nearly 70 million people, enrolled in the program.

Rural areas have higher rates of Medicaid enrollment than urban areas, with 1 in 4 rural residents relying on the program, making it a critical source of funding helping keep rural hospitals open.

Analysis demonstrates that Nebraska alone is forecasted to lose up to \$4 billion in Medicaid funds with 30,000 residents losing health coverage, a devastating blow to individuals, families, and health care providers. Iowa and South Dakota are expected to lose up to \$12 billion and \$1 billion, respectively.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is another crucial program that helps safeguard health by ensuring low-income individuals and families have access to food. SNAP was unfortunately also on the OBBA chopping block, receiving marked cuts with the passage of the law. Once changes are fully enacted, the Congressional Budget Office anticipates that 4 million people, including families with children, older adults, people with disabilities, and veterans, will see SNAP benefits significantly cut or eliminated, having a significant multiplier effect on local food systems and families’ spending power.

Rural health transformation misses the mark

Rural areas already face higher uninsurance and underinsurance rates than their urban counterparts, and rural hospitals disproportionately depend on Medicaid, Medicare, and Marketplace for payment reimbursements. If residents lose these coverages and do not secure other health insurance, the rising costs of uncompensated care will lead to hospital and care facilities closures.

In a letter to Congress in June 2025, the National Rural Health Association noted that, since 2010, 193 rural hospitals have shut their doors or stopped inpatient services, and almost half of all rural hospitals are operating at a loss. Indeed, shortly after passage of OBBA, Nebraska’s Curtis Medical Center announced it would close due anticipated federal budget cuts to Medicaid.

A 2025 report by the Charis Center for Rural Health cited that nationwide, 432 rural hospitals are vulnerable to closure, including at least 21% of Nebraska’s rural hospitals and 46% of those in Kansas.

Congress attempted to address the crisis they knew Medicaid cuts would create for rural hospitals

by including a provision in OBBA for a \$50 billion Rural Health Transformation Fund (RHTF) to be allocated to states over five years. However, the legislation passed without a requirement to use the funds for rural hospitals. Instead, states are required to use funds for five strategic goals: health innovations, access to providers, workforce development, innovative care, and tech innovation.

When the RHTF Notice of Funding Opportunity was released last fall, it included a condition that states can only use 15% of the funding for health provider payments, including payments to rural hospitals.

With anticipated cuts in Medicaid funds at \$911 billion over 10 years, the RHTF will not even begin to cover the deep shortfall facing health providers.

Access to health care is required for a healthy rural America

In order to have thriving rural communities, the people who live there must have equitable, affordable, and reliable access to health care. Research has shown that in comparison to their urban counterparts, people in rural communities have less access to health care, are more likely to be uninsured, and are less affluent, older, and less healthy. These figures demonstrate the vital importance of health care access programs like Medicaid and the Marketplace in rural America.

As the OBBA policies are rolled out over the next few years, states will be forced to grapple with the fallout. At the very least, decision makers must endeavor to limit harms by implementing changes in ways that mitigate burdens and limit unnecessary loss of coverage or benefits. Efforts should include providing extensive public outreach and education on any new conditions for coverage, such as work requirements or documentation, and ensuring sensible exemptions for individuals with extreme hardships.

Right now, it is vital that rural residents ask Congress to act to protect rural health care. There are bipartisan efforts in the Senate and House to revive ACA subsidies. Backed by 17 Republicans including Rep. Zach Nunn of Iowa, the House passed legislation that would extend the ACA subsidies for three years if enacted. Additionally, several bills have been introduced to restore funding for Medicaid and SNAP.

Creating a healthy rural America requires ensuring that every resident has the access they need to resources that support their health and well-being. It’s more important than ever to hold our leaders accountable and speak up about the realities of how these cuts directly impact our families and neighbors. By working together, we can continue to build a future where rural communities are healthy, strong, and resilient.

Quote of the week

“What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness.”
— John Steinbeck

Staples World

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The deadline is 12 noon, Friday. Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily represent the views of this newspaper.

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Fairness: The Staples World tries conscientiously to report fairly and accurately. If you feel we fall short of this objective at any time, please direct your complaint to the manager whose name appears on this page.

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Mark Your Calendar

Jan. 29
‘WALK WITH A Doc’ Thursdays at 5:15 p.m., at Lakewood Health System’s main campus in Staples. Meet at the main entrance. For more information about this free program, visit <https://walkwithadoc.org/join-a-walk/locations/staples-minnesota>

Jan. 30
WOMEN’S OPEN AA RECOVERY MEETING Fridays in person, 10:30 a.m., Motley Free

Methodist Church (lower level), 33 Wellwood St. E. Motley. All women welcome.

Jan. 31
FREE COMMUNITY BREAKFAST Saturday, Jan. 31, 9 - 10:30 a.m., at Motley United Methodist Church, 847 3rd Ave. S., Motley.

TOWN HALL MEETING - LEGISLATIVE UPDATE Saturday, Jan. 31, 10 a.m., The Depot, 100 Aldrich Ave. SW, Wadena. Sen. Paul Utke, Rep. Krista Knudsen, Rep. Mike Wiener. Discussion on fraud issues

under Gov. Walz and the DFL majority. Q&A session, coffee & donuts provided.

Feb. 1
CELEBRATE RECOVERY GROUP MEETINGS Sundays, 6 p.m., at Motley Free Methodist Church, 33 Wellwood St. E., Motley.

Feb. 3
OLD TIME DANCE is held the first Tuesday of every month at the Wadena VFW. For information, call 218-639-0132.

RUBY’S PANTRY will be held Tuesday, Feb. 3, from 4:30 - 6 p.m. at the parking lot of Central Lakes College in Staples.

EXPERIENCE STRENGTH AND HOPE AA GROUP MTGS IN STAPLES Tuesdays, 7 - 8 p.m., at Church of Christ, 27343 490th St., Staples. For info., call Dan at 218-640-7228.

THE CASS COUNTY REPUBLICAN BPOU PRECINCT CAUCUSES are called to meet Tuesday, Feb. 3, at 7 p.m. Locations include Pillager High School, 11 precincts.

