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JANUARY 29, 2025

Volume 19 • Issue 1

Township Elections Just Weeks Away, Slate of Candidates Set



Write-in votes will settle who takes at least two open seats on Rice County's townships boards.

(continued on page 12)

Supporting Our Local FFA Chapters & Celebrating National FFA Week Feb. 15 - 22, 2025



Starting in 1948, the National FFA Board of Directors designated a weeklong tradition to recognize George Washington's example and legacy as a leader and farmer.

For the past 76 years, FFA members across the country have taken part in agricultural, leadership and service-based activities during National FFA Week.

(continued on page 9)

Announcements

• **Winter Parking Ban:** The winter parking ban is in effect from October 31st through April 15th between the hours of 2am and 6:30am. There is no parking allowed on any city street. Vehicles in violation will be ticketed. Ordinance §71.06.

Do you have an announcement?

Email:

hometownmessenger@gmail.com

What's Up at Windy Willows

By Cheri Roshon

Ahhh, winter is here, and the cabin fever epidemic is upon us! Ok, so we live in a place that half the year is cold, so we are used to it, but Cabin Fever is a real thing. Unable to get out as much when the temperatures dip

below freezing, there is only so much you can do in the house. I know some folks love to be outdoors in this cold, but I am not one of them. I prefer the warmth of my own home, and going out looking for new and fun things to do.

(continued on page 3)

Dundas City Council Hears Updates on Several Road Construction Projects

Courtesy of KYMN Radio News

The Dundas City Council was sworn in at their first meeting of the year. Councilors Luke LaCroix and Luke Swartwood were both reelected in November uncontested and now start their second term.

(continued on page 17)

Jim Tracy Scholarship Applications Being Accepted

The James Tracy scholarship program was established because of a Dennison area farmer, James W. Tracy.

(continued on page 9)



Jim Tracy



Hot Dish Cook Off and Live Music part of Dennison Flake Out Festival Sat., Feb. 1st



The Devney Brothers

The Dennison Lions Club is planning the 2025 Flake Out Festival & Winter Parade for Saturday, February 1st.

The club is holding a raffle in conjunction with the days events to raise funds to support Lions Clubs activities, support other area non-profit entities and those in need, which the club donates to and supports throughout the year.

A \$500 1st Prize, plus other cash and prizes will be given away. Winner will be announced around 9 PM Saturday night at Fireside Lounge.

(continued on page 5)

Shop Local for your Valentine's Delights!

By Cheri Roshon

We all know, living in small towns, that "things" are usually cheaper if we go to a larger town to purchase what we need. But do we factor in the cost of driving to Rochester, Minneapolis, or any of the places that the price of a product may save a buck? Or the time we spend getting there?



(continued on page 4)

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There's Hope



BY Jon Dudek, co-founder of Isaiah Ministries, bringing Biblical teaching to help overcome life's everyday challenges.
www.isaiahministries.cc

Can you believe it is a new year? I am declaring a year of breakthrough, blessings, and abundance for both you and me. However, perhaps you think that maybe this year will just be another year of struggle. Another year of disappointment, conflict, and pain. If you feel this way, you are not alone.

These last few weeks and months I have wondered, what am I doing with my life? Why do I feel discouraged? Perhaps you're like me and your emotions can be all over the place, and sometimes you may feel lonely in the journey.

I know we may feel alone and even wonder what life is all about, but as a follower of Christ, we are not alone and there is a plan and purpose for our lives. It is so important for us to renew our minds with truth, and a great way to do this is to start the day by reading a few verses or chapters in the Word of God, the Bible. It will radically transform you and help turn that hopelessness to hopefulness.

I want to encourage you with a few verses that have spoken to me, and I hope they will minister to you. When we feel like we are all alone, a great verse that can bring comfort is, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5b). You and I are not alone in the adventures of life. You and I are not alone in the ups and downs. God is right there with

us—even if we don't sense Him, the Word of God says He is. We don't trust in what we feel, we trust in what the Bible declares.

Another verse of encouragement is Zechariah 4:6b, which states, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord." When we feel we need to fight with all of our might, we need to stop. Whatever is in front of us, we will not need to walk it out alone. Jesus will be with us every step of the way.

You and I are blessed to walk our lives with Christ. He will help us, direct us, listen to us, and hear us. As I was doing my daily devotional the other day, in the book of Proverbs I read, "Don't get sidetracked" (4:27).

Sometimes we get caught up in worldly things or watch what everyone else is doing in their lives. Stay the course. With God's strength, push forward in whatever challenges come your way. The enemy wants to discourage you and cause you to be fearful and anxious in life. Don't listen to him. The Lord Jesus sends us love, compassion, and what has been highlighted to me recently, supernatural peace.

Can you believe in Philippians 4:6-7 it literally tells us how to handle anxiety and how we can have peace that is beyond our understanding? "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (emphasis mine).

During times of feeling fear and anxiety with all areas of life, God wants to overwhelm us with His peace. A peace that manifests during a storm. A peace that will calm our minds and hearts to make rational decisions during tough and challenging times in life. Have you ever experienced this?

I know in my life recently I have felt this peace. I don't quite know how to explain it, but it feels as if a calmness comes over you when the world around you is crumbling. When nothing seems to be going right, this peace settles your inner being to help you respond in a Godly fashion and not a fear-based reaction.

If you haven't experienced this, pray and ask the Lord to pour out His presence and peace that surpasses all understanding. May the Lord bless each one of you, and may His

peace calm you in every way. There is hope. If you have read this and are not a Christian but want to accept Jesus Christ in your heart, read, believe, and confess the following words.

"Jesus, I ask that you come into my life and my heart. I know I am a sinner, and I ask that you forgive me. I believe that you died on the cross for my sins and that God raised you from the dead. Jesus, I believe that you are Lord and Savior. Help me grow in my relationship with you. Thank You. Amen" (Romans 3:23, 1 John 1:9-10, Romans 10:9-10,

Ephesians 2:8, Acts 3:26).

If you believe and confessed the above prayer, I believe that you are saved. You have made the best decision in your life and your new journey has begun. My recommendation is to find a church that teaches from the Word of God, get into the Bible, and find a Christian to mentor you. If you have any questions specifically about this prayer, you are more than welcome to reach out to me.

