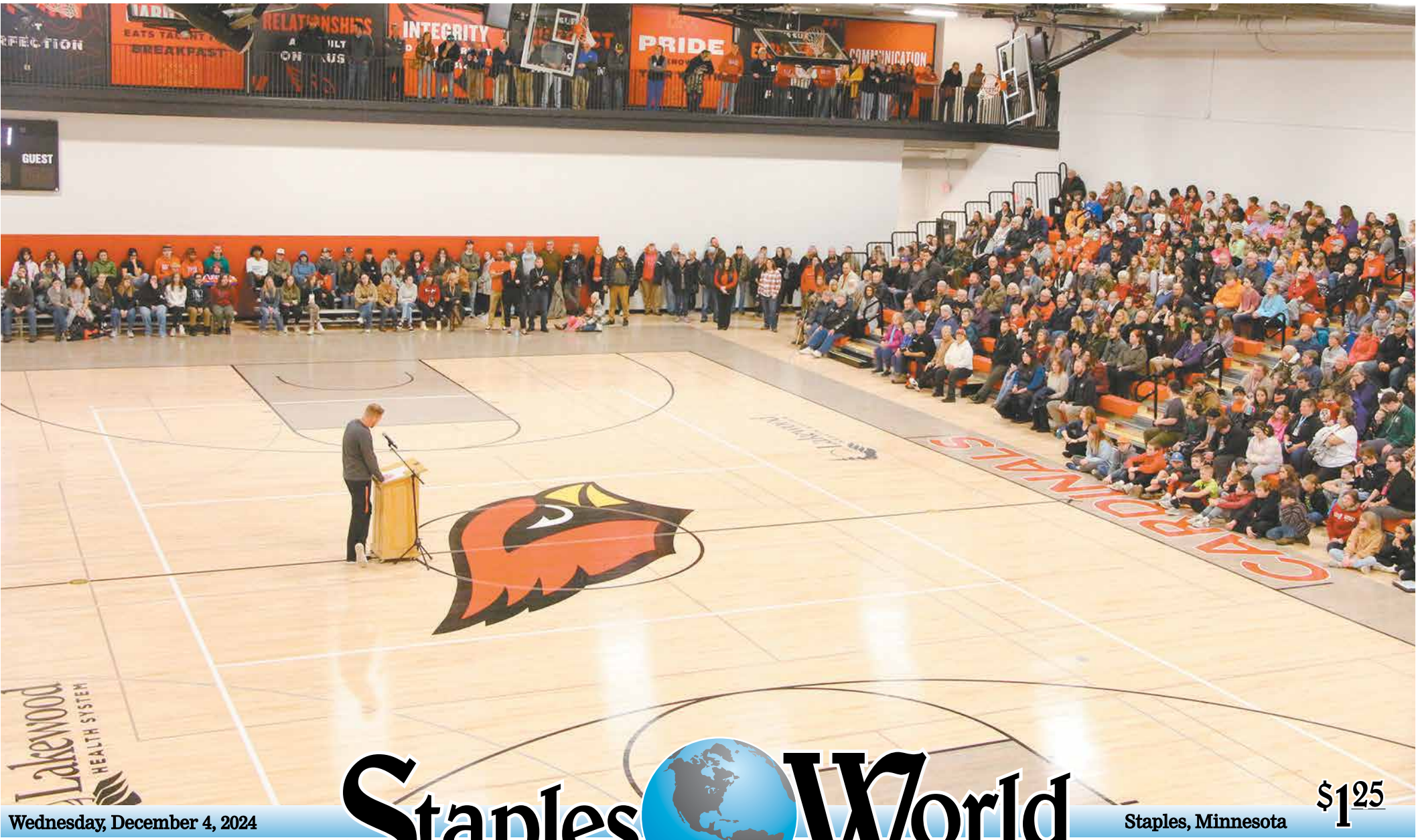


Inside this issue:

Community Thanksgiving meal
Walking track, fitness rooms at The Nest
Boys, girls wrestling started
State athletes congratulations pages
A broken wrist Hallelujah



StaplesWorld

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Staples, Minnesota

\$1²⁵

The Nest welcomes community The grand opening of The Nest, the new gym, walking track and community fitness center at Staples-Motley High School was held Dec. 2. Community members packed the stands along with students to find out about the collaboration between the school district, Lakewood Health System, First International Bank and Trust and other community partners. The gym will be the new school competition gym. (Photos by Mark Anderson)

SEDA builds inflation into rental prices

By Mark Anderson
Managing Editor

The Staples Economic Development Authority (SEDA) recommended adding a small increase of about two percent to leases each year, for entities renting SEDA owned properties. SEDA Board member Doug Case brought it up when asking about the Accura machine shop renting space in the city-owned industrial building. Case said they do a good business and have been in the building for 20 years. He said the rental space was supposed to be an incubator building for businesses to get started at a low price until they can afford to move to a different building or pay more. “They are getting a good deal on this,” said Case.

Case suggested either offering the building for sale or increasing the lease cost. City Administrator Jerel Nelsen said the leasing agreement has been mutually beneficial for the city and for the company. “They’ve been rock-solid, covering the taxes and other costs associated with the building,” said Nelsen. SEDA Board member Lisa Bjergs said the current rental agreement is close to market price for the square footage they occupy. SEDA Board members Steve Gertken and Blake Gerard advocated for an annual two percent increase in lease prices, starting next year. Gerard said “If there were 50 businesses trying to get in there, then we could go higher.”

The board agreed and asked Director Lucas Wakefield to increase lease prices starting next year. This would also included city owned land rented by the CLC Ag and Energy Center. **Wayfinding** Wakefield brought up the Blandin grant that had been approved for downtown development. He said a wayfinding study had been done by a company called Stratelligent, but there was not a signed agreement over the costs of the study. Wakefield said the costs were to be included in the final project, which they may not do because the grant won’t cover the whole project. He said the company has asked for the grant to pay for the study.

See **SEDA** on page 3a

Council approves ‘most restrictive’ cannabis law

By Mark Anderson
Managing Editor

The Staples City Council approved a new cannabis ordinance that City Administrator Jerel Nelsen said was the “most restrictive” allowed by the state of Minnesota, which takes over cannabis regulation in 2025. Several council members wanted it to be more restrictive and asked if there were ways to prohibit all cannabis businesses from operating in the city. The ordinance includes preventing cannabis sales within 1,000 feet of a school or another cannabis retail business. It also must be more than 500 feet from a day care, treatment facility, public park or athletic field. Those distances are the maximum allowed under the state’s new law. Nelsen said the state allows three cannabis businesses in Todd County and two in Wadena County, based on population guidelines. If that allowance is met in other cities, Staples does not have to allow any

cannabis businesses. If those quotas are not met and there is an application that meets the city ordinance, the council would have to approve it, but the City of Staples would not have to allow a second business, they can cap it at one. Council member Roy Miles voted against the ordinance because he did not want any cannabis business to be able to operate in the city. “I can’t consciously do this, it is ruining people’s lives, it is destroying families, it is destroying kids,” said Miles. “Not just teenagers, there are elementary kids. I just can’t do it.” Earlier in the meeting, Wadena County Attorney Kyra Ladd gave a report about activities that have been prosecuted this past year. She said the one common denominator with nearly every prosecution is that alcohol, marijuana or other substances are involved in the crimes. Council member Doug Case also voted against the ordinance.

