

Viewpoint

Legislature needs to pass two election laws this year

Minnesota’s last two governors, Republican Tim Pawlenty and DFLer Mark Dayton, both had an unofficial policy that any changes in the state’s election laws needed broad bipartisan support before they would sign the bills.

“Broad support” means a substantial number from both parties back the change, not just one party with a few mavericks from the other. New Gov. Tim Walz would be wise to follow their guidance on election law reform.

As it is, however, across the United States, calls for changing election laws have been growing. Republicans claim that many fraudulent votes are being cast, and that Democrats are reluctant to investigate. Democrats claim that Republicans are engaging in voter suppression tactics to keep minorities from voting.

Over time, Minnesota has consistently been at or near the top in voter turnout. That suggests that voters here still have confidence that our elections are fair and honest. Nevertheless, the pressure for change is growing here, too. In the Minnesota Legislature this year, 129 bills have been introduced relating to election laws.

These bills range from allowing felons to vote who are still on probation, to campaign finance reform, to requiring the state’s Electoral College members to follow the national result, not Minnesota’s.

Most of these election bills can wait until next year for hearings.

“... if the public loses confidence in our elections, believing they are dishonest or inaccurate, our democratic republic will lose the primary reason for its existence.”

However, we believe that two issues deserve attention now.

First, on March 3, 2020, Minnesotans will vote in a presidential primary. Previously, delegates to the national presidential nominating conventions were chosen through party caucuses and conventions. Minnesota holds a primary election every two years, so it may seem to be no big deal to hold another one especially for presidential candidates.

However, the presidential primary will be run differently from the state’s traditional primary. Voters in the presidential primary will be required for the first time to ask for a Democrat or Republican

ballot. The traditional primary limited voters, in the secrecy of the voting booth, to vote for candidates of only one party. The presidential primary law requires that the ballot one requests will be public information.

For many voters, that will be problematic. Local elected officials run without party designation, but their party will be revealed if they vote in a presidential primary. The same could also be an issue for businesspeople; the social media mob could call for business boycotts if the party affiliation of business owners is revealed. Some employers would be tempted to use the information to weed out otherwise qualified job applicants.

The law needs to be amended this year so that the knowledge of voters’ party affiliation remains

(Continued on Page 5A)

Honesty, accountability and dollars will produce more diverse teachers

This week’s column may make a lot of people angry. But after spending 20 years studying and working on ways to attract and retain more American Indian and “people of color” teachers, I have reached two conclusions. First, it’s a very worthwhile goal. Second, we need a combination of honesty, accountability and dollars.

Here are four suggestions for legislators, schools and districts that want to make progress.

First, we need much more honesty about why tens of millions of dollars spent has produced virtually no increase in the percentage of Minnesota teachers of color. The best single report on this, published in 2018, was by Rose Chu, former chair of the Metro State College of Education, and some Humphrey School students. It’s “The Tale of Two States: How Policy and Funding Affect Efforts to Diversify the Teaching Corps in Oregon and Minnesota.” They found that between 2006 and 2016, the percentage of Oregon’s teachers of color almost doubled, from 5.2 to 9.3 percent. Meanwhile in Minnesota

