

Doubles fuel close Anoka wins

Anoka County UNION HERALD

FRIDAY | April 26, 2019 | A | SECTION | \$1.00

ABC NEWSPAPERS | Anoka County UnionHerald | Blaine/Spring Lake Park LIFE | Vol. 153 | No. 42

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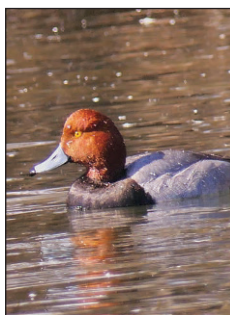


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PUBLIC NOTICE:

The Andover City Council will hold a public hearing at 7 p.m. May 7 regarding the property tax abatements for the community center expansion project..

See this and other
Public Notices on
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Man killed in Coon Rapids police shootout

By Connor Cummiskey
Staff Writer

A 40-year-old Cass Lake man was shot to death after opening fire on police in Coon Rapids last week, according to authorities.

John Duane Fairbanks died April 18 after exchanging shots with police following a routine traffic

stop on Foley Boulevard near 98th Lane, according to the Anoka County Sheriff's Office and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

Three law enforcement officers discharged their weapons, according to the BCA. Coon Rapids officer Alex Hattstrom and Anoka County Sheriff's deputy Christopher Vitek

Jr. both discharged firearms, and Coon Rapids officer Geoff Neumann discharged a Taser.

On April 18, at approximately 1:40 a.m., a Coon Rapids officer began a routine traffic stop that resulted in the suspect drawing a handgun and opening fire before fleeing the



Anoka County Sheriff's Office vehicles help blockade Foley Boulevard April 18.
Photo by Connor Cummiskey

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30 years on ice



McKenna Shoberg practices her solo performance during a rehearsal of the Ice Fantasy show.

Photo by Connor Cummiskey

Coon Rapids Ice Fantasy show connects past and present

By Connor Cummiskey
Staff Writer

After 30 years of the Ice Fantasy show skaters' passions have not cooled.

The show "30 Years of

Applause" opened Thursday, April 25, and runs through Sunday, April 28 at the Coon Rapids Ice Center.

"It's sort of like a spring finale to 24 weeks of les-

sons that have been going on since September," skating director Karen Meck said. "It's a chance for the kids to show off what they've learned over the year, and it's a really fun

opportunity."

What began in 1989 with roughly a dozen routines to hits by Madonna and Michael Jackson

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St. Francis siblings die in crash on Easter

By Jonathan Young
Managing Editor

Two siblings from St. Francis died in a single-vehicle crash in St. Francis in the early hours of Sunday, April 21, according to the Anoka County Sheriff's Office.

The siblings were identified as Cassandra Marie Carlson, 23, and Josiah James Carlson, 21, both of St. Francis.

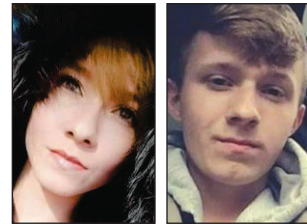
Around 1:10 a.m. the St. Francis Police Department and the Sheriff's Office responded to the area of 229th Avenue Northwest at Arrowhead Street, where they found a vehicle fully engulfed in flames, according to authorities.

When the St. Francis Fire Department extinguished the fire, Cassandra and Josiah Carlson were found dead inside the vehicle, the Sheriff's Office said.

Preliminary information indicated the vehicle was traveling westbound on 229th Avenue Northwest, then entered the south ditch, struck a tree and caught fire, according to investigators.

The crash is being investigated by the St. Francis Police Department, Minnesota State Patrol and Anoka County Sheriff's Office.

A fundraiser has been started on GoFundMe to support the family. The campaign can be found at [gofundme.com/2-precious-lives-lost](https://www.gofundme.com/2-precious-lives-lost).



Cassandra
Carlson

Josiah
Carlson

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Lawmakers address opioid crisis

Local legislators support action, differ on funding mechanism

By Jonathan Young
Managing Editor

As the opioid addiction crisis continues, it has drawn the attention of Minnesota legislators, including those from Anoka

County.

Separate bills have passed in the House and Senate to raise money and implement measures to combat the epidemic, and a conference committee has been working to find

a compromise.

