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## St. Stephen snowmobile club celebrates 50 years

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# St. Cloud Times

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2019 ■ SCTIMES.COM

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## Sub shortage hitting local schools

47% of Minn. districts call issue a ‘serious problem’



Samantha Backer goes through a book with kindergarten students Jan. 25 at Talahi Community School in St. Cloud.

Jenny Berg and Jordyn Brown  
St. Cloud Times | USA TODAY NETWORK

*“Right now, actually today, one of the reasons my day was so busy is because I was covering for a teacher that didn’t have a sub...and it makes your day a little bit hectic because you’re running from one class to another.”*

— **Michele Claassen**  
Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School  
special education teacher

■■■

Almost a full year of a child’s K-12 education is taught by a substitute teacher.

According to Al Sowers of Teachers on Call, a staffing service that provides substitute teachers to schools, this statistic conveys the importance of putting capable and engaging substitutes in classrooms.

But a new report shows in recent years, the state — including St. Cloud metro school districts — have seen a steep decline in the number of substitute teachers.

When school administrators cannot find enough subs to cover for absent teachers, they scramble.

They pull teachers from special assignments such as academic coaches or gifted and talented advisers. They

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Special education teacher Michele Claassen teaches on Jan. 22 at Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School.

JASON WACHTER/JWACHTER@STCLOUDTIMES.COM

### Substitute teacher pay, by district

St. Cloud and Sartell districts manage short-call substitute teachers through Bloomington-based Teachers On Call, which provides substitute staffing services for 89 school districts in Minnesota.

Pay varies by district, but the **statewide average is \$125 a day** for licensed substitute teachers, according to Teachers On Call.

The **basic rate in St. Cloud is \$105 a day**, but increases to **\$125 a day** if substitutes complete a four-hour training provided by the district on culture and diversity, technology, instruction, special education and behavior.

Retired teachers who come back to sub make \$135 a day in St. Cloud.

Licensed substitute teachers in **Sartell-St. Stephen make \$120 a day**.

Sauk Rapids-Rice manages its substitute staffing needs internally. Licensed substitute teachers in **Sauk Rapids-Rice make \$120 a day** with prorated hourly assignments. An additional **one-time stipend of \$100** is added for those who also go through district training and about 80 hours of subbing in the district.

Pay for non-licensed substitute positions such as food service workers, custodians and bus drivers varies by position.

## Minn. suffers the most snowmobile thefts in US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ST. PAUL — Minnesota snowmobile owners, beware: The North Star State has the highest number of snowmobile thefts in the country, according to a new report.

The National Insurance Crime Bureau released findings Tuesday that more than 300 snowmobiles were stolen in Minnesota from 2015 to 2017, Minnesota Public Radio News reported.

Almost half of the 20 U.S. counties reporting the most snowmobile thefts are located in Minnesota, led by Anoka and St. Louis counties, according to the nonprofit that fights insurance fraud and vehicle theft.

Michigan ranks second, with about 200 reported snowmobile thefts over the three years of data.

Frank Scafidi, the nonprofit’s director of public affairs, said snowmobiles are particularly vulnerable to theft because they’re often stored in places that make them easy to haul away, such as trailers, or left in remote places. Scafidi said snowmobiles can be difficult for law enforcement to spot because they often aren’t driven in public places.

“They’re not that large. They can be easily hidden, the can be taken to somebody’s cabin and used minimally there,” Scafidi said.

More than half of Minnesota’s stolen sleds are never returned.

Scafidi recommends that snowmobile owners store their machines securely and record their vehicle’s data, including VIN and license numbers.

## Minn. sex offender center guard accused of having sex with patient

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANKATO — A security guard at the Minnesota Sex Offender Treatment Program in St. Peter is accused of having a sexual relationship with a patient.

Claudia Kogo, 57, of Mankato, was charged Friday in Nicollet County District Court with felony counts of criminal sexual conduct, the Mankato Free Press reported.

Authorities say a patient who was committed as a sexually dangerous person reported that he had sex with Kogo more than two dozen times in late 2017. The patient said the relationship started with flirting and progressed to sex.

Prosecutors allege that Kogo told a state investigator she kissed and groped the patient but denied having sex with him. A St. Peter police detective who listened to recordings of phone calls between Kogo and the patient said many of the calls included conversations about their sexual activities, according to court documents.

Kogo no longer works at the facility, a Minnesota Department of Human Services spokesman said. A phone number for Kogo could not be found.

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USA TODAY

Tackling border security: Trump, O’Rourke to face off Monday. **17A**

Opinion

Closure of Minn. shelter offers chance to create regional animal control. **14A**

Weather

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