

Inside this issue:

Legendary bird prank recalled
Baseball, softball win with walk-off hits
Mohler celebrates 90th birthday
Food packing volunteers feed the hungry
Trapping gophers



Wednesday, April 23, 2025

Staples World

Staples, Minnesota

\$125

School avoiding cuts as state funding uncertain

By Mark Anderson
Managing Editor

The Staples-Motley School District is not seeing a budget shortfall like many other school districts in the state. At the April 14 school board meeting, Business Manager Ellie Hill said the school is benefiting from planning ahead and “right-sizing” the district so that their expenditures fit their income.

Hill told the board they have been budgeting for decreased enrollment every year, but this year they have maintained the number of students, so the expected revenue is up.

The board passed a revised budget for the 2024-25 year. Hill said the school used reserve funds to add an early childhood class.

Hill said the business office has to plan on new state mandate rules that require the school to send back funding if they don't meet the specific mandates that the money is intended for. She said the school didn't qualify for some student support funding because they already have staff in place to provide the services the money was for. Hill said they have contacted the state to say that practice is punishing the schools who were already

providing those services.

She said the READ Act funds also have that stipulation, but the Staples-Motley schools are using those funds as intended and won't have to give them back.

Looking to the future, Hill said they will be budgeting to keep up with curriculum and technology needs, as well as rising transportation costs.

Superintendent Shane Tappe said a proposed budget in the Minnesota State Senate provides a zero increase through the 2026-27 school year, then large cuts starting in 2028 and 2029. With a shortfall in the state budget, Tappe said it would be an accomplishment if they can hold on to that zero percent instead of cuts coming sooner.

Tappe said even with projected funding cuts, there could be some positive developments in legislation. One change is that the uses for long term facilities maintenance (LTFM) funds, which use local tax money, can be used for more uses, such as roofing, which could help schools avoid dipping into their general fund for building needs.

Hill said they are not aware of any federal funding cuts being planned, so they are continuing to budget with the expected

funding.

“We are at a balanced budget, we want to stay there,” said Hill.

Elementary culture

Staples-Motley Elementary Principal Ryan Koenigs gave a presentation on the work the school has been doing to foster connections between students with the help of staff.

He said they took a PBIS assessment that surveys the school climate and culture. For the first assessment, the staff originally rated the school at 17 percent, with 25 percent being the average score for a school. After working on it this year, they have raised their inventory score to 33 percent.

“We are creating a sense of belonging, we see more of celebrating children this year,” said Koenigs.

Koenigs said their efforts were enhanced this year by successful sports teams walking through the building on their way to state tournaments. He said it was easy to do culture-building activities in that atmosphere, such as students participating in dress up days for homecoming. In a different week, staff held secret dress-up days where they didn't tell the students.

See **SCHOOL** on page 3a

Staples-Motley hosts Reality Store

Students in grades 10 - 12 at Staples-Motley High School had the opportunity to attend the Reality Store April 16, which was held in the Legacy Gym. Close to 70 volunteers from the community helped students as they participated in a ‘real life’ simulation event that taught them about budgeting, managing expenses and dealing with family, career and unexpected situations. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



State speech qualifiers

Five members of the Staples-Motley speech team placed in the top three at the section meet to qualify for the Minnesota State Speech Competition. From left, Walker Johnson, Laken Hines, Olivia Opheim, Brynn Bestland and Raina Mikhaeil. See story, page 2a. (Submitted photo)

Weather

2025 This Week's Forecast			
	High	Low	Cond.
Apr. 23	62	39	M. Cloudy
Apr. 24	53	38	Rain
Apr. 25	60	34	P. Cloudy
Apr. 26	64	44	P. Cloudy
Apr. 27	58	51	Showers
Apr. 28	56	49	Showers
Apr. 29	59	38	Cloudy

Last Year, 2024			
	High	Low	Cond.
Apr. 23	55°	42	Cloudy
Apr. 24	67	32	Sunny
Apr. 25	71	43	M. Sunny
Apr. 26	47	42	Rain
Apr. 27	52	44	Cloudy
Apr. 28	41	37	Rain
Apr. 29	43	35	Rain

Average Temps:
H = 60° Low = 37°
Have a great Easter!

Compiled by
Dale Hausmann,
WCO's Staples area
Weatherwatcher

Public Notices

Moran	9A
Fawn Lake	9A
City of Motley	9A
Todd Culverts	9A
Thomastown	9A
ISD #2170	9A

Obituaries

Robert Denny
Valerie Hellmers
Charles R.
Hanson
Robert Sorenson



Friendly Rider recognizes one-millionth rider

The Wadena County Friendly Rider transit service recognized their one-millionth rider, Joe Ebner, at the Wadena County Courthouse on April 15. A short ceremony was held in the Wadena County Commissioner's room where Ebner was presented a certificate by Randy Jahnke, Wadena County Transit Director.

Friendly Rider began in 2003, under the Wadena County Human Services Dept. At that time there were three busses and a staff of five. Ridership was around 12,000 rides a year.

Friendly Rider now has their own facility, operates under the Wadena County Highway Dept. and current-

ly, has a staff of 16 and eight busses. Ridership is now approximately 55,000 a year.

Friendly Rider continues with the support of the Wadena County Board of Commissioners, Friendly Rider Transit Advisory Committee, Minnesota Depart. of Transportation (MnDOT) and their riders.

Above, left to right: Commissioners Ron Noon, Jon Kangus; Jahnke; Commisioner Bill Stearns; Ebner; Commissioner Murlyn Kreklau; George Behl, Transit Director, Kay Kreklau, Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) representative. (Submitted photo)

Cardinals sending five to state speech

On April 12, the Staples-Motley speech team competed at the Section 6A tournament in Menhaga. The team had an excellent showing, tying for second place in the section and advancing five individual competitors to the state tournament, which will be held on Friday, April 25.

Those advancing to state are: Walker Johnson, who won first place in the category of Creative Expression, Olivia Opheim, who won first place in Informative Speaking, Laken Hines, who won second place in the category of Humor,

Brynn Bestland, who won second place in Drama, and Raina Mikhaeil who won second place in the category of Great Speeches. The top three in each category advanced to state.

The Staples-Motley team had many additional competitors place in the top

six in their category. Addie Brenny placed sixth in Poetry, Maddock Harvey placed fifth in Storytelling, Joshua Cushing placed fourth in Creative Expression, Annabella Hurtig placed fifth in Original Oratory, and Lexi Ann placed sixth in Prose.



Section speech second place team

The Staples-Motley speech team gathers after earning second place in the Section 6A Speech Competition. Pictured front row from left, Walker Johnson, Adelaide Toepper, Laken Hines, Head Coach Kip Hines, Olivia Opheim, Meredith Hoemberg, Jackson Alexander and Landon Zeigler; second row, Annabella Hurtig, Hai-

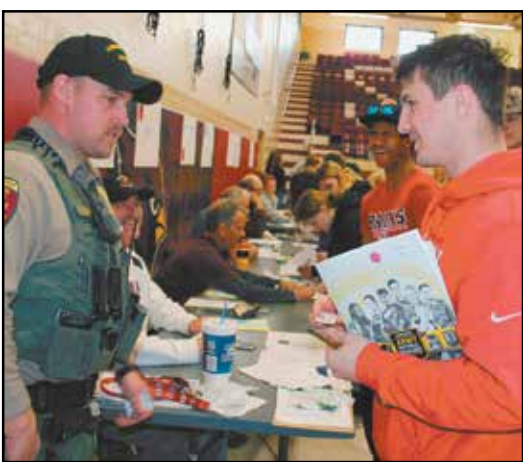
ley Richardt, Sadye Anderson, Brynn Bestland, Raina Mikhaeil and Lydia Tkalcich; third row, Nayomi Perez, Caleb Bestland, Lexi Ann and Jackson Bitzer; back row, Addie Brenny, Maddock Harvey, Joshua Cushing and Alex Tkalcich. (Submitted photo)



Learning about charitable donations

Juniors Katriane Beach and Emmalee Dobson stopped to talk with volunteers John Jewison (seated left) and Jerel Nelsen about charitable giving during the recent 'Reality Store' at Staples-Motley High School.

Based on their assigned incomes, the girls had to decide how much they were able/willing to give to charity, and learned about tax deductions as well. (Staples World photos by Dawn Timbs)



An unexpected 'fine'

Minnesota DNR Officer Levi Brown (left) issued Colbe Tappe a \$50 fine during the Reality Store at Staples-Motley High School. Tappe, a junior, had to work the unexpected fine into his monthly budget.



Course in check writing

Rosie Blessing of Staples, seated, helped junior Conner Kuhns write a check to the fictional utility company at the Reality Store at Staples-Motley High School.

Students play the 'game of life' at the Reality Store

By Dawn Timbs
Staples World reporter

Staples-Motley students in grades 10 - 12 had the opportunity to participate in the annual Reality Store April 16, held in the Legacy Gym.

As they played the 'Game of Life,' as described at the school's Facebook page, "Students received their occupation, monthly salary, and other life details including marital status and children, then had to navigate and budget through a month's worth of income, bills and life's twists and turns. Some received Fate cards from roaming doctors and law enforcement officers and had to tackle those challenges."

During the course of the day students also had the opportunity to vote, purchase a home and vehicle, and even learn how to write a check.

Planning for the event was done by SMHS staff members Melissa Jewison, media center paraprofessional; Debbie Ferdon, principal and Steve Jennissen, guidance counselor. Jewison was in charge of the prep and volunteer coordination.

Close to 70 volunteers participated at the Reality Store. "They come from all over," Jewison said of the volunteers, adding that they included current school staff, retired educators, current business owners and employees, and other individuals "who just want to help." Jewison noted that, as in other years, there was a roaming doctor and police officer that interacted with the students. New this year was a conservation officer. "The event truly wouldn't happen without all hands on deck," Jewison said.

"I learned that life is very expensive," said Conner Kuhns, a junior at SMHS. He'd been assigned a job as a personal care atten-

dant and was navigating a monthly budget of \$2,750.

Fellow junior Natalie Miller was distraught that she didn't have enough money in her budget to buy a dog. "I am broke," Miller said, looking at her mock check book. "I have zero money, even though I have two jobs...one as a cook," she added.

Junior Colbe Tappe shared that he'd been assigned the job of a physician's assistant and was married. He made a decent salary, but found that the majority of his income had gone toward housing expenses. After receiving an unexpected fine from the DNR, Colbe stopped by to speak with financial planner Bob Beseman, from Investment Center Advisor Group in Wadena. Through the course of their discussion, Tappe learned that if he skipped purchasing a can of pop once a day and instead invested that money, in 40 years he'd have saved at least \$1 million.

"This has been inspiring," Tappe said of the Reality Store, adding that he planned to incorporate much of what he learned in his real life.

Jewison said she thought the event, "went great," adding that several teachers told her that students were chatting about it throughout the afternoon, sharing about things they'd learned about "adulthood" that surprised them.

"I'm so proud of our students," Jewison went on, adding, "Many community members commented on how polite and engaged they were during the Reality Store." Jewison also shared that Tina Mitts' eighth grade cooking class served the students lunch after the event. "We were all impressed with how professional they were," adding that the lunch and desserts they made were delicious.

JOIN US

Live Well

A CELEBRATION OF AGING

Lakewood HEALTH SYSTEM

CENTRAL LAKES COLLEGE: STAPLES CAMPUS

1830 Airport Rd, Staples

THURSDAY, MAY 22

8 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

TICKETS ONLY \$15

Tickets can be purchased at:

shorturl.at/0QrTe

Or by calling 218-894-8579

With outstanding speakers and dozens of local vendors, this event brings older adults together for a day of education and fun.



Julie Benson, MD
FAMILY MEDICINE PHYSICIAN
Lakewood Health System

Dr. Benson leads a panel of experts on seniors and specialized care options, Medicare insights, and local resources.



Paul Davis, PhD, LP
PSYCHOLOGIST
Lakewood Health System

Learn how to live and age well in love, work, and play. Getting old can be your new super power!