Blessings, Jon Dudek
Isaiahministries.cc

Area Church Directory

Lightening Our Burdens

At that time I said to you, "You are too heavy a burden for me to carry alone."

— Deuteronomy 1:9

Moses, the leader of God's people during their long time of wandering in the desert, learned that he could not carry the heavy burdens of the people on his own. The Israelites had grown in number. Bearing their problems, burdens, and disputes was too much for one person to handle. So he shared the workload with other leaders from among the twelve tribes of Israel, and they developed a system that worked for everyone. (See also Exodus 18.)

New challenges are a part of life, and we cannot keep doing what we are used to if it no longer works. We can talk to a pastor, family members, close friends, or other trusted persons when our burdens are too much for us—emotionally, physically, or spiritually. Many of us today face an overload of situations that are causing anxiety in our lives: family concerns, financial troubles, broken relationships, work dissatisfaction, career pressures, societal issues. Struggling on our own is not healthy, and eventually we need help. The Lord wants us to share one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).

As followers of Jesus, we can make the right choice by lightening our burdens. Jesus invites us to receive rest for our souls (Matthew 11:28-30). We don't have to carry our burdens alone. We can give them to the Lord.

Lord Jesus, thank you for bearing our burdens. We are not alone. You have given us people who love and care for us. Help us to find rest for our souls and strength to carry on. Amen.

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YTH Wednesdays at 6:30p.m. Canvas Recovery Group meets Thursdays at 6:30p.m.

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Pastor Penny Bonsell • pastor@littleprairieumc.org

507-663-6150 church phone • 651-503-4279 Cell

9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship; Sunday School & Nursery; Adult Group 8a.m.

CITY LIGHT CHURCH 2140 Hwy. 3 South, Northfield, MN

Pastor Pete Haase • 507-645-8829 Call for service times

LIFE21 CHURCH 2100 Jefferson Road (just north of Target)

Pastor Brent Bielenberg • 645-7730 life21church.com

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NORTHFIELD EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH 5600 East 110th Street

Pastor Dan Runke • 663-0133 • northfieldefc.org

9:30 a.m. Worship; 11:00 a.m. Christian Life Classes

HOSANNA CHURCH - NORTHFIELD 205 2nd St. S., Dundas

Pastor Dean Swenson • 507-664-9007 • www.hosannalc.org

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Wednesday: Middle School Ministry - doors open at 5:30; programming 6-7:15;

High School Ministry - doors open at 7pm; programming 7:30-9pm

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THANKS

FOR SHOPPING & DINING

Locally!

What's Up at Windy Willows

(continued from page 1)

One place I love going to is Windy Willow Farm Adventures. Located at 9748 110th St.

E, Northfield, it is not far from Dennison, and once you get there, you will be greeted by humans and animals, all of which are friendly!

This winter, Colleen and the crew have come up with some pretty fun and unique classes for you to not only enjoy, but come away with a handmade treasure to keep or to gift to someone special.

On top of the classes, there is a very nice collection of handmade gifts for everyone on your list. You can get farm fresh eggs, baked goods, jewelry, coffee cups and so much more!

Some of the classes coming up are:

OBITUARY

Curtis L. Piper

Curtis L. Piper, age 90, died on January 21, 2025 at the Northfield Hospital.



Funeral services were held at Boldt Funeral Home, Faribault on Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. with visitation one hour prior to the service. Interment was at Cannon City Cemetery.

Curtis LeRoy, son of Donald and Christine (Silbernagle) Piper, was born on November 2, 1934 in Faribault. Curtis was a dedicated farmer, tending to the family farm in Cannon City. He served in the MN National Guard for over twenty years. He was active with the Rice County Steam & Gas Association and enjoyed skiing, making maple syrup, cutting wood, caring for his cats, and traveling, including helping with the recovery after Hurricane Katrina.

He is survived by his sister, Arlene (David) Caron; sister-in-law, Diane Piper; nieces and nephews, Rick Caron, Doug (Linda) Caron, Brad Caron, Rhonda (Lee) Hagre, Travis (Amy) Piper and Crystal (Luke) Sargent; 13 great nieces and nephews; many great great nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Donald; nephew, Jeff Caron; niece, Pam Caron; great-nephew, Andy Caron.

Boldtfuneralhome.com for information and guest book.



Glass Mosaic Class where you will pick one of 3 projects to make with glass. Class part 1 is on Feb. 8 at 1 pm, and Class part 2 is Feb. 15th at 4:30 pm.

Next up is Mandala Rock Painting on Feb 9th at 1:30 pm

Bunny Bonanza Come and play with the bunnies! A very popular event, bring the whole family and immerse your self in some bunny fun from 10 am to 4 pm on Feb 15th & 16th!

And the most fun class ever...GOAT

YOGA! There will be about 15 classes for this very popular class, so go to the website and get signed up for this or any other classes happening through the winter!

Who says winter can't be fun??? For more information, shoot them an email at windy-willowfarmadventure@gmail.com, or visit the website to learn more about this incredibly fun place to play!!! And please pass this along to any of your peeps who are interested in turning a cold Minnesota winter into a really fun adventure!! See you there!

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National FFA Week February 15-22, 2025



Shop Local for your Valentine's Delights!

(continued from page 1)

Or, most importantly, how our local friends

and neighbors are doing their part to have available the things we need to have for our daily living without driving to another town?

Starting a business in a small town is a gamble. There are less people to buy from us, and maybe not such a wide variety in the things we can stock. But most of the businesses around these parts are willing to try their best to find what you want, and at a competitive price. Sure, you can go online and find almost anything these days, but you will also spend time to find what you want, can't ask any questions, and oh yeah....pay for shipping and handling. And as I have found out recently, you may not get the product that was advertised. And just TRY to get your money back!


In most cases, that won't happen.

I believe the people in this area are honest, friendly, and willing to meet you halfway to make a deal. And look around! We have bakeries, clothing stores, gift shops, and some of the best restaurants around. Gift certificates are an easy way to gift the ones you love! You can purchase everything from guns to tires. Or cookies to massages. Even flowers to liquor. Perhaps your mom would like a gift certificate for her house to be cleaned? Or your father needs some hunting supplies? Grandma and grandpa could use a gift certificate to a restaurant so they can have a night out, and not have to cook. How about a round of golf, or a goat yoga class at Windy

Willow Adventures? And jewelry! Who wouldn't like the gift of bling? A day at the spa with a massage, a foot bath and a facial, all topped off with a new hair style? All these things can be found near you, and the people who sell them to you stand by their products, and are proud to be able to sell them to you.

