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Special Christmas section

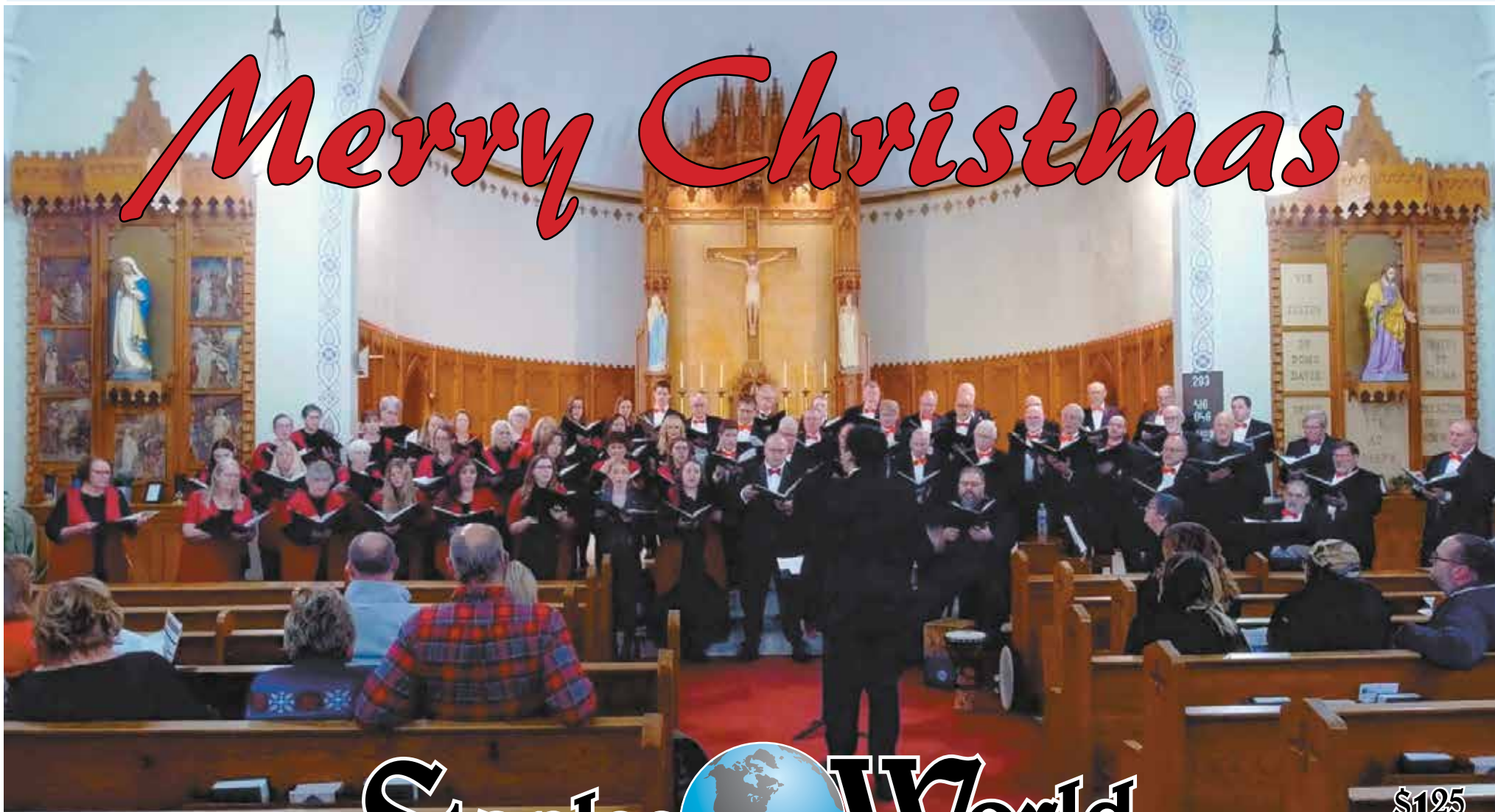
Third grad students answer Christmas questions

Wrestling team wins big tournament

Lee Jenkins' Christmas display on WCCO News



Merry Christmas



Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Staples World

Staples, Minnesota

\$1.25

Community Christmas Concert

The Staples Area Men's Chorus and the Staples Area Women's Chorus joined together at Sacred Heart Church in Staples Dec. 13, to perform a variety of Christmas music at the Community Christmas Concert. (Submitted photo)

Staples city budget increases, but tax rate is lower

Due to increased development in the city of Staples, the 2026 tax rate will be lower, despite a city budget increase.

At the Dec. 9 Staples City Council meeting, the council passed a 5.92 percent tax levy increase, but because of development in the city, the tax rate decreased by 2.23 percent. The actual taxes paid by property owners will depend on how much their valuation increased. If valuation stayed about the same, they should see a decrease in the city portion of their property tax bill.

Staples City Administrator Jerel Nelsen went through the budget with the council and noted some of

the highlights.

Local Government Aid, which is paid by the state to the city, has risen the last three years, from \$855,000 in 2023 to \$988,455 in 2024 and an increase of \$1,000 for 2025 and 2026.

The budget has a three percent increase for cost-of-living adjustments. The Staples Police Department uses 53 percent of the city's general fund budget, with Staples Fire Department getting 14 percent. Administration takes up 16 percent of the budget.

Nelsen said the city expects to pay more for their annual audit and for attorneys fees.

See **STAPLES** on page 14a

Motley approves zero percent increase to its 2026 levy

By Dawn Timbs
Staples World reporter

At their regular meeting Dec. 8, the Motley City Council approved the total levy for 2026 (\$428,450), which is a zero percent increase from last year's certified levy. They also adopted the final budget for 2026 as presented.

The total certified levy includes sums of money for the following funds:

- General: \$282,011
- Fire: \$27,000
- Street Improvement: \$58,000
- Beaulieu Project Bond: \$0 (project was paid off)
- 2011A Street Improvement: \$24,439
- 2012A Street Improvement: \$37,000.

A Truth in Taxation meeting was also held Dec. 8. No concerns about the levy or budget were raised at that time, but one member of the public voiced her concern about the safety of pedestrians attempting to cross Hwy 10 in downtown Motley. She noted that drivers ignore

the crosswalk signs and it's especially dangerous during the summer's heavy traffic. Both Mayor Pat O'Regan and Police Chief Al Yoder sympathized with the woman, but noted that Hwy 10 is a state highway and also a federal highway in that portion that goes through Motley, and that proposals for change would have to be brought to the MN Department of Transportation (MnDOT). There had been much discussion around this topic at a Comprehensive Plan meeting this past August which MnDOT attended, with no real solution offered.

Chief Yoder went on to congratulate the council on their achieving a zero percent levy increase for 2026. He noted that when he served on the council in the past (as a council member and mayor) it had been his dream to have a zero percent levy increase. Although it didn't happen at that time, "I still got to see it," Yoder said. Mayor

See **MOTLEY** on page 14a



Newspaper icon passes

Shown in his office in 2019, when Gary Mueller retired from the Staples World newspaper. Gary worked for the newspaper for 45+ years. He passed away in December, 2025.

Lakewood surgeon, Dr. Jay Lenz, honored with 2025 Scheels Hometown Hero Award

Lakewood Health System, Staples, was honored to celebrate Dr. Jay Lenz, general surgeon and U.S. Navy veteran, at a surprise gathering on Dec. 10, when he became one of six recipients across the Midwest to receive the 2025 Scheels Hometown Heroes Award.

David Morris from American Heroes Outdoors was on hand to present the award to Dr. Lenz, as he was surrounded by coworkers and family who filled the hallway and cafeteria area at Lakewood to witness the award presentation.

Dr. Lenz was nominated by Matt Krebsbach of Brainerd, a longtime patient, fellow veteran and friend who credits Dr. Lenz with saving his life five years ago. As part of his nomination, Krebsbach shared, "His (Dr. Lenz's) service to our

nation, his profound impact on individual lives, his commitment to mentorship and his unwavering dedication to his community set him apart as an exemplary person," adding, "Dr. Lenz is not just a surgeon. He is a true servant leader whose pride and professionalism shine brightly in everything he does."

When given the opportunity to share some thoughts, Dr. Lenz said, "I think to be a good team, you have to be a good teammate. And I think we've got a whole bunch of great teammates, making this a wonderful team. And that's what makes Lakewood so special. Thank you very much for the award. I very much appreciate it. I'm not sure I deserve it, but thank you very much.

See **LENZ** on page 3a



With his award

Dr., Jay Lenz (left) with his award, along with nominator Matt Krebsbach. (Submitted photo)

Weather

2025			
This Week's Forecast			
Dec. 24	30	18	P. Cloudy
Dec. 25	32	28	Cloudy
Dec. 26	31	24	Cloudy
Dec. 27	32	6	Cloudy
Dec. 28	9	-3	Sunny
Dec. 29	13	3	M. Sunny
Dec. 30	28	20	P. Cloudy

Last Year, 2024			
Dec. 24	24°	18	Cloudy
Dec. 25	29	27	Cloudy
Dec. 26	32	30	Cloudy
Dec. 27	37	34	Cloudy
Dec. 28	44	28	Sunny
Dec. 29	33	31	Cloudy
Dec. 30	32	24	Cloudy

Average Temps:
H = 22° Low = 6°
Merry Christmas!

Compiled by
Dale Hausmann,
WCCO's Staples area
Weatherwatcher

Public Notices

Bullard Township
9A

Staples Township
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Todd Planning Commis
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Fawn Lake Township
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Obituary

Gary Mueller

Jenkins’ Peanuts Gang display to be featured on WCCO

By Dawn Timbs
Staples World reporter

A hobby that Lee Jenkins discovered in retirement - building the ‘Peanuts Gang’ characters out of wood - will be featured on WCCO News three times during the Christmas season, beginning Wednesday, Dec. 24, at 10 p.m.

Television reporter John Lauritsen and photojournalist Grant Verdon visited with 82-year-old Jenkins at his Staples home Dec. 16, learning about his hobby that’s turned into an elaborate Christmas scene that’s been inspiring passersby for the past several years.

“There’s just something about these characters that touched me,” Jenkins shared, noting the Peanuts Gang created by cartoonist Charles Schulz, a Minnesota native. He went on to note Charlie Brown, Lucy, Woodstock, Schroeder and others, with their stories that focus on things that matter, like friendship. He likes them all, but says Linus is his favorite.

During the interview, Lauritsen notes that it’s been 60 years since “A Charlie Brown Christmas” first aired on CBS, which WCCO-TV is affiliated with. The animated television

special, based on Schulz’s Peanuts comic strip with music by Vince Guaraldi, has become a holiday classic.

It seemed the perfect time to highlight Jenkins’ Christmas display, which WCCO had gotten wind of the previous year.

Jennifer (Jenkins) Krippner had contacted Lauritsen, inspired by her dad’s creations and believing his story would inspire others. Lauritsen, who hosts the news segment, “Finding Minnesota,” agreed.

