

# PERSPECTIVES

Contributions welcome to editor@chaskaherald.com, 952-345-6574

## Preparing for the new year

It's hard to believe that we're in the last days of summer, but everywhere I look, the staff of Eastern Carver County Schools are busy preparing for the 2019-20 school year. It's always an exciting — and a little nerve-wracking — time as we work to make sure we're prepared for the arrival of students.

It takes a lot to prepare for those learners. For district leadership and teachers, that preparation started almost as soon as the school year ended. District and building leadership spent time together doing focused professional development around diversity and inclusion in our schools.

A summer academy for teachers, led by teachers, included sessions that took a deeper look at equity in the classroom. The district also hosted the fifth annual Personalized Learning Summit, which brought nearly 800 educators together from around the country to learn with, and from, each other about strategies and tools to help students succeed.

These are just a few examples of the work that went on in the district over the summer so we are ready to hit the ground running in September. That doesn't even begin to account for the hours put in by our buildings and grounds and maintenance crews to make sure the physical spaces in our schools are in the best shape, too.

The excitement over the beginning of the school year is even greater as we welcome



Clint  
CHRISTOPHER  
GUEST COMMENTARY

nearly 800 kindergarteners, our biggest kindergarten class in our district's history. Those kinds of numbers speak positively of the quality of education parents expect in our schools and the growth we see in the communities we live in. That growth will continue, with a projected 1,400 new students expected over the next five years, most at the elementary level. That's roughly one new classroom of students every month, for the next five years. Figuring out how to accommodate that, while maintaining high levels of academic achievement, is the best kind of

problem to have. Our district's strength is this community, which supports our talented teachers and staff and our remarkable students. The kids, after all, are the reason we're here. What we do as a district, our investment in safe, inclusive, and welcoming environments,

Christopher to 7 ➤

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## Preserving upland to protect waters

When development occurs, it changes the way water moves across the land. More roads, driveways and rooftops increase the amount of hard surfaces. More hard surfaces mean fewer areas for rain to soak into the ground, and more runoff.

This runoff, called stormwater runoff, causes flooding and water pollution problems in local lakes and rivers.

There are many ways to reduce runoff from a developed area. Rain gardens and permeable pavers help rain soak into the ground, stormwater ponds provide a place for runoff to be stored and filtered, and stormwater reuse systems collect and store runoff to be used for irrigation later.

Another way is to preserve or restore natural areas, thus increasing the amount of green space and providing more area for water to soak in. This is called upland preservation. It is one of many methods Carver County Water Management Organization promotes to protect lakes and rivers from stormwater runoff

pollution during development.

**What is upland preservation?** Upland preservation occurs when a natural area such as a prairie or a forest is restored or permanently protected during development.

Having these natural areas dotted throughout neighborhoods can reduce the amount of stormwater runoff coming off the area, provide a place for extra water from development to soak into the ground, reduce flooding, provide wildlife and pollinator



Madeline  
SEVELAND  
LAND AND WATER SERVICES

“When development occurs, it changes the way water moves across the land.”

Madeline Seveland

habitat, and provide recreation opportunities for nearby residents.

**It's about the roots:** Upland preservation sites can absorb a significant amount of water. Mature trees and native prairie plants have very deep roots. Deep roots help water soak into the ground and the plants use and transpire the water back into the atmosphere.

**Meeting rules:** New developments are required to meet local water rules to manage stormwater runoff from the site. Features that slow down runoff, allow more water to soak in, and filter pollutants must be included in design and construction.

Seveland to 7 ➤

## CHASKA HERALD

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### Newspaper rates:

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**Guest columns and letters to the editor:** Letters to the editor and guest commentaries stating positions on issues facing the local community are especially welcome but are reviewed by the editor prior to publication. The newspaper reserves the right to edit letters for length, grammar and clarity. We will not print letters of a libelous nature. Letters should be 400 or fewer words in length. Exceptions are at the editor's discretion. Deadline for letters is noon on the Monday before the Thursday publication date. Letters must contain the address and daytime phone number of the author, as well as a signature (except on e-mails). We prefer letters that are e-mailed to editor@chaskaherald.com. Editorials that appear on this page represent the institutional voice of the newspaper. Any questions or comments should be directed to the editor.