Erik Isaak, CFP
CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER
LPL Financial

Join Erik Izaak, estate planning expert, as he educates seniors on wills, trusts, asset protection, and planning ahead.

*If registrations are received before May 16th, a lunch is included with your purchase.
If registrations are received on or after May 16th, a lunch is not guaranteed.

SCHOOL continued from page 1a

School posting stories online

It took two days for the students to figure out something was going on with the staff, he said.

“A big focus this year is staff telling our story,” said Koenigs. “Someone is going to tell your story. If it’s not you, it’s going to be someone else.”

For that reason, they are putting more classroom items on Facebook. Koenigs said a lot of the negative things said about the school are being drowned out by the positive posts coming from the school. He said those efforts are a result of the communications plan made by Staci Headley and Trisha Larson.

Koenigs gave one example of the improved culture from a parent who was new to the school. After one day, she said “I never had my daughter talk so much,” so she knew this was a great place for her kids, said Koenigs.

The elementary school has made some physical adjustments. They refurbished the library area by taking out computers and making it more of a comfortable area for classes to come for lessons or to read books. The book shelves have also been updated for younger students to flip through the books because they pick out books based on the cover, not on the spine of the book.

The school is being helped by organizations such as the Parent-Teacher Organization, which implemented the Glow Run to raise money for an outdoor basketball court.

Koenigs said he also appreciates the SPARKS mentoring program, which has 40 volunteers coming to the school regularly to read, talk and eat meals with students.

“Kids know that what they do is important, if people

from the community come in and read with them or eat with them,” said Koenigs. “We have working people, retired people and even some high school students in every week. It’s a great thing for our students.”

In other news, the board

- Approved resignations of Kyla Gray, paraprofessional, and Nest assistants Angela Jares and Grace Jennissen.

- Approved hire of Emili Vieths, high school English; Abbie Detlof, 2nd grade; and assistant golf coaches Cy Bestland and Keller Anderson.

- Approved health occupations contract with Brownville School District for a shared position.

- Approved foster care cooperative transportation agreement.

- Approved nursing and allied health clinical affiliation agreement.
- Approved Northern Pines Mental Health Center service agreement.

- Approved utility easement agreement with the City of Staples for an alley vacated by the city, in case the city wants to use the alley for utility projects in the future. School purchased property near student parking lot.
- Approved 2026-27 school calendar.

- Heard from Tappe about a Staples-Motley school bus that struck a light pole while students were in the bus. He said there were no injuries reported.
- Heard from Middle/High School Principal Debbie Ferdon, who said changes to MCA testing had all the students testing at the same time. They had math the week of the meeting, with science tests coming up in a couple of weeks.

75 YEARS Ago - 1950

- April 27, 1950 - Once again the newspaper headlines are about the snow storm which struck this community, and throughout the entire upper midwest, the first of the week, raising havoc with transportation, and in some areas greatly hampering communications - and in others, raising the flood waters higher than they have ever been, thus creating more agony to people and damage to all kinds of property.

- O -

Compiled by
Dawn Timbs

- O -

The Staples area was completely blanketed with the heaviest fall of snow in the history of the area, for this time of year. The snow ranged from six inches in the city to almost a foot in depth in the rural area. Old timers, many of whom have been here sixty years, state that the storm, although not accompanied by wind velocity, is the worst they can recall in their residence in this community.

Farmers of the Staples area are worried over the outlook at the present time. Many of them state that: “As long as we can remember back, we have not been kept out of the fields this late in the spring season.” This fact has the farmers worried a great deal, as from the apparent outlook at the present time, it will be several weeks yet before the farmers will be able to get on to their fields.

- April 27, 1950 - Staples city baseball team has again signed up as members of



Mystery photo

Hello readers. This week’s archive photo is from 1975. 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.

the Crow Wing Valley baseball league, and the opening game for the locals is scheduled in Staples on Sunday, May 14, at the Pine Grove ball diamond just south of the city.

Members of the Crow Wing Valley league include Staples, Northern Pacific Shops at Brainerd; Dagget Brook, Pine Center, Nisswa, Pillager, South Long Lake, and possibly the Brainerd DeMolay team. The latter had not paid the required registration fee at the time deadline.

50 YEARS Ago - 1975

- April 24, 1975 - Eight families in the Staples area



Mystery solved

Last week’s mystery photo published in the April 3, 1975 edition of the Staples World featured Jerry Dezell (center), who had rolled a 278 at the Hi-Way Lanes, collecting a \$100 gift certificate for his efforts. Making the presentation is Jack Wilson, co-owner of dj’s Men’s Wear, which had made the offer at the beginning of the bowling season. At right is Don Stern, owner of the lanes on which Jerry rolled his winning game. A similar offer for the ladies was made by Stern’s Fair Lady.

DJ Wilson of Staples correctly identified all, and noted that Jack Wilson, a former Staples Mayor, was his father.

Kevin Dezell of Staples correctly identified all, mentioning that his father, Gerald (Jerry) Dezell, was a longtime owner of the Hi-Way Lanes, before selling it to Don Stern. Hi-Way Lanes Bowling Alley was located on old Hwy 10 (now 2nd Ave. NE) where the pawn shop in Staples is today. Kevin said he has great memories of working at the bowling alley when he was a kid, and learning to bowl from skilled bowlers like his dad. There were also pin-ball machines and billiard tables at the bowling alley, which were a lot of fun. He commented that he and his three siblings are still avid bowlers today. Kevin also recalled that Don Stern later built the restaurant/bowling alley Donovan’s, located where the North Todd County Government Center is today. Stern moved the lanes from Hi-Way Lanes to the new location, as well as purchasing a few more.

Barb Hasselberg of Staples recognized all, and recalled that Jack Wilson was Mayor of Staples at that time. She also mentioned that Don Stern was the owner of Donovan’s restaurant and the attached bowling alley, where she worked in 1976. Thanks for participating in our mystery photo.



Steve Fields
Minnesota Attorney

INJURED?
We've Helped Thousands
Get Compensation

**Contact Us Today
For Free Advice**

Car Accidents
Personal Injury
Workers' Compensation

320-433-4994
www.FieldsInjury.com



FIELDS
INJURY LAW

DEADLINE

**for all classified
ads and copy is
12 noon Friday**

**For the
Staples World**

**Happy 90th
Birthday,
Joyce Mohler**

April
25



Love,
Your Family

Court report Apr.16

Long Prairie Police Department

Tyler David Johnson, Brownville. Wireless communication device. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.

Mayerlin Dahiana Sandoval Camargo, Long Prairie.

MN Dept. of Natural Resources

Taylor Scott Baier, New London. Spear without both dark house spearing and angling licenses. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.

MN State Patrol

Erin Elizabeth Bromeling, Brownville. Speed 65/55. Fine \$40. Fee \$85.

Gregory Paul Pruett, Stacy. Speed 82/65. Fine \$60. Fee \$85.

Jackie Lynne Bruder, Alexandria. Hands free law. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.

Yessenia A. Cobian Perez, Long Prairie. Speed 70/60. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. No MN Driver's License. Fine \$100.

Michael Floyd Courtright, Maple Lake. Speed 80/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85.

Chad Lawrence Engels, Fargo, ND. Speed 75/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85.

Juan Sevastian Ambriz Hernandez, Grey Eagle. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85.

Martha Elimboto Isingo, Wichita, KS. Speed 95/70. Fine \$70. Fee \$155.

Roger Nyara James, Fargo, ND. Speed 80/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85.

Jerome Scott Leageld, Long Prairie. Speed 71/60. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.

Christopher Josue Matamoros Cruz, Montevideo. Hands free law. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.

John Edward Murphy, St. Paul. Speed 84/70. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.

Emma Faith Reeder, Brainerd. Fail to Yield to right of way Stop signs/ blinking. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.

Pedro Valentin Reyescedeno, Long Prairie. No MN Driver's License (after 60 days residence/30 days CDL) \$100. Fine \$85. Weaving over lane line. Fine \$50.

Sumer Elizabeth Roberts, Shakopee. Speed 85/70. Fine \$60. Fee \$85.

Bayley Maye Roper, Hewitt. Speed 79/60. Fine \$60. Fee \$85.

Logan Christopher Rott, Ferguson, MO. Speed 81/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85.

Lily Anne Svajgl, Bellevue, NE. Speed 70/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85.

Brandon Lee Kasper, Little Falls. Window restrictions. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.

Todd County Sheriff

Daniel Godinez Solis, Long Prairie. Speed 77/55. Fine \$70. Fee \$155.

Salomon Josue Ramiriz Gonzalez, Long Prairie. Speed 70/55. Fine \$60. Fee \$85. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100.

Ryan James Hernandez, Clarissa. Roads-drive over/through/around barricade-highway. Continued for dismissal. Fine \$200. Fee \$85.

Kolin Anthony Messer, Long Prairie. Forestry-open burning-violate ban. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.

Sirialys Francheska Molina, Long

Prairie. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100.. Fee \$85.

Ruben Leomar Ramirez, Clarissa. Driving after revocation. fine 4200. Fee \$85.

The following cases were heard before Judge Daniel A. Benson in Seventh District Court in Todd County April 7, 2025.

Zachary James Adamek-Lyon, Rice. Trespass-occupy/enter dwelling/locked/posted building. Sentenced. Local confinement (90 days, stay 69 days for 1 yr credit for time served: 21 days). Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$50. Fee \$75. Liquor-consumption by persons under 21. Sentenced. Liquor-possession by person under 21. Dismissed.

Eric Michael Tepley, Long Prairie. Harassment: restraining order-violate restraining order. Sentenced. Local confinement (364 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 334 days for 2 yr credit for time served: 8 days). Supervised probation, 2 yr. Fine \$100. Fee \$75.

The following cases were heard before Judge Daniel A. Benson in Seventh District Court in Todd County April 8, 2025.

Bryar James Gadacz, Miltona. Driving after suspension. Continued. Unsupervised probation without conviction, 6 mo. Fine \$50. Fee \$75.

Mayerlin Dahiana Sandoval Camargo, Long Prairie. Domestic assault. Continued. Unsupervised probation, 1 yr.

Jack Eli Eisenberg, Sioux Falls, SD. Unlawful passing. Continued for dismissal. Unsupervised monitoring without conviction, 6 mo). Fine \$50. Fee \$75.

The following cases were heard before Judge Daniel A. Benson in Seventh District Court in Todd County April 9, 2025.

Luis Angel Garcia Morias, Perham. 5th degree possession of a controlled substance. Dismissed, conditions met or expired. Local confinement (4 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 0 days credit for time served: 4 days). Supervised probation, 3 yr. Fine \$500.

Andrew Perez Jesus, Federal Way, WA. Drugs 1st degree-possess 50 grams or more-cocaine or methamphetamine. Sentenced. Commit to Commissioner of Corrections-adult (MN Correctional facility-St. Cloud, 128 mo). Fine \$50. Fee \$75.

Benjamin Silas Weekly, Staples. Theft. Dismissed. Receiving stolen property. Continued. Local confinement (87 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 0 days for time served: 87 days). Supervised probation, 5 yr. Restitution \$1,189.54. Fee \$50. Theft-take/use/transfer movable property-no consent. Local confinement (90 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 0 days credit for time served: 87 days). Fine \$50. Restitution \$50. Restitution \$60.08 Fee totals \$235.08. \

James Alfred, Jr. Flath, Wadena. Domestic abuse no contact order-violate no contact order. Supervised probation, 2 yr). Fine \$50. Fee \$75.

Local news keeps community civically engaged and informed

From University of Minnesota

Local journalism is an integral part of healthy communities across Minnesota. Unlike national news organizations, local outlets keep you and your neighbors informed about elections, events and other important community updates.

Despite the importance of this vital resource, local newspapers are disappearing. Since 2005, over 3,300 local newspapers nationwide have shuttered.

Benjamin Toff, an associate professor in the University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts, answers questions about the value of local journalism and how you can support local news.

Q: What sets local journalism apart from other news?

Prof. Toff: Local news consistently rates higher than national news in terms of how highly they are trusted because local sources are often seen as far less politically polarized. The issues and concerns that matter to people at the local level often do not line up with national news items and are in many cases more closely aligned with matters that are even more relevant to people's daily lives.

