

# Opinions

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(Compliments from the Wright County Journal-Press as a service to our readers.)



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## Kiffmeyer comments on CARES funding in support for overcoming the impacts of COVID

Governor Walz announced on June 25 that he would distribute the full \$841 million in federal CARES funding to local entities. The distribution is according to the approved compromise legislation the Senate and House agreed to in the special session.

"As our communities begin to rebuild, this funding will provide the extra support needed to overcome the impacts of the pandemic," said Senator Mary Kiffmeyer (R-Big Lake). "We led this discussion over special session, developed a fair formula, and I am glad the Governor decided to evenly distribute these funds to our communities."

The compromise agreement distributed the local government funding fairly to Minnesota counties, cities, and towns based on a formula using their population. The Senate passed the agreed-upon legislation with nearly unanimous support during the special session. The legislation brought transparency

and fairness to the distribution since the federal funds were not subject to legislative approval and could be spent unilaterally by Walz.

Minnesota received more than \$2 billion from the federal government to help local governments, health professionals, and businesses fight COVID. That money went into an account called the Federal Coronavirus Relief Fund, so it could be quickly deployed to places it is needed most.

The funds will be distributed as follows:

- Sherburne County \$11,667,880
- Wright County \$16,569,926
- Big Lake Township \$596,017

Cities of:

- Big Lake \$863,098
- Elk River \$1,875,294
- Otsego \$1,305,119
- Albertville \$563,922
- St. Michael \$1,343,694
- Hanover \$261,883
- Dayton \$457,466

## Out of the Blue

by Sherri Larson



Pictured with Ed, 20 years ago at Buffalo Heights.

## Lessons from the Links

"You can three-putt from there!"

No matter where I landed on the green, two feet away from the hole or thirty-two, my golf partner Ed Blair shouted this, following it up immediately with his hearty laugh.

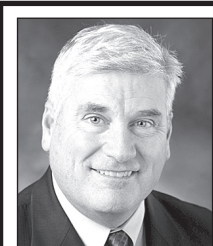
Many readers will remember the late Pastor Ed Blair, who served at Zion Lutheran church from 1970 - 2001. Ed overflowed with humor, encouragement, and wisdom; his enthusiasm was infectious and inspiring. When I first came to my position as youth minister at Zion in 1994, Pastor Ed and I quickly established a commitment to begin fair-weather Fridays with golf.

One of my favorite memories of Pastor Ed was his deep commitment to positivity. We could all use a dose of that. And so, with a nod to Ed Blair, I'll try to make some metaphorical connections between golf and life's challenges.

When Ed shouted, "You can three-putt from there!" Non-golfing readers must be aware that three-putts are not desired. The scoring of golf allows for two putts. Three-putts are disappointing and frustrating. Unfortunately, for me, they're not uncommon. Ed helped me find humor and hope.

Some problems are much too big and complex to compare to golf, of course. A three-putt on the golf course is a tiny setback, but it can represent how less-than-ideal circumstances lead to frustrations. I can't dwell on small disappointments; maybe I can salvage a good lesson before moving on to new possibilities. Ralph Waldo Emerson

said it best: "Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as



Congressman  
**Tom Emmer**

Dear Friends,

Heading into Fourth of July weekend, I want to wish all of you a safe and happy Independence Day! As you fire up the grill and celebrate our great nation with family and friends, I hope you will take a moment to remember the sacrifices made by so many brave men and women over the last 244 years to ensure our country can flourish.

Although these may feel like turbulent times, this Saturday we honor the history of the United States together as Americans united in preserving the enduring promise of opportunity our country can provide for generations to come.

Before you head off to the lake, I want to share a few highlights from last week...

### Failure to deliver on Police Reform

Last week the House of Representatives voted on legislation named after George Floyd, on the one-month anni-

versary of his tragic passing.

Rather than working together on non-partisan solutions to address ongoing issues between law enforcement and the communities they serve, this effort was crafted behind closed doors with no opportunity for input from Republicans in Congress. This was a missed opportunity to provide increased transparency and accountability within our law enforcement community. Instead, House Democrats decided to make this a partisan issue. They ignored the hard work and experience of Senator Tim Scott and Representative Pete Stauber, who have authored the JUSTICE Act, and refused to allow ideas like my Minnesota-inspired Community Outpost (COP) Outreach and Engagement Act to even be considered in this discussion.

We all want the same goal: for everyone to feel safe and secure in their community. Everyone deserves a voice in this process. In a time where America must come together soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day."

Every hole starts on the tee and ends with the ball in the cup, but everyone has a different journey. Players start on the same tee-box and head to the same green. Some (so I've heard and witnessed) make that journey in the nicely prepared, short route on the fairway with no errant shots taking them off course. They have the right swing, the right clubs, the best golf ball. They're prepared and set for success. Because people don't have the same equipment, there can be inherent inequality in golf. Sometimes the old clubs and the cheap golf balls win.

Even so, both the prepared and the unprepared can get caught up in the hazards, such as sandtraps, water, or trees. Plus, there are penalty strokes for losing the ball. Just after the splash or the launch into out-of-bounds territory, instead of recording a penalty stroke, Pastor Ed applied a little grace, saying, "Losing a golf ball is punishment enough."

