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# Albert Lea Tribune

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**SPORTS:**  
**A.L. GIRLS' BASKETBALL FALLS TO MANKATO EAST**

## A REAL-LIFE HERO'S STORY

### Community Theatre to present play set during World War II

By Colleen Harrison  
colleen.harrison@albertleatribune.com

Just weeks after International Holocaust Remembrance Day, a play set during World War II will take center stage in Albert Lea.

"Irena's Vow" is the true story of Irena Gut Opdyke, a housekeeper for a Nazi officer during Adolf Hitler's reign of terror. When she finds out the nearby Jewish ghetto is about to be liquidated, the titular character and real-life hero becomes determined to help 12 Jewish workers by sheltering them in the safest place she can think of: the basement of the German commandant's house.

Pat Parsons plays Opdyke in the drama, which Glen Parsons directs. Jason Howland, Luke Zacharias, Michael Lilienthal, Jennifer Gonsalves, Risha Lilienthal, Daniel Montenegro, Kris Bartley, Aaron McVicker and Logan Petersen also star.

Glen Parsons said the Albert Lea Community Theatre cast and crew have been working on the production since December, and the play has meant a lot to those working on it.

"Many know the story of Anne Frank. This is a story most people don't know," Parsons said. "It's a beautiful story, and it needs to be told."

It's around the 15th production for the director, who said the story is especially important in contemporary society, especially with the way the United States is considered to be divided based on political beliefs. Parsons said parallels can be drawn to the divisiveness Germany and much of Europe faced as Hitler's influence spread. The importance of the story is something that can evoke emotions, Parsons said, tearing up himself while discussing the play.

"I'm just so thrilled to be able to do this," he said. "I'm just so touched by it."

Parsons said the production has been a team effort, with the cast and crew talking, sharing and brainstorming together to make Opdyke's story come alive.

"It's a human story. It's a story of hope. It's an inspirational story," Parsons said. "It's really a beautiful story."

"Irena's Vow" can be seen at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday this week or at 2 p.m. Sunday. It will also be performed at 7:30 p.m.



Pat Parsons as Irena Gut Opdyke rehearses a scene from Albert Lea Community Theatre's upcoming production of "Irena's Vow." COLLEEN HARRISON/ALBERT LEA TRIBUNE

### Tickets, please

**What:** Albert Lea Community Theatre's production of "Irena's Vow"

**When:** 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday, and 7:30 p.m. Feb. 19 through Feb. 22

**Where:** Marion Ross Performing Arts Center, 147 N. Broadway Ave. in downtown Albert Lea

**How much:** \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. Tickets can be purchased at 1-877-730-3144, actonbroadway.com, or at the theater box office or the Albert Lea Convention and Visitors Bureau

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From left, Risha Lilienthal, Michael Lilienthal and Jennifer Gonsalves rehearse a scene from "Irena's Vow," which opens Thursday.

## Minnesota Legislature convenes with 2020 election looming

ST. PAUL (AP) — The Minnesota Legislature opened its 2020 election-year session on Tuesday with lawmakers debating how much to borrow for public infrastructure projects and a host of other contentious issues that divide Democrats and Republicans.

Dozens of women wearing red "Moms Demand Action" T-shirts in support of gun control gathered outside the House and Senate chambers and roamed the halls of the Capitol to welcome lawmakers back.

The House held not one but two hearings on a Democratic-backed bill to provide emergency insulin supplies to diabetics who can't afford them, one of the main issues left over from last year. Senate Republicans plan to hold a hearing Thursday on their own insulin bill that focuses on long-term affordability. Major elements of the Senate proposal have been incorporated into the House bill, but the two parties disagree over how much the insulin manufacturers should pay.

Democratic House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler, of Golden Valley, said he expects the House to pass the bill by the end of the session.

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## Minnesota presidential primary approaching

By Sarah Stultz  
sarah.stultz@albertleatribune.com

The Freeborn County auditor-treasurer is reminding county voters of the changes taking place to the election process this season.

For the first time since 1992, there will be a presidential nomination primary on March 3 instead of a presidential straw poll at precinct caucuses. The votes at the primary will be binding in determining Minnesota's delegates for both parties.



Pat Martinson

Freeborn County Auditor-Treasurer Pat Martinson said voters in the presidential primary will have to declare a party, choosing either a Republican or Democratic-Farmer-Labor ballot, as opposed to having both parties on the same ballot as in previous primary elections. If a voter refuses to select a party, they will not be able to participate. Minnesota's other two major parties, Legal Marijuana Now Party and the Grassroots Legalized Cannabis Party, have chosen not to participate in the primary.

On the Republican ballot, President Donald Trump is the only candidate listed, or voters could write in a candidate.

On the DFL ballot, there are 15 candidates to choose from, along with a write-in option.

