

# PERSPECTIVES

Contributions welcome to [editor@chaska Herald.com](mailto:editor@chaska Herald.com), 952-345-6574

## GI Bill continues to change America

On June 22, 1944, the “GI Bill of Rights” was created.

While its upcoming 75th birthday may not sound like a significant achievement in our nation’s history, it means a great deal to me and tens of millions of others.

Through three-quarters of a century, the GI Bill remains an excellent way to support veterans in two key areas: higher education and home ownership. This combination of benefits ensures that the GI Bill continues to provide success for Americans.

Original legislation came about through lessons learned from history. When World War I veterans returned, few benefits existed for them. This spurred “Bonus Marches” as service members demanded post-war bonuses to avoid the bread lines.

Not wanting a repeat of this following World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt launched his plan to shift the nation’s economy from supporting the war to supporting our troops. Out of this plan came the GI Bill.

At that time, a small minority of Americans attended college. But in 1947, 49 percent of post-secondary enrollment consisted of veterans returning home. The result from this is well documented: these men and women launched careers, built homes and started families. The American dream became a reality for many, shaping American society as we know it.

My grandfather, Bill Orr, returned from his U.S. Navy tour in the Pacific after the war ended. He enrolled in the University of Minnesota’s science program, graduating in three years. Shortly afterward, he married my grandmother, Rita, secured a teaching position in west-central Minnesota, and built the home I grew up next to.

Rita and Bill went on to have nine children and Mr. Orr taught high school science for almost 40 years to thousands of students from Benson, Minnesota. Fast forward 75 years and the GI Bill helped my ability to graduate



Dan  
**TENGWALL**  
VETERAN SERVICES

college — I’m on my second round of the benefit to gain a master’s degree.

The GI Bill remains a permanent part of veterans’ benefits. The legislation’s expansion includes active duty personnel, reservists and surviving spouses. In many cases, a veteran can transfer their benefits to dependents as well.

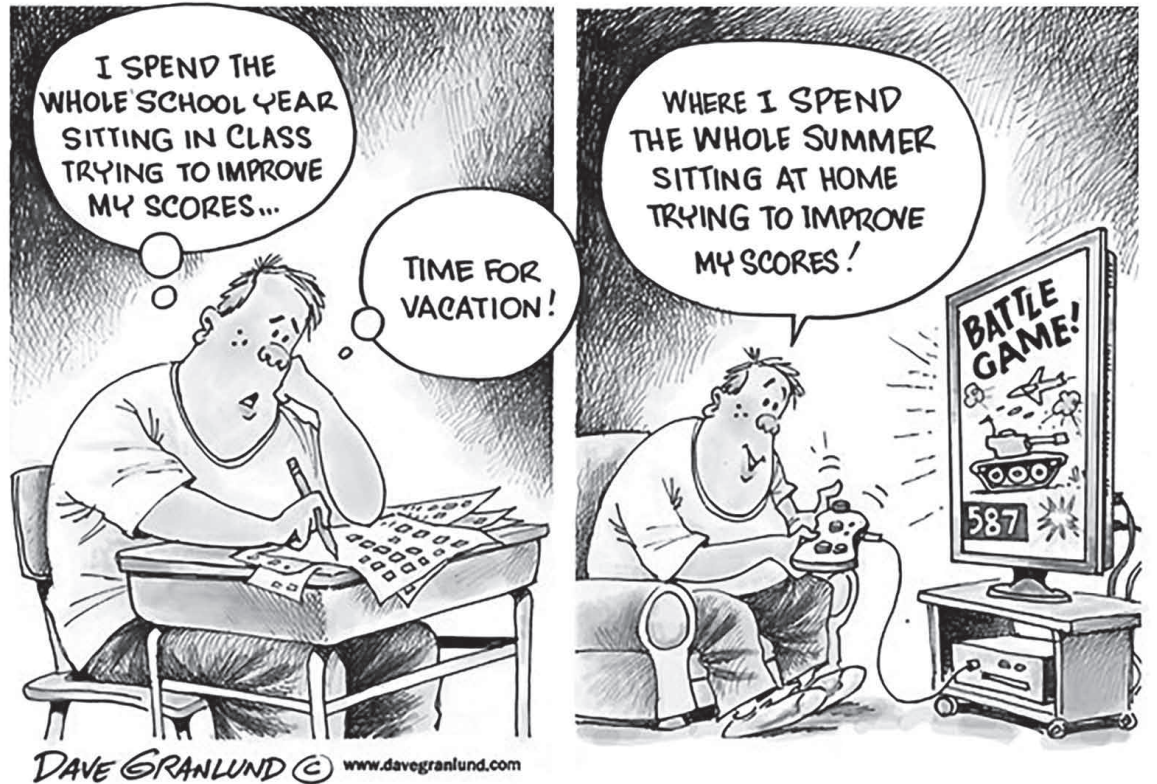
The “Forever GI Bill” approved last year features a lifetime guarantee for veterans who served after 2011. Often touted as incentive to join the military, I’d argue that many young adults signing up for service don’t truly realize the magnificence of the GI Bill until they see their civilian peers struggling to pay school loans years after graduation.

