

## Inside this issue:

Lakeland PBS launches "218Life" series  
Hilltop Kitchen receives funding  
Motley City Council passes on new tanker truck  
School referendum plan and tax impact



**Section basketball** The Staples-Motley boys basketball team reached the Section 8AA finals with a win over Osakis, only to fall in the finals against Perham. Pictured above, the swarming defense stopping Osakis included, from left, Josiah Burton, Conner Kuhns, Noah Larson, Carter Sarbaum and Eli Rutten. See story, page 7a. (Photo by Staples-Motley School District)

## Building owner prompts council to explore fire damage communication

By Mark Anderson  
Managing Editor

A local business owner asked the Staples City Council about communication on when a property is damaged by a fire at an adjacent property.

At the March 10 council meeting, Allesia Gonier said she owns the building next to the Staples Theater building. When a fire broke out at the upper portion of the theater building, the Staples Fire Department used Gonier's building to access the fire. She said there was damage to her roof and water seeped in and damaged the carpet in her building.

She said the new business she is putting in the building was about two weeks away, but the water damage now has made it four to six weeks away from opening.

Gonier said she talked to the owner of the theater building, Aaron Ekola, but he said he doesn't have insurance on that building. She said she doesn't want to report it to her insurance company because as a new policy holder, they could kick her off of that insurance.

Gonier said she only learned about the

fire after talking to someone else. She asked the council if there was a procedure to inform property owners when there is a fire that affects their property.

### Second fire

The theater building also had a second fire on March 4, which the council had discussed earlier in the meeting. City Administrator Jerel Nelsen said a police officer saw flames in the middle of the night and the Staples Fire Department was able to put it out. The fire marshal said the second fire was likely rekindled from an ember from the first fire. Nelsen said the fire marshal has not determined the cause of the first fire yet.

Gonier said she didn't learn about the second fire either, until two days later.

"I expect to be informed when these things happen," said Gonier.

The council was not sure if there is a fire department policy to inform adjacent property owners and said they would research it. The council discussed ideas on how to inform nearby landowners.

"We need to do everything we can to help a new business downtown," said Mayor Ron Murray.

## Motley man stabbed multiple times, sustains life-threatening injuries

The Morrison County Sheriff's Office reports that on March 15, at approximately 7:14 a.m., their office received a 911 call of a person that was stabbed at a residence located off Cherry Lane, approximately six miles south of Motley, in Scandia Valley Township.

According to the sheriff's office, deputies responded to this location and learned that a 53-year-old male victim identified as Douglas Alan Denio from Motley, suffered several stab wounds. He was transported to Lakewood Health System Hospital in Staples by Lakewood Ambulance and was later

transported to St. Cloud Hospital with life-threatening injuries. The suspect, 23-year-old Christian Ray Denio of Motley, was arrested and transported to the Morrison County Jail where he is awaiting formal charges.

The investigation is ongoing.

The Morrison County Sheriff's Office was assisted at the scene by the Scandia Valley First Response Team, Mayo Clinic Ambulance, Lakewood Ambulance and the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.



Christian Ray Denio

## Industrial building sale approved, lots rezoned

By Mark Anderson  
Managing Editor

The Staples City Council approved the sale of the city industrial building and the 31 acre parcel surrounding

it. At their March 10 meeting, the council approved selling the building and property for \$647,000 to Austin Redemske, owner of Olander Tooling and Machining. A portion of the

building is currently used by Accura Tool & Engineering, and the two businesses have an agreement to keep them in that space.

This was the first read- See **STAPLES** on page 10a

## Weather

| This Week's Forecast |      |     |           |
|----------------------|------|-----|-----------|
|                      | High | Low | Cond.     |
| Mar. 18              | 45   | 29  | Cloudy    |
| Mar. 19              | 47   | 36  | M. Sunny  |
| Mar. 20              | 52   | 33  | M. Cloudy |
| Mar. 21              | 51   | 31  | P. Cloudy |
| Mar. 22              | 39   | 26  | M. Cloudy |
| Mar. 23              | 41   | 29  | Cloudy    |
| Mar. 24              | 44   | 27  | Cloudy    |

| Last Year, 2025 |      |     |           |
|-----------------|------|-----|-----------|
|                 | High | Low | Cond.     |
| Mar. 18         | 37°  | 28  | Cloudy    |
| Mar. 19         | 35   | 27  | Cloudy    |
| Mar. 20         | 48   | 26  | M. Cloudy |
| Mar. 21         | 49   | 31  | Cloudy    |
| Mar. 22         | 40   | 12  | M. Cloudy |
| Mar. 23         | 27   | 17  | Cloudy    |
| Mar. 24         | 46   | 17  | M. Sunny  |

Average Temps:  
H = 42° Low = 23°

Compiled by  
Dale Hausmann,  
WCCO's Staples area  
Weatherwatcher

## Public Notices

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Becker Township     | 9A |
| City of Staples     | 9A |
| City of Motley      | 9A |
| May Township        | 9A |
| Moran Township      | 9A |
| Thomastown Township | 9A |
| Todd Cty            | 9A |

## Obituaries

Barbara Mares  
Russell Nanik  
Duane Strack



## Driving on thin ice

The Cass County ice rescue vehicle near a patch of open water. See story, page 10a. (Submitted photo)

# Motley City Council reluctant to purchase out-of-state fire truck

By Dawn Timbs  
Staples World reporter

Motley Fire Chief Todd Judd will have to wait a bit longer before purchasing a new tanker truck for the fire department.

At the Motley City Council's regular meeting March 9, Judd reported he'd been in touch with RWC Enterprises, LLC, out of Portland Oregon, who had a new truck available for the price of \$148,788. However, they required a certified check or money wired to them in advance before the truck would be delivered.

Mayor Pat O'Regan said he had a problem with that, as did council members Steve Johnson and Nikki Bjerga, the latter of which noted that once money is wired to someone, it's gone.

Chief Judd said that he had found this company and reached out to them, not vice versa.

Johnson said he didn't want to ruffle any feathers, but he wondered why the fire department wouldn't do business with a company in Minnesota? Because there's not a new tanker truck in the state that's ready to go, Judd said.

City Clerk/Treasurer Tami Brotherton said that the sales invoice is confusing. In one place it states that payment is due before delivery, and in another that it's due upon delivery. Judd said he does not feel worried about their proposal.

Council member April Skeesick-Larson said she feels the company should meet the city half-way, that payment should not be required until the truck has been delivered. Instead of RWC Enterprises, LLC calling the shots, the city could turn the table on

them and be the ones to call the shots.

The department's current tanker was ordered in 1993. "It's had a long life," Chief Judd said.

Judd said that he's been working on ordering this truck for the past eight months. He was not looking forward to starting all over from square one.

Johnson noted that he's seen at least five or six trucks sitting on the lot of a dealership in Royalton. Judd answered that those trucks are all used ones.

In a roll call vote, the council unanimously decided against paying for the truck prior to delivery, as was requested by the company.

Johnson told Judd that he is 100 percent for the fire department, noting that he'd been their liaison for 10 years. "I want the truck," Johnson said, going on to say he'd like to pursue bids from Minnesota.

Bjerga said she felt the council needed to trust Judd on this, but also felt they needed to re-negotiate with the Oregon company.

In other matters the council:

- HELD a public hearing at which they adopted Ordinance No. 192 amending the City Code to update the City Fee Schedule. The Summary Publication was approved as well.

- HEARD from Gretta Trantina regarding the upcoming June Fest, sponsored by the Motley Community Events Organization (MCEO). Per the organization's request, the council approved a special event permit for the MCEO in regard to the upcoming June Fest. This included council approval for the following: waiving fees; a temporary liquor license; city employees to work activities on the clock; and

closing city streets for the fun run and parade. In addition, the council:

- APPROVED a \$3,000 donation from the city's 10 percent gambling funds to go toward June Fest.

- APPROVED Greg Weber as the Planning and Zoning Commission Chair, as appointed by the planning commission.

- HEARD monthly report from Fire Chief Todd Judd which included a total of 18 calls for February.

- APPROVED hiring an applicant for the firefighter position, pending the person's background check and physical.

- HEARD monthly report from Police Chief Al Yoder which included a total of 42 calls for February.

- HEARD monthly report from Public Works Supervisor Bruce Brotherton during which he noted the John Deere snowblower sold for \$770 and the plow truck's rear springs were replaced. He went on to say that materials for the splash pad at Converse Park have been delivered and that he hopes to have it completed by Memorial Day.

- HEARD from City Clerk/Treasurer Tami Brotherton who noted a Sourcewell Funding Opportunity. She also mentioned a training opportunity at Sourcewell on March 25 she wanted to attend and was given permission by the council to close the office that day, as the deputy clerk will be out of town that day.

- SCHEDULED a performance review for Bruce Brotherton after the regular council meeting April 13.

- APPROVED waiving the penalty fee for Rich's Seafoods.
- VOTED AGAINST an

ordinance amending the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment Provisions, as well as the Summary Publication of the ordinance.

- APPROVED unanimously the Planning Commission Membership and Appointment Policy, which said the commission shall consist of five (5) voting members, as determined by the city council.

- DISCUSSED amending the city code regarding THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) Retail Sales to conform with state law. Currently, Ordinance No. 205 regulates the sale of THC products in the City of Motley. However, Tami Brotherton reached out to the city's lawyer and was told that it does not appear that the City of Motley has the authority to limit retail registrations for lower-potency hemp edible retailer licenses., which means the city's ordinance would need to be amended. Tami Brotherton noted that Motley Discount Liquor, Orton's Holiday and Ten-Hi are licensed by the Office of Cannabis Management, but only Motley Discount Liquor has registered with the city.

- APPROVED donating \$500 to Horizon Health, an organization which serves seniors and family caregivers in Motley and the surrounding area. This comes out of the city's 10 percent funds.

- HEARD from Skeesick-Larson during the council forum regarding the newsletter which was put together by the city's deputy clerk Kristen Ziegler. "Awesome job," Skeesick-Larson said, adding, "Thanks."

- SET next regular council meeting for Monday, April 13, 4:30 p.m.



## Lions Club donates

The Staples Host Lions Club recently donated \$250 to Freshwater Education District for their 'Reading for the Future' program. Pictured, from left, Lisa Wick, Freshwater Education District; Staples Host Lion Blaine Quast; Eric Weber, Freshwater Education District. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)

## Motley area law enforcement

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

March 10 - Motley Police received a report from a Motley resident of his Samsung S-25 Plus cell phone, valued at \$900, that was missing when he was in Las Vegas. His 360 locations show the phone was at an address in Murrieta, Calif. Motley Police called the Riverside County Sheriff's Office and requested that they send a deputy to go check that address.