If signed into law, the legislation would create an advisory council to confront the opioid crisis, focusing on topics such as addiction prevention, education and treatment access.

The legislation would also generate \$20 million a year through fees on drug companies. The

money would go into a new account to fund a variety of programs and grants aimed at treatment, recovery and more.

A significant difference between the House and Senate bills is the Senate version would sunset the high fees if the state reaches large settlements

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AROUND ANOKA COUNTY

Site plans for 2 projects approved in Coon Rapids

By Peter Bodley
Contributing Writer

Site plans for an office/warehouse building and self-storage facility were approved by the Coon Rapids Planning Commission April 18.

JSN Properties, East Bethel, is proposing an 85,479-square-foot office/warehouse in the Coon Rapids Industrial Park at 11201 Xeon St. NW, while Metro Storage is planning a three-story, 138,000-square-foot, indoor self-storage business at 3021 124th Ave. NW south of Main Street.

The application for the self-storage project was made just before a six-month moratorium imposed by the Coon Rap-

ids City Council on the development, construction or expansion of self-storage facilities became effective in early March, according to Planner Scott Harlicker.

The Metro Storage building on 2.73 acres of land zoned for general commercial use will be located across 124th Avenue from a single-family neighborhood and contain about 1,084 storage units with no outdoor storage and all units accessed from inside the building, Harlicker said.

No one spoke at the public hearing.

The commission also approved a conditional use permit for the project and imposed several conditions, which included

additional landscaping, irrigation of all landscaped areas and use of the same interior and exterior warm color temperature lighting that was approved for a recently authorized self-storage facility at Foley Boulevard and 101st Avenue.

According to information provided to the commission, Metro Storage is a family owned and operated business that opened its first business in 1973 and has since grown to more than 140 locations in 16 states.

JSN Properties' one-story building with 12 warehouse loading doors will be located between Highway 10 and the Burlington-Northern Santa Fe Railway single-line tracks on 9.25 acres of industrial-zoned

vacant land, Harlicker said.

A small stream that runs diagonally across the north portion of the site will be shifted farther to the north, allowing paving for access to the loading doors, while there is a large wetland on the south edge of the property, he said.

At the public hearing, a resident who lives across the railroad tracks from the proposed building opposed the project because of noise and lights.

JSN Properties, which operates Designing Earth Contracting Inc., currently rents space in East Bethel, Harlicker said.

A condition of approval is payment of a \$31,200 park dedication fee to the city prior to is-

suance of a building permit.

According to its website, Designing Earth Contracting is owned by Jesse and Stephanie Neumann, providing services to a five-state region that include site grading, excavating, utilities and stormwater management, general contracting, soils and minerals, erosion control, environmental remediation, specialty contracting, infrastructure improvements and snow removal.

Site plans do not go to the City Council for action unless there is an appeal from the planning commission decision.

State legislators work to address opioid crisis

Continued from Page 1A

in lawsuits with drug companies.

Gov. Tim Walz has said he expects the conference committee will produce a compromise he can sign, but he's called the sunset clause a sticking point.

The House bill passed back in March on a 94-34 vote. Rep. Erin Koegel, DFL-Spring Lake Park, was a co-author of the House bill and voted in favor. Locally she was joined by Rep. Connie Bernardy, DFL-New Brighton; Rep. Melissa Hortman, DFL-Brooklyn Park; Rep. Peggy Scott, R-Andover; and Rep. Zack Stephenson, DFL-Coon Rapids.

Several area Republicans opposed the House bill, including Rep. Cal Bahr, R-East Bethel; Rep. Kurt Daudt, R-Crown; Rep. John Heinrich, R-Anoka; and Rep. Linda Runbeck, R-Circle Pines.

Rep. Nolan West, R-Blaine, didn't vote.

Daudt, the House minority leader, said he supports the programs and spending in the bill but not the additional fees on drug companies.

"That just gets passed on to the consumer, and the ultimate effect of that is you're just raising the cost of health care," he said.

With a state budget surplus and money coming from the federal government to address the opioid epidemic, Daudt said, the new fees are unnecessary.

Heinrich agreed.