Nathan on Education



by Joe Nathan

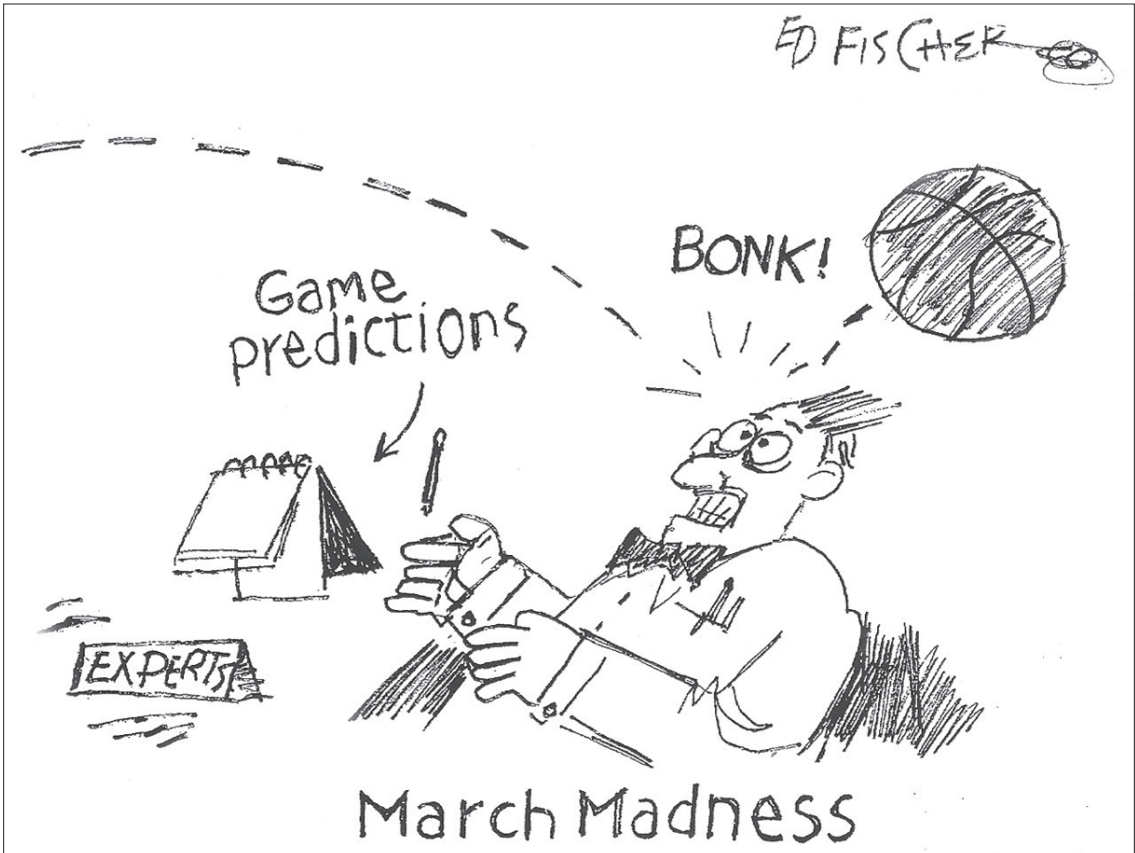
it increased less than 1 percent, from 3.5 to 4.2 percent.

Researchers found Minnesota spent more than \$5 million to increase the number of American Indian teachers. But available reports did not show how many remained in teaching. It also explained that several Minnesota private universities received millions to increase the number of teachers of color — again, no record of how many of them remain teachers.

Chu et al pointed out that Oregon spent money not only to encourage people of color to enter teaching but also to stay in teaching. Minnesota focused primarily on encouraging people to enter the profes-

(Continued on Page 5A)

“We need much more honesty about why tens of millions of dollars spent has produced virtually no increase in the percentage of Minnesota teachers of color.”



New Twins about as lovable as corporate America

The Twins kicked off their 59th season in Minnesota last week. I know what you’re thinking: Hope springs eternal for this God-forsaken franchise.

I’ve been around for all 59 of those seasons. What some people don’t recall is that the team existed for 60 years before that, as the Washington Senators. Teams evolve through the years, but history is history, and the Twins have been less than mediocre from the start.

In the 1950s they were so bad, that a best-selling book became a smash Broadway musical, “Damn Yankees.” It was about a Senators’ fan so tired of losing that he sold his soul to the devil for a chance to lead the team to the pennant.

In those first 60 years, the American League had eight teams. The Senators finished in the lower half 40 times. They won three pennants and one World Series before moving here.

In June 1961, I attended my first games as a Twins fan. My

“The favorite, familiar faces are gone. Watching this team play its first few games, it feels as new as 1961, but overlaid with corporate efficiency instead of hometown ties.”

My one memory of the games is that the Twins’ shortstop, Zoilo Versalles, batted lead-off. In those days, pitchers still hit in the American League, but they usually didn’t bother to go out to the on-deck circle. Zoilo was in the on-deck circle and when it was the next batter’s turn, he started walking toward the plate.