The new ordinance replaces the THC ordinance passed by the council recently. **City budget** The council reviewed the 2025 budget, which they will plan to pass at their Dec. 10 meeting, showing a 2.52 percent budget increase, the city’s tax base grew by more than that, so the actual taxes should be lower. Nelsen said over the past few years, the city has averaged a 1.14 percent increase in their budget, which has helped keep the levy down. **Fire Relief pension** The council approved an increase in the Staples Fire Relief Association pension benefit level, raising it from \$2,100 to \$2,500 per year. Firefighter Jef Cichos said the pension fund is 131 percent funded and that

See **COUNCIL** on page 3a

Weather

2024 This Week's Forecast				
	High	Low	Cond.	
Dec. 4	28	0	M. Cloudy	
Dec. 5	10	3	M. Sunny	
Dec. 6	20	17	M. Cloudy	
Dec. 7	29	25	M. Cloudy	
Dec. 8	34	20	Cloudy	
Dec. 9	24	13	Cloudy	
Dec. 10	22	16	M. Cloudy	

Last Year, 2023				
	High	Low	Cond.	
Dec. 4	29°	22	Cloudy	
Dec. 5	28	24	Cloudy	
Dec. 6	50	28	Sunny	
Dec. 7	53	31	Sunny	
Dec. 8	47	40	Cloudy	
Dec. 9	27	21	Cloudy	
Dec. 10	24	20	Cloudy	

Average Temps:
H = 27° Low = 13°

Compiled by
Dale Hausmann,
WCCO's Staples area
Weatherwatcher

Public Notices

City of Staples
Todd BOA **8A**

Obituaries

Heidi Brown
Larry Holmberg



Holiday Parade of Lights in Staples

Dozens of people braved the sub-zero temps Nov. 30 to watch the Parade of Lights in downtown Staples, which featured brightly lit floats. Collecting candy thrown from the floats was a hit with young people. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Enjoying the Community Thanksgiving dinner

Dozens of people enjoyed a free Thanksgiving feast at Timbers Event Center in Staples Nov. 28. The meal was made possible by the generosity of many individuals and area organizations, and served by volunteers. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Thankful for family and friends

A number of families and friends gathered at Timbers Event Center in Staples to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner together. Pictured above are members of the Edeburn, Crawford, Vollegraaf and Klose families. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Service with a smile

Area young people helped serve at the Community Thanksgiving dinner Nov. 28, at Timbers Event Center in Staples. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Little Falls man arrested in connection to thefts and burglaries in Todd and Wadena counties

The Morrison County Sheriff's Office reports that on Nov. 26, their office along with the Todd County Sheriff's Office and Little Falls Police Department executed a search warrant on 6th Avenue SE in the city of Little Falls.

Due to the heightened risk for officer safety the Morrison County SWAT team assisted in securing the residence. During the search, numerous items were recovered that are believed to be connected to thefts and burglaries reported in both Todd and Morrison Counties.

Charges are pending on 34-year-old Timothy Aleman of Little Falls. We want to assure the public that there is no ongoing threat to the community. This operation is part of our continued efforts to address and resolve criminal activity in our county.



Master plate-clearer in action

Liam Kroll, left, was one of the young people who helped serve food and clear plates at the Community Thanksgiving Dinner in Staples Nov. 28. Also pictured are Rick and Dawn Adamietz of Staples who enjoyed the meal with members of their family. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)



Santa's mailbox in Motley

Veterans Park in Motley will be home to a gingerbread house and Santa's mailbox during the holiday season. Children can address letters to Santa Claus at 123 Elf Road, North Pole 88888 and drop them in the mailbox. The mailbox will be checked daily and mailed out. The holiday display was painted by Eric and Alisa Olson of Motley. (Submitted photo)



Re-elected to the Motley City Council

Pictured above at their regular meeting Nov. 25, are the newly re-elected members of the Motley City Council. From left are council members Dennis Erickson and April Skeesick-Larson; Mayor Pat O'Regan; and council member Steve Johnson. All four are currently serving on the council. (Submitted photo)

Motley area law enforcement

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

Nov. 20 - 26
Nov. 25 - Motley Police assisted with a vehicle that was stalled in the middle of the intersection of Hwy 10 and Hwy 210 in Motley, pushing it off the road.

Nov. 23 - The MCSO received a report of a domestic situation at the 6000 block of Azalea Rd., Motley.

Nov. 23 - The MCSO received a report of trespassing at the 34000 block of Bugle Rd., Motley.



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Steve Fields
Minnesota Attorney



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Steve Fields
Minnesota Attorney

COUNCIL continued from page 1a

Fire pension fund still in good shape after raise

whenever a fund is over 95 percent, a raise can be considered. With the current raise, it will still be 115 percent funded.

Nelsen said other area fire departments have somewhat higher pension amounts, with a couple lower than the Staples fund.

Cichos said the pension benefits can be used as a recruiting tool.

- In other news, the council**
- Approved Valley View covenants, conditions and restrictions for newly platted lots.
 - Approved writing off utility bills for a total of \$3,016 on 21 properties, ranging from \$580 to 89 cents. Nelsen said these are unpaid bills that have gone through the recovery process and others that are too small.
 - Approved liquor license for The Witches Brew, which will be operating the event center.
 - Approved establishing

SEDA continued from page 1a

Small Cities Development Grant being implemented

Gertken said since the city isn't using the plan, they shouldn't have to pay the planning costs.

Bjerga said the city needs to preserve their relationship with the company and suggested negotiating the cost of the study, since there was not signed agreement.

SEDA Board member Shane Tappe suggested they give the board a breakdown of how much time was spent

a task force to make recommendations to the city council regarding feral cats.

- Heard from Planning and Zoning Commission, which is planning to review the city's signage ordinance.
- Approved legal services contract with Quinlivan and Hughes for Todd County services, for \$225 per hour for most matters and \$190 per hour for trial preparation and criminal trials.
- Attorney Joe Krueger said work in 2024 included DUI, assault, thefts and nuisance violations, plus civil matters such as clearing hazardous buildings, the new cannabis ordinance and rental ordinance issues.
- Approved legal services with Kyra Ladd for Wadena County services, for \$75 per hour. Ladd said she appreciates working with the Staples Police. "They are a good group of people, I don't mind getting those phone calls in the middle of the night," said Ladd.

75 YEARS Ago - 1949

• Dec. 8, 1949 - Mrs. Beulah Brichacek was elected president of the Moran Farm Bureau unit for the 1950 year at the annual election of officers held on Nov. 24.

Other officers for the unit for the year include: Vice President - Lloyd Heldman; secretary-treasurer - Joe Lenk; reporter - Joan Koval; unit director - Frank Koval; Home and Community chairman - Mrs. Marvin Heldman; Blue Cross Leader - Thelma Sweeney.

• Dec. 8, 1949 - Bud Welle

— O —

Compiled by Dawn Timbs

— O —

and Duane Starke, both 8th graders from Motley, are now second class scouts, having received the rank at the District Court of Honor, which was held at Wadena, announces Richard Becker, Scout Master. The two boys are now the highest ranking scouts in Troop 62, but according to the scoutmaster, it won't be many weeks before a number of others attain higher ranks.

Others in attendance from here were Ed Morey, troop committeeman, his sons, Eldon and Loren; Manley Nichols, Albert Allee and Mr. Becker. They all accompanied Mr. Morey to Wadena.

- Dec. 8, 1949 - Jack Markfelder of Staples, bringing in a 220-pound six-point buck, copped the first prize offered by the Staples Sportsmen's club for the largest deer brought in during the hunting season.
- Markfelder, hunting alone near International Falls, shot the buck the second day of the season. He had a tough time to get the animal out of the underbrush and swampy area in which it was shot. He had to drag the deer about 3/4 of a mile in the area, before he could get it to his car.
- Otis Lee of Hartlant took the honors for the largest doe which tipped the scale

at 136 pounds. Both men received prizes of \$10 in cash from the Staples club.

- Dec. 8, 1949 - Cpl. Russ Dahl, son of Mrs. Maude Dahl of Staples, is now located with the United States Air Forces at Tucson, Ariz. Incidentally, Russ is playing basketball with one of the teams of his unit. He was one of the stellar players on the Staples high school while attending school here.

50 YEARS Ago - 1974

- Dec. 5, 1974 - The east display window at Nancy's Boutique on North Fourth Street in Staples was broken early Wednesday morning, Nov. 27.

Staples Police said that the window was intact when they conducted a door check of the businesses at 2 a.m., but then discovered it broken a couple hours later.

Apparently there were no clues as to how the window was broken or by whom.