So, I invite you to sit down and make a list of the people you wish to gift this Valentine's Day, and shop local! Save time and money, and get the perfect gift for the ones you love!








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**Hot Dish
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part of
Dennison
Flake Out Festival
Sat., Feb. 1st**

(continued from page 1)

(Need Not Be Present To Win).

Raffle tickets are available now, and can be purchased at 625 Bar & Grill, Dennison Depot, Fireside Lounge, Heritage Bank, or

any Lions Club Member. They Make a Great Christmas Gift too!

The Annual Lighted Parade will take place at 6:30 PM, and anyone can participate. A Cash Prize will be given to the best float.

Other returning favorites include Euchre at Fireside Saturday morning, with 100% Prize Payout. Designer Purse & Gift Card Bingo at City Hall in the afternoon.

New this year, Cook up your best HOT DISH recipe and bring it down to city hall for judging, with a cash prize for 1st and 2nd place. Live music will also be a part of the evening festivities, with Melissa Schultz at 625 beginning at 6 PM and The Devney Brothers returning to entertain at the Fireside beginning at 8 PM

If you have any questions, contact Lion President Diane at 612-532-0268. Check out the full schedule in this issue of the Messenger.



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The Importance of Time Spent Outdoors for Children



By Brian Kettering, Director of Day Camps at Camp Victory Zumbro Falls, MN

The concept of designated “outdoor time” is a mostly recent phenomenon. Some folks born in a year that starts with the number 19 can remember a time where your mother gave you a designated inside time, one that was typically tracked by sunsets or streetlights. With the rapid rise of technology, specifically the advancements of the smart phone, social media, and video games, the tides have turned drastically. Gone are the days where the after-school activity was to ride your bike to the

park, throw a baseball in the yard with dad, or skip stones at your favorite creek or pond. Now have come the days of digital homework assignments, unlimited movies and television streamed to your home, and online video game stores with flowing discounts that seem to keep the wallet of a gamer ever so light. With all the great reasons to stay inside, why would anyone bother going outside? Perhaps an even more specific question is necessary: as a parent living in the middle of the digital revolution, why should I send my kids outside more often?

As an avid outdoorsman, I can think of about 20 good reasons to go outside, but I’ll keep it simple and offer three reasons every child should spend some time outside nearly every day.

- A study in Denmark showed that significant time spent in “green spaces” (ones with natural plant life) had been shown to decrease mental health diagnoses in adolescents. We live in an unprecedented age when it comes to our awareness of mental health, especially for our younger generations. Every little piece of our lifestyle influences our mental health, and most studies agree that time spent in nature can have a very positive influence on it.

- Time spent outdoors can work wonders for you and your child’s physical health just as well. Regular time spent in nature can improve your cardiovascular, respiratory, and muscular health, as well as strengthen your senses by working out your eyes, ears, and nose!

- Time spent outdoors allows your mind a place to imagine. Imagination deprivation is deteriorating the joyful, youthful spirit of our adolescents today. In the book *The Coddling of the American Mind* by Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt, the duo explores the psychological and sociological damage that can (and does) exist when children are deprived of unsupervised, unstructured play time. There is absolutely no better space for the cultural remedy of imagination deprivation than in the great outdoors.

Perhaps you know all of this, but you’re wondering, “where do I start?” It can certainly be difficult to cultivate a lifestyle that creates space for outdoor time from scratch, especially in urban environments. Here are some tips for easing into it:

- Start small. Consider taking a short walk every other day as a family during pleasant seasons and playing in the snow for thirty minutes during colder ones. Nothing is too small to try!

- Find community-oriented, family-friendly sports options. I once played with a regular ultimate frisbee group against children as young as 10 years old and adults as old as 70, all on the same field. It was casual enough to be safe but competitive enough to be fun. It was also a great opportunity for multi-generational engagement.

- Consider adding an outdoor hobby to your family that provides natural rewards, like gardening, foraging, or fishing. There are numerous books, YouTube channels, and podcasts about all three things, and Amazon has



all the tools you need to get started affordably.

- Consider attending a family retreat or family camp at your local summer camp! Perhaps I’m biased towards camping as a camp professional, but I have seen, heard, and experienced wonderful family development and outdoor engagement happen at camps all over the country.

I hope you feel encouraged to start including regular outdoor time into your family rhythm. Get out, get moving, and watch your child’s mental, physical, and imaginative health improve!

Denmark study source: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6421415/>

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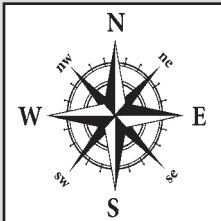
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Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes

I Can Fix Most Anything



By Terry Campbell

This column is written by Messenger editor and Minnesota native Terry Campbell. Terry now splits his time between Minnesota when it's warm here and Tennessee when it's cold here.

Spending my life as a farmer I have learned to repair most types of equipment. To begin with it was a necessity. Farming in the mid 1980's was a survival mode existence. I took it for granted, if it broke you ran it into the shop and made it unbroke. Most farmers shops are a testament to that. There are parts saved and stored from the past fifty years, because one day you are certain you will need it to fix something. Or just create something new to fit an application the market hadn't come up with yet. There is a magazine called Farm Show, which is full of inventions from farm shops made by creative farmers across the country.

Often times I would think on it over night to come up with a solution. I find that the longer one mulls a project over in their mind, the more likely it is to work. And more than not there are multiple designs to get it to work right. But I often surprised myself with creative ways to rebuild something.

Someone who didn't grow up with a father who farmed may not have any idea that probably nothing is unfixable. We come from a society which throws things away rather than repair them. But I am glad I have enough influence from previous generation to do otherwise.

erwise.

My step-daughter brought something home from the big city this summer. It was a collapsable grocery cart. Living in the city, it is simpler to walk to the market and back, than to drive and look for a parking spot on the busy streets. Wheeling bags is much easier than carrying them. It had collapsed, but not in the way the makers intended for it to. She assumed it was not fixable but brought it home to me because it had four perfectly good wheels on it. I was told I could have it for the parts. She had seen the covered parts graveyard I called the shop. She knew it would have plenty of company here. It was a tangle of metal tubes, chrome plated steel basket material, rods and wheels.

