JPINION

Smith was the late editor of

the Monticello

contemporary of

Phil Duff. Smith

Minnesota's first

Don't Smoke Day

the stage for what

in 1974, setting

today the world

Great American

knows as the

Smokeout.

Simply put, he'd had enough

killing themselves one cigarette

that different than the impetus

friends, neighbors and families,

of seeing his fellow citizens

at a time — a motivation not

behind Needles & Pills last

about it as a community.

winter. Drugs are killing our

and we need to do something

Readers may recall that we

published a series titled "Killer

Crisis" starting after Christmas

2017 and continuing into early

February. In the words of the MNA contest judges, "The

personal stories and data are

crisis but distilled to a local

the series, interviews grew

Goodhue County, Red Wing

and the Duff Endowment we

included a community "book

read" and culminated in a

was clear: Goodhue County

needs a drug treatment court.

District Court Judge Doug

predecessor Tom Bibus had left

Bayley, picking up where

Timing is everything, of

public forum that March.

powerful reminders of a global

While we were working on

into conversations and so with

launched Needles & Pills, which

The message from that forum

the late RE Editor

Times and a

spearheaded

Community is key to drug court and beyond

he Republican Eagle recently received the Lynn Smith Community Leadership award. I consider this the highest honor bestowed on a news organization by the Minnesota Newspaper Association, and I know that the honor truly belongs to our community



JACOBSON News director RiverTown Multimedia

off, had sought federal monies to establish such a court. In 2017, word came back that another grant application had failed, but by year's end a new strategy emerged: Demonstrate community commitment to the need, and we might prevail.

In late 2017, Ben Schmidt, a recovering drug addict, released his book "Six Years Lost." The local man was a part of the Needles & Pills panel March 29 at the Red Wing Public Library. That night, County Commissioner Paul Drotos set the stage and then Police Chief Roger Pohlman moderated as law enforcement, counselors, social workers and more spoke. The place was packed, and citizens asked, "What can we do?"

They learned that housing and hope, jobs and in-house local treatment — not strictly incarceration — must play roles in someone's successful recovery. Everyone heard that a drug court is only the first

In the following months, Bayley gathered letters, newspaper articles, a video from the forum, etc., to round out the final federal application. Goodhue County learned in September that it landed \$500,000.

Thank you to all who allowed us to share their stories in "Killer Crisis" and through Needles & Pills so openly and honestly with readers. Thank you to all who would not relent and are part of winning a federal drug court grant.

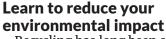
As Bayley said in an email announcing that success: "Now the real work begins."

The Republican Eagle will report on the drug court when it launches later this year and will write about the people involved.

As the newspaper judges put it: "This is the kind of journalism that changes the world one community at a time ... that's why we do what

We do it with and for you, our community.

LETTERS



Recycling has long been something that we've been able to do as responsible members of the community to reduce waste and to be more environmentally and economically sustainable. Upcoming changes in Red Wing's recycling program should make it easier to participate, increase the amount of our waste that is recycled and likely expand the types of materials collected for recycling.

On Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the Library, the League of Women Voters will present "Talking Less Trash," a program and a community forum that will include presentations by recycling experts.

Recycling is a simple way to reduce your environmental impact. The Sustainability Commission has chosen to co-sponsor "Talking Less Trash" as part of our educational mission. Please join us and find out more. Randy McLaughlin Red Wing

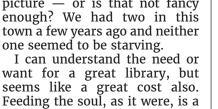
Let's get with it, **Design Ellsworth**

How about if the Design Ellsworth people would concen- Ellsworth

trate on designing a town with picture — or is that not fancy one seemed to be starving.

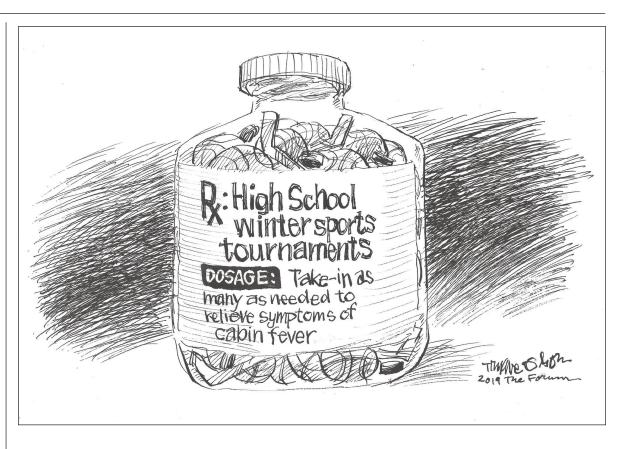
set up a decent pharmacy?