March 9 - Motley Police spoke with a resident at the 100 block of Eledredge St. E., Motley, regarding an ordinance violation of his garbage cans being out in

the street.

March 6 - Motley Police spoke with a resident at the 400 block of 3rd Ave. S., Motley, regarding their garbage cans being out on the streets all week. They were issued a warning for this ordinance violation.

March 9 - The MCSO received a report of a theft at the 1000 block of 360th St., Motley.

March 9 - A Morrison County deputy was dispatched to a vehicle on the road (VOR) at the 32000 block of Atlantic Rd., Cushing. Upon arrival, the deputy found the vehicle was unoccupied. Contact was made with the owner and no injuries were reported.



## Lions Club donates

The Staples Host Lions Club recently made several donations to area organizations. Above, Mary Kobliska, Staples '93 Lions member accepts a donation of \$500 from Staples Host Lion Blaine Quast. The money will go toward the '93 Lions' Easter Eggstravaganza. Below, Jeanne Rohr accepts a donation of \$500 from Lion Blaine Quast for the Staples Motley Artistic Hall of Fame, which is holding their induction ceremony Saturday, April 11, at Centennial Auditorium in Staples. (Staples World photos by Dawn Timbs)



# Updating area organizations

Editor's note: we are updating our community organizations list, please let us know if we are missing your group or if there is another contact person for your organization. Send updates to editor@staplesworld.com or call 218-894-1112.

All Veterans & Community Park, Huck Holst 218-296-2469

www.staplesmnveteranspark.org  
American Legion Auxiliary, Arlene Grover 218-894-2254  
American Legion Post, Motley, Alan Marshall 218-352-6757

Barn Quilts of Central Minnesota 218-894-2906  
www.barnquiltsmn.org  
Bicycle Club, Bob Hamann 218-894-3139  
www.lakesareabikeclub.com

Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Jace Carlson 218-330-9408  
E-mail: jhzjg99@gmail.com  
Care Ministries 218-894-1723

Central Minnesota Boys Choir, Sheila Edin 218-894-3576  
www.centralmnboyschoir.com  
Discover Staples Tourism, Renee Kroll 480-678-5926

Dollars for Scholars, Bryan Winkels 218-296-2425  
Engage! by Lakewood, Alicia Bauman 218-894-8215  
aliciabauman@lakewoodhealthsystem.com

England Prairie Pioneer Club, Shelly Dukowitz 218-296-2611

www.england-prairie.org  
FFA/FFA Alumni 218-894-5414  
Five Wings Arts Council, Miranda Lape 218-895-5660  
www.FWAC.org

Foster Grandparent Program, Jon Knopik 320-229-4593  
Friends of Staples Public Library, Gloria Palmer 218-894-1204

www.griver.org  
Girl Scouts, Nancy McMullen 320-247-4562 girlscoutslp.org

Historical Society, Tom Kajer 218-894-2906  
Lake Country ATV Riders, Paul & Jen DeBoer 218-640-5679

lakecountryatv.utv@gmail.com or lakecountryatvriders.com

Lakes Area Pregnancy Support, Lisa Boie 218-295-5200  
www.lakesareapregnancy.org

Lakewood Lake System Foundation  
Matthew Jensen 218-898-7960

matthewjensen@lakewoodhealthsystem.com  
Lamplighter Community Theatre, Justin Edin  
lctstaples@gmail.com or lctstaples.com

LEAP (Leadership, Engagement, Advocacy & Positiveness)

Tim Rice 218-296-0396 timrice513@gmail.com  
Lions Club Staples '93, Amy Leidenfrost 218-894-1935  
Lions Club Staples Host, Frank Leidenfrost 218-894-1935  
Living Legacy Gardens, Tammy Rick 218-296-2795  
trick@clcmn.edu

Meals on Wheels, LuAnn Braford 218-894-2556  
Ministerial Association, Carl Larson 218-894-1546  
Old Wadena Society oldwadenarendevous.org

Piecemakers of Staples Quilt Club, Lisa Kajer 218-894-2906

Red Hat Society, Judy Marte 218-894-2634  
Rotary Club, Jerel Nelsen 218-894-2550  
Senior Citizens, LuAnn Braford 218-296-2804

Snowmobile Club, Todd County Trail, Bernard Mumm 218-894-1835

Staples Amateur Baseball Assoc., Chris Etzler 218-296-1419

Staples Area Men's Chorus, Kevin Olsen 218-296-2430  
www.staplesmen.org

Staples Area Women's Chorus www.stapleswomen.org  
Staples Motley Area Community Foundation, Nick Trout

troutnicholas@gmail.com or staplesmotleyfoundation.org  
Staples Volunteer Fire Department, Cole Yungbauer 218-296-1292

Staples Motley Area Arts Council, Tim Rice 218-296-0396  
www.staplesmotleyarts.org

Staples Chamber of Commerce, Zoe Zuhlsdorf  
stapleschamber@gmail.com

Staples Motley Beyond Poverty, Gail Honek 218-894-1105  
staplesmotleybeyondpoverty.org

Staples Softball Association, Leo Carlson 218-296-2026  
Sustainable Farming Assoc. of Central MN  
844-922-5573 ext. 704  
central@sfa-mn.org or www.sfa-mn.org/central/

Wahoo Valley Area MDHA, Walt Wiese 218-640-5423

Whiskey Creek Film Festival, whiskeycreekfilmfestival.org

Women of Today, Nicky Anderson 507-381-0786



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continued support*

# Hilltop Kitchen receives funding

A community meeting will take place Saturday, March 28, 2026, 10 a.m. at the Hilltop Kitchen Dining Room, Eagle Bend to celebrate the Hilltop Square Regional Housing project (Eagle Bend, former Eagle Bend School) receiving State Housing funding.

Updates will be given on the 23-unit, 55-plus housing project including funding awarded, timelines, next steps, how you can help, what to expect in the future as well as an auditorium project.

The meeting is open to the public. This is a regional project in which

senior housing will be available to individuals/ couples age 55+.

Deanna Hemmesch from Central MN Housing Partnership will be available for questions, as well as clarification updates from committee leaders Jay Eckel and Verna Toenyan.

Contact Verna Toenyan, 320-815-4301 or Jay Eckel 218-639-7966 for questions in advance.

Sponsored by Initiative Foundation, TCCA, Blandin Boost Grant.

Sharon Notch  
Committee Member

# Staples Police report

Recent incidents on the Staples Police Report included:

March 1, Staples Police assisted with a vehicle fire on Airport Road. The vehicle was seen smoking from the front brakes area. Staples Fire Department watered down the brakes to cool them down.

March 2, Staples Police assisted with a parent whose child was destroying items in their apartment.

March 3, Staples Police assisted with a credit card fraud and stolen identity attempt. The subject's driver's license had been altered and used to attempt to make a purchase.

March 4, Staples Police assisted with a suicidal sub-

ject.

March 4, Staples Police assisted in an incident where a subject possibly had a weapon.

March 5, Staples Police assisted in shutting off water to a residence on 7th Street SE. It was reported that there were two feet of water in the basement. The City of Staples arrived to turn the water off.

March 6, Staples Police assisted with a report of a restraining order violation at a residence on Airport Road.

March 7, Staples Police received a report of wrong way drivers on Highway 10, with two vehicles heading west in the east bound lane out of Motley.

# Todd Cty Sheriff's report

Recent reports from the Todd County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) included:

**March 5, 2026, 5:02 p.m.:** TCSO received a 911 call reporting a structure fire at a residence in rural Aldrich, 20820 464th St. Todd County Dispatch paged Bertha and Hewitt Fire Dept. to respond to the fire.

A Todd County Deputy arrived shortly after the call, to find the east side of the residence engulfed in flames. Bertha and Hewitt Fire Dept. arrived on scene and extinguished the flames. Firemen were able to remove some dogs from the residence, however, several dogs perished in the fire. No other injuries were reported.

The fire is currently under investigation by the Minnesota State Fire Marshal's Office. TCSO was assisted on scene by the Bertha and Hewitt Fire Depts., Lakewood Health System Ambulance, Todd-Wadena Electric and the Staples Veterinary Clinic.

**Feb. 24, 2026, 7:52 a.m.:** TCSO responded to a two-vehicle accident on Cty Rd 10 near the City of Osakis.

Preliminary investigation indicated a vehicle trav-

eling eastbound on Cty Rd 10 lost control due to ice-covered roadways. The vehicle slid into the westbound lane and collided with a vehicle traveling westbound.

As a result of the collision, the westbound vehicle left the roadway and entered the north ditch of Cty Rd 10. The eastbound vehicle also left the roadway and overturned.

Both drivers were evaluated at the scene, reported no injuries and were released at the scene. Assisting were the Osakis Police Dept and Osakis Fire and Rescue.

**Feb. 22, 2026, 4 p.m.:** TCSO received a 911 call reporting a one vehicle roll over on Cty Rd 32, east of Cty Rd 1, rural Todd Cty. Kathleen Bogatzki, of rural Bertha, was traveling west on Cty Rd 32, when her vehicle left the roadway, struck a field approach and rolled. Bogatzki was operating a 2019 Jeep Renegade at the time of the crash and was transported to Astera hospital with injuries. TCSO was assisted on scene by Bertha Fire Dept, Bertha Ambulance, Astera Ambulance and Petrie's Towing.