I looked at it and visualized how it was constructed to neatly fold up and stow away and yet instantly deploy into a usable cart again. I guess kind of like a transformer to the younger reader. Imagining the way it was intended to function, I realized the pivoting rivets had simply given up holding it together. Eyeballing the size of the hole that was left, after I extracted the cheap Chinese connectors, I went to the bolt drawer and brought back some #12 x 2" stove bolts and locking nuts. A couple minutes later it was as good as new.

She was quite surprised to find that the little cart was ready for a new life. It went back to the big city to help with domestic chores when she returned. For me it was just another day of fixing things.

This fall she sent back something she found



in her apartment. She saved it for me and thought it would have some value. It was a 5/16" flange nut and a 3/8" fender washer on a 3" carriage bolt. She probably doesn't know that I use flange nuts and fender washers all the time. Flange nuts have a wide washer attached to the base of the nut and fender washers are super wide washers, atleast four times the width of standard washers. When working with wood or metal with oversized holes one needs the extra washer width. But she knows I can fix things. And I have the affirmation that someone from a younger generation acknowledges that. And that is quite satisfying for an old guy to see.

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A Minnesotan: Sledding



By RosaLin Alcoser

2025. How can it already be 2025? It feels like not too long ago we were ringing in the new decade. I could take the time to talk about the first five years of the 2020s, but instead I'm going to talk about sledding. More specifically the first time that I went sledding.

Recently my mom was telling me about how her neighbors were taking their one-year old grandchild out for their first time sledding. Which got me thinking about the first time my sister and I went sledding.

We moved to Minnesota from Arkansas the fall of 1999; meaning that I was old enough to remember the first time that I ever saw snow. Which frankly TV Christmas specials did not prepare me for. It turned out to be cold, wet and we learned the hard way that there's a difference between powdery snow and wet snow.

That first snow in 1999 we had no idea what we were doing when it came to playing in the snow. So after our mom bundled us up in our new snow gear, told us not to breathe through our mouths so our lungs wouldn't freeze, and sent us out the door. We decided to try our hand at sledding.

There were two problems with this idea. The first was we had not idea how to sled. The same TV specials that hadn't prepared us for snow also hadn't given clear instructions on how to sled. The second problem was that we did not own sleds.

Not having sleds didn't really stop us from going sledding though. Instead we tried a couple of things. First we tried using cardboard boxes, which as you might imagine did not work at all. To this day we agree it was our worst attempt in this endeavor. After that we tried using our plastic alligator teeter totter and toddler rocky horse. Both of which worked better than the boxes.

Neither of which worked out well for my three-year old self. Or at least not as well as they did for my older sister. When she tried it she went down the hill, However, when I tried it I just fell over into the snow. So I ended up deciding that the best option would be to simply roll down the hill. Which really wasn't so much of sledding as it was just rolling down a hill.

I think soon after that first attempt our parents did get us saucer sleds and those worked way better then anything that we had tried to use as sleds. Once we had sleds and got the hang of sledding it did become a favorite winter activity for the Alcoser sisters.




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NATIONAL FFA WEEK

February 15-22, 2025



The National FFA Organization promotes the growth of tomorrow's agricultural leaders through education.

We salute Cannon Falls, Goodhue, Randolph, Kenyon-Wanamingo and Northfield FFA members for their dedication to developing leadership skills, confidence and career direction that will help them succeed in their chosen fields.

From hard work on the farm to important lessons in the classroom, FFA has shown its strength and determination to achieve success.



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Supporting Our Local FFA Chapters & Celebrating National FFA Week Feb. 15 - 22, 2025

(continued from page 1)

"National FFA Week is a significant event that really showcases the heart of our organization," says Christine White, chief program officer for the National FFA Organization. "Local chapters use this as an opportunity to highlight program success, recognize community supporters and amplify the mission of the organization."

Again this year, more than 700,000 FFA members will spend the week of February 15 - 22 developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

They will do so in creative and innovative ways. Whether volunteering to clean up the local fairgrounds or throwing a citywide party to celebrate the 1732 birth of our first president, there is no limit to how this week can be recognized.

"It could be hosting a breakfast for teachers, an open house for FFA supporters or bestowing chapter-level degrees. It truly is an opportunity to celebrate all things FFA. As a former member and agricultural educator, FFA Week is something I always looked forward to since

it was a way to share my passion for the organization," White says. "FFA members should embrace the planning, execution and celebration that occurs with developing activities and events for FFA Week. The skills of teamwork, communication and advocating are ones you will carry with you beyond your FFA experience."

Keep track of all that is happening by following #FFAWeek on your social channels. Find more about all the resources available at FFA.org/National-FFA-Week.

The organization also wants to Thank Alumni and Supporters!

Whether they wore the blue jacket or simply support an organization they were never a member of, these individuals are celebrated on National FFA Alumni and Supporters Day. Since 1971, alumni and supporters have found ways to significantly contribute to their local chapters.

Jeremy Krerowicz, the past president of the Denmark FFA Alumni in Wisconsin, fondly remembers his time as a member, and he used those experiences as motivation to lead the 2020 Outstanding FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapter.

"Our members love to see the students grow," Krerowicz says. "We love seeing them being recognized at state and national conventions, during their chapter banquet and throughout the community. It shows that we are doing our part. We help them with the resources they need to get that far."

In every state in the nation, alumni and supporters chapters work to create environments

where people and communities can develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success.

Find out more information at www.mnffa.org, or www.ffa.org

Jim Tracy Scholarship Applications Being Accepted (continued from page 1)

This will be the 10th year the Minnesota FFA Foundation will be offering the James W. Tracy Scholarships. The Minnesota FFA Foundation is pleased to bring life to James Tracy's dream of supporting youth in agriculture, keep rural America strong, and support FFA and 4-H members by providing scholarships to youth involved in agriculture.

James W. Tracy was born in 1941. He grew up on a farm near Dennison, Minnesota. During his childhood, James was an active FFA and 4-H member. After graduating from high school, Jim served two years in the U.S. Marine Corps. He loved helping young people and wanted to see agriculture and rural America remain strong. He farmed his land until he lost his battle with illness in 2014.