He would have been called out for batting out of turn if he had stepped into the batter’s box, but he was called back in the nick of time. With a sheepish grin on his face, he walked back to the on-deck circle as the pitcher, Pedro Ramos, came out of the dugout. Ramos slapped him in the back of the head as they passed.

For Twins’ fans, there have been a lot of head slapping moments since. The curse of mediocrity has

West Words



by Tom West  
Former Editor/General Manager

been lifted only a few times. In 1965, Harmon Killebrew, Mudcat Grant and Versalles took the Los Angeles Dodgers to the seventh game of the World Series before falling. Then, in 1987 and 1991, with Kirby Puckett and Kent Hrbek, the Twins won it all.

In 1969, the American League was split into divisions which means every team had at least twice the chance to make post-season play. Regardless, it has been clear since 1991 that the Twins could not compete with big spending teams like the Yankees and Red Sox.

The Griffith family owned the Senators/Twins during most of their existence. Calvin Griffith sold out to banker Carl Pohlad in 1984. Pohlad spent just enough to keep the public buying tickets — or maybe not.

In 2001, contracting the team out of its financial misery was considered.

But then, fortunes briefly turned. Between 2002 and 2010, the Twins made the playoffs six times. They weren’t serious contenders; they went 3-19 in playoff games during that run.

However, Pohlad convinced the public, in a move worthy of P.T. Barnum, that the Twins had to have a new ballpark to compete. The new revenue streams would make it possible to bid on superstars. Pohlad died in 2009 and his sons took over the team. No superstars appeared, but ineptitude made a comeback.

Finally, three years ago, Pohlad’s sons decided that after

116 years of family-owned bumbling, maybe a more professional approach was needed. They hired a couple of college-educated whiz kids, Derek Falvey and Thad Levine, to run the operation

They started slowly, rebuilding the farm system from the ground up. Then last year, they traded away two of the most popular Twins, infielders Eduardo Escobar and Brian Dozier, mostly for minor leaguers. Topping it off, St. Paul natives Joe Mauer retired and Paul Molitor was fired. In the space of two months, they encapsulated everything Americans hate about corporate America. No loyalty; no humanity. Just win.

And that brings us to 2019. Falvey and Levine are all about “analytics,” believing that computers can tell you what your lying eyes can’t see. Sportswriters suddenly seem to think this team is a favorite to make the playoffs again.

This week, USA Today published the salaries of every Major Leaguer. What it revealed about the heretofore cheapskate Twins was revealing. Yes, the team’s total payroll is only seventh among the 15 American League teams. However, its median salary of \$1.8 million is the third highest in the league, meaning the team is paying more players big money than most other teams. Nelson Cruz, 38, is the highest paid Twin, making \$14.3 million this year. Only one other team, the Toronto Bluejays, has a highest-paid player who makes less.

Attendance hit a 15-year low last year. The favorite, familiar faces are gone. Watching this team play its first few games, it feels as new as 1961, but overlaid with corporate efficiency instead of hometown loyalty.

This franchise has been outscored over its 119 years by 3,518 runs and has lost 739 more games than it has won. Maybe Falvey and Levine know what they’re doing; maybe not. Either way, they have a long way to go to bring this franchise up to average. Play ball.

Tom West, now retired, is the former general manager of this paper. Reach him at westwords.mcr@gmail.com.

Letter to the Editor

Walz laid out a plan for all Minnesotans

To the Editor:

In the State of the State address, Governor Walz demonstrated the integrity, empathy and willingness to tackle the problems facing Minnesotans that got him elected in the first place.

It’s clear Walz is listening to the people of Minnesota: their needs, concerns and aspirations. Our governor built his agenda around solving the problems Minnesotans face and making sure every Min-

nesotan, regardless of where they live, has the opportunity to succeed.