“It was a surprise to us,” Krippner said of her dad’s woodworking hobby during the recent interview. She went on to note her dad’s service in the U.S. Navy, followed by his dedication to his family and work. It wasn’t until he was in his 70s that her dad would discover woodworking.

Krippner went on to note that it’s been inspiring to see how a hobby can keep someone young, and she hopes her dad’s story will show others that creativity and things you are passionate about don’t have a retirement age.

Jenkins said that creating his Peanuts Gang display has brought him a lot of joy. It started in 2017 when he created a Char-



Sharing his passion about Peanuts characters

Lee Jenkins of Staples, left, was excited to share about the ‘Peanuts Gang’ characters he’s built out of wood during a recent interview with WCCO-TV News reporter John Lauritsen. There are currently 10 characters on display in Jenkins’ Vintage Villa neighborhood, with an

11th character in the works. Jenkins’ television interview will air on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, during the 10 p.m. news; Thursday, Dec. 25, during the morning news; and Sunday, Dec. 28, during the 10 p.m. news. (Staples World photos by Dawn Timbs)

lie Brown Christmas Tree. That evolved with building Snoopy (first on the pump house, later building the dog house which he mounted Snoopy and Woodstock on), followed by building a host of characters over the years, including Charlie Brown, Sally, Peppermint Patty and Pig Pen, who was the most difficult to create, Jenkins said.

He’s currently working on his latest wood character, Marcie.

Jenkins brought Lauritsen and Verdon into the shop, where he showed them the process of his work. It entails first drawing the character, tracing it on the plywood, cutting it with the jigsaw and painting it. When it’s finished, it becomes part of the display in Jenkins’ yard. He’s attached lights as well, which are plugged in at night. He spends “a lot of time” on each piece, Jenkins said, estimating between 10 to 20 hours by the time one is completed.

When asked how this latent talent came about, Jenkins said he’s not quite sure. “My former neighbor is an international

artist, maybe that helped,” Jenkins joked, referring to longtime Staples native Rose Edin.

Well, however it came about, Jenkins is just happy to have discovered this hobby that’s become a passion. There are 18 total characters in the Peanuts Gang, so he intends to be at this for awhile.

New to the display this year, Jenkins said, is an 81-year-old sleigh that had been owned by his late brother-in-law Lee Greig and built by the late Bill Berndt, both Motley natives.

Each piece, including the sleigh, means a lot to him, Jenkins said. He went on to note that there’s “something about these characters” and their stories of friendship and love that have always touched him.

Krippner agreed. She notes that the Peanuts stories, both the comics and the Christmas TV special, are filled with nostalgia. Their stories bring back memories for the family, and their messages of gentleness and kindness are timeless.

To learn more about Jenkins’ story, the interview

with Lauritsen with air on WCCO-TV Wednesday, Dec. 24, during the 10 p.m. news; on Thursday, Dec. 25, during the morning news; and on Sunday, Dec. 28, during the 10 p.m. news.



Family support

Lee Jenkins’ wife and daughters were there for moral support during his recent interview with WCCO News of Minneapolis. Pictured, from left, are his wife, Judy; and daughters Lisa Olson, Baxter, and Jennifer Krippner, Remer. Jennifer, who first contacted WCCO about her dad’s woodworking hobby, was also interviewed that day.



In the shop

Lee Jenkins, dressed in one of his favorite Snoopy sweatshirts, is at work with the jigsaw, cutting out his latest Peanuts character, Marcie.



Shelter from the storm

Workers putting up the pavillion at the Staples Veterans Park worked through the snow storm on Dec. 9, so they could get the structure ready for the roof, pic-

tured on Dec. 11. (Staples World photo by Mark Anderson; submitted photo)



Setting up

The crew from WCCO-TV in Minneapolis set up equipment prior to interviewing Lee Jenkins of Staples Dec. 16, about the Charlie Brown art display he built. From left are Jenkins, WCCO reporter John Lauritsen, and photojournalist Grant Verdon.



Chilly sentry

The military statue at Staples Veterans Park shrugged off the snow from the Dec. 9 snow storm. (Staples World photo by Mark Anderson)

LENZ continued from page 1a

Dr. Lenz one of six selected in the Midwest

Thank you all.” A native of Coon Rapids, Dr. Lenz served in the U.S. Navy from 1982–1996, demonstrating skill and courage as a surgeon in challenging, high-stakes environments. His military service laid the foundation for a medical career defined by compassion, integrity and dedication. The Scheels Hometown

Heroes Award, presented in partnership with American Heroes Outdoors, honors service members and first responders who have dedicated their lives to serving our nation and who continue to make a meaningful impact in their communities. Out of 78 nominations, only six individuals were selected this year throughout the Midwest.

Staples Police report

Recent incident reports taken by the Staples Police Department: Nov. 30, Staples Police received a call about a traffic violation with a pickup truck pulling a toboggan with people in it, drifting around corners. The caller was concerned for the safety of the riders. Nov. 30, Staples Police received a call about a person asking for money and demanding a bus ticket or hotel room. Dec. 1, Staples Police received a suicide threat. A female party with financial issues and other problems, has a five month old child. Dec. 3, Staples Police received a report of a domestic incident. Reporting party said her husband is out of control, pushing tables and pushed the person calling. The person has guns in the

home. Dec. 3, Staples Police assisted Wadena County Sheriff’s Office with arresting a person and transporting them to jail for probation violation. Dec. 3, Staples Police received a report of a party walking on Highway 10 near County Road 83, they were not dressed for the weather. Dec. 4, Staples Police received a call about an elderly driver traveling in the wrong lane on Highway 10. Vehicle struck a light pole, no damage to light pole or injuries. Dec. 5, Staples Police received a report of a person walking a dog, when they were attacked by another dog. The caller’s dog had a puncture wound. Dog owner was issued a verbal warning for dog at large.

Todd Cty. court report Dec. 17

Long Prairie Police Ambarly Fernandez Nunez, Long Prairie. License plates required on front and back of vehicle. Fine \$30. Fee \$85. Driver must carry proof of insurance when operating vehicle. Fine \$200. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Jesus Gutierrez Valentin, Long Prairie. Driving after cancellation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. **Dept. of Natural Resources** Breydon Michael Smith, Burnsville. Fish & Game. Illegally take buy see transport possess protected wild animal. Fine \$100. Fee \$85. **MN State Patrol** Tessa Jeanette Eskew, Richmond. Speed 80/60. Fine \$70. Fine \$155. John Earle Bennett, Sauk Centre. Fail to Yield upon entering roadway. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Patricia Ann Boeckmann, Mount Pleasant, TX. Speed 80/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Shannon M. Brass, Regina, SN. Speed 91/70. Fine \$70. Fee \$155. No MN Drivers License. Fine \$100. Rachael Lynn Hartsock, Burtrum. Seat belt required. Fine \$25. Fee \$85. Seth Kaleb Hess, Eagle Bend. Seat belt required. Fine \$25. Fee \$85. Paul Joseph Jacks, Miami, FL. Speed 74/60. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Jonathon Dominic Jahnke, Long Prairie. No Proof MV Insurance. Jeffrey Arnold Klaphake, Freeport. Speed 64/55. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Yerferson Daniel Martinez Villamizar, Long Prairie. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. No proof MV Insurance. Fine \$200. Anthony James Miles, Alexandria. Speed 91/70. Fine \$70. Fine \$155. Karina Marie Morales Banks, Browerville. Speed 70/60. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Yuqueiry Ortega Cantalicio, St. Cloud. Speed 65/60. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Garrett Hamilton Page, Sanford, FL. Speed 79/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Joseph R. Ring, Reiles Acres, ND. Speed 77/60. Fine \$60. Fee \$85. Emily A. Rose, Plainfield, IL. Speed 79/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Aiden Michael Shattuck, Swanville. Speed 82/70. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. **Todd County Sheriff’s Office** Alan Jesus Acevedo Raya, Melrose. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100. Fee \$85. Nathan Scott Brown, Long Prairie. Seat Belt required. Fine \$25. Fee \$85. Keith Alan Jares, Long Prairie. Speed 64/55. Fine \$40. Fee \$85. Elvin Leslie Smith, Clarissa. Stray animals-running at large of domestic animals prohibited. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. June Beverly Smith, Clarissa. Stray animals-running at large of domestic animals prohibited. Fine \$50. Fee \$85. Grace Sargbe Wah, Plymouth. Driver must carry proof of insurance when operating vehicle. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. **Staples Police** Rocio Fernanda Mendoza Martine, Staples. Driving without a valid

drivers license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100. Fee \$85. **The following cases were heard before Judge Daniel A Benson in Seventh District Court in Todd County December 10, 2025.** Richard Charles Jr. Kuhlmann, Long Prairie. Threaten crime of violence. Continued. Local confinement (3 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 0 days credit for time served: 3 days). Supervised probation. Fine \$300. Daniel Thomas Duncanson, West St. Paul. Cannabis open package-possess in motor vehicle-not compliant packaging or container. Sentenced. Fine \$100. Fee \$75. **The following cases were heard before Judge Daniel A Benson in Seventh District Court in Todd County December 9, 2025.** Aiden Joseph Bauch, Clarissa. Careless Driving. Sentenced. Local confinement (30 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 30 days for 1 yr). Fine \$150. Fee \$75. Cindy Jay Kruger, Staples. Theft-no consent. Continued. Unsupervised monitoring without conviction, 6 mo). Fine \$50. Justin Duane Johnson, Clarissa. Disorderly conduct. Sentenced. Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$100. Reckless driving. Dismissed. Careless driving. Dismissed. Public nuisance. Dismissed. Ryan Paul McGuire, Browerville. Domestic assault. Dismissed. Disorderly conduct. Supervised probation. Continued. Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$50. Bernadin, Long Prairie. Speed 95/55. Fine \$150. Fee \$150. Driver fails to Yield right of way to Emergency vehicle. Fine \$25. Driver must carry proof of insurance when operating vehicle. Dismissed. unlawful passing-against signs. Dismissed **The following cases were heard before Judge Daniel A Benson in Seventh District Court in Todd County December 8, 2025.** Nichole Lynn Elias, Motley. Careless driving. Sentenced. Local confinement (90 days, stay 0 mo 90 days for 1 yr). Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$225. Fee \$75. Falsely reporting crime. Dismissed. Failure to notify owner/police of damaged property. Dismissed. McKenzie Larae Kowalski, Staples. DWI-operate motor vehicle under influence of controlled substance. Dismissed. DWI-Fourth Degree driving while impaired. Sentenced. Local confinement (90 days, stay 90 days for 1 yr). Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$200. Fee \$100. Expired registration. Dismissed. Unregistered-alter/deface registration. Dismissed. Driver must carry proof of insurance when operating vehicle. Dismissed. Thomas Francis Tabatt, Grey Eagle. Driving after cancellation. Sentenced. Local confinement (354 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 363 days for 2 yr credit for time served: 1 day). Supervised probation, 2 yr. Fine \$100. Fee \$75. B Card violation. Dismissed. Driving restrictions-drive-operate-control-motor vehicle w/o ignition interloc Dismissed.