Traditionally, people have a strong personal connection to sources of local news, whether it's individuals delivering the sports and weather on television or columnists who write about important civic matters in the newspaper. There's historically been a neighborly connection that people tend to expect from local news that is less often found in larger outlets just by virtue of its distance from local communities.

Q: How does local journalism impact communi-

ties?

Prof. Toff: Communities with local news coverage tend to have less corruption in their local governments and more civically engaged and informed communities. In short, people tend to know more about what their elected officials are doing on a day-to-day basis and those officials are more likely to be held accountable to the public for their actions.

Local news tends to be less polarized, offering their audience a strong sense of place and connection through community voices and multiple perspectives on community activities.

Not all local outlets have a great track record of serving their entire communities equitably or fairly, which can be quite alienating for marginalized community members. But at least in theory, this community connectedness role has often been recognized as one of the most important functions played by local news.

Q: What barriers smaller outlets face when covering the news?

Prof. Toff: Increasingly, the local news business model has become more challenging. These outlets have long depended on advertising as their primary source of income. Today, more small businesses put their dollars toward digital advertising through platforms such as Google and Meta.

The loss of local advertising revenue means many outlets are especially reliant on paid subscriptions, but audiences have not been particularly willing to pay for those subscriptions. The expectation is for news sites online to be free, particularly when audiences have free access to information

about things happening in their communities directly from community organizations, governments, small businesses and online sites that serve as community bulletin boards, like Facebook groups or Nextdoor. These factors contribute to a growing number of local news outlets closing in Minnesota and around the country. With fewer journalists working in local news, it has also made those jobs more challenging. The combination of low pay, increased workload, and limited prospects for advancement has made it harder for local journalists to "keep at it" serving their communities.

Q: How can communities support local journalism?

Prof. Toff: You can support your local news outlets directly through subscriptions and donations. Another great way to support local journalists is through volunteer work. News outlets are more understaffed than ever, so passing along information about things happening in your community is often appreciated. Local journalists are trying to do far more with less and it is difficult to keep up.

Despite the challenging headwinds, there are many efforts by national and local philanthropic groups to develop alternative non-profit models for local journalism, which is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the industry as we found in our Minnesota-focused research. Press Forward at the national level and Press Forward Minnesota represent ambitious efforts to inject new investments in local reporting. The American Journalism Project, Institute for Nonprofit News and LION (Local Independent Online News) also seek to bolster local news ecosys-

tems.

Q: How does your work at the University of Minnesota prepare future local journalists?

Prof. Toff: The Minnesota Journalism Center at the Hubbard School of Journalism has several programs designed to fill local reporting gaps while providing our student journalists with experiences outside the classroom, including:

Report for Minnesota, which places students as summer interns in Greater Minnesota newspapers.

Hosting a variety of programs, training and events aimed at helping newsrooms find new ways to cover the communities they serve. For example, earlier this year we hosted a workshop and Hackathon on AI and local journalism.

We regularly share research about the changes in the ecosystem or ways newsrooms are experimenting with reaching younger audiences through social media.

A partnership with the Minnesota Newspaper Association on a survey of newspaper publishers to better understand where we and other supporters of local news can be most effective in helping the industry transform itself and find a more sustainable future.

Lastly, we publish a monthly newsletter to keep Minnesota's local journalism community informed about opportunities and new developments across the state.

Benjamin Toff is an associate professor in the University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts. He studies news audiences and political engagement, public opinion and changing journalistic practices.

Solar energy putting Minnesota sheep to work

By Cora Hoffer
Center For Rural Affairs

Using livestock such as goats and sheep to graze under solar arrays is quickly becoming a popular vegetation management practice at solar sites. In Minnesota, it provides opportunities for local graziers to access land, generate income, and use livestock as a land management tool.

Based out of Northfield, Minnesota, Arlo Hark and Josie Trole started Cannon Valley Graziers (CVG) in 2018. They began with the mission of using livestock to create a tangible, positive impact on the soil health, water quality, and biodiversity of their region.

Solar grazing is a type of "agrivoltaics" or "dual-use solar." Simply put, agrivoltaics is the practice of using the same land for both agriculture and solar energy production. Minnesota is a leading state for agrivoltaics. According to the Innovative Solar Practices Integrated with Rural Economies and Ecosystems project map, there are 593 agrivoltaics sites in the U.S., with 259, or 44%, of those located in Minnesota. Of those Minnesota sites, 55 are reported as managed with grazing.

CVG initially began working in prairie and forest ecosystems to perform disturbance management, practices aimed at mitigating or managing disruptions to an ecosystem. Observing a growing number of solar sites appearing throughout rural Minnesota, they quickly recognized an opportunity to expand their services to solar developers who were interested in implementing environmentally beneficial land practices at solar sites.

When CVG started, solar grazing was a relatively new concept. There were only a small number of shepherds grazing on the fringes of solar sites, and the solar industry was hesitant to bring on livestock as part of the vegetation management strategy.

Over the past several years, CVG has watched the industry change and, with that, so has their business. CVG has grown from managing a flock of 20 sheep to now managing over 2,200 head of sheep and goats. In 2024, they grazed just under 2,000 acres of solar projects throughout the Upper Midwest. While solar grazing makes up a majority of their work, they also graze

goats in forest ecosystems and offer sheep grazing for ecological disturbance management on public and private land in Minnesota.

"Our focus is to use the principles of targeted grazing to support native ecosystem function on these sites, promote soil health and water quality, while also meeting the vegetation management requirements of the solar industry," said Arlo.

According to a presentation by the American Solar Grazing Association in April 2024, there were 100,000 acres of solar sites being grazed in the U.S. by more than 80,000 sheep. CVG predicts that number will double in the next 2 to 3 years, noting it as a key opportunity for the sheep industry.

By integrating targeted grazing into traditional land management, CVG produces lamb and wool while providing a helpful service. This model creates new revenue streams for graziers and strengthens the economic viability of the sheep industry. Rather than relying solely on commodity markets, graziers can be compensated for the ecological benefits they deliver: vegetation management, soil health improvement, biodiversity enhancement, and carbon sequestration.

The model also improves land access opportunities by allowing farmers to use the land beneath solar panels to graze their livestock. This provides additional pasture area without the purchase or rent of new land, expanding the grazing operation and granting access to a new source of forage for the animals.

Additionally, CVG says that solar grazing presents the chance to shift the paradigm within the sheep industry from being primarily a product-based industry—focused on the production of lamb and wool—to a service-based industry. Solar grazing challenges graziers to think beyond extraction and instead recognize the value that livestock bring as land management tools.

"I think what's most exciting to me about solar grazing is that it is a non-discretionary solution," said Arlo. "It solves problems across a multitude of disciplines and exists at the nexus of many different seemingly distinct industries. What do renewable energy, ranching, and ecology all have in common? Ask a solar grazer and you will find out."

USDA putting work requirements on SNAP benefits

From USDA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a memorandum to all state agencies administering the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program's (SNAP) purpose statement that it "assist low-income adults in obtaining employment and increasing their earnings." This pivotal legislation reaffirmed efforts to reduce dependency on public assistance programs and increase self-sufficiency.

As USDA partners to lift Americans out of dependency, FNS affirms its commitment to consult with State agencies during the waiver review process and provide technical assistance to ensure ABAWD waivers are only utilized when consistent with the Act and protect the integrity of SNAP to the greatest extent. Additionally, FNS will review the effectiveness of current regulatory authorities to effectuate statutory requirements and the Secretary's discretion, all under the overarching principles articulated by Secretary Rollins.

Court finds Google operates as a monopoly, creates imbalance

From Minnesota Newspaper Association

On April 17, a federal judge issued a landmark ruling that says Google acted illegally to operate an advertising technology monopoly, forcing news and other content publishers to use its services. Google then paid publishers at lower rates than they would have received in a competitive marketplace, wrote Judge Leonie Brinkema of the Eastern District of Virginia.

An August 2024 decision in a separate case found that Google violated antitrust laws in its search and advertising businesses. Together, the rulings paint a picture of Google's anticompetitive practices and the resulting devastating revenue losses to creators of original content.

The News/Media Alliance's President and CEO Danielle Coffey said:

"The news media industry hails the court's decision to again hold Google accountable for decades of abuse of its market power. Google monopolistic tactics - this time in the advertising market - have starved content creators of the revenues they deserve and need to sustain quality journalism. Today is a big day for our industry."

The News/Media Alliance has long advocated on behalf of news publishers against Google's anticompetitive practices by supporting other lawsuits, issuing white papers, offering testimony and, most notably, championing the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act (S673) co-sponsored by Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minnesota,

and Sen. John Kennedy, R-Louisiana.

The JCPA is intended to address the market imbalance that has ravaged the news media's ability to invest in quality journalism. "We will continue to work with our legislative champions, Senators Kennedy and Klobuchar, to find a path forward for this desperately needed legislation," N/MA said in a statement issued this afternoon.

Elsewhere: A \$6.6 billion class-action lawsuit was filed in the U.K. against Google, alleging it abused its market position to charge higher prices for advertisements in search results than it could have in a competitive market. According to CNBC, it is also accused of shutting out competition by making deals with cell phone makers to pre-install Google Search and its

Chrome browser on Android devices and paid Apple to make it the default search engine on iPhones to hamper competition.

Also in the same week, Japan's Fair Trade Commission issued a cease-and-desist order against Google. The commission said the tech giant violated Japan's anti-monopoly laws by requiring Android device manufacturers to prioritize Google's own search apps and services, CNBC reported.

What's next? Judge Brinkema's decision in Virginia clears the way for a hearing to determine what Google must do to restore competition, such as sell off parts of its business, media reported. That trial has yet to be scheduled.

StaplesWorld

Established in 1890. USPS 518-760
©2025 RMM Publications
Published Wednesdays by RMM Publications
Office located at 224 4th Street NE
Periodicals postage paid at Staples, Minnesota 56479.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100
Telephone: 218-894-1112 - Fax: 218-894-3570
Toll Free: 1-888-894-1112
www.staplesworld.com - E Mail: editor@staplesworld.com
Deadline: 12 noon, Friday
Official Newspaper for:
City of Staples, Todd County,
Staples-Motley School District,
Freshwater Ed. District and area townships.

Letters: Readers are encouraged to express their views by writing letters to the editor. Letters are verified for authenticity, so please include a name, address and phone number. Only the author's name and city will be published. Letters may be edited for spelling and grammar errors, libel, length and other factors. Private thanks, solicitations and libelous letters will not be published. Letters are printed on a space available basis. The editor reserves the right to reject letters.
The deadline is 12 noon, Friday. Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily represent the views of this newspaper.
Printed at Quinco Press, Lowry, MN

MINNESOTA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

1897

FREE PRESS

FREE PEOPLE

Publisher.....RMM Publications LLC
Owners Rick Gail, Mike Kremer, Mark Anderson
Managing Editor.....Mark Anderson editor@staplesworld.com
Advertising Rep.....editor@staplesworld.com
Photo Tech/production.....Janice Winter jwinter@staplesworld.com
Bookkeeping/Circulation/
.....Kathy Odden kodden@staplesworld.com
Reporter.....Dawn Timbs dtimbs@staplesworld.com
Front Office.....office@staplesworld.com

Subscription Rates:
Local: (Todd, Wadena, Morrison, Cass Counties) \$53 per year
Website: \$50 per year
Minnesota: \$58 per year - Out of State: \$63 per year
Foreign: on-line only - Student Rate: (Sept. through Apr./in-state) \$43
There is a \$5 charge for address change from local to out-of-state.

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.
Note to Advertisers: Advertisers should check their ad following first publication. This newspaper shall not be liable for failure to publish an ad or for the typographic error or errors in publication except to the extent of the cost of the ad for the first day's insertion. Adjustment for errors is limited to the cost of that portion of the ad wherein the error occurred. The publisher reserves the right to cancel any advertisement at any time.