# Todd County court

**MARCH 11**  
**Long Prairie Police**  
Jhoana Altamirano Montanez, Long Prairie. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100. Fee \$85. Child passenger restraint system-age 4 or older/ booster seat/safety. Fine \$50.  
Yurico Selene Hernandez Garcia, Long Prairie. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85.  
Lori A. Larson, Burnsville. Issuing worthless check. Continued. Unsupervised probation. Restitution \$30.  
Tristen Lorentz Molden, Fosston. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85.  
**MN Dept. Natural Resources**  
Dennis Harold Breitenfeldt, Long Prairie. Fish and Game-lend, borrow or transfer a license tag or seal. Fine \$200. Fee \$85. Big game-fail to register deer as required. Fine \$100.  
Taylor Lee Mattson, Otsego. ER Big Game-take deer with invalid bonus permit (before valid). Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
Cedric David Pichotta, Glencoe. Fish and Game-knowingly direct/allow/permit minor to illegally or violate fish and game. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
**MN State Patrol**  
Aaliyah Lynn Bellanger, Burnsville. Duty to drive with due care. Fine \$40 Fee \$85.  
Lobsang Yessid Collazo Rosario,

Clarissa. NO MN Drivers license. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
Dexter Joel Leer, Vadnais Heights. Speed 80/70. Fine \$40. Fee \$85.  
Khristopher Michael Lerol, Sabin. Hands free law. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.  
Amy Sue Moldenhauer, Sauk Centre. Hands free law. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.  
Michael Keith Osborne, Dickenson, ND. Speed 84/70. Fine \$50. Fee \$85.  
Hector Manuel Perez, West Fargo, ND. Speed 88/70. Fine 460, Fee \$85. No MN Drivers license. Fine \$100.  
Daniel Louiss Staffki, Grey Eagle. Expired registration. Fine \$30. Fee \$85.  
**Staples Police Dept.**  
Alexis Isabelle Hunter, Staples. Driver who is not owner must later produce proof of insurance if required. Fine \$200. Fee \$85.  
Angela Elizabeth Johnson, Detroit Lakes. Driving after suspension. Fine \$200. Fee \$85.  
**Todd County Sheriff**  
Olivia Josephine Avery, St. Cloud. Domestic assault-bodily harm. Continued. Local confinement (2 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 0 days credit for time served: 2 days). Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$50. Disorderly conduct. Dismissed.  
Katelynn Ann Berg, Staples. Liquor-consumption by persons

under 21. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
Sheldon Ray, Jr. Boyd, Isle. Liquor-consumption by persons under 21. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
Jaider Medina Batista, Long Prairie. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
Jose Roberto Nunez Cabral, Flensburg. Speed 66/60. Fine \$40. Fee \$85.  
Antony Joel Ortiz Carcamo, Murdock. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
Oscar Yovany Parias Dominguez, Perham. Speed 78/60. Fine \$60. Fee \$85.  
Jeremiah Lee Peterson, Wadena. Liquor-consumption by persons under 21. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
Eider J. Valdes Farina, Chicago, IL. Driving without a valid license for vehicle class or type. Fine \$100. Fee \$85.  
Nelson Mercedes Valdez Rodriguez, Long Prairie. Driving after revocation. Fine \$200. Fee \$85.  
**The following cases were heard before Judge Heidi L. Hovis Seventh District Court in Todd County March 2, 2026.**  
Jeanette Marie King, Eagle Bend. 3rd degree DWI-operate motor vehicle-alcohol concentration 0.08 within 2 hours. Sentenced. Local confinement (364 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 334

days for 4 yr credit for time served: 2 days). Supervised probation, 4 yr. Sentenced. Fine \$400. Fee \$75.  
**The following cases were heard before Judge Heidi L. Hovis Seventh District Court in Todd County March 3, 2026.**  
Kimorah Laulul Yobeck, Long Prairie. Domestic assault-intentionally inflicts/attempts to inflict bodily harm on another. Dismissed. Disorderly conduct. Local confinement (90 days, stay 0 yr mo 89 days for 1 yr credit for time served: 1 day). Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$100. Fee \$75. Liquor-consumption by persons under 21. Dismissed.  
Rayshawn Malik Frelix, Brainerd. Driving after revocation. Sentenced. Fine \$50. Fee \$75. Cannabis open package-possession in motor vehicle. Dismissed.  
Kami Kristine Fritz, Wadena. Drugs-5th degree-possess Schedule 1,2,3,4 or paraphernalia residual-not Cannabis/hemp. Sentenced. Local confinement (364 days, stay 319 days for 1 yr credit for time served: 4 days). Supervised probation, 1 yr. Fine \$250. Enter into and sign probation contract.  
Carl Raymond Peterson, Swanville. 3rd degree DWI-Refuse to submit to chemical test; breath or test refusal or failure. Local confinement (364 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 361 days for 4 yr credit for time served. Super-

vised probation, 4 yr. Fine \$500. Fee \$105. 4th degree DWI-operate motor vehicle under influence of alcohol. Dismissed.  
**The following cases were heard before Judge Heidi L. Hovis Seventh District Court in Todd County March 4, 2026.**  
Nathaniel Jon Kettner, Willmar. 3rd Degree DWI-operate motor vehicle-alcohol concentration .08 within 2 hours. Sentenced. Local confinement (364 days, stay 334 days for 4 yr credit for time served: 1 day). Supervised probation, 4 yr. Fine \$50. Fee \$455.  
Corbin John Pierce, Eagle Bend. Theft-take/use/transfer movable property-no consent. Dismissed.

Theft. Continued. Unsupervised probation.  
David William Sauer, Burtrum. Criminal vehicular operation-bodily harm-under influence alcohol. Dismissed. DWI4-operate motor vehicle under influence of alcohol. Dismissed. Traffic collision-driver involved fails to stop for collision-driven or attended vehicle. Dismissed. Criminal vehicular operation-bodily harm-alcohol concentration .08 or more within 2 hours of driving. Local confinement (364 days, stay 0 yr 0 mo 344 days for 4 yr credit for time served: 5 days). Supervised probation, 4 yr. Fine \$400. Fee \$75.

Staples World

Advertising

(classified and display),

copy, public notices,

letters to the editor, etc.:

DEADLINE

Friday noon

## Looking back

too late to take the train to Staples. They arrived here by bus Tuesday afternoon. Bob Martin was expected to arrive in Staples Wednesday to be with his mother.

**50 YEARS Ago - 1976**  
• March 11, 1976 - A break-in at the Lincoln Model Nongraded school early Wednesday morning, March 3, resulted in an undetermined amount of money being stolen and some vandalism done within the building.  
H. Michael Carr, Staples Chief of Police, reported that it is believed that the break-in took place between 1 - 5 a.m. that day. Entry was gained by breaking the pad-lock on the west door.  
• March 11, 1976 - The Motley Fire Department was called out on two separate occasions during the past weeks.  
Tuesday, Feb. 24, the Motley Firemen were called to a chimney fire at the Peter Mares residence at Lincoln. That same day, they answered the alarm to Denny's Body Shop in Motley.

• March 11, 1976 - The Motley Junior High Team participated in the Aitkin Junior High tournament Feb. 23.  
Terri Trout, storyteller, and Elaine Johnson, Serious Prose interpreter, received blue ribbons for their participation.  
• March 11, 1976 - Twelve members of Coach Tom Wolhowe's Cardinal Basketball team have earned letters in the sport for the 1975-76 season, it was reported. They include Dave Blanchard, Tom Backberg, Mark Redemske, Paul Flack, Brian Bates, Steve Grossman, Mark Matanich, Greg Peterson, Steve Randgaard, Bob Nurnberger, Bruce Baustian and Bruce Crocker.  
• March 11, 1976 - Pillager School students were involved in the school's first timber harvest last Friday as an area logger demonstrated quality forest management in action.  
Host for the harvest was the Pillager School's Forest located east on Cass County Road 34, south on 49th Ave. and down the logging trail.  
Local logger, Rod Enberg, owner of Enberg Logging Supply of Motley, donated his services for the harvest and will donate the revenue from the timber back to the school. The money will fund the school forestry program taught by Karl Kaufmann.

**25 YEARS Ago - 2001**  
• March 15, 2001 - Don Droubie of Staples was appointed as the new member of the Staples Motley school board at a special meeting Monday evening.  
Droubie will be sworn in at the regular meeting of the board March 19. He will fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of long-time board member Wayne Haglin whose term expires Dec. 31, 2001.  
• March 15, 2001 - Motley Staples Middle School choir members participated in the "World's Largest Concert" held March 9 via satel-



## Mystery photo

Hello readers. This week's archive photo is from 1976. 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.

lite in the music room.  
Over 60 MSMS students, under the direction of Mrs. Rohr, sang along with millions of other participants joining voices around the world for the annual event.  
Sixty million people sang in last year's event, hosted by National Music Educators. This is the fourth year that MSMS students have been involved in the event. This year's them was "Music - Pass it On." Winners of the music T-shirts were David Gast, Jessica Pogreba and Justin Edin.  
• March 15, 2001 - Local Girl Scouts took delivery of 709 cases of cookies March 7. That's 8,508 boxes sold this year compare to last year's total of 4,713 boxes. On hand to help sort the cases were Scouts Beth Hoyt, Brianne Hove and Sam Rosenthal; Leader Cathy Hove, Cookie Coordinator Julie Rosenthal; Community Coordinator Corlie Hoyt.  
• March 15, 2001 - The Guthrie on Tour production of "Molly Sweeney" will be presented at Centennial Auditorium in Staples at

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 10.  
"The Guthrie Theater has a prestigious national reputation and to have them approach us to present a theater production is outstanding," said Ken Scarbrough, superintendent of Staples Motley Schools and managing director of Centennial Auditorium. Scarbrough is also a member of the Staples Motley CAPP (Comprehensive Arts Planning Program) committee, presenters of the Guthrie on Tour production.

**10 YEARS Ago - 2016**  
• March 17, 2016 - Lynn (Kelly) Lenk of rural Staples, who comes from a long line of Irish descendants, has been dubbed a leprechaun by many who share her heritage. She looks forward to celebrating St. Patrick's Day March 17, and has been busy making Irish brown bread and preparing the traditional corned beef and cabbage meal her family enjoys each year. Her St. Paddy's Day beverage of choice? "Green beer, of course."



## Mystery solved

Last week's mystery photo published in the Sept. 16, 1976 edition of the Staples World featured Flight winners in the Terrace Golf Club's tournament. Back row, from left: Ed Bounds, champion second flight; Frank Odell, champion seventh flight; Carl LaBonte, champion sixth flight; Lloyd Palmer, champion fifth flight. In front: Butch Nyhus, champion fourth flight. Missing from the picture: third flight winner Gordon Stolhanske.

# School referendum plan and tax impact

By Shane Tappe, Superintendent of Staples-Motley Schools

As superintendent, one of my most important responsibilities is to keep the school community informed about the district’s long-term, big-picture plans to continue improving the education we offer our Staples-Motley students.

On Tuesday, April 14, residents will vote on a \$42.5 million bond referendum designed to improve safety, modernize learning spaces, and expand career and technical education opportunities for students across our district. The plan reflects months of community input and careful financial planning, which helped us narrow our focus to the most pressing facilities needs.

