



## Mighty Mouse's revenge

Sorry to once again foment widespread fear and panic, dear readers, but earth is facing a new threat which menaces our health, liberty and American way of life: namely, muscle-bound mice from space. I don't know if there have been any oddly specific prophecies about this, but if there were, then they have come true and we're all in danger.

As usual, this impending super-rodent apocalypse is being brought about by the hand of man. According to AP News, just last week - Jan. 7, to be exact - a SpaceX Dragon capsule returned to earth from the International Space Station. Inside the capsule were chocolate chip cookies baked by the station's special Zero G oven and 40 mice who had been on the station since early December. Eight of those mice were genetically engineered to have twice their normal muscle mass; some of the non-engineered mice bulked up in orbit for a muscle study while the rest will be hitting the gym once they're back in the lab, however that works.

According to my exhaustive research of science fiction media, I estimate there are about 8.6 bazillion ways these mouse experiments could go wrong. I mean, there are already entire industries and breeds of felines devoted to eliminating mice from our homes and properties, but scientists are devoting millions of dollars and valuable room on the International Space Station toward turning each of these creatures into Captain America. Imagine what would happen if only one of these specimens escapes into the wild to reproduce with the native population. Those of you without industrial grade temperature-controlled cheese vaults will be shaking your fists at the sky, ruing the day it rained down on us these miniature extraterrestrial bodybuilders. Then, because you're standing outdoors, you'll get punched into a gopher hole by a rodent who looks like a 1990s Hulk Hogan.

Those chocolate chip cookies are but another worrisome development. Sure, the success of the space station's Zero G oven is a boon to people like me who are used to baking in a weightless environment, but anyone who has read classic children's literature knows that, if you give a mouse a cookie, it will precipitate the animal's descent into uncontrollable greed. If you give a mouse a cookie and biceps, it will not stop until it has conquered the world, following the path of Schwarzenegger by claiming the governor's seat in California. It would probably be a welcome change from their current leadership, but then the mice might cast their beady eyes eastward and we'd all be doomed.

The killer blow will come, though, when the big money gets a whiff of this mouse-enhancing technology. I



by Ben Sonnek  
**Ultra Sonnek**

have no doubt that Disney, who already owns our children, will soon be using its fortune to send Mickey into orbit; upon his return, he'll be in the proper physical condition to lead his well-funded military across the globe to establish the worldwide Disney Empire. Billions will fall before the power of the cartoon mouse, his neck muscles wider than his trademark smile. We'll be helpless to resist as the bloodbath is streamed to us live on Disney Plus.

Yes, dear readers, the muscled mice from the heavens could cause more trouble than those exploding sea urchins I warned you about last October. However, let me ease your dismay; as I had a plan to deal with the sea urchins, so also do I have a way to protect us from the mice. As with all brilliant strategies, the details are simple: We take advantage of the rodents' lust for cheese and turn all of Wisconsin into a giant mousetrap. It would likely take some time and hard work, but if we all pull together in a spirit of unity not seen since the days before man invented politics, we could cover our neighboring state's approximately 54,000 square miles of land with spring-loaded traps, each one the size of a backhoe trailer. Wisconsin might suffer some inconvenience as well as some casualties, but it would be a small price to pay for global security. Besides, I understand we owe them payback for this year's football season.

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## Letters to the editor accepted

Letters to the editor and other opinion articles are welcome. Letters must be signed with a first and last name and include an address and phone number. Letters must be under 400 words and be submitted by Monday at 5 p.m.

They can be emailed to [office@saukherald.com](mailto:office@saukherald.com), mailed to *Sauk Centre Herald*, 522 Sinclair Lewis Ave., Sauk Centre, MN 56378 or dropped off at the office.

Email to [office@saukherald.com](mailto:office@saukherald.com)

## Letter to the editor

Tax increases and government corruption at the hands of the SRWD

By Julie Zimmermann, Sauk Centre

The Sauk River Watershed District (SRWD) is a board of unelected officials who can and will tax you. They have no more knowledge than you or I but can levy taxes and assessments without public input or notice.

They want to build a fancy new building with an approximate cost of \$2 million. Have you ever seen anything come in at the price budgeted? What about office equipment, labs, etc.? All of that expense for six employees, and they are already \$4 million in debt. Maybe they should take care of that debt before adding another \$2 million to it. Oh, that's right, we get to pay for it. Your assessment will be looking at you via your tax statement. Allowing this building to be built is opening the door for the tip of the iceberg to come in. It will be one assessment tacked on after another.

Another huge issue is what the SRWD has done to property owners and farmers within the district. For a whole lot of people, it is nothing short of a nightmare. In most cases, the end result is worse than before they started. People are getting big assessments on their taxes for something that doesn't work. There are thousands of people upset with the activities of the SRWD; that should raise a red flag.

A petition is being developed and written up for the dissolution of the SRWD. We need to stand together. Our voices need to be heard!

## Happy belated L.E.A.D.

If you are from Sauk Centre, Melrose, Minneapolis or Timbuktu you may have discussed the events that took place on Pine Street Sunday - if one of our Sauk Centre Herald Facebook posts reaching 114,190 people is any indication. What actually happened? We could hash it out here, but I would rather you just read the story that begins on the front page.