Member: Minnesota Newspaper Association, MCAN Advertising



90th birthday celebrated at Senior Dining Site

The monthly Staples Nutrition Site meal held at the Staples Community Center culminated with a 90th birthday party held in honor of Joyce Mohler, right, of Staples (April 25). Following the meal, Joyce was presented with a birthday cake and happy birthday was sung. The Senior Dining Room was decorated for Easter.

Above, standing are Lois Kneisl, Maryann Riewer, Tootie Moris, Jeanie Huebner, Ann Ohmann (Joyce's daughter), Amy Lindstrom. Missing from the photo was Jenny Braun, Joyce's daughter. (Submitted photo)

Hello World

ONLINE BIRTHS REMOVED AT THE REQUEST OF LAKEWOOD HEALTH SYSTEM.

POUR OUT TO THE GOD OF HOPE AND BE FILLED ROMANS 15:13

National Day of Prayer
Community Prayer Meeting
Thurs., May 1, noon
Staples City Hall
(in council chambers)
122 6th Street NE Staples

THE 74TH ANNUAL NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2025

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

Mark Your Calendar

April 24

‘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>

WADENA WHIRLWAYS SQUARE DANCE GROUP DANCING Thursday, April 24, 7:30 - 10 p.m., at St. Michael’s Church, 280 1st Ave. S., Motley. Bob Maiden, caller. For info., 612-743-3480.

April 25

WOMEN’S OPEN AA RECOVERY MEETING Every Friday in person, 10:30 a.m., Motley Free Methodist Church (lower level), 33 Wellwood St. E., Motley. All women welcome.

April 26

CARE MINISTRY FREE BREAKFAST Saturday, April 26, 9 - 10:30 a.m., at Motley United Methodist Church, 847 3rd Ave. S., Motley. The free community meals are held on a monthly basis to promote fellowship, connection and nourishment.

April 27

CELEBRATE RECOVERY GROUP MEETINGS are held every Sunday at 6 p.m., at Motley Free Methodist Church, 33 Wellwood St. E., Motley.

April 29

WOMEN’S AA MTG Tuesdays, from 6 - 7 p.m., at Staples Church of Christ, on Hwy 210, south of Staples.

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

Ballroom Vacation Rental on Horseshoe Lake

Open House Sat., April 26

This one-of-a-kind lakefront oasis boasts the best swimming beach you will find with 277' of sandy shoreline! This 5,000 SF retreat features 5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms and living/rec spaces on each level, with a 2nd kitchenette area on the upper and bar on the lower. It is the perfect location for large family gatherings and an ideal rental for groups or corporate events. All 3 levels have walkout vistas to stunning lake views. This retreat offers hotel quality linens and plenty of space for guests to relax.

Superb clarity and fantastic fishing. Enjoy the fire ring, kayaks, stand up paddle board and ice fishing opportunities. Also an additional option of a pontoon rental.

Enjoy a piece of history, as this is the original site of locally, well-known Horseshoe Ballroom which opened in 1950. In 2006, it was magnificently renovated to this extraordinary waterfront dream. Truly a rare beauty in the land of 10,000 Lakes.

Owner Kristi Measner (Macho) grew up 4 miles from this historic site. Her parents hosted their wedding dance here on October 14, 1950.

We hope you enjoy what our place and Brouerville has to offer!

25537 County 62 • Brouerville MN 56436
Contact Kristi for Reservation Requests 970.682.0001 • krismn@outlook.com
Expedia • <https://expe.applink/R5mcPZn74Rb>
VRBO • <https://www.vrbo.com/property/details/32143873804961549>



OLD SCHOOL HEALTH

Open Mon.-Fri.!

- Massage
- Bio Resonance Testing
- Rife Machine Sessions
- Ear Candling
- Essential Oils
- Living Water – Hydrogenated Water
- NASA Tech Air Purifiers with Ozone

121 4th St. NE
Staples 218-895-8102

Monday - Friday
10am - 4pm
or by Appointment

DEADLINE for all classified ads and copy is 12 noon Friday

For the Staples World

SUBSCRIBE

Staples World

Staples World newspaper subscription rates, one year:

Local: \$53 (Todd, Wadena, Morrison, Cass counties)

Minnesota: \$58.

Out-of-State: \$63.

Foreign: on-line only

Student Rate: \$43 per school year, in-state (Sept.-April)

On-Line: \$50

Print with on-line: \$76

P.O. Box 100
224 4th St. NE
Staples, MN 56479
218-894-1112
www.staplesworld.com

STEVENS COUNTY

Social Worker Position- CP Unit
Stevens County Human Services

Are you passionate about helping children and families be their best? Do you want to be a part of a supportive team built on camaraderie and trust? Our team is collaborative, inclusive with reflective consultation, career development and provides professional trauma support. **Stevens County is looking to fill one position** to expand its Child Protection Unit to provide professional child protection services to a variety of children, adult and family clients. Provide ongoing case management services and perform intake responsibilities on a rotating basis. **Wage range** \$31.47 - \$42.30, DOQ. Group health insurance w/ 100% single Employer paid and up to \$1500 per month toward family. There is also dental, vision, life, disability, critical illness, accident, and hospital insurance. Two-week vacation, one personal day, two-week sick leave, and 12 paid public holidays annually. Flexible hours possible AND remote work available after 1 year of service providing autonomy over where and how you work. 7.5% employer contribution to Public Employer’s Retirement Account. Bachelor’s degree from an accredited four-year college or university with a major in social work, psychology, sociology or closely related field in behavioral sciences, or a bachelor’s degree from an accredited four-year college or university with a major in any field and one year of experience as a social worker in a public or private social services agency preferred.

Go to: Stevens County’s website <http://www.co.stevens.mn.us> under “Employment Opportunities” by the closing date of 4:30 p.m. April 25, 2025. ADA accommodations available. Stevens County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

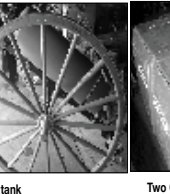
Possibly 2 rings - Bring A Friend

AUCTION

Due to health reasons, I am selling the following personal property located from Little Falls, MN 4-1/2 mi. South on Hwy. 10, to 103rd St., Homestead, Fire #15151. Follow signs on:

Saturday, April 26, 2025

SALE TIME: 10:00 A.M. RESTROOMS AVAILABLE LUNCH ON GROUNDS



FARM RELATED / HEAVY EQUIPMENT
Gas barrel with pump, 300 gal. (?)
660 John Deere side delivery rake, tri-wheel
John Deere 1219 haybine, 9' V-8 Cat 3208 engine
Tag axle Two dump rakes
Treated wood posts
Metal scaffolding
A lot of scrap iron
Roller plants
Walk through gates
International digger with drag
Hydraulic lift

STEAM ENGINE STUFF
Steel belt pulleys
Crepaco frame from steam engine
Pistons Pressure valves
Fly wheels
Ford Co.

VEHICLE
'93 6.5 diesel w/plow, needs work, good title, 3/4-ton long box

TOOLS/ MORE
Air compressor
Small sand blaster
Boxes of tools
Metal shelving
Sm. air compressor
Copper, stainless, brass, jumper cables
Log chains
Old elevator
A lot of antiques
Pull behind 9' disc
3x16 pull type plow, IH
8' 3-pt. digger
Sprayer tank

Old side delivery rake
2-bottom horse drawn plow
Two - 2-bottom plows
Two potato diggers
Old barrel
Old boot polisher (possibly from Bernal's Shoe Store, Randall)
A few trunks
Many antiques
Horse drawn dirt bucket
Horse drawn mower
Stainless steel sinks
Cream separator bases, approx. 3 - 4
Horse cultivator
Pedal sewing machines
A lot of horse items
Old dentist chair (heavy)
Four trailer loads of Misc. items and antiques
YARD/ RECREATIONAL
Older Simplicity lawn mower 5212
Portable fish house

MANY MORE ITEMS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION

Mike Clark, Jr., owner

Trantina Auction Service
Col. Walter Trantina, Lic. #77-61 • Brouerville, MN 56436 • 218-820-1019
www.midwestauctions.com

TRANTINA AUCTION SERVICE, TERMS: CASH ON GOOD CHECK. Nothing to be removed until settled for. Bidder must be made by completion of auction. Everything sold "AS IS". You are responsible for your items after making a purchase. Owner's license or proper ID is required to register. Statements made by auctioneer at auction take precedence over any printed material. Purchases in excess of \$5,000 must be accompanied with a bank letter of credit. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS.

Firefighters face higher risks of cancer, emotional trauma & heart disease

MnFIRE training gives firefighters the tools they need to protect their health

MnFIRE provides no-cost physical and emotional health training sessions on:

- Emotional wellness
- Cardiac
- Cancer
- Sleep
- Nutrition & fitness
- Support resources

**MnFIRE**
Hometown Heroes Assistance Program

Supporting Our Hometown Heroes

mnfirehealth.org



Obituaries

Charles R. Hanson

Charles (Charlie) Ray Hanson, 73, of Belle Fourche, South Dakota, passed away January 7, 2025 of brain cancer.

Charles was born October 8, 1951 in Wadena to Donald and June (Dump-prope) Hanson of Leader. He graduated from Staples High School in 1970 and went to work in Minneapolis. He was drafted into the U.S. Army and served in Germany.

Charlie was a talented

carpenter, building homes and stone fireplaces.

He is survived by four sons, Ryan of Piedmont, SD, Eric (Loni) of Red Lodge, MT, Christopher (Heidi) of Billings, MT and Jamie of Belle Fourche, SD; one daughter-in-law, Deb Mammenga of Staples; five sisters, Jeanne (Steve) Dailey of Verndale, Peggy (John) Sirucek of Staples, Glenda (Gary) Dauer of Leader, Connie (Kenny) Winter of Verndale, Leasha (Bryon)

Nyland of Leader; one sister-in-law, Donna Hanson of Staples; three brothers, John of Motley, Dale of Staples and Larry (Laura) of Motley.

He was preceded in death by his parents; one son, Stacey Mammenga; one infant sister; one brother, Rick; one sister-in-law, Denise Hanson; one brother-in-law, Al Clark and one niece, Emmi Hanson.

w18c A00006B2020APR23

Robert Sorenson

Robert (Bob) Dean Sorenson, 71, of Staples, passed away April 14, 2025 at his home.

A memorial service was held April 19 at the Brenny Family Funeral Chapel in Baxter.

Bob was born August 29, 1953, to S. Wayne and DeEtta (Reipke) Sorenson in Wadena. He graduated from Staples High School in 1971 and went on to earn a degree in machine tool rebuilding from Staples Technical College in 1973. On September 22, of that same year, he married the love of his life, Cindy White later expanding their family with daughter, Amanda and son, Brent.

Bob began working at an early age alongside his mother and father in the family agricultural business, eventually taking over operations and running it until his retirement in 2002. He later joined a former classmate at Ferrellgas, where he continued to work until retiring again in 2019. Known for his warm, outgoing personality, Bob often said he could “talk to anyone” and he did. He had a lifelong passion for racing, all things automotive and took pride in keeping everything polished and meticulously waxed - from snowmobile races on his Arctic Cat, to drag racing his beloved car, Boogie Fever or wrenching on his 1972 Chevelle. He was often



spotted riding his bike to work or cruising the “big loop.” Bob’s legacy of kindness, work ethic and gift for connecting with others will be remembered by all who knew him.

Bob is survived by his devoted wife of 51 years, Cindy; one daughter, Amanda (Baron Hinkel) and one son, Brent; favorite granddaughter, Emma Holsen; one brother, Ron Sorenson (Andy Campeau); one sister, Jane (Mike) Ringler; three sisters-in-law, Suzanne Fuller, Lori (Brad) Schmidt and Darcee (Tim) Bell.

He was preceded in death by his parents and mother- and father-in-law.

Arrangements were by Brenny Family Funeral Chapel, Staples.

w18c A00006B2020APR23

Benjamin Denny

Benjamin LeRoy Denny, 80, of Staples, passed away at his home April 16, 2025, surrounded by family.

Funeral services will be held Friday, April 25, 2025, at Brenny Funeral Home in Staples. A short viewing will take place at 10 a.m., followed by the funeral service at 11 a.m. Burial will follow at Evergreen Hill Cemetery in Staples.