If approved, the plan would invest in safer school entrances, improved security systems, and better traffic flow for student pick-up and drop-off. It would modernize classrooms that were built decades ago. It would also allow us to relocate fifth-grade students back to the elementary school, placing them in a learning environment better suited to their age while creating

space at the middle/high school for growing academic programs.

In addition, the plan would address aging infrastructure that has reached the end of its useful life, including roofs, windows, doors, and restrooms that no longer meet accessibility standards. It would also expand and improve Career and Technical Education spaces so students can train with industry-standard equipment in fields like manufacturing, construction, culinary arts, and nursing. Updates to activity spaces like the Centennial Auditorium, football field, and track are also included, making the experience better for athletes, performers, and audiences.

With all of these proposed improvements, I consistently have Staples-Motley residents ask how this plan would impact taxes. The answer is straightforward: if approved, the school district’s portion of the property tax rate would not change.

Through careful financial planning, new debt from the referendum would replace existing debt as it is paid off. This phased approach keeps the tax rate

stable and unchanged for taxpayers while allowing the district to make significant improvements in our schools that will enhance education and better set our students up for success. Though the question on the ballot will refer to a tax increase due to state law about the wording, if approved by voters, the school district’s tax rate will not change.

This plan represents a responsible investment in our students, our schools, and our community, balancing educational needs with financial stewardship. The district is committed to sharing clear, accurate information and answering questions so residents can make an informed decision.

Additional details about the plan, the tax impact, and voting information can be found at SpreadingOurWings.org, along with answers to frequently asked questions.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more and for your continued engagement in the future of Staples-Motley Schools. Together, we can ensure our facilities serve students and our community well for years to come. Go Cardinals!

Quote of the week

“Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”  
— Theodore Roosevelt

# Check facts when using artificial intelligence

By Bryan Welk  
Cass County Sheriff

We were recently asked about covering the use of artificial intelligence (AI), including the risks and safety concerns associated with it, particularly from a law enforcement and public safety perspective. Since this is relatively new technology, we are continuing to learn more about its uses and limitations, just like you are. We will break down the basics of AI, how it can be used safely and what to watch out for.

## The Basics of Artificial Intelligence

*What It Is, What to Watch Out For, and How to Use It Safely*

Artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer a futuristic idea—it’s already part of everyday life. From voice assistants and recommendation systems to chatbots and image generators, AI tools are becoming increasingly common. While AI can be incredibly useful, it’s important to understand its basics, limitations, and how to use it responsibly.

Artificial intelligence refers to computer systems designed to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. These tasks include understanding language, recognizing images, solving problems, and making predictions based on data.

Most AI systems today are narrow AI, meaning they are trained to perform specific tasks rather than think like a human. For example:

- A chatbot can answer questions or write text.
- A recommendation system suggests videos or products.

ucts.

- Image tools can recognize faces or generate artwork.

AI does not have emotions, consciousness, or true understanding—it works by identifying patterns in large amounts of data.

AI is used across many fields, including:

- Education: tutoring tools, writing assistance, and language translation
- Healthcare: medical image analysis and scheduling support
- Business: customer service chatbots and data analysis
- Entertainment: music, video, and content recommendations

When used correctly, AI can save time, improve productivity, and help people learn and create more efficiently.

### What to Be Aware Of When Using AI

Despite its benefits, AI also comes with important risks and limitations:

1. AI Can Be Wrong - AI systems can generate confident-sounding but incorrect information. This is especially risky when using AI for research, health advice, or legal topics. Always verify important information with reliable sources.
2. Bias in AI - AI learns from human-created data, which means it can reflect existing biases or unfair assumptions. This can affect hiring tools, facial recognition, or content moderation if not carefully managed.
3. Privacy Concerns - Some AI tools collect and store user data. Sharing sensitive personal information—such as passwords, financial details, or private conversations—can put

# Fischbach working on health care issues

By U.S. Representative Michelle Fischbach

Last fall, I supported legislation that created a Rural Health Transformation Program. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid recently announced that Minnesota would receive \$193 million from this program in 2026. This investment is a helping hand for rural clinics and hospitals that often struggle with limited staff or aging equipment. In plain terms, the money will be used to help hire and train more doctors and nurses to work in rural areas, upgrade medical equipment, and expand “telehealth” services, which let patients see specialists via video visits from their own homes. By focusing on everyday health needs like heart care and diabetes, this funding is all about making healthcare more reliable, modern, and convenient for everyone in Greater Minnesota, ensuring that your zip code doesn’t determine the quality of your care.

I recently had the opportunity to meet with RiverView Health to discuss how this funding is especially impactful for community-owned, not-for-profit health systems, like it, that are facing financial strain. I look forward to ensuring

this funding helps organizations like RiverView Health.

### Health Insurance CEOs

I joined my colleagues on the House Ways & Means Committee for a hearing with the CEOs of the nation’s largest health insurance companies to address a growing crisis: why health care costs are soaring while the quality of coverage declines. We looked into the few companies that own everything from the insurance plan to the pharmacy and the doctor’s office, and how they use that power to raise costs.

I also had the opportunity to ask Cigna Group CEO David Cordani about rural EMS providers in my district who are struggling with compensation issues. It is unacceptable that our first responders, who cover hundreds of square miles in rural communities, are operating on razor-thin margins due to unfair reimbursement rates. I specifically asked Mr. Cordani why Cigna is effectively only paying for half of an EMS response by refusing to reimburse the cost of driving to a scene and only paying once a patient is in the ambulance. I will continue to follow up with Cigna and other insurance companies

to ensure fair pay for our rural EMS.

### Healthcare For All Act

Last month, I joined my House colleagues in passing the Lower Health Care Premiums for all Americans Act to reduce the cost of health insurance. Instead of using temporary fixes, this bill tries to fix the root causes of why insurance is so expensive. For example, it targets the “middlemen” in the drug industry to ensure the discounts they get are actually passed on to you, and it provides direct funding to help stabilize the insurance market so prices don’t spike every year.

The most helpful part of this plan for many people is that it gives you more power and more choices. If you work for a small business or work for yourself, you’d be allowed to join together with others to get the same “bulk discount” rates that giant corporations get. It also lets your boss give you tax-free money to pick out your own health plan, rather than being stuck with whatever one plan the company offers. By cutting through red tape and encouraging more competition between insurance companies, the bill aims to save the average person about 12 percent on their premiums.

# First step to new Farm Bill

By Kalee Olson  
Senior Policy Manager  
Center For Rural Affairs

On March 5, the House Committee on Agriculture passed the Farm, Food, and National Security Act, taking the first step in yet another attempt to pass new farm bill legislation.

The bill was approved on a vote of 34-17, with all Republican members joined by seven Democrats to pass the bill. The vote followed a two-day mark-up, in which committee members were allowed to present amendments and voice their support or opposition prior to the final vote.

While a significant first step, the fate of a new farm

bill remains uncertain. While the House committee has taken action, the Senate Committee on Agriculture has yet to release and pass its own version of the bill. Even if these bills survive their respective full floor votes, the two versions must be conferenced and approved yet again by the full House and Senate before proceeding to the president’s desk.

Agricultural producers and rural communities have been waiting on a new farm bill since the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 first expired on Sept. 30, 2023. Since then, the 2025 budget reconciliation package (aka the One Big Beautiful Bill Act) has complicated the relationship between lawmakers who traditionally show up to negotiate on the farm bill. Tensions remain particularly high

given OBBBA’s investment in crop insurance subsidies over cuts to nutrition programs like SNAP.

The current farm bill extension will expire on Sept. 30. While six months in length, this window will become increasingly slim as members of Congress turn their attention to the November general election and campaigning back home.

As lawmakers weigh their options in the year ahead, it’s important they hear from their constituents about issues that affect rural communities. You can find contact information for your members of Congress here. If you would like assistance contacting your U.S. representative or senators to demonstrate your support for rural communities, please email me at [kaleeo@cfra.org](mailto:kaleeo@cfra.org).

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**The deadline is 12 noon, Friday.** Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily represent the views of this newspaper.  
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# Tips for parents to make reading fun

In the spirit of National Reading Month, experts from Reading Eggs – the national sponsor of Read Across America (RAA) – is sharing great ideas for parents to celebrate reading with their child.

Literacy expert Sheila Robitaille, who leads professional development for Reading Eggs has these fun ideas for parents:

- Create a fun space “for reading only.” Use pillows, blankets, treats, etc. to make it cozy and inviting.
- Let kids be the teacher - have them read to you as if they are the teacher and ask you questions about what they read.
- Connect reading to a fun activity - do an art project, cook food, take a nature walk or do something fun related to what was read in the story.
- Turn on the subtitles - have subtitles running during kids’ favorite TV shows or movies. They will tend to watch the text and naturally read along.

“Reading is fun, but kids love it when Mom or Dad make it a game,” said Robitaille. “One of my favorite ways to do this is to let the child be the teacher. A little role-reversal gives them a chance to show off their skills. The hard part is not correcting them, just get into the play-acting of being a kid and enjoy the moment.”

# Cardinal speech wins Walker tournament

On March 7, the Staples-Motley Speech team competed in the 54th Chuck Beckman Memorial Tournament in Walker. The Staples-Motley team won first place in the tournament, and with it \$250 to donate to a charity of the team's choice.

The team win was built off of plenty of individual success. In the category of Creative Expression, Maddock Harvey placed fourth and Joshua Cushing received a ribbon. In Discussion, Bella Hines placed fourth.

In Drama, Brynn Bestland placed second in the honor final and Raina Mikhaeil received a ribbon.

Matthew Jewison and Christopher Mikhaeil placed fifth in the Duo honor final. In Extemporaneous Reading, Meredith Hoemberg placed sixth and Ava Davis placed third in the honor final. Angie Paklonsky placed seventh in the Extemporaneous Speaking honor final. In the category of Great Speeches, Tristan Rendon placed first and Raina Mikhaeil placed second.

Caleb Bestland placed sixth in Humor.

In Original Oratory, Annabella Hurtig placed third in the honor final and Hailey Richardt received a ribbon. In Poetry, Brynn Bestland placed first, Addie Brenny placed third, and Nadia Santos placed sixth in the honor final. In the category of Prose, Tristan Rendon placed first in the honor final and Lexi Ann received a ribbon. In Storytelling, Maddock Harvey placed first and Jackson Bitzer placed third in the honor final.