Grandpa Bill passed away in 2017, but we were able to compare our stories of service when interviewed by American Public Media shortly before his death ([www.americanradioworks.org/documentaries/from-boots-to-books/](http://www.americanradioworks.org/documentaries/from-boots-to-books/), skip to 28:42).

One realization I had from that wonderful experience is that my life wouldn’t be what it is — I may not even be here at all — had FDR not signed the legislation for our heroes returning home in the late 1940s.

I am a product of the GI Bill, and someone you know probably is, too.

*Dan Tengwall is the Carver County Veteran Service officer. Contact his office about veteran-related benefits at 952-442-2323.*



## LETTER

### POLITICS

#### Nothing to do with GOP Facebook

I would like to clarify a matter which has come up over the last several months — I have absolutely nothing to do with the Carver County GOP Facebook page or any related social media content.

I have received numerous complaints about misleading news and offensive content on the Republican Facebook page, and I suspect these protests come my way because I am a Republican senator from Carver County.

However I have no involvement with these posts. The current leaders of the local Republican Party will do what they do — I cannot change that.

It saddens me whenever and wherever I see social media

content promoting mean-spirited divisiveness instead of embracing thoughtfulness and enhanced understanding of differing viewpoints.

**Scott Jensen**  
District 47 State Senator  
Chaska

#### Defeats for the citizens

It has been weeks since our legislative session has ended, and I see reports in the news about a victory for one party or the other on an issue.

My view is different. I see defeats for the citizens of Minnesota. I see a defeat for our transportation system, because we failed to provide the long-term sufficient funding to maintain and improve it for our growing population. Anyone that runs a business, whether it be a family farm or

a billion-dollar corporation, understands that you have to plan on long-term funding for your infrastructure, not biannual band aids.

I see it as a defeat for all of us when we lose a piece of our future because a young person dies because they cannot afford insulin or any needed medical care.

I see it as a defeat for our state when we send our young people out into the world with unmanageable debt.

Let the politicians crow about their victories, but I hope the citizens of Minnesota will elect leaders that will work and crow about the victories for us, the people of Minnesota.

*Editor’s note: The author is vice chair of Carver County Democrats-SD47. He wrote this letter on his own behalf.*

**Jim Weygand**  
Carver

## CHASKA HERALD

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# Busy summer ahead of us

Happy summer! It's nice to have warm — bordering on hot — days again.

I know the wet spring has already impacted our farming community. Let's keep our fingers crossed for a little bit of a dry spell, so our local farmers can get their crops going and growing.

We continue to work with the school district, the Chaska Human Rights Commission, the YMCA, impacted parents and the city of Carver on equity and inclusion. The YMCA recently presented a proposal, and we are working on the details of what a community event could look like.

The school district has hired Dr. Muhammad Khalifa, the CEO of Adjusted School Equity Solutions and professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Minnesota, to do an equity audit.

Thanks to all of those involved in the planning process. The input has really created some forward motion. These are small steps, but they move us forward.

Speaking of school, congratulations to the Chaska High School Class of 2019! These are exciting times as you finish your high school years and move on to your next endeavors, whatever they may be. Good luck to all.

## MEMORIAL DAY

Before the sun started shining in June, we had a rainy Memorial Day. The cemetery visits went as planned, and for only the second time I can remember, the Memorial Day parade was canceled due to the rain.