While we are at it, why not have a delivery system for a reaget with it folks! Don Beebe



want for a great library, but seems like a great cost also. Feeding the soul, as it were, is a fine thought, but giving up such a needed part of the community is rather ridiculous. We have two medical clinics and a dental clinic, so why is it so difficult to

sonable fee? How much time and expense plus driving in conditions as we have had this winter could be saved by sending one courier instead of several clients cluttering up the roadways and office space. How much does it cost to drive to River Falls or Red Wing from the furthest part of Ellsworth? What about time saved for folks who have iobs? In my case I do not drive, so I have to pay someone's car expense plus for their time. This all becomes an anxiety thing as well as a pain in the butt! Let's



VIEWPOINT

District moving ahead to fulfill promises

ver the past few months, I have described some of our plans moving

forward as a result of successful passage of the operating levy questions last November. Today, though, I have news to share about action recently taken to make our promises reality.

At its Feb. 19 meeting, the Red Wing School Board authorized the hiring of several positions directly related to the school

district's educational plan and referendum promises. The additions will have a lasting impact on our students and community.

KARSTEN

ANDERSON

Superintendent

of Red Wing

Public Schools

To help implement a career, college, and life readiness framework and fulfill a referendum promise, the School Board authorized the hiring of a Flight Path coordinator. The coordinator will develop and oversee student work-based learning opportunities in local businesses, develop curriculum for career planning, implement a career planning software called Naviance, and plan for the restructuring of coursework to meet today's

employment needs. It's a big assignment, so we hope to hire a strong candidate this spring to begin planning for next year. Providing mental

health support is a key school and community need. At a minimal cost to the school district, we will contract with local providers for mental health therapists to provide direct services to

students in K-12. Eventually, there will be a therapist at each elementary and secondary school.

Because the therapists can bill insurance companies and Medical Assistance for their services, the positions will become self-sustaining financially. However, until caseloads are full, referendum resources — as promised — will be allocated to provide stronger access to mental health services.

The counseling departments at our schools need additional resources to provide personal

counseling and support for career and college planning. An additional school counselor will be hired for next year using money generated from the operating levy referendum. As a result, there will be two school counselors at the middle school and three at the high school. The structure of the counseling department will also change to provide better service for our students.

And, finally, the school board authorized the hiring of a media and technology specialist for our elementary schools. This specialist will replace our media specialist who recently retired, but in the newly formulated position we will be looking for someone who has a strong media, literacy, and technology background.

We have significant planning work to do this spring and next year as we implement our educational plan and fulfill our referendum promises. I will continue to regularly inform you of our promises, progress, and pitfalls.

Please contact me at 651-385-4502 or klanderson@ rwps.org if you have any questions or concerns about the school district.

VIEWPOINT: GOODHUE COUNTY

Leadership transitions abound at Goodhue County

ne hundred ninety-two is the combined number of vears served by department heads or elected officials who

have retired or left leadership positions from Goodhue County in the last year. That's almost two centuries of combined time.

During my 12 years as the Goodhue County administrator, I have had the pleasure of working with very competent, valuable and highly respected individuals throughout the county. As we move forward and wish those success in their retirements, I look forward to developing those same relationships with new faces.

Goodhue County as an organization is adjusting to change and tackling transitions. I would like to introduce a few of those changes to you:



SCOTT ARNESON Goodhue County Administrator

Finance Director Brian Anderson along with the Finance Controller Kelly

> Bolin are new faces to the Government Center. This new leadership team is overseeing the Finance and Taxpayer Services. This department strives to provide quality taxation, assessment, election administration and financial reporting services for all the residents of Goodhue County.

Sheriff Marty Kelly along with Chief Deputy Jeremy Lerfald are new faces to the Law Enforcement Center. The sheriff is an elected position, while the chief deputy is an appointed position by the sheriff. Kelly was sworn into office for his first term in January 2019, and appointed Lerfald. Numerous transitions are taking place due to retirements of employees

within the Sheriff's Office and

the Adult Detention Center. Stephen O'Keefe is the new county attorney, but is far from a new face to the Justice Center. He held the position of an assistant county attorney for over 25 years. The county attorney is an elected position, in which he was sworn into office for his first term in January 2019.

Court Services Director Ioanne Theobald Pohl intends to retire in March 2019 after 40 years of service. The state of Minnesota and Goodhue County are in the process of hiring her replacement.

Scott Safe was appointed as an interim commissioner to represent District 1 as Commissioner Ron Allen continues his battle against cancer.

The County Board of Commissioners continues to encourage departments to succession plan as we look further down the road and see the potential of long-term county employees retiring.

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Letter and viewpoint submissions must be signed and contain your name, address, email and phone number for verification purposes. Email your submission to: editor@republican-eagle. com. You can send a letter or viewpoint submission to: Red Wing Republican Eagle, PO Box 15, Red Wing, MN 55066

Reader submissions must be received no later than Noor Monday to be considered for publication in the following Wednesday's edition and 5 p.m. Wednesday for publication in the weekend paper. For details, call 651-388-8235.

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