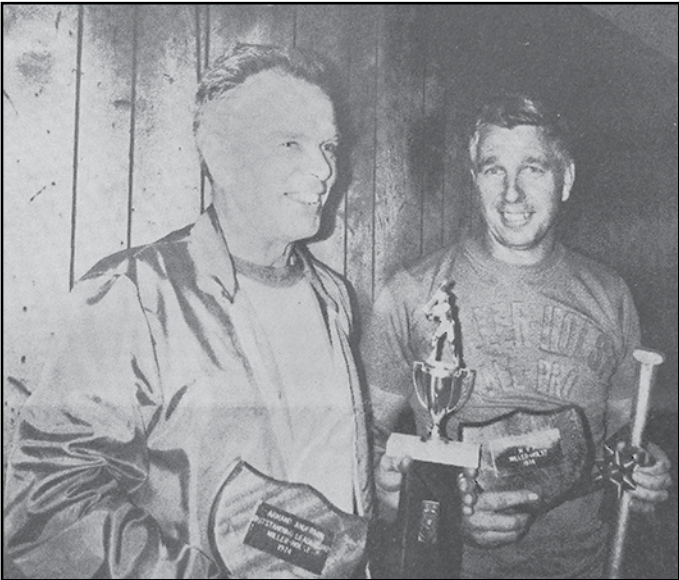
- Dec. 5, 1974 - The Staples Chapter of the Future Farmers of America will select their 1975 Chapter Sweetheart at special coronation ceremonies Saturday evening in the Staples Auditorium.

Seeking the honor are Barb Becker, Gayle Neal, Karen Macho, Alice Goeden, Lorene Haglin, Lori Swanson and Joyce Madson. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. with a dance to follow.

- Dec. 5, 1974 - The Staples High School Chamber Choir will perform the "Messiah" at its annual C Christmas Concert Dec. 16, at Sacred Heart Church.

Stan Carlson, director, said that this occasion will also mark the dedication of the music department's harpsichord. The harpsichord was built this past summer by Homer Clark. Mr. Clark donated over a month of his time to build the instrument.

- Dec. 5, 1974 - Four Cardinal wrestlers captured championships for Coach Don Dravis' team in the first annual Staples Jaycee Wrestling tournament last



Mystery photo

Hello readers. This week's archive photo is from 1974. 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.

weekend.

Wrestling their way to individual titles were Dave Sowers (98), Dave Roberts (112), Randy Snyder (119) and Tony Van Buren (hwt.). The SHS Cardinal Wrestling team also captured the first place trophy.

25 YEARS Ago - 1999

- Dec. 9, 1999 - Nichole Tyrrell of the Staples Motley FFA Chapter received the American FFA Degree at the 72nd National FFA convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

Of the 450,000 members, only 2,324 received the degree in 1999. To receive this degree, members must have earned \$7,500 through a supervised agricultural experience program in which they start their own or work for an existing agricultural enterprise and productively invested those earnings. Nichole's enterprise is dairy production.

"Her project was truly an outstanding project," Kerry Lindgren, Staples Motley FFA advisor stated.

Nichole Tyrrell is a third generation recipient of the American FFA Degree. Howard Tyrrell (grandpa) received the degree in 1944, Dennis Tyrrell (dad) in 1971, Jakin Tyrrell (brother) in 1997.

- Dec. 9, 1999 - The Staples Motley Cardinal girls opened the 1999 - 2000 basketball season Dec. 3 with a very strong 73-28 win over Swanville.

Sarah Miller scored 18 points, Alisha Miller 13 and Rachel Landecker 12 as the girls turned a slow start into a 32-15 halftime advantage.

- Dec. 9, 1999 - Staples Fire Chief Joe Hassler reminds area residents that Christmas and New Year's, while great family holidays, are some of the worst times for home fires.

He urged people to be very careful with holiday lights, Christmas trees and when burning any fires, such as candles, in the home.

"It's a very good time to check your smoke detector and make sure the batteries are good," Hassler said.

- Dec. 9, 1999 - The Staples Motley school board voted Tuesday night to offer the district's teachers an 8.79 percent salary increase over the next two years.

The action came after more than two hours of discussion in closed session and followed the Truth and Taxation hearing at the school in Motley.

The contract would raise the base salary 2.67 percent the first year from the current \$23,450 to \$25,000. The second year the base salary would be raised four percent to \$26,000.

Essentia planning musculoskeletal center at Baxter

Essentia Health announced plans for a state-of-the-art musculoskeletal center in the Brainerd Lakes area. The Essentia Health Musculoskeletal Center-Baxter will expand care options for the patients we have the honor of serving across this region.

The clinic will be located at the site of the former Camping World, 14275 Edgewood Dr. It will provide approximately 50,000 square feet of space to supplement existing services with new offerings specifically designed to meet the needs of our patients. The Essentia Health Musculoskeletal Center-Baxter will offer orthopedic surgery, podiatry, rheumatology, endocrinology, interventional pain care, sports medicine and more. It will provide comprehensive care, including diagnostic imaging —X-ray, MRI and fluoroscopy — treatment and rehab.

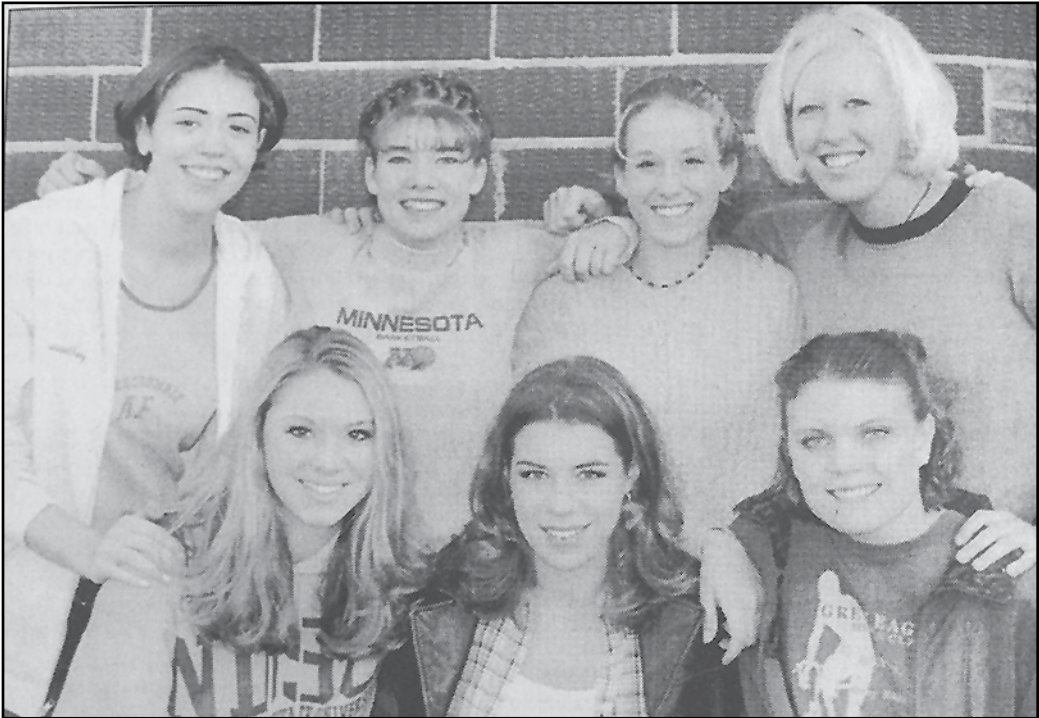
"We are always looking for ways to better serve the community we call home, and this investment will advance the care we provide our family, friends and neighbors," said Dr. Christopher Metz, an orthopedic surgeon at Essentia. "This is an exciting opportunity to combine the best technology with the expertise of our team and deliver a wide range of care under one roof."

The renovated space will feature 70 exam and procedure rooms as well as an indoor and outdoor rehabilitation gym. Patients will also have access to orthopedic urgent care, the first program in the region designed specifically to treat orthopedic injuries immediately; Baxter's first drive-through pharmacy; expanded spine services to bring expert care to adults with back and neck pain, including our highly regarded SpineX program, which is designed to help patients with spine conditions by improving strength, flexibility and reducing pain.

An additional 50,000 square feet of space inside the building will initially be unused. Moving forward, Essentia will evaluate how best to incorporate that into the clinic site.

All told, the new location will allow Essentia to consolidate existing orthopedic services in the Brainerd Lakes area and expand offerings to provide more complete diagnosis, outpatient treatment and rehabilitation for all types of musculoskeletal conditions in one convenient center of excellence.

Essentia hopes to break ground on this project in 2025. Construction is anticipated to take approximately 18 months.



Mystery solved

Last week's mystery photo published in the Nov. 18, 1999 edition of the Staples World featured Cardinal volleyball players who earned post season awards. Front row, from left: Jill Mertens, Sarah Berg, Amanda Noska. Back: Dana Hasselberg, Heidi Dumphrope, Missy Matejicka, Sarah Bach.