The program was moved into the old junior high on Fourth Street. The students did an excellent job with their speeches, as did the



**Mark**  
**WINDSCHITL**  
MAYOR OF CHASKA

main speaker, Harry Niemela.

Thank you to all who participated in and attended the program. It was great to see a full house. Great job by the veterans organizations for adapting on the fly to make the day memorable, even though the weather didn't cooperate.

We had a few new businesses open in May.

Aldi, Chipotle and Starbucks opened in Hazeltine Plaza, and Schram Haus Brewery opened off of County Road 61 west of County Road 44. Schram Haus is at the old Carver County Public Works site, which overlooks Athletic Park. I hope you get a chance to visit these great additions to Chaska.

Athletic Park will be busy the rest of summer with the Chaska Cubs, our local amateur baseball team, playing many home games. Let's cheer them on as they compete for a state tournament bid.

The Downtown Chaska Farmers Market has started up in a new location this year. Due to construction around City Square Park, the farmers market is now in the City Hall parking lot and plaza 3-7 p.m. every Wednesday.

Stop by for fresh produce and stay for the family fun.

## PGA

There is still time to get out to Hazeltine National Golf Club to see the best women golfers in the world play in the KPMG Women's PGA Championship this weekend. If you're looking for a fun family activity, Saturday is Youth Day, and kids can receive a souvenir golf ball, while supplies last.

For more information, including how to purchase tickets, visit [KPMGWomensPGA.com](http://KPMGWomensPGA.com).

You can't forget about the Fourth of July activities held at Jonathan every year. It includes an early morning 5K race, 10 a.m. kiddie parade, and family fun and games afterward. Check local media for the location of the festivities, as it may have changed due to the Jonathan Pavilion fire last year.

Ending the fun-filled day will be the annual fireworks near Jonathan Elementary. Great viewing areas can be found anywhere in that area, or on the east side of Highway 41.

The later part of July brings two other major community events to downtown Chaska. Our Fire and Ice Festival will be held July 19-21. This a great weekend full of fun for everyone. Tons of games for kids, a bonspiel in the Chaska Curling Center, a great lineup of bands at night, food and local craft beers and fireworks.

The fireworks are the highlight of Friday and Saturday nights. For more information, head to [fireandicebonspiel.com](http://fireandicebonspiel.com).

## RIVER CITY DAYS

From July 26-28, downtown Chaska will host the 44th annual

River City Days. This is another full weekend.

Friday night is the Chaska Community Band concert, which always draws a large crowd. The Devon Worley Band caps the night under the big top. Around City Square Park, you can bring the family for games, crafts, food and beverages and much more.

Saturday includes the business expo, the popular Chaska Fire Department water fights, Rotary steak fry, and the band Good for Gary under the big top. Just outside the big top is the beer garden, staffed by the Chaska Lions Club.

Sunday includes the parade, with Steve Patterson, host of Twin Cities Live, presiding as the grand marshal. Please check [chaskarivercitydays.com](http://chaskarivercitydays.com) for the full schedule.

Aug. 10, Flags and Honor of Minnesota holds its annual car show in City Square Park from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. This is another great event with all proceeds going to local veterans.

## CONSTRUCTION

Construction will be happening soon on the new interchange at County Road 44 and Hwy 212. County Road 44 will be closed from Jonathan Carver Parkway to Savanna Way starting June 27.

While there will be some traffic adjustments, this project will provide a great connection to southwest Chaska. To stay up-to-date on this project, you can sign up for email updates at [hwy212interchange.com](http://hwy212interchange.com).

Our downtown reconstruction is around St John's Lutheran Church and City Square Park. Parts of Fourth Street and Oak Street have already closed, so make sure to

look for alternate routes, especially if you are headed to the Carver County Government Center.

The construction project at Highway 41 and Lyman Boulevard has been postponed due to higher-than-expected bids.

Utility work will still happen this year in preparation for the future project. Please give our construction workers extra space and slow down when traveling through any construction zones.

If you haven't heard, there has been a string of burglaries across the metro area and, unfortunately, Chaska has been one of communities that has been impacted. We certainly want you to feel safe and secure, so please make sure to remove valuables from your car, lock your car and close your garage door. If you see any suspicious activity, please call 9-1-1 immediately.

Lastly, the city of Chaska has been named a 2019 Star Tribune Top 150 Workplace. This is a great honor, especially since over 2,000 organizations were invited to participate in the survey. We were one of only two cities to make the list. We also had a number of Chaska businesses receive the award. Congratulations to them as well.