75 YEARS Ago - 1950 • Dec. 28, 1950 - Not roses in December, but pussy willows for the month. Dec. 15, as Casper Adami-etz was going to a neighbor’s home south of his own farm in Moran township, he noticed something rather peculiar about some of the bushes along the road. Being curious, he investigated, and found that the pussy willows were all budded and that the furry little bud was just as it - o - Compiled by Dawn Timbs - o -

would be in the spring of the year. That wasn’t all either.. A little farther along the route, he discovered a robin lazily taking a bath in the waters of the Long Prairie River. - This is also a rarity for Minnesota at this time of year. • Dec. 28, 1950 - Duane Lund, vocational guidance instructor of the Staples high school, was granted his Master of Arts degree from the University of Minnesota at the December Centennial Commencement exercises held at the university Dec. 21. • Dec. 28, 1950 - Staples high school basketball game won their last two games with very narrow margins the first on Tuesday evening, Dec. 19 when, in an overtime period they eeked out a 28 to 27 victory over the Long Prairie Indians. In the game Friday evening, Dec. 22, at Crosby, the Cards again eeked out a one point victory over the Rangers. The final score was 33 to 32 for the Cards. • Dec. 28, 1950 - Following eight weeks in the Brainerd Hospital as a result of a broken leg sustained in the last football game of the season, Billy Berndt of Motley returned home Dec. 22. Billy has to wear the cast for at least a month yet, but being home is wonderful. Billy’s leg was broken just above the knee. • Dec. 28, 1950 - Card of Thanks: I wish to thank the Junior Class, other students, and members of the faculty who sent gifts, flowers, cards and letters to me while I was in the hospital. Thanks too, to the blood donors and to all who made personal calls. Your thoughtfulness was appreciated. Billy Berndt. • Dec. 28, 1950 - On Dec. 21, the Motley chapter of the FHA and FFA held their annual Christmas party. The party began with group singing of Christmas carols in the gym, after which Mr. Gentzkow showed some slides of the carnival. Following that, dancing was enjoyed.

50 YEARS Ago - 1975 • Dec. 25, 1975 - The Cardinal and White clad cagers of Coach Tom Wolhowe chalked up their third victory of the season Dec. 16, with an 81-40 non-conference conquest of the Long Prairie Indians. However, Friday evening on the home court, the Cardinals, who fought so bitterly all night, saw a rebound shot swish the nets at the buzzer to send them down to a 47-45 defeat at the hands of the Crosby-Ironton Rangers in Mid-State Conference play. • Dec. 25, 1975 - Four students from Staples are among the 500 St. Olaf students who participated in the St. Olaf Christmas Festival concerts, which were video-taped for television broadcast throughout the upper Midwest this Christmas season. The color television program will be broadcast in its entirety by KTCA-TV on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, at 10:30 p.m. and Christmas Day, Dec. 25, at 8:30 p.m.

Correction In the December 17 issue of the Staples World, the photo outline of Wadena County Attorney Kyra Ladd and her daughters should have read Emily Wick and Aryn Ladd, both of the Twin Cities. The World regrets the error.

Looking back



Mystery photo

Hello readers. This week’s archive photo is from 1992. 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.

Students from Staples participating include Raymond Denning, Viking Chorus; Patrick Quance, Chapel Choir; Jane Anglin, Manitou Singers; Karen Stevens, Campus Choir. • Dec. 25, 1975 - “An Evening with State Rep. Bruce Nelsen” will be held in the V.F.W. Clubrooms Dec. 29, from 7:30 - 10:30 p.m., according to Mrs. Ruth Huss and Mrs. Don Sanda, co-chairmen of the event. Special guests invited to the wine and cheese party (with non-alcoholic punch also served) will be former Congressman and Mrs. Ancher Nelsen of Hutchinson, Bruce’s father; State Representative David Fjosen of Brandon; State Representative Frank DeGroat of Lake Park; and the Honorable Dwaine Hoberg, Mayor of Moorhead. • Dec. 25, 1975 - The junior class of Staples high school will hold a “Winter Fun Day” Saturday, Jan. 3 (the last day of Christmas vacation). The day’s events will start off with three hilarious films featuring the Marx Brothers in “Pigskin Capers,” Charlie Chaplin in “The Masquerader” and Laurel and Hardy in “They Go Boom.” Showtime is at 1:30 and admission will be 35 cents. • Dec. 25, 1975 - Motley Letters to Santa: Dear Santa, Please bring me a sled. I saw you twice before but not this year. Love, David Anderson •Dear Santa, Please bring me that dolly that when you push on her tummy she sneezes. I don’t know her name. Jeanne wants Baby-That-Away. Thank you, Sherry Nieken • Dear Santa Claus, I want that game that you shoot at a rabbit and you have to hit it a certain way. Also I’d like a doctor kit. Thank you, Santa, Kevin Flickinger • Dear Santa, Can you bring me a color book and crayons. You know where I live. Renee Achermann • Dear Santa, Please bring me a blue tent. I want to go camping. Thank you, Todd Greig **25 YEARS Ago - 2000** • Dec. 28, 2000 - Staples Motley’s boys survived a close scare in the final moments of the basketball game Friday night to down Detroit Lakes 67-60 for a Mid State Conference victory. That win, plus the 58-54 victory over Long Prairie-Grey Eagle Dec. 19, gives the Cards a 5-0 record going into the Rochester Rotary Invitational this week. • Dec. 28, 2000 - The Staples Motley girls pushed Detroit Lakes into overtime Friday night, Dec. 22, before losing 47-41. This week the girls will be in action on their home court, hosting Pine River-Backus, East Grand Forks and Cass Lake-Bena in the Cardinal Invitational. Action starts at 6 p.m. Thursday night. • Dec. 28, 2000 - Twenty young people from Trinity Lutheran Church and Faith Lutheran Church in Staples worked earlier this fall to help clean in the Lakewood Community Park on the corner of Prairie Ave. and 4th St. NE in Staples. In conjunction with their efforts Aid Association for Lutherans Branch 2960 donated \$1,000 to the Lakewood Health System Foundation’s Happy Healthy Kids Fund. • Dec. 28, 2000 - Students in the Sacred Heart Elementary School presented their annual Christmas program Dec. 20, with sixth graders presenting The Christmas Chronicles. **10 YEARS Ago - 2015** • Dec. 24, 2015 - The entire Staples Motley High School Music Department will be performing at the prestigious MMEA (Minnesota Music Educators Association) Midwinter Clinic in Minneapolis Feb. 11. This includes the Chamber Orchestra, directed by John Koopmann; Symphonic Band, directed by Jeff Iversen; and A Cappella Choir, directed by Steve Hoemberg.



Mystery solved

Last week’s mystery photo published in the Dec. 14, 2000 edition of the Staples World featured members of the Cardinal Bank class at Staples Motley High School, practicing setting up accounts on the day before the bank opened at the high school. In photo at left Tom Craft, left, is opening an account, while Alisha Forsberg, center and Ericka Vargas are tellers. The Cardinal Bank was staffed by members of Lynn Peterson’s model bank class at the high school. Above, staff from the sponsoring First Integrity Bank in Staples came to the Cardinal Bank’s office to set up accounts with Alisha Forsberg again working as a teller. From left are Amy Cloakey, Marv Rothstein, Dave Howe, Cathy Meyer and Betty Arndt Amy (Cloakey) Winter correctly identified all, with a little help from Alisha (Forsberg) Winter, as well as the context of the photo. Amy went on to share, “Fun fact: Alisha Winter started at the bank in 2005 (now First International Bank and Trust). She is currently the Retail Services Operations Manager with staff in Staples and five other offices in North Dakota.” Thanks for participating in our mystery photo.

Quote of the week

“There’s nothing sadder than waking up on Christmas morning and not being a child.”
— Erma Bombeck



A Minnesota bobcat. (Photo by Ryan Pennesi)

Minnesota carnivores spread beneficial fungi

From the University of Minnesota and Natural Resources Research Institute

Animals help disperse seeds and spores for many plant and fungal species. This typically happens when animals eat the fruiting bodies of plants and fungi and pass seeds and spores through their digestive systems.

Mycorrhizal fungi form symbiotic associations with plant roots, enhancing water and nutrient uptake and playing a central role in forest productivity, regeneration and resilience to environmental stress. Through these connections, mycorrhizal fungi shape forest structure and function by influencing plant establishment, growth and responses to drought and disturbance.

Some fungal species produce above-ground fruiting bodies (mushrooms) that release spores into the air. Many mycorrhizal fungi produce below-ground fruiting bodies, such as truffles, that cannot disperse spores without animal consumers.

Animals facilitate the dispersal of mycorrhizal spores when they consume fungal fruiting bodies and pass spores through their digestive systems. Small mammals are particularly important fungal consumers; however, their limited movement typically restricts spore dispersal to tens or hundreds of meters. This constrained dispersal may limit the ability of mycorrhizal fungi to recolonize disturbed areas and track environmental change across fragmented landscapes.

Carnivores that prey on small mammals may be able to transport fungal spores that were eaten by the prey. When a carnivore eats a small mammal, it can car-

ry the spores in its digestive system and deposit them over long distances, helping fungi move across fragmented landscapes.

This process is called secondary dispersal. However, little is known about how often carnivores disperse mycorrhizal fungi this way or what traits make some carnivores more effective fungal dispersers than others.

New research from the Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI) at the University of Minnesota, recently published in the journal Ecology Letters, found:

Mycorrhizal fungal spores were present in 87 percent of small mammals and 67 percent of the carnivore scats examined.

When spores were present, carnivores dispersed hundreds to more than a billion spores per scat.

Larger carnivores, such as wolves, tended to disperse spores over greater distances, while smaller carnivores, such as red foxes and fishers, ate more small mammals, dispersed more fungal species, and had higher spore loads in their scats.

Although all carnivores dispersed mycorrhizal fungal spores, fishers and bobcats were particularly effective due to their high spore loads and long-distance movements.

Carnivores play an important role in ecosystem function by providing a largely overlooked mechanism for long-distance dispersal of beneficial mycorrhizal fungi.

“Mycorrhizal fungi play such a critical role in ecosystem structure and function,” said Michael Joyce, a wildlife ecologist at NRRI and senior author of the study. “When we think about carnivores, we often think about the effects

they can have on wildlife communities by killing and eating prey. But these predator-prey relationships can have much broader, positive impacts on ecosystems by providing long-distance dispersal of mycorrhizal fungi. Secondary dispersal of spores is sort of like a relay race, where spores are transferred from the fungi to small mammals and finally to the carnivore who spreads the spores to a new spot.”

“Wildlife are doing more than we realized to keep forests healthy,” said Alexis Grinde, a wildlife ecologist and Forest and Land Research Group Leader at NRRI who coauthored the study. “Carnivores act as long-distance dispersers of beneficial fungi, helping trees survive stress and disturbance. This hidden partnership may be essential for forest resilience in a changing climate.”

According to Joyce, while the study’s results suggest that secondary fungal dispersal by carnivores is likely a widespread phenomenon, carnivore species differ in their spore dispersal effectiveness. This work is ongoing, and the research team is continuing to examine additional factors that shape fungal movement across landscapes. In particular, they are currently evaluating how habitat selection by carnivores influences where spores in scats are deposited, which likely also plays a strong role in the dispersal effectiveness.