Pat Held of Motley correctly identified all and thought it had something to do with volleyball. He also shared that Heidi (Dumphrope) Smith is now the head volleyball coach at St. Cloud

Technical and Community College. "I remember them as great kids in school," Held said.

Judy Wolak of Staples correctly identified all except for Sarah Berg, whom she thought was Rachel Landecker. Amanda (Hamberg) Geray, 1999 Staples-Motley grad, and her sister Katie (Hamberg) Dickman, a 2000 SM grad, both correctly identified all. Thanks for participating in our mystery photo.

Staples Police report

Nov. 19, Staples Police performed a traffic stop in the 900 block of 8th Street NE. Police found that the driver of the vehicle was under the influence of alcohol and arrested Beau Nieters, 25, for Third Degree Driving Under the Influence.

Nov. 19, Staples Police responded to a report of a juvenile who was refusing to go to school. The juvenile had also assaulted his mother. The juvenile was taken to Lakewood for a mental health evaluation

and will be charged with domestic assault.

Nov. 19, Staples Police assisted a motorist dispatch a coyote in the 1700 block of Airport Road.

Nov. 23, Staples Police responded to the 500 block of Wisconsin Ave. SE for a report of an unresponsive subject. Police determined the subject was just intoxicated and he refused medical treatment.

Nov. 23, Staples Police were dispatched to Hewitt to assist Todd County with

a report of a suicidal male with a possible knife. Police arrived on scene and provided standby. Cleared without incident.

Nov. 24, Staples Police were dispatched to the area of 2nd Avenue Northeast near Casey's to take a report of juvenile who walked away from his father and refused to get back into the vehicle. Police located the juvenile who was reunited with his father.



Festive fire trucks

Staples Fire Department trucks Parade of Lights on Nov. 30. (Staples World photo by Dawn Timbs)

A ‘broken wrist Hallelujah’

By Dawn Timbs
Staples World reporter

It wasn’t the Thanksgiving we had envisioned...a holiday down south with relatives we hadn’t seen in awhile, catching up over turkey and collard greens, sharing blessings of the year with one another as we visited at their Alabama table.

A fluky fall in the living room Nov. 1 had resulted in a broken wrist, and two surgeries later it was clear the trip south would have to be postponed. My Georgia-born husband was a great nurse and very understanding, but I felt terrible that he, in particular, would not be seeing his family for yet another holiday due to my being a klutz (*note to self: Don’t walk and look at your phone at the same time*). We thought about joining my side of the family for the festive weekend in the Twin Cities, but even that amount of traveling would have been difficult and unwise.

“We could go to the Community Thanksgiving Dinner at Timbers,” my husband said encouragingly, pointing to the notice in the paper I’d slowly typed up with my uninjured right hand while working at the Staples World. (Thank God I am not left-handed!) I admit I teared up a bit at the suggestion...not that it wouldn’t be a good meal at a lovely venue, but it wasn’t the same as sharing a home-cooked meal with family.

In the end we decided to go, making our reservation for the free meal, a gift

made possible thanks to the generosity of many individuals and area organizations.

No, it wasn’t the same. But, we experienced blessings we never would have, had we not shared Thanksgiving with others in the Staples community.

For starters, we were greeted by smiling faces who helped us find seats at a lovely set table, complete with a linen tablecloth my Swedish grandmother would have approved of. Then we joined the buffet line to be served a traditional Thanksgiving meal of turkey and all the trimmings. The servers were young people from the area who ranged in age from grade-schoolers to teens. At least one boy I recognized as having helped lead the Cardinal football team to the state tournament just the previous week and here he was, asking me how many slices of turkey I’d like. Another girl, who’d recently performed in the school’s musical, worked to pour gravy neatly over my mashed potatoes. As each youngster placed their food item on my plate, they accompanied it with a smile and heart-felt, “Happy Thanksgiving!” blessing which unexpectedly moved me to tears. What servants they were.

These same young people, along with other adults who were there to serve, stopped by tables to offer water or coffee refills, and clear plates at the end of the meal.

And though we didn’t catch up with our relatives on either side, we shared conversations and unexpected blessings with oth-

ers who were at Timbers that day. At the table next to us were friends and former coworkers we enjoyed catching up with. And at our table, was a sweet couple who both had backgrounds in the medical field. The wife was a nurse who reassured me with concerns I’d voiced about my broken wrist, and the husband said he recognized my husband Gary from a decade or so ago, having been with him in the ambulance as he was transported from Staples to a hospital in St. Cloud. Wow. What an appropriate place and time for Gary to be able to say “Thank you” in person all these years later.

I can genuinely say it was a lovely Thanksgiving day, thanks to so many selfless, hard-working and kind-hearted souls who gave up time with their own family and friends to give to others, many of whom were most likely strangers to them.

I can’t say I’m thankful for a broken wrist, but I am truly grateful for the blessings I’ve experienced along the way because of it...including the kindness of so many volunteers at the Community Thanksgiving Dinner at Timbers in Staples. Thanks, and may God bless each and every one of you.

Energy bill circumvents local utility decisions

Letter from John Jewison,
Staples City Council member,
to U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar

As you may know, S.4753, the Energy Permitting Reform Act of 2024 (EPRA), may be considered for passage in these waning days of the 118th Congress. The municipal electric utility of Staples, MN, would like to express our strong opposition to provisions in the bill.

First, the bill would require municipal electric utilities and rural cooperative utilities to file a tariff under the Federal Power Act to build a transmission line that has been designated “in the national interest “ by FERC. Municipal electric utilities and rural cooperative utilities are customer-owned. This means the customers not only own the non-profit utilities, but have a say in the operations of the utility - including rates.

By requiring the filing of a tariff, this circumvents customers’ authority over their own utility. Further, it creates a significant regulatory burden on customer-owned utilities, as it would require these utilities to participate in interregional planning processes, instead of allowing them to do so only on a voluntary basis. This circumvents local utility decision making on transmission participation and planning.

Additionally, the bill would require municipalities and cooperatives to subject themselves to additional FERC regulations in order to receive a FERC permit to build a transmission line if the line has been

deemed of “national interest.” As not-for-profit entities which do not enter transmission investments as a profit-making venture, participation by public power and co-ops in regional lines can actually help reduce overall project costs. However, forcing co-ops and public power to subject themselves to additional FERC oversight instead of their own established and regulated rate processes, could diminish the interest from not-for-profit utilities, and raise consumer costs as a result.

A letter from our national association, the American Public Power Association (APPA) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) provides a more detailed accounting of the concerns that both municipal electric utilities and cooperatives have with S.4753.

We ask that if S.4753 were to move forward, that the amended language be adopted.

Municipal electric and rural cooperative utilities desire to see permit reform accomplished. We are very familiar with the delays and obstacles in siting and routing new transmission projects needed to support the national grid, to provide reliable power and to provide affordable electricity for customers’ daily lives. However, permit reform can, and should, be done without circumventing and diminishing customer control over their own utility and without the provisions discussed here which hinder transmission development and could elevate customer costs.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Thanksgiving dinner was less expensive

By Heather Close
The Rural Blog

Serving up this year’s Thanksgiving dinner cost five percent less than it did in 2023. The average price of this year’s turkey dinner with all the trimmings rings came in at \$58.08, compared to 2023’s, \$61.17, and 2022’s painful \$64.05. While the decrease is welcomed news, this year’s Thanksgiving meal is still 19 percent higher than it was in 2019, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation’s 39th annual survey.

To tally this year’s Thanksgiving dinner costs, the AFBF sent out volunteer shoppers who checked prices Nov. 1-7, which is notably before most grocery store chains began featuring deep discounts on whole frozen turkeys. U.S. turkey prices declined in 2024, with the average price for a 16-pound turkey at \$25.67 or \$1.60 per pound, down six percent from 2023.

Several other ingredient prices declined, including the cost of whole milk,

which dropped more than 14 percent, and the price of fresh vegetables decreased by 6.4 percent. Those decreases helped offset the price hikes on dinner rolls and stuffing cubes, which increased by around eight percent.