## Speech tournament champions

The Staples-Motley team who won the Walker tournament on March 7, back row left to right: Matthew Jewison, Alex Tkalcich, Addie Brenny, Maddock Harvey; Next row: Hayden Anderson, Jackson Bitzer, Meredith Hoemberg, Jackson Alexander, Lexi Ann; Next row: Angie Paklonsky, Landon Zeigler, Kai Bestland, Lydia

Tkalcich, Nadia Santos, Bella Hines, Ava Davis, Hailey Richardt; Next row: Joshua Cushing, Jackson Bitzer, Annabella Hurtig, Caleb Bestland, Tristan Rendon, Molly Hoemberg; Front row: Charlotte Aldrich, Christopher Mikhaeil, Raina Mikhaeil, Brynn Bestland, Sadye Anderson, Head Coach Kip Hines. (Submitted photo)



## I Love to Read month celebrated at Staples Library

The Staples Public Library celebrated "I Love to Read" month during the February Storytime program. Sign up to attend Storytime by calling the library, 218-894-1401. Above, left to right: Olivia Vankek, Gwen Vankek, Farryn-ae Fritz, Alida Hanson, Carson Sadlo, Elana Runge. (Submitted photo)



## Introduction to Staples Library

Owen and Lindy Thompson recently visited the Staples Public Library, receiving a free hard cover book and a burp bib while picking out Owen's first book. Introduce your little one at the library and check out all the offerings.

Call 218-894-1401 to sign your child up for the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program. Sponsored by the Staples Friends of the Library. (Submitted photo)

## Mark Your Calendar

### Mar. 19

**'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>

### Mar. 20

**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.

### Mar. 22

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

### Mar. 24

**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.

### Mar. 28

**FREE COMMUNITY BREAKFAST** Saturday, Mar. 28, 9 - 10:30 a.m., at Motley United Methodist Church, 847 3rd Ave. S., Motley.

## Menu

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

**LOCATED AT: Staples High Rise, 615 4th St. NE, Staples. Seniors welcome to dine-in at 11:00 a.m., with meal reservations.**

**Staples 218-979-4118**  
**March 23 - 27**

**MONDAY** - Spaghetti/meat sauce, green beans, hot spiced apples, dinner roll, marg., vanilla wafers, 1% milk.

**TUESDAY** - Herb baked chicken, rice pilaf, peas/carrots, dinner roll, marg., chocolate pudding/topping, 1% milk.

**WEDNESDAY** - Smothered chopped steak, baked potato, sliced carrots, applesauce cup, marg., sour cream, wheat bread, 1% milk.

**THURSDAY** - Scalloped potatoes/ham, whole kernel corn, tropical fruit cup, wheat bread, marg., peanut butter cookie, 1% milk.

**FRIDAY** - Cheese/egg bake, diced herb potatoes, peas/carrots, dinner roll, marg., chocolate chip cookie, 1% milk.

**March 30 - 31**

**MONDAY** - Country fried chicken, cream gravy, mashed potatoes, green peas, wheat bread, marg., sugar cookie, 1% milk.

**TUESDAY** - Beef stew, sliced carrots, apple dump cake, marg., biscuit, 1% milk.

wk13



## Speech wear

Event champions Brynn Bestland, Maddock Harvey and Tristan Rendon received shirts as well as medals. (Submitted photo)

## Easter Egg Hunt

AT STAPLES ALLIANCE CHURCH

Saturday, April 5th 9-11 AM

Family Fun Event for All Ages

Bounce house, Face Painting, Crafts, Food, Program

### WADENA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE - PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

**Thursday, March 19, 2026, 6 p.m.**

**Sebeka Senior Citizen Center**  
104 MN Ave. E., Sebeka, MN

Wadena County is hosting a public input meeting with regard to the Wadena County Comprehensive Plan Update.

The Comprehensive Plan is the road map and plan for change, to provide for growth and development in the County and is the legal basis for the Land Use Control Ordinances adopted by the County.

Key items to consider are: Land Use, Economic Development, Transportation, County Facilities and Services and Parks and Recreation.

For more information, check the Wadena County Website at:

[www.co.wadena.mn.us](http://www.co.wadena.mn.us)

and scroll down to the **News Flash** or the **County Calendar** and click on the date.

w12-13c

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Leader Area Lions Club

**Fundraiser Breakfast**  
**Sun., March 22**

Leader Community Center, Hwy. 64, Leader

Serving **10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**Pancakes, sausages, scrambled eggs, milk, juice, coffee**

**\*FREE WILL OFFERING BENEFITS THE MOTLEY FOOD SHELF\***

## Hello World

ONLINE BIRTHS REMOVED  
AT THE REQUEST OF LAKEWOOD  
HEALTH SYSTEM.

## Student Achievements

**GWENDLYNNE BROWN**, Pil-lager, recently graduated from South Dakota State University with an Associate of Science degree from SDSU's College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences.

## Barbara Mares

Barbara Mares, 74, of Staples, passed away March 5, 2026.

Services were held on March 9 2026.

Arrangements were by Brenny Family Funeral Chapel, Baxter.

w13c A00006B2026MR18

## Obituaries

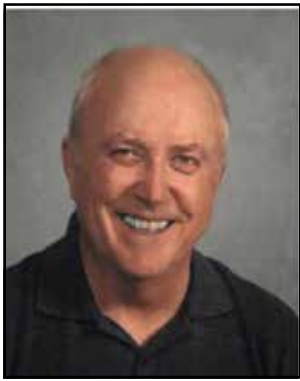
### Duane Strack

Duane A. Strack, 83, of Motley, formerly of St. Cloud and Lake Alexander, passed away March 9, 2026.

A celebration of life was held March 17 at the Brenny Family Funeral Chapel, Staples.

Duane was born January 28, 1943, to Sylvester and Veronica (Dockendorf) Strack in St. Cloud. He lived on a farm in Stearns County, raised and educated in St. Cloud and was a retired Municipal Sales Representative for DeZurk in Sartell. Duane built a cabin in 1969 and in 2000 a retirement home on Lake Alexander which he sold in 2015 when he moved to Motley. Duane managed 40 acres of wild-life area for upland game habitat in western Morrison County, was Chief Executive Officer for Amasa, Inc., past secretary for Brainerd Lakes Audubon Society, past officer for the Motley Area Historical Society and the Staples/Motley Area Arts Council and member of England Prairie Pioneer Club in Verndale.

Duane was a loyal volunteer at the Living Legacy



Gardens in Staples for the past 22 years and was involved in resetting the brick pathways to make it easier to maneuver a stroller or wheelchair through the gardens, help build a pergola and butterfly house, fundraising, wreath making in the fall to name a few of his activities. Duane enjoyed nature walks and pickleball.

He is survived by one brother Elmer Strack, Lebanon, MO and five nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by one brother, Marvin in 2007.

w13c A00006B2026MA18

## Russell Nanik

Russell Nanik, 87, of Staples, passed away March 6, 2026.

Funeral services were held March 14 at Karvonen Funeral Home in Wadena

Russell was laid to rest at West Lyons Cemetery, Verndale

Visit [www.karvonen-funeralhome.com](http://www.karvonen-funeralhome.com) to leave memorials and condolences on Russell's Tribute Wall.

Arrangements were by Karvonen Funeral & Cremation Service of Wadena

w13c A00006B2026MR18

## 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 a.m.  
Sabbath School.....10:45 a.m.

#### Thomastown Covenant

15940 251st Ave., Staples.....218-894-3923  
Pastor Scott Jorgenson  
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.  
WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH.....6:30 p.m.

#### Trinity Lutheran

1000 4th St., NE, Staples.....218-894-2372  
Pastor Vicar Paul Koehler  
Sunday Divine Service .....9:00 a.m.  
Sunday School and Bible Class...10:30 a.m.

#### United Methodist

310 5th St. NE, Staples.....218-894-2248  
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.  
(Nursery Available for Sunday Worship)

### Aldrich

#### Balsamlund Lutheran

19550 490th Street, Aldrich  
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  
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

#### St. Helen's Episcopal Church

22 Dayton Ave. SW, Wadena, MN  
218-631-3928  
Sunday Worship.....10:00 a.m.

#### St. Ann's Catholic Church

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

## "No Spiritual Lone Wolves"

Submitted by Pastor Roy Miles, Staples Assembly Of God

### God's Word For Today

We live in a society that is increasingly independent. Everyone wants to make his or her own decisions. If individuals don't agree with rules or laws, they simply ignore them. "It's my life, I'll do what I want," people cry.

Independence is good to a point, but not in our spiritual lives.

"Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in Me." (John 15:4).

In a spiritual sense, sometimes we try to handle life alone. We try to call the shots instead of seeking God's direction. Then we walk in our own way instead of God's way.

But being a Christian means working in tandem with the Holy Spirit. As we imitate Jesus and focus on staying connected with Him, we get a sense of being part of God's team. That's when fruit begins to grow.

*Thought for the day: How can you stay connected to the "vine"?*

Levi and Justine Brown

### More Escape Room participants

The Underwater Escape Room at the Staples Public Library was completed Feb. 28. The Escape Room was sponsored by the Staples Friends of the Library. (Submitted photos)



Front: Lisa Boie, Eva Joy Lund; back: Deb Schreiner, Roxanne Zerwas

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## DEADLINE

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

**For the Staples World**



## Cardinals win section overtime thriller, fall in championship game

By Mark Anderson  
Managing Editor

The Staples-Motley boys basketball team lost a double digit lead in the second half of the Section 8AA finals, to fall short of going to state.

To reach the championship game, the Cardinals emerged in the second overtime of their semifinal game against Osakis.

“We fell short of our goal to win the section championship,” said Coach Zack Qual, “but I’m so proud of the effort we gave on a daily basis to accomplish that goal.”

The road to the section championship started on March 11 at Concordia College in Moorhead. Osakis came in with an athletic, talented team, but Staples-Motley was able to match them and eventually pulled away.

Noah Larson dominated the paint with 15 rebounds while Avandre Brandt and Eli Rutten were able to get the shots they wanted. Brandt thrived driving to the basket, scoring on six of 12 shots inside the arc and added two three pointers. Rutten only took nine shots, but made his points at the free throw line, connecting on 12 of 13 from the line. Josiah Burton took advantage of his inside position and made five out of 10 shots in the game.

As a team, the Cardinals made 24 of 30 free throws, including a bunch at the end of the game to pull away in the second overtime.