Funding for the study was provided by the U.S. Forest Service, Northern Research Station; Natural Resources Research Institute at the University of Minnesota; and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Support and celebrate small businesses this holiday season

By Rhea Landholm
Center For Rural Affairs

This holiday season, will you shop at one of the 33.2 million small businesses that make up 99 percent of all businesses in the U.S?

Up and down rural main streets in rural America, shopkeepers are readying their stores for the season. Business owners are stocking special gifts and rolls of wrapping paper to provide added value when you spend your money with a local retailer.

Independently owned businesses are what keep our rural communities thriving. They rely on our patronage during the crucial holiday season as well as year-round.

This year, more than ever, small businesses need our support. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Small Business Index, 79 percent of independent business owners say this upcoming holiday season is important for their overall profit this year, up from 70 percent last year.

When you shop local, you support your community by paying sales tax. You are also helping out a small business owner who in turn might sponsor a school activity or host a community event, showing just how important main street businesses are as part of our life in rural America.

Shopping local is good for consumers as well. During this holiday season, more than half of small businesses, 56 percent, say they are planning to offer seasonal discounts and 48 percent say they will extend regular business hours (up from 39 percent last year).



On average, shoppers plan to do 41 percent of their holiday shopping at small businesses, increased 5 percent from last year. I am one of these shoppers. Are you?

Small Business Saturday is on Nov. 29 - a nationally recognized day to show your appreciation for local retailers. During this holiday season, and year round, #ShopSmall. Support your community, your friends, and your way of life.

When local businesses succeed, we all win.

Get youth involved with volunteer summit

By Lisa Monroe
BlueZones.com

The Community Volunteer Summit hosted by Blue Zones Project Petaluma (Calif.) brought together approximately 800 high school students and 22 nonprofit organizations. The goal was to promote volunteerism while simultaneously showing youth that volunteering can be a great avenue for pursuing their interests.

The event was held at Casa Grande High School in Petaluma, a city in Sonoma County, Calif. Event sponsors included Healthy Petaluma District & Foundation, the City of Petaluma, and Providence Petaluma Valley Hospital.

“It was a win for everybody involved,” said Ethan Schiff, Community Engagement & Marketing Lead for Blue Zones Project Petaluma. “Students got to interact with lots of different organizations and ask questions, learn, and sign up for things they were interested in. The school [...] already told us they loved [the event] so much that they’re considering it their first annual event. And from the nonprofit lens, many organizations that participated have told us they felt like they got more engagement from this tabling event than any they had done in years. Some of them reported having over one hundred signups.”

During the event, students had the opportunity to visit and speak to representatives from participating organizations and sign up to volunteer. More than

20 teachers brought their students to the event during class, and the event was also open to students during their lunch breaks.

Blue Zones Project Petaluma has previously led Purpose Workshops at the high school to help students hone their interests. “Many of these students had just done our Purpose Workshops, so they were coming in with that fresh awareness around their talents and passions and areas of focus,” Schiff said.

Having purpose is one of the Blue Zones Power 9® principles. The Power 9® is a web of nine interconnected principles based on commonalities identified in the world’s original blue zones, known for longevity. These five blue zones include: Okinawa, Japan; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Ikaria, Greece; Loma Linda, California; and Sardinia, Italy. According to the “Purpose” principle, finding one’s purpose can help people of all ages to have a greater sense of meaning and direction in their lives, potentially resulting in increased happiness, improved work performance, and a longer lifespan.

The Blue Zones Project team identified a gap in youth leadership across nearly all sectors in the community. “While the City of Petaluma is undergoing General Plan Updates, community leaders designing complete and safe streets, third places, and food resilience hubs noted an absence of youth perspective and engagement in these areas,” she said.

The result was the Volunteer Summit bringing Petaluma youth and nonprofits together in one space, thanks to support from the event’s generous sponsors, Casa Grande High School, and its teachers.

The high school provided the use of its large, open, multipurpose room for the event. Schiff said, “We also had a champion there who was a teacher who really understood the Blue Zones mission and wanted to advocate for it.” This teacher secured signups from 23 teachers who committed to bringing one of their classes to the summit.

“What was really beautiful about this process was that it was like the true intersection of people, places,

and policy work all together in one project, and that felt really important, special, and meaningful,” said Schiff.

Importance of youth volunteers

“Volunteerism and civic engagement in communities are strong indicators of a longer and more fulfilling life,” Warwick explained. However, teen isolation and lack of volunteers are problems that are widespread across communities in America, including Petaluma.

“Within Petaluma, we’re discovering there’s a lack of third spaces for teens or spaces to hang out. That’s one challenge – teens feeling isolated – which I don’t think is specific to Petaluma but is more cultural, with lots of influence around social media and teen mental health. It’s definitely something we’re working toward improving: the sense of belonging within the population here.”

According to a 2024 study by researchers at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 58.5% of teens in the U.S. do not receive the social and emotional support they need, which is closely linked to teen mental and physical health issues.

Nationwide, there has also been an overall decline in volunteerism, which has even been linked to the divisiveness now seen across the country.

“What we’ve also discovered here is that there’s a small group of people that are doing almost all of the volunteering in town, and then you run the risk of the volunteers becoming burnt out, spread too thin, and also not always feeling appreciated,” Schiff explained. “So, there’s a goal to get younger people interested and also to get teens or younger people in general to almost rebrand or rethink what volunteering even means to them.”

Whereas historically, a younger person might have only thought of volunteering to get the hours they needed for school, Schiff said, “One of our goals is to help young people realize that volunteering can be much broader and can be directly aligned with areas they’re personally passionate about.”

Staples World

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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.

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

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Quote of the week

“We’d get sick on too many cookies, but ever so much sicker on no cookies at all.”
— Sinclair Lewis



PreSchool Storytime held at Staples Library

December Storytime was recently held at the Staples Public Library with Santa crafts made by the children. Above, seated: Carson Sadlo, Lucy Moon, Olivia and Gwen Vanek. Back: Will Moon, Rhett Sylas, Bjorn LaBlanc.

For information on upcoming free programs, stop by the library, call 218-894-1401 or visit www.griver.org. Storytime is held every third Wednesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. (Submitted photos)



Cardinal Orchestra

The Cardinal Orchestra, under the direction of Kristina Haataja, performed two songs of the season at the Staples-Motley Middle/High School Cardinal Christmas Concert Dec. 18. They included “What Child is This” and “We Need a Little Christmas.” (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)

Vaccine rates in Wadena County dropping below herd immunity

The Morrison, Todd, Wadena Community Health Board released their Kindergarten Immunization Report, showing that vaccination rates in Wadena County have fallen below the herd immunity level for several serious diseases.

Following are some out-takes from the report.

Executive Summary

This report analyzes kindergarten immunization data for the 2024-2025 school year in Morrison, Todd and Wadena counties, highlighting a concerning trend of declining vaccination rates and a sharp increase in non-medical exemptions (NMEs). This decline places the region, particularly Todd and Wadena counties, at significant risk for outbreaks of preventable diseases like measles, pertussis and varicella.

Key findings:

- Regional Vaccination Rates are Declining: While Minnesota’s statewide kindergarten vaccination rates have been falling since 2020, the decline is more severe in this region.
- Morrison County: Vaccination rates remain relatively strong and stable,

generally exceeding state averages and meeting most herd immunity thresholds.

- Todd County: Rates have recently dropped sharply, falling below herd immunity levels for highly contagious diseases like measles and DTaP.
- Wadena County: Rates show a severe, multi-year decline, leaving them critically low and far below herd immunity thresholds for nearly all required vaccines.

- Non-Medical Exemptions are Surging: the primary driver of vailing vaccination rates is a rapid increase in parents filing NMEs. From 2019 to 2024, regional NME rates for key vaccines like MMR and Varicella have tripled, rising from approximately 5 percent to over 14 percent. The trend is most alarming in Wadena County, where NME rates reached 26 percent overall, with some school districts like Menahga reporting NMEs for over 50 percent of students for multiple vaccines.
- Increased Risk of Outbreaks: The combination of low vaccination coverage and high exemption rates creates significant public health vulnerabilities. The

region is seeing an uptick in pertussis cases, and the low MMR coverage in specific school districts means a single imported measles case could trigger a large-scale outbreak. These outbreaks pose a direct threat to vulnerable populations, including infants and the immunocompromised, and riskstraining the rural healthcare system and causing significant economic disruption through school closures and lost productivity.

Cost of outbreaks

Even a small drop below herd immunity can carry large financial consequences four our counties. A single measles or pertussis outbreak could trigger:

- Healthcare expenses from urgent care visits, hospitalizations and contact tracing - costs that would strain small rural hospitals.
- Lost productivity as parents miss work for sick children and quarantines.
- School closures in affected districts.
- The rural healthcare system’s limited capacity means outbreaks can quickly overwhelm available beds and providers.

Mark Your Calendar

Menu

Dec. 24

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
At FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH Wednesday, Dec. 24. Family service at 3 p.m.; Candle-light service at 5 p.m. Located at 430 12th St. NE, Staples. All are welcome. For info., 218-894-1546.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
At STAPLES ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH Wednesday, Dec. 24, at 4:30 p.m. Located at 914 3rd Ave. NE. For info., 218-894-1081. All are welcome.

Dec. 25

‘WALK WITH A DOC’ Thursdays at 5:15 p.m., at Lake-wood 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>

Dec. 26 - 28

LIGHTS IN THE PINES will be held at Pine Grove Park in Staples Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, 5 - 8 p.m., through December. Free will donation.

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

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

FREE COMMUNITY BREAKFAST Saturday, Dec. 27, 9 - 10:30 a.m., at Motley United Methodist Church, 847 3rd Ave. S., Motley.

Dec. 30

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

Senior Nutrition Program

Call mornings (218-979-4118) the Thursday before to reserve next week’s meal(s) and for current suggested donation info. LSS Meals - traditional older adult menu. Menu is subject to change.

LOCATED AT: Staples Hi-Rise Apartments, 615 4th St. NE, Staples. Seniors welcome to dine-in at 11:00 a.m., if meal is reserved.

Staples 218-979-4118

LSS meals include bread (various kinds), marg. and 1% milk.

Dec. 29 - Dec. 31

MONDAY - Biscuit, gravy, broccoli, spiced peaches, oatmeal raisin cookie.

TUESDAY - Beef stroganoff, egg noodles, peas, apple-sauce cup.

WEDNESDAY BBQ chicken breast, diced Rosemary potatoes, carrots, vanilla wafers.

THURS./FRI.: (NOT AVAILABLE)

wk01

Cardinal Band

The Cardinal Band, under the direction of Kristina Haataja, performed two festive pieces at the Staples-Motley Middle/High School Cardinal Christmas Concert Dec. 18. They included “Do You Hear What I Hear/Snow Bells” and “Bossa Nova Holiday.” (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)

May the warmth and joy of the Christmas Season remain with you throughout the coming year.