Benjamin was born January 5, 1945, to Benjamin H. Denny and Florence (Anderson) Denny.

Benjamin was a hard-working man who enjoyed Minnesota sports, playing basketball, working on his muscle cars and spending time with family. He and Tracey were married on August 29, 1982 and together raised three children.

Benjamin is survived by his wife of 42 years, Tracey Denny; one daughter, Melissa Denny; two sons, Jason Denny and Michael Denny; four brothers, Law-



rence Denny, Walter (Zela) Denny, Darrell (Jackie) Denny and Gary Denny and one sister, Laura Trana. He is also remembered fondly by many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents and three sisters, Gladys Anderson, Frieda Franks and Melva Ament.

Arrangements are by the Brenny Family Funeral Chapel, Staples.

w18c A00006B2020APR23

Valerie Hellmers

Surrounded by family who loved her, Valerie (Wood) Hellmers, 63, passed away April 11, 2025 at Lakewood Health System Hospital, Staples.

Graveside services were held April 16 at Lakewood Cemetery in Crosby.

Val was born July 11, 1962 to LeRoy and Betty (Oliver) Wood in Crosby. The family moved from Riverton to Fawn Lake Township in Todd County. Val attended school in Staples, graduating high school in 1979. At age 18, she suffered a paralyzing auto accident leaving her a paraplegic. She worked a variety of desk jobs, the longest being at Fingerhut in St. Cloud. As her late husband described her, she was not handicapped but she was handi-able. Val and Andy Hellmers were introduced in 1984 by Holly, a mutual friend and they married in 2010, “the second Thursday in May”, an elopement facilitated by Dawn, Val’s cousin. Val loved country life, birds (her favorite hobby), enjoyed wild animals, (except raccoons), loved cats but not dogs. Her hobbies included crocheting afghans, gardening, keeping family picture albums, cooking, baking (chocolate chip cookies, anyone?). She was not one to complain and



was an immaculate housekeeper. Vals’ cats, Mellow and Wild Child, meant the world to her and were lovingly spoiled by her.

The family wishes to thank Val’s friends Anita and Bob for the wonderful, all encompassing care and attention they gave to Val in these last months.

Loved ones mourning her passing are one sister, Peggy of Wyoming; four brothers, Mike, Rick, David and Donnie, all of Iowa; many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

Preceding Val in death were her husband, Andy in January 2025; parents and one brother, Kevin.

Arrangements are by Taylor Funeral Home, Staples.

w18c A00006B2020APR23

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.....8:30 a.m.
Sunday School and Coffee Fellowship.....10:05 a.m.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
310 4th St. NE, Staples
Church.....218-894-2296
info@marysacc.org
Fr. Aaron Kuhn and Fr. Rick Aubol
MASS:
Sunday.....8:30 a.m.

Seventh Day Adventist
421 Dakota Ave. SE, Staples
Pastor Joshua Jeresek
218-894-0033
Saturday Worship.....9:30 am.
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
Janet 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
January - July.....9 a.m.
July - January.....11 a.m.

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
1st St. and Birch, Motley.....218-894-2296
info@marysacc.org
Fr. Aaron Kuhn Fr. Gabriel Walz
MASS:
Saturday.....4:00 p.m.

St. Michael
280 1st Ave S, Motley.....218-894-2296
Fr. Aaron Kuhn and Fr. Rick Aubol
MASS:
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
Cty. 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
Vermda,e.....218-894-2296
info@marysacc.org
Fr. Aaron Kuhn and Fr. Rick Aubol
MASS:
Saturday.....6:00 p.m

St. Hubert Catholic Church
Bluegrass.....218-894-2296
info@marysacc.org
Fr. Aaron Kuhn and Fr. Rick Aubol
MASS:
Sunday Service.....10:00 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.

“Volcano Faith”

Pastor Scott Jorgenson, Thomastown Covenant Church, Staples

Ever tried to predict a volcanic eruption? Good luck. I’ve been watching the recent (last two years) eruption on Iceland. Dormant for over 600 years and now with the beautiful little town of Grindavik built on its hillside this volcano sprung to life two years ago... unexpectedly. The volcanologists have seismometers, lasers and tiltmeters that have been monitoring this volcano and ... SURPRISE! ... it came back to life. It’s now been erupting for a week or so and then goes to sleep for a few months only to roar back to life.

The forecast for the most recent eruption was a wonderful reminder of how much we don’t know about the future. This Iceland volcano eruption pattern was looking pretty consistent and so the recent forecast included an expected time of eruption, that the eruption would be in a certain location and that the eruption would be large.

Guess what? It didn’t happen when expected, it didn’t happen where they thought and it was much smaller than anticipated. Surprise.

Volcano faith is the truth that surprises and awaits every one of us. They come in all sizes and varieties. There are the wonderful surprises like: we’re going to have a baby, I got a job, or the surprise anniversary gift of a trip to Cancun. And there are those not so wonderful surprises like: I have cancer, I lost my job, or another ten inches of snow in April.

God does not guarantee a life without surprises. In fact, He reminds us that we should observe, monitor, plan, estimate and save only to have one of those surprises in life cancel out all those plans.

Now, God isn’t the author of the bad stuff. He’s not the creator of evil. That stuff happens due to our lack of paying attention to God. God calls that “sin.” But even when we do turn our back on God, He NEVER turns His back on us. No matter how horrible the circumstances or how horrible we ourselves have acted, He’s always there with welcoming, open arms.

Isaiah 55:6,7, “Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him

while He is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”

Now, that’s a nice surprise...God forgives us simply by us asking to be forgiven. Volcano faith.

And when we do ask that forgiveness, when we do “return to the Lord” the surprises continue to come. God has given us brains to plan, to expect, to share and to be smart about things...like those volcanologists on Iceland it’s better to have an IDEA of what’s going on than to be completely ignorant of impending trouble.

God reminds us that in all our planning we are not to forget that He is in control and He may have other plans.

Isaiah 55: 8,9 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

In other words, things are going to happen that we didn’t expect and some of those things will be wonderful and some of those things not so wonderful. They are not surprising to God. And God doesn’t just sit back without intervening in our lives.

Romans 8:28-29 “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good.”

The church has a word for this: REDEMPTION. God takes all our circumstances and all those surprises in life and He repurposes them for GOOD.

Surprise. Volcano Faith.

If things are surprisingly messy in your life right now: turn to God... He has a plan for it.

If all is going according to plan: turn to God...He may have other plans.

May God bless us on our journey of Volcano Faith.

THE STAPLES AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY IS SPONSORED BY THESE AREA BUSINESSES:

To become a Church Directory supporter, call 218-894-1112.

Ernie’s Food Market
Groceries - Gas - Convenience - more
Staples, MN 218-894-1072

Staples Veterinary Clinic
"Complete Animal Care"
Staples, MN 218-894-1775

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

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

Staples World
Your community newspaper since 1890
224 4th St. NE, Staples, MN
218-894-1112

The Church Directory is supported by the advertisers listed above and the Ministerial Association.

***To update your church information or to advertise on the Church Directory, email: jwinter@staplesworld.com. or call 218-894-1112. Continue to email your Ministerial pastoral message or advertisement to: jwinter@staplesworld.com



Kossan, Storry, Bettis get big hits in Cardinal walk-off win

The Staples-Motley softball team came back twice before finally getting over the top in a 12-11 win over Frazee in their first game of a doubleheader on April 15. The Cardinals lost the second game 15-4.

In the first game, the Cardinals took a 3-0 lead, but saw that erased with two home runs by Frazee. In the sixth inning, they tied the game again with help from

a bases-loaded double by Jade Storry. The Cardinals had a chance to score more, but had base-running mistakes to end the inning.

Frazee scored two more in the top of the seventh, forcing Staples-Motley to come back again. Izzy Becker and Emersen Bettis got on base, then Rachel Kossan and Storry moved them along with hits.

With Kossan on third

base, Leighton Bettis delivered a hit up the middle to score Kossan with the winning run.

Addie Potter pitched all seven innings and kept Frazee off balance, except for the two home runs. She struck out 10 batters.

The Cardinals racked up 25 hits in the game, leading to 12 runs. Storry had four hits and four RBI. Emersen Bettis had four hits and

scored three runs. Kate Kossan and Rachel Kossan had three hits each, as did Leighton Bettis and Becker. Lilly Tyrrell and Olivia Lorber had two hits and one RBI each.

In the second game, Staples-Motley had nine hits but it only led to four runs. Lorber and Rachel Kossan had two hits each and Lorber had two RBI.



Game-winning swing

Leighton Bettis drives the ball over the head of the Frazee pitcher and into the outfield for the game-winning hit against Frazee. Below, teammates swarm Bettis after she reached first base. (Staples World photos by Mark Anderson)



Dialed-in hitter

Right, Jade Storry takes a cut at a high pitch. Storry reached base five times with four hits and a walk.



Catcher Clara Maros and pitcher Addie Potter celebrate an inning-ending strikeout.



Rutherford, Carlson get big hits in walk-off win

Hayden Rutherford hit a triple and Jack Carlson knocked him home for the walk-off run in a 9-8 win against Frazee on April 15. The Staples-Motley baseball team split their doubleheader with Frazee, losing the first game 9-6.

In the first game, the Cardinals were playing catch-up the entire way after Frazee scored six runs in the first inning. Kris Taylor had two hits, two RBI and scored one run, while Cooper Tappe and Rutherford also had two hits. The

team scored six runs, but Frazee got three runs in their last two innings to seal the win.

In the second game, the Cardinals took a 4-3 lead with three runs in the third inning. Frazee tied it up and pulled ahead with two runs in the sixth and seventh innings.

Down 6-8 in the final inning, Colbe Tappe took a walk, stole second, moved to third on a ground out and scored on a passed ball.

Ben Tyrrell walked and scored on a deep triple by

Rutherford. With two out, Carlson singled to send Rutherford home with the winning run. It was Carlson's second hit of the game.

Elijah Kossan and Colbe Tappe each scored two runs in the game, while one run was scored by Cooper Tappe, Taylor, Tyrrell, Rutherford, and Carlson.

Cooper Tappe pitched the first five innings, getting eight strikeouts. Tyrrell pitched the final two innings with two strikeouts.

Brandt, Dukowitz, Beachy, Ferdon lead field event near-sweep

The Staples-Motley boys track and field team won five of the six field events to propel their team to second place at a meet in Perham on April 15. Avandre Brandt won the long jump and the high jump, Drake Dukowitz won the shot put, Turner Beachy was first in the pole vault and Sawyer Ferdon won the triple jump.

Besides his two field event wins, Brandt also lowered his personal best in the 200 meter dash, breaking 23 seconds for the first time at 22.99.

In the girls meet, Sophia Luna placed fifth in the 100 meter dash and Abby Brichacek was 10th in the 100 meter hurdles.