### Section finals

Staples-Motley traveled to Concordia again on March 13 to face Perham for the section title.

The Cardinals started out in the lead thanks to Conner Kuhns getting hot early. He hit three 3-pointers to score nine of the first 11 points for the Cardinals. Later, he made three free throws after getting fouled while shooting a three, to put the team up 22-18. Burton and Rutten scored baskets to push the lead to 26-20, before Larson pulled down an offensive rebound and put it back in for a 31-25 lead. Larson preserved that score by blocking a shot right before halftime.

Brandt and Kuhns pushed the lead to 11 points in the second half, with Brandt scoring two inside baskets and a deep three-pointer. Kuhns made another long shot and the Cardinals were starting to take control of the game.

But Perham found their outside touch and made three 3-pointers in succession while the Staples-Motley scoring started to slow down.



### Tough going in the paint

Eli Rutten gets hit as he goes to the basket against Osakis. He made 12 free throws in the game after going to the line 14 times. (Photos by Staples-Motley School District)

With eight minutes left, Perham retook the lead. For the next five minutes, the teams traded leads and traded ties. Once again Perham hit two long shots while the Cardinals had a couple of misses and they found themselves down by five with two minutes left.

Rutten pushed into the lane to earn two free throws and made two late three pointers, but Perham kept hitting their free throws to keep the final score a five point margin, 66-61.

Staples-Motley again shot well from the free throw line, hitting 11 of 14, with Kuhns making five and Rutten four, but they didn’t get to the line as often as they would have liked. The Perham defense was concentrating on stopping Rutten’s three point shots, but he still didn’t commit a turnover in the game.

“This was a wonderful season with a wonderful group of young men,” said Qual. “I’ll cherish the memories from this season forever. These seniors have made a lasting impression on me and my family and I just know they’ll go on to do incredible things in the future.”

The four senior start-

ers on the team are Rutten, Brandt, Larson and Kuhns, with Peyton Jares another senior starter who got injured during the season.

“This group really changed the culture of Cardinal basketball and they will be looked back on as the foundation of a program that turned it back around,” said Qual. “I’m proud to be their coach, I’m proud to be a Staples-Motley Cardinal, and I love each and every last one of them.”

### Team results

**Section 8AA Semifinal**  
**Staples-Motley 75, Osakis 69 (2 OT)**

Scoring: Avandre Brandt 23, Eli Rutten 22, Josiah Burton 10, Noah Larson 9, Carter Sarbaum 7, Conner Kuhns 4

Rebounds: Larson 15, Burton 7, Rutten 5, Kuhns 4, Brandt 2, Sarbaum 2

Assists: Kuhns 5, Rutten 5, Larson 3, Brandt 3, Burton 2

Steals: Rutten 7

**Section 8AA Chapionship**  
**Staples-Motley 61, Perham 65**

Scoring: Kuhns 17, Rutten 17, Brandt 15, Larson 7, Sarbaum 3, Burton 2

Rebounds: Larson 10, Burton 6, Rutten 3, Brandt 3

Assists: Kuhns 4, Rutten 3, Larson 2, Burton 1, Sarbaum 1

Steals: Larson 4, Kuhns 2, Rutten 2, Brandt 1



Avandre Brandt dunks in the game against Osakis as Conner Kuhns cheers him on. (Photos by Staples-Motley School District)



Conner Kuhns



**107**  
**SERVICES & EMPLOYMENT**  
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**Help Wanted**  
NOW HIRING: •CDL driver w/mechanical knowledge, FT, Motley location •Store Manager, FT, Brainerd location •Warehouse laborer, Brainerd location, Seasonal. Apply in Motley or call 800-982-5337. 12tfc

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**FOR SALE:**  
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**Parcel for Sale**  
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with 3 other siblings. 1/4 parcel 01-0035600. Contact daughter, Christine, POA, 218-639-3173. 51tfp

**GARAGE SALES**  
**701**  
STAPLES ASSEMBLY OF GOD YOUTH: NOW accepting donations for upcoming missions garage sale. Call Kathy at 218-296-1647 for drop off or pick up. 8-17c

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Staples, MN 56479  
Payment must accompany the order.  
Use form below or click on [www.staplesworld.com](http://www.staplesworld.com)  
**Deadline: Friday at Noon**

**Staples World**  
The Staples World office,  
207 4th St. NE, Staples  
open every weekday, 8 a.m. - noon.  
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Regular advertising and copy  
deadline is Friday, noon.  
The office closes at noon on Friday.  


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

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**NOTICE  
BECKER TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF APPEAL  
AND EQUALIZATION  
MEETING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting for the Township of Becker, Cass County, Minnesota shall meet on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the Becker Township Hall.

The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether taxable property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor, and to determine whether corrections need to be made.

Mary Fitcher, Clerk  
Becker Township

13pnc

**(ABBREVIATED  
ADVERTISEMENT)**

**TODD COUNTY  
2026 GRAVEL  
SURFACING PROJECT  
Closing date:  
March 31, 2026**

Sealed bids will be accepted until 10:00 a.m., March 31, 2026 by the Todd County Public Works Director/Engineer and County Auditor/Treasurer at 44 Riverside Drive, Long Prairie, Minnesota 56347 for the following construction projects:

CP 26:88  
CP 26:93

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

Loren Fellbaum  
Todd County Public Works  
Director/Engineer

11-13pnc

**PUBLIC  
NOTICES:  
Your Right  
to Know**

**MINUTES OF THE  
MEETING OF THE TODD  
COUNTY BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS HELD  
FEB. 3, 2026**

**Call to Order**

The Todd County Board of Commissioners met in the Commissioner's Board Room in the City of Long Prairie, MN on the 3rd day of February, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Byers. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. All Commissioners were present.

**Approval of Agenda**

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

**Consent Agenda**

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

To approve the Todd County Board of Commissioner's Meeting Minutes for January 21, 2026 as presented.

Approve the resignation of Katherine Pittman, Administrative Specialist, effective February 13th, 2026.

To approve the hire of Morgan Hickerson to fill the open Social Worker position. Grade 1/9 Step C \$35.10. Start Date: TBD.

**Commissioners**

The County Board recognized staff for their years of service awards from 4th quarter 2025.

**Auditor-Treasurer**

On motion by Noska and second by Denny, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous rollcall vote: To approve the Commissioner Warrants number (ACH) 404330 through 404349 in the amount of \$64,416.87 and (Regular) 59545 through 59571 in the amount of \$62,887.44 for a total of \$127,304.31.

On motion by Becker and second by Neumann, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous rollcall vote: To approve the Health & Human Services Commissioner Warrants number (ACH) 807250 through 807275 and (Regular) 713813 through 713847 for a total of \$53,174.56

On motion by Denny and second by Becker, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous rollcall vote: To approve the Health & Human Services Warrants number (ACH) 601914 through 601920 and (Regular) 518799 through 518818 for a total amount of \$118,199.51.

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

**APPROVAL OF ALL COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTAL CHANGE  
& PETTY CASH FUNDS**

WHEREAS, there are multiple petty cash & change funds in various departments across the county, and;  
WHEREAS, State Auditing Standards & Statutes require board approval when modifications are requested and to annually confirm/reaffirm all county departmental change & petty cash funds,

**NOTICE  
CITY OF MOTLEY  
SUMMARY  
PUBLICATON OF  
ORDINANCE NO. 192**

On March 9, 2026, the City Council of the City of Motley, Minnesota, adopted Ordinance No. 192 amending the City Code to update the City Fee Schedule.

The ordinance revises and updates fees charged by the City for permits, licenses, services, and other municipal activities. The updated fee schedule establishes the amounts charged by the City for various services and administrative functions.

The full ordinance and fee schedule are available for inspection at City Hall during regular business hours at 316 Highway 10 South, Motley. Copies will also be available on the City's website at Cityofmotley.com.

This summary is published pursuant to Minnesota law authorizing summary publication of ordinances.

**BY ORDER OF  
THE CITY COUNCIL**

Tami Brotherton,  
Motley City Clerk

Published in the City's  
official newspaper on  
March 18, 2026.

13pnc

**(ABBREVIATED  
ADVERTISEMENT)**

**TODD COUNTY  
HIGHWAY SAFETY  
IMPROVEMENT  
PROJECTS  
Closing date:  
March 31, 2026**

Sealed bids will be accepted until 10:00 a.m., March 31, 2026 by the Todd County Public Works Director/Engineer and County Auditor/Treasurer at 44 Riverside Drive, Long Prairie, Minnesota 56347 for the following construction projects:

SP 077-070-017  
6-Inch Ground-In Wet  
Reflective Multi-Component Edge Lines  
Various County Roadways (12.5 miles)

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

Loren Fellbaum  
Todd County Public Works  
Director/Engineer

11-13pnc

**NOTICE  
CITY OF STAPLES  
ORDINANCE NO. 559  
AN ORDINANCE  
AMENDING THE  
ZONING OF  
PROPERTY**

WHEREAS, the City Council has the authority to re-zone property within the city limits of the City of Staples; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it to be in the public interest, convenience and general welfare to amend and rezone the following described parcel;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Staples as follows:

**This Property**, described as follows, is to be re-zoned from B-1 Business to R-3 Multi-Family Housing:

W2 of N 3/4, Block 8 in the O'Connor Addition to Staples, Todd County, Minnesota.

Adopted this 10th day of  
March 2026.

Tara Greer, City Clerk

13pnc

**NOTICE  
THOMASTOWN  
BOARD OF APPEALS  
and EQUALIZATION**

The annual Thomastown Board of Appeals and Equalization meeting will be held at the Thomastown Town Hall on Friday, April 10, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether property in this jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor.

Sue Walsvik, Clerk  
Thomastown Township

13pnc

**TODD COUNTY  
BOARD OF  
ADJUSTMENT  
215 First Ave. South  
Long Prairie,  
Minnesota 56347  
320-732-4420  
toddplan.zone@co.todd.mn.us**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that on **Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.** the Todd County Board of Adjustment will hold a public hearing in the Commissioner's board room, 215 1st Ave South, Suite 301, Long Prairie, Minnesota.