Individual Prices:

- 16-pound turkey: \$25.67 or \$1.60 per pound (down 6.1%)
- 14 ounces of cubed stuffing mix: \$4.08 (up 8.2%)
- 2 frozen pie crusts: \$3.40 (down 2.9%)
- Half pint of whipping cream: \$1.81 (up 4.7%)
- 1 pound of frozen peas: \$1.73 (down 8.1%)
- 1 dozen dinner rolls: \$4.16 (up 8.4%)
- Misc. ingredients to prepare the meal: \$3.75 (down 5.1%)
- 30-ounce can of pumpkin pie mix: \$4.15 (down 6.5%)
- 1 gallon of whole milk: \$3.21 (down 14.3%)
- 3 pounds of sweet potatoes: \$2.93 (down 26.2%)
- 1-pound veggie tray (carrots & celery): \$.84 (down 6.4%)
- 12-ounce bag of fresh cranberries: \$2.35 (up 11.8%)

By Kelly Asche,
Senior Researcher,
Center for Rural Policy and Development

All of us are guilty, at one point or another, of taking our health for granted. We lean into the belief that we will always be able to take care of ourselves or our loved ones until the very end. Statistically, however, this type of situation isn’t likely. Many Minnesotans will need to use some form of professional long-term care, either through agencies providing home health care or by taking up residence in an assisted living or nursing facility. The long-term care industry is critical for providing care to our loved ones when their needs surpass what a family member can provide.

So it’s concerning when more and more stories are being told about elderly individuals not being able to access the care they need. We are hearing frequently from rural leaders and residents that access to home care is becoming difficult, assisted living may be too expensive if it even exists in a rural area, and that nursing facilities are either shrinking the number of beds they have available or closing completely.

This report focuses on bringing these stories from being not just anecdotes but to being facts by using the Department of Health’s provider data (helpfully provided by the Care Providers of

Minnesota). The statistics are quite clear: the number of beds in rural licensed nursing facilities (commonly referred to as nursing homes) has declined between 30% and 100%, depending on the region, since 2005. Many of these declines are due to facilities closing and not just operators shrinking the number of beds available. And all of this is happening while demand for these beds is increasing and is expected to keep increasing until 2045.

The reason for these declines are two-fold:

- A long-time shift in consumer preference for alternatives to nursing facilities, which led to policy and financial shifts allowing home-care agencies and assisted living to take a larger portion of the elder care pie, and
- A more recent, severe shortage in staffing.

This perfect storm threatens to leave rural areas underserved. Not only is nursing facility capacity shrinking at a higher rate in rural areas compared to larger population centers, there are significant differences in the supply of assisted living beds and home care agencies as well.

This report is the first report addressing a research theme the Center for Rural Policy and Development will be diving into over the next few years: “Remaining resilient in an aging, rural Minnesota.” It will put numbers and context to this issue, setting it up for dis-

cussions on solutions later.

Demand will vary across Minnesota

In 2024, the oldest members of the Baby Boomer generation turned 75. In the healthcare industry, this is a significant milestone. It’s a reminder that demand for long-term care among our elderly population is going to skyrocket over the next 20 to 30 years.

However, demand for these beds will not peak at the same time across all of Minnesota. It will actually peak much sooner in rural Minnesota, largely due to the older average age in rural areas.

Declining capacity

While the number of available nursing facility beds has been declining across Minnesota, the reasons why vary between rural and urban Minnesota.

As of February 2024, Minnesota had 33% fewer nursing facility beds compared to 2005. This decline isn’t consistent across the state, however. The most severe drops have occurred in rural Minnesota, where entirely rural counties have 41% fewer nursing facility beds compared to 2005, followed by 40% in town/rural mix counties, 33% in urban/town/rural mix counties, and 29% in entirely urban counties.

The most severe declines are currently happening in northwest, southwest, and the north central lakes region of Minnesota. Red Lake County experienced the most severe decline – they lost all of their nursing facility beds since 2005. This is followed by Cass County – in 2005 they had 489 nursing facility beds, but by 2024 only 33 remained—a loss of 93%. Several other counties aren’t far behind, including Grant County (-75%), Swift (-69%), and Pine (-65%). Chippewa County is the only county to have more beds in 2024 than in 2005, due only to a new nursing care facility built by the Minnesota Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

Although capacity has been decreasing across all of Minnesota since 2005, the loss of beds isn’t evenly distributed and neither is the cause of that loss. Besides the loss of beds, there is the loss of the facilities themselves. Entirely rural counties had 26% fewer nursing facilities in 2024 compared to 2005, while entirely urban counties were down by only 9%.

A primary reason for the loss in nursing facility beds is the larger role that assisted living and home health

care are playing in providing long-term care. Compared to two decades ago, a significantly larger percentage of people who would have been living in nursing facilities are now living in other non-institutional facilities or at home.

In many ways, this has been a good thing. Research has shown that individuals with less severe ailments or less intense recovery reap many benefits from being cared for at home or in an assisted living facility, including cost and health outcomes. But the role of these types of facilities is limited and may not be what the patient needs in more severe cases, especially those needing 24-hour care, and there are significant concerns regarding access to these non-institutional care services in rural Minnesota.

What to do?

The data presented demonstrates that the current supply of long-term care services, especially for nursing facility beds, isn’t likely meeting demand in rural areas now. The problem will only grow as demand for services increases over the next 20 years. Rural areas, with their larger senior populations, are going to feel the pinch first, which means they also have the least amount of time to prepare.

Every policy being discussed around long-term care must take into consideration the wide variety of facility capacity serving rural Minnesota and the geographic differences that affect the industry and its ability to operate. Raising standards and pay could help these facilities and agencies provide even better service, but the data show that these changes can’t be done based on the current business model. The economies of scale are such that without a large population to spread the risk over, long-term care facilities will only continue to struggle and close, leaving few options for rural residents.

Now more than ever it’s important to dig deep into this issue to find lasting solutions, both quick and slow, to address the barriers that are making it difficult for facilities and agencies to meet demand. The Center for Rural Policy and Development will be digging deeper into these specific issues to help provide further guidance and policy options over the coming year.

See the full report at ruralmn.org

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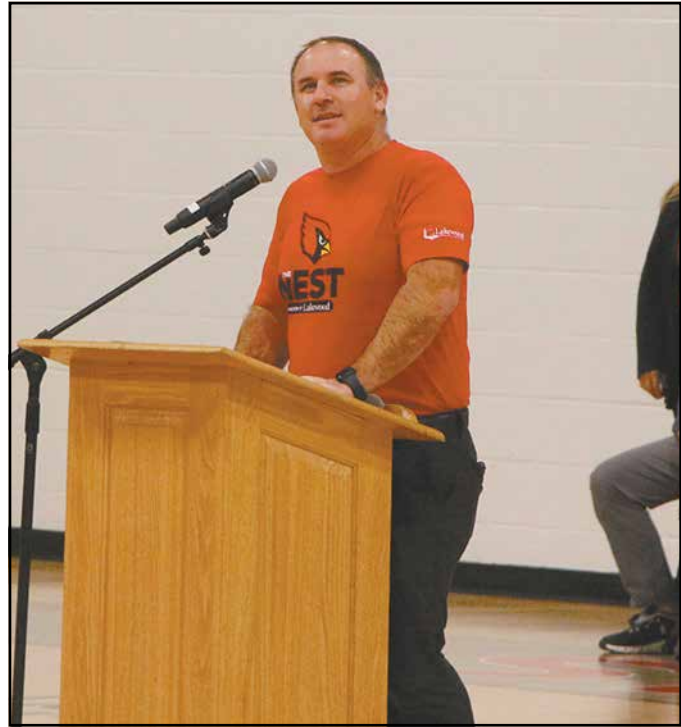


Powered by Lakewood, home of the Cardinals

Collaboration, appreciation and community were the themes of The Nest opening in Staples on Dec. 2. Above, Lakewood Health System CEO Lisa Bjerga talks about the many years that they put in to partner for the new facility. She said the competitions that will be held in the new gym will bring people to town and give the community the ability to grow.

Below, Staples-Motley Superintendent Shane Tappe talks about how the school's values guided the process, calling it "powered by purpose." He said it is a place for student education and community wellness coming together, which led to the name The Nest.

In a video that was shown on the new scoreboard, Bjerga and Tappe teamed up to say the facility is "powered by Lakewood, home of the Cardinals." (Staples World photos by Mark Anderson)



Staffing The Nest

Lori Nienow, center, guides visitors through the process of joining the fitness center at The Nest or getting approved to walk on the free walking track. The facility will be staffed and operated by Staples-Motley School District.