We heard about people across the state who simply want what’s best for their communities. They aren’t interested in cynical partisan bickering and they don’t want to hear excuses. They believe, as I do and as Walz does, that our state government should be a force for righting wrongs, fixing what’s broken and ensuring prosperity spreads throughout our great state. Your ZIP code should not determine your destiny. Walz believes in One Minnesota where all

communities thrive and no individual is left behind.

Walz’s investments in our classrooms, our health care and the infrastructure so vital to our communities lives up to the hopes and aspirations of Minnesotans everywhere.

We must set aside our differences, stop playing politics and move forward on Governor Walz’s agenda for the good of Minnesota. — Ken Martin is the DFL chairman for Minnesota.

Online Poll

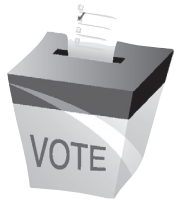
Do you know someone with an opioid abuse problem?

- 1. Yes, it’s a big problem.
- 2. No, and I hope everyone I know can avoid having that problem.

Last week’s poll results

Do you think the County Board should approve a permit for MudFest? 67.0% - Everyone has a good time, what’s the big deal? 23.7% - Yes, provided they abide by the sheriff’s wishes. 9.3% - No, there have been too many problems in the past.

Cast your vote online at www.mcrecord.com under the Viewpoint tab



Over 20,000 Circulation

216 S.E. 1st Street, Little Falls, MN 56345 • (320) 632-2345  
www.mcrecord.com • e-mail: mcr@mcrecord.com

Published every Sunday and delivered by APG Media of East Central Minnesota in Morrison County and parts of surrounding counties. Legal newspaper in the State of Minnesota and official publication for all school districts, city governments, and county government in Morrison County.

APG Media of East Central MN . Publisher  
CARMEN MEYER.....General Manager  
TENA WENSMAN.....Sales Manager  
JUDY ESPINO.....Business Manager  
TERRY LEHRKE.....Managing Editor  
FAYE SANTALA.....Production Manager  
NANCY GERADS.....Typesetting Manager  
KAREN GRITTNER.....Distribution Manager



The Record welcomes letters

The Morrison County Record invites readers to contribute letters to the editor. E-mail letters are preferred to mcr@mcrecord.com. Letters should be no more than 200 words and Thank You’s should be no more than 75 words in length. Letters containing libelous material, or those intended as advertising will be refused. All letters must include a signature, address and a daytime telephone number. Deadline for letters is Wednesday at 5 p.m. Letter writers are limited to one letter every 5 weeks.

Published by APG Media of East Central Minnesota  
Circulation audited by Certified Audit of Circulations (CAC)

• FAX NUMBER: 320-632-2348 • Copyright © Morrison County Record 2018



Viewpoint

Become an advocate for children in your community

By ERIN FOSS  
Guest Columnist

Did you know that in the past year drug overdoses have claimed more lives than motor vehicle accidents? Substance abuse remains an ongoing crisis that every community is currently facing. In the midst of this public health tragedy, you may be asking yourself the following questions: How is this impacting families in our community? How does this harm children living in a household with a parent who is using illicit substances? What is our community doing to help?

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 8.3 million children in the United States live with a parent who is dependent or abuses alcohol or other drugs. In Morrison County,

seventy eight percent of all children placed in foster care were removed from their homes due to parental alcohol or drug use. Research has shown that children with parents who use alcohol or drugs are more likely to experience maltreatment and neglect.

The following are common signs that an individual may be battling addiction: Social isolation, financial problems, weight loss, poor physical hygiene, mood swings and erratic behavior such as difficulty regulating emotions like anger and impulsivity. In addition, children who are living in a household with parents who are using could appear mal-

nourished, have poor physical hygiene, health issues, poor cognitive, social and emotional development, depression and anxiety, poor school attendance, and substance use problems later in life.

With that being said, it is the goal of both the Child Abuse Protection Council and health care providers to assist people struggling with addiction in our community to seek help. This is of utmost importance so that they can begin to recover, and provide a loving and supportive home for their children. Circle of Parents support group is offered by our Child Abuse Prevention Council. This

“... 8.3 million children in the United States live with a parent who is dependent or abuses alcohol or other drugs.”

support is funded by the Ral-diothon to end child abuse, and the local United Way.