Boys results

100 - 10. Gavin Chenoweth 12.48, 15. Luke Bjerga 12.66, 31. Ivan Lozano 13.36, 38. Skyler Self 13.82

200 - 2. Avandre Brandt 22.99, 31. Self 28.01, 35. Carter Kist 30.09, 36. Jacob Faulkner 30.23

400 - 5. Brandt 54.78, 8. Dillan Robben 56.91

800 - 11. Blaine Plattner 2:18, 24. Andrew Robben 2:28

16. Plattner 5:16, 21. Dobson 5:39, 34. Israel Ritter 6:12

3,200 - 11. Lozano 12:14

110 hurdles - 4. Noah Larson 15.4

300 hurdles - 6. Larson 45.30

4x100 - 4. SM (Chenoweth, Josiah Critten, Jesus Gallardo, Gauge Holst) 51.52; 15. SM (Dustin Converse, Adrian Gomez, Drake Dukowitz, Luke Bjerga) 55.88

4x200 - 5. SM (Alexander Helstrom, Sawyer Ferdon, Gallardo, Critten) 1:41.67; 14. SM (Carson Dewald, Faulkner, Holst, Kist) 1:55

4x400 - 4. SM (Ferdon, D. Robben, Turner Beachy, L. Robben) 3:48

Shot put - 1. Dukowitz 42'1", 2. Gomez 41'7", 16. Converse 35'5", 46. Parker Hammer 23'8", 46. Ben Oeltjenbruns 22'2"

Discus - 10. Dukowitz 98'8", 25. Gomez 79'9", 42. Peter Oeltjenbruns 55'3", 43. B. Oeltjenbruns 38'7"

High jump - 1. Brandt 5'10", 7. Larson 5'6", 10. Dewald 5'4"

Pole vault - 1. Beachy 14'1", 14. Conner Kuhns 9'0"

Long jump - 1. Brandt 19'4.5", 3. Ferdon 17'6", 21. Holst 14'11", 36. Kist 11'9"

Triple jump - 1. Ferdon 40'9", 3. Helstrom 35'11", 13. Gallardo 29'9"

Girls results

100 - 5. Sophia Luna 13.92, 29. Kylee Chenoweth 15.55, 33. Onna Schmitz 16.13, 36. Emily Lynn Sullivan 16.43

200 - 31. Giovanna Santos 32.82, 32. Iva Hinson 33.01, 38. Arabella Moore 34.58

400 - 21. Naila Mikhaeil 1:14, 26. Lily Davis 1:17

1,600 - 15. Suhaila Mikhaeil 6:22, 23. Maddie Kist 7:05

100 hurdles - 10. Abby Brichacek 20.0

300 hurdles - 14. Brichacek 1:03

4x100 - 8. SM (Luna, Kana Reese, Chenoweth, Hinson) 58.25

4x200 - 9. SM (Reese, Chenoweth, Ronnie Noska, Luna) 2:05

Shot put - 18. Marissa Heifort 25'2.5", 37. Chadia Schultz 20'7.5", 40. Gemma Fairbanks 18'6", 43. Natalia Burciaga Perez 16'11.5"

Discus - 14. Heifort 73'0", 25. Noska 59'1", 29. Annie Schlosser 54'1", 38. Fairbanks 46'10"

High jump - 13. Schmitz 4'4", 20. Arianna Grant 4'2"

Long jump - 16. Schmitz 12'7", 22. Davis 11'4.5"

Triple jump - 12. Brichacek 24'11"

Classified Ad Order Form

Name

Phone

Address

City

State

Zip

Classification #

Cost of Ad

First 15 words for one week

\$9.85

Add for number of words over 15

x 25¢ =

OR

First 15 words for three weeks

\$25.00

Add for number of words over 15

x 25¢ =

Add \$5 for bold type and/or CAPITALIZED

indicate which word(s) is/are to be bold or capitalized

Add \$10 for Blind Box

TOTAL enclosed

"Card of Thanks" and "In Memoriam" are 20¢ per word with no minimum.

Number of words

x 20¢ =

TOTAL enclosed

Please check your ad the first day.

Refunds or credit will not be given for errors brought to our attention after the second publication.

We are not responsible for errors due to illegible copy or missing punctuation.

Your ad will be printed as you write it.

Please print clearly, one word per space.

Use additional paper if necessary.

Thank you for your order!

Please mail completed form and check payment to:

Staples World, Box 100, Staples, MN 56479

SERVICES & EMPLOYMENT

208 Storage

FOR RENT

Japke's North 8th Street Mini Storage, 894-1551

6x20, 10x12, 10x20, 10x24

REAL ESTATE

602 Apartments for Rent

STAPLES: Downtown, 1 - 2 bdrm., recently remodeled, NO pets, non smoking, 218-894-3108. 6tfc

SHOP AT HOME WITH THE CLASSIFIEDS

DEADLINE for all classified ads and copy is 12 noon Friday

For the Staples World

FRONTIER TOWNHOMES

FOR RENTAL INFO CALL 218-296-5031

Under new ownership

We are accepting applications for 2 and 3 bedroom townhomes in Staples, a community you can get attached to. Rent based on income. Now professionally managed by

BRUTGER EQUITIES, INC.

Income guidelines apply.

GARAGE SALES

701

INDOOR GARAGE SALE: Fri., May 2, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat., May 3, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. 421 2nd Ave. NE, Staples (former Longbella Drug downtown building). Antiques, clothing, books, bedding, furniture, display cases, display racks, shelving, housewares, toys, seasonal items and much more. Longbella/Roberts. 17-19p

STAPLES ASSEMBLY OF GOD YOUTH: Now accepting donations for upcoming garage sale. Call Kathy at 218-296-1647 for drop off or pick up. 8-23c

NOW TAKING APPLICATIONS

Sunny Pines Apts. in Motley

Tenant must be income eligible, 62 years or older, handicapped or disabled. Heat, water, sewer, electric provided.

Call Rosie Talberg, Manager at: 320-468-2303

MOTLEY, MINN.

We Made It...

30s

Many small-town newspapers have been around since the late 1800's. Most are still here today. KEEP READING. Keep making history. Keep your community newspaper alive. Go to mna.org and click on Minnesota Newspapers You'll see what we mean!

Staples World

*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY

SERVICE DIRECTORY

GIZA

EST 1934

PLUMBING & HEATING

• PLUMBING

• HEATING

• AIR CONDITIONING

• GEOTHERMAL

• NEW CONSTRUCTION

• REMODEL

• SERVICE

MN LIC. #PC644417

218-894-2284

WWW.CALLGIZA.COM

H&R

Electrical Services for

•Residential

•Commercial

•Industrial

218-296-2461

Zach Hanson 218-296-1285 • Mike Rollins 218-296-2461

hrelectricofstaples@yahoo.com

Licensed, Bonded & Insured • Over 30 years experience

Altrichter

Excavation & Septic Service

218-575-2222

•Septic System Installation

•Camera Inspection, Tank Pumping and Cleaning

MN State Certified

6685 330th St., Cushing, MN. 56443

Ultimate Septic Service LLC

David Odden - Owner/Operator

Services:

•Septic Pumping •Jetting

•Emergencies

Call USS for all your septic pumping needs!

218-296-1137

ultimatesepticservice@gmail.com

LPS Inc.

Long Prairie Sanitation

Long Prairie, MN

218-631-3101 888-878-5578

SINCE 1978

PAUL DRAKE TREE SERVICE

•General •Lot Clearing

•Storm Damage Clean Up

•Stump Grinding •Brushing

•55 ft. Bucket Truck

218-894-2871

AE ALBIE ELECTRIC LLC

CELL 218-838-0581

RESIDENTIAL AND LIGHT COMMERCIAL ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY

PROFESSIONAL

IDEAL

CONSTRUCTION LLC

Asphalt Paving • Granite Products • Excavating • Driveways

Roads • Parking Lots • Site Prep • Gravel • Rock • Black Dirt Fill • Peat • Ponds • Demolition • Hauling • Landscaping

Recycled Concrete and Asphalt

PAVING THE WAY FOR YOU!

Staples, MN 56479

218-894-3105

SINCE 1958

PHB Excavating Inc.

Phil Bjerga

218-639-5007

Licensed / Bonded / Insured

Septics • Waterlines • Trenching • Basements • Retaining Walls

Landscaping & Site Preparation • Backhoe & Skid Loader Work

Sewer Pipe Cleaning and Steaming • Custom Pressure Washing

Equipment, Buildings, Driveways, etc. • Snow Plowing & Removal

Statema Backhoe Service, LLC

MPCA CERTIFIED SEPTIC SYSTEMS

•FREE ESTIMATE FROM DESIGN TO INSTALLATION

•COMPLIANCE INSPECTIONS

Site Prep • Basements • Waterlines • Driveways • Landscaping • Black Dirt • Gravel • Construction & Abandonment of Manure Pits • Fill Dirt

Cleaning & Grading • Ditch Cleaning • Snow Plowing: Commercial & Residential

Andy Statema •320-594-2912 • 320-594-6347

*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY*SERVICE DIRECTORY

CONSTRUCTION

Sellnow Law Office, P.A.

Thomas H. Sellnow*

sellnowt@sellnowlaw.com

Jason R. Sellnow

sellnowj@sellnowlaw.com

218-894-4618 • 133 4th St. NE, Staples

229 Central Ave., Long Prairie

320-732-1919 • Toll free: 877-297-1125

*Thomas Sellnow is a Real Property Law Specialist certified by Real Property Section of Minnesota State Bar Association.

• Probate and Trusts

• Estate Planning

• Real Estate

• Title Insurance

• Personal Injury

• Family Law

• Business Law

• Elder Law

• Auto Accidents

www.sellnowlaw.com

SW 2024 changed wk #15

⌘

Staples Motley School Board Minutes

○

**ISD #2170
SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING
March 24, 2025
6:00 p.m.
District Office**

MINUTES

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Chair Freeman at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call was taken, members Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Trout and Freeman were present, comprising a quorum. Member Wright was absent. Also present were Superintendent Tappe, Business Manager Hill, Recording Clerk Larson, Principal Ferdon, Principal Koenigs, AD Lee, Staples World Managing Editor Anderson, SMEA president Kneisl and other staff members. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Frisk, second by Reeck to adopt the agenda. **MC**

Chair Freeman welcomed the public in attendance.

School/Community Forum

None

Consent Agenda
Approve the minutes from the February 24, 2025 Regular Board Meeting
Approve the fundraiser requests from Student Council
Approve the contract and hire of Justine Janecsek, Speech Language Pathologist at MA Step 11 for the 2025-2026 School Year.
Approve the resignation of Josh Lee, Athletic/Community Ed Director effective June 30, 2025.
Approve the hire of:
a. Melissa Jewison, Adventures Aide effective 2/3/2025
b. Alisha Amerud, Ele-

mentary Paraprofessional effective 2/24/2025
c. Amanda Hinson, Level 3 MS/HS Paraprofessional effective 3/3/2025
d. Ashley Orth, Assistant Track Coach
e. Lisa Koenigs, Middle School Track Coach
f. Claire Grunewald, JH Softball Coach
g. Jake Kuehl, Assistant Baseball Coach

Motion by Trout, second by Reese to approve the Consent Agenda. **MC**

Donations and Grants
Motion by Reese, second by Reeck, to approve the resolution to accept donations and grants in the amount of \$9,135. **MC**

Finance Items
Finance Report presented by Business Manager Hill
Approve the February Disbursements
General Fund: \$685,727.74
Food Service: \$52,416.01
Community Service: \$28,497.31
Construction Fund: \$80,243.60
Debt Service: \$0
Fund 21 Student Activities: \$12,974.68
Fund 45: \$0

Motion by Reeck, second by Frisk, to approve the February disbursements. **MC**
Approve the February Receipts
General Fund : \$1,299,348.51
Food Service: \$95,433.61
Community Service Fund: \$20,088.97
Construction Fund: \$0
Debt Service Fund: \$7,333.90
Fund 21 Student Activities: \$4,749.
Fund 45: \$0

Motion by Freeman, second by Trout, to approve the February receipts. **MC**

Other

Cabinet Presentation

Presentation by Middle/High School Principal Ferdon

Personnel
Motion by Reeck, second by Frisk, to approve the addition of an after-school Tutor position (American Indian Education Aid Program). **MC**

Motion by Trout, second by Reeck, to approve the Non-Renewal of Samantha Schimpp, a Tier 1 Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Frisk Trout. Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Frisk, second by Freeman, to approve the Non-Renewal of Jocelyn Anderson, a Tier 1 Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Freeman, Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Reese. Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Reeck, second by Trout, to approve the Non-Renewal of Jeff Sterriker, a Tier 1 Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Reese, Freeman, Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Freeman, second by Frisk, to approve the Non-Renewal of Kristopher Mumm, a Tier 1 Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Reese, second by Trout, to approve the Non-Renewal of Bonnie Zimmerman, a Tier 1 Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Frisk, second by Reeck, to approve the

Non-Renewal of Tina Mitts, a Tier 2 Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Trout, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Freeman, second by Frisk, to approve the Non-Renewal of Angela Jares, a Tier 2 Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Frisk, Trout, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Reese, second by Trout, to approve the Non-Renewal of Alicia Truax, a Probationary Teacher with an out of field permission, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Freeman, Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Freeman, second by Reese, to approve the Non-Renewal of Bobbyjo Johnson, a Probationary Teacher with an out of field permission, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Reese, Freeman, Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Reeck, second by Reese, to approve the Non-Renewal of Lisa Koenigs, a Probationary Teacher with an out of field permission, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Trout, second by Frisk, to approve the Non-Renewal of Holt Truax, a Probationary Teacher with an out of field permission, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Absent - Wright)