Steve Fields
Minnesota Attorney

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On-Line: \$50

Print with on-line: \$76

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



Sourcewell donates to 28 food shelves in region

Through Sourcewell’s Food Security Partner Fund, administered by the Initiative Foundation, Sourcewell has provided \$7,500 to every food shelf and food bank in its central Minnesota service region.

This funding, given to 28 organizations in the area, targets critical gaps in community food security. Each month more than 440,000 Minneso-

tans use SNAP, one of the national programs affected by budget cuts and the recent government shutdown.

“This is a critical time for our region,” said Tammy Filippi, Senior Resource Development Administrator at Sourcewell. “Between the rising cost of living and lingering impacts from the government shutdown, now is the time to step up for food security

in our communities. We’re so thankful to the Initiative Foundation, for partnering with us on this fund and keeping rural Minnesotans fed.”

The recipient list includes Cass Lake, Pillager, Central Lakes College, Morrison County, Motley, Browerville, Long Prairie, Staples and Verndale.

Obituary

Gary Mueller

Gary Mueller, 78, of Staples passed away at his home December, 2025.

A Military Burial Service will be held in the spring of 2026.

Gary Robert Mueller was born September 29, 1947 to Melvin (Whitey) and Elaine (Olson) Mueller in Brainerd. Gary grew up in Randall where he attened grade school. In 1963 the family moved to Staples. Gary graduated from Staples High School in 1965. He served with the U.S. Navy from 1966 - 1970, serving one year in Viet Nam, 1-1/2 years in Morocco and then seven months aboard the USS Dahlgren at Norfolk, VA. After the service he attended Brainerd Vocational School for landscaping and worked at Ernie’s Grocery Store in Staples. He began his career in advertising at the Staples World newspaper in 1973, retiring in 2019 after 45+ years. Gary was named Post Commander of the Robert W. Hand Post 1910 VFW, Staples in 1974.

He married Shirley



Lange in Staples in 1988.

Gary enjoyed golfing, fishing, hunting, tending to his rose beds and time spent with family and friends.

Gary is survived by one brother, Randy (Shirley) Mueller of Staples; two nephews, Scott Bachmann, of Grand Rapids and Daniel Mueller of Brainerd and one niece, Darcy (Chris) Rau of Woodbury.

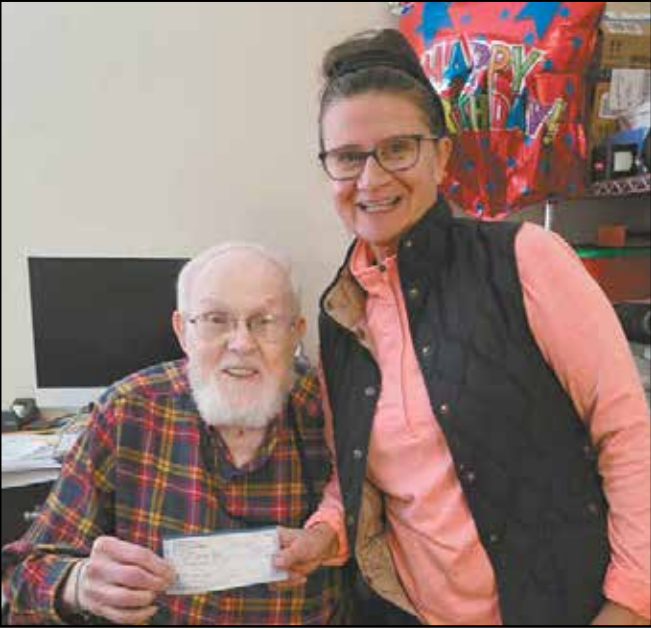
He was preceded in death by his parents; one sister, Sherry and his wife.

Arrangements are by Brenny Funeral Home, Staples.

w1x A0006B2025DC24

Hello World

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Veterans Park donation

United States Navy Veteran Charlie Crews of Staples recently donated \$1,000 to the WWII Wall of Honor at Staples All Veterans Park. Accepting the check is Penny Nelsen, Staples All Veterans Park Board member. (Submitted photo)

Mitchell Koppes 12/27/84 ~ 7/12/08

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To become you
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and mind
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Entwines self, angst,
weakness
Plants turmoil inside you
Forges dependence,
not independence
Cushions your fall,
afraid you'll realize
you were never leaning on
me-
I was the one leaning on you
Holding on,
refusing to see
I was gripping only one
feather
you had been flying on your
own for a long time
Now I live with you
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or Mumster
I think
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Staples Area Church Directory

Staples

Staples Alliance
1512 8th St. NE, Staples.....218-894-2891
Jonny Olson, Associate Pastor
Sunday Worship.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday School.....11:00 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
AWANA.....6:00 p.m.

Assembly of God
914 3rd Ave. NE, Staples.....218-894-1081
Pastor Roy Miles
Small Groups (Bible classes
for all ages).....9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship Service.....10:30 a.m.
Children's Church (Kids start in main
worship service).....11 a.m.
Prayer Meeting.....5 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Sonlight (kids ages 4 yrs.-6th grade)
.....After school to 5:30 p.m.
Youth Group (Teens, 7th-12th grade)
.....After school to 5:30 p.m.

Church of Christ
27343 490th St., Staples.....218-894-2609
Pastor Barry Klein
Facebook Live
Bible School (youth and adult).....9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY:
Adult Bible Study.....6:30 p.m.

Faith Lutheran
430 12th Street. NE., Staples.....218-894-1546
Pastor Carl Larson
Sunday Worship Service.....9:00 a.m.
Sunday School and
Coffee Fellowship.....10:05 a.m.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
310 4th St. NE, Staples
Church.....218-631-1598
info@marysacc.org
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314
Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-632-7310
Rev. Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
Mass: 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

280 1st Ave S, Motley.....218-631-1598
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314 Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-
632-7310 Rev. Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
Sunday.....10:30 a.m. (May - Nov.)
Saturday.....4:00 p.m. (Dec - April)

United Methodist

847 3rd Ave. S. Lane, Motley.....218-352-6466
Pastor Greg Leslie
www.motleyumc.net
Sunday Worship Service.....10:00 a.m.
Monday AA meeting.....8:00 p.m.

Oylen

Oylen Alliance
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
Verndale.....218-631-1598
info@marysacc.org
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314 Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-
632-7310 Rev. Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
MASS: Saturday.....6:00 p.m

St. Hubert Catholic Church

Bluegrass.....218-631-1598
info@marysacc.org
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314 Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-
632-7310 Father Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
Sunday Service.....10:30 a.m. . (Dec - April)
Saturday.....4:00 p.m. (May - Nov.)

Leaf River Township

The Old Country Church
Leaf River Twp., Wadena County Rd. 6
Info: 218-837-5690 Call first.

Wadena

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218-631-3928
Sunday Worship.....10:00 a.m.

St. Ann's Catholic Church

514 1st Street SE, Wadena(218) 631-1593
Rev. JC Duncan, 218-632-7314 Rev. Rick Aubol, 218-
632-7310 Father Greg Sauer, 218-632-7319
Mass: Sunday.....10 a.m.

"Drifting Christmas"

Pastor Barry Klein, Staples Assembly of God Church

How early do you put up your Christmas tree? I’ve heard some people put a tree up shortly before Christmas and take it down within a week. Some have it up for three months. I know some of this depends on whether a tree is fresh or artificial. Family traditions often move the rhythm of timing.

How about the Nativity scene? We have a China cabinet that houses our Nativity scene and “It’s A Wonderful Life” village 12 months of the year. (My wife is okay with that because she says then it doesn’t have to be dusted).

But in the midst of it all, what needs to be the central meaning of Christmas? After all, if we’re honest, it’s a holiday that, although truly based on Jesus’ historical birth, has developed over the centuries. We don’t know that Jesus was born on December 25 and likely could have been another part of the year.

Here we are though. The December Christmas season is deeply embedded in our calendar year, so how do we swing it back from how far it has drifted from its original meaning? Madison Avenue advertisers keep moving “Black Friday” farther and father back in the elusive chase for the customers’ dollars (or credit cards).

First off, let’s hear and regain the accounts in the Bible about Jesus’ birth in Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1 and 2. Let’s teach that in our homes, churches and the public square. Let’s sing well written Christmas carols. Let’s treasure and participate in Christma services that call us back to the true miracle of Jesus’ Holy SPirit conception in Mary’s womb. Let’s let gift giving be about life generosity in the giving of oneself even more than the giving of store gifts.

In it all, let’s bring the meaning of Jesus’ coming into this world, into all the year.

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Swarming defense

Going after a tipped pass in the Aitkin game, from left, Carter Sarbaum (13), Noah Larson and Conner

Kuhns start a fast break. (Staples World photos by Mark Anderson)

Cardinals straighten out to win conference game after two losses

The Staples-Motley boys basketball team had two nailbiter losses before coming back to win a game going away. They fell 57-55 to Aitkin on Dec. 16, traveled to Perham and had one point loss, 55-54 on Dec. 19, then returned home on Dec. 20 to beat Hawley 69-53. Against Aitkin, the Cardinals had a two point lead at halftime, but fell behind in the second half. They worked hard to tie the score again but allowed an open three pointer to put them behind in the last minute and they missed their own three to win at the end. Against Hawley, the Cardinals built a small lead in

the first half when Avandre Brandt broke open the defense for three drives to the basket. They started running away in the second half after Josiah Burton made two 3-pointers for a 10 point lead with 11 minutes left. After that, they made a lot of free throws, with Carter Sarbaum and Eli Rutten sinking most of them.

Team results
Staples-Motley 69, Hawley 53
Scoring: Eli Rutten 17, Carter Sarbaum 16, Avandre Brandt 10, Josiah Burton 10, Noah Larson 8, Peyton Jares 7, Evan Schultz 2



Carter Sarbaum scores on a fast break.



Kody Dause looks to pass in the Hawley game.

Cardinals lose two road games

The Staples-Motley girls basketball team had two conference losses, 68-31 at Barnesville and 67-26 at Perham. Chloe Larson led the Cardinals in scoring in both games, with nine and eight points. Sophia Luna also scored nine against Barnesville.

Team results
Staples-Motley 31, Barnesville 68
Scoring: Chloe Larson 9, Sophia Luna 9, Hannah Cole 6, Pam Lawrence 3, Joci Lenk 2, Clara Maros 2
Staples-Motley 26, Perham 67
Scoring: Larson 8, Cole 6, Luna 6, Lawrence 4, Addison Potter 2

Wrestlers steamroll Jackhammer Invite

The Staples-Motley boys wrestling team had five champions and eight other placers in the Jackhammer Invitational at Pequot Lakes Dec. 19-20, a large tournament loaded with ranked teams, big schools and highly ranked individuals. Even without two of their starters, the Cardinals won the tournament by a wide margin. Champions were Garrett Bjerga, Caden Kramer, Cayden Neisen, Gage Bjerga and Colbe Tappe. Kramer and Tappe were untouchable throughout the tournament, winning by technical falls in their title matches. The other championship matches were close, but the Cardinal wrestlers got takedowns to win. Garrett Bjerga won 6-3, Neisen 4-2 and Gage Bjerga 4-2. Beau Carlson also reached the championship match at 152 pounds, but fell 4-0 in the final. Zach Tabatt upset the top seed at 215 pounds with a late takedown and near fall as the clock ran out to win 5-4. He went on to place fourth. Another notable match was at 189 pounds, where Luke Bjerga lost his semifinal with a score of 22-19, a wild, high-scoring match. Adrian Gomez won his third place match with a pin. Riley Reese placed fourth, with his only losses to the top two seeds.