"I would have preferred to see that come out of the

general fund," he said. "I feel like the intent (of the fees), some of it, is just to go after the pharmaceuticals."

"If you want to help people, we've got the resources to help people," Daudt said. "If you want to punish the drug companies, this doesn't even effectively do that."

Anoka's senator, Republican Jim Abeler, sees it differently. He co-authored the Senate bill, and he wants to send a message that manufacturers of dangerous products are responsible for mitigating the effects of the product. He said the point of the bill is to say, "Yes, indeed, a manufacturer and a distributor has a responsibility for the harm their product does."

"That's the heart of the issue in my mind," Abeler said.

He acknowledged a risk of increased prices for patients receiving opioid prescriptions and said it was unfortunate that they may have to pay for opioid manufacturers' past misdeeds.

But he also said taxpayers are already paying the price of child protection, medical treatment and other costs that accompany opioid addiction.

The Senate version of the bill passed 59-6 April 1, with Michelle Benson, of Ham Lake, among the six Republicans who voted no.

Benson said she supports the goals of the bill but had problems with the funding mechanism in the Senate bill.

"I was concerned that

because of the way we're collecting money from just a few manufacturers, then we wouldn't actually get that money (if they pulled out of the state)," she said. "I understand the mission and the purpose, and we absolutely need to figure out how to fund this."

Benson also worried the bill could force out of the state some smaller companies that provide important post-surgical pain management tools.

Despite her concerns with the bill, she said she appreciates much of what the bill does and says it "(lets) manufacturers and prescribers know that we're not going to take our eyes off this."

Sen. John Hoffman, DFL-Champlin, said he thinks the legislation is a good start on addressing the problem, and he hopes the bill that emerges from the conference committee gives the advisory council "some teeth."

Sen. Jerry Newton, DFL-Coon Rapids, said, "It's heartening to know legislators on both sides of the aisle recognize that this is indeed an epidemic and it is about time that those who are profiting from the sale of opioids take responsibility for their over-prescription and pay a price."

Both the House and Senate bills include reporting requirements to help the Legislature track whether money is being spent effectively to help curb opioid addiction and overdoses.

Reporters Connor Cumiskey and Paige Kieffer contributed to this story.



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Contracts awarded for street maintenance projects

By Peter Bodley
Contributing Writer

Contracts were awarded by the Coon Rapids City Council April 16 for four street maintenance projects covering 13 cities.

Since 2004, Coon Rapids has been the lead agency in a consortium of cities that seek competitive bids for street maintenance services by purchasing the materials in bulk rather than individually to reduce costs, according to Tim Himmer, Coon Rapids public works director.

Through the economies of scale, the participating cities save anywhere from 3 to 7 percent on the cost of these projects, Himmer said.

The participating cities in the 2019 program have all signed off on the low bids for seal coating, pavement markings, crack sealing and fog sealing follow-

ing a 30-day review period, he said.

The 13 cities are Andover, Anoka, Arden Hills, Brooklyn Center, Columbia Heights, Circle Pines, Coon Rapids, East Bethel, Fridley, Ham Lake, Mahtomedi, Mounds View and St. Francis.

The low bids approved by the council were the total project costs, not just the Coon Rapids portion, Himmer said.

Allied Blacktop Company was awarded three of the contracts — seal coating, crack sealing (\$293,972) and fog sealing (\$298,484) — with AAA Striping Service Co. the low bidder for pavement markings work (\$267,707).

According to Himmer, there was both a base bid (\$1.597 million) and an alternate bid (\$1.591 million) for the seal coating.

The base bid includes regular asphalt emulsion

seal coat oil and trap aggregate, but an alternate bid was requested because some member cities prefer granite aggregate on their projects, Himmer said.

Seal coating and crack sealing will start at soon as feasible and be completed by September, while pavement marking services can last later in the year depending on the weather, he said.

Timing of the fog sealing work will take place based on the timelines requested by the cities, Himmer said.

According to Himmer, Coon Rapids will be seal coating 6.8 miles of streets and fog sealing 6.8 miles of streets plus 47 cul-de-sacs as well as completing pavement markings and crack sealing.

Its portion of the total cost will be about \$400,000, Himmer said.