DEADLINE

for all classified ads and copy is 12 noon Friday

For the Staples World

Craft Vendors Wanted

SYLVAN SHORES 2nd Annual CRAFT SHOW

Feb. 14, 2026 \$25 per table

Call Harry for details: 952-465-7829

Staples Area Church Directory

Staples
Staples Alliance
1512 8th St. NE, Staples..... 218-894-2891
Jonny Olson, Associate Pastor
Sunday Worship.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday School.....11:00 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
AWANA.....6:00 p.m.
Assembly of God
914 3rd Ave. NE, Staples..... 218-894-1081
Pastor Roy Miles
Small Groups (Bible classes for all ages).....9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship Service.....10:30 a.m.
Children’s Church (Kids start in main worship service).....11 a.m.
Prayer Meeting.....5 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Sonlight (kids ages 4 yrs.-6th grade).....After school to 5:30 p.m.
Youth Group (Teens, 7th-12th grade).....After school to 5:30 p.m.
Church of Christ
27343 490th St., Staples.....218-894-2609
Pastor Barry Klein
Facebook Live
Bible School (youth and adult).....9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY:
Adult Bible Study.....6:30 p.m.
Faith Lutheran
430 12th Street. NE., Staples.....218-894-1546
Pastor Carl Larson
Sunday Worship Service.....9:00 a.m.
Sunday School and Coffee Fellowship.....10:05 a.m.
Sacred Heart Catholic Church
310 4th St. NE, Staples.....218-631-1598
Church.....
info@marysacc.org
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314
Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-632-7310
Rev. Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
Mass: Sunday.....8:30 a.m.
Seventh Day Adventist
421 Dakota Ave. SE, Staples
Pastor Joshua Jeresek
218-894-0033
Saturday Worship.....9:30 a.m.
Sabbath School.....10:45 a.m.
Thomastown Covenant
15940 251st Ave., Staples.....218-894-3923
Pastor Scott Jorgenson
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH.....6:30 p.m.
Trinity Lutheran
1000 4th St., NE, Staples.....218-894-2372
Pastor Vicar Paul Koehler
Sunday Divine Service.....9:00 a.m.
Sunday School and Bible Class...10:30 a.m.
United Methodist
310 5th St. NE, Staples.....218-894-2248
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.
(Nursery Available for Sunday Worship)

Aldrich
Balsamlund Lutheran
19550 490th Street, Aldrich
Joner Eckman SMA.....218-837-5831
jre227@yahoo.com
Sunday Worship.....8:30 a.m.
Cushing
Bethany Lutheran
25430 Bison Rd.Cushing, MN
320-749-2140
Pastor Carl Larson
www.bethanylutherancushing.org
Sunday Worship.....9:00 a.m.
Communion.....1st and 2nd Sunday of each month
Lincoln Evangelical Free
1354 320th Street, Cushing, MN 56443
Phone: 218- 575-2449
www.lincolnefree.org
Facebook Lincoln E Free
Office Hours: Tues. - Thurs., 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Senior Pastor: Don Reigstad
SUNDAY
Church Worship Gathering.....10:00 a.m.
YouTube Channel.....10:00 a.m.
Cushing Baptist
26298 Bear Rd., Cushing
Pastor Dan Holmes.....320-749-2583
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Bible study.....7:30 p.m.
Leader
Swan Valley Lutheran
Leader.....218-397-2470
Sandy Knight, Synodically Authorized Minister of Word and Sacrament
Sunday Worship.....9 a.m.
January - July.....11 a.m.
July - January.....
Maple Hill Lutheran
Sandy Knight, Synodically Authorized Minister of Word and Sacrament
Leader.....218-397-2470 (Rural Pine River)
Worship and Sunday School.....9:00 a.m.
Motley
Motley Free Methodist
33 Wellwood St. E
Motley 56466.....218-352-6888
Jim Johnson, Senior Pastor
Casey Reynolds, Assistant Pastor
Sunday Worship.....9:00 and 10:30 a.m.
facebook live.....9 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
AWANA.....4:00-5:30 p.m.
Youth Group.....6:00-8:00 p.m.
St. John’s Lutheran
497 3rd Ave. S, Motley.....218-352-6399
Pastor Vicar Paul Koehler
Sunday School and Bible Class.....8:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....9:30 a.m.

St. Michael Catholic Church
280 1st Ave S, Motley.....218-631-1598
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314 Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-632-7310 Rev. Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
Sunday.....10:30 a.m. (May - Nov.)
Saturday.....4:00 p.m. (Dec - April)
United Methodist
847 3rd Ave. S. Lane, Motley.....218-352-6466
Pastor Greg Leslie
www.motleyumc.net
Sunday Worship Service.....10:00 a.m.
Monday AA meeting.....8:00 p.m.
Oylen
Oylen Alliance
City. Rds. 7 and 9, Oylen
218-472-3440 or 218-472-3316
Pastor Neal Malcore
Sunday School.....10:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....11:00 a.m.
Pillager
First Lutheran Church
Pastor Mathew Sundquist
717 River Street S, Pillager, MN
218-746-3775
Sunday Worship.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday School, 2nd and 4th Sundays.....8:30 a.m.
Casino Assembly of God
Pastor Dan Johnson
N. of Motley, Hwy. 64, E. on Cty 34 to Cty. 104.
Phone.....218-746-3839
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....7:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY.....7:00 p.m.
First Baptist
903 River Street South, Pillager
Pastor Jake Anderson
218-746-3768
curious@fbcpillager.com
Worship Gathering.....10:00 a.m.
Connection Point.....9:30 a.m.
Hewitt
Church of the Nazarene
114 Front Street, P.O. Box 146 Hewitt, MN
218-924-2028
Jim and Linda McGaffey, Pastor
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....10:45 a.m.
WEDNESDAY PRAYER.....7:00 p.m.
Trinity Lutheran Church (LCMS)
524 Front Street, PO Box 116, Hewitt, MN
Pastor Robin Fish
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Hewitt Community Church
Hwy. 210, Hewitt, MN
Pastor Kenneth Uhren
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Verndale
Verndale Alliance
109 NW Brown Street, Verndale, MN 56481
218-445-5619
Senior Pastor Tony Stanley
Youth Pastor Joe Ward
Sunday Worship.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday Bible Fellowship Classes 11-11:45 a.m.

Family Life Church
402 NE Clark Drive, Verndale 218-445-5568
VerndaleFLC@gmail.com
Pastor Amos Self.....218-371-7189
Tahna Rurup, Connections & Media Pastor
Tillman Phagan, Kid’s & Food Shelf Pastor
Ryan Wolfenden, Youth Pastor
SUNDAY
Youth Prayer.....9:20 a.m.
Worship Service.....10:00 a.m.
Prayer Meeting.....5 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Life Groups.....6:30 p.m.
Hope Chapel Alliance
18126 County Road 7, Verndale
218-445-5643 or 218-472-3316
Pastor Neal Malcore
Sunday Worship.....9:00 a.m.
Sunday School.....10:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Family Night.....5:30 p.m.
Immanuel Lutheran Church of Bartlett Township (LCMS)
17097 460th St., PO Box 37, Verndale
Pastor Robin Fish
Sunday Worship.....9:00 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Bible Study.....6:30 p.m.
Verndale United Methodist
10 3rd Ave. SW, Verndale
218-445-5108
Pastor Jill Pawlowski
Sunday Worship.....9:00 a.m.
Central Community Church
5 miles N on Cty Rd 26 (Nimrod tar)
Pastor James Middendorf, 320-260-4952
Sunday Service.....9:00 a.m.
Bible Study.....10:30 a.m.
St. Frederick Catholic Church
20 Mason Avenue NW
Verndale.....218-631-1598
info@marysacc.org
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314 Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-632-7310 Rev. Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
MASS: Saturday.....6:00 p.m.
St. Hubert Catholic Church
Bluegrass.....218-631-1598
info@marysacc.org
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314 Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-632-7310 Father Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
Sunday Service.....10:30 a.m. (Dec - April)
Saturday.....4:00 p.m. (May - Nov.)

Leaf River Township
The Old Country Church
Leaf River Twp., Wadena County Rd. 6
Info. 218-837-5690 Call first.
Wadena
St. Helen’s Episcopal Church
22 Dayton Ave. SW, Wadena, MN
218-631-3928
Sunday Worship.....10:00 a.m.
St. Ann’s Catholic Church
514 1st Street SE, Wadena(218) 631-1593
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314 Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-632-7310 Father Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
Mass: Sunday.....10 a.m.