Staples-Motley was able to enter a second wrestler in several weight categories. Two of them placed in the tournament, with Reece Headley finishing fifth and Seth Cossentine placing sixth.

Team results
Jackhammer Invitational
Staples-Motley 260, Perham 154, Paynesville 147, Becker 138, Bemidji 124, Centennial 122, Mille Lacs 121, Foley 111, Totino-Grace 109, Detroit Lakes 96, Minniewaska 87, Alexandria 85, Rogers 82, Rock Ridge 73, Pequot Lakes/Pine River-Backus 68, Fosston-Bagley 63, Champlin Park 62, Eagan 61, Lakeville North 58, Belgrade-Brooten-Elrose 47, Albany 47, Irondale 40, Cloquet/Esko/Carlton 40, Aitkin 35, Walker-Hackensack-Akely/Nevis/Laporte 26, Crosby-Ironton 16, Pillager 13, Blackduck-Cass Lake-Bena 7, Deer River 0
107 Garrett Bjerga 4-0, 1st place
114 Justin Olson 2-3, 8th place; Jude Thompson 0-2
121 Caden Kramer 4-0, 1st place
127 Camrik Tappe 2-2
133 Cayden Neisen 5-0, 1st place
139 Gage Bjerga 4-0, 1st place
145 no entry
152 Beau Carlson 4-1, 2nd place
160 Colbe Tappe 5-0, 1st place; Cooper Tappe 1-2
172 Riley Reese 4-2, 4th place; Seth Cossentine 4-3, 6th place
189 Luke Bjerga 4-1, 3rd place; Reece Headley 5-2, 5th place
215 Zach Tabatt 3-2, 4th place
285 Adrian Gomez 4-1, 3rd place



Avandre Brandt lines up a three point shot.



Confrontation at the rim

Josiah Burton scores over the Aitkin center and gets fouled in the process.

Middle school wrestling results

Staples-Motley middle school wrestlers participated in the Pierz Middle School Christmas Clash on Dec. 20.

Leach 4th, Reed Leach 2nd, Elliott DiGiovanni, Tim Lind 6th, Tayden Weite 2nd. Javden Rogers 2nd. Leiten

Oeltjenbruns 5th, Gavin Caldwell 4th, Cygnus Walz, Ryker Weite 4th, Bennett Sonenstahl 4th. Conner Reeck. Preston

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205 Help Wanted
May Township (Cass County) is seeking a **HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR**. Forty-hour week, flexible schedule (hours vary according to weather rain/snow). Wages: \$62,400 - \$75,000 depending on qualifications and experience. **Minimum requirements:** CDL or willing to obtain a CDL and able to lift 70 pounds. Preferred two years of experience heavy equipment operation or education. Call Jason Barg, 218/851-7502 with questions. Or send resume to clerk@maytwp.com. Apply by February 1, 2026. 52-1c



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Public Notices

NOTICE MAY TOWNSHIP PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing will be held on **January 12, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.**, at the May Township Hall by the May Town Board of Supervisors. The public is invited to attend.

The purpose of the hearing is to take comments on the “updated” Ordinance 2007-01. Road and Drive-way Standards Ordinance. Written comments can be sent to the May Township Clerk, Bianca Wyffels, 5834 112th Street SW, Pillager, MN 56473, by January 12 2026 so it will be received up to the date and time of the hearing.

Due to the lengthy content of the Ordinance, a brief synopsis follows:

Section One Authority/Purpose - additional line:

Our driveway regulations are necessary to prevent interference with the construction, maintenance and safe use of the roads and its appurtenances and the public use thereof.

4.2 Construction and Maintenance of Driveways

The following rules will apply to construction or re-construction, and maintenance of driveway entrances onto an existing Township road;

4.2.2 All culverts shall be galvanized steel, a minimum of twelve inches (12) in diameter diameter as indicated on application, with length sufficient for the width of said driveway and flared ends.

Section 4.3 Permit Requirements – additional line:

4.5.3 The initial and final inspections are provided free of charge by the Township. Any additional inspections or other permit work will be charged at current Township rates.

4.5.3 A \$50 fee will be charged by the Township for initial and final inspections. Any additional inspections or other permit work will be charged at current township rates.

A copy of the updated ordinance 2007-01 Road and Driveway Standards can be viewed at the township hall. Please feel free to contact the clerk: Clerk@maytwp.com with any questions..

By order of the May Township Board of Supervisors.

Bianca Wyffels, Clerk 1pnc

STAPLES TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF FILING

Staples Township is accepting filings for:

Supervisor for a three (3) year term

Clerk for a two (2) year term

The filing period for these offices opens at the home of the Clerk located at 48301 County 21, Staples, on December 30, 2025 and closes at 5:00 p.m. on January 13, 2026.

Filing fee is \$2.00. Please contact Bonnie Thoele at 218-296-2151 to file for office.

Bonnie Thoele, Clerk Staples Township 52-1pnc

BULLARD TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF FILING

Bullard Township is accepting filings for:

Supervisor for a three (3) year term

Supervisor for a one (1) year term

Clerk for a two (2) year term

The filing period for these offices opens on December 30, 2025 and closes on January 13, 2026.

Filing fee is \$2.00. Please contact the Bullard Township Clerk at 218-296-1612 to file for office. .

Janelle VanAlst, Clerk Bullard Township 52-1pnc

TODD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

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

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

Agenda •Call to Order •Pledge of Allegiance •Introduction of Planning Committee Members and process review

•Approval of agenda •Approval of December 4, 2025 Planning Commission meeting minutes

•The applicant is introduced

•Staff report •Applicant confirms if staff report accurately represents the request

•Correspondence •Site Visit Review •Public Comment

•Board review with applicant, staff, and public

1. Reorganization of the Board and Review Business Rules:

2. Donniel Robinson: Section 28, Moran Township

Site Address: 40324 County Rd., 21, Browerville, MN 56438

PID: 19-0029102.

1. Request to build a 60' x 120' building to grow Cannabis indoors as a licensed microbusiness, according to Statue, in AF-2 Zoning District.

3. Richelle Taylor: Section 11, Birchdale Township, Fuller Lake

Site Address: 27740 County 98, Grey Eagle, MN 56336

PID: 03-0008202

1. Request to keep the Property as a Retreat, home will be rented to Youth Groups, Weddings, Clubs, and Churches. Request to amend condition #5 of CUP #20080512696 to increase the occupancy from 14 to 22 people in Natural Environment Shoreland Zoning District.

4. First Creek Addition Plat, Robert and Judith Berscheid: Section 24, Birchdale Township, Little Birch Lake

Site Address: 28449 County 2, Grey Eagle, MN 56336

PID: 03-0019400

1. Request to create a 6.47-acre, six lot plat in AF-1 and Recreational Development Shoreland.

Adjournment.

Next meeting: February 5, 2026

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

Todd County Board of Adjustment Jim Pratt, Chair 1pnc



Staples-Motley Elementary Winter Concert

Kindergarten students at Staples-Motley Elementary School held their winter concert held Dec. 16 in the elementary gym. They sang “Jolly Old St. Nicholas”, “Christmas ABC” and “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer”

under the direction of Elementary Music Dept. Director, Mrs. Brandy Lyon. (Staples World photos by Janice Winter)



Staples-Motley Elementary first graders

First grade students at Staples-Motley Elementary added kazoos to their Winter Concert performance Dec. 16. “All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth,

“Christmas Chopsticks” and “Rockin’ on the Housetop” were performed for the crowd.



FAWN LAKE TOWNSHIP FILING NOTICE

Fawn Lake Township will hold an election in March, 2026 for the following offices:

One (1) clerk, two (2) year term

One (1) supervisor, two- (2) year term.

The filing period for these offices opens December 30, 2025, until 5:00 p.m. January 13, 2026. To file for office, call the clerk to make an appointment, 218-531-0287.

Kelly Miller, Clerk Fawn Lake Township 52-1pnc

BARTLETT TOWNSHIP FILING NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the residents of Bartlett Township that filing for township offices may be made at the home of the clerk at 47810 193rd Ave., Aldrich, from Tuesday, December 30, 2025 through 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 13, 2026.

One (1) Supervisor for a three (3) year term

One (1) Clerk for a two (2) year term.

Call 218-640-3176 for an appointment.

Jan Jares, Clerk Bartlett Township 1pnc

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has

occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:

DATE OF MORTGAGE: January 22, 2002

ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$65,000.00

MORTGAGOR(S): Richard T. VanNorman, an unmarried man

MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Washington Mutual Bank, FA

DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on January 29, 2002 as Document Number 406496; as modified of record by Richard T. VanNorman and Christine Mary VanNorman by document recorded on July 31, 2019 as Document Number A515362 in the Office of the County Recorder of Todd County, Minnesota.

ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. by assignment recorded on December 14, 2012 as Document Number 482007 in the Office of the County Recorder of Todd County, Minnesota; thereafter assigned to U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely in its Capacity as Trustee of Citigroup Mortgage Loan Trust 2022-RP3 by assignment recorded on August 18, 2022 as Document Number A533219 in the Office of the County Recorder of Todd County, Minnesota.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: The Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (SE 1/4 NE 1/4) lying North of Highway #12, Section Thirty-three (33), Township One Hundred Twenty-nine (129) North, Range Thirty-two (32) West of the Fifth P.M., Todd County, Minnesota.

STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 31326 COUNTY 12, BURTRUM, MN 56318

COUNTY IN WHICH

PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Todd County, Minnesota.

THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$52,442.11

TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.

NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Washington Mutual Bank, FA

RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Nationstar Mortgage LLC

TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 04-0033701 and 04-0033702

TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 1000541-3000216461-2

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

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

DATE AND TIME OF SALE: February 12, 2026 at 10:00 AM.

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

to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is twelve (12) months from the date of sale.

TIME AND DATE TO

VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on February 12, 2027.

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

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

Dated: December 09, 2025

U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY, BUT SOLELY IN ITS CAPACITY AS TRUSTEE OF CITIGROUP MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST 2022-RP3 Mortgagee

TROTT LAW, P.C. By: /s/ N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq. Samuel R. Coleman, Esq. *Alexa Marsh, Esq.* Attorneys for Mortgagee 25 Dale Street North St. Paul, MN 55102 (651) 209-9760 (25-1121-FC01)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR.

52-5pnc



Mrs. Uselman's
class, Sacred
Heart Area
School



Esther Edin

2. Santa's elves have a very important job, they're the ones who make all the toys for christmas. They also enjoy baking, and visitng homes and schools.