MC
Motion by Freeman, second by Reeck, to approve the Non-Renewal of Shelby Brusewitz, a Probationary Teacher, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Trout, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Freeman, second by Trout, to approve the ULA of Zack Qual, a tenured teacher with out-of-field placement, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Freeman, Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Reese, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Frisk, second by Reese, to approve the ULA of Drew Potter, a tenured teacher with out-of-field placement, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Reese, Freeman, Trout, Frisk, Reeck, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Motion by Reeck, second by Trout, to approve the ULA of Kim Prestridge, a tenured teacher with out-of-field placement, effective at the end of the 2024-2025 School Year. (Roll Call Vote: In favor - Reeck, Reese, Freeman, Frisk, Trout, Absent - Wright) **MC**

Policy
(Policy Committee Minutes)
Motion by Frisk, second by Reese, to approve the review of policies with minimal or no changes. **MC**

205 – Open Meetings and Closed Meetings
206 – Public Participation at Board Meetings
302 – Superintendent
303 – Superintendent Selection
304 – Superintendent Contract, Duties and Evaluation
403 – Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of

School District Employees
413 – Harassment and Violence
502 – Search of Lockers, etc.
504 – Student Dress & Appearance
731 – Post-Issuance Debt Compliance

Other
Motion by Reeck, second by Reese, to approve sealed bids for miscellaneous items. **MC**

Motion by Freeman, second by Frisk to approve the revision to the 2024-2025 School Calendar with recommendation from SMEA and administration. (Student and Staff day on April 21 and staff day on June 2) **MC**

Reports:
School Board:
a. FED – No Minutes
b. Sourcewell - No Minutes
c. Other
SMEA - Report from President Kneisl and Representative Elfstrum
Principals - Reports from Principal Koenigs and Principal Ferdon
Activities Director - Report from AD/CE Lee
Superintendent - Report from Superintendent Tappe
Other
Motion by Reeck, second by Trout to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. **MC**

Trisha Larson, Clerk
ISD #2170
18pnc

Upcoming Meetings: Monday, May 5, 2025: Board Meeting, District Office, 6 p.m.; Monday, May 19, 2025, Board Meeting, District Office, 6 p.m.; Monday, June 2, 2025, Work Session, District Office, 6 p.m.

**NOTICE
ORDINANCE NO.211
CITY OF MOTLEY
SUMMARY OF
ORDINANCE**

This is a summary of ordinance number 211 passed by the City of Motley on the 14th day of April, 2025. The full text of the ordinance is available for review and inspection at the Motley City Offices during regular business hours.

ENACTING A CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE CITY OF MOTLEY, MN, REVISING, AMENDING, REINSTATING, CODIFYING AND COMPILING CERTAIN EXISTING GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE POLITICAL SUBDIVISION DEALING WITH SUBJECTS EMBRACED IN SUCH CODE OF ORDINANCES, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Tami Brotherton, Clerk-Treasurer, City of Motley
18pnc

**NOTICE
FAWN LAKE
TOWNSHIP ANNUAL
ROAD TOUR**

Fawn Lake Township will hold its Annual Road Tour on Friday, May 9, 2025 at 9 a.m.

All interested parties should meet at the town hall by 8:55 a.m.

Any questions, please call the clerk at 218-531-0287.

Kelly Miller, Clerk
Fawn Lake Township
18-19pnc

**NOTICE
MORAN TOWNSHIP
ROAD INSPECTION**

Moran Township will hold their road inspection tour on Saturday, May 3, 2025 starting at 7:00 a.m.

The Moran Township Board will be leaving from the town hall to drive the township roads about that time. Residents are welcome to follow in your own vehicle.

Diane Mack, Clerk, Moran Township
18-19pnc

**NOTICE
(ABBREVIATED
ADVERTISEMENT)**

**TODD COUNTY
2025 BOX CULVERT
PROJECTS**

Closing date: May 13, 2025

Sealed bids will be accepted until 10:00 a.m., May 13, 2025 by the Todd County Public Works Director/Engineer and County Auditor/Treasurer at 44 Riverside Drive, Long Prairie, Minnesota 56347 for the following construction projects:

SAP 077-599-065
SAP 077-599-067

This is an abbreviated advertisement. A full advertisement can be viewed by going to the Public Works website at <https://egram.co.todd.mn.us/oneoffice/bidding>.

Loren Fellbaum, Todd County Public Works Director/Engineer
17-19pnc

**NOTICE
THOMASTOWN
TOWNSHIP
REQUEST FOR BIDS**

Thomastown Township is seeking bids for 4-5 miles Class #1, spread and packed, 1,000 yds./mile. Must meet Wadena County test specifications for Class #1.

Deadline for completion: August 15, 2025. Watering of roadbed required in event of drought.

Bids must be received before 7 p.m., May 5, 2025. Contact Troy Barrett, 218-894-2136.

Sue Walsvik, Clerk
Thomastown Township
17-19pnc

**NOTICE
MORAN TOWNSHIP
MESSAGING**

Moran Township residents that are 18 years or older, along with landowners: We are starting a new contact option called Click-Send. The messages will be sent, however, replies will not be available.

If interested, please send a text to “Click Send” with

your name and address to the clerk at 218-287-2233.

Diane Mack , Clerk, Moran Township
18-19pnc

**TODD COUNTY
REQUEST FOR
PROPOSALS**

Notice is hereby given that Todd County will accept proposals for private Minnesota Paid Family & Medical Leave until 3 p.m. May 27, 2025.

Request for Proposal specifications may be obtained from Integrity Employee Benefits at 866-437-7977, or email integrity@integrityeb.com.

Todd County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive formalities, and to make the award that is in the best interests of the group.

Todd County desires a long-term relationship for this program and will maintain so, as long as cost and services are satisfactory.
18pnc

SUBSCRIBE

Staples World

Staples World newspaper subscription rates, one year:

Local: \$53 (Todd, Wadena, Morrison, Cass counties)

Minnesota: \$58.

Out-of-State: \$63.

Foreign: online only

Student Rate: \$43 per school year, in-state (Sept.-April)

On-Line: \$50

Print with on-line: \$76

P.O. Box 100
224 4th St. NE
Staples, MN 56479
218-894-1112
www.staplesworld.com

MINNESOTA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

MCAN

Statewide Classifieds

Minnesota Classified Advertising Network

EMPLOYMENT
JOIN OUR TEAM
Coon Rapids, MN and surrounding areas. We are looking for Skilled Laborers and Heavy Equipment Operators/HDD Operators with a CDL. Competitive pay and full benefits package. Opportunities for growth and advancement. Immediate openings, start your career with us! Apply today: andersonug.com/jobs 302/203-1830

ECSE TEACHER - LONG TERM SUB
New London-Spicer Schools. MN licensure required. For more information, see: www.nls.k12.mn.us/employment

HELP WANTED
AGE 55+ WORKERS
needed for part-time custodial work at rest areas and state parks in Minnesota. Apply online at greenviewmn.com or call 651/639-1913

WANTED TO BUY
WANTED:
ALL 1970S MOTORCYCLES
Running or not. Titled or not. Will pick up. Cash in exchange. Sell now before prices fall. Call Dan at 612/720-2142

WE BUY HOUSES
for cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 844/978-0683

MISCELLANEOUS
DON'T LET THE STAIRS LIMIT YOUR MOBILITY!
Discover the ideal solution for anyone who struggles on the stairs, is concerned about a fall or wants to regain access to their entire home. Call AmeriGlide today! 866/832-5506

MISCELLANEOUS
GET BOOST INFINITE!
Unlimited talk, text and data for just \$25/mo! The power of 3 5G networks, one low price! Call today and get the latest iPhone every year on us! 855/849-6621

GET DISH
SATELLITE TV + INTERNET!
Free install, free HD-DVR upgrade, 80,000 on-demand movies, plus limited time up to \$600 in gift cards. Call today! 855/562-4309

GET A BREAK
ON YOUR TAXES!
Donate your car, truck, or SUV to assist the blind and visually impaired. Arrange a swift, no-cost vehicle pickup and secure a generous tax credit for 2025. Call Heritage for the Blind Today at 844/220-9501 today!

SAFE STEP
North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1,600 off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 833/966-3882

**Advertise here statewide in
200+ newspapers FOR only \$279 per week!
Call 612-332-8844 or this newspaper**

The Open Book

Now Online



Search public notices published in local newspapers from across the state in one convenient place. Stay in the know at www.mnpublicnotice.com

MINNESOTA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION
A public service provided by Minnesota Newspapers and the Minnesota Newspaper Association.

Staples World

Advertising

(classified and display),
copy, public notices,
letters to the editor, etc.:

DEADLINE
Friday noon



Stream trout offer prequel to fishing opener

For those like me who grew up in a rather strict religious denomination, there were a number of religious holidays besides Sundays that carried with them a special responsibility. A religious holiday of this significance was known then as a “holy day of obligation;” the obligation being to attend church services. These services were likely to be scheduled both early and late in the day, so that work, school, or other secular responsibilities and distractions did not prevent a person from meeting the aforementioned obligation.

It would be irreverent to suggest that major events on Minnesota’s outdoor calendar are of comparable significance. But it would not be inaccurate, or an overstatement, to say that

Minnesotans observe some of these seasonal events with a religious fervor. Without question, the premier such event on Minnesota’s outdoor calendar is the general fishing opener that will arrive in just over two weeks. It would not be much of an exaggeration to say that many think of it almost as an obligation, one they will honor with their attendance!

But the second weekend in May—when “the opener” occurs—is not the true beginning of the open water fishing year. A month earlier, typically the second weekend in April, angling for trout in streams becomes legal statewide. While only a small subset of Minnesota anglers identify as stream trout fishermen, many are as hardcore as the most avid walleye, bass, or musky fisherman.

Apart from the biological differences between Minnesota’s several stream trout and the walleyes, crappies, northern pike, bass, and muskies that are “warmwater” fish, there is a dramatic difference in the environments where they are typically sought. Most of

us fish for the warmwater species on lakes, and from boats. But the stream trout angler does his stalking and casting on foot, as often as not wading in hip boots or waders directly in that environment where the fish he’s seeking live.

Apart from the simplicity and low-tech nature of it, this branch of angling—following the course of a river, creek, or stream on foot, searching out the places where a trout might lie—makes the angler a firsthand witness to changes that are beginning to transform the landscape from bleak and monotone to green, colorful, and vibrant with life.

It’s not unusual to find remnant patches of snow in the woods in April when the statewide stream trout season opens. Some years it has been more than a remnant, with snow ankle-deep, or more, in sheltered places. All of which adds to the sense of adventure, if not comfort.

The woodland wild flowers that emerge with the disappearance of snow and warming of woodland soils are not always evident on that early April opening

day, but will be soon after. Among the first are the star-like white flowers of bloodroot, whose tuberous root was used as a red dye by Native Americans. Trillium, whose leaves and flower petals are arranged in radiating threes—hence the name—will soon carpet the understory before full leaf-out shades the forest floor. Bright yellow marsh marigold will cling to the streambanks at the water’s edge, where it’s assured of constant moisture. Be on the lookout, too, for blue, lavender, pink, or white hepatica flowers on fuzzy stems that rise but a few inches above the leaf litter; their three-lobed leaves were once used to treat liver ailments!

The first days of stream trout season may be just a bit early to hear the booming sound of male ruffed grouse in their courtship ritual drumming. But not too soon to see wild turkeys in their own courtship groups. You might see one or more “toms” in full display, tail feathers spread in a 180-degree fan behind them, body feathers puffed out to twice normal size, their neck wattle’s folds of skin

engorged and bright red, all for the purpose of impressing a willing hen—or several—nearby.