Besides being a lifelong member of his church, he was an active member in the Lions Club. Jim was a generous man who donated to many causes. He loved helping young people and wanted to see agriculture and rural America remain strong. Tracy had a deep love for the land and farming.

But Jim's story doesn't end there, his desire to support youth in Agriculture led him to donate his farm to an organization that he admired most, the FFA. The Minnesota FFA Foundation is pleased to bring life to James Tracy's dream of providing scholarships to youth involved in Agriculture. Generations of young people will benefit from this donation as the funds will be used to support youth agricultural scholarships.

This scholarship is open to Minnesota FFA and 4-H Members.

Scholarship Eligibility:

Must be a resident of Minnesota

Must be enrolled or plan to enroll in an accredited post-secondary school in the U.S.

Must plan to pursue an academic award (certificate, diploma, or degree) in agriculture or animal husbandry

This year \$2,000 scholarships will be awarded to students based on the following criteria:

Leadership, involvement, and agriculture interest

Three essay questions, limited to no more than 500 words

Two letters of recommendation. Letters must be from non family members. One letter of recommendation is required to be from someone who has known / worked with the student during the previous 12 months.

Upon completion of the recipients Fall 2025 semester at a post-secondary school, the scholarship recipient will need to send a transcript (copy acceptable) to the MN FFA Foundation showing satisfactory progress. Transcript can be emailed to: amanda.sommers@mnffaoundation.org. Once transcript is received by the MN FFA Foundation and upon completion of your following semester/term, a check will be sent to the scholarship recipient.

Scholarship Timeline:

Applications are due by February 1st, 2025
Scholarship recipients will be announced by April 15, 2025.

For full details please go to our website. Again this year students will apply with a Google Form application that can be found here. Applicants can edit their applications if need be. Just an FYI: Applicants no longer need to be limited to High School Seniors. College students can apply. If selected as a recipient of this scholarship, students will be able to receive this scholarship once as a high school student and once as a college student.

Deadline is February 1, 2025. Scholarship recipients will be announced by April 15, 2025.

Questions on the James Tracy Scholarship Program can be directed to:

Amanda Sommers, Program Coordinator
Phone: (507)461-2214

OR

Email:

amanda.sommers@mnffaoundation.org

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A woman and a young girl are in a bedroom. The woman is holding the girl, and they are both looking at a window. The window has a white frame and a grid pattern, looking out onto a green landscape.

A man and a woman are in a living room. They are standing in front of a large, floor-to-ceiling window that looks out onto a balcony and a green landscape. The man is wearing a red shirt and the woman is wearing a white dress.

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Township Elections Just Weeks Away, Slate of Candidates Set

(continued from page 1)

No affidavits for candidacy were filed in the 2025 race for Northfield Township treasurer, or to fill the term of the remaining year of the term for the Morristown Township clerk.

The treasurer's seat, a two-year term, is up in all every township except Forest Township where the treasurer is appointed, rather than elected.

In addition to two open seats on the ballot, Erin Township voters will decide whether or not to appoint, rather than elect its town clerk and treasurer. While Forest is currently the only township to appoint its treasurer, four Rice County townships appoint their clerk.

One supervisor seat is up in each township. All are threeyear terms.

Township elections and their annual meetings are Tuesday, March 11. Polls hours and meeting times vary and are listed below.

Tuesday, Feb. 18 is the last day to pre-register to vote for the 2025 township elections. Paper applications must be received by the Elections Office at the Rice County Government Services Building, 320 Third St. NW, Faribault by 5 p.m. on Feb. 18. Voters regis-

tering online through the Minnesota Office of the Secretary of State's secure website -- bit.ly/33cMK5X -- have an 11:59 p.m. deadline.

Residents can also vote absentee from Friday, Feb. 7 through Friday, March 7 at the Rice County Government Services Building. The office is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except for Monday, Feb. 17, when county offices close for Presidents Day. Voters can also cast an absentee ballot from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, March 8 and from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday, March 10 at the Government Services Building.

Running for office are:
Bridgewater

Treasurer: Debbie Salaba
Supervisor Seat B: Andrew Ebling
Vote from 2 p.m-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 500 Railway St, Dundas
Annual meeting: 8:15 p.m.

Cannon City

Treasurer: Brandi Sprung
Supervisor: Karl R. Francis Jr.
Vote from 4-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 4490 Crystal Lake Trail, Faribault
Annual meeting: 8:15 p.m.

Erin

Treasurer: Elgin Trcka
Supervisor: David Ceplecha
Vote from 3-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 12378 Independence Ave., Lonsdale
Annual meeting: 8:15 p.m.

Forest

Supervisor: Ronald Gernandt and Bob Jacobson

Vote from 2-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 3625 Millersburg Boulevard, Faribault
Annual meeting: 1 p.m.

Morristown

Treasurer: Vicky Timm
Supervisor: Wayne Saemrow
Clerk: No affidavits for candidacy were filed
Vote from 5-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 402 Division St. S, Morristown
Annual meeting: 8:15 p.m.

Northfield (Precincts 1 and 2)

Treasurer: No affidavits for candidacy were filed
Supervisor: Josh Malecha and Cole Lindenfelser
Vote from 2-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 10901 Jacobs Ave., Northfield
Annual meeting: 8:10 p.m.

Richland

Treasurer: Alan Meyer
Supervisor: James Donkers
Vote from 5-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 9985 240th St. E, Faribault
Annual meeting: 4 p.m.

Shieldsville

Treasurer: Kimberly Pesta
Supervisor: Dale Kuchinka
Vote from 3-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 7250 154th St. W, Faribault
Annual meeting: 2 p.m.

Walcott

Treasurer: Carrie Heiderscheidt
Supervisor: Paul Wunderlich and Donald Novak

Vote from 5-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 4020 240th St E., Faribault
Annual meeting: 8:15 p.m.

Warsaw

Treasurer: Ron Kuball
Supervisor: Ryan Witte
Vote from 5-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 22955 Dalton Ave, Faribault
Annual meeting: 4 p.m.

Webster

Treasurer: Robert Michel
Supervisor: Brian L. McFadden and Daniel Rogers
Vote from 3-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 4175 Delano Ave., Webster
Annual meeting: 1 p.m.