Don and I were in the Twin Cities area visiting with family when news of the event began to trickle in. This was all happening in the neighborhood where I used to live, so I know numerous people who live on that block. Of course, you worry and pray about the safety of everyone, from the victims to the agencies involved and even the suspect. It turned out to be a very long day for all of them and in the end, thankfully, authorities were able to resolve the situation with no loss of life.

So, as I should have done a week ago on Jan. 9, today I am singing the "blues" in honor of Law Enforcement Appreciation Day (LEAD). You would think I'd have it on the calendar, with my daughter, Melissa, working in the department as the administrative assistant. An overly simplified description of her work is that the bulk of her time is spent processing all the reports and other information that needs to be recorded for each incident. She could tell us many stories, but privacy rules forbid that.

On any given day, our local law enforcement is there to help settle our disputes and assist with medical situations, motorist problems and all the dramas that can be involved with being human. There are often drugs or alcohol in people's systems, and then there are the mental health problems, exacerbated by the fact that we lack the necessary facilities to care for people who need them. (Someone's decision to close most of these places down affects law enforcement much more than we realize.)

For the heck of it, I pulled up a random email from Melissa. She has typed up our police report for years and from one report in March, here is a sampling of the types of things they deal with on a weekly basis: medical, welfare check, motorist assist, agency assist, dog complaint, theft, school patrol, juvenile problem, funeral escort, k9 assist, harassment, suspicious activity, warrant arrest, fight, exposure, another fight, driving complaint and vandalism. That is a portion of one week and doesn't include the dozens of traffic stops, which can turn up who knows what at any given time. As you can tell, there is a huge variety in what these people deal with. Not a single day of their work is guaranteed to end well. They know that going in, but it doesn't diminish the reality.

Sunday's events involved a whole lot of people alongside the Sauk Centre Police Department, including the Stearns County Sheriff's Office, Melrose Police Department, Belgrade Police Department, Stearns-Benton SWAT, St. Cloud SWAT, Minnesota State Patrol, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Enforcement Division, Sauk Centre Fire Department and Sauk Centre Ambulance Department.

These public servants' lives were all affected that day, and here is just one example: My son-in-law, Jamie Kleinschmidt, is on the Sauk Centre Fire Department and spent the day on civic duty, blocking off a street with a fire truck to help create a perimeter around the area. It was his 40th birthday, but being on the fire department is so much more than fires. Melissa was also called in to work and later asked if I would stop by the house and turn the crockpot down when we got back to town. The ribs smelled delicious but no one was there to eat them.

That's my connection to Sunday's drama and I am sure you have yours. At the end of the day - and it bears repeating - the event was resolved without loss of life. The worst part is, without an armored vehicle in this case, the story could have ended so differently. Thank you to everyone from all the agencies involved who spent their day working through this situation. Hats off to all of you for a job well done.

To our local police department and all law enforcement, I wish you a happy belated Law Enforcement Appreciation Day! I truly do appreciate all of you, and I thank you for your service to our community.



by Diane Leukam  
**Random Reflections**

## NEWS

## Arvig accepting 2020 scholarship applications

Perham - Arvig is now accepting applications for two different scholarships to be awarded to area high school seniors graduating in 2020. The deadline for both scholarship applications is February 21, 2020.

**Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) in Cooperation with NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association, College Scholarship (FRS/NTCA)**

FRS awards graduating high school seniors across rural America with \$2,000 scholarships. Arvig contributes an additional \$500 making it a \$2500 award for scholarship winners who are sponsored by Arvig.

To be eligible, applicants

graduating high school in 2020;

- Be accepted by an accredited two or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school;

- Be sponsored by Arvig; in order to obtain sponsorship, the applicant must be from a family that subscribes to at least one residential service from Arvig;

- Have at least a C grade point average (GPA);

- Express an interest in returning to a rural community following graduation.

Applications can be found online at [www.frs.org/programs/youth-programs/scholarships](http://www.frs.org/programs/youth-programs/scholarships).

To obtain the Arvig sponsorship for the FRS/NTCA scholarship, please submit a copy of all required application materials to Arvig, Josie

Winkels, 150 2nd Street SW, Perham, MN 56573. This is considered the application for the Arvig sponsorship.

If selected, the chosen applicant will be contacted by Arvig with further instructions for submission.

**Minnesota Telecom Alliance Foundation Scholarship**

Ten scholarship awards ranging from \$1,000-2,000 each will be awarded to 2020 Minnesota graduating high school seniors.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be a current senior graduating high school in 2020;

- Be attending post-secondary education at either a university, college, or technical college;

- Be a Minnesota resident;

- Be from a family that subscribes to at least one residential service from Arvig.

Applications can be found online at [www.mnta.org/page/Scholarship](http://www.mnta.org/page/Scholarship).

Once a student has completed the MTA Foundation Scholarship application online, they need to print a copy and attach the required documentation and submit to Arvig, Josie Winkels, 150 2nd Street SW, Perham, MN 56573. Arvig will then submit the scholarship application to the MTA Foundation on the applicant's behalf.

All scholarship questions can be directed to Josie Winkels at 218-346-8213.

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