“REBOOT” A Life Changing Event with Chris Stefanik

Weds., Feb. 11 7-9 p.m.

(Doors open at 6 p.m.)

Wadena Memorial Auditorium

249 Dayton Ave. SW, Wadena (W-DC Elem. School)

TICKETS: www.marysacc.org

REBOOT

A LIFE-CHANGING EVENT





Join us at the Wadena County Republican Caucuses

Tues., February 3, 2026, 7 p.m.

Registration Starts: 6:30 p.m. LOCATIONS AND PRECINCTS:

- Menahga High School Commons for: Menahga City, Blueberry Twp., Huntersville Twp., Shell River Twp.
- Sebekka High School Media Room for: Lyons Twp., Meadow Twp., Nimrod, N. Germany Twp., Orton Twp., Red Eye Twp., Rockwood Twp., Sebekka
- Wadena-DC High School Commons Area for: Leaf River Twp., Wadena P1, Wadena P2, Wadena P3, Wadena Twp.
- Verndale High School Library for: Aldrich City, Aldrich Twp., Bullard Twp., Staples, Verndale, Wing River Twp.,Thomastown Twp.

For more information call 218-371-8668 or email WadenaCountyRepublicansSecretary@gmail.com

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Get Involved.

Join Us at the Todd–Wadena DFL Caucus

When: Tuesday, February 3, 2026
Registration Starts: 6:30 PM
Meeting Starts: 7:00 PM

For Todd County Residents:
Browerville Community Center
653 Main St S
Browerville, MN 56438

For Wadena County Residents:
Wadena–Deer Elementary School
South Entrance
215 Colfax Ave SW
Wadena, MN 56482

Send email to ToddCountyDFL@gmail.com or call 612-419-4033 for more information.

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Staples, MN 218-894-1775

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Pizza, Pasta, Salads, Sandwiches
Staples, MN 218-894-3299

Central Building Supply
Hwy. 10 West, Staples, MN
218-894-3794

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Todd County Commissioners Minutes

TCC continued from page 9a

2020, the Finance Committee recommended taking a proactive budget approach for future retirement severances within Fund 01-General Revenue, and;

WHEREAS, the County Board established the Committed Fund Balance for Future Retirees' Severance Fund with Resolution #20201229-08 for FYE 2020 and has recommit- ted the updated balance annually since its inception and;

WHEREAS, the remaining bal- ance of this account as of Decem- ber 31, 2025 is \$193,809.32. State Auditors recommendation is to approve a commitment of this fund balance on an annual basis for trans- parent financial reporting.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Todd County Board of Commissioners hereby authorize the County Auditor/Trea- surer to register the Committed Fund Balance account in Fund 01-Gen- eral Revenue with a balance of \$193,809.32 to track the funding plan for the Committed Fund Balance for Future Retirees' Severance Fund, effective December 31, 2025.

On motion by Denny and second by Noska, the following resolution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

TRANSFER OF FUNDS – COUNTY DITCH 18 - PARTIAL REPAYMENT

WHEREAS, on December 28, 2017 the Todd County Board of Commissioners approved the advance of \$300,000.00 from the General Fund (Fund 01) to the Ditch Fund (Fund 40) per BA#20171228-06; and

WHEREAS, on September 4, 2018 the Todd County Board of Commissioners approved the special assessment payment terms, granting a 10-year repayment term with 2% interest to be credited to the General Fund (Fund 01). The first year of the special assessment collection began for taxes payable in 2019 per BA#20180904-07; and

WHEREAS, the amount col- lected thus far from 2018 through 2024 for Ditch 18 Special Assess- ment #7189 consists of a principal amount of \$189,498.58 along an interest amount of \$19,744.13 and has been authorized for transfer; and

WHEREAS, the amount col- lected for Ditch 18 Special Assess- ment #7189 in taxes payable year 2025 is \$39,603.61 of the principal balance, along with \$1,964.14 of interest and is ready for transfer as a partial repayment to the advance made by the General Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Todd County Board of Commissioners hereby authorize the transfer of funds in the amount of \$41,567.75 from Fund 40-County Ditches/Ditch 18 to Fund 01 General Fund.

On motion by Becker and second by Neumann, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: To approve the final amount of ARPA funds previ- ously authorized via BA#20241217-19 for the Office 365 Project at \$75,157.01 and allow the remaining funds of \$12,511.89 to be re-as- signed according to the terms of BA#20241217-20.

On motion by Becker and second by Denny, the following resolution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

TRANSFER OF FUNDS - FINAL ARPA PROJECT FUNDING

WHEREAS, Todd County has received funding via the Federal American Rescue Plan (ARP/SLFRF) Act, and;

WHEREAS, Todd County has used/expended funds within the allotted timeframe indicated in the federal guidance terms, and;

WHEREAS, Todd County depart- ments incurred qualifying expenses via the Federal ARP/SLFRF Act which were not able to be expensed directly to Fund 19-ARP/SLFRF and now necessitate realignment to the County Departments that incurred the initial eligible expense.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Todd County Board of Commissioners hereby authorize the transfer of funds in the amount of \$79,773.97 from Fund 19-ARP/SLFRF to Fund 01-Gen- eral Fund (Recorder's Tech) in the amount of \$22,211.89 and to Fund 51-Solid Waste in the amount of \$57,562.08 to realign eligible ARP-SLFRF expenses to the County Departments where the support of the project expense occurred.

On motion by Neumann and second by Noska, the following res- olution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

TRANSFER OF FUNDS – SOLID WASTE LOAN REPAYMENT

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2021 the Todd County Board of Commis- sioners adopted BA#20210316-19 which established a loan from the General Fund (01) to Solid Waste (51) to support the financing needed for construction of a new transfer station building in the amount of \$972,210.00, and;

WHEREAS, on Decem- ber 30, 2024, the Todd County Board of Commissioners adopted BA#20241230-12 which trans- ferred the loan funds to the Solid Waste department to support the construction expenses necessary to keep the project moving forward toward completion in 2025, and;

WHEREAS, the Solid Waste has budgeted for the first installment of repayment of this loan to occur in 2025, and;

WHEREAS, audit standards require the County Board approval prior to transferring monies between two different funds.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Todd County Board of Commissioners hereby

authorize the transfer of funds in the amount of \$50,000.00 from Fund 51-Solid Waste to Fund 01-General Revenue as repayment towards the Transfer Station Construction Loan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Solid Waste department will continue to make principal payments to the General Fund of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) annually, or as can be afforded, until the remaining principal is zero and it is understood that this resolution replaces and supersedes the repayment timing stipulated in BA#20210316-19.

On motion by Noska and second by Denny, the following resolution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

RESOLUTION FOR A PUBLIC LAND AUCTION OF TAX- FORFEITED PARCELS IN TODD COUNTY

WHEREAS: Tax-Forfeited Par- cels in Todd County have been on a market value auction and minimum bid auction and now classified as provided by M.S. 282.01 and will be offered for sale by the Todd County Auditor/Treasurer through Bid4as- sets.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Todd County Board of Commissioners do hereby approve said land auction to com- mence on the 12th day of December 2026 and closing 19th of Decem- ber 2026 with Bid4assets. The Todd County Auditor/Treasurer is hereby directed at publishing a notice of the upcoming land auction as provided by law.

BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the terms of sales are as follows: All property sold requires imme- diate payment, no payment plans will be offered, and full payment is due on the date of sale.

A charge of \$25.00 will be made for each State Deed issued.

A charge of \$46.00 will be made to record the State Deed.

State Deed Tax on the amount of purchase will be collected. (0.0033 x purchase price of more than \$3k or minimum of \$1.65)

A \$50.00 fee for well certificate, if applicable, will be collected.

A Tax Forfeiture Administration fee of \$250.00 will be collected.

A 3% Assurance Fund charge will be made (as per M. S. 284.28, Subd. 8).

A Buyer premium to Bid4assets online auctions, 5% of the total sale price minimum of \$100.00

BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Tax-Forfeited Parcels will be offered for sale subject to liens, existing roads, easements and leases, if any, and any special assessments canceled at forfeiture may be re-as- sessed by the municipalities after the sale.

BE FURTHER RESOLVED that all Tax-Forfeited Parcels are sold as is.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the right is reserved by Todd County, in the interest of the public, to cancel this sale at any time.

Todd County Ag Society

Members of the Todd County Ag Society board provided an update to the County Board of the 2025 activities and discussion was held regarding proposals for improvement projects at the Todd County Fair- grounds location.

County Sheriff

On motion by Becker and second by Denny, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unani- mous vote: Acknowledge the dona- tions to the K9 fund received in 2025 for a total of \$2,095.00.

Planning & Zoning

On motion by Noska and second by Denny, the following resolution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

FINAL PLAT APPROVAL – “SEXTON BBL LEGACY” SUBDIVISION

WHEREAS, Applicant Sexton Family Cabin LLC, applied to sub- divide a property owned by Sexton Family Cabin that is described as part of Section 25 of Birchdale Township with the plat to be known as “Sexton BBL Legacy”.

WHEREAS, Sexton BBL Legacy consists of one lot; Block One, Lot 1, 2.92 acres located in Shoreland Recreational Development Zoning District in Birchdale Township.

WHEREAS, On November 6, 2025, the Todd County Planning Commission recommended the fol- lowing properties be considered for Subdivision pursuant to Todd County Subdivision Regulation and Ordi- nance:

Lots One (1), Two (2), Three (3), Four (4) and Five (5) of Block One (1) Harcora Lodge, First Addition; and half of Vacated “H” Street abutting these said lots.

And Outlot “B” of Harcora Lodge, First Addition; and half of Vacated “H” Street abutting this said Outlot “B”.

And

All that part of Outlot “C” of Har- cora Lodge, First Addition, North of the following described line: Said line commencing at a point at the Southwest corner of Lot Five (5), said point being designated by an iron monument, of said Harcora Lodge, First Addition; thence in a Westerly direction to a point on the West line of Outlot “C”, said point being 78.88 feet South of the North line of said Outlot “C”, being part of Government Lots One (1) and Two (2), Section Twenty-five (25), Town- ship One Hundred Twenty-seven (127) North, Range Thirty-three (33) West of the Fifth Principal Meridian; and half of Vacated “H” Street abut- ting this said part of Outlot “C”.

WHEREAS, On November 18, 2025, the Todd County Board of Commissioners considered the Pre- liminary Plat for the above described property and approved the Sexton BBL Legacy preliminary plat with no

conditions.

WHEREAS, the Planning & Zoning Department has completed the necessary final plat review and find that all items required for final plat approval have been completed.

Administration

On motion by Denny and second by Becker, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unani- mous vote: Renew the Hands of Hope Resource Center lease agree- ment as presented, for January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026.

On motion by Noska and second by Denny, the following resolution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

ADOPTION OF CHANGES TO THE TODD COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICY

WHEREAS, the Todd County Board of Commissioners has recog- nized a need for a strong, up-to-date personnel policy, and;

WHEREAS, The Todd County Board of Commissioners and Employment Legal have had the opportunity to review the policy addi- tions set forth in Section 7.07, Min- nesota Paid Leave, of the Personnel Policy, with an effective date of Janu- ary 1, 2026, and find the implemen- tation to be in the best interest of the sound administration of the County, and;

WHEREAS, the addition of Sec- tion 7.07, Minnesota Paid Leave, will require the renumber of all ap- propriate Personnel Policy sections to maintain order within said policy.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Todd County Board of Commissioners adopts the attached changes to the Todd County Personnel Policy and directs the County Coordinator to begin administration of said policy as of January 1, 2026, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it is understood that this Reso- lution replaces and supersedes all prior County Board actions, oral or written, relating to the subject matter hereof.

County Auditor-Treasurer's Report

The County Auditor-Treasurer reported on year end balancing pro- cesses in progress, absentee voting opened on 12/26/25 for the Osakis School District special election and filing for numerous township office's in Todd County opens today and closes on January 13, 2026.

County Commissioner's Report

The Commissioners reported on meetings and events attended.

Commissioner Becker attended meetings including Transfer Station Ribbon Cutting, Facilities, and TWCC.

Commissioner Denny has attended meetings including commit- tees and the Transfer Station Grand Opening.

Commissioner Noska has attended meetings including Canna- bis Tour and TWCC.

Commissioner Byers attended meetings including the Transfer Station Ribbon Cutting, Facilities and SWCD.

Commissioner Neumann attended meetings including the SRWD, Transfer Station Ribbon Cut- ting, JD2, and HR Interviews.

Adjourn

On motion by Denny and second by Neumann, the meeting was adjourned for the month of Decem- ber and year of 2025.

COMMISSIONER WARRANTS

VENDOR NAME	\$ AMOUNT
AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	\$5,530.49
AMERICAN SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESS	5,552.10
ASSOC OF MN COUNTIES.....	2,250.00
CARGILL SALT DIVISION	29,491.98
CDW GOVERNMENT INC.....	6,040.27
CMVPLUS, LLC	4,271.08
ELSNER WELL DRILLING INC	14,219.06
FARM-RITE EQUIPMENT, INC	4,350.00
HILLYARD	4,078.82
LEADSONLINE LLC.....	3,230.00
LONG PRAIRIE LEADER	5,148.50
M-R SIGN COMPANY INC ..	6,094.40
MENCH/JAMES	9,820.00
METAL CULTVERTS INC ...	20,980.00
METRO SALES INC.....	6,588.29
MOTOROLA	7,105.71
NORTHERN STAR COOP... ..	5,070.55
64 PAYMENTS LESS	
THAN \$2,000	22,471.92
Total:	\$162,293.17

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES WARRANTS

VENDOR NAME	\$ AMOUNT
DHS - MOOSE LAKE RTC - 462 5,596.75	
DHS - MSOP - MN SEX OFFENDER PROG - 462	9,699.00
GREATHER MN FAMILY SRVS INC	3,817.90
HEARTLAND GIRLS RANCH.....	23,356.45
NORTH HOMES CHILDREN & FAMILY SRVS	28,597.50
NORTHWOOD CHILDRENS SERVICES	9,769.48
PRAIRIE LAKES YOUTH PROGRAMS	13,627.19
VILLAGE RANCH INC	23,556.30
WEST CENTRAL REG JUVENILE CTR	7,798.00
17 PAYMENTS LESS	
THAN \$2,000	6,905.07
Total:	\$132,723.64

On a motion by Denny and second by Neumann, the preceding minutes of the County Board meeting held Decem- ber 30, 2025 were duly approved by unanimous vote at the Todd County Board of Commissioners at the Regu- lar Board Meeting held on January 6, 2026.