Wells

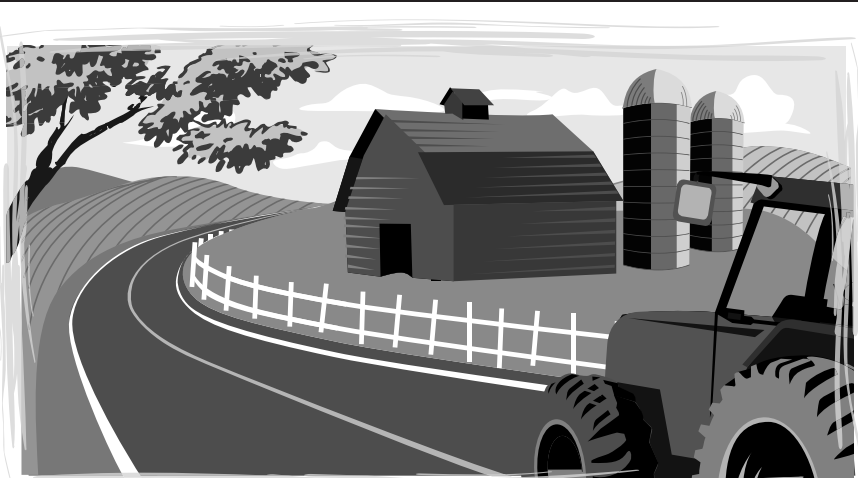
Treasurer: Flavia Berg
Supervisor: Richard G. Cap
Vote from 2-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 18400 Roberds Lake Boulevard, Faribault
Annual meeting: 1 p.m.

Wheatland

Treasurer: Sara Chlan
Supervisor: Brian Pieper
Vote from 3-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 9641 50th St W, Veseli
Annual meeting: 8:15 p.m.

Wheeling

Treasurer: Marilyn Danks
Supervisor: Duane Bailey
Vote from 5-8 p.m. at Town Hall, 8492 Nerstrand Boulevard, Nerstrand
Annual meeting: 8:15 p.m.



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Prevent Lung Cancer: Test Your Home for Radon Gas

January is National Radon Action Month. Rice County Public Health joins the Minnesota Department of Health and US Environmental Protection Agency to encourage

everyone to test their home for radon, the invisible radioactive gas found at elevated levels in many Minnesota homes.

Radon is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas that occurs naturally in Minnesota soils. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among people who never smoked. Fortunately, the risk is largely preventable through testing homes and fixing radon problems. The only way for residents to know if their home has radon is to test.

With more people working and schooling from home, it's even more important to test homes.

Tests should be done in the lowest level of the home that is frequently occupied. Test devices are usually placed in the home for 2-5 days. The best time to test is during the heating season, but testing can be done year-round.

Test kits are available at many hardware stores, or directly from radon testing laboratories. Rice County residents may also stop by the Faribault office located in the lower level of the Rice County Government Services Building, 320 Third St. NW, to request a free kit.

Health professionals recommend testing for radon during real estate transactions and a radon test should be incorporated into a home inspection. Sellers must disclose any prior radon testing and provide a twopage publication to buyers, under state law. MDH licenses home inspectors and other professionals who test for radon. A list of currently licensed radon measurement professionals can be found on the Find a Radon Measurement Professional page on the MDH

site.

In homes found to have high radon levels, radon reduction typically involves installing a venting pipe and fan to pull the gas from under the home to the outside. This reduces the amount of radon in the home to low levels. A list of currently licensed radon mitigation professionals can be found on the Find a Radon Mitigation Professional page on the MDH website.

MDH conducts free inspections of radon mitigation systems installed after June 1, 2020. The inspections ensure systems were installed correctly and meet minimum requirements. To learn more, contact the MDH Indoor Air Unit to request an inspection at mailto:health.indoorair@state.mn.us.

To help residents get a more accurate picture of radon levels in Minnesota, MDH has a series of maps showing information about Radon in Minnesota. Some of the key find-

ings were:

- About 40% of Minnesota homes have dangerous levels of radon.

- The average radon level in Minnesota homes is about 4.2 pCi/L compared to 1.3 pCi/L nationwide.

- Only about 1-2% of homes in Minnesota are tested annually, but every home in Minnesota should be tested at least every five years.

- Testing and mitigation is less frequent in communities with lower incomes and more renters.

Learn more about the radon maps, radon testing, radon mitigation, and licensure in Minnesota:

- MN Public Health Radon Data Maps
- Purchase a low-cost radon test kit
- Radon in Homes
- Or call the MDH Indoor Air Unit at 651-201-4601 or 1-800-798-9050

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12:00 PM Bring Entry to City Hall
12:30 PM-1:30 PM Tasting/Voting
2:00 PM Hot Dish Winner Announced (1st & 2nd Place Payout)

Native Plants 101 Workshop

Join us for a workshop on Minnesota Native Plants! We will go over some of the basics of native plants, different types of plantings and available cost-share programs that can help with these projects.

Native Plants 101 Workshop

Time & Location: Feb 08, 2025, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Straight River Room, 1900 Fairgrounds Dr, Faribault, MN 55021, USA

About The Event

Join us on Saturday, February 8th, 2025, from 9 - 11 am to learn about some Minnesota Native Plants. Learn about the benefits, limitations, ecological information and identifying factors of some of our Minnesota native plants. There will also have some preserved native species present to see in person! We will also go over some common native plant projects, ways to start them and available cost-share to help with these projects.

To RSVP to this event, please call or email Trevor Rudenick at (507) 357-8556 or trevor.rudenick@lesueurcounty.gov.

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RCSO Captain Completes Intensive 10-week Leadership Program



The Rice County Sheriff's Office proudly announces that Capt. Paul LaRoche has graduated from the School of Police Staff & Command through the Northwestern Center for Public Safety.

The 10-week course is an intensive leadership and management education program that helps prepare experienced law enforcement professionals for success in senior command positions. The program's curriculum includes command-level content such as planning and policies, media relations, budgeting and resource allocation, human resources and contemporary policing, according to the Northwestern website.

LaRoche, a Faribault native who has served as a law enforcement officer for more than 17 years, began his career with the Rice County Sheriff's Office in early 2008. He's served in multiple roles during his tenure, including patrol deputy, instructor in use-of-force topics and field training officer for new deputies.

He was a member of two regional tactical teams for nearly 10 years and from 2014-18 worked in Investigations. He was promoted to sergeant in January 2018 and by that fall was named commander of the Cannon River Drug and Violent Offender Task Force, a collaborative effort of Faribault and Northfield Police departments and the Rice and Le Sueur County Sheriff's offices.