Elwen Ellingsen

2. I think santa's Elves probably go outside and play football in the snow.



The Christmas tradition continues

The choir, band and orchestras came together for the finale of the Cardinal Christmas Concert Dec. 18. Above, Director Kristina Haataja conducts the combined group as they performed their last piece, "Angels We Have Heard on High." Prior to that, audience members

who had sung or played the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's "Messiah" in the past were invited to join the group on stage, a Cardinal tradition for decades. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)

Christmas Questions

1) Some Minnesotans eat lefse during winter holidays. What is lefse and how do you make it?

2) What do Santa's elves do for fun?

3) In the Christmas story, angels talked to shepherds about the birth of Jesus. Was that social media for those days? How did it work?

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

STEP

STEP On In Thrift Store Staples

We'd Like to Shout It From the Rooftops: MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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Jolly, Happy Christmas

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119 3rd St. NE, Staples



The Heart of Christmas at FLC

The youth at Faith Lutheran Church in Staples presented "The Heart of Christmas," a service for the congregation and its children Dec.21 . Above: Shepherds and angels learn of the birth of Jesus as the Sunday School children sing "Away in a Manger."

Below: All gather around the manger to "Share the good news, Jesus is born." (Staples World photos by Janice Winter)

May the warmth and joy of the Christmas Season remain with you throughout the coming year.

State Farm

Daniel Douts, Agent
812 4th Street NE
Staples, MN 56479
Bus: 218-894-1717
daniel.douts.f27q@statefarm.com



Christmas musicians

Staples-Motley third graders play marimbas for their Christmas Concert. (Photo by Mark Anderson)

First International Bank and Trust wishes everyone a happy and wonderful holiday season!

Coming Your Way: Our Best Wishes!

SouthSide Mini Mart
223 6th St. SE, Staples • 218-894-2757
Ken's Collision & Glass Center
219 6th St. SE, Staples • 218-894-3714
Southside Suds



Dawn Weite's class, Staples-Motley Elementary



Emmery Brenna

2. Santa's elves like to play football. Some elves like to do crafts some just like to sit around. Santa's elves like to cause chaos they put rats in each other's shoes



Oliver Clairmont

2. Santa's elves like to write funny notes about themselves for fun!



Finlay Craig

2. For fun Santa's elves like to cause messes. Like spilling the cereal box. They scream in excitement when they cause those messes. They dance on the bed before they go to sleep and it is funny to watch.



Ella Davis

3. Jesus is born
When the angels talked to the shepherds about Jesus being born. It was like social media. They didn't have phones so they spread the word by going to the people.



Noah Dukes

1. Lefse is a torillashell with butter and sugar in it. It is made out of potatoes. We eat it at Christmas time.



Easton Erickson

2. Santas Elves like to make funny snowmen to make santa laugh out loud for fun. Santas Elves like to have a snowball fight and go crazy after all the toys are made.



Raelynn Hansen

2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
Santa's elves like to sing and dance a lot so they decided To plan a party the party will be so fun. They can't wait till the Party starts but we can't forget to invite santa.



Eli Heschke

2. Santa's elves make toys every year for kids.
If you are bad you get coal. If you're good you get candy and presents.



Bennett Hove

2. Santa's elves like to snow fight. My elf on the shelf was like, I believe I can fly!



Liam Kroll

3. In the Christmas story, the angels tell the shepherds about the birth of Jesus. Some people might think this is like social media but I don't believe it is because only a couple people got to hear it.



Tambree Mudek

2. Santa's elves like to do things like make cookies for fun.



Nala Lambert

2. Santa's elves like to be like monkeys hanging on the Christmas trees for fun.



Brixton Nelson

2. Santa's elves like to turn around and make presents.



Robyn Nordell

2. When the elves are done making toys...
Santa's elves rode on the reindeers. For fun. Because they want to be like Santa. And they said eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!!



Charlee Roberts

2. Have you ever wondered what Santa's elves do for fun?
They like to write goofy notes to Santa for fun. They also like to play tag. They really have fun sliding into the pool of snow. They love having hot chocolate and marshmallows.



Cj Rogers

2. What do Santa's elves like to do for fun?
Santa's elves like to have a snowball fight. But they have to go to the elfe-vatar first to go down to the snow pit!



Brecken Rundquist

2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
Santa's elves like to cause chaos like destroying your bathroom, fridge, kitchen, and bedroom .They will hit a baseball with a baseball bat and they will blame it on the dog.



Roman Sadlo

2. Santa's elves like to go crazy for fun. They go bananas and rush home to do backflips and eat! Then they run out of energy and then they go to bed.



Kaitlyn Scheffler

2. For fun, santa's elves like to make tows for children.
They also like to play pranks on kids like an elf on the shelf!



Symantha Trettel

2. What do elves do for fun?
They use candy canes to make slides to play on.



Caleb Vangsness

1. A lefse is a common Canadian food. It is made out of mashed potatoes and sugar. It usually eaten during the winter holidays. That is why I choose to write about Lefse.



Logan Wilson

2. Santa's elves like to make toys for fun. They also like to eat cookies and chocolate chips and milk.



Brightest Joy

May peace and happiness light your way this Christmas and always. Thanks for your business, and best wishes for a very merry holiday season.

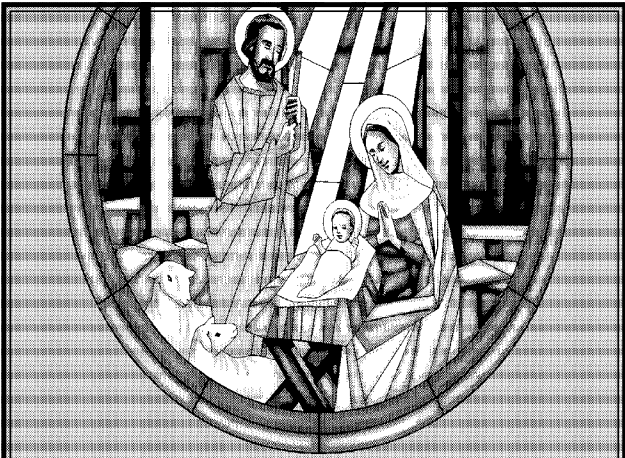
Ideal Construction Company

Staples
218-894-3105



AnnaBeth Dottenwhy

2. Santa's elves like to make a mess in your house just for fun. Your Mom might get mad. But I do not have an elf, my gramma and my grandpa have an elf and they got it from a dump last year. It is wearing shorts and a T-shirt. The elf was found in a jar. And on the note it said someone smells bad!!!!



For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

May you find inspiration in the miracle of Christmas, and may peace and joy reside with you throughout this holy season and beyond.

Isaiah 9:6-7

ERNIE'S
GROCERY • CONVENIENCE • GAS • MORE



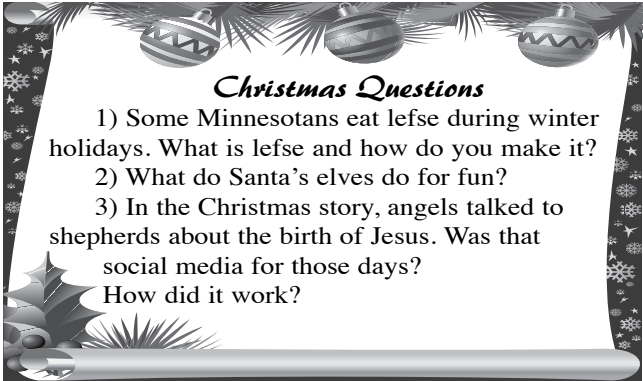
Rejoice in the Reason for the Season

On Christmas morn, we celebrate our Savior born and his ever-present love for us. May the pure joy of this holy season bring contentment to your heart, enlightenment to your soul and strength to your faith.

Let peace be upon you this Christmas and always!

Staples ACE Hardware

210 2nd Ave. NE, Staples 218-894-1080
HOURS: Mon.-Sat., 8:00 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Live Bait • Propane • Paint • UPS • Firearms
• Window/Screen Repair • Stihl Dealer



Christmas Questions

1) Some Minnesotans eat lefse during winter holidays. What is lefse and how do you make it?
2) What do Santa's elves do for fun?
3) In the Christmas story, angels talked to shepherds about the birth of Jesus. Was that social media for those days?
How did it work?

Sarah Larson's class, Staples-Motley Elementary



Dennis Bramstedt
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun.I think Santa's elves play board games because they could just make them.I also think they make hot cocoa.



Asyus Brandt
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun? I think they eat the leftover cookies . They might play in the snow and build a snowman.They could play tag, that's what I think Santa's elves do for fun.



Breella Elifrits
2. I think they mess with the reindeer and the elves make toys for nice kids, not mean people.
Kids need to say thank you and please you .



Dakota Simoneau
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
They tell jokes.Play board games.They also feed the raindeer candy canes.



Alex Beard
3. n the Christmas story angels talked to shepherds about the birth of Jesus. Was that social media for those days? How did it work?
Answer: I think it is because social media is where there is no power there and it was like 1,000,000 years ago.



Owen Denning
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
I think thatSanta's elves do snow ball fights, eat lefse and play! Then they tell fun stories and feed the reindeer cookies.



Olivia Lang
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
What I think Santa's elves do for fun is they plan their tricks at people's houses to prank them and sometimes it can be funny. Another one is I think they play with toys they made and mess with the other elves They probably can build a snowman and talk to each other and eat left over cookies and play in the snow.



Jayce Bunn
2.What do Santa's elves do for fun?
I think Santa's elves eat leftover cookies. Play in the snow and make snow angels and ride in the slay with Santa.



Scotlyn Storry
2. WHAT DO SANTA'S ELVES DO FOR FUN
I think that the elves run around the workshop and play with the toys and play with each other . I think that the elves have fun when they're at your house running around every night hiding where you can not find them . SO SNEAKIE!!!



Ethan Lund
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
The elves eat Santa's cookie leftovers.The elves make toys, play games and suck on candy canes.



S'vanah Peterson
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun? When the elves have extra time they eat cookies and milk.



Lane Paurus
3. Yes that was social media because people talk to each other it spread like wildfire. That is why I think that.



Caitlynn Lucas
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun :) I think they push each other in the snow and talk to themselves and spend time with friends. They buy stuff for themselves and for friends. They drink hot cocoa and read any book



Michelle Blomquist
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
Maybe Santa's elves play tag.Maybe Santa's elves drink hot coc cocoa.



Adalyn C
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
I think that Santa's elves play Christmas games. They tell Christmas jokes and drink hot chocolate with marshmallows.



Lil' Bear Coon
2. What do Santa elves do for fun?
The elves pack up presents. They have Lunch with Santa before Christmas. They go outside and play in the snow.



Nazarius Reger
2. What do Santa elves do for fun? Santa's elves make presents and toys.



Elliot Schultenover
2. "I think Santa's elves have fun by making toys for children. They make a lot of toys."



Bryce Borash
2. What do you think Santa's elves do for fun? The elves move to entertain kids.They feel like the elf is more magical to them. Then kids can be excited for the next day so they are happy. The parents see their kids looking for their elf.and create family fun! And it could make their day good.