Witness my hand and seal: /s/ on file: Bob Byers, County Board Chairperson /s/ on file: Denise Gaida, Todd County Auditor-Treasurer

6pnc

Hello World

ONLINE BIRTHS REMOVED AT THE REQUEST OF LAKEWOOD HEALTH SYSTEM.

Central Lakes College announces Fall Honors List

Central Lakes College, Brainerd and Staples, has announced its 2025 Fall Semester Honors List. The President's List includes students who earned a grade point average of 3.75 or higher while enrolled in at least 12 credits. The Dean's List includes stu- dents who earned a grade point average of 3.25 - 3.74 while enrolled in at least 12 credits.

The released honors list does not include stu- dents who have requested no release of information. Local students named includes:

Motley

President's List: Scott Dobbs, Emmalee Dobson, Shae Macheel; **Dean's List:** Kyler Batton, Isaac Calix, Mabel Haehnel, Taylor Henry, Justin Olson.

Pillager

President's List: Bran- don Burgau, Isabel Cole, Jacob Dixon, Ryan Fordahl, Ryan Larson, Zachary Lipenga, Gracie Mudgett, Rylee Rochel, Allie Tryg- geseth, Steven VonDali; **Dean's List:** Nash Aus- land, Hannah Cole, Tessa Eastman, Melissa Elkins, Joshua Gammello, Isaac

Lindberg, Leah Mate- jcek, Makenna Thalhuber, London Zapzalka.

Staples

President's List: Carol Eblen, Brooke Hansen, Amber Johnson, Jorja Kobliska, Brett Nelson, Nicholas Peterson, Jason White; **Dean's List:** Mason Albertson, Sadye Ander- son, Erik Bergstrom, Abbie Bodicoat, Geoffrey DeCamp, Kieran Groetsch, Huntington Kleinschmidt, Skye Larson, Cassandra McGree, Axel Mertens, Tyler Turpin.

Student Achievements

SAWYER FERDON Motley, was recently named to the 2025 Fall Semester Dean's List at the University of Wisconsin-Supe- rior. To qualify, students must have com- pleted 12 degree-seeking semester credits and achieved a grade point average of 3.50 or higher.

HEIDI ZIMMERMAN Motley, was recently named to the 2025 Fall Semester Dean's List at the University of Minnesota Crook- ston. To qualify, students must complete 12 or more letter-graded credits while attain- ing a 3.66 or higher grade point average.

COLTON CONVERSE Motley, graduated from North Dakota State University in the fall of 2025 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics.

BRENDEN BRICHACEK Motley, was recently named to the 2025 Fall Semester Dean's List at South Dakota State University, Brookings. To qualify, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credits and must have earned a 3.5 or higher grade point average.

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY recently announced its 2025 Fall Semester Dean's List. To qualify, students must earn a 3.50 grade point average or higher and be enrolled in at least 12 class credits. Local students named include:

- Daniel Bartle, Cushing
- Kayli Dorn, Pillager
- Israel Ervasti, Staples
- Laken Hines, Staples
- Landen Hines, Pillager
- Lilly Tyrrell, Staples

Join the competition at the Staples Public Library Escape Room

Escape Room players are needed at the Staples Public Library. The Underwater Escape Room will be available until Feb. 28 during reg- ular library hours. Groups of four or less can try their hand at figuring out the clues and locks to escape in 30 minutes or less. So far, the time to beat is 26:43 to win the

pizza party. The competition is free for ages 16 to adult. Call the library at 218-894-1401 and accept the challenge. (Submitted photos)



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Cardinals win girls wrestling invitational

The Staples-Motley girls wrestling team won the 20-team Bertha-Hewitt/Verndale/Parkers Prairie invitational on Jan. 24. Leah Greenwald was the 112 pound champion, while Kana Reese, Maddie Kist and Anika Tureson were second at their weight categories. Isabelle Dobson and Kalee Winter each placed third, whyl Kyleena Rudlang was fifth and Aubrie Houchin was 8th.

Greenwaldt scored a pin and a 6-0 win to reach the final. In the championship match, there was no scoring in the first period. Greenwaldt got an escape and a takedown in the second period. In the third period, her opponent got a takedown to tie the score, but Greenwaldt got out for another escape and the winning point on a 5-4 win.

Kist upset the top seed in her semifinal match by being patient. After no scoring in the first period, Kist got a reversal in the second and turned it into a pin. Tureson scored two pins to reach the final. She gained a 6-3 lead early in the title match, but got caught and pinned. Reese also had two pins to reach the final but fell behind and got pinned in her championship match.

Dobson scored a close 5-4 win with a late reversal to reach the third place match. She scored three takedowns and three near falls for an 18-2 technical fall win in the third place match.

After losing to the top seed in the semifinal, Winter scored two straight pins to place third.

Team results
Bertha-Hewitt/Verndale/Parkers Prairie Girls Invitational

Staples-Motley 127, West Central Area/Ashby-Brandon-Evansville 117, Mille Lacs 101, Badger-Greenbush-Middle River 86, Ottertail Central 82, Spectrum 76, New York Mills 72, Frazee 68, Long Prairie-Grey Eagle/Browerville 64, Bertha-Hewitt/Verndale/Parkers Prairie 56, Roseau 50, Pillager 47, Crookston 28, Belgrade-Broton-Elrosa 27, Osakis 25, Foley 20, Walker-Hackensack/Akely/Nevis 17, Ortonville 16, Pequot Lakes/Pine River-Backus 10, Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg 2

100 Kana Reese 2-1, 2nd place
106 Isabelle Dobson 3-1, 3rd place
112 Leah Greenwaldt 3-0, 1st place
118 Kyleena Rudlang 2-2, 5th place
124 Maddie Kist 2-1, 2nd place
136 Kalee Winter 3-1, 3rd place
170 Anika Tureson 2-1, 2nd place; Aubrie Houchin 1-3, 8th place



Running shot

Sophia Luna goes past the Wadena-Deer Creek defense for a basket. (Staples World photo by Mark Anderson)

Basketball team competitive in losses

The Staples-Motley girls basketball team played well in two losses, a 61-57 game against Upsala on Jan. 19 and 49-32 loss at Wadena-Deer Creek on Jan. 20.

Against Upsala, the Cardinals had a one point lead at halftime, but one of the Upsala players scored 25 points in the second half to put them ahead at the end. The Cardinals shot well from the outside, Sophia Luna making three 3-pointers, with Chloe Larson and Clara Maros adding two each.

Against W-DC, the Cardinals were down by 12 at halftime, but played better in the second half.

Team results
SM 57, Upsala 61
Scoring: Chloe Larson 22, Sophia Luna 11, Hannah Cole 9, Clara Maros 6, Pam Lawrence 5, Addison Potter 4
SM 32, Wadena-Deer Creek 49
Scoring: Larson 13, Luna 9, Cole 6, Potter 3, Lawrence 1



Pam Lawrence passes on a fast break.