Promoted to captain in January 2023, LaRoche oversees the office's patrol operations, scheduling, training, purchasing and up fitting squad cars, handling of forfeitures, and other various administrative duties.

"I appreciate Capt. LaRoche's interest in this very difficult training program and am anxious to learn what new information, ideas and perspectives he can now bring to the Sheriff's Office that will help improve services to the residents of Rice County," said Sheriff Jesse Thomas.

LaRoche is the second member of the Rice County Sheriff's Office to complete the program. Former Rice County Sheriff Troy Dunn graduated from the School of Police Staff & Command in 2008.



Capt. Paul LaRoche, left, poses with his diploma from the School of Police Staff & Command, an intensive 10-week course for experienced law enforcement officers. Pictured with LaRoche is Sheriff Jesse Thomas.

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Letter to the Editor

To the editor:

On January 27, I supported a motion to expel Democrat Senator Nicole Mitchell, who is on trial for felony first-degree burglary. This was the second time Republicans made this motion, and for the second time, Senate Democrats protected her.

This isn't about politics; it's about doing what's right. It's deeply disappointing that Democrats chose to protect one of their own instead of protecting the Senate's integrity.

Senator Mitchell's case is not a small one. It is extremely serious. She is charged with felony first-degree burglary after police caught her breaking into her stepmother's home. She was dressed in black, hiding in the basement, and had items that weren't hers. While everyone deserves due process, we also have a responsibility to protect public trust. Senator Mitchell's constituents deserve honesty and accountability.

I have been asked why Senator Mitchell's case is different than President Trump's. The difference is clear: President Trump was a private citizen during his trial. Voters knew about his charges and still chose him to be their president. Senator Mitchell's constituents haven't had that choice. If she wants to try to run for office again, that's up to her -- but her district deserves to make that decision.

As senators, we are held to a higher standard. When public trust is broken, we must act swift. I hope my Democrat colleagues will soon reconsider and join us in protecting the integrity of the Senate. That's what we should have done from the start.

Sincerely,
Senator Bill Lieske

**Opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are not necessarily those of The Messenger.*


Headlights on When Snowing


Winter weather often means reduced visibility, especially during snowstorms. Your headlights play a critical role in keeping you safe and visible to other drivers. Blowing snow can quickly create dangerous whiteout conditions, so it's important to remember a simple rule: if there's any kind of precipitation, whether it's snow, rain or even a light drizzle, turn on your lights. It is the law.

While many vehicles have sensors that activate lights automatically when it's getting dark, they don't always turn on your lights during precipitation, especially in daylight. Check your owner's manual to learn how to manually activate your lights if needed.

Seeing and being seen can help reduce your chances of getting in a crash. Before hitting the road, take a moment to ensure all your lights are on and working properly. It's a simple step that helps everyone stay safe this winter.


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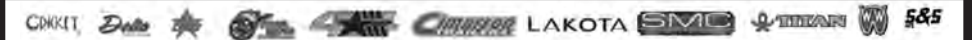




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DUNDAS CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 9, 2024

7:00 p.m. City Hall

Present: Mayor Glenn Switzer Councilors Luke LaCroix, Ashley Gallagher, Grant Modory, Luke Swartwood

Staff: City Engineer Dustin Tipp, Finance Director Jessi Sturtz, City Administrator/Clerk Jenelle Teppen

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Switzer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Modory, second by Swartwood, to approve the agenda. Motion Carried Unanimously (MCU)

CONSENT AGENDA

- Regular Minutes of November 25, 2024
- Consider Approving Resolution 2024-38 Authorizing Staff to Pay Invoices Received Between December 4, and December 18, 2024

- Pay Voucher 4 – Forest Ave/Depot Street Reconstruction Project
- Disbursements - \$256,613.94

Motion by Gallagher, second by LaCroix, to approve the consent agenda. MCU

REGULAR AGENDA

- Public Hearing

Consider Adopting Resolution 2024-39 Approving 2025 Proposed General Fund Budget and 2025 Final Property Tax Levy

- Staff Presentation
- Public Comment

Mayor Switzer opened the public hearing at 7:01 PM and indicated that the discussion tonight would be brief since the City Council has been working on this budget for the last several months and had held four work sessions. The preliminary levy was adopted in September as required and there were no changes to the proposed budget and levy since September. Finance Director Jessi Sturtz presented the proposed 2025 General Fund Budget and 2025 Final Property Tax Levy. Ms. Sturtz walked through a power point presentation that took the charts and graphs from her memorandum that was included in the agenda packet. The proposed levy is a 5.3% increase, which keeps the tax rate level with 2024. If the assessed values were to remain flat in 2025, taxpayers would see a slight reduction in the City’s portion of their tax bills.

Scott Code, 215 Hagerty St asked why the Economic Development Authority was made up of City Council members and then made several remarks about his property taxes increasing over the years.

Doug Lange, 1118 Bluff Street spoke and inquired about the increase in his property values, he commented that there was no increase in public benefit with this budget.

Mayor Switzer closed the public hearing at 7:23 PM

The Mayor and City Council members reiterated that this budget has been discussed several times at public meetings since May of 2024. They encouraged both the people attending the meeting and others to engage in the process earlier in the year and to reach out to staff with specific questions on projects and line items in the budget.

Motion by Gallagher, second by Swartwood, to approve Resolution 2024-39 Approving 2025 Proposed General Fund Budget and 2025 Final Property Tax Levy. MCU

- Consider Approving Ordinance 2024-06 Amending Chapter §34.01 of the Dundas City Code Adopting Fees and Charges

The City Administrator reported that while the list of fees and charges outlined in the Ordinance is lengthy, the only fees that are increasing in 2025 are water, sewer, storm sewer and refuse. These were previously discussed with the City Council when they reviewed the Proposed 2025 Enterprise Fund Budgets and are included in the 2025 budget.