### Deadlines

News: Noon Monday; 4 p.m. Thursday for events calendar  
Advertising: 4 p.m. Thursday  
Classifieds: 3 p.m. Tuesday for paid ads;  
noon Tuesday for Thrift ads  
Legal notices: noon Thursday, one week before publication

**Publisher:** Todd Mollidre 952-345-6672; tmollidre@swpub.com  
**Senior Vice-President, Sales/Operations:** Laurie Hartmann 952-345-6878; lhartmann@swpub.com  
**Regional Editor:** Mark W. Olson 952-345-6574; editor@chaskaherald.com  
**Staff Writer:** Alex Chhith 952-345-6575; achhith@swpub.com  
**Sports Editor:** Eric Kraushar 952-345-6576; scores@swpub.com  
**Circulation:** Ruby Winings 952-345-6682; circulation@swpub.com  
**Classified Advertising:** 952-345-3003; self-serve at swnewsmedia.com/classifieds

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# Universal success story at the county library

The Carver County Library thanks the community for their great support of the “A Universe of Stories” youth summer reading program. Over 1,000 children and teens wrote 16,452 reviews to earn exciting incentives such as tickets to the State Fair, Minnesota Twins, Sea Life, and Crayola Experience.

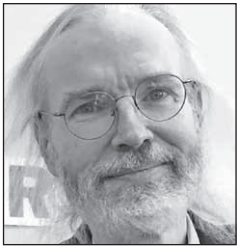
During the summer, children and teens attended 73 performances of musicians, jugglers, magicians, and STEM presenters. In addition to outside performers, Carver County youth librarians created a steady stream of STEM programs connected to the outer space theme which engaged children.

Storytime attendance remained high, as caregivers connected their children to a quality early literacy experience, including special STEM storytimes and even visits from the dairy princess!

Teens volunteered almost a thousand hours to shelve all the kids’ books checked out in the summer as well as engage in special projects. A Universe of Stories was an out of this world success thanks to the enthusiastic participation of residents of Chanhassen, Chaska, Victoria and the rest of Carver County.

### FALL FICTION

Fall into September by getting caught up on some great nonfiction.



Patrick JONES

LIBRARIAN

“Elderhood” by Louise Aronson. For more than 5,000 years, “old” has been defined as beginning between the ages of 60 and 70. That means most people alive today will spend more years in elderhood than in childhood, and many will be elders for 40 years or more. Yet at the very moment that humans are living longer than ever before, we’ve made old age into a disease, a condition to be dreaded, denigrated, neglected and denied. Reminiscent of Oliver Sacks, noted Harvard-trained geriatrician Aronson uses stories from her quarter century of caring for patients, and draws from history, science, literature, popular culture, and her own life to weave a vision of old age that’s neither nightmare nor utopian fantasy, but a vision full of joy,

wonder, frustration, outrage, and hope about aging, medicine and humanity itself.

“Once More We Saw Stars” by Jayson Greene. As the book opens 2-year-old Greta Greene is sitting with her grandmother on a park bench on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. A brick crumbles from a windowsill overhead, striking her unconscious, and she is immediately rushed to the hospital. But although it begins with this event and with the anguish Jayson and his wife, Stacy, confront in the wake of their daughter’s trauma and the hours leading up to her death, the book quickly becomes a narrative that is as much about hope and healing as it is about grief and loss. Jayson recognizes, even amid his ordeal, that there will be a life for him beyond it and that he will survive what seems unsurvivable. With raw honesty, deep emotion, and exquisite tenderness, Greene captures both the fragility of life and absoluteness of death, and most important of all, the unconquerable power of love.

“The Second Mountain” by David Brooks. Brooks explores the four commitments that define a life of meaning and purpose: to a spouse and family, to a vocation, to a philosophy or faith, and to a community. Our personal

fulfillment depends on how well we choose and execute these commitments. Brooks looks at a range of people who have lived joyous, committed lives, and who have embraced the necessity and beauty of dependence. He gathers their wisdom on how to choose a partner, how to pick a vocation, how to live out a philosophy, and how we can begin to integrate our commitments into one overriding purpose. In short, this book is meant to help us all lead more meaningful lives

“Truth Worth Telling” by Scott Pelley. An inspiring memoir from the front lines of history by the award-winning “60 Minutes” correspondent. Don’t ask the meaning of life. Life is asking, what’s the meaning of you? With this provocative question, this book introduces us to unforgettable people who discovered the meaning of their lives in the historic events of our times. A “60 Minutes” correspondent and former anchor of the “CBS Evening News,” Pelley writes as a witness to events that changed our world. In moving, detailed prose, he stands with firefighters at the collapsing World Trade Center on 9/11, advances with American troops in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq and reveals private moments with presidents (and would-be presidents) he’s known for decades.

### Check it out

**Chaska Library:** 3 City Hall Plaza, 952-448-3886

**Chanhassen Library:** 7711 Kerber Blvd., 952-227-1500

**Victoria Library:** 1670 Stieger Lake Lane, 952-442-3050

**Info:** [www.carverlib.org](http://www.carverlib.org); [www.facebook.com/carvercountylibrary](https://www.facebook.com/carvercountylibrary); or <https://twitter.com/carvercolibrary>.