NOTE: This meeting is again being held in-person and the public is encouraged to attend. 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? Call or email 320-732-4420 or toddplan.zone@co.todd.mn.us

**Agenda**

- Call to Order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Introduction of Board of Adjustment Members and process review
- Approval of agenda
- Approval of January 22, 2026 Board of Adjustment's meeting minutes
- The applicant is introduced
- Staff report
- Applicant confirms if staff report accurately represents the request
- Site Visit Review
- Public comment
- Board review with applicant, staff, and public

**1. USS Eagle Bend Solar LLC: Section 02, Wykeham Township  
Site Address: 14910 380th Street, Eagle Bend, MN 56446**

**PID: 28-0001100**

1.Request CUP to construct and operate an up-to 10-megawatt solar farm in AF-1 Zoning District

**2. The Towers LLC C/O Buell Consulting: Section 23, Birchdale Township**

**Site Address: 21794 State Hwy 28, Grey Eagle, MN 56336**

**PID: 03-0018603**

1.Request for construc-

tion of a monopole for telecommunications antennas and equipment with a structure height of 155', and an overall height of 164' including the lighting rod in Rural Townsite Zoning District.

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

**Adjournment.**

Next meeting: May 7, 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

13pnc

**NOTICE  
CITY OF STAPLES  
ORDINANCE NO. 560  
AN ORDINANCE  
AMENDING THE  
ZONING OF  
PROPERTY**

WHEREAS, the City Council has the authority to re-zone property within the city limits of the City of Staples; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it to be in the public interest, convenience and general welfare to amend and rezone the following described parcel;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Staples as follows:

**This Property**, described as follows, is to be re-zoned from B-1 Business to R-3 Multi-Family Housing:

Blk 9 and south 66 feet of the vacated street lying south of Blk 9 in the O'Connor Addition to Staples, Todd County, Minnesota

Adopted this 10th day of  
March 2026

Tara Greer, City Clerk

13pnc

**STATE OF MINNESOTA  
COUNTY OF TODD  
DISTRICT COURT  
SEVENTH JUDICIAL  
DISTRICT  
PROBATE DIVISION  
Court File  
No. 77-PR-26-214**

**In Re: Estate of  
Gary R. Mueller,  
Decedent**

**NOTICE OF AND  
ORDER FOR HEARING  
ON PETITION FOR  
FORMAL ADJUDICATION  
OF INTESTATE  
AND DETERMINATION  
OF HEIRS AND APPOINTMENT  
OF PERSONAL  
REPRESENTATIVE AND  
NOTICE TO CREDITORS.**

It is Ordered and Notice is given that on April 13, 2026 at 10:14 A.M., a hearing will be held in this Court at 221 1st Ave. S., Long Prairie, Minnesota, on a petition for the formal adjudication of intestacy and determination of heirs and for the appointment of Randy Mueller, whose address is 416 4th St. NE, Staples, MN 56479, as personal representative of the Decedent's estate in an unsupervised administration.

The hearing will be an administrative hearing, and your appearance is not required. If there is an objection to this petition, you will be notified of another date and time.

Any objections to the petition must be raised at the hearing or filed with the

**NOTICE  
MORAN TOWNSHIP  
MEETING**

The Moran Township April meeting will be held Monday, April 6 at 7 p.m. at the town hall.

Diane Mack, Clerk  
Moran Township

13-14pnc

**(ABBREVIATED  
ADVERTISEMENT)**

**TODD COUNTY  
2026 PAVEMENT  
MARKING PROJECT  
Closing date:  
March 31, 2026**

Sealed bids will be accepted until 10:00 a.m., March 31, 2026 by the Todd County Public Works Director/Engineer at 44 Riverside Drive, Long Prairie, Minnesota 56347 for the following construction project:

**C.P. 77-26-03  
Pavement Marking  
Application  
Various County Highways (262.58 miles)**

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

Loren Fellbaum  
Todd County Public Works  
Director/Engineer

11-13pnc

**NOTICE  
MAY TOWNSHIP  
ASSESSMENT  
MEETING**

The Board of Appeal and Equalization for the Township of May, Cass County, Minnesota shall meet on Wednesday, April 1, 2026 at 12:00 noon at the May Town Hall. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether taxable property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor, and to determine whether corrections need to be made.

Bianca Wyffels, Clerk  
May Township

13-14pnc

the Police State Aid 2023 One-Time Distribution for the fiscal year ending 2025 with a balance of \$545,138.97.

On motion by Denny and second by Becker, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: To approve the attached Budget Request Form for Carry Over of TCSO YE2025 account balances for Canine, Forfeiture and Contingency funds for a total of \$104,694.95.

**Facilities**

On motion by Neumann and second by Noska, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: Approve the bid from Eagle Fabricating to replace the movable wall in the Expo building for a total cost of \$18,875.

**County Assessor**

On motion by Becker and second by Noska, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: To set the 2026 Todd County Board of Appeal & Equalization will be held on June 15, 2026 commencing at 6:00pm and not ending before 7:00 pm.

**Todd County Recorder**

On motion by Becker and second by Denny, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: To accept the reclassification of Employee Number 748 to be Deputy County Recorder and eliminate the position of Generalist effective pay period beginning February 8, 2026.

**Solid Waste**

On motion by Neumann and second by Denny, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: Authorize solid waste staff to execute grant agreement for \$2,795 million via DocuSign.

**County Auditor-Treasurer's  
Report**

The County Auditor-Treasurer informed of all the election related events happening on this day and the next two months.

**County Commissioner's  
Report**

The County Coordinator reported attending personnel, paycom, interviews, TWCC, Expo tour, Long Prairie Energy workshop and Holiday party events.

**County Commissioner's  
Report**

The Commissioners reported on meetings and events attended.

Commissioner Becker attended meetings including the Policies, Friendly Rider, Comp plan, EMS, Holiday Party, Rural Mn County Caucus, Todd Trails and Public Health Advisory.

Commissioner Denny has attended meetings including regular meetings and Prairie Lakes.

Commissioner Noska has attended meetings including Wellness, Tri-CAP and HRA.

Commissioner Byers attended meetings including Facilities, Finance, Personnel and the Holiday Party.

Commissioner Neumann attended meetings including the Comp plan, CPT, Todd Trails and the Holiday Party.

**Recess**

On motion by Neumann and second by Denny, the meeting was recessed until February 17th, 2026.

| COMMISSIONER WARRANTS<br>VENDOR NAME \$ AMOUNT   |              |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| CARGILL SALT DIVISION                            | \$50,554.83  |
| KRIS ENGINEERING INC                             | 4,709.36     |
| LONG PRAIRIE LEADER                              | 8,405.00     |
| MACQUEEN                                         | 19,987.30    |
| POMP'S TIRE SERVICE                              |              |
| INC                                              | 6,190.80     |
| SHI CORP                                         | 5,171.40     |
| TRAFERA LLC                                      | 13,950.00    |
| 40 PAYMENTS LESS                                 |              |
| THAN \$2,000                                     | 18,335.62    |
| Total:                                           | \$127,304.31 |
| HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES<br>VENDOR NAME \$ AMOUNT |              |
| MDHS - SWIFT                                     | 2,930.96     |
| RONALD McDONALD HOUSE - UPPER MIDWEST            | 4,380.00     |
| SCHULLER FAMILY FUNERAL HOMES                    | 3,500.00     |
| TCCS MH INITIATIVE FLEX FUND                     | 3,637.52     |
| TODD COUNTY ATTORNEYS OFFICE                     | 2,025.00     |
| TRAFERA LLC                                      | 10,600.00    |
| 47 PAYMENTS LESS                                 |              |
| THAN \$2,000                                     | 19,820.15    |
| COST EFF HEALTH INS                              | 2,205.00     |
| USDA-RD                                          | 2,538.14     |
| 6 PAYMENTS LESS                                  |              |
| THAN \$2,000                                     | 1,537.79     |
| Total:                                           | \$53,174.56  |

| VENDOR NAME \$ AMOUNT                           |              |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SRVS LLC                   | \$2,516.25   |
| DHS - MOOSE LAKE RTC - 462                      | 2,844.25     |
| DHS - MSOP - MN SEX OFFENDER PROG - 462         | 4,929.00     |
| GREATER MN FAMILY SRVS INC                      | 3,616.12     |
| MERIDIAN SERVICES INC                           | 2,211.48     |
| MINNEAPOLIS FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES LLC | 3,375.00     |
| NEXUS - KINDRED FAMILY HEALING                  | 2,295.40     |
| NORTH HOMES CHILDREN & FAMILY SRVS              | 24,640.98    |
| NORTHERN PINES MENTAL HLTH CTR INC              | 13,212.68    |
| PORT GROUP HOMES                                | 7,248.12     |
| PRAIRIE LAKES YOUTH PROGRAMS                    | 13,950.00    |
| VILLAGE RANCH INC                               | 24,341.51    |
| WEST CENTRAL REG JUVENILE CTR                   | 7,798.00     |
| 14 PAYMENTS LESS                                |              |
| THAN \$2,000                                    | 5,220.72     |
| Total:                                          | \$118,199.51 |

On a motion by Becker and second by Neumann, the preceding minutes of the County Board meeting held February 3, 2026 were duly approved by unanimous vote at the Todd County Board of Commissioners at the Regular Board Meeting held on February 17, 2026.

Witness my hand and seal:

/s/ on file: Bob Byers,  
County Board Chairperson

/s/ on file: Denise Gaida,  
Todd County Auditor-Treasurer

13pnc

**MINUTES OF THE  
SPECIAL BOARD  
MEETING OF THE TODD  
COUNTY BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS HELD  
ON**

**FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

**Call to Order**

The Todd County Board of Commissioners met in the Commissioner's Board Room in the City of Long Prairie, MN on the 9th day of February, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Byers. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. All Commissioners were present except Commissioner Noska.

**Agenda**

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

**Closed Session**

On motion by Neumann and second by Denny, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: To enter into closed session pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.03 at 2:04 p.m.

On motion by Denny and second

Court prior to the hearing. If the petition is proper and no objections are filed or raised, the personal representative will be appointed with the full power to administer the Decedent's estate, including the power to collect all assets, pay all legal debts, claims, taxes, and expenses; sell real and personal property; and do all necessary acts for the Decedent's estate.

Notice is further given that, subject to Minn. Stat. § 524.3-801, all creditors having claims against the Decedent's estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court within four (4) months after the date of this notice or the claims will be barred.

Dated: March 4, 2026

**BY THE COURT**

Heidi Hovis,  
Judge of District Court

Kim Peterson  
Court Administrator

**SKOOG LAW**

Grant K. Skoog  
MN# 0403246

24 Colfax Ave. SW

PO Box 623

Wadena, MN 56482

Telephone: (218) 631-1228

E-mail:

Grant@Skooglaw.com

ATTORNEY FOR  
PETITIONER

12-13pnc

by Neumann, the following motion was introduced and adopted by unanimous vote: To reopen the session at 3:04 p.m.

**Adjourn**

On motion by Denny and second by Neumann, the meeting was adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

On a motion by Becker and second by Neumann, the preceding minutes of the Special County Board meeting held February 9th, 2026 were duly approved by unanimous vote at the Todd County Board of Commissioners at the Regular Board Meeting held on February 17, 2026.

Witness my hand and seal:

/s/ on file: Bob Byers,  
County Board Chairperson

/s/ on file: Denise Gaida,  
Todd County Auditor-Treasurer

13pnc

# Lakeland PBS celebrates northern resilience with new anthology series “218Life” premiering March 19

Jordan Stearns,  
Lakeland PBS

LakelandPBSannounces the premiere of its newest flagship anthology series, “218Life,” debuting March 19, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

“218Life” is designed as a vibrant celebration of the Northland’s natural beauty, cultural diversity and the rugged, independent spirit that defines our region. The series serves as a mirror for our community, reflecting a unique way of living that people across Greater Minnesota can truly relate to. While our coverage area is vast, stretching over 7,500 square miles from the Canadian border to Little Falls. This program aims to bridge the miles by finding the common threads that tie us together. Whether we’re in the deep woods, on the lake, in a backyard garden, we share a distinct resilience and a deep-rooted connection to nature.

“This series is about more than just watching someone perform a task; it’s about the heartbeat of the 218 area code,” says Meghan Jewett, Lakeland PBS Program and Production Manager. “We wanted to create a show that didn’t just observe Northern Minnesota life, but one that truly embraced it. We want to represent the full spectrum of people who call this region home, show that while our practical traditions may differ, there’s a shared desire to live more intentionally and sustainably.”

**Season 1: The Homesteading Spirit**

The inaugural four-part season focuses on the “back-to-basics” movement; individuals who are reclaiming

age-old traditions to build a more connected life:

•**Cheese Making: From Pail to Table:** Homesteading is a lifestyle that Jonathan and Julia Carter of Park Rapids chose to incorporate in raising their family. Julia shares her journey of mastering cheese making and the joy of passing that foundational knowledge along to others.

•**Queen Bees: A Buzzing Community:** Bees are integral to our ecosystem and have been a cornerstone of our culture for centuries. In Beltrami County, a group of adventurous women continue to learn the age-old art of beekeeping. From honey butter and mead to friendship and curiosity, they prove the possibilities are endless.

•**Flax Fiber Craft: Grow Your Own Shirt:** Discover the meticulous process of growing your own clothing from flax. Kristy Balder’s journey began with a simple desire to learn the spinning wheel and loom; now, she harvests fiber from her own backyard to “grow her own shirt.”

•**Cultivating the North: Gardens of Northern MN:** Gardening in the North presents unique challenges due to climate and soil health. We visit with three local gardeners to hear their secrets for success before heading to Happy Dancing Turtle in Pine River to learn about soil health from the experts.

**Looking Ahead: Future Seasons**

As an ongoing anthology, “218Life” will continue to evolve, exploring the seasonal rhythms and traditions that define our heritage. Future seasons are

already in development to cover the essential pillars of Northern life, including outdoor recreation, hunting, fishing and foraging.

By highlighting these traditional practices, Lakeland PBS continues its mission to tell the authentic stories of the people who make the Northland unlike anywhere else in the world. A place we’re proud to call home.

Viewers can tune in to Lakeland PBS on March 19 for the premiere episode, or stream the episodes online at lptv.org and via the free PBS App.

**About Lakeland PBS**

Lakeland PBS is the only local public television station serving the citizens of north and central Minnesota. Operating two full-power digital broadcast stations (KAWB Bemidji and KAWB Brainerd), Lakeland PBS provides vital local news, public affairs programs and educational content across an estimated 7,500 square miles. The station is determined to continue its mission despite a significant budget shortfall caused by the loss of federal funding.

Lakeland PBS’ mission is to educate, inform and enrich our viewers with the programming we produce right here in northern Minnesota and the nationally available programs we know our members enjoy. Lakeland PBS’ vision is to be a valued and trusted source of news, entertainment and storytelling that connects and uplifts our diverse region. We strive to empower citizens while serving and connecting the diverse communities across our broadcast region.



## Various thickness of ice

Ice that supports a vehicle can be right next to open water, as this Cass County rescue vehicle demonstrates. (Submitted photo)

# Stay safe as ice melts

By Bryan Welk  
Cass County Sheriff

As the weather switch quickly flips from winter to spring, ice safety and keeping Minnesota lakes clean is a focus that we should all have.

As winter begins to fade across Minnesota, many anglers, snowmobilers, and outdoor enthusiasts are still enjoying time on frozen lakes. Late-season ice fishing can be productive and enjoyable, but spring ice also brings serious safety risks and environmental responsibilities.

Understanding how ice conditions change in spring and making sure to remove all trash from the ice—helps protect both people and Minnesota’s lakes.

Spring ice is not the same as winter ice. We had an exceptional winter lake ice year, colder temperatures and little snow conditions allowed good clear ice to build in some places more than 3 feet thick. Late-season ice may look thick, but warm temperatures, rain, and sunlight can weaken it quickly. Even when the ice appears solid, it may no longer support the same amount of weight as it did earlier in winter.

Ice conditions can deteriorate rapidly during spring warm-ups. In some cases, lakes transition from solid ice to open water in just a few days. Another important reminder: there is no such thing as completely safe ice. Conditions can vary widely across a single lake due to currents, springs, snow cover, and changing temperatures.

Anyone heading out on the ice late in the season should take extra precautions.

**1. Check ice thickness frequently**

Ice can vary greatly in thickness. Experts recommend checking ice often with an auger or chisel as you move across the lake.

**2. Follow minimum thickness guidelines**

Typical safety recommendations include:

- 4 inches for walking or



## Open water on frozen lake

A large open water area opened up as winter ice begins to melt. Submitted photo)

ice fishing

- 5-7 inches for snowmobiles or ATVs
- 9-12 inches for cars or small vehicles

In spring conditions, experts recommend doubling these guidelines because melting ice is significantly weaker.

### 3. Wear safety gear

Safety equipment can save your life if you fall through the ice:

- Ice picks or ice claws
- A foam life jacket or float suit
- Ice cleats for traction
- A whistle for emergency signaling

### 4. Never go alone

Always bring a friend and tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.

### 5. Leave the ice early

Morning ice may be safe, but sunshine and warm temperatures can weaken the ice throughout the day. The route you took onto the lake may not be safe on your return trip.

Clean Up Your Trash Before the Ice Melts - Spring is also the time when garbage left on the ice becomes a serious problem. Every year, lakes reveal trash that was left behind during winter recreation. When the ice melts, that garbage sinks into the lake or washes up on shorelines.

Common items left behind include:

- Beverage cans and bottles
- Fishing line and bait containers
- Food wrappers and cigarette butts
- Propane cylinders and equipment debris

This waste harms fish, wildlife, and water quality. Minnesota law requires anglers and lake users to store garbage in containers attached to their shelter or vehicle and remove it from the ice when leaving. Violations can result in fines. A simple rule to follow: Pack It In, Pack It Out. Leave no trace. If you bring it onto the lake, take it back with you.

The Minnesota DNR has established the following deadlines for inland waters:

- Southern two-thirds of the state: 11:59 p.m. on March 2.
- Northern one-third of the state: 11:59 p.m. on March 16.
- Minnesota-Canada border waters: 11:59 p.m. on March 31 (includes Lake of the Woods).

By practicing good safety habits and cleaning up after ourselves, we can ensure that Minnesota’s lakes remain safe and beautiful year-round.

# Energy assistance available from HHS

From Todd County Health and Human Services

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay home heating costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified households. EAP is federally funded by the Department of Commerce and passed through the Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services. Grants are available for renters or homeowners that reside in Todd County. Services may include payment of energy

bills, help with utility disconnections or necessary fuel deliveries, repair or replacement of homeowner’s malfunctioning heating systems and extra assistance for households with a member over 60 to pay their monthly utility bills.

To qualify you must be income eligible – there is no asset limit.

Apply with a paper application or apply online at mn.gov/home

Call 320-732-4516 or 888-838-4066 for more information.



## Right here, for you.

No matter where life takes you, the care team in Staples is by your side. We’re committed to listening, caring, and delivering the kind of personalized health care you deserve — every step of the way.

### PRIMARY CARE FOR ALL AGES:

- Prenatal and Postpartum Visits
- Adult Preventative Visits
- Women’s Health Visits
- Welcome to Medicare Visits
- Well Child & Teen Visits
- Medicare Annual Wellness Visits

### SPECIALTY SERVICES:

- Cardiology
- Orthopedics
- Physical Therapy
- and more

Call 218-894-7870 or schedule online at [EssentiaHealth.org/Schedule](https://EssentiaHealth.org/Schedule)



Essentia Health

**St. Joseph’s–Staples Clinic**  
Monday–Friday: 8 am–4:30 pm  
Urgent Care Monday–Friday: 8 am–6 pm

STAPLES continued from page 1a

## Council looks to provide a small number of overnight parking spots in city lots

ing of the ordinance, they will have a second reading at their March 24 meeting. The amount of the sale was the appraised value of the property and land.

The council has stated that they will look into using the money from the sale to build a smaller industrial building that could be used as a start-up space for modern industries.

The council also approved two ordinances to rezone properties from business to multi-family housing. One property, owned by Gary Erickson, is located across from the

Staples-Motley Elementary School on 4th Street NE. The other property is owned by the Staples Economic Development Authority (SEDA), adjacent to the other one, between 4th Street and 5th Street NE, across the street from the Pullman Townhomes.

### In other news, the council

- Approved gambling permit for Ottertail Ducks Unlimited to conduct bingo and raffle.
- Heard from City Administrator Jerel Nelsen that there were 27 applications for the SEDA Director position.

• Heard report from Public Works Commission about implementing an after-hours reconnect policy, which would charge more for reconnect, or the customer would have to wait until the next day.

• Approved appointing Tom Good to Public Works Commission seat.

• Discussed overnight parking in city parking lots. There are some leased spaces where people are allowed to park overnight, but other cars are currently being ticketed. The council discussed whether there could be a few overnight spaces downtown for the public.