Ed teased that golf is easy because it only requires focusing on fourteen things at once (give or take): grip, arms, elbows, hips, shoulders, club head, tee height. Weather. Bugs. Those golfers talking over there on the next tee. Squirrel! Research shows that human beings really aren't good at multitasking...so the problem is obvious. Golf keeps me humble. I try to get to the hole efficiently and without too much swearing. All I really need to do is keep my eye on the ball; if I forget that, nothing else matters. Golf is impossible to do perfectly. So is everything else. It's important to remember that.

No matter how I get there or how many strokes it takes, I'll meet you on the green. I might be able to three-putt from there. Thanks for the memories and inspiration, Pastor Ed!

er, I hope we can all come to the table and work towards justice for George Floyd and produce substantive police reforms that make our communities safer.

## Community Corner

By Shelby Hulstein



## Celebrating America

Making our way through the Marvel movies again, my husband and I recently watched "Captain America," in which an American hero was created to defeat Hydra and its scientists working behind the scenes of WW2. Before Steve Rogers is transformed from a scrawny, sickly kid into the strong, advanced superhuman that is Captain America, he tries repeatedly to enlist in the Army. When his friend, Bucky, asks him why he keeps trying so hard after being rejected so many times, he replies, "There are men laying down their lives. I got no right to do any less than them. That's what you don't understand. This isn't about me."

Seeing the patriotism and self-sacrifice portrayed in the movie stirred up the realization that we don't see that as much anymore, at least not on that level; the language and conversation about our country has shifted to the almost polar opposite of patriotism. And the irony of it all is that, come this weekend, the masses will be out on the lakes, grilling, and celebrating the 244th birthday of America. Personally, I think many don't even celebrate the true meaning of the holiday, but rather the fun weekend and excuse to eat and drink a ton. Don't get me wrong, I love a day out on the lake and enjoying some good food, but let's make sure to take the time to acknowledge those who have fallen protecting this beautiful country so you and I can have these kinds of summer weekends.

I'm sure for some, given the current state of division and violence, the idea of celebrating our country might not be appealing. I'd argue that now, more than ever, we need a strong celebration of America. No one's claiming this country is perfect, and we have a long way to go in becoming a great nation again. But that doesn't mean we disregard all of the good. We can celebrate the triumphs and continue to grow, working towards a better future. Just like we all need grace

when we stumble, we need to extend that same grace to those running our country, regardless of political affiliations. Yes, there are some people abusing their power, but a good amount are people like you and me, just trying to do the best they can with what they're given. We can still hold people accountable without destroying everything around us.

We can also do our part by doing a better job of remembering and teaching what freedom truly means. Ever since our society has been twisting into one of knee-jerk reactions, cancel culture, and whatever else Hollywood throws into the mix, the original mindset of gratitude has shifted into a mindset of entitlement. Younger generations are being raised by technology and haven't lived through difficult times to respect the freedom they take for granted. They're only being taught to use their voice, not to also respect those fighting for them to have one. The sooner we put the true cost of freedom back into our everyday lives and Fourth of July celebrations, the more opportunities we have to strengthen patriotism and gratitude.

So, remember: "This isn't about me." Steve Rogers wasn't trying to enlist to receive applause from others. He wasn't looking to join a fight for a photo op. He wasn't hopping on the bandwagon simply because everyone else that was joining. Steve was passionate about serving his country, because he realized the bigger picture didn't include his own achievement. He knew his country wasn't perfect, but he saw the potential for better and would die fighting for that.

That is what I would encourage you to celebrate this weekend. The Fourth of July celebrates our freedom, and the opportunity to become better than we were before. And as long as we keep encouraging patriotism, not division, we have a better shot at achieving the dreams of our Founding Fathers.

I am passionate about promoting access to justice for all Americans, and LSC is a huge part of that effort. They serve low-income individuals, children, families, seniors, and veterans in 813 offices in every congressional district across our nation.

Watch my remarks here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILwW-XEAB8K&feature=youtu.be&t=3957>

### From Midwest Energy to Housing: Serving Minnesota's Sixth District

Last week, I met with the National Biodiesel Board

Emmer

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## Letters to the Editor

We encourage letters to the editor about public matters. Please state your views briefly in your own words. Letters must be signed by the writer and include the legible name, address and daytime phone number of the writer. Only your name and town will normally be published. All letters are subject to editing for clarity, space and appropriateness of content. We reserve the right to refuse publication of any letter. Address letter as follows: Letters to editor, Wright County Journal-Press, P.O. Box 159, Buffalo, MN 55313.

During political election campaigns, we prefer to reserve space in the letters column primarily for our readers and not necessarily for the candidates or campaign committees. We ask that candidates and people who are active on their committees, please identify themselves when submitting material during a campaign. We will consider publishing that material elsewhere on the Opinion Pages. This is not a perfect system. Sometimes candidates feel entitled to respond within the letters column to what they see as serious false charges or significant factual errors made against them in someone's earlier letter. This newspaper tries to be fair in those cases. Do not wait until election eve to raise a serious new issue, when insufficient time remains for a reply.

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