Eliza Warner
3. In the cristmas story, angels talked to the sheperds about the birth of Jesus.was that social media for those days?How did it work?
The answer is that God sent angels down from heaven so they could tell them the news. They also spread the joy of the world



Elmer Noska
3. In the Christmas story. Angels talked to Jesus. Was that social media for those days?
No because those days they did not know what Social media is.



Jaymee Chenoweth
2. What do Santa's elves do for fun?
Santa's elves have a disco party.
Feed the reindeer candy cane.
They cook cookies for Santa.
ride the reindeer.
Make presents for girls and boys.



Sending warm bear hugs, loving kisses and many wishes for the wonderful occasion of Christmas. May all have a splendid Christmas filled with lights, songs and cheer.



Magic Forest
Childcare
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1411 6th St. NE,
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Customers like you make our job easy, and we'd like to say thanks for being such great friends and neighbors.

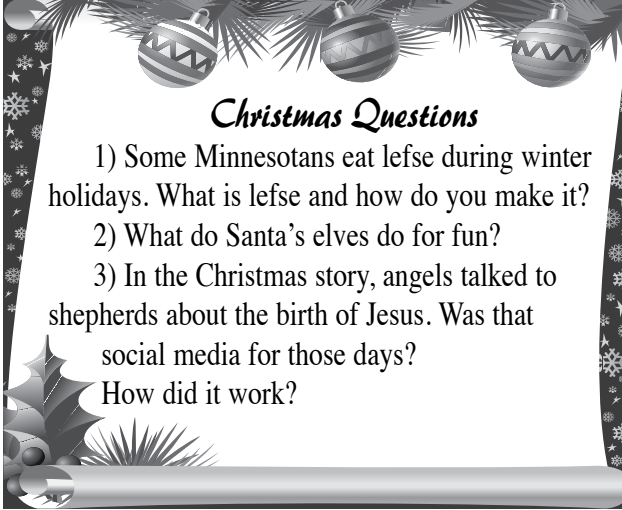
Thanking You Is at the Top of Our To-Do List

We hope your holiday season is equipped with all of the fixings that matter most: friends, family, community, love, good cheer, peace, goodwill and everything that makes you happy.

Merry Christmas!

117 Hwy 10 S, Motley, MN 56466
Phone: 218-352-6366
Store Hours: M-F, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.,
Sat. 8 a.m.-3 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-2 p.m.





Christmas Questions

1) Some Minnesotans eat lefse during winter holidays. What is lefse and how do you make it?

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May the Miracle of Christmas fill your heart with joy.



Katrina Fligge's class, Staples-Motley Elementary



Millie Keplin

1. Lefse is basically a tortilla wrap with butter and sugar.



Drake Noska

1. You get a large bowl and mix it. Then you put it in a flat pan and put it in the oven for ten minutes.



Brantley Bendson

1. You mix buttermilk, sugar, and cake mix and put it in the oven for 60 minutes at 341 degrees.



Oliver Simkins

2.They make snow angels out of flour.



Averie Carry

2. Elves have fun by screaming 6-7! They make a mess in your house and make toys for me.



Landyn Laney

2. They help Santa deliver gifts and they make toys and they go to people's houses to do funny things.



Blair Spandl

2. Sometimes they like to be naughty and pour juice all over the floor.



Paxlee Boozell

2. They go into my house and play hide and seek.



Sam Elfstrum

2. They get in their PJ's and have hot chocolate, sing and make decorations for Santa.



Caitlyn Schmidt

2. They make gingerbread houses, play with reindeer, and prank Santa and kids.



Wyatt Fraundorfer

2. They make toys and trick Santa.



Jaidyn Fonteyn

2. They like to play hide and seek at your house.



Kace Thompson

2. They hide in our homes for fun!



Grace Paskewitz

2. I think they play in the snow for fun.



Brayden Trana

2. Elves make toys so Santa can give them to kids.



Maverick McKenna

2. Elves play in the snow and make toys to play with.



Owen Trout

2. Elves like to dance and play games like Elf Box and their favorite music is Elf Bop.



Kane Knight

2. They like to play in the snow, They make snowballs and throw them on the playground. They like to swing on the swingset.



Lydia Detloff

2. I think elves have fun by drinking hot chocolate and writing songs to sing to Santa. They also like to make up dances to show Santa and get in their PJ's and have a popcorn movie night.



RaeLynn Smith

2. They come to children's houses and do funny stuff. They make toys because they like to see kids being happy.



Will Brusewitz

3. In those days, there were no computers, phones, tablets, or video games. They sent letters by camel and ship.

Christmas Questions

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Hope your Christmas is...

Simply Spectacular!

Filled with splendor and happiness too, we wish a great season to all of you!

203 Warner Rd., Staples

218-894-3360

Clarissa, 218-756-3533

And suddenly there was the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest."

Luke 2:13

414 2nd Ave. NE, Staples

218-894-3299

Spread the Joy!

In the air and on the ground it feels like Christmas all around. People laugh and children play counting down to Christmas Day. And as we deck the halls and tree we send a wish to all of thee who've helped to make our year so bright: Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

Giza Plumbing & Heating

218-894-2284

Many thanks to you, our neighbors and friends, for bringing us so much joy this past year!

May you enjoy all the best this special time of year has to offer!

Orth Insurance Agency

227 4th St. NE, Staples

218-894-2525

Faith. Joy. Peace

May this holy season bring happiness and contentment to your heart and soul.

Merry Christmas!

922 US Hwy. 10 E, Staples

218-894-1331

Merry Christmas

Wishing you peace, joy and all the best this wonderful holiday has to offer. May this incredible time of giving and spending time with family bring you the joy that last throughout the year.

STAPLES, MINNESOTA

218-895-5220



Staples senior citizens Christmas

Senior citizens gathered at the Staples Community Center for a Christmas party Dec. 17, enjoying lunch and a game of bingo. Standing, from left, are Luann Braford, Mary Wetzal, Joyce Mohler,

Amy Lindstrom, Jenny Braun, Maryann Riewer, Jeanie Huebner, Gloria Marden, Linda Christensen, Tootie Moris. In front, Bobbie Braford. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Featured soloist

Cardinal Choir soprano Addison Potter sang a verse of "Good King Wenceslas" at the Cardinal Christmas Concert Dec. 18, at Centennial Auditorium in Staples. Other soloists during this song included Noah Larson, Brynn Bestland, Raina Mikhaeil and Maci Mithun. Direct-

ed by Cade Bestland, the Staples-Motley High School Cardinal Choir also sang Oh Come, O Come, Emmanuel, For All the Saints, Deck the Hall, We Wish You a Merry Christmas and Silent Night. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Morning Choir performed "Carol of the Bells"

The Morning Choir sang "White Winter Hymnal" and "Carol of the Bells" at the recent Cardinal Christmas Concert at Centennial Auditorium in Staples. The choir rehearses in the morning twice a week prior to the start of class. The singers include Alexa Dolezal, Lauren Dolezal,

Maci Mithun, Addison Potter, Terri Rodrigues, Sadye Anderson, Brynn Bestland, Raina Mikhaeil, Cecily Moe, Hailey Richardt, Jackson Alex Alexander, Joshua Cushing, Micah Ritter, John Schotzko. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Sams win hospitality award



Brian and Heather Sams, owners of Campfire Bay Resort in Cushing, were awarded the top Resort Owner/Operator of the Year Award at the Stars of the Industry Gala Dec. 4, at the Loftan Hotel in Minneapolis.

At top, Ian Leonard, Chief Meteorologist with FOX 9 News (and emcee at the gala), reaches to congratulate the Sams. At right is Angie Whitcomb, President and CEO of Hospitality Minnesota.

The Sams purchased the resort, located on Fish Trap Lake, in February of 2002. Heather Sams shared that this was a "totally unexpected honor at an event that celebrated the hard work of all those in the hospitality industry in our state. It was a humbling experience and an amazing night filled with great testimonies from those who persevered over the decades and lived to serve others." (Submitted photos)

MOTLEY continued from page 1a

Motley Fire Department officers approved

O'Regan commented that Yoder had done a lot during his time on the council to get them headed in that direction.

In other matters the council:

- APPROVED the Motley Fire Department's recommendation for the following officers: Chief, Todd Judd; 1st Asst. Chief, Nathan Thiede; 2nd Asst. Chief, Tim Holmberg; Medical Officer, Karyn Thiede.

- APPROVED the Fire Chief Judd's request to purchase Red Alert Reporting System for the fire department, for attendance and reporting.

- HEARD a summary of a closed meeting held regarding the performance review for Motley Police Chief Al Yoder. Yoder received 53.4 out of a possible 56 points with an average score of 3.8, determined to be highly satisfactory.

- HEARD from Public Works Director Bruce Brotherton that they are working on putting ice on the rink for skating. The ice rink is located near Veterans Park.

- HEARD positive comments from council member Steve Johnson regarding

the holiday decorations in town. "They look fantastic," Johnson said, complimenting Brotherton and Bryan Stevens, Motley Maintenance Assistant for their hard work.

- LEARNED from City Clerk/Treasurer Tami Brotherton that the city's new utility billing software is up and running. In addition, the new printer has been installed at city hall.

- APPROVED a request to accept a payment of \$500 as a full and final payment for a December 2024 fire call invoice of \$800.

- APPROVED a resolution accepting a \$10,000 donation from the Motley Lions to support the construction of the city's new splash pad.

- APPROVED a resolution accepting Grant Navigator Funding through the League of Minnesota Cities.

- APPROVED donating \$654 to Hilltop Regional Kitchen in Eagle Bend.

- SET next planning and zoning commission meeting for Monday, Jan. 5, at 5 p.m.

- SET next regular council meeting for Monday, Jan. 12, at 4:30 p.m.

STAPLES continued from page 1a

New T-hangar to bring in more revenue for city airport

One big expenditure on the budget is a new street sweeper that the city plans to purchase in 2026.

The city expects additional revenue from the new T-hangars now being used at the Staples Airport.

In other news, the council

- Approved licenses for the sale of tobacco to Ernie's Liquor, Still Lefty's, Dollar General, Jon's Family Foods, Family Dollar, Southside Mini Mart, Casey's, Staples Holiday, Staples Smoke Shop and Little Store.

- Approved solid waste hauling licenses to G&T

Sanitation, Long Prairie Sanitation and Waste Management.

- Approved legal services contract with Quinlivan & Hughes of Long Prairie for work in Todd County and regular city matters. Work rates range from \$200 to \$290 per hour.

- Approved legal services contract with Kyra Ladd for Wadena County to work with a retainer of \$3,000 and \$75 per hour for prosecutions.

- Approved part-time and seasonal staff wage scale, with one change bringing fire department training pay up to minimum wage.

Under the tree
the gifts enthrall,
But the nicest
present of them all
Is filling our thoughts
with those who care,
Wanting our Christmas
joy to share.

Merry Christmas

Staples World

Mark Anderson
Kathy Odden
Dawn Timbs
Janice Winter