**Closed:** Carver County Library will be closed Monday, Sept. 2, for Labor Day.

### MASTER GARDENER

#### Master Gardener Help

**Desk:** 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 31 at the Chanhassen and Chaska libraries. Bring your plant samples and insect disease questions to any of the Yard & Garden Help Desks. Carver/Scott Master Gardeners will help diagnose problems and answer your yard and garden questions.

### STORYTIMES

See you for storytime starting Sept. 9.

*Patrick Jones is branch manager for the Chanhassen and Victoria libraries. He can be reached at [pjones@co.carver.mn.us](mailto:pjones@co.carver.mn.us).*

# Southwest News Media and ProPublica partner up to cover hate crimes

I always wanted to be a knight when I grew up. In the novels I spent hours reading, knights helped the people who needed it most, shined a light in the darkness and restored justice to the world.

As I got older, I realized there weren’t many opportunities for knighthood in the modern world and found a different career to help my community: journalism. Whether I’m asking politicians how they plan to serve their constituents, researching business practices or interviewing a community elder, I aspire to hold a mirror up to my community, to reflect who we are and look at both the bright spots and the dark ones.



Eden TELLER

COMMUNITY REPORTER

That is why I’m excited to announce that Southwest News Media has joined 150 newsrooms, including the Boston Globe, the Star Tribune and The Guardian, as a partner in ProPublica’s

Documenting Hate project. For the past two years, ProPublica has partnered with newsrooms across the country to share tips about hate crimes in their coverage area. With data sharing and professional training, ProPublica empowers newsrooms to pursue those stories and promotes the finished product on Documenting Hate’s website and social media, broadening the impact of reporting that takes considerable time, resources and empathy.

A hate crime is a criminal offense motivated solely or in part by the offender’s bias against a person’s actual or perceived race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender or gender identity. No one knows for sure

how many hate crimes and instances of bias occur in the U.S. every year; because of the sensitive nature of the crime, they’re often under reported. The most recent data from the FBI reports 7,175 hate crimes in the U.S., against 8,828 victims. That’s up from 5,850 hate crimes against 7,173 victims in 2015, part of a five-year upward trend across the country.

The ideals behind our partnership with Documenting Hate are the same ones that have driven our eight newsrooms for many years: to collaborate with our community, to persevere in the face of obstacles, and to report the truth with integrity and compassion.

This will not signal a dramatic change in our reporting — after

all, readers still deserve to know about the local festivals, city politics and the achievements of their neighbors that make our cities some of the best in the country to call home. Rather, it is a re-commitment to report the painful news alongside the joyful; to listen to all voices in our communities; and to shine a light on the ways society leaves some of its members in the dark.

You can share a tip on Southwest News Media’s website, <https://bit.ly/2TUhJdE>. I hope to hear from you, and to work together as we strive to make our communities welcoming, safe and kind to all people. After all, the world will not be perfect until we make it so.

## CHRISTOPHER

► continued from 6

to high achievement through personalized learning, to sustaining our future: all these things center around positioning our children for success not just in school but beyond.

As we close out summer and start this new chapter, I am energized by our growth and excited for what the 2019-20 school year will bring. Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support; together we’ll make it another great year.

*Clint Christopher is superintendent of Eastern Carver County Schools.*

## SEVELAND

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Carver County Water Management Organization encourages upland preservation to protect open space and increase an area’s ability to keep water on site.

To date the organization

approved 29 upland preservation sites through the permitting process, for a total of about 300 acres. Three sites preserve existing forest and 26 restore native prairie.

*Madeline Seveland is an education coordinator with Carver County Water Management. She can be reached at [mseveland@co.carver.mn.us](mailto:mseveland@co.carver.mn.us).*

## LETTER

### POLITICS

#### Return power to the people

Eight out of 10 Americans (both Democrats and Republicans) agree that our political system is out of control. Billions of dollars are pouring into campaigns from corporations, unions and the wealthy.

Even our local elections are being influenced by outside money, and lobbyists are often influencing the decisions that are made by our government representatives.

Big money in politics is really about how our government makes decisions on all the issues we face and who is represented in our democracy. Special interest groups pour large sums of money into political campaigns and they expect something in return. Citizens lose their voice in the process.

American Promise is a group of citizens from all political backgrounds who are supporting a 28th amendment to the U.S. Constitution. A 28th amendment would overturn the 2010 Citizen’s United Supreme Court decision, which gave human constitutional rights to

corporations and struck down laws that provided limits on campaign spending. It would return power to the people and ensure that we return to our democratic roots.

American Promise has several chapters in Minnesota, including the AP West Metro Chapter. If you would like to work toward returning governmental power to the people, instead of corporations and billionaires, check out [americanpromise.net](http://americanpromise.net) or go to our local Facebook page at American Promise-West Metro, MN.

**Becky Varone**  
**Chanhassen**