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# St. Cloud Times

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019 ■ SCTIMES.COM

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## ‘No stopping our local community’



Steve Fines flies the drone that helped find missing 6-year-old Ethan Haus. Fines used thermal imaging equipment in an effort to track down Ethan and his dog. ZACH DWYER/ST. CLOUD TIMES

## Drone, army of volunteers help locate boy

Clairissa Baker St. Cloud Times  
USA TODAY NETWORK

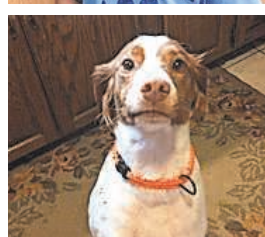
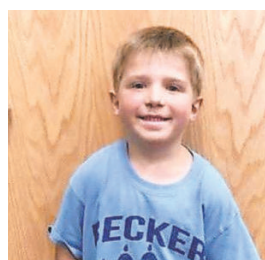
A St. Cloud drone operator watched via thermal imaging early Wednesday morning as rescuers found a 6-year-old Sherburne County boy in a field after he'd been missing in near-freezing temperatures for about 10 hours.

It was the first time Steve Fines, owner of Fines Aerial Imaging, had used his drone to help law enforcement search for a missing person.

The moment of discovering Ethan Haus was joyful.

"It was a lot of hollering and shouting," Fines said. "Everybody was pretty happy."

Fines saw the news of the missing boy Tuesday night and thought he might be able to help with his drone. The thermal imaging equipment on his



Ethan and Remington were found safe early Wednesday. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY SHERBURNE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

drone allowed Fines to see the "bright spot" in a corn field that ended up being Ethan and the family dog, a spaniel named Remington.

As Fines hovered the drone over the location, four rescuers ran about ¼ of a mile to the child, he said.

"On the screen, I could watch their thermal images appear, and one of them grabbed the boy," Fines said. He could make out the thermal image of the dog running around, too.

"You knew what had happened," he said.

Fines was one of more than 600 volunteers who showed up to help after Haus was reported missing just after 4 p.m. Tuesday near Sherburne County Road 16 and Minnesota Highway 25.

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## Emmer to face 2 Democrats, including TV personality

Mrs. Minnesota America, veteran hope to unseat Republican in 6th

Nora G. Hertel St. Cloud Times  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A former Mrs. Minnesota America hopes to represent part of Central Minnesota in Congress and replace U.S. Rep. Tom Emmer in the process.

Television personality Tawnja Zahradka, 54, announced her bid for Congress this week. The Forest Lake resident is running on the Democratic ticket.

Zahradka saw Emmer at a town hall in the summer. She didn't like what she saw and decided to try and replace him.

"I'm not afraid of Tom Emmer. I'm not an idiot; I know how red this district is," Zahradka said. "My goal is to make him try."

Fellow Democrat Ian Todd faced Emmer in 2018 and lost. Todd is running in 2020 and welcomes the DFL competition. "I'm excited for a primary," said Todd, who continued campaigning through the past year and is pursuing a bachelor's in biochemistry and molecular biology at St. Cloud State University.

The 29-year-old Air Force veteran thinks Zahradka's campaign, and the potential for other Democratic candidates, signal that the 6th District has the potential to turn blue.

District 6 curves around the north and west edges of the Twin Cities metro and extends northwest into parts of Stearns and Benton counties.

Emmer is serving his third term in the district previously held by the very conservative Michele Bachmann, a Republican candidate for president in 2012.

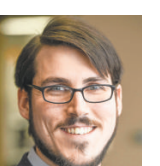
Zahradka is a political novice and thinks she can appeal to women throughout the district. She's been politically neutral most of her life and counts Republican women among her friends, she said.

"There's a lot of women out there who've had enough," Zahradka said.

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Zahradka



Todd



Emmer

## State schools to keep 2-day MEA break

Erin Golden Tribune Content Agency

Minnesota schools' long tradition of canceling two days of classes for an annual teachers conference will continue this week – even though the conference has been permanently shortened to a one-day event.

Until last year, the Minnesota Educator Academy, or MEA, was held on a Thursday and Friday in mid-October. That changed, when Education Minnesota, the teachers union that puts on the conference, scaled the event back to a Thursday-only gathering, and limited it

to union members and student affiliates. Union leaders said at the time that the shift was in response to a U.S. Supreme Court decision that exempted nonunion public employees from having to pay for collective bargaining.

Now, Education Minnesota has decided to keep both of those changes for the foreseeable future. The union already has scheduled conference dates for the next decade, all of them on the third Thursday in October. But most school districts, including many that

See MEA, Page 2A

Until last year, the Minnesota Educator Academy, or MEA, was held on a Thursday and Friday in mid-October.

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