Thank you to all of our dedicated employees for their role in making Chaska such a great place to live and work.

What a busy summer we have ahead of us. While we'll have the typical road construction headaches, we'll have plenty of community events to celebrate summer fun.

Have fun, enjoy and be safe!  
*Mark Windschitl is the mayor of Chaska.*

# Session ends with positives, negatives

Following a one-day special session last month, Gov. Tim Walz recently signed into law Minnesota's new, two-year state budget.

While I would've preferred a more transparent process, the session's outcomes were mostly positive, as much of what was accomplished in this budget will benefit Carver County and our state.

I appreciate both sides compromising despite stark differences, and I believe many of this session's most problematic proposals were avoided.

## POSITIVES

One of the major highlights is that the proposed \$12 billion tax increases that were center stage this year won't be going into law. These would've harmed families and small businesses, and I'm glad these huge new tax increases won't be happening.

I'm especially pleased that no transportation tax increases were passed. This means there will be no 20 cent per gallon (70% increase) gas tax hike, no vehicle sales tax increase, and no license tab fee increases.

To fund transportation, auto parts sales tax revenue already



**Greg**  
**BOE**  
GUEST COMMENTARY

collected will continue being dedicated to roads and bridges. With this funding mechanism, higher gas taxes aren't necessary to fund transportation infrastructure improvements.

The Minnesota Legislature also stopped a proposal to cut nursing home funding by \$68 million, which would've devastated facilities' budgets and jeopardized care for older Minnesotans. We also cut middle-class Minnesotans' income taxes and approved federal tax conformity, meaning more money in people's pockets and fewer headaches next tax season.

Minnesota's public schools will receive 2% per-pupil funding in-

creases each of the next two years, making available more resources to help our students succeed in the classroom. This comes alongside \$90 million to help address rising special education costs and additional funding for school districts' safety needs.

In addition, Minnesota's reinsurance plan was extended, which builds on progress made through a program that has proven effective in lowering health insurance premiums the last two years. More needs to be done to combat high insurance rates for those buying their own health insurance, but this action represents a positive step in that direction.

The legislature also passed distracted driving legislation that will take effect Aug. 1. We heard many emotional testimonies from families who have lost loved ones due to distracted driving. The new law will help reduce those occurrences.

## NEGATIVES

Despite the positives mentioned above, the legislative session also produced a few negative outcomes.

One of the year's most disappointing outcomes is the con-

tinuation of the sick tax. I heard from residents on both sides of this issue. Extending the sick tax raises the cost of Minnesotans' healthcare, making every trip to the doctor more expensive and disproportionately hurting those requiring the most treatment and facing already high medical bills.

The sick tax was scheduled to expire at year's end, and I believe not letting that happen was a major missed opportunity to reduce the healthcare costs.

## LOCAL PROJECTS

Finally, I authored measures to provide funding for two infrastructure projects important to Carver County. The first would've provided funding to help Chanhasen upgrade a 1.5-mile stretch of Lyman Boulevard, and the other would've provided funding to assist Carver County construct necessary infrastructure and amenities to develop Lake Waconia Regional Park.

Working with both sides of the aisle to gather support, I pushed hard for these bills this year. However, because the Legislature didn't pass a bonding bill, most

local infrastructure projects didn't receive any state funding.

Next session is a non-budget year, in which a greater focus will be on bonding. When that time comes, I will continue advocating for these and other key local projects, and I remain optimistic we can secure the necessary funding.

Ultimately, I believe 2019 resulted in numerous positive laws and policies to benefit our area and state. Minnesota families already pay high tax burdens, and avoiding most large tax increase proposals stands out as a victory to me. And yet, at the same time, I'm proud we were still able make investments in our future.

With my first session wrapping up, I'm reminded what an extraordinary privilege it is to serve our community in St. Paul. As always, please reach out and contact me if you have any questions about anything that happened at the Capitol this year.

*Rep. Greg Boe, R-Chaska, represents Minnesota House District 47B, which includes Chaska and parts of Chanhasen, Victoria, and Laketown Township. Boe can be reached at [rep.greg.boe@house.mn](mailto:rep.greg.boe@house.mn) or 651-296-5066.*