Community members can help to mentor children on healthy relationships, life skills and building resiliency by advocating for federal and state policies that support children and families, such as home visiting programs. It is also beneficial for community members to learn about abuse prevention resources that are available in our area. People in our community can also help by donating funds or time to organizations such as the Kinship program and our local Boys and Girls Club who offer mentorship programs along with other services that benefit children.

If you feel that a child is being neglected or in danger please contact Morrison County Social Services In-

take line at (320) 632-2951.

To donate time, resources, or to learn more about the Kinship Mentoring Program of Morrison County visit <https://kinshipofmc.org>.

If you would like to donate or learn more about our local Boys and Girls Club of Little Falls, visit their Facebook page or call (320) 414-0322.

Circle of Parents support group is located at First Lutheran Church in Little Falls. Contact Tami Naslund at (320) 360-9870 for upcoming dates and times. If interested there is a free meal through the Oasis Share a Meal, which is offered at 6 p.m. at the First Lutheran Church. Child care is provided.

If you or a loved one is struggling with an opioid (heroin or prescription pain medication) addiction and

would like to reach out for help, contact the Controlled Substance Care Team at CHI St. Gabriel’s Family Medical Center in Little Falls at (320) 631-7274. At Family Medical Center we have physicians certified to prescribe medication to help patients overcome opioid addiction. This is known as medication assisted treatment (MAT). The goal of the Controlled Substance Care Team is to keep our patients working, parenting and living a productive life as they were before they became plagued with the disease of addiction.

Erin Foss, RN, is the Opioid Program Development and Outreach Coordinator in Morrison County.

‘I Ask’ campaign empowers individuals

By AMANDA KAPING  
Guest Columnist

As part of the national 2019 “I Ask” campaign, Hands of Hope Resource Center joins the National Sexual Violence Resource Center in empowering individuals to practice consent every day. This year’s theme, “I Ask” builds on the idea that consent is a healthy, normal and necessary part of everyday interactions. “I Ask” will champion the power of asking — whether it be asking to hold someone’s hand, for permission to share personal information with others or if a partner is interested in sex. It will also highlight the importance of listening to and accepting the answer without pressuring someone to change their mind.

The goal of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) is to raise public awareness about sexual violence and educate communities on how to prevent it. Consent is about always choosing to respect the personal and emotional boundaries of others. It’s important for individuals to think about how their actions might make others feel and ask questions if they don’t

know.

All of us can practice consent in our lives by asking permission before assuming and showing respect for others’ choices. When it comes to sex, it’s important that everyone is on the same page, and the best way to do that is by being direct and asking.

Our words and actions shape the world around us. Whether you are speaking out against “locker room talk” or helping someone better understand these issues, your voice is powerful and necessary in preventing sexual violence, misconduct and abuse.

We know that one month isn’t enough to solve the serious and widespread issue of sexual violence. Nearly one in five women in the United States have experienced rape or attempted rape some time in their lives, and one in 67 American men have experienced rape or attempted rape (Smith et al., 2017). The majority of sexual as-

saults, an estimated 63 percent, are never reported to the police (Rennison, 2002). Despite misconceptions, the prevalence of false reporting for sexual assault crimes is low — between two percent and 10 percent (Lisak et al., 2010).

The good news is that prevention is possible and it’s happening. Individuals,

“Show your support of victims of sexual assault by wearing a teal ribbon and/or participating in our prevention campaigns.”

communities, and the private sector are already successfully combating the risk of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse through conversations, programs, policies and research-based tools that promote safety, respect and equality.

Show your support of victims of sexual assault by wearing a teal ribbon and/or participating in our prevention campaigns. The following participating businesses will be hosting A Cup of Prevention Campaign: Buy a cup of coffee at A.T. The Black and White, Donna’s Big John’s, Jordie’s Trailside Café, Randall Café, The

Royal and Zoomski’s, and they will donate a portion of the proceeds to our sexual assault program.

April 24 is Denim Day where people are encouraged to wear denim in honor of the National Day to End Sexual Violence. Area businesses participate by allowing their employees to “break the dress code.”