Burton, Rutten power offense to 90 points

The Staples-Motley boys basketball team went inside to Josiah Burton, who scored 25 points in a 90-77 win at Hawley on Jan. 20. This was the only game of the week because of weather cancellations.

Burton made nine of 11 shots and added seven out of nine free throws as Hawley struggled to stop him inside. That helped get open shots for Eli Rutten, who made five out of seven three point attempts and finished with 23 points, including six of seven free throws made.

The Cardinals built a 10 point lead by halftime. They started the second half with Conner Kuhns scoring on a fast break, Rutten hitting a three pointer and Burton scoring inside. They soon built their lead to 18 and eventually it got up to 22 before Hawley hit some three pointers in the last two minutes.

Avandre Brandt had a good all-around game with 10 rebounds, five assists and two blocked shots. Kuhns had 10 pass deflections, three steals and seven assists.

Kuhns 9, Avandre Brandt 5
Rebounding leaders: Brandt 10, Larson 9, Sarbaum 9, Burton 8, Rutten 5
Assists leaders: Kuhns 7, Brandt 5, Larson 4, Burton 2



Josiah Burton blocks a shot in a game earlier this season.



Hannah Cole turns to shoot.

Team results
SM 90, Hawley 77
Scoring: Josiah Burton 25, Eli Rutten 23, Conner Kuhns 10, Avandre Brandt 5

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TODD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD DEC. 30, 2025

Call to Order

The Todd County Board of Commissioners met in the Commissioner's Board Room in the City of Long Prairie, MN on the 30th day of December, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Byers. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. All Commissioners were present.

Approval of Agenda

On motion by Becker and second by Denny, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: To adopt the agenda as presented.

Consent Agenda

On motion by Neumann and second by Noska, the following motions were introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

To approve the Todd County Board of Commissioner's Meeting Minutes for December 16, 2025 as presented.

To approve the hire of Maria Vazquez Botello to fill the open Administrative Assistant II - Bilin-

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE 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.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:

DATE OF MORTGAGE: April 29, 2025

ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$116,400.00

MORTGAGOR(S): Sondra Mevissen, as an individual MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Zillow Home Loans, LLC

DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on April 30, 2025 as Document Number A545637 in the Office of the County Recorder of Todd County, Minnesota.

ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: PennyMac Loan Services, LLC by assignment recorded on October 17, 2025 as Document Number A548370 in the Office of the County Recorder of Todd County, Minnesota.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lots 10, 11 and 12, Block 9, Townsite of Hewitt, according to the plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the County Recorder in and for Todd County, Minnesota.

STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 408 N MAIN ST, HEWITT, MN 56453

COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Todd County, Minnesota.

THE AMOUNT CLAIMED

NOTICE OF TERMINATION OF CONTRACT FOR DEED

YOU ARE NOTIFIED: Default has occurred in the Contract for Deed ("Contract") dated December 10, 2021 and recorded on December 10, 2021, as Document Number A529445 in the Office of the County Recorder of Todd County, Minnesota, in which Leah N. Bardwell, as Seller, sold to Jordan A. Anco and Jacqueline A. Horwath, as Purchaser, the real property in Todd County, Minnesota, described as follows: Lot 7, Block 4, Shellabarger's First Addition to Staples, according to the plat thereof on file and of record. The default is as follows: Purchaser has failed to timely pay 24 monthly payments and the balloon payment due December 1, 2024. Total amount due and owing as of September 1, inclusive of late fees and interest, is \$45,022.90. The conditions contained in Minn. Stat. 559.209 have been complied with or are not applicable.

THIS NOTICE IS TO INFORM YOU THAT BY THIS NOTICE THE SELLER HAS BEGUN PROCEEDINGS UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 559.21, TO TERMINATE YOUR CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF YOUR PROPERTY FOR THE REASONS SPECIFIED IN THIS NOTICE.

THE CONTRACT WILL TERMINATE 90 DAYS AFTER THE FIRST DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE UNLESS BEFORE THEN: (a.) THE PERSON

gual position. Grade D/4, Step A at \$21.83/hr. Start date: TBD

Approve the resignation of Eligibility Worker Nicholas Katehis, effective January 2, 2026.

Auditor-Treasurer

On motion by Denny and second by Neumann, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous rollcall vote: To approve the Commissioner Warrants number (ACH) 404270 through 404305 in the amount of \$81,745.80 and (Regular) 59467 through 59511 in the amount of \$80,547.37 for a total of \$162,293.17.

On motion by Becker and second by Denny, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous rollcall vote: To approve the Health & Human Services Commissioner Warrants number (ACH) 807145 through 807177 and (Regular) 713701 through 713735 for a total of \$149,065.97.

On motion by Noska and second by Neumann, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous rollcall vote: To approve the Health & Human Services SSIS Warrants number (ACH) 601892 through 601899 and (Regular) 518756 through 518773 for a total amount of \$132,723.64.

On motion by Becker and second

TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$123,012.38

TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.

NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Zillow Home Loans, LLC

RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: PennyMac Loan Services, LLC

TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 35-0016100

TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 100278200006378243

THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part.

PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:

DATE AND TIME OF SALE: March 19, 2026 at 10:00 AM.

PLACE OF SALE: Todd County Sheriff's Office, County Detention Center, 115 Third Street South, Long Prairie, MN 56347.

to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date

AUTHORIZED IN THIS NOTICE TO RECEIVE PAYMENTS RECEIVES FROM YOU:

(1.) THE AMOUNT THIS NOTICE SAYS YOU OWE; PLUS

(2.) THE COSTS OF SERVICE (TO BE SENT TO YOU); PLUS

(3.) \$1,000.00 APPLY TO ATTORNEYS' FEES ACTUALLY EXPENDED OR INCURRED; PLUS

(4.) FOR CONTRACTS EXECUTED ON OR AFTER MAY 1, 1980, ANY ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS BECOMING DUE UNDER THE CONTRACT TO THE SELLER AFTER THIS NOTICE WAS SERVED ON YOU; PLUS

(5.) FOR CONTRACTS, OTHER THAN EARNEST MONEY CONTRACTS, PURCHASE AGREEMENTS, AND EXERCISED OPTIONS, EXECUTED ON OR AFTER AUGUST 1, 1985, \$83.37 (WHICH IS TWO PERCENT OF THE AMOUNT IN DEFAULT AT THE TIME OF SERVICE OTHER THAN THE FINAL BALLOON PAYMENT, ANY TAXES, ASSESSMENTS, MORTGAGES, OR PRIOR CONTRACTS THAT ARE ASSUMED BY YOU); OR (b.) YOU SECURE FROM A COUNTY OR DISTRICT COURT AN ORDER THAT THE TERMINATION OF THE CONTRACT BE SUSPENDED UNTIL YOUR CLAIMS OR DEFENSES ARE FINALLY DISPOSED OF BY TRIAL, HEARING OR SETTLEMENT. YOUR ACTION MUST SPECIFICALLY STATE THOSE FACTS AND GROUNDS THAT DEMONSTRATE

by Noska, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: To approve the attached vehicle purchase from Nyhus Chevrolet, Staples, MN for the County Motor Pool of a 2026 Chevrolet Equinox in the amount of \$35,191.08.

On motion by Neumann and second by Becker, the following resolution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

COMMIT FUND BALANCE FOR BUILDING & GROUNDS IMPROVEMENT FUND

WHEREAS, the Todd County Board of Commissioners established a building & grounds improvement fund with the objective that the funds be utilized for current and future expenses and held within the County General Fund. The building & grounds improvement funds are appropriated and utilized each calendar year;

WHEREAS, the remaining balance of this account as of December 31, 2025 is \$1,776,668.67. State Auditors recommendation is to approve by resolution a commitment of this fund balance on an annual basis for transparent financial reporting;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Todd County Board of Commissioners hereby

of sale.

TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on September 21, 2026.

THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES 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 MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None

Dated: January 13, 2026

PENNYMAC LOAN SERVICES, LLC Mortgagee

TROTT LAW, P.C.

By: /s/ N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq. Samuel R. Coleman, Esq. *Alexa Marsh, Esq.* Attorneys for Mortgagee 25 Dale Street North St. Paul, MN 55102 (651) 209-9760 (25-1247-FC01)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

5-10pnc

YOUR CLAIMS OR DEFENSES.

IF YOU DO NOT DO ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE ABOVE THINGS WITHIN THE TIME PERIOD SPECIFIED IN THIS NOTICE, YOUR CONTRACT WILL TERMINATE AT THE END OF THE PERIOD AND YOU WILL LOSE ALL THE MONEY YOU HAVE PAID ON THE CONTRACT; YOU WILL LOSE YOUR RIGHT TO POSSESSION OF THE PROPERTY; YOU MAY LOSE YOUR RIGHT TO ASSERT ANY CLAIMS OR DEFENSES THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE; AND YOU WILL BE EVICTED. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS NOTICE, CONTACT AN ATTORNEY IMMEDIATELY.

The name, mailing address, street address or location and telephone number of the Seller or of an attorney authorized by the seller to accept payments pursuant to this notice is: Name: Daniel M. Eaton, Attorney for Seller, Waypoint Law PLLC, 400 South 4th Street, Suite 1025, Minneapolis MN 55415

Street Address or Location where the Seller or the Attorney will accept payment pursuant to this notice:

Waypoint Law PLLC, 400 South 4th Street, Suite 1025, Minneapolis MN 55415, Telephone: 612-445-7596

This person is authorized to receive the payments from you under this notice.

Daniel M. Eaton

4-6pnp

authorize the County Auditor/Treasurer to register the Committed Fund Balance account in Fund 01-General Revenue Fund with a balance of \$1,776,668.67 to track the funding plan for the Committed Fund Balance of Building & Grounds Improvement Fund, effective December 31, 2025.

On motion by Noska and second by Denny, the following resolution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

COMMIT FUND BALANCE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FUND

WHEREAS, the Todd County Board of Commissioners established an Information Technology fund with the objective that the funds be utilized for current and future expenses and held within the County General Fund. The information technology funds are appropriated and utilized each calendar year;

WHEREAS, the remaining balance of this account as of December 31, 2025 is \$125,000.00. State Auditors recommendation is to approve by resolution a commitment of this fund balance on an annual basis for transparent financial reporting;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Todd County Board of Commissioners hereby

TODD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

215 First Ave. South Suite 103 Long Prairie, Minnesota 56347 320-732-4420 toddplan.zone@co.todd.mn.us

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Todd County Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on **Thursday, January 8, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Commissioners meeting room, Historic Courthouse, 215 First Ave. South, Long Prairie, MN to consider the following applications.

NOTE: This meeting is again being held in-person and the public is encouraged to attend, and those who do attend in person can find parking atop the hill on the west side of the Historic Courthouse and enter through the north doors, near the American Flag and monument.

Questions? Phone 320-732-4420 or Email toddplan.zone@co.todd.mn.us

Agenda •Call to Order •Pledge of Allegiance •Introduction of Planning Committee Members and process review •Approval of agenda •Approval of January 8, 2026 Planning Commission meeting minutes •The applicant is introduced •Staff report •Applicant confirms if

authorize the County Auditor/Treasurer to register the Committed Fund Balance account in Fund 01-General Revenue Fund with a balance of \$125,000.00 to track the funding plan for the Committed Fund Balance of Information Technology Fund, effective December 31, 2025.

On motion by Becker and second by Noska, the following resolution was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote:

COMMIT FUND BALANCE FOR FUTURE RETIREES' SEVERANCE FUND WHEREAS, beginning in FY

See **TCC** con't on page 6a

PUBLIC NOTICES: Your Right to Know

staff report accurately represents the request

- Correspondence
- Site Visit Review
- Public Comment
- Board review with applicant, staff and public

1. **Sacred Heart Addition: Sisters of the Society Saint Pius X, Inc.** Section 07, Hartford Township

Site Address: 708 8th St. W., Browerville, MN 56438

PID: 12-0007400.

1. Request to create a +/- two-acre, one lot plat, for a convent cemetery in Residential-2 Zoning District.

2. **Adam Froseth:** Section 22, Kandota Township, Sauk Lake

Site Address: 43543 County Rd 17, Sauk Centre, MN 56378

PID: 14-0024803

3. **Amendment to Article XII. Regulation on Cannabis Businesses, Todd County Planning and Zoning Ordinance**

Adjournment.

Next meeting: March 5, 2026

All persons interested are invited to attend said hearing or submit a letter to be heard on these matters. All correspondence must include name, mailing address and be received 48 hours before the date and time of the hearing.

Todd County Board of Adjustment Jim Pratt, Chair

6pnc

LEGAL NOTICE

TODD COUNTY BUDGET SUMMARY STATEMENT FOR BUDGET YEAR 2026

The Todd County Budget Summary Statement is Published in accordance with Minnesota Statute 375.169. The complete budget is available for public inspection at the Todd County Auditor/Treasurer's Office during normal business hours.

REVENUES	2025	2026
Property tax	18,804,881	19,710,868
State General Purpose Aid	2,404,142	2,269,803
Other taxes	1,428,917	1,631,948
Licenses & Permits	174,800	174,800
Federal Grants	4,068,850	5,159,456
State Aids	12,243,428	12,323,962
Local Grants	0	0
Charges for Service	2,670,927	2,494,514
Misc Revenue	2,997,164	3,321,751
Interest on Investments	251,000	250,000
Other Financing Sources	28,000	28,500
Transfers	5,000	5,000
Total Revenue & Other Source	45,077,109	47,370,602
EXPENDITURES		
General Government	7,236,005	8,153,129
Public safety	6,186,128	6,601,372
Highway/Construction	9,119,710	10,242,034
Streets & Highways (excluding Constr.)	4,531,355	4,687,327
Human Services	10,493,622	10,740,262
Health	2,915,750	2,876,079
Culture and Recreation	448,734	481,592
Conservation of Nat Resources	1,628,853	1,650,590
Economic Development	99,458	107,800
Gen Debt Service	415,354	419,984
Capital Outlay	1,682,736	746,100
Transfers	619,404	664,333
Other Fiscal Charges	0	0
Total Expenditures & other uses:	45,377,109	47,370,602
Budget Balance	300,000	0
Todd County Auditor/Treasurer Denise Gaida		6pnc

NOTICE BECKER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF AUDIT

Becker Township will hold their Annual Board of Audit meeting after their regular 7:00 p.m. meeting on February 10, 2026 at the town hall. The public is invited to attend.

Mary Fitcher, Clerk
Becker Township

6pnc

NOTICE LEADER COMMUNITY HALL MEETING

The Leader Community Hall Board will meet Thursday, February 12, 2026 at the hall at 7:00 p.m.

Mark Strom, Secretary
6-7pnc

NOTICE STAPLES TOWNSHIP ELECTION ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Township residents needing an Absentee ballot for the township election on March 10, 2026 should contact the clerk at 218-296-2151 between February 7 and March 8, 2026.

Bonnie Thoele, Clerk
Staples Township

6pnc

NOTICE VILLARD TOWNSHIP REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING/ BOA

The Villard Town Board will hold its Reorganization Meeting on Tuesday, February 10 at 6:15 p.m. followed by the Board of Audit and the Regular Monthly Meeting. These meetings will be held at the Eastwood Inn, Motley, MN. Feel free to reach out with questions at 218-640-6115.

Mary Trantina-Koenig, Clerk
Villard Township

6pnc

NOTICE MEADOWBROOK TOWNSHIP

Board of Audit

The Board of Audit for Meadowbrook Township will meet at 7:45 p.m. on Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at the Leader Community Hall, immediately following the monthly town board meeting.

Ty W. Peterson, Clerk
Meadowbrook Township

5-6pnc



Braving the cold

Bill Haugan of Staples waves as he passes by the digital weather sign reading 18 degrees below zero the afternoon of Jan. 22. Haugan was on his way to the Staples Public library and said he'd be

walking at least a mile that day. Pictured below, Kim Butler of Browerville fills up her gas tank at the Little Store in Staples before heading out on the road. (Staples World photos by Dawn Timbs)



Keeping warm indoors

A number of people opted to do indoor activities during the recent below-zero temperatures, including putting together puzzles. Pictured above at the Staples Public Library on Jan. 24, National Puzzle Day, are the Hagg siblings of Monticello...Aveline, three, and Elijah, five. Their

grandmother is Angela Johnson, who is a library assistant there. Below, putting together a puzzle at Lakewood Manor in Staples Jan. 25, are Tim Finn (left) and Ed Perish. (Staples World photos by Dawn Timbs)



MSHSL continued from page 1a

Dobson, Larson shine in academics, arts and athletics to earn Triple-A award from MSHSLS

the basketball and baseball teams at SMHS. This year, he's decided to take up golf. Tyson is grateful for the coaches who've helped him over the years. He mentioned basketball coach Justin Thorn, who has inspired him to keep working at this sport. "He pushes us," Tyson said, adding that Coach Thorn "sees our potential...what he knows we can do." Tyson went on to mention Jeff Halverson, his baseball coach during his freshman year. Tyson recalled that he'd injured his shoulder which left him unable to swing a bat or pitch a ball. Coach Halverson made Tyson the pinch runner so he'd still be able to be part of the team. "He saw the potential in me," Tyson went on, noting that the coach helped him get past some mental blocks and realize that "everybody makes mistakes." That meant a lot to him, Tyson said.

In the area of arts, Tyson is a member of the Cardinal band, where he plays alto sax and serves as first chair. Scholastically, Tyson

was a part of the Knowledge Bowl at SMHS his freshman and sophomore years. He maintains a 4.0 grade point average and is involved in the PSEO program, hoping to earn his Associate of Arts (AA) degree by the time he graduates from high school. Tyson plans to go to college, and would like to pursue a degree in the business and marketing fields.

He enjoys his studies, Tyson said, noting that math had always been his favorite subject up until this year, when it switched to English. "I love writing," he said. Tyson may come by this naturally, as his mom was an English teacher, he said. He credits his math teacher, Caitlyn Hacker, for helping prepare him for the high school environment.

Tyson shared that up until sixth grade, he'd attended school in Brainerd, where class sizes were significantly larger. He appreciates being a part of a smaller school, Tyson said.

He enjoys being of service to others, Tyson said. He shared that he's been a REACH buddy during high

school, helping younger students with their school work.

Outside of school, Tyson keeps busy working at Jersey Mike's, a sandwich shop in Brainerd. He also enjoys playing catch with his dad, and taking his dogs, Stella and Charlie, on walks.

Isabelle Dobson

Isabelle Dobson, the daughter of Christopher Dobson and Jennifer Dobson, is active in a variety of activities at SMHS, including sports and music.

Isabelle has been a cheerleader since elementary school, and cited coach Jayme Carlson for being an inspiration to her. She decided to try a new sport her sophomore year at Staples-Motley...wrestling. "I'm really enjoying it," Isabelle said, going on to mention the help she's received from the coaches, including Holtan Truax. She's loved being a part of Cardinal sports, where she's had a lot of fun over the years, and has appreciated the support she's received from fans and fellow teammates.

She also loves being a

part of the arts, Isabelle said, sharing that she plays flute in the Cardinal band. Kristina Haataja is the band's director, and has introduced the students to a variety of music, all of which Isabelle enjoys.

Academically, Isabelle has worked to keep a "decent GPA," she said. In addition to her studies at SMHS, she is also involved in the PSEO program, studying cosmetology at M-State in Wadena. At Staples-Motley, Isabelle said she's particularly enjoyed the history and criminal justice classes taught by Erik Johnson. "He keeps the students engaged," she said.

Outside of school, Isabelle loves to read, especially mysteries and thrillers.

Noah Larson

Noah Larson, the son of Cameron and Trisha Larson, is active in a variety of activities at SMHS, including sports and fine arts.

In the area of sports, Noah's been a part of the Cardinal's football, basketball, and track and field teams. He noted he's been a

two-time captain in basketball and loves the opportunity to help his teammates. Noah expressed his appreciation for coach Zach Qual, who he says understands him and saw his potential. He went on to note coach Bruce Fuhrman who helped him in track and field, and football coach Drew Potter who gave him the opportunity to be a starter on the team.

A highlight for Noah was the year the Cardinals made it to the state football tournament, although he experienced frustration when he was injured and couldn't play. Noah said he was grateful to the therapists at TCO-therapy (Twin Cities Orthopedics) in Staples, especially Peyton Landowski, who helped and inspired him as he worked through his injury.

Noah has attended schools at Staples-Motley since second grade, and is grateful for many teachers along the way, including Kathy Iverson in elementary school; and LaRae Bjorge and Laurie Trout when he was in

middle school. He became a Snoopy fan because of Mrs. Trout, Noah said, and went on to note their good-natured rivalry when it comes to professional football. "She loves the Vikings and I'm a Packers fan."

Academically, Noah's maintained a good grade point average at Staples-Motley. He is also involved in the PSEO program, and enjoys all of his studies, he said.

Next year, Noah will head to Northern State College in Aberdeen, S.D., where he plans to earn a degree in either business, or something in the medical field, perhaps occupational or physical therapy. Noah said he's been inspired by therapists at TCO who've helped him overcome sports injuries, and he'd like to help others in the future.

In his spare time, Noah said he loves his volunteer work helping younger kids in sports, and during the summer, enjoys tubing, watching movies, and doing homework for his PSEO classes.



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