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Skluzacek wins Torchlight button design contest

Wade Young
Montgomery Messenger

Out of more than 140 entries in the button contest for the Torchlight Parade and Fireworks, organizers chose the design by fourth-grader Corinne Skluzacek.

The daughter of Ryan and Jenny Skluzacek, of Lonsdale, was all smiles on Friday when she found out at a special event with her classmates at TCU-Lonsdale.

Torchlight committee members Neaner Kriha and Anita Rynda

brought the fourth-grade classes to the school's commons area before announcing Skluzacek had created the winning button design.

Kriha said Corinne had put a lot of time and effort into all of the details that portray a winter Christmas scene with a table with a mug of steaming hot cocoa, a letter to Santa, cookies, an Elf on the Shelf, a Christmas tree and wreath, lights, bows, and a fireplace.

Kriha said you can tell she put a lot of effort into the drawing.



Wade Young Photo

Corinne Skluzacek, a fourth-grader at TCU-Lonsdale, is this year's button designer for the Torchlight Parade and Fireworks Celebration in Montgomery.



The Torchlight Parade and Fireworks Button, designed by fourth-grader Corinne Skluzacek of Lonsdale.

"She has the whole nine yards on this button. She really, really took her time with it," Kriha said.

Corinne said she started with the desk and hot cocoa for her holiday theme, then it grew from there.

"I added some picture frames, some cookies and a letter to Santa," she stated.

Mom advised a little but left the design up to the fourth-grader who says art is her favorite subject in school.

"I mentioned she should draw it bigger in front of a window with it snowing," Jenny stated. "Then she started working on it and came up with that design all by herself. She

is so artistic. She LOVES Christmas, so all of that in the picture reminded her of it all. She is very creative and wants to be an artist when she grows up."

Corinne's celebration included another surprise when her family and grandparents emerged from behind a curtain to surprise her.

Le Sueur County Historical Society sets sight on steeple *Big project, little church*

Lisa Ingebrand
Montgomery Messenger

The restoration of a little historic church's steeple will be Le Sueur County Historical Society's first big project, since the group's leadership changed in June.

The project, which carries an estimated price tag of \$174,000, includes the building of a new, historically accurate steeple, the erection of that steeple, and the installation of a new roof on the 160-year-old Ottawa Stone Church, one of four historic properties owned by LCHS.

"There is no small project," stated LCHS President Bill Stangler. "Our properties are in disrepair and need attention, which means we're going to need the funds to make things happen. Thankfully, the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation sees the importance of what we are trying to do and have awarded us a matching grant for the Ottawa church project."

According to Stangler, the foundation has agreed to pay \$2 for every \$1 LCHS raises for the steeple project, up to \$120,000.

"We need to raise \$60,000 by mid-December," he stated.

To help make the fundraising goal, LCHS is holding a membership drive with the hope of increasing membership to 1,000. Currently, the society has about 230 members.

"We have this beautiful, well-maintained, 160-year-old church. It's history. From its hand-carved



Photos courtesy of LCHS

Le Sueur County Historical Society hopes to crown 160-year-old stone church in Ottawa with a new, historically accurate steeple. Fundraising for the project has begun.

stones to its potbelly stove, it helps tell the history of this area," Stangler stated. "This is history we should work to keep for, not only ourselves, but future generations."

The Ottawa Stone Church was built in 1859, making it one of the three oldest German Methodist churches in Minnesota, but the history of the people who built the church predates the structure.

According to information provided by LCHS, the people in the area worshiped without a church. The group was originally called Minnewashta, meaning good water, but the congregation was later renamed the Ottawa Methodist Episcopal Church in 1856 in honor of the Algonquin Indian tribe.



Ottawa stone church's original steeple was square.

School board receives good news, positive reviews

Wade Young
Montgomery Messenger

For the most part, the regular TCU School Board meeting on Monday was about good news, pats on the back, awards and donations.

During the part about informational items, Superintendent Teri Preisler recapped the several awards TCU has received over the past couple of years. She commented not in her career has she ever seen a school district with as many awards as TCU.

"It shows the work we've done in the district has made a difference," she said.

Board member Marsha Franek added, "We're doing good things."

The awards included:

- Project Lead the Way, Distinguished District, 2017-2018, one of two districts recognized in Minnesota in the past two years, 31 in nation.
- Project Lead the Way, National Schools of Distinction (Launch), 2018-2019, 256 schools in the nation.
- Project Lead the Way, National Schools of Distinction (Gateway), 2018-2019, 158 schools in the nation.
- Postive Behavioral Interventions & Supports MN (PBIS) sustaining Exemplar Recognition, 2018-2019, one of 71 Minnesota Schools recognized.
- National Blue Ribbon Schools, TCU Lonsdale, 2018-2019, one of 10 Minnesota Schools recognized and 362 in the nation.

School to 10



Church to 10

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