Other spring arrivals may be found nearby, too. More than once, while following a streamside trail, I’ve flushed a woodcock out of a tangle of alders or other dense cover. If there’s a grassy forest opening nearby, or perhaps an old timber clear-cut, that may be a site where you could watch the woodcock’s “sky dance,” the after-dusk, high-altitude spiral mating flight that is as unique and distinctive as any courtship display.

If you’re a birder, spring along a trout stream is a great place and time to catch many of our warblers in their northward migration. They, and the various sparrows, perhaps the most iconic of which is the white-throated sparrow, whose clear, plaintive notes sing of “pure...sweet...Canada, Canada, Canada.”

Another courtship event you might witness during the early stream trout season is the spawning run of white suckers. In many watersheds they swim out of a downstream lake or river

and into a trout stream’s headwaters to mate and lay their eggs. Their presence can make catching trout difficult, not only because the numerous, close-packed suckers displace trout from their usual lies, but the suckers alarm easily when an angler approaches, and in turn spread the alarm to startle the trout he’s seeking.

Some trout anglers choose to “go with the flow” and fish intentionally for the suckers when they’re in and spawning. One friend will—instead of trout lures—bait up with scented salmon eggs, and catch a batch of suckers for smoking. Another benefit of the sucker spawning run is the vast quantity of protein they leave behind when they return downstream, their eggs then being easily available to the resident trout.

Apart from the real object of the chase—catching trout—a trek along a trout stream before the general fishing opener is a good way to get in touch with the new season, its flora and fauna, and profitably pass the time before that angling “holy day” in May.

Inside the Outdoors



Mike Rahn



Volunteers feed the hungry

At least 120 volunteers participated in a food packing event at Staples Church of Christ on April 12. Working for three and a half hours, the group packed 40,422 meals that will be sent to people around the world who are suffering from hunger and malnutrition. The program, called God Always Provides, was brought to Staples by a church Sunday School class. (Submitted photos)



The tale of Staples’ rare bird revisited

By Dawn Timbs
Staples World reporter

“Did you know there was a funeral at Tower Pizza years ago?” was a question asked by Bruce Nelsen recently to a few other Staples residents, including Tower’s current owner, Eric Neznik.

Neznik was apparently unaware of this happening at the popular pizza joint, as were some others Nelsen had spoken to about it, including this reporter who, it turns out, only *thought* she knew everything about Tower’s history, having had an aunt who’d waitressed there for years.

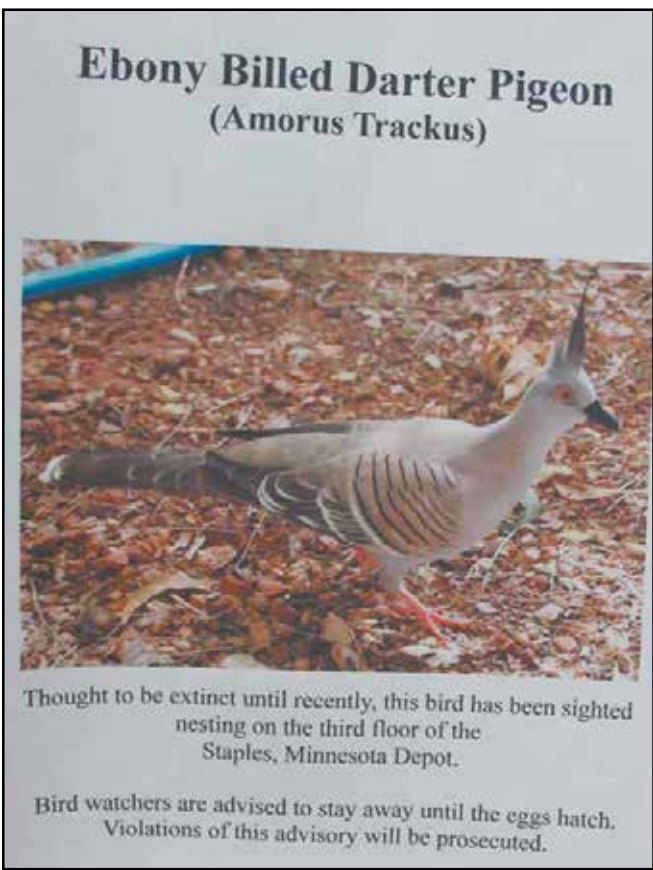
Intrigued, I set up a time to visit with Bruce and his wife, Bev, at their home in Staples. The date was April 1, a beloved day for pranksters, so I had my doubts about the validity of this funeral story. These doubts were confirmed as Bruce began to share the tale, a very tall one indeed, about the world’s last Ebony Billed Darter Pigeon who’d made its home at the Northern Pacific Depot in Staples. As our conversation progressed over coffee and chocolate chip cookies, I learned that the rare bird (whose Latin name was *Amorus Trackus*) had ultimately passed on, its skeletal remains discovered in the depot, and was now considered to be extinct.

Or so the sad story was told by Bruce Nelsen, whose Latin name is, or should be, “Joculator.”

Eager to hear the rest of the tale (and hoping for another cookie), I took out my notebook and pen, and nodded for the Joculator (jester or jokester in English) to continue.

It all started with a conversation he’d had with his friend and neighbor, Bruce Hayenga, Nelsen said. The other Bruce had mentioned spotting a pigeon on the third floor of the depot where restoration work had begun by the Staples Historical Society. He didn’t get a real clear look at the bird, but Hayenga tossed out the idea that perhaps it was a rare breed.

Hmmm. ‘Could that be possible?’ Nelsen wondered.



First poster

Posters in regard to the sighting of a rare pigeon in Staples appeared at Tower Pizza over a two-year period. The mystery of the poster maker (as well as the validity of his story) was revealed in 2009, at the pigeon’s ‘funeral’ which was held at Tower Pizza.

Inspired by Hayenga’s observation, Nelsen set out (secretly) to see how far the story of a rare pigeon residing in Staples would go.

His first stop was Tower Pizza, where he left a poster announcing the sighting of an Ebony Billed Darter Pigeon at the depot in Staples. It was seen, of course, by the coffee klatch of ‘grumpy old men’ that gathered there each morning to discuss and solve the world’s problems. Soon their conversations turned to the mysterious sighting of the rare pigeon...conversations that would continue for two years or so, as new posters about the *Amorus Trackus* would emerge from time to time at Tower.

Although they suspected the entire story might be fictitious, these bright codgers couldn’t figure out who might be behind the posters. Since they came with the

occasional typo, suspicion fell on Tom “Scoop” Crawford, former Staples World editor. Others pointed out the beautiful pictures of the pigeon that graced the posters, and pointed their fingers at Ken Klose and Pat Miller, noted photographers in town. All claimed their innocence.

Apparently, even members of “The Table of Knowledge,” a coffee klatch of equally ‘grumpy old men’ down the road at Burger King, were befuddled by the mysterious pigeon sighting. If Dr. Duane Lund, headmaster of that razor-sharp group, couldn’t solve the mystery, what chance did the Tower bunch have?

Eventually, in 2009, an ad in the paper announced that funeral arrangements had been finalized for the nation’s last Ebony Billed Darter Pigeon. Services were to be held Feb. 10, at 9:45 a.m. at Tower Pizza. It further stated that ‘Any memorial money received will go for a good cause (buying donuts).’

Followers of the story flocked to the funeral, anxious to pay their respects to the now extinct bird, and to hopefully discover who the mastermind behind the tall tale was.

A photo of Bruce Nelsen, sporting an elongated schnoz on the final poster in the *Amorus Trackus* series, was a clue to the mourners at Tower. The poster’s message stated, “This is what happens to your nose when you tell too many wild pigeon tales.”

Thus, the mystery of the Ebony Billed Darter Pigeon was solved, and the grumpy old men who gathered at Tower moved on to solve other pressing problems at hand, such as whose turn it was to buy donuts. Probably Nelsen’s...aka the Joculator.



Still a jokester after all these years

Bruce Nelsen of Staples is pictured recently with the pine casket he built for the remains of an intact pigeon he discovered on the third floor of the Northern Pacific Depot some years ago. This skeletal find was the impetus for Nelsen’s planning a funeral in 2009 for the last remaining ‘Ebony Billed Darter Pigeon,’ a tall tale he’d concocted and shared with buddies in his coffee klatch at Tower Pizza and chronicled in the above notebook binder. The story came to light again this past April Fool’s Day, and bears repeating for those readers who somehow missed it 16 years ago. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Emotional gathering

Over a dozen people gathered at Tower Pizza in early 2009, to share stories about a supposed “Ebony Billed Darter Pigeon,” the last of its kind, that had lived at the Staples depot. Upon learning it had recently gone to ‘birdie heaven,’ a funeral was planned by several of the rare

bird’s admirers and held their favorite local Italian hangout. Whether it was the heart-wrenching memories shared that morning, or the extra jalapeños added to the breakfast pizza, one thing is certain...there was not a dry eye in the house. (Submitted photo)

Officiant Rev. “Crank” Odell

Frank Odell of Staples, aka Rev. “Crank” Odell, served as officiant at the 2009 funeral for the last known remaining Ebony Billed Darter Pigeon held at Tower Pizza in Staples. (Submitted photo)



An unusual service call

Brenny Funeral Home provided the hearse and monitored parking at the funeral service held for the now extinct (or so it’s believed to be) Ebony Billed Darter Pigeon at Tower Pizza back in 2009. The Brenny staff said they believed it was the first such funeral they had served at. (Submitted photo)



Paying their respects

Although they’d never actually seen or met the rare feathered dweller at the depot in Staples prior to its demise, a number of Staples area residents stopped by Tower Pizza in the winter of 2009 to pay their respects. Pictured above, from left, are Don Dravis, Jim Vollegraaf and Jim Jeziorski. (Submitted photo)



Staples World receives Women of Today Award

The Staples World recently received ‘The Golden Star Award’ from the United States Women of Today (WOT) organization for their support of the Staples Motley WOT during their 2024 Railroad Days car show. Pictured, from left, are Dawn Timbs, Staples World reporter, and Shelly Zaffke, with Staples Motley WOT. (Staples World photo by Janice Winter)



Care close to home.

Staples Clinic & Urgent Care

Essentia Health provides high-quality patient care for you and your family throughout every stage of life.

Call or schedule online with your family medicine provider today!



Haley Faynik, PA-C
Family Medicine



Kevin Bardwell, MD
Family Medicine

☎ 218-894-7870 ⌚ Mon–Fri: 8am–4:30pm 📍 301 2nd Ave NW

URGENT CARE: Mon–Fri: 8am–6pm

EssentiaHealth.org



Essentia Health



Celebrating National Columnists Day

Employees at First International Bank and Trust (FIBT) in Staples stopped by the Staples World with a gift of donuts April 18, to recognize National Columnists Day. Pictured from left are Kylie Peterson

and Steve Gertken from FIBT; and Mark Anderson, Managing Editor of the Staples World. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Spring practice has begun in Staples

The Gophers have been hard at work recently, with spring practice for tunnel digging set up just west of Staples. However, as the owners of this practice site had not been notified ahead of time of the tunnel digging and subsequent dirt mounds lining their yard (over 40 were counted), they called in Coach Sam “Trapper” Hirschey of Staples, pictured at right, to deal with the Gophers situation. Hopefully the team will retire or set up practice elsewhere.

Coach Hirschey did confirm later that practice proved to be too strenuous for at least one of the team members. (Staples World photos by Dawn Timbs)



Housing for Your Lifestyle

Prairie View Neighborhood

in Staples, MN

Homes for Sale

404 1st Street NE
\$ 195,900

401 1st Street NW
\$ 182,900

Come view our lovely homes located in our manufactured housing land lease community, Prairie View Neighborhood. These new homes are ready for move in today. All homes include 24x24 garage and have 12 month warranties. Come join us at Prairie View Neighborhood offering housing for your lifestyle. Call Michelle for your showing 218-256-3800.

3 bdrm / 2 bath homes available now

Call today

Mike Ives Realty
Mike Ives Home Sales
Michelle Carlson, Broker
218-256-3800

Prices \$ 189,900 - \$195,900



Success

At least one of the little rodents was removed. (Submitted photo)