See **PRIMARY**, Page 9

## Klobuchar faces questions in case of juvenile lifer

NEW YORK (AP) — As voters made their way to the New Hampshire polls, Sen. Amy Klobuchar faced pointed questions Tuesday about her oversight of a high-profile murder case in which a black teen was sentenced to life after a flawed police investigation.

"I mean, how do you defend something like that, to someone like me, who is the mother of a black boy, a

black teenager?" asked Sunny Hostin, co-host of the CBS show, "The View." "This case would be my worst nightmare."

Klobuchar, who has drawn enthusiastic crowds following her debate performance Friday night, said, "All of the evidence needs to be immediately reviewed in that case. The past evidence and also any new evidence."

The back and forth between Klobuchar and Hostin concerned an Associated Press investigation into the case of Myon Burrell. Burrell was 16 when he was apprehended in the 2002 death of an 11-year-old African American girl, killed by a stray bullet while doing her homework.

No gun, fingerprints or DNA were ever recovered, and the case against Burrell relied on the testimony of a teen rival who offered conflicting stories when identifying the trigger

man, who was standing 120 feet away, mostly behind a wall, the AP reported.

The AP also uncovered questionable police tactics in the case, including an investigator who offered cash for information, and interviewed a prison inmate who said he was the trigger man and that Burrell was not on the scene when Tyesha Edwards was shot and killed.

After the AP's story, Klobuchar

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— Matthew 10:32



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"Irena's Vow" is a true story of a housekeeper who shelters Jewish workers in the basement of her employer's house — her employer being a German commandant. COLLEEN HARRISON/ALBERT LEA TRIBUNE

## PLAY

Continued from Front Page

Feb. 19 through Feb. 22, with all performances being at Marion Ross Performing Arts Center. Parsons said there are moments in the play that could be frightening for younger children, and said the appropriate audience is likely teenagers and adults.

### Cast and crew

**Irena Gut Opdyke:** Pat Parsons  
**Major Rugemer:** Jason Howland  
**Rokita:** Luke Zacharias  
**Lazar Haller:** Michael Lilienthal  
**Ida Haller:** Jennifer Gonsalves  
**Fanka Silberman:** Risha Lilienthal  
**Schultz:** Daniel Montenegro  
**Helen/Rokita's secretary:** Kris Bartley  
**SS officer/mayor of Jerusalem:** Aaron McVicker  
**The visitor:** Logan Petersen  
**Director:** Glen Parsons  
**Assistant director/music director:**

George Favell  
**Technical director/set designer:** Mark Bartleson  
**Lighting designer:** Dietrich Poppen  
**Production manager:** Jason Howland  
**Stage managers:** Jan Rogness, Elaine Wallace  
**Costumes:** Elizabeth Harty, Mary Ellen Johnson  
**Props, set dressing:** Teresa Howland  
**Lights:** Josh Gulbrandson  
**Sound:** Sue Runden  
**Technical assistant:** Phil Hanson

## SESSION

Continued from Front Page

Valley, said they hope to bring the bill to the floor "within the first couple of weeks."

House Democrats also plan to pass two gun violence prevention measures, a bill for universal background checks on firearms transfers and a "red flag" bill to allow courts to confiscate guns from people judged to be an imminent danger to themselves or others. Similar legislation passed the House last year but not the Republican-controlled Senate, where leaders don't plan to take those bills up this year either.

Democrats hope to use the issue to help to regain control of the Senate in the 2020 elections.

"This session, we will spend some time articulating our vision for Minnesota," Democratic House Speaker Melissa Hortman, of Brooklyn Park, told reporters. "And some of that won't become law. We know that. But rather than dismiss it as just politics, I think it's important to elevate what we do in a democracy. Its about telling Minnesotans what we would do if we had a Democratic Senate."

The chambers convened around noon and both held solemn tributes to three Minnesota National Guard members

who were killed in a Black Hawk helicopter crash near St. Cloud in December: Chief Warrant Officers James Rogers Jr., of Winsted, and Charles Nord, of Perham; and Sgt. Kort Plantenberg, of Avon. The House also held a remembrance for Democratic Rep. Diane Loeffler, of Minneapolis, who died of cancer last November.

Lawmakers also got an early start on assembling a borrowing bill to fund infrastructure projects around the state such as housing, water treatment plants, roads and bridges, school and other government buildings, and public safety facilities.

The committee that will

craft the House version of what's commonly known as a bonding bill got an early start by meeting at 8 a.m. to hear a walk-through of Democratic Gov. Tim Walz's \$2 billion wish list from Budget Commissioner Myron Frans and his staff.

The committee chair, Democratic Rep. Mary Murphy, of Hermantown, later said she plans a list closer to \$3.5 billion. Senate Republican leaders have said they would like to hold the price tag below \$1 billion. Since bonding bills require 60% majorities in each chamber to pass, the final package will need at least six House Republican and at least six Senate Democratic votes.