On April 25, at 7 p.m. we will be having our free Common Sense Self Defense Class for females ages 15 and up at Little Falls Taekwondo.

If you or someone you know has been a victim of sexual assault, please feel free to call our 24-hour hotline at (320) 632-4878 or for more information about us, our events or to register for our self-defense class, please call (320) 632-1657.

SAAM is organized nationally by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC). For more information on this year’s national campaign or more about the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, visit [www.nsvrc.org/](http://www.nsvrc.org/)

Amanda Kaping is the sexual assault coordinator with Hands of Hope Resource Center, Little Falls.

Legislature needs to pass two laws

(Continued from Page 4A)

private.

Second, Minnesota has received \$6.6 million from the federal government to improve election security. While the Minnesota House has approved spending all of those funds, the state Senate has approved only \$1.5 million. Secretary of State Steve Simon, the state’s chief election official, has proposed a 20-point plan on how to spend the funds, but the Senate has been slow to act on appropriating the remainder.

While the Senate should do its due diligence with regard to all spending, including for election security, we urge the senators to take up the matter now. We know that foreign actors are out to undermine the integrity of U.S. elections, and if the public loses confidence in our elections, believing they are dishonest or inaccurate, our democratic republic will lose the primary reason for its existence.

The Senate is not obligated to rubber stamp Simon’s proposal. However, it should act sooner rather than later so that compromise can be achieved with broad bipartisan support in time for full implementation before the next election.

— An opinion of the Adams Publishing — ECM Editorial Board. Reactions welcome. Send to: [editorial.board@ecm-inc.com](mailto:editorial.board@ecm-inc.com).

Letter to the Editor

Defenseless child needs protection

To the Editor:

The March 31 crime section told of a man’s alleged assault and malicious punishment of a 1-year-old

child. It goes on to say that a family member alleged that the man does abuse the child. The mother allegedly did not defend the child. She allegedly had no explanation for the wrist fracture and unexplained bruises all over its body.

Thank you letter

To the Editor:

This week the sixth grade Metier class at Pioneer had the opportunity to have Katie Hoheisel from Farmers and Merchants Bank come teach us about online banking. We as the sixth grade

would like to thank Katie for coming and F & M Bank for sponsoring the sixth grade trip to go to Biz-town in St. Paul later this year where we will get to learn about community economics hands on. Thank you. —

I feel so sorry for this child. It seems no one cared for it. I hope this case does not end the way so many cases end: with a cheap fine and a small amount of time in jail.. — Virginia Pederson, Little Falls

Ruthie Osborne, sixth grade reporter, Pioneer Elementary School, Pierz

Staples/Motley May 14th \$60 Million Bond Referendum

The School District taxes in 2018 totaled \$1.971 million. With the 24% increase that was voted on by the school board, they will get \$2.444 million this year. A \$60 million bond at 3.5% interest for 25 years will add another \$3.640 million to the \$2.444 million for a total of \$6.084 million per year. This means property taxes will need to go up by 250% of what is paid this year. My taxes might double, yours might triple but the average will be 250%.

Voting will be at the City Hall in Motley or at the Staples Community Center. Motley City Hall has limited parking and as a large turnout may happen, it may be a good idea to get an Absentee Ballot. Applications are available at the Motley Middle School or the Staples High School. May 14th is not far away and voting by absentee ballot takes time. ACT NOW.

Ervin Bjerga  
Motley, MN

INSURE CAREFULLY,  
DREAM FEARLESSLY.

CALL (320) 632-2376 FOR A  
NO-OBLIGATION FREE QUOTE.

Joe Schommer, Agent  
Joe Schommer, Agent  
14759 19th St Ne Ste 101  
Little Falls, MN 56345  
[jschomme@amfam.com](mailto:jschomme@amfam.com)  
amfam.com



AMERICAN FAMILY  
INSURANCE®

American Family Mutual Insurance Company, S.I.  
American Family Insurance Company,  
6000 American Parkway, Madison, WI 53783  
006441 — Rev. 11/15 ©2015 — 9449076