Motion by Modory, second by Swartwood, to approve Ordinance 2024-06 Amending Chapter §34.01 of the Dundas City Code Adopting Fees and Charges. MCU

- Consider Approving Resolution 2024-40 Approving the Summary Publication for Ordinance 2024-06 Amending Section §34.01 Fee Schedule of the Dundas City Code

Motion by Modory, second by Swartwood, to approve Resolution 2024-40 Approving the Summary Publication for Ordinance 2024-06 Amending Section §34.01 Fee Schedule of the Dundas City Code. MCU

- Consider Approving Quote and Award Contract for 2025 Pond Maintenance Project

Motion by LaCroix, second by Gallagher, to approve the quote and award the contract to BKJ Land Company DBA as BKJ Excavating in the amount of \$123,392.50. MCU

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

City Engineer Tipp reported that staff attended a meeting hosted by Rice County and their consultant, SRF Consulting who conducted the Decker Ave Corridor Study on the County’s behalf. The proposed alignment of Decker Ave through Dundas aligns with the approved Transportation Comprehensive Plan. Next steps include the drafting of an agreement with the City so that when the property develops, the alignment is reserved.

ADJOURN

Motion by Swartwood, second by LaCroix, to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 PM. MCU Minutes prepared by Jenelle Teppen, City Administrator/City Clerk



Big questions as 2025 session begins

BY: SENATOR BILL LIESKE

Every year when I drive up to St. Paul for the new legislative session, I’m reminded of what a privilege it is to represent the people of Dakota, Goodhue, Rice, and Scott

Counties in the Senate. Being your voice at the capitol is an honor I do not take lightly. While the work requires time away from my family – a sacrifice no one takes lightly -- it’s also commitment I’m proud to make because of the trust you’ve placed in me.

Here is where things stand as session begins:

In the Senate, the tragic passing of Senator Kari Dziedzic leaves us tied at 33-33, with the felony burglary trial of Democrat Senator Nicole Mitchell still hanging over our head. As long as the Senate is tied 33-33, power will be shared equally between Republicans and Democrats. There will be co-chairs of all committees, committee membership will be even, there will be co-presiding officers, and Republican Leader Mark Johnson and Democrat Leader Erin Murphy are on equal footing.

Will Senator Mitchell continue to vote on bills while her felony trial is ongoing? She did last year, casting many deciding votes and calling into question the legitimacy and integrity of the Senate.

There is still a lot of bitterness left over from the ugly, chaotic end of the 2024 session. You will remember that in the final minutes of session, Democrats unveiled a colossal 1,400-page bill in the final hours and forced it into law without debate. Neither the public nor legislators had time to review it. It was the culmination of two years of hyper-partisan Democrat one-party rule in which the voices of half of Minnesotans were com-

pletely shut out of the process.

The House has even bigger challenges. While Republicans hold a slim 67-66 majority House Democrats have promised to skip work to block Republicans from governing. They even held a possibly illegal, possibly invalid, and definitely secret swearing-in ceremony so they can collect paychecks during their obstructionism. Democrat political analyst Blois Olson said it perfectly: “Between the end of last Session, and the start of this one, the D in DFL could stand for ‘dysfunction’.” This is not how a functioning democracy works, and Minnesotans deserve better.

Despite these obstacles, my priority is clear: building a responsible state budget. Over the past two years, Democrats spent recklessly, increasing state spending by an unsustainable 40%, burning through a \$19 billion surplus, and raising taxes by \$10 billion. Minnesota now faces a looming \$5 billion budget deficit. My focus this session is to craft a budget that reins in spending, avoids new taxes, and protects Minnesotans from further economic strain. It is time to put Minnesotans first.

Minnesotans have already endured enough. Families are struggling under the weight of higher taxes, schools are grappling with heavy mandates that have pushed budgets into the red, and inflation continues to erode any financial gains workers may have made. The last two years saw Democrats prioritizing political allies and special interests. This year, we need to prioritize you – the hardworking people of Minnesota.

Your feedback is critical to this. To represent you effectively, I need to hear from you. Please reach out with any questions, concerns, or ideas.

Email:

sen.bill.lieske@mnsenate.gov

Phone: 651-296-5019

For updates on what’s happening at the Capitol, I encourage you to sign up for my email newsletter. You can do so by sending an email to my office. Staying informed is one of the best ways to ensure your voice is heard.

It is a privilege to serve you.

Dundas City Council Hears Updates on Several Road Construction Projects

(continued from page 1)

The meeting was primarily organizational with few actions taken. However, the council did hear a report from the City Engineer. One of the major projects the city is taking on is a pedestrian crossing at County Road 1 and Highway 3. Currently, there is no pedestrian crossing in Dundas across Highway 3. Dundas City Administrator Jenelle Teppen shared that the city had applied for funding from the state and received a grant of \$370,000 to help fund the project. Construction on the project will be completed this summer.

Also in the report was an update on the maintenance work on the old Dog Park. The old park was ultimately moved to its current location off of Everett Street in part because the city needed access to the storm pond next to the old park. Contractors have cleared the trees for the storm pond and are expected to

begin excavation in the next week, which will take approximately two weeks. After the work has been completed on the storm pond, no plans are in place for the park afterward.

Another major project Dundas is taking on in 2025, is Water Main improvements along Dundas Boulevard from Millstone Lane to Hester Street. Currently, the Millstone and Stoneridge developments are served by one water main. The city would install a second water main via Dundas Boulevard, which would provide service if a water main shut-down or a break were to occur and improve water flow for fire hydrants. Construction on the project will take place this summer. Staff have made draft plans for the project, and the final proposal will be presented to the city council shortly.

The Dundas City Council meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at 7pm.



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3. *He's Just Not That ____ You"
4. Of the same period
5. *Popular Snow Day pastime
6. Some tournaments
7. Zugspitze, e.g.
8. *Severe weather
9. Deed hearing
10. Algae, sing.
11. Marble bread
13. ____ Jack, English pirate
14. *As opposed to rain
19. Irregular
22. Type of conifer
23. Musketeers' swords
24. High-strung
25. Cerebellum location
26. Unit of life
27. Students' dwellings
28. *Snow Day reading choice
29. Helping theorem
32. *Like soft pj's
33. Intelligence org.
36. *Slope fun
38. Shorter than California
40. Number of years
41. No, it doesn't crawl in one's ear
44. Horse of certain color, pl.
46. Spontaneous additions
48. Obtuse one
49. Tom Cruise's "The ____ of Money"
50. Highway hauler
51. Bad sign
52. Of a particular kind
53. Smoothie berry
54. Superman's last name
55. Part of a seat
56. *Like chocolate on a Snow Day

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