Lakewood Health System and Staples-Motley School Board members participate in cutting the ribbon to officially open The Nest. The large digital scoreboard is a donation by First International Bank and Trust.

Mark Your Calendar

December 4

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

December 5

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

December 6

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

December 7

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT presented by the Staples Area Men's and Women's Chorus will be held Saturday, Dec. 7, at 7 p.m., at Sacred Heart Catholic

Church in Staples. Tickets available at Nelson Insurance in Staples, Markus Hair Design in Motley, from any chorus member, or online.

December 8

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

December 9

AA GROUP MTGS IN MOTLEY are held at the United Methodist Church, 847 3rd Ave. S., on Mondays at 8 p.m.

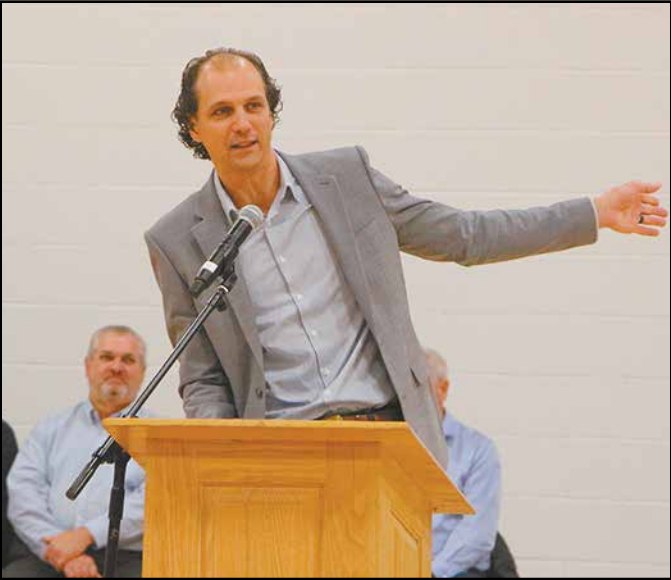
December 10

EXPERIENCE STRENGTH AND HOPE AA GROUP MTGS IN STAPLES are held at the Church of Christ, 27343 490th St., Tuesdays from 6 - 7 p.m. For info., call Dan at 218-640-7228.

'GRIEF SHARE' GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP is held on Tuesdays from 6 - 8 p.m., at Motley Free Methodist Church basement, through Dec. 17. For more information, call 218-352-6888.

Gym memories

Adam Barnett, a 2002 Staples-Motley graduate who was the architect on this project for JLG Architects, told the crowd about having to sneak into the old weight room by crawling through tunnels.



Completed

Staples-Motley School Board Chair Bryan Winkels, right, speaks to the crowd. He said he was attending school when the gym was built in 1989, but it wasn't completed until now.



Lunch with Santa

11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 7
St. John's Lutheran Church, Motley
497 3rd Ave. S

Get Your Picture taken with Santa!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Don't miss Lunch with Santa! This event will be held at St. John's Lutheran Church from 11 am to 1 pm. Pictures can be taken with Santa.

Hosted by Motley Lions Club

Women veterans social and town hall meeting scheduled for Dec. 10

A Women Veterans social and town hall meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, Dec. 10, in Building 4, Room 180, at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center, located at 4801 Veterans Drive, in St. Cloud.

The social, including light refreshments, begins at 4:30 p.m. and the town hall meeting starts at 5 p.m.

The social and meeting is open to all women veterans served by the St. Cloud VA and provides an opportunity to meet fellow women veterans, to meet with local VA leadership, and to learn more about Whole Health and Mental Health program offerings.

OLD SCHOOL HEALTH

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- Essential Oils
- Living Water - Hydrogenated Water
- NASA Tech Air Purifiers with Ozone

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

Monday - Friday
10am - 4pm
or by Appointment

Christmas Boutique!

Annual Fall, Christmas and Clearance SALE!
Home décor and more!

Weds., Dec. 11, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.
Thurs. CLOSED
Fri., Dec. 13, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
Sat., Dec. 14, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Wreaths, winter floral arrangements, vases, trees, baskets, artwork for all seasons; items for gift giving or year-round decorating.

Home of Marlene Finck: 1120 6th St. NE, Staples, Pullman Townhome: Unit 901. At the stoplights go north on 6th St. 11 blks (almost to the end), east side of the street. Look for "Welcome Signs". Follow the sidewalk around the right side of the garage.

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Live Drive-thru Nativity

2024 is the 9th Annual

Tuesday and Wednesday, December 10-11
(notice new days!) 6:00-8:30 p.m.

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Hello World

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ONLINE BIRTHS REMOVED AT THE REQUEST OF LAKEWOOD HEALTH SYSTEM.

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Obituaries

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Heidi Brown

Mrs. Heidi K. Brown, 48, of Scottsboro, Alabama passed away October 24, 2024.

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, December 28 from 1 to 6 p.m. at Holst Acres, Staples.

Heidi Kay Brown was born September 30, 1976 to Cindy and Shaun Gauld in Wadena.



She attended elementary school in Staples and graduated from CD Hylton High School in Woodbridge, VA in 1995. She was employed by Huntsville Hospital as a Registration Manager for 15 years until her terminal diagnosis in October of 2020. She continued to work until her health would not allow her to. She married the love of her life, Richard Brown, on May 12, 2016.

Heidi's life was a beautiful blend of love, sweetness and spirit. She had a zest for life and loved fiercely. She was loyal and protective of those she loved. Heidi's kindness touched everyone she met - her warm smile and gentle heart made her a cherished sister, friend and confidant. Beneath her loving nature, she carried spunky, playful energy that could light up any room. She was quick-witted, always ready with a clever remark or a well-timed joke, leaving laughter in her wake.

Though she left us far too soon, Heidi's memory will live on in the hearts of all who knew her. She taught us the value of joy, the importance of kindness and the

power of a little sass. If you needed her, she was there, ALWAYS. She adored being Mimi to her grandson and loved her nieces and nephews so much. Nothing gave her more pride than her children and husband.

We will carry her spirit with us always. She is now protecting and loving us from above and we will miss her dearly.

She is survived by her husband, Richard; mother, Cindy (Jason) Morales; father, Shaun (Karen) Gauld; three children, Madeline, Daniel (Haley) and Moose (Tallulah); one grandson, Konnor, five sisters, Tiffany Glass, Jamie (Nathan) Miller, Leah Matanich, Jena (Charlie) Lansdell and Heidi Pearson; three brothers, Kevin (Michelle) Matanich, Brent Mertens and Brad (Stacy) Pearson; neices and nephews; her precious puppy, Yona, many aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

She was preceded in death by grandparents, Lyle and Sara Johnson and Verl and Mary Gauld.

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Larry Holmberg

Larry Holmberg, 76, of Motley, passed away peacefully in his sleep on November 24, 2024.

A funeral service will be held Saturday, December 14, at 4 p.m. at the Motley Free Methodist Church. Visitation will be held one hour prior to services at the church.

Larry was born December 18, 1947, to Armin and Lyla (Schmalz) Holmberg in Springfield. He graduated from Motley High School. In 1971, he married Candi Johnsen in Sisseton, SD. Larry spent many years serving as the head custodian at Motley High School and operating his own meat cutting business. In his free time, Larry enjoyed farming, deer hunting, visiting the casino and tending to the flower gardens started by Candi.

Larry is survived by one daughter, Dawn (Jason); two sons, Darin and Tim (Christina); seven grandchildren, Taiya (Grant), Dalton (Emily), Emma (Trevor),



Alex, Lilly, Levi and Emma; three great-grandchildren, Colter, Brynlee and Jett; two sisters, Janet and Theresa; one brother, Dean and many nieces and nephews who all loved him dearly.

Larry was preceded in death by the love of his life of 47 years, Candi and his parents.

Larry will be greatly missed by his family and all who knew him.

Arrangements are by the Brenny Family Funeral Chapel, Staples.

w50c A00006B2024DC04

Staples

Staples Alliance
1512 8th St. NE, Staples 218-894-2891
Pastor Zach Jones
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
Pastor Chris Mathiason
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.....218-894-2296
info@marysacc.org
Fr. Aaron Kuhn and Fr. Rick Aubol
MASS:
Sunday.....8:30 a.m.

Seventh Day Adventist
421 Dakota Ave. SE, Staples
218-894-0033
Saturday Worship.....9:30 am.
Sabbath School.....10:45 a.m.

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

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

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

Aldrich

Balsamlund Lutheran
19550 490th Street, Aldrich
Janet Eckman SMA.....218-837-5831
jre227@yahoo.com
Sunday Worship.....8:30 a.m.

Cushing

Bethany Lutheran
25430 Bison Rd.Cushing, MN
320-749-2140
Pastor Carl Larson
Pastor Chris Mathiason
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
Community Life Pastor: Jim Brown
SUNDAY
Church Worship Gathering.....10:00 a.m.
YouTube Channel.....10:00 a.m.

Cushing Baptist
26298 Bear Rd., Cushing
Pastor Dan Holmes.....320-749-2583
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Bible study.....7:30 p.m.

Leader

Swan Valley Lutheran
Leader.....218-397-2470
Sandy Knight, Synodically Authorized Minister of Word and Sacrament
Sunday Worship
January - July.....9 a.m.
July - January.....11 a.m.

Maple Hill Lutheran
Sandy Knight, Synodically Authorized Minister of Word and Sacrament
Leader.....218-397-2470 (Rural Pine River)
Worship and Sunday School.....9:00 a.m.

Motley

Motley Free Methodist
33 Wellwood St. E
Motley 56466.....218-352-6888
Jim Johnson, Senior Pastor
Casey Reynolds, Assistant Pastor
Sunday Worship.....9:00 and 10:30 a.m.
facebook live.....9 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
AWANA.....4:00-5:30 p.m.
Youth Group.....6:00-8:00 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran
497 3rd Ave. S, Motley.....218-352-6399
Pastor Vicar Paul Koehler
Sunday School and Bible Class.....8:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....9:30 a.m.
St. Michael Catholic Church
1st St. and Birch, Motley.....218-894-2296
info@marysacc.org
Fr. Aaron Kuhn Fr. Gabriel Walz
MASS:
Saturday.....4:00 p.m.

St. Michael
280 1st Ave S, Motley.....218-894-2296
Fr. Aaron Kuhn and Fr. Rick Aubol
MASS:
Sunday.....10:30 a.m. (May - Nov.)
Saturday.....4:00 p.m. (Dec - April)

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

Oylen

Oylen Alliance
City. Rds. 7 and 9, Oylen
218-472-3440 or 218-472-3316
Pastor Neal Malcore
Sunday School.....10:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....11:00 a.m.

Pillager

First Lutheran Church
Pastor Mathew Sundquist
717 River Street S, Pillager, MN
218-746-3775
Sunday Worship.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday School, 2nd and 4th Sundays.....8:30 a.m.

Casino Assembly of God
Pastor Dan Johnson
N. of Motley, Hwy. 64, E. on Cty 34 to Cty. 104.
Phone.....218-746-3839
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....7:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY.....7:00 p.m.

First Baptist
903 River Street South, Pillager
Pastor Jake Anderson
218-746-3768
curious@fbcpillager.com
Worship Gathering.....10:00 a.m.
Connection Point.....9:30 a.m.

Hewitt

Church of the Nazarene
114 Front Street, P.O. Box 146 Hewitt, MN
218-924-2028
Jim and Linda McGaffey, Pastor
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....10:45 a.m.
WEDNESDAY PRAYER.....7:00 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church (LCMS)
524 Front Street, PO Box 116, Hewitt, MN
Pastor Robin Fish
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.

Hewitt Community Church
Hwy. 210, Hewitt, MN
Pastor Kenneth Uhren
Sunday Worship.....10:30 a.m.

Verndale

Verndale Alliance
109 NW Brown Street, Verndale, MN 56481
218-445-5619
Senior Pastor Tony Stanley
Heath Belknap, Pastor of Student Ministries
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 School.....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
18126 County Road 7, Verndale
Vermda;e.....218-894-2296
info@marysacc.org
Fr. Aaron Kuhn and Fr. Rick Aubol
MASS:
Saturday.....6:00 p.m.

St. Hubert Catholic Church
Bluegrass.....218-894-2296
info@marysacc.org
Fr. Aaron Kuhn and Fr. Rick Aubol
MASS:
Sunday Service.....10:00 a.m. (Dec - April)
Saturday.....4:00 p.m. (May - Nov.)

Leaf River Township

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

Wadena

St. Helen's Episcopal Church
22 Dayton Ave. SW, Wadena, MN
218-631-3928
Sunday Worship.....10:00 a.m.

“God and His Return”

Pastor Barry Klein, Staples Church of Christ

Have you thought recently about history and your life in light of the soon return of Jesus?

Because Jesus' return will literally be unlike any other day in the history of humanity, the apostle Peter pleads with the people of the first century to not be apathetic and lazy in how they view, live and approach every God-given day.

I Peter 3:8-9 (NIV) then says, “But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

Jesus in Matthew 24:37-39 reminds people of the days of Noah when all but eight people in the entire population of that day were spiritually alert to the impending flood disaster. It took an incredibly long time to build the ark while all but eight people were going on in their daily “business” oblivious to the soon impending disaster.

It's not an alarmist perspective when a documented future from the God of the universe tells us the day

something either is or will be. God predicted a multitude of times in the Old Testament that He was sending His Son, Jesus to earth in the future to experience His death on a cross, burial and resurrection so that we could have our sins paid for and we could come back to Him in our choice response to that indescribable sacrifice. And He came.

Jesus' second coming is as sure. There will be a day on the calendar that will not finish the way we thought it would be. It's an urgent day for living in a vigilant way in the anticipation of Jesus' soon return. The stakes couldn't be higher.

But are you and I ready? God says in II Peter 3:9 that He doesn't want any one to perish. That means hell. That means some are on the road of perishing, but it's about choices. It's not a popular subject, but neither are any evacuation warnings of what's to come in either pending weather or war.

Are you living each day “ready” come what may? It's coming and no one more than God wants you to be ready. He has pulled all the stops out for you. Have you and I pulled out all of our stops for ready-living for Him?

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For the Staples World

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To request that an obituary, anniversary or other event (including benefit events) be placed word for word, personalized, contain more than one photo, or to run for more than one week, it may be placed as a display advertisement at the regular advertising rates (\$10.75 /col. inch). The item will be placed in our newspaper with a border around it and must be paid for at the time of placement. Deadline for advertising copy is noon on Friday.

Obituaries received from private parties, funeral homes, will be edited to our format and paid for prior to running at our obituary rate (\$10.25 poi) plus \$5 per photo. Minimum is \$60. Deadline for copy is noon on Friday, however, every effort is made to include those with timely services. Death notices are available and are free if followed in the next publication by the entire obituary. Obituaries printed in the Staples World will be posted on our website.

All obituaries are paid advertisements. Obituaries requested to be printed word for word will be charged regular advertising rates and marked as a -Paid Advertisement- with a box around it.

Please be sure to include the name of the deceased, date of birth, age, city of residence, when and where he or she died and the name and city of the funeral home handling the arrangements.



Hoops season

The Staples-Motley boys basketball team has started practices, their first home game is Thursday, Dec. 5, the first game played at the refurbished south gym now called The Nest. (Staples World photos by Mark Anderson)



Girls wrestling on the rise

Staples-Motley wrestling team has 16 girls training for the upcoming season, up from around nine who wrestled last year. Competitions will be at dual meets against other teams with girls wrestlers or at girls-only tournaments. (Staples World photos by Mark Anderson)



Wild creatures' relationships may remind us of our own

Even a casual student of Nature may eventually see that there are relationships between wild creatures that resemble the relationships we have with other humans. Relationships like competition, cooperation, aggression, opportunism, and no doubt more. In wild creatures these are driven by instinct rather than by thought or calculation. But they exist nonetheless, and play a part in Nature's dramas of survival.

During this time of southward migration of many birds, there is an urgency to fortify themselves with the metabolic fuel they will need to sustain migratory flights, which can range from hundreds to thousands of miles. Among the most visible are waterfowl, the ducks, geese, and swans, some of which have nested close by, others as far away as the Arctic Circle.

On a lake that I regularly visit at this time of year, trumpeter swans and Canada geese are congregating, "larding up" while open water remains. The swans will likely hang on the longest, until freeze-up drives them out. But for now, both geese and swans are using the lake as a secure staging area where they rest between feeding forays to harvested grain fields nearby. They're also feeding in the lake's shallows, where they find submerged vegetation and aquatic invertebrates.

You're unlikely to see geese and swans together in flight, but it's not uncommon for them to mingle when feeding. Both swans and Canada geese feed on lakes and wetlands by "tipping up," with their tail feathers pointed skyward, paddling

their feet to maintain a vertical position, and using their necks to reach beneath the surface and grope for food. This is also how the many duck species we call "dabblers," or "puddle ducks" feed; very much unlike the branch of the duck tree we call divers, which dive and swim beneath the surface as they forage for food.

Canada geese are perfectly capable of reaching the aquatic foods beneath the surface; certainly as capable as the dabbling ducks, which have appreciably shorter necks and bodies. But that doesn't mean that a goose is too proud to mooch off others if the opportunity arises.

I've seen this happen more than once. The swans do a "shimmy-shake" with their broad, heavy body, which disturbs the water below the surface and stirs up food. The swan then tips up, tail to the sky and head and neck under water, to probe the depths and bottom to gather food. The Canadas, meanwhile, have been swimming placidly alongside them, shadowing the swans; not tipping up like the swans, but casually picking up bits of food that the swans have stirred up.

At times, one of the geese will get too close to a swan, and the trumpeter will rush the goose and chase it away. Swans are especially territorial and aggressive during the nesting and brood rearing period in spring and summer. But it's clear they do not entirely abandon this attitude toward potential competitors, as some of the opportunistic Canada geese that are dining with them discover!

There is an old saying that "birds of a feather flock together." It warns us that we are known by the company we keep, good or bad. At a more literal, non-moralistic level, it applies to birds, too. Birds that migrate in flocks, as most do, tend to be entirely of one species, with only the occasional exception that proves the rule.

But there are some that

have a well-developed habit of "hanging out" with birds other than their own kind. And not just for the companionship. One that regularly does this is the duck we know as the American widgeon. It is also called "baldpate," for the white feather patch atop the strikingly handsome male's head, which to some suggests a bald spot. The widgeon is one of the aforementioned dabbler or puddle ducks that typically find their aquatic plant and invertebrate foods on, or just below, the surface, rather than diving to feed. But somewhere in its evolutionary development the widgeon found that by hanging out with the right crowd, and showing enough aggressiveness, some of the work of food gathering could be done by others. Biologists politely call the widgeon a "highly flexible forager," one that feeds in crop fields, may feed even on turf grass in parks and urban green areas, and by stealing food brought up from the depths by diving ducks—commonly redheads, or canvasbacks—that forage in deeper water. If one finds unrelated ducks together in a mixed group, odds are good that the "odd ducks" may be widgeon, there perhaps for a free meal!

If we judged wild creatures as we judge humans, we might say that the Canada goose can at times be a lazy opportunist, while the widgeon is an out-and-out thief. But we know better. We can confidently say that the behaviors of wild creatures are not based on free will, or a lack of ethics or scruples. Somewhere back in the mists of evolutionary time, a certain characteristic or behavior proved to have survival value to a creature, and it was passed down as genetic inheritance to future generations.

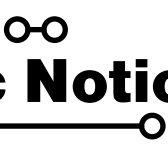
Whether widgeon or wolf, goose or grizzly, swan or shark, the creature itself is blameless, whether its habits are to be to our liking, or not.



New season, old wrestling room

The Staples-Motley boys wrestlers have started the season practicing in the old wrestling room, but will move to the new wrestling space in The Nest after the Dec. 2 opening. The first home match is Friday, Dec 6, at The Nest. (Staples World photos by Mark Anderson)





Public Notices

CITY OF STAPLES NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Staples will conduct a public hearing at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 10, 2024 at the Staples Government Center located at 122 6th St NE, Staples to receive public input regarding the 2025 Final Budget and Property Tax Levy.

All interested persons are invited to attend the hearing and be heard on this matter or submit written comments to the City Clerk prior to the hearing. For a copy of the proposed 2025 Final Budget and Property Tax Levy, contact City Hall at 218-894-2550.

Dated: December 4, 2024

Tara Greer, City Clerk
50pnc

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, December 19, 2024 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 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 Court-house 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
- The applicant is introduced
- Staff report
- Applicant confirms if staff report accurately represents the request
- Public comment
- Board review with applicant, staff, and public
- Approval of agenda
- Approval of October 24, 2024, Board of Adjustment meeting minutes

1. Thomas and Bonnie Dingmann: Section 20, Burnhamville Township, Big Swan Lake

Site Address: 17031 Downy Dr., Grey Eagle, MN 56336 **PID: 06-0058600**

1. Request to reduce the OHWL setback from 100' to 65' to enclose an existing deck in RD Shoreland Zoning.

2. James and Valerie Kluver: Section 22, Kandota Township, Sauk Lake

Site Address: 20580 Alabama Drive, Sauk Centre, MN 56378 **PID: 14-0034500**

1. Request to reduce the Road Right of Way setback from 35 feet to 31 feet in RD Shoreland Zoning.

Adjournment.
Next meeting: January 23, 2025

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
Richard Johnson, Chair
50pnc

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CONGRATULATIONS

SMHS Girl's Cross Country Team

7th at State

Audrey Brownell
1st at State



Audrey Brownell



Aleea Holst



Leah Greenwaldt



Suhaila Mikhaeil



CONGRATULATIONS
Ronnie Noska
State Tennis
Consolation Runner-up



Bella Hines



Naila Mikhaeil



Elise Trif



Staples World photos by Mark Anderson

These area businesses support and congratulate the athletic achievements exemplified by the Girls Cross Country team and individual, Audrey Brownell and the Tennis team and individual Ronnie Noska.

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Carpet & Gift
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Motley Dairy Queen
Spot Cafe
Lake Country Insurance
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Shop

Elite Title & Escrow
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Salute to Cardinal FOOTBALL

**CONGRATULATIONS
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Photos by Bill Johnson, Picture Day Pro
Staples World photos by Mark Anderson



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Salute to Cardinal FOOTBALL

CONGRATULATIONS
State
Runners-up



Staples World photos by Mark Anderson



The Nest draws a crowd

Community members and students packed into the stands at The Nest, during the grand opening on Dec. 2. Following the presentation, the public had a chance to walk around the walking track, check out the new community fitness room and weight room. The walking track and fitness rooms are filled with inspi-

ration messages written on the walls, which seemed to inspire people to come together for conversations. It was also a chance to see new views from the walking track, looking out at the snowy day below and down on the competition gymnasium. (Staples World photos by Mark Anderson)



Video scoreboard

Staples-Motley seniors Alex Schultz and Corinne Olson were featured in a video during the opening of The Nest, shown on the new large scoreboard. Activities Director Josh Lee said it is the largest scoreboard the company has installed in a school gym in the United States.



In the community fitness room, with messaging from Lakewood.



Rachel Paryzek, PA-C, is newest Family Medicine Provider at Lakewood Health System

Lakewood Health System in Staples welcomes Rachel Paryzek, physician assistant, to the family medicine provider team.

Originally from Valparaiso, Neb., Paryzek has an undergraduate degree in exercise science from North Dakota State University, and completed her master's degree in physician assistant studies from Bethel University. She belongs to the Christian Medical and Dental Associations, and the Catholic Medical Association.

As a physician assistant, Paryzek chose to work within family medicine due to her love of caring for patients of all ages. She has special interests in natural family planning, and preventative medicine with exercise and nutrition. As a



Rachel Paryzek, PA-C

student, Paryzek completed a family medicine clinical rotation at Lakewood's Browerville and Eagle Bend clinics, where she worked alongside a number of Lakewood's family medicine advanced practice providers.

"I chose to work at Lakewood because I had a won-

derful clinical rotation here in family medicine, and it allowed me to move back to a smaller, rural community like the one in which I grew up. I'm excited to start building relationships with patients and meet them where they are at in their own health journey."

Paryzek is married to her husband, Jace, and they have one son. She and her family love to be outside, whether that is hiking, hunting, or exploring new places. She is an avid runner and has completed everything from 5Ks to marathons. Paryzek also enjoys crafting and growing in her faith.

To schedule an appointment with Paryzek, call 218-894-1515. She will begin seeing patients starting Dec. 14, 2024.



Visitors explore the weight room.