## PRIMARY

Continued from Front Page

with an uncommitted option.

Martinson said ballots were determined by the parties ahead of time, and there may be some candidates listed who dropped out of the race after the ballot deadline had passed.

New this year is the addition of four new mail ballot precincts: Bath Township, Carlston Township, Geneva and Manchester. Ballots should be sent to all registered voters in those precincts, along with the registered voters in Conger, Hayward, Hollandale, Myrtle and Twin Lakes.

Martinson said voters in these precincts will receive both ballots but must choose only one to fill out and then destroy the second one.

She said steps are being taken to protect privacy of voters. Which candidate a person votes for is private under the data privacy act, but a record of which party's ballot a voter selects will be made available to the major political parties.

Martinson said the state is reimbursing for ballots, judges and overtime costs incurred by work for the presidential nomination primary, as well as for supplies, postage and public safety purposes.

There is not an alternative weather date in the case of bad weather, but there is an emergency plan in place if somehow people can't reach their polling places because of inclement weather. She advised people

## What about precinct caucuses?

Caucuses will be Feb. 25 for both the Republican and DFL parties.

The Freeborn County Republican Party caucus will be at Southwest Middle School, 1601 W. Front St. in Albert Lea.

The DFL Party caucus will be at the Union Center, 1407 State Highway 13 in Albert Lea.

The caucuses at both locations will begin at 7 p.m.

to listen to KATE Radio or visit the county website for this information if the need arises.

The Freeborn County Auditor-Treasurer's Office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every weekday until the primary for absentee voting, along with 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. the Saturday before the election.

She reminded voters that no excuse is needed to vote by absentee ballot.

Ballots must be received by the last mail delivery on Election Day or can be dropped off in person at the Auditor-Treasurer's Office.

As of Monday morning, 79 absentee ballots had been accepted and 142 had been sent out.

Martinson said Freeborn County always has a great turnout — above the state average — and noted that Minnesota is also a leader amongst all the states.

If people have questions about voting in the primary, they can call the Auditor-Treasurer's Office at 507-377-5121.

## QUESTIONS

Continued from Front Page

said evidence in the case should be reviewed. But her exchange with Hostin was especially heated and took place at a pivotal moment in her candidacy.

"You're a U.S. senator now," Hostin said. "You're a powerful woman. What do you intend to do to right this wrong?"

Klobuchar replied: "It must be reviewed. Sunny, I think you know that I care so much about justice and this case must be reviewed."

**Tell us about the news**

in your neighborhood **507.379.3433**  
 email: [Sarah.stultz@albertleatribune.com](mailto:Sarah.stultz@albertleatribune.com)

## Minn. wants anglers to go lead-free

COLLEGEVILLE (AP) — The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is launching a new program to encourage anglers to switch to lead-free fishing equipment as a way to save the state bird, the loon.

The campaign was created with money from the federal government's settlement with BP over the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, Minnesota Public Radio News reported.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awarded Minnesota agencies more than \$6 million from the settlement to help support its loon population after researchers found traces of oil and the chemicals used to disperse the spill in the feathers, eggs and blood of birds in Minnesota.

About \$1.2 million will go toward the public awareness campaign called "Get the Lead Out" over the next three years.

But State Sen. Bill Ingelbriksen, R-Alexandria, chair of the Minnesota Senate's Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee has temporarily delayed the funding so his committee can hold a hearing on the program. He expects approval soon.

In the meantime, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is moving forward. It has already posted a website that lists more than three dozen companies where anglers can find lead-free fishing equipment that won't harm loons.

While some states have total or partial bans on the use of lead sinkers and jigs, Minnesota's lead-free campaign is voluntary.

Carrol Henderson, who retired from the state Department of Natural Resources in 2018, led a seven-year study that found Minnesota's loons were affected by the BP oil spill. He says loons are especially

susceptible to lead poisoning because they swallow pebbles at the bottom of lakes to help them grind up their food.

"When they accidentally pick up a lead jig or sinker off the bottom, all it takes is one split shot or one jig to kill the loon from lead poisoning," Henderson said.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency estimates lead poisoning causes about 14% of loon deaths in the state.

"It's something that's totally avoidable if people simply learn to shop for nontoxic jigs and sinkers," Henderson said, pointing out various lead-free alternatives made from materials like tin, steel, bismuth or tungsten.

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5	9			6	8			
		7						9
4				6				
				2				
1	7	4						3
	9			5				4
7		8	6		1			
	4							6
3	5			9	2	4		

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6	3	5	7	9	8	4	2	1
9	4	1	6	8	7	2	5	3
2	7	2	9	8	1	4	6	3
8	6	3	1	5	8	4	7	2
5	1	6	9	4	7	2	1	8
4	8	2	7	3	3	2	9	5
3	6	7	1	5	8	3	3	4
5	1	9	2	3	4	6	7	8

ANSWER: